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NEWS CLIPPINGS

12 September 2018

Wednesday



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SC REFERS TRILLANES CASE TO MAKATI RTC

STORY BY DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN

In denying the opposition senator's petition to block Proclamation No. 572, the Supreme Court rules that the Makati Regional Trial Court must first determine whether he had complied with amnesty requirements. **AG**

FROM A1

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan
@dpazzibuganINQ

Taking notice of President Duterte's statement that Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV would not be jailed without a warrant, the Supreme Court on Tuesday declined to issue an order blocking the arrest of the government's fiercest critic in Congress.

The Supreme Court also did not rule on the question of the legality of Proclamation No. 572, by which the President voided the amnesty given to Trillanes as a military rebel in 2011.

Mr. Duterte's claims in the proclamation that Trillanes did not apply for amnesty and admit guilt in the military uprisings against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in 2003, 2006 and 2007 "appear to be factual in nature" so these have to be evaluated by the trial courts or the Court of Appeals as the "trier of facts," the high court said.

Lower court's jurisdiction

"Hence it is appropriate that the Makati [courts] should be given leeway in exercising their concurrent jurisdiction to hear and resolve... the legality of Proclamation 572," it

said.

The ruling came a day after the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), the largest organization of the country's lawyers, urged the courts to resist "creeping incursions" on their independence and warned of judicial chaos if they upheld Proclamation No. 572.

In a statement issued on Monday, the IBP expressed alarm over the "audacity to publicly arrest and incarcerate" Trillanes for offenses that were canceled by the amnesty given to him by President Benigno Aquino III and Congress in 2011.

Following the presidential proclamation, the Department of Justice (DOJ) asked Makati Regional Trial Court Branches 148 and 150 to issue warrants for Trillanes' arrest and resume criminal proceedings against him.

Both courts denied the DOJ's requests for warrants without a hearing, saying it would violate Trillanes' right to due process.

Judge Andres Soriano of Branch 148 set a hearing for Sept. 13, while Executive Judge Elmo Alameda of Branch 150 ordered a hearing for Sept. 14.

Double jeopardy

The IBP said amnesty "cannot be simply dissolved by the invocation of the words 'void ab



Antonio Trillanes IV —LYN RILLON

initio' (void from the start) as though it were some magical incantation that can nullify vested rights."

The move against Trillanes, it said, "runs roughshod over the constitutional guarantee against double jeopardy," or holding a person to answer twice for the same offense.

The IBP said the judiciary could be subjected to an "anomalous situation" in which one court could uphold the amnesty and another rule to void it.

The group accused the DOJ of "forum shopping" and "potential mischief" by simultaneously petitioning the two

Makati RTC branches that had dismissed the cases against Trillanes to order his arrest based on Mr. Duterte's proclamation.

10 days to comment

Although it did not grant Trillanes' petitions, the Supreme Court ordered the government officials tasked with carrying out Mr. Duterte's order 10 days to comment on the ruling.

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said he was "very happy" that the Supreme Court denied Trillanes' petition for a preliminary injunction or a temporary restraining order.

He said the two Makati RTC branches had given Trillanes "the opportunity to be heard" through the hearings on Thursday and Friday.

Solicitor General Jose Calida, who instigated the scrapping of Trillanes' amnesty, said the ruling meant the Supreme Court "acknowledged that Proclamation No. 572 afforded Mr. Trillanes due process."

Malacañang thought the Supreme Court upheld Proclamation No. 572.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said there was no more legal impediment to the enforcement of the proclamation, although he wanted to see what Mr. Duterte had to say about the high court ruling.

In a speech after returning from visits to Israel and Jordan on Saturday, Mr. Duterte said he was not seeking the arrest of Trillanes without a court-issued warrant, a pronouncement that the Supreme Court recognized as a public commitment.

The high court also recognized the statement of the Armed Forces of the Philippines that it was deferring court-martial proceedings against Trillanes until the courts could resolve the amnesty row. —WITH

REPORTS FROM LEILA B. SALAVERRIA,
CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO AND AP
INQ



NFA administrator out

Rody asks Congress: Abolish NFA Council

By ALEXIS ROMERO

With the country's rice supply still dwindling, President Duterte is now in search of a new head for the state-run National Food Authority (NFA) after his appointee Jason Aquino requested to be relieved.

In a televised interview with chief presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo yesterday, Duterte announced that Aquino has requested to be removed after leading the agency for one year and eight months.

"He says he's tired and he cannot cope with the dynamics inside, which is always ordinary happening, happening in government because we cannot be in agreement all the time," Duterte said, referring to the NFA administrator.

Aquino is being blamed for the lack of rice supply in the market, prompting prices to spike.

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Aquino could not be reached for comment while NFA special assistant to the administrator Lachel Miguel is currently out of the country.

Even NFA spokesman Rex Estoperez, who is on leave, has not responded to queries and clarifications.

A source from the NFA, however, said the announcement from the President was unexpected as Aquino has not mentioned any plan to resign from his post.

NFA deputy administrator Tomas Escare told a recent House hearing that the grains agency asked the council last October to allow the importation of one million metric tons of rice. He claimed the council permitted the NFA to import rice only last May.

NFA Council member and Trade Undersecretary Ruth Castelo countered Escare's claim, saying the approval was delayed because of the NFA's failure to submit information about its inventory.

Duterte has claimed that the Philippines has more than enough supply of rice and expressed readiness to order the opening of warehouses to prevent hoarding.

Officials have said the government would open stores selling cheap rice to stabilize prices.

The Chief Executive said he would appoint someone who would implement the policies of the economic managers but did not elaborate. He also did not say what position would be offered but revealed he was just waiting for the person to retire.

Best option

Several lawmakers and agriculture industry groups have been calling for Aquino's resignation because of his supposed failure to address rice supply issues.

The Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (Sinag) welcomed the decision, saying voluntary exit is the best option for Aquino.

"I don't think he could solve the situation right now so it is better that he just leave," Sinag chairman Rosendo So told **The STAR** in a phone interview.

"He has to be accountable to the farmers and to the people for the rice shortage in the market," he added.

The group will also review the graft charges it filed against Aquino on Aug. 29, saying there is a chance that the Office of the Ombudsman may just dismiss it given that he will be out of office anytime soon.

As to the next NFA chief, So said stakeholders trust the President to choose the right person to replace Aquino.

"The person to replace him should be pro-farmer and who will buy and protect our local farmers and not just think of importation," he said.

"Someone who will help the local farmers and not the other countries," So added.

NFA Council abolition

The industry also lauded the administration's plan to scrap the interagency NFA Council, echoing the President's sentiments that it is useless and has supposedly failed to perform its function.

Duterte revealed his plan amid the increase in prices of rice in the market.

"I will recommend to Congress the abolition of the (council). It has not done any purpose; it only hinders the operation," he said.

The NFA Council, which formulates policy on rice and food security, like importation, was formed by Presidential Decree No. 4, later amended by Presidential Decree No. 1770. It consists of representatives from the finance department, National Economic and Development Authority, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Landbank and the farming sector.

Duterte reiterated the need to remove rice quotas and to just allow anyone to import rice to ensure that the country has enough supply.

"I have been advocating tariffication... anybody can import," he added.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. previously said the bill that imposes tariffs on rice imports could lead to the abolition of the NFA. The measure was approved by the House of Representatives last month.

The entire council, which used to be led by Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco, has been in disagreement with Aquino in particular since last year due to opposing decisions on the extension of import arrivals.

The issue worsened with several deferments and non-approval of importation as well as rejection of the increase in the buying price of *palay*.

Rice from Sabah

Meanwhile, Duterte said he was considering buying rice from Sabah to address the country's rice supply issues.

"Shortages are always there... The economic life of a country cannot be all bed of roses. I have several options. The importation did not stop. If worse comes to worst, I will open Sabah," the President said.

"The rice from Sabah is cheap. If we let the authorities, those from Basilan, those from Jolo or Zambo-

anga to buy rice there, they can get it at a very low price," he added.

Duterte also expressed willingness to set up barter trade in the area, which is now being administered by Malaysia.

- With Louise Maureen Simeon

NORTHERN LUZON

'YOLANDA-LEVEL' PREPARATIONS UNDER WAY AS TYPHOON NEARS

By Jeannette I. Andrade and Melvin Gascon @Team_Inquirer

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) is undertaking "Yolanda-level" preparations as Typhoon "Mangkhut" moved toward the northern part of the country.

In Batanes province, village officials have been instructed to distribute ropes to households to be used to tie down roofs in preparation for strong winds. Each household is to get 10 meters of plastic rope.

Mangkhut, to be named "Ompong" when it enters the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) on Wednesday afternoon, may not be as intense as Super-typhoon "Yolanda" (international name: Haiyan) but it continues to gather strength.

Several provinces in northern Luzon, including Cagayan, Isabela, Apayao, Kalinga, Abra, Ilocos Norte, Batanes and the Babuyan group of islands, began experiencing gusty winds and heavy rain on Tuesday.

As of 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Ompong was pack-

FROM A1

ing winds of 185 kilometers per hour and gusts of 225 kph, and was barreling westward toward northern Luzon at a speed of 30 kph, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

Cagayan, Batanes landfall

"We continue to warn the public that the typhoon would be destructive, as it has a relatively wide coverage and an evident eye," Pagasa weather specialist Aldzar Aurelio said in a Facebook live video update.

Ompong is expected to make landfall in Cagayan and the

Batanes group of islands, and will bring stormy weather to the whole of northern and central Luzon on Thursday and Friday, Aurelio said.

Pagasa is set to raise Storm Signal No. 1 in northern and central Luzon on Wednesday night. The approaching typhoon will enhance the effect of the southwest monsoon, it said.

The Armed Forces' Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) has placed on red alert its troops and reservists for humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

For its part, the Philippine Coast Guard has alerted its districts and stations in northern and Central Luzon to ensure the readiness of all assets and personnel for emergency situations.

Office of Civil Defense Ad-

ministrador Ricardo Jalad wanted preparations to be at the level of Yolanda. NDRRMC spokesperson Edgar Posadas said at a press conference on Tuesday.

"We have learned a lot after Yolanda. It does not mean that Mangkhut is the same level as Yolanda but anything can happen because it's gaining intensity as it draws near the PAR," Posadas said.

Disaster assessment

Posadas said representatives of telecommunications companies and the National Electrification Administration (NEA) were present at the disaster risk assessment conference on Monday.

He pointed out that the NEA

had drafted a plan for power outages, including the provision of artificial power sources, while the telecommunications firms had committed to provide communications on wheels.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has set aside P1.7 billion as standby fund and has prepositioned relief goods in strategic areas.

Redundancy

The DSWD said national reserves, both in personnel and equipment, had also been prepositioned at the Clark and Cauayan airports.

Preemptive evacuation may be undertaken in some areas, according to the NDRRMC.

In undertaking Yolanda-lev-

el preparations, Posadas said redundancy was the main focus.

He explained that the layer of disaster response started from the barangay up to the national government. "If one fails, the other steps in."

Nolcom helicopters and Navy vessels have been also placed on standby, Maj. Ericson Bulosan, the command's acting public information chief, said on Tuesday.

Residents of coastal villages, which were swamped by floods due to the monsoon rains last month, have been advised to strengthen their houses and prepare to evacuate when needed. —WITH REPORTS FROM TINA G. SANTOS, TONETTE OREJAS, YOLANDA SOTELO AND NATHAN ALCAANTARA INQ

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Super typhoon accelerates, enters PAR today

By HELEN FLORES

Super typhoon Mangkhut has accelerated as it remains on track to pummel northern Philippines this weekend, the state weather bureau warned yesterday.

Mangkhut is expected to enter the Philippine area of responsibility this afternoon and will be locally named Ompong.

The US Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) upgraded Mangkhut into a super typhoon yesterday.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Admin-

istration (PAGASA)'s 3 p.m. forecast, however, still classified Mangkhut as a typhoon.

PAGASA and JTWC use different standards in classifying cyclones.

PAGASA uses 10-minute average readings of a cyclone's wind speed, while the JTWC uses one-minute average.

The state weather bureau categorizes a cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 220 kph as a super typhoon.

PAGASA is expected to raise tropical cyclone warning signal number 1 tonight over Northern and Central Luzon areas due to Mangkhut.

"Typhoon Mangkhut will be felt in Northern and Central Luzon beginning Thursday or Friday," PAGASA weather forecaster Aldazar Aurelio said.

He said Mangkhut is expected to hit Cagayan-Batanes

area on Saturday.

As of 3 p.m. yesterday, the eye of the typhoon was spotted at 1,650 kilometers east of Southern Luzon with maximum sustained winds of 185 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 225 kph.

It is expected to move west at 30 kph.

Mangkhut is expected to be 50 kilometers southwest of Calayan, Cagayan on Saturday morning.

Aurelio said Mangkhut is also expected to enhance the southwest monsoon, which will bring scattered light to moderate rains and thunderstorms over Zamboanga Peninsula, Western Visayas and Palawan beginning tomorrow.

The southwest monsoon will also bring light to moderate rains over the Bicol region, the Visayas and Mindanao tomorrow.

Aurelio said Metro Manila would experience cloudy skies with isolated light to moderate rains and thunderstorms due to the southwest monsoon by Friday.

Meanwhile, Tropical Depression Neneng, which has intensified into a storm, left the Philippine area of responsibility yesterday.

PAGASA said the effects of Neneng (international name Barijat) over Northern Luzon were "gradually decreasing," according to PAGASA.

PAGASA, however, said Batanes, Babuyan Group of Island and Ilocos provinces would continue to experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshower and thunderstorm due to the trough or extension of Neneng.

The weather agency continued to warn residents in these provinces to brace for possible flooding and landslides.

Meanwhile, Metro Manila and rest of the country still have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers due to thunderstorms.

As of 3 p.m., Neneng was located at 425 km west of extreme Northern Luzon, packing winds of 85 kph and gustiness of up to 105 kph. It was moving west southwest away from the country, according to Aurelio.

The heavy rains caused by Neneng ground commerce in Batanes to a halt.

Flights were cancelled, leaving several visitors stranded while food supply deliveries were also cancelled.

Provincial disaster officials however did not report any casualty or injury from the storm.

Mangkhut, on the other hand, pummeled through Guam on Monday, as it approached the Philippines through the Pacific.

The Philippine Consulate in Guam has not received a report that any of the 43,000 Filipinos living there and 20,000 more in Northern Marianas were adversely affected by the typhoon.

Level up preparations

With the approaching monstrous storm, lawmakers urged state agencies to make the necessary preparations.

Leyte Rep. Yedda Marie Romualdez

said state agencies and local disaster officials should learn from the lessons of super typhoon Yolanda. Her congressional district was practically wiped out by Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013.

"It is crucial to highlight that the struggle of our people did not only happen during that very day Haiyan made landfall; it continued even weeks after the typhoon long left our region," she said.

"Deadlock and delays caused by bureaucratic paralysis, and poor coordination by different agencies rendered Tacloban City and most of the first district of Leyte completely helpless," she recalled.

Romualdez, who took over the post of her lawyer-husband Martin in May 2016, pushed for the approval of House Bill 7968 creating the proposed Department of Disaster Resilience that would replace the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

The NDRRMC, for its part, is putting on standby P1.7 billion worth of food packs and other disaster relief-related equipment in preparation for the storm.

NDRRMC spokesman Edgar Posadas said the agency is on red alert and has intensified its "Yolanda-like" preparation.

Posadas said the standby aid would complement the prepositioned food

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Super From Page 2

packs for the residents in the provinces of Cagayan, Abra, Isabela, Batanes, Kalinga and Apayao and the Ilocos provinces.

He said the government would determine today whether it should implement forced evacuation through local officials in the areas in the path of the typhoon.

Acting Social Welfare Secretary Virginia Orogo said they are closing monitoring weather bulletins to ensure immediate response to communities that will be affected by the weather system.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said stockpile food packs and standby funds are available at its central offices, field offices and the National Resource Operations Center.

The department said it has 356,349 family food packs that are ready for immediate deployment.

Undersecretary Hope Herville of the DSWD Disaster Response Management Group said they have prepositioned goods in all regions in preparation for the incoming typhoon.

In Cagayan Valley, officials have implemented the "no sail and no fishing zone" as of Mon-

day in preparation for Ompong.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) has alerted all its units and geared them for search and rescue operations for the typhoon.

Nolcom commander Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Salamat said all ground forces were already deployed for humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations.

Air and sea assets from the Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard were also alerted for operations if needed.

Interior and Local Government officer-in-charge Eduardo Año called on local officials to make preparation and implement measures to attain zero casualty.

"To the government officials, show your leadership. Don't disappear. We should anticipate it, let's aim for zero casualty," Año said.

The National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP), the country's power system operator and transmission service provider, said it has undertaken the necessary preparations and precautions to minimize the impact of the approaching storm.

The NGCP said preparations

included ensuring the reliability of communications equipment, availability of hardware materials and supplies necessary for the repair of damages to facilities, as well as the positioning of line crews in strategic areas, to facilitate immediate restoration work.

On the other hand, the Department of Agriculture (DA) warned Ompong might leave P14 billion in estimated damage in agriculture.

Initial estimates from the DA's Field Operations Office showed that approximately 1.2 million hectares of farms planted to rice and corn about to be harvested will be affected if Ompong continues on its course and slams into Northern Luzon.

Looking at the worst possible case scenario, rice crops in the Cordillera, Ilocos region, Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon could suffer up to P7.3 billion in damage affecting 893,000 hectares of rice farms.

The DA field offices in the four regions have been advised to activate their disaster monitoring offices and operate on a 24-hour basis to monitor the effect of the typhoon. - With Jaime Laude, Louise Maureen Simeon, Delon Porcalla, Emmanuel Tupas, Pia Lee-Brago, Evelyn Macairan, Victor Martin, Jack Castaño, Janvic Mateo, Eva Visperas

'Mangkhut' continues to gather strength, may enter PH today

By ALEXANDRIA SAN JUAN

Typhoon "Mangkhut," which will be locally named "Ompong" upon entering the country, continues to gather

strength while moving closer to the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR), threatening to bring heavy rains over Northern Luzon.

In the 6 p.m. weather fore- ▶13

'Mangkhut' continues... ◀1

cast of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), the eye of Mangkhut was located already at 1,650 kilometers east of Southern Luzon while slightly moving faster westward at 30 kilometers per hour (kph).

It has further intensified and now packs maximum sustained winds of up to 185 kph and gustiness of up to 225 kph.

PAGASA weather specialist Aldzcar Aurelio said that the typhoon will enter the boundary line of PAR Wednesday afternoon and will be referred to as Ompong – the country's 15th tropical cyclone for the year.

The typhoon is threatening Northern Luzon and may traverse the Cagayan-Batanes area on Saturday while moving northwest toward Taiwan.

Aurelio added that the effect of Mangkhut will be felt in Northern and Central Luzon by Friday afternoon, but tropical cyclone warning signal No. 1 may be raised in the area as early as Wednesday evening.

Widespread moderate to heavy rains due to the typhoon is possible by Friday, September 14, over Northern Luzon, especially over the provinces of Cagayan, Isabela, Apayao, Kalinga, Abra, Ilocos Norte, and Batanes, PAGASA said.

The bureau also said that the typhoon may strengthen the "habagat" or southwest monsoon which will bring scattered light to moderate rains and thunderstorms over the Zamboanga Peninsula, Western Visayas, and Palawan starting Thursday, September 13.

The state weather bureau reiterated that Mangkhut is not a super typhoon yet until it develops maximum sustained winds of 220 kph near the center.

As of now, PAGASA is not yet predicting Mangkhut to be a super typhoon but it's expected that its maximum sustained winds may reach 210 kph.

14-B damage to agri sector

The Department of Agriculture (DA) has already drawn every worst-case scenario that Ompong could incur to the agriculture sector. As a start, its forecast damage now stands nearly P14 billion.

In what could be an unusual scenario for the DA, the agency came up on Tuesday with a detailed computation of how much damage it is expecting Ompong to cause the farm sector, which is yet to fully recover from typhoons that hit the country in July.

"An estimated 1.2 million hectares

of farms planted to rice and corn which are about to be harvested may be affected if Typhoon Ompong continues on its course and slams into Northern Luzon by Thursday or Friday," Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said.

In total, the field operations office of the DA, headed by Christopher Morales, projected that in a worst case scenario damage to rice crops could be around P7.3 billion while the damage to corn could be around P6.2 billion.

This, as most rice crops, especially in the Cordillera Region, Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley, are now ready for harvest.

"In a worst case scenario, an estimated 893,000 hectares of rice farms in the four regions will be affected by Typhoon Ompong," Piñol said.

The estimate, which also shows project for "moderate" losses, said rice crop could incur losses worth P3.3 billion if the typhoon will not intensify.

Also in a worst case scenario, an estimated 483,000 hectares of corn fields could be affected with a projected crop loss amounting to P6.2 billion.

The moderate scenario, on the other hand, shows an estimated corn damage amounting to P4.2 billion.

The DA Field Offices in the four regions have already been advised to activate their disaster monitoring offices and operate on a 24-hour basis to monitor the effect of the typhoon, according to Pinol.

Meanwhile, the National Food Authority (NFA) assured the agency has a ready supply of rice for any emergencies and relief operations requirements.

NFA Administrator Jason Aquino said the NFA has at least 750,000 bags stored strategically in its different warehouses in Luzon, including NCR for distribution through accredited retailers and for relief operations during calamities.

Noicom ready for 'Mangkhut'

The Armed Forces of the Philippines-Northern Luzon Command (AFP-NoLCom) said that its forces alongside the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (RDRRMC) and the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD) are preparing for the imminent threat Mangkhut may bring to Northern and Central Luzon.

All local DRRMCs were advised to revisit their respective contingency plans, utilize all Early Warning Systems (EWS) such as Short Messaging System (SMS), social media platforms and others to ensure widest dissemination

of weather updates and advisories.

The NoLCom also advised the public to suspend other outdoor activities like caving and surfing and to take precautionary measures around areas which are susceptible to floods and landslides and prepare for pre-emptive evacuations for communities at risk.

Maj. Ericson C. Bulosan, acting chief of NoLCom's Public Information Office, said they have alerted all their ground forces (Army, Navy, Air Force including their Reservists) to be on standby and are now in position to perform Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response Operations (HADRO) with their military resources such as Helicopters and Navy vessels which are ready for use if the need arises.

NoLCom chief Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Salamat said they have set warning advisories to be disseminated to all units and LGUs in coordination with regional OCDs as part of their ongoing

preparation.

Guam onslaught

Meanwhile, the Philippine Consulate in Guam said it has not received any report of any Filipino in the entire Northern Marianas adversely affected by Mangkhut.

Consul General Marciano de Borja said his office remains in touch with leaders of the 63,000-strong Filipino communities in Guam and the Northern Marianas, as well as with the Guam Office of Civil Defense.

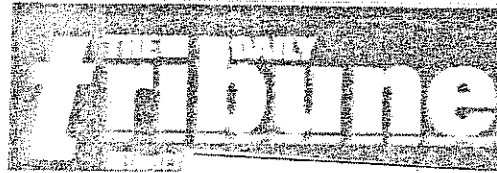
"The Philippine Consulate General in Agana said that so far it has not received any report of any among the 43,000 Filipinos in Guam and the 20,000 in the Northern Marianas being ad-

versely affected by the cyclone," Borja said in a report to the Home Office in Manila.

Borja said Typhoon Mangkhut almost directly hit the island of Rota in the Northern Marianas, and its southern quadrant affecting the northern part of Guam, including Dededo and Tamuning.

Dededo is the main island's most populous district with thousands of Filipino residents while Tamuning is where the Consulate General is situated.

He assured that the Consulate stands ready to provide assistance to any affected Filipino national in the area. (With reports from Madelaine B. Mirafior, Francis T. Wakefield, and Roy C. Mabasa)



Go vows government ready for 'Ompong'

Special Assistant to the President (SAP) Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go on Tuesday assured the public that government is prepared to face any eventuality when super typhoon "Ompong" enters the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) today as expected.

The President's right-hand man said

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From page 1

various government agencies, along with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), are prepared for any eventuality should "Ompong" make a landfall.

"We have already coordinated with the NDRRMC, with Undersecretary (Ricardo) Jalad and gave instructions that we should prepare," Go said at the sidelines of the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (NAASCU) season opening at the Cuneta Astrodome.

We have already coordinated with the NDRRMC, with Undersecretary (Ricardo) Jalad and gave instructions that we should prepare.

"We gave instructions to prepare drinking water and food so that what happened when Yolanda hit the country will never happen again," Go said. "We were caught off-guard that time."

Go added while some local government units - like that in Marikina - are prepared for such disasters, the enormity of the possible destruction that may be brought by "Ompong" will give the government a hard time to address it.

"Most of our local government units are prepared, but sometimes if the damage is too severe, we will really need all the help we can get," Go said. "We will really need the cooperation of the public in times of these disasters. It's better that we are prepared."

Typhoon "Ompong," with an international name "Mangkhut," intensified further Tuesday morning, a day before its expected entry into the PAR.

In a bulletin released past 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said "Mangkhut" now has maximum winds of 170 kilometers per hour (km/h) from the previous 160 km/h and gustiness of up to 210 km/h from the previous 195 km/h.

"Mangkhut" is already 1,845 kilometers east of Southern Luzon, moving west at a slightly slower 25 km/h from the previous 30 km/h.

Since it remains over water, there is a chance for it to strengthen into a super typhoon, the strongest tropical cyclone category.

The President's special assistant also assured the public that the AFP, PNP and other volunteer groups will be extending a helping hand but it will depend on where the typhoon will make first contact.

"The AFP and the PNP, along with other volunteer groups are preparing for any event, but their deployment will depend on where the typhoon will hit and cause more damage," Go said. "But in any case, we are prepared and we urge the residents of places where the typhoon may hit to prepare as well."

ENW

Trillanes happy with SC ruling, may leave Senate

By PAOLO ROMERO

Despite the Supreme Court (SC)'s denial of his petition for temporary restraining order (TRO), Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV was happy with the decision that he said bars President Duterte and the military from arresting him and allows him more freedom to argue his case on the validity of his amnesty before the lower courts.

Trillanes said he has consulted his lawyers on the possibility of breaking out of his self-imposed weeklong confinement in his office at the Senate because of the SC decision that took judicial notice of Duterte's pronouncement that there will be no arrest until the question on the constitutionality of his revoking the senator's amnesty is settled.

"It was a carefully worded decision by the Supreme Court. We are grateful that they showed some semblance of independence. They could have outrightly dismissed the petition," Trillanes told reporters yesterday outside his office shortly after the high tribunal announced its ruling.

"But they (justices) knew that we presented a strong case and the proclamation is badly flawed, but nonetheless they give him a face saving way out, according to my lawyers," he said.

He said he considered the decision some sort of victory since he expected the magistrates to be partial to Duterte.

"But they took a stand, in some way, so that's good enough," Trillanes said.

Duterte signed Proclamation 572 last

Aug. 31 revoking the amnesty granted to Trillanes by then president Benigno Aquino III in 2011 for coup-related charges.

The senator said his office will be coordinating with the Armed Forces leadership to make sure they understood the SC ruling in the same way his lawyers did.

He said his "ordeal" is not yet over as Duterte remains hell-bent on persecuting him. He also warned Duterte would be defying the SC if he insists on arresting him.

He said the SC decision passed on to the Makati regional trial courts (RTCs) the factual issues of the case "and gives us more space to summon the witnesses and subpoena the documents that they (Department of National Defense and Armed Forces) have."

He thanked Senate President Vicente Sotto III for barring any arrest on Senate premises and for allowing him to stay in his office since Duterte's proclamation was released.

Some supporters of Trillanes remain camped outside the gates of the Senate after the SC ruling.

Trillanes also asked the Makati RTC Branch 148 to deny the urgent motion of the Department of Justice (DOJ) for the issuance of arrest warrant and hold departure order against him.

In a 15-page comment signed by Trillanes' lawyer Reynaldo Robles, it stated that the DOJ's motion has "no legal or factual basis" as the senator's criminal liability no longer exists because of the amnesty granted to him. **Turn to Page 10**

Trillanes From Page 6

Robles also emphasized that the court's decision on the charges filed against Trillanes was dismissed as early Sept. 21, 2011, which means it cannot be revived or reopened anymore.

"(We pray) to deny the prosecution's very urgent ex parte omnibus motion for lack of jurisdiction and/or lack of merit, pursuant to prevailing laws and/or jurisdiction," Robles said.

"The instant case having been already dismissed through Honorable Court's Order dated 21 September 2011, which dismissal and/or termination of the case had already become final and executory nearly seven years ago," he added.

Trillanes' comment against the DOJ's motion came a few days after state prosecutors filed the motion for issuance of warrant of arrest and departure order against him after Duterte revoked his amnesty.

Judge Andres Bartolome Soriano, of the Makati RTC Branch 148 has deferred issuing any order against Trillanes,

but asked him to comment on the DOJ's motion and set the first hearing of the case on Thursday.

The DOJ has also filed another motion before Makati RTC Branch 150, but Judge Elmo Alameda did not issue any order against Trillanes as he set the hearing on Friday.

Meanwhile, the Senate minority bloc, to which Trillanes belongs, filed a resolution seeking an investigation into the "fraudulent and erroneous" proclamation of Duterte.

The minority senators said there is need to immediately investigate the matter and enact laws "to ensure that the administration is not using and/or abusing the awesome powers of the presidency and its control over the military and the police to instill fear among critics."

"Proclamation No. 572 is apparently being used to silence Senator Trillanes, one of the strongest critics of President Duterte and his administration," the resolution read.

—With Robertzon Ramirez

Go questions Trillanes' *delicadeza*

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY - Special Assistant to the President Christopher Go yesterday turned the tables on Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, who accused him of having no *delicadeza* over alleged billions of pesos worth of government projects awarded to Go's family.

Go challenged Trillanes to prove that he influenced any office or official to grant projects to his relatives, who were engaged in the construction business even before he entered government service.

Go revealed that Trillanes' mother became a supplier of the Philippine Navy when the senator was still a soldier.

"Where is your *delicadeza*? You have no *delicadeza* at all," Go told Trillanes.

Go said he observes *delicadeza* when it comes to the business of his family.

He said when he became Duterte's aide, he never allowed his father, stepbrother

and other relatives to enter the Davao City Hall for 15 years.

Go said he never called anyone to favor the firms of his relatives for projects.

He welcomed the move of Trillanes to initiate a Senate investigation on the alleged billions worth of projects cornered by the CLTG Builders and Alfrego Builders owned by Go's family.

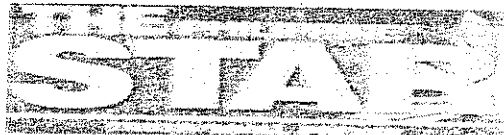
Go added he is ready to face Trillanes during a Senate inquiry.

The President's aide maintained that he has never been involved in corruption in the government.

Go said the attacks against him were "politically motivated."

He noted that CLTG Builders and Alfrego Builders were not even included in the list of top construction companies in Davao City.

Go reiterated that he has no plans of running for the Senate, adding the attacks against him are expected since he is the President's top aide.



'No delegation of amnesty grant by Noy'

By AUREA CALICA

Former president Benigno Aquino III did not delegate his power to grant amnesty to his then defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin, contrary to what President Duterte and

chief presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo claimed in their talk yesterday.

According to Aquino's spokesperson, lawyer Abigail Valte, the point being driven by Duterte and Panelo was that Aquino should have signed the certificate of amnesty himself.

"But amnesty is granted to a class of people, not individuals. It is pardon that is granted to individuals, that is why the President signs it," Valte said in a text message.

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No delegation From Page 1

"So once the President grants amnesty to that class of people, whoever he delegates the application process to is empowered to do so. The delegated authority is in the proclamation," referring to Proclamation No. 75 that granted amnesty to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, a former soldier who was charged and jailed for participating in the uprisings against then president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The task delegated was the determination of those who may be qualified among the applicants under the parameters of the amnesty given. It's not the grant of amnesty itself that was delegated," Valte said.

Duterte declared the amnesty void from the beginning in his Proclamation No. 572.

He did not say why Trillanes was selected from the list of those granted amnesty to be rearrested and subjected to court-martial once again.

Initially, government officials also said only his application for amnesty and admission of guilt were missing.

Earlier, Gazmin said that as far as he could remember, all those granted amnesty went through the process.

"I am getting in touch with the ad hoc committee so that facts can be refreshed as these happened many years ago," Gazmin said.

The amnesty given to Trillanes and others was concurred in by Congress and was declared legal by the Supreme Court. The lower courts also dismissed the cases against Trillanes following the amnesty given.

Trillanes has shown documents to prove that he filed for amnesty and admitted guilt to his offenses upon submitting his application.

Edwin Lacierda, former presidential spokesman of Aquino, said: "Let there be no argument. President Aquino in his personal and official capacity, granted amnesty to political offenders, which was concurred in by both Houses. That much is found in Proclamation No. 75 and that much is in compliance with the amnesty requirements under the 1987 Constitution."

Lacierda said the reference to Supreme Court decisions is a general statement, not a sui generis (class of its own) reference to the exercise of amnesty by the President.

He said the cited judicial precedents support the President's grant of amnesty as he personally and officially granted amnesty to the whole class of political offenders by issuing Proclamation No. 75.

"One should not warp constitutional statements to conceal a feeble foundation," he said.

He said government lawyers keep inventing and changing the legal basis for the revocation of Trillanes' amnesty.

"However, Proclamation No. 572 rests only on one legal basis: the absence of an application for amnesty. By changing the legal basis, the state impliedly admitted that Proclamation 572 is deficient. Without a shadow of a doubt, the government lawyers themselves just voided the President's own proclamation," Lacierda explained.

REBUTTAL OF DUTERTE'S LATEST ARGUMENT

AQUINO: IF MY AMNESTY GRANT IS WRONG, THOSE OF PAST PRESIDENTS ARE ALSO WRONG

By Malla Ager and Jeannette I. Andrade @Team_Inquirer

Former President Benigno Aquino III on Tuesday said that if the process he followed in granting amnesty to military rebel Antonio Trillanes IV in 2011 was invalid as Malacañang claimed, then all the amnesty grants by his predecessors were also invalid.

Aquino said he followed the amnesty process used by Presidents Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Rescind all

"If our grant of amnesty to Trillanes was wrong, then it follows that the grants by the other Presidents were also wrong because the process followed by everyone was the same," he said by phone.

If the Duterte administration wants to rescind the amnesty given to Trillanes, it must also rescind the amnesty grants by all the past Presidents, Aquino said.

"How many thousands are those?" he asked.

Aquino was commenting on Malacañang's claim that the amnesty granted to Trillanes was void because it was recommended and granted by his former defense secretary, Voltaire Gazmin.

President Duterte himself had said that granting amnesty was a sole prerogative of the President and it could not be delegated to other officials.

Aquino said he did not delegate his amnesty power to Gazmin.

"Proclamation No. 75 is the document that I signed," he said, referring to his 2010 amnesty proclamation con-



Benigno Aquino III

current in by Congress.

"I did not delegate. That is the practical way of carrying this program out, which is to assign a body to tackle the applications of specific individuals," he said.

If Malacañang wants to see a

document that he signed granting amnesty to Trillanes, it should look for amnesty grants signed by his mother, President Corazon Aquino, and Presidents Ramos, Estrada and Arroyo, he said.

'Gift' to Duterte

Former National Security Adviser Jose Almonte said on Tuesday that the scrapping of Trillanes' amnesty was apparently done in retaliation for the senator's fierce criticism of the Duterte administration: "Do unto others what they do unto you."

Almonte, national security adviser to Ramos, said the Golden Rule—do to others what you want others to do to you—was a gem. "But do not apply it the wrong way."

Trillanes is a gift to President Duterte, as he is proof that there is democracy in the Philippines, he said.

"We are a democracy. With-

in a democracy you have an opposition," he said

Almonte recalled that during martial law, President Ferdinand Marcos' Cabinet wanted to run after the opposition.

"What Marcos said was this: You know, we are a democracy. If we do not have an opposition, maybe we even have to organize one. Otherwise we will not have democracy," Almonte said.

"Trillanes is a gift to President Duterte because he is the only opposition," Almonte said.

Probe loss of application

Almonte said Trillanes should not be punished because his application for amnesty could not be found. *Ab*

"You investigate why they cannot find the original. That's not enough basis to the conclusion that there's no application," he said. —WITH A REPORT

FROM LEILA B. SALAVERRIA INQ

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SC won't issue TRO on voiding of Trillanes amnesty

By EDU PUNAY

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV has failed to secure relief from the Supreme Court (SC) in his bid to avoid arrest and prosecution on cases stemming from adventurism during his colorful military career.

The SC denied his plea for a temporary restraining order (TRO) or writ of preliminary injunction against the implementation of Proclamation No. 572 that voided the amnesty granted to him by the previous administration.

SC spokesperson Ma. Victoria Gleoresty Guerra said a majority of the SC justices present in regular session yesterday voted to dismiss the urgent prayer in the petition filed by the arch critic of President Duterte last week, which sought to annul the proclamation over alleged violations of the 1987 Constitution.

Guerra stressed that the SC did not see the urgency to act on

Trillanes' plea as it considered "categorical pronouncement of Duterte that Trillanes will not be apprehended, detained or taken into custody unless a warrant of arrest has been issued by the trial court."

"There is no extreme and urgent necessity for the Court to issue an injunctive relief, considering that the respondents have acknowledged Trillanes' right to due process. In fact, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has caused the filing of pertinent motions before the Makati regional trial courts," she pointed out.

The spokesperson said the SC also cited technical grounds in denying the senator's plea for TRO.

"Preliminarily, the issues of whether or not Trillanes filed an application for amnesty and whether or not he admitted his guilt for the crimes subject thereof appear to be factual in nature. Only a trial court (RTC), and in certain cases, the Court of Appeals, are trier of facts,"

she said.

"Hence, it is appropriate that the Makati RTCs should be given leeway in exercising their concurrent jurisdiction to head and resolve the pleadings/motions filed by the parties as regards the legality of Proclamation No. 572," Guerra added.

Guerra said the SC opted to allow the Makati RTCs handling the cases against Trillanes in connection with his participation in the Oakwood Premier mutiny in 2003 and The Peninsula Manila siege in 2007 to hear the motions filed by the DOJ seeking arrest of the senator and reopening of cases against him after the voiding of his amnesty.

Apart from denying Trillanes' TRO plea, the SC also ordered the respondents - Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Carlito Galvez

Jr. and Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Oscar Albayalde – to answer the petition and gave them 10 days to submit their comment.

This means the SC will still rule on the merits of the case.

Without the TRO from the SC on Proclamation No. 572, the scheduled hearings of Makati RTC Branch 148 on Trillanes' coup d'etat case and Branch 150 on his rebellion charge later this week will proceed.

Branch 148 is set to resolve the motion of DOJ prosecutors seeking the issuance of arrest warrant against Trillanes as well as a hold departure order (HDO) against him.

Branch 150, on the other hand, has already denied DOJ's motions for issuance of arrest warrant and HDO, but was still set to hear and decide whether or not to reopen the rebellion case against the senator.

The assailed order struck down Amnesty Proclamation No. 75 issued by former president Benigno Aquino III insofar as it absolved Trillanes of criminal liability in uprisings against former president and now Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The three-page proclamation, which took effect last Tuesday, specifically ordered the AFP and PNP to "apprehend" the opposition senator and recommit him in the deten-

tion facility where he had been incarcerated prior to the grant of amnesty in 2011.

It also directed the DOJ and the AFP Court Martial "to pursue all criminal and administrative cases" against Trillanes in relation to the Oakwood mutiny and Peninsula siege.

As this developed, the DOJ and Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) yesterday welcomed the decision of the SC.

In separate statements, Guevarra and Solicitor General Jose Calida lauded the SC for denying the prayer of Trillanes in his petition for issuance of TRO on Proclamation 572.

"There is really no extreme urgency to speak of, as the trial courts have set the DOJ's motions for alias warrant of arrest and HDO for hearing, thereby giving Trillanes an opportunity to be heard," Guevarra stressed.

The DOJ chief also saw the SC ruling as a vindication of their position that the coup d'etat and rebellion cases against Trillanes before the Makati RTCs branches 148 and 150, respectively, should proceed.

"The SC has also acknowledged the trial courts' continuing jurisdiction over the coup d'etat and rebellion cases, notwithstanding the alleged 'finality' of the orders of dismissal based on the grant of amnesty to Trillanes," Guevarra stressed.

"More importantly, the SC has recognized that the issue of validity of Proclamation No. 572 involves factual questions that only the trial courts may properly resolve," he added.

Calida, for his part, also im-

mediately welcomed the development.

"The OSG is elated that no less than the SC has acknowledged that Proclamation No. 572 afforded Trillanes due process. Hence, the SC found that 'there is no extreme and urgent necessity for the Court to issue injunctive relief,'" he stressed.

Calida also slammed Trillanes for his "baseless and inflammatory statements," which he said were "mere delusions of a grandiose man."

"We nurture the hope that Trillanes, no matter how remote the possibility, will finally man up and face the charges against him for unlawful actions he committed against the Filipino people," the top government lawyer stressed.

'SC has spoken'

The government can arrest Trillanes if it wants to because there is no more legal impediment to the voiding of his amnesty, Malacañang said yesterday.

"The SC has spoken. Trillanes has sought to restrain implementation of Presidential Proclamation No. 572, the SC denied the application for TRO. There is no legal impediment now to implement the (proclamation). He had his day in court and he failed," Roque said at a press briefing.

Asked if Trillanes would be arrested by the military or the police, Roque replied in Filipino: "That's not what I meant. But if they want to, they can... I'm not saying they will do it."

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Duterte said he has not read the SC decision on Trillanes' legal challenge to his proclamation but insisted that an amnesty is a personal act of the president.

"One of the glaring mistakes of the Aquino administration was to extend an amnesty. But the procedure was totally wrong in the sense that he just issued the proclamation, no particular names. It was a motherhood statement to cover the individual and any of the acts of the mutineers," the President said yesterday in an interview with chief presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo.

Duterte said Aquino had designated former defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin and a committee to look into the case of Trillanes. The committee then came up with a resolution granting Trillanes and other rebel soldiers amnesty.

"On that basis, Gazmin wrote to the president that they are recommending amnesty. Correct. There's no problem with that. The problem is after recommending, at the end of the narration, the narratives there, Gazmin signed the amnesty itself," Duterte said.

"You know, it is not possible to do that. Why? Because an act of pardon or amnesty is an act

of state. It cannot be delegated to anybody but to the person or the president himself," he added.

Duterte insisted that the Constitution exclusively grants to the President the power to pardon or to grant an amnesty.

"The action now taken against (Trillanes) by way of a criminal complaint is a very serious one, rebellion. Had it succeeded, it could have overthrown the government. So that an act of pardon, an act of amnesty is always an act of state which cannot be done by a mere Cabinet member, especially if that Cabinet member was the one or was one of those who investigated and made the recommendation and approved the recommendation

himself," he added.

Roque echoed the President's view, saying the power to grant amnesty, like the power to grant pardon, must be exercised by the President in person. He cited the case of Villena vs Secretary of Interior, a 1939 case reiterated in a 2009 case in Angeles vs Gaité. The court ruled that secretaries of departments exercise certain powers but the law cannot impair or in any way affect the constitutional power of control and direction of the President.

"The court further ruled that there are certain constitutional powers and prerogatives of the Chief Executive of the nation which must be exercised by him in person, and no amount of approval or ratifica-

tion will validate the exercise of any of those powers by any other person," the presidential spokesman added.

Panelo said Trillanes' fears of being arrested are baseless.

"The fact remains: there was no order to arrest him. From the very start, we have been saying that," the presidential legal counsel told CNN Philippines.

"I think logic and common sense will tell us that if the government filed a motion for the issuance of an alias warrant of arrest, it means that we need a warrant of arrest to effect the arrest of Trillanes - it's as simple as that. So the fear of Trillanes has no basis. That is precisely why the SC denied (his motion) - there is no basis for his fears," he added.

Duterte reiterated the denial that the voiding of Trillanes' amnesty was intended to silence those who are critical of him.

"I have yet to sign anything ordering the arrest and silence of anyone in this government, especially the critics," the President said.

"They (critics) are doing it

every day. I'm giving them the time of their lives to just talk and talk and talk," he said.

Duterte also denied being a dictator, saying he was only preserving the country and the next generation.

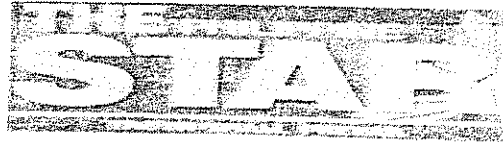
"You differentiate a dictator from the desire to protect your children," he added.

For his part, Año suggested that it should be Senate President Vicente Sotto III who would turn over Trillanes to police authorities in the event that a warrant of arrest is issued by the Makati RTC.

This would avoid commotion if police will serve an arrest warrant against Trillanes, Año said.

"We will follow the rule of law and due process," he said. "Everyone here is fair under the rule of law."

On reports of destabilization plots against the Duterte administration, Año said they are looking at all the information to ensure that no group would take advantage of the current political events. - With Alexis Romero, Emmanuel Tupas



Recto: Change priorities, not regimes

By PAOLO ROMERO

No need for regime change, only a refocusing of government priorities.

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto made the statement yesterday as he called on the Duterte administration to learn how to handle criticism as this helps government officials serve the people better.

"People should rally behind the President and let him finish a term he won fair and square. There is no need for a regime change, only a refocusing of government priorities. It must re-

pivot to the gut issues of jobs, prices, income," Recto said.

"Extremism in defense of one's position does not encourage productive civil discourse. When the message is blurred by a fit-for-tat of coarse language, the free exchange of ideas hampers democratic dialogue needed to forge public policy," he added.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) should maintain its allegiance to the Constitution and to the people amid the laws passed for the benefit of military personnel.

Lacson pointed out the measures providing for the AFP's modernization are the work of the Senate as an institution representing the people.

"More than who authored the bills, the members of the AFP can best show their appreciation by serving the country and the Filipino people," he said.

Lacson, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1971, said the passage of such laws benefiting the AFP is not just a matter of authoring bills, but also taking part in other stages, including holding committee hearings and sponsoring the measure.

Lacson cited the Revised AFP Modernization Act (Republic Act 10349),

which stemmed not only from the efforts of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, but Recto and himself as well.

He also presided over several committee hearings on the matter, along with Sen. Gregorio Honasan, a former rebel military officer.

The AFP, on the other hand, appealed for public calm amid reported sightings of armored personnel carriers in the streets and helicopters hovering over Metro Manila.

"There is no cause for alarm," AFP spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo said.

Arevalo gave assurance that movements of military vehicles are normal and "properly coordinated" without compromising operational security.

- With Jaime Laude

ONE-ON-ONE WITH PANELO

DUTERTE INSISTS TRILLANES AMNESTY NOT VALID

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

President Duterte reiterated on Tuesday that only the President could grant amnesty to military rebels and that the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV as a military mutineer in 2011 was invalid because it was signed not by then President Benigno Aquino III but by then Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin.

But nowhere in his Proclamation No. 572 is it stated that that is the reason for his voiding Trillanes' amnesty and ordering his arrest.

Instead, the proclamation says Trillanes did not apply for amnesty and did not admit his guilt in the failed military uprisings in 2003, 2006 and 2007 against then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Trillanes questioned the legality of Mr. Duterte's order in the Supreme Court and asked the tribunal to stop his arrest.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday declined to issue an order blocking the arrest of Trillanes

because Mr. Duterte had already publicly stated that he was not seeking the senator's arrest without a warrant.

But Mr. Duterte, in a televised discussion with his chief legal counsel, Salvador Panelo, did not say that Trillanes would not be arrested.

Trillanes, in a talk with reporters in the Senate, said Mr. Duterte's new argument involving Gazmin was false. (See related story on this page.)

Aquino proclamation

President Aquino issued Proclamation No. 75 in 2010 granting amnesty to military rebels who took part in the uprisings against Arroyo, the senator said.

The Department of National Defense only processed the applications and its approval of the applications was appealable to the Office of the President, he said.

In his discussion with Panelo, Mr. Duterte mentioned Trillanes' back-channel talks with the Chinese in Beijing at the height of the maritime standoff between China and the Philippines at Panatag Shoal in 2012.



President Duterte --TV GRAB

Mr. Duterte said China seized the shoal after Trillanes returned to Manila.

Trillanes countered that he had been cleared of charges related to his back-channel mission to Beijing.

He said charges thrown at him after the 2003 mutiny, including having secret houses, had all been dismissed.

'So insecure'

Trillanes said Mr. Duterte had become "so insecure" when

the President chided soldiers for siding with him and listed what he had done for them, including doubling their salaries.

He said nobody was competing with Mr. Duterte over benefits to the military.

The soldiers are loyal to the chain of command and the Constitution, he said.

Trillanes also blasted Mr. Duterte for dragging his mother into the controversy between them by saying she bagged military contracts.

He said his mother, who was afflicted with Parkinson's disease, had no case concerning military contracts.

Trillanes also denied Mr. Duterte's claim that Magdalo, an organization of former military officers that had become a party-list group, was colluding with communist insurgents to overthrow him.

Waste of public's time

Sen. Risa Hontiveros said Mr. Duterte wasted the people's time by taking to the air on Tuesday without offering solutions to the nation's many problems.

Malacañang earlier announced that Mr. Duterte would address the nation, but the address was canceled and instead Mr. Duterte and Panelo sat before the camera for a discussion that Hontiveros described as a "complete disappointment."

"Instead of presenting concrete measures to address the country's soaring inflation and rice crisis, President Duterte spent a good part of his 'tete-a-tete' with his legal adviser trying to justify his revocation of Sen. Antonio Trillanes' amnesty, discussing his paranoia over a so-called October destabilization plot and his bloody war on drugs," Hontiveros said.

"It exposes President Duterte's priorities: destroy the political opposition and silence dissent," she said.

"President Duterte should snap out of his fantasy with destabilization plots, roll up his sleeves and start working. Strong economic policies, not wild conspiracy theories, will address the country's rice crisis and untamed inflation," she said. INQ *MB*

ARREST THREAT

SENATOR STAYS PUT IN SENATE AFTER RULING OF HIGH COURT

By Leila B. Salaverria @LeilasINQ

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV on Tuesday said he would stay in the Senate building because of statements from Malacañang and information he received from the military that he would be arrested following the Supreme Court ruling.

Trillanes said he was also advised by his fellow senators from both the minority and the majority to remain in the Senate building.

He said he had a "direct engagement" with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and was told that the order to arrest him remained.

The Supreme Court recognized the military's statement that it was deferring court-martial proceedings against Trillanes until the courts could settle the controversy over the amnesty granted to the senator as a military rebel in 2011.

Trillanes said, however, that the military had not categorically said whether it would arrest him.

He also noted Malacañang's statement on Tuesday that the Supreme Court ruling meant there was no more legal impediment to the enforcement of Proclamation No. 572.

Earlier, Trillanes began considering going home after the ruling came down.

'Carefully worded decision'

The court showed "some semblance of independence" with its "carefully worded decision" that allowed the President to save face, he said.

Trillanes said the bottom line of his petition was to stop his arrest, and the government took back its order before the Supreme Court could hand down a decision.

The court mooted his petition for a preliminary injunction or a temporary restraining order, but the effect was still the same, he added.

Public commitment

Trillanes' lawyer Rey Robles said the Supreme Court ruling made it clear that there was a public commitment by the President not to have Trillanes arrested without a court-issued warrant.

"There were instances in the past that promises have been broken, things that were said were taken back. Sometimes they would say that it's a joke, that's why we chose not to allow Senator Trillanes to go home in the meantime. Now, it's the Supreme Court saying there is a public commitment. If they still defy this, it means nothing is respected in our country," Robles said.

It's not over

While grateful for the Supreme Court decision, Trillanes said his fight was far from over.

"This ordeal is not yet over by any stretch of the imagination. The Duterte administration is hell-bent on putting me away in whatever form. But nonetheless, I am very, very grateful to all those who have been with us physically here, those who spent a lot of time joining the vigil outside and those extending their prayers all over the world for my safety and the well-being of our democracy," he said. INQ

Duterte to military: Mount mutiny with Trillanes if you're dissatisfied with me

By GENALYN D. KABILING

President Duterte on Tuesday challenged the military to go with Senator Antonio Trillanes IV and mount a mutiny if they are no longer satisfied with his leadership.

The President said soldiers may join Trillanes if they think he was "not competent" to lead the country and the senator was the "brightest military man."

"Iyong kayong may nakita at nakita ninyong may gawa, may ginawa si Trillanes para sa inyo [If you see Trillanes has done something for you] go to him and stage a mutiny or revolution or whatever. You are free to do that. As a matter of fact, I am encouraging you parataposna," Duterte said over government television.

"Kung tingnan ninyo mga sundalo na mas mabuti si Trillanes pati si Aquino, please kindly go to them and stage whatever you want. Pakita mo sa buong Pilipinas na kaya ninyo [If the soldiers think Trillanes and Aquino are better, please kindly go to them and stage whatever you want. Show the Philippines that you can do it]," he added.

Duterte, however, frowned on any violent military overthrow of the government that would lead to the death of troops. He said he would not allow soldiers and policemen to kill one another.

"If the Armed Forces think that I am not competent, that I am not qualified to be sitting here as President, I have discussed this matter with them in a command conference. Bahala kayo (It's up to you)," he said.

"If you want another President, fine. I will not allow you to fight your own soldiers...I would not allow my soldiers to kill another soldier or a policeman shooting another soldier. Eh, kalokohan 'yan," he said.

The President issued the statement after warning of an alleged ouster plot by Trillanes, the Liberal Party, and the communist rebels against his administration. The power grab plot was reportedly being hatched in time for the martial law anniversary this month and switch to high gear on October.

Duterte said there was a "loose conspiracy" among these groups based on intelligence information provided by a foreign country. He said he would ask such communication information be "declassified" and shown to the public.

Duterte later cautioned the soldiers against forging an alliance with Magdalo, a group led by Trillanes in mounting failed military uprisings during the Arroyo administration.

"Ang sinasabi ko lang sa sundalo sa Republikang Pilipinas (I'm telling the soldiers of the Republic of the Philippines): Just be careful. Just be careful

na 'yung pagsabwatan niyo diyan sa Magdalo. Because - Magdalo is not all in agreement in membership to destabilize or overthrow the government," he said.

The President also maintained that unlike him, Trillanes has done nothing to improve the plight of soldiers. He said Trillanes did not even visit the government troops fighting terrorists in Marawi.

"Nandiyan kana sa gobyerno, anog-inawa mo? Anong ginawa mo maski konti na nakatulong sa sundalo (You are in government, what did you do? What have you done to help the soldiers)?" he asked Trillanes. "You never really cared for the poor soldier," he added.

In contrast to Trillanes, Duterte said he has implemented measures to promote the welfare of soldiers, including doubling their salary and upgrading their weapons and other equipment.

"I doubled the salary. I doubled it long before Marawi. It was a campaign promise and I complied," he said.

"Ako binigyan ko kayo lahat ng firearms. Kasi walang fixed bayonet ngayon. Lahat ng sundalo binigyan ko (I gave firearms to all soldiers. Fixed bayonet is already obsolete)," he added.

Duterte had earlier revoked the amnesty given to Trillanes for two coup attempts and ordered his prosecution and detention. 13

SC junks Trillanes's TRO plea

By **REY G. PANALIGAN**

The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday denied the plea of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV for the issuance of a temporary restraining order (TRO) that would stop the enforcement of President Duterte's Proclamation No. 572 which revoked the

senator's 2010 amnesty and ordered his arrest and detention.

Instead, the SC - during its full court session - decided to require the Executive Department, led by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, to comment on or answer within 10 days Trillanes's petition that

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SC junks Trillanes's TRO... ◀1

challenged the constitutionality of the proclamation.

In denying Trillanes's plea for a TRO or a preliminary injunctive relief, the SC took note "of the categorical pronouncement of President Duterte that Senator Trillanes will not be apprehended, detained or taken into custody unless a warrant of arrest has been issued by the trial court, and, thus, there is no extreme and urgent necessity for the Court to issue an injunctive relief considering that the respondents have acknowledged Senator Trillanes's right to due process."

"In fact, the DOJ (Department of Justice) has caused the filing of pertinent motions before the Makati regional trial courts (RTCs) and the Armed

Forces of the Philippines has assured that the court martial proceedings shall be held in abeyance pending resolution of the amnesty withdrawal," the SC also in its resolution.

The SC pointed out that "the issues of whether or not Senator Trillanes filed an application for amnesty and whether or not he admitted his guilt for the crime subject thereof appear to be factual in nature."

"Only a trial court, and in certain cases, the Court of Appeals, are the trier of facts. Hence, it is appropriate that the Makati RTCs should be given leeway in exercising their concurrent jurisdiction to hear and resolve the pleadings/motions filed by the parties as regards the legality of Proclamation

No. 572, Series of 2018," it stressed.

Earlier, the DOJ had filed a motion each before Makati RTCs Branch 148 and Branch 150 for the issuance of an arrest order and hold-departure order (HDO) against Trillanes.

But RTC Branch 148, where Trillanes' criminal case in connection with the 2003 Oakwood mutiny was litigated and later dismissed with the grant of amnesty in 2010, did not issue any order and opted to hear the side of the parties in a hearing set for September 13.

Also Branch 150, where Trillanes's cases related to the Peninsula Manila siege in 2007 was filed and subsequently dismissed, decided to conduct a hearing on September 14.

The dispositive portion of the SC resolution released by the High Court's public information office (PIO) states:

"WHEREFORE, the prayer for

the issuance of a writ of preliminary injunction and/or temporary restraining order of petitioner Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV is DENIED. Respondents are DIRECTED to FILE COMMENT thereon within ten (10) calendar days from notice."

Proclamation No. 572, which was issued last August 31, directed the AFP and the PNP "to employ all lawful means to apprehend former LTSG Antonio Trillanes IV so that he can be recommitted to the detention facility where he had been incarcerated for him to stand trial for the crimes he is charged with."

It also directed the DOJ and the courts martial of AFP "to pursue all

criminal and administrative cases filed against former LTSG Antonio Trillanes IV in relation to the Oakwood Mutiny and the Manila Peninsula Incident." It cited Trillanes's failure to apply for amnesty and to express guilt for the crimes he committed as reasons for the revocation of the amnesty granted him in 2010.

In his petition before the SC, Trillanes claimed that the proclamation which revoked his amnesty is null and void for violations of the Constitution.

Trillanes submitted documents which, he said, would prove that he met the requirements of amnesty specifically his formal application and admission of guilt on the crimes charged against him.

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■ DENIES FROM A1

High court

implementation of the Presidential Proclamation 572. The Supreme Court denied the application for TRO," he added.

Roque however noted that Duterte had previously decided to wait for the courts to issue a warrant for the arrest of the former Navy officer.

The Department of Justice (DoJ) had filed urgent requests for warrants of arrest and hold-departure orders against Trillanes before two Makati courts. The requests were denied, with Branch 150 of the Makati Regional Trial Court saying due process must be followed and Trillanes should be allowed to challenge

Roque said: "There is no legal impediment but the President has previously decided that he will await action of the regional trial court but I do not want to preempt the President on whatever position he may have now. But that was the last position of the President."

Asked if the military would arrest Trillanes after the ruling, Roque said in Filipino: "It is possible, but we are not saying it will be done now. There is no more impediment if they want to arrest Senator Trillanes but I'm not saying that will happen."

'Test case'

Trillanes on Tuesday described as an "initial victory and "test

case" the Supreme Court decision denying his petition to stop the implementation of Presidential Proclamation 572 revoking the amnesty granted to him in 2011.

"This is a test case and its initial decision was a welcome development because it was a show of their independence so far," the opposition senator said. "It was a carefully worded decision by the Supreme Court."

"They (Supreme Court associate justices) could have dismissed the petition altogether but they knew that we presented a strong case and the proclamation of Mr. Duterte was or is badly flawed. But nonetheless they gave him a face-saving way out," he said.

During deliberations on Tuesday, the high court ordered respondents Office of the President, Department of National Defense and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to comment on the petition within 10 days from notice.

The Office of the Solicitor General will represent the respondents.

Only nine justices participated in the deliberations, led by Chief Justice Teresita de Castro and the *ponente* of the case, Associate Justice Diosdado Peralta.

'No dictatorship' - Duterte

Duterte on Tuesday dismissed allegations that he was using his power to silence government critics, saying he was giving them "the time of their lives to just talk."

In a televised interview with Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo, Duterte said he

had yet to sign a fresh order to arrest Trillanes or silence his critics.

"The fact that they are doing it every day only goes to show that I am giving them the time of their lives to just talk and talk and talk," he added.

Duterte issued Proclamation 572 last week, revoking the Department of National Defense's resolution that granted amnesty to Trillanes in 2011.

The amnesty was declared *void ab initio* since the senator supposedly failed to comply with two requirements, namely application for amnesty and admission of guilt.

The President on Tuesday insisted that granting an amnesty to Trillanes was "totally wrong" as it was approved by former Defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin instead of then president Benigno Aquino 3rd.

"On Trillanes' case, it's just only two of them. Solicitor General Calida found something very wrong. If that's wrong, it's wrong. You cannot really correct it," Duterte said.

"Look, why? You know because the action now taken against him by way of a criminal complaint is a very serious one, rebellion. Had it succeeded, it could have overthrown the government. So that an act of pardon, an act of amnesty is always an act of state which cannot be done by a mere Cabinet member.

Before Trillanes, Sen. Leila de Lima, who was also critical of Duterte, was detained in February 2017 on drug-dealing charges.

WITH BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO AND JOMAR CANLAS

Defense chief denies giving papers to Calida

BY DEMPSEY REYES

DEFENSE Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Tuesday clarified that he was not the one who provided the amnesty documents of Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th to the Office of the Solicitor General.

In a text message to reporters, Lorenzana said he only told Solicitor General Jose Calida that the Department of National Defense (DND) possessed the amnesty records of Trillanes and his comrades from the Magdalo group of mutineers.

He said he also asked the military's Judge Advocate General Services to assist Calida in obtaining the documents in connection with Trillanes' amnesty application.

"The records that came out of DND were Proclamation 75 and

the amnesty documents signed by Secretary Gazmin," Lorenzana said, referring to his predecessor, former defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin.

Proclamation 75 was issued in late 2010 by then-President Benigno Aquino 3rd, granting amnesty to Trillanes and the rest of the Magdalo group involved in the Oakwood mutiny in 2003, the Marine headquarters standoff in 2006 and the Manila Peninsula siege in 2007.

Lorenzana also revealed that Calida's staff was able to obtain copies of Proclamation 75, an ad hoc committee's amnesty order signed by Gazmin, and a

certification stating that Trillanes' application for amnesty could not be found at Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

The defense chief said his department was contacting members of the ad hoc committee that granted Trillanes' amnesty in 2011.

"We will have to get from them what procedures were in place and where the applications were sent to. If it was filed, then it must be somewhere," Lorenzana said.

The Cabinet official earlier disclosed that Calida had called him directly for amnesty documents from the Armed Forces' deputy chief of staff for personnel or J1. A2

Opposition senators seek probe into proclamation

MINORITY senators on Tuesday sought an inquiry into the alleged "fraudulent and erroneous" basis of Proclamation 572, which revoked the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th in 2011.

They filed Resolution 887 directing the proper Senate committee to look into the matter "for the purpose of looking into possible remedial legislation to prevent possible abuse of presidential powers in the future.

The Senate minority bloc is composed of Senators Franklin Drilon, Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan, Paolo Benigno "Bam" Aquino 4th, Risa Hontiveros, Leila de Lima, and Trillanes. De Lima was detained at the Philippine National Police Custodial Center in February 2017 on drug charges.

They noted that on September 4, "The Manila Times published on its classified ads section a copy of Presidential Proclamation 572 signed by President Rodrigo Duterte on August 31, 2018 revoking the amnesty granted to then Lt. Senior Grade Antonio F. Trillanes."

The proclamation states that the amnesty granted to Trillanes during the Aquino administration was *void ad initio* or invalid from the beginning, since he failed to fulfil two essential requirements for the amnesty grant: application for amnesty and admission of guilt.

On September 8, the President confirmed that it was Solicitor General Jose Calida who did the research behind the revocation of Trillanes' amnesty.

"Coincidentally, on September 4 when the Proclamation 572 was publicized, it was also when Senator Trillanes was presiding over a committee hearing that tackled the conflict-of-interest case against Solicitor General Calida with regard to his security agency's multi-million contract with government agencies," the minority bloc said.

They said the proclamation

came a day after the Department of National Defense (DND) issued a certification stating that "there is no available copy" of the amnesty application of Trillanes. This was done despite the fact that, according to DND spokesman Arsenio Andolong, "[they] are still looking for it and have not yet exhausted efforts to finding the document."

"In the light of the foregoing, there is an imperative need to immediately look into this matter to ensure that the administration is not using and/or abusing the awesome powers of the presidency and its control over the military and the police to instill fear among the critics of the administration, and that all persons, regardless of their position in the society, are afforded of their basic human and legal rights, as enshrined in the 1987 Constitution and other pertinent laws of the Philippines and for the purpose of looking into possible remedial legislation to prevent and/or avert possible abuse of presidential powers in the future," the lawmakers said.

On November 24, 2010 former president Benigno Aquino 3rd issued Proclamation 75, which granted "amnesty to all active and former personnel of the Armed Forces and Philippine National Police (PNP), as well as their supporters, who have or may have committed crimes punishable under the Revised Penal Code, the Articles of War or other laws in connection with, in relation or incident to the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, 2006 Marines stand-off, and 2007 Manila Peninsula hotel siege, who will apply therefore." A2

The minority senators said that on January 5, 2011, on the basis of Proclamation 75, and with Congress concurring, Trillanes applied and submitted his amnesty application before the DND Ad Hoc Committee and swore to it before the administering officer.

BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO

■ PLOT FROM A1

Palace

"Ilong grupong Magdalo ay talaga namang iyan ang kanilang hobby, magpataksik ng gobyerno, bagama't hindi naman sila nagwawagi (This Magdalo group, their hobby is to overthrow a government but they never succeed)," Roque noted in an interview with GMA-7's Unang Hirit.

He made the statement after Duterte accused Trillanes of coalescing with the "yellows" or the Liberal Party (LP) and the communist rebels to remove him from the presidency by October.

But apparently, a military armored vehicle does not a destabilization plot make.

On Tuesday, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) downplayed a posted photo wherein the military armored vehicle was seen along Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa) where two popular revolts were launched, toppling two sitting presidents.

According to Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP spokesman, sighting such vehicle is part of "normal occurrences."

"We wish to categorically state that there were no such sizeable movements of military aircraft or armored vehicles," Arevalo said in a statement.

He added that all routine movements are properly coordinated, and such may happen any time of the day or night "especially in localities where there are military camps."

"Some [movements] are even announced to the public in so far as they will not compromise operational security. We urge the public to stay calm. There is no cause for alarm," Arevalo said.

He reminded the public to refrain from spreading rumors or conjectures, which he said would not help.

Meanwhile, a military source said the military armored vehicle spotted along Edsa was part of their "logistics run" and there was nothing to worry about. *W*

The source echoed Arevalo's statement that there was nothing to worry about.

He, however, declined to state

where the military vehicle was headed.

Trillanes and LP stalwarts have denied Duterte's allegation they were plotting his ouster, saying the President was merely paranoid.

Roque said Duterte had basis as he has access to information, which may have led him to conclude that his enemies were out to overthrow him.

"Iyong sinasabi lang ni Presidente, katotohanan na alam na ng mga Pilipino at ito po ay katotohanan na nakalap din ng Presidente sa mga intelligence reports na tanging siya lang ang nakakakita (What the President said is the truth that the Filipinos know, and the truth that the President gathered from intelligence reports that he alone sees)," he added.

Without mentioning names, the Palace official said "many" of the members of the LP cannot "move on" and accept Duterte as President.

"Hindi na rin sekreto na marami doon sa mga dilawan ang talagang hindi makapag-move on doon sa pagkatalo noong 2016. Marami sa kanila ayaw kilalanin ang ating Presidente (It's no secret that many of the yellows cannot move on from their loss in the 2016 elections. Many of them have refused to acknowledge our President)," Roque added.

"At syempre po, hindi naman nakakapagtaka na kung sila ay magkakaroon ng kasunduan, para nga dito sa pagpataksik kay Presidente (And of course, it cannot be denied that they have plans to oust the President)," he said.

Duterte, returning from his state visits to Israel and Jordan on Saturday, said the public should be wary of the LP, Trillanes and the communist rebels that are planning to remove him from office.

The President added that he received an intelligence report about the supposed ouster plot from "sources from a foreign power."

The LP has rejected Duterte's claim that it was plotting to kick him out from Malacanang with the help of the communist rebels and Trillanes.

**CATHERINE S. VALENTE
AND DEMPSEY REYES**

MALACANANG has named the Magdalo group led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th as among those that have connived to oust President Rodrigo Duterte from power.

In a television interview, Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said it was Magdalo's "hobby" to destabilize governments, referring to its role in alleged attempts to overthrow the Arroyo administration.

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'Get it over with. Oust me!'

Trillanes sympathetic to Duterte to join coup plotters

By Nat Mariano and Macon Ramos-Araneta

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte said Tuesday he has a record of conversations to prove a "loose conspiracy" to oust him, involving the opposition Liberal Party, Senator Antonio Trillanes IV and the communist rebels, and warned the Armed Forces of the Philippines against siding with them.

"We have the evidence and we have the conversation provided by a foreign country sympathetic to us," said Duterte as he addressed the nation with his live dialogue with Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo Tuesday afternoon.

"We do not have that sophistication, but the connection will be shown maybe any day now," said the President, emphasizing the groups were in contact with each other.

"I asked that it be declassified, and we will show it [to the public]," he said, adding it might be

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"loose conspiracy," but emphasized that the three groups are simultaneously planning it.

"This is my message to the Armed Forces: Just be careful. Just be careful of your connivance with the Magdalo [group of Trillanes]. Because Magdalo is not all in agreement to destabilize or overthrow the government," he said.

"I said my clear stand on the matter. If the Armed Forces think that I am not competent, that I am not qualified to be sitting here as President, I have discussed this matter with them in a command conference. You are on your own," he said.

"If you want another President, fine. I will not allow you to fight your own soldiers... I would not allow my soldiers to kill another soldier or a policeman shooting another soldier. That's crazy," he added.

He then called on the soldiers, who believe Trillanes fights for their welfare, to join the opposition senator.

"To those who see that Trillanes made a difference for your well-being, go to them and stage a mutiny or revolution. You are free to do that. As a matter of fact, I am encouraging you, so we could end

this," Duterte said. "I am challenging Magdalo to start now. If you think the soldiers are yours, it's fine. If the generals [think of the same], so be it. Let's show the Filipino people what you really want."

Duterte then hit Trillanes for not doing anything for the benefit of the soldiers.

"You were a mess. You committed a ruckus in Makati. You went to jail, cursed all the people in the government. Now that you have been pardoned by President Aquino, and you were in government, what have you done? What have you done, even in little ways, that helped the soldiers?" asked the President, criticizing the senator for not showing up as the soldiers sacrificed their lives during the Marawi siege.

"Did I ever have the occasion to see you there? You were not there. Your group is only for sympathy. But you never really cared for the poor soldier," the President said.

In his arrival speech on Saturday morning, Duterte said Trillanes, LP, and the Communist Party of the Philippines are "praying" for his ouster.

Duterte warned the public to closely watch the three groups as they have been plotting his ouster.

Magdalo Party-list Rep. Gary Alejano on Tuesday denied that Magdalo is involved in any oust plot against the President.

"The Magdalo is performing its mandate as members of the opposition under the check and balance system of our democratic government. The essence of this is to strengthen democracy and not to destabilize it. Further, since the onset of the Duterte administration, the actions of Magdalo have shown respect of the Constitution and the legal processes it provides," Alejano, a staunch Duterte critic and a former coup leader, said.

"We continue to trust our government in-

stitutions despite being abused right now by certain leaders in order to advance their own interests," Alejano added.

He also dismissed the allegation that the Magdalo is behind the destabilization against the President and his administration, saying it was merely a product of the administration's paranoia.

"This is only meant to divert the attention of the people from the present economic woes they themselves have failed to address. If there is someone destabilizing the present government, they should not look beyond themselves for they are ones destabilizing it," Alejano said.

Senator Panfilo Lacson, meanwhile, said members of the AFP should maintain their allegiance to the Constitution and the people.

"More than who authored the bills, the members of the AFP can best show their appreciation by serving the country and the Filipino people," said Lacson, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1971.

Besides, he said the passage of such laws benefiting the AFP is not just a matter of authoring bills, but also taking part in other stages, including holding committee hearings and sponsoring the measure.

Lacson cited the Revised AFP Modernization Act (Republic Act 10349), which stemmed not only of the efforts of Trillanes, but of Senator Ralph Recto and himself.

Aside from authoring the bill that was consolidated into the measure, Lacson also delivered the sponsorship speech for the measure and defended it on the Senate floor.

Palace files SC ruling to void amnesty order

By Nat Mariano, Rey E. Requejo and Macon Ramos-Araneta

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Tuesday insisted that a President cannot delegate the power to grant amnesty to a Cabinet official, and that the amnesty granted to Senator Antonio Trillanes IV in 2011 was invalid because it was signed by

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then Defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin.

"An act of pardon or amnesty is an act of the State which cannot be done by a mere Cabinet member," said Duterte in a tête-à-tête with Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo.

At the time, President Benigno Aquino III designated Gazmin to form a committee to determine if Trillanes and others who had taken part in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny should be granted an amnesty.

"And that committee came up with the resolution to grant amnesty... The problem is after recommending, Gazmin signed the amnesty itself," Duterte said.

Panelo said based on existing jurisprudence, in particular the decision of former Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban in the case of Constantino vs Cuisia, there are certain powers vested in the President that cannot be delegated to an alter-ego.

"There are certain presidential powers which arise out of exceptional circumstances, and if exercised, would involve the suspension of fundamental freedoms, or at least call for the superseding of executive prerogatives over those exercised by co-equal branches of government," Panelo said, quoting Panganiban's decision.

Duterte said the criminal complaint of rebellion against Trillanes was "very serious."

"So... an act of amnesty is always an act of state that cannot be done by a mere Cabinet member. Especially, if that Cabinet member was one of those who investigated and approved the recommendation," Duterte said.

While Aquino was within his rights to authorize Gazmin to investigate the case, it was wrong to let him sign the amnesty, he said.

"To authorize him to investigate, I will concede to that. But the act of granting amnesty with Gazmin and Congress concurring, it's just baffling. I don't know how to reconcile it," Duterte said.

Trillanes taunted Duterte, saying the President seemed obsessed with him, mentioning his name more than 100 times in his tête-à-tête.

To counter the President's assertion, he showed reporters a two-page copy of his amnesty bearing President Aquino's signature.

Trillanes also hit Duterte for casting aspersions on his mother for alleged deals with the Navy.

"I can't understand why he would drag my parents in this fight. Stick with me, Mr. Duterte," he said.

He denied any impropriety in his mother's dealings.

"They raised me properly. Maybe if they were corrupt, I would be too, but I'm not," he said in Filipino.

Trillanes also criticized the President for comparing what he had done for the military as the Chief Executive, as against what he as a senator had done.

The Palace earlier hit back at former presidential spokesman Edwin Lacierda for defending Gazmin's involvement as a "lawful act" of a government official.

In a press briefing, Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque cited the 1939 case of Villena v. Secretary of the Interior, where the court ruled that there are certain constitutional powers and prerogatives that must only be exercised by the Chief Executive of the nation in person.

"No amount of approval or ratification will validate the exercise of any of those powers by any other person," said Roque.

"The power to grant amnesty, like the power to grant pardon, must be exercised by the President in person," he said.

On Saturday, Lacierda said Gazmin's role was purely administrative, and that there was nothing irregular in his signature on Trillanes' amnesty.

On Tuesday, the Supreme Court denied Trillanes' plea for a temporary restraining order to prevent his arrest, saying it was unnecessary.

The Court took judicial notice of President Duterte's categorical pronouncement that the senator would not be arrested, unless a warrant of arrest has been issued by a trial court.

Nonetheless, the Court ordered respondents

from the executive department to file their comment on Trillanes' petition within 10 days.

Newly designated SC spokesman Gleoresty Guerra said the Court did not see the urgency to act on Trillanes' petition as it considered the President's "categorical pronouncement... that Senator Trillanes will not be apprehended, detained or taken into custody unless a warrant of arrest has been issued by the trial court."

The order for respondents to comment on Trillanes' plea means the Court will still rule on the merits of the case.

The Supreme Court ruling also means two Makati courts hearing the coup cases against Trillanes may proceed.

Makati regional trial court Branch 148 is set to resolve the motion of Justice Department prosecutors seeking the issuance of an arrest warrant against Trillanes for continuation of promulgation of the case against him and also issuance of a hold departure order against him. The trial court earlier deferred acting on the motion until the Supreme Court had decided on the plea for a TRO.

Branch 150, on the other hand, has already denied the DoJ's motions for the issuance of an arrest warrant and an HDO, but still set a hearing to decide whether or not to reopen the rebellion case.

Duterte's Proclamation 572 nullified Amnesty Proclamation No. 75 issued by Aquino to absolve Trillanes of criminal liability in staging failed coup d'états against former President and now House Speaker Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Duterte's proclamation declared "void ab initio" (from the start) the grant of amnesty to Trillanes for his supposed failure to file the official amnesty application form and expressly admit his guilt for the crimes he committed.

Trillanes said the Supreme Court decision enabled Duterte to save face, but noted that the justices did not deny his petition outright, and instead asked government lawyers to comment on it.

In a media briefing, Trillanes described the "carefully worded" SC decision as "an initial victory."

Trillanes: SC showed 'some semblance of independence'

BY JP LOPEZ AND JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

WHILE he did not get immediate relief from the Supreme Court, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV yesterday welcomed the tribunal's decision on his petition questioning the constitutionality of Proclamation 572 which nullified the amnesty granted to him by the previous administration.

"This is a test case. The initial decision was a welcome development because it was also a show of their independence, so far," Trillanes told reporters in a press briefing outside his Senate office minutes after hearing the SC decision.

"It was so carefully worded decision by the SC. We are grateful that they showed some semblance of independence. They could have outrightly dismissed the petition altogether," he also said.

Trillanes said that prior to the decision, the SC has been under

heavy suspicion of being partial in favor of Duterte.

Meanwhile, Trillanes' colleagues in the minority bloc urged the Senate to look into the "fraudulent and erroneous" basis of Proclamation 572.

In Senate Resolution 887, Senators Franklin Drilon, Francis Pangilinan, Paolo Benigno Aquino IV, Leila de Lima, and Risa Montiveros said they hope an investigation will result in possible legislation that will "prevent possible abuse of presidential powers."

President Duterte, who signed Proclamation 572 on August 31, said former Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin signed the order granting Trillanes amnesty to "protect" then President Benigno Aquino III.

He made the statement dur-

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TRILLANES

ing a televised tête-à-tête with Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo in Malacañang, but did not say why Aquino needed to be protected.

He has been saying it should be Aquino himself who should have signed the amnesty grant.

He also said he has yet to read the SC decision.

The Supreme Court yesterday denied Trillanes' plea for the issuance of a temporary restraining order or an injunction against Duterte's proclamation which also ordered Trillanes' arrest. The tribunal noted Duterte's "categorical pronouncement" that the opposition senator will not be apprehended, detained or taken into custody unless a warrant of arrest has been issued by the trial courts. It also said there was no "extreme and urgent" need

to issue an injunctive relief because Duterte and the other respondents have acknowledged Trillanes' right to due process.

Trillanes said his camp will coordinate with the Armed Forces and the PNP to ensure they have the same interpretation of the SC decision.

If the PNP or the AFP would insist on arresting him, Trillanes said they may be cited in contempt by the SC. Nevertheless, he said, he will not resist.

He said he is ready to go home after taking a week-long refuge at the Senate building because of the threat of being arrested.

"We can do it tonight (Tuesday) or tomorrow (Wednesday)," he said.

On the SC decision passing the factual side of his petition to the Makati courts, he said it "gives us more space to summon the witnesses and subpoena the documents that they have."

Duterte maintained that only the President can exercise the power of granting amnesty, which he said is like granting pardon which is an exercise of a power of the state.

Duterte added this made the grant of amnesty to Trillanes "one of the glaring mistakes of the Aquino administration."

"The procedure was totally wrong in the sense that he (Aquino) just issued the proclamation, no particular names, it was a motherhood statement to cover the individual and any of the acts of the mutineers. Ang problema niyan, he designated Gazmin to investigate and there was a committee. And that committee came up with the resolution to grant amnesty. On that basis, Gazmin wrote to the President that they are recommending amnesty... after recommending, at the end of the narration, the narratives

there, Gazmin signed the amnesty itself," he said.

He said Gazmin's approval and signing of the amnesty was wrong "because an act of pardon or amnesty is an act of state. It cannot be delegated to anybody but to the person or the president himself."

Panelo and presidential spokesman Harry Roque echoed the President's stand, saying the Supreme Court, in previous rulings, has said certain powers of the President cannot be delegated.

Defense Secretary Deifin Lorenzana said the defense department has Trillanes' amnesty records, except for the application form the senator signed in January 2011.

Lorenzana said copy of the documents were given to a staff of the Office of the Solicitor General on August 17, a day after Solicitor General Jose Calida requested for docu-

ments relating to Trillanes' amnesty.

"The records that came out of DND were Proclamation 75 and the amnesty documents signed by Secretary Gazmin. These were the records that the office of solgen got from us," said Lorenzana.

Proclamation 75 was issued by Aquino in November 2010, granting amnesty to those involved in plots to overthrow the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

It was Gazmin who approved the recommendation of a DND-AFP ad hoc committee that processed Trillanes' application. He also issued a certificate of amnesty to Trillanes and to the other grantees.

"Later, the GHQ (general headquarters of the AFP) issued a certification to the Solgen that the application for amnesty by Senator Trillanes cannot be found... Trillanes' application for am-

nesty cannot be found at DND or GHQ," he said.

Asked why Trillanes was given a certificate for amnesty when there is no record that he applied, Lorenzana said the DND is coordinating with members of the ad hoc committee, chaired by then DND undersecretary Honono Azcueta.

"We are talking to the members of the ad hoc committee and will get from them what procedures were in place and where the applications were sent to," said Lorenzana.

"If it (amnesty application) was filed, then it must be somewhere," he added Lorenzana.

Members of the media covered Trillanes when he and other members of the Magdalo Group which staged the 2003 Oakwood mutiny went to the AFP general headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo to file their application for amnesty. — *With Victor Reyes*

Military appeals for calm

**BY VICTOR REYES
AND JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR**

THE Armed Forces yesterday appealed for calm amid efforts by some quarters to sow disinformation, referring to reports on the supposed presence of battle tanks on EDSA, while President Duterte told soldiers sympathetic to former President Benigno Aquino III and opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV they are free to stage a mutiny, a destabilization move, or any plot to oust him. AFP spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo said the military is asking

the public to stay calm. "There is no cause for alarm," he said. Arevalo made the statement after the alleged sighting of tanks on EDSA on Monday. A picture of one of the tanks was posted on the internet. Arevalo said he did not see the posting. He did not categorically deny the movement of the tanks on Monday but said there have been instances when people post old pictures to sow confusion. "With this goes our appeal to the public to stop spreading rumors

or conjectures. They don't help. They tend to sow misinformation, confusion, and worst, panic. The public should be wary of persons or groups who maliciously spread such rumors," said Arevalo. Arevalo said he has also received questions about sightings of helicopters and declaration of red alert status. The military declared a red alert when Duterte left to visit Israel and Jordan on September 2. It continues to be on red alert. "We wish to categorically state

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that there were no such sizable movements of military aircraft or armored vehicles. And even if there were any in the past or in the future, those were or will be routine movements that are properly coordinated," said Arevalo.

"These transportations may happen any time of the day or night especially in localities where there are military camps. Some are even announced to the public in so far as they will not compromise operational security," he added.

A video also spread on the internet showing an armored personnel carrier, named San Marcelino, passing EDSA on Monday morning.

A source confirmed the movement of the APC but said it is "just an ordinary logistics run."

He declined to give details, invoking "operational security" but said "there is nothing to worry about."

President Duterte has said Sen.

Antonio Trillanes IV and the political opposition are conniving with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army to oust him.

In a televised conversation yesterday with chief presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo, Duterte repeatedly said the soldiers are free to support Trillanes while at the same time mentioning some of the things that he had done for the uniformed service, like doubling of their salaries, release of millions of funds for their health services, and visiting troops in Marawi City.

Duterte also said he received information, along with a recording of a conversation, from a "foreign country sympathetic to us" about the connivance of Trillanes' group and the communist group.

Duterte said the "connection will be shown, maybe any day now."

It was not the first time that Duterte claimed a foreign country has given him information about his detractors. — *With Reuters*

Trillanes fails to get relief from SC

Court sees 'no extreme, urgent necessity' to issue injunction

BY ASHZEL HACHERO

OPPOSITION Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV failed to get relief from the Supreme Court yesterday as the tribunal denied his petition seeking to stop the implementation of Proclamation 572 which nullified the amnesty granted to him by the previous administration.

Proclamation 572, signed by President Duterte on August 31, also ordered Trillanes' arrest with the voiding of his amnesty for "failure to apply for amnesty and refusal to admit his guilt."

Trillanes, a former Navy lieutenant, was involved in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny against the administration of then President, now

Speaker Gloria Arroyo, and in the 2007 Manila Peninsula takeover.

The Supreme Court, in denying Trillanes' plea for the issuance of an injunction, said it took judicial notice of President Duterte's "categorical pronouncement" that Trillanes will not be apprehended, detained or taken into custody unless a warrant of arrest has been issued by the trial courts.

Thus, it said, "there is no extreme and urgent necessity for the Court to issue an injunctive relief considering that the respondents have acknowledged Senator Trillanes' right to due process."

The SC also noted the Department of Justice has filed motions seeking an arrest warrant before

two branches of the Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC), and the Armed Forces has given assurances that court martial proceedings will be held in abeyance pending resolution of the case filed by Trillanes last week questioning the validity of Proclamation 572.

The high court said the question of whether Trillanes has complied with the requirements to qualify for an amnesty or not is factual in nature, and that the trial court should be given the opportunity to hear the case.

"Preliminarily, the issues of whether or not Senator Trillanes filed an application for amnesty and whether or not he admitted his guilt for the crimes subject thereof appear

to be factual in nature. Only a trial court, and in certain cases, the Court of Appeals, are trier of facts. Hence, it is appropriate that the Makati RTCs should be given leeway in exercising their concurrent jurisdiction to hear and resolve the pleadings/motions filed by the parties as regards the legality of Proclamation No. 572, Series of 2018," it said.

The justice department is asking Makati RTC Branch 148 and Branch 150 to issue an arrest warrant and hold departure order against Trillanes.

The courts have set hearings for the DOJ petitions on Thursday and Friday to give Trillanes the

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opportunity to air his side.

Branch 148 is handling the coup d'état case against Trillanes in connection with the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and Branch 150, the Manila Peninsula incident.

Both courts dismissed the charges in 2011.

The SC directed respondents Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Defense Secretary Delin Lorenzana, Interior Department officer-in-charge Eduardo Año, Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra, AFP chief Gen. Carlito Galvez, and PNP chief Oscar Albayalde to file their comments on Trillanes' petition within 10 days from notice.

Trillanes, in the petition filed on September 6, asked the court to declare Proclamation 572 "null

and void an initio" for being contrary to "jurisprudence, the law and the 1987 Constitution."

Trillanes cited the 2011 dismissal of the coup and rebellion cases against him, noting the prosecution did not contest the dismissal.

As to the court martial proceedings against him, Trillanes said he is considered resigned from the military when he filed his candidacy for senator in 2007.

Trillanes said the only reason for the nullification of his amnesty was that he earned Duterte's ire for opposing his policies.

Both courts dismissed the charges in 2011 records showed though Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra contends that the nullification of the amnesty stripped the junking of the said cases.

Guevarra said the Supreme Court's decision showed it ac-

knowledges the trial courts' continuing jurisdiction over the coup and rebellion cases.

"The DOJ is very happy to know that the Supreme Court has denied Sen.

Trillanes' application for a restraining order since there is really no extreme urgency to speak of, as the trial courts have set the DOJ's motions for alias warrant of arrest and hold departure order for hearing, thereby giving Senator Trillanes an opportunity to be heard," Guevarra said.

He also said the decision showed that the SC recognizes that the issue of validity of President Duterte's order revoking the amnesty of Trillanes involves factual questions that only the trial courts may properly resolve.

"In the process, the Supreme Court has also acknowledged

the trial court's continuing jurisdiction over the coup d'état and rebellion cases, notwithstanding the alleged finality of the orders of dismissal based on the grant of amnesty to Senator Trillanes," he said.

Solicitor General Jose Calida also lauded the SC's decision, and said it is time for Trillanes to "man up" and face the cases against him before the trial courts.

Calida initially denied he initiated the probe on Trillanes' amnesty application but Duterte said it was Calida who recommended to the voiding of the amnesty.

Trillanes has said Calida's move was linked to his effort to stop the Senate investigation on the multi-million-peso contracts of the security agency of Calida's family with various government agencies since 2016.

Foreign sleuths reveal 'putsch'

Duterte: Information valid, confirmed

If you think that Trillanes has done something good to you, then go to them, stage a mutiny or revolution or whatever

By Kristina Maralit and Elmer Manuel

Challenging soldiers to unseat him if he is wrong, President Rodrigo Duterte yesterday confirmed threats of destabilization from three fronts based on shared intelligence

from a foreign agency.

In a one-on-one with Chief Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo, the Chief Executive claimed receiving validated information from a foreign intelligence group confirming threats to destabilize government, including efforts to launch a putsch.

You are free to do that. As a matter of fact, I'm encouraging you, so that this can end.

But President Duterte dared soldiers to "go on and remove" him if they find him wrong

or risk sympathizing with the trio of his political foes in the exiled Maoist communist leader Jose Maria Sison, the Magdalo group of embattled Sen. Antonio Trillanes and other people who have been unhappy with his ascent to power since the May

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2016 polls, particularly members of the Liberal Party.

Duterte said they are reportedly combining efforts to overthrow the government.

"Sison, Magdalo, even those who dislike me and really never accepted me since the election, they have combined. I have evidence," Duterte said.

"I have the

conversation provided by a foreign country sympathetic to us. We don't have that sophistication," the President stated without naming his source of information.

But Mr. Duterte said he had asked his source if he could reveal the contents of the information relayed to him.

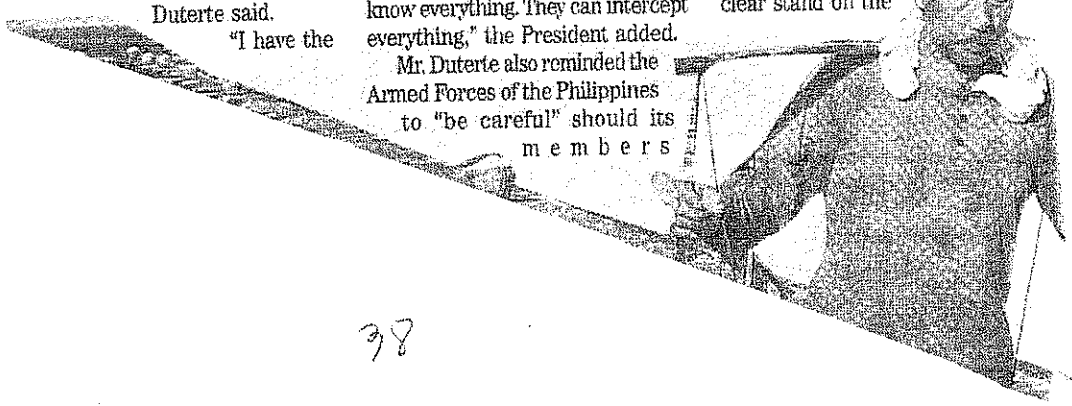
"I asked that it be declassified and be shown to everyone. They know everything. They can intercept everything," the President added.

Mr. Duterte also reminded the Armed Forces of the Philippines to "be careful" should its members

entertain plans of conniving with the Magdalo and Trillanes in the alleged ouster plots against him.

"It might be loose conspiracy, but they are into it. What I want to tell the soldiers of the Republic of the Philippines: Just be careful. Just be careful in dealing with the Magdalo," the President warned.

"I have said my clear stand on the



matter. If the Armed Forces think that I am not competent, that I am not qualified to be sitting here as President, if you want another President, fine. If you believe in Trillanes and that he can provide what you need, go with them. I urge you to go with Trillanes," Mr. Duterte added.

Trillanes and the Magdalo soldiers were involved in three failed uprisings against former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in 2003, 2006 and 2007. They were granted amnesty by former President Benigno Aquino III in 2011.

But President Duterte, through Proclamation 572, revoked the amnesty granted to Trillanes last 31 August for his alleged non-compliance with all the requirements.

Despite the warning, the President challenged Magdalo and other

would-be conspirators to go ahead with their plan to overthrow the government.

Duterte dared soldiers to 'go on and remove' him if they find him wrong or risk sympathizing with the trio of his political foes in the exiled Maoist communist leader Jose Maria Sison, the Magdalo group of embattled Sen. Antonio Trillanes and other people who have been unhappy with his ascent to power.

"If you are sure that the military is with you, then fine," said Duterte, referring to his alleged destabilizers. "To the generals, if you want to join, then go ahead."

"If you think that Trillanes has done something good to you, then go to them, stage a mutiny or revolution or whatever," Duterte added. "You are free to do that. As a matter of fact, I'm encouraging you, so that this can end."

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana earlier had announced

the presence of a plot to remove the President. But Lorenzana's statement said the plot is coming from the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army.

Lorenzana said then that the alleged involvement of the "yellows" or pro-Aquino groups and the camp of opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV had yet to be verified.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) also said it is still verifying the information although PNP chief Director General Oscar Albayalde stressed that the President has unlimited sources of information and since it directly came from the Chief Executive, it should be taken seriously.

Duterte had said in recent interviews that he preferred a military junta or politicians like former Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. and Sen. Francis Escudero to succeed him instead of Vice-President Leni Robredo whom he deemed incompetent to take on the job.

The Palace, meanwhile, said Duterte might step down from the presidency if Bongbong Marcos wins his electoral protest.

Sonny storm still brewing

By Alvin Murcia

Sen. Antonio Trillanes views as victory the denial of his request for a temporary restraining order (TRO) against President Rodrigo Duterte's voiding of his amnesty for plotting two putsches but for which he has the Chief Executive

to thank for holding his arrest pending other motions related to Proclamation 572.

It's not a triumph for Trillanes, though, as the Supreme Court (SC) in a majority vote junked the lawmaker's plea for a TRO against the revocation of his amnesty by former President

Benigno Simeon "Noynoy" Aquino III.

Lawyer Maria Victoria Gleoresty Guerra, Supreme Court spokesperson, announced the SC decision at a press conference Tuesday afternoon.

"The Court resolved to deny petitioner Senator Trillanes'

prayer for the issuance of a writ of preliminary injunction and/or temporary restraining order," the order stated.

The High Court said there was no need for a TRO as President Duterte guaranteed that the opposition senator will not be

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arrested unless an arrest warrant has been issued by a trial court.

Considering that the respondents have acknowledged Senator Trillanes' right to due process, there is no extreme and urgent necessity to issue an injunctive relief, the SC said.

It further stated that the trial courts will determine the facts of the cases against the senator, who remains on the fence whether to leave or stay at the Senate building despite the absence of an arrest warrant against him.

The SC said it is appropriate that the Makati RTC (Regional Trial Court) should be given leeway in exercising jurisdiction to hear and resolve the pleadings/motions filed by the parties as regards the legality of Proclamation 572.

An urgent *ex parte* motion to issue an alias warrant of arrest and hold departure order was filed by the Department of Justice (DoJ) after Duterte issued Proclamation 572, declaring as "void ab initio" or void from the start, the amnesty granted to Trillanes for failing to comply with the requirements.

Separate motions were also filed by the DoJ before Makati RTC Branches 148 and 150 seeking

arrest warrants and HDO against Trillanes.

Branch 148 is handling the coup d' etat case against Trillanes concerning the Oakwood mutiny while Branch 150 is handling the rebellion case against the senator over the Manila Peninsula siege.

Judge Andres Soriano of Branch 148 and Branch 150 Judge Elmo Alamedo have set separate hearings on the DoJ's motion on Thursday and Friday, respectively.

Ten days were given by the SC to the respondents to submit comments.

Duterte on 31 August said Trillanes has no pending application for amnesty granted to all active and former personnel of the AFP and supporters who joined the July 2008 Oakwood Mutiny, the February 2006 Marines stand-off and the November 2007 Manila Peninsula incident. It voided the amnesty extended to him by former President Benigno Aquino III through Proclamation 75 issued in November 2010.

Trillanes is seeking relief through a 36-page petition for certiorari prohibition and injunction questioning the legality of the proclamation.

Named as respondents in the petition were Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Justice

Secretary Menardo Guevarra, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Carlito G. Galvez, Interior Secretary Eduardo Año, Philippine National Police chief Director General Oscar Albayalde and Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Chief Police Director Roel Obusan.

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra welcomed the High Court's decision, saying the DoJ is happy to know that the SC denied Trillanes' TRO.

The High Court said there was no need for a TRO as President Duterte guaranteed that the opposition senator will not be arrested unless an arrest warrant has been issued by a trial court.

"More significantly, the Supreme Court has recognized that the issue of validity of Proclamation 752 involves factual questions that only the trial courts may properly resolve. In the process, the Supreme Court has also acknowledged the trial courts' continuing jurisdiction over the coup d' etat and rebellion cases, notwithstanding the alleged 'finality' of the orders of dismissal

based on the grant of amnesty to Sen. Trillanes," Guevarra explained.

Putting a brave face, Trillanes claimed victory following the SC denial of his request for TRO.

"This is a test case. The initial (SC) decision was a welcome development because it was also a show of their independence, so far," Trillanes said.

"It was so carefully worded... protect my rights and the rights of similarly situated individuals in the future. The SC stood up," he added.

Trillanes said that prior to the decision, the SC has been under heavy suspicions of being partial to Duterte.

"They showed some semblance of independence...they could have dismissed it outrightly," Trillanes said.

His lawyer, Rey Robles, said they are "gratified" by the SC decision. "It could have been worse," he said.

Trillanes said his camp will closely coordinate with the AFP and PNP to ensure that they have the same interpretation of the SC decision that prevents his arrest.

"We're closely coordinating with the AFP to make sure that they have correct reading (of the decision) as that of our lawyer. So that there will be no miscommunication," Trillanes said.

He added he is now ready to go home after taking a week-long refuge in office at the Senate building to avoid arrest.

"We can do it tonight (Tuesday) or tomorrow (Wednesday)," Trillanes said.

Meanwhile, the Palace expressed confidence that there is no more legal impediment to completely implement Proclamation 572 after the SC action.

"The Supreme Court has spoken. Senator Trillanes has sought to restrain implementation of the Presidential Proclamation 572. The SC denied the application for a TRO. There is no legal impediment now to implement Proclamation 572, he had his day in court and he failed," presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said.

While no arrest warrant was issued, Roque reiterated the President's orders not to arrest Trillanes.

"It doesn't automatically follow that Senator Trillanes will be arrested. But if it is desired, it can be done. But I'm not saying it will happen even if there's no more legal impediment to arrest him. But the President has already declared that no arrest will be done unless the courts have decided. A warrant of arrest must be issued by the Regional Trial Court," Roque said.

Militar sa destab, 'rumor' lang—DND chief

Wala umanong katotohanan ang mga kumalat na ulat hinggil sa umano'y destabilization plot ng ilang aktibong miyembro ng militar laban sa pamahalaan, bilang pagpanig kay Senador Antonio Trillanes IV.

Itinanggi rin ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana sa isang press briefing sa Camp Aguinaldo na hati ang militar dahil sa umano'y kasalukuyang sitwasyon ng pulitika sa bansa.

"No, I don't think so. That is just a rumor. May gumagawa ng storya na ganyan na marami nang disgruntled na active military pero wala naman kaming nakikita eh," pahayag ni Lorenzana.

Naniniwala ang kalihim na mataas ang moral ng mga sundalo.

"Matataas na ang suweldo nila, nadoble. Di mataas ang morale niyan, di ba," ani Lorenzana.

Ayon pa kay Lorenzana, kung may lalabas man na balita tungkol sa destabilization, ito umano ay galing sa Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA).

"Meron sila kasing oust Duterte, eh, na ipinapaano nila 'yan sa mga galamay nila. Now I don't know if sasakyan yan ng ibang grupo, we do not know," sabi pa ni Lorenzana.

Francis T. Wakefield

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CONTRASTING MOODS

PROTEST AT LIBINGAN, MASS IN SARRAT MARK MARCOS' 101ST BIRTHDAY

By Leilanie Adriano and Matthew Reysio-Cruz @Team_Inquirer

Two contrasting moods marked the 101st birthday of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos on Tuesday.

Dozens descended on his resting place at Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City, bearing not flowers and well-wishes but scathing placards and righteous indignation.

Hundreds of kilometers to the north, the mood in Ilocos Norte province was solemn and quiet, unlike the lavish celebration by Ilocanos on the 100th birthday of Marcos last year.

Because it was not a special holiday, most residents went about their daily routines.

Last year, thousands of Marcos loyalists wearing red shirts gathered here and in the late dictator's birthplace, Sarrat town, to celebrate.

But on Tuesday, a simple thanksgiving Mass and wreath-laying ceremony were held separately in Sarrat and Batac City, where Marcos' eldest daughter, Ilocos Norte Gov. Imee Marcos, watched as the police rendered a 21-gun salute at the Marcos

monument in front of the family ancestral house.

At Libingan ng mga Bayani, protesters used the strongman's birthday as a springboard to rage at his family's brewing political comeback and President Duterte's support for them—an alleged "deal with the devils." said the Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses and Martial Law (Carmma).

Carmma and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) led the protest.

Bongbong, Imelda at Libingan

The protest played out at the gates of the cemetery as members of the Marcos family, including former first lady Imelda Marcos and former Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., held a private Mass inside.

It might have been Marcos' birthday, but activists like former Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo, Bayan Muna president Satur Ocampo and former Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño had some requests of their own from the ousted first family.

"We will not move on until they let go of their illusions of returning to power with the help of Rodrigo Duterte," Casiño said.



ANTI-MARCOS PICKET An old woman joins anti-Marcos protesters at Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City on Tuesday, the 101st birthday of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. —MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

referencing Imee's widely criticized remark that martial law critics should "move on."

Unexplained wealth

"We will not move on until the Marcoses, and everyone else responsible for that dark chapter in our nation's history, is punished," Casiño added. "It's hard to move on when the cur-

rent President of the Philippines idolizes Marcos."

Taguiwalo drew parallels between today's "skyrocketing prices of goods" and "record-breaking inflation" and the worsening conditions during Marcos' rule that made the political environment ripe for his overthrow.

Soldiers of the Armed

Forces of the Philippines decked out in riot gear blocked the entrance to the cemetery during the protest action.

Demonstrators carried makeshift tombstones that bore the "Never Again" slogan, paired with images of the late dictator and several of his "white elephants," or grand but ultimately unused infrastructure projects, like the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

In Ilocos Norte, officials and employees from various towns offered red and white flowers and sang songs popularized during martial law declared by the dictator 46 years ago.

Paddy art

The state-run Mariano Marcos State University and the Philippine Rice Research Institute in Laoag City showcased paddy art featuring the image of Marcos as tribute to his contribution to agriculture. All

Dubbed "FEM 101," the paddy art at the northern portion of the university's twin gates in Batac City used IR 1552, a traditional purple rice variety from Korea, and PSB Rc82, a high-yielding inbred variety preferred by farmers here. INQ

Duterte defends martial law in Mindanao

By ALEXIS ROMERO

On the 101st birth anniversary of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, President Duterte yesterday defended his imposition of martial law in Mindanao.

Duterte claimed military rule reduced crimes in the island, which is hounded by jihadists, communist insurgency and clan wars.

"It has lessened criminality by and large. And the only way to do that is to conduct a survey among the people of Mindanao, the political leaders, they can call them," Duterte said in a televised interview with his chief legal adviser Salvador Panelo.

"The stations have the number

and maybe... they can... conduct an interview or they can always ask their networks there to do the survey. Let's see," he added.

The interview with Duterte was held on the same day Marcos loyalists were commemorating the 101st birth anniversary of the late strongman whose presidency was tainted with allegations of corruption and human rights violations.

Marcos placed the entire country under martial law in 1972 supposedly to quell the threats posed by communists. The late strongman, once described by Duterte as "one of the best Filipinos," was ousted by the historic People Power Revolution in 1986.

Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao on May 23, 2017 after terrorists linked with the Islamic State laid siege to Marawi City, torched establishments and kidnapped several civilians. Congress voted to extend martial law until the end of the year despite fears that it would lead to abuses.

Duterte said he does not know of any complaints against soldiers implementing military rule. He claimed the Marawi siege proved that the military could "thrive in a war zone" and "can survive on a controlled condition." ¹⁶

"I take full responsibility for it. Otherwise, martial law will be toothless," the President added.

'Martial law lessened crime in Mindanao'

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Tuesday claimed that martial law in Mindanao has reduced cases of criminality in the conflict-stricken region.

"It has lessened criminality by and large. And the only way to do that is to conduct a survey amongst the people of Mindanao, the political leaders, they can call them," Duterte said during a televised interview with Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo in Malacañang.

"May mga number man 'yang mga istasyon and maybe they can conduct an interview or they can always ask their networks there to do the survey. Tingnan natin (Let's see)," he added.

Duterte made the statement after Malacañang said it was considering

extending martial law in Mindanao after the twin bombings in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat.

Executive Salvador Medialdea earlier explained that while he does not necessarily recommend the extension of martial law, it may be an option.

"We're trying to make it as easy as possible *kung ganito pa rin nangyayari, ano'ng gagawin? Upo lang tayo diyan?* (If this continues to happen, what should we do? Should we just sit around?)," Medialdea said in a media interview.

Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio also said she was open to the possibility of martial law extension in Mindanao if the Armed Forces of the Philippines finds it necessary.

13 CATHERINE S. VALENTE

Martial law lessens criminality in Mindanao

THE implementation of martial law in Mindanao—effective until December—has greatly lessened criminality in the area, President Rodrigo Duterte said Tuesday during a cozy interview, beamed nationwide, with Presidential Legal Adviser Salvador Panelo.

"It has lessened criminality. And the only way to do that is to conduct a survey amongst the people of Mindanao," said the President, adding the effectivity of martial law in Mindanao could be defended by asking the people in the South what they received with the emergency.

"The political leaders, they can call

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Martial...

From A1

them. The stations have contacts with them. Maybe they can conduct an interview. Or they can always ask their network there to do the survey. Let's see," said Duterte during the interview conducted in Malacañang.

Duterte also said in the wide-ranging interview he had no problem living in a war zone as the people could survive in a controlled condition, adding he needed to implement it as suggested by the military.

"To me, it's nothing. Now, it was the military's [order] because of the uprising in Marawi... But by and large, it could give them the confidence of going around with a gun," said Duterte.

"You know my army does not have weapons, they don't have side-arms. So, they go out naked. And I did not like it because my soldiers are being killed like dogs. So, I said, this cannot go on. If you have to go out, just watch for the Sparrow at the back but use it to kill, if you have to kill them," he added.

According to Duterte, he was the one who ordered the installation of police/military checkpoints.

He added: "Those who are suspected of transporting illegal drugs, traveling to escape, or are in the wanted list of the government, they have to go down. And that is my order and I take full responsibility of (sic) it," Duterte stressed.

"Otherwise, this martial law would not be feared."

Palace officials like Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque had previously said the administration thought the talks to extend martial law in Mindanao were still premature, following the deadly bombing attacks in the region.



NPA, AFP clash in CamSur; 2 rebels killed

LEGAZPI CITY – Two suspected New People’s Army (NPA) rebels were killed in an encounter with government troopers in Caramoan, Camarines Sur yesterday.

Capt. Joas Pramis, 9th Division public affairs officer, said the fatalities were brought to the Caramoan police office for identification.

An M2 carbine was recovered at the scene.

Pramis said soldiers of the 83rd Infantry Battalion conducted combat operations after receiving reports from villagers on the presence of armed men.

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– Celso Amo

Illness? Rody says dark skin due to desert air

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Amid alleged plots to oust him from power, President Duterte held a live television interview yesterday at Malacañang to dispute concerns over his health as he discussed issues hounding the economy and his order to arrest Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

In the interview hosted by chief presidential legal adviser Salvador Panelo, Duterte attributed the dark skin of his face to sun exposure – not to failing health as claimed by critics.

Following his recent trip to Israel and Jordan, Duterte said his face

darkened anew because he failed to apply an ointment that his wife recommended.

"It's a desert, again I failed to apply the (ointment) my wife gave me. That's why it turned dark again. It's fine as long as I still look handsome," he said in the interview aired by state-run PTV4.

Duterte then started lashing out at his critics, particularly Trillanes whom he accused of conniving with the communists to remove him from office.

"They have combined and we have the evidence, and we have the conversation provided by a foreign country," Duterte said, referring to

Trillanes' Magdalo Group and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

To prove himself, Duterte said he will order the proper agencies to make public the destabilization plot against him.

"Maybe any day now, I ask that it be declassified and *ipakita nila... Nahihigop lahat eh* and they were in constant communication," he added.

Duterte called for a press conference but members of the Malacañang Press Corps (MPC) and the Foreign Correspondents of the Philippines (FOCAP) were barred from the coverage exclusive to state media.

Upon his arrival from Jordan last weekend, Duterte claimed that there are efforts to oust him and the plotters are expected to shift to high gear by October.

Duterte revealed that a country sympathetic

to the Philippines has been giving him information about efforts by some groups to merge in an effort to remove him from office.

Loose conspiracy

Duterte said there might be a "loose conspiracy" between the Magdalo and leftist groups to oust him.

"It might be loose conspiracy but they are into it," he said, as he warned the soldiers to be careful with joining up with the Magdalo.

He cited information that not all members of Magdalo are "in agreement in membership to destabilize or overthrow the government."

"I said my clear stand on the matter. If the Armed Forces think that I am not competent, that I am not qualified to be sitting here as President, I have discussed this matter with them in a command conference," he said.

Duterte maintained he is not

holding on to power like a dictator.

"It's up to you. If you want another President, fine. I will not allow you to fight your own soldiers. So, I would not allow my soldiers to kill another soldier or a policeman shooting another soldier," he said.

Angered by the call for support by Vice President Leni Robredo, other Liberal Party stalwarts for Trillanes, Duterte said he is ready to step down if necessary.

Duterte said he is merely trying to "govern the way I promise."

"If you do not want me, and you think that a woman like Leni (Robredo) is more beautiful, and more capable, then you proceed with it. I am challenging all of you, really," he said.

He addressed the military to join Trillanes if they believe his cause.

Duterte said he wants the destabilization efforts done and over with – if the opponents have enough manpower and firepower to launch any coup. 1/4

Army corporal dies in Or. Mindoro clash

By R. R. R. - Editor

CAMP KINABAR, Quezon — An army corporal was killed in a clash between soldiers and a group of New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Mindoro Oriental Mindoro, Philippines.

The Southern Luzon Command (SLC) said the clash occurred at Camp Kinabar, Mindoro Oriental Mindoro, on Monday.

The NPA rebels, who are active in the area, were seen in the vicinity of the camp.

The clash occurred in the vicinity of Camp Kinabar, Mindoro Oriental Mindoro, on Monday.

Defense Secretary Gen. Antonio Trini C. Gateno said he believes there were also casualties on the part of the rebels, as evidenced by blood stains on the ground.

The army is continuing operations in the area.

The army recovered some weapons and equipment from the rebels. The rebels also drove away some supplies and two backpacks from the camp.

The army is continuing operations in the area.

NPA member surrenders in Eastern Samar

TACLOBAN CITY - A member of the New People's Army (NPA) is now under the custody of the 2nd Eastern Samar Police Mobile Force Company after he surrendered to the authorities in Barangay Buenavista, Quinapondan, Eastern Samar on Sunday.

Abe Labide is a 29-year old resident of Barangay Loog, Basey, Samar. He is political instructor in the George Bollito Command that operates in Sta. Rita, Marabut and Basey towns in Samar and in nearby towns in Eastern Samar.

Labide also turned over his caliber .257 revolver and am-

munition to PCI Frederick Senal, the company commander of 2nd ESPMFC.

The police mobile force company has been intensifying its counterpropaganda efforts to convince communist rebels to surrender.

Its efforts were lauded by the Eastern Visayas Police regional director Chief Supt. Dionardo Carlos.

"Isa itong patunay na ang kapulisan nalin ay tunay na nageserbisyo at nakikipag-ugnayan sa ating komunidad para sa mas ligtas at matiwasay na pamumuhay," Carlos said. (Marie Tonette Grace Marticio)

Coups, 'destab' a Magdalo hobby

By Elmer N. Manuel
and Kathleen Mae Eulquerin

Overtthrowing governments they do not like has become a hobby embattled Sen. Antonio Trillanes and his Magdalo group are now trying to satiate themselves with through a reported destabilization plot against President Rodrigo Duterte.

This was how presidential spokesman Harry Roque described the reports as no less than Malacañang claimed new unsettling developments against Duterte's leadership are being initiated by the Chief Executive's critics.

Roque made the claim

during a televised interview directly naming no less than Trillanes and his group — the Magdalo — which in the past had waged two coup attempts against former President and now Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as behind the anti-Duterte plot.

But Roque quickly brushed off the report, saying no effort against the administration will see the light as the President still enjoys the trust and support of the public.

But while Roque is confident that any plot or ploy by the President's critics and the opposition will not materialize,

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It (launching destabilization) is Magdalo's 'hobby' (against) governments. But try as they may, they will not succeed

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he noted that threats from Trillanes' Magdalo group should not be taken lightly by the state's security forces.

"It is Magdalo's 'hobby' (against) governments," Roque said. "But try as they may, they will not succeed."

The presidential spokesman also insisted that the Liberal Party (LP) members and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) — together with the Magdalo — are working to bring down the Duterte administration.

"This is the truth that was relayed to the President based (on) intelligence reports (which were) for the President's eyes only," Roque said, noting that "many" LP members still refuse to acknowledge Duterte as the country's leader.

Criticisms are at par for the course. The mandate to serve comes with constant exposure to criticisms.

"It's not a secret that many of those 'yellow' members are not able to move on after losing in the 2016 national elections and many of them refuse to acknowledge Duterte as President," Roque said. "So, of course, it's not far-fetched that they will have an agreement to unify and oust the President."

Roque stressed that while there is apparent public support for Duterte, any plot to destabilize government may further harm the economic prospects of the country.

"In politics, you need not be successful. You only need get attention," Roque said. "So that can serve as a warning to the President."

He then denied that these claims of ouster plots were government distractions from the economic woes of the country which he believes are growing at

a healthy rate.

"I don't really know what critics are saying, because while we have a problem on inflation, the country's progress in terms of economy is pushing through," Roque said.

"At a press briefing, I noted that the unemployment rate in the country is the lowest while our manufacturing rate is soaring together with the GDP. So, I can't really see what they are talking about," he added.

Roque, meanwhile, assured the public that Mr. Duterte was firm when he stated to respect any decision by the Supreme Court (SC) regarding the senator's amnesty revocation.

In another development, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) urged the public to stay calm amid the sighting of a military tank on EDSA in a viral social media post.

"We wish to categorically state that there were no such sizeable movements of military aircraft or armored vehicles. And even if there were any in the past or in the future, those were or will be routine movements that are properly coordinated," Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP spokesman, said in a statement.

The AFP spokesman added such transportation of military tanks "happens any time of the day and night, especially (in) the different locations of military camps."

Arevalo also urged the public to stay calm as there is no reason to raise an alarm.

"With this goes our appeal to the public to stop spreading rumors or conjectures. It doesn't help.

It tends to sow misinformation, confusion and worst — panic. The public

should be wary of persons or groups who maliciously spread such rumors," Arevalo said.

He also assured the public it will hear from the AFP on transport of military equipment when it could release statements to avoid compromising operational security.

The photograph of what was claimed as a military tank was captured on EDSA and Trinoma last Monday evening.

It quickly spread on social media, with some linking the sighting to an earlier reported announcement by the President which was actually a televised interview conducted by his Chief Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo.

Meanwhile, Senate President Pro-Tempore Ralph Recto also called on the Filipino people to rally behind President Duterte to address the country's pressing

problems instead of calling for his ouster.

Recto, in a statement, stressed that Mr. Duterte should finish his six-year term as mandated by the Constitution with his victory in the 2016 presidential polls.

With this goes our appeal to the public to stop spreading rumors or conjectures. It doesn't help. It tends to sow misinformation, confusion and worst — panic.

"People should rally behind the President and let him finish a term he won fair and square," Recto said.

"There is no need for a regime change, only a refocusing of government

priorities. It must re-pivot to the gut issues of jobs, prices and income," he added.

No less than the President earlier had revealed an alleged plot to oust him by the "yellows," Trillanes and the CPP-NPA.

Former Senate President Juan Ponce-Enrile also theorized that there are "orchestrated" efforts to weaken Duterte by riding on the issues of the rising inflation rate and the unstable supply and price of rice.

Enrile told the *Daily Tribune* that he is seeing groups that led the uprising against the late

President Ferdinand Marcos now attacking the Duterte administration — apparently for power.

Recto issued an unsolicited advice to the Duterte administration by urging government officials to take criticisms constructively.

"Criticisms are at par for the course. The mandate to serve comes with constant exposure to criticisms. The best way to handle them is to treat them as advice on how to govern better and not to dismiss them outright as destabilization moves," Recto said.

Relatedly, Liberal Party president Sen. Francis Pangilinan reiterated his denial of the party's involvement in any plot against the administration.

"There is no truth to that and it is very easy to come up with so-called intel report," Pangilinan said.

Sundalo timbuwang sa NPA

CAMP G. NAKAR, Quezon - Patay ang isang Army corporal sa engkuwentro sa pagitan ng 4th Infantry Battalion (4IB) at ng New People's Army (NPA) sa Sitio Panahulugan, Barangay Panaytayan, Mansalay sa Oriental Mindoro kamakalawa, ayon sa ulat ng Southern Luzon Command (SOLCOM).

Sumiklab ang bakbakan, na tumagal ng halos 45 minuto, at naging sarhi ng pagkamatay ni Cpl.

Romeric Urbiztondo, bandang 6:50 ng umaga.

Ayon sa SOLCOM, nagsasagawa ng combat operation ang grupo matapos makatanggap ng sumbong mula sa mga residente sa lugar na kinikilan sila ng pera at pagkain ang mga armadong terorista.

Narekober sa pinangyarihan ang ilang gamit pandigma tulad ng mga improvised explosive device (IED), laptop computer, computer hard

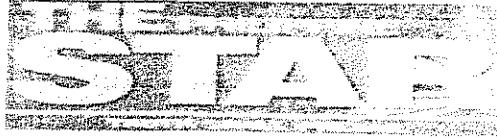
drive, limang cell phones, dalawang backpacks, maraming dokumento, at medical supplies.

Naniniwala naman ang militar may sugatan din sa panig ng mga rebelde base sa mga patak ng dugo sa lugar at ang rutang ginamit ng mga rebelde para makatakas.

Patuloy ang pursuit operation laban sa mga komunistang grupo sa Regions 4 at 5.

Danny J. Estacio

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MILF execs register for Bangsamoro plebiscite

MAGUINDANAO - Officials of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) registered yesterday for the plebiscite on the creation of the proposed Bangsamoro Organic Law.

Hadji Murad Ebrahim, chairman of the MILF's central committee, led officials of the group who registered at the MILF's Camp Darapanan in Sultan Kudarat town in this province.

Officials from the Commission on Elections (Comelec) main office, including spokesman James Jimenez, flew to Cotabato City on Sunday to oversee the three-day special voter registration in areas covered by the plebiscite.

The special registration, which started yesterday, is

for voters in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and other areas to be included in the proposed Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi comprise ARMM while 39 barangays in North Cotabato, six towns in Lanao del Norte and the cities of Cotabato in Maguindanao and Isabela in Basilan are being eyed for inclusion in the BARMM.

ARMM Gov. Mujiv Hataman urged qualified MILF members to register so they could participate in the plebiscite on Jan. 21.

"This is a peace process... that should involve all sectors in the autonomous region," Hataman said. - John Unson

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MILF FIGHTERS EXPECTED TO ENLIST AS VOTERS

By **Bong S. Sarmiento**
@inqmindanao

KORONADAL CITY—From bullets to ballots.

Majority of the 40,000-strong Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) are expected to enlist in the three-day special satellite voter's registration conducted by the Commission on Elections (Comelec) starting on Tuesday, a rebel leader said.

The special registration was held in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and other areas in the proposed new Bangsamoro region specifically for the plebiscite to ratify the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL).

Recognition

Von Al Haq, spokesperson for the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, the armed wing of MILF, urged their troops to register. "It is important for MILF combatants to register so they can (finally) exercise their right of suffrage," he said.

In the past, the MILF observed a "hands-off" policy involving political exercises.

Al Haq said the ratification of the BOL would answer the centuries-old quest of the Bangsamoro people for recognition. He said they were expecting "99 percent" of their 40,000 fighters to register.

Ray Sumalipao, ARMM Comelec director, urged residents in areas covered by the plebiscite to register. "We want to get as many potential voters involved in the plebiscite in consonance with the spirit of the Bangsamoro Organic Law," he said.

President Duterte, speaking before the Filipino community in Jordan on Sept. 7, vowed to campaign for the BOL ratification in the plebiscite scheduled on Jan. 21, 2019.

Sumalipao said the satellite registration centers would accommodate applications for voter's registration, transfer of registration, reactivation, change, or correction of entries and inclusion, or reinstatement of records.

Non-Muslim voters

The special satellite registrations will be held in the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Norte and North Cotabato, and in the cities of Cotabato and Isabela.

Edgardo Ramirez, ARMM's deputy governor for Christians, also called on non-Muslim qualified voters to register.

ARMM has a population of 4 million, based on the 2015 census of the Philippine Statistics Authority. INQ

PRRD scouting for new NFA administrator

President Duterte is searching a replacement of National Food Authority (NFA) Administrator Jason Aquino after he offered to vacate his post.

Amid the rice supply problems hounding the state-owned food agency, the President revealed that Aquino has asked to be "relieved" from his post because he was already "tired."

"Jason Aquino has requested that he be relieved already. He says he's tired. He cannot cope with the larodyansa inside, which is always ▶13

PRRD scouting for new... ◀1

ordinary happening in government because we cannot be in agreement all the time," Duterte said on government television.

"I will scout for a new one," he added.

Some lawmakers have called for the removal of Aquino for alleged incompetence in dealing with reported rice shortage in some parts of the country.

Aquino has been accused of failure to fulfill the NFA mandate to stabilize rice supply and market cost following reports of shortage of cheap government rice that caused price hikes of the commodity.

Adequate rice supply

The President, meantime, assured the public that the country has adequate rice supply; adding more stocks are "coming." He recognized the need to import additional rice, saying he wants to keep a 60-day buffer stock in the country.

Duterte said he was also considering allowing the country's rice trading with Sabah to pave the way for the entry of cheaper rice for some parts of Mindanao.

"If worse comes to worst, I will open Sabah. Ayan talaga. Free for all na. Busog lahat. Mura," he said.

He said a barter trade system could be established to boost rice supply in Zamboanga and nearby provinces.

"Actually, kung hayaan mo lang ang ating authorities diyan, kung ang mga taga-Basilan lang, Jolo, Zamboanga magbili ng bigas, sobra-sobra ang bigas kasi mura," he said.

"We just have to control rice diyan sa mga Moro baka sinasabi ng ginugutom sila," he added.

Duterte has also pushed for the

passage of a bill that imposes tariffs on rice in place of import quotas.

Likewise, Duterte said he was prepared to enforce the full force of the law against groups hoarding rice supply and manipulating prices in the market.

He said he would not allow an "artificial" or man-made shortage of rice in the country. He said he detests the "bad practice of manipulation to make money at the expense of our countrymen."

Malacañang had earlier announced that Duterte has given the green light to rice traders to import small volume of rice from Malaysia to boost supply in some parts of Mindanao.

The rice traders, however, will be required to pay the corresponding import tariffs for the rice stocks intended for Zambasulta (Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi) area, according to Presidential spokesman Harry Roque.

Deploy rolling stores

Meanwhile, Senator Nancy Binay on Tuesday scored the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) over their lack of ingenuity in addressing the high inflation and the skyrocketing prices of commodities.

Binay said the DTI should have re-deployed the "rolling stores" project so that the poor have access to affordable commodities to cushion the impact of inflation.

"DTI has a commitment in ensuring that consumers have access to reasonably-priced goods. The last time we saw DTI's rolling stores was in Leyte during the height of Yolanda and the Marawi conflict," Binay said. (With a report from Hannah L. Torregoza)

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PNP watching foreigners over terrorism links

By AARON B. REGUENCO

The Philippine National Police (PNP) is now monitoring some foreigners who have entered the country for their possible ties with local terrorist groups, particularly those based in Mindanao.

Director General Oscar Albayalde, PNP Chief, said that based on police intelligence monitoring, some of these foreigners are from Indonesia.

"We are monitoring alleged foreigners but we cannot confirm that they are terrorists or ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) members," said Albayalde.

"We have a few listed foreign names especially coming from Indonesia but we cannot really confirm if they are really members of the ISIS or terrorist group," he added.

Albayalde's statement came as the police have filed and continuously running after those responsible for the bombings in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat and Lamitan City in Basilan.

The official, however, said that the threats of bombings are always present, noting that terror groups are just waiting for any opportunity to strike.

In fact, he said bombing and other form of terror attack also happen in other countries, including the highly-developed ones.

"With regard to threat to terrorism, I have been saying ever since that the threat of terrorism is already global, it's there. It can occur anytime," said Albayalde.

What is important, according to him, is that the PNP and other security forces are exerting all efforts to deny terror groups the opportunity to carry out their attacks. &

BIFF leader, 20 followers charged with murder for Isulan blasts

By JOSEPH JUBELAG

GENERAL SANTOS CITY- Police have filed murder charges against the leader of a local terror group and more than 20 of his followers in connection with the spate of bomb attacks in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat, which left five people dead and 50 others wounded.

Chief Supt. Elias Tam Rasco, Police Regional Office-12 director, said multiple

murder charges have been filed against Esmael Abdulmalik alias Abu Toraiie, the self-proclaimed leader of of ISIS-inspired faction of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters and 24 other militants in connection with the two bomb attacks which rock Isulan town on August 28 and September 2.

Rasco said the special investigation task group, headed by Sr. Supt. Oliver Enmodias, police deputy regional director for operations, filed the case against the

suspects before the provincial prosecutor's office in Isulan town.

He said the filing of the case against the terror suspects was the result of coordinated efforts among the police, military and other law enforcement units which shared intelligence information during the case build up to identify the suspects.

Probers were able to establish the identity of the suspected bomber who detonated an improvised explosive

device which went off at a flea market in Barangay Kalawag 3 on the night of August 28 which killed three people and injured 35 others.

Police identified the bomb courier as Aladin Mohammad Kikay, said to be a newly-trained bomb expert of the BIFF.

Police said witnesses tagged Kikay as the one who left the back pack which contained the improvised bomb at a used clothes store, or "ukay-ukay" stall minutes before it exploded. 10

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Abu Sayyaf fighter killed in Sulu encounter

By **NONOY E. LACSON**
and **BONIFA L. ERMAC**

ZAMBOANGA CITY- The military in Sulu encountered an estimated 60 Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) members and killed one of them during the encounter in Barangay Bungaong, Patikul, Sulu. Col. Gerry M. Besana said the ASG fighters were followers of Almujafer Yadah and Idang Susukan, notorious leaders of the ASG in Sulu province.

Besana said Joint Task Force Sulu

(JTF) reported that one of the ASG gunmen was killed during the encounter last Monday at 9 a.m.

"One enemy was killed, based on dead body recovered during the clearing operation, identified as Muin while no casualty was recorded on the government side," he said.

The military also recovered an M16 rifle left behind by the ASG.

He said that due to the superior firepower of the government forces, the bandits were forced to withdraw and escape in different direction inside the forested areas of the village.

According to Besana the firearm is

temporarily under the custody of the Joint Task Force Sulu prior turnover to higher headquarters.

AFP-WesMinCom commander Lt Gen Arnel dela Vega said: "This latest encounter only shows how persistent our forces are to track down the terrorist groups wherever they go to make sure that they are decimated and that remaining kidnap victims are also rescued. We also have to give due recognition to the support of the local community in directing our troops to the terrorists' location proving that they are already tired of the menace they bring to their locality." *IP*

Abu Sayyaf terrorist killed in Sulu clash

ZAMBOANGA CITY: Government troops clashed with Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) terrorists killing one of them in Sulu, officials said on Tuesday.

The fighting broke out on Monday in the village of Bungkaong in Patikul town after soldiers encountered about 60 bandits under Abu Sayyaf commanders Almujer Yadah and Idang Susukan.

There was no report of military casualties, according to Lt. Col. Gerry Besana, a spokesman for the Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom).

He said members of the 21st Infantry Battalion (21st IB) were deployed to the hinterlands of the town after villagers reported that the terrorists were holding several hostages in the area.

"In the continuing conduct of military operations to rescue the remaining kidnap victims in Sulu, soldiers under the 21st Infantry Battalion led by Lt. Col. Pagala, encountered more or less 60 Abu Sayyaf Group members under Almujer Yadah and Idang Susukan in Barangay Bungkaong, Patikul, Sulu at 9 this morning [Tuesday]. Due to the superior firepower of the government forces, the bandits were forced to withdraw and escape," Besana reported.

He said soldiers recovered the body of the slain bandit, including his M16 automatic rifle.

Lt. Gen. Arnel dela Vega, WestMinCom chief, praised the soldiers for their bravery and said the operations against the Abu Sayyaf would be relentless.

"This latest encounter only shows how persistent our forces are to track down the terrorist groups wherever they go to make sure that they are decimated and that remaining kidnap victims are also rescued."

"We also have to give due recognition to the support of the local community in directing our troops to the terrorists' location proving that they are already tired of the menace the terrorists bring to their locality," he said.

The Abu Sayyaf is still holding about a dozen Filipino and foreign hostages.

Since January, dela Vega said, security forces have killed 32 militants in fighting in Sulu, one of five provinces under the Muslim autonomous region.

The Abu Sayyaf, whose leaders have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, is fighting for establishment of the caliphate in the troubled Mindanao region in southern Philippines. **AL JACINTO**



Kidnaper na Abu, napatay

Napatay sa sagupaan ang isang bandidong miyembro ng mga kidnaper na lokal na teroristang Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) sa pagpapatuloy ng law enforcement operations upang masagip ang nalalabi pang mga hostages sa engkuwentro sa Brgy. Bungaong, Patikul Sulu noong Lunes.

Kinilala ang napatay na bandido na si Muin na inabandona ng mga nagsitakas nitong kasamahan.

Wala namang naiulat na nasugatan sa panig ng tropa ng militar at nasamsam sa encounter ang isang M16 rifle.

Sa ulat, bandang alas-9:00 ng umaga nang makasagupa ng tropa ng Army's 21st Infantry Battalion (IB) ang tinatayang nasa 60 Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) sa ilalim ng pamumuno ni Almujeer Yadah at Idang Susukan sa liblib na bahagi ng nasabing lugar.

Kasalukuyang sinusuyod ng tropang gobyerno ang nasabing lugar nang masabat ang grupo ng mga bandido sa nasabing lugar na nauwi sa kalibutan. *Jay Santos*

Abu Sayyaf kidnaper todas sa encounter!

Napaslang sa sagupaan ang isang hinihinaiang kidnapper ng lokal na teroristang Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) sa pagpapatuloy ng law enforcement operations upang masagip ang 9 pang naialabing hostages sa Brgy. Bungaong, Patikul, Sulu nitong Lunes.

Ayon kay Col. Gerry Besana, spokesman ng AFP-Western Mindanao Command, bandang alas-9 ng umaga nang makasagupa ng tropa ng 21st Infantry Battalion (IB) ng Philippine Army ang tinatayang nasa 60 Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) sa itatim ng pamu-

muno ni Almujer Yadah at idang Susukan sa liblib na bahagi ng nasabing lugar.

Sinabi ni Besana, kasalukuyang sinusuyod ng tropang gobyerno ang nasabing lugar nang masabat nila ang mga bandido hanggang sa magkabakbakan.

Isa sa mga terorista na kinilala lamang sa pangalang "Muin" ang napatay sa bakbakan na inabañdona ng mga nagsitakas nitong kasamahan.

Watang nasugatan sa panig ng tropa ng militar at narekober sa encounter site ang isang M16 rifle (*Joy Cantos*)

SKETCHES

ANA MARIE PAMINTUAN

Gut issues

A supermarket near my home is popular for its fresh seafood selection; the owner also operates a commercial fishing business.

Last Saturday the supermarket was selling *galunggong* (round scad), the so-called poor man's fish, at P250 per kilo, close to the price of milkfish or *bangus*. Just over a week ago a small-scale fisherman had told me that "GG" was being retailed at P140 a kilo – but that was in the wet markets of Quezon.

From the supermarket checkout counter, I proceeded as usual to the kiosk selling Chinese-style vegetable *tumpia*. The price had jumped from P85 for the special to P105. Dismayed by the sudden price surge, I decided against buying. I asked the saleslady why the increase was so hefty. She said vegetable prices were steep.

And yes, the price of bird's eye chili or *siling labuyo* was a dizzying P1,000 per kilo, whether at the supermarket or the sidewalk stall of my *suki* vegetable hawker.

To put this in context, a kilo of *siling labuyo* is one large mass of chili – many piles or *tumpok* sold in the wet markets. Still, P1,000 is too much for something that grows as easily as a weed in gardens. Has there been an infestation of birds? They love eating chili (and culinary herbs such as basil).

At least the prices of some seasonal fruits have gone down considerably. Rambutan is down to P60 per kilo in the wet markets, about half the peak-season prices last year. Either there's a glut, or else the logistics cost has gone down. Fruit vendors told me their rambutan now comes from nearby Batangas and Laguna instead of Mindanao and the Visayas. The Luzon rambutan is just as sweet.

Luzon has also started producing mangosteen, which could account for this year's much lower prices compared to previous years. At off-season prices of up to P420 a kilo in previous years, mangosteen has long been considered a luxury food item. But today even the large supermarket chains are selling mangosteen at P140 to P160 a kilo; in the wet markets, the fruit retails for about P100 to P120 a kilo depending on the size and freshness.

Six to eight pieces of mangosteen for P120, however, is still a luxury for millions of Filipinos. Their concerns center on the prices of the food items that make them feel full and energized for the day's toils, at affordable prices: rice, vegetables, *galunggong*.

Many can't eat without fish sauce or vinegar, and many like their *patis* and *suka* laced with *siling labuyo*. Without *ulam* or viand to go with the rice, spicy-hot *patis* will do. This is why P1,000 per kilo of bird's eye chili is felt keenly by the very poor.



Ordinary folks may be fascinated by the Duterte administration's obsession with opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, and may wonder whether the days of destabilization and coup attempts are really back. But they can't be diverted too far from the gut issues that are their principal concerns: soaring prices of basic goods and shrinking purchasing power.

This is the suspicion of certain quarters – that the effort to create a destabilization scenario, with Trillanes at the center, is meant to divert public attention from the nine-year-high inflation rate, long rice lines, the worst-performing currency in Southeast Asia and the decelerating economy.

Is the administration capable of this sort of scheming? Maybe the explanation is simpler: the administration just doesn't like Trillanes. The guy is unbowed; after going after President Duterte's son Paolo and son-in-law Manases Carpio, Trillanes has launched a probe of Jose Calida and the solicitor general's family, with the President's confidante and *anak-anakan* Christopher "Bong" Go up next.

Go has come out swinging, daring the "coward" Trillanes to leave the safety of the Senate and go home.

People are monitoring this unfolding drama, and wondering if there is basis for the other speculation, that all the talk about destabilization and an oust-Duterte plot is meant to lay the groundwork for the declaration of martial law nationwide.

Duterte's modified address to the nation yesterday – incidentally the birth anniversary of dictator Ferdinand Marcos – dispelled the martial law fears.

Trillanes has his following and is becoming a rallying point for anti-Duterte forces. But circumstances have not approached the tipping point against the administration. And the buzz in legal circles is that Duterte will likely get what he wants from the courts: Trillanes will lose his amnesty and return to jail.

Yesterday, in the nationally televised interview described by Malacañang as a "tete-a-tete" with Chief Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo, President Duterte challenged any military supporters of Trillanes to stage a mutiny. Duterte knows it won't happen.

In the same interview of sorts, Duterte also announced he was letting go of the administrator of the National Food Authority, and urging Congress to abolish the NFA Council.

Whether this will improve rice supply and pricing remains to be seen. I don't think the price of my usual variety of commercial rice at my *suki* dealer is reverting anytime soon to its level last month, which was P500 cheaper for 50 kilos.

People who are unimpressed with Trillanes are nevertheless concerned about the impact of the political turbulence on economic matters such as the peso and stock market, and consequently on consumer prices.

Will his detention and voiding of his amnesty bring down the prices of rice, GG and my vegetable *tumpia*? Chances are that the political instability will drive consumer prices even higher.

Everything returns to the gut issues.

★

LOYALTY TO THE CONSTITUTION

ALLOW me to just echo what military chief Carlito Galvez Jr. recently told the Armed Forces: "I am reminding every soldier, airman, sailor and marine not to meddle or take part in partisan politics. Our loyalty is to the Constitution."

If General Galvez uttered those words sincerely, then may our soldiers and policemen

be steadfast in protecting and serving the people. And may the counsel of the military chief reverberate in the "hallowed" Supreme Court every time it decides on cases, especially those involving sensitive "political" issues. Otherwise, "loyalty to the Constitution" rings hollow.

May the rule of law always prevail, not the rule of a few. It

is imperative to have in the government statesmen who can neither be bought nor intimidated, and whose options are limited to just two: do right, or be stricken by conscience forever.

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The Great Inflation

Of expectations, that is. When it was announced that the President would address the nation on Sept. 11, the generation of martial law babies and those older immediately (and ominously) connected it with the great dictator's birth anniversary. By the next day, the Armed Forces had to issue the kind of statement that triggers panic—don't panic, it said.

Reacting to social media chatter and reporters picking up on the buzz and asking the AFP if, indeed, there was an ongoing movement of armored military vehicles, the Armed Forces replied, no; but even if there were—and there are, and have been, and will be—movements of armored vehicles, that's to be expected in the vicinity of armed camps, so stay calm, don't panic, do not fall prey to the evil designs of rumor-mongers.

But that can be explained away as an excess of zeal on the part of the military. What really put the current state of the ruling Noob Society on full display was when the Palace made an announcement early yesterday afternoon. The next 20 minutes or so that gripped the nation can be summarized as follows:

Presidential—Communications Operations Office: No presidential presser anymore, we can't say why.

Bong Go: No presser but speech to proceed at 3:15.

Salvador Panelo: No presser was scheduled in the first place.

Harry Roque: No cancellation happened; what was scheduled will push through but under modified format.

Indeed, what there would be, Roque purred, was a "tête-à-tête." Panelo would read questions from the media, which, however, would be barred from the actual tête-à-tête.



THE LONG VIEW

MANUEL L. QUEZON III

The Malacañang Press Corps had been biding its time, literally kept in the dark—someone, somewhere, didn't think it was necessary to switch on the lights in the media briefing room. But rumblings of discontent, shared by foreign and domestic media practitioners alike, provoked a withdrawal of questions from the forthcoming tête-à-tête.

In the end, the tête-à-tête proved a test of patience, as the President's complexion bore a startling—and distracting—resemblance to Among Ed Panlilio (hopefully, a makeup artist somewhere is going to take the blame). A foreign journalist from abroad commented online that it was a scene straight out of the Vladimir Putin playbook. For the domestic crowd, the only thing missing was the late Ronnie Nathanielsz, though Panelo proved an equally obliging substitute—exclaiming, at one point, with pointed enthusiasm, that the President looked very healthy, indeed.

The President ended up revealing what had been clear since his particularly ill-tempered press conference when he returned

earlier than expected from Jordan: The scheme of the Solicitor General to pin down Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV has caused unforeseen complications, not just in terms of a debate within the Armed Forces and general contempt over the move's legal reasoning on the part of the legal community, but also the continuation of the erosion of the perception that the President's word is, literally, the law.

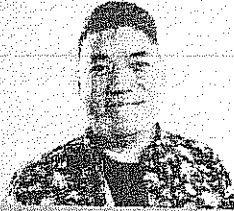
Judges dug in their heels—or, to be precise, shuffled their papers—saying they had to hold hearings and study the case. This led to the military and police taking on a more neutral stance, subordinating their actions to the courts, leading, in the end, to a swift, surprising consensus to let the courts handle matters without rushing to an actual arrest.

If the past two months have seen the startling transformation of the President from a strongman whom no one dared oppose, to a tired, cantankerous senior citizen overwhelmed by events, then the Trillanes saga offered the chance to prove who's boss. It's turning out that there remains residual self-respect among legal practitioners to resist the Executive's whims—gently, but firmly enough (so far).

The President's bullying and hectoring has found its match in Trillanes, who has never been subtle and whose lack of subtlety is apparently tailor-made for confronting the current Chief Executive. Indeed, the whole message in the presidential tête-à-tête, if there was one to be found, was that the President has discovered the limits to his power and charisma. There are lines more and more of his subordinates won't cross. He needed to save face, and so he had a chat on TV.

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A question of heroes



LOOKING BACK

AMBETH R. OCAMPO

The Philippines is a cursed country indeed, if we are to follow Brecht's idea that "cursed is the nation that needs heroes." Our textbook history is built on the exploits of our heroes (and a handful of heroines); our provinces, cities, towns and barangays are littered with monuments to heroes, along with schools, streets and parks named after them. We once had a National Heroes Commission, a government agency responsible for the propagation of the lives and works of our heroes.

Nick Joaquin reacted to all this hero worship with a compilation of essays titled "A Question of Heroes." There were also two famous speeches by Renato Constantino, widely circulated in the 1960s, that took on the prime national hero: The first suggested that Rizal was an American-sponsored hero, and the second called on the people to make Rizal obsolete by reforming the nation.

"Goyo: Ang Batang Heneral," by Jerrold Tarog, is a complex film fueled by the same iconoclastic sentiment; it is an antihero film that is not meant simply to debunk, but rather to question the blind hero worship Filipinos are reared on. Viewers can be overwhelmed by the historically accurate production design, or the many scenes shot so well you can freeze the frame, print it and send it to your mom on Mother's Day.

Viewers may be easily distracted from the actual horrors of the Philippine-American War by all the good-looking actors and actresses who fill the screen. There are many thought-provoking lines—mostly from the mouth and pen of Apolinario Mabini—that make us pause and shudder at the fact that the situations our heroes faced a century ago are still our own today.

"Goyo" made me reflect on my own career, which, for the past three decades, has

been about heroes and history. When I was starting out, many people of an earlier generation disagreed with my methods, because they insisted on heroes fossilized in bronze and marble, heroes who inspired simply by being unreachable. They didn't want heroes of flesh and blood, heroes with feet of clay, who inspired simply because they were human like you and me.

I'd like to think that, in the end, our heroes were not diminished by their defects; rather, they were made relevant to a younger generation by their humanity.

For the past two years, I have been grappling with a different creature in Ferdinand Marcos, who is a villain to all but his kin, friends and fellow Ilocanos. As a martial law baby, I grew up with propaganda about Marcos' heroism and greatness. All that was mercifully thrown away following the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolt, and a historiography of the past three decades that has painted him out to be the most evil person in contemporary Philippine history.

Then came Marcos' diaries covering the years 1969-1984, collated from five different sources, that give us his version of the

story. Since the diaries were written to be read in the future, he put his best foot forward. It's amusing in parts when Marcos lies even to his own diary.

In 1973, an *asalto* was held in Malacañang on the eve of his birthday, where the top brass of the Armed Forces of the Philippines were compelled by the first lady to entertain the guests by appearing in drag and acting like streetwalkers. Marcos noted that he "pounded the table to splinters from hilarity." Many of those generals were not amused, and perhaps the seed of Marcos' downfall in 1986 were planted on that birthday in 1973.

Ten days later, on the first anniversary of the declaration of martial law, an elated Marcos wrote: "A rather happy day. Delivered what could be one of my best speeches over TV—the State of the Nation on year after [Proclamation No.] 1081. I attach copies of the speech without the ad libs and inserts which will be set in the printed copy. This is the first Philippine Thanksgiving Day."

Next day he wrote: "I have often said achievement is but the meeting or congruence of preparation and opportunity... I have had phenomenal luck in time of war as well as peace. And there must be a Guiding Hand above who has forgiven me my sins, of which I have had more than my mortal share, and led me to my destiny."

Is this a sense of destiny, of history or megalomania? Reading the Marcos diaries is like watching a film he himself produced, directed and appeared in. One must remain critical, since, as he declared in his last interview with *Playboy* magazine: "History is not done with me yet!"

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

UNRAVELING

Trillanes should be jailed, the Senate abolished

By GETSY TIGLAC

WITH its coddling of cashiered mutineer Antonio Trillanes IV, the senator with the atrocious history of two coup attempts against the government, the Senate has shown its true nature — an obstructionist group of egotistical politicians who do nothing but thwart the will of the people.

The Senate's closing ranks on Trillanes — whose faulty amnesty has been voided — reminds me of a fraternity protecting a member implicated in a hazing death. They don't care if the member beat to death a neophyte, or if the member betrayed the country through treasonous, seditious acts; they will still protect him because he is one of their own.

As his fellow senators vow that their colleague the putchist will never be arrested inside the Senate, the rest of the country have heaped their scorn on this useless and irrelevant chamber. Everytime we elect a new senator, we are creating a multi-millionaire egotist who thinks his or her only job is to remain in the limelight by holding as many public hearings as possible.

The current crop of senators have become experts in criticizing the people in government who do actual jobs, such as those in the executive department. Is this why we elect senators and pay them so much money, so that we can hear them lambast people left and right?

One remembers how in one their public hearings (otherwise known as the "in aid of legislation" media events), Senator Trillanes verbally abused and insulted a resource person, General Angelo Reyes, whose sense of honor was so acute he committed suicide in front of his mother's grave.

Trillanes said afterwards he wasn't sorry with the way he treated Reyes. Yes, this is the kind of person this putchist is. No matter how many statues of the Virgin Mary he carries, Trillanes remains as the arrogant megalomaniac who wants to be president despite getting only 800,000 votes when he ran for vice president in 2016.

The Senate, even without Trillanes, is nothing more than an old boys' network composed of traditional politicians who survive every change in the political landscape, demi-celebrities who are

married to real ones, and new faces with the money and connections to get themselves elected. No intellectuals here, forget it.

There is another member of the Senate that is in trouble with the law, Senator Leila de Lima, who is incarcerated in Camp Crame on drug charges. De Lima is accused of colluding with drug lords, giving them protection, in exchange for money. This is testified by several prison officials, drug lords, and even De Lima's former driver and lover, Ronnie Dayan. Yes, this is how low our Senate has fallen, and lower still with Trillanes' imminent arrest.

As I've consistently argued in this column, we will be better off with a federal government with a single chamber, the Parliament. This is the more efficient system, with no more back and forth between chambers, and we will save a huge amount of taxpayer's money by paying only a single group of legislators.

If not for the Lower House, the Philippines would not have been able to pass important legislation. Many more are still pending because of Senate inaction. Indeed former House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez in his frustration once called the Senate the "Mabagal na Kapulungan" (the slow chamber).

The senators are always too busy politicking to study and discuss important laws. For instance, recently they called to a hearing agriculture officials just so they can berate them publicly. This, instead of discussing the proposed rice tariffication law, which the executive department has said can solve the rice supply problem.

On signing Proclamation No. 572, President Duterte declared as void from the start the amnesty given to Trillanes in 2010 by the previous administration. Apparently, Trillanes did not file a proper application for amnesty and there are questions on the legal basis of his freedom.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Defense Department have no record of the amnesty application supposedly filed by Trillanes. He also failed to submit a written admission of his guilt for his crimes when he attempted to overthrow the government of president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Trillanes committed rebellion and

sedition twice. In the first one in 2003, he and his Magdalo group holed up in a fancy hotel in Makati, and in the second in 2007 they occupied an even swankier one, again in Makati. They ran scared and surrendered when tanks barged into the Manila Peninsula Hotel.

One of the clearer explanations for the nullification of Trillanes' amnesty has come from Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo. He likened it to the pardons given to prisoners who had been convicted of crimes.

"Your amnesty is akin to conditional pardon. If you were given conditional pardon, you need to comply with the terms and conditions. If you do not comply, it will be cancelled," Panelo said.

Lex

Trillanes not only failed to meet the requirements of the law; he also abused the amnesty with his succeeding actions challenging the government, according to Panelo. (This includes in my mind his unsubstantiated charges of hidden wealth against President Duterte whom Trillanes obviously has not forgiven for not taking him on as a vice presidential candidate-partner in the 2016 elections.)

Yes indeed, if you were a convicted murderer who was pardoned, and then you murdered another person, how do you think the law will treat you? If you were a former destabilizer of a legitimate government, and then you continued to challenge the government, what does that say of you?

"What did he do? He's sowing terror, anger, and he's inciting the public to rise up against the government and President Duterte," Panelo said. The government, he said, has the right to protect itself from assault coming from any individual.

Another major defect of Trillanes' amnesty: it seems that it was then Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin who recommended and granted the amnesty to Trillanes, and not former president Benigno Aquino III.

Aquino only signed a general amnesty, Proclamation No. 50, for the mutineers that participated in the Oakwood and Manila Peninsula mutinies. Aquino's proclamation of amnesty was not specific to Trillanes.

According to President Duterte, Gazmin can be charged with usurpation of authority for doing this as the power to pardon and grant amnesty is solely

vested in the president as clearly stated in the Constitution.

The invalidation of Trillanes' amnesty based on Duterte's Proclamation 572 means that he has reverted to the status of an active military personnel, according to military and defense officials. This means that once he is arrested, he will be turned over to custody of the military police.

The people have to wait a bit however for Trillanes' court martial. Because we are a democratic country with working courts (take note, New York Times), Trillanes

was able to file a petition before the Supreme Court seeking a temporary restraining order against the voiding of his amnesty.

But the odds are stacked against him, legally speaking, and there is of course the matter of his constant insults and verbal abuses of the Supreme Court justices.

So we wait and see. Until then, let us enjoy the fact that the putchist Trillanes was finally hit with a karmic comeuppance.

The Deegong's health: Its implications

LATELY speculations have been rife as to the health of DU30. Social media has been inundated by rumors on the purpose of his recent trip: "Why is Duterte in Israel? Why is his schedule full of big holes? Is he there for medical treatment? Why are the details under wraps?"

The national conversation has deteriorated to a point where rumor and innuendo gain more currency than actual news. But such is the nature of gossips. They have more traction. They are simply salacious and easier to spread from mouth to mouth. These normally start with tidbits of truth and, depending on which side of the issue you belong to or are comfortable with, one adds a tier of prevarication or "unverifiable truth," spreading this out, seducing others to chip in by coating another layer, and so on and so forth.

Social media has opened channels to every Tom, Dick and Harriet to vent their views on the public with nary a concern for "the truth." This liberating power needs only an internet connection and suitable apps.

Lately items have proliferated dissecting the Deegong's "pale, gaunt skin texture," irregular public exposures and irritable demeanor. Even his close supporters claim to notice the same, jumping to the conclusion that indeed, the President must be sick. It's the old "liver problem," they surmise. And the old rumors of his taking small doses of the opioid fentanyl as a pain reliever have again been revived. All these really are, in the colorful language of the president, "just plain b___t."



LITO MONICO C. LORENZANA

It seems to me that there are several factions feverishly involved in this deadly game of rumors and social media inaccuracies. There are those who are not happy with this regime and are identifiable as the opposition which includes the yellow army and the remnants of the old cabal of PNoy, the LP and other political parties, decimated by the earlier raids of the PDP Laban.

Another bloc is the rabid Deegong loyalists faithfully carrying the torch for his political agenda and the defenders of whatever he stands for—from the deadly war against illegal drugs to his ambiguous anti-corruption fight to a bastardized version of federalism. The latter is toxic because of the propagation of a myth that only Duterte alone and only within his watch can federalization be realized, thus, this frantic effort to put this half-cooked version in place prematurely.

An adjunct to this group is the disgruntled Duterte election campaign workers who were left out in the cold, without government appointments or rewarded sinecures in corporate boards. They are not as acrimonious as the yellow army but won't mind chastising the president in their own perverted way.

These factions have raised this game of rumor-mongering to a dangerous level. The "antis," convinced that the Deegong's health

is deteriorating fast and may not last the mid-term, have accelerated their attacks in all media, precipitating the near-desperate move of Duterte's minions in the Comelec and government bureaucracy to enforce a different protocol to get Bongbong into the line of succession, shunting aside Leni Robredo.

A twist to this scenario is that the President's allies have anticipated this all along and have in fact disingenuously positioned GMA, a hard-nosed politician, to be the Deegong's handmaiden in pursuit of the next phase of a pragmatic political agenda—the mentoring of his heir apparent, Sara.

The permutations are intricate. One yellow army thread calculates DU30 can't depend on the military to do his bid-

ding despite his seeding the bureaucracy with appointed generals, colonels and assorted officers. So, the narrative flow is that he will have to rely on his old leftist comrades, those outside of Joma Sison's coterie, nurtured by him while he was the Davao mayor, to stand as "shock troops." Meantime, he will have to neutralize experienced coup plotters like Trillanes and his erstwhile special forces comrades by incarceration or by other means.

All these because Deegong is perceived to look pale, frail and sickly!

For heaven's sake, the President is not that sick! There is no incontrovertible proof that he is. He may be weakening as gleaned from his own statements and the knee-jerk denial of his spokesman, but the man is 74 years old. He will not give up his seat for Bongbong, Leni or Chiz. He has been riding on the tiger's back to dismount safely. He loves power too much to give it all up.

This quarrel between the pro and anti DU30 is beginning to irritate a larger group comprising most of the citizens who are neither identified with the yellow army or the DDS/fist pumpers. This group has neither the inclination to hate or love the Deegong. But neither are they neutral too in the political conflicts. They are not categorized as "the undecided," as they have made their decision in favor of the country. They too have a stake in its welfare but their concerns demanding simply good governance are being marginalized by the boisterous opposing factions.

What to me is closer to reality instead of these conjectures on the President's health, fanciful scenarios and false narratives is that DU30's vaunted political will may be on the wane. Where earlier in his regime, his impulses and brash language were taken as reflections of *political will*, as these were amplified by his two ranking mouthpieces in congress, Koko Pimentel and Bebot Alvarez. But these two are no longer there. They have been replaced by two charismatic leaders with solid bases of their own, not dependent on the Deegong's. GMA and Sotto are his full partners, not subalterns.

With "political will" as its main impetus, federalism, as a flagship is similarly on its death throes, a victim of a conspiracy of the unelected. His appointed ConCom produced a document that his cabinet was permitted to mangle. It was revealed by some quarters that for the past 10 months, federalism was never even discussed seriously in a cabinet meeting.

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NEDA stepped in with its 15-year roadmap only recently when it is by function the custodian of long-term programs. As a priority, NEDA should have taken the initiative from the very beginning to embrace it as its own. Either NEDA was not in tune with DU30's agenda or it was allowed to sabotage this program; in which case the Deegong is complicit. *AL*

But all these are water under the bridge now that the political realities are in a flux. DU30 will have to sound the clarion call once more for his DDS/fist pumpers to assemble to get his selected candidates into elective positions this midterm, if he is to salvage what is left of his agenda and avoid being a lame duck. I doubt this time they will heed his call without the traditional enticements. And this could be tragic. It is almost a truism that Philippine polarizing presidents could end their term in perfectly good health - but find themselves incarcerated.

DU30's prerogative?

As this is written, President Rodrigo Duterte is about to address the nation in a live TV broadcast. Malacañang has given no indication what exactly he intends to talk about. He arrived last Saturday from a week-long arms-shopping trip to Israel and Jordan, which did not bear

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S. TATAD

■ TATAD FROM A1

much fruit. The news cycle has since been dominated by his controversial attempt to revoke a 2010 presidential amnesty granted by then President Benigno S. Aquino 3rd, with the full concurrence of Congress, to former Navy lieutenant-turned-senator Antonio Trillanes 4th for his participation in three destabilization efforts in 2003, 2006 and 2007 against the Gloria Macapagal Arroyo government.

This is now the subject of a raging debate, and no one has accused DU30 of winning it.

It is not for me or anybody else to tell him what to talk about. But he has a vast field to cover if he wants to be informative and forthright. He could begin by talking about his Israeli and Jordanian trips: what happened in those visits? He traveled with a plane-load of 400 people, according to the news reports; the taxpayers would like to know if they were all freeloaders who may be part of the reasons why we now have Southeast Asia's highest inflation rate of 6.4 percent.

What happened in Israel What happened in Jordan

In Jerusalem, a number of good things happened. DU30 discovered the God of Abraham is real, all-wise and all-powerful, and not in the least "stupid"; that Hitler was absolutely insane for ordering the Holocaust which killed 6 million Jews; and that he owed former US President Barack Obama (who is incidentally not a Jew) an apology for calling him a "son of a whore" in 2016. It would be good to hear DU30 say something about all these. But more importantly, it would be good for him to tell us what happened to his well-announced plan to acquire the most modern military arms and equipment from the Jewish state.

By this, he had intended to show his "independence" from the US, the country's historic ally, which he accused of giving the Philippines only hand-me-down arms and equipment. Since then, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Defense Secretary James Mattis and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross have written DU30, presumably on behalf of President Donald Trump, a letter offering the Philippines a range of modern military equipment. Is it true Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu showed no interest whatsoever in selling DU30 any Israeli arms and equipment?

It was in Amman, Jordan where DU30 finally got some discussions on military purchases going. Jordan agreed to transfer two refurbished Bell A-H1 Cobra attack helicopters to the DU30 government by July. Unless I am completely mistaken, these are slightly used US-made helicopters. But the more interesting question about the Jordanian visit was that it was cut short by one day without any official explanation for it. Was there anything Malacañang failed

to tell us? Perhaps there was.

Earlier in March, DU30 had a lively exchange with Jordanian Prince Zeid Raad Al Hussein, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2014 to 2018, who once played a central role in organizing the International Criminal Court at the Hague, where a private party has brought allegations of crimes against humanity against DU30.

Zeid said DU30 needed to be psychiatrically evaluated after he threatened to go after Agnes Callamard, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings, who has been trying to inquire into the drug killings in the Philippines. DU30 said Zeid, coming from a monarchy, was unfamiliar with the ways of constitutional

government. Having apologized to Obama while he was in Israel, people expected DU30 to apologize to Zeid, a blood relative of King Abdullah 2nd, before or during his visit to Amman. But he did not, so people are asking whether that had anything to do with his decision to shorten his four-day visit. It would be good to hear from DU30 on this.

The Trillanes amnesty

Or he could explain more comprehensively his attempt to cancel Aquino's final and irrevocable amnesty in favor of Trillanes. This has been lengthily discussed in the press, but his latest statement seems to provide a definitive proof of how he completely misunderstands the constitutional powers and prerogatives of the President. He says his attempt to cancel Aquino's Proclamation 75 of November 24, 2010 by his own Proclamation 572 on August 31, 2018 is an exercise of "presidential prerogative."

This is a complete misreading of the Constitution. The president's power and prerogative, under Article VII, Section 19 of the Constitution is "to grant amnesty with the concurrence of a majority of all the members of the Congress." It is not the opposite. The Constitution does not grant the president the power to revoke or cancel any amnesty previously granted by another president under the same provision, even with the concurrence of all the members of Congress.

Least of all does it grant him the power to revoke any such amnesty without the concurrence of any member of Congress. Some propagandists have tried to advance the view that while the consent of Congress is necessary and essential to give validity to the president's amnesty, it does not share the president's power to issue such amnesty. This is probably the last word in sophistry, but you don't need to have studied Aristotelian logic to show this is bunk. The power to grant amnesty is defined by the Constitution as a shared power of the president and the Congress.

Gazmin's intervention

The only pro-government argument that seems worth exploring is the

one advanced by the most unlikely source, the presidential counsel Salvador Panelo, which claims that the official who granted Trillanes and company their amnesty was not Aquino himself but only his Secretary of National Defense, Voltaire Gazmin, who had no constitutional authority to do so. Since Aquino could not delegate his power to Gazmin, if it were shown beyond doubt that the amnesty was granted by Gazmin rather than Aquino, then it would be void ab initio.

But was that, in fact, the case?

It appears there is no dispute on the authenticity of Aquino's signature on Proclamation 75; Gazmin intervened solely as processing officer, pursuant to the rules of procedure in the processing of amnesty applications. His participation could not invalidate the amnesty unless it was shown that he, rather than Aquino, granted amnesty to the applicants without legitimate constitutional authority. If DU30 can show this to have been the case, then he could question not Trillanes's amnesty alone, but that of 38 other officers and 53 enlisted men as well. But can he?

Ousting DU30

This is also a good time for the President to talk with some coherence about his claim that certain groups are out to oust him in October. He has identified three groups, but Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana has confirmed the alleged threat from only one group — the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army/National Democratic Front. The communists reportedly started planning their move against DU30 in 2016, then finalized it in 2018. As an old student of Philippine politics, I have serious reservations about it. Most, if not all, of DU30's problems are self-inflicted.

But assuming Lorenzana is correct, DU30 should have been the first one to know about it. Why then did he have to appoint seasoned members of the CPP/NPA/NDF to the Cabinet, give imprimatur to the idea of a coalition government, and allow his Cabinet secretary, the rebel ex-priest and vice-chairman of the NDF, Leon Evasco Jr., to conduct his grassroots campaign for the development of a Philippine socialist state?

Why did he make a big show of separating economically and militarily from the US and aligning himself with China and Russia against the world? And how does this explain his latest public statements that the CIA is out to kill him? Will he care to tell the nation whether he sees an active alliance between the CIA and the communists? Or will he care to remind the nation that he had long warned us that only two out of his five statements are to be taken seriously?

The economic crisis

Did DU30 decide to speak to the nation because the looming economic crisis threatens to go

out of control? If so, it will not be enough to blame Donald Trump's "tariffs" for the skyrocketing consumer prices that have given us the highest inflation rate of 6.4 percent nationwide (9 percent in Bicol) in all of Southeast Asia. The people must have enough food on their table and must not be made to choose between "rice with *bukbok*" (weevils) and "bukbok with some rice," and imported *galunggong*.

Faced with the massive complaints against all the negative effects of the TRAIN (Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion) Law, DU30 should decide whether the problem could be solved by scrapping the said law, or simply by renaming it TRABAHO (for Tax Reform for Attracting Better and High-quality Opportunities). Propaganda allows the government to tell the starving masses how much they are enjoying the bounties of good government.

DU30 will have to decide whether Davao should carve the biggest share of the national budget while the other regions get nothing. He will also have to decide whether the family of his special assistant Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go, whom he had long described as a "billionaire," should have all the infrastructure contracts denied to more deserving competitors. Finally, he will have to decide whether or not to keep the large number of incompetent and corrupt officials who have become an albatross around the neck of his administration.

I do not expect DU30 to have the courage to fire any of these scoundrels right now, but never before have I felt any desire to be wrong about this ex-mayor of Davao.

IN MEMORIAM. It is with the deepest sorrow that I share with friends and readers the news about the passing of Ambassador Jose V. Romero Jr., 84, in Baltimore, Maryland. The information is sketchy, but everything is being done by his bereaved family to make sure his remains are brought to Manila as soon as possible. Joe served as Philippine ambassador to Rome, and as permanent representative to

the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

Until his passing, he chaired the Philippine Council for Foreign Relations, and was a professorial lecturer in political economy at the University of Asia and the Pacific, where he earned a doctorate in development management. A product of Trinity College, Cambridge, he took graduate studies in economics at Georgetown University later. One of his enduring causes was to fight for the coconut farmers. A mutual friend Charlie Avila was able to pay him his last respects before he passed. "Finish the fight," he told Charlie before he expired.

Joe contributed occasional pieces of substance to the *Manila Times*. He had a passion for excellence and he lived the life of a devoted Catholic Christian gentleman. I ask the pious reader to offer a prayer for the repose of his soul.

fsitad@gmail.com

Yellows like lunatics now shrieking: 'The end is near'

In their
wishful
but deluded
thinking that
the inflation
spike and
the Trillanes
brouhaha



**RIGOBERTO
D. TIGLAO**

will be bringing down President Duterte soon,
the Yellows can't even pick a slogan that won't
hint at their lunacy.

► TiglaoA6

Yellows like lunatics now shrieking: 'The end is near'

Melito Salazar, a Board of Investments vice chairman during the Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos administrations, very surprisingly titled his column "The end is near." There he claimed that the Duterte administration was now in "economic and political chaos" that marks the end of any regime.

Vicente Romano 3rd, President Noyonoy Aquino's five-month tourism undersecretary who nearly got the country to plagiarize the Poland tourism slogan (and even logo), echoed Salazar's take: "You know the end is near when... the economy is in a free fall. Prices of commodities are hitting the roof, beyond the reach of the poor. And nobody seems in charge on how to contain the problem."

That "the-end-is-near" line of course is an old, old line used in so many caricatures of religious nuts wearing sack cloth shouting (with placards even). "Repent, the end is near." So, it is befitting that these Yellows should be using this cliché.

Either he is a closet Yellow cultist, or a political opportunist with a lousy sense of timing (or just dull-witted analyst), but Senator Ralph Recto in the opening prayer of the Senate session the other day — for chrissake, in a prayer! — also portrayed the country as already in economic collapse, saying that "food is scarce, their prices high" and that "inflation is robbing our people of the full value of their wages."

Inflation is indeed high at 6.4 percent year on year in August. That means prices went up 6.4 percent from August 2017 to August 2018, not as some Yellows are stupidly claiming, that prices went up from July 2018 to August 2018. That means your P100 in August last year can buy only P94 worth of goods in August 2018.

There were unique factors that pushed up the rate in August. Mainly three: the uptick in global oil prices which — in our very market-oriented oil industry — had to be reflected in higher prices for fuel (and therefore transport); the fact that June to August is the lean season in agricultural production, with harvests, especially for rice,

still to come in two months' time; and production and distribution disruptions due to typhoons. The National Food Authority in its programming apparently didn't take into account the Duterte administration's clampdown on rice smuggling, which was rampant during the past administration, which explains the low inflation rates at that time. (See my column last week "Clampdown on smuggling destabilized rice prices, supply.")

Take it from a business and economic journalist: these past many years. The 6.4 percent August inflation is a spike, and will go away. More importantly, the country has been through worse bouts of inflation in the past 40 years, and our institutions, mainly the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, whose main job precisely involves this, have learned to contain inflation, quickly and easily.

In 2008, the worst global recession after the 1929 Great Depression hit the planet, translating into a 12.4 percent inflation rate in September that year. By the end of the year though, this was contained — to the credit of President Gloria Arroyo's P330-billion Economic Resiliency Plan — so that the whole-year rate was at 8.3 percent, with the momentum price deflation continuing into the next three years.

There were similar such spikes in 2001, 1994, 1998, and 1971 — the latter even a perfect storm of sorts as there was both an economic crisis (triggered by OPEC's oil embargo) and a political crisis (Plaza Miranda bombing, a violent national election, mass unrest. Would you believe, the inflation rate in 1971 was 21 percent and in 1974, 41 percent, yet Marcos continued to consolidate his one-man rule throughout that decade?

The worst surge of inflation was in 1984 when it hit 63 percent in September that year. This was another politico-economic storm. The worldwide debt crisis broke out in 1981, we defaulted on our loans in 1983 that imposes nearly ground to a halt, and then there was political volatility after Ninoy Aquino's assassination in 1983.

PHILIPPINE INFLATION RATES

YEAR	RATE	YEAR	RATE
1984	50.3	2002	2.7
1985	23.1	2003	2.3
1986	1.1	2003	2.3
1987	4.1	2004	4.8
1988	13.9	2005	6.5
1989	12.2	2006	5.5
1990	12.2	2007	2.9
1991	19.3	2008	8.3
1992	8.7	2009	4.2
1993	6.7	2010	3.8
1994	10.4	2011	4.6
1995	6.8	2012	3.2
1996	7.5	2013	3.0
1997	5.6	2014	4.1
1998	9.2	2015	1.4
1999	5.9	2016	1.8
2000	4.0	2017	2.9
2001	5.3	2018	4.9*

Source: World Bank
*Average monthly January to August

■ THE END IS NOT NEAR: Inflation rates through the years.

Guess what, the Marcos government still managed to bring the rate down to 12 percent in September 1985 and 6 percent at the end of 1985. Amid the January snap elections, the daily anti-Marcos demonstrations, rumors of a coup, the inflation rate was just 4 percent in January 1986, right before the February 1986 revolt. (Which belies the notion that an economic crisis triggered EDSA.)

Guys, we're not Venezuela, which is situated in a continent that for some reason has been so prone to hyper-inflation since before World War 2. The 1983 and 2008 global debt crises have so strengthened our financial and monetary system that this very easily responds to moves to contain inflation.

It's a characteristic mark of the Yellows to have very limited phraseology (or erudition) that they use only tired clichés as this recent "The end is near," "Never Again" (the Jewish cry against the

Holocaust), and of course "Daang Matuwid" ("Straight Path," a reference to Islam).

In her exertions to claim that the military will go to the aid of Trillanes, a Rappler writer who's in a time warp in the 1980s, thinking that she is still covering Gringo Honasan and his dashing comrades in the Cory regime (and not the megalomaniac Trillanes) titled her piece, "Don't mess with the military." She's forgotten that that cliché had evolved into a comedic line, after the box-office comedy movie, "Don't Mess with the Zohar," where Adam Sandler played the hilarious anti-hero.

So appropriate to use that line. Trillanes is more hilarious now than Sandler.

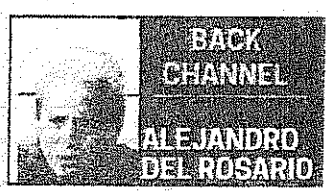
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Convergence



THERE is a confluence of events that is building up into a social volcano. The people are grumbling about rising prices and food shortages. Grumbling coming from the pit of the stomach is the hardest to ignore because one can say it is really a gut issue. Consumers are blaming the government's TRAIN law, specifically the heavy excise tax on fuel, for the ripple effect on electricity rates and just about everything else. The cartels are in control because the administration is more focused on mindless politics.

These are statements of fact but the government does not take kindly to criticism. Quite often, this would be taken as insidious remarks from the Liberal Party and the Communist Party of the Philippines. The LP

and the CPP, in case the administration does not know it yet, are both already discredited and irrelevant in the scheme of things on how Filipinos are struggling to survive.

Sensing a gathering storm (not the super typhoon heading towards the country's northern part) President Rodrigo Duterte said he would address the nation Tuesday afternoon but canceled at the last minute. Instead he had a one-on-one interview with chief legal adviser Salvador Panelo.

It is interesting to note that earlier on the same day, two legal issues were decided favoring Malacañang. The

Supreme Court ruled to deny Senator Antonio Trillanes' bid for a restraining order on Presidential Proclamation 572 revoking the amnesty granted him by former President Benigno Aquino III. The House judiciary panel on the other hand voted to reject the impeachment case filed against seven SC justices who voted to remove Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno via quo warranto proceedings.

Another columnist in this newspaper warned the situation might have reached a tipping point. He cited facts and figures on the inflation, the peso-dollar rate, etc. to support his contention that the country's instability might have reached a tipping point.

A tipping point or when a boiling pot of water overturns, however, needs the political factor to the economic hardship to complete the heady mix for a social upheaval. The people around the President—his economic advisers and legal panel—do NOT seem to have a sense of history.

We are not fomenting an upheaval against the government. That's the last thing we need in a volatile global economy. But then the people in charge of providing basic food and services for the people must read up on history. The French people stormed the Bastille on July 14, 1789 when King Louis XVI's wife Marie Antoinette uttered her now famous and insensitive statement of "let them eat cake" in response to poor people protesting the lack of bread in stores and on their table. This sounds eerily familiar to Filipinos complaining about the scarcity and high price of rice.

Grumbling coming from the pit of the stomach is the hardest to ignore.

Turn to A5

Handwritten mark

Convergence

From A4

Cake, of course, in the time of King Louis and Queen Marie Antoinette, was only available at Versailles Palace. Flour for bread and the everyman's baguette could not be found in stores.

The present rice crisis reminds me of a subtle line of editor-poet G. Burce Bunao. With the closure of the Roces-owned Manila Times, Fred (for Godofredo) lost his job. He put up a bakery shop selling mostly pan de sal. On the front window pane of his store he pasted a sign which read: "*Para magkaroon ng tinapay sa mesa, ang masa ay kailangang umalsa.*" Translated in English, Fred Bunao's words cannot be as much meaningful as they are

in Tagalog.

For his double entendre message, Fred landed in a military camp where he was detained a week for purportedly inciting the masses to rise against the martial law regime.

But what is laughable is the ludicrous statement of Agriculture Secretary Manny Pinol that "there is no rice shortage." Another joker, Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque said prices of prime commodities, are exaggerated. Workers told Roque to go out and check market prices.

The present economic condition accompanied by political turmoil seen in the government's handling of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV's case could be compared to the torrential flow of two rivers converging at some point which could result

in a people storm surge. I would suggest the government head off this converging river torrent lest it becomes too late to manage. This confluence of events was what stoked People Power into Edsa One and Two.

There is apparently a feeling of hubris inside the Palace after the administration's success in arresting and detaining Senator Leila de Lima and then ousting Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno via quo warranto proceedings. The draconian action against Trillanes is seen as part of that steamroller momentum to silence the President's critics.

But the legal team of Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra, Solicitor General Jose Calida and Harry Roque who's also a lawyer, might have overreached itself. What they are doing against the senator is

making Trillanes a symbol of persecution and a hero which he really is not. This is a big political blunder the Palace coterie did not seem to realize.

The problem that arose in the Sereno and Trillanes cases is the making of former President Benigno "Noy" Aquino. He appointed Sereno who had no seniority nor court appearance experience which laid the ground for Calida and company to claim her appointment was ab initio or flawed from the start.

This is the same basis for the presidential proclamation that the grant of amnesty to Trillanes was also flawed from the start since he allegedly did not apply for the amnesty. Trillanes though showed reporters documents that he did apply and was granted amnesty together with fellow coup plotters.

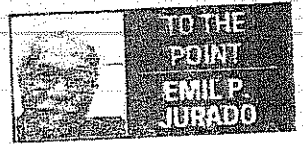
Malacanang officials are smug that Trillanes will not be able to whip up a storm among the people nor from certain officers in the military and police establishments. But the two People Power uprising showed us that the military need not do anything like harness their force against the people or the powers that be. They don't have to do anything except withdraw support from the government and then watch how events unfold.

A former Armed Forces chief, senator and congressman Rodolfo Biazon expressed his view that the withdrawal of the amnesty given to Senator Trillanes is without legal basis.

"If the amnesty granted to Trillanes is void, then so the amnesty would be for former military rebels Danny Lim, Nicanor Faeldon, Gary Alejano, and the others."

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Is Bong Go linked to DPWH anomalies?



IN THE wake of the controversy over the revocation of the amnesty granted to Senator Antonio Trillanes IV by former President Benigno Aquino III, now comes the issue linking Special Assistant to the President Christopher "Bong" Go and his half-brother in the procurement of awards and contracts in public works.

I rely on the findings of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism linking Go to the contracts and posing questions on his other involvement in business.

The pertinent questions: What role did Bong Go have in the multi-billion public works contract awarded to his father and half-brother? Did Go exert some influence as special assistant to then-mayor and now President Duterte?

In the same breath, among the public works officials, who could be held responsible for the approval of these contracts awarded to CLTG (Go's initials) Builders from 2008 to 2017?

In fairness to Go and Duterte, however, the contracts did not involve the Davao City government but other areas in the Davao region.

In fact, when the PCIJ sought Go's reaction, he denied everything.

Trillanes plans to investigate Go. Go meanwhile offered to resign if allegations against him are proven true.

Here are some excerpts from the report:

"In sum, CLTG has been awarded P4.6 billion worth of projects, all from the DPWH, in the past decade. It won more than half of the total only last year."

Another portion of the report said: "In 2017, CLTG won DPWH contracts worth a total of P399,336,326.72. In the same year, it won, through joint ventures, a total of P2,538,191,443.36 in DPWH contracts."

How lucky can some people get? It's like winning the lottery!

The PCIJ further said: "Two senior government officials and at least four contractors privy to the procurement activities in Davao told PCIJ in separate interviews that backroom deals are happening in order for certain companies to corner contracts even though they do not have the capability to take on projects."

My *gula*, I believe what the PCIJ reported because when I covered the DPWH at one time when I was still with The Philippines Herald, I knew that the department was rotten to the core. So many projects were left unfinished and yet completely paid for.

My former classmate Vicente Jayme was once assigned to the DPWH. He lasted only seven months. I asked him why, and he said he could not stand the corruption there.

The real scandal here, PCIJ reports, is that senior officials and some contractors trace the problem to a strange situation in the region. Mostly the same contractors are winning more and more contracts than they

"The department is rotten to the core."

could finish within their capacity and within deadline.

This is why I believe there should be an investigation, not only into Bong Go's alleged links to DPWH, but the whole anomalous practice in public works. DPWH Secretary Mark Villar has a lot of explaining to do.

In the meantime, Trillanes should ask if Go even filed his Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth. He is a public official, after all. And didn't President Duterte call Go a billionaire, one time?

The probe would be likely because there is talk he would run for the Senate next year. Go should be asked about his academic credentials, qualifications, and program of government if elected.

Is loyalty now a ticket to the Senate?

The President did not push through with addressing the nation and only spoke with chief legal adviser Salvador Panelo.

The main topic was the alleged ouster plot against him. But how can he be

74 Turn to A5

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Is Bong...

From A4

ousted when he remains popular?

As far as the Magdalo group of Trillanes, I doubt that the Armed Forces would join them. I have been a journalist for so long and I have observed numerous coup attempts. Before any military takeover can succeed, there must be a people power component.

While there are the problems of high prices and looming rice crisis, the people do not seem discontented and about to march on the streets.

Not yet, anyway.

From the opposition, there is no credible leader who would inspire following among the people. Not Vice President Leni Robredo, not Trillanes.

So what destabilization is the President talking about?

* * *

One effect of the revocation of Trillanes' amnesty is that the amnesty given to all 59 others may also be null and void.

The question is whether the amnesty was really void from the start?

Only the courts can rule with finality. But what about the other recipients of the amnesty who are now in government, like MMDA's Danilo Lim and Undersecretary Nicanor Faeldon?

Duterte's dialogue

PRESIDENT Duterte has announced that he will make important announcements to the public about developments in the government at 3 p.m. yesterday, but no nationwide address was heard or seen.

The planned nationwide TV and radio appearance of the President took on an even greater importance because it was scheduled on the same day that the Supreme Court was to decide on the petition for temporary restraining order (TRO) filed by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV against Duterte's Proclamation 572 which nullified the amnesty granted to him by President Noynoy Aquino for his involvement in two mutinous adventures.

'The public expected much from the planned press conference which became just a one-on-one interview with the President, with the interviewer just his Palace subordinate with very friendly questions and answers that we all have heard before.'

Yesterday morning, the high tribunal declined to issue a TRO, but based its decision on the President's pronouncement that Trillanes will not be arrested without a warrant, thus there is "no extreme and urgent necessity for the Court to issue an injunctive relief."

The SC also decided to give the government 10 days to answer Trillanes' challenge on the constitutionality of the amnesty revocation. This means while the SC is not immediately stopping the proclamation's implementation, it is not putting an end to hearing the senator's petition just yet.

Because Duterte did not disclose what the planned announcements were about, many Filipinos especially those active on social media, began to speculate on what the developments are about.

Conjectures about a revolutionary government, planned destabilization plots, and similar political movements were aired, prompting Malacañang to modify the announced dialogue with only presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo asking the prepared questions from media.

The Duterte-Panelo dialogue did not come close to the dramatic way it was announced as an important press conference. It went pitiful as a media event, for it degenerated instead as a legal discussion between two lawyers who were exchanging legal arguments about what a president's power to grant amnesty is.

Panelo asked Duterte about his health, who replied instead that there is a destabilization plan by the Magdalo and the communist party against him, and went on to enumerate all the privileges and perks he has given to the military while Trillanes gave nothing.

The President also used his TV appearance to hit Joma Sison, but his vitriol are nothing new, and the nation has gotten bored of Sison anyway that he does not command any more authority or influence, perhaps even from rebels still fighting the armed rebellion.

The continuing martial law in Mindanao was also a topic of the two officials, and the President defended it, saying the residents of the South are generally supportive of martial law despite the numerous military checkpoints. **ML**

The public expected much from the planned press conference which became just a one-on-one interview with the President, with the interviewer just his Palace subordinate with very friendly questions and answers that we all have heard before.

Duterte avoids health query, shows obsession with Trillanes

THERE were two things that stood out in President Duterte's one-hour-and-a-half tête-à-tête with presidential legal counsel Sal Panelo: he didn't want to talk about his health and he is obsessed with Trillanes.

After about 10 minutes of monologue defending his attempt to nullify the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV by then President Benigno Aquino III (this time using alleged defective approval of then Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin which was not the basis of his Proclamation 572), Panelo wanted to talk about his health: "Puntahan naman natin ang mga agam-agam ng tumambayan kasama na ang critics ayona si Joma Sison. Sinasabi na kayo ay maysakit-sakit. Ano po ang masasabi nyo nangkol sa inyong kalusugan para marinig ng tumambayan?"

Duterte's answer was about the alleged conspiracy of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Magdalo to topple him: "Alam nyo itong si Sison, pati itong Magdalo, pati itong away sa akin, yung talagang hindi tumanggap sa akin ever since noong

election, they have combined and we have the evidence and we have the conversation provided by a foreign country sympathetic to us. We don't have the sophistication but the connections will be shown maybe any day now. I asked that it be declassified at ipakita nila sa lahat. Nabihigop lahat. They were in constant communication."

Panelo returned to the issue of his health: "Sa punto po ng kalusugan, talagang malusog na malu-

Panelo tried to make him discuss other issues but he kept on going back to Trillanes.'



HONESTLY SPEAKING

ELLEN TORDESILLAS

sog kayo, nakikita ng mga tao."

Duterte didn't comment.

Here's the observation of some viewers:

Journalist Fe Zamora said, "He looks sick, out of focus ang mata parang na-stroke. Very dark ang skin, which reminds of a friend who underwent radiation, umitim ang mukha."

Manny Bautista seconded: "The contrast is very apparent in the color of the arm to face."

This was the same observation of a friend who sent me a private message: "Pansin po ba ninyo that PRRD is parang biglang nawawala sa issue? Walang focus or me sakit na yata talaga."

He also noted that "he (Duterte) was talking about rice and Cabinet meeting tapos biglang nag-shift ke Trillanes. Walang konek."

His obsession with Trillanes was obvious.

Panelo tried to make him discuss other issues but he kept on going back to Trillanes. This shows that he was really rattled by Trillanes' defiance which gained widespread support and sympathy.

What did Duterte achieve with that tête-à-tête? **DU**

Here are more comments on Facebook:

Ricardo De Leon Dalisay: "In love ba si Digong kay Trillanes, maski anong issue, bumabalik doon."

Ismael Paredes Penado said at one point, "It's getting so boring already. The obsession with Trillanes is so palpable. Pitiful."

Andrei Manuel said, "He also

See DUTERTE ► Page B5

sounds like he is threatening the military who are supporting Sen. Trillanes."

Inday Espina-Varona: "Ayun lumabas ang hugot sa AFP generals, probably because they didn't follow orders to storm the Senate for Trillanes. Doon kayo kay Trillanes. Never mind me. I will survive. You can kill me. Pakita nyo sa Filipino na matalino kayo."

He even said, "Bakit gusto nyo si Trillanes, dahil mas guwapo?"

He must have been affected by all the memes putting him side by side with Trillanes.

Jing Garcia said, "Daming topics pero puro Trillanes lang narinig ko. It's like Facebook Live on TV."

Noel Esquela said, "I found it ridiculous, pathetic in its petulance, petty in its vindictiveness, framing everything as a choice between himself and the folly of public outcry against his perceived incompetence or inability to govern at all."

Virginia Florita said, "As usual...nagdakdak na naman...just like an old broken tap."

Beting Laygo Dolor: "He's rambling, but what else is new?"

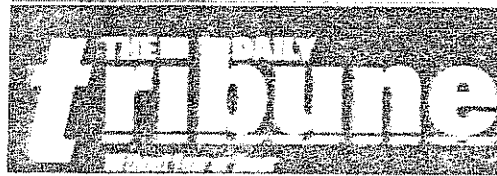
That's what JB Baylon said: "He is no Rambo. He is rambling."

Manny Marinay said, "I started cooking dinner. Walang kwenta, as usual."

Jinky Jorgio said, "Nakatulog ako."

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Another ouster plot gone awry

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At most, it will be a one day protest, joined in by the yellows, the Reds and not to forget, the effing Whites.

Warnings were aired by Malacañang the other day of a "massive destabilization" plot from groups that want President Duterte ousted which is supposed to be timed for the 46th anniversary of martial law under the Marcos regime.



FRONTLINE
Ninez Cacho-Olivares

If there is such a plot, this certainly will no longer come about, since the plot already has been publicly bared and the police and military as well as the Palace officials are all ready for such a plot.

Still, what will probably take place on 21 September, the day then President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law, is a protest march against Duterte, with protesters of different colors, protesting against too many varied issues, which is why these groups can't seem to have a united front—save to get Presidents they dislike—ousted.

It is also probable that some other provincial cities will have protesters with the same set of issues against the President.



At most, it will be a one day protest, joined in by the yellows, the Reds and not to forget, the effing Whites

representing the clerics and the religious, who always get involved in political matters instead of getting their pedophile priests and rapists in clerical robes sent to jail.

Looking back at the past 21 September anniversaries of the proclamation of martial law, the protesters appear to have lost their power of persuasion to get more and more people to join them and, at times, even have to pay and bus in people to join them.

Notice the faces and groups who continue to stage protests—these are more or less the same "activists" out of power that have been protesting through the years, mouthing the same political spiels and want the Marcoses out of power and position.

These people don't seem to accept the fact that it is not they who elect Presidents but the majority of the Filipino people—whether they elect Rodrigo Duterte or Bongbong Marcos or Imee Marcos.

The vote of the majority, above all, must be respected but, unfortunately, none of these yellows, Whites and Reds seems to respect the vote of the electorate, as they have been known to mount coups against Presidents they dislike and replace them with those they like—without their going through an election.

One does not have to forget the past. However, what they carry with them all these decades is not just the past but also the hatred that they refuse to let go, which is pretty stupid, since it is hatred that eats away from them, bodily and mentally.

On the Malacañang warning of a "massive destabilization" plot from groups said to want Duterte from presidency ousted timed for the 46th

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anniversary of martial law, the President himself pointed to the yellows, Reds and Trillanes as the instigators of the oust-Rody plot, which the three color-coded groups had denied, including Sen. Antonio Trillanes of the yellow strain.

Strangely enough, Duterte's Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana contradicted the Chief Executive, insisting that reports of the destabilization plot against the Duterte administration come from the members of the New People's Army (NPA), thus shielding Trillanes and the yellows.

"The destabilization plot is true, but this comes from the NPA as they have an oust-Duterte Movement. I don't know if this is true," Lorenzana said.

“What I know is that it is precautionary and if someone comes around to recruit you on this plot against Duterte, don't listen to them. There is this rumor going on, but we are still verifying this,” he added.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque belittled the plot given the President's huge victory in the 2016 elections.

"The way I see it, because of the huge mandate the people gave President Duterte, nothing will come out of the destabilization plot," Roque said.

He added that it is so clear to him that on the day of the (presidential) election, the yellows never accepted their loss. And from day one, they were already planning on how they could return to power and position. The yellows are addicts of power. *U*

"They (yellows) are really preparing for a widespread destabilization on the martial law anniversary, which is why the President said. It (the oust Rody plot) will be in high gear in October, Roque said in a radio interview the other day.

The destabilization move through widespread protest won't work and the yellows, Reds, Whites and even Trillanes and his cohorts know this.

However, what they are angling for is to get the police to lose their cool and start arresting them, for them to have the bigtime excuse to call Duterte a dictator and make this their proof.

These yellows, Reds and Trillanes, along with the Whites, are just too pathetic for words.

Dots form yellow plot

“Trillanes and the yellow LP are trying to turn the Senate mass up into another power grab.”

A connect the yellow dots of sorts, the theatrics of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV at the Senate in evading arrest due to his past coup exploits are unraveling as another major yellow mob operation.

A check by *Daily Tribune* with those who witnessed the 9 September Mass for the beleaguered senator said Imelda Nicolas was among those in the yellow crowd and even assisted Trillanes in carrying an image of Our Lady of Peñafrancia during a procession which was joined by Trillanes' supporters from Tindig Pilipinas.

YOU DON'T NEED TO LAUNCH A COUP D'ETAT. I WILL GIVE IT TO YOU.

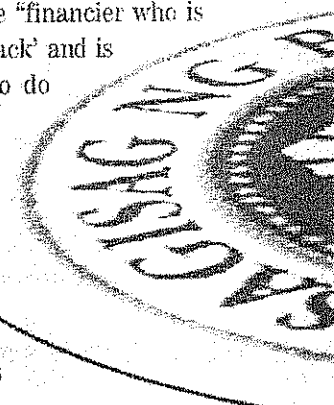
Nicolas was a former official of the yellow President Noyoy Aquino as secretary of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

A photo taken of the event by both *Agence France Presse* and the *Associated Press* showed Nicolas with Trillanes and Noyoy's former peace adviser Teresita Deles.

Nicolas is the younger sister of Filipino-American philanthropist and Liberal Party (LP) financier Loida Nicolas-Lewis who President Rody Duterte said is one of the leading figures behind the oust-Duterte movement.

Rody said in a speech that the “financier who is a rich woman who married a ‘black’ and is now a millionaire is planning to do massive demonstration.”

Communications Secretary Martin Andanar had also reported about rumors from the Filipino-American community in the US about plans to oust Duterte due to his continuous attacks against the US.



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Rody told Lewis: "If you think that you can help, tell me because I will appoint you in a group of presidential advisers with a Cabinet position or without a portfolio but with the rank of a Cabinet. And I will follow your instruction to a tee."

"All those with Western persuasion. If you're blinded into believing America, if you think that you have personal debts to it, please join. You don't even need to launch a *coup d'etat*. I will just give it to you. I myself will swear you to Malacañang that these are the new rulers of the Republic and they will run the country, fine," Duterte said. 4

"And if the military or the police thinks that I do not serve well, no need for *coup d'etat*. God, you are wasting your bullet. Go to Malacañang, we'll have coffee and I myself will swear you to run this Republic and solve the problem," he added.

Nicolas also co-founded the US-Pinoy for Good Governance together with her sister and has strong links with yellow Filipino-Americans such as Rodiel Rodis and Eric Lachica.

News site *Politiko* said Lachica is a top aide of Nicolas-Lewis and was seen "hanging out with some leaders of the opposition in the Senate last February such as Trillanes and Atty. Phillip D. Sawali, the chief-of-staff of detained Sen. Leila de Lima."

Lachica is occasionally tapped by Nicolas-Lewis to organize and arrange the recent trips of opposition personalities like Trillanes to the US in an effort to gather support for the ouster of President Rodrigo Duterte from some top US officials.

Trillanes was at Capitol Hill in Washington DC in October last year and met Florida Republican Sen. Marco Rubio for US support on the campaign to boot Rody out of power.

Rubio is known to be critical of the alleged human rights violations being ascribed to the war on drugs.

With some paid protesters complete with Magdalo freebies such as caps and sashes, Trillanes and the yellow LP are trying to turn the Senate mass up into another power grab.

LP President Francis Pangilinan had called for the assembly of Trillanes' supporters at the Senate which he would later deny as a destabilization bid, saying it was meant to protect Trillanes from an "illegal arrest."

Patently illegal, however, is the power grab that the yellow mob is again cooking up to subvert a leader chosen by the people.

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Nicolas is the younger sister of Filipino-American philanthropist and Liberal Party financier Loida Nicolas-Lewis.

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No CPP tie-up with Magdalo, LP to oust Duterte, says Joma Sison

By: Deifin T. Mallari Jr. - @inquirerdotnet

Inquirer Southern Luzon / 07:49 PM September 11, 2018

LUCENA CITY — Exiled Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria “Joma” Sison denied that the communist rebels were in cahoots with the Magdalo group and Liberal Party to topple the Duterte administration.

“The broad united front promoted by the CPP against the Duterte tyranny is open to all patriotic forces,” Sison said in an online interview from his base in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

“But as far as I know, there are yet no talks between the CPP and Trillanes group or the Liberal Party,” he said, referring to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, who was of the Magdalo, which was involved in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and the 2007 Manila Peninsula siege.

President Rodrigo Duterte, in a televised interview with his chief presidential legal counsel, Salvador Panelo, said he had evidence to prove that his political opponents, the communists, and the Magdalo group were conspiring to overthrow him.

He said his evidence included a conversation provided by a foreign country sympathetic to his administration.

Sison said there had never been any discussion between him or the CPP with Trillanes or the Liberal Party about ousting Duterte from power.

However, he stressed that it was no secret that the revolutionary movement would wish “to promote a broad united front of patriotic forces and encourage the broad masses of the people in their millions to rise up and oust Duterte,” as Marcos was ousted in 1986 and Estrada in 2001.

Sison said: “Duterte is now worried to death and so desperate as to imagine that he would be ousted this coming October.”

He accused the President of “lying and bluffing” by claiming that there were recorded conversations between the CPP and the other plotters provided by a foreign government.

“I know Duterte long enough as a congenital liar and an incorrigible political swindler. And I challenge him to present publicly what he claims as recorded conversations,” Sison said.

He said: "The experts will easily expose the fakery if he dares to present anything. This could be something like his invented foreign bank accounts of Trillanes."

Sison said Duterte's ouster would happen when military and police forces withdraw support from him "upon the sight and inspiration of the rising people in their millions throughout the archipelago."

However, Sison admitted that it might take a little more time to build up the broad united front and the mass movement and prepare the way for the key military and police officers to withdraw support from the President.

"At any rate, Duterte will be lucky if he survives 2018 and even luckier if he survives middle of 2019," the rebel leader said.

He said the President was facing the threat of a determined Filipino people to oust him, considering his deteriorating physical and mental health. /atm

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Trillanes lawyer to Duterte, AFP: Respect SC decision on arrest warrant

By: Consuelo Marquez, Faye Orellana - @inquirerdotnet

INQUIRER.net / 04:32 PM September 11, 2018

Lawyer Reynaldo Robles on Tuesday called on President Rodrigo Duterte and officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to respect the Supreme Court and not arrest Senator Antonio Trillanes IV.

"Since the Supreme Court has made a public proclamation, taking note of the word of the President and the AFP, and if something untoward happens, yung tao at ang Korte Suprema na siguro ang bahala," Robles told the reporters at the Senate on Tuesday.

The SC denied the petition of Trillanes for a temporary restraining order on the implementation of Proclamation 572, revoking the amnesty granted to the senator by the previous administration.

The SC noted that President Rodrigo Duterte had clearly stated that the senator would not be arrested without a warrant of arrest.

Robles said: "Sa tingin namin, ngayon, kinikilala mismo ng SC na may commitment na ganoon yung Presidente, siguro walang dahilan para labagin iyon ng PNP (Philippine National Police) o ng AFP."

"Sa tingin namin, as a lawyer, I think that should be enough assurances and that should be taken note by the PNP and the AFP na Supreme Court na mismo ang nagsasabi na hindi niyo dapat gawin yan," he added.

Trillanes to stay in Senate

However, Robles said Trillanes will still stay in the Senate on the possibility that the promise not to have the senator arrested without a warrant would be broken.

"There are instances in the past that promises have been broken and things were taken back, minsan sasabihin na joke lang ,[which is why] we do not allow the senator [Trillanes] to go home," Robles said. Meanwhile, Trillanes' camp still welcomed the decision of the SC and branded it as 'one of the best outcomes' they could hope for even though the high court did not issue a TRO on the implementation of Proclamation 572.

"We are gratified with the decision of the Supreme Court," Robles said. "I think it is one of the best outcomes that we could hope for under the circumstances." /vvp

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Armored vehicles on Edsa? No cause for alarm, says AFP

By: Frances Mangosing - Reporter / @FMangosingINQ

INQUIRER.net / 04:07 PM September 11, 2018

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) downplayed circulating reports of military tank sightings along Edsa on Monday night – the eve of President Rodrigo Duterte’s planned address to the nation.

“We urge the public to stay calm. There is no cause for alarm,” AFP spokesperson Col. Edgard Arevalo said in a statement on Tuesday.

He also asked the public to “to stop spreading rumors or conjectures.”

“They don’t help. They tend to sow misinformation, confusion, and worst—panic. The public should be wary of persons or groups who maliciously spread such rumors,” he said.

The AFP spokesperson was reacting to “persistent queries” on the alleged sightings of tanks, military helicopters, and other military assets.

“Matters that are otherwise normal occurrences,” Arevalo said, adding that “there were no such sizeable movements of military aircraft or armored vehicles.”

Posts about armored vehicles supposedly rolling along Edsa circulated on social media on Monday night. It comes in the wake of allegations that there are rumblings in the military amid Mr. Duterte’s Proclamation No. 572 voiding the amnesty granted to his fiercest critic, Senator Antonio Trillanes IV, a former military rebel turned lawmaker.

In a separate text message, AFP public affairs chief Col. Noel Detoyato confirmed that the military has been on red alert since last week.

“It’s our SOP if the President is out of the country. But it was not lifted because of the coming typhoon (Mangkhut/ Ompong),” he said. /kga