

PUP to file case vs. teachers requiring students to join rallies

MANILA -- After hearing from parents of missing Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) students on Wednesday, PUP president Emanuel de Guzman assured that professors who require their students to attend protest activities will face charges.

“If proven, administrative cases will be filed against them. They will no longer be qualified to teach in PUP,” de Guzman said in an interview with Philippine News Agency (PNA) on the sidelines of Senate hearing on missing minors who have been allegedly recruited by organizations with links to the communist movement.

De Guzman expressed support to the government in stopping communist-front groups like Anakbayan and Kabataan in recruiting students into their organizations that cause students to abandon their studies and join the insurgents. Mothers of five missing students who were senior high school students of PUP, Far Eastern University and the University of the East Manila told the Senate hearing that their children joined the League of Filipino Students, Anakbayan,



Polytechnic University of the Philippines President Dr. Emanuel de Guzman (PNA photo by Avito C. Dalan)

and Kabataan party-list groups.

Of the five, only Gemma Labsan’s daughter has remained with her parents while the rest did not contact their families.

Labsan showed copies of photos where her child went with a teacher and other students during street rallies while President Rodrigo Duterte delivered his fourth State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 22.

The Senate committee on public order and dangerous drugs chairperson, Senator Ronald dela Rosa, said he got a text complaint that a professor of the University of the Philip-

pires in Cebu wants his students to attend a protest against the government so they can pass his subject.

“Teachers leading their students astray, communists allowed to recruit inside the school grounds, we should not tolerate that,” the senator said. De Guzman, meanwhile, apologized to the parents of the missing PUP students.

“Ako po ay nag-apologize sa kanila dahil ‘yung mga anak nila na nasa PUP ay na-recruit kahit na ito ay labag sa aming ka-looban (I apologize to them because their children were recruited while in PUP despite that this is against our will). But we cannot

commit that 100 percent, this would not happen. We are hoping this will not happen again,” he said, adding that the recruiters operate without their knowledge.

“Ang PUP, kahit noon pang panahon ng martial law ay lugar na ng mga aktibista, pero maliit na minority lamang sila sa aming malaking populasyon. Unti-unti nang lumiliit ang bilang dahil naglagay na kami ng reporma (PUP, even during the martial law years, has been a place for activists but they are just a minority compared to the big population [of students]. Little by little their [activists] numbers are decreasing because of the reforms we put in place),” he said. (PNA)

national dengue epidemic has been declared),” Belmonte said.

Citing that the local government already had several measures in place as part of the efforts against dengue, Belmonte assured residents of the availability of rapid diagnostics test kits or NS1 in health centers.

According to the Department of Health, these kits help diagnose and assess dengue cases, and arrange a referral mechanism for patients with warning signs of dengue and need immediate hospitalization to government hospitals within the city.

“Ngayon, kailangan lang nating paigtingin ang mga pagkilos na ito lalo na sa (Now, we just have to strengthen our efforts especially in the) top 10 barangays with the highest number of dengue cases in the first six months of 2019, including Payatas A and B, Commonwealth, Batasan, Fairview, Kamuning, Tatalon, Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora, Bagong Silangan and Bagbag,” Belmonte said.

Belmonte has also instructed the Barangay and Community Relation Department and the Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department to maintain the city’s cleanliness and get rid of mosquito breeding grounds. (PNA)

Panay-Guimaras-Negros bridge study to be completed this year

MANILA -- The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) on Wednesday said the feasibility study of the inter-island bridge connecting three major islands in Western Visayas is expected to be completed before 2020.

“The feasibility study for the Panay-Guimaras-Negros (bridge) is expected to be completed this year,” Anna Mae Lamentillo, chairperson of the Build, Build, Build Inter-agency Committee, bared this in a press briefing in Malacañang.

Lamentillo said the DPWH is being “very careful” in relation to the design and construction of the project given its magnitude.

“May requirement

po kasi (there’s a requirement). For an inter-island bridge for example, may required na pre-feasibility study, feasibility study and detailed engineering design,” she added.

She assured that the bridge has been included as one of the priority projects under the Build, Build, Build program of the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte.

Once completed, the bridge is expected to be another option for traveling across Western Visayas to prevent incidents such as the recent Iloilo-Guimaras Straight sea mishap that killed 31 people from occurring.

The Proposed Panay-Guimaras-Negros Island Bridges

Project is undergoing a feasibility study under CCC Highway Consultants Co., Ltd. of the People’s Republic of China.

Based on the project profile, the two proposed bridges are the Panay-Guimaras Bridge, which will start in Leganes, Iloilo and will end in Buenavista, Guimaras, and the Guimaras-Negros Island Bridge, which will start and end in San Lorenzo, Guimaras and Pulupandan, Negros Occidental, respectively.

Some road sections in Guimaras Island have already been developed and paved, now known as the Guimaras Cross Island Roads as part of the preparation for the construction. (PNA)

Indonesia, PH armies to conduct more anti-terror trainings

MANILA -- Indonesian and Philippine Army (PA) units will conduct various training as part of the ongoing effort to defeat terrorism.

This came as the Commandant of the Indonesian Army Command and General Staff College (IACGSC), Major Gen. Kurnia Dewantara paid a courtesy call on PA Chief-of-Staff, Major Gen. Jesus B. Sarsagat, at the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City on Wednesday.

The two senior leaders discussed the continuous cooperation of the two armies to combat terrorism through the conduct of various training ex-

changes here in the Philippines and Indonesia, said PA spokesperson Lt. Col. Ramon Zagala in a statement.

Dewantara is in the country and is heading a 61-member delegation from the IACGSC for an Overseas Study Tour from August 5 to August 9.

The program aims to expose the students from the Indonesian Army to a holistic approach on international military affairs.

It also aims to further strengthen the current ties of the PA and the Indonesian Army when it comes to training exchanges.

“We agree that the cooperation between Indonesia and Philippines should

be maintained because we face the same threat of terrorism. Through these training exchanges, we are able to learn from each other to develop the best approach to fight it and then solve the problem together,” Dewantara said.

“As we face terrorism, we also have to deal with new threats like in cyber security. The Philippine Army also sees the importance of strengthening our information sharing and exchanges of intelligence as a way to defeat terrorism,” Sarsagat said.

He added that PA troopers also learned a lot on Indonesian counter-terror efforts during their visit and study there. (PNA)

BI blacklists 2 S. Korean illegal recruiters

MANILA -- The Bureau of Immigration (BI) reported on Wednesday the arrest of two South Korean nationals for attempting to facilitate the departure of 13 undocumented overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) they illegally recruited to work in Malaysia.

BI port operations division chief Grifon Medina recommended to Commissioner Jaime Morente to include the South Koreans, identified as Lee Jeong Seop and Pyun Jung Su, in the BI blacklist to

prevent them from returning to the Philippines and recruit more victims.

He said the foreigners were reportedly identified by the victims as responsible for arranging and shouldering their expenses after they were intercepted at the Clark International Airport (CIA) in Angeles City, Pampanga on different occasions last month.

It was learned that Lee supposedly arranged the travel of eight of the victims who were stopped at

the Clark airport last July 16 as they were about to board a flight of Jetstar Airways to Singapore en route to their final destination in Kuala Lumpur.

The passengers, who were disguised as tourists, admitted that they were hired to work as English instructors for Korean students in Malaysia.

On the other hand, the five other victims were intercepted last July 22 as they were being accompanied by Pyun in boarding a Cebu Pacific flight to Hong Kong.

QC dengue cases down by 22% amid nat'l epidemic

MANILA -- Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte on Wednesday announced a 22-percent drop in the number of dengue cases in the city compared to the same period last year.

In a statement, Belmonte reported that a total of 2,730 dengue cases with 21 deaths were reported from January 1 to July 27, 2019.

According to the QC Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (QC-ESU), there were 3,498 cases and 26 deaths for the same period in 2018.

The QC-ESU added that the city recorded 7,527 dengue cases with 75 deaths in 2017 and 8,158 cases with 74 deaths in 2018.

Despite the drop in the dengue incidents, Belmonte ordered concerned local agencies and barangay officials “to remain vigilant and to double their efforts in combating dengue” following the government’s declaration of a national epidemic.

“Inaatasan ko ang mga kaukulang tanggapan ng siyudad, lalo na ang ating City Health Office, at mga barangay official na paigtingin pa ang kampanya ngayong idineklara na bilang national epidemic ang dengue (I order the respective city offices, especially our City Health Office and barangay officials to strengthen the (city’s) campaign now that the