

Raps filed vs. 45 mayors for failure to create local ADAC

MANILA -- The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) has filed a complaint against 45 mayors before the Office of the Ombudsman for their alleged failure or refusal to create Anti-Illegal Drugs Abuse Council (ADAC) in their areas.

DILG Secretary Eduardo Año said the complaint was filed against the second batch of 25 mayors on Wednesday afternoon. The first batch of complaints against 20 mayors were filed last March 14.

said in a statement. Of the 45 mayors, 15 are in the Bicol region, particularly in Albay, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Masbate, and Sorsogon provinces.

Seven are in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), specifically in Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and Lanao del Sur provinces.

Five are from Abra and Ifugao provinces, and five from Palawan province.

In Central Visayas, four mayors are in Cebu

province. In Earlier, Año said they intend to institutionalize the ADAC program by urging Congress to pass a legislation on it.

He said the war against drugs is a “whole-of-government approach” and can only be won when everyone “chips in” their contribution.

The local governments in the barangay, municipal, and provincial levels are mandated to convene their ADACs to address first-hand drug issues in areas of their jurisdiction. (PNA)

Gov't appeals to keep oceans, seas plastic-free

MANILA -- The Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) on Wednesday appealed to keep the oceans and seas free from plastic and other harmful pollutants following the recent death of a Cuvier's Beaked Whale in Compostela Valley waters.

In a statement, the DA-BFAR expressed regret over the incident, "which is somehow a result of improper wastes disposal".

Last March 15, the Cuvier's Beaked Whale, about 15.4 feet long and seven feet wide, was found stranded along the coastline of Barangay Cadunan in Mabini, Compostela Valley Province.

The incident was reported to the DA-BFAR in Region 11 (Davao Region), which immediately dispatched a team to respond to the beached marine mammal, which is considered an endangered species.

The DA-BFAR said several attempts to properly ferry the beached whale to deeper waters were made. However, despite these efforts, the whale returned to shallow waters where its condition further deteriorated and eventually died.

A necropsy was performed on the whale and BFAR 11 collected tissue samples for scientific determination of other possible causes of death through a series of histopathologic tests.

The initial diagnosis of death is ingestion of huge amount (88 pounds) of foreign objects mostly of plastics, pending the complete result of necropsy.

The animal's remains are now undergoing preservation process and its bones will be preserved for educational exhibit purposes.

"Following this incident, we urge the general public and all concerned government entities to support the Malinis at Masaganang Karagatan, a holistic program of the DA-BFAR, which would ensure that our seas and oceans are free of plastics and other harmful pollutants," it said.

"(The) DA-BFAR is committed to further intensifying its monitoring and law enforcement efforts to be more responsive on incidents of marine mammal stranding and safeguard our seas from destructive activities to prevent similar occurrences from happening in the future," it added. (PNA)

Rise of China means growth of PH, neighbors: Locsin

MANILA-- Foreign Affairs Secretary Todoroc Locsin Jr. on Tuesday reaffirmed the Philippines support to China as the rising power in the East, saying the emergence of a "new China" creates a world where the developing nations have a chance.

Locsin said Manila

has much to hope for, and nothing to fear from the rise of a new power. This, as it hoped for a "new world" where a state's goal to get richer is through helping others prosper.

Citing what he wrote in the Philippine-China memorandum of understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative, Locsin said

Duterte asks Misuari to form negotiating panel

MANILA -- President Rodrigo R. Duterte has asked Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) founding chairman Nur Misuari to form a negotiating panel to address his group's concerns.

Duterte made this response to Misuari when they met in Malacanan on Tuesday and the MNLF leader told the President that he will go to war if the proposed shift to a federal system will not materialize.

"Sabi ni Misuari kagabi (Misuari said last night), 'If you do not give it to me, let me be very honest: I will go to war.' Sabi ko (I replied), I understand that Nur. So ganito na lang gawin natin (So here's

what we will do). Let's form a panel because we have to inform the people. We cannot negotiate secretly here," Duterte said in his speech during the campaign rally of the Partido Demokratiko Pilipino--Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban) in Marikina City on Wednesday night.

"Sabi ko para (I said, so that) day to day they will be briefed kung ano outcome, how gusto mo ma-apply yung federal system sa gusto mo, gaya ba ng BOL o different type. (What the outcome, how you want to apply the federal system the way you want. Would it be like the Bangsamoro Organic Law or a different

type)," he added.

The President said Misuari expressed his desire for federalism which was promised to his group since the administration of former President Corazon Aquino.

"Iyan ang inaasahan ng mga Moro para magkaroon naman sila, magkaroon, mabawi nila 'yung mga lupa na inagaw ng mga pari, mga Español pati Amerikano (That is what Moros expect for them to regain the lands grabbed by the priests, Spaniards, Americans)," he said.

Duterte met with Misuari after the MILF leader returned from an overseas trip.

"Misuari kagabi galising siya abroad, (Misuari returned from abroad last night) I allowed him to go out kasi may kaso siya. Sabi ko (because he is facing charges. I told him) when you come back come here, we'll talk," Duterte said.

The President said National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Presidential Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr. and Palace Spokesman Salvador Panelo were present when he met with Misuari.

Duterte earlier said he "admired" Misuari's patience in peace negotiations.

Meanwhile, Panelo said Misuari "was very happy" with the President's response to form a negotiating panel. (PNA)

Military not engaged in partisan political activities

MANILA -- The Makabayan bloc's allegations that the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), along with other government agencies, is engaged in partisan political activities are "meant to tarnish the image" of the military, an official said Thursday.

AFP Public Affairs Office chief, Col. Noel Detoyato, denied the allegations of the left-leaning group that the AFP, the Philippine National Police and the Department of the Interior and Local Government are into partisan political activities, system vilification, and red-tagging of organizations.

"The AFP will never engage in partisan politics. The sweeping statement of this group is meant to tarnish the image of the AFP, which is at the forefront of ensuring the security and safeguarding the rights of the voters so that they can freely go out and vote this coming midterm elections," Detoyato said.

Detoyato said the Makabayan bloc should instead convince voters and the

public that their group is not part of any violent efforts to topple the government.

"Why don't they just concentrate on convincing the voters that they are not part of the group that wants to bring down the government through violent means instead of concentrating on destroying the image of the Armed Forces of the Philippines," Detoyato said.

"The only time the voters will believe them

that they are not part of the group that is conspiring to violently bring down the government and change our way of life is when they publicly denounce the CPP-NPA-NDF (Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front) and its fronts," he said.

The CPP-NPA is listed as a terrorist organization by the United States and the European Union. (PNA)

deepen Philippines-China relations.

Although a lot of work remains to be done, there are "greater advantages" in the two nations' collaboration across a wide range of areas, Locsin said.

"There is so much to look forward to and accomplish that will be of much greater value to both of us than those differences can ever be to each one," he noted.

Locsin also assured the Chinese official that Manila will look after the Chinese people in the Philippines.

"You have our assurance that the Philippines will look out for

your people in my country as I have seen China look out for our people in yours," said Locsin, who is in Beijing for his first official visit to China.

Prior to his presser with Wang, he met with Vice President Wang Qishan, a stalwart of the Chinese Communist Party, who reaffirmed China's commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations with Manila.

Also present during the meeting were Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and Philippine economic managers led by Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez. (PNA)