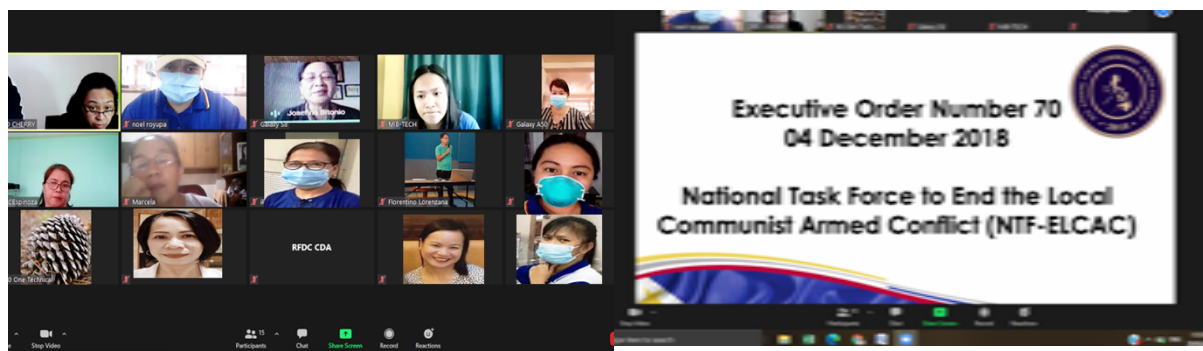


NICA Orients CDA-RO 1 On the Campaign of the Government Against the Communist-Terrorist Groups

On December 4, 2018, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte signed Executive Order No. 70, which created the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC). The NTF-ELCAC has 12 clusters and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) is tasked to conduct orientation and provide government employees with basic information on how the problems caused by the Communist-Terrorist Groups (CTGs) have derailed the country's progress and infiltrated the bureaucracy. Amidst the alternating cycle between negotiations and violence, the threat of militancy and terrorism continues. The Order offered a new hope to confront the issues brought about by the 51-year existence of the Communist Party of the Philippines, reinforced by its militia, the New People's Army and political arm, the National Democratic Front (CPPA-NPA-NDF).

On June 29, 2020, Deputy Regional Director Cherry Tamang of the NICA-Baguió City, conducted an orientation via Zoom application, to the CDA Region I personnel concerning the Communist-Terrorist Groups.



The presentation covered various topics focusing on different groups, namely, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), New People's Army (NPA) and the National Democratic Front (NDF), commonly known as the Communist-Terrorist Groups (CTGs). It also presented how the CTGs sabotaged government programs and projects and took credit for such services as well as the different military-led strategies to solve the problems on CTGs. The highlight of the orientation was the video presentation regarding the abuses committed by the CTGs against the IPs in Mindanao. The video depicts the suffering of people who were deceived by the CTGs. The indoctrinated victims were made to believe that a communist revolution is a means of pursuing change and economic equality, based on the dogma of an all-knowing, all-wise regime. This has been a protracted and continuous effort

of promoting their objectives through mass mobilization, military engagement, subversive political action, and international solidarity work (ISW) with several other organizations.¹

Dir. Tamang disclosed that for the past 51 years, these communist-terrorist groups (CTGs) have been fighting a Maoist-concept guerilla warfare, with the primary aim of overthrowing the government. Through the years, new alliances are developed with strategies adapting to changes of the times, including political overtone and advances in multimedia and digital technology. Several so-called development and community organizations have since joined the bandwagon with emerging leaders coming out of campuses and local communities.²

A former rebel and an active leader in the university shared her story on how she joined the communist group and her journey as a member, until she realized that she wanted to bring back her trust to the government and help the latter in its campaign against the CTGs.

CDA Regional Director Josefina Bitonio expressed the Agency's commitment to help implement EO No. 70 as the CDA is committed to help the vulnerable and marginalized Filipinos, whether it be indigenous peoples, rebel returnees, women or youth. "The former members of CTGs are welcome to join the sector where they can act for their common interest to address their problems. With government assistance and intervention, community change is effected", she added.

Dir. Bitonio conveyed her sincerest gratitude to the officers and staff of NICA for the opportunity to learn and be informed of the basic information about the CTGs. She also thanked them for recognizing CDA in its efforts to help the vulnerable and marginalized through cooperativism. Moreover, Dir. Bitonio expressed her appreciation to the NICA for incorporating materials of CDA like volunteerism and its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the end of the orientation, Pilipinas kong Mahal was sung, with a video presentation of cooperative members in the background doing their share of Bayanihan during the COVID-19 pandemic (jbb/jll).

¹ Whole of Nation, Harold E. Clavite, published on Feb. 23, 2019 by the Philippine Information Agency

² Ibid.