



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

HEADLINES NEWS REVIEW JULY 2013

Headlines & Politics

Karapatan reiterates call to dismantle paramilitary groups, revoke EO546	1
Army chief tags rights defenders as enemies of the state	1
'State of the Nation Address' Should Outline Plan to Tackle Impunity	1
Int'l confab delegates call for end to impunity, resumption of peace talks	2
Dutch activist in SONA protest under immigration probe	2
A call to human rights defenders: conduct actions to end impunity!	3

Institutions

Gender bias must be penalized, says solon	3
Angara admits 3 flaws in anti-cybercrime law	4
EU-PH expand partnership for justice reform	4
Rights advocates urge EU to scrap 10M euro grant	5
PNP most corrupt agency – survey	5
Palace not endorsing FOI passage	5
Aquino vows to address needs of military	6
High court affirms law on women's rights	6
Karapatan calls for CHR chair resignation	6
CHR to anti-SONA groups: Government respects your rights	7

Current Cases of Human Rights Violations

Task force rescues 132 human trafficking victims in Zambo	7
Groups condemn ambush of B'laan leader and member	8
Manila bishop launches online petition against Tampakan mine in South Cotabato	8
Family asks banana firm to release son held incommunicado	8
Arrests, surveillance of activists precede Aquino's SONA	9
"Kill them, they are NPAs!" Lumad torture victim recounts ordeal	9
Abuses, then and now, for Agusanons	10
Hundreds flee Agusan Sur villages	10
2 mediamen gunned down in Quezon City	11
Labor leader shot dead in Cotabato City after bringing kids to school	11

Updates on Cases of Human Rights Violations

Statement on the First Death Anniversary of Bro. Willem Geertman	11
AFP admits to 7 human rights violations in H1	12
30 killed in Davao since July 1	12
Clarificatory hearing on Italian priest's slay held	12
Murder case OK'd vs hotel guard in slay of Ati leader	13
Kin, rights advocates hail junking of bail plea of Palparan's co-accused	13
DFA explains sex-for-flight probe process, as Akbayan releases names on list	13

Maguindanao Massacre

Ampatuan arraignment reset to August 27	14
---	----

Peace Process

Human Rights News July 2013



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Muslim rebel group seeks unity with ex-secessionist leaders	14
CPP-NPA stays on EU terror list	14
Gov't plans to end review of peace pact with MNLF	15

Further Readings

10 FAQs on Wealth Sharing Annex between Philippines, MILF	15
[English version] President Aquino's SONA 2013: Full text	15
“Matuwid na daan” excludes human rights victims and defenders	15

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).

Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

HEADLINES & POLITICS

Karapatan Press Statement, 06.07.2013

Karapatan reiterates call to dismantle paramilitary groups, revoke EO546

"The inordinate delay in the delivery of justice for the victims of the Ampatuan massacre and the recent accounts of the backhoe driver exemplify how impunity runs through from one administration to the next; in this case from the Arroyo to the Aquino regime. Despite the people's outrage and after more than three years after the massacre, one of the key government policies, Executive Order 546, has yet to be revoked by Pres. Noyoy Aquino," Karapatan secretary general Cristina Palabay said. [...] Former Pres. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's Executive Order 546 allowed local officials to employ members of the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units (CAFGU) and Civilian Volunteer Organizations (CVO) to purportedly address insurgency in the country. Karapatan said Pres. Aquino expanded and strengthened the EO by creating the Special CAFGU Auxiliary Action (SCAA) to protect operations of mining firms. "EO 546 legitimized the use of civilian military groups as force multipliers to supposedly combat rebel groups, giving free reign to paramilitary groups and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to commit heinous crimes such as the Ampatuan massacre and

protect the interests of big foreign corporations such as transnational mining companies and agro-business plantations," Palabay said.

Palabay noted "the notoriety of such paramilitary groups continue under the Aquino administration as the AFP employs them for its counter-insurgency program, Oplan Bayanihan, in their operations in the communities." She said, "such paramilitary groups were involved in many cases of extrajudicial killings, torture and enforced disappearances in communities where there are opposition to big businesses that will dislocate the local peasants and indigenous peoples."

[...] The continued existence of paramilitary groups in the Philippines had been a major concern among member countries of the United Nations. During the 2012 UN Universal Periodic Review, where the rights record of the Philippine government was reviewed, several foreign missions called for the immediate dismantling of paramilitary groups such as the CAFGU, SCAA, CVO and the repeal of EO 546. [...]

Bulatlat.com, 12.07.2013

Army chief tags rights defenders as enemies of the state

By Ronalyn V. Olea

MANILA - Two organizations of human rights advocates slammed an Army officer for branding them as enemies of the state.

[For criticizing the appointment of Brigadier General Aurelio Baladad](#) as head of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, Karapatan and the National Union of Peoples' Lawyers were tagged as enemies of the state by Army Chief Lt. Gen. Noel Coballes.

Baladad is facing a string of criminal and administrative charges, including torture, before various courts for his alleged involvement in the arrest and torture of 43 health workers, more popularly known as the Morong 43.

[In a report](#), Coballes said: "You don't expect any positive statement from the enemy," referring to the two groups. "General Baladad won't be given a key position if he is not upright," Coballes said in the same report.

Recidivist

The NUPL, a leading association of peoples' lawyers in the country, which handles the case of Morong 43 and other high-profile human rights cases, said the military is back to its old recidivist ways.

"It confirms yet again the military's mindset of treating legal organizations, and a lawyers' organization at that, as 'enemies of the state.' It is the same line of Gen. Jovito Palparan, the notori-

ous rights violator who was coddled by former President Arroyo and who is now still in hiding," Edre Olalia, NUPL secretary general, said in a statement.

[...] "By calling Karapatan its enemy, the AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] had justified that the victims of human rights violations are also its enemies," Cristina Palabay, Karapatan secretary general, said.

The group has documented 142 cases of extrajudicial killing and 164 frustrated killing; 16 incidents of enforced disappearance; 76 cases of torture; 293 cases of illegal arrest and detention since Aquino assumed the presidency.

[...] "Such a mindset had in the past placed our members and clients in real danger," Olalia said. The group recalled that former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Killings Philip Alston pointed out that such mindset bred the attacks on civil society groups. Alston visited the Philippines in February 2007 during the height of extrajudicial killings.

Olalia said Coballes's statement is also in open violation of the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and even the Philippine Code of Professional Responsibility that proscribe associating or imputing to the lawyer the cause or case of the client.

Human Rights Watch, 19.07.2013

'State of the Nation Address' Should Outline Plan to Tackle Impunity

(Manila) - [Philippine](#) President Benigno S. Aquino III should use his annual "State of the Nation Address" to outline concrete steps to provide justice for victims of human rights abuses in the country, Human Rights Watch said today in a [letter](#) to the president.

Aquino will deliver his State of the Nation Address in Manila on Monday, July 22, 2013. He is expected to highlight his administration's accomplishments since his inauguration on June 30, 2010. His six-year term ends on June 30, 2016. Human Rights Watch outlined specific measures that Aquino should address in the State of the Nation speech, including:

- Ending impunity for extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances by prosecuting state security forces implicated in human rights violations.

- Prosecuting officials implicated in "death squad" killings in Davao City and other cities.
- Stopping abuses in mining areas.
- Disbanding local militias and paramilitary forces, and rescinding Executive Order 546, which allows politicians to arm "private armies."

"President Aquino should use this State of the Nation speech to put meat on the bones of his human rights commitments by outlining specific measures to tackle ongoing human rights problems," said [Brad Adams](#), Asia director. "At the top of his list is holding abusive members of the security forces accountable."



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Pinoyweekly.org, 21.07.2013

Int'l confab delegates call for end to impunity, resumption of GPH-NDFP peace talks

By Macky Macaspac

[...] "Without human rights, there can be no peace."

Thus said Anna Claire Morris, lawyer and vice chairman of Haidane Society of Socialist Lawyers and a delegate of the International Conference for Human Rights and Peace in the Philippines (ICHRP).

The conference delegates called for the resumption of the stalled peace talks between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), while assailing the continuing culture of impunity in the country.

The three-day conference attended by more than 200 human rights advocates from 26 countries tackled two main issues: escalating human rights violations in the country with the Aquino government's insistence on implementing neoliberal policies like the Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), as well as threats of more violence and human rights violations due to stalled peace talks between the GPH and the NDFP.

Former Rep. Teddy Casino, spokesperson of ICHR, said the privatization of public utilities and services violates social and economic rights.

"This (privatization and PPP) systematically violates peoples' rights to housing, health and other basic social services," Casino said.

According to Casino, human rights violations worsened with Aquino's implementation of the counter-insurgency program Oplan Bayanihan patterned after the United States counter-insurgency guide.

[...] Casino alleged that the termination of GPH peace talks with the NDFP would further escalate rights violations. [...]

Impunity still reigns

Prior to the conference, delegates joined fact-finding missions in Central Luzon, Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog and Mindanao to investigate and document cases of human rights abuses and the people's economic and social conditions.

The group insisted that impunity still reigns under Aquino's watch, while human rights violations are on the rise.

Philstar.com, 23.07.2013

Dutch activist in SONA protest under immigration probe

By Louis Bacani

MANILA, Philippines - The Bureau of Immigration (BI) is investigating foreigners who participated in the protests during the State of the Nation Address (SONA) last Monday.

The BI said they want to determine if the foreigners have committed acts that might be a ground for their deportation.

"We are verifying their identities and visa status and if there is basis to initiate deportation proceedings against them," Immigration Officer-in-Charge Siegfred Mison said in a statement.

Mison explained that the non-Filipino demonstrators can be deported or ordered to leave the country if they commit acts that constitute "overthrowing the government, unlawful destruction of property and violation of the conditions of their stay."

The foreigners will then be blacklisted and banned from re-entering the Philippines.

Mison said temporary visitor visa holders have no business joining protest rallies as it is tantamount to meddling in the country's internal political affairs.

The agency has so far identified Dutch national Thomas Van Beersum, 30 [...].

Van Beersum came to the country as a delegate of the International Conference on Human Rights and Peace in the Philippines and attended the SONA protests last Monday.

He was seen in a viral photo screaming at PO1 Joselito Sevilla,

Gill Boehringer, an expert of contemporary state and corporate abuse of human rights, said that killings never stopped in the current administration. He said that killings and harassments have been reinforced by the government support for paramilitary groups.

Boehringer also noted that instead of prosecuting perpetrators, military officials linked to abductions and other violations were promoted by the Aquino government. He also cited the case of fugitive Gen. Jovito Palparan is being linked to the abduction of two student activists.

"One can only assume he is being protected as others have been protected in the past by military units," Boehringer said.

Sharing his experience, a delegate from the US, Ron Gochez of Union del Barrio noticed the heavy presence of military in civilian communities and even said that an unknown military agents took photos of mission delegates in Paquibato District in Davao. "We felt intimidated, and with a short visit to Paquibato, we felt what the people said about harassment, intimidation of military in their communities," Gochez said.

A teacher by profession, Gochez issued deep concern to the plight of children in militarized communities, he said that children showed traumatic signs due to the presence of military in their communities. "I saw the psychological impact that the militarization had on children, and its very, very disappointing," he said.

Gochez vowed to bring the reports of intensified human rights violations to California Sen. Barbara Boxer who in the past conducted Senate hearings on human rights violations in the Philippines. [...]

International pressure worked in the past on the issue of human rights, "International pressure worked in the past on the issue of human rights. We hope it works this time for the sake of peace," said Casino.

who broke down to tears while trying to disperse the protesters. Lawyer, Ma. Antonette Mangrobang, BI acting intelligence chief, arrived in a state news agency report that Beersum arrived in Manila as a tourist last June 13 and was admitted for an initial stay of 21 days.

She said Beersum was not supposed to join the rally because it meant violating the limitation and condition of his admission and stay as a temporary visitor and non-immigrant.

Beersum said he attended the SONA protest because he had been "outraged by the human rights violations committed by the corrupt Aquino regime."

"I am tired of the extrajudicial killings, the illegal arrests, the forced demolitions, the land-grabbings, the puppetry to US-imperialism, tired of all the oppression and exploitation [...]," he said in his open letter posted on his Facebook page.

After the SONA protests, netizens created the Facebook page "Filipinos against Foreign Interference in Filipinas" to "provide a voice to Filipinos who have been marginalized by continued foreign interference in Filipinas political affairs."

[...] A petition for deportation was also created on change.org for Van Beersum, seeking to declare the Dutch national as persona non-grata.



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Hronlineph.com, 23.07.2013

A call to human rights defenders: conduct creative & courageous actions on four (4) fronts to end impunity! -PAHRA

[...] The Philippine Alliance of [Human Rights](#) Advocates (PAHRA) recalls that: President Benigno Aquino III, in his 2011 State of the Nation Address (SONA) popularly well defined impunity: That which is wrong, no matter how long it takes, is still wrong. [...] Otherwise, the same wrongs will recur. If no one pays for what has been done, it would be like we ourselves have encouraged the wrong doer to do it all over again. Impunity is a deadly social virus of such strain that addressing it with half-measures and / or insufficient dosages of actions only emboldens its bearers more while it instills more widely within Philippine society the climate of fear and of helplessness against impunity's next choice as its victim. The danger is increased when those infected belong to the high echelons of government, the security sector and the business sector - as shown in the unwillingness of PLDT to comply with the final decision of the Supreme Court in favor of the Digitel Employees Union as well as in the still un-captured ex-Maj.Gen. [Jovito Palparan, Jr.](#) and the highly possible involvement of military and police officers in rub-outs.

[...] Government and the security sector has miserably failed to diligently investigate and appropriately prosecute the past and present violations. The culture of impunity persist. And the private sector, in varying degrees, is being infected with it. [...] Extrajudicial killings, for one, by death squads are no longer confined in [Davao City](#). Similar incidents, according to Human Rights Watch, are being reported in the cities of Zamboanga, General Santos, Cagayan de Oro and Cebu.

To prevent this backlash, we call on all human rights defenders to conduct creative and courageous actions to:

1. Assert the right to truth.
2. Pursue the right to justice.
3. Organize to obtain the right for an effective remedy and to received reparations.
4. Work for structural and institutional reforms to prevent recurrence of systemic abuses.

Determinedly work for the passage of the Freedom of Information Bill. Now we need to push for the success of the People's Indirect Initiative as it has been freed from the clutches of politi-

cal unwillingness. [...]

The intransigence of both the AFP and the PNP, as pointed out by the Court of Appeals, in cooperating with the CHR to obtain information relevant to the resolution of Jonas Burgos case must be decisively dealt with. If wrongly permitted to take this course, Jonas Burgos and his family would be, despite being a high profile case, added victims of impunity, piled on cases like that of the enforced disappearances of six young casual workers from Surigao known as the PICOP 6. If there is no full consideration, as another example, of the truth about the massacre of the Capion family in [Davao del Sur](#), proper redress and compensation along with justice will be not achieved.

Truth should [...] also [be obtained] in economic, social and cultural rights. The right to information is [...] also [the accessibility] of transparency of business plans and records containing also financial reports affecting people, their sources of subsistence and the environment particularly in areas of extractive industries.[...]

The President should order, not merely endorse, that transparency and accountability be diligently done in dealing with serious accusations of criminal and/or human rights violations implicating both rank-and-file personnel and officers. The President should review and / or rescind executive actions which give rise to human rights violations, like the Executive Order 546 which allows the arming of militias by local officials. Alongside the ban, he should issue an Executive Order which bans all para-military formations and to dis-arm immediately all the said groups. [...]

Finally, to ensure that systemic abuses do not recur, structural and institutional changes should take into serious consideration without discrimination the promotion and protection of human rights of all, especially, the indigenous peoples, the peasants, the workers, women, children, the LGBTs, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Human Rights Defenders should monitor government compliance.

No trade-off's to end impunity.

INSTITUTIONS

ManilaStandardToday.com, 05.07.2013

Gender bias must be penalized, says solon

By Maricel Cruz

A measure was filed in the House of Representatives prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender of an individual.

House Bill 110 of Dinagat Island Rep. Kaka Bag-ao also provides a penalty ranging from a fine to a jail term for violators.

Bag-ao said that the measure was in compliance with numerous international agreements—where the Philippines is a signatory—that seek to ensure respect for the human rights of all persons regardless of sex, sexual orientation or any other condition.

“These international human rights instruments have consistently been interpreted by international institutions, such as the United Nations Human Rights Committee and the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,” Bag-ao said in the bill’s explanatory note.

“Unfortunately, reality has still to catch up with the noble inten-

tions of these numerous laws and international agreements,” she added, noting that “lesbians and gays continue to be oppressed by the iniquitous treatment of society at large, primarily because of misconceptions and ignorance.”

Even in schools, workplaces, commercial establishments, and public service, particularly the police and military, Bag-ao said “prejudicial practices and policies based on sexual orientation and gender identity limit the exercise and enjoyment of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

Bag-ao’s proposal declares illegal any actions “barring lesbians and gays from public service, including the military and police; access to medical and other health services; access to education and membership in groups; and access to the use of establishments, facilities, utilities and other services.”

Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

InterAksyon.com, 05.07.2013

Angara admits 3 flaws in anti-cybercrime law, but adds: 'It's 95-percent good'

By Ernie Reyes

MANILA, Philippines – Senator Edgardo Angara on Thursday admitted that there are three flaws in the [Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012](#), which he principally authored in the 15th Congress and is now the subject of a petition before the Supreme Court. In the weekly Kapihan sa Senado, Angara said that the Cybercrime Law is consistent with the changing times, and in fact 95 percent good.

[...] "Only 3 provisions in the law are being contested: the cyber libel, the one degree higher penalty. At saka, iyong (And, the) right of the justice department on take down provision."

However, the country need the law since the hottest issues right now are hacking and spying on individuals, governments, and on industrial secrets.

[...] Earlier, Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago [filed a separate bill on Internet freedom](#), to counter the repressive and contentious provisions of the Cybercrime Prevention Act, which was stopped by the Supreme Court pending resolution on its constitutionality.

Under the [Magna Carta for Philippine Internet Freedom](#), Santiago explained that the time has come for the establishment of a comprehensive State framework for the administration of Internet and information and communication technology in the Philippines, "a task that should be jointly undertaken by the government and the private sector." [...]

She added that [Senate Bill No. 53](#) provides for appropriate mechanism and command structures within the government to address ICT-enabled threats and promote online access and social benefits.

Among the pertinent provisions on Internet rights and freedom instituted by Santiago on the proposed measure (Part 2, Chapter III), are:

- Protection of the internet as an open network
- Promotion of network neutrality
- Promotion of universal access to the internet
- Right to privilege access to devices
- Right to freedom of speech and expression on the internet
- Protection of the freedom to innovate and create without permission
- Right to privacy of data
- Right to security of data
- Protection of intellectual property
- Promotion of development of internet, network and information and communications infrastructures

"The State, as the primary duty-bearer, shall uphold constitutional rights, privileges, guarantees, and obligations in the development and implementation of policies related to the Internet and information and communication technology," the bill said.

If passed, the law mandates the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) to be the principal administration of this Act as such take the necessary measures for the implementation of policies and objectives set forth in the measure.

Joint Press Release of the Government of the Philippines and the European Union (EU), 11.07.2013

EU-PH expand partnership for justice reform through new PhP 570 million support programme

The Government of the Philippines has embarked on a major reform in the field of justice and rule of law. In support of this important undertaking, a new PhP 570 million (Eur 10 million) comprehensive support program financed by the European Union will be launched on Thursday at the Philippine National Police (PNP) National Headquarters in Camp Crame. Secretary Mar Roxas, Secretary Leila de Lima, and EU Ambassador Guy Ledoux will lead the ceremony to be attended by more than 100 participants. [...]

The European Union-Philippines Justice Support Programme II (or EPJUST-II) particularly focuses on two specific issues. It prioritises the issue of access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged people and of impunity for major crimes, in particular extra-legal killings and enforced disappearances.

In doing so, it tackles several of the underlying institutional issues besetting the Filipino justice system as a whole by contributing to the implementation of 7 out of the 9 priorities identified for the Rule of Law in the 2011-2016 Philippine Development Plan.

[EU-Philippines Justice Support Programme II](#)

The thrust of the action is to promote the rule of law and an accessible and enforceable justice system as its linchpin as an essential requirement for economic growth and poverty reduction in line with the development policy of the administration of President Aquino.

To be implemented over the next four years until 2016 with the Department of the Interior and Local Government as the lead agency, the action involves the participation of all major stakeholders of the justice system from the Executive, the Judiciary, the Oversight Bodies such as the Commission on Human Rights and the Civil Society. [...]

Background

The program dubbed 'Justice for All: Enhancing Accessibility, Fighting Impunity' has three major components: Component I - 'Enhancing Accessibility' aims to facilitate people's access to legal information and assistance and to expand the provision of quicker and fairer judicial services; Component II - 'Fighting Impunity' aims to make the criminal justice system more efficient in preventing and punishing major crimes in general and extra-legal killings and enforced disappearances in particular through the improvement of the investigation, prosecution and adjudication processes; and



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Component III - 'Enhancing Transparency and Accountability' aims to strengthen internal monitoring and evaluation systems and to improve the oversight mechanisms involving external actors to better assess the performance of the justice system.

The program will be implemented in selected areas in Metro Manila and the following indicative provinces: Abra, Camarines Sur, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Capiz, Leyte, Oriental Mindoro, Western Samar, Lanao del Norte, Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat and Zamboanga del Norte. Those locations were pre-identified on the basis of criteria such as poverty ranking, presence of minorities and indigenous peoples, level of incidence of major human rights violations and status as conflict-affected area.

The program involves major partners such as the Department of Justice (DoJ), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Supreme Court (SC), Commission on Human Rights (CHR), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), National Commission

EU-Philippines Justice Support Programme II on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

EPJUST II is a follow-up of two previous EU-funded programs. One is the "Access to Justice for the Poor Program", which focussed on increasing access to legal information, improving the administration of the barangay justice system and training justice actors and community members on human rights, women and gender issues. The other was the first EPJUST, which helped strengthen the capacities of the criminal justice system stakeholders, including the community, to prevent, prosecute, adjudicate, and monitor ELKs and EDs and improve the human rights training of uniformed services.

The Philippine Star, 11.07.2013

PNP most corrupt agency – survey

By Alexis Romero

MANILA, Philippines - The Philippine National Police (PNP) is the most corrupt institution in the country, according to the latest Global Corruption Barometer of the anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International.

The survey showed that 69 percent of surveyed Filipinos believed police personnel were corrupt, 64 percent believed public officials and civil servants were affected by corruption, while 58 percent had the same view on political parties.

The media and religious institutions were perceived to be the least affected by corruption with 14 percent and 15 percent, respectively.

At least 56 percent of the respondents thought the judiciary was corrupt, four percentage points higher than the 52 percent who have the same opinion on the legislature.

The military was deemed corrupt by 43 percent of the respondents.

The survey also showed that 32 percent viewed the educational system as affected by corruption while 31 percent had the same opinion on the medical and health services.

About 30 percent of the respondents thought corruption was affecting businesses, while 25 percent had the same perception on non-government organizations.

The Global Corruption Barometer has been gathering the corruption views and experiences of people around the world since 2003. This year's survey covered more than 114,000 respondents in 107 countries.

Phil corruption eases

The latest survey also showed that 35 percent of Filipinos thought corruption in the country had gone down a little in the

ManilaTimes.net, 26.07.2013

Palace not endorsing FOI passage

Rights advocates urge EU to scrap 10M euro grant

By Dennis Carcamo

MANILA, Philippines -Foreign rights advocates on Thursday urged the European Union to withdraw its 10 million euro grant to the Philippine Justice Support Programme for Manila's failure to stop cases of extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances.

"Impunity in the violations of human rights in the Philippines continues amidst the unjust and selfish interests of European big businesses and their equally greedy and corrupt Filipino collaborators in business and politics," said in a resolution by over 250 foreign delegates of the International Conference on Human Rights and Peace.

The resolution cited the unresolved and unprosecuted killings of Dutch missionary Willem Geertman who was killed in Pampanga, and Italian Catholic priest Fr. Fausto Tentorio, in Mindanao.

Earlier, the family of Dutch missionary Willem Geertman scored the statements of EU ambassador Guy Ledoux lauding the Aquino government for its supposed improved human rights record.

The EU ambassador also extended another 10 million euro aid in support of the European Union-Philippine Justice Support Programme, supposedly to stop political killings.

Meanwhile, foreign delegates who attended the People's State of the Nation Address last Monday were frustrated, but not surprised, that President Benigno Aquino III did not mention concrete ways to address the prevailing impunity in the country.

Philstar.com, 25.07.2013

The EU supports the rule of law in the Philippines since 2003 with a total financial assistance of over PhP 1.3 billion, including this latest contribution of PhP 570 million.

As a highlight of the program launch, the PNP will demonstrate the use of investigative kits acquired under EPJUST I for crime scene investigation.

past two years, while 31 percent believed it had stayed the same. Nineteen percent of surveyed Filipinos said corruption had increased a lot, while 12 percent said it had increased a little. Only two percent thought corruption in the country had decreased a lot.

Some respondents also admitted to paying bribes in the last 12 months. Nineteen percent admitted to bribing the police while 14 percent did the same for registry and permit services.

Eleven percent of the respondents said they paid bribes to land services, while 10 percent bribed members of the judiciary. Seven percent and six percent of the respondents bribed tax authorities and education officials, respectively.

Six percent of the respondents said they paid bribes to personnel involved in education services, while four percent did the same to those in medical services. [...]

Almost half or 45 percent of respondents agreed that ordinary people could make a difference in the fight against corruption.

Efforts recognized

Meanwhile, Malacañang said the survey showed that the people believe that the issue of corruption is being addressed by the Aquino administration.

"Our fight against corruption has been recognized from six percent (in 2010) to 38 percent and we continue to fight corruption in all levels," presidential spokesman Edwin Lacierda said.

[...] Armed Forces public affairs chief Lt. Col. Ramon Zagala assured the public that efforts are underway to make the military less vulnerable to corruption. [...]



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

By Llanesca T. Pantí

DESPITE touting transparency and accountability as its core policy, the Aquino administration is not endorsing the passage of the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill in the 16th Congress, an administration lawmaker said on Friday.

Ifugao Rep. Teddy Baguilat, one of the FOI authors, made the disclosure in light of reports that Ako Bicol Rep. Rodel Batocabe is likely to be named House Committee on Public Information chairman.

The House Public Information panel is crucial in the passage or death of the FOI measure because its chairman can dictate the pace of the hearings on the bill en route to the plenary debate.

"He [Batocabe] told me that he didn't want to chair the Committee because it would be difficult. His feeling is that there is no clear endorsement coming from Malacañang," said Baguilat, who has been named the chairman of the House Committee on Agrarian Reform.

During the 15th Congress, Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone chaired the Public Information panel. The substitute bill on the FOI was already done by February 2011, and yet the measure was only approved in the Committee level by November 2012. The measure was sponsored before the plenary, but it never progressed from thereon.

Inquirer.net, 26.06.2013

Aquino vows to address needs of military

By Frances Mangosing

MANILA, Philippines—[...] In his speech [...] at Camp Aguinaldo on Friday afternoon, President Benigno Aquino III gave assurances he would address the needs of the military in all aspects.

[...] Aquino clarified that he was not against AFP modernization.

"I heard that there were soldiers bothered in my speech about modernizing the military, particularly in buying fighter jets and other war equipment. I agree with modernizing the military, but we cannot risk our other priorities for our countrymen such as

ManilaStandardToday, 27.07.2013

High court affirms law on women's rights

By Rey E. Requejo |

The Supreme Court has affirmed the constitutionality of Republic Act 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Act of 2004.

In an en banc decision written by Associate Justice Estela Perlas - Bernabe, the SC junked the petition filed by a man who was separated from his family after allegedly beating his wife in Bacolod.

The high tribunal was not convinced by the argument of petitioner Jesus Garcia that R.A. 9262 is "violative of the equal protection and due process clauses, and an undue delegation of judicial power to barangay officials" based on application of the law on the case filed against him in the regional trial court.

"The grounds for nullity must be beyond reasonable doubt. In this case, however, no concrete evidence and convincing arguments were presented by petitioner to warrant a declaration of the unconstitutionality of RA No. 9262," the SC ruled.

The tribunal said that RA 9262 "is an act of Congress and signed

Pinoyweekly.org, 30.07.2013

Karapatan calls for CHR chair resignation

By Macky Macaspac

Human rights group Karapatan today called for the resignation of Etta Rosales as chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), saying that Rosales has been remiss in her duty as chair of the commission by virtually acting as a spokesperson of

The Palace submitted its position on the FOI before Evardone's panel only by January 2012.

Baguilat said their experience in the 15th Congress showed that waiting for Palace endorsement of the FOI can doom the bill so they might as well proceed without Malacañang's inputs.

"Our mistake in the last Congress was we got lax. We neglected it. We depended on the President's pronouncements. For this Congress, let us not make the Palace endorsement as a prerequisite for action. Whether or not the President says that it is priority legislation, we should push for it and make it our own priority," explained Baguilat, a member of the ruling Liberal Party chaired by President Benigno Aquino 3rd.

"You don't need Malacañang's blessing to pursue the FOI bill," he added.

But Baguilat clarified that FOI advocates like him are not asking Batocabe to railroad the bill, saying that a Committee Chairman should not be biased for the measure.

"As chairman, you just have to make sure to facilitate the discussions and avoid delays.

That is what is asked of being the chairman, not exactly to be openly biased for the bill," Baguilat concluded.

education, health jobs, just to be able to appear strong before other countries," he said, referring to his fourth State of the Nation Address last Monday.

"To those still having their doubts, let me emphasize this: We will continue to strengthen the Armed Forces, and I will make sure that we will do it the soonest possible time," Aquino said.

[...] At present, there are 3,072 active members in the AFP, Philippine National Police and Philippine Coast Guard who are produced by the OCS. [...]

into law by the highest officer of the co-equal executive department."

Besides, the SC ruled that the law does not violate equal protection clause by favoring women over men as victims of violence and abuse.

"R.A. No. 9262 is based on a valid classification brought about by the unequal power relationship between men and women and the official statistics on violence against women and children showing that women are the usual and most likely victims of violence," the high court explained.

Petitioner had also claimed that the law violated his right to due process after the RTC immediately issued temporary protection order (TPO) preventing him from getting near his wife and their children.

However, the SC explained that he was given five days to appeal the TPO issued by the lower court.

police and military institutions.

Karapatan cited the latest remarks of Rosales in media reports blaming protesters in the violent dispersal of the rally during President Aquino's State of the Nation Address (SONA).

Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

"Instead of conducting CHR's own investigations on the many incidents of police brutality in rallies and barricades during demolitions, Ms. Rosales, in many occasions, only resorted to victim-blaming," said Marie Hilao-Enriquez, chairperson of Karapatan.

The group said that instead of fulfilling her mandate, in many instances Rosales allegedly justified violations committed by state security forces against activists and protesters.

Enriquez took exception with Rosales' statement condemning the participation of Dutch activist Thomas von Beersum who was caught in photos shouting at a policeman.

Despite the denial of a permit from the Quezon City government and with thousands of security forces blocking Commonwealth Avenue, protesters pushed through with their march.

"We negotiated with the PNP (Philippine National Police). They treacherously started to push and beat our colleagues. The brutal police action prompted many of us, including foreign activists like Beersum, to express indignation. Rosales was quick to blame us, acting as the PNP spokesperson, instead of doing her job of investigating what actually transpired," Enriquez said

Aside from the SONA dispersal, Enriquez also chided Rosales for condemning urban poor residents of North Triangle, Quezon City who supposedly threw feces at police and demolition teams.

Enriquez accused Rosales of ignoring the use of force in evictions and the consequent economic displacement of poor residents in the area.

"When poor people are left with no other choice but to defend their survival, it is just to exercise their legitimate right to protest. Ironically, Rosales chose to (deny) the role of the Aquino government, the local government, the Ayalas and the PNP in driving away the urban poor in North Triangle from their homes and livelihood to make way for big business interests," added Enriquez.

Karapatan also scored the CHR for the issuance of clearances for the promotion of human rights violators and Arroyo generals such as Brig. Gen. Eduardo Año and Brig. Gen. Aurelio Baladad. Karapatan opposed the appointments of Año, who is among the accused in the disappearance of activist Jonas Burgos, and Baladad who is among those responsible for the illegal arrest, torture and detention of the 43 health workers known as "Morong 43" in 2010.

CURRENT CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

MindaNews.com, 04.07.2013

Task force rescues 132 human trafficking victims in Zambo

ZAMBOANGA CITY - The multi-agency Sea-Based Anti-Trafficking Task Force (SBATTF) rescued in separate operations Wednesday 132 human trafficking victims and arrested a suspected illegal recruiter in this city, officials said.

Chief Insp. Alexander Lorenzo, head of the Philippine Center on Transnational Crime in Western Mindanao, said that 59 of the 132 victims were rescued at around 6:30 a.m. at a private wharf in Barangay Baliwasan.

A suspected illegal recruiter, whose identity was withheld by Lorenzo except for saying that he is from Ozamis City, was arrested when the victims were rescued.

Lorenzo said they composed of 31 men, 17 women and 11 children, who were recruited in the Davao Region and Zamboanga Peninsula.

The victims were recruited to work in palm oil plantations, house helpers and others, Lorenzo said.

He said the victims were rescued aboard a wooden-hulled ferry

"We have strong reason to believe that the CHR and Ms. Rosales

CHR to anti-SONA groups: Government respects your rights

By David Lozada

MANILA, Philippines - Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chair Etta Rosales said the Aquino administration respects the human rights of those who openly oppose the government as she expressed disappointment for violent incidents at a State of the Nation Address (SONA) protest rally on Monday, July 22.

Protestors and police clashed along a blocked portion of Commonwealth Avenue hours before President Benigno S. Aquino delivered his SONA in the Lower House.

Unfortunate

"The skirmishes that took place was unfortunate because it was not necessary. It could have been avoided," Rosales told Rappler.

Rosales said that the militant groups present in the protest did not attend a dialogue organized by the Philippine National Police (PNP) before the SONA.

"We were all present--the CHR, PNP and the Quezon City government--to set the rules and regulations. We invited the organized groups but they did not attend. Only two were there," she maintained.

Rosales also shunned the militant groups' accusations that they were not granted a space to protest.

"It's already their default that their rights will not be upheld. It's not a question of permit. It was given," Rosales maintained.

Speaking from experience

Rosales, an activist during the Marcos dictatorship, said that unlike under Martial Law, the government respects the right of people to assemble. [...]

Much needed dialogue

Rosales insisted that a peaceful dialogue is needed to have a mutual understanding of the problem.

[...] "Let's get everybody on board and let's set the rules and regulations so that the basic constitutional rights will be upheld for all parties."

Rosales agreed that the SONA should not be one-sided and that the concerns of the people must be heard.

"What is the SONA for? We can agree or disagree with what the President says. We should always be critical of our government. We can have our own state of the nation but we can do this constructive, critically and peacefully," she maintained. [...]

Rappler.com, 25.07.2013

granted the said generals with clearances without considering the standing cases in court against them. The CHR denied our request for access to the clearance documents which they issued--a clear violation of the right of the people to information and access to public documents," Enriquez asserted.

Karapatan accused the CHR and Rosales as implementers of Oplan Bayanihan that has allegedly resulted to countless human rights violations.

that was set to leave for Taganak, Turtle Island municipality, Tawi-tawi and then to Sandakan, Sabah.

The other 73 victims were rescued aboard two passenger vessels at around 7 p.m. Wednesday at the port of Zamboanga, according to Zamboanga Coast Guard Station commander Lt. Senior Grade Jomark Angue.

The vessels were set to depart for Bongao and Sitangkai municipalities in Tawi-tawi.

They were hired in Bohol and Cebu to work as deep-sea fishermen and dried fish workers in Tawi-tawi, unlike those rescued ahead of them, Angue said.

He said the task force had been watching on people traveling to Tawi-tawi to work as deep-sea fishermen since they ended up maltreated and underpaid based on complaints received by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The DSWD is among the government agencies that comprise the SBATTF.



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

All of the rescued victims are in the custody of the DSWD in this city.

Press Release, Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM), 05.07.2013

Groups condemn ambush of B'laan leader and member in minerals-rich Davao del Sur

Groups, supporting the opposition of indigenous peoples and faith-based organizations to the Tampakan Copper Gold Mining project, condemn the recent report of ambush of B'laans Eking Freay and his brother-in-law Sonny Boy Planda on June 28.

It was between 8:00 to 9:00 in the morning when the two were on their way home after selling their crops in Brgy. Kimlawis when they were fired at by alleged members of [Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit](#) (CAFGU) under Task Force KITACO ([Kiblawan](#), Tampakan, [Columbio](#)). Planda was fatally wounded and later died while on his way to [Davao City](#) for medical treatment, a report said.

Freay, community leader of T'bol of the Bong Mal B'laan Territory, was hit in the right thigh and the back but was able to flee toward Bong Mal.

"We condemn the killings and the attack to indigenous communities who have opposed mining in there area. There is more than enough evidence to show that the presence of paramilitary groups there is detrimental to the communities, especially when we know that Task Force KITACO is paid for by the mining company opposed by the people," said Jaybee Garganera, national coordinator of Alyansa Tigil Mina.

Freay is one of the sons of Bong Fulong Anting Freay of the Freay-Capion Clan, and publicly expresses his strong opposition on the presence of SMI/Xstrata and of military detachments in Bong Mal.

"The recent attempted murder of Eking Freay and Sonny Boy Planda adds to the series of unsolved killings victimizing the B'laan community opposing the Tampakan Copper Gold Mining project. The incident clearly illustrates that communities affected by large-scale and destructive mining operations consistently serve as magnets of violence, deception and other forms of human rights violations," said Dr. Nymia Pimentel Simbulan, executive director of the Philippine [Human Rights](#) Information Center.

Simbulan also called on the different government agencies to immediately take action.

"We call upon concerned agencies of the Aquino government specifically the [Department of Interior and Local Government](#) and the [Justice Department](#) to immediately take action so that justice may be served to victims of the crime. We likewise, urge the Commission on Human Rights to implement measures that will protect the indigenous peoples' right to life and security."

Fr. Edu Gariguez, executive secretary of the National Secretariat for Social Action—Justice and Peace of the [Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines](#) (CBCP-NASSA) added: "[...] Gathering that this is mining-related, if not solely due to mining investments, then the more that mining should not be allowed in

DavaoToday.com, 20.07.2013

Family asks banana firm to release son held incommunicado

By John Rizle L. Saligumba

DAVAO CITY—The family of plantation security guard Allan Redubla appealed his employer to release him from being held incommunicado since July 15.

The Rotto Fresh International Traders, a Cavendish banana plantation company in Compostela, Compostela Valley allegedly detained Redubla on suspicion that he helped New People's Army guerillas in burning the company's backhoe last July 13.

"We have been sleepless since we cannot contact him," said Allan's mother Gloria.

Police earlier arrested Redubla on the grounds that he acted as "look-out" for the NPAs and "because he was always using his phone (when the incident happened)," Gloria Redubla said.

Manila bishop launches online petition against Tampakan mine in South Cotabato

By Tricia Aquino

Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo has created an online petition on advocacy platform Change.org, asking President Benigno Aquino III to stop the Tampakan gold and copper mining project in South Cotabato.

The project is seen to harm the environment and displace the local community, although it can significantly contribute to the Philippine economy.

Operated by Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI), which is the Philippine unit of global mining company Xstrata Plc., the Tampakan project will explore "[13.5 million metric tons of copper and 15.8 million ounces of gold](#)". It can provide P134 billion to the economy each year.

Under a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement, SMI is allowed to extract gold and copper in four provinces that covers four ancestral domains.

The project has been [marred by deaths on both sides of the fence](#), with the family of an anti-mining indigenous leader, and an SMI security officer and his escort, killed last year.

[Pabillo's petition](#), which has gained over 5,000 signatures, cited an Institute for Development and Peace study published in June which states that the project will violate, among others, the rights to "livelihoods, health, education, culture, and the fundamental right to life, security, and liberty."

InterAksyon.com, 29.07.2013

the area."

During a Congressional Hearing of the National Cultural Communities chaired by Rep. Teddy Brawner-Baguilat in February 2013, then Kiblawan Mayor Marivic Diamante confirmed that Sagittarius Mines Inc (SMI) is providing funds for the CAFGU and military operations in the KITACO area. [...]

The groups maintained that opposition to mining operations in the country are nearing tense levels, as violence and human rights abuses against anti-mining communities also escalate. The same environmental and human rights groups urge Congress to pass a new mining law to address these conflicts.

ATM is part of the Tampakan Forum, a coalition of international and local organizations that serves as technical working group on the Tampakan mining issue.

Alyansa Tigil Mina is an alliance of mining-affected communities and their support groups of NGOs/POs and other civil society organizations who oppose the aggressive promotion of large-scale mining in [the Philippines](#). The alliance is currently pushing for a moratorium on mining, revocation of EO 270-A, repeal of the Mining Act of 1995, and passage of the AMMB.



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

"They gave us a number where I can text Allan. But when I tried the number, I got no reply," she said.

Davao Today tried to get the side of Rotto Fresh but their designated representatives were not available.

Rotto Fresh is facing a labor dispute when it terminated work-

ers, blaming the Typhoon Pablo disaster last year. Workers staged a strike after the company offered to re-hire them as contractual workers, a move that violated provisions of their Collective Bargaining Agreement. Rotto Fresh has filed a civil case against the workers.

Bulatlat.com, 21.07.2013

Arrests, surveillance of activists precede Aquino's SONA

By Ronalyn V. Olea

MANILA - Five activists were arrested and two Church members reported being the subject of surveillance a few weeks before President Benigno Aquino III deliver his fourth State of the Nation Address (SONA).

On July 16, peasant activist Aristedes Sarmiento, was arrested July 16 in the house of village captain Julianita Abuel Lagaya at 51 Mabini street, barangay 7, Lucban, Quezon by elements of the Lucban Municipal Police Station, Regional Intelligence Police Regional Office-CALABARZON, Military Intelligence Group (MIG4), Intelligence Service of the AFP (ISAFP), 1st Special Forces Company, 201st Infantry Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division and Naval Intelligence Security Group (NISG 4).

According to the Samahan ng Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyo at Aresto, Sarmiento was arrested for charges of murder. He was brought to Camp Vicente Lim in Calamba, Laguna by a convoy of military vehicles. Lagaya tailed the convoy up to Camp Vicente Lim but was not allowed to enter the camp. Sarmiento was only shown to his family midnight of July 16 and only after the family members asked the camp to issue a certification that Sarmiento is not in their custody. On July 17, Sarmiento was brought to the Gumaca court and was committed to the BJMP Quezon district Jail in Lucena City. The next day, he was transferred to Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan on July 18.

Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) condemned the arrest and red baiting of Sarmiento.

A press release from the Public Information Office of the Philippine National Police - Region IV-A on Wednesday said that "Sarmiento is a political analyst/activist who is also a member of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and Secretary of Sub-Regional Military Guerilla Unit 2. He was detained for rebellion in 2006." [...]

[KMP chairman Rafael] Mariano said Sarmiento is a consultant of KMP and of KMP's Southern Tagalog chapter, the Katipunan ng mga Samahang Magbubukid sa Timog Katagalugan, in their campaign to reclaim the coconut levy funds. Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr., the President's uncle, still holds the 20 percent of coco levy fund shares in San Miguel Corporation being claimed by small coconut farmers. [...]

Meanwhile, two farmers and a tricycle driver were abducted by elements of the 24th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army on July 11 in barangay Liyang, Pilar, Bataan, according to human rights group Karapatan.

Farmer Josue Ortiz, 23, was brought to the 24th IBPA headquarters where he was initially kept from his parents and members of the Karapatan quick-reaction team (QRT). After four days in detention, Ortiz was brought to the Bataan provincial court on July 15, and charged with illegal possession of firearms and

explosives. [...] Meanwhile, the other farmer, Manuel Pacaira, and the tricycle driver remain missing as of this date.

During the search, members of the Karapatan QRT saw Pacaira in an army truck on its way out of the 24th IBPA camp and to the direction of Pilar, Bataan. He was again seen at the Bataan provincial court premises in Balanga, Bataan on board a truck during Ortiz's inquest on July 15.

Earlier, on June 28, Juan Pablo Versoza, a member of the Alay Sining UP Diliman, and his wife Grace were arrested in Marikina City through a warrant containing only aliases. The names of the couple were only inserted in the warrant after they were arrested, Karapatan said. [...]

Surveillance

Meanwhile, two priests of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) were subjected to surveillance by alleged state security forces.

In a statement, the Youth of Iglesia Filipina Independiente (Yifi) condemned the surveillance on the IFI seminary and the Aglipay Central Theological Seminary (ACTS) and the harassment of its rector, Fr. Terry Revollido and of Bishop Antonio Ablon of the Diocese of Pagadian City.

At around 7:00 p.m. of June 6, four men riding in tandem on two motorcycles were seen roving around the vicinity of ACTS in Urdaneta, Pangasinan. Days after the incident, on the evening of June 15, a seminarian saw a man standing right at the gate of the seminary. The man was seen taking out a rifle from a sack, which he left at the gate in his haste when he noticed that the seminarian is getting near him. The seminarian took the sack to the rector.

"The YIFI is convinced that the incident is rather politically-motivated and is a part of many other harassments and vilification made against the Aglipay Seminary and to its Rector. We believe that Fr. Revollido, who is a staunch human rights advocate, has also been the main target of this harassment," the youth group said.

On July 12, Bishop Antonio Ablon from the Diocese of Pagadian City discovered his room inside the parish was forcibly opened by unknown persons. At that time, the Bishop was preparing for a solidarity mission to the mining area in Bayog town of Zamboanga del Sur.

"This is not the first time that the IFI experienced such incidents. We remember Fr. William Tadena, Bp. Alberto Ramento, and Benjamin Bayles, who were killed by alleged military elements, after similar cases of harassments, were observed," the Yifi said. Tadena and Ramento were staunch supporters of Hacienda Luisita farmers when they were killed. Bayles, meanwhile, was a peasant activist. [...]

DavaoToday.com, 27.07.2013

"Kill them, they are NPAs!" Lumad torture victim recounts ordeal

By Earl O. Condeza

DAVAO CITY, Philippines - "Mao nang NPA, pagpamatya ninyo na mga NPA na! (They are NPAs, kill them!)"

These were the words heard by Rolang Sanglid, an Agusanon Lumad, heard when he and three other youths crossed paths on Monday with paramilitary Bagani Force and soldiers in the highway of Kauswagan, Loreto, Agusan del Sur.

Sanglid, 19 and his three companions Rico Basilisco, 18; Alan (not his real name), 16; and John (not his real name), 17, said state forces prevented them from going to the local Comelec in order to register as first-time voters in time for the upcoming Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Council) and Barangay elections. Sanglid's companions Alan and John are currently held under

Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

custody of the Social Welfare Department of Loreto facing charges of murder filed by the paramilitary.

Sanglid is now in Davao with John's mother Estrilla Basilisco as they sought help with Karapatan for the release of Alan and John.

He told Davao Today that that they had nothing to do with the killing of Kauswagan Barangay captain Ramon Diaganonon, contrary to the claims of the paramilitary Baganis.

Sanglid also recalled his ordeal at the hands of the military captors.

"Ninaog naman sila sa trak, gipa line mi. Pagkahuman niabot tog nagtudlo, gitudlo ang tulo nako ka kauban ingon nga 'mao nang NPA, pagpamatya ninyo na mga npa na'. Pagkahuman ato, gipangapos ang tulo ug gipasaky mi sa sakyanan, kaming upat. (They came down from the truck and made us fall in line, then one of them pointed at my three companions saying 'They are NPAs, kill them!' Then they tied up my three companions and forced the four of us aboard their truck.)

Sanglid said while they were on board, the Baganis beat and kicked his companions; they spared him because he was a neighbor of one of the paramilitary forces.

He said they forced them to lie flat on the truck floor while they heard shots being fired from the back-ground.

The troops stopped in Baliti village and continued beating the three. Sanglid said Bagani Forces talked about killing them off but did not proceed.

He remembered they pleaded for their lives and insisted they were innocent of the charges.

Sanglid said he and his companions were hungry that time. "Wala pa mi paniudto ato, katong mga bagani naniudto, nindot pa ilang pagkaon. (We didn't have lunch, while the Baganis ate.)"

Sanglid and Basilisco were rescued hours later by

DavaoToday.com, 31.07.2013

Abuses, then and now, for Agusanons

By John Rizle L. Saligumba

LORETO, AGUSAN DEL SUR- Epimaco Malayan and Juanita Loreto had memories of nearly 20 years ago when government troops came and abused fellow Agusanon Lumads in this town.

Loreto told Davao Today, "I can never forget how soldiers forced my father to eat a map because they couldn't find the NPAs (New People's Army)."

"Soldiers way back in 1995 ran about the mountains to look for rebels. If they see you along the way, even if you are just tending to your carabao, they beat you," said Malayan who was in his twenties then.

Malayan is now 47 and he joined 422 other people who fled for fear from operations launched by the Philippine Army's 26th Infantry Battalion with the paramilitary Bagani Force in villages of Sabud, Kauswagan, Mansanitas and San Mariano.

The evacuees slept in crammed classrooms in Barangay Kauswagan Elementary School since they arrived on July 25. Some have gotten sick with cough and fever.

Not only were villagers crammed in the school, they also brought their livestock, from pigs to chickens.

Malayan said the villagers were afraid they will suffer from the same fate as that of the four youths who were "tortured" last week by the soldiers and paramilitary. [...]

"[...] We were really hurt since one of the youths was my wife's relative. We were scared that if the soldiers had done that to them, what more things would they do once they enter our

relatives who pleaded for their release. But Alan and John were detained at the Barangay Hall of Kauswagan village.

Basilisco said Alan and her son, John, were tortured; bruises were all over their neck and body.

She said when she and her father-in-law went to fetch John, the paramilitary Baganis held her father-in-law and slashed his shirt.

Basilisco appealed to authorities to release the two minors. "Hinaot na buhian nila akong anak. (I wish they would release my son.)"

She also asked state forces to stop hurting civilians in their counter-insurgency campaign.

"Hinaot pud sa mga sundalo og bagani na dili magpamataka og dakop sa sibilyan. Klarohon nila na ang ilang kalaban kadto rang NPA, dili sibilyan, mga mag uuma pa gyud. (I want the soldiers and Bagani forces to stop abusing and arresting civilians. They should not treat us civilians or farmers as NPAs.)"

Karapatan Southern Mindanao's Hanimay Suazo slammed the soldiers belonging to the Army's 26th Infantry Battalion and the Bagani Force for the torture and grave human rights abuse committed against the minors.

Hundreds flee Agusan Sur villages as military 'arrest' suspects in village chief's death

By Karlos Manlupig

DAVAO CITY, Philippines - More than 500 residents from four villages in Loreto town in Agusan del Sur walked for at least three hours carrying with them some of their belongings as they left their homes after military troops arrived in their communities. [...]

The government soldiers trooped to Barangay (village) Kauswagan after village chief Ramon Diaganonon was killed by suspected members of the New People's Army last July 20.

Two days after, four boys, including a 16-year-old and a 17-year-old, were accosted by the military along the highway in the same village, Loreto said.

[...] Major Leo Bongosia, spokesperson of the military's 4th Infantry Division, said the minors were arrested for their alleged participation in an ambush staged by communist guerrillas.

The target of the ambush is a military unit deployed to secure the family and the remains of Diaganonon.

"The family requested for security but the unit tasked to protect the family was ambushed," Bongosia said.

[...] Bongosia brushed off [...] claims explaining that the soldiers were deployed for peace and development efforts under the Oplan Bayanihan program of President Aquino.

"The house-to-house visits were for the needs assessment to identify the social services needed in the communities. The results of the assessment will then be forwarded to the concerned government agencies so that they will be able to deliver the services demanded. And the pictures taken by the soldiers are purely for documentation purposes," Bongosia said.

Bongosia said the evacuation has been orchestrated by Karapatan to discredit the government and the military.

"The people must not fear the military. They must get rid of the negative perception about the military because we have undertaken reforms. We do not do torture. We are here to look into the problems of the communities and to facilitate various agencies in bringing in services," Bongosia commented.

But Loreto said the military has been daydreaming about security reforms in the country.

"What needs assessment? They were listing our names and their questions go around and around about the NPA. They keep on asking us if we know NPA members and if we know their locations. The reality in the communities is that we fear for our lives, there are mauling, intimidation and illegal arrests," [spokesperson of the local group Kahugpungan Alang sa Kalambuan, Juanita] Loreto said.

Presently, the residents are taking temporary shelter at a public school in Barangay Kauswagan and are firm that they will only return to their villages once the military has pulled out from the area. [...]

Inquirer Mindanao, 29.07.2013

villages?" said Malayan.

Loreto said troops from the 26th Battalion arrived in their village on Saturday, July 24, to look for NPAs. [...]

Malayan said the paramilitary 'Bagani Force' guides accompanied the troops. The Bagani Force were said to be "goons" of Loreto Mayor Dario Utasa.



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Soldiers reportedly arrived at the school vicinity on Monday morning. They took profile pictures of the villagers. The military operation has disrupted the classes of a local pre-school.

Loreto said prior to the military operation, the Bagani members had been going around the community forcing them to sign a "tie-up" agreement with a company to build a plantation for tuba-tuba (jathropa) and biograss.

"We refused their demand for us to ask to sign a blank paper

that would sell-off our land to the company," she said.

Loreto also said a mining firm was also interested in exploring materials for marbles.

Local officials and the municipal social welfare have pledged food assistance to the villagers. But villagers said they are hoping for officials to heed their demand for soldiers and paramilitary to pull out from the villages.

Inquirer.net, 31.07.2013

2 mediamen gunned down in Quezon City

By Jamie Elona

MANILA, Philippines – Two mediamen were gunned down by still unidentified suspects in Quezon City Tuesday evening, police said.

Senior Police Officer 1 Pascual Fabreag of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit said Bonifacio Loreto and Richard Kho of Aksyon Ngayon Newspaper were shot by still unidentified suspects [...] in Quezon City around 11 p.m. Tuesday.

Fabreag said the victims, along with one Rey Moreno, were drinking in front of a convenient store when the suspects arrived and alighted from a motorcycle, and opened fire. Moreno was escaped unhurt.

A Radyo Inquirer 990AM report quoted Moreno as saying that the gunmen immediately left the area after the incident and drove off onboard their motorcycle.

It also quoted Richelle, Kho's daughter, as saying that the motive behind the attack on his father and Loreto may have something to do with the people her father was helping as a mediaman.

Police said the victims died from multiple gunshot wounds.

Empty shells from a caliber .45 and caliber 9-millimeter pistols were recovered from the crime scene.

InterAksyon.com, 31.07.2013

Labor leader shot dead in Cotabato City after bringing kids to school

A labor leader was shot dead inside his multicab passenger jeepney after bringing his three kids to school in Cotabato City.

Forty-seven-year-old Kagi Alimudin P. Lucman was shot on his head and chest by a lone gunman at seven in the morning of July 18 while in front of the Cotabato City State Polytechnic College, a labor group said.

Lucman's male companion who was seated beside him was also wounded but survived, the Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) said in a statement issued Wednesday.

Lucman was the second such labor leader killed in the past two weeks in Mindanao, the group said.

The incident took place "during peak hours when students and vehicles converged near the CCSPC," APL said. It added that Lucman's brazen daytime killing "makes a mockery of justice and underscores the reign of impunity in the country."

"Kagi," as he was fondly called, was the president of the Notre Dame Village Operators and Drivers Association (NDVODA), which was organized in 2009 and affiliated to the NCTU-APL in 2010. He also represented NCTU-Cotabato during the NCTU National Conference in Cavite last year.

NCTU is the National Confederation of Transportworkers' Unions, which is in turn both affiliated to the national labor center Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) and the global union International Transportworkers' Federation (ITF).

On July 2, Antonio "Dodong" Petalcorin, a transport leader was murdered by a paid assassin in Davao City.

Petalcorin was the president of the Network of Transport Organizations (NETO-NCTU-APL) in Davao City.

Earlier, on Jan. 25, Emilio Rivera, former head of the Matina Aplaya Transport Cooperative (MATRANSCO), an independent group but with working relations with NCTU-Davao, was also killed by an assassin, the APL said.

Another partner in the Davao City-based organized transport groups, Carlos Cirilo of the Mindanao Alliance of Transport Organizations (MATO), survived an attempted killing when a grenade lobbed into his home failed to explode last May 21.

NCTU-Davao revealed that Petalcorin, Rivera, and Cirilo were very active in disclosing many alleged irregularities in the Davao office of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) and in the campaign to oust its regional director, Benjamin Go.

According to the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights (CTUHR), Petalcorin was the fifth transport leader killed since the start of President Aquino's administration three years ago, making Lucman the sixth.

All of them now belong to the increasing list of victims of extra-judicial killings, especially among trade unionists and social activists in the Philippines, the APL said.

UPDATES ON CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Promotion of Church People's Response, 03.07.2013

Statement on the First Death Anniversary of Bro. Willem Geertman

Today, we join the family, relatives, friends, supporters and the entire people of the country especially of Central Luzon in remembering the life of Bro. Willem Geertman. He is a missionary brother from Netherlands who opt to selflessly serve the Filipino people for more than half of his life. He is a faithful who courageously pursue the Christian prophetic task of bringing the good news of salvation and condemning the evil works.

Last July 3, 2012, Bro. Willem was mercilessly killed inside the premise of Alay Bayan Inc. by elements who wanted to silence him and cut short his Christian mission. The method of killing is a reason of doubt that the motive of the assassins was to rob the life out of Bro. Willem and not simply after any amount of

money.

Video footage taken from the camera of the security outpost of the subdivision helped in identifying the criminals. Despite this prima facie evidence and other witness statements, the police authorities failed to make those perpetrators accountable before the bar of justice. Worst, the legal charges filed against them were downgraded to simple robbery with homicide. Such legal moves of the police department bear similarities to how they address cases of extra-judicial killings during the time of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. It is very alarming that state departments water down cases of political in nature.

It is all the more disappointing that series of dialogue with the



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Department of Justice initiated by the families and supporters of Bro. Willem, until this day, end up with no final resolution of the case.

This signifies the prevailing culture of impunity in our nation. A case that after three year of injustice will most likely fall in the same trash bin of the government that have long neglected the cry of the victims and their families for justice.

Bro. Willem Geertman was the 4th victim among church people and among the 142 victims of extra judicial killings under the watch of President Aquino. He was assassinated by those few powerful that fear to loosen their hold to the people whom Bro Willem has served.

Ensuring that justice is served to Bro. Willem's death is a re-

sounding demand of those who want significant change. We reiterate our call to the Aquino government to stop the killings and put an end to the prevailing culture of impunity. Perpetrators must be made accountable at the immediate.

We appeal to all faithful to put forward the issue of human rights as it reflects the dignity of God's creation. Let us firm up our resolve to never cower in the face of threat while giving flesh to our commitment to serve the least and marginalized. We encourage all church leaders to firmly stand for the restoration of life towards its fullness.

Justice for Bro. Willem Geertman!

Justice to All Victims of Human Rights Violations!

Philstar.com, 11.07.2013

AFP admits to 7 human rights violations in HI

MANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) - The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) admitted today that government troops committed alleged seven mission-related human rights violations (HRVs) during the first half of this year.

Lieutenant Colonel Ramon Zagala, chief of AFP's public affairs office, said that the reported number of HRVs from January to June this year was much lower than the 22 cases in 2012, 37 in 2011, and 51 in 2010.

He attributed the decline in the alleged mission-related HRVs on the implementation of the Internal Peace and Security Plan (IPSP) Bayanihan since 2010.

IPSP Bayanihan is a military plan of winning the hearts and minds of the rebels in the mountains with the primary focus of

winning the peace and not just defeating the enemies.

Zagala said there were a total of 164 HRV cases since 2010 including cases that were personal in nature.

"Out of these, 47 were resolved and were submitted for listing in the Commission on Human Rights, while 117 are pending resolution or for further investigation," he said.

To address human rights violations, which allegedly involved the military, the official said that recently, the Interagency Committee, headed by the Department of Justice of the Philippines, signed and approved its operational guidelines. The Technical Working Group also compiled the 101 priority human rights cases that are under investigation or are on trial.

Sun.Star Davao, 25.07.2013

30 killed in Davao since July 1

A TOTAL of 30 people were killed in Davao City since July 1, three of whom members of a kidnap-for-ransom group in a shootout with police.

One the victims also include a transport group leader, who was gunned down at the garage of his house in Matina Aplaya last July 2.

But, most of the killings were perpetrated by riding in tandem gunmen who, until now, has yet to be arrested despite pronouncements of Davao City Police Office (DCPO) director Sr. Supt. Ronald dela Rosa to hunt down the killers.

The latest victim of the series of summary executions was trisikad driver Mark Laolao, 27. He was shot to death by gunmen at around 5 p.m. along Aurora Street, Barangay 25-C Poblacion.

Laolao was detained once for drugs and his family is now crying

for justice.

The killings have a pattern: Most of those killed have either previous criminal records or were involved in recent robbery and drug trade. A good number of the victims were also minors. The gunmen usually ride in motorcycles. In some cases, four gunmen on board two motorcycles staged the killings.

Until now, police have yet to come up with witnesses.

Because of the series of killings, people suspected that so-called members of the vigilante Davao Death Squad (SSD) are back.

Police, however, are also suspecting that some of the killings were perpetrated out of revenge or personal grudges like what happened to Antonio "Dodong" Petalcorin, the transport group leader slain early this month.

The victim was reportedly killed after he exposed corruption at the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board.

Sun.Star.com, 26.07.2013

Clarificatory hearing on Italian priest's slay held

By Malu Cadeliña Manar

KIDAPAWAN CITY -- Government prosecutors from Soccsksargen Region (Region 12) conducted on Wednesday in Arakan, North Cotabato an ocular inspection and clarificatory hearing on the murder of Italian priest Fausto Tentorio of the Pontifical Mission (PIME).

Regional prosecutor from Central Mindanao Al Calica led the hearing and inspection.

They arrived at the parish of the Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Poblacion, Arakan, at around 10 a.m., and ended the process, around 4 p.m.

Calica said they have yet to conduct another hearing on July 31. He stressed it is the mandate of the Department of Justice (DOJ) to expedite the resolution on Tentorio's killing.

"[...] The resolution we would issue should be correct. This should not be done on a haste," Calica said in an interview.

At this time, Calica said his team is on the process of appreciating which of the two versions of the story is "more credible."

The first version, using as basis the testimony of a witness, pointed to a gunman who boarded a blue XRM motorcycle after the killing.

The witness said he saw the gunman escaped from the Arakan Church compound after several shots were heard.

The second version, using as basis the account of a former driver of the late Arakan Mayor Gerardo Tuble, pointed to two gunmen onboard a Yamaha DT motorcycle, which he saw escaped somewhere along the highway in Barangay Magtangkil, minutes after the killing of the priest.

The highway, the driver said, is located on the other side of the Arakan road, which is far from the church.

Almost two years after the murder, authorities still face a blank



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

wall as to the killer's identity and those behind it. Calica said the camp of another PIME priest, Peter Geremia, has sought the DOJ and other investigating teams to put on hold the process while they are still preparing to submit additional doc-

Inquirer Visayas, 27.07.2013

Murder case OK'd vs hotel guard in slay of Ati leader

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.

ILOILO CITY—The Aklan provincial prosecutors' office has found sufficient basis to file in court a murder charge against a hotel security guard for the killing of the spokesperson of the Ati tribe on Boracay Island.

In a six-page resolution released on July 5, the prosecutor's office said there was sufficient basis to formally charge Daniel Celestino in the murder of Dexter Condez.

A lone gunman shot dead Condez on Feb. 22 as he was walking home from a meeting to the Ati community in Barangay Manoc-Manoc in Boracay.

Condez, 26, was the spokesperson of Boracay Ati Tribal Organization and the most visible figure in the tribe's struggle to keep a parcel of land titled to them by the government.

Investigators believe that Condez was murdered because of disputes over the 2.1-hectare beachfront property that was awarded to the tribe by the government in 2011 through a certificate of ancestral domain title issued by the National Commis-

Bulatlat.com, 27.07.2013

Kin, rights advocates hail junking of bail plea of Palparan's co-accused

By Ronalyn V. Olea

MANILA - Relatives of missing University of the Philippines (UP) students Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan welcomed the court decision denying the bail petition of two military suspects in the abduction of the students.

"That's good," Mrs. Erlinda Cadapan, mother of Sherlyn, told *Bulatlat.com* in a phone interview. "I am happy that the judge was able to see that our witnesses are telling the truth."

In a decision dated July 12, Judge Teodora Gonzales of the Malolos Regional Trial Court Branch 14 denied the bail petition of Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado and Staff Sergeant Edgardo Osorio. The two, together with retired Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. and Master Sergeant Rizal Hilario, are charged with kidnapping and serious illegal detention for the disappearance of two UP students in 2006. Palparan and Hilario remain at large.

The court said "the prosecution thus far had shown that evidence of guilt against the accused for said crimes is strong."

"As to whether or not the accused were only maliciously pinpointed for the kidnapping of the victims is a matter which at this stage can only be considered as a defense that calls for further factual support in the course of judicial proceeding," the court said.

Witness Raymond Manalo positively identified Anotado in court. In his [testimony](#), Manalo said Anotado was the one who talked to him and to Karen and Sherlyn for about three times at the military camp in Limay, Bataan.

Osorio, meanwhile, has been identified by [Wilfredo Ramos](#) as the one who hogtied him, his father, the two UP students and farmer Manuel Merino on June 26, 2006.

"I am thankful to the judge for such a decision," Mrs. Concepcion Empeño said in a phone interview. "I hope this will speed

InterAksyon.com, 30.07.2013

DFA explains sex-for-flight probe process, as Akbayan releases names on list

By Pots de Leon and Lira Dalangin-Fernandez

MANILA, Philippines - The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) released Tuesday the list of the 13 officials allegedly involved in the abuse of overseas Filipino workers in the Middle

Eastern as regards the killing.

Tentorio was killed on October 17, 2011 inside the church's compound in Arakan town. [...]

sion on Indigenous Peoples.

Celestino is employed by the Crown Regency Boracay Resorts hotel chain which is owned by the Cebu-based property developer J. King & Sons Co. Inc. The property developer is among those with boundary disputes or ownership claims over the Ati property.

Celestino and his employers have repeatedly denied involvement in the killing of Condez. [...]

Fr. Arnold Crisostomo, Boracay parish priest, urged law enforcers and the government to speed up the prosecution of the case and to determine and arrest the masterminds behind the murder.

Last July 22, tribe members lit candles, laid flowers and offered prayers for Condez at the site where he was gunned down.

"We pray that his death will not be in vain," said Evangeline Tamboon, a tribe leader.

up the case."

Lorena Santos, secretary general of Families of the Desaparecidos for Justice, said it is a positive development that should lead to the conviction of the suspects. [...]

Karen's father, Oscar Empeño is not satisfied. "The two [Anotado and Osorio] must be transferred to a regular detention facility. The military is still protecting them."

Anotado and Osorio are detained at Fort Bonifacio, headquarters of the Philippine Army.

Palparan

[...] Palparan, former commanding general of the Philippine Army's 7th Infantry Division that has jurisdiction over Bulacan, was positively identified by Manalo during the preliminary investigation at the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Mrs. Cadapan said that Palparan's flight is a "sign of guilt." She lamented that the task force created by the Philippine National Police for the capture of Palparan and Hilario was "all talk and no action."

"As long as Gen. Jovito Palparan is being protected by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and his benefactors in government, as long as he is not made accountable for the gross human rights violations that he so shamelessly perpetrated, as long as impunity is being promoted by the Aquino administration, there is still a long way to go to attain justice," [Cristina] Palabay [secretary general of human rights alliance Karapatan] said.

Santos said the prosecution must not stop with Anotado and Osorio. "The enforced disappearance of the two students was not done in isolation. It was ordered by the higher-ups in the military. Palparan should be held liable," she said. [...]



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

The DFA list also contained the action taken by the government against the officials.

Bello and fellow Akbayan partylist Representative Ibarra Gutierrez received the document from the DFA, which they later released to the members of the media.

In all, 13 officials from the DFA and Department of Labor and Employment "may" be guilty of various harassment cases on overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) awaiting repatriation, the DFA officially confirmed after its fact-finding exercises.

Hernandez said two officials were from the DFA and 11 others were from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

DFA Raul Hernandez stressed, however, that nothing has been "proven" yet from the sex-for-fly allegations and there was no hearing conducted yet. He clarified that the harassment allegations on the 13 DFA and DOLE personnel are not exactly all "sexual" in nature.

Hernandez explained, "There was no formal hearing because there was no formal complaint. The process is... we receive a

formal complaint and then based on that formal complaint, there will be fact finding to establish probable cause. If there is probable cause, [the official] will be charged. And then, there will be a hearing." [...]

Bello said [he was not satisfied with the government's action](#) [...]. He noted that only lower-level officials were involved in the investigation.

The Labor department earlier ordered a separate probe into the allegations. The DFA, for its part, recalled its envoys from Syria, Kuwait, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Egypt, Libya and Lebanon for consultations on the sex-for-fly scheme, where distressed Filipinos were supposedly forced to give sexual favors to officials to expedite their repatriation.

The DFA also recalled envoys from Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong--places with a big number of OFWs--but concluded that none of these posts is guilty of any offense in handling OFW cases.

MAGUINDANAO MASSACRE

ManilaStandardToday.com, 04.07.2013

Ampatuan arraignment reset to August 27

By Rey E. Requejo

A Quezon City regional trial court handling the Maguindanao massacre case on Wednesday reset the arraignment of two members of the Ampatuan clan charged with 58 counts of murder.

Branch 221 Judge Jocelyn Reyes reset the proceedings to Aug. 7 for Sajid Islam Ampatuan and Akmas "Tato" Ampatuan, son-in-law and nephew of ex-Maguindanao governor Andal Ampatuan Sr.

On Wednesday, the Department of Justice was mulling over the possibility of using Bong Andal, the aide of the Ampatuan clan who allegedly drove one of the two backhoes used to bury victims of the Maguindanao massacre on Nov. 23, 2009, as state witness in the multiple murder case.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima confirmed that Andal has been covered by the DOJ's witness protection program only on provisional and partial basis.

"There is a reason why he (Andal) is not fully covered by WPP, but I cannot discuss the details because of a confidentiality rule in the program," she said in an interview.

"It depends on evaluation of the WPP and recommendation of the prosecutors. Not all witnesses are entitled to exactly the same terms and conditions. Not all witnesses are entitled to exactly the same benefits from the WPP."

Andal went public Monday, telling GMA-7 News in an exclusive interview that he was ready to testify against the clan accused of the killing of 58 people.

He alleged in the video clip that Ampatuan Sr. ordered him to take the excavator to the scene of crime.

At least three witnesses have been killed since 2010, including a former Ampatuan family employee whose dismembered remains were found in a sack in 2012.

PEACE PROCESS

Philstar.com, 23.07.2013

Muslim rebel group seeks unity with ex-secessionist leaders

MANILA, Philippines ([Xinhua](#)) - The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) appealed today to the leaders of various factions of a former Muslim rebel group for unity and solidarity amid the progress in the peace process with the Philippine government.

Muhammad Ameen, chair of the MILF Secretariat, made the call following reports that some leaders of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), particularly those in southern island province of Sulu, were planning to bring up a case before the United Nations.

The MNLF was then a secessionist group, which forged a peace agreement with the Philippine government in 1996 in exchange for the creation of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

(ARMM).

But the MILF, a breakaway group of the MNLF, forged a framework agreement with the government last October. The initial pact is a roadmap that will abolish the ARMM and will pave the way for the creation of a Bangsamoro government.

Recently, the government and the MILF, the largest Muslim rebel group in the country, signed the second annex of the framework agreement, the wealth-sharing.

"These achievements in the peace talks are for everybody and not for the MILF alone. We are inclusive and we make sure that whatever we sign with the government does not shortchange our people," Ameen said.

ABS-CBNnews.com, 26.07.2013

CPP-NPA stays on EU terror list

MANILA - The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), remain on the European Union's list of terrorist organizations.

The EU's Official Journal -- the bloc's record of decisions and their implementation -- show the CPP-NPA on the latest list of 11 persons and 25 groups deemed to be involved in terrorist activity.

The CPP-NPA have been fighting successive governments for 44

years in a rebellion that has claimed at least 30,000 lives.

President Benigno Aquino hoped to end the rebellion before his six-year term expires in 2016, but the government said in April that peace talks had collapsed due to rebel demands such as for the release of captured comrades.

In recent months, the communist rebels have launched more assaults, often targeting unarmed soldiers, police, and civilians. Being on the EU terror list means the bloc imposes sanctions on



Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

the communist group, its members, and officials.
The sanctions include prohibition of sale or transfer of weapons,

freezing of funds and other financial assets or resources, ban on entry or transit through the territories of EU member-states. [...]

The Philippine Star, 28.07.2013

Gov't plans to end review of peace pact with MNLF

By Jose Rodel Clapano

MANILA - The Philippine government is bent on completing the review of the 1996 tripartite final peace agreement it signed with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Deles met with Indonesia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Marty Natalegawa in Jakarta last Friday to discuss the status of the government-MNLF peace deal, which is being facilitated by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Peace Committee for Southern Philippines chaired by Indonesia.

"This was a follow-through on the meeting held in Jakarta last March when Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario relayed to Minister Natalegawa the government's position that is

was time to bring the tripartite review process to a proper completion," Deles said.

She said that after six years since the review started in November 2007, a joint review process had established consensus points and joint mechanisms between the MNLF and representatives of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao's government.

MNLF chairman Nur Misuari earlier called for an assembly with his followers after the reported "closure" of the peace process.

"From the start, what the government proposed to complete was the review of the tripartite agreement and not the closure of the peace process nor the abolition of the 1996 final peace agreement," Deles said. [...]

FURTHER READINGS

InterAksyon.com, 16.07.2013

10 FAQs on Wealth Sharing Annex between Philippines, MILF

The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) came out with these 10 frequently asked questions on the historic Revenue Generation and Wealth Sharing Annex between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

1. What is the concept of Revenue Generation and Wealth Sharing in the GPH- MILF peace process? Why is it important? To view the complete article, please [click here](#).

ABS-CBNnews.com, 22.07.2013

[English version] President Aquino's SONA 2013: Full text

To read the full State of the Nation Address of President Benigno S. Aquino III to the Congress of the Philippines, Batasang Pambansa Complex, Quezon City, July 22, 2013, please [click here](#).

Hronlineph.com, 22.07.2013

"Matuwid na daan" excludes human rights victims and defenders; Liberal party, a haven of warlords

One of the characteristics of the Philippine society is the bankruptcy of the legal system. In the cities and relatively urbanized areas, the criminal justice system is rotten. While the country's leaders and the elite have "elegant rhetorics on justice and democracy", the workings of the justice and police institutions have made the lives of the ordinary people miserable. To view the full statement, please [click here](#).