

Brief Background of Anak Mindanao (AMIN) PartyList Debacle

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In October 4-5, 2000, a Mindanao Electoral Conference was held in preparation for the 2001 National Election where Anak Mindanao (AMIN) PartyList would participate for the 2nd time. The conference was organized and attended by the peoples' organizations (POs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which had been directly involved and supportive of AMIN as well as from revolutionary groups and progressive individuals including Mujiv Hataman. In this conference, significant matters related to AMIN's participation in the coming elections were discussed, among others: National Electoral Guidelines and Framework; one-year campaign plan including the conduct of the 2nd National AMIN Congress; AMIN nominees; support to candidates; and generation of resources through cooperation of the POs and NGOs. It was during this time that Mujiv Hataman's name was mentioned as possible 1st nominee of AMIN PartyList and set the 2nd National Congress of AMIN, which was held in November 23-25, 2000 in Cotabato City. In May 2001 elections, AMIN won (first term) but served in the Lower House only towards the end of the 2001-2004 term or 12th Congress for eight (8) months only. In a short period, AMIN was again preparing for the 2004 Elections.

In the 2004 elections, AMIN for the third time participated in a synchronized National and Local Elections. Once again, NGOs and POs showed their all-out support to AMIN through campaign activities and financial support. Through the efforts of the NGOs and POs, funds were raised for the campaign and One Million Pesos was entrusted to Mr. Rafael Nabre as his discretionary funds for his specific tasks in the campaign. It would be good to note that Mr. Nabre was not even subjected to audit for the 1 million he spent. AMIN won the 2004 elections with the support and efforts of the tri-people (Lumad, Moro & Settler). This was the 2nd term of AMIN in the House of Congress (13th Congress). But it was the first time that it had to serve the full term (2004-2007).

It cannot be denied that there are shortcomings/weaknesses in the operations of the AMIN as organization since this was a new arena of struggle that was entered into by the organizations and peoples that compose AMIN PartyList. Such weaknesses were evident during the 1st term of AMIN at the 12th Congress of the House of Representatives, where it served for 8 months only. The following were some of the observations

during this period: no regular meeting of the National Council; National Executive Committee and other bodies within the AMIN structure; no systematic flow of communication and action from different chapters in Mindanao and Mindanao Central office to the Congressional Office and others. AMIN Mindanao chapters did not even know the staff and personnel of AMIN office in Manila.

Major activities launched by the AMIN National Council in 2004 were: 1) 2 National Council Meetings (March 8, 2004 & July 23-24, 2004); 2) 1 National Executive Committee Meeting (October 20, 2004); 3) 1 Strategic Planning (November 5-7, 2004); and 4) 2 Meetings of the Secretariat under the leadership of Prof. Mahmor "Moy" Edding, the President and Mr. Rafael Nabre, the Secretary-General. They were elected during the 3rd National Congress of AMIN in 2004. President Edding was present only in one (1) meeting of the National Council and he was not functional from November 2004 up to May 2007 elections.

Despite all these, the operations of AMIN continued in 2004 up to 2007 with this relative condition. The seating nominee was able to pass few bills, AMIN as an organization conducted advocacy activities on various issues especially those affecting the tri-peoples in Mindanao. It also facilitated infrastructure projects (hard) and financial supports (soft projects) to different areas in the country particularly in Mindanao. During this time, the leadership and membership of AMIN were told that there would be minimal project support that could be availed from the CDFs because AMIN was considered as among the opposition of the PGMA Administration due to its support to the PGMA impeachments and protest actions related to programs and policies of GMA.

In 2004, it was observed that bulk of AMIN projects were given to areas closed to Mr. Nabre, the Secretary-General. This observation was brought to the attention of Cong. Cong. Hataman, AMIN's representative to the Congress. Through this, it was agreed by the Projects Committee that next projects should not be in areas closed to Mr. Nabre. But this did not materialize because succeeding AMIN projects were still in favor of Mr. Nabre. The situation worsens when Mr. Nabre initiated that AMIN financial supports (soft projects) are coursed through his organization which was not part of the agreement of the Projects Committee. Many member organizations reacted to this kind of arrangement and management by Mr. Nabre.

In year 2005, much time was given in facilitating project allocations including resolution of what was done by Mr. Nabre of the previous allocation of projects. This marred the relationship of Mr. Nabre with other officers of AMIN especially to the members of the Political Council. Mr. Nabre issued a statement that he was accused of stealing funds from AMIN projects when in fact concerned members wanted only to be clarified on why there was no equitable allocation of projects and to organizations that AMIN financial supports are coursed through. No meeting of the National Council, National Executive Committee, the Secretariat and other bodies of AMIN was done during this period. And this was despite the fact that during this period, organizational problem and uncertainties brought by the Secretary General were much felt.

In January 2006, Mr. Nabre gave his verbal resignation as Secretary-General of AMIN in front of the few officers of AMIN, Cong. Hataman and the Political Council in one of its meetings. Several meetings were conducted by few officers of AMIN, Political Council and Cong. Hataman in order to resolve the problem but Mr. Nabre was adamant of his resignation. So, his resignation was accepted and he was tasked to manage the project of one member-organization of AMIN and other works not related to AMIN where he could help. Temporarily, Eng'r. Victor Layasan, the Deputy Secretary-General, assumed the responsibilities vacated by Mr. Nabre with closed supervision of the few officers of AMIN and the Political Council. This set-up was cleared and accepted by Mr. Nabre.

The new arrangement was discussed in expanded meetings of the Political Council in May 9-10, 2006 at Naawan, Misamis Oriental and Secretariat in June 29 and August 25, 2006. Consequently, AMIN continued to operate and carry out what its members are expected of despite the organizational set-up. But, there were times during this period when Mr. Nabre was spreading the issue that Cong. Hataman would be the next to be in question and this was expressed by Mr. Nabre to Cong. Hataman. Mr. Nabre made many disinformations like: Cong. Hataman would be replaced as 1st nominee and changing the officers of AMIN coming from Cotabato City. Mr. Nabre did these intrigues and lies to gain sentiments from the Moro and provoke the biases of the Moro against the Lumads and Settlers or Christians.

Point-Persons (per area) Meeting was held in Camiguin in June 19, 2006. In this meeting, AMIN projects and various initiatives that benefited the AMIN constituents were discussed and still it was on a minimal scale due to the opposition image of AMIN PartyList in Congress as reported by Cong. Hataman. Like there was one (1) project in Basilan, one (1) project in Zamboanga City and few projects in some areas in Mindanao because accesses to projects allocation was very difficult. With

this, another expanded meeting of the Political Council was called and held in Dakak, Dapitan City in December 2006, where Cong. Hataman was present. Main agenda of the meeting was the preparation for the coming 2007 national elections and the process of selecting the new set of nominees which should be different from the previous one. Cong. Hataman suggested that with the mushrooming of PartyLists engaging in the election, whether those initiated by traditional politicians and by the Arroyo Administration, it would be important that the 3rd nominee of AMIN should be prominent and influential to the traditional politicians and candidates even if he is a traditional politician himself. Cong. Hataman endorsed the name of Arnel Arbison, who has influential families in Sulu, Tawi-tawi, Maguindanao and in some areas in Mindanao. Also, Ariel Hernandez was mentioned as possible 2nd nominee.

After these series of meetings, it was found out by some members of AMIN that the records in Department of Budget and Management (DBM) website were revealing something different from what Cong. Hataman was telling them. It became clear that with the 8 months in Congress of AMIN in 2003, the full 70 Million Pesos CDF was accessed (50M for infrastructure or hard projects and 20M for financial support or soft projects). Then in 2004, AMIN through Cong. Hataman, accessed another 70 Million pesos allocation of the CDFs, while in 2005, 40 Million pesos was allocated where 20M is for hard projects and 20M for soft projects. Of the yearly allocation, more or less 42 Million Pesos or roughly 60% is allocated to Basilan (largest), Zamboanga City and Sulu and the remaining 40% was distributed to the 2 cities and 8 provinces. It could be remembered that this was the time of the 2004 elections wherein despite of the limited financial resources of the NGOs and POs, they tried to contribute and come up with One Million Pesos to be used in the campaign in order for AMIN to win a seat in 2004 elections.

As per DBM website, from the yearly AMIN CDFs, 40% of the projects went to Basilan, the province of Cong. Hataman. This figure dismayed the majority of the AMIN members, especially those founding members, who have supported and stood with AMIN since 1997. It was noted that in 2006 there is no meeting of the National Council and the National Executive Committee. During this time, AMIN's operation and management was made possible through the efforts of the few officers of AMIN, members of the Political Council, members of the Secretariat and some personalities from the old member-organizations which founded AMIN. But in terms of CDF allocation, only Cong. Hataman has the discretion of how much and where to put up AMIN projects. And as if to consummate the whole process of deception Cong. Hataman put in the AMIN website a different figure of the CDF allocation. Intentionally the true amount allocated in his province and favored areas were hidden.

Despite this situation, here comes year 2007 and time for the synchronized National and Local Elections. Because of the non-functional and no meeting of the National Council under the leadership of Prof. Moy Edding, active officers (at the same time founding members of AMIN) together with members of the Political Council had organized a meeting to discuss the preparation for the 4th National AMIN Congress. Such meeting was done in February 18-19, 2007 as per suggestion of Cong. Hataman. In the preparation, it ensured the presence of Prof. Moy Edding during the Congress (even if he was only President of AMIN for one day - that was his presence during the National Council Meeting in 2004).

The 4th AMIN National Congress was conducted successfully in February 28 and March 1, 2007 because of the urgency to submit list of nominees, which had a deadline of March 30, 2007 as per COMELEC Resolution. The Congress was considered a success even though some Lumad members were disappointed because there is no Lumad representative in the first set of nominees. This was due to the idea of Cong. Hataman that it is best to put nominees that is influential especially in Muslim areas. With this suggestion in mind the following nominees were endorsed in the 4th National Congress: 1) Cong. Hataman (Moro); 2) Ariel Hernandez (Settler); 3) Ariel Arbison (Moro); 4) Dra.

Erlinda Senturias (Settler) and 5) Quene Gene Areola (Lumad). AMIN Platform of Governance was presented and Election of new set of officers: Timuay Alim Bandara, a Lumad leader, was elected as President of AMIN. The Congress ended without the presence of Prof. Moy Edding and Cong. Hataman was tasked to talk and inform Prof. Moy to call for a National Congress. It was observed that Cong. Hataman could be considered half present during the Congress due to his short stay despite the fact that it was the most important activity of AMIN. Further, the scheduled date of the Congress was set per suggestion of Cong. Hataman to suit his schedules. After the 4th AMIN Congress, AMIN campaign activities were in full swing in different areas in Mindanao. On the other hand, the sentiments of the majority AMIN members that they were lied upon by Cong. Hataman in terms of CDF allocations were slowly coming out. Some officers of AMIN tried to reach out to Cong. Hataman to resolve the matter but Cong. Hataman was elusive. And before the 2007 elections, Cong. Hataman promised to discuss it after the elections.

The first meeting of the National Council of the 4th Congress was held in April 2-3, 2007. The meeting was attended by the majority of the Council members, 3 nominees and members of the Political Council. One resolution of the Council was appointment of Prof. Moy Edding as President Emeritus for his contribution as President of AMIN in 2004. The Constitution and By-Laws were amended and approved by the Council as what was agreed in the 4th Congress. There were resolutions passed like the Council should be active and have a big role in all AMIN matters particularly in CDF allocations. This time, Cong. Hataman also talked on how to intensify the AMIN campaign and give emphasis on what is called "market" votes and "negotiated" votes. After the meeting, documents of the 4th National Congress and minutes of meeting of the National Council were submitted to the COMELEC.

After the Holy Week of 2007, the resolution of the Council informing Moy Edding of the results of the National Congress, on the National Council meeting and on the resolution giving him the position of President Emeritus was executed. Moy Edding expressed his comments regarding the unusual process of informing him by Cong. Hataman with regards to the holding of the Congress, which was not clear for him. However, explanations were made and he expressed that it was not problem to him and even with the holding of the 1st Council meeting. He acknowledged and accepted the position of President Emeritus and asked on the next schedule meeting of the Council. In this aspect, majority of the Council members and Political Council were surprised on why Cong. Hataman did not fix Moy's invitation when in fact he was part in planning the details of the 4th National Congress.

During the 1st Council meeting, the aspect of CDFs allocation was not tackled, thus, it continued to reach out Cong. Hataman to discuss this matter but still his answer was to discuss this after the elections. So, a resolution made during the meeting regarding transparency and accountability in terms of CDF allocation and active participation of the Council in dispensing the funds. But as the campaign was going on, Cong. Hataman was spreading information that there was a 5 Million pesos campaign fund and was not properly used. He even requested Timuay Alim to investigate the 5M, where and how it was disbursed. This prompted some AMIN members to confer with Cong. Hataman on the supposed information. Thus, after the elections, AMIN President (Timuay Alim Bandara) and Cong. Hataman agreed a specific date to discuss the issue about the 5M as was raised by the latter.

June 3, 2007 was the agreed date of the supposed meeting but this created another puzzle because at the last minute Cong. Hataman did not attend the meeting and put blame on Timuay Alim. The meeting was pushed through because persons involved were all present except for Cong. Hataman. It was learned that of the 5M, 2M was used in the campaign for the 9 provinces and 5 cities, the other 2M was in Cong. Hataman's disposal while the 1M was for in Misamis Oriental. Another information was confirmed that there was a 15M pesos that was coursed through in Zamboanga

Peninsula but the 14M pesos was taken directly by Cong. Hataman. Also, the Council wanted to be clarified on how the P200,000.00 monthly was used as operational funds since January 2006 to May 2007 and this amounted to P3.6M. It should be remembered that, since 2003 until December 2005, the P200,000.00 was divided for AMIN's operation in Mindanao and Manila. Cong. Hataman specifically requested that the total amount of P200,000.00 be allocated to Metro Manila operations because of the expensive cost of operations of the mass movements in these areas.

Aside from not attending the agreed meeting, Cong. Hataman was working out with collaboration of some individuals to get the sympathy of the Teduray Lambangian tribe (of Timuay Alim) by way of promising them projects and monies. By this, they have divided the tribe and this was the beginning of the conflict within the tribe. In addition, Cong. Hataman alleged that Timuay Alim was part of the 5M scam. In July 19, 2007, some tribe members who sided with Cong. Hataman, talked to Timuay Alim. They accused Timuay Alim of conspiring to hide the 5M. Later, they told Timuay Alim to stop the investigation of the 5M because there was no more aggrieved party. But this did not deter Timuay Alim to continue the investigation because this put his credibility on question that by stopping the investigation it implies that he was bought out by Cong. Hataman. Aside from this, there were baseless accusations from his tribe against him.

After the elections, there was another attempt by some AMIN officers to talk to Cong. Hataman, but he made a promise that it would be after AMIN proclamation. To the surprise of the majority, in August 5, 2007, there was a Executive Meeting of the officers of the 3rd Congress that was called by Cong. Hataman, Prof. Moy and Mr. Nabrel. They declared the 4th AMIN National Congress conducted in Feb 28 & March 1, 2007 in Naawan, Misamis Oriental as illegal. This declaration was made official when they called a meeting of old officers of the 3rd Congress in August 16-17, 2007. Mr. Nabre made an intrigue to Cong. Hataman that there was a complaint filed against him by the new officers of the 4th Congress submitted to the COMELEC. This was to get the full support of Cong. Hataman in Mr. Nabre's group of conspirators' side.

The 2nd meeting of the National Executive Committee of the 4th Congress was conducted last August 14, 2007. The agenda were the following: 1) pre-assessment of the last campaign in preparation of the Comprehensive Electoral Assessment; 2) Plan and Preparation for AMIN Victory Celebration; 3) Scheduled 2nd Regular Meeting of the National Council of the 4th Congress; 4) Barangay election; 5) Other Matters including the information declaring 4th National Congress as illegal based on the meeting of the old officers (3rd Congress). The National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting was attended by a majority of the members. Plans and actions were laid down regarding the response to the invitation letter of the old President (Moy) to the old members of the 3rd Congress, who were also elected as officers of the 4th Congress. The letter response of NEC to Moy was dated August 14, 2007.

In August 16-17, 2007, there was a meeting of the old Council (3rd Congress) held at Cecille's Pension House, Zamboanga City. In the same manner, this Council had declared the 4th National Congress as illegal, bogus, immoral and illegitimate and suspension of the 2 officers (Vic Layasan and Elizabeth Padilla), replacement of officers and members who have any connection or identified to revolutionary groups, and mandated Mr. Nabre as Secretary-General to oversee the whole operation of AMIN including those related to projects.

A letter (dated August 23, 2007) from Moy was received in response to the letter sent by Timuay Alim on the invitation for the 2nd NEC meeting. In his letter, Moy expressed that what transpired during the 4th National Congress was illegal, illegitimate and violative of the Constitution of AMIN. Even meeting of the old officers in Zamboanga recognized that the 4th National Congress was bogus, illegal, illegitimate and violates the Constitution, including the suspension of the 2 officers.

The 2nd National Council (NC) meeting of the 4th Congress was conducted in August 25-26, 2007 in Iligan City. Agenda of the meeting included the enforcement of the resolutions made during the 1st NC meeting, updates on the status of PartyLists that won in the last election, organizational matters including past CDFs, problem of the Teduray tribe that stems from the AMIN problem, the Basilan war and Human Security Act.

After the 2nd NC meeting, Timuay Alim Bandara sent letters (dated Sept. 1, Sept. 2, Sept. 7 and Sept. 12) to Moy, Cong. Hataman, other nominees and Council members on the legitimacy and legality of the 4th Congress and clarifications on some issues that existed. These letters were responded by Moy (dated Sept 10, 2007), but he did not respond to the substantial issues like Cong. Hataman's allocation of the CDFs (40% more or less) of the projects are in Basilan, the 2M and 14M campaign funds of Cong. Hataman. September 7, 2007, Moy issued a Circular #01-07, where it talked about AMIN not to be related to revolutionary groups but such issues are not the issues brought out by Timuay Alim in his letters.

On the other hand, Cong. Hataman and Mr. Nabre continued spreading disinformation of Timuay Alim's credibility to his fellow tribe because Cong. Hataman did not get Timuay Alim to side with him. Disinformation campaign like about peace process and the revolutionary party not helping the Lumad issues were circulated by the same group. The issue of Anti-Muslim was used to gain sympathy from Moro officers and threatening individuals to be tagged as terrorists. Aside from these actions, Prof. Moy's and Cong. Hataman's camp were exhausting all means in declaring themselves as the legitimate officers of AMIN through their meetings, sending out letters to COMELEC and to be acknowledged themselves in Congress.

The 3rd meeting of the National Council of the 4th Congress was held last October 8-9, 2007 in Iligan City. This was to regularize meetings of responsible bodies given with the current situation confronted by AMIN and to avoid the experience (no meeting conducted) under the leadership of Moy Edding. Cong. Hataman was invited to attend; however, he did not attend it for the second time.

It was found out that the clique of Moy, Cong. Hataman and Mr. Nabre have violated the law like falsification of document (AMIN's Manifestation to Participate in the 2007 Election) and the financial report on the expenses incurred by AMIN during the elections, which was signed by a person not an officer of AMIN. Another violation is by deceiving the members and officers of AMIN that he (Cong. Hataman) supported the 4th Congress but in fact the officers and members accepted it as genuine and true. But afterwards, Cong. Hataman and clique declared it as illegal and this cause confusion to the whole membership of AMIN.

With this, it is obvious that Cong. Hataman misrepresented AMIN PartyList because he did not recognize the Congress (4th Congress) who nominated him and put him in the 14TH Congress of the House of Representative of the Philippines.

ANAK MINDANAO (AMIN) Party-List

National Executive Council

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