



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

### HEADLINES NEWS REVIEW DECEMBER 2013

#### **Headlines & Politics**

Philippines continues to improve in Corruption Perception Index - TI	2
Majority of women journalists experience abuse or harassment – global poll	2
Strength in colors: The Filipino LGBTQ community	2
Japan defense minister back to discuss regional tensions	3
EU supports human rights groups to protect human rights defenders	3
Anger, discontent pour in streets over Aquino’s bad human rights record	4
Uphold and Fight for Dignity-At All Times & Situations-PAHRA	4
\$40M US military aid, bane to rights and sovereignty of Filipino people	4

#### **Typhoon Yolanda/ Haiyan**

Dependency a worry in typhoon-hit provinces	5
WHAT YOLANDA SURVIVORS WANT   Jobs and participation	5
Human trafficking a worry post-Yolanda	5

#### **Institutions**

The CHRP-IDP Project	6
Aquino pressed on human rights compensation law	6
Senate sets deadline for FOI bill’s passage	6

#### **Current Cases of Human Rights Violations**

Gunmen kill Maguindanao election official in North Cotabato	7
Another IP killed for having opposed palm oil plantation	7
Militant farmers cry vs human rights violations	7
NPA, human rights group claim Comval tribal leader killed by AFP troops	8
Land-grabbing now prevails in ‘Yolanda’ disaster areas—right groups	8
Human rights violations continue in Cordillera	8
Human rights workers arrested after visiting jailed MNLF men	9
Aquino doesn’t consider media killings a national catastrophe	10
Lawyer Raymond Fortun's wife shot in cheek	10
Mayor, wife shot dead at NAIA Terminal 3	10

#### **Updates on Cases of Human Rights Violations**

Bayles case seen	10
Duterte: No comment on recent shootings in Davao City	11
Resolution of missing activist's case 'slow'	11
4 alleged human rights violators promoted by Aquino	11
PHILIPPINES: Political Detainees freed on Human Rights Day	12
Reds “indict” PH gov’t forces implicated in boy’s “murder”	12
Amnesty International blows the whistle on migrant workers exploitation	13
Former lawmaker joins petition for writ of kalikasan vs Zambales mining	13
Luisita farmers vow raps vs Aquino uncle over arrests	13
18 women activists killed, 23 detained under Aquino administration	14
Negros, a “laboratory for trump-up charges”	14



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

### Maguindanao Massacre

De Lima to discuss new guidelines on massacre trial with DOJ panel 15

### Peace Process

GPH, MILF sign Power-Sharing annex 15

CPP gives up on peace talks, calls for Aquino ouster 16

### Further Readings

The Call to Stop Corporate Human Rights Abuses 16

Human Rights Report for 2013 16

6 cases showing impunity under Aquino 16

Negros solar farm gears up for DOE renewable energy plan 16

***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

InterAksyon, 03.12.2013

### Philippines continues to improve in Corruption Perception Index - TI

MANILA and BERLIN - The Philippines continues to improve on its image relative to corruption in the country, registering a marginal improvement in its grade and a jump of 11 places in its ranking relative to the rest of the world, as measured by Transparency International.

Afghanistan, North Korea and Somalia are seen as the world's most corrupt countries while Denmark and New Zealand are nearly squeaky-clean, graft watchdog Transparency International said in a survey Tuesday.

The Philippines ranked 94th on the [index](#) of 177 countries, [...] scoring 36 on a perceived level of public sector corruption based on a scale of 0-100, "where 0 means a country is perceived as highly corrupt, and 100 means it is perceived as very clean."

The Philippines had a marginally higher score this year compared to 2012 (36 versus 34), and also moved up 11 places from its 105th ranking last year. It was 129th in 2011.

In the Southeast Asian region, Singapore again topped its neighbors, ranking 5th, while Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia were distant second and third (38 and 53, respectively). The Philippines was fourth in the region in terms of corruption perception,

rated better than Thailand (102), Indonesia (114), Vietnam (116), and Laos (140). [...]

The Aquino administration has been struggling from fallout from the pork barrel scam and perceptions that the widespread corruption it blames on its predecessor continues under its watch.

Worldwide, almost 70 percent of nations are thought to have a "serious problem" with public servants on the take, and none of the 177 countries surveyed this year got a perfect score, said the Berlin-based non-profit group. [...]

The group says that because corruption is illegal and secretive, it cannot be meaningfully measured.

Instead Transparency collates expert views on the problem from bodies such as the World Bank, African Development Bank, Economist Intelligence Unit, Bertelsmann Foundation, Freedom House and other groups.

It then ranks countries on a scale of 0-100, where 0 means a country's public sector is considered highly corrupt and 100 means its is regarded as very clean. [...]

GMA News, 04.12.2013

### Majority of women journalists experience abuse or harassment – global poll

By Kim Luces

Almost two-thirds of women journalists have experienced intimidation, threats or abuse in their work, according to a global survey on threats against women working in the news media. Curiously, many of these women did not experience harassment or abuse while on the field covering wars, natural disasters, or political unrest. The global survey, conducted by the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) based in Washington, D.C. and the International News Safety Institute (INSI) based in London, concluded that [the abuse came from superiors and co-workers](#).

"When we talk about safety for the media, we often think in terms of staying safe in war zones, civil unrest and environmental disasters, but how often do we think of the office as a hostile environment," said INSI Director Hannah Storm in a statement. The poll tracked instances of intimidation, threats and abuse including sexual violence, physical violence, sexual harassment, racial harassment, ageism and digital security threats. It also measured prevention, protection and preparedness. The poll was conducted from July to November 22nd of 2013, with 958 respondents. About 875 of respondents were women and 251 of the women respondents were from Asia and the Pacific. [...]

**Intimidation, threats, abuse**

When asked if they had experienced 'intimidation, threats or abuse' related to their work, 530 out of 822 respondents (64.48 %) said yes. Among the forms of abuse mentioned were (1) abuse of power or authority, (2) verbal, written and/or physical intimidation including personal threats, and (3) attempts or threats to damage reputation or honour.

In 458 out of 1,603 types of incidents reported, the abuse was perpetrated by the boss. Abuse was also perpetrated by 'others' (27.69%), supervisors (13.66%), co-workers (12.04%), and interviewees (7.23%). [...]

Over half of the respondents who had experienced abuse (51.31%) said that the abuse had left a psychological impact on them.

**Sexual harassment**

About 46.12% or 279 out of 605 respondents said they had experienced sexual harassment. [...]. Most perpetrators were work colleagues (45.78%), interviewees (30.52%), and bosses (28.92%). In almost all the cases (93.09%), the perpetrators were men. The most common types of sexual harassment were 'unwanted comments on dress and appearance' (67.87%), 'suggestive remarks or sounds' (60.64%) and, 'jokes of a sexual nature' (57.43%).

**Other forms**

About 89 of 563 women also said that they experienced racial harassment, while 127 of 552 said they had been harassed on the grounds of age. Other forms of harassment were because of sexual orientation (6.03%), religion (6.81%), political and/or trade union membership (11.92%), or disability -in relation to their work (3.39%). A majority (69.03%) said that their organization does not provide emotional support or professional counselling and therapy for any work-related harassment or violence. [...]

Rappler.com, 07.12.2013

### Strength in colors: The Filipino LGBTQ community

By Buena Bernal

MANILA, Philippines – It has been 19 years since the first organized gay pride parade in the Philippines.

At that time, openly gay and lesbian groups were a rarity. Boundaries had to be pushed. Attendance was at a minimum.

Rev Fr Richard Mickley of the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) Philippines recalls the June 1994 march clearly. MCC –

the church he founded which welcomes members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community – was among the two participating organizations of the country's first LGBTQ pride march.

"[...] Millions of people now believe that there is an alternative to the teachings of the Catholic Church," he said in an interview



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

with Rappler.

The Philippines remains largely Catholic, although with [dwindling Church attendance and a relatively low level of religiosity](#).

To fight long-standing stereotypes and generalizations, Mickley believes that visibility is important for the LGBTQ movement. [...] The Metro Manila Pride March is reported to be the oldest annual gay pride parade in Asia.

### 2013 Pride March

Jade Tamboon, head coordinator of the Task Force Pride Philippines, co-organized the 2013 march held Saturday, December 7.

[...] "For this year, our theme is strength in colors. It emphasizes the ability of the LGBTQ community to rise up from oppression."

Tamboon acknowledged that social perceptions have become more accommodating of the LGBTQ community, but believes more can be done to fight discrimination.

"In the country, there's still no legislation that guarantees equal rights for everybody regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Even though the Philippines is somehow presented as an LGBT-friendly nation [...]," he said. [...]

### Forward strides

Naomi Fontanos, executive director of Gender and Development Advocates (GANDA) Filipinas, was also among the organizers of the 2013 pride parade. [...]

"In the past year, we saw more people from the LGBTQ community engage in politics. We saw the passage of anti-discrimination ordinances in different cities... [There is also] a

newly-filed anti-discrimination bill in Congress," she explained. Fontanos, however, was dismayed by the lack of LGBTQ representation in the country's legislative body. In the May 2013 polls, Ang Ladlad Party-list ran for a seat in Congress but lost.

Not much has changed in terms of legally enforceable LGBTQ rights since the first pride march in the country in 1994. Various versions of an anti-discrimination legislation have surfaced in Congress, but no law has been enacted to date. [...]

### Hate crimes

On August 3, the Philippine Commission on Human Rights (CHR) [made a move to protect the interests of the LGBTQ community](#).

It decided to document hate crimes – violence done on the basis of the victim's sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) – against LGBTs across the country. [...]

According to data collated by the Philippine LGBT Hate Crime Watch, there have been around [164 cases of murdered LGBTs](#) in the country from 1996 to June 2012.

The creation of safe spaces – establishments where LGBTs can freely express their sexual orientation and gender identity – and the conduct of gender sensitivity training in law enforcement agencies are among the things that advocates continue to fight for. [...]

Over 50 organizations participated in this year's pride march. [...]

Rappler.com, 07.12.2013

## Japan defense minister back to discuss regional tensions

By Carmela Fonbuena

MANILA – Japan highlighted the need for a peaceful resolution of the regional conflict as various countries expressed concern over China's Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) established over Japan-controlled islands in the East China Sea.

"I think the world shares the same understanding that the regional tension should not be raised by the course of action," Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera told reporters in Manila on Saturday, December 7. [...]

He met with Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin to discuss China's ADIZ and the growing tension in the region, Japan's assistance to Typhoon Yolanda victims, and deeper military-to-military cooperation between the two countries.

The Philippines joined the US, European Union, South Korea, and Taiwan, among other countries, in criticizing China's unilateral establishment of the ADIZ. It wants foreign aircraft to provide a flight plan if they want to fly over the disputed area.

### ADIZ in West Philippine Sea?

Onodera said they are also concerned about reports China will also establish a similar ADIZ in the West Philippine Sea, where the Philippines and China are involved in a bitter territorial dispute.

Gazmin shared the sentiment but at the same time downplayed the possibility [...].

HRonlineph.com, 11.12.2013

## EU supports human rights groups to protect human rights defenders

The [European Union \(EU\)](#) provides financial support to two national human rights groups namely the Medical Action Group (MAG) and the [Task Force Detainees of the Philippines](#) (TFDP) worth Php 25 million in their work for the protection of human rights defenders and in their fight against impunity in the Philippines.

On December 10 [...] MAG and TFDP announces a 3-year project supported by the EU to provide support for and strengthen protection of human rights defenders and their families.

Dubbed "Use of [Evidence Based](#) Approach to [Human Rights](#) Documentation and Monitoring for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and their Families, and in the Fight Against Impunity", the project will be implemented by MAG and TFDP. [...]

Protection and supporting human rights defenders is a "long established element of the EU's human rights policy" and has long been a priority for the EU. The main international instrument on human rights defenders is the [UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders](#). Likewise, the [EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders](#) which "provide for interventions by the Union

for human rights defenders at risk and suggest practical means of supporting and assisting human rights defenders."

[...] At present, one of the issues facing human rights defenders is that they are often perceived by the government as, among others, "[enemies of the State](#)", "terrorists" and "members of armed groups".

This project aims to provide support for human rights defenders so that they can work safely and effectively, free from intimidation and reprisals. Likewise, the project will be implemented in key provinces/cities in the Philippines where human rights violations are rampant, and where human rights defenders have become targets of rights violations themselves by authorities, mining corporations and private landowners because of their work in exposing human rights abuses and support victims of human rights violations to seek redress.

The project has several major components: documentation and reporting of human rights violations cases; supporting human rights defenders and their families; legal action; capacity building; education and; advocacy and lobby.

## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Pinoyweekly.org, 11.12.2013

### Anger, discontent pour in streets over Aquino's bad human rights record

By Macky Macaspac

Thousands of protesters marched around the country to commemorate the 65th International Human Rights Day. [...]

Aside from the alleged gross human rights violations of the current administration, Karapatan also slammed Aquino for government negligence in dealing with the aftermath of many calamities like typhoons and earthquakes.

"People are enraged at the negligence and apathy of the Aquino government over the plight of the victims of disasters, while the whole world are shaken and concerned," the group, said in a statement.

Days before Human Rights Day, the group recorded at least three cases of extrajudicial killings.

[...] Accordingly, police and military elements are suspected to be the perpetrators of the two last incidents.

Karapatan said that Aquino is accountable for 152 extrajudicial killings and 168 frustrated killings, 18 enforced disappearances, 358 illegal arrests and detentions on trumped up charges, tortures and other gross human rights violations [...].

The figure covered the three years of Aquino administration. The group added that impunity still pervades [...] and further violations are committed because no one is punished.

"Military officials charged for masterminding abduction and tortures are promoted to higher ranks. Masterminds of extrajudicial killing and disappearances are at large, and many were let off the hook by the courts for their crimes," Cristina Palabay, secretary general of Karapatan said.

While a bill penalizing enforced disappearances was signed by Aquino, abduction and enforced disappearances still happen.

Ben Villeno, a trade union leader was the latest victim of enforced disappearance. "I'm being trailed by someone," Ben was quoted through a text message to his daughter Jessamine before he was gone missing.

"That was the last time I heard of my father," Jessamine said in an interview with *Pinoy Weekly*. [...]

Ben Villeno was one of the 18 victims of enforced disappearances according to Karapatan's documentation from July of 2010 to August 2013. [...]

While Aquino expressed reservation over former Batangas governor Antonio Leviste's parole, 449 political prisoners continue to languish in different detention facilities nationwide.

Like Leviste, some 28 political prisoners are elderly. [...]

At least three ailing political prisoners died during Aquino's

Karapatan - Press Release, 19.12.2013

### \$40M US military aid, bane to rights and sovereignty of Filipino people

Human rights group Karapatan considers the \$40 million US military aid pledged by US State Secretary John Kerry during his visit in the Philippines as "another hefty addition to the growing war chest of the Aquino and Obama administrations against the Filipino people and the people of Asia and the Pacific." Karapatan secretary general Cristina Palabay said that "while Kerry euphemistically stated that the funds are for 'maritime security assistance and counter-terrorism training in the Philippines,' we believe that these funds are meant for, and will inevitably be used for Aquino's counter-insurgency program Oplan Bayanihan, which has spawned extrajudicial killings, disappearances, tortures, bombings of communities and other human rights violations in the country." "We also believe that this recent package of military aid is a wily measure of the Obama administration meant to circumvent the existing block on the \$3 million of annual financial military assistance to the Philippines as a result of the international campaign by human rights groups on the issues of extrajudicial killings and other rights violations in the country," she added.

#### Uphold and Fight for Dignity-At All Times & Situations-PAHRA

Human rights spring from the dignity of each person. Since the first human rights day on December 10, 1948, these rights enshrined in the [Universal Declaration on Human Rights](#) (UDHR) have evolved and developed over time and different circumstances to show how they are to be respected, protected and fulfilled.

And it is the State that is primarily obligated to do so not only on normal times but even, and especially, in times of emergencies, crises and even wars. [...] The Aquino government needs to [...] focus especially, but not solely, on those affected by the earthquake in [Bohol](#) and by typhoon Yolanda ("Haiyan"), according to Science Secretary Mario Montejo: 6.6 million people in 171 municipalities, covering 4, 971 villages in an area of 25,000 square kilometres, of whom, as of November 30, more than 5,632 persons are dead, 26,136 persons injured, and 1,759 missing.

PAHRA stresses that [...] while national and international concerns and assistance are highly concentrated on the destruction recently wrought by a super typhoon and an earthquake, we should not lose sight of those whose lives and property have, to a large degree, also been gravely affected, as in [Central Luzon](#), but have not commensurately been given attention and needed allocations for their own rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. It is government that has the obligations to ensure equitable assistance so as to uphold and protect dignity and human rights.

Finally, while we deeply grieve over the loss of so many lives by natural calamities which are now often intensified by human actions and policies done out of ignorance and disregard of our own rights to the environment, we also rage against and condemn the culture of impunity which claimed and destroyed lives of individuals, families and communities due to extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture and destruction of sources of subsistence amidst a coercive environment.

Amidst Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development, Assert our Dignity and our Rights.

No more unnecessary loss of lives and properties, fight for [Climate Justice](#). End the culture of impunity, bring the perpetrators to justice.

*HRonlineph.com, 10.12.2013*

term. [...]

"There are at least 48 others who are similarly suffering from various ailments without proper medication," added Hilao-Enriquez [chairperson of Samahan ng Ex-detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (Selda)].

Of the 449 political prisoners, 13 are peace consultants of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines or NDFP who went on a ten-day fasting and hunger strike. [...]

The funds will be sourced reportedly from a US program known as the Global Security Contingency Fund, which, according to the US State department website, is an "initiative to incentivize joint planning and to pool the resources of the Departments of State and Defense, along with the expertise of other departments to provide security sector assistance for partner countries so they can address emergent challenges and opportunities important to U.S. national security."

[...] "It may not be openly giving aid to the Philippine Army due to its stench of human rights violations but the \$400 M is still part of the US Counter-Insurgency (US COIN) Guide which the Oplan Bayanihan is following. Part of the second phase of BS Aquino's Oplan Bayanihan is to enable the police to perform counter-terrorism activities," Palabay explained. [...] "We will not be fooled, the US has already done this to the Haitian people taking away their sovereignty posing as reliable friend but acted as a parasite that sucked all the natural resources and richness of the nation," Palabay ended.

## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

TYPHOON YOLANDA/ HAIYAN  
ManilaStandardToday.com, 12.12.2013

### Dependency a worry in typhoon-hit provinces

The Red Cross warned against aid dependency in the Philippines Tuesday as the United Nations urged donors to double their assistance to millions of victims of the country's deadliest ever typhoon.

The secretary general of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Bekele Geleta said that, a

#### Human trafficking a worry post-Yolanda

WASHINGTON DC, USA - Thousands of women and children in the Philippines risk falling prey to human traffickers in the aftermath of last month's catastrophic typhoon, lawmakers and the chief US aid agency warned Tuesday, December 2.

A US congressman returning from a visit to the storm-ravaged island nation said that [...] more attention was needed to thwart criminal opportunists taking advantage of the chaos after Super Typhoon Haiyan roared ashore.

"The most vulnerable -- women, children, the elderly, and those with special needs -- always fare worst during disasters," Republican congressman Chris Smith [...] told a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee. [...] many among the thousands transported out of the disaster zone [...] could fall victim to offers of work in Saudi Arabia or Korea, Smith said, only to find themselves with "an engraved invitation to a hell on Earth." [...].

Last year, a [United Nations envoy said](#) the Philippines has failed to curb the huge problem of human trafficking in recent years, despite high-profile government efforts.

Poor law enforcement and crushing poverty meant many men, women and children were still being trafficked, both internally and overseas, said Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, the UN's Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, during a 5-day visit to the Philippines in November 2012. [...]

*Rappler.com/ Agence France-Presse, 04.12.2013*

month after Super Typhoon Haiyan devastated the islands, longer-term recovery needs should begin to take precedence over food aid. [...]

Haiyan swept across the central Philippines on November 8, destroying scores of communities along its path.

The typhoon brought with it tsunami-like storm surges, which swallowed up many coastal areas and were blamed for majority of the nearly 6,000 deaths.

More than 1,700 people remain missing and about four million have been displaced.

Geleta called for the stepping up of "cash for work and cash transfer programmes that put money in people's pockets".

In Geneva the spokesman for the UN disaster agency, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said Tuesday it was raising its appeal for the Philippines to \$791 million to cover needs over 12 months.

The figure was more than double the \$348 million it had earlier sought to cover needs over six months, OCHA spokesman Jens Laerke told reporters. [...]

Geleta said cash grant transfer programmes to help 50,000 of the hardest-hit families are to be launched this month to provide a boost to people whose livelihoods have either been disrupted or destroyed by the storm.

"Thousands have lost their income and this approach gives them dignity and allows them to set their own priorities," he said.

"They can buy what they need and at the same time, money being spent locally will help to revitalise the economy of the area."

InterAksyon, 30.12.2013

### WHAT YOLANDA SURVIVORS WANT | Jobs and participation in rehab, reconstruction

TACLOBAN - Begging and living on relief and aid forever are not options, thus said several associations of workers in the informal sector in Yolanda-hit Eastern Visayas on Monday, as they launched a campaign demanding employment, social protection, and people's participation as bedrocks of the Yolanda rehabilitation and reconstruction plan to address not only the immediate but also the long-term needs [...].

The campaign came days after the government announced the US\$8.17-billion or P361-billion plan under the so-called Reconstruction Assistance on Yolanda (RAY) which will be completed in four years or by 2017, labor group Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) said in a news release.

Held in Tacloban City, the campaign launch was spearheaded by tricycle and triskad drivers and operators (TODAs) in Tacloban, Hilongos, and Baybay, in coordination with PM. [...]

In a joint Manifesto [...] the groups explained that prior to the onslaught of Yolanda (Haiyan), they already were living poor, miserable lives [...].

"Because income is irregular in this nature of work, we earn less than what we need. This condition likewise explains why many of us, together with other poor people, live in urban poor communities where we face recurrent and extreme vulnerabilities from both man-made and natural calamities. [...]," read the manifesto. [...]

#### Jobs as priority

According to Judy Torres, regional coordinator of Partido ng Manggagawa, this was the main reason why they were urging the government and donor agencies to make jobs a priority in Yolanda rehabilitation and reconstruction plans.

"We want jobs because it is a guarantee to a person's long-term security and a life of dignity," said Torres, adding that while

everybody was devastated it is the poor that suffered most.

"We want to rebuild our lives. We want to rebuild our communities. Hence, in the rehabilitation and rebuilding process, we do not want to just revert back to where we were before Yolanda. We want a new community -- a better community," according to the manifesto.

Torres, who also chairs TAFEMDO, added that aside from providing employment, "the State must also provide victims of Yolanda a broad range of social protection to enable them to live a more secure life in the face of the 'new normal' and the worsening climate crisis." [...]

"What you owe us is immediate, climate-resilient, inclusive, and empowering rehabilitation and rebuilding program," said the groups, stressing further that in the rebuilding process, direct participation by the people is far more important than private consultants and contractors.

#### International responsibility

The groups likewise urged donor countries and international aid agencies that once the relief and life-saving stage is over, "we enjoin you to help us build a new model community out of the ruins of Yolanda."

They further stated: "While we clearly understand that it was Nature's wrath that made our lives more miserable now, we are also aware that today's extreme weather systems are the awful outcome of climate change caused by unrestrained economic activities of industrial countries. Thus, we believe that more than the humanitarian aspect, developed countries have the historical, moral, and social responsibility to come to our aid." [...]

The groups said they are making this appeal not as mere victims of Yolanda but as Filipino citizens who are entitled to the broadest social protection possible from the State. [...]

## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

INSTITUTIONS

HRonlineph.com, 01.12.2013

### The CHRP-IDP Project

Posted by displacedfilipinos

The Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHRP) is in the forefront of laying down foundation of a human rights culture and a mechanism for the protection of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). [...] It has developed the CHRP Project on Internally Displaced Persons (CHRP-IDP Project) envisioned to set up a rights-based protection mechanism for peoples and communities displaced by armed conflict and natural calamities. [...] The reason being Mindanao is a witness to decades-long internal conflict between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Bangsa-Moro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BMIFF), the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front-New People's Army (CPP-NDF-NPA) and factions of these groups. It is the homeland of various Indigenous Peoples (IPs) whose last recourse against development aggression and incursion of multi-national corporations into their ancestral domain are the use of "bagani forces" (tribal warriors) for defense. It is also the Bangsamoro (Moro Nation) territory of 13 ethno linguistic tribes with salient cultural practice of "redo" (clan wars). All of these are impetus to the violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of peoples and communities that lead to situations and phenomenon of massive internal displacement.

Philippine Daily Inquirer, 04.12.2013

### Aquino pressed on human rights compensation law

By Leila B. Salaverria

MANILA –[...] Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares has castigated President Aquino for "refusing" to implement the law that provides compensation to human rights violations victims during martial law.

The money to be given to the victims would come from a P10-billion fund sourced from the ill-gotten wealth recovered from the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Aquino signed the measure into law in February during the celebration of the 1986 People Power revolution.

But the promise of recognition and reparation for the martial law victims has not come nearly 10 months later [...].

Colmenares, in a privilege speech [...], said the President's failure to appoint members of the Human Rights Victims' Claims Board that would oversee the distribution of the P10 billion fund was the reason the law could not be implemented.

Inquirer.net, 19.12.2013

### Senate sets deadline for FOI bill's passage

By Maila Ager

MANILA, Philippines - The Senate has made a self-imposed deadline to pass the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill early next year, Senate President Franklin Drilon said on Thursday.

"The FOI is in the advanced stage of debate; the interpellation has been going on. We imposed a deadline on first quarter of next year within which to pass the FOI bill," Drilon said at a press conference. [...]

Drilon said the Senate would also work on strengthening the anti-corruption laws, particularly in hastening the prosecution of cases before the Sandiganbayan.

He admitted that during the past six months of his leadership, the Senate was faced with a challenge of restoring the people's

The phenomenon of internal displacement in the Philippines presents the fact that the government is ill prepared for any situations of dislocation. It usually brushes aside evacuation as "collateral damage" of war against insurgents or a "normal" occurrence in the implementation of security and economic schemes. A showing that human rights are not intrinsically framed in the [...] national agenda or a basic pillar in the mandates of various government agencies and offices.

The Project wishes the government to take a pro-active role in the protection of the rights of internally displaced persons and communities. It is the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights to lead the way in setting up a national protection mechanism to guide in the planning, implementation and monitoring of plans and actions towards enduring solutions on the phenomenon of displacement in the country.

At present the project on IDP is under the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights with a Focal Commissioner in charge. It has been managed by the Project Management Office (PMO) charge to start the project rolling with the five (5) regional offices of the Commission in Mindanao.

The PMO is tasked to monitor and provide necessary assistance to regional CHRP offices in Mindanao.

Without the board, which would also be tasked to come up with the implementing rules and regulations, the process of compensating the victims could not begin, Colmenares said. [...]

Congress should exercise its power of oversight and investigate the nonimplementation of the law that it approved, he added.

Human rights groups have long submitted nominees for the board positions but it seems the President has yet to choose from among them. [...]

Colmenares said he was baffled why the President has yet to constitute the board, and could not help but ask if the P10-billion fund for the victims was still available.

[...] Among the victims that passed away before seeing the law implemented were human rights lawyer and former Marikina lawmaker Romeo Candazo and activist, artist and director Behn Cervantes.

confidence in the chamber as an institution.

"I think we have succeeded, maybe not fully, because it is a work in progress to completely bring back the confidence of our people," said the Senate leader.

"But unprecedented, we gave up our PDAF (Priority Development Assistance Fund) even before the Supreme Court ruled it as unconstitutional. We have given up the PDAF and realigned the budget to calamity funds in order to help our people in Visayas and Mindanao."

"We have passed the budget on time highlighted by the fact that there is over P140 billion for calamity," Drilon added.

CURRENT CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

InterAksyon.com, 03.12.2013

## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

### Gunmen kill Maguindanao election official in North Cotabato

KIDAPAWAN CITY -- Two unidentified men, believed to be hired killers, shot dead an election officer assigned at Parang, Maguindanao on North Cotabato highway Monday morning. Ted Monteverde Sispon, 48, was on board a passenger multi-cab vehicle from Kidapawan City heading toward Matalam town when shot in front of horrified passengers at 9:30 a.m., said Senior Inspector Elias Colonia, Matalam police chief. Colonia said the gunmen were initially tailing the passenger vehicle. But when their shot missed Sispon, they flagged down the passenger vehicle, causing the victim to alight and run for his life.

Bulatlat.com, 05.12.2013

### Another IP killed for having opposed palm oil plantation

By Marya Salamat

MANILA — [...] Another IP active in defending their farmland against landgrabbing was killed last Dec 1. Rolan Langala, a member of IP group Pangalasag, was brutally murdered [...], the Kalumbay Regional Lumad Organization said in a statement.

Langala was a farmer [...]. His farm and those of his fellow IPs are reportedly being seized by A. Brown company as it seeks to expand its oil palm plantation in the province. With Paborada and other IPs, Langala had been opposing the company's drive to takeover their farm lands, Datu Jomorito Guaynon, chairman of Kalumbay Regional Lumad Organization, told *Bulatlat.com* [...]. Guaynon said five IPs were specifically threatened by known representatives and armed goons of A. Brown. Of the five, Paborada and now Langala had been killed.

Langala, 35, suffered an undetermined number of stab wounds and two gun shots in the head. [...]

As reported by witnesses to Kalumbay, Langala and a companion, another Pangalasag member, Ruel "Don-don" Tagupa, were about to go home [...] when their way at the exit was blocked by village Councilor Nestor Bahian and Ramil Salban.

[...] Witnesses said Councilor Bahian pushed Tagupa away and then took out a .45 caliber pistol.

Meanwhile, Rolan Langala was assaulted by Ramil Salban and a certain Arnel.

Moments later, Langala was seen bloodied from multiple stab wounds. It was after he collapsed that, according to a witness, Councilor Bahian allegedly shot him in the head for good measure. [...]

The IP group said that historically, for several decades now, it has been an "open secret" to the residents of Barangays

The suspects chased him and killed him at the grassy portion of the highway before fleeing on their motorcycle.

"They looked like professional gun for hire, they used cal. 45 pistols, and they did not cover their faces," Colonia said.

"His wife told us he has been receiving death threats through his mobile phone," Colonia said.

Police investigators took possession of the victim's mobile phone that contained the threat messages.

Police said it could be work-related as the threats came after the recent barangay election.

Bagocboc and adjacent villages that only a gang of few and some armed untouchables are controlling the area. [...]

Kalumbay said that until now, the ruling political dynasties in the area and its armed groups have victimized many poor [...] with impunity.

"Ironically, under the government of BS Aquino, warlords and paramilitary groups were not dismantled. Worst, the same warlord group is said to be facilitating the entry of mining and oil palm plantations like that of A. Brown company in the area." [...] Jomorito Goaynon asserted that because of the [economic interests of firms like A. Brown](#), "local bureaucrats such as Councilor Bahian have been emboldened to commit rights abuses in their brutal campaign to suppress the legitimate dissent directed at their racketeering schemes."

#### Continuing rights violations for expanding oil palm plantation

According to an International Fact Finding Mission (IFFM) conducted May 2011, several incidents of rights abuses were found to have been committed due to the presence of [A. Brown agri-business firm](#). [...]

Kalumbay and human rights groups in the region fear for "another whitewash" on the government's investigation, saying that based on its record, not a single case of human rights violations complaint allegedly perpetrated by local officials and their cohorts had been given justice in the area. [...]

Kalumbay demanded a fair and speedy investigation on the continuing rights violations of IPs. They urged the Aquino government to dismantle paramilitary and warlord groups including those in Opol, Misamis Oriental. They called on the public to support their struggle against land conversion, and for their fellow IPs to regain their lands and ancestral domain.

Sunstar.com, 09.12.2013

### Militant farmers cry vs human rights violations

By Victor L. Camion

SOME farmers from the hinterland of Barangay Avocado in Sta. Catalina, Negros Oriental complained of human rights violations allegedly committed by government troops.

In a press conference held at the Promotion for Church Peoples Response (PCPR) office in Dumaguete City Monday morning, Diony Cabugnason said he and his co-farmers were harassed by soldiers belonging to the 79th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army.

Cabugnason, vice president of the Project Committee Management, said the troops conducted house-to-house and combat operations that disturb them.

He also said that the troops forced them to show a certain Jimlan Dela Cruz, among other names who are believed to be leaders of the rebel group New Peoples' Army (NPA).

He said that they were also accused of supporting the NPA.

Cabugnason clarified, however, that they were not mauled by

the soldiers.

Another farmer, Ricardo Cadayday, also from Avocado village in Sta. Catalina, appealed to Governor Roel Degamo to help them by driving out the military detachment in the area so that they can live without fear.

Cadayday said that residents in the village are apprehensive of the possible encounter between the military and the NPA group if the detachment will remain in the area.

He admitted that they know some of the NPA members because the rebels ask them food and water sometimes. He said the farmers normally give food and water to the rebel group, as well as to the military troops.

Carlos Solano, president of the Kahugpungan sa mga Maguuma sa Oriental Negros, echoed the farmers sentiments, saying human rights violations will not stop unless the military detachment is removed from the area. [...]



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Asked for comment, however, 302nd Infantry Brigade Deputy Commander Colonel Christopher Estela refused to confirm the allegations, but assured they will conduct investigation.

DavaoToday.com, 10.12.2013

### NPA, human rights group claim Comval tribal leader killed by AFP troops

DAVAO CITY – The New People’s Army and a human rights group claimed government troops killed an indigenous leader in Maco, Compostela Valley last week.

[...] Karapatan’s secretary general Hanimay Suazo said Pedro Tinga, a 57-year old Mansaka tribal leader in Barangay Malamodao, was killed in an operation by the Philippine Army’s Alpha Company of the 71st Battalion last Friday.

She said reports from their quick-response team reveal that residents of Malamodao last saw Tinga harvesting peanuts in his farm.

The NPA’s Comval Davao Gulf Sub-Command also condemned the killing and denied the death was due to their armed encounter with the AFP.

In a statement, the NPA spokesperson Daniel Ibarra said the military operations “left a civilian dead, the detention of three others, and the dislocation of hundreds more in Maragusan and Maco towns since November 18 up to December 6.”

The NPA identified the detained civilians as Dodong Camporemundo, Orong Gabriel and Aba Bakud, all residents of Purok 2, Brgy. Malamodao.

The NPA said aerial bombings by the soldiers resulted to evacuation of farmers in Brgys. Teresa and New Barili.

In Karapatan’s documentation, residents heard gunfire and bombings in Brgy. Malamodao forcing them to flee.

“[...] two helicopters [...] bombed the area six times,” the statement said.

Philippine Daily Inquirer, 11.12.2013

### Land-grabbing now prevails in ‘Yolanda’ disaster areas – right groups

By DJ Yap

MANILA, Philippines—Supertyphoon “Yolanda” (Haiyan) has made it easier for land-grabbers to take land from the landless in areas ravaged by the storm, according to the rights groups Focus on the Global South and the Rural Poor Institute for Land and Human Rights Services (Rights) Network.

On the island of Sicogon in northern Iloilo, where practically all houses were wiped out by Yolanda, some 6,000 families have not been able to rebuild their homes on a property claimed by a developer, the group said.

“They don’t want us to rebuild. They are not allowing us to buy supplies,” said Amelia dela Cruz, 57, a resident of Carles town, who went to Manila to seek help.

She said part of the 809-hectare property claimed by the Sicogon Development Corp. was a 72-hectare strip of public land being occupied by residents of two barangays (villages), including Alipata, where her own family lived.

But after the storm, the developer allegedly began blocking efforts by the residents to rebuild their houses and threatened to demolish the entire settlement. Most of them have only been able to set up tents using tarpaulin, she said.

“They (developer) said Yolanda helped them demolish our houses, that Yolanda was on their side,” Dela Cruz said.

Sun.Star Baguio, 11.12.2013

### Human rights violations continue in Cordillera

DESPITE new laws enacted to further protect human rights in the country, many persons continue to report abuses.

Newly enacted laws such as [...] the Anti-Torture Law and [...] or the Anti-Enforced Disappearance Act remain hardly implemented or appreciated by various government agencies includ-

Estela urged the media to get the side of the 79th Infantry Battalion, but Lieutenant Colonel Marion Sison of the said battalion failed to answer queries sent to him through text messages.

Farmers ran down from their farms for safety but “were put on hold by the military...[...],” the report said. [...]

Witnesses told Karapatan they went searching for Tinga until Saturday. [...]

“They went to the funeral and found out that the dead body was Pedro Tinga [...]. He sustained multiple gunshot wounds in the frontal area of his body that caused his death,” the report added. The NPA also scored Malamodao Brgy. Captain Edgar Reyabonansa whom the AFP pressured “to gag the victim’s family and prevent them from pursuing charges against the enemy.” [...]

Meanwhile, the Armed Forces of the Philippines Eastern Mindanao Command claimed their troops killed four NPAs in Barangays Teresa and Malamodao in separate encounters Wednesday and Friday mornings. [...]

The NPA refuted the AFP saying there were no casualties on their side as their “punitive actions” against the 66<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 71<sup>st</sup> IB, and Division Reconnaissance Company units resulted in the killing of 20 soldiers and wounding of 14 more.

According to Karapatan, Tinga figured in the campaign of farmers and small scale miners who were dislocated after Typhoon Pablo and affected by the Apex Mining operations. [...]

Karapatan said Tinga is the 26th victim in Southern Mindanao under the “Oplan Bayanihan counterinsurgency program of Aquino.” [...]

She said the developer claimed that the whole property had been bought by a giant real estate firm intending to establish resorts in the area.

The firm purportedly gave the residents two options: to receive P150,000 in exchange for voluntarily leaving, or to be relocated on another island, Dela Cruz said.

Leaders of the Focus on the Global South and Rights Network blamed the slow and ineffective implementation of various land laws, including the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and the Indigenous People’s Reform Act, for the proliferation of land-grabbing.

The two NGOs urged the Philippine government to pay close attention to land-grabbing in Yolanda-hit places, and to “stop investments in land and agriculture that not only displace the rural poor but also violate human rights and land laws.”

[...] “We need public investments that support progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security,” it said.

The groups vowed to intensify the campaign against land-grabbing in the country, as well as the campaign for agrarian reform, and control of ancestral domains and waters of the rural poor.

ing state forces.

Commission on Human Rights Regional Director Harold Kubaron in Tuesday’s Regional Human Rights Consciousness Week celebration said violations in the region remain low and not a trend but isolated cases of abuse persist especially in far-flung



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

communities. [...]

In his report, majority of cases of human rights violence are perpetrated by civilians and unidentified perpetrators and not state forces like the AFP and the PNP or rebel groups such as the New People's Army.

From January to September this year, some 27 regular cases of HR violations were brought to the attention of CHR while some 97 other legal services were rendered by the commission.

Majority of these cases include violations of the International Humanitarian Law such as cases of rape, violence against women and children.

However, other cases also include at least three cases of torture, six cases of summary execution, two cases of unlawful searches and unnecessary arrests and two cases of enforced disappearance.

Lack of awareness of basic human rights remains a hindrance for most communities. [...]

He said another factor for the low report of human rights violations is the lack of appreciation of some agencies which need to have a deeper understanding of human rights. [...]

Meantime, Cordillera Human Rights Alliance secretary general Jude Baggo in their [2013 Human Rights Situationer](#) reported violations committed against Indigenous Peoples persist including abuse of their civil and political rights. [...]

Baggo highlighted the violation of the rights of IPs on self-determination and decision making processes which include disregarding rights to freely determine issues related to the exploitation of natural resources.

The human rights leader said government insists on offering

mineral resources to big corporations without consent from the communities which might be affected by the new development.

He also assailed continued red tagging of at least 28 names of development workers and human rights defenders, including him, included in the target lists of the Armed Forces of the Philippines as alleged supporters of the New People's Army. [...]

Another case of human rights violations which he pointed is purported by the AFP include the use of children in counter-insurgency operations, encampment in schools, construction of permanent detachment near schools and using children as guides and sources of information including children of revolutionaries to win over their parents. [...]

Another notable incident where incidents of human rights violations recently occurred in Malibcong, Abra and in Aguid, Sagada as aerial strikes and bombing between the military and the police versus rebel groups endangered nearby communities including residential and agricultural areas, the report stated.

The human rights organization also questioned the strengthening of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army through their integration into the AFP saying this only intensified what they alleged as paramilitary groups. [...]

This as he urged the CHR to act promptly on cases they bring to the commission's attention if only to get the real picture of abuses of human rights in many areas often those which are far-flung and poverty stricken.

[...]he called on the CHR's continued engagement in investigations and real dialogue with civil society organizations in documenting human rights violations.

Inquirer Mindanao, 13.12.2013

### Human rights workers arrested after visiting jailed MNLF men

By Julie S. Alipala

ZAMBOANGA CITY - Two government special investigators assigned to the Commission on Human Rights in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and three members of their staff were arrested after visiting suspects in the September attack on Zamboanga City who are locked up in the San Ramon Penal Colony in Zamboanga del Sur province, a CHR regional official said Friday.

Police denied that the human rights workers had been arrested but confirmed they were being questioned for alleged breaches of security that endangered police guarding maximum security prisoners.

Lawyer Edy Santiago of the CHR-ARMM told the Inquirer the Zamboanga City police, particularly those assigned to the Ayala Police Station, committed grave abuse and harassed the CHR team.

She identified those arrested as Special Investigator II Al-Ghosaibi M. Jupli, Special Investigator I Umma Omar Edding, administrative aide Nasser Halapto, data enumerator Madzsalman Cifria and driver Hermie Omar.

Santiago said it was Supt. Rey Dante Soledad, the commander of the Regional Public Safety Battalion 9, who arrested and escorted the human rights team from the San Ramon Penal Colony to the Ayala Police Station on orders from Chief Supt. Juanito Vano, the Western Mindanao police chief.

"We really don't know why they did that to our team. Worse is they threatened our team by saying that once they returned to San Ramon, 'We would have a battle'," Santiago said.

She said the CHR-ARMM team visited the suspects locked up at the prison facility to determine if their rights were being respected.

Vano could not be reached but Soledad called up the Inquirer and denied that the CHR-ARMM team was arrested.

He also denied threatening them in any manner.

Soledad said security had been tightened at the prison facility anew after the authorities intercepted note exchanges between a suspect and a relative, which indicated that the jailed Moro National Liberation Front gunmen were planning an escape.

He said police authorities were alarmed when visiting the CHR-ARMM team started taking photos of the positions of policemen assigned to the jail.

Soledad said he had ordered his men to ask the CHR-ARMM team to refrain from taking photos but they were apparently ignored.

He said he had asked for an Ipad of one of the visiting human rights team and was appalled at what he discovered.

"I inspected the photos of his Ipad and we were alarmed because he took pictures of the main gates of the penal colony, all the entrances and the detention cells where the rebels are detained, they took photos left and right portion of the whole facility," Soledad said.

He said the CHR-ARMM team had no clearance from Vano.

"I called up our regional director (Vano) and he instructed me to delete those photos, which I did, and he advised me to bring them to the Ayala police station for documentation," Soledad said. [...]

He said he also informed Human Rights Commissioner Jose Manuel Mamaug and even facilitated a conversation between Mamaug and the team leader of the CHR-ARMM.

Santiago said the explanation given by Soledad was not acceptable and they were preparing charges against him and other police officers involved.

Retired Judge Jesus Carbon, Zamboanga City legal officer, said the immediate transfer to Manila of the more than 200 jailed suspects was being arranged now. [...]

Philippine Daily Inquirer, 14.12.2013

## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

### Aquino doesn't consider media killings a national catastrophe

By Michael Lim Ubac

TOKYO - President Benigno Aquino III is not happy with the recent killings of journalists but won't label them a "national catastrophe."

Aquino said he believed the solution to all killings lay in strict law enforcement, gun control and an efficient judicial system.

At least 27 media persons have been killed during the three-and-a-half years of the Aquino administration. [...]

On Thursday, New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) urged Aquino to declare the deadly attacks on Filipino journalists a "national catastrophe," saying the situation "threatens civil liberties" in the country.

The killing of three journalists in Mindanao in the past two weeks was "no less than a war against the media" that needed immediate action, said Carlos Conde, HRW Philippine researcher.

Reporters Without Borders and the European Union delegation to the Philippines also issued statements condemning the attacks and urging the government to take decisive action.

The call for more action against media killings came after Rogelio Butalid, a block-timer at 107.9 FM Radyo Natin, was shot dead by a gunman in Tagum City, Davao del Norte, on Wednesday, shortly after he ended his radio program.

The night before, unidentified men shot and wounded Jonavin Villalba, a radio reporter, in Iloilo City.

Rappler.com, 19.12.2013

### Lawyer Raymond Fortun's wife shot in cheek

MANILA - Attorney Carole Fortun, wife of lawyer Raymond Fortun, was shot in front of their house in BF Homes Almanza, Las Piñas, at 8 pm, Thursday, December 19.

Fortun said his wife just finished serving in the Mass when unidentified suspects on board a motorcycle shot her.

[...] Fortun, who served as legal counsel for one of the petitioners who questioned the [legality of pork barrel funds](#), told Rappler the attack could have originally been directed to him.

Rappler.com, 20.12.2013

### Mayor, wife shot dead at NAIA Terminal 3

MANILA - A Zamboanga del Sur town mayor, his wife and 2 others were killed in an ambush Friday, December 20, at the arrival area of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 3.

Gunmen aboard a motorcycle shot dead Labangan Mayor Ukol Talumpa, according to airport manager Jose Angel Honrado in a media briefing Friday. Also slain were Talumpa's wife Lea; their nephew Salipudin Talumpa, 25; and Phil Tomas Lirasan, an 18-month-old baby. [...]

Another member of the Talumpa family, Remayda Talumpa, was also wounded and brought to the East Avenue hospital.

#### How it happened

The mayor, his family and security aides arrived from Zamboanga City on board Cebu Pacific Flight 5J 852 at around 11:15 am. They [...] went straight to their waiting vehicle near the Arrival Bay 2, where they were ambushed by 2 men aboard a motorcycle, Honrado said.

#### UPDATES ON CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Visayan Daily Star, 02.12.2013

### Bayles case seen

By Adrian Nemes III

The case of the Bayan Muna-Negros member who was killed allegedly by members of the military in Himamaylan City, Negros Occidental, about three years ago may be resolved in a

Radioman Michael Milo was gunned down in Tandag City, Surigao del Sur, on December 6.

A week earlier, another radioman, Joas Dignos, was killed in Valencia City, Bukidnon.

Aquino said he wouldn't be treating this as a national trend unless "somebody can say that there is some sort of an established policy to kill a journalist of this particular position, mentality."

He said a "correlation" must first be established: "What's common among (the killings) besides (the reality) that somehow they are connected to media."

"Now if you don't identify the problem correctly, you will not come up with a solution. The point is... we are 95 million Filipinos. It's difficult to see the intent, especially for those... some might really be wanton and merciless and totally wrong," he said.

He said, however, he was reserving comment on specific incidents "because I don't know yet what led to this incident."

[...] He said he was open to creating special courts to hasten the prosecution of murder cases involving media persons.

"I think the most we can do is a request (for additional courts) because the creation of these courts will have to be under the Supreme Court," he said, adding that "justice delayed is justice denied."

Raymond Fortun served as the legal counsel of [Serendra blast unit owner Marianne Cayton-Castillo](#). He is also the younger brother of lawyer Philip Sigfrid Fortun, lead counsel of the Ampatuans, who are implicated in a political massacre that killed 58 in 2009.

Fortun said his wife was already in "stable condition."

Authorities are investigating the incident.

Mayor Talumpa was shot in the chest and on the right side of his body, while his wife was hit in the head. Their nephew Salipudin Talumpa had 4 gunshot wounds in the head and body, according to authorities.

Honrado also admitted there is no closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera in the crime scene. In fact, all 4 passenger terminals at the airport are not equipped with CCTV camera.

[...] The motorcycle was earlier parked at Bay 8 of Terminal 3, according to the same report. The two suspects fled to the Southern Luzon Expressway, the report added.

An eyewitness told dzMM at 1:30 pm that the gunman was wearing a cap and police uniform, while the motorcycle driver was wearing a helmet and black jacket. The eyewitness said the motorcycle that the suspects boarded did not have a plate number.

Talumpa had been the target of previous attacks. [...]

year, Edre Olalia, secretary general of National Union of People's Lawyers, told the DAILY STAR Saturday.

Olalia, who joined in the two day national congress of NUPL in



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Bacolod City, said they are done with the presentation of evidence for the prosecution but the motions filed by the accused slows down the progress of the case.

One of the motions filed by the camp of Private First Class Rafael Cordova, whose pseudonym is Roger Bajon, and Pfc Reygine Laus, alias Ronnie, was that to expunge so the court will not accept some of the evidences presented against the accused.

Olalia said they will no longer present additional evidences against the accused on the next hearing scheduled on February next year at the Himamaylan City Regional Trial Court.

Sun.Star Davao, 03.12.2013

### Duterte: No comment on recent shootings in Davao City

By Ivy C. Tejano

DAVAO City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte refused to comment on the recent spate of shooting incidents in the city, where the victims were reportedly involved in crimes.

Duterte, in his television program "Gikan sa Masa, Para sa Masa" on Sunday said he has no idea that there were three victims in shooting incidents last week. He added that only one victim was reported to him.

Sun.Star Baguio, 08.12.2013

### Resolution of missing activist's case 'slow'

By JM Agreda

THE lawyer of missing activist James Balao's family found the response of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) slow.

Lawyer Jennifer Asuncion said a month after receiving orders from the Supreme Court, Task Force Balao has not given out new developments on the case, except for a computerized cartographic sketch of suspects who abducted the missing activist.

Asuncion said the task force has been allegedly sleeping on the case, citing there was no cross-checking of these sketches with any members of the AFP and the PNP.

The Supreme Court (SC), in an October 22 decision on the Writ of Amparo filed by the Balao family, tasked the AFP chief of staff and PNP director general to directly and personally monitor efforts of Special Investigation Task Force Group-Balao until the conclusion of its efforts.

The decision also directed the National Bureau of Investigation and the Commission on Human Rights to conduct an independent and parallel investigation on the disappearance of Balao.

The SC order also ordered all concerned officers and authorities

Bulatlat.com, 11.12.2013

### 4 alleged human rights violators promoted by Aquino

By Ronalyn V. Olea

MANILA — [...] These military officials who have been promoted and appointed to key positions by Aquino have [...] tainted records when it comes to human rights violations.

#### **Brigadier General Eduardo Año**

Brigadier General Eduardo M. Año was promoted to star rank and appointed as head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp).

Mrs. Edita Burgos, mother of missing activist Jonas Burgos, told *Bulatlat.com* in a [previous interview](#), "Our belief is very strong that he [Año] had a key role in the abduction of my son." Jonas has been missing since April 28, 2007. Mrs. Burgos filed charges of charges of arbitrary detention, murder and obstruction of justice against Año and several other military officials. The Department of Justice (DOJ), however, cleared Año of any responsibility in a resolution dated Sept. 3.

**Brigadier Gen. Aurelio Baladad and Lt. Gen. Jorge Segovia**

Two motorcycle-riding men shot dead Bayles, 44, in Himamaylan City on June 14, 2010. Two suspects on a motorcycle apprehended at a police checkpoint in nearby Kabankalan City later that day, were found to be members of the Army.

The accused are allegedly members of the 3rdPlatoon, Bravo Company of 61stInfantry Battalion formerly based in Sitio Barasbarasan, Brgy. Manlucahoc, Sipalay City.

Olalia said the biggest question that needs to be answered until now is the identity of the person behind the assassination of Bayles.

[...] "So there were killings. What was reported to me was that there was only one victim, not three. But no one's to be blamed. It's their fault," Duterte said, referring to the victims.

At least three victims were killed in separate shooting incidents on Wednesday. [...]

Until now, the police have no idea as to the identity of the killers. The police are still conducting investigation on the incidents.

to make available all documents they have on James Balao and make accessible all officers who had anything to do with the abduction, or who had knowledge of the abduction, as well as to grant access to camps and safe houses that could give leads to the whereabouts of the missing activist.

The order also directed Judge Jennifer Humiding to render further compliance to the December 13, 2011 decision at branch 63 of the Regional Trial Court in La Trinidad, Benguet, which originally issued a Writ of Amparo or protection in favor of Balao.

Balao, one of the founders of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance, went missing on September 17, 2008, in Tomay, La Trinidad.

[...] She said another cause of delay is the changing command of the Special Investigation Task Force Group-Balao.

The turtle paced resolution of human rights cases has been condemned by the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance as the country marks the annual celebration of Human Rights Day on December 10.

In September, the Commission on Appointments [confirmed Brigadier General Aurelio Baladad](#) as commander of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division based in Western Visayas.

Baladad, former head of the 202nd Brigade of the Philippine Army, ordered the arrest of 43 health workers in Morong, Rizal on February 6, 2010. Majority of the Morong 43, who were charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives, were eventually released.

Baladad, along with other military and police officials, is facing charges of torture, other criminal and administrative cases filed by members of the Morong 43. He is also one of the respondents to the damage suit filed by the health workers. The cases are pending with the Ombudsman, Quezon City Regional Trial Court and the Commission on Human Rights.

Dr. Alexis Montes, one of the so-called Morong 43, filed a formal protest against the confirmation of Baladad but to no avail.



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Last year, Aquino also promoted another general involved in the arrest and torture of the Morong 43. Major General Jorge Segovia, former commander of the 2nd Infantry Division of the Philippine Army, was promoted to lieutenant-general. He assumed the post of commanding officer of the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom).

Montes also filed an opposition to Segovia's promotion, citing pending cases filed against the latter.

### Ricardo Visaya

Brigadier Gen. Ricardo Visaya was appointed "acting commander" of the 4th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army based in Cagayan de Oro City.

According to human rights group Karapatan, Visaya was former commanding general of the Army's 69th Infantry Battalion implicated in the November 16, 2004 Hacienda Luisita massacre that claimed seven lives.

Karapatan noted that Visaya is also responsible for the following cases:

- The abduction and torture of farmers Raymond and Reynaldo

Manalo on February 14, 2006, where elements of the 69th IB-PA, headed by Visaya, are directly involved. [...]

- The massive deployment of soldiers under Visaya's Civil Military Operation (CMO) Battalion in Metro Manila communities from February to September 2007 that resulted to numerous cases of threats, harassment and intimidation especially among members and leaders of progressive organizations, as well as partisan campaigning against progressive partylist organizations and recruitment of intelligence agents among the people;

- Threats, harassment and intimidation of DOLE Philippines' farm workers during their union election in February 2011. Visaya headed the 27th IBPA assigned in Polomolok, South Cotabato. Visaya's troops reportedly targeted leaders and members of the incumbent union affiliated with the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU);

- Encampment and use of barangay halls, day care centers, chapels, and other civilian facility by troops under 901st IBPA in villages in Albay. [...]

Asian Human Rights Commission, Press Release, 13.12.2013

## PHILIPPINES: Political Detainees freed on Human Rights Day

Three (3) Muslim victims of arbitrary arrest and detention were released last December 10, 2013, Human Rights Day after the Taguig Regional Trial Court's decision that they were victims of mistaken identity.

Mujeener Dagam Cabalo and his two other co-accused were released from the Special Intensive Care Area of the Camp Bagong Diwa under the decision of Taguig City RTC 266 Honorable Judge Toribio E. Ilaog, Jr.

The three were released because it was proven that they were not the same person charged in the information issued by authorities.

According to the human rights group Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP), on March 5, 2013 at about 9:00am, around ten joint operatives of the Mindanao Area Police Intelligence Office (MAPIO), Regional Intelligence Division (RID), Regional Public Safety Battalion 9, Police Regional Office (PRO) 9, arrested Mujeener Dagam Cabalo, allegedly a suspect in a bombing incident that happened in Kidapawan City, North Cotabato in October 2007.

[...] He was brought to the police station in the Municipality of Sta. Maria in Zamboanga City, where he was interviewed and taken mug shots and documentation. [...]

According to Cabalo, the police showed them a warrant of arrest for a certain "Aman Kabalu", of which the family said that it was not him.

The police showed a picture of a pale and thin picture of him that was probably taken recently and contained the name of

certain Aman Kabalu.

The police refused to be identified after being asked by the victim's wife and the victim himself.

Cabalo is a resident of Latuan Baluno, Isabela City, Basilan Province, Island of Mindanao and a madrasah teacher since 2007. He was confined at Ciudad Medical Zamboanga, Zamboanga City in Mindanao on February 22, 2013 due to heart ailment.

"There are instances that there are Muslims being arbitrarily arrested on the basis of similar names. And there are reports that this is being resorted to because there is reward money," said Emmanuel Amistad, Executive Director of TFDP.

Mujeener Dagam Cabalo is one of the more than three hundred political prisoners and detainees who were victims of arbitrary arrests and detention, torture and political incarceration in the country.

"Unfortunately, the victim (Cabalo) is afraid for his safety because of information received from sources that he might be arrested again.

This information came from Mindanao that the Police still looking for possibilities to implicate him in another case." Rita Melecio, Deputy Executive Director of TFDP said. [...]

The two (2) co-accused of Mujeener namely, Muaweya Masabpi and Tohame Usman whom the prosecution witness failed to identify during the Preliminary Investigation were also released on Human Rights day.

DavaoToday.com, 17.12.2013

## Reds "indict" PH gov't forces implicated in boy's "murder"

DAVAO CITY - A "special investigating body" of the "Compostela Valley People's Democratic Government" has recommended "an order for the immediate arrest and commencement of the trial" of 23 respondents composed of army, police and government civilian personnel implicated in the "murder" of Roque Antivo.

Roque Antivo was killed in a strafing incident which allegedly involved military men of the Army's 71st Infantry Battalion last April 3 in a road near their farm in Sitio Kidaraan, Barangay Anitapan, Mabini, Compostela Valley. The military has maintained that Antivo was killed due to an encounter between the AFP and the New People's Army.

Two survivors of the incident pointed to the military as responsible for the shooting while Antivo's father positively identified

a certain Lieutenant Llorca as the commanding officer of the group who led the strafing against his sons and brother in law.

The 11-page "indictment," signed last December 10 during the International Human Rights Day was signed by an "investigating body" composed of Members Osang Quijano and Mario Renante and Head Julius Senajon.

It laid down 12 "facts and circumstances" to "support" the charges against the respondents for "planning, aiding, abetting and conspiring in the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity and serious violations of Human rights and international humanitarian law in the murder of Roque Antivo and frustrated murders of Jeffrey Hernan and Earl Jhun Antivo."

At the height of the furor in April caused by Antivo's killing, Compostela Provincial Police Director Camilo Pancratius



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Cascolan said the identified military officers were "restricted to barracks." The police office later recommended that cases be filed against the unit but did not progress.

In the indictment paper, the investigating body said they found "probable cause" to charge with "murder" and "frustrated murder" 2Lt. Felipe D. Llorca, Jr., the commander officer of a unit under the Army's 71st Infantry Battalion and 12 soldiers under his command.

Llorca's higher-ups in the Battalion level [...] were also implicated for "acts of bribery and for influencing the victim's family to deny justice and erase culpability of the responsible Army unit.

[...] Police officers and members of the crime laboratory of the Mabini police were "charged" for "having committed the cover-up in the crimes by "presenting, giving credence and by upholding the clearly tampered evidence at the crime scene and for

deliberately showing two sets of bullets to insinuate that two armed groups were involved in an armed encounter."

Meanwhile, Provincial Prosecutor Graciano Arafol, Jr. based in Nabunturan was also cited in the indictment for having dismissed the case filed by the victim's family. [...]

Other respondents in the document includes Pres. Benigno Aquino III, Defense Chief Voltaire Gazmin, AFP Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Emmanuel T. Bautista for their role in the formulation and implementation of Oplan Bayanihan, "which involves military campaigns of suppression, including the brutal killing of adults and children through bombings, strafing, among others."

[...] The indictment document also cited "historical aggravating circumstances" implicating the 71st IB and its officers for its involvement in the harassment of a teacher, mauling of a civilian, and killing of a girl in 2011. [...]

Amnesty International Philippines – Press Release, 18.12.2013

## Amnesty International blows the whistle on migrant workers exploitation in Qatar and Hong Kong

A day before the International Migrants Rights Day, Amnesty International blew the whistle on the dark side of working in Qatar and the exploitation of domestic workers in Hong Kong. This was during the launch of two reports on migrant workers: "The Dark side of Migration, Spotlight on Qatar's Construction Sector Ahead of the World Cup" and "Exploited for Profit, Failed by Governments, Indonesian Migrant Domestic Workers Trafficked to Hongkong" in Quezon City.

"As we commemorate the UN International Migrant Workers Day, migrants workers are abused, deceived, forced into slave-like situations and often treated as if they are not human. All migrant workers in Qatar and Hong Kong and elsewhere dream of giving better lives to their families, yet many of their dreams are shattered because of labor exploitation, discrimination and because governments failed them." said Dr. Aurora Parong, Director of Amnesty International in the Philippines.

Amnesty International's research mission in Qatar and Hong Kong noted inadequate protective laws and documented abusive practices of recruitment agencies, brokers, placement agencies, sponsors and employers who used deceptive practices to traffic migrant workers for exploitation and forced labor.

"Most of the 1.35 M migrant workers in Qatar come from Nepal, Bangladesh and the Philippines, either as construction workers or domestic workers. In Qatar, said to be the richest country in

the world, our researchers found cases where people were engaged in work for which they had not offered themselves voluntarily - because they had been deceived about their terms or conditions, or had pay withheld for months at a time. Some of them had unpaid wages and experienced withholding of passports and permission to leave the country. Where migrants had clearly been deceived into situations of forced labour, they were also victims of human trafficking."

"Meanwhile, Indonesian and Filipina domestic workers in Hong Kong are in much greater risk to experience gender-based exploitation as they live-in with their employers. [...]

Amnesty International said that it is inexcusable that sending and receiving countries in these situations have failed to fully protect migrant workers from trafficking, forced labor and labor exploitation leaving many migrant workers struggling to survive. The widespread abuse proves the inadequacy or absence of due diligence of governments in implementing already existing laws that supposedly provide protection and security to migrant workers. The human rights organization recommended that Hong Kong should sanction those who violate its laws in relation to migrant workers. Amnesty International recommends that the Labor Law in Qatar should be amended to include domestic workers, among others. [...]

InterAksyon.com, 19.12.2013

## Former lawmaker joins petition for writ of kalikasan vs Zambales mining

By Lira Dalangin-Fernandez

MANILA, Philippines -- Former Agham party-list representative Angelo Palmones led residents of Zambales in asking the Supreme Court on Thursday to stop the operations of DMCI Mining Corp. in the province.

The petition for a writ of kalikasan asks the high court to issue a restraining order against DMCI amid reports the firm "has actually leveled a mountain so they can create a foreshore for the port to be used in their mining operations."

Palmones said reports of the firm's activities were "alarming" and need the intervention of the tribunal.

"Agham party-list invokes the Supreme Court to intervene on behalf of the petitioners in order that a balanced and healthy

ecology is restored in Zambales and that the environmental properties of the province is protected, preserved and immediately rehabilitated," Palmones said. [...]

Also named respondents are the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Philippine Ports Authority.

The writ of kalikasan is a legal remedy available to citizens whose right to a balanced and healthful ecology is violated.

The environmental damage -- real or potential -- should cover two or more cities or provinces.

The petition may be filed with the Supreme Court or the Court of Appeals.

InterAksyon.com, 24.12.2013

## Luisita farmers vow raps vs Aquino uncle over arrests

By Paterno Esmaquel II

MANILA, Philippines -- Released from detention, farmers from Hacienda Luisita accused the President's uncle of having "di-

rectly ordered" their allegedly violent arrest, and vowed to file charges against him as well as the policemen who nabbed them.



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr, an uncle of President Benigno Aquino III, denied their claim.

The farmers' coalition Alyansa ng mga Manggagawang Bukid sa Asyenda Luisita (AMBALA) made this accusation Tuesday, December 24, after authorities released 5 of them from detention. [...]

AMBALA said the Cojuangco-owned Tarlac Development Corporation (TADECO) tried to sue the 5 farmers for trespassing, coercion, direct assault, and physical injuries after the "violent" confrontation on Saturday, December 21.

The group said the prosecutor sided with the farmers. AMBALA said Tarlac City Prosecutor Hermo Manglicmot ruled in a resolution that the respondents "also suffered injuries" based on medical certificates. [...]

### Cojuangco: 'I was abroad'

AMBALA said Cojuangco "is believed to have directly ordered" the newly appointed Tarlac police chief Senior Superintendent Alex Sintin to have the farmers arrested.

"Supt Sintin was seen going back and forth to consult with somebody inside a closed van parked near the site of the confrontation," the group said.

Belying this claim, Cojuangco told Rappler in a text message,

Bulatlat.com, 28.11.2013

## 18 women activists killed, 23 detained under Aquino administration

By Ronalyn V. Olea

MANILA — An organization of women rights defenders scored President Benigno S. Aquino III for the continuing human rights violations against women.

Citing data from the human rights alliance Karapatan, Tanggol Bayi said 18 women were victims of extrajudicial killings while 23 women were arrested and detained under the Aquino administration. They are among the 34 women political prisoners who languish in jails because of trumped up criminal charges, according to Tanggol Bayi.

"The BS Aquino administration should be held accountable for these attacks against women human rights defenders," Cristina Palabay, convener of Tanggol Bayi and Karapatan secretary general, said.

On Nov. 28, on the eve of the International Day of Women Human Rights Defenders, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling on all states "to publicly condemn violence against women human rights defenders, amend legislation that hinders them and give activists free access to UN bodies."

In 2005, the [Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition](#), a coalition of 28 organizations from different countries declared Nov. 29 as the International Day of Women Human Rights Defenders.

National Union of People's Lawyers, Press Statement, 28.11.2013

## Negros, venue of NUPL National Congress, a "laboratory for trump-up charges"

BACOLOD CITY - Human rights defenders called Negros Island the "laboratory" of the military's tactic of swamping activists and human rights defenders with trumped-up charges, which they brand as "continuing harassment and intimidation" to silence protests.

At the press briefing here at the Third National Congress of the National Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL) on November 30-December 1, 2013 in Bacolod City, they said they will "bring the fight to the military" by countering with charges of their own [...]. "We will not back out from this fight. We will stand by our clients," declared Atty. Edre Olalia, secretary-general of the NUPL, the largest nationwide organization of human rights lawyers. "We will also file charges against them administratively and criminally."

"For your information, I was out of the country when they said I ordered the police." [...]

AMBALA said Cojuangco and TADECO should face criminal and civil charges, while the police officers should face criminal and administrative charges.

"Their abuse of power must stop. We will file charges against the Cojuangcos, their minions in the local police force, and even the prosecution attorneys who file these trumped-up charges against farmers and their supporters to justify their illegal arrests," AMBALA lawyer Jobert Pahilga said.

Earlier, AMBALA also blasted the Department of Agrarian Reform for allegedly keeping 200 hectares of prime agricultural land in Hacienda Luisita from being distributed to farmers. [...]

Hacienda Luisita is a 6,000-plus-hectare sugar estate in Tarlac that belonged to the family of President Aquino on his mother's side. For decades, the Cojuangcos successfully dodged government efforts to place it under the agrarian reform program.

In its final decision in April 2012, the Supreme Court ordered the total distribution of Hacienda Luisita to about 6,000 farmer-beneficiaries. [...]

Tanggol Bayi paid tribute to [Juvy Capion](#) and [Cristina Jose](#). Both were human rights defenders who were killed under the Aquino administration. [...]

"Neglect characterized the response of the Aquino administration during the recent devastation brought about by super typhoon Haiyan (Philippine name Yolanda). This is typical of the BS Aquino government as shown by the plight of the victims of typhoon Pablo," Kiri Dalena, convener of Tanggol Bayi said. "It such a shame that those courageous women who rose above the crisis to demand for government response are getting killed," Dalena said.

"It is even more shameful that perpetrators of attacks against women human rights defenders are walking free - free to commit further repression and violence," Dalena added.

No one has been punished for the murder of the two human rights defenders. Last month, the local prosecutor in Digos City, Davao del Sur dismissed the murder charges against soldiers implicated in the massacre of the Capion family.

Tanggol Bayi also opposed the massive deployment and operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in rural and urban poor communities under Aquino's counter-insurgency program, Oplan Bayanihan. "This also puts the lives and security of their children at risk," Palabay said. [...]

Further, they vowed to bring international attention to the matter. Advocate Jo Deremaeker, of the Progressive Lawyers' Network, Belgium, expressed "the grave concern of the European lawyers" on this new attack on human rights workers. She said: [...]. Two Bayan Muna representatives in the lower House, both NUPL members, announced they would be filing resolutions in Congress for an inquiry on the growing trend of the military slapping critics trumped-up charges, with Negros as the military's "laboratory". Reps. Neri Javier Colmenares and Carlos Isagani Zarate said they will summon during the investigation not only military and police officers, jail warden, false witnesses, but also public prosecutors and even members of the judiciary "to explain to us on their role in the prosecution and trial of these trump-up charges.:"



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

[...] The military in Negros slapped murder charges against eight activists and human rights advocates. Two of them are in detention, namely: Zara Alvarez, member of the Northern Negros Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (NNAHRA), who has been in prison for one year. The other, Alizar Nabas, a peasant, was slapped with arson and jailed for three years. The court has acquitted Nabas but he still languishes in detention after the military slapped him with murder, another unbailable offense. Zarate, a former NUPL vice president for Mindanao, recalled

they saw military men in civilian attire standing by at Alvarez's detention cell. "I asked the jailors why they allowed military men to roam around inside the detention center, and they answered me that Alvarez was a 'high risk' prisoner," Zarate recalled. [...] "Nothing has changed under the administration of Pres. Benigno Aquino III," noted Marie Hilao Enriquez, chair of the human rights group Karapatan. [...] In the period recorded there are now 449 political prisoners that included 35 women, 12 elderly and 3 minors aside from 28 sickly ones. [...]

MAGUINDANAO MASSACRE  
Inquirer.net, 11.12.2013

## De Lima to discuss new guidelines on massacre trial with DOJ panel

By Tetch Torres-Tupas

MANILA, Philippines – Justice Secretary Leila De Lima on Wednesday welcomed the new guidelines set by the Supreme Court to speed up the trial in the Maguindanao massacre case. She said once she receives the copy of the guideline, "I will take it up with our panel of prosecutors handling the Maguindanao massacre trial."

[...] In its new guideline, the high court has appointed a third assisting Judge for Quezon City Regional Trial Court Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes. The judge will handle all non-trial incidents in the Maguindanao massacre case such as the arraignments, pre-trials as well as motions that are not essential to the merits of the multiple murder case.

Other guidelines include:

- Reyes and the third assisting Judge can resolve the other motions despite pendency of some of it before the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court;
- The judge is allowed to hold, upon her discretion, separate

trials on accused which the prosecutors believe that there is no need to present further evidence and submit the case for decision without prejudice to applying other modes of terminating a case in advance of a full trial;

- The lower court can issue separate rulings on matters in any of the 58 cases of murder without waiting for the completion of evidence for all the accused;

- The high court also allowed the use of judicial affidavits for the remaining witnesses and attached exhibits (evidence) at least 10 days before the scheduled date of testimony and provide copies to the public prosecutor or lead counsel for the accused.

"Like in any other criminal case, the Executive acts thru the prosecutors and the prosecutors handling the Maguindanao massacre case have been doing their job diligently and are not at all engaging in dilatory maneuvers. The prosecutorial interest and goal is to secure convictions without delays," De Lima said.

PEACE PROCESS  
MindaNews.com, 09.12.2013

## GPH, MILF sign Power-Sharing annex; January eyed for signing of comprehensive peace pact

By Carolyn O. Arguillas

KUALA LUMPUR – The government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) peace panels signed Sunday night the Annex on Power-Sharing to the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB) with the panels agreeing that the unresolved issue on "Bangsamoro waters" be treated as an addendum to the annexes on Power-Sharing and Revenue Generation and Wealth-Sharing.

Sunday's signing leaves only one more annex – Normalization – for the panels to finally complete the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that would hasten the drafting of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) to pave the way for the creation of the Bangsamoro, a new autonomous political entity that would replace the 23-year old Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

[...] The Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC), the body that is drafting the BBL, expects to complete its task by April 2014. [...]

**Reserved, Exclusive, Concurrent**  
The [Annex on Power Sharing](#) took 16 months to negotiate since the Technical Working Groups first convened in August 2012.

It delineates powers between the Central Government and the Bangsamoro Ministerial Government within the territorial jurisdiction of the "Bangsamoro;" spells out the Central Government's reserved powers, the Bangsamoro's exclusive powers within its territorial jurisdiction, and concurrent powers shared by the Central and Bangsamoro governments and also provides the principles of intergovernmental relations "to ensure the

harmonious partnership between and among the different levels of government," the Joint Statement said..

[...] "In its genes, the shape of the future Bangsamoro political entity are encoded. But we know that all these will have to be translated into the Bangsamoro Basic Law – one that will put in place a strong, viable autonomous governance for the Bangsamoro in Mindanao, and connect with its siblings and cousins who came before them and will come after them," she [government peace panel chair Miriam Coronel-Ferrer] said. Iqbal cautioned that despite the success in completing the Annex on Power-Sharing, the road ahead is "still full of twists and turns." [...]

### Stuck on waters

[...] the panels got stuck on the issue on Bangsamoro waters. MindaNews sources said government on Friday proposed a "creative" way of moving ahead by signing the Annex on Power-Sharing with a provision that the panels would craft an addendum to both annexes on power-sharing and wealth-sharing, on the Bangsamoro waters. [...]

MindaNews sources said one of the formulations offered was for the Bangsamoro waters to be defined as an area up to 22 kilometers from the shoreline or seven kilometers more than municipal waters.

Another suggestion was to have a zone or area of cooperation and management deal with the issue of waters on the Moro Gulf and the Sulu Sea. [...]

The issue on shares from oil and gas explorations in the Sulu Sea



## Action Network Human Rights- Philippines

was also discussed, with proposals of 60-40 sharing in favor of the Central Government, while another proposal was on royalty

payment.

Rappler.com, 27.12.2013

### CPP gives up on peace talks, calls for Aquino ouster

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By Carmela Fonbuena

MANILA, Philippines - The peace talks between the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has been in limbo for months. On its 45th anniversary on December 26 [...], the CPP declared it is giving up on the administration of President Benigno Aquino III.

"In view of the proven unwillingness of the Aquino regime to negotiate a just peace, the revolutionary movement does not expect the resumption of peace negotiations with the regime. [...]" reads a [statement of the CPP central committee](#).

It is also calling for Aquino's ouster, saying he is worse than former President Gloria Arroyo in terms of violations of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).

[...] The talks collapsed in February 2013 when the two panels couldn't agree on the initial agenda of the negotiations.

According to government, CPP founder Jose Maria Sison changed his mind on a "special track" he had originally agreed

to. Under this, both sides would immediately declare a ceasefire and a special panel from both sides would be convened to tackle issues that bring about rebellion.

Government negotiator Alex Padilla claimed the rebel troops in the Philippines prevailed on Sison to reject the special track and bring back to the table old demands that the government had already rejected. The NDF had wanted the government to, among others, terminate the Aquino administration's anti-poverty flagship program, the conditional cash transfer, stop the military's Oplan Bayanihan counter-insurgency program, and give land to 5 million landless farmers.

[...] NDF panel member and spokesperson Fidel Agcaoili tried to save the peace talks when he came to Manila [...]. The "special track" and the "regular track" are complementary, he said. But nothing came out of his visit. Agcaoili believed that the President was misled by his Cabinet officials. [...]

#### FURTHER READINGS

Rightingfinance.org, 04.12.2013

### The Call to Stop Corporate Human Rights Abuses - What Does It Mean For Financial Companies?

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By Dominic Renfrey ·

Like all companies, financial companies can and must do more to recognize their frequent role in violating human rights and take action to respect human rights. At the recent ESCR-Net [Peoples' Forum on Human Rights and Business](#), held between November 5-7 in Bangkok, close to a 100 civil society and grassroots organizations from around the world deliberated on the direction of the corporate accountability movement, and they reiterated the need to establish strong systems of accountability to combat corporate human rights abuses. Read more [here](#).

Asian Human Rights Commission - Press Release, 08.12.2013

### Human Rights Report for 2013

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On the occasion of the Human Rights Day, 2013, the Philippine Desk of the Asian Human Rights Commission has produced a 19 page report detailing the prevailing situation in the country.

This year's report is entitled, 'License' to torture, kill and to silence the oppressed' and gives numerous examples of the human rights abuses by the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the armed forces. [...] The full report is available for download [here](#).

Bulatlat.com, 11.12.2013

### 6 cases showing impunity under Aquino

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Malacañang claims that the culture of impunity has been solved because the Aquino government has been doing something about it. And yet, unsolved cases of extrajudicial killings under the current administration continue to pile up. [...] six prominent cases [...] reveal that the human rights situation in the country remains to be bleak. The article draws special attention to the cases of Fr. Fausto Tentorio, Gerry Ortega, Capion Massacre, Willem Geertman, Leonard Co, Sofronio Cortez and Julio Borromeo, and Jimmy Liguyon. Please click [here](#) to read more.

Rappler.com, 19.12.2013

### Negros solar farm gears up for DOE renewable energy plan

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By Pia Ranada

MANILA - [...] San Carlos Solar Farm (SaCaSol) [...] is set to generate 22 megawatts of electricity. That's enough to power the entire San Carlos City. [...]

ThomasLloyd has two more renewable energy plants in San Carlos. A bioethanol plant which produces ethanol gas for cars has been operating since 2005, the first in Southeast Asia. A biopower plant, which generates electricity from sugarcane waste, is under construction and will be ready by 2015.

When completed, the 3 projects will make San Carlos the first integrated renewable energy zone in the country. [...]. Read more [here](#).