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21 September 2018

Friday

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PORK INSERTIONS BLAMED ON PALACE

STORY BY JEROME ANING

Former House Majority Leader Feriñas says it was President Duterte who submitted the spending bill containing P52 billion in 'parked' funds suspected to be appropriation for pet projects of lawmakers.

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By Jerome Aning
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The camp of former Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez on Thursday said Malacañang was behind the P52-billion "parked" funds suspected to be pork for lawmakers in the P3.757-trillion proposed national budget for 2019.

Pork refers to lump-sum appropriation for pet projects of congressmen and senators, and is a source of kickbacks.

Ilocos Norte Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas, former House majority leader under Alvarez's speakership, said the projects to be funded by the P51.7-billion appropriation were contained in the National Expenditure Program (NEP)—the basis of the spending bill currently being debated in the House.

"I do not have any knowledge or information about such 'park[ed] funds.' Anyone can see that in my district, all items are specific projects with specific amounts and there is no lump-sum project," Fariñas said in a statement.

Submitted by President

"Moreover, all the said projects are/were in the NEP submitted by the President," said the former majority leader.

"Please note that we had a change of leadership at or about the time of the submission of the NEP (the day of the State of the Nation Address [Sona] or immediately thereafter)," he added.

Former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo replaced Alvarez on the day President Duterte delivered his third Sona in July.

Minority Leader Danilo Suarez earlier disclosed another "parking scheme" in which a congressman would insert appropriations for multimillion-peso projects in the district of another congressman. The funds would be reclaimed later.

Majority Leader Rolando Andaya Jr. said there were no lump-sum allocations as all projects to be funded were itemized on the proposed budget.

Lawmakers from the Makabayan bloc denounced what they described as "the gall of Malacañang and some solons"

in inserting the P51.7-billion appropriation for projects under the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

"We in the Makabayan bloc demand that the said P51.7-billion pork to be rechanneled to restore the budget cuts for basic services," the lawmakers said in a statement.

They said people should not have to go to lawmakers but go directly to agencies to claim the services they need. "This lessens patronage politics."

They accused President Duterte and the Department of Budget (DBM) of "callousness" for making budget cuts on essential services, like the P51 billion from the Department of Education (DepEd), the P36 billion from the Department of Health (DOH), and the P548 million from state universities and colleges (SUCs).

No budget for mass housing

They noted that no fund had been allocated for mass housing for the poor. "This is the height of insensitivity and must be corrected."

At a press briefing, ACT Teachers Representatives Antonio Tinio and France Castro said the new House leadership should eradicate the lump sums and divert them to social services.

"We are ashamed of what happened here in Congress. The Supreme Court had already ruled against pork barrel, but until now it is still being practiced," Castro said.

The House, sitting as the committee of the whole, amended on Tuesday the report of the appropriations committee on the budget bill by realigning most of the P51.7 billion to other items under the DPWH.

The committee of the whole diverted the rest to the DepEd, SUCs, DOH, Department of Agriculture, and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

Davao City Rep. Karlo Nograles, House appropriations committee chair, insisted that there was no pork or lump-sum appropriation in the spending bill.

Nograles said all proposed projects had passed through the regional development councils and had been vetted by the DBM. INQ

Dozens buried in Cebu landslide

By JAIME LAUDE

A landslide set off by heavy rains came crashing down into homes at the foot of a mountain in Naga City, Cebu yesterday, and dozens of people are feared buried.

Initial reports said at least 15 people were killed and eight were rescued, including a minor, from the debris.

The collapse buried about 30 small houses in Sitio Sindulan, Barangay Tinaan after daybreak.

Chief Inspector Roderick Gonzales, Naga City police chief, said search teams were able to rescue seven from the huge mound of earth and debris.

Some victims still managed to send text messages after the landslide hit, Gonzales said, adding elderly women and a child were among the dead.

"There were signs of life. Some of them managed to send text messages (asking for help)," Gonzales said.

Gonzales identified four of

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Dozens

From Page 1

the fatalities as Olivia Moral, 63; Abel Labiano, 40; Romeo Jabonilia, 40, and four-year-old Beatrice Hope Chavez.

Gonzales said they are verifying reports that at least 40 people are buried in the muck.

Naga City Mayor Kristine Vanessa Chiong said at least 64 people remained missing.

"We're really hoping we can still recover them alive," she said.

Rescuers were treading

carefully in small groups on the unstable ground to avoid further casualties. Injured survivors were wheeled into the back of ambulances and the dead were laid on pews at a local church.

"We're running out of time. The ground in the area is still vibrating. We're striking a balance between intensifying our rescue efforts and ensuring the safety of our rescuers," Naga City Councilor Carmelino Cruz said.

The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) confirmed at least 64 people are missing in the landslide.

"There are 64 missing. Six are (initially) confirmed dead. Nine were injured... these are minor injuries," OCD spokesman Julius Regner said.

"There are more than 100 rescuers on the site. They are using backhoes (excavators) and other heavy equipment," he added.

The regional OCD said landslides are fairly rare in Cebu.

It's not clear what set off the landslide, but some residents blamed limestone quarries, which they suspect may have damaged and caused cracks in the mountainside facing their villages.

The quarry nearest the landslide-hit villages was abandoned about a year ago,

but a company still runs a government-authorized quarry not far away and villagers also profit from the limestone business, according to Angeline Templo, assistant to mayor Chiong.

Templo added more than 300 villagers were evacuated for safety as search and rescue work continued.

Cracks

The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) said the landslide occurred at the site where it has limestone quarries and the rains may have loosened part of the mountainside.

The PDRRMO said the site had been identified as a landslide-prone area. It added the local disaster office had initially warned residents to evacuate in the event of heavy rains.

Days before, local residents reportedly noticed cracks on top of the mountain where the quarry of Apo Cement is located.

Chiong was notified and in turn, issued a cease and desist order to stop the quarrying activities.

It was not immediately known if the order was enforced as the site was inspected two days ago by officials of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau of the Department

of Environment and Natural Resources.

Barangay Tinaan chairman Teodoro Cantal Jr. told *dzMM* that the buried houses are located near the quarry site.

He said the residents had been advised to evacuate two weeks ago after cracks were seen on the ground.

PDRRMO spokesman Baltazar Tribulano said it was raining heavily over Naga City since Wednesday.

"There's an ongoing quarry operation which is quite far from the actual landslide area but apparently because of the heavy rainfall, the soil became so saturated and subsequently caved in towards the villages (going) down," Tribulano said.

Cristita Villarba, a 53-year-old resident in the area, said the rain stopped when the landslide hit and there was no rain on Wednesday.

She said her husband and son were preparing to leave for work when the ground shook and they were overwhelmed by a roar.

"It was like an earthquake and there was this thundering, loud banging sound. All of us ran out," Villarba said, adding she, her husband and three children were shocked but unhurt.

Outside, she saw the house of her elderly brother, Lauro,

and his family buried in the landslide.

"Many of our neighbors were crying and screaming for help. Some wanted to help those who got hit but there was too much earth covering the houses, including my brother's," she said.

More than a dozen people live in her brother's home, mostly his family and grandchildren, Villarba said, adding that many small houses in her community got hit.

Malacañang condoled with the families of the victims of the Naga landslide and promised to find ways to prevent similar disasters.

"Expect the government to do everything to alleviate the grief of the victims. We will see how we can prevent such occurrences in the future," presidential spokesman Harry Roque said.

Naga is a coastal city with a population of more than 100,000. Although Cebu province was not directly hit by Ompong, the massive typhoon helped intensify monsoon rains in a large part of Central Visayas.

Ompong pounded Northern Luzon on Saturday and left more than 80 people dead and 70 missing, mostly in landslides. — With AP, AFP, Lorraine Mitzi Ambrad/The Freeman, Emmanuel Tupas, Alexis Romero

US, PH reaffirm commitment under MDT

By Rey E. Requejo

THE United States and the Philippines have reaffirmed their commitment under the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1951 during the official visit of Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana to the US Department of State in Washington, D. C. on Wednesday.

US State Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert disclosed that Lorenzana met with US State Secretary Michael Pompeo where the two officials tackled cooperation on addressing regional security challenges, including the militarization of the South China Sea.

Nauert said that Pompeo has assured Lorenzana of the US readiness to continue its support for the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"Secretary Pompeo and Secretary Lorenzana discussed cooperation on addressing regional security challenges, including the militarization of the South China Sea and the threats posed by terrorism and efforts to achieve denuclearization in North Korea," Nauert said, in a statement released by the US State Department via US East Asia and Pacific Media Hub.

AB

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Palace slams verdict of int'l people's court

By Julie M. Aurelio
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Malacañang on Thursday scoffed at the finding of the International People's Tribunal (IPT) that President Duterte was guilty of human rights violations for the thousands of killings in his brutal war on drugs, persecution of political opponents and enforcement of military rule in Mindanao.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque called the ruling a "sham decision" that had "no official sanction."

A former human rights lawyer, Roque questioned the legitimacy of the tribunal and the credibility of its members who heard and decided the complaints against Mr. Duterte.

"I'm in this field of law, I do not know who sat there. They appear to be a propaganda body of the international Left,"

he told reporters.

"Therefore we set it aside as being a useless piece of propaganda against the government," he said.

The organizers

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers, European Association of Lawyers for Democracy and World Human Rights, Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers, Ibon International and International Coalition of Human Rights in the Philippines convened the IPT in Brussels, Belgium, to hear complaints of human rights violations against Mr. Duterte.

Complaints of human rights violations were also brought against US President Donald Trump, the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Trade Organization, transnational corpora-

tions and foreign banks.

The complainants were the left-leaning groups Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Anakbayan, Migrante, Kadamay, Karapatan, Hustisya, Desaparecidos, Selda, Sandugo and Rise Up for Life and for Rights.

A panel of jurors composed of eight human rights lawyers and activists sat on Sept. 18 and 19 to hear the complaints.

War on drugs

The panel was headed by Azadeh N. Shahshahani, a prominent human rights lawyer and advocate based in Atlanta, Georgia.

The complainants accused Mr. Duterte of gross violations of human rights, including thousands of extrajudicial killings in his take-no-prisoners crackdown on illegal drugs.

The Philippine National Police has acknowledged the killings of more than 4,500 people in the war on drugs, but insisted the victims resisted arrest.

Mass killings

Rights groups, however, have claimed the victims number about 12,000, and that the PNP set up crime scenes to fake encounters.

The complainants also accused Mr. Duterte of mass killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, political persecution, attacks on the press and other abuses in the enforcement of martial law in Mindanao.

They also accused the President of violating economic, social and cultural rights of laborers, peasants, women and migrants, and violating international humanitarian law with

the military's attacks on schools and communities, terrorist labeling and environmental degradation.

Fox a witness

The complainants presented 31 witnesses, including Australian missionary Patricia Fox, who is appealing a government order for her deportation for taking part in human rights activities in the Philippines.

They also presented documentary evidence, including pictures, videos, special reports, expert analyses and summaries.

The panel found Mr. Duterte guilty. Trump and the other accused were found guilty for supporting the Philippine leader.

Its verdict will be forwarded to the International Criminal Court (ICC), European Parlia-

ment and United Nations Human Rights Council.

Mr. Duterte and 11 of his officials are accused of crimes against humanity in the ICC over the thousands of alleged extrajudicial killings in his war on drugs.

In finding Mr. Duterte guilty, the IPT panel cited his praise for military violence and disdain for human rights, including his likening himself to Adolf Hitler in his desire to "slaughter" drug users.

The tribunal said that being elected by the Filipinos, Mr. Duterte had a "moral obligation toward the people."

Instead, it added, he pursued his predecessors' policies that violated the rights of the people and "created new forms of attack and intensified the old ones." —WITH A REPORT FROM BONG S. SARMIENTO INQ

AFP, House, CHR to probe killing of 7 Tausug

The Armed Forces of the Philippines is investigating the killing of seven young men suspected to be members of the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu province last week whose relatives have vehemently denied their links to the bandit group, the military's top investigator said on Thursday.

"We are directed by our Chief of Staff (Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr.) to conduct this investigation in Patikul and we want to find out the truth and to give justice to all," Lt. Gen. Rafael Valencia, the APP inspector general, told the Inquirer.

Permission to harvest

In a phone call to the Inquirer, Valencia, who was in Zamboanga City, said several of his staff flew to Sulu on Thursday to begin the investigation.

The seven who were killed, including a minor, had sought permission from the 45th Infantry Battalion to harvest lanzones and durian from their farm at Sitio Bato, Barangay Kabuntakas, Patikul town, on Sept. 14.

The next day, relatives who learned about their deaths, recovered their bullet-riddled bodies at the headquarters of the Joint Task Force Sulu in Jolo, Sulu, where soldiers said they were Abu Sayyaf bandits who had clashed with government troops.

Accounts of witnesses

Three witnesses, however, said that even before the fruit pickers reached their farm around 11 a.m., they saw the group already in the custody of Army Scout Rangers from the 32nd Infantry Battalion.

Col. Gerry Besana, public affairs officer of the Western Mindanao Command, said there was a "legitimate" encounter between Task Group Panther under Lt. Col. Samuel Yunque and Capt. Michael Asistores of the Scout Rangers and more than 100 Abu Sayyaf bandits under Radulan Sahiron at around 1:30 p.m. on Sept. 14.

Aiza Salakadang Casimra, an information officer for the Regional Human Rights Commission of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said her agency was conducting its own investigation and had dispatched a team to Patikul on Sunday.

Speaking to the Inquirer, Mahmud Arula said the victims were his cousins—Alpadal Diray, 16; Makrub Diray, 25; Mijar Hairan and Basiluddin Hairani, 30; Issah Hamsan, 21; Benajal Tula and Maknun Sakirin, 22.

"They were not terrorists. They were just trying to earn a living by harvesting their own crops in that area," Arula said.

Congressional inquiry

At the House of Representatives, members of the Makabayan bloc and several other representatives early this week sought a congressional inquiry into the killing of the seven young men.

In a resolution filed on Tuesday, the lawmakers called on the House human rights committee to investigate the incident because of the conflicting claims of the military and the relatives of the victims.

The resolution was signed by Kabataan Rep. Sara Jane Elago, Anakpawis Rep. Ariel Casilao, Gabriela Representatives Arlene Brosas and Emmi de Jesus, Act Teachers Repre-

representatives France Castro and Antonio Tinio, and Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate.

Zambales Rep. Cheryl De-los-Montalla, chair of the human rights committee, and Tawi-Tawi Rep. Ruby Sahali, chair of the committee on peace, reconciliation and unity, and vice chair of the committees on Mindanao affairs and on Muslim affairs, also signed the resolution.

Apparently informed that the Scout Rangers involved were on a "test mission" at the time, Sahali said she wanted to know whether it was true that the troops, "before they graduate, needed to kill some Abu Sayyaf."

"There would be no problem if they truly were Abu Sayyaf. But what if they killed innocent people?" Sahali said.

She said the inquiry could start after the budget hearings.

Threat to Inquirer reporter

Valencia, the AFP inspector general, appealed to people in Sulu to cooperate with the military investigation.

He also said he came across some Facebook posts that slammed and threatened Inquirer reporter Julie Alipala, who reported about the claims by relatives of the victims that they were innocent.

"We are also alarmed how some people are harassing journalists who are performing their job," Valencia said. "We would also like to find out who are behind those threats against a reporter and if threats are coming from active members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines."

In a letter to Undersecretary Joel Sy Egco, head of the Presidential Task Force on Media Security, Inquirer executive editor Jose Ma. D. Nolas-

co asked for an investigation and to "unmask the people behind the irresponsible posts" against Alipala.

"The Philippine Daily Inquirer views with grave concern this online attack on Ms Alipala," Nolasco said.

"We fear for her safety, especially in this age when social media posts are used to summon an army of trolls to destroy a perceived enemy's reputation and incite misguided fanatics to murder."

PHIL LEAKS

The Facebook page, PHIL LEAKS: Huwag Tularan, on Sept. 17 accused Alipala of being a "Certified Bayarang Kolumnista ng mga teroristang Abu Sayyaf Group."

Some of those who commented posted outright threats against Alipala. A certain Ricardo Macapagal said, "Tokhang yan." Another, Rhoel Dispo, posted: "Dpat barilin na yan sa ulo." Bong Medina said, "dapat ito ang na aambush."

PHIL LEAKS had targeted political activists, many of them belonging to left-leaning groups and other so-called enemies of the state.

In a letter to her editors, Alipala said: "I just can't imagine [that] a reporter diligently doing his or her job, taking all sides of the coin for a complete story, will be labeled a terrorist."

Nolasco said the Inquirer "vouches for the integrity of Ms Alipala and stands by her story."

"She is ^{an} among our veteran reporters covering community issues, crime, insurgency, and conflict and peace initiatives in Mindanao since 1998," Nolasco said. --REPORTS FROM JULIE ALIPALA AND JEROME ANING INQ



UP DILIMAN

MUSEUM TO REMIND FILIPINOS OF DICTATORSHIP



By Matthew Reysio-Cruz and Krixia Subingsubing @Team_Inquirer

A four-minute song once cost Gilbert Pimentel, now 68, two months in horrific confinement

It was 1974, two years after dictator Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law to quell growing civil unrest. Pimentel, then 23, was among the rebels captured by the military in an encampment in mountain-ringed Benguet.

Even while under detention in Camp Olivas in Pampanga, Pimentel made no secret of his disdain for the regime. One morning, after he and his fellow detainees were told to sing to welcome the camp commander, they belted out the rousing song that would become the anthem of the resistance: "Bayan ko, binihag ka / Nasadlak sa dusa!"

Seven of them were promptly thrown into a

FROM A1

dark cell no wider than a dinner table that they were not allowed to leave for two months. An empty pineapple juice can served as their toilet; a small barred window that looked out to the camp was the only source of light and distraction.

Pimentel was detained until 1977. By then his wife, Jennifer Carino, had been killed while organizing indigenous communities in the Cordilleras. She was only 26.

It is stories like Pimentel's that bolster the need for the creation of a memorial to honor the martial law victims. Such a structure may soon stand in the bastion of the antidictatorship movement: the University of the Philippines Diliman.

'Natural location'

A memorandum of agreement is to be signed today, the 46th anniversary of Marcos' imposition of martial law, between UP and the multiagency Memorial Commission (MC).

Led by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), the MC is tasked with establishing a martial law museum, or what will eventually be the "Freedom Memorial," in UP.

No particulars have been laid out, except that it is planned to be built near the College of Fine Arts, said Butch Dalisay, UP vice president for public affairs. The MC is hoping for a lot measuring at least a hectare.

An emblem of the largely student-led First Quarter Storm, UP is the "natural location" for a memorial as a number of its "best and brightest contributed to the resistance [against the dictatorship]," said Dalisay, himself a former political detainee.

UP also "produced the players of that period, both left and right," MC head Chuck Crisanto said, citing Moro National Liberation Front founding chair Nur Misuari, who struggled against Marcos and is also a UP graduate.

The museum is a key element of Republic Act No. 10368, or the Human Rights Victims Reparation and Recognition Act.

RA 10368 is the only national law institutionalizing the memory of the brutal 14-year martial rule in which thousands were killed, tortured or forcibly disappeared and the Marcoses and their cronies pillaged the national coffers and resources.

But while other countries like Germany (Holocaust), Cambodia (Khmer Rouge genocide) and South Korea (Kwang-ju massacre) moved swiftly to build memorials to the atrocities they had experienced, the Philippines grappled with a 30-year "contestation of history" that whitewashed martial law, said CHR Chair Chito Gascon.

A state-backed memorial will help "set the record straight" and hopefully lead to a national reckoning, he said.

Artifacts from victims

At the heart of the Freedom Memorial is a planned museum showcasing, among others, artifacts recovered from martial law victims. Around P500 million—the interest from the P10 billion in Marcos wealth allotted by the state for reparations—has been set aside by the national treasury for its construction.

Nearly a million pieces of memorabilia are in the custody of the MC and UP Main Library, said NHCP Chair Rene Escalante. These include some 500,000 documents seized by the Presidential Commission on Good Government and at least 75,000 photographs and affidavits filed by rights abuse victims to claim reparations from the state.

The artifacts comprise written testimonies and photographs of torture and abuse, political and literary books, smuggled dissent flyers, or declassified military documents.

Some, like the military van that transported Ninoy Aquino after his assassination in 1983 at the airport later named after him, will be among the key memorabilia. The van is now full of bullet holes because it was used later by soldiers for target practice.

But more than being just an exhibit of objects, the museum will be experiential and immersive—to recreate "the feeling of what it was like to be denied your civil liberties," said historian and former NHCP Chair Maria Serena Diokno, a daughter of the late former Sen. Jose Diokno, a staunch democrat and opponent of martial law who was detained along with Aquino at Fort Magsaysay in Laur, Nueva Ecija.

This would include, for example, a gallery of the torture methods used to extract information from dissidents and a "graveyard" with the names and likenesses of martyrs carved on tombstones, she said. Perhaps also a jail cell to recreate the hellish confinement that rebels like Pimentel endured.

Crammed in a cell with six other men, languishing amid the smell of their excrement, Pimentel remembered descending into depression "Moving around was difficult ... [I'd] stare at the ceiling for hours, scream into my pillow. I didn't know what was happening to my family."

Ultimately the museum hopes to merge these individual horror stories into the broader narrative of martial law: the sociopolitical and economic conditions that made its declaration possible and why its consequences resonate still, amid the Marcos heirs' renewed bid for power and President Duterte's increasingly authoritarian rule.

The heart should bleed

"In other museums, you come out happy," Escalante said. But in this one, the heart should bleed. "*Dapat dumugang puso.*"

The museum will be the centerpiece of the memorial, but the complex will also potentially include a garden adorned with installation art, an auditorium for the viewing of martial

These are living, real artifacts of what happened in the past, objects of our memory . . . They should be subjected to constant reinterpretation. Giving substance to martial law is well nigh impossible if the people have nothing to see

Arjan Aguirre
Political Science Professor

law films, and function rooms for "anything that relates to human rights," Diokno said.

But UP wasn't the first choice. The initial planned location of the museum was present-day Bonifacio Global City (BGC), which is equally rife with symbols as the site of Fort Bonifacio, one of the infamously brutal camps during the dark era.

"It was like going back to where part of it began," Diokno said. "You are giving the narrative new meaning. From a symbol of imprisonment, now you are converting it to a symbol of liberation."

But the MC could not have secured a vacant lot in the bustling commercial district without engaging in a tug-of-

war with private owners. Despite the support of then President Benigno Aquino III, who personally lobbied for the museum to be built in BGC, the idea was ultimately shelved.

In April 2016, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources signified willingness to provide space at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center in Quezon City. But the Aquino administration ended before an agreement could be signed, bringing the MC back to the drawing board.

Now, with UP, the MC is hoping that the third time's the charm.

But the idea of building the museum in an institution that wears its activist tradition like a

badge of honor could further alienate those who view martial law as "the concern of activists only," Diokno warned.

Still, she said, UP would give the museum unfettered freedom to take command of the story that needed to be told, especially amid the Duterte administration's "antipathy" to critics.

Nameless and faceless

Arjan Aguirre, a political science professor and administrator of Ateneo de Manila University's virtual Martial Law Museum, also raised the need to rediscover the nuances that had been lost to the dominant, "monolithic" narrative of the period.

"People think the story of martial law is all about economy and politics. Where is the humanity in these stories?" said Aguirre, arguing for an account of martial law that would make room for the "nameless and faceless" people whose suffering was no less visceral than the era's prominent players.

The new museum—less a concrete edifice than a living testament—will likely be expected to settle unresolved issues that have inflamed the national debate on martial law for decades.

"These are living, real artifacts of what happened in the past, objects of our memory," Aguirre said. "They should be subjected to constant reinterpretation. Giving substance to martial law is well nigh impossible if the people have nothing to see."

Pimentel lamented the absence of a concerted effort to quickly institutionalize the memory of martial law.

He conceded that survivors, too, had grown complacent. "Now we are feeling the effects of the failure to take the necessary steps," he said. "We thought the rage of the people would always be there."

Pimentel's own rage has diminished through the years, crystallizing into something else entirely—a somber, but steadfast, desire that the horrors of martial law never be experienced again.

After all, martial law didn't just steal his liberty; it also robbed him of the joy of witnessing his daughter's first steps and first words.

"We missed the chance of a normal life," he said. "[I] don't want those events to happen again. Not to me, not to anybody." INQ

Rerouting, class suspension for martial law anniversary

Classes in Manila have been suspended and the local police rerouted traffic as groups – both militants and supporters of President Duterte – are set to hold rallies today to mark the 46th year since the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law.

Mayor Joseph Estrada yesterday suspended classes in all levels today following a report by the Manila Police District (MPD) of rallies that will be held in the city.

"As a remedial measure to ensure the safety and security of the public, specifically the students, the MPD has recommended the suspension of classes," he said in his executive order.

MPD director Chief Superintendent Rolando Anduyan told **The STAR** that they have not monitored any specific threat but recommended the suspension so the students will not be inconvenienced by the traffic jams caused by the rallies.

Director Guillermo Elea-

zar, National Capital Region Police Office chief, said pro-Duterte groups would use P. Burgos street while marching to their designated rally site, Burnham Green – the open area in front of the Quirino Grandstand.

Militant groups will use T.M. Kalaw street to march to their rally site, the grandstand itself, he said.

Both lanes of Roxas Boulevard, from Katigbak Drive to Quirino Avenue; the eastbound lane of T.M. Kalaw from Ma. Orosa to Taft Avenue; the westbound lane of T.M. Kalaw, from M.H. del Pilar to Roxas Boulevard and the service road of Roxas Boulevard at the corner of United Nations Avenue will be closed starting at 6 a.m. today.

Motorists coming from the Delpan Bridge-Pier Zone intending to use Roxas Boulevard's southbound lane should turn left on P. Burgos to their point of destination.

Motorists using the westbound lane of T.M. Kalaw

going to Roxas Boulevard should turn left on M.H. del Pilar to their point of destination.

Those coming from Mabini taking the eastbound lane of T.M. Kalaw going to Taft Avenue should turn left on Ma. Orosa, while motorists coming from the southern part of Manila using the northbound lane of Roxas Boulevard should turn right on Quirino to their point of destination.

Meanwhile, all cargo trucks travelling on Osmeña Highway should turn right on Quirino Avenue, straight to Nagtahan, A.H. Lacson, Yuseco and cross Jose Abad Santos straight to Raxabago and Capulong to their point of destination.

All cargo trucks using the southbound route coming from Pier should take the northbound lane of Road-10 then turn right on Capulong, straight to Yuseco, A.H. Lacson to their point of destination – Rey Galupo, Jose Rodol Clapano, Non Alquitran

Drawn by gold, buried in mud

ITOGON - A month ago, Jes Feliciano struck gold. The ingot was the size of a coin, and it brought the 16-year-old miner more money than he ever imagined.

On Monday evening, Feliciano got a reminder that what the Cordillera Mountains give, they also take away. That was

when he identified the body of his uncle, Mordecai Bahatan, one of dozens of miners feared killed when a torrent of earth, loosened by a typhoon's rain, engulfed their encampment in the mountains.

The bounty of the Cordilleras, which form the northern spine of Luzon, is leg-

endary: gold, hydropower and fertile farmland. But the mountains' danger is equally fabled to the people who make the cloud-wreathed peaks home.

On Saturday, Typhoon Mangkhut (Ompong) churned the rich earth of

Turn to Page 5

the Cordilleras, and floods of mud inundated mining bunkhouses and mountain homes. In one case, some of those killed had tried to rescue neighbors trapped in the landslide, only to be buried themselves.

The typhoon may have taken its heaviest toll in Itogon, the town where the landslide took place. All told in the Philippines, more than 100 people are thought to have perished as a result of Mangkhut, the strongest storm the world has seen this year.

In Itogon, in Benguet province, teams of search-and-rescue workers accompanied by miners dug through the mud with their bare hands on Monday, the squelch of wet earth accompanied by the growl of chain saws slicing through debris. Dogs sniffed for bodies, which were slowly excavated from the muck.

Ornate white coffins with golden trim were laid out, ready to receive more. But it will take at least a week to dig through the 20 feet of mud that besieged the miners' bunkhouses, police officers said. They did not expect any survivors.

Mangkhut's death toll did not approach that of Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda), which in 2013 killed at least 6,300 people in the Philippines.

But the storm illustrated both the resilience of a country that is habitually devastated by natural disasters - floods, earthquakes, volcanoes, typhoons - and the dangers people are forced to face to survive.

The allure of gold

Feliciano started working the mines at 15. He faked his age, a common practice, he said.

For two weeks at a time, he would work day and night, relieved only by five-hour breaks. One of his jobs was binding together up to 20 sticks of dynamite to shatter the hard rock.

Then he would light the fuse.

"It's not difficult to do - as long as you run," he said.

His uncle never had that chance.

Typhoon Mangkhut lashed the Philippines with intense rain and gusts up to 170 miles per hour. The soil that came loose from a mountain scarred by decades of mine-tunneling gathered intensity, pouring down on the shelters in which the miners and some of their family members were trying to ride out the storm.

Among those trapped by the earth were Noel, Jocelyn, Jay-e and Baby Ann Sta. Ana, along with a cousin of Feliciano's, Alkine Buocan.

Also presumed dead was Edwin Banawol, the pastor of an evangelical Christian church located in the mining encampment. Banawol, who was living at the mine with his wife and two small children, was the leader of a group of small-scale prospectors who worked the mine.

Government officials say Banawol refused to follow their instructions to evacuate the mine site during the storm. One community leader, Kennedy Weclin, said the pastor later told him the miners had already left.

"I believed him until I heard the news of the landslide and so many people trapped inside," Weclin said.

Many of the victims of the landslide were born-again Christians from the Ifugao indigenous group native to the Cordilleras.

Bridget Miranda said she lost 20 relatives, entire branches of her Ifugao family tree obliterated by the typhoon. She herself, she said, had last worked at the mine a couple months ago, sifting for gold dust in piles of rejected rocks. It's the only job at the mine available to women, she said.

But even she stopped when the monsoon rains intensified in August and September. The slippery slopes were too dangerous.

Those people who remained, as Typhoon Mangkhut lashed the mountains, were there for

Drawn From Page 1

only one reason, she said.

"They needed money," Miranda said. "Why else would they be there?"

'Give Mother Earth a respite'

Gold fever first gripped the Cordilleras in the 1930s. Large companies, many affiliated with the Americans who governed the Philippines then, followed veins deep into the mountains. In the 1990s, the environmental toll of rampant mining prompted the local authorities to close down most of the large-scale mining in the region.

But private miners, many the offspring of the original gold-rush generation, stayed on, claiming individual crevices in the mountain as their heritage. Although wildcat mining was illegal in the Cordilleras, everyone in Itogon knew it still went on, said Victorio Palangdan, the local mayor.

"Everyone is here because of the gold," Palangdan said. "It's why we all came."

The landslide occurred at a mining site in Itogon that had been operated by the Benguet Corp. until the mining shutdown. The company maintains that the independent prospectors who kept working its tunnels were doing so without its permission.

"Subsequent warnings and notices from the company for the small scale miners to vacate the area were met with resistance and outright refusal," the company said in a statement.

Palangdan said local miners had formed a collective that secured an agreement with the company allowing them to work there for a cut of the profits. One miner there said that small-scale operators had to hand over a portion of their profits. The company has denied that any such profit-sharing agreement exists.

President Duterte has called for an investigation, and on Monday, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu issued a cease-and-desist order on small-scale mining in the Cordilleras. The military will guard the Itogon site to ensure no further mining occurs.

The continued excavation of the mountain by independent miners hollowed it out, creating an ever-thinner frame to support its bulk. When the mining tunnels soak up rainwater during typhoon season, landslides are more likely to occur, local officials say.

"Give Mother Earth a respite from endless digging," Duterte said at a news conference on Monday evening.

But what will the people of Itogon do without the gold mines? For many, there are not a lot of options.

Emmanuel Kalahi, a miner at the Benguet Corp. site, said the landslide had buried five of his friends, including one cousin. He hadn't wanted to work in the mines, as his father and two brothers did before him. Kalahi, 20, once took a baking class, and the idea of making people happy with warm pastries was more enticing than mining gold.

But in the end, he too ended up at the mines.

"The only good thing about gold is that you earn money," he said.

A life-or-death decision

In Kayapa, a few mountain passes away from Itogon and deep in the cloud cover, 15 villages were still completely inaccessible on Monday because of landslides, said Amor Dapiawen, an official with the local department of the interior.

In this part of the Cordilleras, only the poorest resort to farming the vertiginous slopes, their crops cascading like waterfalls down the sheer gradient. "In these mountains, every house is at risk for landslides," Dapiawen said. "Every house is in a dangerous location."

Nobody knows what prompted Gilbert and Rosalyn Aliaga to split up their family on the eve of the typhoon. Perhaps, local officials speculated, it was an existential spreading of risk.

- NYT

Trillanes used tricks for amnesty – DoJ

By Alvin Murcia

Senator Antonio Trillanes IV did not comply with the requisites specified by law for his amnesty.

This was the firm position of the Department of Justice (DoJ) in a 10-page reply signed by Acting Prosecutor General Richard Anthony Fadullon and four other state prosecutors to the Makati Regional Trial Court.

It stated that Trillanes did not follow the regulations asked under Proclamation 75 which was signed by former President Benigno Simeon Aquino III on 24 November 2007.

The DoJ likewise insisted that Trillanes tricked the State when he claimed to have followed all requirements to avail of presidential amnesty.

A pending alias warrant of arrest and hold departure order are currently at the sala of Makati RTC Branch 150 Judge Elmo Alameda.

The prosecutors asked the court to issue a warrant of arrest and HDO against Trillanes to prevent him from slipping out of the country.

They argued that being an incumbent senator, Trillanes has the capacity to leave the country and elude prosecution in connection with his rebellion case pending before the Makati Court.

President Rodrigo Duterte said the amnesty granted to Trillanes by Aquino is "void ab

initio" or void from the start as he allegedly failed to comply with two requirements for his freedom – an application for amnesty and his admission of guilt.

Trillanes did not follow the regulations asked under Proclamation 75 which was signed by former President Benigno Simeon Aquino III on 24 November 2007.

A certification, dated 30 August 2018, from the Armed Forces of the Philippines, stated that "there is no available copy" of Trillanes' application for an amnesty.

Trillanes' application for

amnesty, along with other military personnel who participated in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and 2007 Manila Peninsula siege, was covered by the media, however.

Trillanes is currently holed up at the Senate for nearly two weeks now as the petition for the issuance of a warrant and HDO has yet to be decided by the court.

The Supreme Court on the other hand denied the urgent motion by Trillanes to issue a temporary restraining order to stop the implementation of the proclamation voiding his amnesty.

Instead, the SC said it is the local court that should issue a ruling whether to issue a warrant and HDO.



LONELY as one can be but a candle to commemorate the heroism of the names etched at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani is an assurance that their contributions are not forgotten.

ANALYLABOR

Handwritten mark or signature.

DoJ prods RTC to order Trillanes arrest

By **Rey E. Requejo**

THE Department of Justice on Thursday reiterated its plea for the Makati City Regional Trial Court to issue hold departure order and alias warrant of arrest against opposition Senator Antonio Trillanes IV and subsequently proceed with the stalled trial of the coup d'etat charges against him.

In a 10-page reply, the DoJ asked Judge Elmo Alameda of the Makati City RTC Branch 150 to grant its motion for the issuance of an HDO and alias warrant of arrest against Trillanes.

The DoJ's reply signed by Acting Prosecutor General Richard Anthony Fadullon stressed that Trillanes failed to show "received" copy of duly accomplished amnesty application form during the RTC hearing, and news reports indicated he refused to admit guilt over 2007 Manila Pen siege.

The DoJ noted that during the Sept. 14 court hearing on its motion, Trillanes failed to present proof of his duly accomplished amnesty application form with stamp "received" by the Department of National Defense, which processed the amnesty applications, contrary to his claim that he faithfully complied with said requirement.

"As aptly pointed out by this honorable court during the motion hearing, the best evidence that accused could submit to prove his claim is a copy of his application form bearing the receiving mark/stamp of the DND. This, the accused failed to do," stated the reply also signed by Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Juan Pedro Navera, and Assistant State Prosecutors Josie Christina Dugay and Eves Eunice Keyser.

"As to the requirement of admission of guilt, the DoJ explained that Trillanes also failed to comply with this based on a media interview he gave where he was quoted to have said, "I would like to qualify that we did not admit to the charge of 'coup d'etat' or anything we filed because we believe those were not the appropriate charges against us," the DoJ prosecutors said.

JP

Typhoon 'Ompong' toll rises to 72 in Cordillera

ITOGON, Benguet: The death toll from Typhoon Ompong has risen to 72 in the entire Cordillera, while 63 others were reported missing as of Thursday noon, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) in the region said.

DILG Regional Director Marlo Iringan, who also heads the regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (DRRMC) cluster on the management of the dead and the missing, said those confirmed dead were mostly from this mining town with 54, followed by Baguio with 11, Mountain Province with six, La Trinidad (Benguet) with three and one each from Tuba (Benguet) and Kalinga province.

Of the 65 missing persons, 49 were from Itogon, and four were from Baguio City.

Iringan said authorities continue to receive reports of missing persons.

Itogon Mayor Victorio Palangdan said 20 bodies have been recovered from a major landslide in Barangay Ucab in this mining town.

Ruben Carandang, Office of Civil Defense Cordillera (OCD-Cordillera Administrative Region) regional di-

rector and chairman of the regional DRRM, said the Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) had sent additional personnel on Wednesday morning to help in the search, rescue and retrieval (SSR) operation at the landslide area in Barangay Ucab.

From Day 1 of the landslide, about 200 persons have been helping each other at ground zero daily, digging up tons of soil and mud to recover bodies and look for survivors.

"There are over a thousand warm bodies, who are alternately doing the SSR operation," Carandang said.

At present, personnel from the AFP, Philippine National Police (PNP) and Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and private volunteers, including miners, are collaborating in the SSR operation.

In a briefing, Carandang thanked the AFP for sending five choppers, which are now being used in transporting supplies to areas isolated by the typhoon.

He said the choppers were also used by ground officials for aerial inspection of the landslide area

to look for possible sites that the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) could possibly access by backhoe and heavy equipment to reach ground zero.

Benguet Gov. Crescencio Pacalso said the heavy equipment would be used in removing the soil that diggers take out from the landslide area to clear the site.

"We cannot use the backhoe to dig for bodies," Pacalso added.

The Itogon mayor expressed confidence that they could still find survivors under the rubble.

"I am still hopeful that we can still find survivors," he said, pointing to live animals found under collapsed structures.

He added that if live animals could be found, there was still a big chance that survivors would also be recovered.

On Tuesday, Political Adviser and Secretary Francis Tolentino told reporters in an interview that the operation is still a "rescue operation," relating past experiences in Nepal, China and other countries, where survivors were still rescued several weeks after being buried underground.

Tolentino was assigned by President Rodrigo Duterte as his point person and emissary in the aftermath of Typhoon Ompong.

Carandang said forensic experts from the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) have already arrived in Itogon.

They will be in charge of processing the dead and conducting possible DNA tests on unidentified bodies.

Dr. Sheilah Mapalo of Baguio City said the central office of the NBI has opted to send two forensic teams.

She added that DNA testing is crucial, as decomposition makes the bodies difficult to identify.

It was agreed in the Tuesday meeting that a temporary burial site be identified for unrecognizable bodies, which would be exhumed when the DNA test results come out.

Mapalo said it would take a little more time for the DNA results to be completed.

She added that the bodies would not be released if the families are unsure of what they are getting are not the remains of their family members.

A7 THOM F. PICANA

Lorenzana, Mattis discuss terror in Washington meeting

DEFENSE Secretary Delfin Lorenzana discussed terrorism and other defense issues with US Defense Secretary James Mattis when he visited the latter in Washington on Wednesday.

Dana White, Pentagon chief

spokesperson, said the highlight of the meeting was terrorism, a major issue faced by both countries for years.

"The leaders discussed a broad range of defense issues, to include their com-

mitment to fighting terrorism and reaffirmed US military advisory support to assist the Philippines in combatting ISIS and other violent extremist networks," White said in a statement that was also sent to

Manila-based reporters.

She was using another acronym for Islamic State, an international terrorist organization.

Mattis thanked Lorenzana for the Philippines' contribution to maritime security through

trilateral patrols with Malaysia and Indonesia in the Sulu and Celebes seas.

The trilateral maritime patrol was launched by the three countries last year.

11/3 **DEMPSEY REYES**

WALANG PASOK SA MAYNILA

Mga estudyante, sasali sa anti-ML rally

Inaasahang makikisap ang mga Catholic schools sa "Mass for Dignity and Peace" rally sa San Agustin Church sa Intramuros, Maynila bilang paggunita sa ika-46 na taong deklarasyon ng Martial Law (ML), ngayong Biyernes, Setyembre 21.

Sa memorandum na nilagdaan ni Fr. Nolan Que, regional trustee ng Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP)-NCR, ipinaabot sa lahat ng opisyal at pinuno ng CEAP member Catholic Schools ang paanyaya sa pakikibahagi sa mga naturang pagtitipon.

Nakapaloob sa liham na ang hinihinging pakikisap ng bawat institusyon ay pagpapakita ng pagmamahal sa kasarinlan ng bansa matapos ang diktadurya ng rehimeng Marcos.

Hirukayat ng Pari ang bawat

kasaping paaralan ng CEAP na tumugon sa panawagan ng Sangguniang Laiko ng Pilipinas (SLIP) at Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) sa isasagawang Mass for Dignity and Peace sa San Agustin Church, ganap na 2:30 ng hapon.

Matapos ang misa ay sama-sama nang magtutungo sa Luneta para makisap sa mga programang inihanda ng United People's Action para sa isang grand rally upang manindigan sa panawagan laban sa na diktadurya noon at bantang maulit ito muli ngayon.

Ang CEAP-NCR ay binubuo ng 173 member Catholic schools mula sa walong diyosesis sa NCR.

Kaugnay nito, umapela naman ang Philippine National Police (PNP) sa mga

estudyante na huwag lumahok sa nasabing protest action na posibleng magiging madugo dahil lalahukan umano ito ng mga komunistang rebelde.

Sa isang dokumentong nakuha ng Balita sa PNP, nakasaad ang nasabing plano ng Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) sa ilalim ng "Oplan Aklatan".

Kaugnay nito, sinuspinde ni Manila Mayor Joseph "Erap" Estrada ang klase sa Maynila ngayong Biyernes, sa bisa ng Executive Order No. 35, Series of 2018, na inisyu ng alkalde kahapon.

Kanselado ang klase sa lahat ng antas sa lahat ng pampubliko at pribadong paaralan sa lungsod ngayong Biyernes.

Mary Ann Santiago at Aaron Recuenco

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A1

DREAM ON FROM A1

Palace tells ouster plotters: Dream on

MALACANANG on Thursday told those who want to oust President Rodrigo Duterte to continue dreaming because it would never happen.

Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. made the statement after anti-Duterte groups said they would stage protests during the commemoration of the 46th anniversary of the declaration of Martial Law by the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos today, September 21.

In a news conference, Roque said the anti-Duterte protests were something

► Dream OnA2

Palace tells ouster plotters: Dream on

that the government could handle.

"It's not anything that the State cannot deal with. Dream on to those who want to remove the President," Roque told reporters.

In various speeches and interviews, Duterte had said destabilization efforts against him and his government would reach its peak by September 21, when the country marks the 46th anniversary of the declaration of Martial Law, up to October.

The President also claimed that the Liberal Party (LP), the Magdalo group, the Left, and other critics have formed a loose coalition to destabilize his administration.

Both the LP and the Magdalo group have denied the alleged connivance to oust the President.

Roque said Duterte had met with representatives from the government's intelligence agencies but he declined to provide further details.

"It's a regular intel briefing which unfortunately remains classified," the Palace official said.

Roque assured the public that maximum tolerance would be observed as usual by the police during the demonstrations today (Friday).

He reiterated that Duterte has always been for free speech.

"It's always been to observe maximum tolerance since it's the law and that is what the President has been following whether or not there is a law, but more so since there is a law," Roque said. He said no one could complain that Duterte was "onion-skinned" as the President had allowed people to protest for or against the government.

"He lets them do it, he recognizes the importance of free speech," Roque said.

"So we will give maximum tolerance to everyone because after all, the President was not the one who declared martial law in September 21 many years ago," he added.

Last year, Duterte signed Proclamation 310, which declared September 21, 2017 the National Protest Day to give way to those who wanted to protest against the government.

Students warned

The Philippine National Police (PNP) on Thursday urged students to stay out of danger and not join the massive rally set by militant groups.

Mayor Joseph Estrada cancelled classes in Manila Friday because of the rally.

Senior Supt. Benigno Durana, PNP spokesman, said in a news conference it was possible for members of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) to infiltrate the rally to recruit members and cause trouble.

"This is always the modus operandi of the CPP-NPA-NDF. They will infiltrate a peaceful demonstration or rally and they will try to instigate participants to create trouble and violence because this is a good media copy for them," he said.

Durana said the PNP would deploy 4,000 police in different areas to ensure peace and order.

Another 1,000 police personnel were reserved and would be on standby at the PNP National Headquarters.

Intelligence operatives will also be deployed to monitor the activities and look for wanted members of the CPP-NPA-NDF.

CATHERINE S. VALENTE AND ROY D.R. NARRA

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A7

Former PNP chief to run for senator

BY JAIME G. AQUINO

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan: Ronald de la Rosa, former chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP), on Thursday announced here that he would run for senator in the 2019 mid-term elections.

De la Rosa, who now heads the Bureau of Correction (BuCor), made the announcement in a chance interview with reporters after a courtesy call to Pangasinan Gov. Amado Espino 3rd.

"I am here with you to introduce myself, and I am announcing my intention to run for senator," he told Espino and other provincial officials who had warmly welcomed him when he arrived at the provincial capitol.

Teodorico Duyanen, a senior citizen and the grandfather of a 17-year-old student who was gang-raped by four drug users, said he would vote for De la Rosa because

he was the best-ever PNP chief.

Dela Rosa arrived in Pangasinan at about 9 a.m. using a big bike and escorted by other BuCor officers.

He held a breakfast meeting with police officers in Pangasinan led by Senior Supt. Wilson Joseph Lopez and urged them to continue their campaign against illegal drugs under the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte.

De la Rosa admitted that illegal-drug use would never stop because prohibited drugs had been a huge business for drug lords but that law enforcers were doing their job to eradicate the menace.



■ Ronald de la Rosa

If elected senator, he said he would introduce a bill seeking a salary and allowance increase for policemen.

The former PNP chief added that he would also initiate a measure imposing grave penalty against policemen found guilty of abusing their positions and conniving with criminals.

Meanwhile, the BuCor chief

assured the public that convicted retired major general Jovito Palparan would not be jailed under maximum security and would be treated as an ordinary inmate.

"I will not give him VIP [very important person] treatment even if he is my mistah at the Philippine Military Academy considering the gravity of the offense he committed and he was found guilty by the court," de la Rosa said.

But since Palparan is already a senior citizen with failing health, he added that he would allow the former military officer's family to visit him anytime and let him use a mobile phone. *A7*

Palparan and three others were convicted and sentenced early this week to suffer the penalty of reclusion perpetua by the Bulacan Regional Trial Court for the kidnapping and serious illegal detention of two students of the University of the Philippines.

4K cops to be deployed as militants stage rallies

BY RAYMOND AFRICA

MORE than 4,000 policemen will be deployed at Mendiola and other strategic areas today where militant groups will stage protest rallies denouncing the declaration of martial law 46 years ago.

PNP spokesman Chief Supt. Benigno Durana Jr. said the cops will maintain peace and order in the light of intelligence reports that members of the Communist Party of the Philippines will join the mass actions and spark "violent demonstration in critical strategic areas in Metro Manila in order to encourage the public to lose

support to the present government."

Durana said a 1,000-strong reserve force will be on standby at Camp Crame ready to be deployed on short notice to where they will be needed.

Pro-Duterte groups are also expected to hold their own activity at the Quirino Grandstand.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said maximum tolerance will be observed by police, adding President Duterte had always allowed the conduct of rallies because he believes in freedom of expression.

Roque also belittled reports

See 4K COPS ► Page B3

4K COPS

of possible threats against the administration, saying: "Dream on to those who want to remove the President."

Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada, meanwhile, cancelled classes in all levels today in the city, both public and private.

Former President Ferdinand Marcos Sr. placed the whole coun-

try under martial law on September 21, 1972 that lasted until 1981 to quell civil strife and threats of communist rebels.

The Manila Police District is also closing several roads in the city today as part of pre-emptive efforts.

"Expect heavy traffic and take alternate route," the MPD said in an advisory.

Four major roads will be closed — the north and southbound lanes

of Roxas Boulevard from Katigbak to Pres. Quirino; eastbound lane of TM Kalaw from Ma. Orosa to Taft Ave; east and west bound lane of TM Kalaw from MH del Pilar to Roxas Blvd.; and UN Ave. corner Roxas Blvd. Service Road.

Durana said according to intelligence reports, the communists have forged a grand alliance with militant groups and the student sector through "Oplan Aklasan."

He said part of the plan is to conduct mass walk-out from schools and launch massive rallies and violent demonstrations to advance the "Oust Duterte" campaign.

He said the intelligence report added that "infiltrators" may incite

violence by way of bombings or shootings "which would result to casualties which will be blamed to the government."

Durana said the police will implement a "no permit, no rally" policy even as he assured that ground troops will exercise maximum tolerance and protect the rights of the protesters.

He said that cops will make arrest protesters violating the law.

"Although the right to peaceably assemble will be upheld and respected, safety and convenience of the general public, and security of public property and installations will be the paramount concern that will be safeguarded at all times," Durana added.

He said the National Police Region Police Office will be on heightened alert status.

Roque also dismissed a reported decision of the International People's Tribunal (IPT) finding Duterte guilty of human rights violations.

The IPT ruling is expected to be forwarded to the United Nations Human Rights Council, the European Parliament, and the International Criminal Court (ICC) where Duterte is also facing a complaint.

"That's a sham decision. It has no official sanction. The validity of the findings will depend on the

credibility of the tribunals - I'm in this field of law. I do not know who sat there. They appear to be a propaganda body of the international left, and therefore we set it aside as being a useless piece of propaganda against the government," Roque said.

The IPT, on September 18 to 19 heard, testimonies on allegations of violations of civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, the right to self-determination and development, and international humanitarian law against Duterte. - *With Gerard Naval and Jocelyn Montemayor*

46TH ANNIVERSARY OF MARTIAL LAW

DON'T JOIN RALLIES, PNP TELLS STUDENTS

By Jeannette I. Andrade @jiandradeINQ



Citing intelligence reports that communist rebels will join rallies commemorating the declaration of martial law by dictator Ferdinand Marcos 46 years ago, the Philippine National Police urges students not to take part in today's demonstrations "for their safety."

The PNP, nevertheless, will deploy 4,000 officers to secure rally sites around Metro Manila, according to the PNP spokesperson, Chief Supt. Benigno Durana Jr.

'NPA infiltration'

Durana on Thursday said members of the New People's Army (NPA) "will infiltrate a peaceful demonstration or rally and they will try to instigate participants to create trouble and incite violence."

"We assume that they (NPA) will always try to create chaos and disturbance and sometimes violence, that's

why we are appealing to the students . . . to refrain from joining these protest rallies for their own safety," he added.

Student leaders

Youth and student leaders, however, said they would not be intimidated by the PNP warning.

"Why should we stop now when we ourselves can see the hardship of the Filipino masses and when our fellow youth are being killed and stripped of their rights?" said Shara Mae Landicho, spokesperson for Samahan ng Progresibong Kabataan.

The University of the Philippines student regent, Ivy Joy Taroma, said there was no need for the NPA to instigate unrest because the people themselves were already "fed up with the dictatorship and tyranny" under President Duterte.

"[The warning] is a desperate attempt of Duterte to sow fear among the youth and the people because in truth, he is the one scared of the power of

the people," she said.

According to Durana, the ultimate goal of the local communist movement is "to bring down the government through violent means to gain political power" but they won't succeed.

Maximum tolerance

Malacañang on Thursday also dismissed any possible success for groups wanting to overthrow Mr. Duterte.

"It's not anything that the State cannot deal with. Dream on to those who want to remove the President," said presidential spokesperson Harry Roque.

However, he reminded the authorities to follow the law on maximum tolerance during protests.

"No one can complain that the President is onion-skinned. He recognizes the importance of free speech. So we will give maximum tolerance to everyone because after all, he was not the one who declared martial law on Sept. 21 many years ago," he said. —WITH REPORTS FROM JULIE M. AURELIO AND JHESSET O. ENANO INQ

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7 soldiers hurt in landmine attack

BUENAVISTA, Agusan del Norte – Seven soldiers of the 23rd Infantry Battalion (IB) were wounded when a landmine planted by New People's Army (NPA) rebels exploded in Sitio Agfa, Barangay Lower Olave in this town on Wednesday.

The 4th Infantry Division public affairs office said the rebels detonated the landmine after a gunfight with the soldiers.

Prior to the incident, soldiers also clashed with rebels in Sitio Bulak.

A rebel identified as Rex Hangadon, 23, was found dead after the encounter. Soldiers seized the rifle of the slain rebel.

— Ben Serrano

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Leni: Another EDSA

won't be good for Phl

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

They have not joined forces and there is no conspiracy to oust President Duterte through mass actions that are supposed to start today, the 46th anniversary of Ferdinand Marcos' declaration of martial law, and culminate in October.

This was stressed by Vice President Leni Robredo who heads the opposition Liberal Party (LP), Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV of the Magdalo party-list group and chairman Jose Ma. Sison of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

Thousands of police officers have been deployed for today's rallies in Manila to commemorate the declaration of martial law, with pro-administration groups holding their own rallies to express support for President Duterte.

Former president Benigno Aquino III and Robredo are scheduled to attend a mass at De La Salle University in Manila to commemorate the declaration of martial law.

The government said it was prepared for the rallies and any possible destabilization attempts. Duterte had said the LP, Magdalo and CPP were conspiring to boot him out by next month.

Facing "The Chiefs" last night on Cignal TV's *One News* channel, Robredo said, "Filipinos are not keen on supporting another uprising. It will not be good for the country if we will go through another political upheaval the likes of EDSA. I feel we have gone through so much already."

She denied that the LP was involved in any ouster plot, adding that if there is any such movement afoot, she would not be part of it.

LP vice president for external affairs Erin Tañada had issued a similar denial to The Chiefs, stressing that the party is busy preparing for the 2019 elections.

Sison and Trillanes also categorically denied conspiring to oust Duterte, although the exiled communist leader stressed that their rebellion has always aimed to replace the Philippine government and its leader.

Trillanes told The Chiefs that it would be impossible for him and the Magdalo, which represents soldiers, to "lie in bed with the enemy" since communist rebels continue to kill government forces. The two groups, he said, are "like oil and water."

Sison, speaking to The Chiefs by Skype from the Netherlands, said he had also consulted rebel forces in the Philip-

pines and was sure that no such talks for a conspiracy had transpired. He said Duterte was "lying" for claiming that there is a taped conversation to prove the conspiracy.

Palace to destabilize groups: Dream on

Malacañang expressed confidence yesterday that state forces will be able to thwart any destabilization effort against the administration of President Duterte while various groups take to the streets today to dramatize their protest against the government.

"It's not anything that the state cannot deal with; dream on to those who want to remove the President," said presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. when asked to assess the threat against the administration.

Roque gave the assessment after the President met with top intelligence officials in Malacañang last Wednesday barely 48 hours before the planned demonstrations that would coincide with the 46th anniversary of the declaration of martial law during the Marcos regime.

"It's a regular intel briefing which unfortunately remains classified," he said, confirming the meeting but invoking confidentiality, apparently due to the sensitive security issues discussed by the President and members of the intelligence community.

Last week, Duterte bared an alleged alliance of the camp of Senator Trillanes, the LP and the CPP to oust him from office.

The President said the activities today are part of the destabilization efforts, which were denied by all three camps.

This came after Duterte issued an order that voided the amnesty granted by former president Aquino to Trillanes for the Oakwood mutiny and other activities against then president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Trillanes, who has exposed the alleged hidden wealth of Duterte and his family, is now fighting the order vigorously.

Roque said the President, however, respects freedom of expression, whether the people are for or against him.

The Palace said the Philippine National Police (PNP) is expected to observe maximum tolerance during the protest rallies, which will converge at the Quirino Grandstand to condemn killings and abuses in the administration's war against illegal drugs.

Aside from the mass at De La Salle, the commemoration will also feature an exhibit of photos taken by a group

of photojournalists who document the killings related to the Duterte administration's war on drugs.

Robredo is also scheduled to attend the premiere of independent film "Liway" at the University of the Philippines Film Institute.

Directed by Kip Oebanda, the film is about the lives of Cecilia 'Liway' Flores-Oebanda and her son Dakip during the martial law era. — With Janvic Mateo

Pinoys feel safer this year – poll

Families fearing burglaries fell by 12 points in Mindanao, from 54 percent in March 2018 to 42 percent in June 2018

By Elmer N. Manuel

Filipinos victimized by crime and violence had dropped drastically this year indicating an improved public order, results of a Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey showed.

The SWS survey showed 5.3 percent of respondents which is equivalent to 1.2 million families report being a victim of common crimes in the past six months.

Despite the improved situation on peace and safety, critics of President Rodrigo

Duterte indicated plans to hold protest rallies supposedly against a looming dictatorship timed with the commemoration of the martial law declaration of former President Ferdinand Marcos.

Turn to page 2

5.1 percent or around 1.2 million families lost a property to street robbery, burglars (break-ins) or carnappers

From page 1

Protesters billed the mass action as an "anti-dictatorship" protest. Presidential spokesman Harry Roque, meanwhile, said Mr. Duterte met with intelligence officials last Wednesday ahead of the 46th anniversary of the military rule declaration.

SWS said the incidence of common crimes such as pickpocket or robbery of personal property, break-ins, carnapping and physical violence had dropped.

"This is 1.3 points below the 6.6 percent in March 2018 and the lowest since the record-low 3.7 percent in June 2017," the SWS said.

Acts of violence fall

The survey also found a record-low 0.2 percent of families reporting that a member was hurt by physical violence within the past six months.

This is 0.4 point lower than 0.6 percent in March 2018 and is 0.1 point below the previous record-low of 0.3 percent in June 2011 and June 2014.

Of those who reported to have family members who had been victims of physical violence, the respondents said the victim was male.

The survey, conducted in June, also found 5.1 percent or around 1.2 million families lost property to street robbery, burglars (break-ins) or carnappers within the past six months.

This is a point below the 6.1 percent in March 2018 and lowest since the record-low 3.1 percent in June 2017.

Up to 61 percent of those who said a family member was a victim of pickpocketing or robbery of personal property said the victims were women.

Fear of crime subsides

Families fearing burglaries fell by 12 points in Mindanao, from 54 percent in March 2018 to 42 percent in June 2018, the lowest since the 40 percent in September 2007.

Families fearing the presence of many drug addicts in their area fell by four points in Visayas, from 41 percent March 2018 to 37 percent in June 2018.

Fear of burglaries, however, hardly changed in the Visayas, from 52 percent in March to 53 percent in June and rose by 9 points in Metro Manila, from 60 percent in March to 69 percent

in June and in Luzon, from 52 percent in March to 58 percent in June.

Fear of unsafe streets went down in Mindanao, hardly changed in the Visayas and Metro Manila, but rose in Luzon.

Families fearing the presence of many drug addicts in their area fell by four points in Visayas, from 41 percent March 2018 to 37 percent in June 2018.

This perception slightly rose in Balance Luzon, from 39 percent in March to 40 percent in June and increased by 5 points in Mindanao, from 33 percent in March to 38 percent in June.

It likewise rose by three points in Metro Manila, from 51 percent in March to 54 percent in June.

Crime rate down

"The crime rate is lower and the people themselves are saying so," Roque said in a Palace briefing.

"We welcome the good news that property crime or that includes street robbery, burglars, break-in, carnapping and others fell to 5.1 percent in June 2018 compared to 6.1 percent in March 2018," he added.

Roque also welcomed the record low 0.2 percent of families with members hurt by physical violence within the past six months.

The Second Quarter 2018 SWS

survey was conducted from June 27-30, 2018 through interviews of 1,200 adults aged 18 years old and above nationwide: 300 each in Metro Manila, Balance Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Dream on to those who want to remove the President.

The SWS report noted that the victimization by common crimes reported in SWS surveys is usually much higher than the number of crimes actually reported to the police.

The Duterte administration has earlier vowed to crack down on illegal drugs and criminality in the country.

Gov't can deal with plots

Roque also expressed confidence that the government would be able to deal with any destabilization plot. Duterte said the military and police will have to eventually face the "crisis."

"It's not anything that the State cannot deal with; dream on to those who want to remove the President," Roque said.

The President's meeting with intelligence officers came in the wake of Duterte's allegation of a destabilization plot by the opposition Liberal Party, communist rebels and Magdalo group of opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV on 21 September, when the nation marks the anniversary of Marcos' martial rule.

Military says it can defeat NPA next year

BY VICTOR REYES

THE military yesterday said it can defeat the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, by the middle next year.

"We are on the right track in our campaign to decimate the terrorist New People's Army by middle of next year," said AFP spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo.

The military has been aiming to defeat the NPA for decades. Latest military estimates show the NPA has some 4,000 members.

On Tuesday, President Duterte said the NPA may be defeated by the second quarter of 2019 because rebel fronts have been falling and NPA members have been surrendering.

Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder who has been on self-exile in the Netherlands since the late 80s, dismissed Duterte's statement the following day and called the President "delusional."

Arevalo said the military is confident of defeating the NPA by next year "given the resolve of the current administration and the cooperation of other agencies of government."

Arevalo noted the rising number of NPA regulars and supporters who have been surrendering to

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MILITARY

the military. The military has said over 4,000 NPA members and supporters have surrendered this year.

"The number of NPA regulars and supporters surrendering in droves with their firearms is phenomenal. Their guerrilla fronts were either dismantled or

downgraded one after the other. High-ranking leaders of this terrorist group are neutralized in succession," said Arevalo.

"These are what the CPP-NPA continues to ignore or refuses accept. It's more like them whistling in the dark. Or this could be NPA rhetoric to project capability and entice other groups to join them in

their bid to topple the President," added Arevalo.

Duterte has linked the communists, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, and the political opposition to a supposed plot to oust him by next month. Defense and military officials said the communists hatched the plan as early as 2016.

Arevalo said the military could

preempt any attempt by the communists to oust Duterte. "The AFP will ensure that they will not succeed," Arevalo said.

The Duterte administration shifted to localized peace negotiations this year after the collapse of its peace negotiations with the CPP-NPA-National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

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PNP on high alert vs destabilization move of anti-Duterte forces

By Alfred Dalizon

THE Philippine National Police yesterday went on high alert ready to keep peace and order following reports of major protests by leftist groups and other forces opposed to the Duterte administration in today's 46th anniversary of Martial Law.

The political opposition are reportedly determined to overthrow President Duterte and won't stop until he is out of office and indicted for the things they accused him of, specifically alleged human rights violations as a result of his unrelenting war against illegal drug trafficking and abuse.

Motivated by different shades of vested interests, various groups monitored to be led by the CPP/NPA/NDF will hold various protests in Metro Manila and other key cities today to vainly try to embarrass and undermine the popular administration of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte. They will latch on to various political and economic issues already being addressed by the government," said PNP spokesman and newly-promoted Chief Superintendent Benigno B. Durana Jr.

"While we may not agree with these minority's sentiments, we will make sure they would be able to fully and freely exercise their constitutional rights to freedom of assembly and expression. But to incite others to bring down the current administration are

not only violations of the Revised Penal Code but also acts of rebellion," Durana said in a press conference.

PNP chief Director General Oscar D. Albayalde has ordered the fielding of a 4,000-strong Civil Disturbance Management (CDM) contingent in Metro Manila as a preemptive move in response to the situation.

Durana said that "these CDM units are under strict orders to observe Maximum Tolerance, observe and protect human rights and adhere to prescribed rules of engagement contained in the Police Operational Procedures, and provisions of Batas Pambansa 880 or the Public Assembly Act of 1985."

National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Guillermo Lorenzo T. Eleazar is leading all security preparations in Metro Manila with the help of the Armed Forces NCR Command. He already talked with leaders of different protest groups and called for their full cooperation to all police security preparations including those aimed at preventing the possibility that 'saboteurs' may be able to infiltrate the ranks of the demonstrators.

A report has identified the Liberal Party as having escalated its agitation and propaganda activities to polarize the nation with all opposition senators and congressmen undermining the economy programs

and policies of President Duterte.

It also said that 'international and mainstream media allied with the opposition' are doing their best to alienate the Filipino people by trying to erode public support for President Duterte through fake news and biased reporting.

The report also alleged that 'the Catholic clergy is organizing and inciting people against President Duterte'.

The projected big demonstration in Metro Manila comes in the wake of a noted increase in NPA attacks on lightly-guarded government installations and other 'soft targets' in the countryside and the spate of bombings in Mindanao which officials said are all aimed at trying to discredit the martial law declared by President Duterte in the region.

There is also the presence of remnants of the Magdalo Group of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV reportedly trying to drive a wedge in the AFP hoping to have a breakaway group that will initiate another 'People Power' scenario.

However, both the PNP and the AFP leaderships have maintained they are 100 percent solid behind the Duterte administration and would fight any effort to undermine the duly-constituted authorities, institution and government.

NPA REBELS HAHALO SA RALIYISTA

PNP todo-alerto sa mga kilos-protesta

Nasa 4,000 pulis ang ikakalat sa mga istrategikong lugar sa Metro Manila matapos makatanggap ng intelligence report ang pamunuan ng PNP na daang miyembro ng mga rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) ang lalahok sa hanay ng mga militanteng grupo na magdaraos ng kilos protesta upang ipahiya ang administrasyon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kaugnay ng paggunita sa ika-46 taong anibersaryo ng martial law ngayon (Setyembre 21).

Sa press briefing sa Camp Crame, sinabi ni

PNP Spokesman P/Sr Supt. Benigno Durana Jr. na isinailalim na sa full alert status ang kapulisan kasabay ng pagpapaigting ng police visibility patrol bilang bahagi ng pro-active measure.

"Motivated by different shades of vested interests, various groups monitored to be led by the CPP/NPA/NDF will hold various protests in Metro Manila and other key cities on 21 September to vainly try to embarrass and undermine a popular administration of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte," pahayag ni Du-

Ni JOY

rana.

Idinagdag pa nito na base sa intelligence report, hahalo sa rally ng mga militanteng grupo ang nasabing mga rebeldeng komunista kaya todo alerto ang PNP-Civil Disturbance Management (CDM) team upang masupil ang posibleng paghahasik ng kaguluhan ng mga ito.

Nabatid na kabilang sa mahigpit na bantayan ay ang kahabaan ng Mendiola patungo sa Palasyo ng Malacañang, US Embassy

CANTOS

at iba pang lugar na pagdarausan ng kilos protesta.

Inihayag ni Durana na nakahanda ang kapulisan na arestuhin ang CPP-NPA na may warrant of arrest na hahalo sa mga magdaraos ng demonstrasyon.

Sa kabila nito, ayon kay Durana ay wala naman silang namomonitor na "terror threat" pero mas mabuti na ang nakaalerto sa lahat ng oras dahilan sa traydor ang komunistang mga terorista.

Kaugnay nito, nanawagan si Durana sa mga estudyante na huwag ng makilahok sa mga bayo-

lenteng pagkilos para sa kanilang kaligtasan.

Magugunitang binanggit kamakailan ni Pangulong Duterte ang plano umanong pagpapataksik sa kanya ng tatlong grupong CPP-NPA, grupo ni Sen. Trillanes at mga dilawan na isasabay sa paggunita sa deklarasyon ng Martial Law ngayong araw na ito.



ML ANNIV GUGULUHIN NG NPA REBELS

Hahalo sa mga raliyista...

Daang miyembro ng mga rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) ang umano'y lalahok sa isasagawang rali ng mga militanteng grupo kaugnay sa paggunita ng ika-46 taong anibersaryo ng Martial Law ngayong araw.

Ito ang natanggap na intelligence report ng pulisya kaya't idedeploy ang

4,000 pulis sa mga istratehikong lugar sa Metro Manila.

Ang paglahok umano ng mga NPA rebels sa rali ay upang ipahiya ang administrasyon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Ayon naman kay PNP Spokesman P/Sr. Supt. Benigno Durana Jr. na isinailalim na rin sa full alert status ang kapulisan

kasabay ng pagpapaigting ng police visibility patrol bilang bahagi ng proactive measure.

Base sa intelligence report hahalo sa rali ng mga militanteng grupo ang nasabing mga rebeldeng komunista kaya todo alerto ang PNP-Civil Disturbance Management (CDM) team upang masupil ang posibleng paghaha-

NI JOY CANTOS

sik ng kaguluhan ng NPA rebels.

Kabilang sa mahigpit na babantayan ay ang kahabaan ng Mendiola patungo sa palasyo ng Malacañang, US Embassy sa lungsod ng Maynila at iba pa na pinagdarausap ng kilos protesta.

Nakahanda ang kapu-

lisan na arestuhin ang CPP-NPA na may warrant of arrest na hahalo sa mga magdaraos ng demonstrasyon upang kondenahin at ipahiya ang administrasyon sa mga isyung tinutugunan ng mga ito.

Mahigpit ding ipatutupad ang no permit, no rally policy at oobserbahan ang maximum tolerance alinsunod sa Police Opera-

tional Procedures at probisyon ng Batas Pambansa 880 at Public Assembly Act of 1985.

Tinatayang 20,000 ang target na mahikayat na raliyista ng CPP-NPA, pero sa nakalipas na State of the Nation Address (SONA) ni Pangulong Duterte noong Hulyo ng taong ito ay nabigo ang mga ito at nasa 5,000 lamang demonstrador ang

nakilahok.

Nanawagan si Durana sa mga estudyante na huwag nang makilahok sa mga bayolenteng pagkilos para sa kanilang kaligtasan.

Noong Setyembre 21, 1972 ay nagdeklara ng martial law ang yumaong si dating Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos na paghari sa bansa sa loob ng matalubang panahon.

Phl improves in counterterrorism

By JOSE KATIGBAK
STAR Washington bureau

WASHINGTON – The Duterte administration has improved its counterterrorism capabilities in the face of an evolving and robust terrorist threat.

In its Country Reports on Terrorism 2017, the US State Department said the threat posed by transnational terrorism was particularly prominent when Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)-affiliated domestic groups in Mindanao occupied parts of Marawi City for five months since May before finally succumbing to Philippine counterterrorism forces.

"The Philippine government consistently acknowledged the dangers from ISIS-affiliated terrorist groups and welcomed assistance from the US and a range of international partners," the report, released on Wednesday, said.

Several countries, including Australia, Japan and the United

States, provided counterterrorism and reconstruction assistance to the Philippines as its government began to develop a plan to rebuild Marawi.

Southeast Asian governments have remained concerned about foreign terrorist fighters returning from Iraq or Syria and using their operational skills, connections and experience to launch domestic attacks, the report said.

State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism Nathan Sales said numerous countries saw a decline in terrorist violence between 2016 and 2017 largely due to fewer attacks and deaths in Iraq.

Although terrorist attacks took place in 100 countries last year, they were geographically concentrated, he added.

The report said 59 percent of all attacks took place in five countries – Afghanistan, India, Iraq, Pakistan and the Philippines.

But political settlements to long-running insurgencies in the

Philippines remain elusive, it said.

It cited delays in implementing the Bangsamoro Basic Law have provided recruitment propaganda for former Moro Islamic Liberation Front fighters and commanders who formed more extreme breakaway groups including the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, Ansar al-Khalifa and the Maute group.

Governments in East Asia and the Pacific have continued to work to strengthen legal frameworks, investigate and prosecute terrorism cases, increase regional cooperation and information sharing and address critical border and aviation security gaps throughout the year, the report said.

Regional cooperation between domestic law enforcement and judicial authorities within countries throughout Southeast Asia resulted in high numbers of terrorism-related arrests and, in many cases, successful prosecutions, it added.

– With Pia Lee-Brago

BARMM will need more skilled workers – Murad

COTABATO CITY — The incoming Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) that will replace the decades-old Autonomous

Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) will need more workers than ever to ensure its success, both in the political and social spheres. This was expressed by Al Haj Murad

Ebrahim, chairman of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) on the sidelines of the 2nd Bangsamoro General Assembly of the Ulama, attended by over 1,000 "Ulama" (Islamic scholars) from all over the country, at Alnor Convention Center here Tuesday.

"We need more people who know how to run agencies of the new expanded regional government," Murad said referring to the MILF-led BARMM political entity.

He added: "With due respect to the mujahideen (Islamic guerrilla fighters), frankly I would like to tell you that not all of us would be accommodated to work with the government."

Murad said many workers in the current ARMM have undergone extensive training, both here and abroad, in running the regional government.

"We need such skilled workers to run a regional government," he stressed. "When we talk of guerrilla warfare, you (mujahideen) have that



ULAMA SUPPORT — Moro Islamic Liberation Front chair Al Haj Murad (fourth from right) attends the 2nd Bangsamoro General Assembly of the Ulama held Tuesday (Sept. 18, 2018) at Alnor Convention Center in Cotabato City. The 1,000-strong Ulama group has signified its full support to the Bangsamoro Organic Law that would pave the way for the creation of the MILF-led Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao replacing the old Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao set up. (Photo courtesy of the MILF Media Group)

skill to fight. However, running a (regional) government is a different field. It is very much different from armed struggle," the MILF chief said.

Murad said once the BARMM government is in place, special programs under the normalization process would be lined up for the many former MILF rebels to improve their skills in the field of agriculture, big industries, business, and commerce, among others.

"Rest assured, the mujahideen will not be left behind because this is all for you, for us Bangsamoro people," he said.

The MILF has an estimated 7,000 former armed guerrillas.

Murad's latest pronouncement has somehow allayed the fear of massive displacement of some 6,000 ARMM workers once the BARMM starts to go in operation.

"We need the help of everybody to achieve our aspiration," he said. (PNA)

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US showcases Marawi victory

Cites int'l effort vs IS

The battle for Marawi was considered the longest urban warfare in the country's history

By Chito Lozada

The Philippines was cited as a showcase for the success of the global war against terror in the US State Department's annual Country Reports on Terrorism (CRT) due to the swift victory of state forces against Islamic State (IS)-inspired groups which laid siege on Marawi City for five months last year.

In the East Asia and Pacific region, the report said the threat posed by transnational terrorism was particularly prominent "when IS-affiliated domestic groups in the southern Philippines occupied parts of Marawi City for five months before finally succumbing to Philippine counterterrorism forces."

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Political settlements to insurgencies remained elusive in the country

From page 1

It said several countries, including Australia, Japan and the United States, "provided counterterrorism and reconstruction assistance to the Philippines as its government began to develop a plan to rebuild the city."

It said Southeast Asian governments "remained concerned about foreign terrorist fighters returning from Iraq or Syria and using their operational skills, connections and experience to launch domestic attacks."

Improved capabilities

The report said the Philippines has improved its counterterrorism capabilities "in the face of an evolving and increasingly robust terrorist threat."

It noted that the Philippine government consistently acknowledged the dangers from IS-affiliated terrorist groups and welcomed assistance from the United States and a range of international partners.

The report said from May to November last year, terrorist organizations pledging support to IS "including a faction of the Abu Sayyaf Group, the Maute Group and others" occupied and held Marawi City.

"When the siege began, President Duterte declared martial law over the entire Mindanao region, approximately one-third of the country's territory," it said.

The battle was considered the longest urban warfare in the country's history.

The clashes were triggered by a police mission to serve an arrest warrant on Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon who was then in Marawi City supposedly to meet with Maute Group leaders.

Hapilon's forces opened fire on the combined Army and police teams and called for reinforcements from the Maute Group, which is believed to be responsible for the 2016 Davao City bombing.

The report said Congress granted an extension of martial law until the end of 2018 and by November, government forces cleared the city and eliminated much of the terror leaders "but suffered many casualties during the siege."

Elusive solutions

The report said political settlements to insurgencies remained elusive in the country, "thereby driving recruitment and fueling terrorist activities among certain groups."

At the time of the writing of the US report, it said the "Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), intended to implement the previous administration's 2014 peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), was awaiting action in Congress at the end of last year."

Last July, President approved the BBL, which was renamed the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL).

"Delays in passing the law have provided recruitment propaganda for former MILF fighters and commanders who formed more extreme breakaway groups, including the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), Ansar al-Khalifa and the Maute Group," the report added.

The report also noted gains in the campaign against communist guerillas.

"On 5 December, President Duterte signed a presidential proclamation to formally designate the CPP-NPA (Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army) a terrorist group, but the courts must still rule on the designation," the report said.

KFR cases fall

"Beyond Marawi, Philippine media observed that kidnapping-for-ransom cases declined from previous years," it said.

"Armed attacks against civilians and security forces continued, however. The press reported that on 22 June, security forces rescued at least 60 civilians held hostage after a BIFF attack in North Cotabato. Suspected members of the Abu

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Sayyaf Group attacked a village in Basilan on 21 August, killing at least nine civilians and wounding a dozen more," the report added.

The 3 December attack on a police station in Misamis Oriental by approximately 100 CPP-NPA members exemplified the group's frequent strikes at military, police and local government official targets, it said.

"Key counterterrorism law enforcement actions included the National Bureau of Investigation's October 2017 arrest of a woman suspected of using the Internet to spread terrorist propaganda and recruit foreign terrorist fighters to the Philippines," the report said.

The Department of Justice was also acknowledged for charging the Maute clan matriarch, the former Marawi mayor and nine other individuals with rebellion in June.

The 23 percent drop in worldwide terrorist attacks in 2017 was attributed mainly to fewer attacks in Iraq.

"Additionally, the Philippines effectively exercised its capabilities to protect the 2017 Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit and related events from terrorist attacks," it added.

Iran top terror sponsor

The report said Iran remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism while highlighting another drop in terrorist attacks worldwide.

The annual survey of global terrorism accused Iran of intensifying numerous conflicts and trying to undermine governments throughout the Middle East and beyond. Iran's "terrorist affiliates and proxies," the report said, "demonstrated a near-global terrorist reach."

The number of worldwide terrorist attacks dropped by 23 percent last year compared with 2016, according to the report, a change largely due to gains against the IS group in Iraq. The number also had declined in 2016 over the previous year.

The report comes as the Trump administration is toughening its stance against Iran. President Donald Trump withdrew from the landmark nuclear accord with Iran earlier this year and has begun to dismantle sanctions relief granted under the 2015 deal.

Attacks down 23%

The 23 percent drop in worldwide terrorist attacks in 2017 was attributed mainly to fewer attacks in Iraq, where territory once held by the Islamic State group was retaken by government forces. Deaths due to terrorist attacks also decreased by 27 percent last year. The report said IS alone carried out 23 percent fewer terrorist attacks and caused 53 percent fewer total deaths, compared with 2016.

Despite the drop in attacks, the report described the terrorist landscape as "more complex" and said the terrorist threat to the US and allies around the world had "evolved."

As IS lost territory, the group became "dispersed and clandestine, turning to the Internet to inspire attacks by distant followers," which has made the group "less susceptible to conventional military action," the report said.

The report stated that IS and groups that pledged allegiance to IS carried out attacks in more than 20 countries worldwide in 2017.

IS disperses

The near-defeat of the IS in Iraq and Syria has forced a dispersal of the group that has made the global threat of terror attacks much more complex, the report added.

Islamic State, al-Qaeda and related jihadists have decentralized and are adopting new technologies like simple chemical weapons and small drone systems to be able to pose a threat far from their traditional operating zones, according to the department's report on terrorism in 2017.

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'Sulu youths may have been killed by nerve suffocation'

By Nash B. Maulana and Macon Ramos-Araneta

THE seven young men earlier reported to have been killed in a military encounter with a bandits' group in Patikul, Sulu, could have actually died of nerve gas suffocation, a resident helping seek justice for the victims' families said on Thursday.

Dr. Raden Ikbala of the Integrated Provincial Health Office in Sulu said the victims' bodies bore no gunshot wounds, and that this raised speculations that they were tortured and forcibly suffocated with something soaked into a Sarin nerve gas.

Ikbala, founder of the BassaKao (Read) Foundation, said the victims, whose age ranged 17-22, had sought permission from the 55th Infantry Battalion to harvest from fruit trees owned by their families in Sitio Bato, Barangay Kabuntakas, Patikul, near Jolo, Sulu last Friday.

Col. Gerry Besana, public affairs officer of the Western Mindanao Command, also said on Friday that seven Abu Sayyaf bandits were killed and that six others were wounded, including their leader Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan.

"*Walang klarong putok sa ulo* [There's no visible gunshot wound in the head].

Each of the victims bore no gunshot in the body," Ikbala said of the bodies of the seven young men.

Earlier, reports said the bodies of the victims, which were recovered the following morning at the headquarters of the Joint Task Force Sulu in Jolo, Sulu, "were riddled with bullets."

Ikbala, however, said that no technical tests had yet been conducted to conclude that the victims were forced to smell the deadly Sarin nerve gas, or were injected with any deadly substance that might have caused their death.

But he said that residents and the victims' families are still puzzled as how they died or were actually killed.

"Were they fed and forcibly made to swallow thorns of durian peels or were overfed with seeds of another fruit that could have possibly stopped their breathing?" Ikbala asked.

"Sarin is a nerve gas which victims of torture are forcibly made to smell or are suffocated with to cause instant death. It can also be mixed into a vial of medicine for a liquid injection," Ikbala said.

Ikbala noted that the dead bodies in another photo of Sarin-poisoning victims had strong similarities with those of the young Tausug victims, who are now collectively known there as the "Patikul 7."

Besana said a legitimate encounter took place between the Task Group Panther under Lt. Col. Samuel Yunque and Capt. Michael Asistores of the Scout Rangers and more than 100 Abu Sayyaf under Radulan Sahiron on Friday around 1:30 pm.

Their relatives said that on Sept. 14 at 9 a.m., the seven victims were allowed by the 55th Infantry Battalion in Barangay Issan to harvest fruits in Sitio Tubig Bato in Barangay Kabuntakas in Patikul.

But along the way, scout rangers reportedly from the 32nd Infantry Battalion allegedly "arrested them at 11:00 a.m.," a relative of two of the victims said.

As this developed, the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy, a Muslim think tank based at the University of the Philippines, has called for an investigation into the deaths of the seven young men in Sulu and the recent bombings in several parts of Mindanao. **A3**

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Terror attacks bumaba ngunit naging mas kumplikado ³

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Ang halos pagkatalo ng Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) ay nagpuwersa ng pagkakatatak-watak ng grupo na lalong nagpakumplikado sa mga banta ng terror attacks sa buong mundo, iniulat ng US State Department nitong Miyerkules.

Decentralized na ang Islamic State, Al-Qaeda at mga kaugnay na jihadists at gumagamit ng mga makabagong teknolohiya tulad ng simpleng chemical weapons at maliit na drones para maging banta malayo sa kanilang tradisyunal na operating zones, ayon sa ulat sa terorismo noong 2017 ng departamento.

"They have become more dispersed and clandestine, turning to the internet to inspire attacks by distant followers, and, as a result, have made themselves less susceptible to conventional military action," ayon dito.

"Further, the return or relocation of foreign terrorist fighters from the battlefield has contributed to a growing cadre of experienced, sophisticated, and connected terrorist networks, which can plan and execute

terrorist attacks."

Sinabi ni State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism Nathan Sales na bumaba ang global terror attacks ng 23 porsiyento at mga pagkamatay dahil sa paghina ng terorismo sa 27 porsiyento noong 2017 mula 2016.

Malaking dahilan ang pagbagsak ng Islamic State sa Iraq, kung saan nabawi ng coalition at government forces ang malaking bahagi ng teritoryong kumukob ng grupo.

Ngunit ang mga miyembro ng malansag na grupo ay umalis sa Middle East, at muling lumutang at nagkaroon ng karulang mga sariling operasyon at networks sa ibang lugar, kabilang sa Southeast Asia. Noong nakararang taon umatake ang ISIS operatives sa England, Spain, Egypt, United States, at Pilipinas, diin ng ulat.

Ipinunto sa ulat na banta na rin ngayon ang ISIS sa China at Chinese interests sa buong mundo, matapos sumali sa grupo ang ilang Chinese nationals.

Sinabi niya na ang Al-Qaeda, kahit ilang taon nang nasa anino ng ISIS, ay nananatanging pinakamatinding banta sa mundo.

Responsible sila sa maraming pag-atake tulad ng truck bomb attack noong Oktubre 2017 sa Mogadishu, Somalia na ikinamatay ng 300 katao.

"Al Qaeda is a determined and patient adversary," ariya.

Ang ikatlong major threat, sa mata ng US, ay ang Iran, na ayon kay Sales ay natatangi dahil taglay nito ang buong kapangyarihan ng estado sa likod ng mga planong pag-aalake.

"Iran remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism and is responsible for intensifying multiple conflicts and undermining US interests in Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Bahrain, Afghanistan, and Lebanon," aniya.

Ang tatlong ito -- ang Islamic State, Al-Qaeda at Iran -- "have both the capability and intent to strike the United States and our allies," aniya.

Isinubestyon ng ulat na paigtingin ang pandaigdigang kooperasyon para malabanan ang terorismo, kabilang ang pagtunton at pagharang sa daloy ng pananalapi ng mga grupo.

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GOTCHA
JARIUS BONDOC



**Trillanes standoff:
What's the end game?**

President Duterte direly wants Senator Trillanes behind bars. That's his aim in revoking Trillanes' 2010 amnesty as a Navy mutineer. His Proclamation 572 directs the AFP and PNP "to apprehend former LtSG Trillanes so that he can be recommitted to the detention facility." Trillanes himself says the amnesty issue thinly disguises the presidential decree as nothing more than an arrest order.

Trillanes is the bitterest of Duterte's critics. He alone has been alleging multi-billion-peso undeclared deposits - which riles the latter no end. Things were bound to come to a head. In devising Trillanes' retrial for mutiny, Duterte swears to want only to correct a faulty exoneration of an "enemy of the state." In reply Trillanes taunts Duterte anew to waive bank secrecy over the questioned accounts. How else then for the Commander-in-Chief to shut up Trillanes than by military stockade?

Things didn't work out as planned, though. Trillanes' case has gone viral and international. By holing out at the Senate, he was projected as an underdog. Duterte's own advisers rued that the posse of cops and hecklers outside only heroized the senator as a crusader against authoritarianism. In truth, Trillanes was disliked in his own circles. He habitually defied superiors: the President in 2003 and 2007; the Senate President who took him from prison into personal care in 2010; the Makati Mayor who financed him in 2011; the Foreign Secretary during the Scarborough stand-off with China in 2012; and presidential candidate Duterte starting 2016 after the latter turned him down as VP running mate. Trillanes' political stock has been waning. He was about to fade away upon term's end in 2019. But the gang-up by administration spokesmen and prosecutors unwittingly has projected him as leader of the anti-Duterte opposition in the coming mid-term election.

The judiciary also has intervened. At the Supreme Court was filed the question of whether Duterte by his lonesome can repeal an amnesty jointly granted by a former President and Congress. Too, a trial court refuses to issue an arrest warrant against Trillanes, preferring to examine first the facts of the 2010 amnesty grant. Duterte, a former state prosecutor, had to back off in favor of legal procedures. He says he is no longer interested in jailing his foe.

Meanwhile, Duterte's son has been filing a series of libel suits against Trillanes. Sooner or later, prosecutors and judges

Justice Sereno through a Quo Warranto petition, instead of impeachment as provided by the Constitution, followed by the issuance of a proclamation revoking the amnesty granted to Trillanes. Revoking something void or non-existent from the very beginning is really quite absurd and ridiculous.

Indeed, the situation in our country now is quite unstable. And this is not due to the destabilization moves of Duterte's political foes which they dubbed as "yellowtards." This is because of the erroneous policies of Duterte's economic managers that brought about the highest inflation rate in our country, the rising prices of essential commodities and the food shortage.

This current state of our country should be recognized by Duterte and his supporters, otherwise the situation will worsen. And most importantly, writing about this actual situation should not be taken as an "Anti-Duterte" but a "Pro Country" move.

* * *
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from the Duterte's Davao City home court will be issuing subpoenas for Trillanes' personal appearance. The senator growls that he is unafraid to show up in enemy territory. But upon leaving the Senate he would be fair game. Sanctuary there is best, he knows.

Whatever happens will dictate the course of the midterm election.

Sotto: "Ang mamatay nang dahil sa iyo" is defeatist. It should be "ang ipaglabaan ang kulaygaan mo."

Bato: "Ang manlalaban ay mamamatay!"

The P55-billion pork barrel at the House of Reps is being likened to "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves." House leaders discovered it buried in the maze of items in the P3.757-trillion national budget bill for 2019. Allegedly the previous leaders inserted it there before they were deposed. If undiscovered, the P55 billion supposedly would have been disbursed to 40 favored congressmen.

In the "Tales of the Arabian Nights" woodcutter Ali Baba saw 40 robbers with their loot arrive on horseback at a cave. The bandleader commanded, "Open sesame," and the boulder swung open to let them in and hide the stolen gold. When they rode out, the leader boomed, "Shut sesame," and the boulder swung back to cover. After they left, Ali Baba repeated the magic words, entered the cave, then took off with the hoard.

At the House, the finders of the P55-billion pork barrel treat it as an open-and-shut case. Say they, the loot should be shared equally by all 294 members, not only the favored 40. And they will live happily ever after – to the detriment of the taxpayers from whom the P55 billion came.

Are disaster deaths preventable? That question is always asked after a typhoon, flood, landslide. It will continue to be asked, by people knowledgeable about disaster mitigation in responsible countries compared to negligent Philippines.

Most disaster deaths certainly are preventable. Filipinos just have to remember what they learned in kindergarten. From the children's song about the foolish man building his house upon sand and the wise man upon rock, they should grasp the need for stable foundation. From the bedtime story of the wolf blowing down the little pigs' shelters made of hay or sticks but not of bricks, they should use sturdy building materials. From elementary science they should know that rocks fall down, never up; that water seeks its own level; and that fire can wipe out everything.

Yet plain folk and officials persist in doing wrong: erecting homes in avalanche zones, beside rising rivers, in the middle of drying creeks. Ignoring the Building Code in which pioneering engineers and architects denoted the type and dimensions of building materials and methods of construction. Denuding forests and carving up mountains, without restoring nature as required in timber and mining concessions.

The Philippine archipelago is within the Pacific Ring of Fire. It is prone to the strongest cyclones, killer quakes, and volcanic eruptions. Climate change is messing up cropping seasons and warming the fishing grounds. All Filipinos are doing is accept their supposed fate that "London bridge is falling down."

Catch *Sapul* radio show, Saturdays, 8-10 a.m., DWIZ (882-AM).

Gotcha archives on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Jarius-Bondoc/1376602159218459>, or The STAR website <https://beta.philstar.com/columns/134276/gotcha>

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To wake up— and remember

So much has been said about the need to remember what happened during martial law, accompanied by the slogan "Never again." But I worry that we've barely scratched the surface when it comes to restoring what we need to remember.

Sure, much has been done in the area of human rights violations, but even there, given the magnitude of "salvagings" (extrajudicial executions), disappearances and torture during the Marcos era, we're really still dealing with numbers—numbing numbers.

We need to bring back to life the disappeared and the dead through stories, retold by relatives and friends, that underscore their humanity. I thought last week of Dr. Bobby de la Paz who, after graduation from UP's College of Medicine, chose to serve the poor in Samar and, for that, drew the ire of the military. He was killed in 1982. Last week was his birthday; had he lived, he would have been 66.

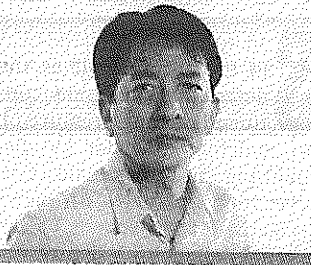
Several years ago, Asuncion David Maramba (who contributes occasional columns to the *Inquirer*), collected life stories, including that of Bobby, which were published as "Six Young Filipino Martyrs." We need more of those anthologies to be written, and to be in schools and home libraries.

Rightly so, there's much concern about historical revisionism. But how will future generations of Filipinos be able to tell what facts have been distorted, when we don't even have the facts made available to the public in the many new forms of media?

We tend to leave the defense of history to, well, historians, but we also need sectoral narratives about what happened during martial law. One important sector would be public health and medicine, and we need to hear from health professionals who lived through that dictatorship to assess what happened.

For example, there was much criticism during that era when Imelda Marcos set up highly specialized centers such as the Heart Center and the Lung Center. Yet, many Filipinos have benefited from these centers and will praise them.

But little is said about how those centers were built and maintained while neglecting community healthcare (sometimes called primary healthcare), which could have brought about more substantive and sustainable reforms in health, especially among the poor and in rural areas.



PINOY KASI
MICHAEL L. TAN

Again, I think of Bobby de la Paz, who was working with community-based programs specializing in tuberculosis. Instead of supporting these programs, the dictatorship labeled them subversive, harassed health professionals and workers and, in the case of Bobby, resorted to assassination.

We are still paying for that neglect, still struggling with diseases that have long been conquered in other neighboring countries, tuberculosis being the prime example.

We will need similar assessments for other sectors, especially for areas where historical revisionism has already gone into full gear.

Economics is one such area, especially with the way young Filipinos are being told that the Philippines developed rapidly under Marcos. Our economists need to present the facts, to explain how "development" under Marcos was driven by huge foreign debts and by exporting Filipinos. Even before Marcos fell, the UP School of Economics came out with a white paper outlining what had happened under Marcos, with dire warnings of economic collapse.

Another area where the dictatorship failed dismally was education. Up to the 1960s, other countries sent their scholars to the Philippines to study because our universities—state-run as well as private—offered high-quality education. That changed as the government's budget for education was sacrificed, and higher priority given to military spending and debt service.

Another sector that suffered was S&T or science and technology, again because budgets for research and development dwindled. The last years of the dictatorship were the worst, especially after Ninoy Aquino's assassination. I started teaching during that crisis period and saw the effects; our libraries, for example, were unable to renew subscriptions to important journals.

Recently, too, I was looking up some articles from the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, an excellent Hong Kong-based magazine, and realized that issues from 1972 and several years after were all missing. The magazine had been banned by the martial law government.

It's time now to come up with the real stories of how dictatorship affected the arts and humanities, sports, mass media, agriculture, fisheries and many other sectors. In doing so, we will realize how the dictatorship lives into the present through its long-term effects.

I think especially of the overarching theme of governance and how, through those years, we became a nation anesthetized—stripped of the ability to feel and to discern, and lulled into complacency with patronage and promises.

How can we remember, when we remain in deep slumber?

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EDITORIAL

Epic fail

Ferdinand Marcos used the communist insurgency, then only a few years old, as his main excuse to declare martial law, 46 years ago this weekend. In 1972, the strength of the New People's Army was estimated at 1,028 rebels; by the time he was People-Powered out of Malacañang Palace in 1986, the NPA had grown to over 22,500 armed regulars. By Marcos' own standard, then, martial law was—as kids say these days—an epic fail.

Marcos used the martial law regime—a nation-building enterprise he called the New Society, justified by a legal framework he created called constitutional authoritarianism—to advance his original campaign vision, of making the country “great again.” When he came to power, the country's foreign debt was about \$1 billion; when he was ousted, the total had swollen to some \$25 billion—a terrible burden on every citizen, which we continue to pay for until today. Under his watch, in 1983 and 1984, the economy had its worst years since the end of World War II. By Marcos' own standard of “greatness,” then, the Marcos years were an epic fail.

He used the martial law regime to launch what he called a revolution from the center, and pledged to fight the oligarchy that he said controlled the country. But of the 80 or so families that formed the economic elite during the martial law years, many were new oligarchs, the infamous cronies, who rose to power and prominence because of their direct connection to either Marcos or his extravagant wife, Imelda. By Marcos' own standard of fighting the oligarchy, then, the martial law regime was also an epic fail.

He also used peace and order as another justification for imposing, then extending, then disguising, military rule. He promised to create a culture of discipline and form a government in strict adherence to the rule of law. But with a Supreme Court under his almost total control and lawmaking powers of his own under the new Constitution, he instead built the most repressive regime since the Japanese Occupation. He and his regime were responsible for at least 3,257 recorded killings, some 35,000 documented cases of torture, and about 70,000 incarcerations. By Marcos' own standard of peace and order, then, martial law was an epic fail.

Martial law succeeded only in one thing: in centralizing control, power and money in the hands of the Marcoses and their cronies. As much as \$8 billion of the new foreign debt incurred went straight to them—the worst case of corruption in Philippine history. Even today, even after over P170 billion in ill-gotten wealth from the Marcoses and their cronies have already been recovered by the Presidential Commission on Good Government, his wife and his children continue to contest various attempts around the world to reclaim more hidden wealth.

To all of these incontrovertible facts, his eldest daughter, Imee, who is running for a Senate seat in next year's elections, and his only son, Bongbong, who is disputing his loss in the 2016 vice presidential election, only have one thing to say to the Filipino people: Move on.

The different protests scheduled today across the country are an appeal from the depths, directed at the Duterte administration, to stop its own Marcosian tactics. From a longstanding sympathizer of the communist insurgency, President Duterte has changed into a strident critic, ready to red-tag any sign of opposition. From the initial signs of optimism two years ago, the administration has turned into the bearer, and the brunt, of bad news: galloping inflation, a weakening peso, indifferent or outright hostile investors. From the first flourish of antioligarchic sentiments, the Duterte era is now transformed into an enabler of a new economic elite.

And despite all the talk about fighting the war on drugs and the war on corruption, even the President confesses that corruption in the government remains pervasive and that the illegal drug trade continues to thrive. But already thousands of people, many of them demonstrably innocent, have been killed.

Supporters of the President, however, continue to spew nonsense about creating a revolutionary government, or pushing through a federalist charter that will concentrate power in his hands. They do not understand history's lessons: Even though Marcos was able to use martial rule to concentrate power, for a time, he ultimately could not stop the people from wresting it back. That is the one message from today's many protests.

That we do not forget

If you have not done so yet, make time to watch "Goyo: Ang Batang Heneral." Like most Filipinos, much of what I remember about Gen. Gregorio del Pilar is limited to the postcard that memorializes his martyrdom at Tirad Pass, and monuments like the one in Calumpit which tells me I'm nearing my mother's hometown.

The enthusiastic turnout on the film's second week reflects well on director Jerrold Tarog's remarkable rendering of Del Pilar's portrait as a hero and as a human being.

Aptly screened after our observance of National Heroes Day and before the anniversary of the declaration of martial law, "Goyo" also revisits a critical question about the role of history. Should history strengthen our sense of patriotism and nationhood by only presenting what is good and beautiful? Or should history help us learn from the past by presenting both what our founding fathers did right, and what they could have done differently?

Coincidentally, this was the crux of the 1986 Historians' Debate. On the one hand were historians who argued that the time had come to remove the stigma of the Holocaust so that Germany could "normalize" its past. On the other were historians who argued against it, as Auschwitz occupies a unique niche in their history along with their finest moments as a country. It is noteworthy that the philosopher Jürgen Habermas took up the cudgels for the latter's position. His differentiation between strategic action and communicative action may help explain why he did so.

Revising Auschwitz, or *moving on*, as it is referred to now in the context of the Marcos past, presents an understanding of history that reduces it to strategic or instrumental action. We engage in strategic action in the realm of economics and politics.

COMMENTARY

VON KATINDOY

We invest money so we can earn interest. In the same manner, we vote for politicians so we can be represented in government. Similarly, corporations and political parties engage in strategic action to achieve their respective economic and political objectives. Put simply, we engage in strategic action, or the world as we know it grinds to a halt.

Alas, history neither belongs to the economic nor the political systems that sustain modern society. This is why preserving the stigma of Auschwitz vis-à-vis the exemplary contributions of Germany to humanity suggests a broader understanding of history—one that flows from communicative action. This is the natural inclination of human beings to come to a better understanding of themselves and of one another by way of culture and language in our everyday world—or the "lifeworld," as Habermas calls it. Relationships within families, friends and communities thrive when they engage in communicative action through the good times and the bad times.

It is when the rules that apply to the economic and the political systems are extended to the lifeworld that problems arise. This is what Habermas calls the colonization of the lifeworld. When we mistake something that belongs to the lifeworld for something that is unique to the system, he warns us of the price we end up paying: "The growing number of hospital beds occupied by psychiatric patients, the epidemic proportions of behavioral disturbances, alcoholism, the phenomena of addiction per se, the rising suicide and juvenile delin-

quency rates... the destruction of the urban environment, the industrialization, contamination and sprawling disfiguration of the landscape..." (Habermas, Observations on "The Spiritual Situation of the Age").

Lorena Barros, the UP scholar who became a revolutionary during the martial law years takes Habermas' prognosis closer to home. "... I wish the world didn't revolve so much on money. Sometimes it feels that way. Money, money, money all the time. No move that doesn't cost a cent. Even my walks around the golf course are paid for—by your blood and sweat. No, nothing's for free. Nothing. Every sunset is paid for..." (Maita Gomez, "Gentle Warrior" in "Six Young Filipino Martyrs," ed. Asuncion David Maramba).

For Habermas then, the use of history to achieve political or economic objectives perpetuates the continuing colonization of our lifeworld. Almost a hundred years before Habermas defended the purpose of history to enlighten and to teach, another Filipino revolutionary by the name of Apolinario Mabini clearly grasped what history was for.

Near the end of "Goyo," reflecting on how our first president failed the vision of Jose Rizal and the aspiration of Andres Bonifacio, Mabini minced no words in his incisive analysis: "The revolution failed because it was badly led; because its leader won his post by reprehensive rather than meritorious acts; because instead of supporting the men most useful to the people, he made them useless out of jealousy... God grant **that we do not forget** such a terrible lesson, learnt at the cost of untold suffering."

It was so then. It is so today.

Von Katindoy trained in philosophy at the Mother of Good Counsel Seminary before completing his MA in philosophy at Ateneo de Manila University.

VIEWS FROM DOWN UNDER

AMANDA GORELY

Partners in peace

Tomorrow is the International Day of Peace, a day for all humanity to commit to peace above all differences and to contribute to building a culture of peace. Sadly the Philippines is home to some of the longest running internal conflicts in the Indo-Pacific region. But as I have found during my time here, it is also home to some of the most inspiring, committed and innovative peacebuilders.



In May this year I took the Australian Minister for International Development and the Pacific to Cotabato. We met with a group of youth leaders from the Iranun corridor, just north of Cotabato. These young women and men are helping to prevent and resolve conflict. Through their ideas, passion and determination they are working to keep their communities safe. They are truly inspirational.

I am proud of the contribution that Australia is making to peace in the Philippines. For over 20 years we have supported the peace process between the Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. I was delighted to see the signing of the Bangsamoro Organic Law in July, a once in a generation opportunity to secure a lasting peace in the region.

We are supporting development projects in conflict-

affected Mindanao that make a real difference to the communities there, including water systems, local roads and livelihoods projects. These help build confidence in the peace process and help demonstrate that peace brings development.

We also work with local non-government organisations that help resolve conflict and promote dialogue. They also support the engagement of women in the peace process and in political leadership, and help strengthen community cohesion.

As shown by the tragedy of Marawi City, the biggest threat to peace in Mindanao is the violent ideology of the Islamic State. Australia stands with the Philippines in its commitment to combat terrorism. We know that the force of arms alone cannot win the fight against terrorism. Only by working with local communities to resist the influence of these groups can the war be won. That is why we support work with religious and community leaders, young people and parents, to help people stay on the path to peace.

Australia is committed to assisting residents displaced from Marawi City until they can safely return home, as well as to the recovery and reconstruction of Marawi City. We are providing food, education and livelihoods assistance. And we are supporting Task Force Bangon Marawi to address the enormous challenge in planning for and delivering the reconstruction.

In late July, I visited Iligan for the launch of the Marawi Reconstruction Conflict Watch. This important group of

community leaders from Marawi City understands local conflict dynamics. They will help the Philippine Government and other partners ensure that the reconstruction of Marawi is peaceful and sensitive to the unique culture of the area.

While in Iligan, I saw the award-winning documentary 'Maratabat', which Australia supported through one of our NGO partners. This documentary showcases some of the unsung heroes of the siege of Marawi: the volunteer rescue squads who, unarmed, escorted to safety trapped residents, Christian and Muslim alike. Their inspiring story is a vital counter to the negative stereotypes that can persist after violent conflict. I encourage people to watch the documentary and promote it widely.

The people of the Bangsamoro will soon vote on whether to accept the Bangsamoro Organic Law. If the law is accepted, the Philippines will be presented with an opportunity to secure a just and lasting peace, where there has been so much conflict for so long. Be assured that Australia will continue to work with the Philippines Government, and with the people of Mindanao, as a partner in peace.

You can watch the award-winning documentary 'Maratabat' at: www.international-alert.org/media/philippines-honor-stories-valor-marawi

(Amanda Gorely is the Australian Ambassador to the Philippines. Follow her on Twitter @AusAmbPH)



Revisiting martial law

EDITORIAL

There have been some mass protest actions, but for many Filipinos, the yearlong martial law in the entire Mindanao has largely gone unnoticed. This is thanks to the conduct of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in enforcing martial law.

There is renewed interest, however, even among millennials, on the conduct of the AFP and other state forces four decades ago, when they were the enforcers of martial law declared by dictator Ferdinand Marcos on Sept. 21, 1972.

Under Marcos' military rule, the AFP and Philippine Constabulary, particularly the PC Metropolitan Command or Metrocom which operated in Manila and surrounding towns and cities, could barge into private homes and drag anyone to detention by virtue merely of a so-called Arrest, Search and Seizure Order that did not emanate from the courts. A number of individuals rounded up by virtue of an

ASSO were tortured or executed. Others remain on the list of

the country's *desaparecidos*.

The PC and Metrocom have been disbanded, with Constabulary members absorbed into the Philippine National Police. But today, as the country remembers the 46th anniversary of the declaration of martial law, the objects of fear are PNP members who abuse state power and resort to extralegal means of fighting criminality.

The abuses have fueled renewed interest in the dark days of the dictatorship, and bolstered the resolve to blunt any attempt to restore authoritarian rule. If more people are commemorating the anniversary of martial law today, it is because they perceive dark clouds again forming in the horizon. Perhaps their eyes are merely playing tricks on them. But when it comes to protecting basic freedoms, it cannot be stressed enough that eternal vigilance is a small price to pay. §

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SKETCHES

ANA MARIE PAMINTUAN

Leni and Rody

She's the Vice President of all Filipinos and not just the Liberal Party. And being the constitutional successor, the Vice President cannot lead any self-serving calls for the ouster or resignation of the President of the Republic.

So how does Leonora Robredo balance this with her role as leader of the opposition?

With much difficulty, as VP Leni Robredo herself admits.

Facing us on "The Chiefs" this week on Cignal TV's *One News* channel, the Veep recalled with a wry grin how those who egged her on to seek the nation's second highest post had told her that the job of spare tire to the president would be much easier than her work as congresswoman representing Camarines Sur.

So has it turned out to be true? It would be easy, she admitted to us, if the President is not Rodrigo Duterte.

For the reasons cited above, the Veep is reluctant to take direct swipes at President Duterte, even if, as opposition leader, there are valid reasons for her to do so.

It also hasn't escaped her attention that her ratings always fall whenever she directly takes on Duterte, whose popularity midway through his term remains impressively high although the numbers are on a consistent downward trend.

Filipinos, she told us, want the two top officials of the land to work together.

Both she and Duterte gave it a try. The rapprochement was coming along so well that people even began teasing them romantically, helped along by Duterte's politically incorrect jokes. Robredo recalls this period with amusement, noting that it would not have happened if she's not a widow.

The teasing didn't last long. When she was the housing chief with Cabinet rank, Robredo had openly criticized the brutal methods in fighting the illegal drug trade. She recalled that during a Cabinet meeting, she had mentioned her criticism to the President and he had told her it was OK. The Veep was pleased and thought Duterte didn't mind if she voiced her critical opinions on other issues related to his policies.

She thought wrong; after that brief rapprochement with the President, she was disinvited to Cabinet meetings. Eventually she dropped the housing portfolio. These days, Robredo notes, she's not even invited to meetings of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council where by law (Republic Act 7640), the VP is a member.

Today their relationship (she asked: was there ever one?) has so deteriorated that Duterte is accusing the LP, which she heads as the party member with the highest position in government, of plotting to oust him by October, through a series of mass actions that are supposed to start today, the 46th anniversary of the declaration of martial law by his idol Ferdinand Marcos.



The LP, Duterte has claimed, is conspiring with the communists and the Magdalo group of former rebel soldiers led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV in the ouster plot.

From the Senate, Trillanes also faced us two weeks ago together with Communist Party of the Philippines founding chairman Jose Maria Sison in the Netherlands and LP vice president for external affairs Erin Tañada.

Trillanes reiterated what he had said about the ouster plot as soon as Duterte had hurled the accusation: it was a figment of the imagination of an "insecure" President.

Tañada gave a similar categorical denial, stressing that the LP is now busy preparing for the midterm elections in May 2019, with the filing of certificates of candidacy set next month.

Joma Sison also denied any conspiracy with the Magdalo and LP, although he stressed that communists are waging a rebellion so the aim is to replace the government. So yes, Sison said, they want Duterte ousted.

Whether this is possible is as uncertain as Duterte's assessment that the communist rebellion would be defeated by mid-2019. The communist New People's Army continues to launch armed attacks. Trillanes and his fellow Magdalo, former party-list congressman Ashley Acedillo, told us that this was why their group could not possibly be in bed with the enemy — the NPA rebels who continue to kill government forces. Sison also pointed out that government forces continue their offensives against the communists.

Robredo herself categorically denied to us that she was involved in any plot to oust the President.

"Filipinos are not keen on supporting another uprising," Robredo told us. "It will not be good for the country if we will go through another political upheaval the likes of EDSA. I feel we have gone through so much already."

On the other hand, does she suspect that Duterte is behind efforts to unseat her by ensuring the victory of Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. in his electoral protest against her? That would be an unfair accusation on her part, she told *The Chiefs*.

She also maintains her faith in the capability of the Supreme Court, sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, to render a fair decision on Marcos' protest, and to make a legal rather than political decision. The VP, after all, is also supposed to lead the nation in showing respect for the country's institutions.

As leader of the nation rather than merely of the LP, she may never be able to meet the expectations of certain quarters for a more vocal opposition leader.

To neutral observers, this void is being filled by Trillanes. Thanks to Duterte's obsessive effort to shut him up, Trillanes has become an opposition star. Robredo and LP members, however, stress that Trillanes is not the new opposition leader, although the Liberals and Magdalo are coalescing for the 2019 elections.

I asked the VP if she thought the political turbulence combined with the country's current economic woes — record-high inflation, record-low peso and shortage of subsidized rice — are strengthening the opposition.

She said she didn't want the opposition to gain strength from problems that beset all Filipinos. Political differences, she said, must be set aside for a united response to common economic problems. Her final message to our viewers in fact was a call for unity in addressing these urgent problems.

It would be good for administration officials to do the same.

Time for a Dep't of Disaster Resiliency

THE arrival of typhoon "Ompong" and the threat it presented to the areas of the country it would hit swept away for a moment other critical issues worrying our people. There had been so many of these issues demanding action from the government - federalism, the Trillanes case, rising prices especially of rice, etc. But as "Ompong" drew near and when it finally hit land, everything else was set aside as we concentrated on the powerful typhoon.

Vegetable prices unexpectedly went down in the days preceding the typhoon's landing, as farmers quickly harvested their crops before they were destroyed by the strong winds, creating a temporary oversupply. The rice shipments from Vietnam and Thailand had started arriving, so rice prices had also stabilized. Stern warnings were also issued against price manipulators. The high prices, however, have now returned, pushed by increased oil prices and a reduction of the food supply from the north.

This would be a good time for Congress to consider the proposal to create a Department of Disaster Resiliency (DDR). In his State of the Nation Address last July, President Duterte called on Congress to approve the bill creating the new department "with utmost urgency." The President said the bill "will be a significant step toward attaining safe, adaptive, and disaster-resilient communities by leading efforts to reduce the risk of natural hazards and the effects of climate change."

Senate President Vicente Sotto III, who filed the Senate bill for the proposed department, said

it will focus on three basic areas - disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response, and recovery and building.

In a country regularly beset by typhoons, floods and landslides, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and climate phenomena such as El Niño and La Niña, these disasters are now attended to by scattered government agencies. They get in one another's way on occasion.

The new department will need considerable funding and will compete with other programs of the government in the allocation of funds in the national budget. The proposed federal system of government with its 18 regional governments on top of the existing national and local governments will need a great deal of funds. The "Build, Build, Build" infrastructure program is another administration program needing funds in the trillions of pesos. There is need for our defense forces to acquire more ships and planes and arms. The Department of Budget and Management will have thus its hands full as it considers the priorities of the administration.

Even with the new department, many individual projects will be handled by other departments - construction of evacuation centers by the Department of Public Works and Highways, for example. Actual distribution of emergency relief goods will still be done by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

But the proposals and the rationale for the projects and activities will come from the Department of Disaster Resiliency, which will focus on the one single major problem of disasters that our island country is heir to.

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PUNCHLINE

Duterte moves Army chief to NFA; 'idiotic' rice problem hit



By FRED M. LOBO

PRESIDENT Duterte has named retiring Army chief Lt. Gen. Rolando Bautista as the next head of the much-criticized National Food Authority (NFA).

Cheap rice never reached the poor and hungry due to "idiotic" structure in the food agency, he lamented.

"What we don't want to happen is the rice is already there, paid by the people, but the public still might not eat it because it has weevil," presidential spokesman Harry Roque had said earlier.

Translation: *Bigas na, binukbok pa! Style niyo bulok!*

Duterte asked Bautista to serve as NFA administrator when he retires next month right after devastation by typhoon Ompong, and in the midst of a dragging NFA rice-lack controversy.

Rationalize the "idiotic" structure in the NFA and ensure a stable supply of rice in the country, he ordered.

Duterte said Bautista, also former Presidential Security Group (PSG) commander and graduate of PMA, Class 1985, will take the place of NFA Administrator Jason Aquino who recently offered to be relieved from his post amid NFA rice stocks shortage that triggered price hikes in the market.

"NFA ka na. Mabait yan si Rolly [You'll be assigned in NFA. Rolly is good]," the President told Bautista during his disaster response meeting in typhoon-hit Cagayan.

"In the meantime hindi kita malagay sa Central Bank, pwede ka muna

sa NFA siguro to rationalize the idiotic structure, to plan...]," the President told Bautista.

Translation: Before going to the Central Bank, take care of the Central Market first, Rolly...

In case there is already adequate supply of NFA buffer rice, Duterte said Bautista should make sure the government rice stocks are distributed from the warehouses to markets in strategic places where they are badly needed.

We plan to purchase trucks for the NFA that would efficiently deliver the rice stocks to the retail stores, he added.

"There is a dearth of substantial knowledge of where the rice is (during calamity). I need somebody I can trust at *masabihan ko na* fix that. So *wala na ako ibang malagay, so si Bautista muna*," Duterte said.

"In the meantime you have to help the country and rationalize everything there. Keep a level of inventory," he told Bautista.

Duterte also directed Bautista "to enforce the law" on rice trading and supply-price stabilization.

Yes sir, go after the rice cartel, syndicates, hoarders, profiteers, and smugglers, Army-style!

The President said he is supportive of the rice tariffication proposal to help stabilize rice prices and prevent shortage by liberalizing rice importation.

"I am decided on tariffication. *Walang limit...* You have to auction. But no corruption," he said.

Roque confirmed "PRRD ex-

pressed his desire to appoint Lt. Gen. Rolando Bautista as NFA Admin effective on his retirement as Chief of Army on 15 Oct.," citing him as commander of the task force that defeated the Islamic State-linked terrorists that attacked Marawi City last year.

Okay, please run after rice trading "rebels," sir!

Roque said earlier the NFA must take measures to prevent a repeat of the weevil infestation of its imported rice shipments recently, as fumigation is "not a perfect excuse."

Badly needed rice in bad shape. Whew!

The discovery of infestation by rice weevils on thousands of imported rice sacks inside the vessel docked at Subic ports irked consumers and Malacañang.

"The NFA said there was still a remedy despite the presence of weevils. We're not saying this is acceptable. What we don't understand is why it took a while to unload the imported rice," Roque said.

Sen. Cynthia Villar, chairperson of the Senate Agriculture Committee, said the price of rice should be sta-

bilized and not allowed to skyrocket further to the prejudice of poor Filipino consumers.

"Where is the rice?" she asked at a recent Senate public hearing.

Agriculture Sec. Manny Piñol again assured there is adequate rice production by local farmers but the problem is the lack of cheap NFA rice buffer, a responsibility of the NFA Council of which he is not even a member.

Indeed, time to rationalize the rice problem. No to dragging "memo-rice" for poor, hungry Pinoy!

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FIRST THINGS FIRST

FRANCISCO S. TATAD

The problem is no longer Marcos

THIS is the day of the year when nearly everyone tries to say something ponderous or pooppy about martial law and the Marcos "dictatorship." **>TatadA5**

Leni wants to move on

IT'S disturbing on several levels that a lawyer of Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo has declared that former senator Ferdinand Marcos Jr. should just accept his supposed loss in the 2016 elections **>RoblesA6**



LOWDOWN

JOJO ROBLES

They damn Marcos to the point of deifying and sanctifying his most monstrous enemies whose crimes have never been subjected to the simplest analysis. Partisanship is undefiled by scholarship. Very few care to remember that Marcos' suspension of the privilege of *habeas corpus* and proclamation of martial law throughout the Philippines on September 21, 1972 was a constitutional response to the raging communist rebellion that threatened to take over Philippine society; it was the intended cure rather than the disease.

The irony is that in his resolute effort to stop a looming communist dictatorship, he forged his own anti-communist dictatorship. This ended on January 17, 1981 when he lifted martial law, but he remained in power until 1986. The greater irony though is that the CPP/NPA/NDF rebellion was never really defeated; it continues to this day.

As Marcos' press secretary and spokesman from 1969 to 1980, I spent a longer time than the President reading Proclamation 1081 on TV on September 23, 1972. So those who never liked

my face thought I was the one who proclaimed martial law, rather than Marcos, and should be held accountable for it.

A political mistake

In 1975, at the height of the Department of Public Information's "*disiplina*" campaign — "*sa ikauunlad ng bayan, disiplina ang kailangan*" — ("discipline is needed for progress"), I thought Marcos had overcome the communist challenge, and suggested it was time for him to lift Martial Law and renew his electoral mandate. He quickly shut me off, which I thought was a serious mistake. As history would later demonstrate, it turned out to be my mistake. Happily, this conversation never became public.

On January 17, 1981, Marcos lifted Martial Law. This was one year after I resigned from the Cabinet, and one month before Pope St. John Paul 2nd came to the Philippines on February 17, 1981 to beatify its first Filipino martyr, Lorenzo Ruiz. That same year Marcos finally called for a

new presidential election, which the old politicians, being unprepared for the election, boycotted. This allowed me to produce the only challenger to Marcos (Gen. Alejo Santos) who agreed to run on the condition that I would be his campaign manager. Without any money or organization, Santos lost nationwide, except in his own province where he managed to squeeze through.

World's last holdouts

When Marcos fell from power on February 22, 1986 in a civilian-supported military mutiny, there was no sign of any communist involvement either. This led some people to theorize that the communists no longer counted. But when the Cold War ended and Soviet communism disintegrated in 1991, the only communists left standing in Europe were the Filipinos in Utrecht, led by Jose Maria Sison, founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and his Jesuit comrade, Father Luis Jalandoni.

I spoke to Sison in Utrecht in 1991, and he said the Soviet Union

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The problem is no longer Marcos

had made a big mistake, but that the communist revolution was far from over because China was still there. China remained ideologically communist, even though its economic policies had shifted toward capitalism, and it had become the fastest growing economic power in the world.

Back home, the CPP/NPA/NDF had outlived Marcos, who died in Hawaii on September 28, 1989, and their thesis against Marcos and martial law was renewed every time Marcos's September 11 birthday and the anniversary of Martial Law came around. Year after year, we heard the same rhetoric from this crowd, without a word on what made Marcos and his Martial Law necessary or possible. By focusing on the past, we run the risk of overlooking the present dangers coming from the same ideological actors who have managed to devise new scenarios for their planned takeover.

DU30 and the commies

Lately, DU30 has been talking of Jose Maria Sison's reported plan to oust and replace him

as president. But this has not always been the game plan. In the beginning, DU30 was supposed to work together with the communists to establish a coalition revolutionary government, in lieu of the duly constituted government.

In anticipation of this program, he appointed known communists to his Cabinet, led by the communist ex-priest Leoncio Evasco, whom he named Cabinet Secretary and put in charge of the operations of the Office of the President and 12 to 18 executive agencies.

Evasco's mandate was to turn the bureaucracy into the main engine to transform the country into a Chinese-type socialist state. He started with *Kilusang Pagbabago* and *Masa Masid*, which finally collapsed into Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio's *Hugpong Pagbabago*, which will now finally coalesce with PDP-Laban to run some senatorial candidates in 2019.

This means the agenda has failed, but it does not negate the fact that DU30's original intent was to team up with the communists to establish a dictatorship.

Sison out, but option still there

Because Sison has been predicting DU30's political ouster, and trying to taunt him on the darkening of his skin, which supposedly tends to show some serious internal disease, DU30 is not likely to maintain any political partnership with his former political science professor anymore. But does this mean he has abandoned his dictatorial ambitions altogether?

There is no sign of this.

Having already wrecked the tripartite system of government, DU30 may have extreme difficulty following anything other than his natural instincts toward one-man rule. From the very beginning, he has shown little capacity to follow anything else. This seems abundantly clear to a great number of people, so several church groups are converging at the Luneta on this important anniversary, no longer to denounce the crimes of Marcos but rather to warn against the rise of a new dictator potentially far worse than the previous one.

This is one way of moving on.

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Will President Duterte fall? Will Yellows return?

"It is more likely," the 79-year-old communist says of his former student, "that Duterte would be ousted from power than that he could destroy the people's revolutionary movement by the middle of next year."



President Rodrigo Duterte himself has warned of a conspiracy of red commies, yellows backing his predecessor Benigno Aquino 3rd and former Magdalo rebel soldiers to oust him, with a possible assassination attempt on the September 21 anniversary of Marcos Martial Law today.

"There is a collaborative effort of the Left, the Magdalo and the Yellow," Duterte said in his televised interview last week with his chief legal counsel Secretary Sal Panelo. "And we have the evidence and we have the conversation provided by a foreign country sympathetic to us."

So, is President Duterte on the way out, or way off in his conspiracy theory?

A coup plotter's view

One seasoned security expert, former Army Scout Ranger Abe Purugganan, who once joined a failed coup attempt against then-President Corazon Aquino, cites ongoing moves against Duterte in a "People's Intelligence Assessment" attributed to him.

In his assessment, the Philippine Military Academy graduate warns of many moves against the President:

"The Liberals [Aquino's partymates] have escalated agitation and propaganda activities to polarize the nation. A vice president openly opposes President Duterte in all aspects. Opposition senators and congressmen [are] undermining all programs and policies of President Duterte.

"The international and mainstream media allied with the opposition are alienating our people. They are trying to erode public support for President Duterte through fake news and biased reporting.

"The Catholic clergy is organizing and inciting people against President Duterte for September 21. The communist legal and underground organizations [also] are preparing for September 21.

"This includes labor, youth, student, grassroots organizations, and party-list organizations. In tandem, the CPP/NPA/NDF [communist insurgency] has ordered an increase in their tactical offensives against government forces."

Purugganan believes the government "is infiltrated by the communists. They use our system to undermine [and make] government operations ineffective against them. They are using government resources to build their legal and underground organizations. Government policies and programs are exploited to build their guerrilla bases."

The former coup plotter accuses the Magdalo mutineers, who tried to oust then-President Gloria Arroyo, of "trying to drive a wedge in the AFP and hoping for a breakaway group."

Meanwhile, there have been "bombings in Mindanao to discredit martial law [and] an increase in drug trafficking activities. ... Corruption in government persists. There is no fear [among] officials and employees to steal [the] people's money."

Prices up, ratings down

Adding to instability fears are inflation troubles, one big reason for the decline in President Duterte's net trust and satisfaction ratings, as surveyed in June by Social Weather Stations (SWS).

And the political temperature has risen of late

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REPUBLIC SERVICE

RICARDO SALUDO

with Vice President Leni Robredo intensifying her rhetoric against the administration, and tough-talking Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th making headlines after the President voided the 2011 amnesty granted to the Magdalo mutiny leader, and ordered his arrest.

Then, last week, Supertyphoon Ompong dumped massive rains in the north, unleashing floods and landslides and killing more than 80. Even worse for the nation, Ompong has destroyed sorely needed palay harvests with value estimated by the Department of Agriculture at between P4 billion and P8 billion.

If not offset in coming weeks by supplies from other regions and overseas, the massive losses in the country's main rice crop could prolong high rice prices, which Agriculture Secretary Manny Pifol had hoped to bring down with the September harvest.

Meanwhile, the people's confidence in President Duterte's top-priority drive against crime, drugs, and terrorism cannot but be shaken by repeated Mindanao bombings, the recent multi-billion-peso shabu smuggling incidents.

Add to that the apparent escape of alleged drug lord Peter Lim, and the entry of Mindanao's Parojinog narcotics group in Mandaue, part of Metro Cebu, even after the bloody wipeout of its patriarch and other top family members in Ozamiz City.

Another top Duterte priority seems to have hit the skids too. The draft federalism charter, which Congress was supposed to deliberate on as a constituent assembly, seems stalled. Also facing delays are the 2019 national budget, mired in a Palace-House dispute over the proposed cash-based system, and the succeeding tranches of tax reforms, after the first law was wrongly blamed for inflation.

What's ahead for Duterte

Critics and negative media have been speculating on Duterte's possible downfall, and many Filipinos as well as foreign observers are feeling anxious. They shouldn't.

Having seen far worse conditions and threats against then President Gloria Arroyo, this former Cabinet Secretary, who had been in several Palace meetings to counter ouster threats, does not see the current government anywhere near demise.

Duterte still has high approval and trust ratings, unlike Arroyo's negative net scores, and benefits from a far more robust economy and strong fiscal position — thanks in large part to her 2006 tax reforms.

Yes, the peso is under pressure, and prices must be tamed, especially rice. But the government has the funds to get affordable food in the shops, which would moderate the inflation rate.

For sure, there are formidable political challenges ahead, especially the planned shift to federalism and the May 2019 elections, which would be a test for Duterte's rule. But the opposition has no better offer to woo voters, certainly not their past crime- and drug-ridden rule, with its *Tuwid na Daan* claims being debunked by the Metro Rail Transit, Dengvaxia, and pork barrel scams now finally being exposed.

So, Mr. President, just focus on getting cheap rice on the table, tax reform out of Congress, and infrastructure rising across the land. That should silence critics and calm doubters. And consolidate support for the big challenge: better governance through the war on graft and the leap to federalism.

Spineless UP president so terrified of small leftist gangs



Concepcion (the male in white shirt) at KB reunion: Two weeks later and after a few critical leftist manifestoes, he condemns what they stood for.

WHAT has happened to the University of the Philippines, supposedly the country's center of scholarship that is subsidized by tens of billions of taxpayers' money, and which for decades has been headed by people who



RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO

► TiglaoA6

resist mobs and even governments in order to assert the institution's academic independence?

It now has a president so spineless and so worried he might lose his well-paid job, that he immediately capitulated to the small but noisy leftist gangs in the university.

UP President Danilo Concepcion was without an iota of doubt a huge supporter of the strongman Marcos all throughout his regime.

As a Marcos believer, he got to be a member of the Sangguniang Bayan of Valenzuela, 1972 to 1974, and president of the Kabataang Barangay Federation of Metro Manila from 1976 to 1978. Under Marcos' aegis, he was youth sector representative in the Interim Batasang Pambansa, the proto-parliament that the dictator had organized, from 1978 to 1984. A Marcos stalwart, now senator Richard Gordon, took Concepcion into his law firm, which became the base for his legal career.

Nothing wrong with that, and — despite the Yellows' propaganda that martial law was a dark period of our history — many of the country's best and the brightest worked under Marcos in their conviction that he was leading the country out of our quagmire, as strongmen all over our part of the world were doing.

We even had a president who was martial law's muscle: Marcos' cousin Fidel Ramos who headed the national police (called the Philippine Constabulary) for the entire period of that regime. The administrator and legal eagle of the regime was Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, at 93 a revered elder statesman of our nation.

KB reunion

Last August 27, officials and members of Marcos-era Kabataang Barangay — the strongman's project to mobilize the youth for building the nation (or alternatively, depending on your political persuasion, to get the youth to support his regime) — had a reunion at the UP Alumni Association's event venue, attended even by Imee Marcos, who headed the KB in that era. Concepcion, one of the top bigwigs of the KB, of course, attended it, "to be with old friends I haven't seen for decades," he said.

A harmless reunion of an organization, the kind that people in their 50s and 60s revel in to relive their youth, the best times of their lives.

That apparently got the goat of the Communist Party commissars secretly leading the party cells at the UP, which they think is their Red base in the metropolis. The university's Student Council, almost always controlled by the Left except for a brief period in 1973, at the end of that day issued a statement claiming the event was an insult not only to the "victims of martial law" but also "of the atrocities of the Duterte administration." It wasn't clear though if the council even met to approve the statement or whether it was merely the statement of its chair.

Former Negros NPA commander (and short-lived Duterte social welfare secretary) Judy Taguiwalo led a sparsely attended press conference that cried to high heavens that "victims of martial law were insulted" by the KB's holding of their reunion within UP.

Four days later, the UP "history department's" website had a post condemning Concepcion's attendance at the reunion,

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Spineless UP president so terrified of small leftist gangs

with the statement filled with all the usual communist slogans against the Marcos regime. What is so shameful about that is that while it claimed to be the statement of the "UP Department of History" it didn't list the people in that department who supported it. Cowards, indeed.

That website which claims to be the history department's official website doesn't even identify who its chairman currently is. The entire UP website is so badly made that believe it or not, it doesn't even have a directory of its colleges and departments identifying the chairman of these units. The only data I could find after an hour of googling is that one Maria Bernadette Abrera, in an item dated 2012, was the chairman.

Hysteria

But such anti-Marcos hysteria is not unexpected from organizations controlled by the Communist Party whose growth almost entirely has been based on portraying Marcos as bloodthirsty tyrant that all Filipinos must overthrow, under the leadership of course of the party.

Two days later, Concepcion profusely apologized that he joined his friends KB party and said that the "university under my watch will never forget the dark period of our country during the Martial Law years." The alumni association, which had more sense and courage than Concepcion, issued a statement that it "believes in giving all sectors of society, including politicians and political parties, an opportunity to be heard, and express their opinions." That should have been the principled stand of the UP's president.

But, what a gutless, unprincipled fellow this Concepcion is. He was an ardent supporter of martial law, and after it ended in 1986, he never said anything bad about it. After being threatened by a leftist cabal in the university, he changed his mind, sharing the Left gang's view that the martial law was "a dark period" of our history.

Obviously, this yellow-bellied little man was terrified of the statement of the student council, the anonymous one by a purported history department, and a sparsely attended press conference. Since when did the student council, a department, and a band of leftists determine the stand of the university on any issue? Did Concepcion get the approval for his statement from the UP system's other campuses and departments? No.

He was of course, worried that he'd be seeing demonstrations — even if small — in front of his office, and god forbid, that he loses his job with all the perks, like a huge house on campus.

But not only that, he practically pissed in his pants so frightened of the Left that he issued a "Proclamation No. 1" — i.e. the first such "Proclamation" issued by any UP President — declaring September 21 (the declaration of martial law) as a Day of Remembrance.

"I hereby authorize and encourage the holding of special lectures, meetings, and ceremonies devoted to the commemoration of UP's participation and sacrifice in the struggle against martial law." What an opportunist jerk: He supported and benefited from Martial Law and never said a word against it. Now that he's being threatened by small leftist mobs in the university, and he badmouths it, even becoming the first UP president to

condemn that very controversial period of our history.

No clue

Concepcion should be fired. He has no clue about what heading an academic institution is for, which is to search for the truth beyond political partisanship.

He declares in his proclamation: "Martial Law resulted in severe political and economic repression, generating widespread discontent and resistance among the Filipino people."

That statement is the narrative of the Aquino oligarchy and the Yellow Cult it created. The martial law regime, as true of any era in any society, was a complex phenomenon, with its bad and good aspects.

A facile way of debunking the demonization of martial law is to ask the question: If Martial Law was so bad, why have its pillars — Ramos, Enrile, and its chief economic manager Cesar Virata — been revered to this day as respectable leaders?

Why has the UP itself renamed its College of Business Administration after Virata, who was given nearly total control of Martial Law's economic policies?

That there has been little protest against that renaming of that college indicates the fact that the UP is not unanimous in its view that Martial Law should be condemned. As in any society or community, there is probably a majority there who have a more realistic view of Martial Law. They are just afraid of the tiny but noisy Left groups, or prefer not to be bothered and just devote their time to their scholarly pursuits.

What makes Concepcion's statement so nauseating is that he is the president of an institution of scholarship, and 30 years after Martial Law ended there hasn't been any objective scholarly work on it. What we have are books and articles mostly by American writers right after Marcos fell trying to cash in on the best-selling possibilities of their hurriedly written books "exposing" how horrific the strongman was. Or by second-rate writers paid generously by the Yellow Cult.

In two weeks, Concepcion changed his view of Martial Law, and abandoned his friends of three decades.

Do we want people like this to lead our premier university? Duterte should find some way to fire this milksop.

Neither the UP nor its fellow ideological traveler, the Ateneo de Manila University, has produced any scholarly, objective work on martial law. How can the president of a university condemn martial law so much that he declares a "Day of Remembrance" for its victims, without any basis in scholarship?

I correct that a bit. What could pass off as a scholarly work dealing with Martial Law was published by the UP's most eminent economist, Gerardo Sicat, who was Marcos' economic planning secretary for most of his regime. The book was disguised as a paean to his patron Marcos' first and last prime minister, Virata, entitled *Cesar Virata: Life and Times, Through Four Decades of Philippine Economic History*. Those four decades roughly cover the period of Marcos' rule as president and "authoritarian" leader.

Guess what, it mostly praised Marcos' achievement during those decades, and provided strong arguments and data for its claims.

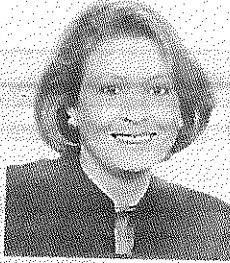
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Sonnyboy's goose is cooked

“It appears to be a big mistake on the part of the Trillanes camp.

President Duterte appears to have been right after all in revoking the amnesty on charges of it being a flawed one that had been granted Sen. Antonio “Sonny” Trillanes, who claimed he had filed an application form and admitted his guilt in the role he played in mounting at least three coups d’etat against the Arroyo government.



FRONTLINE
Ninez Cacho-Olivares

Duterte revoked the amnesty granted to Sonnyboy Trillanes in 2011 in relation to his involvement in mutinies against the government of then President Gloria Arroyo in 2003, 2006 and 2007.

The incumbent Palace tenant said Sonnyboy’s amnesty is flawed as he failed to admit his guilt; there is a video clip of him admitting that while he filed his application form, he and his group of rebels never admitted their guilt in the crimes.

But it also looks like Sonnyboy had trapped himself when he claimed he not only applied for amnesty, but that he also refused to admit his guilt.

Worse, it was his lawyer, Reynato Robles, who unwittingly laid the trap for Trillanes when he appealed to the court to permit him to submit secondary evidence in his bid to buttress Trillanes’ claim.

Makati court branch 150, presided over by Judge Elmo Alameda, ordered the GMA Network for an

authenticated copy of its report of the former coup leader now senator availing himself of the amnesty program.

It appears to be a big mistake on the part of the Trillanes camp, as the video footage titled “Trillanes avails of amnesty, admits ‘breaking rules,’” quotes the latter as saying he and other Magdalo soldiers had filed the amnesty application form and signed their agreement to a “general admission of guilt” to violation of military rules and the Revised Penal Code.

However, also in the same video clip, Sonnyboy-Trillanes, the confirmed braggart and prevaricator, is also

quoted as saying he and the other rebels did not regret participating in the 2003 Oakwood Mutiny.

Quoting the report, it stated that “Trillanes said while they admitted to ‘violating some rules,’ they were not admitting guilt to the mutiny and coup d’etat charges lodged against them both in the civil and military courts.

“I would like to qualify that we did not admit to the charge of ‘coup d’etat’ or anything that was charged against us that we filed because we believe that this was not the right charges filed,” Trillanes was quoted as saying.

“But it also looks like Sonnyboy had trapped himself. This admission from Sonnyboy may just have cooked his goose, as it was he who has insistently claimed that he filed an application form for the amnesty and even claimed he had admitted his guilt, while pointing to the fault of the military and defense on the missing Trillanes application form.

Not so, it seems, as there probably never was an application form and/or the admission of his guilt filed by Sonnyboy, or that the

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military under the yellow president may have filched these documents. After all, these missing papers may just place the then yellow defense and military officials in legal trouble for a probable cover-up in granting the coup leader amnesty despite his refusal to admit his guilt.

The admission of guilt is a condition to the amnesty grant.

The Trillanes camp that insisted the Duterte military lost the documents does not fly. It is more logical for the yellow military and defense officials to be at fault for the missing documents, given the braggart Sonnyboy Trillanes admitting that he and his Magdalo group never admitted their guilt.

The senator did state that he and his group merely broke some rules but lawyers know that rules are not law, which again provides some sort of substantiation that, indeed, Sonnyboy failed to admit his guilt in the crimes committed against the government and state.

Sonnyboy may even have gotten his own coup group into more trouble at this time when they may already all be leading relatively peaceful lives, just to save his own skin.

His sidekick, outgoing party list congressman Gary Alejano, who has taken to blasting Duterte to make himself look like a relevant candidate for the Senate next year, may find himself in the same boat as Sonny Boy if he, too, failed to admit his guilt for the crimes committed by him along with the other rebels.

At this time, it's a guessing game, whether Judge Alameda will take as evidence the video footage or not, but one thing is sure. Should the judge rule in favor of the prosecution and a warrant of arrest is issued against the senator, expect Sonnyboy to suddenly go into hiding.

Any takers for the bet?

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The Department of Disaster Resilience

“**DDR is somehow similar to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, USA’s Federal Agency primarily responsible for disaster preparedness and recovery.**”

On Tuesday, 18 September 2018, the House of Representatives passed House Bill 8165 (HB 8165) on 2nd Reading, proposing the creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR). This was passed pursuant to the insistence of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, who announced it during his last State of the Nation Address.



QUO VADIS
Darren M. de Jesus

The passage by the House was timely, in light of the destruction wreaked by Typhoon “Ompong” in Northern Luzon over the weekend. The DDR would hopefully address all government gaps exposed in the recent years by typhoons and other disasters.

Chairperson of the House Committee on Accounts, Leyte Rep. Yedda Marie Romualdez, one of the principal authors who represents Tacloban City or the “Ground Zero” during the onslaught of super typhoon “Yolanda” in 2013, gave her utmost gratitude to her colleagues for its passage. In Rep. Romualdez’s statement, which gives us a good idea on how the DDR would help communities, she mentioned: “This will give us high hopes for the government to respond quickly on natural disasters, effectively reduce our vulnerability to natural hazards and bolster our resilience to the impact of national disasters and climate change. We can now look forward to the future with hope, knowing that the government is ready, better equipped and committed

to exert its best effort to reduce the risks that come with natural disasters, to empower local communities to rise above the different vulnerabilities that surround them and to ensure that in the years to come, such a tragedy will never happen again.”

The DDR shall be headed by a secretary, who will be the accountable government officer, thereby lessening the finger-pointing, typical in case

of government screw-ups. There have been several pieces written about the DDR during the past days and weeks, but what may not have been emphasized that the Secretary will have the power to call upon the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to assist in disaster-affected areas, acting as if the Commander-in-Chief – power belonging to the President – in times of disasters.

It is a department that will be comprised of a huge manpower base, most of which will be taken from existing government offices. As such, the DDR is a consolidation of different offices located in various departments and will effectively replace the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), under the Department of National Defense. There will also be quite a number of officers to lead the DDR. Aside from the secretary, the DDR shall have five undersecretaries and 10 assistant secretaries to be appointed by the President.

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While rightsizing is among the priorities of the administration, creating a new department to address disaster preparedness and recovery altogether is justifiable since most of the manpower for DDR is in existence already. If at all, the creation of DDR is rationalizing government functions and placing things in proper order.

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We can now look forward to the future with hope, knowing that the government is ready, better equipped and committed.

As a lawyer, this writer is interested in the penal sanctions in the bill and there are quite a number. In Section 66 thereof, it states that public and private persons and corporations may be liable criminally and administratively for a number of reasons. These may include dereliction of duty that leads to destruction or loss of life, delaying delivery of aid, withholding of relief goods due to political or partisan consideration, preventing entry of relief goods, substituting or illegal solicitation of relief goods. Penalties can go as many as 15 years in prison. Had this law been in existence during "Yolanda," there would surely be charges filed against some government officials. Perhaps, the idea of HB 8165 is to depoliticize disasters, removing the possibility of politicians interfering and taking credit for aid received from other foreign and private sources.

DDR is somehow similar to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA),

USA's Federal Agency primarily responsible for disaster preparedness and recovery. FEMA has been in existence since 1979 and its mandate is continuously updated by the US government, to improve its services, the latest was in 2006 when then President Bush signed the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act.

FEMA was in the limelight recently due to Hurricane "Florence," which hit almost the same time as typhon "Ompong." An administrator heads FEMA, not a Cabinet secretary. Amusingly, the US has been buzzing with FEMA's introduction of "Presidential Alert" text messages, same with what the NDRRMC is presently doing by sending us text messages coupled with an automated alert sound.

This writer, however, is quite particular with use of the word "resilience" in the proposed department. According to Webster, "resilience" refers to the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change. It therefore presupposes that a great tragedy has already struck, and that the people with nothing else to do except to get back on their feet. What about disaster preparedness? We can look at how Japan has been doing this, as it is the most seismically active country prone to earthquakes and tsunamis. Thus, DDR can actually be renamed as Department of Disaster Safety, Preparedness, Response, Resilience and Defense, or "DDS-PRRD." Obviously, this writer is not serious.

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A better sanctuary

“ Trillanes, prior to his Senate campout, has been exploiting media hostile to Rody to do his greatest damage.

Comeuppance is fast gaining on Sen. Sonny Trillanes as he faces more libel cases over his previous cocky statements directed against President Rody Duterte and members of his family.

Trillanes has been the designated attack dog of the yellow mob in the oust-Duterte movement.

Former Davao City Vice Mayor Paolo Duterte had filed two new libel cases against Trillanes over his allegations of Paolo's connection with the P6.4-billion shabu smuggled into the Philippines from China.

During the Senate hearing on the issue, Trillanes had the benefit of parliamentary immunity on his bellicose behavior but speaking outside the chamber, the senator became liable.

Paolo's lawyer Rainier Madrid said the new libel cases stemmed from Trillanes' statements over DZMM and on CNN Philippines where he accused President Duterte's son as the perpetrator of shabu shipment and being a drug lord during live interviews.

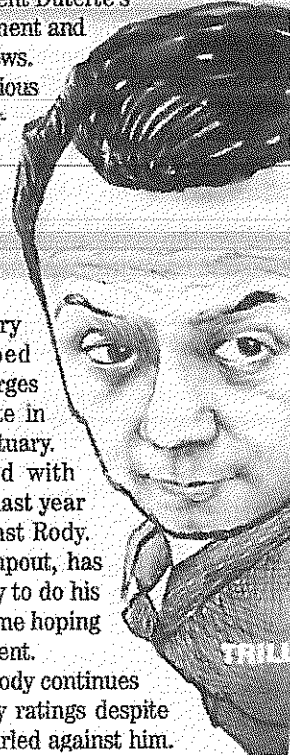
The cases were separate from previous libel cases filed by Paolo and his brother-in-law Mans Carpio over Trillanes' allegations on purported corruption and extortion involving ride-hailing service UBER and other similar companies which Trillanes alleged during an interview in Cebu City.

Last week, Labor undersecretary Jacinto "Jing" Paras also slapped Trillanes with inciting to sedition charges for attacking President Rody Duterte in his press briefings in his Senate sanctuary.

Trillanes was similarly charged with sedition after suggesting in March last year that the military should rebel against Rody.

Trillanes, prior to his Senate campout, has been exploiting media hostile to Rody to do his greatest damage while at the same time hoping to erode the popularity of the President.

These efforts have been futile as Rody continues to have more than 70 percent survey ratings despite all the vile, unfounded allegations huried against him.



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As a result of poor efforts to bolster his hidden wealth allegations against Rody, for instance, Trillanes uttered in a privilege speech, "If the soldiers see this (hidden wealth), they will use an M60 machine gun on you (Duterte) because these are many. The magazines will be emptied if you're looking for P40 million."

He also authored the new figure of 20,000 extrajudicial killings (EJK) in the war on drugs, also in a privilege speech.

He manufactured the number after the claim of 13,000

EJK was disputed by government figures.

Yellow-friendly news outlets particularly those overseas, which care little for official figures, started to use the data supplied by Trillanes and is still quoted in stories against the war on drugs until now.

"While the country continues to laugh at the lewd jokes of Duterte, more than 20,000 of our countrymen have been killed," Trillanes said in his privilege speech.

“ Rody continues to have more than 70 percent survey ratings despite all the vile, unfounded allegations hurled against him.

Trillanes has not left the Senate for more than two weeks after the issuance of Proclamation 572 which voided his amnesty for leading mutinies against former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The embattled senator, thus, again faces his revived cases before military and regular courts on his instigation of the Oakwood mutiny, the Fort Bonifacio standoff and the Manila Peninsula siege.

Trillanes should face more serious allegations aside from the mutiny, *coup d'etat* or libel cases as the government should go back to former Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile who in one confrontation with Trillanes revealed the possibility of the abrasive senator committing treason.

During a faceoff sometime in 2012, Enrile read notes of former Philippine Ambassador to China Sonia Brady which indicated, among others, that Trillanes as a backchannel negotiator of then President Noynoy Aquino stated to the Chinese that "no one cares about Panatag Shoal in the Philippines."

Panatag is also called Scarborough Shoal which, through the independent foreign policy of Rody, resulted in a relaxation of tensions with China, thus allowing Filipino fishermen to again ply their trade without being disturbed by Chinese ships.

Trillanes also said, based on the Brady notes, that the Philippines "cannot enforce coastal protection."

The statements of Trillanes showed where his true interest lies.

His past and current actions prove Trillanes deserves to be either in a military stockade or in a New Bilibid Prison cell for a campout instead of his Senate office.

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Duterte's intel assessment

THERE'S a supposed assessment of the current situation in the country pertaining to the Duterte presidency by Abe Purugganan, co-founder of the Young Officers Union, a rebel group of military officers in the late '80s.

Purugganan was a Scout Ranger together with retired Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim (also co-founder of the YOU), who is now chairman of the Metro Manila Development Authority.

Purugganan served as undersecretary for Special Concerns during the Gloria Arroyo presidency. From his social media posts, Purugganan is apparently a diehard Duterte supporter.

Titled "People's Intelligence Assessment," it ends with, "For the information of the sovereign Filipino people. For widest dissemination. Please share it."

I tried to verify via Facebook with Purugganan if it's really his assessment but as of this writing (1 p.m., Sept. 20) I didn't get a reply from him.

The assessment is intriguing. If this is the kind of reports the President gets, no wonder, he is paranoid.

Take time to read it. It's helpful in understanding why Duterte thinks the way he thinks.

National Situation:

1. The Liberals have escalated agitation/propaganda activities to



The assessment is intriguing. If this is the kind of reports the President gets, no wonder, he is paranoid.

HONESTLY SPEAKING

ELLEN TORDESILLAS

polarize the nation.

2. A vice president that openly opposes President Duterte in all aspects.

3. Opposition senators and congressmen undermining all programs and policies of President Duterte.

4. The international and mainstream media allied with the opposition are alienating our people. They are trying to erode public support for President Duterte thru fake news and biased reporting.

5. The Catholic clergy is organizing and inciting people against President Duterte for Sep 21.

6. The Communist legal and underground organizations are

preparing for 21 September. This includes labor, youth, student, grassroots organizations, and party-list organizations. CPP/NPA/NDF has ordered an increase in their tactical offensives against government forces.

7. Government is infiltrated by the communists. They use our system to undermine government, making government operations ineffective against them. They are using government resources to build their legal and underground organizations. Government policies and programs are exploited to build their guerrilla bases.

8. Magdalo is trying to drive a wedge in the AFP and hoping for a breakaway group.

9. Bombings in Mindanao to discredit martial law.

10. Trillanes trying to do a la Enrile-Ramos breakaway scenario in EDSA 1 as a trigger for another people power.

11. A threat on the life of President Duterte. There is an assassination plot against President Duterte.

12. Liberals and oligarchs are projecting a bad situation in the economy.

13. Sovereign will is compromised by Comelec and Smartmatic, and liberals are covering up massive cheating in the 2010 and 2016 national elections.

14. PET's snail-paced recount on the election of the vice president.

15. There is an increase in drug trafficking activities.

16. Corruption in government persists. There is no fear on the part of government officials and employees to steal people's money.

17. Congress has become a people's burden.

18. Our justice system is too slow. Rule of law exploited by the opposition and the oligarchy.

Conclusion

1. The liberals, communists, Magdalo, oligarchs, and the political opposition are determined to overthrow President Duterte.

See DUTERTE'S > Page B5

DUTERTE'S

They won't stop until he is out of office and indicted for the things they accuse him of.

2. Their main goal is to put Robredo in power.

3. There will be power-sharing between the liberals and commu-

nists in the event that they succeed.

People's recommended courses of action

1. Allow these people to continue until it's ripe for the government to move against them. Timing is the key.

2. Or cut them off now.

3. Government and the sovereign Filipino people must be ready to counter and neutralize these people. All-out countermeasures and strategic responses must be done to once and for all stop this kind of political madness and rotteness in the life of our nation.

4. Intelligence units must increase intelligence activities against them. Build up dossiers for these people including the corrupt.

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ONLINE NEWS

21 SEPTEMBER 2018

Military on right track to crush NPA

By Priam Nepomuceno September 20, 2018, 5:55 pm

MANILA -- The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is on the right track to defeat the New People's Army (NPA) next year, Col. Edgard Arevalo said Thursday.

"We are on the right track in our campaign to decimate the terrorists NPA by middle of next year," Arevalo, the AFP spokesperson, said in a statement sent to reporters.

He attributed this to the resolve of the current administration, and the cooperation of other agencies of government.

With this strong support, he added, the AFP is confident that it will succeed in its anti-insurgency campaign.

"The number of NPA regulars and supporters surrendering in droves with their firearms is phenomenal. Their Guerrilla Fronts were either dismantled or downgraded one after the other. High-ranking leaders of this terrorist group are neutralized in succession," the AFP spokesperson said.

President Rodrigo Duterte earlier said the government is winning the war against the NPAs as many of the rebels are voluntarily laying down their arms and surrendering. *(PNA)*

www.pna.gov.ph

Palace touts strong military, livelihood aid in ending insurgency

By Azer Parrocha September 20, 2018, 3:50 pm

MANILA – Malacañang on Thursday expressed optimism about ending communist insurgency in the second quarter of 2019, saying the government has a combination of both a stronger military force and livelihood programs for members of the New People's Army (NPA) who would lay down their arms and surrender.

"*Kombinasyon po 'yan -- 'yung patuloy na pakikipaglaban sa kanila at patuloy na pag-eenganyo na mag-surrender ang mga nanlalaban sa ngalan ng Communist Party of the Philippines* (It's a combination of continuing to fight with them and continuing to encourage them to surrender)," Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said in a Palace briefing.

He made this remark after President Rodrigo R. Duterte on Wednesday said he sees the NPA's defeat by the second quarter of 2019, noting the huge number of rebels returning to the folds of law.

"I think that *kung maawa ang Panginoong Diyos* (if God will be merciful), this will be over by about the second quarter of next year. *Ang rami na kasi nagsu-surrender* (There are many of them surrendering)," Duterte said in a speech in Malacanang. "I think we are winning the war finally."

Roque said the government has already given several rebel returnees safety, financial assistance, and livelihood for turning themselves in.

At the same time, Roque said the government is in the process of modernizing the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"It's a combination of both, plus the fact that the people will know that the President was given the mandate to address the root causes of rebellion and he has been doing so," Roque said.

Roque also assured that all government policies are directed to address the root causes of poverty and promise NPA fighters "a new lease on life."

Meanwhile, Roque said the executive order for localized peace talks with the NPA has already been drafted by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP).

"There's a draft already, it's a matter of getting it issued. *Siguro tinitingnan ng* (Perhaps it is being reviewed by the) Office of the Executive Secretary because it was prepared by OPAP," Roque said. (PNA)

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