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NEWS CLIPPINGS

28 September 2018

Friday



Honor. Patriotism. Duty

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Raps filed vs group eyed in destab plot

By REY GALUPO and EDU PUNAY

Six people linked to a supposed destabilization plot were arrested and charged by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) yesterday.

NBI deputy director Vicente de Guzman Jr. said NBI operatives and troops from the Army's 80th Infantry Battalion also seized a cache of high powered firearms from the suspects during the raid on a six-hectare farm in Barangay Dalig, Teresa, Rizal on Tuesday.

Chinese businesswoman Lily Ong, Brandy Solinap, Victor dela Cruz, Diosdado Bohol, Bi-Eian Ke and Ke Quiao Li were presented to the media yesterday and later charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives before the prosecutor's office.

The military linked the arrested individuals to the communist New People's Army (NPA), citing surveillance operations showing the suspects were often visited by known rebel leaders in the region.

Lt. Col. Melencio Ragudo said they were applying for a search warrant against Ong, a

known NPA supporter, when they learned the NBI was also targeting the farm "on another concern."

"It was a joint operation on a specific target, but they were following up on a case while we have intel report that this group could be preparing something," Ragudo said.

"Of course it goes without saying that they know why we're there and we know why they're there, but those things are classified," Ragudo said, referring to the NBI's operation.

The NBI, on the other hand, has no similar information yet on the group. NBI officials said their operation in Teresa was in connection with a complaint of a businessman against Ong and company for death threats stemming from a land dispute.

"We were actually following up on the complaint of (a) businessman, but we stumbled into this," De Guzman said.

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Raps From Page 1

Asked why the military accompanied them during the raid, De Guzman said they have information the target area was rebel-infested and "we do not want to be massacred."

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra said he has yet to receive the official report of the NBI on the case.

The NBI said they would still verify information on the reported involvement of the suspects in the ouster plot.

"We cannot comment on whether this is related to the

so-called 'Red October' plot until more facts are established," Guevarra said.

De Guzman added they are looking into the military's claim that Ong and her cohorts have linked up with the NPA in the Red October plot to oust President Duterte.

"We still have to process that information and the military has yet to brief us on the matter. But since we are here already, I believe our investigation will go to that direction," NBI deputy director Ferdinand Lavin added.

Maj. Gen. Rhoderick Parayno, commander of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division, said they are conducting an investigation to see if the recent seizure of high-powered guns from Ong and her group and previous encounters with NPA rebels in Southern Luzon are connected to Red October.

"That's what we are looking at. As I said, we are looking back at what we found in Batangas and Quezon to check if we missed anything," he said.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Oscar Albayalde ordered an investigation into Ong, linking

her to the Red October ouster plot.

Albayalde said the Rizal provincial police had to explain the circumstances behind the raid and verify Ong's allegation that she has been giving police officers P8,000 a month for protection. The woman alleged there were people who tried to kidnap her.

Ong also denied that she had anything to do with the Red October plot.

The STAR reported on Wednesday that the NBI has started its own probe on the ouster plot.

The NBI has started a fact-finding investigation to look

into information from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that communist groups and opposition personalities are conspiring to oust Duterte.

Guevarra said conspirators of the supposed plot would face sedition and coup d'etat charges.

Just doing their job

Malacañang said the NBI probe on Red October was not intended to suppress critics of the administration.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said the NBI was just performing its mandate when it started its investigation on the anti-government plotters.

"The NBI was just doing its duty. They are determining if somebody violated the law so cases can be filed before the fiscal and the courts," Roque said at a press briefing yesterday. "This is not a crackdown. It's about duty."

Roque said those who would face charges over the Red October plot would be given due process.

"They would be given the opportunity to be heard and to respond," he added.

Roque said Malacañang expects the military to cooperate with the NBI probe.

"If the military has intel information, they should share it to the NBI so we would know who should be punished," Roque said.

"As I have said time and again, the job of the President

as chief executive is to implement the laws. If somebody violates the laws on rebellion, coup d'etat and sedition, let the process begin against them," he said.

Duterte previously said some soldiers are in touch with the communists and the opposition Liberal Party, a claim confirmed by acting interior secretary and former military chief Eduardo Año.

Officials are confident that any attempt to overthrow the Duterte administration would not succeed because the President enjoys "overwhelming support" from the public.

Roque said reports about the supposed involvement of soldiers in destabilization efforts should be verified but expressed optimism that the military remains loyal to the President.

"He (Duterte) is the only president who doubled the salary of soldiers and policemen, the only president who went to camps to determine the needs of soldiers and policemen," he added.

AFP spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo said the troops remain loyal to the Constitution, the law and the chain of command.

"We assure our people that their Armed Forces of the Philippines is a professional organization that subscribes to the Constitution that it has sworn to uphold and to defend," Arevalo said. — **With Alexis Romero, Cecille Suerte Felipe, Michael Punongbayan, Emmanuel Tupas**

GOV'T ACTION ON HIGH PRICES, LOW PAY URGED

STORY BY THE INQUIRER STAFF

People's disapproval of how the Duterte administration is handling the soaring cost of basic goods and services has surged 22 points to 51 percent, according to results of a Pulse Asia survey conducted earlier this month. **AB**

FROM A1

By the Inquirer Staff
@Team_Inquirer

As they reel from soaring prices of basic goods, particularly food, Filipinos consider curbing inflation and improving wages as the most urgent national concerns that the Duterte administration should attend to, a Pulse Asia survey has found.

Pulse Asia has also found that people's disapproval of how the administration is handling rising prices surged 22 points to 51 percent.

A labor group said the survey sent a strong message to President Duterte that he had failed to deliver on his campaign promise for ensure a comfortable life to Filipinos.

"The survey result also shows that the administration has wrongly focused its attention and energy on changing the Constitution and form of government and on attacking their critics rather than on arresting problems like high prices and

low wages," said Nagkaisa labor coalition spokesperson Renato Magtubo.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque assured the public that Mr. Duterte was dealing with rising prices.

At a press briefing, Roque cited Mr. Duterte's recent issuances, such as the removal of nontariff barriers and the streamlining of procedures for importing agricultural products.

Most urgent concern

Results of the Pulse Asia survey show that 63 percent of respondents identified controlling inflation as the most urgent concern, up 12 points from June.

Amid the rising cost of living, 50 percent identified improving wages as their second concern.

Zero real wage growth

Recently, wage boards throughout the country approved a P9 to P56 raise in the daily minimum wage to help workers cope with high inflation.

Labor groups, however, said



WRONG FOCUS Workers urge President Duterte to focus on reining in inflation instead of linking the opposition and other groups to an alleged plot to unseat him. —EARVIN PERIAS

the paltry increase did nothing to help improve the lives of workers.

The workers' situation is supported by a finding of World Bank Philippines senior economist Rong Qian that real wage did not grow at all in the country between 2000 and 2016.

Other issues related to the cost of living—fighting poverty and creating more jobs—were

Up to three concerns

In the survey, Pulse Asia interviewed 1,800 respondents, who are registered voters 18 years old and above, to cite up to three urgent concerns from a list.

The survey has a margin of error of plus-or-minus 2 per-

centage points.

The nationwide survey was conducted from Sept. 1 to 7 when the government announced that the August inflation spiked to 6.4 percent, the fastest rate of increase in prices since March 2009.

Prices of food and nonalcoholic beverages rose to 8.4 percent.

Budget adjustments

Banny Poblete, an employee at an insurance company, said she had to make adjustments to keep her budgeting steady.

Rice, fish and meat have to be bought at wet markets, where prices are usually cheaper than those at supermarkets and grocery stores.

She said the changes in her family expenses were more felt in her 7-year-old child's "baon" to school. Prices of fruit juices have increased by as much as P15, while powdered milk can cost her P35 more.

The Associated Labor Unions-Trade Union Congress of the Philippines suggested that the President ask his Cabinet for "timebound indicators and ex-

pected results" to deal with the problem of the ever-increasing cost of basic goods and services.

Remy Santos, who runs a small eatery in Quezon City, agreed that the government should curb the rapidly rising prices.

Even with the rising prices of ingredients that she needs for the foods that she sells, she said she had kept her prices low.

Her daily earnings, however, has significantly been reduced to just P1,000 from P3,000 of the past two to three years.

Stop obsession

Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate said that instead of harping on the supposed Red October plot against Mr. Duterte, the administration should concentrate more on improving the economy.

"The Duterte administration should stop its obsession with their hunt for the phantom Red October and move fast to lower the prices of commodities," he added. —REPORTS FROM ANA ROA, INQUIRER RESEARCH; JULIE M. AURELIO, JOVIC YEE, JEROME ANING, JHESSET D. ENANO AND CEDRIX PEREZ INQ

China demands US act to improve military ties

US B-52 bombers fly in vicinity of S. China Sea

BEIJING (Reuters) — China yesterday criticized the United States for flying B-52 bombers in the vicinity of the South China Sea, and demanded that the US take steps to improve military relations amid heightened tensions between the two countries.

Defense ministry spokesman Ren Guoqiang told a monthly briefing that China is resolutely opposed to provocative US military actions in the South China Sea - where China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines have rival claims.

Separately, Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang denied US President Donald Trump's accusation that Beijing is trying to influence the US congressional elections in November.

"We advise the United States to stop this unceasing criticism and slander of China," Geng said at a briefing in Beijing.

"Stop these wrong words and deeds that damage bilateral relations and the basic interests of both countries' peoples," Geng said.

The two countries, already engaged in an acrimonious

trade war, continue to butt heads over a list of sensitive issues including the South China Sea and Taiwan.

On Saturday, China summoned the US ambassador in Beijing and postponed joint military talks to protest Washington's decision to sanction a Chinese military agency and its director for buying Russian fighter jets and a surface-to-air missile system.

Beijing has also denied a request for a US warship to visit Hong Kong, the US consulate in the Chinese city said on Tuesday.

China also expressed anger after the US approved the sale of spare parts for F-16 fighter planes and other military aircraft worth up to \$330 million to self-ruled Taiwan, which China considers a renegade province.

Meanwhile, In another news, Trump dismissed as "fake news" reports that world

leaders laughed at him in the opening moments of his speech to a session of the UN General Assembly.

"They weren't laughing at me. They were laughing with me," he declared at a news conference Wednesday, the day after counterparts from around the globe audibly laughed as he began the highly anticipated address by reciting US economic gains under his watch.

"We had fun. That was not laughing at me," he said. "So the fake news said people laughed at President Trump. They didn't laugh at me. People had a good time with me. We were doing it together. We had a good time. They respect what I've done." [7]

Trump opened Tuesday's speech by describing the American economy as "booming like never before."

He also claimed his administration had accomplished more in less than two years than any predecessor had by this same point in their terms.

Just sentences into Trump's remarks, the audience — which included many leaders from other countries who were listening to a translation through headphones — began to chuckle. Some broke into outright laughter.

US flies bombers over South China Sea

WASHINGTON—The US military flew B-52 bombers in the vicinity of the South China Sea this week, US officials told Reuters, a move that drew sharp criticism from Beijing amid heightened tensions between the two countries.

Lt. Col. Dave Eastburn, a spokesperson for the Pentagon, said B-52 bombers transited over the South China Sea as part of "regularly scheduled operations designed to enhance our interoperability with our partners and allies in the region."

Such flights are common, but usually upset Beijing.

On Thursday, China criticized the United States for the B-52 flights.

Defense ministry spokesperson Ren Guoqiang told a monthly briefing that China was resolutely opposed to provocative US military actions in the South China Sea.

In June, China's foreign ministry said no military ship or aircraft could scare China away from its resolve to protect its territory after US B-52 bombers flew near disputed islands in the South China Sea.

China militarization

The United States and China have frequently sparred about the militarization of the South China Sea, where China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines all have competing claims.

"If that was 20 years ago and [China] had not militarized those features there, it would have just been another bomber on its way to Diego Garcia or whatever," US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told reporters.

Eastburn said separately the United States also flew B-52 bombers over the East China Sea on Tuesday as part of a "reg-

ularly scheduled, combined operation."

A defense official said the nuclear-capable aircraft were escorted by Japanese fighters and the flight was part of the Pentagon's "continuous bomber presence" in the region.

China is claiming a group of uninhabited islands in the East China Sea that Japan controls.

Japan frequently scrambles interceptors to drive away Chinese reconnaissance planes that intrude into airspace over the Senkakus, which the Chinese call Diaoyu.

Three against China

Japan has joined the United States and Britain in countering China's ambitions in the region, and has sent its biggest warship, the helicopter carrier Kaga, to the Indian Ocean for naval drills with the British warship HMS Argyll.

China recently denied a re-

quest for a US warship to visit Hong Kong amid rising tension between Beijing and Washington.

China summoned the US ambassador in Beijing and postponed joint military talks in protest against a US decision to sanction a Chinese military agency and its director for buying Russian fighter jets and a surface-to-air missile system.

Mattis said he did not think there was a fundamental shift in relations between China and the United States.

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

On Wednesday, Trump accused China of seeking to meddle in the Nov. 6 US congress-

sional elections, saying Beijing did not want his Republican Party to do well because of his pugnacious stance on trade.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang on Thursday denied Trump's accusation.

"We advise the United States to stop this unceasing criticism and slander of China," Geng said.

Britain-Japan naval drills

Also on Wednesday, Japan's helicopter carrier Kaga joined naval drills with Britain's HMS Argyll as the frigate headed toward the South China Sea and East Asia.

Japan and Britain have found common cause with their close ally the United States in countering growing Chinese influence in the region that they worry could put key commercial sea-lanes linking Asia with

Europe, the United States and elsewhere under China's sway.

"We have traditional ties with the British Navy and we are both close US allies and these drills are an opportunity for us to strengthen cooperation," Kenji Sakaguchi, the Maritime Self-Defense Force commander of the Kaga group's four helicopters, said on the hangar deck.

The more frequent presence of the Royal Navy in the region is a chance for the two navies to train more closely in the future, he added.

The Argyll, Kaga and its destroyer escort, the Inazuma, practiced formations on calm seas in the Indian Ocean close to commercial sea-lanes plied by container vessels and oil tankers. *A2*

Three helicopters from the Japanese carrier hovered above, monitoring the drill. --REPORTS FROM REUTERS AND AFP

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Japanese carrier drills with British warship heading to contested South China Sea

BOARD THE KAGA, Indian Ocean (Reuters) - Japan's biggest warship, the Kaga helicopter carrier, joined naval drills with Britain's HMS Argyll in the Indian Ocean on Wednesday as the British fleet headed toward the contested South China Sea and East Asia.

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The Argyll's arrival in the region comes after Britain's amphibious assault ship HMS Albion, last month challenged Beijing's territorial claims in the South China Sea on its way to Vietnam from Japan by sailing close to Chinese bases in the Parcel islands in a freedom of navigation

operation (FONOP).

China dispatched a warship and helicopters to counter the British presence and warned London that similar actions in the future could endanger talks for a possible trade deal that Britain is seeking as it prepares to leave the European Union.

China, which says its intentions are peaceful, claims most of the South China Sea, through which some \$3 trillion of seaborne trade passes every year. Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Brunei also claim parts of the sea, which has oil and gas deposits as well as rich fishing grounds.

Japan, which is embroiled in separate territorial dispute with China in the neighboring East China Sea, has yet to conduct a FONOP in the South China Sea.

However, in a rare public announcement this month, Japan's Ministry of

Defence said one of its submarines had carried out a naval exercise in the disputed waterway with two Japanese destroyers and the Kaga, which is on a two-month deployment in the Indo-Pacific.

After crossing the South China Sea, the Argyll will operate in waters around

Japan, including a stint monitoring sanctions imposed on North Korea by the United Nations to force it to abandon nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, said a British government source who asked not to be identified because he is not authorized to talk to the media.

US B-52s fly over South and East China Seas

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US B-52 bombers have recently conducted transit operations in the South China Sea and East China Sea, the Pentagon said Wednesday, amid soaring tensions with Beijing over trade tariffs.

Late Tuesday the heavy bombers "participated in a regularly scheduled, combined operation in the East China Sea," Pentagon spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Dave Eastburn said.

A defense official said the ►12

US B-52s fly over South... ◀1

nuclear-capable aircrafts were escorted by Japanese fighters and the flight was part of the Pentagon's "continuous bomber presence" in the region.

Earlier in the week, B-52s flew through "international airspace over the South China Sea," Eastburn said.

China has claimed large swaths of the strategic waterway and built up a series of islands and maritime features, turning them into military facilities.

Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam have competing claims to the region, and an international maritime tribunal ruled in 2016 that China's claims have no legal basis.

Eastburn said the flights were part of "regularly scheduled operations."

The United States rejects China's territorial claims and routinely says the military will "continue to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows at times and places of our choosing."

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

China has reacted angrily, and this week scrapped a US warship's planned port visit to Hong Kong and canceled a meeting between the head of the Chinese navy and his American counterpart.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said he was not concerned the US transit flights would increase tensions with China.

"If it was 20 years ago and they have not militarized those features there, it would have just been another bomber on its way to Diego Garcia or whatever," he told Pentagon reporters, referring to the US military base in the Indian Ocean.

"So there's nothing out of the ordinary about it, nor about our ships sailing through there."

The Pentagon chief went on to say there is no "fundamental shift in anything."

"We're just going through one of those periodic points where we've got to learn to manage our differences," he said.

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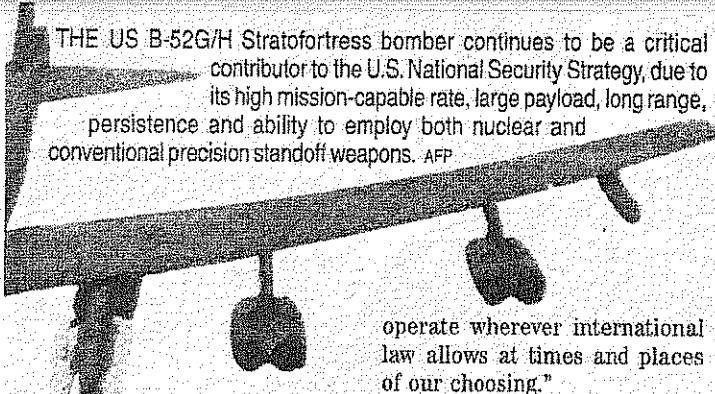
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THE US B-52G/H Stratofortress bomber continues to be a critical contributor to the U.S. National Security Strategy, due to its high mission-capable rate, large payload, long range, persistence and ability to employ both nuclear and conventional precision standoff weapons. AFP

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Military's support for Duterte 'overwhelming'

President Duterte enjoys the military's "overwhelming support" and sees no need to conduct loyalty checks amid a plot for his ouster dubbed "Red October," Malacañang said on Thursday.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said that while there was a need to verify the alleged involvement of some soldiers in the ouster plot, the Palace was confident that the military and the police would not back the destabilizers.

"We should look at all angles, but I think the President enjoys the overwhelming support of the military," Roque said.

During a visit to Camp Vicente Lim in Laguna on Wednesday, Mr. Duterte spoke of his disappointment at soldiers who, he said, were colluding with the communists and opposition politicians to overthrow him.

On Thursday, the President said he was ready to step down

because of the destabilization efforts by his enemies and his difficulty stopping corruption in the government.

'I really want to go'

"That's why those saying there would a coup d' etat, mutiny, and that they want me to go—the irony of it all is that I really want to go," he said to his audience of new career executives.

The military earlier bared that the Communist Party of the Philippines, the Liberal Party, members of the Magdalo group and other opposition forces had banded together to remove the President in a plot called "Red October."

Roque pointed out that the President had the military's support because he improved their welfare by doubling their salaries and providing them better housing benefits. —REPORTS

FROM JULIE M. AURELIO, CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO INQ

Probe of missing DND papers urged

By Roy Stephen C. Canivel
@roycanivel_INQ

The National Privacy Commission (NPC) should investigate the loss of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV's amnesty application form from the files of the Department of National Defense (DND), as it is considered a possible data breach, a former privacy official said on Thursday.

Lawyer Jamael Jacob, a former NPC director and now a data protection officer at Ateneo de Manila University, said the Data Privacy Act requires the DND to protect information like Trillanes' amnesty application form.

Privacy Commissioner Raymond Enriquez Liboro on Thursday said Trillanes "may file a complaint."

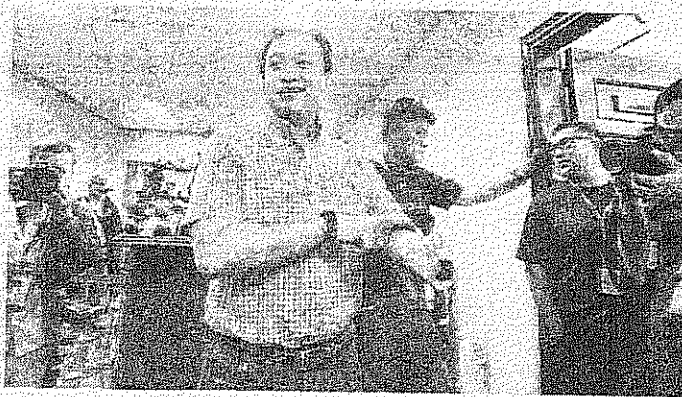
Jacob said the DND should have employed measures to protect personal information against "natural dangers such as accidental loss and human dangers such as unlawful access."

Data breach

"In Trillanes' case, one could argue that the loss of his record by the DND amounts to a type of data breach," Jacob said in an e-mail interview with the Inquirer.

Trillanes, a former military rebel, applied for amnesty on Jan. 5, 2011, together with other military mutineers who tried to overthrow the government in 2003, 2006 and 2007.

Their applications were approved three weeks later and the coup d'état and rebellion charges that had been brought against them were dismissed by the courts.



STILL FREE Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV tells Senate reporters on Thursday that they can relax as there is no new court order for his arrest. —JOAN BONDOC

What happened to Trillanes' application form is unknown but its loss became the basis for President Duterte's Proclamation No. 572 revoking the amnesty granted to his fiercest critic in Congress and ordering the senator's arrest and the revival of the charges against him on the grounds that he failed to file an application for amnesty and acknowledge guilt.

Trillanes showed proof that he applied for amnesty, including a picture of himself holding his application form and an affidavit from the military officer who handled his application attesting that he went through the process.

But the Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 150, which the Department of Justice (DOJ) had asked to reopen the rebellion case against Trillanes, rejected the evidence as secondary, saying the application form itself or a copy of it was the acceptable proof that the former Navy junior officer applied for amnesty.

Jacob said the NPC should look into the case even if the commission had not yet received any complaint.

He cited instances in the past two years where the NPC went out of its way to investigate situations.

The privacy law, he said, gives the NPC freedom to initiate its own investigation even without receiving a complaint.

"The NPC, if it is to be consistent with its previous actions, or at least if it wanted to do, should look into it," he said.

In a talk with reporters on Wednesday, Trillanes called on the military and the DND to "tell the truth" about the loss of his amnesty application form.

He said military and defense leaders knew that he applied for amnesty and had the documents to prove it.

But Solicitor General Jose Calida took the documents, he said, adding that Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana had called him to say that Calida

had asked for the papers.

"Why did they allow Calida to acquire and lose these," Trillanes said.

Calida took Trillanes' statement as an accusation of theft and demanded an apology from the senator.

"Unless Mr. Trillanes expresses his sincere apology for calling me a thief, I shall be constrained to file a criminal case for libel plus damages against him," Calida said.

Trillanes refused to apologize.

"He's in no position to demand anything. He knows the truth. The whole Philippines at this point knows the truth. Whatever he plans to do, I expect the worst out of him. He can do whatever he wants," the senator told reporters on Thursday.

Trillanes is out on P200,000 bail, after Judge Noel Alameda of Makati RTC Branch 150 granted the motion of the DOJ to reopen the rebellion case against him and order his arrest.

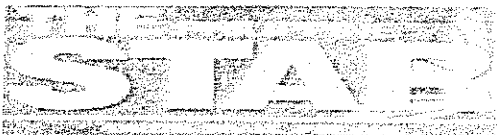
Nonbailable case

The DOJ has also asked the Makati RTC Branch 148 to reopen the coup d'état case against Trillanes and order his arrest.

If the case is reopened, Trillanes will be imprisoned while under trial, as coup d'état is a nonbailable offense. *No*

Trillanes' lawyer Rey Robles said on Thursday that the senator's camp was considering asking the Supreme Court to rule on his petition questioning the legality of Proclamation 572. —WITH REPORTS FROM LEILA B. SALAVERRIA AND VINCE F. NONATO INQ

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SolGen demands apology from Trillanes

Solicitor General Jose Calida yesterday revealed his plan to file criminal and civil suits against Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV for publicly accusing him of stealing his amnesty application record.

"Unless Mr. Trillanes expresses his sincere apology for calling me a thief, I shall be constrained to file a criminal case for libel plus damages against him," Calida declared in a statement.

Several criminal and civil cases have been filed against Trillanes by presidential son and former Davao City vice mayor Paolo Duterte and Labor Undersecretary Jacinto Paras. This is aside from the

revival of the coup d'etat and rebellion cases over his involvement in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and 2007 Manila Peninsula siege after President Duterte issued

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Proclamation 572 to void the amnesty granted him by the previous administration.

The proclamation cited as one of the bases the supposed

failure of Trillanes to formally file for amnesty since records of the Armed Forces of the Philippines showed that he did not have any application form.

The "missing" document was the main reason cited by Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 150 Judge Elmo Alameda in granting the government's plea to issue an arrest warrant and hold departure order last Monday.

The court dismissed in 2011 the rebellion charges after former president Benigno Aquino III issued the amnesty.

Trillanes was able to post P200,000 bail.

Judge Andres Soriano of Makati RTC Branch 148 is set to rule next week on the similar pleading filed by the Department of Justice (DOJ) on the coup d'etat case, a non-bailable offense.

"The putschist Mr. Trillanes ranted to the media yesterday (Wednesday) that I 'stole' his amnesty applica-

tion document. In effect, Mr. Trillanes maliciously branded me as a thief, which I'm not. Obviously, Mr. Trillanes' rationality (assuming he had one) has deserted him," he stressed.

The solicitor general explained that such application form did not exist, citing the certification issued by Lt. Col. Thea Joan Andrade, chief of the Discipline, Law and Order Division of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, which is the custodian of records, that said "there is no available copy of Trillanes' application for amnesty in the records."

"Second, I have never entered the offices of the J1 or the

Personnel Division of the AFP at Camp Aguinaldo so how could I 'steal' documents kept there?" Calida pointed out.

The top government lawyer also reiterated that the basis for the issuance of proclamation was also the failure of Trillanes to admit to his crimes.

"Trillanes did not express his guilt for the crimes which he committed, like the Oakwood coup d'etat and the Manila Peninsula rebellion, when he stated during an interview on Jan. 5, 2011 that 'they were not admitting guilt to the mutiny and coup d'etat charges lodged against them both in the civil and military courts'

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and "I would like to qualify that we did not admit to the charge of coup d'etat or anything (that have been filed against us because) we believe (that those were not the proper charges against us)," Calida explained.

He added that if this "convoluted logic" is followed, then "he's saying that he did not commit the crimes that were covered by the amnesty.

If that is what he really means, then he has no need for amnesty because when one applies for amnesty he must expressly admit his guilt to the crimes he committed. Moreover, DND-AC Circular No. 1 further requires the applicants to recant all previous statements inconsistent with the requirement of admission of that guilt, which he never did." - With Edu Punay, Christina Mendez

DUTERTE LIKENED TO 'AMPAW'

TRILLANES SAYS GMA MORE CHALLENGING FOE

By Leila B. Salaverria
@LeilasINQ

For the second time, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV is battling the country's leader and faces the possibility of imprisonment.

But the former military mutineer said fighting President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was harder than standing up to President Duterte despite his description of the former Davao City mayor as a "more ruthless and more evil person."

"The fight was more difficult during the time of GMA because we led the struggle from within the detention facility. And it took us seven years before we were able to get out," Trillanes said in an interview at his office on Wednesday night.

Trillanes was first jailed in 2003 after leading some 300 junior military officers comprising the Magdalo group against Arroyo, denouncing alleged massive corruption in her government.

Amnesty

The mutineers surrendered after briefly occupying the Oakwood apartment building, which they had rigged with explosives.

In 2007, shortly after being elected to his first term as senator from his detention cell, he and other officers walked out of their trial and attempted to mount another uprising against Arroyo and holed up in the posh Manila Peninsula hotel. They were gassed out of the hotel within hours.

Trillanes and the other officers received amnesty from former President Benigno Aquino III in 2011.

He is now facing a possible return to jail after Mr. Duterte

voided his amnesty on the grounds that he did not submit an application and admit his guilt. Trillanes said the charge was unfounded.

As a lawmaker, Trillanes said he now had a platform "to ventilate the grievances of the people and expose anomalies, whereas during the time of GMA, we didn't have that."

Political base

He said the President's strength was his political base, "the people he fooled," but that was being eroded every day.

He believes the number of Mr. Duterte's supporters will continue to dwindle due to problems that Filipinos continue to face, including extrajudicial killings and the deteriorating economy.

He likened Mr. Duterte to an "ampaw," a puffed rice snack consisting of a hard shell with a hollow, air-filled core.

"If he collapses, it would be quick. I'm saying that not as an insult, but an objective description of the kind of administration or regime that he has," he said.

Describing himself as fatalist, Trillanes said he was preparing for the worst because Mr. Duterte wanted him behind bars at whatever cost.

'Fate given by God'

He said his ordeal was difficult for his wife and two children, but they knew the value of his struggle.

"If I give up this fight and allow Duterte to prevail, he might do something worse to the country, the same country where they live," Trillanes said.

"But this is the fate given to us by God and I have to accept it," he said. INQ

CALIDA TO TRILLANES: 'Say sorry or face libel case and pay damages'

SOLICITOR General Jose Calida on Thursday denied stealing or destroying Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th's amnesty application form, and demanded an apology from the mutineer-turned-lawmaker.

The embattled Trillanes, whose rebellion case has been revived after the Duterte administration revoked his 2011 amnesty, said he would not apologize to Calida and told the solicitor general he could do whatever he wanted.

Calida, in a statement, threatened to file a libel case against Trillanes, a fierce critic of the Duterte government.

The putschist Mr. Trillanes ranted to the media yesterday that I 'stole' his amnesty application document. In effect, Mr. Trillanes maliciously branded me as a thief, which I'm not," he said.

"Unless Mr. Trillanes expresses his sincere apology for calling me a thief, I shall be constrained to file a criminal case for libel plus damages against him," he added.

President Rodrigo Duterte revoked Trillanes' amnesty in a proclamation earlier this month, stating that the former Navy officer's application could not be found and that he did not comply with the requirement to admit guilt in connection with the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and the siege of the Manila Peninsula hotel in 2007.

"First, what is there to steal when Lt. Col. Thea Joan N. Andrade, Chief of the Discipline, Law and Order Division of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (J1) who is the custodian of the records issued

a Certification that there is no available copy of Trillanes' application for amnesty in the records?" Calida said.

"Second, I have never entered the offices of the J1 or the Personnel Division of the AFP at Camp Aguinaldo so how could I 'steal' documents kept there?" he added.

The senator said he expected the worst out of Calida.

"He is in no position to demand anything. He knows the truth. The entire country knows the truth at this point," Trillanes said in a news conference.

Trillanes on Wednesday noted that no less than Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana had admitted that it was Calida who requested on August 16 the amnesty application documents.

The senator's lawyer, Rey Robles, said: "That was publicized in the media. Secretary Lorenzana himself said that Solgen Calida asked for the documents. Then after two weeks, they were missing already. What conclusion can you draw?"

No decision from Branch 148 yet

Trillanes was ordered arrested on Tuesday by the Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 150, which revived the old rebellion case after the senator failed to produce his original amnesty form. Trillanes posted bail of P200,000.

**BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO
AND NEIL JAYSON
N. SERVALLOS**

Trillanes ready to go to jail but no arrest warrant issued

BY JOAN DAIRO AND EVAN ORIAS

HIS bags were packed and he has prepped his family and given instructions to his staff. He was all set for his much-expected arrest and detention. But as of yesterday, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV lived a free man for another day.

As the public watched and waited for the next chapter of the Trillanes amnesty saga, the Makati City Regional Trial Court Branch 148 deferred issuing a resolution on the petition of the Justice Department seeking to revive the coup charges slapped against the senator for the 2003 Oakwood Hotel uprising.

Judge Andres Soriano likewise did not issue an

alias warrant of arrest and a hold departure order against the senator.

"Not today. I don't know when it will be," Soriano told reporters when asked in an ambush interview when the resolution will be issued.

The DOJ ran to the Makati RTC Branch 148 earlier this month and asked for an arrest warrant against Trillanes after President Duterte voided his 2010 amnesty through Proclamation 572. The case was submitted for resolution on Wednesday after the DOJ submitted its last pleading to the court.

Trillanes said he was relieved no arrest warrant was issued. "It's something that I didn't expect.

See TRILLANES > Page B6

TRILLANES

When you are psyched for something, you feel different when it doesn't happen. But it's a welcome development," he said.

However, he said he still cannot be complacent. "As I have said, let's take it one day at a time. We will deal with the situation as it comes. If there is a warrant of arrest, so be it. But if there is none, then that's going to be a victory for our democracy," he added.

Trillanes said his camp remains hopeful the court will follow the rule of law, but added they are prepared for the worst.

The legal team of the senator did not file any court pleadings on Thursday, contrary to Trillanes' announcement on Wednesday they would file an appeal of the Makati RTC Branch 150 ruling finding

basis to revive the rebellion case in relation to the 2007 Manila Peninsula siege. The court issued an arrest warrant against the Trillanes on Tuesday but released him after he posted bail.

Lawyer Reynaldo Robles said no motion for reconsideration was filed because "there was no urgent" need to do so.

Robles said since the senator posted bail, their camp has 15 days to file an appeal. "We will still meet and discuss our next step," he said.

Trillanes said he was prepared to be arrested yesterday and had packed a bag with his basic clothing and toiletries. He also had a long talk with his family and had given instructions to his staff in case he went to jail and cannot preside over his office's operations.

"I have a list of to-dos for each staff, even my family. Last night I

had a talk with them. I told them to expect for the worst because we are living in an era where the worst has happened, so you should expect it," he said.

Solicitor General Jose Calida yesterday demanded an apology from Trillanes, and vowed to file a libel case, over his allegation that he "stole" his amnesty documents to ensure there was basis for Proclamation 572.

Calida said Trillanes "maliciously" branded him as a thief when he claimed in a radio interview that he "stole" his amnesty application form.

"Obviously, Mr. Trillanes' rationality, assuming he had one, has deserted him. First, what is there to steal when Lt. Col. Thea Joan Andrade, chief of the Discipline, Law and Order Division of the Office of the Deputy Chief

of Staff for Personnel or J1 who is the custodian of the records issued a certification that there is no available copy of Trillanes' application for amnesty in the records," Calida said.

He added he never entered the offices of the J1 for him to be able to "steal" the documents.

"Unless, Mr. Trillanes expresses his sincere apology for calling me a thief, I shall be constrained to file a criminal case for libel plus damages against him," Calida said.

Trillanes, in response, said: "He is in no position to demand anything. He knows the truth, ang buong Pilipinas alam ang buong katotohanan (the whole country knows the truth). If he wants to file a case, let him do it. Trip nya 'yan (He wants to do that). He can do whatever he wants. I expect the worst out of him." — *With Ashzel Hachero*

Calida threatens libel on Trillanes

By Alvin Murcia

Already hemmed in by a string of court cases, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV who is holed up in the Senate, expects libel charges from Solicitor General Jose Calida due to the senator's accusation that he stole his

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amnesty application document to justify the issuance by President Duterte of Proclamation 572.

The proclamation declared as void *ab initio* the grant of amnesty by former President Benigno Aquino in connection with his role in several failed attempts to overthrow the Arroyo administration.

Calida issued the warning after Trillanes called him a thief in connection with the voiding of his amnesty.

"Trillanes should express his sincere apology for

Calida threatens libel on Trillanes

calling me a thief, I shall be constrained to file a criminal case for libel plus damages against him," Calida said.

Trillanes should express his sincere apology for calling me a thief.

"The putschist Mr. Trillanes ranted to the media yesterday that I 'stole' his amnesty application document. In effect, Mr. Trillanes maliciously branded me as a thief, which I'm not," Calida added.

The justice chief said it was obvious that Trillanes' rationality has deserted him.

"What is there to steal when Lt. Col. Thea Joan N. Andrade, chief of the Discipline, Law and Order Division of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (J1), who is the custodian of the records issued a Certification that there is no available copy of Trillanes' application for amnesty in the records?" he said.

"I have never entered the offices of the J1 or the Personnel Division of the AFP at Camp Aguinaldo so how could I 'steal' documents kept there?" he added.

Requirements restated

Calida said the senator might have not bothered to read "with perspicacity" Proclamation 572 that voided his amnesty.

He explained the revocation of Trillanes' amnesty was anchored on at least two minimum requirements which were not complied with which are that Trillanes did not file an official amnesty application form and the sworn statement or narration of his participation in the Oakwood and Manila Peninsula incidents which was required to be annexed to his application and that Trillanes did not express his guilt for the crimes which he committed in connection with the Oakwood Mutiny and the Manila Peninsula siege.

Calida said Trillanes should have done that during an interview on 5 January 2011 that "they were not admitting guilt to the mutiny and *coup d'etat* charges lodged against them both in the civil and military courts" and "I would like to qualify that we did not admit to the charge of *coup d'etat* or anything which were filed against them."

"If one will follow the convoluted logic of Trillanes then he's saying that he did not commit the crimes that were covered by the amnesty," he said.

"If that is what he really means, then he has no need for amnesty because when one applies for amnesty he must expressly admit his guilt to the crimes he committed. Moreover, DND-AC Circular 1 further requires the applicants to recant all previous statements inconsistent with the requirement of admission of that guilt which he never did," he added.

He explained that the revocation of the senator's amnesty is based on his failure to comply with the two minimum requirements to be eligible for such.

No delegation

Sen. Richard Gordon, meanwhile, said he is one with Mr. Duterte in the belief that amnesty should not be delegated by the commander in chief to a Cabinet secretary.

Without particularly citing the revoked amnesty of fellow Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, Gordon also stressed there should be accountability to ensure that those granted with amnesty would no longer commit offenses against the state.

"Amnesty comes from the President, I don't think that the President should give it to the secretary. It should be signed by the President himself. I don't want to dwell on this issue but it is being discussed," Gordon, who is a lawyer like Mr. Duterte, said.

The putschist Mr. Trillanes ranted to the media yesterday that I stole his amnesty application.

"We should be careful in granting amnesty because it's always political...you want peace but those being granted are not serious and do it again and again...like now, we are talking about *coup d'etat* but no one is jailed because of *coup d'etat*," he added.

Gordon, who has previous quarrels with Trillanes, maintained he sympathizes with his fellow senator

but stressed there should be accountability.

"I sympathize with him, he is a senator...I am not happy when somebody is in jail. I am just talking about the principle because you asked me about accountability. When you say accountability - children should be taught not to do things they don't want to be held accountable for," Gordon said.

The President earlier had justified his issuance of Proclamation 572 by citing that former President Aquino delegated the granting of amnesty to Trillanes and other Magdalo officers and soldiers to ex-Defense Chief Voltaire Gazmin.

Calida threatens to sue Trillanes

Solicitor General Jose Calida yesterday threatened to sue Senator Antonio Trillanes IV for calling him a thief.

"Unless Mr. Trillanes expresses his sincere apology for calling me a thief, I shall be constrained to file a criminal case for libel plus damages against him," Calida said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the Solicitor General has denied allegations that he stole the application for immunity of Trillanes.

"The putschist Mr. Trillanes ranted to the media yesterday that I stole his amnesty application document. In effect, Mr. Trillanes maliciously branded me as a thief, which I'm not," Calida said in a statement.

Trillanes made the claim as the senator pointed out the missing application document was the reason why Makati City Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 150 issued an arrest warrant and hold departure order (HDO) against him.

The lawmaker insisted that he filed amnesty application with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) but had somehow gone missing.

However, Calida pointed out there was nothing to steal since there was no amnesty application in the first place. (Jeffrey Damicog)



SolGen threatens to sue Trillanes over amnesty

By Rey E. Requejo and Macon Ramos-Araneta

SOLICITOR General Jose Calida on Thursday threatened to file a libel complaint against Senator Antonio Trillanes, for accusing him of stealing his amnesty application to justify the revocation of the amnesty granted him by the Aquino administration in 2011.

The chief state lawyer said it was record custodian Lt. Col. Thea Joan N. Andrade, chief of the discipline, Law and Order Division of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (JI) who issued a certification that there was no available copy of Trillanes' application for amnesty in the records.

Calida said Trillanes' accusation has no basis because he never entered the offices of the JI or the Personnel Division of the AFP at Camp Aguinaldo.

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"Unless Mr. Trillanes expresses his sincere apology for calling me a thief, I shall be constrained to file a criminal case for libel plus damages against him," Calida said in a statement.

Trillanes said he would not apologize to Calida.

"He is in no position to demand anything. He knows the truth, the whole Philippines knows at this point the truth. Whatever he plans to do, I expect the worse out of him so he can do whatever he wants," Trillanes said.

Earlier, Trillanes earlier claimed that Calida "stole" his amnesty application, citing Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana's statement to the media that Calida had requested the document.

On Thursday, Calida again pointed out that the revocation of the senator's amnesty was based on his failure to comply with the two minimum requirements: A formal application for amnesty and an admission of guilt for the crimes he committed.

"If we follow the convoluted logic of Mr. Trillanes, he's saying that he did not commit the crimes that were covered by the amnesty. If that is what he really means, then he has no need for amnesty because when one applies for amnesty he must expressly admit his guilt to the crimes he committed," Calida said.

Trillanes earlier asked the military why it allowed Calida to take his documents from their custody.

"I am calling on the leadership of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Department of National Defense, particularly AFP's J1. They knew that I applied. They knew that I have the documents. Why did they allow Mr. Calida to take it and lose it?" the senator said.

Trillanes on Thursday met with some members of the Magdalo group that had staged two attempts to oust then President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, GMA News reported. No details of the meeting were available, however.

Over 32,500 CCT 'ghost' beneficiaries purged from ARMM

By ALI G. MACABALANG

COTABATO CITY – Over 32,500 “ghost” or ‘undeserving’ beneficiaries of the national conditional cash transfer (CCT) program have been delisted across the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), translating to savings of more than ₱44.8 million per month for the government, local authorities said.

Atty. Laisa Alamia, ARMM executive secretary, said she was expecting at least 10,000 more “unfit” individuals to be delisted in the continuing purge of the regional CCT list of beneficiaries.

ARMM, classified by the govern-

ment as one of three poorest regions in the country, covers Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi provinces and the cities of Marawi and Lamitan.

Alamia, a renowned human rights lawyer, launched the massive cleansing of the lists of CCT or Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) beneficiaries in the region after Regional Governor Mujiv Hataman installed her as concurrent secretary of the ARMM's Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) last December.

The 4Ps program, formerly Ahon Pamilyang Pilipino, is being implemented by the DSWD. It aims to eradicate extreme poverty by investing in health and education particularly in

ages 0–14. Patterned on programs in other developing countries like Brazil and Mexico, it started to operate in June 2014 in 17 regions, 79 provinces, 1,484 towns and 143 cities covering 4,090,667 household beneficiaries. Each household with three children receives ₱1,400 monthly.

Prior to the purge, reportedly instigated by concerned local officials led by Maguindanao Gov. Esmarel Mangudadatu, 4Ps beneficiaries in ARMM stood at more than 370,000 as of last December, Alamia said, hinting that only about 75 percent of the figure constituted genuine beneficiaries.

Alamia initiated the purge last March, holding successive fora in ARMM and tapping military forces

as enforcers of the martial law in Mindanao – to elicit support from constituent barangay, municipal, and provincial officials.

ARMM Education Secretary Rasol Mitmug Jr. joined all the fora, bringing along all schools superintendents in the region because there were reports that teachers were involved in the alleged scam. Some teachers were discovered to be either 4Ps beneficiaries or collaborators in the exaction of “commissions” from beneficiaries, it was learned. ³

Alamia said the bulk of irregular 4Ps beneficiaries was discovered in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, which have the largest population in the ARMM.

Duterte places Regions 1, 2, 3, CAR under state of calamity

By GENALYN D. KABILING

President Duterte has placed Regions 1, 2, 3, and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) under state of calamity after typhoon "Ompong" left a trail of death and destruction.

In Proclamation No. 595, the President said the calamity declaration would speed up the government's relief and rehabilitation works, mobilize funds, and allow price control measures in the four affected regions.

"Typhoon Ompong (Inter) ▶ 12

Duterte places...

national name: Mangkhut) caused widespread destruction, substantial damage and deaths in Regions 1 (Ilocos), 2 (Cagayan Valley), 3 (Central Luzon), and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)," the proclamation read.

"The declaration of a State of Calamity will hasten the rescue, recovery, relief and rehabilitation efforts of the government and the private sector, including any international humanitarian assistance," the proclamation read.

Under the calamity proclamation, the President directed concerned government agencies to "implement execute rescue, recovery, relief and rehabilitation work

in accordance with pertinent operational plans and directives."

Government agencies have also been directed to coordinate and augment the basic services and facilities of the affected local government units.

Law enforcement agencies and the military were likewise mobilized to ensure peace and order in the regions hit by the powerful typhoon.

"This declaration will provide basis for price control measures which can mitigate economic impact to affected populations," the proclamation read.

It will also provide the national government and local government units "ample latitude in the utiliza-

tion of funds for recovery and rehabilitation efforts, on one hand, and delivery of basic needs and services, on the other"

The proclamation, signed last September 25 but only released by the Palace Thursday, was issued upon the recommendation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC)

The state of calamity will remain in force until lifted by the President.

The powerful typhoon battered several provinces in Luzon early this month, triggering floods and landslides that left dozens of people dead. The storm has also caused huge damage to agriculture and public infrastructure during its onslaught.

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Local aviation firms seeking defense and security deals

By **BERNIE CAHILES-MAGKILAT**

Local aerospace players explore opportunities in defense and security sector as the government implements an industry roadmap that aims to establish an integrated aerospace value chain in the country.

Several companies engage in the aerospace industry and other agencies are participating in the three-day 3rd Asian Defense and Security (ADAS) 2018 Exhibition, which opened Wednesday at the World Trade Center.

ADAS is a tri-service (defense, security, and crisis management) exhibition and conference which addresses the requirements of the Philippine armed forces, national police, and security agencies.

ADAS is expected to attract over 300 leading domestic and international exhibitors representing the full spectrum of defense, homeland security, and disaster relief industries.

Aerospace is one of the country's priority sectors. The Aerospace Industry Roadmap which was crafted by the industry in 2013, envisions the Philippines as a hub for aerospace OEM (original equipment manufacturing) and allied services such as MRO (maintenance, repair, and overhaul) for the global commercial aircraft industry.

The industry targets to achieve an export value of \$2.573 billion by 2022, to generate 14,932 jobs in the sector, and to have an integrated aerospace value

chain in the Philippines.

"Our participation in ADAS further highlights and reaffirms the competitiveness of the local aerospace manufacturing and services industries. These industries have charted significant growths and we see these maturing industries ready to compete in the global market," Trade Undersecretary for Industry Development and BOI Managing Head Ceferino S. Rodolfo said.

The Philippines is rapidly becoming one of the most active and progressive defense and security marketplaces in Southeast Asia with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Modernization Act No. 10349, the initiative is a 15-year defense modernization program with an initial funding of ₱75 billion for its first phase which is nearing completion. The Department of National Defense (DND) is now embarking on the second phase of the program with a projected potential market value of almost ₱6 billion by 2024.

Under the defense and military procurement of the government, local demand and market for maintaining hardware and planes (MRO and parts distribution) is projected to grow.

"The country's participation in ADAS likewise offer immense opportunities on industrial collaboration such as encouraging investments in MRO, trainings and technology transfer to the Philippines, leveraging on government procurement of aircrafts and military equipment," Undersecretary Rodolfo said, adding that

this positive development translates to the growth of the aerospace and aviation industries, which means more export earnings for the country and more quality jobs for Filipinos.

"We will take advantage of the ADAS Exhibition, and others of this nature, as an opportunity to create traction for our positioning to be the aerospace manufacturing hub for ASEAN," he said.

The exhibitors from the Philippines include 3M Philippines, AHOLDTECHPH CORPORATION, Armscor Global Defense, Inc., Armscor Shooting Center, Inc., Army Shirt Wear/VIELA APPAREL COMPANY, Astrophysics Asia, Inc., Austal Philippines, BAMBUSAT, BMW Bureau of Customs, COMSPEC, Cristianini by Boston Home Inc., Draeger Philippines Corporation, Dynamic Castings, Dynamic Power Marine & Industrial Hardware, Inc., Embassy of the United States of America, Government Arsenal, Department of National Defense, Freeport of Bataan (FAB), Microdata Systems and Management, Inc., National Security Council, Office of Civil Defense, Panpisco Technologies, Inc., Philippine Air Force, Philippine Army, Philippine Board of Investments (BOI), Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine International Trading Corporation, Philippine National Police, Philippine Navy, Philippine Office for Transportation Security, Propmech Corporation (1860), Propmech Corporation (D252), Rohde and Schwarz (Philippines) Incorporated, Safer PH Innovations, Inc., and Triton Communications Corp. p2

Duterte: Extrajudicial killings my only sin

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRESIDENT Duterte yesterday said he wants to reduce illegal drug activities in the country by at least 49 percent.

At an event in Malacañang, Duterte also said his "only sin" are "extrajudicial killings."

Duterte, who has been saying there is a plot to remove him from office, did not elaborate on the extrajudicial killings which are being linked to his war against drugs.

Some soldiers are reportedly being recruited in the alleged plot to oust Duterte.

"Sabi ko nga sa military, anong kasalanan ko? Nagnakaw ba ako diyan ni piso? Sigaw daw. Did I prosecute somebody na

ipinakulong ko?

Ang kasalanan ko lang 'yung mga extrajudicial killing (I asked the military, what did I do wrong? Did I steal even a peso? They said go ahead. Did I prosecute somebody that I sent to jail? My only sin are those extrajudicial killings)," he said during ceremonies in Malacañang for the oath-taking of career executive service officers and conferment of awards for the 2017 Gawad Career Executive Services and 2018 Outstanding Government Workers.

During the presidential campaign in 2016, Duterte vowed to solve the drug problem within three to six months of his term. He extended his deadline to a year, and eventually to the end of his

term. Duterte later said he just wants the drug problem reduced and again vowed to continue the campaign until the end of his term.

Figures on those killed in the drugs war range from 7,000 to as high as 20,000 but the official count of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency is 4,854 from July 1, 2016 to August 31 this year.

Critics have filed a complaint against Duterte before the International Criminal Court because of the extrajudicial killings.

A recent Social Weather Stations survey showed 78 percent of Filipinos are satisfied with the campaign against drugs while only 13 percent are not for a net satisfaction rating of +65.

"Basta 'yung pangako ko, stays. No corruption, walang drugs or minimized at least by 49 percent ngayon. Wala na masyado 'yung saksakan (My promise stays. No corruption, no drugs or minimized at least by 49 percent now. Reduce the stabbing)," he said.

The President and his war against illegal drugs is being heavily criticized both in the country and abroad because of the thousands reported killed in police anti-drug operations.

Duterte said the problem is that some deaths are being linked to the anti-illegal drug operations.

He said some "ninja cops" or errant

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cops are also behind the deaths.

In the same event, Duterte joked that "shabu" should be distributed the next time that there is a rice crisis in the country.

He said rice supply should be provided to the "innocent and the good ones."

He said there is a rice crisis because many rehabilitated drug addicts are now eating rice.

"Ngayon na marami ng na-rehab kaya rayo nagkaroon ng rice crisis. Kumakain na ang mga u*** eh. So maybe next time kapag may crisis na naman na, you distribute shabu, kumain iyung iba para we can save rice for the others, especially the innocent and the good ones," Duterte said.

He said illegal drug users, especially those using shabu, are often slim because they do not eat or have appetite for food. He said users prioritize the illegal substance over food.

There is a lack supply of rice from the National Food Authority, which is cheaper than commercial rice. Duterte has ordered the importation of rice to flood the market and keep prices down.

CONFLICTING COURT ORDERS

No Palparan 'Munti' transfer yet

By Eimer N. Manuel

A second case of illegal detention in a Malolos City court is keeping the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) from transferring convicted kidnapper former Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan to the New Bilibid Prison.

Palparan was sentenced earlier this month to *reclusion perpetua* or imprisonment of up to 40 years after he was found guilty of the 2006 kidnapping and illegal detention of University of the Philippines students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño.

In a statement on Thursday, the AFP said it could not yet effect the transfer of Palparan to Muntinlupa as ordered by the Malolos Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 15.

Philippine Army spokesman Lt. Col. Louie Villanueva said the AFP is also awaiting word from the Malolos RTC Branch 19, which recently ruled that the former commander of the Philippine Army's 7th Infantry Division should be in AFP safekeeping as he is still facing a separate illegal detention case.

Palparan was sentenced earlier this month to *reclusion perpetua* or imprisonment of up to 40 years after he was found guilty of the 2006 kidnapping and illegal detention of University of the Philippines (UP) students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño.

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra on Tuesday said Palparan had been committed to Bilibid but later withdrew his statement with an apology.

Labeled as a "The Butcher" by activists, Palparan was a star in the anti-communist drive called "Oplan Bantay Laya" of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Palparan was even praised by Arroyo in her 2006 State of the Nation Address in front of high-ranking government officials and other dignitaries.

Labeled as "The Butcher" by activists, Palparan was a star in the anti-communist drive called "Oplan Bantay Laya" of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Along with Palparan, also convicted were Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado, Jr. and S/Sgt. Edgardo Osorio. They received the same sentence and were each ordered to pay P800,000 in civil indemnities to the families of Cadapan and Empeño.

The National Union of People's Lawyers which counseled Cadapan and Empeño's families, hailed the ruling and called it a warning to human rights violators.

Military officers under watch

BY VICTOR REYES

THE intelligence community of the Armed Forces is conducting surveillance on a group of active and retired military officers who are allegedly involved in a supposed plot to oust President Duterte.

A senior military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the subjects of the surveillance are believed to be "in cahoots" with the political opposition in a plot to overthrow the government.

"We are monitoring some members... it will be dealt with accordingly once confirmed," the official said without giving names or the number of those being monitored.

"It's our inherent task to moni-

tor active and retired. Its minority but there are still (in cahoots)," said the source.

But he said active and retired officers have "no capability" to oust the President.

Duterte has said some soldiers are conniving with the opposition Liberal Party and with the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, in the ouster plot tagged "Red October."

On Wednesday, Interior officer in charge Eduardo Año said there are efforts to recruit soldiers for the supposed plot. He said the reported recruitment became the basis for

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government to be "proactive"

The 96,000-strong Army has not monitored any of its men who are involved in the plot, said spokesman Lt. Col. Louie Villanueva.

"As of now, we have not monitored such. If there will be recruitment, it will doom to fail because there is no issue for us to

react. The morale of the Philippine Army is very high."

The Navy, Air Force, and the Marines also said they have not monitored any recruitment of their men.

"I haven't heard any rumor of recruitment or ones being recruited within the Navy's rank," said Navy spokesman Cmdr. Jonathan Zasa.

Air Force spokesman Maj. Aristides Galang said, "We have

not received any information about recruitment. The morale of the Air Force is very high... No one is re-recruiting (Air Force personnel)."

Marines spokesman Capt. Jerber Anthony Belonio said, "There is no such activity in the Marine Corps... You can be assured that the Marine Corps will follow its oath to defend the Constitution."

Nevertheless, Belonio said, the Marines is conducting "extensive information gathering" to ensure that no Marine is recruited.

President Duterte yesterday told the military not to engage in any "melodramatic" actions like a coup d'état, reiterating all they need to do is tell him and he would readily step down if he agrees with their reason. — *With Jocelyn Montemayor*

Duterte can't forgive corrupt cops

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna – President Duterte has threatened anew to dismiss policemen engaged in corruption, saying he could not forgive them for such offense.

In his visit to Camp Vicente Lim here last Wednesday, the President told policemen to avoid corrupt practices similar to the anomalous transactions allegedly committed by sacked military officers in a government hospital.

"Huwag 'yung mga ganun na bagay. Huwag kayong pumasok diyan kasi talagang hahabulin ko kayo. And I will see to it that..talagang i-dismiss kita, i-discharge kita. Iyang ganun ang hindi ko talaga mapatawad," he said.

"At saka 'yung mga pagkain at 'yang sweldo ng ano. 'Pag ako nagbigay ng allowances, kailangan dumating sa lahat 'yan," he added.

The President maintained that

he would "never, never condone" corruption, especially the misuse of funds intended for the medicines of soldiers.

Duterte recently ordered the dismissal and court martial proceedings of around 20 top officials of a military hospital over alleged irregular transactions.

"Kaya por Diyos 'yung sabi ko, 'yung nalaman ko na 'yung ghost delivery sa ospital sa gobyerno, AFP,

I had to fire the general," he said.

"Mapatawad ko pa 'yang conversion, per parts or ligid, ano bang ligid sa Tagalog? Gulong, pero 'yang medisina anak, adre, medyo hindi tayo magkakaintindihan diyan. Away talaga aabutin natin diyan," he said.

Duterte reminded the police to serve the people, not some public officials involved in politicking. **(Genalyn D. Kabling)**

2 Marines nabbed for trader's death

TWO Marines were arrested Wednesday in Iloilo for the fatal shooting of a trader in Barangay Poblacion, Barotac Viejo town.

Chief Supt. John Bulalacao, head of the Western Visayas police, identified the alleged gunmen as Cpl. Jessie Ensilay and Sgt. Brian Rey Mullot, both assigned to the headquarters of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 5 based in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat.

Police investigators, quoting witnesses, said the two were

aboard a motorcycle when they fired at Joren Banas, a businessman, and Pebe Barabona, his driver, who were in an Elf truck traveling in Barangay Poblacion at around 5 p.m. Wednesday.

Barabona drew his firearm to retaliate, hitting Ensilay in the body.

The witnesses told responding policemen where the motorcycle headed after the shooting. The policemen later caught Ensilay and Mullot.

Banas was declared dead on arrival at a hospital. Barabona was unhurt.

Ensilay was brought to Barotac Viejo District Hospital and later transferred to Western Visayas Medical Center in Iloilo City.

Police are still investigating the incident. — Raymond

Africa 13



2 sundalo na gun for hire, arestado

Nasakote ng mga otoridad ang dalawang miyembro ng Philippine Marines na pinaghihinahang miyembro ng gun for hire gang matapos masangkot sa pamamamili na ikinasawi ng isang sibilyan habang isa pa ang malubhang nasugatan sa Iloilo nitong Miyerkules.

Kinilala ang mga nasakoteng suspek na sina Corporal Jessie Ensilay at Sgt. Brian Rey Mullot, pawang miyembro ng Marine Battalion Landing Team (MBLT) 5 na nakabase sa Palembang, Sultan Kudarat.

Ang dalawang biktima ng pamamamili ng mga sundalo ay kinilalang sina Joren Banas, dead on arrival sa pagamutan at Pebe Barabona na grabe namang nasugatan sa insidente at pawang residente ng Barotac Viejo, Iloilo.

Nabatid na ang mga biktima ay lulan ng Elf truck nang pagbabarilin ng mga suspek na lulan ng kulay itim na Honda XRM 125 motorcycle na walang plaka matapos na mag-overtake sa sasakyan ng mga sibilyan.

Bandang alas 2:00 ng hapon nitong Miyerkules nang masakote ng mga elemento ng Iloilo Police ang mga suspek. Joy Cantos

AFP links raid to 'Red Oct,' but NBI not on same page

Bureau says action stemmed from complaint vs trader, but military calls it an anti-NPA operation

By Aie Balagtas See
@ABalagtasSeeINQ

The National Bureau of Investigation on Thursday said it had yet to find evidence supporting the military's statement linking the cache of firearms seized from a businesswoman in Rizal province to the so-called "Red October" ouster plot against President Duterte.

A thorough investigation was still being conducted to establish such a connection, NBI spokesperson Ferdinand Lavin said as the bureau announced the arrest of Chinese businesswoman Ke Be and five others in a raid conducted Sept. 25 by an NBI special action unit on her mansion in Teresa town.

Armed with a search warrant and backed up by soldiers, NBI agents found about 20 unlicensed assault rifles and pistols at Be's mansion inside a 3-hectare farm in Pantay, Buhangin, Barangay Dalig.

Partner's complaint

The businesswoman, along with Brandy Solinap, Victor dela Cruz, Bi-lian Ke, Diosdado Bohol and Ke Quiao Li, was charged with illegal possession of firearms and ammunition at the Department of Justice on Wednesday.

Seized from the mansion were four ArmaLite rifles, a grenade launcher, five shot-

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ARMS CACHE NBI Director for Investigative Service Vicente de Guzman (speaking on microphone) presents businesswoman Ke Be, alias Lily Ong (standing behind him), and five other persons arrested in the Sept. 25 raid in Teresa, Rizal, that yielded several firearms and explosives. —MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

guns, a .45-caliber pistol, a .38-caliber revolver and two grenades, as well as several two-way radios, cell phones and tactical vests.

According to the NBI, the operation stemmed from a complaint from a business partner of Be who alleged that she was plotting to kill the former and keeping an arms cache at her mansion. According to sources privy to the raid, the agents

found tunnels on the property emanating from the mansion.

AFP version

On Tuesday, however, the Armed Forces of the Philippines issued a press statement saying the search warrant served by the NBI was issued after "months of intelligence operations" against communist guerrillas hiding in the area.

The AFP identified the tar-

gets of the intelligence gathering as Armando Lazarte, alias "Pat" and "Romano," secretary of the Sub-Regional Military Area 4A of the communist New People's Army; and Tirso Alcantara, alias Bart, a former NPA regional commander.

The statement quoted Brigadier Gen. Arnulfo Marcelo Burgos Jr., commander of the 202nd Infantry Brigade, as saying that soldiers and NBI agents

served the warrant on a farm believed to be providing "a safe house" for top NPA leaders in Southern Tagalog.

"The presence of top NPA leaders and the proximity of Teresa town to Manila are indicators that the threat of Red October cannot be downplayed and that the plotters are just awaiting an opportunity to execute their plans," Burgos said.

But NBI insiders, who asked not to be named in this report lest they incur the ire of superiors, expressed surprise and dismay over the way the military reported the raid.

Joint operation?

For one, they complained about the phrase "joint operation" used by the AFP, saying the soldiers only served as security backup of NBI agents—a common arrangement when they are operating in far-flung areas.

They also pointed out that the AFP was not part of the case buildup leading to the raid. "The military was never part of the surveillance. They did nothing. Nothing," one of the insiders said. "This is disappointing. Is this the way our soldiers think?"

While it was possible that Be had friends from the NPA, she also had friends from the police, some of whom had served as her escorts, they added. INQ



Rody tells troops: No need to stage a coup

By ALEXIS ROMERO

President Duterte stressed that government forces do not need to stage a coup to oust him, saying he is ready to step down if they give him a good reason to do so.

"There are talks about coup d'état, mutiny, they want to oust me. The irony of it all is I really want to step down,"

Duterte said during the oath-taking of new career executive service officers at Malacañang yesterday.

Duterte said he once informed military and police officials of his intention to resign

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Rody From Page 1

because of the serious corruption problem in government.

"In front of all the officers of the police and the Armed Forces I said, 'For all the efforts I made against corruption, I am already tired since I cannot stop corruption, I am now offering to step down as President,'" Duterte said.

"Not because I am afraid of you or I am afraid to die. We will all die. I said if you do it, do not do it with a melodramatic thing. Do not bring your armor there outside. You just can call me, we will have coffee and I think if I like your strategy, your plan, you can have it," he added.

His critics find a lot of fault in

him but as far as Duterte is concerned, he just committed one sin.

"What are your sins? Me? I told the military 'what are my sins? Did I steal money? Even just one peso? Did I prosecute somebody I sent to jail? My only sin is extrajudicial killings,'" Duterte declared.

Duterte, whose controversial war on illegal drugs has left more than 4,000 people dead, went on to justify the killings, saying they were directed at "fools."

The President also justified his controversial crackdown on illegal drugs, saying the problem has contaminated several Filipinos.

"There are things that I have to do because I have to do it. Who will do it? You know, the police then, they said, before you Duterte, there was really no killing, no extrajudicial (killings). Look what happened," Duterte said.

"When I became President, I insisted on opening the records. Many thousands - hundreds of thousands came out. They are thin, all of them are thin, you saw them on TV," he added.

Duterte described as "ulol" (fools) critics who raise concerns on the anti-narcotics campaign.

"Those fools, that black, who was that? I will strike your head with that prosecutor," Duterte said, referring to Fatou Bensouda, the International Criminal Court

prosecutor who announced that the tribunal would look into the alleged extrajudicial killings in the Philippines

Despite claims the drug campaign encourages extrajudicial killings, Duterte's war on drugs remains popular in the Philippines, based on latest surveys.

Duterte also criticized Liberal Party president and opposition Sen. Francis Pangilinan, who he said was always talking as if he was faultless.

Duterte said he would just return to his hometown in Davao City if he relinquishes the presidency.

"I will give up everything. I said the irony of it all is you want to kick me out, I am just looking for a reason, really, I'm going home, I'm tired. That's

true," the President said.

"Really cannot beat corruption no matter what I do. It begins with something like an inaugural fling, the breaking of the ground or the cutting of whatever. It's given the widest publicity. Three months after, they are facing the ombudsman and then Sandigan(bayan)," he added.

Duterte earlier revealed how some soldiers are allegedly conniving with the political opposition and forces who want to oust him as part of the so-called Red October plot supposedly being orchestrated by the communists.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo said all the major service commands have dis-

missed reports of alleged recruitment among the ranks by forces seeking to oust the President.

Arevalo said there is also no need to conduct a loyalty check.

Former chief justice Maria Lourdes Sereno denied and branded as fake news allegations that she and her supporters are part of a coalition seeking to oust Duterte.

Sereno took exception to the claims made by AFP deputy chief for operations Brig. Gen. Antonio Parlade who said in an interview over ANC on Sunday that among the groups pushing for Duterte's ouster is the Coalition for Justice (CFJ) which supports Sereno.

- With Michael Punongbayan, Emmanuel Tupas

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Duterte cautions erring cops anew

By GENALYN D. KASILING

CALAMBA, Laguna – President Duterte has threatened anew to dismiss policemen engaged in corruption.

In his visit to Camp Vicente Lim in Laguna last Wednesday, the President told police officers to avoid corrupt practices similar to the anomalous transactions allegedly committed by sacked military officers in a government hospital.

“Huwag’yung mga ganun na bagay. Huwag kayong pumasok diyan kasi talagang hahabulin ko kayo. And I will see to it that... talagang i-dismiss kita, i-discharge kita. Iyang ganun ang hindi ko talaga mapatawad [Avoid those things. Do not engage in that because I will run after you and I will see to it that I will dismiss

you, discharge you. I cannot forgive you for that],” he said during his visit to Camp Vicente Lim in Calamba, Laguna.

The President maintained that he would “never, never condone” corruption, especially the misuse of funds intended for the medicines of soldiers.

Duterte recently ordered the dismissal and court martial proceedings of around 20 top officials of a military hospital over alleged irregular transactions.

Duterte also reminded the country’s police officers to serve the people, unlike some public officials involved in politicking.

He said they should “obey the mayor” who he claimed was “actually the chief of police.” But he cautioned them against following orders from the local chief executive who was “into politics.”

Public support keeps Duterte above ouster plot

By GENALYN D. KABILING
and FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

Malacañang is confident that President Duterte enjoys the "overwhelming" support of the military and police amid the alleged "Red October" plot by opposition forces to overthrow him.

Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque admitted that the alleged involvement of some soldiers in the ouster plot must be verified but he remained optimistic the military and police would not support such move against the President.

"Sa akin po, jahat dapat tingnan pero sa tingin ko overwhelming po pa rin ang suportang presidente galing sa hukbong sandatahan (For me, everything must be looked into but I think the President has overwhelming support from the Armed Forces)," Roque said during a Palace press briefing when asked if there was a need to conduct a loyalty check in the military and verify reports some soldiers were colluding with the opposition forces to oust Duterte.

"Siguro i-verify ang mga info pero kampanante ang Presidente na tupad sa tungkulin ang kapulisan at kasundaluhan (Information must be verified but the President is confident the police and military are committed to their duty)," he added.

Roque highlighted that the President has implemented several measures promoting the welfare of soldiers and policemen, including higher salaries and better housing benefits.

"This is the only President who doubled the salary of soldiers and policemen. This is the only President who visited camps to look into the needs of the soldiers and policemen," he said in Filipino.

"Even the houses, which were stolen by some groups, are being monitored by the President to ensure these will benefit the soldiers and policemen," he added.

In his visit to a police camp in Laguna last Wednesday, the President discouraged the uniformed personnel from joining any "stupid" coup attempt against his administration. He told the military and police to just talk to him if they were not satisfied with his performance.

He also said government troops should "not nurture personal loyalty" to him because he does not need it. "Your loyalty should begin and end with the Republic of the Philippines. Do not mind me," he said.

Earlier, the President admitted he was dismayed that some members of the military were in cahoots with the opposition forces to overthrow his government. He reminded the government forces to shun any alliance with enemies of the state.

"If you are true to your country, do not bed with the enemy," he said.

AFP loyal to Constitution

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Spokesman Marine Colonel Edgard Arevalo reassured the public yesterday that the military is a professional organization that subscribes to the Constitution which it has sworn

to uphold and to defend. Arevalo made the remark in a bid to dispel rumors that members of the AFP are taking part in any attempts to destabilize or overthrow the present administration.

"We will never allow ourselves in the ranks of the active service to take direct or indirect participation in any political actions against the present duly constituted authorities," Arevalo said.

He also reiterated that the AFP respects the rule of law and court, as in the case of opposition Senator Antonio Trillanes IV. "We respect the rule of law and court decisions and processes. This includes the case of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV. The matter is already in the purview of the courts. And to the civil courts we defer," he said, adding that the AFP will not issue further statements on the case.

Lorenzana: The plot

Meanwhile, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana insisted that the plot to oust Duterte is true despite claims from the communist side that it is just fiction or invented by the government.

In a statement, Lorenzana said the plot to oust the Chief Executive under Red October is with basis and being taken seriously by the Department of National Defense (DND) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines or (AFP).

Lorenzana said the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) is only denying the plot because the AFP has already uncovered it.

"Their (CPP-NPA) plot to oust the president is true. They only deny it because it was already uncovered," Lorenzana said.

Lorenzana explained that

troops seized documents in November, 2016 after their plenum in Northern Mindanao. The peace talks with them, he said, were ongoing during this period but the CPP-NPA was not confident it would last.

"They started to fully implement the plan called "Oust Duterte" in February, 2017 after the President cancelled the peace talks. The ouster was supposed to culminate this October. They reckon that a new president would be more willing to resume the peace talks with them," Lorenzana said.

The defense secretary said the plan calls for mass actions all over the country which they hope will snowball like the EDSA People Power.

"It was their hope that other groups would join to create the desired snowball. There were ral-

lies staged in the recent past. However, they woefully failed to attract people to join except their usual paid rallyists," Lorenzana said.

No mobilization of commies to oust Duterte, militant group claims

By ANTONIO L. COLINA IV

DAVAO CITY – A militant group denied the allegation of a military official that the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, New People's Army (NPA), are undertaking a mass mobilization of various groups in various regions of Mindanao for the so-called "Red October" plot to overthrow President Rodrigo R. Duterte.

Karapatan-Southern Mindanao spokesperson Jay Apiag said government forces are in "hysteria" and "desperately manufacturing fake stories to condition the minds (of the people) and gather support from the general public."

Apiag said the Armed Forces of the Philippines mastered the scheme of "terrorist-tagging and vilification of legitimate organizations while fabricating ludicrous cases and malicious charges against progressive

leaders and members to criminalize reasonable people's demand."

He said the accusation was not surprising since the government security forces have become a "factory of lies and fake stories" from "coercing members of people's organizations to clear their names inside a military detachment to parading them as NPA surrenders."

He said government forces "are also good in exhibiting their skill of planting guns, ammunitions and bombs to justify the arrest and detention of activists and human rights defenders under the cloak of martial law while absconding their accountabilities for all the crimes they foisted against the people."

He added that the people's determination to advance genuine land reform, ending contractualization, national industrialization, social justice and other democratic demands will never be hampered.

But Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) commander Lt. General Benjamin R. Madrigal insisted that the communists are mobilizing different groups in various parts of Mindanao for the so-called "Red October" ouster plot against President Rodrigo R. Duterte.

Madrigal cited information obtained by the military that several groups identified with the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, New People's Army (NPA), are being mobilized most especially in Davao and Caraga Regions to overthrow the country's chief executive.

He said the military learned that the first mobilization was supposed to happen on September 21, 2018 during the commemoration of the 1972 Martial Law Declaration of the late President Ferdinand Marcos and the second during the Peasant Week celebration slated 3rd week of October. 13

No 'destab' plot – military

BY DEMPSEY REYES

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines vowed on Thursday to be loyal to the Constitution, as it denied claims made by President Rodrigo Duterte himself that some officers were conniving with the opposition to oust him from office.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, the military spokesman, said the Philippine military would remain professional and obedient to the 1987 Constitution "that it has sworn to uphold and to defend."

"We will never allow ourselves in the ranks of the active service to take direct or indirect



participation in any political actions against the present duly constituted authorities," Arevalo said in a statement.

Speaking in Jolo, Sulu on Monday, Duterte said he was displeased upon learning that some military officers were supposedly in cahoots with the Liberal Party in moves to unseat him.



► 'Destab' A2

Apart from the General Headquarters of the military itself, the Philippine Army, Philippine Navy, Philippine Air Force and the Philippine Marine Corps all denied supposed ongoing recruitments in their respective commands to participate in the "Red October" plan supposedly involving the Liberal Party, the Magdalo group and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

The plan was first disclosed to the media by the military's assistant deputy chief of staff for operations, Brig. Gen. Antonio Parlade, and later described by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana as "factual."

Supportive of Duterte govt

Lt. Col. Louie Villanueva, the Army spokesman, said no officer or soldier had been monitored to be involved in plans to oust the President.

"There is no reason for us to lose our loyalty. When you say loyalty, of course, [we refer] to the Constitution. We work for the Constitution, we work for the sovereignty of the state, we are always sticking to that," Villanueva told reporters.

He said the 96,000-strong army was also supportive of the Duterte administration.

Commander Jonathan Zata, the Navy spokesman, said in jest that the only activities happening in their command was

the deployment of a contingent to Vladivostok, Russia for a port call, maritime training activities with the Bruneian and Malaysian navies, and the welcoming of a Japanese destroyer ship.

"As what the [military] chief of staff said, these rumors [of destabilization] should not be dismissed outright, but as I mentioned, I haven't heard of any rumors of recruitment or anyone being recruited within the navy's ranks," Zata told reporters.

The Air Force also denied that some of its officers were part of efforts to remove Duterte from the presidency.

Maj. Aristides Galang Jr., the Air Force spokesman, said the morale of Air Force troopers was "very high" because of the support they were getting from the government.

"With all the platforms we have been receiving and the ongoing modernization program, our troops and officers, we are all focused on the modernization program of the Air Force," Galang said.

Capt. Jerber Belonio, Marines spokesman, also declared the Marines' loyalty to the Constitution.

Belonio denied reports that some Marine personnel and officers were getting haircuts to sympathize with Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th, the former Navy officer whose amnesty was revoked by President Duterte.

"So far, nothing out of the ordinary is

happening here," he said.

'Share info with NBI'

Malacañan Palace on Thursday urged the military to share its information on the supposed "Red October" ouster plot to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

"It is the mandate of the NBI and law enforcement agents to investigate and look into every possible crime that may happen. So, if the military has intelligence information, I hope they can share it with the NBI so we can know who to punish," Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said.

In a chance interview after the send-off of 250 prison vehicles at Camp General Vicente Lim in Calamba, Laguna on Wednesday, Acting Interior Secretary Eduardo Año said the movement supposedly headed by the communists was more than a year in the making.

It surfaced recently because the government was in the process of validating these reports, Año said.

He said recruitment was still in the "initial level" and government troops were not budging.

"We are confident, our Armed Forces are isolated from these kinds of [moves]," Año, a former chief of staff of the Armed Forces, said.

WITH RALPH EDWIN
U. VILLANUEVA

Military info to expose 'Red October' plotters

By Nat Mariano

MALACAÑANG said Thursday it expects the military to share intelligence information with the National Bureau of Investigation as the agency has started probing the alleged "Red October" plot to oust President Rodrigo Duterte.

"If the military has intel information [about the plot], we hope that they share it with the NBI for us to know who needs to be punished," Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque told reporters.

Ousted Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno on Thursday rejected an allegation by the military that her supporters were part of a "broad" coalition eyeing Duterte's removal from office next month through a plot dubbed "Red October."

Military officials over the weekend claimed that communist rebels were

leading a coalition that would urge workers' unions to mount strikes and paralyze the manufacturing industry.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines will never participate in political actions aimed against duly-constituted authorities, its spokesman said Thursday.

"We will never allow ourselves in the ranks of the active service to take direct or indirect participation in any political action against the duly-constituted authorities," Col. Edgard Arevalo said in a statement.

The Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army has always

been trying to topple the government since 1968, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said when asked to comment on the CPP-NPA claims that the "Red October" onster plot was only a fiction invented by the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"Their plot to oust the President is true. They are now denying it because it has been revealed," Lorenzana said on Wednesday.

"Our troops captured documents in November 2016 after their plenum in Northern Mindanao. The peace talks with them was ongoing during this period but the CPP-NPA were not confident it would last.

They started to fully implement the plan called OUST DUTERTE in February 2017 after the President canceled the peace talks." *K2*

President Duterte on Wednesday said he was unsure if the peace talks with the CPP-NPA would resume any time soon, admitting that he was "not ready" to talk to them yet. **With PNA**

NSA confirms LP in plot

Tindig Pilipinas acts as front

By Kristine Marañon, Alvin Mercia
and Mario J. Mallari

Despite the repeated denials of the Liberal Party that it is involved in any plot to overthrow President Rodrigo Duterte, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon said the LP's involvement has been established.

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon said the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)

is behind "Red October," but there is another group which serves as a front for the LP in the ouster movement.

"The LP (Liberal Party) is involved because of Tindig Pilipinas," the former AFP chief of staff said in an ambush interview at the mass oath-taking of Career Executive Service Officers last Thursday in Malacanang.

The LP was reported to be part of the plot to
Turn to page 2

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oust the President last 21 September, in connivance with the CPP, but failed to muster enough support

Just recently, the military had confirmed combined efforts by "legitimate opposition groups" and the communists in the ouster plot.

With the leftist group aggressively gathering support to unseat the President, the LP wittingly or unwittingly placed itself in the middle.

Esperon added with the leftist group aggressively gathering support to unseat the President, the LP "wittingly or unwittingly" placed itself in the middle.

"That's an ouster plan already two years in the making," Esperon stated.

The opposition has on numerous occasions refuted claims made by Duterte that they have colluded with exiled communist leader Jose Maria Sison, CPP and New People's Army (NPA) to destabilize the government.

It was Duterte himself, via a one-on-one interview with Chief Legal Adviser Salvador Panelo a couple of weeks back, who revealed an ouster plot against him being orchestrated by Sison, embattled Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and the Magdalo Group and the LP.

Plotters nabbed

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) presented to media six persons, who the military claimed are connected with the "Red October Group," after they were arrested in Teresa, Rizal for illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

Ouster plan already two years in the making.

NBI Director Dante Gierran, identified the suspects as Ke Be Li alias Lily Ong, Brandy Solimap, Victor de la Cruz, Bi-Lian Ke, Diosdado Bohol and Ke Quiao Li alias Sam Jany.

The raid was conducted by joint elements of the Philippine Army's 80th Infantry Battalion (80IB) and the NBI at a coral farm in Teresa, Rizal owned by Ong.

Brig. Gen. Arnulfo Marcelo Burgos Jr., commander of the 202nd Infantry Brigade which has jurisdiction over the area, said the raiding team seeks to serve arrest warrants which were issued after months of intelligence operations against Armando Lazarte, alias "Pat" and "Romano," secretary of the NPA's Sub-Regional Military Area 4A, and Tirso Alcantara alias Bart, the former commander of the NPA Terrorists' Regional Unit Guerilla. Lazarte and Alcantara were not in the area when the warrant was served.

"The presence of top NPA leaders and the proximity of Teresa town to Manila are indicators that the threat of "Red October" cannot be downplayed and that the plotters are just awaiting for an opportunity to execute their plans," Burgos said.

Lt. Col. Melencio Ragudo, commander of the 80IB, said the raid resulted in the recovery of four M653 (baby armalite) rifles, one M203 Grenade Launcher, five US made 12-gauge shotguns, one caliber .45 pistol, one caliber .38 revolver, one 9mm K&G machine pistol, six units of two-way radios, two grenades, eight cellphones, enemy documents and numerous war materials as well as weapon system accessories.

'Red October' probe ongoing

Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra confirmed that an investigation on the so-called "Red October" plot is ongoing.

"The NBI started working on it the moment the President disclosed the plot publicly," Guevarra said in a text message. "I suppose this will be completed before October sets in."

NBI presented to media six persons, whom the military claimed are connected with the Red October Group.

Information from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) alleged that the "Red October" ouster plan against the President remains even if the other supposed plot on 21 September, the 46th anniversary of the declaration of the Marcos-era martial law, did not push through.

Mr. Duterte had said the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the political opposition, including the Liberal Party and the Magdalo Group of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV were plotting to remove him from the presidency.

All three groups have denied the President's accusation.

"This so-called 'Red October' plot is nothing but an AFP invention. Like the rest of the AFP's fakery, it is a poorly concocted story," the CPP said in response. "Is this a foreshadowing of a declaration of martial law by October?"

Rody tired of corruption

The Chief Executive, meanwhile, reiterated that corruption remains to be the biggest problem his administration is facing.

He recalled that during a command conference, he offered to step down from his post because of "efforts going to waste."

"My efforts are going to waste, nothing is happening. Unless we stop corruption, unless we have law and order against corruption, we will never rise as a country," Duterte shared at the same event.

He said that corruption has also become the reason talks about *coup d'etat* and destabilization surfaced.

"The irony is, I really want to step down just give me a very good reason to go," he said. "I'm just looking for a reason, I will go home (to Davao). Because I cannot really stop corruption. In government, there is really corruption. Anywhere you look, there is corruption."

"But from the start, I made it my policy that I will not meddle in any transaction involving money. It begins and ends with the Cabinet," the President added.

Duterte also reminded the military that there is "no need for us to fight" if they think it is time for him to step down.

I guess there's no need for that (loyalty check). We already have transformed and professional Army which is mission centric and dedicated to serve and protect the people.

"Don't do the melodramatic thing - parading your tanks, talking about a coup - just tell me. We can even have coffee. All you have to do is stand up and tell me that I'm no good and I'll go," the Commander-in-Chief said.

AFP morale high

The 125,000-strong Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) also vowed no soldier will directly or indirectly get involved in any plot against the Duterte administration.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP spokesman, said the military subscribes to the Constitution which it had sworn to uphold and defend as he reiterated the AFP, as protector of the people and the state, adheres to the rule of law.

"We will never allow ourselves in the ranks of active service to take direct or indirect participation in any political actions against the present duly constituted authorities," Arevalo said in a statement.

"Every soldier, airman, sailor and marine in the active service is loyal to the Constitution, adherent to the rule of law, and solidly behind of the Chain of Command," he added.

Last Wednesday, President Duterte said the military should not vest loyalty in him but in the Republic as he vowed readiness to step down if the military wanted him removed.

The President made the remarks amid continuing reports about an alleged plot to oust him - spearheaded by the CPP in connivance with political opponents of the President.

Mr. Duterte also lamented that some troops are in communication with his critics, particularly the LP.

The Philippine Army, for its part, stressed that no soldier will be enticed to go

against the Duterte administration -citing the high morale of the troops.

"The Philippine Army is solid in support of the administration," said Lt. Col. Louie Villanueva, spokesman for the Army.

"The morale of the Philippine Army is very high so our focused is on our mission," he added.

Villanueva stressed that any attempt to recruit Army soldiers against the Duterte administration is doomed to fail.

SAP Go trusts soldiers

Special Assistant to the President Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go believes that any plot to destabilize the Duterte administration will never succeed.

Go, in a statement, said he believes that the AFP will not be swayed to turn against the President and he is optimistic that the military is still respecting the chain of command.

"The AFP knows how the President works and based on the latest surveys, the public still gives its full confidence to our President," Go said.

He also noted that the military has intelligence over these groups who do nothing but to slam the President.

No need for checks

Philippine Navy spokesman Cmdr. Jonathan Zata, for his part, echoed Villanueva's pronouncements, stressing the Navy is busy with training activities with counterpart navies of Brunei and Japan and in the relief operations in Northern Luzon.

Air Force spokesman Maj. Aristides Galang said their troops are in high morale because of "the support we are getting from the government and the people."

Galang cited the continuing acquisition of modern platforms by the Air Force. Capt. Jerber Anthony Belonio, spokesman for the Philippine Marine Corps, vowed the PMC is solid behind the Constitution.

Military officers also dismissed the need for loyalty check as earlier suggested by Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

"I guess there's no need for that (loyalty check). We already have transformed and professional Army which is mission centric and dedicated to serve and protect the people," Villanueva said.

"We will not waste these status and our sacrifices just for the sake of adventurism by some disgruntled factions," he added.

SOUTHERN TAGALOG, GINAGALUGAD

Utak ng 'Red October' plot, ipinaaaresto

NI FER TABOY

Kinumpirma kahapon ng Philippine Army (PA) na may lead na sila sa kinaroroonan ng grupo ni Tirso Alcantara, ang kumander ng New People's Army (NPA) sa Southern Tagalog na isa sa mga grupong nasa likod ng "Red October"

plot na naglalayong pabagsakin ang administrasyon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Ayon kay 2nd Infantry Division Chief Maj. Gen. Rhoderick Parayno, pinakilos na niya ang lahat ng tauhan para arestuhin si Alcantara na kasalukuyan nagtatago sa Southern Tagalog.

Una rito, nitong Martes ng umaga ay nagsagawa ng raid ang mga sundalo ng 80th Infantry Battalion (IB), kasama ang mga ahente ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), sa kutang NPA sa Teresa, Rizal kung saan narekober ang matataas na kalibre ng armas at mga improvised explosive device (IED) na pagmamay-ari umano ng rebeldeng grupo.

Sinabi militar na kailangang isailalim muna sa validation ang mga dokumento upang mapatunayan ang kanilang involvement sa "Red October"

plot.

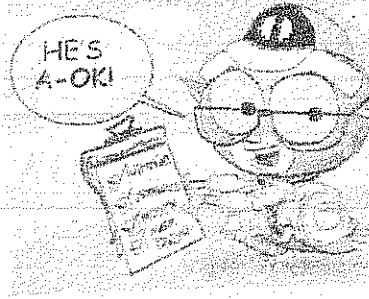
Base sa report, pinanganahan ni Alcantara ang planong maglunsad ng pag-atake, katulong ang dating commander ng NPA Regional Yunit Guerrilla na si Armando Lazarte, secretary ng Sub-Regional Military Area 4A ng NPA, sa bahagi ng Rizal.

Tumanggi naman si Parayno na idetalye pa ang mga narekober na dokumento na may kinalaman sa "Red October", ngunit kanila na raw itong sinusuri.

Naniniwala si Parayno na ang presensiya ng mga top NPA leaders sa Rizal, na malapit sa Maynila, ay isang malakas na "indikasyon" sa ouster plot at naghihintay na lamang umano ang mga ito ng magandang pagkakataon para gawin ang kanilang plano.

Timyak ni Parayno na gagawin ng militar ang lahat para mapigilan ang nasabing banta.

Watch and learn



If anybody can tell there's something wrong with President Rodrigo Duterte's health it's not Jona Sison or members of the opposition--it's his partner Honeylet Avanceña.

Yesterday, Avanceña came out to categorically say Duterte is in good health, dispelling speculations that the

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Watch and learn

From page 1

Chief Executive is suffering from some form of serious illness.

In fact, Avanceña gave out a generous tip to enable anybody to tell if Duterte is not feeling okay.

"If you see me always on his side, that means there's something wrong. But if I can leave him by himself, that means he's okay, there's no problem," she said in a TV interview.

"Nothing is wrong with him," she stressed.

And unlike other guys who project a "macho" image yet horrified by the thought of having a medical checkup, Avanceña said Duterte undergoes regular medical examination.

"He's really a health buff. You know we have friends afraid of seeing a doctor. He's not," she said.

Avanceña said Duterte often sees a doctor

because of his gastro-intestinal problem.

Last week, Duterte told the media that he has undergone routine colonoscopy and endoscopy because of his condition known as Barrett's esophagus. It is a condition where the normal tissue lining the esophagus - the tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach - changes to tissue that resembles the lining of the intestine.

Duterte, however, said the checkups were no cause for alarm.

Last month, exiled communist leader Jose Maria Sison suffered embarrassment after he announced that Duterte had gone into a coma.

To debunk such allegation, Duterte appeared on a Facebook live video. He also spoke lengthily before the League of Municipalities of the Philippines Visayas Island Cluster Conference in Cebu City.

They should listen to Honeylet. She knows better.

PNP checks bribery raps

By Eimer N. Manuel

The Philippine National Police (PNP), meanwhile, is looking at related allegations over the arrest of Lily Ong who owns the coral farm where a joint military and National Bureau of Investigation operations sought to arrest alleged members of the New People's Army.

PNP chief Director General Oscar Albayalde said authorities are investigating charges some police officers have received protection money from Lily Ong.

Albayalde said he had ordered the investigation to look into the matter following the recovery of high-powered firearms from the coral farm of Ong in Teresa, Rizal.

Ong reportedly said she gave P8,000 to each police officer every month for protection from kidnapers. Recovered from her farm was a list of the police officers.

"I have ordered an investigation into that, the alleged protection money, if it really exists," said Albayalde on radio. "Some policemen may have agreed to protect Ong as a 'sideline' to pad their income, which is illegal."

The PNP chief also revealed that acting Rizal police chief Senior Supt. Lou Evangelista appeared not to have been informed of the raid on the trader's farm and that he had already talked to Police Regional Office 4-A regional director Chief Supt. Edward Carranza for an explanation.

High-powered firearms were seized during the raid on the 200-hectare farm in Teresa, Rizal.

36 na New People's Army sumuko

Tatlumpu't anim na miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA) ang sumuko sa militar sa Ilocos Sur, kamakailan.

Se pahayag ni Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) commander, Major General Filemon Santos, unang sumuko ang siyam na kaanib ng kabataang Makabayan Organization 81st Infantry Battalion (IB) ng 7th Infantry Division (ID) ng Philippine Army (PA) sa Barangay Legaspi, Galimuyod sa naturang lalwigan.

Sinundan ito ng pagsuko ng 17 miyembro ng Samahang Magsasaka at 10 tauhan ng Kabataang Makabayan Organization, parehong solid mass organization ng NPA, sa militar sa Bgy. Bugnay, Candon City.

Sinabi ni Santos na hindi na nila ibinunyag ang pagkakakilanlan ng mga ito para na rin sa kanilang seguridad.

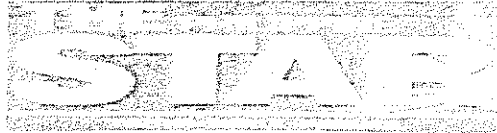
Kaugnay nito, nasamsam ng militar ang dalawang mataas na kalibre ng baril, dalawang improvised explosives device (IED) at iba pang war materials sa Sitio Aguid, Bgy. Agawa, Besao, Mt. Province, kamakailan.

Natunton ang nasabing mga armas sa tulong na rin ng dating rebelde na si Antonio Tabling, alyas Andy, na nagbigay ng impormasyon kaugnay ng taguan ng armas ng kilusan.

Si Tabling ay nagbalik-loob sa pamahalaan nitong nakaraang Hulyo.

Mar T. Supnad

↓



2 Sayyaf men surrender in Sulu

Two Abu Sayyaf bandits surrendered in Sulu on Wednesday.

Julkaidar and Alanu, both surnamed Iddon, said they were with the group of sub-leader Abraham Hamid.

The surrenderees reportedly served as couriers and boat skippers of Hamid's group, which was involved in kidnappings in Sitangkai in Tawi-Tawi. They also turned over their Garand rifles.

From Barangay Mahala in Talipao, the bandits were brought to the Camp Bautista Station Hospital in Jolo for medical checkup.

- Michael Punongbayan, Roel Pareño

Abu Sayyaf regrouping, but gov't vows to crush them

THE Duterte administration is ready to face the threats of kidnapping for ransom by the Abu Sayyaf Group, the Palace said Thursday, following reports members have been regrouping to conduct cross-border kidnappings in Mindanao.

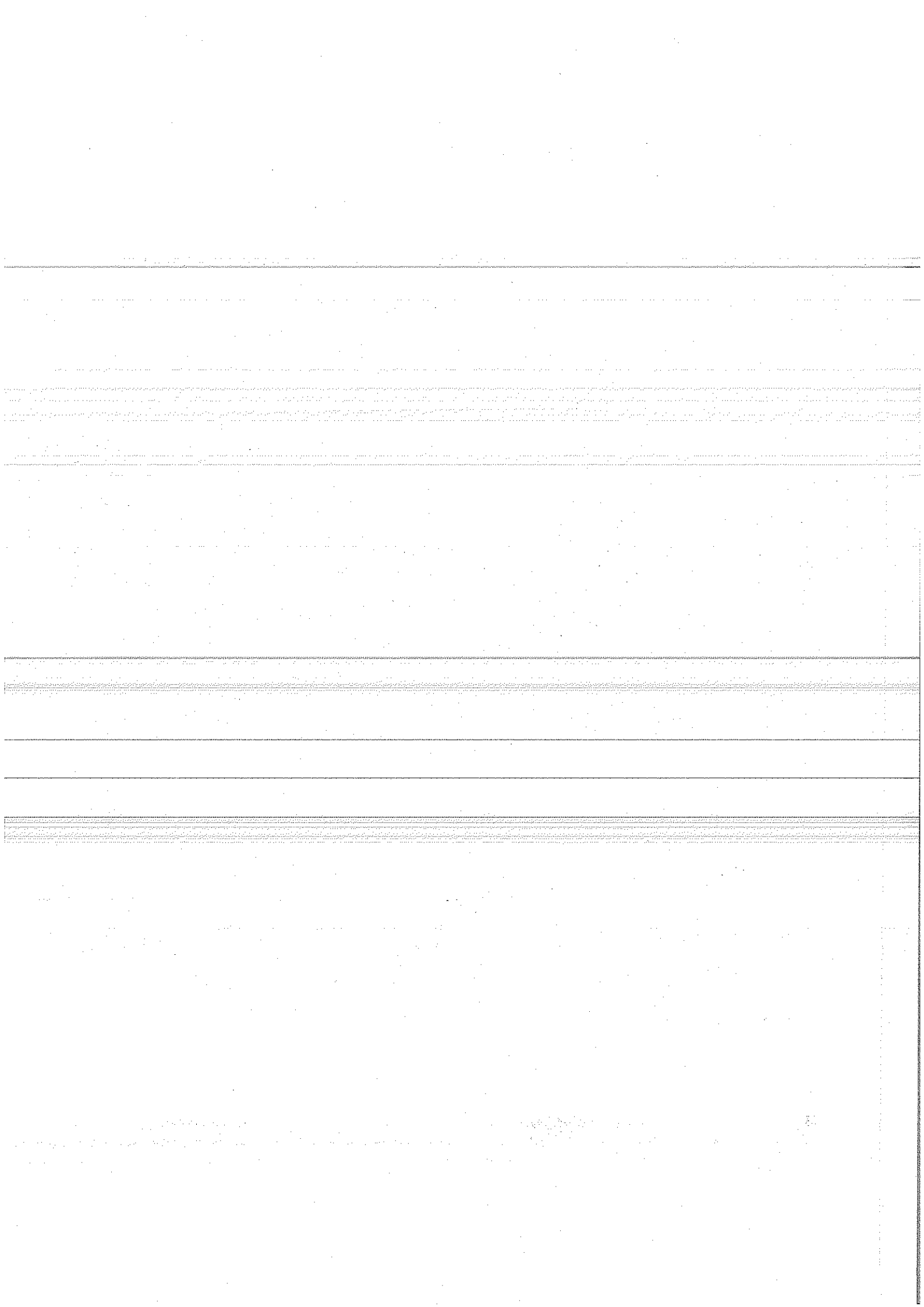
After nearly two years of being on the run, the ASG steps again its business of kidnapping for ransom as some of the group's sub-commanders have regrouped. The Star, a Malaysian newspaper, reported the group posed fresh threats in the east coast of Sabah.

Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque said the government was prepared to meet the possible trouble brought by the known kidnap-for-ransom group.

"Well, I can only say that we are ready to face the threat of the Abu Sayyaf. They need to regroup because we already have pulverized them," Roque told a Palace press briefing Thursday.

"And you can expect that even if they do all sorts of recruitment, our government can easily crush them," he said.

The report said the sub-commanders Indang Susukan and Hatib Sawadjan, still alive, were plotting to conduct a cross-border kidnapping, claiming they have received finances from political figures in Mindanao who oppose the Bangsamoro Organic Law. **Nat Mariano** K2



SKETCHES

ANA MARIE PAMINTUAN

Patronage

In a couple of months, it would be interesting to see what happens to the career of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150 Judge Elmo Alameda.

For sure the judge has drawn positive attention in high places for going along with the entire argument of the government regarding the amnesty granted to Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

Alameda disregarded video footage, photographs, news reports and the sworn affidavit of Col. Josefa Berbigal, head of the ad hoc amnesty committee secretariat, that she personally received Trillanes' amnesty application during the presidency of Benigno Aquino III.

In voiding the amnesty, the current administration - backed by Alameda - is effectively arguing that the Senate erred in concurring with the amnesty, that the Commission on Elections failed to do its job by allowing the amnestied Trillanes to seek a Senate seat, and that voters were wrong in making him win.

In his heart of hearts, perhaps Judge Alameda is wondering how history will judge him, following his controversial ruling. But such concerns can be easily trumped by the prospect of promotion to a higher court - even, why not, to the Supreme Court.

The three branches of government are supposed to be co-equal and independent. In reality, however, the Philippine judiciary is heavily politicized and influenced by the executive, through the president's power to appoint and promote. Congress also holds the power of the purse over the judiciary, based on proposals by the executive.

Even appointees to the Supreme Court are not immune to the persuasive powers of the presidency. SC justices can aspire not just for promotion to chief justice, but also for an appointment to another position in government, such as ombudsman, elections chief or ambassador.

If Congress wants to promote independence in the Supreme Court, it should pass legislation prohibiting SC justices from accepting any appointive position from the president (except, of course, for chief justice), up to two years after their retirement from the high tribunal.

Appointments and promotions in the judiciary should also be de-politicized, with senior members of the judiciary themselves given the loudest voice in the selection process, based on strictly enforced criteria.

The highly politicized system of appointment and promotion in the judiciary has given the country incompetent and crooked magistrates who are beholden to the politicians who endorsed them.

Members of the judiciary should be subjected to lifestyle checks or some form of asset scrutiny when they render controversial decisions or issue temporary restraining orders with abandon.

It would be good to find out, for example, if there are marked improvements in the fortunes of judges after they dismiss cases against the Marcos clan on a mere technicality.

There are also the judges who have cleared several



prosecutors of plunder and graft cases in connection with the pork barrel and fertilizer fund scams. The judges cited the "inordinate delay" in the indictments of the defendants by the Office of the Ombudsman. While the delays in certain cases are truly appalling, several cases look like they were dismissed with undue haste.

The continuing legal victories of the Marcoses have to be among the reasons for the political comeback of the clan. Ordinary folks don't bother scrutinizing if the Marcoses win a legal battle on a technicality or on the merits of the case.

People simply see the record and consider: if no member of the Marcos clan has been convicted of any offense in the past 32 years, despite the seizure of billions in assets traced to the family, perhaps there is basis for their professed innocence and it's time, as Ilocos Norte Gov. Imee Marcos suggests, for the country to move on.

If the latest Pulse Asia survey is accurate, Filipinos are heeding her advice: she's in the top five of the likely winners for the Senate if the elections were held today.

Her brother is even openly trying to rewrite history together with martial law enforcer Juan Ponce Enrile. In 2016, even before Rodrigo Duterte became the top endorser of the Marcos brand, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Jr. already made an impressive showing at the polls, coming within a hairbreadth of the vice presidency.

Two human rights victims of the dictatorship - living proofs that Enrile lied in claiming that no one was arrested for political beliefs during martial law - faced us on The Chiefs this week on Signal TV's *One News*.

Etta Rosales, former chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, was arrested twice, raped and beaten by government forces during the Marcos regime. She attributes the amazing political comeback of the Marcoses to "the politics of money" and the culture of patronage that even people power could not change, along with a general institutional failure.

Our other guest, Rene Saguisag, has a similar opinion. But he also blames the seven coup attempts against Corazon Aquino, with Enrile linked to them, for putting the post-EDSA government on constant survival mode, rendering it difficult to fully focus on the effort to hold the Marcoses and their cronies accountable for the sins of the dictatorship.

Saguisag served as Cory Aquino's spokesman during her revolutionary government. He estimates that people power euphoria lingered until the first post-EDSA elections. When he ran for the Senate in 1987, Saguisag recalls wistfully that he did not have to spend a single centavo.

Businessman Tony Gonzalez, who employed Saguisag's late wife Dulce, contributed P1 million to the campaign. After the elections, Saguisag says he returned the money, unused.

That was the brief period, Saguisag says, when Filipinos thought about what they could do for their country rather than the other way around. People voted based on issues and principles rather than on who could pay more. But by 1988 during the local elections, Saguisag says money politics was back.

He did not mention the courts, but today the judiciary is also plagued by magistrates who think only of themselves and a hefty retirement nest egg.

Saguisag, wearing a bright yellow shirt to our show, is now 79 and not fully recovered from the car accident that killed his wife. He doesn't look like he has given up believing that Filipinos still have the spark, the patriotic spirit that made the 1986 revolt succeed.

Etta Rosales also refuses to give in to cynicism. "We should not lose hope that humanity has its potential," Rosales said.

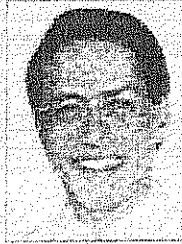
A LAW EACH DAY

[Keeps Trouble Away]

JOSE C. SISON

Rule of law

It is premature to make conclusions and interpretations on the latest order of arrest issued by the Regional Trial Court of Makati City, Branch 150. The warrant of arrest is merely the start of the process that will settle the many pending legal questions surrounding the case triggered by the issuance of Proclamation 572 revoking the amnesty given to Trillanes and several other soldiers involved in the Oakwood and Manila Peninsula Mutiny in 2007. Such order of arrest for the charges of rebellion and coup d'état filed against the soldiers does not finally resolve the issue of whether Duterte's revocation is really legal or constitutional.



To be sure, there are several issues arising from the revocation by Duterte of the amnesty granted to Trillanes and the rebel soldiers. It seems that Trillanes has been singled out as the main political nemesis and target because he has been causing a lot of damage to Duterte's reputation particularly regarding the alleged billion pesos deposits of Duterte in several banks. According to Trillanes these deposits were earned by Duterte in the dangerous drugs trade he conducted together with well-known drug lords. People somehow continue to believe that there is some truth to these charges simply because up to now Duterte refuses to issue a bank waiver that will allow inspection of his bank accounts in the banks mentioned by Trillanes which will belie the latter's accusations. They believe that if Duterte really has no such billions of deposits, he could have readily signed that bank waiver.

Thus, with the issuance of the order of arrest by the Makati Court, the following issues arising from the revocation of the amnesty will now be finally and authoritatively settled. Foremost of course is the necessity of said revocation. Based on the ground cited by Solicitor General Calida who apparently authored it, the amnesty is "void ab initio." This means there is no amnesty issued at all, or it is non-existent from the very beginning. Following Calida's argument, revocation is not necessary because there is nothing to revoke anymore. Revocation is taking back or recalling or rescinding something that exists. In this case, the alleged act that was revoked does not exist at all from the very beginning. So revocation is no longer needed. The government should just have taken steps right away to pursue the rebellion and coup d'état cases filed against Trillanes and his cohorts, pending in the Makati RTCs.

The second issue here is the alleged lack of the application for amnesty and the admission of guilt made by Trillanes and the other rebels. Calida alleged that said application and admission have not been filed that is why, no amnesty has been granted at all. Thus he asked Trillanes to prove that he filed said application and admission. This is not the rule however in our country. The rule here is "presumption of regularity in the performance of official function." Hence the party who allege irregularity has the burden to prove the same. So it is the government which should prove that no application and admission have been made by Trillanes and not the other way around. This is also in accordance with the well-established and settled rule of court that the burden of proof lies on the party making the allegations or accusations. It is interesting to note and to find out in this connection the suspicious moves of Calida in the Department of National Defense (DND) before the amnesty was revoked. People are now also speculating that this move has something to do with the present stance of the government shifting the burden on Trillanes to prove that an application for amnesty and admission of guilt has been filed by him.

Another controversial issue here is whether the Court can still revive the criminal cases that have already been dismissed several years ago. Can persons already acquitted of the alleged crimes charged be accused once more of the same crimes? Is this not in violation of the Constitutional Provision that "No person shall be twice put in jeopardy of punishment for the same offense"? (Section 21, Article III). This is really a vital issue in this case as it involves one of the fundamental rights of an individual in a Democratic Republic. It must be resolved in order to erase any fear felt by most of our countrymen that our country is now leaning towards the return of a dictatorial rule. This is the prevailing atmosphere now especially because Duterte appears to be so close and has favored the family of the late Dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Finally, another issue arising here that will likewise be finally settled is on whether or not the revocation of amnesty should affect all the rebels covered by said in-existent and void amnesty. It is really quite intriguing why Trillanes was the only one arrested when there were several other rebel soldiers covered by said amnesty. Should they not be arrested likewise? And, why not? Furthermore, these cases are about acts when Trillanes was still a soldier. Now he has been a civilian and even a Senator. Can they still be revived?

And so at this stage, let us just restrain from commenting or concluding anything about this case. Trillanes can still question the order of arrest, by asking the court to reconsider its order and recall the warrant issued. And if his motion is denied, he can still go to the Supreme Court and raise all these issues. The Supreme Court is the only court of last resort which can conclusively and authoritatively put an end to this controversy. In the meantime, let us just be vigilant and continue to watch-out that our Supreme Court will decide this case on the basis of the rule of law, not on the rule of a President to whom some of them may be beholden.

Special convict

In the age of smart phones and the Internet, how hard is it to clarify a court order? The Philippine Army is citing conflicting orders from two judges of the Malolos Regional Trial Court in Bulacan in holding on to someone who seems to be one of the military's favorite sons, retired major general Jovito Palparan Jr.

It's been over a week since the former Army officer and party-list congressman was sentenced by the Malolos court to life in prison for the 2006 kidnapping and serious illegal detention of University of the Philippines students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño. Together with the decision, RTC Branch 15 Judge Alexander Tamayo issued an order committing Palparan to the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa.

Until yesterday, however, Palparan remained detained at the Philippine Army custodial center at Fort Bonifacio in Taguig. Army officials say the Malolos RTC Branch 19 had ordered Palparan to remain in military custody because he still faces a separate case

EDITORIAL

for illegal detention.

Palparan's life term may be over by the time Branch 19 resolves that separate case. Will he remain in Army custody until then? How long will it take to clarify the two court orders? There are many convicts already serving their terms at the National Penitentiary while still on trial for other cases. They are simply transported to the courts from the NBP during hearings.

Palparan has denied involvement in the detention, torture and disappearance of Cadapan and Empeño, who were suspected by the military to be communist sympathizers. He is seen to represent a segment of the military that believes playing nice is a luxury government forces cannot afford in counterinsurgency.

But he has been convicted of a serious offense, and the military must turn him over ASAP to the New Bilibid Prison so he can start serving his sentence. There are two court orders that shouldn't take forever to clarify, and the military must not lose time securing that clarification. 12

GOTCHA

JARIUS BONDOC



Who's the real 'threat' - Opposition or China?

To convince people of a "destabilization plot" against it the Duterte Administration must file appropriate charges. Prosecuting real baddies beats press releases. Otherwise, suspicion will linger that Malacañang is demonizing critics preparatory to imposing a sinister "revolutionary government." Or that it is diverting public attention – perhaps even seeing ghosts – because of insecurity about its failures.

"Destabilization" is vague, to begin with. More precise is if it's a "coup d'état." In which case, a professional, disciplined Armed Force can round up the ringleaders before they can strike. The Articles of War allow preemptive, indefinite detention: soldiers, because authorized by the state to carry arms, have no civil rights.

But if just a "political move," then it's normal. It is the duty of any political Opposition to plot to grab power – by peaceful means. The Liberal and Magdalo are legitimate political parties. It is natural for them to bind with other anti-Duterte forces into a coalition, Tindig Pilipinas, to win seats in the May 2019 mid-term election. If they're smart, they'd even be planning this early to win the Presidency in 2022 – against a Duterte Administration that, on the other hand, should be planning its successor.

Even the Communist Party is legal, by virtue of the repeal in 1992 of the Anti-Subversion Law. Wise generals, President Fidel Ramos and National Security Adviser Jose Almonte, had

proposed it to Congress. The aim was to lure communist rebels from armed into parliamentary struggle. It worked. What remains outlawed is taking up arms against the government, as what the New People's Army does. NPA guerrillas get charged under the Revised Penal Code with rebellion, murder, kidnapping, and extortion. If "legalized" Communist Party cadres stay underground, it is by habit of ideology. They believe that true communists must be conspiratorial. That's their pitfall. Averse to genuine alliances, they have not advanced these past five decades of "people's war" from "strategic defensive."

Which brings us to the supposed "Red October push" against President Rodrigo Duterte. Because Communist Party founder Jose Maria Sison allegedly is involved, it is deemed illegal. Yet if "Red October" consists only of demonstrations to recount the horrors of Marcos' martial law and portray Duterte as an emerging dictator, then it's not illicit. Only if soldiers are involved through a coup d'état, in cahoots with armed communist guerrillas, will it violate the law.

No law is broken by Red October "cabals" to celebrate whatever they wish to on the month of communist victories in Russia and China. No wrong too in marking that month of indigenous peoples, some of whose tribes the communist rebels are striving to recruit. No crime is committed in feting 2018 as the 200th birth year of Marx. No sin for Sison to memorial-

ize by December his founding of the Communist Party 50 years ago. Let them party.

Which brings up yet another point. What's so worrisome about Sison anyway? Has not the Duterte administration been revealing that he's old, and dying of serious ailment? That means he's incapable of leading any political or armed action.

Too, has not the government been saying that Sison is so discredited as a communist leader that the NPA no longer obeys him? If so, he has no army, that crucial factor for Maoist revolutionists.

Speaking of which, it's unlikely for the communists to conspire with the Liberals in any way. Ex-President Noyoy Aquino has said he intends to lead the Opposition. The communists hate his guts. They accuse his clan of blood debts in violent labor clashes at Hacienda Luisita during his Presidency.

It is as unlikely for virulently anti-communist ex-military officers in Magdalo to coalesce with Sison to bring down Duterte then share power. As Magdalo co-founder Sen. Antonio Trillanes reminds, it was Duterte who placed four communists in his Cabinet and freed from prison a dozen underground leaders whom the Armed Forces spent lives and years to capture. All the while, Trillanes belittled any settlement with the rebels through negotiations.

The Presidency is too strong for foes to destabilize by political marches or military strikes. If Duterte looks rattled by intelligence gatherings, it could be for his admitted unfulfilled campaign promises. The drug menace that he said he'd lick in six months would take till term's end after all. Eradicating corruption was impossible from the start. He has given up on EDSA traffic.

Threats that state security agencies must watch out for may not be from within but outside. Beijing is determined to grab the entire South China Sea, with Manila as the foremost hindrance. It will employ hard and soft power for the purpose. Already it has concreted seven Philippine reefs into island fortresses and occupied Scarborough Shoal. Among complementary ploys would be to weaken the Philippines through bribery, drugs, and economic sabotage.

Worth looking into is Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon's expose - that tens of thousands of Chinese nationals are now working in Manila. They are not only displacing jobless Filipinos. A good number of them could be spies. Remember how another power had fielded its nationals to the Philippines as businessmen and artists, street vendors and household workers, preparatory to the invasion of 1941.

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

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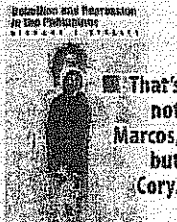
★

US scholar: 'Human rights abuses' under Cory worse than under Marcos

JUAN Ponce Enrile's recent claims on Martial Law in his interview by Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has thrown the Yellows and Reds into paroxysms of rage against the respected senator. The unkindest comment was from the editor in chief of *Philippine Star* who, instead of



RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO



> Tiglao A6

presenting facts to debunk Enrile's claims in her column, branded him "a senile man with symptoms of dementia" who "should be tossed into a regular jail pronto."

Such is the sad state of journalism in this country. Such vitriol is proof of Jose Ma. Sison and his Communist Party's victory in having Filipinos toe their propaganda line, helped by the Yellow Cult.

The communists' fabrication in Hitler's style of repeating the Big Lie again and again: "Communists and its NPAs arrested or killed in the course of their armed struggle against the reactionary State are victims of human rights violations."

Lazy or naïve journalists — and unscrupulous ones fabricating false data — have swallowed the lie. A CNN Philippines article was entitled "8 things Juan Ponce Enrile, Bongbong Marcos got wrong about martial law." There it claimed: "More than 3,000 were killed during the Marcos regime, data from human rights group Amnesty International show." I have copies of the AI reports from 1974 to 1981. Nowhere did the AI make that claim.

That article also claimed: "A 1974 Amnesty International report also said Enrile 'admitted privately to the Archbishop of Manila that incidents of torture against martial law detainees had indeed occurred.'"

The biased-for-the-leftist-view report of course didn't report the actual AI phrase which was "reportedly admitted," which means it was hearsay on the part of AI. It also didn't quote the very next sentence after that: "Mr. Enrile also said some colonels and other high officials had been court martialed." That is evidence that there was no state policy for torturing dissidents, but did occur as aberrations that happens all the time in all countries during armed rebellions.

Victors' narrative

We will never mature to become a strong nation if we refuse to accept facts that give us a different interpretation from the narrative victors of a particular political clash have disseminated — in this case the account of Martial Law propagated by the Yellows and Reds who toppled Marcos in 1986.

Totally ignored in the allegations of massive human rights violations during the Martial Law period is the undeniable fact that the Communist Party and the Moro separatists waged an armed war against the Republic.

While there were indeed tragic horrific cases of military and police abuses against civilians, inevitable in all armed conflicts since ancient times and in every country that experienced such wars, most of the so-called killings and human

rights abuses were casualties in this war launched by communists and Moro separatists against the State, which of course defended itself.

Proof of this is that even after Marcos fell in 1986, such "human rights violations" continued, as Cory Aquino helped the insurgency to surge, naively believing the communists who fought Marcos would continue to be supportive of her.

Such violations were during the regime of Corazon Aquino, purportedly the icon of Philippine democracy whom a few fanatics even lobbied the Vatican to declare a saint.

Such a conclusion isn't just my opinion. It is based on data presented in Richard Kessler's book *Rebellion and Repression in the Philippines* (1989: Yale University). Kessler is an American national

security and foreign affairs expert. His last position before he retired recently was director of the US Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Kessler's data, however, doesn't really report "human rights violations" as usually defined as those against innocent civilians, but reflect the arrests and casualties of the NPA and its other fronts, since these were reports by the Task Force Detainees, which the communists set up and controlled.

Kessler presented data in his book to point out that "human rights abuses" — i.e. casualties in the insurgency — had not at all subsided even after Cory Aquino assumed power until 1988, the last year for which data was available.

Kessler's data is shown in this column (Table 5.1), scanned directly from the book and is unedited except for the arrows to emphasize that the data involves the Marcos and Aquino regimes. (See table above.)

International groups, such as Amnesty International and the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, issued reports in 1988 that suggested that the human rights situation (under the Aquino regime) was "at least as bad as it had been under Marcos" (emphasis mine). As table 5.1 indicates, human rights violations — always a problem in the Philippines — did not cease with democracy's return." (p. 136).

I summarize Kessler's data in the table below.

However, we would just be making an inane apples-and-oranges comparison if we just looked at the totals, since these do not take into account the fact that the Marcos cases span 11 years against Cory's three.

To evaluate how bad the human rights situation really was during the comparative regimes, the average per year should be taken for the years under Marcos and those under Aquino.

There were three times more arrests per year under Cory than under Marcos: 3,627 against 1,960. The average of those killed and disappeared during Cory's watch was 244 annually, which isn't too far from Marcos' 296.

Kessler in his book even gave vivid examples of real human rights abuses under Cory. One example:

"In April 1987 a member of the United Farmers' Organization was kidnapped by a local vigilante in Cebu City, her body, with her head and leg hacked off, was recovered over a week later. In May, a 30-year-old woman, eight months pregnant, and another young woman, disappeared. Their bodies were later discovered, headless and stabbed multiple times. That pregnant woman's abdomen had been slashed open and the fetus ripped out. One day in June, a farmer hoeing his field in Negros was attacked by several vigilantes, who accused him of being a com-

munist rebel. He was decapitated and disemboweled. They took the head to the local military commander who told them that the man was innocent. The head was abandoned in a ditch, to be recovered later by the man's wife" (Kessler, page 136).

Vigilantism, other than rogue police or military men, is one of the main causes of human rights abuses under any government. As Kessler explained in 1989, observing the first three years after Marcos fell:

"Vigilante groups had sprung up all over the country with the tacit or direct support of the military and the government during 1987 after a year of relative calm in the insurgency. In Mindanao were the *Alsa Masa* in Davao City, the *Eagle's Squad*, the *United People for Peace*; in Negros, the *Philippine Constabulary Forward Command*; and in Cebu, the *Tadiad* and the *Citizens' Army* against Communism; even in Manila, the police began giving weapons training to civilians forming neighborhood patrols."

Kessler concluded of the Cory Aquino regime: "The government appeared powerless to restore the rule of law." *M*

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Two roads to revisionism

THE arrest order against Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th by the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150 for the crime of rebellion, which the same court had earlier dismissed pursuant to President B. S. Aquino 3rd's



FIRST THINGS FIRST
FRANCISCO S. TATAD

► TatadA5

2010 amnesty proclamation for the participants in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, invites a serious and urgent re-examination of the nation's state of justice and rule of law. It isn't clear, though, whether it is Congress or the legal academic community which has the mandate, the competence, the inclination, or the moral energy to pursue such inquiry.

Judge Elmo Alameda's arrest order was in compliance with a motion from Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra, who moved that the old case against Trillanes be revived despite the constitutional prohibition against double jeopardy, after President Rodrigo Duterte declared in Proclamation 572 that Aquino's amnesty Proclamation 75, duly concurred in by Congress, was, insofar as Trillanes was concerned, *null and void ab initio*.

The reason DU30 cited in his August 31, 2018 proclamation was that Trillanes allegedly failed to apply for the amnesty and failed to admit his guilt. After it was shown by documentary evidence that neither allegation was true, DU30 amended his position, without actually modifying his proclamation, saying it was merely Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin rather than Aquino himself who approved Trillanes' amnesty. Judge Alameda ordered the arrest after Trillanes failed to produce a copy of his original application for amnesty, even though he had Gazmin's certification that he had applied for, and been granted, amnesty.

Midnight for the law

With these developments, we have descended into one of our darkest nights in the world of law. Some basic questions need to be promptly clarified.

1. Does the President have the power, all by himself, to declare an amnesty granted by a previous President with the full concurrence of Congress, null and void *ab initio*? Isn't a question on the validity of a law or presidential act a judicial issue that should be decided by the Supreme Court rather than by the President himself who is questioning the validity of the law or the presidential act?

2. Since DU30 is questioning the validity of Aquino's proclamation, which had been concurred in by Congress, shouldn't he have gone to court for relief, instead of declaring all by himself the proclamation *null and void ab initio*? Isn't the validity of DU30's proclamation the one in issue at this point rather than that of Aquino's proclamation, which has not been questioned in court?

3. Is there any legal basis for the Makati RTC to nullify its previous action extinguishing the rebellion charges against Trillanes, without any ruling from the Supreme Court that Aquino's amnesty proclamation was in fact void *ab initio*?

4. Does Trillanes or any amnesty recipient have the burden of producing a copy of his application for amnesty after it has been approved? Isn't the official certification in Trillanes' hands that he has been granted amnesty sufficient proof that he had, in fact, applied

for it and been granted it?

5. Since amnesty is granted to a class of offenders, rather than to specific individuals, for whom pardon rather than amnesty is the presidential act of clemency, could it not be presumed that Trillanes, as the known leader of the mutinous group, had, in fact, applied for amnesty, even without need of documentary evidence? Why then this determined effort to swat legal flies and establish a crime where none exists?

There are more.

There is no way to misunderstand these questions, and no way to avoid the answers. The Constitution and jurisprudence are clear. Yet the law of the strong tends to override the strength of the law, and our government of laws tends to become a government of men — or more specifically of one man, the President. The tripartite government no longer operates; after a simple majority of the Supreme Court justices at the President's behest declared the appointment of their Chief Justice null and void *ab initio*, we passed into a dark night of constitutional revisionism, from which there is no promise of immediate relief.

The President has become the supreme judge, no longer the Supreme Court which remains supreme only with his concurrence or consent. Thus, the court cannot declare any act of the President unconstitutional now no matter how manifestly unconstitutional it is. He has also become the principal lawmaker, no longer the legislature, which can only legislate what

he allows them to legislate. Thus, he will not allow Congress to tell him his proposed federalism is nonsense, and the Constitution does not allow him to propose constitutional amendments.

Enrile's revisionism

This is the first road to revisionism we can talk about. The second road involves our Martial Law history, which recently highlighted a televised conversation between former Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and former senator Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., son and namesake of the late former president Ferdinand Marcos.

Enrile made the unfortunate mistake of saying, without the necessary qualifications, that nobody was ever detained during Martial Law solely for their political beliefs. This led to his being lectured on historical revisionism by some ageing politicians, including former Senate President Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel, who is trying very hard to revise his understanding of responsible constitutional democracy by supporting the effort to railroad DU30's absurd federalism.

At 94, Enrile is not free from certain memory issues. But he hasn't quite lost it yet. Al have interviewed him on my weekly cable TV show at least thrice, and found his grasp of historical detail unimpaired. So is the rigor of his reasoning, which one does not always find in the younger set. Still, Enrile may have slipped a little when he sat down with Bongbong to take a second, or third, or

fourth, or even 46th hard look at Marcos Senior's 1972 martial law proclamation when he was the secretary of national defense.

I thought he should have faced a well-known political adversary — Jose Ma. Sison, Luis Jalandoni, Benito Tiamson, Fidel Agcaoili, or Satur Ocampo — rather than somebody who shared his view of history and politics. What he said was not necessarily false. But it was an incomplete statement. Marcos never jailed anyone just because they had read *Das Kapital*, the *Communist Manifesto* or Mao Zedong's *Red Book*. That was obviously what he meant, except that his articulation was incomplete and imprecise.

In that turbulent time, at least one military sergeant made the mistake of questioning a senior newspaper editor for owning a suspicious-looking book entitled, "*The Sexual Revolution*." Indeed, some mistakes were made, and they were corrected, but as a rule, only those who were involved or suspected to be involved in the communist plot to overthrow the government were arrested and detained.

Unfortunately, this did not spare some genuine nationalists who did not mind using the Left in their own effort to undermine Marcos. The former leader of the Light a Fire Movement made this private revelation to me during an important social at the Manila Polo Club last year a few weeks before he died. Enrile's controversial statement was more of an oversimplification — a hyperbole — of his reading of the situation

then obtaining rather than a cold-blooded revision of history.

The real revisionism

The real revisionism of our martial law history tried to make the young and the innocent believe that communism was the cure to the various diseases of Philippine society, and that Marcos' Martial Law robbed the nation of that cure. Marcos nearly totally defeated the armed rebellion that threatened to take over his government and the rest of Philippine society, but after he fell in a civilian-supported military mutiny in 1986, his immediate successor released and amnestied all the detained enemies of the state.

This allowed the communists to continue their armed struggle, even after the Cold War ended, Soviet communism fell apart, and China shifted to free market capitalism.

Today, DU30 continues to talk about a "Red October" communist plot to oust him from the presidency, but it was DU30 himself who started talking about a revolutionary coalition government with the CPP/NPA/NDF, and who appointed several CPP central committee members to his Cabinet without the benefit of a peace agreement. The most important of these appointees — Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco Jr. — appears to be as healthy as the President; he just had a pacemaker installed and continues to run the Office of the President and so many other special agencies.

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BOL info campaign

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will take an active role in the education and information drive focused on voters in the southern Philippines who will ultimately judge if they will ratify or not the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL).

This was announced by Major Gen. Cirilito Sobejana of the Philippine Army's 6th Infantry Division, who said the units in Central Mindanao will either directly embark on educational forums or extend manpower support to dialogues on the intricacies of the BOL.

The plebiscite for the Bangsamoro Organic Law will be held on Jan. 21, 2019 or four months from today. Although it passed Congress and was signed into law by President Duterte, the Bangsamoro Organic Law still has some contentious issues that the residents of the proposed Bangsamoro region should think about, because they are the ones most directly affected by this legislation.

'We see no compelling reason for Muslims in the proposed Bangsamoro region to reject the BOL, for its basic provisions will ensure that this special region will get more than its rightful share in government revenues and national wealth.'

We see no compelling reason for Muslims in the proposed Bangsamoro region to reject the BOL, for its basic provisions will ensure that this special region will get more than its rightful share in government revenues and national wealth.

Maguindanao Gov. Esmael Mangudadaru, who is one of the leaders pushing for the "yes" vote, realizes the benefits this law will give to Filipino Muslims, such as the 60 specific political powers including taxation, financial block grants of P60 billion to P70 billion from the national government on top of the regular internal revenue allotment (IRA), the founding of a Bangsamoro parliament which will pass regional laws, and for the judiciary, the establishment of three layers of Shariah courts which have jurisdiction over family, property and personal cases including minor criminal offenses.

One major issue that might derail the referendum is the perception that the BOL is a product of the Duterte government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and thus is not that inclusive. If indeed it will benefit other Muslims affiliated with groups other than the MILF, and Christians living in the proposed Bangsamoro region, then it will have to be explained to the voters in plain and simple language.

It is reassuring, though, that while the military will be involved in educational and information dissemination forums beyond providing security for the venues, the troops will not adopt a position for or against the BOL. B4

General Sobejana said, "It is up to the voters to decide during the January 21 plebiscite."

In fine, Muslim voters will most like approve or reject the BOL on the basis of endorsement by their local leaders, and so the responsibility lies on the shoulders of Mangudadaru, ARMM Gov. Mujiv Hataman, MILF chairman Al Haj Murad, Vice chairman Ghadzali Jaafar, and others who believe that this is the answer for peace to reign in Mindanao.

Persistent foes

“Based on Joma’s recent statements, the plot would be more measured and will progress based on developments against Rody’s critics.”

It was not a coincidence that exiled Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Maria “Joma” Sison, leaders of the Liberal Party and Senate squatter Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV are singing the same tune on the existence of a plot to oust President Rody Duterte.

All of them are denying an alliance while saying that a conspiracy is a product of Rody’s rich imagination yet, in synchronicity, they harp on Rody’s supposed plummeting approval and trust ratings that they attribute to the soaring prices of basic commodities primarily rice prices and the existence of “disgruntled elements in the military” that will lead to his imagined downfall.

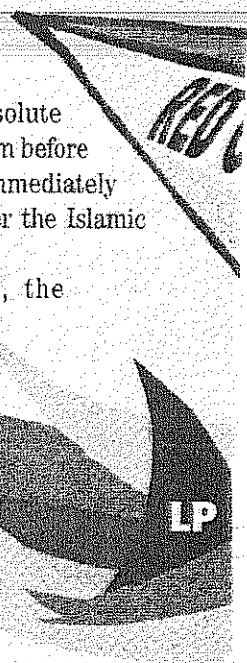
Of course, the claims are all canard since the recent Pulse Asia poll showed a 75 percent approval and 72 percent trust ratings on Rody.

Prior to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) revealing the “Red October” plot, the AFP hierarchy mentioned about an earlier effort called “Aklasan” that was apparently called off after being preempted by Rody himself through a 11 September one-on-one with Presidential Legal Adviser Sal Panelo.

Rody is known for quick and resolute actions that address problems facing him before these get worse such as when he immediately imposed martial law in Mindanao after the Islamic State-inspired siege of Marawi City.

The day before the tete-a-tete, the Palace announced a nationwide address from Rody but the format was abruptly changed to a dialog between the President and Panelo later on.

On hindsight, the shift in format would have indicated that the problem was immediately resolved.



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Statements from Rody and heads of the military indicate that indeed a major destabilization effort was pre-empted.

"That is their plan. If they can't do it through a takeover then they would resort to assassination," Rody said.

Similar to the IS attempt on Marawi City, the power grab was timely defused.

The habit of Rody making light of attempts on his life made many dismiss his recounting of the uprising attempt that included an assassination try.

In the interview with Sal, Rody said he welcomes the possibility of taking an assassin's bullet saying it would "be a quick death compared to dying due to sickness."

66
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"I will be happy to die at your hands. At least I won't die because of sickness. What's a bullet? At least your pain won't last more than one second," Rody said.

In the course of the interview, he even urged the plotters "to set their plans in motion early and not wait until 21 September."

"Start it now, don't delay it, your plan to sabotage on 21 September. Do it!" he said.

The military would later on say that the talk between Sal and Rody televised nationwide preempted the launching of the takeover bid.

Rody's talk then was spent on addressing the AFP daring soldiers to stage a *coup d'etat* "if they believe in Trillanes" or if they disapprove of him as a leader.

The military would also reveal after 21 September, some of its leaders talked with the yellow groups in the tie up with the communists and Trillanes' Magdalo that resulted in the scuttling of the ouster plot.

The sequel called "Red October" would have a difference in that the plot will apparently be led by the communists.

Based on Joma's recent statements, the plot would be more measured and will progress based on developments against Rody's critics such as "a crackdown on the supporters of Trillanes in the military, the replacement of Vice President Leni Robredo by (former Senator) Bongbong Marcos as Vice President or some other flagrant abuse of power."

The destabilizers are indeed on the move to again thwart the people's will by attempting to oust a democratically-elected President.

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Duterte to military: Give me a reason to step down, I'm tired

By: Nestor Corrales - Reporter / @NCorralesINQ

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Once again, President Rodrigo Duterte expressed exasperation over corruption in government and his willingness to step down from office.

Mr. Duterte on Thursday maintained he is ready to quit if the military would give him a reason to do so, saying anew that he was already "tired" of corruption.

Days before this, the President alleged that some soldiers were in cahoots with his political opponents to oust him.

"Sabi ko the irony of it all is you want to kick me out, naghahanap lang ako ng rason really I'm going home, I'm tired. 'Yan ang totoo diyan," he said in a speech before career service executive officers in Malacañang.

"Kasi hindi ko talaga kaya ang corruption. Maski anuhin ko. It begins with something like an inaugural thing, the breaking of the ground or the cutting of whatever. It's given the widest publicity. Three months after, nandoon na sa Ombudsman and then sa Sandigan," he added.

He said corruption in government has been widespread.

"It seems that ang transaksyon nang lahat sa gobyerno meron talaga. Maski saan ka magtingin meron. And all — dito sa national pati sa local," he noted. /kga

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Malacañang unfazed by Abu Sayyaf's 'regrouping' reports

By Jelly Musico September 27, 2018, 5:59 pm

MANILA -- The government will not be threatened by the kidnap-for-ransom Abu Sayyaf terrorists who are reportedly regrouping and planning to conduct cross-border kidnappings in Mindanao, Malacañang said Thursday.

"Well, ang masasabi ko lang po diyan, handa po tayong harapin ang banta galing sa Abu Sayyaf (What I can say is that we are ready to face any threat coming from Abu Sayyaf)," Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque said during a Palace press briefing.

According to an exclusive report of a Malaysian news outfit, the Abu Sayyaf sub-commanders are regrouping after nearly two years on the run due to the all-out war launched by President Rodrigo Duterte's government against the bandits in 2016.

The report identified the "resurrected" sub-commander as Indang Susukan, who was widely reported to have died when his wife and children were killed at the height of the military's attack in Jolo, Sulu in 2016.

"Kinakailangan po silang mag-regroup dahil napulbos na natin sila. At asahan ninyo po na kahit ano pang gawin niyang recruitment, ang Abu Sayyaf po kayang-kayang pulbusin ng ating gobyerno (They need to regroup because we have already destroyed them. You can expect that no matter what kind of recruitment they will do, the government will crush the Abu Sayyaf)," Roque said.

Meanwhile, Roque welcomed a "favorable review" of the US State Department on the Philippines' ongoing campaign against terrorism and violent extremism.

He said the State Department's 2017 report on terrorism has mentioned the concrete steps the country has undertaken to combat terrorism and prevent violent extremism, such as continued interagency information sharing between Philippine law enforcement agencies, increased aviation security capacity, and active participation in training courses on crisis response, border security and investigations, including cybercrimes.

"The report also noted that the Philippine government has consistently acknowledged the dangers from ISIS-affiliated terrorist groups, and welcomed the assistance on counter-terrorism and reconstruction from Australia, Japan and the United States," Roque said.

In 2017, Philippine military troops killed members of the ISIS-inspired Maute Group and Abu Sayyaf, including leaders Omar Maute and Isnilon Hapilon, during the five-month Marawi siege.

The war, however, left 168 government troops dead and reduced Marawi City into ruins. (PNA)

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Palace confident of military's 'overwhelming' support for PRRD

By Jelly Musico September 27, 2018, 5:58 pm

MANILA – Malacañang remains confident that President Rodrigo Duterte still enjoys overwhelming support from the military despite the latter's claim that some soldiers are conniving with the opposition to oust him.

Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque made this reaction when asked during Thursday's Palace briefing if loyalty check is needed to verify the President's claim.

"Sa akin po, lahat dapat tingnan. Pero sa tingin ko overwhelming po pa rin ang suporta ng Presidente galing po sa hukbong sandatahan (For me, everything should be checked, but I think the President still has overwhelming support from the armed forces)," Roque said.

He said Duterte is the only President who has been making the rounds of almost every military and police camp across the country to personally know their needs and situation.

Roque said the President is confident that the military and police will continue to do their duties as protector of the Filipino people.

Recently, Duterte expressed his "ill feeling" towards some people in the military who are communicating with the opposition Liberal Party to remove him from Malacañang.

"So dapat siguro i-verify itong mga impormasyon na ito. Pero kampante naman po ang Presidente na tumutupad sa kanilang tungkulin ang ating kasundaluhan at kapulisan (Perhaps this information should be verified but the President is confident that the military and police are doing their duties)," Roque said.

Duterte earlier said the opposition is conspiring with the Communist Party of the Philippines - New People's Army (CPP-NPA) to dethrone him. Roque welcomed the investigation conducted by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on the so-called "Red October" plotters.

"Katungkulan naman po talaga ng NBI iyan at ng mga law enforcement agents na kapag may posibleng krimen na nangyayari ay dapat imbestigahan (It is really the duty of the NBI and the law enforcement agents to investigate possible crimes)," he said.

He urged the military to share to the NBI any intelligence information about the "Red October" plot.

"As I have said time and again 'no, ang trabaho po ng Presidente (the work of the President) as Chief Executive is to implement the laws. So kung mayroon talagang lumalabag sa mga batas natin (if someone violates our laws) on rebellion, coup d'état and sedition, (let) the process begin against them," Roque added. **(PNA)**

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No monitored recruitment activities on ouster plot: AFP

By Priam Nepomuceno September 27, 2018, 5:05 pm

MANILA – The three major services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have said they have not monitored any recruitment activity within their ranks by groups aiming to overthrow the government, the spokesperson of the Philippine Army (PA) said Thursday.

"As far as the ranks of the PA is concerned, *wala kaming namo-monitor na mga ganyang* (we have not monitored such) issue, no recruitment, no intel reports that some or few of our army soldiers are planning to oust the President," Lt. Col. Louie Villanueva told reporters.

Villanueva added that as far as loyalty is concerned, the 96,000-strong Army solidly supports the Duterte administration.

"We work for the Constitution, we work for the sovereignty of the State. *Nandun lagi tayo, nandun yung ating mandato* (We are always there. That is our mandate.)," he added.

Villanueva noted that the Army's morale is very high and it is focused on its primary mission, which is to protect the people and the state.

Meanwhile, Philippine Air Force (PAF) spokesperson, Major Aristides Galang, echoed Villanueva's sentiments.

"*Wala naman kami sa* (We do not have such in the) Air Force. So far sa Air Force, as of now, *wala kaming nare-receive na ganun na may mga* recruitment. *At saka yung morale ng tao kasi ng Air Force* very much *na napakataas talaga* because of the support *na nakukuha natin sa* government, with the *taong bayan* (We have not received any information about such recruitments and also, the morale of the Air Force personnel is very high because of the support we are getting from the government and the people)," he added.

Philippine Navy (PN) spokesperson, Commander Jonathan Zata, likewise said that they have yet to detect any recruitment activity for any ouster plot.

"As far as the Navy is concerned, personally, I haven't met or heard or read any recruitment of that sort. *Ang nababasa kong reports kasi yung mga* ongoing activities, *kagaya ng pagpapadala natin sa Vladivostok* (Russia) *kasi sabay-sabay yung exercises natin ngayon* (What I have read is about the ongoing activities of the Navy, like the port call in Vladivostok, Russia. The exercises of the Navy personnel are being done simultaneously)," Zata said.

The Navy, he said, is busy with preparations for activities, such as the joint maritime training with the Brunei Navy and Australian Navy in Cebu and Zamboanga, respectively, and the ongoing relief operations in areas hit by Typhoon Ompong.

He added that the PN is also holding a maritime training activity with Royal Malaysian Navy forces in Fort San Felipe in Cavite.

On Thursday, Navy personnel also welcomed the JS Akebono (DD-108), a Murasame-class destroyer of the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force, at the Manila South Harbor. **(PNA)**