

AFP Chief Visaya, 24 other military senior officers course through CA

The nominations and *ad interim* appointments of 25 senior officers from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) were confirmed by the Commission on Appointments (CA) yesterday in its plenary session presided by President of the Senate/Chairman of the Commission Aquilino “Koko” L. Pimentel III. Their nominations and *ad interim* appointments were the first to be taken up by the Commission since it organized and started to buckle down to work in the 17th Congress.

The CA committee on defense, chaired by **Rep. Roy M. Loyola**, deliberated on and recommended for confirmation the nominations and *ad interim* appointments of 25 AFP officers, with no less than the **AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Ricardo R. Visaya**, heading the approved appointments.

Visaya, 55, a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) “Matikas” Class of 1983, was appointed as AFP chief of staff on July 1, 2016. He is set to retire on December 8 when he reaches the mandatory retirement age of 56 for the military. Prior to his appointment as AFP chief, Visaya served as the commander of the Southern Luzon Command since September 2014.

A native of Bacarra, Ilocos Norte, Visaya also held various positions within the military which include: Division Commander of the 4th Infantry Division of Camp Evangelista, Cagayan de Oro City; Assistant Division Commander of the 6th Infantry Division in Maguindanao; Commander of the 901st Brigade, 9th Infantry Division, Daraga, Albay; Commander of the 104th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, Sultan Kudarat and Deputy Brigade Commander of the 1002nd Brigade, 10th Infantry Division, Sarangani Province, Mindanao.

His professional military and educational trainings include having completed his Executive Course at the Asia Pacific Center for Studies at the US Pacific Command, Hawaii, USA; the Command and General Staff Course, placing 6th with a rating of 92.180%, at the Command and General Staff College, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City. He had his Master in Project Management at the Australian Defense Force, Australia and finished Financial Statement Analysis at the University of Asia and the Pacific in Pasig City.

Among the various awards and honors he received were three (3) Distinguished Service Stars; three (3) Gawad sa Kaunlaran Awards; eleven (11) Bronze Cross Medals; forty-seven (47) Military Merit Medals and Sixteen (16) Military Commendation Medals.

In his sponsorship speech at the plenary session, Loyola stressed that with General Visaya's "extensive military career in various positions across key military bases in the country, he deserves the honored lead of over 128,000 strong and able men and women of the Armed

Forces of the Philippines and lay down the foundation for security and defense under the new administration."

Among the other nominations and *ad interim* appointments approved in the AFP were those of:

SALVADOR MELCHOR B. MISON, JR.	to the rank of <i>Lieutenant General</i>
RAUL L. DEL ROSARIO	to the rank of <i>Lieutenant General (nomination)</i>
ROZZANO D. BRIGUEZ	to the rank of <i>Major General</i>
HAROLD N. CABREROS	to the rank of <i>Major General</i>
ERNESTO C. ENRIQUEZ	to the rank of <i>Rear Admiral</i>
NARCISO A. VINGSON, JR.	to the rank of <i>Rear Admiral</i>
VIRME P. TORRALBA	to the rank of <i>Rear Admiral (nomination)</i>
LEANDRO A. LOYAO III	to the rank of <i>Major General (nomination)</i>
JOSE G. MIRANDILLA, JR.	to the rank of <i>Major General (nomination)</i>
ALEXANDER L. MACARIO	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General</i>
RAMON S. OCHOCO	to the rank of <i>Commodore</i>
ANTONIO RAMON A. LIM	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General</i>
ALLAN FERDINAND V. CUSI	to the rank of <i>Commodore</i>
ARNEL M. DUCO	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General</i>
ROLANDO S. ACOPI	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General</i>
CESAR M. IDIO	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General</i>
RONALD C. VILLANUEVA	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General</i>
FELIMON T. SANTOS, JR.	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General (nomination)</i>
ALLEN T. PAREDES	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General (nomination)</i>
ARTHUR B. BLANCA	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General (nomination)</i>
DANTE M. HIDALGO	to the rank of <i>Brigadier General</i>
ROMMEL JUDE G. ONG	to the rank of <i>Commodore (nomination)</i>
JONATHAN H. MANUEL	to the rank of <i>Colonel, Medical Corps</i>
JOSE ERIEL M. NIEMBRA	to the rank of <i>Colonel, Philippine Army</i>

Also taken up during yesterday's plenary session was the election of **Sen. Francis "Kiko" N. Pangilinan** as Member of the Commission on Appointments. He took his oath of office before President of the Senate / Chairman of the Commission Aquilino "Koko" L. Pimentel III during the plenary session.