



A DAMAGED PRESIDENCY, A BESIEGED ADMINISTRATION

Abstract

CAB: Pressing for Time

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After four years doing peace talks, the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) continue to hurdle with Constitutional issues on the agreement they signed as it is about to be translated into basic law and face scrutiny in Congress, and possibly, in the Supreme Court. Malacañang's last-ditch effort to water down the draft of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) amid MILF's insistence to have a Bangsamoro government in 2016 is ominous of the difficulty ahead.

Part of the pressure is the changing context into which the Aquino presidency has gone through enjoying high popularity earlier but now taking more defensive stances especially with Supreme Court's ruling on the Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP) and impeachment charges filed against President Aquino. On the ground, coherence or at least some semblance of unity among Bangsamoros, their major players and stakeholders is even more wanting. The Sabah standoff and the war in Zamboanga last year including the continuing campaign of violence by other rebel groups are symptomatic of rough road of the Mindanao peace process. Now, many people are concerned how the Aquino Administration would be able to rally the major branches of government and the Filipino public to support the project to end the Mindanao conflict.