

Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

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Disclaimer: The news articles available in this review are only collated from local newspapers. They were not written by the Action Network Human Rights- Philippines.

The Action Network Human Rights - Philippines advocates the sustainable improvement of the human rights situation in the Philippines. Members are: Amnesty International, Bread for the World - Church Development Service, Misereor, Missio Munich, philippinenbüro e.V., the International Peace Observers Network (IPON) and the United Evangelical Mission (UEM).

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HEADLINES & POLITICS

Bulatlat.com, 02.06.2013

Int'l watchdog says impunity still reigns

By Ronalyn V. Olea

MANILA - Although the number of cases of extrajudicial killings has gone down, "impunity remains a huge problem under the Aquino administration," according to an international human rights watchdog.

In a chat with online journalists and bloggers on May 29, Phelim Kine, deputy director for Asia of Human Rights Watch, said: "We recognize that there has been some progress... [but] there has been no successful prosecution of extrajudicial killings since 2010."

HRW praised the Aquino administration for the passage of important laws related to the protection and promotion of human rights such as [Anti-Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance Act](#) and the [Human Rights Victim Reparation and Recognition Act of 2013](#).

But Kine said walking the talk is the next step. In the same vein, Carlos Conde, researcher for HRW Asia division, told reporters and bloggers: "The challenge [for the government] is to implement these laws immediately."

Conde raised the alarm over how the government has not yet formed the [Human Rights Claims Board](#). This would have been crucial in implementing the Human Rights Victim Reparation and Recognition Act. "We do not want to speculate but the delay in the formation of the Claims Board concerns us. Some of the victims have died already," he said.

Poor mechanisms

Kine said the human rights mechanisms developed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police are "not effective in stopping abuses."

During the administration of former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, both the AFP and the PNP had set up Human Rights Offices that still exist today. Kine said the HR offices of both agencies are "just talking shops and not about identifying abuses."

Kine said the appointment as AFP spokesman of Domingo Tutaan Jr., former chief of the AFP Human Rights Office, reinforces their view that the AFP Human Rights Office is just a "talking shop" and not doing much. "Instead of transparency, it provides a veneer of accountability without delivering results," Kine said.

Conde shared that the HRW had approached the AFP Human Rights Office several times for specific cases of human rights violations but the latter was not "much help."

Classic example

Asked to comment on the [case of Jonas Burgos](#), Kine said the refusal of the Philippine Army to enforce disciplinary actions against the Army officer implicated in the abduction "gives the impression that rhetoric does not match action."

Recently, the Court of Appeals affirmed its earlier [decision holding the military accountable](#) for the disappearance of Jonas, son of the late press freedom fighter, Jose Burgos Jr. The appellate court also identified [Army Major Harry Baliaga Jr.](#) as responsible for the abduction. But Baliaga remains in active service.

"The Jonas Burgos case is one of the few cases with strong pieces of evidence and yet the military is not suspending or disciplining one of its men," Conde said.

"It's a case of government's foot dragging, which cements the impression that impunity in the Philippines is alive and well," Kine said.

Trumped-up charges vs activists

Asked to comment on the reported cases of filing of trumped-up

charges against activists, Kine replied: "We're always carefully monitoring government laws being used to attack or undermine work of civil society organizers or anyone who challenges the state."

Kine said, however, that they have yet to verify reports in the Philippines.

Human rights group Karapatan has noted that while the number of extrajudicial killings has gone down, cases of arrests of activists have increased. Based on Karapatan's documentation, 148 activists have been arrested and detained under the Aquino administration.

After analyzing the events that preceded cases of human rights violations, Conde noted that "trumped up charges are part of modus operandi" of perpetrators of abuses. He said "Extrajudicial killings are a progression of violations - from surveillance to vilification to arrest."

Karapatan Press Release, 29.06.2013

Heightened repression and rights violations mark Aquino's 3rd year in power

[...] From July 2010 (start of Aquino's presidency) to April 30, 2013, Karapatan's documentation shows:

- 142 victims of extrajudicial killing
- 164 cases of frustrated killing
- 16 victims of enforced disappearance
- 293 persons arrested and detained
- 16 children killed, with ages ranging from four to 15

Karapatan said when Noynoy Aquino launched his own version of 'un-sheathing the sword of war' last year, "it, expectedly, resulted to more cases of rights violations and abuses by the AFP, especially because only six months are left in the implementation of Oplan Bayanihan Phase 1." In previous statements, Karapatan said the deadline of Oplan Bayanihan is timed with the US government's so-called "Asian pivot."

The same pattern as Gloria Arroyo's Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) exists, "the victims of rights violations are the same people who were displaced by big business like logging and transnational mining companies that are coddled by the Aquino government; the victims are the same people who are vulnerable to disasters because of imperialist plunder of the country's natural resources and the consequent environmental degradation; the victims are the same poor Filipino people who are targets of the government's red tagging when they assert their rights."

Karapatan characterized Aquino's three years as "prime time for impunity as perpetrators, both under Aquino's regime and from Arroyo's, remain unpunished and are instead promoted to positions where they wield more power to attack the people." Karapatan opposed the promotion of Gen. Eduardo Año, Lt. Gen. Jorge Segovia, Brig. Gen. Aurelio B. Baladad, among others, who have pending cases for rights violations. "Aquino should also account for his inaction on the rights violations of the previous regime. It is not sufficient to point fingers at Arroyo only when it is convenient for Noynoy to do so," Hilao-Enriquez said.

"With prime suspects missing or hidden, killings remain unsolved even with "high profile" cases such as the killing of Fr. Pops Tentorio, PIME, long time Philippine resident and Dutch volunteer, Willem Geertman, broadcaster and environmentalist Gerry Ortega, and the gruesome Ampatuan massacre," added Enriquez.

Hilao-Enriquez added, "rights violations are in the context of Aquino's anti-people economic policies like the Public-Private Partnership. The Aquino government offers the poor Filipino people's lives in a silver platter to private and foreign companies which, apart from enjoying tax holidays, are raking in super profits by jacking up prices of basic commodities, transportation fare, medical and educational services. Aquino's Oplan Bayanihan indeed serves to protect all these globalization policies. The President and his media spinners boast of 'economic growth' that only the rich and influential in Philippine society can feel and enjoy. A refrain heard and felt by the poor from Marcos' martial law up to the present." [...]

ABS-CBNnews.com, 03.06.2013

Human Rights News June 2013

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VP Binay leaves for Germany to hold talks

MANILA - Vice President Jejomar Binay has left for Berlin late Sunday to strengthen the Philippines' bilateral ties with Germany.

In his speech before leaving Sunday night, Binay said: "There is need for stronger Philippine-German cooperation, and for greater German investments in the country to help sustain our rapid and inclusive growth."

He hopes that his visit there will help in the rebuilding of ties between the two nations.

"Given some isolated issues that had shadowed our relations with Germany in the last few years, I am confident this visit will contribute much to the rebuilding of stronger ties with that important economic power in Europe and the world," he said.

In Berlin, he will take part in the Asia Pacific Weeks 2013 Forum on "Smart Cities." Makati, where Binay was former mayor, is featured there.

He will then meet with government officials and business leaders on trade and investments in Hamburg, Stuttgart and Frankfurt.

"In all these places, I shall be meeting with the Filipino community, aside from German captains of business and industry," he

said.

Also in Hamburg, Binay will attend a maritime roundtable on the future of Filipino seafarers in Europe.

"As you know there are at least 300,000 Filipino seafarers sailing the seven seas, and 80,000 of them are in Europe. The economic turbulence in Europe has created a new situation for our seamen, which the European, notably German, shipping industry is trying to address with our full cooperation and support," he said.

He said the uncertainties faced by the Filipino seafarers need to be addressed considering the economic problems besetting Europe.

"Our seafarers constitute a major portion of our overseas Filipino workers. They are among the strongest sources of foreign remittances to the national economy," he said.

Binay will also install a historical marker in honor of Dr. Jose Rizal in Stuttgart. "This will be at a hotel where our hero stayed with his literary patron Maximo Viola during his visit."

Binay will also lead an early celebration of the Philippines' Independence Day in Frankfurt, the last stop of his one-week stay in Germany.

ManilaStandardToday.com, 11.06.2013

Haciendas still thrive after years of CARP

By Christine F. Herrera

Haciendero President Benigno Aquino III has not distributed a single hacienda—particularly his family's Hacienda Luisita and those of his allies—after three years in power, hacienda farm workers said Monday.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said not one hacienda had been distributed after 25 years of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, and at the same time slammed the Department of Agrarian Reform for allegedly extending the deadline for land distribution to 2016 from 2014.

The farm workers lifted their week-long camp-out at the Department of Agrarian Reform on Monday and proceeded to Mendiola near Malacañang to press President Benigno Aquino III to give up his family's Hacienda Luisita and other haciendas.

"President Aquino showed us that he is a landlord and haciendero first, a good ally to his landlord-friends and a broker to his relatives than President for the poor farmers," KMP secretary general Antonio Flores said. [...]

"Foremost of these haciendas are President Aquino's more than 6,000-hectare Hacienda Luisita and vast haciendas like Hacienda Loooc and Hacienda Roxas in Batangas, Hacienda Yulo in Laguna, the vast haciendas in Bondoc Peninsula, Danding

Cojuangco haciendas in Negros, and the Dole and Del Monte farms in Mindanao, among others."

The farmers made their charges even as the Department of Agrarian Reform on Monday renewed its commitment to wrap up the land acquisition and distribution component of the CARP before President Aquino's term expires in June 2016.

The department at the same time urged its critics to refrain from circulating information that the agrarian reform program would expire next year. It warned that false information might incite landless farmers and farm workers to violence. [...]

The KMP described CARP as "the most deceptive, longest-running, most expensive and bloodiest agrarian reform program."

"What actually transpired in the 25 years of CARP is the buy-and-sell transaction between the government, the DAR and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the supposed farmer beneficiaries," Flores said.

Elvira Balabad, head of the group Save Agrarian Reform Alliance, said the land distribution under the CARP was slow, and that at the pace it was proceeding it would take 14 years to distribute land to the beneficiaries.

The Philippine Star, 15.06.2013

PH tagged as one of 'least peaceful' countries

By Alexis Romero

MANILA, Philippines - Internal civil conflict has placed the Philippines on the list of "least peaceful" countries in the region, according to a report that measures the state of global peace.

The Global Peace Index 2013 report showed the Philippines ranking 129th out of 162 countries in terms of peacefulness, better than its 133rd rank last year but one of the lowest in the Asia-Pacific.

The country's peace ranking was lower than that of its Southeast Asian neighbors - Singapore (16th), Malaysia (29th) Laos (39th), Vietnam (41st), Timor-Leste (51st), Indonesia (54th) and Cambodia (115th) - but higher than Thailand (130th) and Myanmar (140th). "Ranking among the least peaceful countries in Asia Pacific, Thailand, the Philippines and Myanmar all face ongoing internal civil conflict," the report read. The report, released last June 11, showed that the most peaceful country this year was

Iceland followed by Denmark, New Zealand, Austria and Switzerland. The five least peaceful countries were Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria, Iraq and Sudan.

The Philippines scored 2.37 in the index and was among the countries with "medium" state of peace.

The report used a one to five scale with one being the highest in terms of state of peace.

"Last year saw improved prospects for peace between the Philippines government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) when a framework deal for a potential peace agreement was signed," it said.

"There are many obstacles to lasting peace, but negotiations appear to be on-track in 2013," it added.

The government and the MILF signed the historic framework agreement on Oct. 15, 2012 in Malacañang. The deal would form



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a new political entity that would replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which President Aquino had called "a failed experiment."

The peace process, however, is facing uncertainties as the MILF is now accusing the government of delaying the signing of a comprehensive agreement.

"Over the last six years the world has experienced a decline in peacefulness. Much of this is a result of increases in the intensity of internal conflicts, which have tended to exceed concurrent declines in external conflict," the report said.

The Global Peace Index assessed 22 indicators that fall into the

MindaNews, 15.06.2013

Mamanwa Lumads barricade mining firm in Surigao Norte

By Roel Catoto

SURIGAO CITY - A mining company in Claver town in Surigao del Norte has been forced to suspend operations after some 150 members of the Mamanwa tribe today put up a barricade against it for alleged non-payment of royalty amounting to P30 million.

Datu Reynante Buklas, one of the Mamanwa chieftains told MindaNews in a phone interview that they are barricading the Adnama Mining Resources Incorporated (AMRI) in Barangay Urbiztondo where the firm operates.

Buklas said AMRI has failed to pay royalty to the tribe, which holds the ancestral domain title to the area.

He said that AMRI, which has been mining nickel ore in the area and exporting it to China, has not paid them since last year forcing them to stage the barricade.

"We are deprived of this share and we feel being abused by this mining company," Buklas said in the vernacular.

Section 7-b of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 entitles indigenous peoples to "negotiate the terms and conditions for the exploration of natural resources in the areas for the purpose of ensuring ecological, environmental protection and the conservation measures, pursuant to national and customary laws..."

Rappler.com, 16.06.2013

PH affirms stance vs death penalty

By Ace Tamayo

MANILA, Philippines - The Philippines reaffirmed its commitment against capital punishment at the 5th World Congress Against Death Penalty, [...] June 12, in Madrid, Spain.

Speaking on behalf of President Benigno Aquino III, Justice Secretary Leila De Lima delivered a speech where she said "every person is equal before the law, and that each life holds intrinsic value, which no person - no State - can or should take." "I believe that imposing the death penalty cannot fully deter crime. I believe in a system where each citizen is empowered to take hold his destiny, enabling him to uplift his family, community, and nation," the speech said.

The Philippines was the first country in Asia to abolish the death penalty under the ratified Constitution in 1987. It was, however, re-imposed through Republic Act No. 759 in 1992 but once again abolished by members of Congress on June 24, 2006.

In the speech, Aquino said his government's strategy to prevent crimes in the Philippines rests on "an empowered citizenry, a skilled and trusted law enforcement sector, an effective prosecutorial service, and an independent judiciary."

Philippine Daily Inquirer, 18.06.2013

Court orders woman freed after 5 years without charges

By Christine O. Avendaño

The Court of Appeals has directed Justice Secretary Leila de Lima to investigate the incarceration of a woman for five years

broad themes of ongoing domestic and international conflict, societal safety and security and militarization.

Described as a leading measure of national peacefulness, the index ranks 162 nations according to their absence of violence.

The Index was developed by the Australia-based Institute for Economics and Peace and was based on data gathered by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

The data were based on various sources including the International Institute of Strategic Studies, the World Bank, various agencies of the United Nations and peace institutes.

Four firms are currently operating in Claver - the Taganito Mining Corporation, Oriental Synergy Mining Corporation which is now operated by AMRI, Platinum Group Mining Company and Taganito High-Pressure Acid Leach Nickel Corporation.

The 48,678-hectare mining areas in barangays Taganito and Urbiztondo are covered by a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title.

MindaNews tried to contact AMRI officials to get their statement but no to avail.

Buklas said they will continue to barricade until their demand is met, adding more tribe members from different communities will be joining them today and tomorrow.

He said the barricade has forced the company to suspend its operations.

Lt. Col. Vincent Iringan, commander of the 30th Infantry Battalion based in Bad-as, Placer in Surigao del Norte said he was monitoring the barricade and coordinating with the Claver police station to ensure "that no violence will occur in that area." "My men initially talked to some datos today and they assured us that they won't do any violence in the area," he added.

The speech also acknowledged that the Philippines has been facing challenges in making legal services and making them more accessible to the majority of Filipinos. But it said the "administration is determined to address these challenges by setting in place not only the right policies, but more importantly the right people for the job."

De Lima echoed Aquino's stand against the capital punishment and said the government's "practical and urgent reason" for its universal abolition has also been for the protection of Overseas Filipinos Workers (OFWs).

"Some have had the misfortune for getting entangled in criminal cases in foreign jurisdiction, which include those that impose death penalty, where they are in a distinct disadvantage due to certain factors, such as language barriers and social or cultural differences," De Lima explained.

De Lima said the government's aim has been to "ensure that [Filipinos] are always assured of receiving adequate and competent legal representation and support for the defense of their rights." [...]

without charges, a situation that it says is similar to that of detainees in the infamous Guantanamo Bay detention camp in

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4,389 cases remain pending in 8 RTCs

By Kevin A. Lagunda

THER are 4,389 cases that are unresolved in eight Regional Trial Court (RTC) branches in four cities in Cebu that have no regular judges, according to the survey conducted by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP)-Cebu City chapter last April.

There are also four vacant Municipal Trial Courts in Cities (MTCC) branches, after the Supreme Court (SC) dismissed the presiding judges from service.

The pending cases in RTC branches are handled by substitute judges, who also have to attend to other hundreds of cases in their own salas.

The IBP-Cebu City chapter passed a resolution asking President Benigno Aquino III, Supreme Court Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno and the Judicial Bar and Council (JBC) to consider as urgent the filling up of the vacancies.

"While some court vacancies are being temporarily assigned with pairing and assisting presiding judges, the same do not effectively solve the growing problem since those temporarily designated judges would usually dispose only pending incidents and would prefer to let permanently appointed judges to hear and decide cases on merits," the IBP-Cebu City resolution read.

It further said: "The regular courts of those temporarily designated judges would also be adversely affected as the number of hearing dates per week would consequently be reduced since they cannot preside over two courts at the same time."

The 1987 Constitution guarantees that all accused have the right to a speedy trial.

The judges of lower courts are appointed by the president from a list of at least three nominees prepared by the JBC. [...]

Sun.Star, 03.06.2013

Cuba.

In a decision handed down on June 11, the Court of Appeals' Seventh Division dismissed the drug charges government prosecutors brought against Joanne Urbina only last month and ordered her released.

Urbina was arrested on drug charges in December 2007, but, for

Manilatimes.net, 19.06.2013

5 captive soldiers face rebel court in Davao

By Al Jacinto

[...] Communist rebels captured five members of the 60th Infantry Battalion at a checkpoint in Paquibato district.

Rebel leader Leoncio Pitao, also known by his nom de guerre Ka Parago, has branded First Lieutenant Neven Canitan as a coward who abandoned the soldiers just to save himself.

[...] Canitan jumped off from his taxi upon seeing the NPA [New People's Army] checkpoint and escaped, leaving behind his troops who were eventually captured. [...]

He said that, the soldiers are being held as prisoners of war (POW) and are being investigated by the NPA for their role in the military's notorious anti-insurgency campaign in Mindanao that have killed innocent civilians suspected of aiding or supporting the rebel group. [...]

"The POWs are currently undergoing investigation for possible serious human rights violations, violations of International Humanitarian Law and crimes versus the people that they may have committed in the course of their participation in the counterrevolutionary Oplan Bantay Laya and as elements of the reactionary armed force," Pitao said in a statement sent to the regional newspaper Mindanao Examiner.

[...] "Under the guise of [the military's] peace and development [program], the Civil Military Operations completely militarized the farming and lumad [indigenous tribe] populace by regulat-

Inquirer Mindanao, 30.06.2013

Duterte tells criminals: Leave Davao City vertically or horizontally

By Germelina Lacorte

DAVAO CITY, Philippines - Newly elected mayor Rodrigo

Human Rights News June 2013

reasons not clear to the court, state prosecutors failed to bring charges against her until May 9, way beyond the 24-hour period prescribed by law and the 30-day period prescribed by the Department of Justice (DOJ) within which an automatic review of cases should be resolved, the court said.

"More than five years of detention, without a valid information filed in court, is unreasonable; it is intolerable; it is shockingly unimaginable," the court said in the decision written by Associate Justice Noel Tijam, chairman of the Seventh Division.

The court said what Urbina had gone through "smacks of persecution rather than prosecution and pierces through the very essence of fairness and justice."

"It conjures up images of Guantanamo Bay detainees who have never been allowed a speedy and fair trial, a civil right granted to all by the Constitution," the court said.

Guantanamo Bay detention camp is a United States military holding and interrogation center within Guantanamo Naval Base in Cuba.

For terrorists

Also known as Camp Wire and Gitmo, after GTMO, the military abbreviation for Guantanamo Naval Base, the detention camp was established in 2002 by the administration of US President George W. Bush to detain suspected terrorists indefinitely without charges.

But Urbina's case involves illegal drugs and detaining her without charges for five years is an incredible violation of the law.

"We find it necessary to direct [Justice Secretary De Lima] to conduct an investigation on the underlying circumstances [that] caused the five-year delay in the filing of the questioned information and to furnish this court with the result of the investigation immediately upon its completion," the court said.

The court granted Urbina's petition for certiorari and habeas corpus, which stemmed from her alleged arbitrary detention at the Philippine National Police custodial center in Camp Crame, Quezon City. [...]

ing the movement of the civilian populace and abusing the masses," he said.

Pitao said even prior to the capture of the soldiers, the army launched a widespread operations involving three battalions—the 84th, 69th and 60th—in Paquibato district to pave the way for large-scale mining activities, among others.

The military has strongly denied all Pitao's allegations, saying the NPA was behind many human rights violations and other criminal activities such as murders and extortion activities in Davao.

Lt. Col. Inocencio Pasaporte, commander of the 69th Infantry Battalion, said troops were sent to track down the rebels and their hostages. [...]

Pasaporte said the soldiers are part of a peace and development group in charge of a forthcoming feeding program for grade school students in Paquibato district.

He said the feeding program, which is to begin on July 1 in Paquibato, is in partnership with the global volunteer organization Kiwanis International and other stakeholders. It was not immediately how the arrest of the soldiers would affect the humanitarian program.

Pitao has warned that any attempt to rescue the soldiers would only endanger their lives. [...]

Duterte renewed his warning to criminals as he took his oath



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Sunday, the seventh time he had taken since he was first elected as mayor in 1988.

"Stop or leave," said Duterte as he prepared to assume the post that his daughter and outgoing mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio held in the last three years.

"If you can't or will not, you will not survive, you can leave either vertically or horizontally," Duterte said in a speech after his oath at City Hall Sunday.

"Criminals have no place in the city, except in jails, detention

centers, and God forbid, in funeral parlors," said Duterte, who had since earned the flak from human rights groups and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) for statements that seemed to send an implicit message supporting the unsolved killings of alleged criminals in the city.

[...] He also told minors in conflict with the law, "Don't waste away your life," adding that the Juvenile Delinquent Act, "behind which you seek refuge, is now being amended." [...]

INSTITUTIONS

DavaoToday.com, 08.06.2013

Group slams Congress' proposed jail time for young offenders

By John Rizle L. Saligumba

DAVAO CITY, Philippines - Children rights' group Akap Bata slams on Saturday the amendment made by Congress on the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act (JJWA) that seeks to "lower the age of discernment of criminal liability" of minors.

The Bicameral Committee Report has approved on Wednesday that children from 12 to 15 years old, who commit serious crimes like murder and rape, will be confined in a government facility. The period of confinement will still be determined but is said to be not less than one year.

But Arlene Brosas, spokesperson for Akap Bata, said they are opposing the Congress' action "because it will not serve for the best interest of our children."

Arrested offenders who are below 15 years old, under the present law, are required to be immediately release to their parents or guardians. However, the amended JJWA will be implemented once it's signed by President Benigno Aquino III.

"Legislators seem to be missing the point. There is a deeper social context why our so-called 'young offenders' are being

pushed to commit petty crimes and sometimes used by organized syndicate crimes," Brosas pointed out.

She said hunger and poverty "breed children in conflict of the law" thus lowering the age of criminal liability, as well as intervention, will not resolve criminal and civil offenses committed by children.

The group has instead urged for the laws and international policies on child protection to be "genuinely implemented and adhered to."

More importantly, Brosas said, the socio-economic needs of children should be provided and that the problem on juvenile delinquency should be addressed "in a holistic and pro-child manner."

Akap Bata maintained that children are not criminals, but victims.

It challenged legislators and all government agencies "to hunt and pin down the bigger targets" [...]."

Rappler.com, 12.06.2013

DepEd allots P100-M for IP education

By Jee Y. Geronimo

MANILA, Philippines - The Department of Education (DepEd) allotted P100 million to finance education capacity-building initiatives for indigenous peoples (IPs).

"This is part of our commitment to achieve the Education for All (EFA) 2015 targets and the Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations which we are duty bound to fulfill," Education Secretary Armin Luistro said in a statement on Wednesday, June 12.

The allocation was made a week after Luistro's visit to Culion, a town in Palawan populated by Tagbanuas.

The allotted fund will be distributed to 100 divisions in 15 regions for this school year.

The 15 regions are: Ilocos, Cordillera, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, CALABARZON, MIMAROPA, Bicol, Western Visayas, Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Western Mindanao, Northern Mindanao, Southern Mindanao, Central Mindanao, CARAGA and Central Office (NCR).

The fund goes to DepEd's IPs education (IPed) program. Luistro said strict implementing guidelines will be followed in disbursing the money.

The IPed program responds to the indigenous peoples' right to

education that is "responsive to their context, respectful of their identity and supportive of the value of their indigenous knowledge, skills and other aspects of their cultural heritage."

The money may be used to fund at least 3 major purposes -- 1) train DepEd teachers and personnel to be effective IPed implementers, 2) build advocacy and partnership programs within DepEd and other organizations, and 3) establish "baseline and situational analysis" on IPed in order to create a database for the IPs.

[In an earlier interview with Rappler](#), Luistro said the implementation of national programs must only be done after consultation with stakeholders. [...]

He said his visit to Culion was both an articulation of his personal conviction and what feels the department should be moving towards.

"If we're not going to [visit], I think we're coming up with a policy from an ivory tower. This is not about majorities; this is about individual teachers, maybe in the margins, and ensuring that the department is for them as well. Or maybe, should be for them."

The Philippine Star, 16.06.2013

'Bill on violence vs men up to lawmakers'

By Aurea Calica

MANILA, Philippines - Malacañang is leaving it up to lawmakers to pass a bill that would protect men from domestic violence. There have been renewed calls to enact a counterpart of Republic Act 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Act of 2004 with the celebration of Father's Day today.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Abigail Valte said Malacañang would need to first see the contents of any proposal before they could make any comment. [...]

The law states that violence against women and their children refers to "physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering, or



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economic abuse including threats of such acts, battery, assault,

coercion, harassment or arbitrary deprivation of liberty."

Manilatimes.net, 24.06.2013

PNP trains more policemen on anti-insurgency tack

By Anthony Vargas

THE Philippine National Police (PNP) is now training some of its personnel in Central Mindanao on anti-insurgency operations following intensified armed activities of the New People's Army (NPA) rebels.

At least some 90 police officers from Central Mindanao region are now undergoing Special Counter Insurgency Operations

Unit Training (Scout) at the police regional headquarters in General Santos City.

Deputy regional director, Sr. Supt. Manolito Labrador said that the 90 police officers in the 45-day long Scout are expected to enhance their skills in responding to counter insurgency incidence. [...]

CURRENT CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

InterAksyon.com, 05.06.2013

Masbate radio stringer shot dead

MANILA, Philippines -- A news stringer for a Cebu City radio station was shot dead in Masbate province Sunday morning, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines reported.

Miguelito "Mike" Rueras, stringer for station dyDD El Nuevo Bantay Radyo [...], was the third media worker murdered in the province.

The media organization's Masbate chapter said a still unidentified gunman fired at Rueras in his store at the public market of Pio V. Corpus town, killing him with two shots to the chest [...] before fleeing on a black motorcycle toward a nearby village.

During the May 13 elections, Rueras had reportedly stopped submitting reports to dyDD to work for the campaign of re-elected Masbate Gov. Rizalina Seachon-Lanete.

The NUJP-Masbate condemned Rueras' murder and aired concerns his death would go unsolved like those of Nelson Nadura (December 2, 2003) and Antonio Castillo (June 12, 2009).

"We ... strongly urge the Philippine National Police to bring justice to the families of our slain colleagues by sending the perpetrator and others involved to jail and suffer the punitive consequence of the crime committed," the NUJP-Masbate said.

SunStar.Davao, 10.06.2013

2 farmers slain in MILF attack

By Malu Cadelina Manar

KIDAPAWAN CITY -- Two farmers who were on their way home were killed in an ambush allegedly staged by members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) around 4:25 p.m. Friday, a military official said.

Captain Antonio Bulao, spokesperson for the Army's 602nd Brigade, identified the slain farmers as Toto Manial and Eddie Buisan, both residents of Barangay Marbel.

Bulao said the victims were on-board a motorcycle when way-laid by the suspects who allegedly belong to the MILF under Commanders Salonga and Ali Manzur.

The ambush site is located at least 500 meters away from the Peacekeeping Forces in Marbel.

Bulao, citing as basis on the testimonies of some witnesses, said the victims died on the spot while the body of Toto Manial "was chopped into pieces."

He said the MILF has again violated the local peace covenant they signed in May 23 with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) when it ambushed and killed Manial and Buisan, who were both civilians.

Manial, according to Bulao, was the brother of a barangay councilman of Marbel.

"Allegedly, some MILF members were mad at the group of Toto Manial when they decided to return to their abandoned houses at Sitio Tagumpay, Barangay Marbel," Bulao said.

The MILF rebels, according to Bulao, initially torched several houses of the civilians "to dissuade Toto Manial's group from returning to their homes."

"This is a blatant violation and inhumane act committed by the MILF against the civilians. This is murder and that it needs immediate action," he said.

But Superintendent Danny Peralta, provincial police director of North Cotabato, said they could not file a case against the MILF "because both groups, the MILF and the MNLF, do not cooperate."

Peralta said the fighting in Matalam town is caused by "rido."

"We already asked the Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities from both panels and the International Monitoring Team to intervene," Peralta said.

ABS-CBN News Northern Mindanao, 15.06.2013

Gov't urged: Give prosecutors firearms, hazard pay

By Rod Bolivar

CAGAYAN DE ORO -- The Prosecutors League of the Philippines (PLP) condemns the killing of Batangas assistant provincial prosecutor Alexander Sandoval last Thursday.

The PLP challenged the government to conduct a full investigation into the murder and make sure that those responsible behind the crime will be put behind bars.

"Sandoval's killing may have something to do with his work as a prosecutor; thus, the probe must also include the cases he handled including the personalities involved who may have been seriously displeased by his resolution," it said in a statement.

PLP president and regional state prosecutor-10 Jaime Umpa demanded that the government issue firearms to all prosecutors in the country.

"If we cannot provide arms to our prosecutors, I think we should direct our [police] and other law enforcement agencies to give special protection to our prosecutors especially those prosecutors who have been handling high-profiled cases," Umpa said.

He also demanded that the Department of Justice (DOJ) give prosecutors hazard pays. [...]

Since 2009, six prosecutors have received threats and harassment. Four of them were killed, including Sandoval. [...]

Sandoval was on his way home after attending a court hearing when he was shot dead by two motorcycle-riding gunmen.

Police have arrested one of the gunmen, Jayson Espejo Guerrero, and the alleged mastermind in the killing, defeated mayoral candidate Anna Mendoza.

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Mendoza and his husband were implicated by Guerrero, who said he was hired by the Mendoza couple's henchman Richard

Briones to kill Sandoval.

Asian Human Rights Commission, 21.06.2013

PHILIPPINES: Manila mayor tortures rape suspect in full view of the public

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) is demanding an explanation as to why the police did nothing to prevent Manila Mayor, Alfredo Lim, from interrogating and torturing a rape suspect in full view of the public. In this [report](#) by the GMA News, about five policemen in uniform, including a senior police officer, were present in front of Mayor Lim as he questioned, extracted a confession and forced the suspect to admit he had raped a woman and attempted to rape and rob another.

The transcript from the broadcast of Mayor Lim's questioning clearly breaches the provisions of the Anti-Torture Act of 2009. Under the Anti-Torture Act of 2009, to inflict pain either physical or psychological for purposes of extracting a confession, information and forcing a person to admit to a crime is a criminal offence:

[...] Mayor Lim: [...] Isn't it you who rob this woman?

Suspect: [...] It is not us

Mayor Lim: (asking the two complainants) [...] Who robbed you?

[...] You see, she said it was you! (Mayor Lim, in yellow dress, was seen pressing the suspect's shoulder hard).

Suspect: [...] No, it is not me.

Mayor Lim: [...] No? As you saying the complainants are lying? [...]

Mayor Lim: [...] So, what she said is true, right?

Suspect: [...] Yes (this time it is obvious that the suspect was forced to admit)

Mayor Lim: [...] So, you are admitting that you attempted to rape this woman. She was robbed and was attempted to be raped.

The AHRC is shocked, but not surprised, by the inaction of the police and of how Mayor Lim could openly break the law in front of the law enforcement officers. The policemen, including a senior officer, by the uniform he was wearing, did nothing to prevent Mayor Lim from torturing the victim. In a situation where a suspect is questioned in the absence of his legal counsel

by an influential politician in front of senior police officers and journalists, it is likely that any suspect would admit to anything. We are of the opinion that there was no need for Mayor Lim to either extract a confession from the suspect or to force him to admit to the crime. As the report said, the police claimed to have sufficient evidence to prosecute the suspect for rape, attempted rape and for robbery. In fact, Mayor Lim's torture of the suspect in full view of the public only damages the probability of successful prosecution because evidence taken by way of torture is not admissible in court. As a former policeman himself for 30 years, Mayor Lim should have known this most elementary rule of evidence.

The AHRC is demanding that the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and the Public Attorney's Office (PAO), the two agencies who had the legal obligation to conduct an investigation under the Anti-torture Law, to conduct an investigation to determine the criminal liability of Mayor Lim and the policemen for, as it appears, tolerating and allowing Mayor Lim to torture the suspect. If Mayor Lim and the other policemen are not held accountable to this incident, this would aggravates and perhaps have irreversible consequences on the people's loss of trust and confidence in the law.

There is nothing unique and scandalous about Mayor Lim torturing the suspect and the policemen not doing anything to protect a detainee's rights. In fact, it merely reaffirms what all Filipinos know about the systematic and widespread torture practiced during police investigations and questioning while the detainees are held in custody. If they could do this in open view of the public with impunity, there is nothing to prevent other ordinary policemen from using torture as methods of their investigation.

Inquirer Mindanao, 23.06.2013

Rash of deadly attacks on ARMM educators since May prompts tight security measures

By Edwin O. Fernandez

COTABATO CITY, Philippines – Education officials in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao have expressed alarm over the rash of attacks on educators in Maguindanao.

"This is already alarming," Lawyer Kamar Kulayan, education secretary for ARMM, said after unidentified gunmen shot and seriously wounded a teacher in Talayan, Maguindanao, on Friday, four days after a school district supervisor was fatally shot in Gen. SK Pendatun, Maguindanao

[...] Kulayan has sought the help of the Philippine National Police Regional Office to help contain the attacks on teachers and education officials.

[...] Lilia Pendatun, OIC district supervisor for Gen. SK Pendatun town, was driving [...] on June 17 en route to her office in Barangay (village) Poblacion when gunmen riding in tandem on a motorbike overtook her and opened fire.

She sustained six gunshot wounds in different parts of her body and was rushed to a hospital in nearby Tacurong City. She expired three days later.

Pendatun was the deputy school district supervisor and assumed as officer in charge a few days after the district supervisor, Abas Minso, was shot dead a day after the May 13 national and local elections.

Kulayan said Pendatun had no known enemy and had not

received death threats before she was ambushed.

"It may not be election-related, probably related to her job as OIC district director," he said. [...]

Two teachers were shot dead in Maguindanao before the elections and another two were separately shot after the balloting.

Kulayan urged the teachers to report to police authorities or to his office if they were receiving harassment or death threats to prevent loss of lives.

While they are not related, two education officials have been shot in Maguindanao and North Cotabato over the past week.

Aside from Pendatun, Dr. Cynthia Alpas, human resources director of the state-run University of Southern Mindanao, was shot in front of her home in Matalam, North Cotabato on June 16.

Alpas is now in critical condition at a hospital in Kidapawan City.

[...] Dandan said police investigators have been determining if the attempt to kill Alpas was related to the on-going protests actions at USM for the ouster of its president, Dr. Jesus Antonio Derije. [...]

Hours before Alpas was shot, unidentified men tossed two Molotov bombs at a parked Toyota Fortuner vehicle of the USM chief security officer inside the school campus. [...]

InterAksyon.com, 24.06.2013

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DFA confirms 'certain cases' of sexual harassment, molestation of OFWs

Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario on Monday said a fact-finding body has "confirmed" at least some reports of "sexual harassment, molestation and abuse of authority" involving Philippine officials preying on vulnerable OFWs in the Middle East.

"Certain allegations were confirmed," del Rosario said. He did not specify any particular case nor name any particular suspects or victims, but acknowledged that three witnesses had come forward in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to give strong corroboration to reports that female OFWs desperate to go home had been harassed or exploited in return in the course of their seeking help for tickets and papers to go home.

"All other allegations will remain as allegations which will be further investigated," Del Rosario said, even as he continued to encourage witnesses to come forward. [...]

The DFA had formed a task force to look into allegations of "sex for flight" incidents in the Middle East, after Akbayan Rep. Walden Bello last week sounded the alarm on the matter. Bello said they had received reports of OFWs being sexually abused by officials and personnel of Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLO), particularly in the Middle East. The DFA has since said it will expand its inquiry to cover Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia.

The DFA has recommended the termination and recall of embassy personnel who would be found guilty of committing sex abuses against distressed Filipino workers.

As allegations surfaced [...], Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario held consultations in Manila with 13 ambassadors and heads of post based in the Middle East and North Africa from June 22 to 23.

[...] The meeting was called to gather more information on the

alleged criminal behavior of certain personnel to validate the accusation and identify preventive and corrective measures, the DFA said in a news release.

If found guilty those involved will face punitive measures, it said.

Separate DFA fact-finding unit

The DFA established a separate fact-finding unit to look into Bello's allegations. It has also set up a hotline dedicated to receive calls from individuals who may have information or have similar complaints related to this issue. [...]

[...] In the long term, the DFA said the recommendations will include a review of the existing rules and standard operating procedures governing the overall management of the Filipino Workers Resource Center (FWRC), which houses the distressed workers - most of whom have run away from abusive employers.

It also seeks to improve the capacity of these diplomatic missions to effectively handle sex-related offenses, intelligence-gathering, and strengthening and tightening of inter-agency cooperation, it said.

The DFA diplomats and officials were also joined by party-list Representative Walden Bello, who exposed last week the alleged sex atrocities against the workers, and the head of the labor department's fact-finding team, Atty. Leah Fortuna.

[...] The Philippines is one of the world's top labor-exporting nations with about 10 million skilled and unskilled workers scattered in various countries abroad, mostly in the Middle East. Remittances from Filipino migrant workers constitute a significant source of the country's foreign exchange as they send home billions of pesos per year.

Bulatlat.com Northern Dispatch, 25.06.2013

Mt. Province folk demands pull out of soldiers

By Delia Bagni

NATONIN, Mountain Province - Residents here demanded the pull out of soldiers stationed in their community, citing threats to their life and security.

In their petition, residents called on the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) to notify the Philippine Army's 54th Infantry Battalion (IB) to pull out from their community. Residents said the massive military operation is violating their rights stated in the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA). They said the people of Natonin and Ifugao did not allow the entry of the military troops within their ancestral land.

The petition was submitted to the NCIP after a humanitarian mission spearheaded by the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA), June 18.

Residents also called on the 5th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army to investigate the cases of thief and destruction of property implicating elements of the 54th IB. They said proper indemnification must be given to the victims.

A resident of Bunag, who requested anonymity for security reasons, said that soldiers went inside their abandoned house through the window. When he checked the house, his bolo, kitchen utensils and working tools were all missing; his chest was dirty and full of mud. A neighbor informed him about the incident.

Meanwhile, Reyna Chono, a resident of Butac, Aginaldo said she and her family were accused by soldiers as supporters of the New People's Army (NPA) because of the medicines she brought home for her son and her husband who were sick at that time.

Chono said she bought paracetamol and ibuprofen but soldiers claimed she also purchased dextrose. The soldiers said that one NPA guerrilla was wounded after an encounter between the two groups on June 2 at Pakkil, boundary of Ifugao and Natonin.

Chono said that they have not attended to their field even it is already time for planting out of fear of the soldiers.

UPDATES ON CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Asian Human Rights Commission - Urgent Appeal Programme, 03.06.2013

Police justify arrest and detention of an ailing man as a substitute for a wanted man because they 'look the same'

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has been informed that an ailing man whom the police have illegally arrested and detained as a substitute for a wanted man will not be released from jail. The police justified their action by insisting they had proof that the victim's facial features and those of the wanted person are the same. However, the evidence was the testimonies of the policemen and a witness neither of whom had

personal knowledge of the victim's real identity nor they had witnessed the victim perpetrating the bombing as charged.

UPDATED INFORMATION: (Based on the information from the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP))

In our previous appeal we reported that Mohjeennar Dagam Cabalo (reported earlier as Mujeenar), a 35-year-old man, was illegally arrested and detained as a substitute for a wanted man



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allegedly for the purpose of claiming the reward money. On March 5, 2013, nine policemen, two of whom were identified as P03 Chester Reyes and PO2 Wilfredo Bobon, of the Mindanao Area Police Intelligence Operation (MAPIO) of the Philippine National Police (PNP), arrested Mohjeennar while he was being treated for his heart ailment inside the Ciudad Medical Zamboanga, Zamboanga City.

In our [appeal letter](#) to the PNP, we have asked for an investigation into allegations that Mohjeennar Cabalo's arrest was without legal basis. However, the police insist they have proof that Mohjeennar and "Aman Kabalu", one of the accused in the October 5, 2007 bombing incident in Kidapawan City, are one and the same. But apart from the joint testimony of P03 Reyes and P02 Bobon declaring the victim and an alias Aman Kabalu/Rahmin/Rahim are the same person, neither of them had any personal knowledge of his actual identity.

[...] The photograph that the police used as justification for the victim's illegal arrest, detention and prosecution, could not have been credible as first, it was obtained illegally via a covert police

operation and secondly, neither in the policemen's nor the eye-witness testimony did they mentioned that they had witnessed "Aman Kabalu" perpetrating the bomb blast. In his testimony, Tukan's claim was only "I knew the personalities involved" and "they were my friends".

In response to the AHRC's appeal, a [letter](#) dated May 2, 2013, P/Chief Supt. Francisco Don Montenegro, acting director for Investigation and Detective Management, concluded that "his (victim) facial composite matched the photograph in [intelligence files](#) and description of the witness." He, however, did not offer substantive explanations to address the concerns that the name of the person they have arrested is different.

Also, the detention and prosecution of a person who had been arrested based on an alias or nickname can only be legal when the information and the warrant of arrest is amended to include the person's real identity. However, the information and the warrant of arrest have not been amended, notably using the real name of the victim written in his [clearance](#) from the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

InterAksyon.com, 01.06.2013

Dipolog City blocktimer's home, radio station attacked

MANILA, Philippines -- Gunmen shot at the home of a Dipolog City blocktime commentator and the radio station he broadcasted from early Saturday, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines reported.

Rodolfo Tanquiz told colleagues his house was fired on around 12:30 a.m.

However, Tanquiz said he has not been staying at home since he posted bail for a libel complaint filed against him by Superintendent Reynaldo Maclang, director of the Zamboanga del Norte Public Safety Battalion.

Around two hours later, Mitchel Bala, a colleague of Tanquiz at dxFL FM 88.9 said shots were also fired at the station, leaving at least five bullet holes in the announcer's booth.

Bala said none of the station's personnel or members of Tanquiz' family was hurt in both incidents.

The NUJP did not say if the shootings had anything to do with the libel case against him.

It will be recalled that last month, the NUJP also reported Tanquiz's arrest by Maclang who, with several of his men, stormed into the radio station and locked himself with the broadcaster in the announcer's booth where the police officer said his piece on air.

The Philippines is ranked third in the world among countries where media killings and other attacks on the press are carried out with impunity because all but a handful of perpetrators go unpunished.

Sun.Star Bacolod, 07.06.2013

Murders raps vs mayor, police chief transferred

THE six counts of murder and three counts of frustrated murder filed against Escalante City Mayor Melecio Yap and former Bacolod City police chief Santiago Rapiz and 15 others were transferred before the Office of the Ombudsman from the City Prosecutor's Office.

Regional Prosecutor Domingo Laurea Jr. [...] stated that Section 4 of Republic Act 8249 provides that the Sandiganbayan shall have the original exclusive jurisdiction over Yap, et al's case. [...]

Cases for murder and frustrated murder were filed by the families of the alleged victims of extrajudicial killing in Escalante against Yap, Rapiz, retired Army Major Arthur Tupas, [...] and John Does.

Lawyer Renecio Espiritu, legal counsel of the families of the victims, said they will immediately file a motion for reconsideration on the desistance of the city prosecutor in handling the case.

Murder and frustrated murder charges, he pointed out, are not part of the official function of an elected official like Yap and must not therefore be handled by the Office of the Ombudsman that only handles work-related cases based on an elected official's function.

The families of the victims who went to the prosecutor's office on Thursday said they learned about the transfer of the case to the Ombudsman only on

Thursday, and that they felt that it favored Yap.

Ferrer says GPH reviewing documents on the arrest of 4 MILF members

By Ben Cal

MANILA, Philippines-- The government peace panel negotiating with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is reviewing the documents and the circumstances pertaining to the recent arrest of four MILF members in Mindanao.

In a press statement, Prof. Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, chair of the government peace panel, said that the government negotiating panel, through its Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH), has been furnished the copy of the protest filed by the MILF on June 8 regarding the arrest of four alleged members of the MILF in three separate incidents.

[...] She said that initial reports submitted by the Philippine National Police "indicate that the law enforcement operation in Polomolok, South Cotabato on May 31 was covered by two separate search warrants against two men. The search yielded several types of ammunition and a weapon, leading to the men's detention".

Ferrer also said that "the arrest of another male person in Pantao Ragat, Lanao del Norte on June 8 was covered by a warrant of arrest issued on the charge of frustrated murder."

"We are still awaiting information on the fourth case of protested arrest in Sultan Kudarat province that reportedly took place on May 28," Ferrer said. [...]

Ferrer said the "Ceasefire Guidelines prohibit 'unjustified arrests' -- not arrests per se," saying that "in this regard, we are looking into the basis for the arrests, the procedures undertaken by the police in the conduct of these specific law enforcement operations, as well as the current situation of those who have been arrested."

"We assure the families of those arrested that government will observe due process and all the attendant rights of the detained," she added.

Ferrer assured that "the GPH-CCCH will be issuing a reply to its counterpart MILF-CCCH as soon as the government completes its internal inquiry." [...]

InterAksyon.com, 14.06.2013



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Teresita Demario, whose son and brother were among the victims, said they have been longing for justice for the brutal killing of their families.

Rappler.com, 12.06.2013

MILF protests arrest of 4 members

MANILA, Philippines - The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is crying foul over the arrest of 4 of its members, warning this could affect the ongoing peace talks.

MILF vice chairman for political affairs Ghadzali Jaafar said they believe the arrests were a deliberate attempt to target the group amid an ongoing ceasefire with government.

[...] The MILF has submitted their complaint to the International Monitoring Team, which is acting as the 3rd party between the government and the MILF on the ceasefire agreement.

Jaafar told Rappler two of their members were arrested in Polomolok, Sultan Kudarat "less than two weeks ago" over alleged illegal possession of ammunition.

[...] Jaafar said under the ceasefire agreement, one of the mechanisms of the peace talks, members of the MILF's Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces cannot be arrested for carrying firearms or ammunition. [...]

'Law enforcement operation'

Misereor.org, 15.06.2013

An Xstrata mine threatens human rights in the Philippines

(Lucerne/Berne/Aachen, 12 June 2013) The Zug-based group [Glencore-Xstrata](#) is showing insufficient respect for the rights of the affected population with its plans to exploit one of the world's biggest [open-pit mines in the Philippines](#). Because the project threatens the livelihood of tens of thousands of people, tensions are rising and the first deaths have occurred. That is shown by a study commissioned by the Swiss [Lenten Fund](#), MISEREOR and Bread for All. The Swiss government is now challenged to act.

Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI), a subsidiary of the Zug-based giant Xstrata group, that has merged with Glencore, plans to exploit the biggest copper and gold mine in Asia in [Tampakan](#), Philippines. "About 5,000 indigenous people would be relocated and their traditional land destroyed. The mine would also threaten the water supply of tens of thousands of people," says Father Joy Pelino, the director of the Social Action Center of Marbel diocese, who opposes the project. The area is politically unstable and violence is increasing: already, eight people have been killed in the context of the project. The powder keg is about to explode.

A study conducted by the Institute for Development and Peace (INEF) shows that SMI has contravened its obligation of due diligence. The UN's Guiding Principles for Business and [Human Rights](#) state that companies are responsible for respecting human rights worldwide. Precisely in such an area of conflict they must conduct prior, detailed investigations of the effect of their activities on human rights. For Daniel Hostettler, human rights expert of Lenten Fund, one thing is clear: "A mix of

[...] He also bared that the cases filed were only among the 23 murder and frustrated murder cases that they are going to file against Yap and his alleged trusted men in Escalante City.

Government peace panel head Miriam Coronel-Ferrer said in a statement she has asked the police to issue a complete report on the cases.

Major Carlos Sol, secretariat head of the government Ceasefire Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (GCCCH), told Rappler the GCCCH sent a formal letter to the Philippine National Police yesterday asking for a full report on the matter. The police have yet to respond.

Despite the ceasefire agreement, Sol said he believes "law enforcement" should prevail. "There are procedures that can be done under the ceasefire accord," he said. "We don't differentiate on whether they are MILF or what. In my opinion, it depends on whether the person has a warrant of arrest." [...]

NPA vows stronger armed resistance vs Glencore Xstrata's Tampakan project

By Bong S. Sarmiento

KORONADAL CITY - The New People's Army (NPA) will launch stronger armed resistance against the Tampakan copper-gold project of the merged Glencore Xstrata plc., a rebel leader said Tuesday.

In an e-mailed statement, "Ka Efren," spokesperson of the National Democratic Front-Far South Mindanao Region, also appealed "to the people's greater vigilance and fervent stand for the protection of our environment, our subsistence, and our national patrimony against the catastrophic attack of foreign large-scale mining."

"The most recent intrusion of the multinational Glencore will bring about a wider anti-mining resistance in Far South Mindanao. The revolutionary forces are unremittingly preparing for the extensive battle to defy the multinational's invasive assault," he said.

Glencore International plc announced on May 2 that it has completed the takeover of Xstrata plc to form Glencore Xstrata, making it the world's fourth biggest mining company and the world's biggest commodities trader.

Xstrata, through its wholly owned Xstrata Copper, owns 62.5 percent of the 40 percent controlling equity at Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI), developer of the Tampakan project.

Australian firm Indophil Resources NL owns the rest or 37.5 percent of the controlling equity. It is Indophil's flagship asset in its portfolio.

The Tampakan project straddles the towns of Tampakan in South Cotabato, Columbio in Sultan Kudarat, Kiblawan in Davao del Sur and Malungon in Sarangani.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources issued an environmental compliance certificate to the Tampakan project last February, after rejecting it twice last year because of the open-pit ban imposed by the South Cotabato provincial government.

In December last year, SMI announced that it was moving the start of commercial operation from 2016 to 2019. Among the major challenges the company cited is the open-pit ban in South Cotabato.

On New Year's Day 2008, communist guerillas stormed the base camp of Sagittarius Mines in Barangay Tablu in Tampakan town, burning facilities and equipment worth at least P12 million.

On January 29, 2009, NPA rebels also attacked the municipal police station in Tampakan. Four people, including three policemen, were injured in the daring attack that left the police station partially destroyed.

SMI has repeatedly acknowledged in their annual sustainability reports that security threats are among the risks facing the project.

[...] Besides the security threat posed by the NPA, the Tampakan project is also facing opposition from B'laan tribesmen who took up guns in resistance.

The local government units of Kiblawan, Tampakan and Columbio earlier agreed to form the Task Force Kitaco to take charge of security arrangements in the mountains that include the tenement of SMI.

The mining company has been providing support to the military-led task force through its annual financial assistance to the LGUs straddled by the mining project.

The Tampakan Forum, a coalition of international and local non-government organizations and the local Catholic church opposing the Tampakan copper-gold project, said that before Glencore acquired Xstrata, the former wrote them that it does "not believe in military presence in the mine site and will demilitarize when it takes over."

"The Tampakan Forum is taking with a grain of salt the Glencore pronouncement. But if it is able to sincerely demilitarize the project site immediately and unilaterally, this will be extremely welcomed," it said.

MindaNews, 04.06.2013



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government failure, a poor and marginalised population, and armed conflicts are the worst possible preconditions for operating an open-cast mine of these dimensions." The INEF study therefore concludes: "It seems today that conducting the mine project will not be possible without a serious impact on human rights."

The aid organisations Lenten Fund, MISEREOR and Bread for All are calling upon SMI and the Philippines government to enter into an honest dialogue with the people concerned - that could even lead to dropping the project.

"The rights of the indigenous population to freely decide on the operating of mining projects in their territory must be respected," asserts Elisabeth Strohscheidt, development policy expert from MISEREOR. The [Swiss federal government](#) should also

Bulatlat.com, 20.06.2013

AFP 'persistent violator of child's rights' - child rights group

By Anne Marxe D. Umil

MANILA - The Armed Forces of the Philippines is the persistent perpetrator of child's rights violations. This is the assertion of child's rights group as the United Nation recently released its report on violations committed against children.

The UN released its report entitled, "Grave violations committed against children in 22 situations of concern" last June 12. The report covers violations against children that occurred in 2012. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reported that in 2012, there were 26 children who were recruited as soldiers, messengers and informants in conflict zones and dozens of other minors were slain and maimed in militant attacks and gunfights.

The report cited the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the New People's Army, the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Philippine Army as using children in their operations. The UN also listed the said groups except the Philippine Army in a list of 29 groups that are "persistent perpetrators" of the use of children in armed conflict.

The UN reported 66 cases of killings and maiming of children, including 29 deaths and 37 cases of injured children. According to the report, the AFP was implicated in 14 cases; the MILF in four, the NPA in three and one incident attributed to the ASG. Ban meanwhile expressed concern over the use of children as guides by the armed forces during military operations and labeling of children as members of armed groups.

Violations perpetrated by members of the AFP

The Children's Rehabilitation Center (CRC) cited one recently-documented case in Trento, Agusan del Sur, which happened on May 7, 2012. A 16-year old boy from Trento, Agusan del Sur was injured after soldiers from the 25th and 75th Infantry Battalions dropped bombs in their community. When the boy went to the evacuation center where his family and other community members sought refuge, he was arrested by soldiers. The boy was photographed and presented to the media, branding him as member of the NPA.

The CRC expressed deep concern over the alarming cases of children victims of human rights violations. In 2012 alone, CRC has documented 12 cases of killings, 4 children used as guides in military operations, 10 children arrested, detained and tagged as members of the NPA and hundreds of children affected by the continuing attacks and encampment of the AFP in their schools.

[...] Jacqueline Ruiz, executive director of the CRC [...], further cited other cases of children's rights violations perpetrated by armed forces. She cited two cases where four boys from North Cotabato were harassed, threatened and used as guides in military operations by soldiers of the 57th Infantry Battalion. In Quezon province, a 16 year old boy was arrested by soldiers from the 74th Infantry Battalion and detained, on the basis of a

Bulatlat.com, 25.06.2013

take action: the rights without borders campaign calls for legislation so that due diligence becomes a binding standard for corporations. The Tampakan example shows that voluntary standards alone are not enough. Beat Dietschy, general secretary of Bread for All, declares: "Swiss companies have to respect all human rights, all over the world."

Opposition to the Tampakan project also comes from Basel Bishop Felix Gmür. The president designate of the foundation council of Lenten Fund has been to the Philippines and seen with his own eyes how "people's dignity and rights are being trampled underfoot and there is ruthless plundering of creation." For him it is quite clear: "From a Christian perspective, striving for profit must not override the fundamental rights of the population."

fabricated case, for almost 11 months in a government institution. According to CRC, the boy was an ordinary farmer but was illegally arrested and accused of being a member of the NPA. In Negros Occidental, three boys from an Indigenous group were arrested and detained for two days along with 16 other farmers, and were branded as members of the NPA. This was done by the AFP in retaliation after an encounter with the NPA.

Ruiz said children victims bear the brunt of being directly or indirectly victimized. "They are harassed, threatened, forced as guides, displaced, maimed, raped or killed and later on branded as child soldiers as an excuse of the AFP for the violations they have done. [...]," Ruiz pointed out.

The CRC also urged the UN to look into the cases of children's rights violations being committed by the AFP. Ruiz said they have documented and verified through fact-finding missions the AFP's numerous violations on the rights of children. [...]

'Expel military from schools'

The UN report also cited cases of the military's use of schools as temporary stations in conflict areas. [...]

In Las Navas, Northern Samar, Ormoc City and Ilocos region, CRC documented cases of soldiers occupying day care centers, using the walls as urinal and as firewood. The occupation of schools disrupted classes because many children were frightened to see soldiers carrying firearms inside their classrooms. "These early exposure to violence and constant terror has devastating psychological effects which can affect their intellectual development- a direct attack on the children's future," the CRC stated in their 2012 report.

[...] Vencer Crisostomo, national chairman of Anakbayan [...] said public [schools are also being used by the military to vilify activists](#). The vilification or red tagging of human rights organizations has been decried as a tool to condition public opinion against activists who are in the military's hit list or the Order of Battle. [...]

Crisostomo called on the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department on Education (DepEd), and Commission on Human Rights (CHR) to immediately work on keeping campuses military-free. "A school that is military-free is one that is child-friendly," he said.

Resume peace talks

[...] The CRC also enjoins advocates of human rights, children's rights and of peace to call for the resumption of peace talks between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and for an end to the armed conflict by genuinely addressing the roots of poverty.

"[...]"

Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Another witness implicates soldiers in abduction of UP students

By Ronalyn V. Olea

MALOLOS, Bulacan – Two days before the seventh year since Karen Empeño, Sherlyn Cadapan and Manuel Merino were forcibly taken by suspected state agents, another eyewitness faced the court and swore on his account of the incident.

William C. Ramos, 61, took the witness stand, June 24 at the Bulacan Regional Trial Court Branch 14. The local court is hearing the charges of kidnapping and serious illegal detention against retired Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. and three other men in uniform in connection with the disappearance of University of the Philippines (UP) students.

In his affidavit, Ramos said that on June 26, 2006, at around 2 a.m., several men banged the door of his house at purok 6, barangay San Miguel, Hagonoy, Bulacan. Some of the men wore Army fatigue and the others were in civilian clothes but wearing combat boots. When Ramos opened the door, two men grabbed him, tied his arms and blindfolded him. He was hit by the butt of a rifle and then forced to kneel on the ground. His son, Wilfredo, then 14 years old, was also tied.

Father and son were then dragged to the road. William stated in his affidavit in Filipino: "...my blindfold loosened. I saw armed men dragging Sherlyn Cadapan, Karen Empeño and Manuel Merino into the jeep. Sherlyn was shouting 'Tatay, help us.' Meanwhile, Karen Empeño was begging for mercy as the men took off her shirt and tied her and Manuel Merino was struggling as the men held him."

One of the men told Ramos in Filipino: "Whatever you saw, just keep it to yourself because we will go back here." Then the jeep sped away.

[...] Ramos corroborated the statements made by the previous witnesses. His son, Wilfredo, also [testified in the same court](#) on Sept. 10, 2012. Wilfredo was able to [identify one of the soldiers involved in the abduction](#) during the preliminary investigation of the case on July 19, 2011. Three other witnesses were presented by the prosecution in court.

Two of the suspects – Col. Felipe Anotado Jr. and Staff Sgt. Edgardo Osorio – were present during the June 24 hearing. Palparan and Master Sgt. Rizal Hilario remain at large despite a standing warrant of arrest issued by the Bulacan court.

Karen's mother, Concepcion Empeño and Sherlyn's parents, Erlinda and Asher Cadapan, attended the hearing.

"Seven years quickly passed by but the progress of our case has been painstakingly slow," Mrs. Empeño told *Bulatlat.com* shortly after the hearing.

"In those years, many things might have happened to Karen. She would have finished her studies. She would have even been married and would have children by now," Mrs. Empeño said.

[...] Mrs. Empeño expressed frustration that authorities have so far failed to arrest Palparan. "It is highly possible that the military is coddling him [Palparan]. He should face the court." [...]

Inquirer.net, 20.06.2013

'Torture cop' bid for bail blocked

By Tetch Torres-Tupas

MANILA, Philippines – Government lawyers blocked the move of a policeman facing torture case to post bail for his temporary liberty.

Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Philip Kimpo said Margie Catalan-Evangelista, the wife of the victim Darius Evangelista, appeared before the Manila Regional Trial Court and testified against Senior Inspector Joselito Binayug. The victim, Evangelista disappeared on March 5, 2010.

Binayug is facing a case for violation of the Anti-Torture Act.

Kimpo said on the next hearing, they intend to show to the court the video footage of Binayug allegedly torturing Evangelista.

Binayug and several other policemen were relieved after television news showed cell phone footage of a naked and bound man grimacing in pain on the floor allegedly at the precinct station on Asuncion Street in Tondo, Manila.

Inquirer Visayas, 22.06.2013

Support for Boracay tribe growing

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.

ILOILO CITY—Supporters of the Ati tribe on Boracay Island have appealed to the claimants of the land granted by the government to the tribe to withdraw their opposition to the tribe's ownership of the property.

The tribe's supporters, in an online petition, also appealed to the claimants to allow the indigenous peoples' community to build houses on the land.

The petitioners called on property claimants Ulysses Rudi Banico, Gregorio Sanson and Richard King to drop their claims and opposition to the tribe's ownership of a 2.1-hectare property in Barangay Manoc-Manoc occupied by 32 families or at least 200 Ati tribe members.

"This is but too little a consolation [for these] simple people who used to have Boracay as their own little paradise before [investors and tourists] came to this beautiful island," the petition said. The petition had 577 signatories including those from other countries as of noon of June 19.

The property is covered by a certificate of ancestral domain title issued in 2011 by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to the Ati tribe.

The NCIP and anthropological studies have supported claims that the Atis were the earliest settlers on the island but were displaced and driven away, especially starting in the 1970s when the island started to become a top tourist destination and attracted investors.

Ati tribe supporters have started building permanent houses for the community in April. The housing project was initiated by Assisi Development Foundation Inc.

But on May 3, the Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 5 in Kalibo, Aklan, acting on a motion of Banico, ordered the tribe and its supporters to stop erecting permanent structures on the property. The order, issued by Judge Elmo del Rosario, also directed the Aklan police to enforce the court ruling. [...]

MAGUINDANAO MASSACRE

Philippine Daily Inquirer, 06.06.2013

Prosecutors want 2009 massacre suspect arraigned soon despite 'mistaken ID' claims

By Jeannette I. Andrade

MANILA, Philippines – State prosecutors have asked the Que-

Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

IFJ asks Aquino to expedite massacre trial

By Ryan D. Rosaura

OZAMIZ CITY—More than 300 delegates to the 28th World Congress of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in Dublin, Ireland has called on President Benigno Aquino III to “take steps to expedite the trial” of the Maguindanao massacre.

According to National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) chair Rowena Paraan, who joined the Dublin gathering, the call was contained in an urgent resolution adopted by the Congress delegates.

“Everybody is disappointed that after years and years of campaigning, the justice system in the Philippines has not moved forward. Journalists here from 120 countries are absolutely united in making sure that they will help the widest campaigns until justice is found,” IFJ president Jim Boumelha was quoted in an NUJP news release.

The IFJ is the world’s largest organization of journalists with some 600,000 members in 120 countries. The NUJP is its affiliate in the Philippines.

The Maguindanao massacre killed 58 individuals, 32 of whom are media workers. It is dubbed the world’s worst single attack on the press, hence, the massacre trial earned the continued attention of international press freedom advocates. [...]

It has been three and a half years since the grisly incident in 2009 and yet “there has not been a single conviction for the murders,” the IFJ Congress noted.

Among the immediate steps government can do is “to immediately arrest and arraign all the accused...,” the IFJ pointed out.

There are 196 suspects, 32 of them belonging to the Ampatuan clan, a close ally of former president Gloria Arroyo. Until today, 90 of the accused remain at-large. [...]

The IFJ also demanded that the justice department “take measures to protect the witnesses and families of victims” amid reports from some of them that they were “receiving threats and noticing unidentified persons monitoring their movements.”

Further, the IFJ said it was “concerned at confirmed reports that the accused are coercing families to accept monetary settlements in exchange for (their) signing affidavits of desistance” from the massacre case.

Sun.Star Cagayan de Oro, 10.06.2013

Radio dzMM, 14.06.2013

Ex-mayor included in list of massacre suspects

MANILA - Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court’s Branch 221 has thrown out a motion to remove ex-Shariff Aguak Mayor Anwar Ampatuan Sr from the list of suspects in the Maguindanao massacre case.

Reyes said Ampatuan presented no new argument that will overturn her earlier ruling that multiple murder charges be filed

Inquirer.net, 24.06.2013

Roque: 14 relatives of Maguindanao massacre victims negotiating for settlement

By Tetch Torres-Tupas

MANILA, Philippines—Relatives of 14 media victims in the Maguindanao massacre have agreed to negotiate for a settlement with the Ampatuans, lawyer Harry Roque revealed on Monday.

The Ampatuans, including former Maguindanao governor Andal Ampatuan Sr., his son former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) governor Zaldy Ampatuan, former Datu Unsay mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr., former Shariff Aguak mayor Datu Anwar Ampatuan, former vice governor Datu Sajid Ampatuan and former Mamasapano mayor Akmad Ampatuan were the principal accused in the massacre case [...].

Roque, legal counsel for the families of the 17 media victims in the massacre, posted a statement on his blog [...] revealing that the relatives of the 14 journalists signed a “written authority” sometime in February for a third party close to the Ampatuans to negotiate a settlement with the accused.

“Under the scheme, the victims were to sign not just a waiver and a quitclaim but also an affidavit pinning the blame for the massacre on Governor Esmael “Toto” Mangudadatu,” Roque

son City Regional Trial Court to immediately set the arraignment of an accused in the 2009 Maguindanao massacre who had claimed that he was mistakenly arrested as one of the perpetrators of the carnage.

[...] The man that authorities have arrested as Masukat has been crying mistaken identity and has claimed being Talemo Abdulrahman. His scheduled arraignment in May was deferred after he asked Judge Reyes to abide by the Cotabato City regional trial court branch 13’s issuance of a writ of habeas corpus based on an acknowledgment of the mistake on his identity when he was arrested.

[...] In a previous motion, Masukat claimed a clear finding of mistaken identity by the Cotabato City regional trial court, which therefore declared his detention illegal and issued the writ of habeas corpus.

Abdurrahman, whom authorities claimed is also known as Talemo Masukat, is the 101st of 195 accused to be arrested for the Nov. 23, 2009 carnage at Sitio Masalay, Barangay (village) Salman near Ampatuan town in Maguindanao Province.

He was arrested on February 16 after he and several other armed men allegedly engaged in a firefight with members of the Army’s 45th Infantry Battalion at Barangay Manungkaling, Mamasapano town in Maguindanao. [...]

[...] Talemo Masukat, who carries a P300,000 bounty, was a trusted aide of Mamasapano town mayor Bahnarin Ampatuan, another accused in the massacre and grandson of former Maguindanao governor Andal Ampatuan Sr. He also worked as a driver for the ex-governor’s eldest daughter, Bai Rebecca Ampatuan.

Masukat was identified by Datu Abdullah Sangki town councilor Mohammad Sangki as the person who relayed to him the alleged plan to block the Mangudadatu convoy and who deployed on November 19, several days before the massacre, a dozen members of a civilian auxiliary unit to a checkpoint at Crossing Saniag in Sitio (sub-village) Masalay, Ampatuan town.

against the 196 accused.

Ampatuan is set to arraigned on June 26 in Camp Bagong Diwa. A total of 58 people were killed in the November 23, 2009 massacre in Maguindanao, which was carried out by members and allies of the Ampatuan clan.

said adding that they were not informed of the deal but they got wind of it through sources.

[...] Roque said with the government’s failure to provide the victims of an adequate remedy under domestic law and compensation, the victims will continuously be tempted with schemes that may eventually cause a miscarriage of justice.

Roque explained that the duty to pay compensation to the victims of the massacre is separate and distinct from the civil damages that the Court may order the accused to pay to the private complainants as part of the judgment in the criminal cases for murders.

“The compensation that is due to the victims is because it is the state itself that breached its obligation to protect and promote the right of the victims to live. This includes not just monetary compensation, but also all that may be required to restore the emotional and psychological wellbeing of the victims,” he said adding that they still have a pending motion before the Quezon City Court to order government agencies to provide psychosocial support to the victims.

Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

[...] He noted that it even took the government almost four years just to file the information for the 58th Maguindanao massacre victim, Reynaldo Momay.

"This should give us a clue on how long the criminal proceedings will take," Roque added

[...] Roque said the talks for a settlement stopped in February because the person who was supposed to serve as a negotiator was killed two weeks after the written authority was signed.

[...] But one thing is clear, according to Roque, "the 14 relatives are willing to enter into a settlement."

[...] In his blog, Roque, also the chairman of the Center for International Law, said the temptation among relatives to settle with the Ampatuans headed by one of the accused, clan patriarch Andal Ampatuan Sr., became strong because of the government's failure to provide compensation for the suffering of the victims, which was compounded by the failure of the state to provide a safe environment in which people could freely exercise their civil and political rights.

[...] Roque also wrote that his 17 clients would file a communication with the United Nations Human Rights Committee about the government's failure in its obligation of protecting and promoting its citizens' right to life for which it should pay the victims compensation and provide adequate remedies under local laws. [...]

PEACE PROCESS

The Philippine Star, 13.06.2013

Gov't, MNLF resume talks

By Perseus Echeminada

MANILA, Philippines - The Moro National Liberation Front and the government peace panel will hold preliminary talks next week for the final implementation of the 1996 peace agreement under the auspices of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), a top MNLF official said yesterday.

Lawyer Emmanuel Fontanilla, MNLF spokesman, told The STAR that Malacañang set the meeting on June 17 to 19 in preparation for formal talks in Saudi Arabia sometime in August.

[...] He said MNLF chairman Nur Misuari would lead the four-man panel while Presidential Peace Adviser Teresita Deles will head the government panel.

He said the issues to be discussed include the coverage of territory and sharing of resources.

Fontanilla said the peace talks would resume after the OIC issued a resolution that called on the government to synchronize the framework agreement forged by the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to the accord with the MNLF.

He said Indonesia is brokering the final implementation of the peace accord with the MNLF while Malaysia is mediating on behalf of the MILF.

"The MNLF sees no conflict with the framework agreement (with the MILF) because it aims to address the Bangsamoro problem in Mindanao," he said.

However, Fontanilla clarified that if the last two items in the peace accord will not be resolved, they would seek the endorsement of the OIC to bring the issue before the United Na-

Philstar.com, 25.06.2013

Gov't chief CPP-NPA-NDF negotiator to sit as new PhilHealth president

By Camille Diola

MANILA, Philippines - Amid dimming hopes for peace talks with communist rebels, government peace panel chief negotiator Alexander Padilla resigned to take his seat at the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).

President Benigno Aquino III earlier nominated Padilla, who

FURTHER READINGS

Human Rights News June 2013

Palace: Gov't has no obligation to pay kin of Maguindanao massacre victims

By Michael Lim Ubac

MANILA, Philippines — Malacañang does not agree with lawyer Harry Roque's interpretation that the government has the responsibility, under international law, to indemnify victims of the Maguindanao massacre before the conclusion of the trial.

At a briefing, deputy presidential spokesperson Abigail Valte said that part and parcel of the judgment of the court (should it be a conviction) would be the civil aspect of the case.

[...] She doubted the veracity of the P50 million out-of-court settlement that had been dangled to some of the victims' families, saying other lawyers had denied this.

"So I don't know if this is a disconnect between the client and the lawyer. Also, we will defer to the justice department whether they would agree to the interpretation of Attorney Roque on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," said Valte.

She said she was "not really quite sure if that (doctrine) applies."

"He is making it appear that the government had committed the crime — the accused, while they were (still) elected officials. But the government was not one of those (charged)," she said.

Valte said the Aquino administration, through the Department of Justice, would not accede to any attempt to frustrate the ends of justice.

[...] She maintained that when the President met with the families of the victims, the latter had offered help, with some concerns immediately referred to concerned agencies.

"The offer of assistance has always been there because we all know what they're going through. And, again, the instructions of the President stand: for the public prosecutors not to delay the prosecution of the cases and block all and any dilatory motions or dilatory tactics that the defense could employ," she said.

Philippine Daily Inquirer, 25.06.2013

tions.

He said the MNLF would exhaust all peaceful and diplomatic means to attain the political objective of self-rule.

"The MNLF has already renounced violence to attain its objective, we will not fight except in self defense," he said.

Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, the government's negotiator with the MILF, said the rebels should give up some of their demands to achieve a final peace agreement under the proposed Bangsamoro government.

Ferrer said that there are provisions of the MILF that the government cannot devolve to the Bangsamoro.

Ferrer said the MILF proposed that the budget of the Bangsamoro government would be automatically appropriated separate from the annual general appropriations act (GAA).

She said the other contentious issues that hampered the early signing of the peace agreement are the provisions of power sharing where the government maintained that it cannot delegate to the Bangsamoro the handling of national defense, foreign relations, customs and tariff, and immigration.

[...] The MILF leadership earlier warned that any delay in the signing of the peace accord would have an adverse effect on the ground.

[...] The peace talks are aimed at creating an autonomous region for the Muslim minority in Mindanao, the southern third of the mainly Catholic nation of 100 million. [...]

was an undersecretary at the Department of Health, to sit as president and chief executive of the government-controlled company. [...]

The OPPAP, meanwhile, has not yet announced who would succeed Padilla in the panel. [...]



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

OHCHR, 01.06.2013

The factual backdrop for human rights protection and development agendas

The UN [Human Rights](#) Office has spent the past several years researching, consulting and now implementing a range of statistical indicators to assist in measuring progress in realizing human rights. The indicators have been adopted in several countries in a number of situations... [...]

Loretta Rosales, the chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights of [the Philippines](#), described a "simple statistical analysis of arbitrary killings, enforced disappearance and torture... from 2001 to 2010... correlated with policy gaps or failures during the previous government, (which) provided a factual backdrop to what has been described as a climate of impunity in our country." [...] [Read more](#)

Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, 10.06.2013

Sandiganbayan files: 256 poll winners have graft, crime cases; 17 convicted

First of Two Parts

AMONG ITS many excuses for being, the government is supposed to combat crime and corruption. Those elected to office thus take a solemn oath before God, country, and Constitution to uphold, defend, and rule by the laws of the land.

But the May 2013 elections saw the unsettling nuptial of politics and crime, or of candidates and party-list group nominees accused of both graft and criminal offenses winning elective positions. [...] [Read more](#)

Sun.Star.com, 10.06.2013

Manobos to reclaim ancestral domain

TALACOGON, AGUSAN DEL SUR - Members of the Manobo communities here have decided to take their ancestral lands after almost 50 years of occupancy from logging companies which left their lands barren and their forest bald. [...] [Read more](#)

Hronlineph.com, 20.06.2013

STILL WINDOW-DRESSING A Performance Report on the Third Year of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) 2011-2012

The year under review, 2012, saw AICHR take limited steps in the direction of transparency and consultation with civil society. Some of these steps addressed criticism and reflect recommendations that our previous reports had highlighted [...]. [Read more](#)