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MANILA -- Newly-appointed Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief-of-staff, Lt. Gen. Noel Clement on Thursday said two military officers will head the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) in acting capacity.

In his first press conference as AFP chief in Camp Aguinaldo, Clement said Rear Admiral Allan Cusi will be appointed as acting PMA Superintendent next week while Brig. Gen. Romeo Brawner will be appointed as acting Corps of Cadets Commandant.

"As far as the updates on the current issue of the PMA is concerned, first and foremost let me announce that we will be, this afternoon, we will be installing Brig. Gen. Romeo Brawner as the acting commandant of (the Corps of) Cadets of the PMA and next week, we will be installing Rear Admiral Allan Cusi as the acting superintendent of PMA," Clement said.

Cusi will replace Lt. Gen. Ronnie Evangelista while Brawner is taking over the post of Brig. Gen. Bartolome Vicente Bacarro, who both

resigned in the wake of the maltreatment incident that led to the death of Cadet Fourth Class Darwin Dormitorio last Sept. 18 and hospitalization of three other cadets early this week.

"The focus here actually is to make sure that we will be able to continue and make sure that whatever systems and policies that has to be revised will actually be reviewed," he further stressed.

When asked on whether there are new cases of maltreatment, Clement declined to comment on the matter for now.

"I will not want to deal on specific numbers of as of this time but 'yung nako-confirm lang natin is yung (so far, what we have confirmed are) the three cadets right now in V. Luna (now the AFP Medical Center), including the one in St. Luke's (Medical Center) in Global City (Taguig) that have been initially diagnosed as maltreatment cases," he added.

All of these three cadets are now in stable condition. Clement also said in-

spectations of all PMA fourth class cadets for possible maltreatment injuries are now ongoing upon orders from Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana.

"But let me just emphasize that the incident of Cadet Dormitorio and the three cadets is not an institutional incident, it is not a Cadet Corps wide incident that involves all our fourth class members, we are looking at this an isolated incident and hopefully we can address possible future violations of policies in as far as maltreatment is concerned," the AFP chief added. (PNA)

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Duterte, Trump have ‘mutual admiration’ for each other: Palace

MANILA -- Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and US President Donald Trump have a “mutual admiration” for each other, Malacañang said on Thursday.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo said the two leaders had the same leadership “style” which is why they share respect for each other.

In a Sept. 25 tweet, Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro “Teddyboy” Locsin Jr. said Trump conveyed his regards to Duterte whom he called “Frank Sinatra.”

The US President recalled Duterte’s rendition of “Ikaw” during Manila’s hosting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit in 2017.

“At photoshoot with Pres. Trump and First Lady Melania, I shook his hand, he looked straight at me and said, ‘Say Hi to Frank Sinatra. Me stunned: ‘I admire you so much.’ He: ‘You know who I mean’ ‘Uh.’ I remembered--Duterte joined Pilita Corales in a

song at Asean. ‘I love that guy’,” Locsin said.

Asked to comment on Locsin’s story, Panelo said: “I think he (Duterte) loves him too.”

“You know if you recall the style of the President was much earlier than Trump. Bago pa nagkaroon ng Trump may Duterte na eh (Before there was Trump, there was Duterte),” Panelo said.

Duterte was elected into office in June 2016 while Trump was elected in December 2016.

“Nagulat nga tayong lahat na ganundin ang style (We were just surprised that Trump also had the same style),” Panelo said.

“Oh siyempre pag gan-yan pareho ang style ninyo di meron kayong (Of course, if that’s the case that you have the same style then you have) mutual admiration society,” he added.

Panelo, meanwhile, said he would personally ask Duterte what he thought about Trump’s remark. (PNA)

Solon pushes for Pasig River ferry system revival

MANILA -- Senator Sonny Angara said on Thursday there is the need to revive the Pasig River ferry service as an alternative for commuters to ease the traffic congestion problem in Metro Manila.

Angara, who chairs the Senate Committee on Finance, said efforts should be made to make the ferry system financially buoyant again, noting that next year’s proposed PHP74-million government subsidy to the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) for running a ferry along parts of the Pasig River’s original 15-kilometer service route “is clearly not enough.”

Angara said a master plan with yearly expansion, funding, and performance targets is required to revive the service, adding that he is open to increasing the subsidy for its operations.

“We are open to increasing the subsidy if the MMDA can submit a program on where the additional subsidy

would be spent,” Angara said.

The senator said a maritime highway that is wider than the Epifanio delos Santos Avenue (Edsa) should be fully optimized given the traffic congestion in Metro Manila.

He said the Pasig ferry subsidy for a whole year is worth only five days to subsidize MRT-3 operations.

“Yang PHP74 million na proposed subsidy for 2020, may nakapagsabi na limang kilometro lang ‘yan ng asphalt overlay sa isang lane ng Edsa (The PHP74 million proposed subsidy for 2020 is just equivalent to five kilometers of asphalt overlay in one Edsa lane),” Angara added.

He cited that in August 2016, the Department of Transportation pegged at PHP2.65 billion the cost of 20 new 100-passenger vessels, rehabilitating 10 passenger terminals, and annual river dredging. (PNA)

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and He will flee from you.” – James 4:7