

GRP panel to be reconstituted for localized peace talks

MANILA -- The termination of appointments of the members of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) Negotiating Panel will pave the way for the creation of an inclusive panel that will supervise localized peace engagements, Presidential Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr. said on Wednesday.

Galvez said the composition of the new panel will be based on the Colombian model which includes representatives from different sectoral groups, local government units, and the military whose presence are essential to the peace negotiations.

"The discontinuance of the services of the members of the GRP panel is in line with the termination of peace talks with the NDFP (National Democratic Front Panel). But we will reconstitute the panel at a national scope in accordance with the whole-of-nation approach. We are advocating to achieve inclusive and sustainable peace," he said.

As contained in a letter from Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea addressed to the GRP panel members, their services were officially terminated by the Office of the President last March 18.

The peace talks between the government and NDFP, which represents the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), has been intermittent since it began in 1986.

From 2016, there has been four rounds

of talks between the two parties, but the formal negotiation was terminated along with Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) through Proclamation 360 by President Rodrigo Duterte in November 2017 because of intensified NPA offensives on government forces and private installations.

"For 32 years, we didn't gain anything from the talks, and it is being used by the CPP-NPA as a leverage for them to strengthen their forces and take advantage of the sincerity of the government," Galvez said.

Galvez said President Duterte has ordered the review of past agreements with the NDFP.

"That is why we are temporarily suspending the implementation of Hague Declaration and Comprehensive Agreement for

the Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Laws (CARHRIHL) until it is fully evaluated by the Office of the President," he said.

LGUs: Vital partners in peace engagements

The peace adviser also stressed that the participation of the local government in the peace engagements is essential in resolving social issues that have been the root causes of the decades-old insurgency.

"OPAPP (Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process) and other national government agencies will pour in its resources in support of our local chief executives and local peace bodies in their facilitation of their engagements and interventions," he said.

In December 2018, President Rodrigo Du-

arte issued EO 70 which institutionalized a whole-of-nation approach in attaining peace and created a National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict.

During his visit in Negros Occidental last March 8, the peace adviser committed to provide assistance packages to former members and families of Revolutionary Proletarian Army – Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) as well as ex-NPA rebels.

"The EO 70 is very effective in ensuring the delivery of services and social development packages to everyone affected by conflict. We are very confident that the insurgency and its causes will be addressed and resolved under the current administration," he said. (OPAPRU PR)

Group of Nations to receive Japanese excess defense equipment," the DND chief said.

Moving forward, Lorenzana expressed hope that the increasing and growing defense alliance and close partnership between Manila and Tokyo would expand further in the years to come.

In line with this, Lorenzana said the Philippines is looking to acquire other excess defense equipment like radars and planes from Japan, which, he said, are still being discussed at this time. (PNA)

PH first ASEAN nation to get excess Japanese defense equipment

MANILA -- Department of National Defense (DND) Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Tuesday said the Philippines is very lucky as it is the first country in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to receive excess Japanese defense equipment.

He made this statement during the turnover and acceptance ceremony for the UH-IH "Huey" spare parts donated by the Japan Ministry of Defense, which was held at the Haribon Hangar in Clark Air Base, Pampanga.

CAVITE HOLDS INT'L CONFERENCE ON AGUINALDO'S 150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY



Historians, scholars and members of the academe convened on March 19-21, 2019 at the Lyceum of the Philippines University-Cavite Campus Auditorium in the City of Gen. Trias for the International Conference on the 150th Birth Anniversary of Emilio Aguinaldo.

Participants who gathered in commemoration of the life and works of the most illustrious son of the province were welcomed by LPU-Cavite Vice President Ms. Teresa O. Pilapil on behalf of the University President Atty. Roberto P. Laurel, telling how our heroes in the past can be considered as best teachers from whom we learn what it means to be Filipino.

Meanwhile, humbled to be given the opportunity to deliver a message during the opening program of the conference, Cavite Governor Boying Remulla paid his respects to the guests and attendees, especially to former Prime Minister Cesar EA Virata and National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) Chairman Dr. Rene R. Escalante. The governor also acknowledged the collaborative efforts of the NHCP, the Provincial Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office (PTCAO) and the Cavite Historical Society in rekindling the heroism of Aguinaldo. Likewise, the governor encouraged members of the academe to further understand the process of history, as well as to teach history in the right perspective.

Former Prime Minister Cesar EA Virata, Chairman of the Cavite Historical Society, and a descendant of Aguinaldo shared stories of political events during President Emilio Aguinaldo's time and called to settle the issues to collectively gain peace and strength towards nation-building.

On the other hand, Dr. Manny Calairo of De La Salle University-Dasmariñas and member of the NHCP Advisory Committee provided the overview of the conference to further stir the interest of the participants in revisiting and understanding more of Aguinaldo's contributions and legacy of as one of the main pillars of our nation.

Among the resource speakers and scholars who shed light on various issues related to heroism and independence by sharing their historical insights and research were Dr. Reynaldo Ileto of the Australian National University who tackled "The Multiple Roles of Emilio Aguinaldo in the History of Nation Building"; Dr. Lance Collins of the Hawaii Institute for Philippine Studies with his "Ontology of Statecraft: Studying the Ideas of the Malolos Constitution"; and, Dr. Karl-Heinz Wionzek of Dr. Lutke Foundation based in Germany on his work "Emilio Aguinaldo, the Germans and the Australian Ferdinand Blumentritt: Contacts and Mutual Relations between 1897 and 1901, plus many other studies related to the life of the Father of Philippine Independence.

Other sessions include topics on Emilio Aguinaldo before the revolution, behind the uniform and traces on Freemasonry, and different views on him from the northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

The three-day conference that honored the life, achievements and enduring legacy of Aguinaldo concluded with an educational tour to the heritage sites in Cavite spearheaded by OIC-Provincial Tourism Officer Rozelle Sangalang.

The NHCP, the Cavite Studies Center and the Provincial Tourism also invited everyone to join them on March 22, 2019 to celebrate the 150 years of the First President of the Republic of the Philippines at the Aguinaldo Shrine in Kawit, Cavite. Among the activities lined-up are musical performances from the Kawit Singing Ambassadors and the Campus Medley, the Bayanihan Dance Troupe cultural presentation, karakol competition and the Aguisaysayan 2019 (Aguinaldo sa Kasaysayan: Tagisan ng Kaalaman sa Buhay at Kasaysayan ng Unang Pangulo ng Republika ng Pilipinas), a module writing competition. (PICAD)