

Duterte presidential bid gets support from execs

By **Melissa Luz T. Lopez**
Reporter

BUSINESS LEADERS have supported the presidential bid of Davao City Mayor Rodrigo R. Duterte even as he insisted that he will refuse to run for a national post next year.

Speaking during a lunch forum in Makati City, Mr. Duterte said he does not covet the presidency.

"It does not appeal to me. I do not want it. My stand today stays," Mr. Duterte said. He was invited as keynote speaker by the Asia CEO Forum on Thursday in Makati City, departing from the group's usual practice of having corporate executives deliver speeches before top officials belonging to the private sector.

"It is beyond my time... I have earned enough accolades to last a lifetime. I hope you understand," he said.

Mr. Duterte rose to power in 1988 as an appointed vice-mayor shortly after the restoration of democracy in the Philippines. He then went on to covet local posts without fail for nine consecutive elections.

Now 70, the former city prosecutor turned mayor said he is now in a good age to retire, even adding that he might not run for reelection next year should his daughter Sara Duterte-Carpio decide to relinquish his post.

Mr. Duterte emerged to be among the strong contenders for the presidential race in the upcoming May 9, 2016 elections following the strong performance of Davao City, having led its shift from being a

former "murder capital" during the 1980s to become one of the "most livable" cities in Asia, as rated by *Asiaweek*.

He ranked fourth in the April-June survey of the Social Weather Stations for the "best leaders to succeed" President Benigno S. C. Aquino III with 20%, just a percentage point below current Interior Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II who is the presumptive candidate of the ruling Liberal Party. Senator Grace Poe topped the survey with 42%, overtaking Vice-President Jejomar C. Binay for the first time who raked in 34%.

DUTERTE'S LEADERSHIP STYLE

While the mayor repeatedly stressed that the presidency — or any other national position, for that matter — is "not for him," business leaders remained hopeful that Mr. Duterte would reconsider.

"Do you think that he won't run? I think talking to the people, I think there's still a very strong chance that he will," Richard Mills, chairman of the Asia CEO Forum, told reporters on the sidelines of the event.

"There was a lot of interest from the business community to get to know him. He certainly is a leading candidate, and everybody believes in peace and order," Mr. Mills said, when asked why their group invited Mr. Duterte, instead of a business executive.

This, Mr. Mills said, could as well be a show of support from the business community.

Read the full article by scanning the QR code or typing the link <<http://goo.gl/QhYMUU>>.



A JAPANESE Maritime Self-Defense Force Lockheed P-3C Orion patrol aircraft prepares to take off as part of a joint training exercise with the Philippines at Antonio Bautista Airbase in Puerto Princesa on the western Philippine island of Palawan on June 24.

'Beijing cannot invoke UNCLOS provision on military activities'

SUPREME COURT Associate Justice Antonio T. Carpio said that Beijing cannot invoke a provision in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) that exempts military activities from the jurisdiction of the arbitration case.

Mr. Carpio was responding to a recent statement by international law expert H. Harry L. Roque, Jr., who said seeking relief from the tribunal to counter Chinese reclamation would boomerang on Manila because it could invoke the exemption on arbitrating law enforcement activities under Article 298(b) of UNCLOS.

The senior justice said in an earlier lecture that the Philippines should seek a provisional remedy from the arbitration panel because China has been violating UNCLOS provisions on the protection of marine environments.

But Mr. Roque said on Tuesday that this action could backfire, providing Beijing with an opening to claim the activities as part of law enforcement and invoke the reservation clause under

UNCLOS, leading the tribunal to possibly allow the acts.

Speaking at a Thursday forum at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, the senior justice said Beijing could not make the move without being inconsistent, because it has stated before the tribunal that reclamation works in the South China Sea are for civilian functions.

He recalled that China's comprehensive position paper rejecting arbitration before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) did not invoke the said provision on military activities.

"Discussion of any issue not included in this comprehensive position paper is speculative and pointless," Mr. Carpio said. "Clearly, China does not want to invoke military activities as a purpose of its reclamation."

He noted that some reclamation works are being done in submerged reefs classified part of the high seas — waters beyond coastal states' exclusive maritime claims and considered "global commons."

UNCLOS, he cited, reserved these waters for peaceful purposes.

"If China says reclamations are for military activities, it will immediately be incurring violation of UNCLOS," he said. "That's why China has been very careful. It has always said they are for civilian purposes."

Sought for comment, Mr. Roque maintained: "Provisional might give credence to Chinese view. We can't underestimate China."

China claims almost the entire South China Sea, enclosing it in its unprecedented nine-dash line and infringing on five other countries' maritime claims. Manila has lodged the arbitration case with the ITLOS in hopes of invalidating Beijing's claim.

MANILA TO BUY SPY PLANE

The Philippines is planning to buy a spy and surveillance plane from Japan as it faces growing pressure from China, which has conducted reclamation activities on areas being claimed by both Manila and Beijing.

The Department of National Defense is exploring the possibil-

ity of purchasing a P-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft from Japan through an Excess Defense Articles deal, spokesperson Peter Paul Galvez on Thursday said.

Under the arrangement, the military can buy the plane at a very "low" and "reasonable" price as agreed by both nations.

The Philippines saw the capability of a P-3C Orion when Japan successfully flew one during its joint naval drill with the Philippines and the United States on the South China Sea.

The P-3C Orion, which is manufactured by the American company Lockheed Martin, is described as "the ultimate submarine finder."

The aircraft can fly for 16 straight hours with its fuel capacity of 62,560 pounds (28,376.7 kilograms), allowing it to support high-altitude reconnaissance and low-altitude missions.

The military plane is worth \$45 million (P1.8 billion). — **Alden M. Monzon and Vince Alvic Alexis F. Nonato**



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