

NOGRALES SAYS

House may abandon Charter change bid

by LIRA DALANGIN-FERNANDEZ
Inquirer.net

MANILA—The House of Representatives may consider abandoning moves to amend the 1987 Constitution if nothing substantial happens by the adjournment of session in June, Speaker Prospero Nograles said last April 2.

Nograles said the committee hearings and plenary debates would determine the fate of Charter change bid in the lower chamber.

Even his own measure, House Resolution No. 737, has no certainty of being approved before Congress adjourns *sine die* on June 6.

HR 737, seeking to amend the economic provisions of the Constitution, will go through the process of an ordinary legislation.

The resolution has passed the committee level and will soon be debated on the floor.

"Resolution 737 has been passed at the committee level,

it's now on the floor, so it's up to them how the debates will go on the floor," Nograles said at the Serye news forum in Quezon City.

"By June 6, if nothing happens, then probably I may concede that it's too late," he said.

Nograles also said that he would talk to Camarines Sur Representative Luis Villafuerte to find out if he wants the resolution he authored calling for a constituent assembly filed.

But Villafuerte, in an earlier interview, had said there was no more time for Charter change with just 13 months before the presidential elections. ■

Guinness bet photo mosaic for Arroyo birthday

MANILA—Government agencies will take a crack at a Guinness World Record by rolling out the largest photo mosaic, featuring 1,000 pictures of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The 180 x 160-foot tarpaulin print will be unveiled at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila at 11am on Sunday, April 6, the President's 62nd birthday, Malacañang said in a statement.

The photos that will be used in the mosaic were taken by veteran photojournalist Revoli Cortez, the

statement said.

It could not be immediately confirmed if the President will witness the unveiling of her photo mosaic. According to her schedule, she will celebrate her birthday in her hometown of Lubao in Pampanga province.

The event will be sponsored by the Office of the Press Secretary, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (*Inquirer.net*)



President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

NDFP: Gonzales 'ignorant' of court decision

by DELFIN MALLARI, JR.
Inquirer.net

LUCENA CITY—A Utrecht-based official of the communist-led National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) last April 3 called National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales "ignorant" for seeking the expulsion of Jose Maria Sison from the Netherlands to force his return to the Philippines.

"This (Gonzales) notorious violator of human rights now talks nonsense about 'going after'

Prof. Sison and asking the Dutch government to 'expel' him," Luis Jalandoni, NDFP peace panel chief said.

Jalandoni said the government top security official is "ignorant" of the decisions of the highest administrative court in the Netherlands, the Raad van State, in 1992 and 1995.

Jalandoni claimed that the Raad van State in its decision had declared Sison as a "recognized political refugee" under Article 1 A of the Refugee Convention and

is covered by the absolute protection of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

He noted that the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Amnesty International had also testified in Sison's favor before the Raad van State.

Upset over the decision of Dutch prosecutors on Tuesday to finally drop criminal charges against Sison for lack of evidence to pin him down for the death of two of his erstwhile comrades in

the Philippines, Gonzales said the government would press the Netherlands to expel the founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines and send him back to his home country to face trial.

In a statement issued Thursday, April 2, Gonzales said: "We will look into our laws and their (Dutch) laws to find ways to have Sison expelled from the Netherlands and back to the country."

He vowed to "really go after" Sison.

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