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**FRAMING OF THE PROPOSED CREATION OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF
THE CORDILLERA BY COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS**

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*To my grandparents - Evangeline and Cornelio,
I know that in this life, and into the next,
I'll search for you until we meet again
to let you know who and what I've become.
This is for you.*

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the nature of media framing is pivotal to setting government agenda and public debate. It has a big influence on the salience of key information and interpretation of societal issues. This research draws on framing as an approach to understanding media discourse and communication. It looked into community newspapers' framing of the proposed creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC), a three-decade-old proposal in the region covered by the media. Using Polkinghorne's paradigmatic analysis of narratives, this study revealed how Cordillera was framed as a region. The framing of the proposed creation of the ARC was also uncovered through the Labovian model of narrative analysis. Based on the framing used in their reportage, community newspapers' view of Cordillera as a region and their underlying position on the proposed regional autonomy in the region surfaced.

The findings of the study show that Cordillera is generally viewed as an underdeveloped region that has been struggling to attain autonomy. Cordillera was framed as a region predetermined to become autonomous; an underdeveloped and neglected region; a region clamoring for regional autonomy; and a region with a diverse population. Further findings reveal that community newspapers have a favorable stance on the proposed creation of the ARC. Although they are for regional autonomy, they deem it tentative considering that the proposal is contingent on national government action and public understanding and approval. This position is evinced in the frames used in the news coverage of the proposed creation of the ARC. These are that Cordillera needs regional autonomy; that the proposed creation of the ARC needs government endorsement and action; and that it needs the Cordilleran public's support and approval.

This study offers a new approach in defining and understanding framing – that is, by using narrative analysis as framework and methodology. By understanding the community newspapers' rhetoric through an analysis of their news frames, we are able to get a grasp of the meanings or interpretations that they contribute to the marketplace of ideas and convey to their audiences.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Mass Media Framing

Throughout the years, the media have become primary sources of information across the world. The public feeds on information about timely and relevant events, developments, and issues around the world through various forms of traditional and alternative media. In an era where information is a primary commodity, a functioning democracy rests with a citizenry that is not merely passive receivers of information but are active consumers capable of making informed decisions on important societal issues that in some ways affect their lives.

In 1644, John Milton propounded the concept of “marketplace of ideas” which holds the belief that democracy is “best served by an open exchange of ideas so that the citizenry has the best possible information with which to make a decision” (Fortunato, 2005). This concept bestows great power with a corresponding responsibility to mass media whose main functions, according to Lasswell (1948), include surveillance of its environment, correlation of the different aspects of the society, and transmission of cultural heritage. To fulfill such functions, the mass media perform tasks such as a) providing information about all happenings in a society and that of the whole world; b) explaining, interpreting and commenting on the meaning of various events and information; c) maintaining values within a

culture; d) providing entertainment which helps reduce social tensions; and e) promoting societal objectives (McQuail, 2000). In the performance of these tasks, the mass media hold the power of providing information, directing public attention, affecting beliefs and public opinion, influencing behaviors, constructing reality, and conferring status. It is, therefore, important to note that in making decisions relative to certain societal issues and developments, mass media play a vital role in the marketplace of ideas being gatherers and distributors of information to the public.

Lippmann (1922) underlined that media plays an essential role in conferring the status of public issues, key persons in the society, organizations, and social movements. By exposing conditions that may or may not be similar to public doctrines or moralities, organized social action is initiated by the mass media. Often as a result, public opinion, whether approval or disapproval, is voiced out in response to controversial social, political, and developmental issues that are of public interest. Media's ability to bring issues to public attention in a context of presumed citizenry concern is tantamount to its influence in the creation of interest in public affairs.

News media organizations are primarily responsible for mass media content consumed by society. While there are many factors influencing media content, in the end, news media organizations decide what is to be covered, what is to be published, and how they will be presented to an audience. Such factors have an effect on the way people perceive the world. The decision-making process by which mass media organizations choose what events to be covered, what news to write, and how to portray or present news is called "framing". Framing is a concept often associated with the agenda-setting role of the mass media. It was first put forth by Erving Goffman in his 1974 book "Frame Analysis: an essay on the organization of

experience”. The concept of framing uses the metaphor of a frame which has fixed borders wherein only important information is contained. The theory of framing assumes that “the way an issue is framed could shape public perception of the salience” of an issue (Fortunato, 2005).

Fortunato (2005) defined framing, in a mass media context, as the process of decision-making done by mass media organizations, including journalists, in selecting what they deem important. The selection task of news organizations and journalists is not limited to the selection of events to be covered or stories to be published. It also includes the selection of facts to be presented and how the story, itself, will be portrayed. There are two types of media framing methods according to Fortunato (2005) – exposure and portrayal. The exposure framing method focuses on characteristics such as frequency, placement, and amount of time devoted to the coverage. In print media, the frequency is measured in terms of topic selection, column inches, and story placement. On the other hand, the portrayal framing method refers to how content was portrayed in terms of facts selection, inclusion, exclusion, emphasis, and/or elaboration. This method may also refer to the language and pictures used to accompany the story which may affect how the audiences analyze and interpret the contents.

Entman (2007) asserted that media interventions, particularly framing methods, help set boundaries for public debate. Media’s ability to select and put salience to content gives it a power which it uses through text. For him, to frame is:

“to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation,

and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” (Entman, 1993)

This study sought to understand how the local press framed Cordillera as a region and the proposed creation of the Autonomous Region for the Cordillera (ARC), and what their framing of the issue of regional autonomy means. Devereux (2003) stressed that it is important to examine media content for two important reasons - because media content is a powerful source of meanings about the world and because although media content does not always mirror social reality, it somehow represents realities in social, economic and political relationships in the society. Studies have been conducted on the level of awareness, sources of information, and peoples' stand on the proposed regional autonomy for Cordillera. However, there is a lack of attention and limited data on how the media, a primary source of information, covers the issue. It is for this reason that this research was undertaken. This study sought to fill in this research gap by looking into the meanings that underlie community newspapers' framing of the proposed creation of the ARC in their reportage.

The Press

The press is among the pillars of democracy that play an integral role in the development of a society. Like other mass media, the press is a source of information and spreads it rapidly to a wide range of audiences. As a vehicle for transmitting news and opinions, it contributes to establishing a mutual understanding within society. In summary, the integral functions of the press in the society are

providing information; bringing members of the society together; leading the public; establishing the 'public sphere'; providing an avenue for the exchange of ideas among and between leaders and masses; acting as a mirror of the society; and serving as the conscience of society (Hardt, 1979).

According to Berelson (1954), among the print media, "the newspaper is the most accessible". Apart from the fact that it is cheap, the newspaper is "the most readily available and most easily consumed source of whatever gratifications derive from reading itself". In 1945, the Bureau of Applied Social Research of Columbia University conducted a study on people's reaction to the temporary loss of newspapers during a two-week strike in New York. The study found out the different importance of newspapers to the public which made them miss reading newspapers. A core of readers considered newspapers an indispensable source and interpreter of information about the world of public affairs. The interest of readers to newspapers is not only ascribed to the information they get from the news section but also to the commentaries in the editorial and column sections of a newspaper where they base or challenge their opinions. Through newspapers, readers not only learn about events happening in their society, but they also find opinions and interpretations from it which they can use as references in various discourses.

According to Khalid and Ahmed (2014), aside from being a main source of information, newspapers play a key role in setting agenda in modern society. They noted two-step functions of newspapers – selecting and attracting policymakers' attention and setting agenda for the public's action, and telling readers what important information is there to know.

Community Journalism

Mass media roles can only be fulfilled if they cover issues in a context relevant to the people of a society. This is what community journalism is all about. Community journalism, sometimes called public or civic journalism, is a kind of journalism limited to the local level within a small area or group. With the community media's nearness to people, community journalists' primary focus is on the people and the community they are in. In short, community journalism primarily seeks to help citizens within a community see and realize their stake as informed members of society (Alexander, 2005).

As stated by Kurpius (1999), community journalism aids in mass media, particularly print media coverage by increasing diversity of stories, including the context in news stories, adding more depth to the coverage, and having a better understanding of the different happenings at the community level. It encourages journalists "to find ways to capture citizen priorities, concerns, and perspectives on different issues of importance to many different communities". In addition, since it is focused on the coverage of issues, it is more likely that issues already deemed important by the citizens will receive greater and continuous coverage. Citing an interview with Philippine Press Institute's Executive Director Ariel Sebellino, Opiniano, Arcalas, Mallari, and Tuazon (2015), emphasized that community newspapers tend to become aggressive in framing stories that challenge people to have a stake in issues and topics about, concerning and/or affecting them.

Cordillera's Quest for Autonomy

Among the longest-running issues in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) covered by the media is its quest for regional autonomy. For decades, Cordillerans have been aspiring for an autonomous region as they believe it will pave a way to genuine sustainable development.

It is a commonly-shared view in CAR that regional autonomy can significantly contribute to accelerating its development after decades of neglect by the national government. While it may not be the only way to address historical and contemporary problems faced in the region, it is believed to be the best strategy as it would guarantee self-determination for the Cordilleran people whose heritage is historically and culturally distinct from the rest of the Filipinos, just like that of the Filipino Muslims in Mindanao. With regional autonomy, certain powers, functions, and duties relative to self-governance; policy planning; administrative organization; revenues; ancestral domain and natural resources management; community and property relations; urban and rural planning development; and socioeconomic and tourism development among others will be devolved by the national government to the regional government. The regional government can consequently exercise its powers, functions, and duties with due consideration of the region's geographical features, environment, history, and culture (Regional Development Council-CAR, 2013).

Cordillera's advocacy on autonomy has three core messages: 1) Autonomy will preserve and enhance a Cordilleran identity; 2) Autonomy will enable crafting

policies that are more relevant to the unique Cordilleran context; and 3) Autonomy will lead to more inclusive progress (Regional Development Council-CAR, n.d.).

Autonomy will preserve and enhance a Cordilleran identity. The ethnolinguistic groups of the Cordilleras are collectively referred to as "Igorots" which means people of the mountains. Although the Igorots are not the only ethnic groups in the Philippines, the highland people of the Cordilleras along with the Moros in Mindanao were not subjugated by the Spaniards, making them distinct (Botangen, Vodanovich, and Yu, 2017). It was their resistance to colonization and autonomy that has kept them sustaining their indigenous way of living within their ancestral dominions. Buendia (1991) posited that the Cordillerans and Moros' struggle for self-determination has been misconstrued by the national government.

The struggle of the major ethnic groups such as the Cordillerans and Moros for self-government and autonomy has been normally perceived by the national government to be less than a reflection of interlocking socio-political-economic-ecological problems similarly faced by the absolutely poor people – the hungry and malnourished, rural landless, urban squatters and slum dwellers... In reality, however, the Cordillerans, Moros, and Christian Filipinos (apart from the other minority groups) are three different nationalities, living in well-defined territories.

Cordilleran identity is not finite to the Igorot epithet. It is characterized by a shared social system; indigenous knowledge, systems and practices; and common religious, political, and economic interests. Quoting an interview between Dr. William

Henry Scott and the Diliman Review, Buendia (1991) presented how autonomy is essential in the preservation of ethnicity.

“The Cordillera peoples have many things in common which they got from their geography ... these people have been joined in common interests - politically, religiously, economically, whatever the case may be ... I would like to say that the people of the Cordilleras during this century, in just two or three generations, have been able to take their place as voting citizens of the Republic of the Philippines without losing their customs, dignity or self-esteem ... It is where the term Igorot gave way to Cordillera (as their identity) ... It is, therefore, precisely because these highland Filipinos are nationalists that they hope within an autonomous region, they will no longer be second class citizens.”

The idiosyncrasies of the uncolonized people of the Cordilleras and Muslim Mindanao are recognized by the State. As a proof, the creation of autonomous regions for the two was enshrined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Article 10, Section 15 laid down:

There shall be created autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and in the Cordillera consisting of provinces, cities, municipalities and geographical areas sharing common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic and social structures, and other relevant characteristics within the framework of this Constitution and the national sovereignty as well as territorial integrity of the Republic of the Philippines. (“The Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines”, n.d.)

Autonomy will enable crafting policies that are more relevant to the unique Cordilleran context. For the Cordillerans, regional autonomy is tantamount to sovereignty over their domain. The assertion of self-determination over ancestral lands is a component of preserving Cordilleran identity as it means sustaining indigenous cultures, management systems, and customary laws. As people who have lived in and managed their ancestral domain for several years, Cordillerans covet recognition of their rights to possess and own their ancestral lands; and respect for their customary laws (Buendia, 1991). The right of indigenous peoples to self-determination is affirmed by the United Nations in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which was drafted as early as 1985. Articles 3, 4, 5 of the Declaration prescribed:

[Article 3] Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

[Article 4] Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.

[Article 5] Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.

Unfortunately, several national laws have been passed which have limited the indigenous peoples' control and management of lands and natural resources in the

Cordilleras. For instance, the Presidential Decree (PD) 410 series of 1974 declared ancestral lands occupied and cultivated by national cultural communities as alienable and disposable. PD 705 of 1975 or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines classified lands with an 18% slope as forestlands. This decree disqualified most Cordilleran lands to be alienable and disposable. PD 1559 of 1978 which amended PD 705 forbid indigenous groups from cultivating and gaining economically from productive and commercial forests. These are only among few national laws which deprived the Cordillerans of their intrinsic right to own, explore, utilize, and develop their lands. With regional autonomy, it is their hope to have this inherent right to exercise control over their lands and natural resources back.

Autonomy will lead to more inclusive progress. Autonomy is reckoned to be key to the region's growth and development. This is so as an autonomous status will empower the regional government in terms of generation, allocation, and utilization of its resources. Buendia (1991) elucidated that fiscal autonomy is crucial in accelerating economic growth and sustainable development.

Promoting fiscal autonomy means increasing the authority and responsibility of the regional government over the generation, utilization and control of funds. This necessitates the creation of a judicious system of creating and collecting revenues in the region as well as the retention of national taxes. Moreover, it is concerned with the power of local government units (including regional government) to identify sources of revenue, generate taxes, and determine the extent of revenue sharing with the national government.

At present, it is the national government that has control over utilities and enterprises. The power that the national government holds limits the regional government from gaining full economic access and control over its resources. With regional autonomy, the Cordilleras can fully self-govern and institute a fiscal framework unique and apropos to the region.

Moved by the region's desire to preserve Cordilleran identity, self-governance, and fiscal autonomy, measures have been filed for legislation all seeking the establishment of an autonomous region in the Cordillera. These are Republic Act (RA) 6766, RA 8438, and House Bill (HB) 5595, earlier enhanced into HB 4649. Unfortunately, all of these failed to be enacted.

On January 30, 1990, RA 6766 was presented for a plebiscite wherein only the province of Ifugao voted "yes" for regional autonomy. The failure of the first Organic Act was attributed to factors such as "time element, diverse arguments, and various factors either singly or in combination" (Ladia, n.d.). The plebiscite, originally scheduled on February 23, 1990, was postponed to December 27, 1989, and was finally scheduled on January 30, 1990. The changes in the schedule have limited the timeframe for the conduct of the campaign for regional autonomy which would have educated the people about its essence. It was also noted that "the unresolved disjuncture in the different positions on Cordillera regional autonomy" and "the continued domination of dialogue by bureaucrats and lawyers" have also contributed to the decision-making of the voters (Casambre, 2010).

Following the failure of the first Organic Act was the renewed quest for autonomy through RA 8438 which was presented for a plebiscite on March 30, 1998.

During the plebiscite, only the province of Apayao voted in favor of regional autonomy. Casambre (2010) noted that:

The rejection for a second time of a proposed Organic Act for an autonomous Cordillera region was attributed to many things, all of them, at least in part, valid: ignorance, indifference, skepticism, or disagreement with the law. Ignorance is often traced to the failure of information-education-campaigns, which are, in turn, attributed to lack of funds.

More than a decade later, on December 6, 2011, HB 5595, the third Organic Act which sought to create an autonomous region in the Cordilleras was filed in the 15th Congress of the Philippines. It was approved by the House Committee on Local Governments. Its Senate counterpart, Senate Bill 3115, however, slept at the Senate Committee on Local Governments (Polonio, 2016).

On June 11, 2014, the bid for regional autonomy was revived anew through the filing of HB 4649 in the 16th Congress. HB 4649, an enhanced version of the earlier HB 5595, considered several inputs from the different sectors in the region as a result of multi-sectoral meetings and public events. HB 4649 was approved at the committee level by the House Committee on Local Governments and was endorsed up to the plenary for second reading. An Ad hoc Committee was tasked to conduct public consultations across the region regarding the proposed measure (Picaña, 2016). Unfortunately, the House Bill no longer progressed from there and failed to be enacted before the 16th Congress adjourned.

In November 2016, the Regional Development Council-CAR (RDC-CAR) approved and endorsed to Cordillera lawmakers another draft House Bill seeking for

the creation of an Autonomous Region in the Cordilleras (“RDC-CAR endorses a new and enhanced Cordillera autonomy bill”, 2016). Cordillera congressmen have agreed to give Cordillera’s pursuit for autonomy another try by filing the revised autonomy bill in the 17th Congress before it goes on a break in March 2017 (See, 2017).

Despite failures in the past, political leaders have not given up on pushing for an autonomous region in the Cordillera. On March 20, 2017, HB 5343 was jointly filed by Cordilleran lawmakers in the 17th Congress hoping to get a chance under President Rodrigo Duterte’s administration. Cordillerans anticipated for a victory this time after President Duterte himself expressed support for the bill alongside the Bangsamoro Basic Law, a measure with the same aspiration of regional autonomy in Mindanao.

Statement of the Problem

In this research, community newspapers’ portrayal of Cordillera as a region, and the proposed creation of the ARC was investigated through the lens of framing theory. This research looked into media coverage from March to July 2017, in an attempt to understand the meanings that underlie community press’ framing. By looking into the framing of Cordillera as a region and the proposed creation of the ARC, this study aimed to shed light on the following:

1. How do community newspapers view Cordillera as a region?
2. What are the underlying positions of the community newspapers on the proposed creation of the ARC?

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to look into the meanings that underlie community press' framing of Cordillera as a region and the proposed creation of the ARC based on news stories published in Baguio Midland Courier, Baguio Chronicle and SunStar Baguio from March to July 2017. Specifically, this study endeavored the following:

1. To understand how community newspapers view Cordillera as a region; and
2. To surface the underlying positions of the community newspapers on the proposed creation of the ARC based on their framing of the issue.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Framing

It is worth looking into the field of research in framing in order to map out what is known and what gaps in research can be seen. This chapter analyzed recent framing studies to identify where the research questions under study fit in.

Framing has been studied through a wide range of approaches, both theoretical and empirical within the lens of various disciplines such as media, political discourses, war crises, crime, social movements, and people's identity.

Framing has been defined as the combination of words that form a phrase, a sentence, or a story that provides a message to the audience (Cissel, 2012). The message, regardless of its medium – mainstream or alternative media, is framed. These media frames are used by journalists to streamline the flow of information to their readers. These were Cissel's (2012) conclusions in her comparative study of mainstream and alternative media's news coverage of Occupy Wall Street. Through comparison, she examined how mainstream mass media and alternative media portray the events of Occupy Wall Street to identify the similarities and dissimilarities in their news structures, motive, and how their framing impacts their readers. Findings of the content analysis show that the mainstream and alternative media presented news differently. Cissel (2012) speculated that the difference is caused by the financial backing behind media sources and the motives of profit that motivates

them. Alternative independent media were deemed more transparent and objective as they were not pressured by businesses compared to mainstream media which need to protect their financial security.

A study by Kwanuka-tondo, Albada, and Payton (2012) resembles the former study which looked into the business side of media and its role in framing. Similarly, they used comparative content analysis to dig out how human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) were covered and presented to the public by the Ugandan press over time. Subjects of the study were The New Vision, a government-owned English daily, and the privately-owned English daily, The Monitor, both circulated in Uganda. Research findings show that there was a difference in style by which HIV and AIDS were featured in the two publications. The New Vision had more straight news while The Monitor had more feature stories. The Monitor's use of feature writing made it cover the issue more comprehensively than The New Vision. Through features, The Monitor was able to incorporate the element of human interest which makes the articles more comprehensible and relevant to the public. Compared to The New Vision, it also offered more perspectives from a variety of sources, including people living with HIV and AIDS. Kwanuka-tondo, Albada, and Payton (2012), therefore, concurred with previous studies that state-owned newspapers are more likely to cover government events and policies and use official sources. In addition, The Monitor gave prominence to HIV prevention, action, and victim frames while The New Vision highlighted the solutions frame. The emphasis on solutions was attributed to The New Vision's role as a government mouthpiece spreading information about government policies, strategies, and further actions. These findings further show that media ownership can influence coverage of societal issues such as HIV and AIDS.

Rosendale and Longcore (2015) did a slightly similar study on broadcast media. They attempted to determine if television news is being marginalized by viewer demands and TV networks' profit motive. Their content analysis revealed that television evening news programs namely ABC, CBS, and NBC, significantly aired more hard news (up-to-the-minute-news or breaking news story) than soft news (content that is not time-sensitive or currently happening). However, the airtime allotted for hard news does not account for the majority of a 30-minute broadcast. More airtime is allocated for soft news and commercials. This is true for all evening news programs analyzed. These results show that even television news programs present more content that has entertainment value than real news which has an audience impact on a national scale. While this may be associated with factors like profit, the researchers were not able to confirm if indeed consumer demands and potential profit, are the motivating forces for the television content.

Framing is not used merely to push the media's interests. In a study, Moscato (2016) echoed Entman's claim that media interventions, such as framing, contribute to setting matters for public policy discussions. He used the #IdleNoMore movement, an example of online activism through the use of hashtags, as a case study to identify frames present in media reporting of the movement by two Canadian publications, the Globe and Mail, for two months. The #IdleNoMore movement was first used by an indigenous activist named Tanyo Kapo to inform the general public how a government bill would negatively affect the first nations peoples or the Aboriginals in Canada. It became an outcry for Canada's Aboriginals, which later spread in the United States, and internationally to raise issues concerning indigenous peoples. Moscato (2016) used qualitative framing analysis to understand what aspects of the #IdleNoMore movement were made salient. The study found out

that the publications used frames that significantly contributed to making people understand the social and technological factors which gave rise to the movement. The Globe's coverage of the online movement legitimized social media as a venue for advocacy and public debate. The efforts of the activists were also heightened by the two publication's coverage as they used frames that provided information about history and context which widened perspectives on the issue.

In Nigeria, another social movement was made as a subject of framing research to compare mass media and alternate media framing. Egbunike (2015) did a comparative study of how the #OccupyNigeria protests were framed by print and social media. #OccupyNigeria was a social movement that started in 2012 in response to the Federal Government's removal of fuel subsidy on petroleum products and an increase in the petrol price. The study examined national papers - Guardian, Punch and the Nigerian Tribune; and social media platforms – Facebook, Twitter, Nairaland, and blog sites. For the definition of the #OccupyNigeria issue, the following predetermined frames were coded for the newspapers and social media: corruption in the petroleum industry, government dictatorship, excessive government expenditure, oppression, insensitivity, foreign influence, opposition political groups, mass movement, revolution, generational transfer, and ethnic/religious issues. Content categories were also predetermined to identify the causes of the protests. The frames are legitimizing, delegitimizing, injustice, accountability, spectacle, sympathy, contextual, and trust deficit. Content categories were further coded to determine the media's proposed solutions to end the protests. Based on the results, both print and social media defined the protest as a mass movement. As to the cause of the protests, print media pointed fingers to the opposition politicians while social media blamed generational transfer. While both print and social media

corroborated the protest, the two had different ways of reporting. Balanced reporting was found in newspapers through its legitimizing frames while social media promoted protesters' nonconformity and violence. In terms of solutions, the dominant proposed solution by print and social media was the reversal of the price increase of petrol. The predominant frame proposed by journalists was for the government and the petroleum industry to come up with a compromise while social media activists called for the obliteration of the petroleum industry and cutting off of the government. With the foregoing, it can be seen that the print media showed more mature reporting by offering different sides of the protests. On the other hand, the protests were framed in social media with too much idealism and aggression.

Policy legislation has also been linked to media framing. Cravens (2017) attempted to look into the link between issue framing and the results of local referenda for transgender-inclusive ordinances in three cities in the United States of America, specifically in Chattanooga, in Tennessee, Fayetteville in Arkansas, and Houston in Texas. Through predetermined frames, the researcher explored how the ordinances were defined by the three newspapers. The equality, morality, safety/security, education, tolerance, pathology, majoritarian and fairness frames which were earlier observed in an earlier study on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) were used in this quantitative frame analysis. The results of the study found it impossible to determine whether there is or there is no relationship between the published news stories on transgender-inclusive policies and the aftermath of the referenda. However, it validated earlier empirical claims that "gay rights" issue frames and transgender issue frames are somewhat interchangeable. Issue frames were observed to follow different patterns depending on the focus of the ordinance. Ordinances that seek to provide benefits to same-sex couples use the

rhetoric of gay rights which uses equality and morality frames. On the other hand, ordinances that promote civil rights or anti-discrimination follow the transgender narrative which uses fairness and safety or security frames. In addition, fairness, education, and safety or security frames were utilized for ordinances that emphasize sexual orientation and gender identity. Apart from the predetermined frames, new frames emerged in the analysis such as the local economy (centers on the pros and cons of ordinances in terms of local economic impact), non-local values (focuses on the impetus behind the ordinance) and government intervention frames (projects the ordinance as an overreach of government power).

In terms of other sectors of society, Fayoyin (2015) carried out exploratory research to know the Nigerian youth's perception of how much attention they get from the media, public, and policy domains. Young people's responses to an interview established that they perceive the attention they get from the media and public domains as insufficient and alarming. Only degrading issues related to the youth are headlined but are not positioned for a higher level of social and political action. Significant recommendations were given to level up the coverage of youth development agenda, such as "compelling story-telling, comprehensive mapping of issues, and creative issue framing" (Fayoyin, 2015). Underscoring the importance of framing, the researcher sought the need to integrate traditional advocacy efforts, stakeholder alliance, and other creative ideas with framing. It was concluded that framing could help provide deeper knowledge about issues and heighten the positioning of the development agenda.

Media strategies like framing also have a role in creating social phenomena and realities. This was affirmed by Verdet (2017) in his study about media discourse of school bullying by two publications in Spain, *El Mundo*, and *El Pais*. Findings

show that coverage of school bullying at the time of the study was merely conditioned by tragic events which are the suicide of a high school student who was a victim of school bullying in Madrid, therefore, episodic. Although the coverage lacked depth, the presence of school bullying issues in the editorials of the publications under study confirmed the existence of a social phenomenon which is school bullying. As to media sources, it was found out that family members of bullied victims tend to draw on a more dramatic discourse that aims to appeal to the audience emotionally. On the other hand, experts who are knowledgeable and experienced provide rigor to a discourse by introducing and expounding key concepts. These findings show that official news sources convey relevant and necessary information while statements from the circle of victims of a social phenomenon generate empathy which breeds greater response and social concern. The foregoing additional findings imply that statements or quotations frame issues differently depending on the type of news sources.

In the United States, a framing study was also conducted on bullying, more specifically the framing of cyberbullying in mainstream media (Milosevic, 2015). A quantitative content analysis was conducted to investigate whether there was an increase in the frequency of cyberbullying coverage; whether there has been a difference in the attribution of treatment responsibility in print media and TV; and a difference in the framing of the issue based on related literature. Cyberbullying was generally portrayed as something that should be taken seriously considering its effects that could even lead to suicide. The frequency of stories related to cyberbullying did not have a gradual annual increase from 2006 to 2013. Results of the content analysis revealed that media coverage of cyberbullying are often episodic, or are focused on prominent and tragic incidents. This is the same as the

earlier framing study on bullying conducted in Spain (Verdet, 2017). Attribution of causal responsibility to individuals and institutions involved in cyberbullying incidents is evident in both print media and TV. Teachers, schools as institutions, school boards, state legislation, and federal legislation were held responsible for preventing and resolving cyberbullying. In addition, websites and technological platforms were also pointed out as responsible for removing negative content and for developing cyberbullying policies. Findings of this study, especially knowing to whom casual and treatment responsibility are attributed by the media, has implications for anti-cyberbullying interventions, most importantly, in policy-making.

In the search for related studies, it was observed that many recent framing studies paid attention to tragic events. An example is the one by Polen (2014), who inquired into the frames used by the mainstream media in covering mass shootings in the United States. Specifically, he performed textual analysis on mass shooting-related articles found in New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and The Washington Post and looked into the frames present, the emerging patterns in the coverage of mass shooting events, and the factors that influence the use of frames. It was discovered that the most dominant frames employed in mass shooting articles are mental health and access to firearms frames. This means that highlighted in the discussion of mass shooting events are the mental condition of the perpetrators and gun control or the policies that regulate the manufacture, access, and use of firearms. With regards to factors that influence the creation of these news frames, it appeared that depending on the identity of the perpetrator and location where the shooting occurred, news frames varied. Apart from an inadequate mental health system and gun control policies, the print media attributed mass shooting events to violence in entertainment.

An earlier study related to a shooting incident was carried out by Andrus (2012) who explored the framing of the shooting incident which took the life of Trayvon Martin. Trayvon Martin is an African-American 17-year old high school student who was fatally shot by George Zimmerman, a mixed-race Hispanic neighborhood watch coordinator. The latter claimed that he shot Martin in self-defense in response to physical injuries inflicted by Martin who was then unarmed. Andrus (2012) used qualitative textual analysis to understand how news media websites such as foxnews.com, a perceived conservative network, and cnn.com, a perceived liberal network, employed news frames in their coverage of the Trayvon Martin shooting incident. Based on the results of the analysis, both cnn.com and foxnews.com used the identified frames – conflict, attribution of responsibility, human interest, race, and legal. Of these, the racial frame was most prominent. Articles often had racial reference given the two different racial backgrounds of the people involved. But the most significant finding of the study was that people involved were framed differently by the two news sites. Less guilt was attributed to Zimmerman and statements from his circle were more prominent than Martin's in foxnews.com. On the contrary, Martin's camp was often quoted by cnn.com favorably, ergo, creating an impression that he was not at fault and was merely a victim. Quotations from either Zimmerman or Martin's camp were prominently used and placed near the lead paragraph of news articles, thus, highlighting both camps' positions. Andrus (2012) concluded that the framing of the shooting incident and the people involved can have an effect on perceptions toward the victim, perpetrator, and their family; race relations; and even legal systems.

One study related to the effects of framing tragic events like the Trayvon Martin shooting vis-à-vis racial perception was the one conducted by Foreman,

Arteaga, and Collins (2016). They examined how media frames used in crime stories influence the audience's perceptions of racial groups. In the quantitative study, the researchers made use of a fictitious news story about crime for their respondents and surveyed them through post-test questionnaires afterward. Among the significant findings of this study is that respondents who were shown news with a scrutinizing frame had negative feelings towards the criminal suspect and the suspect's racial group. Another discovery is that respondents with the same racial identity with the suspect had more feelings of sympathy than those who do not identify with the suspect. These just demonstrate that news frames influence the audience's perceptions of the story and some of its elements like the character and his/her's racial identity.

At an international level, Freyenberger (2013) examined how print media around the world framed Amanda Knox, an American student who got involved in a murder case of a British exchange student named Meredith Kercher in Italy. The results of the content analysis show that the tragic event received massive media attention. Mentions of Amanda Knox were more prominent in newspapers in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, South Korea, and China than in the United States of America (USA) and Canada. The mentions were found in the headline, lead, and in texts accompanying graphics. In terms of page placement, Amanda Knox mentions were more prominent in the USA and in Canada as mentions were found on the front page of newspapers. This was attributed to the fact that Knox is an American. However, the page placement of Amanda Knox mentions does not necessarily mean positive framing. The tone of Amanda Knox mentions was more positive in newspapers in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, and South Korea than in the USA and Canada. On the other hand, the tone Amanda Knox mentions were

more negative in the United Kingdom and Ireland newspapers than those outside the United Kingdom (UK). Freyenberger (2013) credited this to the fact that Kercher, the victim, is from the UK. This study suggests that a news story's prominence depends on how it was framed in terms of tone, story placement, and page placement. Framing of a person involved in an event may also vary from one country to another depending on the identity of the person, including his/her personal or racial background.

Several framing studies about the refugee crisis were conducted recently. Corbu, Buturoiu, and Durach (2017) studied the framing of the refugee crisis in Europe by Romanian online media. They sought to reveal to which attributes Romanian online media associate the crisis and the way online media cover the issue in terms of attitudes towards the refugees and towards the European Union (EU). The researchers used five generic frames – responsibility, conflict, morality, economic consequences, and human interest, to surface which aspect of the refugee crisis was made most salient. The findings of the study indicate that Romanian online media outlets framed the crisis primarily in terms of responsibility. Journalists, through their texts, made it seem that the most significant aspects of the issue were casting blame on people responsible for the crisis and identifying suitable actors to solve the crisis such as the EU. Other frames such as conflict, human interest, economic consequences, and morality were secondary frames used in portraying the issue but were relatively less visible compared to the first frame. Further, findings suggest that news stories tended to show positive attitudes towards refugees but negative attitudes towards the EU. Attitudes towards refugees and the EU were more positive when solidarity or human interest were addressed. In contrast, news

stories that focused on aspects such as national crisis, social movements, and socio-economic consequences drew negative attitudes.

Framing is not only an approach used by the media but also by other social actors like politicians. Barnhisel (2016) scrutinized the politicized nature of the concept “refugee”. He argued that the word refugee is a politicized concept that is contested and de-contested by state actors who have an interest in limiting the scope of its definition and people who qualify for the said status. He added that the framing of the concept has effects on how refugees are perceived and the policies made for them. Using the migration crisis, now a refugee crisis in Europe, as a case study, Barnhisel (2016) conducted a discourse analysis to look into how the European Union (EU) and Turkey framed the concept of refugees based on their interests. EU wants to keep out refugees, whereas Turkey is after financial aid for the refugees it hosts within its borders and in ensuring its national security by establishing an alliance with the EU. Findings unveil that the interests of the EU and Turkey were portrayed through two dominant frames – the securitized frame and the humanitarian frame. The securitized frame was used when a state put the greatest concern on state stability. Issues on security, budget, and cultural and religious cohesion were highlighted in this rhetoric. The humanitarian rhetoric, on the other hand, was used when a state placed concern on their image. In this frame, the humanitarian impacts of the refugee crisis were discussed so as to appear deeply concerned or responsive to the crisis and to appeal to the international community for assistance. It was through political framing that the EU was able to transfer the burden of caring for the refugees to Turkey. EU’s declaration of Turkey as a safe country for migrants implied that Turkish asylum policies meet humanitarian standards, thus transferring the EU’s obligation to provide refugee protection to

Turkey. These findings just show that through framing, not only can a state narrow or widen the scope of a concept and the people who can qualify for status. It can also externalize crises and corresponding obligations.

To analyze and evaluate media discourse published by an American think tank, the Middle East Forum (MEF), which promotes American interests in the Middle East, Benkhedda (2016) proposed a model of analysis. This model is based on a Problem-Culprit-Cause-Solution framing paradigm which represents the article's main frame, the set of framing moves that support the main frame, and a narrative ethical evaluation. Benkhedda (2016) inferred that MEF authors conveyed hostility by employing a persecution frame of Muslims as villains and isolation frame of Islam not only as anti-Semitic and anti-Western but also as incongruous with modernity, therefore, should be restrained and combatted. The media discourse practices of the MEF framed Muslims and Islam by means of terror, distrust, abomination, and bigotry. The researcher proposed this distinct type of media discourse and framing by the MEF be called "belligerent editorial".

Cordillera Regional Autonomy

The quest for Cordillera regional autonomy has taken three decades. But still, whether it will be achieved remains in question. Several studies have been conducted to look into the prominence of the issue to the general public and the factors that influence their position on autonomy.

In 1997, Abayan and Jamias conducted a focus group discussion at Barangay Greenwater in Baguio City. The study revealed that the lack of discussions with the

public was contributory to the low interest of people on issues like the Cordillera autonomy. It further stated that “In turn, low interest does not motivate them to learn deeply about the issues” hence the low information-low interest cycle among the people (Abayan and Jamias, 1997). The researchers recommended that communication channels used to disseminate information about Cordillera regional autonomy should relay accurate information with regard to the matter properly and for the government to conduct more dialogue with the people about the issue.

Calpito and Solomon (1989) attempted to determine the stand of Baguio Igorot students on Cordillera autonomy-related issues. Through their study, they found out that the majority of Baguio Igorot students were “merely aware” of autonomy-related issues which mean “their knowledge about the issues is not so extensive”. This level of awareness of the students was also credited to the news coverage by the mass media. Further, the study showed that accredited mass media was the most influential factor which influenced the stand of Baguio Igorot students relative to the representatives of the Cordillera Regional Consultative Commission. The researchers concluded that the mass media “was not only the most effective information agent but the most influential factor” in the decision-making of Baguio Igorot students.

A slightly similar study was conducted by Asuncion (1991) who surveyed Baguio City residents. She discovered that out of 100 Baguio City residents, 59% were not aware of what autonomy is all about and have false notions why it is considered an issue in the Cordilleras; 23% were aware of what autonomy means to the region but knowledge on it “is minimal in scale, meaning accurate but incomplete”; while only 18% were substantially knowledgeable about the concept of autonomy, why it should be enacted, and the benefits it can give to the region.

In 2012 and 2013, the Regional Development Council-CAR, through Pulse Surveys, has validated the level of awareness of people from the six provinces in the Cordilleras relative to its quest for regional autonomy. The pulse surveys reported that in 2012, 53.1% of the respondents were still not aware of the region's clamor for an autonomous region for the third time. In 2013, the number rose to 58.9%. The same pulse surveys revealed that in 2012, 40.9% was uncertain how to answer the question on the readiness of the region for an autonomous form of government while there was 49.6% in 2013. Furthermore, when asked whether the respondents are in favor of the third Organic Act or not, 48.8% was undecided in 2012 and 52.5% was undecided in 2013 (Ponciano, 2015).

Community Newspapers in CAR

In a study, Anga-angan, Atuba, and Dacuag (2010) asserted that community newspapers play a role in providing the primary interests and needs of locals in terms of information dissemination, in shaping public opinion, and in creating awareness on current events and relevant issues. They emphasized the need for journalists to heighten their efforts in making the voices of marginalized people, like those of the indigenous peoples, heard by reaching out to them and reporting more about their concerns and issues.

In Baguio City, the role of community journalism is highly valued. Alcazar and Melecio (1995) looked into the credibility of local and national newspapers when it comes to reporting community news stories in Baguio City. The study examined national newspapers and community newspapers namely, the Baguio Midland

Courier, Baguio Gold Ore, and Weekly Vibrations. Of these, only Baguio Midland Courier remains circulated. Survey results showed that businessmen and professionals find local newspapers as more credible news sources than national newspapers when it comes to community news stories. They are considered vital in promoting national development and informing the public about various issues and events. The study also reported that the reasons for consumption of local newspapers were to gain information about local, national, and global events and issues; to search for local job opportunities and advertisements; for entertainment purposes; and to subscribe to favorite writers' content particularly columnists. Although local newspapers were perceived to be more credible, both national and local newspapers were perceived to be fair in taking into account their readers' interests.

An earlier study by Buhain, Cabilatazan, Cadavis, Rabago, and Santos (1991) examined the perception of young urban professionals in Baguio City on the freeness and credibility of six local newspapers. Generally, the local newspapers were perceived as fairly free and credible. But when it comes to preference, Baguio Midland Courier came out to be a favorite as it meets respondents' needs for information.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study made use of a qualitative research approach to understand the meanings that underlie Cordillera community newspapers' framing of the proposed creation of the ARC in their reportage. Qualitative research is a type of scientific research that is interdisciplinary, interpretive, and theoretical in nature. It explores an array of dimensions of the social world to explain social phenomena. It deals with how "the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted" (Mason, 2002). Unlike quantitative research which aims to measure things, the primary objective of qualitative research is to understand and describe ideas, concepts, contexts, usage, and meaning of words; individual experiences; group norms; and relationships. Basically, it is a method in research by which we apprehend how and why things in our social world are the way they are.

In contradistinction with quantitative research, Saludadez (personal communication, August 17, 2017) pointed out that:

Qualitative research (QLR) provides a contextual explanation as to why a phenomenon occurs. It is interested in the subjective dimension of reality - the meaning behind the action. Quantitative research (QNR), on the other hand, provides causal explanation and is interested in the

objective dimension of reality - measurable cause and effect relationship.

She further differentiated the two saying:

Within the qualitative frame, communication is apprehended as the process of interpretation or meaning-making. The concept of interest is meaning... Within the quantitative research frame, communication is apprehended as the process of information transmission, with the corresponding concepts of message, sender, and receiver.

Hancock, Ockleford, and Windridge (2007) distinguished qualitative and quantitative research characterizing the former as a “flexible, emergent but systematic research process”. Qualitative research recognizes that there are several ways of understanding reality, depending on different people and the group’s perspectives. It uses people’s accounts or behaviors in natural settings as data, even if they are not expressed numerically. In contrast, quantitative research is a tradition wherein processes are defined ahead of time. It focuses on understanding and describing reality through general laws. Unlike qualitative research, it involves data from a given population expressed and/or interpreted numerically or statistically.

Qualitative research is influenced by several paradigms such as positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, and critical theories. These paradigms serve as a model in gathering information, understanding meanings, and building knowledge. This qualitative study is grounded in the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm is also termed constructivism, social constructivism, and qualitative research paradigm. From an interpretive standpoint, reality and knowledge are constructed and reproduced through discourse. This paradigm holds the belief that reality and knowledge can be obtained through deep understanding and

interpretation (Tracy, 2013). Using this paradigm, the researcher analyzed information and social action from an actor's point of view or context.

In general, qualitative data analysis entails examining the data; multiple coding to reduce the data into codes; finding similarities or relationships between similar codes and classifying them based on units or categories; and identifying emerging patterns called themes (Kim, 2016). There are, however, many ways to conduct qualitative research. It could be through 1) ethnography; 2) grounded theory; 3) interpretative phenomenological analysis; 4) discourse analysis; 5) conversation analysis; 6) content analysis; and 7) narrative analysis, among others (Hancock, Ockleford, and Windridge, 2007). Each qualitative research tradition understands the social world differently. Each one also has a different assumption of important knowledge or information to focus on. Some seek to understand the nature of lived experience, others study cultural and social phenomena, while others examine language and communication phenomena. For instance, ethnography, which means "portrait of people", focuses on people and their cultures. Grounded theory is a methodology that studies a concept that explains patterns (Martin, 2018). Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a methodology, which is both phenomenological and interpretative in nature, that seeks to understand how participants in a study make sense of their experiences. A tradition that is interested in strategies, patterns, and use of text and talk; and how they present world views, is called discourse analysis. Slightly similar to this is conversation analysis which also involves studies on discourse but limited to naturally occurring speech, conversations, or social interactions. A familiar methodology in research is content analysis. Although common in quantitative studies, the approach was adopted in qualitative research. Instead of counting the frequency of words, phrases, or themes,

content analysis in qualitative research simply means analysis of content. Another methodology is the narrative analysis which is employed to narratives that include but are not limited to, texts and oral stories (Riessman, 2005).

Data Analysis

This study draws on both framing and narrative theories in order to uncover community newspapers' view of the Cordillera as a region and position on the proposed creation of the ARC which were intentionally or unintentionally obscured in narratives through various journalism techniques. Although this is a study on community newspapers' framing it used narrative analysis as a framework and methodology.

“Narrative analysis and interpretation is an act of finding narrative meaning” (Kim, 2016). It is a form of inquiry wherein narratives are gathered and analyzed either in terms of content, thematic structure, or manner of sharing to discover their meanings. This kind of inquiry is important to discover meanings in narratives which may not always be what was explicitly told. Although this form of inquiry sometimes looks into narrative construction, according to Bruner (1991), its central concern is not how narratives are constructed, but rather, how they serve as a tool in the construction of reality.

Over time, different models of narrative analysis have been developed – they are either thematic, structural, interactional, and performative. In this study, the researcher used thematic and structural narrative analysis to surface the meanings

behind community newspapers' framing of the proposed regional autonomy in Cordillera. The thematic narrative analysis looks into patterns that emerge from the data while structural narrative analysis centers on a way a story is told or the form of a narrative, including narrative devices used for persuasion (Riessman, 2005).

In light of the objectives of this study, Donald Polkinghorne's analysis of narratives also called paradigmatic analysis of narratives, and William Labov's model of narrative analysis were operationalized to allow meanings to emerge from the data on hand and answer the research questions without the influence of the researcher's assumptions or predetermined theories.

Polkinghorne (1995) suggested that there are two types of paradigmatic analysis of narratives. The first type is wherein concepts are derived from the data through inductive analysis. On the other hand, the second type derives concepts from theories that are applied to the data. In this type of narrative analysis, stories are used as data that are examined and arranged under categories to discover common themes, conceptual manifestations, or salient constructs. These commonalities and patterns across multiple data are uncovered and decoded to demystify implicit meanings. This method was used to understand how community newspapers view Cordillera as a region of the Philippines based on their framing.

Using William Labov's model of narrative analysis, the data under study were further analyzed to surface the underlying positions of community newspapers on the proposed regional autonomy in Cordillera. This method of analysis primarily aims to bear what a narrative is really about (Kim, 2016). For this to be realized, a narrative's structure has to be scrutinized. Labov and Waletzky (1967) first identified three elements in a narrative structure – orientation, complicating action, and evaluation.

This structure was later revamped by Labov (2013) to include three more elements – abstract, resolution, and coda. It is important to note that these elements are not always present in narratives. Neither can they be detected in sequence.

Using William Labov's model of analysis, the corpus used in this study were parsed into idea units and the following elements of narrative structure:

- Abstract – the introduction to the story, main point or most reportable event, and/or summary of the story;
- Orientation – the part of a narrative which provides background information or context such as time, setting, situation, and characters;
- Complicating action – a chain of casual events that tells what happened in the story. It contains the crisis or the turning point of a plot;
- Evaluation – the part of a narrative that contains the narrator's direct or indirect comment, reaction, opinion or meaning that he/she gives to an event;
- Resolution – the part of a narrative that contains the resolution of the most reportable event;
- Coda – ending of the plot and/or conclusion that brings the audience to the present (Riessman, 2005; Ouyang and McKeown, n.d.)

The corpus under study in this research are selected news articles related to Cordillera regional autonomy published in community newspapers. If we speak of narrative analysis, people's verbal accounts and stories usually come to mind. A wide range of texts, however, may also serve as sources of narrative data such as biographies, autobiographies, newspapers, magazines, internet pages, and online

discussion fora, among others (Kim, 2016). Fulton (2005) posited that all news is also considered a narrative. She defined news, both hard and soft news, as “a specialized kind of narrative with its own recognizable genres”. In addition, “news translates the world of experience into a very specific set of impressions presented as universal truths”. To turn information or events into news narratives, a set of professional practices, journalistic norms, and narrative strategies are employed.

Subjects of this study are the following community newspapers circulating in the Cordilleras:

Baguio Midland Courier

Baguio Midland Courier is a private community newspaper founded way back April 28, 1947 by the Hamada Publishing Corporation. It is the oldest active community newspaper circulating in the Cordilleras. This broadsheet comes out weekly on Sundays.

Over the years, Baguio Midland Courier has earned various awards. It is a Journalism Awardee in 1971-1972 and 1989-1990; on the list of Hall of Fame for consistently bagging awards in the Philippine Press Institute’s Annual Community Press Awards; and is hailed the Most Outstanding Provincial Newspaper by the Rotary Club Manila (Baguio Midland Courier, n.d.).

Baguio Chronicle

Baguio Chronicle is a private community newspaper established on December 6, 2009 by the Baguio Chronicle Media, Inc. This broadsheet newspaper is circulated regionwide and has an average readership of 8,000 weekly. It is

available every Saturday in Baguio City, and every Sunday in other areas of Cordillera.

It was hailed as the country's Best Edited Community Newspaper and Best Editorial Page (Weekly Category) in the 2013 Annual Community Press Awards for Excellence by the Philippine Press Institute (Baguio Chronicle, n.d.).

SunStar Baguio

SunStar Baguio is a private community newspaper which is an affiliate of SunStar Philippines based in Cebu. At present, this broadsheet is the only daily community newspaper in Northern Luzon, but circulates only in the Cordilleras (SunStar Baguio, n.d.).

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents findings from the narrative analysis conducted in this study to answer the questions: 1) How do community newspapers – Baguio Midland Courier, Baguio Chronicle, and SunStar Baguio – view the Cordilleras as a region?; and 2) What are the underlying positions of the community newspapers on the proposed creation of the ARC?

Polkinghorne's paradigmatic analysis of narratives was utilized to reveal how community newspapers view the Cordillera as a region while Labov's model of narrative analysis was operationalized to surface the underlying positions of community newspapers on the proposed creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.

Results

Community Newspapers' View of Cordillera as a Region

Based on the framing of community newspapers, the Cordilleras was generally viewed as an underdeveloped region that has been struggling for self-determination. The community newspapers recognize the region's long-time struggle for self-governance which predates the creation of Cordillera Administrative Region by virtue of Executive Order 220 and the ratification of the 1987 Philippine Constitution where the promise of autonomy is enshrined. Its need for self-

determination is further substantiated by the region's underdevelopment and the regional government's lack of exercise of local autonomy. This is seen to be resolved through a transition from an administrative to an autonomous setup which can only materialize if the proposed creation of the ARC progresses in the legislative waters, and gets favorable votes from the public in a plebiscite.

Community Newspapers' Underlying Positions on the Proposed Creation of the ARC

Based on the framing of autonomy-related news articles, it can be concluded that the community newspapers have a favorable stance on the proposed creation of the ARC. It is deemed necessary but tentative. While cognizant of the need for regional autonomy in Cordillera, the community newspapers are aware that the proposal heavily hinges on the endorsement of Pres. Duterte, the action of the legislative branch of the government, and the decision of the public.

The community newspapers portrayed regional autonomy as vital to the Cordilleras. This portrayal is perceptible based on the frequent mentions of the proposed regional autonomy's rationale, and selected statements and quotations from official news sources. Hence, in published autonomy-related articles, it was also discerned that community newspapers outrightly endorsed the proposal to national government leaders by highlighting the region's need for autonomous status in their narratives. Pres. Duterte's seal of approval on the proposal and Dureza's call for unity among Cordillerans is also manifested in the narratives to convince the public to view regional autonomy as beneficial, probable, and with favor.

Discussion

Community Newspapers' Framing of Cordillera as a Region

The first round of analysis dealt with the community newspapers' view of Cordillera as a region. Although the corpus of analysis and the analyzed period mainly focused on the revival of Cordillera's autonomy bid, the narratives did not lose the framing of the region. It is important to understand how community newspapers view Cordillera as a region. Not only does it provide context about the region's bid for autonomy, but it also provides a better understanding of the community newspapers' position on autonomy. In unraveling the community newspapers' general viewpoints of the region, it was important to first uncover how the region was framed. The following frames turned up:

Cordillera was predetermined to become autonomous. In providing a context of the Cordillera region's bid for autonomy, the community newspapers indicated that Cordillera's administrative status is impermanent and that it is destined to become autonomous. They highlighted these facts - that the creation of Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) is a result of a peace pact between the national government and the Cordillera People's Liberation Army; and that Cordillera being an administrative region is only an initial status as the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides for its transition to an autonomous region. The fact that an autonomous region for Cordillera is conveniently provided in the 1987 Philippine Constitution was

frequently mentioned. “[SSB 1] Article 10 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the regions in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordilleras, as territorial and political subdivision [*sic*], will enjoy local autonomy”.

[SSB 9] The quest for autonomy started in Executive Order 220 in 1987 which created the Cordillera Administrative Region with the Constitution providing that the autonomous region in the Cordilleras shall consist [*sic*] of provinces, cities, municipalities and geographical areas sharing common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic and social structures, and other relevant characteristics within the framework of the Constitution.

A little after the ratification of the 1987 Constitution, Executive Order (EO) 220 was issued, which serves as the legal basis for the creation of Cordillera as an administrative region, following a peace accord entered into by the national government and the CPLA.

[BMC 3 and BMC 4] Aside from the 1987 Constitution, the promise for autonomy by the national government is embodied in Executive Order 220, which created the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Then President Corazon Aquino issued EO 220 as a prize for the signing of peace accord forged between the Aquino administration and the Cordillera Peoples [*sic*] Liberation Army (CPLA) then led by slain renegade priest Conrado “*Ka Ambo*” Balweg in Mount Data Hotel in Mountain Province in 1987.

Said EO likewise mandates the preparation of the region for an autonomous setup. “[BC 3] In July 15, 1986, former President Corazon Aquino issued Executive Order 220 creating the Cordillera Administrative Region with a mandate to administer the affairs of the government in the region and prepare for the establishment of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera”.

Cordillera is an underdeveloped and neglected region. Thirty years after its establishment as a region of the Philippines, Cordillera remains behind in terms of development citing long-time neglect of the national government and the regional government’s lack of self-governance as impediments.

The underdevelopment and lack of self-governance frames were mostly evinced in the community newspapers’ mentions of HB 5343’s rationale which stated that Cordillera autonomy is seen as “[BC 1] [SSB 1] [SSB 2] the ‘most effective option’ to provide the region with the needed foundation to pursue sustainable development ‘as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources’”. Another vision of autonomy is “[SSB 1] to establish a political entity, provide for its basic structure of government in recognition [*sic*] the cause of the Cordillerans and to secure their identity and posterity allowing for a meaningful self-governance”. Other than the rationale behind regional autonomy, regional personalities also expressed views on the matter. In one article, then Regional Development Council-CAR (RDC-CAR) Chairman Mauricio Domogan was quoted:

[BMC 3] “Autonomy mean [*sic*] an enhanced Cordillera identity and self-determination and having responsive policies for the region and its people,” Domogan said.

“We must bring to them the message and our belief that autonomy will help us pursue a development path that is sustainable and responsible to our needs, our diverse cultures, and our uniqueness as a region towards peace and development for all Cordillerans,” he added.

RDC-CAR Vice-Chairman Milagros Rimando, who shared the same belief, was also quoted in another article, “[SSB 7] In RDC, we believe that we can actually improve and develop better under an autonomous set-up”. On another note, one article communicated that the current administrative setup will be a drawback once the Philippines shifts into a federal form of government. NEDA-CAR Assistant Regional Director Jed Aquino came to vent “[SSB 7] “Pag tayo naging part ng isang federal state na composed of many regions, kawawa naman tayo so balik tayo sa dati. Maiipit tayo na maliit na rehiyon na makikipag-agawan ng pondo doon sa mas malalaking regions,”.

The neglected frame, on the other hand, came out from a manifestation made by Domogan. He said “[BMC 2] the historical injustice to the region is that it has been ‘neglected for a long period of time’ by the national government”.

Further, in some articles, it was made obvious that government personalities are aware of the Cordillera’s need to develop as a region. In one article, then Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza said that President Rodrigo Roa Duterte “[BMC 5] recognizes the desire of the Cordillera and the Bangsamoro people for self-determination and the need to develop their own regions, citing colonial ruling and unitary form of government that led to the uneven development of the country.” In addition, the article said, [BMC 5] “He was able to

explain the need of the Cordillerans to be given also the opportunity to govern themselves through Cordillera Autonomous Region eventually to install a federal setup in the country.”. This means that the President is, likewise, fully cognizant of the region’s need for self-governance to pursue the development it desires.

If the reason behind the need for autonomy is to work toward development through self-governance, this demonstrates that the current development in the region and the power vested on the regional government are seen as deficient. Otherwise, the regional government would not find the need for an autonomous status to have a stronger foundation to advance toward sustainable development.

Cordillera is a region that has been clamoring for self-determination. One frame evident across all community newspapers under study is that Cordillera is a region yearning for self-determination. Autonomous status is deemed a prerequisite for the region to enjoy such. One article remarked, “[BMC 6] Failure to achieve autonomy before the 1987 Constitution is amended could mean the end of the road for the Cordillera’s long-time bid for independence”.

The region’s desire to become autonomous was framed with a historical reference in two narratives. One put:

[SSB 5] National Commission on Indigenous People [sic] regional director Atty. Roland Calde added the 30th anniversary of the region is not more of a celebration, but a struggle rooted from the indigenous peoples [sic] struggle to be free from an oppressive system of government.

“It’s not more of a celebration, but for us, that would be thirty years of our struggle for autonomy. This struggle has been started by the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera themselves and we are now here at 30 years, and still, we are struggling for our autonomy,” added Calde.

Although the news article did not elaborate on the details of the indigenous people’s struggle Calde was referring to, his statements allude to a fight that started 30 years ago. Another article made mention of a battle fought by indigenous peoples of Cordillera in the past. However, like the former narrative, it did not flesh out the matter. It said, “[SSB 6] Earlier this year, *A Victory Postponed*, a book published by NEDA about the struggle of 10 former members of the Cordillera Peoples [sic] Liberation Army (CPLA) for self-governance in the Cordilleras, is being distributed to both private and public schools”.

In other narratives, Cordillera’s unwavering commitment to achieving its goal to become an autonomous region was captured. One article declared “[BC 4] We are now ripe to achieve autonomy” which show assertiveness, while another read:

[BC 5] CORDILLERA and autonomy.

The two words connected in a sentence was perhaps the most anticipated pronouncement in President Rodrigo Duterte’s State of the Nation Address on Monday by Cordilleran officials and autonomy advocates.

But after a two-hour speech, no such connections came out of Duterte’s mouth as anticipated after Cordilleran leaders asked

Malacanang [*sic*] in a meeting last July 18 to have the issue included in the second SONA.

Quoting Rimando, it further stated, [BC 5] “Although we did not get our wish that he will mention it in his SONA, it does not discourage us because he pledged (that it will be an urgent bill) on our meeting with us,”. While the article reported unfavorable news, the latter statements expressed optimism which shows the resolve of the regional leaders to attain regional autonomy.

Cordillera is a region with a diverse population. Cordillera was not only framed in a historical, political, or economic context. Community newspapers also put emphasis on Cordillerans who are diverse, and although not explicitly stated, disunited. This was made apparent in the use of news sources’ statements.

[BMC 2] “We hope there’s one united effort by all towards autonomy for the Cordillera. In the roadmap of peace, you may have different roots but there is only one destination; so let’s now try and converge this [*sic*] different roots that we have towards one destination, which is autonomy for the Cordillera,” Dureza said.

He said [*sic*] is committed to support the region’s bid for autonomy as long as it stays united in its pursuit.

“There should be a stronger clamor for autonomy,” he said.

He said Opapp [*sic*] is open to engage with the diverse groups in order to attain autonomy for the Cordillera.

Dureza was quoted in another article mouthing [SSB 3] “In the Cordillera region, madaming grupo, mayroon pang nagkawatak watak and we can understand that since the Cordillera has a very diverse culture, people and tradition; there should be one united effort from all towards autonomy in the Cordillera region”. In these excerpts, it is noticeable how Dureza called for unity amidst diversity among Cordillerans as he is fully aware of the divergence between them. This divergence was acknowledged in one article citing Cordillera Bodong Administration Chairman, Andres Ngao-i. It said “[BMC 2] Because of situations we cannot control, we have many factions. I am giving my members two weeks to study and strategize to unite the different factions”. One narrative also reported that people from the province of Benguet are against the proposal. Then Benguet Representative Ronald Cosalan was quoted saying, [BC 4] “The people of Benguet has [*sic*] time and again rejected the idea of autonomy but I will consult the people again and see what they think of Cordillera Autonomous Region of a Federal State,”. These show beyond doubt that people in Cordillera do not have a united stand on Cordillera regional autonomy.

Community Newspapers’ Framing of the proposed ARC

In looking into the underlying positions of each community newspaper on the proposed creation of the ARC, it is important to highlight the common themes or media frames they used in their reportage. While the main topics varied slightly between the narratives of the community newspapers, common threads turned up. Analysis of the narratives resulted in three dominant themes or media frames - the

need for regional autonomy; the need for people's support; and the need for government support.

It is worth noting that the frames are not an exhaustive representation of all topics that emerged from each narrative. Instead, the frames depict the topics common to all narratives based on the analysis using the Labovian model.

Cordillera needs regional autonomy. The analyzed narratives involved events that highlighted the strong desire of Cordilleran leaders to achieve regional autonomy. This frame was present in four narratives. The community newspapers published stories that discussed the rationale of the revived autonomy bill and the benefits an autonomous status will bring the region. For example, the following excerpt cited House Bill 5343's explanatory note to explain what autonomy means to Cordillera:

[SSB 2] The CAR chief executives cited in the bill's explanatory note the "Cordillera autonomy is seen as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources. Cordillera autonomy will bring the national attention as well as the benefits of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multi-cultural policies for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).

The explanatory note was recited in another story adding: [SSB 1] "It is a manifestation that regional autonomy is no longer just a lifelong dream but a vigorous desire," the solons stressed. These lines hold the belief that self-

governance could enable the region to manage its own resources and benefit from it. It could also allow the region to promote policies favorable to indigenous peoples at the national level.

Apart from House Bill 5343, Baguio City Representative Mark Go was quoted emphasizing that the legislation of a bill creating an ARC should have been done a long time ago. Although behind time, he expressed confidence that it is still a key to economic growth and upliftment of the quality of life of the people in the region: [SSB 1] “This intended piece of legislation is long overdue. I am optimistic the enactment of this bill will ensure the region’s economic growth resulting in the improved quality of life of the Cordillerans,” Go said.

The urgent need for Cordillera to shift from an administrative to autonomous status was further pressed in four narratives where federalism was mentioned. In the following story, an assertion made by Go that an autonomous status will give an edge to the region should the proposed shift to federalism push through was stated: [BMC 1] “Go said if the Cordillera becomes an autonomous region, it will have more leverage in becoming an independent state, along with other states that will be established under the federal form of government.” However, it was not elaborated how it could.

Some narratives reveal the bias of news sources favoring autonomy over federalism. In one story, it was indicated that Cordillera regional autonomy should take precedence because it is promised in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. NEDA-CAR Assistant Regional Director Jed Aquino was also quoted saying it will be easier for the region to be a separate state under a federal type of government if it has an autonomous status:

[SSB 5] “Ang pinaguusapan sa national level is federalism. Tayo naman dito sa region, regional autonomy pa rin. Why not? Kasi ito na ‘yung naumpisahan natin at unang una, it’s a constitutional mandate,” Aquino [*sic*]. “Gusto natin ng federalism pero gusto natin munang maging autonomous region para mas madali ‘yung pagiging separate state natin later.

The same narrative made reference to NCIP-CAR Regional Director Ronald Calde who explained the benefits of having fiscal autonomy under an autonomous setup compared to the proposed federalism, which remains indefinite: [SSB 5] “We still have the support of the government to utilize our own taxes and at least we would have more efficient way and more concrete compared to federalism because as of now, we don’t know what kind of federalism we will have”.

The bid for regional autonomy needs government support. Too much emphasis on the need for government support and action on the autonomy bill for it to progress in the legislative arena was present in the community newspapers’ narratives. Regional officials and advocates are hopeful that the third autonomy bill could finally be the region’s last resort to achieving a self-government exercising functions of power that could better pave the road to development. For this to happen, regional officials need to persuade the national government that indeed, autonomy means progress in the Cordillera region. This was explicitly stated in one of the narratives analyzed:

[BMC 3] “We must bring to them the message and our belief that autonomy will help us pursue a development path that is sustainable

and responsible to our needs, our diverse cultures, and our uniqueness as a region towards peace and development for all Cordillerans,” he added.

In a bid to get the national government’s support, autonomy advocates sought the support of the highest-ranking official of the country, President Rodrigo Duterte, who has the power to influence legislators by setting priority measures. One narrative talked about how regional officials tried to woo Pres. Duterte to consider the autonomy bill as a priority:

[BC 3] “Thirty-three mayors in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) have signed a manifesto to be delivered to President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, asking him to declare the House Bill (HB) 5343 a priority bill.

HB 5343 is “the Act establishing the Autonomous Region in the Cordillera.”

The manifesto of the Cordilleran League of Cities and Municipalities is in Resolution 01-2017 entitled “Supporting the establishment of an autonomous region of the Cordillera by urging President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to certify the House Bill 5343 as urgent and priority measure, and including the Cordillera Regional Autonomy agenda in his State of the Nation Address.”

The narrative added:

[BC 3] “It also said that the Regional Development Council-Cordillera already passed a resolution supporting the establishment of an

autonomous region of the cordillera [*sic*], and is urging President Duterte to certify HB 5343 as urgent.”

Some narratives set high hopes when they reported about a turn of events favorable to the region. That is, that the autonomy bill may be considered a priority or urgent:

[BC 1] “Go also revealed that Office of the President Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza promised to talk to Duterte “to consider the house bill an urgent bill.”

Earlier this year, Dureza even told Cordilleran leaders that Cordillera autonomy will be among the contents of Duterte’s State of Nation Address.”

[SSB 8] Dureza, who attended the Baguio leg of the Cordillera Unity Gong relay on Friday assured the new house bill will be certified by President Rodrigo Duterte this year.

Certification of a bill as urgent means priority and fast-tracked action of lawmakers in Congress. A number of narratives bared how autonomy advocates are heavily banking on Pres. Duterte’s domination for the autonomy bill to advance in the national legislature:

[BMC 4] “Ardent advocates for Cordillera autonomy are upbeat that long-time quest for an autonomous region will be established in the nearest future after President Rodrigo Duterte has agreed to meet with regional leaders on July 18 in Malacañang.”

[BMC 5] “The President ditched his prepared speech and talked in an hour-long speech before Cordillera leaders and elders, saying he will certify the bill as urgent together with the proposed BBL and endorse it to the House of Representatives and the Senate.”

[SSB 9] “Duterte has agreed to support House Bill 5343 and label it as urgent in time for the convening of Congress along with the Bangsamoro Basic Law where Cordillera advocates hope to hurdle and be able to get funding for the plebiscite eyed for next year.”

Seeking the favor of Pres. Duterte was only one example of government support needed in attaining regional autonomy. Some narratives underscored that the enactment of the autonomy bill needs to be accelerated by having a counterpart bill in the Senate and by hastening the process:

[BC 4] Domogan said the next move for the region is to look for senators who will be willing to file a Senate version of HB 5343 so that proceeding can be fast tracked in order to meet the timetable set.

[BMC 6] “While Pres. Rodrigo Duterte will certify CAR’s autonomy bill and the Bangsamore [*sic*] Basic Law as urgent, Domogan said it is very important for the region to meet the timetable, which is for the bill to be passed by Congress before the end of the year.”

Despite promises, Pres. Duterte did not mention Cordillera regional autonomy in his State of the Nation Address. Neither did he certify the bill as a priority or urgent. In spite of that, one narrative cited Go anew, this time, explaining that the autonomy bill will still have to undergo the usual process of legislation:

[BC 5] Regardless, however, of whether the ARC will be endorsed by the President or not, it will still go through the same process of deliberating and approving measures from committee level up to the plenary deliberation for a second reading before third and final reading prior to approval, according to Baguio City Congressman Marques Go.

The bid for regional autonomy needs people's support. Apart from government support, community newspapers also accentuated the need for public support in their narratives. This frame was used by putting emphasis on the government's call for unity among Cordillerans in the talks of autonomy.

Secretary Dureza, who spoke on behalf of the national government, was quoted in several narratives. Aware that the advocates have been lobbying the autonomy bill, he refocused their mindset to addressing the people of the region. The following narrative depicted Sec. Dureza's subtle move:

[BMC 4] While Cordillera advocates are sensing a better chance to push for autonomy under the Duterte government, Dureza warned Cordillerans, especially the leaders of two things. First, Dureza reminded Cordillera autonomy is not about political leaders and key [sic] because the most important sector for the advocacy is the public.

"The bigger table is the public. Despite the unity among officials and leaders, you must address the ordinary public. They must understand and support the cause," said Dureza, who was the guest of honor and speaker during the 30th CAR foundation day.

One narrative had the same tone, emphasizing a fair warning given by the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process that it is not only the government which has a say on the proposed autonomous status:

[BC 2] Dureza, however, warned that certification of the region's autonomy does not necessarily translate to success because Cordillera does not only consist of government officials. He explained that the larger table consists of the public and it is very important that the citizens understand the benefits of the Cordillera being an autonomous region.

Two narratives implied that while the national government recognizes the strong desire for regional autonomy in the Cordillera, it is making sure that Cordillerans have a common stand on the proposal. One of them explained through a statement made by Dureza that a common understanding and position on the proposal could impact harmonized efforts:

[SSB 3] "In the Cordillera region, madaming grupo, mayroon pang nagkawatak watak and we can understand that since the Cordillera has a very diverse culture, people and tradition; there should be one united effort from all towards autonomy in the Cordillera region," the official said.

This was restated in a different narrative, adding that the support needed from the government will be given, provided, it is assured that a favorable vote of Cordillerans in the proposed regional autonomy is unanimous:

[BMC 2] "We hope there's one united effort by all towards autonomy for the Cordillera. In the roadmap of peace, you may have different roots

but there is only one destination; so let's now try and converge this [sic] different roots that we have towards one destination, which is autonomy for the Cordillera," Dureza said.

He said [sic] is committed to support the region's bid for autonomy as long as it stays united in its pursuit.

"There should be a stronger clamor for autonomy," he said.

Then Baguio City Mayor Mauricio Domogan is aware of the need for unity in the region. In one narrative, he was quoted saying people's unity could make or break the fate of regional autonomy:

[SSB 7] "Unity is the key to our autonomy," Domogan said. "Believe it or not, the national government does not want to give us our autonomy which is why they are looking for a justification to not grant it to us. And the justification that can really derail our clamor for autonomy is our disunity. The moment that we are disunited, the national government will say it is our own fault because we do not want autonomy."

In response to the government's call for unity, various stakeholders evinced their support by signing a declaration addressed to Pres. Duterte. It was declared in this extract:

[SSB 4] "We, the Cordillerans recognize our differences but we remain united by our shared goal to achieve regional autonomy in order to establish our permanent Cordillera identity, to accelerate the region's socio-economic development and to have responsive policies for the Cordillera within the context of our common and distinctive historical

and cultural heritage, economic structures and other relevant characteristics do declare our commitment to support the establishment of an autonomous region of the Cordillera towards federalism,” the declaration stated.

Of all the narratives analyzed, there was only one that talked about addressing a specific sector in the talks of regional autonomy. It highlighted the need for the youth to be involved in the discussion as they, too, have a stake in it: [SSB 6] “Aquino added exposing the youth to different kinds of medium is one of the better ways to engage children in regional autonomy.”

The common dominant frames that emerged from the narratives show a shared position of community newspapers on the proposed creation of the ARC. This position on autonomy became evident after a thorough analysis of the narrative’s frames. Based on the analysis of the published narratives, all three community newspapers have a favorable vote on the proposed creation of the ARC. The proposal is outrightly endorsed to the national government and the Cordilleran public.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The aim of this study has been to explore the framing of the proposed creation of the ARC by community newspapers. The questions set out to answer in this study were: How do community newspapers view Cordillera as a region?; and what are the positions of the community newspapers on the proposed regional autonomy?

A qualitative approach was adopted using Polkinghorne's paradigmatic analysis of narratives and Labov's model of narrative analysis. To aid in the analysis, the framing of Cordillera as a region and the proposed creation of the ARC was dug up. The frames used provided insights into the community newspapers' views on Cordillera as a region and their stance on regional autonomy.

Based on the framing of community newspapers, the Cordilleras was generally viewed as an underdeveloped region that has been struggling for self-determination. Cordillera as a region was framed as the following: a region predetermined to become autonomous; an underdeveloped and neglected region; a region which has been clamoring for self-determination; and a region with a diverse population. Cordillera's creation as a region is a result of a peace pact between the national government and the CPLA which came with a promise of regional autonomy. This promise of regional autonomy that is written in the 1987 Philippine Constitution was frequently mentioned to stress the fact that from the very beginning,

the region was intended to become autonomous. However, years after its creation, not only is Cordillera a non-autonomous region, it also remains underdeveloped and neglected by the national government. These were often used as the rationale for the proposed creation of the ARC as regional autonomy is deemed to empower regional governance, consequently, addressing socio-economic and environmental problems and paving the way for sustainable development. Considering that the corpus under study is autonomy-related narratives, Cordillera's firm resolve to an autonomous status was evident. The odds of attaining such, however, is dependent on the national government, and the people of Cordillera. Cordillera was framed as a region with a diverse population with different stance on the proposed creation of the ARC. In several narratives, the community newspapers described Cordillerans as people with different roots and views on social and developmental issues.

With the view that Cordillera is an underdeveloped region that has been clamoring to become autonomous, the community newspapers framed the proposed creation of the ARC in a way that pushes for it. Their position on the matter is that the proposed creation of the ARC is favorable but tentative pending the endorsement of the President, the action of legislators in Congress, and the approval of the Cordilleran public. This underlying position was surfaced from the framing of the main issue under study. Frames that turned up were that there is a need for regional autonomy in Cordillera; that such needs national government support and action; and that it needs public support and approval. The need for regional autonomy in Cordillera was heavily stressed in almost all narratives, through news angles, choice of words, selected information, and direct statements from news sources. The emphasis on the need for regional autonomy also came with a call for national government support by highlighting the efforts of the regional government to woo the

highest-ranking official of the land to endorse it to the legislative branch as a priority bill for urgent action. The invitation for public support and approval, on the other hand, was subtly echoed through direct statements from news sources who called for public awareness on the proposal and a united stand from the general public. With these, it can be seen that community newspapers not only favor the proposal, they also advocate for it.

Conclusions

Framing studies offers an opportunity for increasing understanding of communication processes in society. More specifically, media framing research serves as a venue to explore and grasp the mass media's role and responsibilities being information producers in the marketplace of ideas.

The concept of media framing is based upon the assumption that practitioners choose to cover topics that they deem important, select the information to highlight, and put salience on them through various journalism techniques for the audience to likewise take them as significant. Being a major source of information for events, developments, and issues, the frames used in mass media's coverage of national and local issues affect the way various audiences see them. News reportage is pivotal to creating awareness which allows audiences to make sense of relevant issues, therefore, leading to understanding and appreciation.

At present, the proposed establishment of the ARC is on the agenda of government and political leaders in the region. The media, which includes the community press, play a big role in agenda-building as it is among the primary

sources of information in the region. This study offers a snapshot of how the Cordillera region and the proposed regional autonomy issue were framed, and the underlying positions of community newspapers on the proposed creation of the ARC based on their framing.

Understanding mass media's framing tendencies is critical in the apprehension and appreciation of meanings in a society. By looking at the news frames, we are able to understand the meanings of mass media's perceived reality which they present and convey to the audience. These meanings, which may be a definition of a concept, an interpretation of an issue, promotion of a position, or advancement of recommendations for a particular matter, have an impact on audiences' perceptions of the subjects.

The way in which social development issues like the proposed creation of the ARC is framed is assumed to have a big influence on how readers or information consumers (be it government officials or the public) view the issue. If there is a reason to believe that the lack of appreciation of the proposed creation of the ARC is partly due to mass media framing, community journalists should up the ante in covering and portraying the issue. Quality reportage that is objective, in proportion, and comprehensive is essential to keep regional autonomy messages worthy of government and public attention.

With this study, media practitioners may be guided on how they could heighten the quality of mass media coverage of the Cordillera regional autonomy issue so that the general public may be better informed about it and can take a definite stand on it. The results of this study may also serve as a basis and lead to

review of journalistic norms, standards, and ethics, especially in the community mediasphere.

In addition, with this study government organizations responsible for the communication campaign strategies geared towards promoting regional autonomy in the Cordillera may also be informed of better ways to communicate their messages to the different audiences and stakeholders in the region and at the national level.

On a communication perspective, the present study has proposed and made use of narrative models of analysis to attain its objectives. When we speak of media framing research, framing and textual analysis first come to mind. This study, however, offered a new approach in understanding framing - that is, through narrative analysis. Despite the highly selective framing of media discourse about the Cordilleras and the proposed regional autonomy in the region, Polkinghorne and Labov's models of narrative analysis provided the necessary tools to unveil the meanings behind community newspapers' frames and processes which this study sought to understand. It is, therefore, concluded that these two narrative models are good analytical frameworks which could be used in media and framing studies.

Recommendations for Further Research

By surfacing the community newspapers' news frames, view of Cordillera as a region, and position on the proposed creation of the ARC, this research is a humble contribution to the literature on news coverage and media framing of regional autonomy.

This research encourages directions for future studies integrating the fields of mass communication, journalism, and development. Specifically, the areas of framing, mass media, and regional autonomy should be explored.

This study gives contributions to the fields of media framing and narrative analysis research. Future studies utilizing narrative analysis, specifically, Polkinghorne's paradigmatic analysis of narratives and Labov's model of narrative analysis, as frameworks for defining and understanding framing, are strongly recommended.

More studies that examine the nuances of regional autonomy frames, the factors and ways in which autonomy-related news is shaped, and the impacts of news framing on national and local audience perceptions are needed if the regional government and local media outfits are to further understand and harness media's potential in agenda-setting.

To fill in the gaps of this research, further studies are recommended to address the same research problem in an expanded coverage to include other community newspapers in Cordillera, national newspapers, and other sources of information; and/or more sample data published in a longer period.

Furthermore, with the filing of a new bill seeking for the creation of the ARC at the 18th Congress of the Philippines and with the new Cordillera regional autonomy roadmap, studies aimed at identifying the best channels and strategies to communicate messages such as the concepts, purpose, and boons of regional autonomy in Cordillera to the public should be conducted. Such will provide insights that could help the Regional Development Council-CAR create a functional

communication plan, wherefore, utilizing funds under the Social Preparation of CAR into an Autonomous Region (SPCAR) efficiently and effectively.

Lastly, the proposed creation of the ARC is only one of the several development issues in Cordillera. Future studies focused on how local and/or national media frame other development issues and their impacts on public policy, public perception and action should be carried out.

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ANNEXES

Annex I

NEWS ARTICLES

BMC News Article #1

(Published in Baguio Midland Courier on March 26, 2017)

All Cordillera legislators expressed support to House Bill 5343, or “An Act Establishing the Autonomous Region for the Cordillera (ARC),” which was filed during the first session of the 17th Congress to pursue the region’s renewed bid for autonomy.

The bill, filed by Baguio Rep. Marquez O. Go on March 20, was signed by Reps. Teddy B. Baguilat, Jr. of Ifugao, Joseph S. Bernos of Abra, Eleanor Bulut-Begtang of Apayao, Ronald M. Cosalan of Benguet, Maximo B. Dalog of Mountain Province, and Allen Jesse C. Mangaoang of Kalinga.

The bill was also filed after series of consultations among stakeholders led by the National Economic Development Authority-Cordillera.

HB 5343 is an improved version of HB 4649 filed in the 16th Congress, and is considered as a preparation step towards the transition into federal government being prioritized by the Duterte administration.

NEDA-CAR said HB 5343 provides for the establishment of an ARC as compared to HB 4649, which carried the old CAR acronym. The previous proposed measure was subjected to region-wide public hearings by the Lower House Committee on Local Government, and was approved by the same on Feb. 1, 2016.

The bill has 175 sections and 19 articles compared to the previous HB 4649 with 173 sections and 17 articles.

Among the changes adopted are the titling of sections, identification of the powers to be devolved to the regional government, deletion of the option of provinces/city not voting in favor of the organic act to join the ARC through petition, emphasis on the primacy of the organic act over other national laws, and expansion of policies on mining.

The three-year RDC autonomy roadmap hopes that HB 5343 will be ratified in a plebiscite to establish the ARC by 2019, NEDA-CAR added.

Despite divisions in Congress, Go, said in an interview on Wednesday that the region is banking on the firm support of Presidential Adviser on Peace Process Sec. Jesus Dureza, who promised to convince Pres. Rodrigo Duterte to consider the bill as urgent. Duterte expressed his support for Cordillera’s autonomy bid as it is mandated by the 1987 Constitution during his visit to Baguio on March 11.

Go said if the Cordillera becomes an autonomous region, it will have more leverage in becoming an independent state, along with other states that will be established under the federal form of government.

He added that despite the revisions, the region's request for financial support from the national government remains. To support its regional development, the ARC asks P75 billion on the first year, P10M for next five years, and another P5M for each year for the next five years, which will be among the things that will be tackled in the House Committee of Appropriations. *(By: Hanna C. Lacsamana)*

BMC News Article #2

(Published in Baguio Midland Courier on April 30, 2017)

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza has called on the various Cordillera local officials and civil society organizations to unite to solidify the clamor for an autonomous status for the region.

Dureza, during a forum dubbed “Pioneer Cordillera champions coming together,” emphasized on the need for the region to strengthen its efforts in pushing for autonomy, especially in bringing together various groups to support the advocacy.

The forum was organized by the Cordillera Regional Development Council and the National Economic Development Authority-Cordillera in partnership with Opapp [sic] as a venue for a continuing dialogue with the Cordillera groups and converge their interests and efforts for the attainment of Cordillera autonomy.

“We hope there’s one united effort by all towards autonomy for the Cordillera. In the roadmap of peace, you may have different roots but there is only one destination; so let’s now try and converge this different roots that we have towards one destination, which is autonomy for the Cordillera,” Dureza said.

He said [sic] is committed to support the region’s bid for autonomy as long as it stays united in its pursuit.

“There should be a stronger clamor for autonomy,” he said.

He said Opapp [sic] is open to engage with the diverse groups in order to attain autonomy for the Cordillera.

“On the part of Opapp [sic], any group who wants to engage us, we don’t want to even find out *kung ano ba kayo, totoo ba kayo o hindi*. If you want to listen to the roadmap of Duterte’s peace and development program, we will explain it to you, and we will listen to you,” he said.

Earlier, the representatives of the six provinces of the Cordillera and the City of Baguio have forged support for the passage of House Bill 5343, or “An act establishing the autonomous region of the Cordillera” filed recently in Congress.

Baguio Mayor Mauricio Domogan said the new bill reiterates the Cordillera people’s united stand for genuine regional autonomy.

Domogan, also the RDC-CAR chair, said the historical injustice to the region is that it has been “neglected for a long period of time” by the national government that’s why support for the bill if needed.

As a response to the call of Opapp [sic] in united in the pursuit of autonomy, various groups including the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army responded with their support on the attainment of autonomy.

After the event conducted at the historic Mt. Data Hotel where the *sipat* or peace pact agreement was made with then former President Cory Aquino in 1986, CPLA factions met to discuss the possibility of united as one group.

Cordillera Bodong Alliance-CPLA Chairman Andres Ngao-I said the group has decided to let CBA lead the formation of a technical working group to study this possibility.

“Because of situations we cannot control, we have many factions. I am giving my members two weeks to study and strategize to unite the different factions,” Ngao-I said. *(By: Ofelia C. Empian)*

BMC News Article #3

(Published in Baguio Midland Courier on July 9, 2017)

A personal audience between President Rodrigo Duterte and officials of the Cordillera Regional Development will most likely bolster the bid for autonomous region in the highlands.

“What we (RDC officials) are most hopeful of is to have an audience with the President so we can directly relay to him our strong desire to become autonomous,” said Baguio City Mayor and RDC Chair Mauricio Domogan.

The long-time quest for autonomy is one of the major priorities set by RDC-CAR for Plan 2017-2022 when key government officials and the private sector met at The Mansion on Friday for the State of the Region Address.

Despite setbacks, Domogan rallied RDC-CAR members to remain hopeful and have patience in continuously emphasizing to national and local audiences what autonomy means for the Cordillera and its people.

“Autonomy mean an enhanced Cordillera identity and self-determination and having responsive policies for the region and its people,” Domogan said.

“We must bring to them the message and our belief that autonomy will help us pursue a development path that is sustainable and responsible to our needs, our diverse cultures, and our uniqueness as a region towards peace and development for all Cordillerans,” he added.

Aside from the 1987 Constitution, the promise for autonomy by the national government is embodied in Executive Order 220, which created the Cordillera Administrative Region.

The President Corazon Aquino issued EO 220 as a prize for the signing of peace accord forged between the Aquino administration and the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) then led by slain renegade priest Conrado “Ka Ambo” Balweg in Mount Data Hotel in Mountain Province in 1987.

However, Cordillerans overwhelmingly rejected the organic acts for autonomous set up in the Cordillera in separate plebiscites in 1990 and 1998.

Domogan has explained earlier that the concerns raised by quarters on autonomous setup have been sufficiently answered in the series of public consultation and fora, adding that there is a growing awareness on the key provisions of a House bill pushing for autonomy.

He said that while Cordillera leaders support President Duterte’s planned shift to federal form of government, the advocacy on autonomy should come first before federalism.

“Knowing fully well the progressive and decisive stance of this administration, it may yet be our biggest chance that special concerns affecting Cordillerans are finally heard and addressed (by the Duterte government),” the RDC-CAR chair said.

RDC-CAR had no chance to meet with former president Benigno Aquino III to personally discuss the quest for autonomy in the Cordillera. *(By: Harley F. Palangchao)*

BMC News Article #4

(Published in Baguio Midland Courier on July 16, 2017)

Ardent advocates for Cordillera autonomy are upbeat that long-time quest for an autonomous region will be established in the nearest future after President Rodrigo Duterte has agreed to meet with regional leaders on July 18 in Malacañang.

Office of Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Sec. Jesus Dureza announced the scheduled meeting in Malacañang when he graced the pre-Cordillera Administrative Region 30th foundation day anniversary at the City Hall grounds, Friday.

Dureza also requested Duterte to call on Congress to certify House Bill 5343, an act establishing an autonomous set up in the Cordillera, as an urgent bill either by announcing it during his second State of the Nation Address or by notifying Congress.

A meeting between key officers of the Cordillera Regional Development Council chaired by Baguio Mayor Mauricio Domogan together with Cordillera legislators and governors with Duterte was earlier seen as a key to pursuing autonomy in the region that has not been achieved since the establishment of CAR 30 years ago.

While Cordillera advocates are sensing a better chance to push for autonomy under the Duterte government, Dureza warned Cordillerans, especially the leaders of two things. First, Dureza reminded Cordillera autonomy is not about political leaders and key [sic] because the most important sector for the advocacy is the public.

“The bigger table is the public. Despite the unity among officials and leaders, you must address the ordinary public. They must understand and support the cause,” said Dureza, who was the guest of honor and speaker during the 30th CAR foundation day.

He cited a case wherein Congress did not initially support the Bangsamoro Basic Law, which aims to establish a new autonomous political entity in Southern Mindanao due to intense political bickering among its leaders.

Second, Dureza said even assuming the HB 5343 is certified as an urgent bill, there is a no magic formula to meet the bigger expectations of Cordillerans that peace and development will be further enhanced in the region.

“The bigger challenge is how to meet the high expectations of the Cordillerans following the two unsuccessful attempts to establish an autonomous region,” he said.

Dureza thanked the Cordillera leaders for putting their acts together, especially the seven legislators who all signed HB 5343, saying the feeling of comfort among leaders and constituents is evolving throughout the years.

“There is some kind of convergence now. The feeling of comfort has evolved,” he added.

Aside from the 1987 Constitution, the promise for autonomy by the national government is embodied in Executive Order 220, which created the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Then president Corazon Aquino issued EO 220 as a prize for the signing of peace accord forged between the Aquino administration and the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) then led by slain renegade priest Conrado “Ka Ambo” Balweg in Mount Data Hotel in Mountain Province in 1987. However, Cordillerans overwhelmingly rejected the organic acts for the autonomous setup in the Cordillera in plebiscites in 1990 and 1998. *(By: Harley F. Palangchao)*

BMC News Article #5

(Published in Baguio Midland Courier on July 23, 2017)

Key leaders of the Cordillera region are expecting President Rodrigo Duterte to certify House Bill 5343, an act establishing an autonomous setup in the Cordillera along with the draft bill of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL).

The latest development came following a meeting between the President and Cordillera leaders on July 18 in Malacañang.

The President ditched his prepared speech and talked in an hour-long speech before Cordillera leaders and elders, saying he will certify the bill as urgent together with the proposed BBL and endorse it to the House of Representatives and the Senate.

He said he recognizes the desire of the Cordillera and the Bangsamoro people for self-determination and the need to develop their own regions, citing colonial ruling and unitary form of government that led to the uneven development of the country.

The President met in separate closed-door meetings with 120 leaders of the Cordillera led by the Regional Development Council Chair and Baguio Mayor Mauricio Domogan and Moro National Liberation Front leader Nur Misuari.

“This is the first time, in the entire history of the Cordillera, that all the elected officials of the provinces and two cities of the region and civil society and private setors united, showing our fervent desire for autonomy for the region,” Domogan said.

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Sec. Jesus Dureza said the President is supportive of the Cordillera’s call for autonomy.

“He was able to explain the need of the Cordillerans to be given also the opportunity to govern themselves through Cordillera Autonomous Region eventually to install a federal setup in the country,” Dureza said.

The RDC chair, meanwhile said he hopes Duterte will include in his state of the Nation Address (SONA) tomorrow, July 24, the improvement of Cordillera’s road network and modernization of the Loakan Aripport [*sic*] – the region’s lone commercial airstrip as priority projects.

The mayor said he asked the President to order the departments of Public Works and Highways and Interior and Local Government to allot funds for the Cordillera road infrastructure program and the modernization of Loakan Airport.

Except Baguio City, Domogan said there are 133.3 kilometers of national and local roads in the Cordillera that have yet to be paved. Out of the 133.3 kms., more than 98 kms. Are national roads and 44.8 kms. Are municipal or provincial roads. The estimated funds for these road repair projects is P5 billion.

The modernization of Loakan Airport, on the other hand, requires a funding of P402 million.

“We requested the President to direct the DPWH and DILG to fund these identified priority infrastructure projects in our region and to include them in his pronouncements during his SONA on July 24,” Domogan said.

The realization of these infrastructure projects is seen to enhance Cordillera’s accessibility.

The improvement of Cordillera’s road and air transport infrastructure and the region’s pursuit for autonomy were the major requests regional leaders brought to Duterte’s attention during the meeting that was facilitated by Opapp [*sic*]. (*By: Ofelia C. Empian and Jane B. Cadalig*)

BMC News Article #6

(Published in Baguio Midland Courier on July 23, 2017)

Failure to achieve autonomy before the 1987 Constitution is amended could mean the end of the road for the Cordillera's long-time bid for independence.

Baguio City Mayor Mauricio Domogan, chair of the Regional Development Council, said time is running out for the Cordillera's bid for an autonomous region in the light of the impending amendment of the Constitution to pursue the current administration's priority of changing from presidential to federal form of government.

While Pres. Rodrigo Duterte will certify CAR's autonomy bill and the Bangsamore [*sic*] Basic Law as urgent, Domogan said it is very important for the region to meet the timetable, which is for the bill to be passed by Congress before the end of the year.

At that point, he said the proceedings need to be fast-tracked give way for the conduct of a third plebiscite, ideally in April 2018. Assuming that the region's constituents approve the law, an executive budget for the operation of the "Autonomous Region of the Cordilleras" and for the election of its regional officials should be prepared and submitted by June 2018, so that it will be included in the country's budget for 2019 and in the budget for the midterm elections on the same year.

"If we miss this and if we are not included in the 2019 budget, it would be next to impossible to convince the national government and even Congress for that matter to come out with a special appropriation to effect the operation of the autonomous region as well as the election of its regional officials," Domogan said Wednesday, a day after he and other regional officials met with Duterte in Malacañang and were assured that the CAR autonomy bill will be certified as urgent by the current administration.

Further, the mayor warned that administration officials may already start discussions on the constitutional amendment when the Congress convened on July 24 during the Duterte's second State of the Nation Address.

"I believe that if we would not be able to finish our autonomy bid before the constitutional amendment, from the moment the Constitution has been revised and the provision that gives us the opportunity to be autonomous is removed, *wala na*, that's the end of our dream. We will already be overtaken by events," Domogan said, adding the region has to sustain information campaign on autonomy in the grassroots for it to fare well during the plebiscite and follow-up in the Congress to pass the autonomy bill into law.

He added they are also hoping to have senators who will file a similar bill for the Cordillera autonomy in the Senate as it would further help in meeting the timetable.

“Our meeting with the President last Tuesday was very important. That is why *kung hindi natin ite-take advantage nitong third try natin*, it can possibly be the end of it,” the mayor said. (By: *Hanna C. Lacsamana*)

BC News Article #1

(Published in Baguio Chronicle on April 1, 2017)

FOR the third time in recent years, Cordillera congressmen and advocates again try to shoot for the moon by quietly filing a bill pushing for a Cordillera autonomous region.

On March 20, Baguio Congressman Mark Go filed during the first regular session of the 17th Congress a third organic act received at the House of Representative as House Bill 5343 or “An Act Establishing the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC).”

The bill was signed by all Cordilleran congressman which, according to the National Economic and Development Authority-Cordillera, signified a unified position among Cordillera leaders to pursue autonomy as a preparatory step towards transition to a federal system.

In 2012, the Cordillera representatives filed HB 5595 and again in 2014 with HB 4649. Both bills were left to languish in the legislative waters partly because of the lukewarm reception of then President Benigno Aquino III.

But this time, President Rody Duterte has promised to include Cordillera’s quest for autonomy in his forthcoming State of the Nation Address.

The Cordillera representatives are crossing their fingers that it will pave the way for the third Republic Act to call for regional plebiscite to finally pass a Cordillera Autonomous Region. Republic Act 6766 in 1989 and Republic Act for 8438 in 1997, both providing for an Organic Act for CAR, lost miserably in plebiscites in 1990 and 1998, respectively.

In the HB 5343’s explanatory note, the proponents see the Cordillera autonomy as the “most effective option” to provide the region with the needed foundation to pursue sustainable development “as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources.”

The Cordillera lawmakers are confident that this time, the organic act will get the support of the President, the highest elected official of the land.

Why not? Out of the seven Cordilleran lawmakers, only Ifugao solon Teddy Baguilat Jr. is not part of the “super majority” at the House of Representatives that is bent at backing President Rodrigo Duterte’s agenda.

Go also revealed that Office of the President Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza promised to talk to Duterte “to consider the house bill an urgent bill.”

Earlier this year, Dureza even told Cordilleran leaders that Cordillera autonomy will be among the contents of Duterte’s State of Nation Address.

“Hopefully, we can pursue this at the committee level. Although we have many financial considerations in bill, this will be considered by the Committee on Appropriation,” Go told Baguio Chronicle.

But it was the same confidence emanated by Cordilleran leaders in the 15th and 16th Congress when they thought then President Benigno Aquino [*sic*] would push for the attainment [*sic*] autonomy.

Back then, even the Regional Development Council was convinced Aquino would “complete the legacy” of her mother, former President Corazon Aquino, who signed the 1987 Constitution.

It can be recalled that HB 5595, filed in the 15th Congress, was again passed upon by the House Committee on Local Governments while its Senate counterpart, Senate Bill 3115, slept in the Committee on Local Governments.

HB 4649, refilled [*sic*] in the 16th Congress, was again passed upon by the House Committee on Appropriations. Both HBs were authored by all Cordillera lawmakers just like the recently filed bill.

However, the third attempt to realize a Cordillera autonomous region might ultimately spell its demise.

Based on the RDC’s three-year autonomy roadmap, HB 5343 is expected to be ratified in a region-wide plebiscite by 2019.

A third refusal, a “strikeout,” would mean the majority of Cordillerans prefer the region to be treated just like any regular region.

It would ultimately put to waste years of allocating millions of government resources, and efforts from the members of the RDC and autonomy advocates in a bid to educate and convince the grassroots Cordillerans to say “yes” to autonomy.

Should two or more provinces favorably ratify the third Organic Act, they will constitute the Cordillera Autonomous Region.

A single province voting favorably for an Organic Act cannot form a region, according to the Supreme Court in its decision after the first plebiscite in 1990.

Those who will reject the organic act will go back to their original regions prior to the existence of the Cordillera Administrative Region, which was crafted by Executive Order 220 to prepare for the establishment of the autonomous region.

Originally, Benguet (including Baguio), Mountain Province and Abra were part of Region 1 while Ifugao, Kalinga, and Apayao were included as Region 3.

In a plebiscite on January 30, 1990, only Ifugao voted in favor of autonomy while only Apayao, then newly separate province, voted for autonomy in the second plebiscite on March 9, 1998.

According to NEDA- Cordillera Regional Director Milagros Rimando, lack of understanding regarding autonomy led to the failure of the two previous referenda.
(By: Karlston Lapniten)

BC News Article #2

(Published in Baguio Chronicle on July 15, 2017)

WHILE Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza assured that President Rodrigo Duterte will address the clamor for autonomy of the Cordillera Administrative Region, he also gave cautionary pieces of advice ala Spiderman.

With the filing of House Bill 5343 in Congress and the impending meeting with the president to discuss CAR's autonomy on Tuesday in Malacanang [*sic*], government officials are optimistic over the legalization of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.

Dureza, however, warned that certification of the region's autonomy does not necessarily translate to success because Cordillera does not only consist of government officials. He explained that the larger table consists of the public and it is very important that the citizens understand the benefits of the Cordillera being an autonomous region.

"Even if it is signed and if it is not supported by the people, it will be worthless," said Dureza, citing the case of Bangsamoro Basic Law wherein its own citizens are doubtful of its legitimacy. He added that the ordinary people must be addressed so that they will come to support the autonomy of Cordillera.

Dureza added that the bigger challenge for the region is not the legislation of the law establishing Cordillera as an autonomous region but its implementation.

"Just because a law is passed, do not think that there is magic and everything will be well and good already. In fact, the bigger challenge is how to run it to meet the high expectations of the people," Dureza said.

The secretary then advised that Cordillera should learn from the experience of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and not to repeat the mistakes in its governance that resulted in civil war and multitude of problems.

Although there is still a lot of work to be done, Dureza encouraged that this can be done step-by-step.

"The road to peace is not a paved road, but what is important is that we move forward. Let's keep the course. There might be a lot of challenges but don't be discouraged. This part of growing up. That is part of evolution of what we want to have," Dureza ended.

In line with the celebration of the 30th Cordillera Day, the region adopted Dureza as its son during the Unity Gong Relay of Ifugao to Baguio on Friday. He was baptized as "Mansapit" which is an indigenous word that means "A Peace Maker."

(By: Wenilyn Asuncion, Special to Baguio Chronicle)

BC News Article #3

(Published in Baguio Chronicle on July 15, 2017)

BAGUIO CITY—Thirty-three mayors in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) have signed a manifesto to be delivered to President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, asking him to declare the House Bill (HB) 5343 a priority bill.

HB 5343 is “the Act establishing the Autonomous Region in the Cordillera.”

The manifesto of the Cordilleran League of Cities and Municipalities is in Resolution 01-2017 entitled “Supporting the establishment of an autonomous region of the Cordillera by urging President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to certify the House Bill 5343 as urgent and priority measure, and including the Cordillera Regional Autonomy agenda in his State of the Nation Address.”

As Monday [*sic*], there was already 33 mayors who have signed the manifesto, which is being brought to the different towns in the region to allow the mayors to sign them. Cordillera has six provinces and two cities or a total of 77 Cordillera mayors.

The resolution says “the current administration is pushing earnestly for a shift from a unitary to a federal form of government. The establishment of an autonomous region in the cordillera [*sic*] is aligned with the principles of the federal form of government.”

It also said that the Regional Development Council-Cordillera already passed a resolution supporting the establishment of an autonomous region of the cordillera [*sic*], and is urging President Duterte to certify HB 5343 as urgent.

Baguio Mayor Mauricio Domogan said they were confident the bill when approved by congress would be approved by the residents.

“The Cordillera Congress have all signed the bill and supports the establishment of the autonomous region. There are no opposition to the proposal” and the officials in the different provinces and municipalities are supportive considering the benefits that the region will reap once the Cordillera transcends from an administrative to an autonomous region, he said.

The manifesto was opened on Friday here, during the Cordillera mayor’s summit at Mansion House, which gained full support of all the attendee-mayors.

In July 15, 1986, former President Corazon Aquino issued Executive Order 220 creating Cordillera Administrative Region with mandate to administer the affairs of the government in the region, and prepare for the establishment of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.

As the region celebrates its 30th year as an administrative region on July 15, the leaders are drumming up the call for the passage of the bill and eventually go through the process of Plebiscite [*sic*] which will determine its fate as mandated in the

1986 Constitutional provision for creation of the autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao and in the Cordillera. (*By: Liza T. Agoot / PNA*)

BC News Article #4

(Published in Baguio Chronicle on July 22, 2017)

WE are now ripe to achieve autonomy.

Baguio City Mayor Mauricio Domogan made this pronouncement on Wednesday, stating Cordillera has never been this close leaving its administrative state finally becoming an autonomous region 30 long years after it was promised.

On Tuesday night, with some 120 Cordilleran officials and autonomy advocates, Domogan met with President Rodrigo Duterte at the Malacanang [*sic*] Palace where the latter certified House Bill 5343, the latest bill seeking the establishment of an autonomous Cordillera region, as an urgent administration measure alongside the proposed Bangsamoro region bill for appropriate action by the 17th Congress.

Domogan said Duterte “almost forgot to certify” the bill as urgent due to his “enthusiasm and happiness” to see big number of local government officials, which was also a first according to the Baguio official.

“For the first time in 30 years, it is only now that we see the unity of local government officials, line agencies, the private sector, and CSOs (Civil Service Organizations),” said Domogan, who also chairs the Regional Development Council.

But Rep. Ronald Cosalan of neighboring Benguet said that things are still hazy in the autonomy front.

In a statement released by Cosalan, he said if ever the revenue would still go thru the same cycle of begging for the source of income of the region then is [*sic*] better for the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) to push for the federal state.

“The people of Benguet has time and again rejected the idea of autonomy but I will consult the people again and see what they think of Cordillera Autonomous Region of a Federal State [*sic*],” said Cosalan.

Domogan said the next move for the region is too look for senators who will be willing to file a Senate version of HB 5343 so that proceeding can be fast tracked in order to meet the timetable set.

The RDC earlier set the timetable for a plebiscite on April 2018, which means the bill to create the Autonomous of the Cordillera needs to be approved before the year ends.

“Timetable is important because priority agenda of the administration is to change the government from [*sic*] to federal and amend the constitution,” Domogan explained.

The “only way” for Cordillera is “autonomy towards federalism” which can be possible only if the autonomy is granted, making the region a single state, Domogan said.

Should the plebiscite yield a positive vote, the RDC needs to submit the executive budget for 2019 before June 2018, just a month after the proposed voting date.

“If we miss passing the executive budget in June 2018, it will already be next to impossible for Congress to come out with a special appropriation to effect the operation of the regional autonomy and the election of officials,” Domogan stated.

An autonomous region means faster socio-economic and infrastructure development, both keys to addressing poverty and economic development, he said.

But if the bill fails to be approved before the year ends or before the constitution is amended, it could be the “end of dreams” for the region, Domogan said.

During their audience with Duterte, the President accordingly recognized the need to devolve more powers from the national government to the local government units.

“Granting the BBL (Bangsamoro Basic Law) and the Autonomous Region of [sic] Cordillera is the starting step to doing that,” Domogan said.

As of 2017, Domogan said 183.3 kilometers of road in the Cordilleras are not yet paved. The national roads still need PHP3.74 billion allocation while the local roads need PHP1.47 billion.

Domogan also raised the issue on the modernization of the Loakan Airport. He said Cordillera leaders want the modernization of the only airport in the region as it is important for trade, agriculture, and tourism.

He also stressed that the airport is an important infrastructure for Baguio City-manufactured export products and a critical lifeline during disasters as well.

In response, President Duterte said he believes a federal setup will correct this inequality and eventually make the country progressive.

The President added further that if the aspiration of the Muslim Filipinos are neglected, the country will never achieve peace. *(By: Karlston Lapniten (Correspondent) and Florenda Pedro (Contributor))*

BC News Article #5

(Published in Baguio Chronicle on July 29, 2017)

CORDILLERA and autonomy.

The two words connected in a sentence was perhaps the most anticipated pronouncement in President Rodrigo Duterte's State of the Nation Address on Monday by Cordilleran officials and autonomy advocates.

But after a two-hour speech, no such connections came out of Duterte's mouth as anticipated after Cordilleran leaders asked Malacanang [*sic*] in a meeting last July 18 to have the issue included in the second SONA.

Presidents typically use the SONA to put pressure on the legislative branch to hasten the passage of laws they believe will benefit the country.

During his speech, Duterte only managed to ask Congress to pass six priority measures – National Land Use Act, the creation of a disaster response and management department, reimposition of the death penalty, rightsizing the national government to improve public service delivery, review of procurement laws, and the comprehensive tax reform.

House Bill 5343 or the act creating an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera, or even just Cordillera itself, was never mentioned even.

Instead, Duterte defended his war on drugs and his declaration of martial law in Mindanao, as he vowed to tax mining companies destroying the environment.

The Bangsamoro Basic Law, which also seeks to establish a new autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao, was mentioned but not explicitly deemed it [*sic*] as urgent legislation.

He only mentioned that the Bangsamoro Transition Commission which drafted the bill is more inclusive and that the Bangsamoro government laid out in the bill "truly reflects the aspirations of our Muslim brothers and sisters as well as our indigenous brethren."

Despite this, National Economic and Development Authority Regional Director Milagros Rimando, who is also the Regional Development Council vice-chair, said advocates are optimistic on the passage of the ARC this year.

Rimando also mentioned that the two slots given to the region in the consultative committee for the planned constitutional change is a "positive response".

“Although we did not get our wish that he will mention it in his SONA, it does not discourage us because he pledged (that it will be an urgent bill) on our meeting with us,” Rimando said.

RDC chairman and Baguio Mayor Mauricio Domogan earlier said Duterte verbally certified HB 5343 as an urgent administration measure during their July 18 meeting.

However, the ARC was not among the bills endorsed by NEDA chief Ernesto Pernia as chairman of Legislative Executive Advisory Council to the President as “urgent” bills in Congress.

Regardless, however, of whether the ARC will be endorsed by the President or not, it will still go through the same process of deliberating and approving measures from committee level up to the plenary deliberation for a second reading before third and final reading prior to approval, according to Baguio City Congressman Marques Go.

The bill is set for a committee hearing on August 19.

Assistant Regional Director Jade Aquino of NEDA Cordillera said the agency is “scaling up” its Information Education Campaign [*sic*] to reach the different sectors of the society in the region.

She added that they are “seeking meetings” with Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III for the Senate to come up with a counterpart of the ARC.

In the survey conducted by NEDA Cordillera, it revealed that the awareness level on Cordillera’s quest for autonomy jumped from 35 percent in 2008 to 47 percent in the past two years.

Meanwhile, the number of those who have not yet decided whether to vote for or against autonomy decreased from 66 percent in 2008 to 52 percent as shown in latest survey.

Two plebiscites were made in 1990 and 1998 to make Cordillera autonomous but were turned down by the majority of residents.

Domogan last week echoed the sentiments of Cordilleran leaders that a third failed plebiscite will be the end of the region’s quest for autonomy. (*By: Karlston Lapniten*)

SSB News Article #1

(Published in SunStar Baguio on March 25, 2017)

BAGUIO CITY Representative Mark Go together with other Cordillera lawmakers filed HB 5343 – An Act to Establish an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC).

The House Bill was jointly filed by Teddy Baguilat, Jr. (Ifugao), Eleanor Bulut-Begtang (Apayao), Joseph Sto. Niño V. Bernos (Abra), Ronald Cosalan (Benguet), Maximo Dalog (Mountain Province) and Allen Jesse Mangaoang (Kalinga).

Article 10 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the regions in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordilleras, as territorial and political subdivision, will enjoy local autonomy.

According to the solons, Cordillera autonomy is seen as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources.

The rationale of the proposed measure is to establish a political entity, provide for its basic structure of government in recognition the cause of the Cordillerans and to secure their identity and posterity allowing for a meaningful self-governance.

“Cordillera autonomy will bring to national attention the benefit of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multicultural policies for Cordillerans,” the lawmakers explained.

The revived autonomy bill, once enacted into law will be subject to the ratification of the constituents in a plebiscite covering the provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Mountain Provinces and Baguio City. Provinces or cities voting unfavorably for the Organic Act will remain within their current region.

“It is a manifestation that regional autonomy is no longer just a lifelong dream but a vigorous desire,” the solons stressed.

The Cordillera Administrative Region was created by virtue of Executive Order No. 220 under the administration of Pres. Corazon Aquino with the authority to administer the affairs of the government in the region and to prepare for the establishment of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.

“This intended piece of legislation is long overdue. I am optimistic the enactment of this bill will ensure the region’s economic growth resulting in the improved quality of life of the Cordillerans,” Go said. *(No byline)*

SSB News Article #2

(Published in SunStar Baguio on March 27, 2017)

THE REGIONAL Development Council in the Cordillera Region received a boost with the official filing of House Bill 5343, “An Act Establishing the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC)” on March 20 during the First Regular Session of the 17th Congress.

Affixed in the bill were signatures of all CAR district representatives – Cong. Teddy Brawner Baguilat, Jr. (Ifugao), Cong. Joseph Sto. Niño Bernos (Abra), Cong. Eleanor Bulut-Begtang (Apayao), Cong. Ronald Cosalan (Benguet), Cong. Maximo Dalog (Mt. Province), Cong. Mark Go (Baguio City), and Cong. Allen Jesse Mangaoang (Kalinga) signifying a unified position among Cordillera leaders to pursue autonomy as a preparatory step towards the federal transition.

The CAR chief executives cited in the bill’s explanatory note the “Cordillera autonomy is seen as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources. Cordillera autonomy will bring the national attention as well as the benefits of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multi-cultural policies for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).”

HB 5343 responds to the concerns raised by both local and national stakeholders. Several Technical Working Group sessions were convened by the RDC for this purpose. The new and enhanced house bill draws inputs from various sources, the CRCC bill of 1988, HB 4649, RA 8438, RA 9054 of the ARMM, HB 5811 (BBL), and suggestions from regional consultations, workshops, IEC for a, meetings, conferences, round table discussions, and reviews, documented by NEDA-CAR from 2014 to 2017.

HB 5343 provides the establishment of an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC) as compared to HB 4649 filed in the 116th Congress, which maintains the old CAR acronym. It can be recalled that the latter was subjected to region-wide public hearings by the Lower House Committee on Local Government, and was approved by the same on February 1, 2016.

The bill has 175 Sections and 19 Articles as compared to the previous HB 4649 with 173 Sections and 17 Articles. Some changes adopted were the titling of sections, identification of the powers to be devolved to the regional government, deletion of the option of provinces/city not voting in favor of the organic act to join the ARC through petition, emphasis on the primacy of the Organic Act over other national laws, and expansion of policies on mining among others.

The three-year RDC autonomy roadmap hopes by 2019, the new bill – now HB 5343 will be ratified in a plebiscite to establish the ARC.

The filing was preceded by a Cordillera Leaders' Fora convened by the RDC earlier this year where a united position among CAR congressmen to immediately file the bill was gained. It was likewise encouraged by the constant support from Sec. Jesus Dureza, and the recent statement from President Duterte who expressed his support for Cordillera's aspiration to become autonomous as mandated by the constitution. *(By: Carmela Matabang / NEDA-CAR)*

SSB News Article #3

(Published in SunStar Baguio on May 2, 2017)

BAUKO, Mountain Province – The Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army – Cordillera Bodong Association (CPLA-CBA) finally showed unity in urging the government to grant Cordillera the regional autonomy it has long been pursuing.

This happened during consultation entitled “Pioneer Cordillera Champions Coming Together Moving Forward for Autonomy Towards Federalism,” held at the Mount Data Hotel with Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) Secretary Jesus Dureza.

Dureza urged the various groups and entities from the different provinces in the Cordillera region to unite to attain the regional status during the consultation organized by the Regional Development Council-Cordillera in collaboration with the OPAPP to explore the re-engagement of the advocates for Cordillera Autonomy [*sic*] in reinforcing the RDCs [*sic*] Roadmap for achieving autonomy towards federalism.

The OPAPP official assured the Duterte Administration [*sic*] is supportive of the pursuit of autonomy in the Cordillera region and also in the Bangsamoro of Mindanao, as he encouraged the whole of the region regardless of culture, tradition, belief and other aspect [*sic*] to unite to show they as one in pursuing regional autonomy.

“In the Cordillera region, madaming grupo, mayroon pang nagkwatak watak and we can understand that since the Cordillera has a very diverse culture, people and tradition; there should be one united effort from all towards autonomy in the Cordillera region,” the official said.

During the event, leaders and representatives from the various factions of the CPLA with its political arm, CBA, voiced out their support to the pursuit of the regional autonomy in the Cordillera region.

Despite the CPLA-CBA coming from the different factions, CBA president Andres Ngao-I of Kalinga said they are one in supporting the autonomy status for the Cordillera region.

“We are not only a supporter of the fight for autonomy but we are reminders of the national government of the agreement of the CPLA with the government in attaining the autonomous status of the region,” Ngao-i added.

Among the CPLA leaders present who shared their thoughts were Conrad Dieza, former Mayor Mailed Molina and the Cosagon faction.

Ngao-I informed the CBA as the political arm of the CPLA and neutral to the different factions, will form of a technical working group to study and strategize how to unify the different CPLA factions in the coming weeks.

More than a hundred CPA members came to the event and expressed their support to the pursuit of Cordillera autonomy. *(By: Redjie Melvic Cawis / PIA-CAR)*

SSB News Article #4

(Published in SunStar Baguio on May 5, 2017)

SEVERAL Civil Society Organizations are now backing the call for Cordillera's long struggle in becoming an autonomous region.

National Economic and Development Authority Cordillera Administrative Region (NEDA-CAR) assistant director Jedidia Aquino said they remain optimistic of attaining regional autonomy at the earliest possible time with the support of the civil society.

Aquino said this was observed during the meeting with Secretary Jesus Dureza of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace Process in Mt. Data, Bauko, Mountain Province last week.

"What happened was there are CSOs who have joined the talk including members of the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army, Cordillera Bodong Administration and others who have gave their support for the regional autonomy," Aquino said.

Aquino added Dureza is willing to be a champion of regional autonomy for the Cordillera and has urged the different groups to have their unity.

"At [*sic*] the end as a matter of fact, they came up with a manifesto or a declaration of support for the regional autonomy for the Cordillera region," Aquino said.

Close to 200 local officials, civil society organization and tribal leaders from the different parts of the Cordillera signed the Mount Data declaration of support for the establishment by the Duterte administration.

The signing of the declaration was done by the Cordillera officials and tribal leaders after the conduct of a forum entitled "Pioneer Autonomy Advocates, Getting Together" which was spearheaded by the Office of the Presidential Assistant [*sic*] on the Peace Process (OPAPP) and the Cordillera Regional Development Council (RDC-CAR) on April 24.

"We, the Cordillerans recognize our differences but we remain united by our shared goal to achieve regional autonomy in order to establish our permanent Cordillera identity, to accelerate the region's socio-economic development and to have responsive policies for the Cordillera within the context of our common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic structures and other relevant characteristics do declare our commitment to support the establishment of an autonomous region of the Cordillera towards federalism," the declaration stated.

The Cordillera leaders, tribal elders and civil society heads declared their commitment by collectively urging President Rodrigo Duterte to certify House Bill No. 5343 which is an Act establishing the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera; exert all

necessary efforts available to ensure that HB 5343 will be enacted into law without substantial change; support the establishment of regional autonomy in the Cordillera while awaiting the establishment of a federal system of government, and pushing as separate federal state by itself once a federal form of government is operationalized; adopting the 2017-2019 road map for achieving autonomy towards federalism as our guide in pursuing autonomy in the region.

The leaders also committed to continue capacitating themselves on the current discourse on federalism vis-à-vis autonomy to become effective advocates; conduct consistent information, education and communication activities to increase awareness and support among our fellow Cordillerans and constituents; active in engaging in programs, projects and activities of the RDC-CAR in forwarding autonomy at various levels; pursue a process of healing, reconciliation and building back cohesive relationships to advance the advocacy for the attainment of regional autonomy and support the initiatives of the OPAPP that facilitate the region's autonomy advocacy together with Muslim Mindanao. *(By: Ian Jeffrey Addatu)*

SSB News Article #5

(Published in SunStar Baguio on June 29, 2017)

AFTER 30 years, Cordillera Administrative Region officials remain optimistic it will achieve its long time desire of earning autonomy.

National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) assistant regional director Jade Aquino said the celebration will give Cordillerans a sense of togetherness, unity, and solidity.

“Ang pinaguusapan sa national level is federalism. Tayo naman dito sa region, regional autonomy pa rin. Why not? Kasi ito na ‘yung naumpisahan natin at unang una, it’s a constitutional mandate,” Aquino [*sic*]. “Gusto natin ng federalism pero gusto natin munang maging autonomous region para mas madali ‘yung pagiging separate state natin later.”

National Commission on Indigenous People [*sic*] regional director Atty. Roland Calde added the 30th anniversary of the region is not more of a celebration, but a struggle rooted from the indigenous peoples [*sic*] struggle to be free from an oppressive system of government.

“It’s not more of a celebration, but for us, that would be thirty years of our struggle for autonomy. This struggle has been started by the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera themselves and we are now here at 30 years, and still, we are struggling for our autonomy,” added Calde.

Calde added compared to federalism, the region’s quest for autonomy have a better support.

“We still have the support of the government to utilize our own taxes and at least we would have more efficient way and more concrete compared to federalism because as of now, we don’t know what kind of federalism we will have,” added Calde.

In the event that federalism is implemented before the Cordillera autonomy, Aquino said there is a chance provinces in the Cordillera region will be separated and enjoined with other regions such as Region I and Region II.

“Pag tayo nagging part ng isang federal state na composed of many regions, kawawa naman tayo so balik tayo sa dati. Maiipit tayo na maliit na rehiyon na makikipag-agawan ng pondo doon sa mas malalaking regions,” Aquino said.

Aquino however iterated the Regional Development Council backs the call for federalism but wants autonomy first for Cordillera region. *(By: Jenny Alex Caburian and Arianne Jo Julaton / UP Baguio interns)*

SSB News Article #6

(Published in SunStar Baguio on June 30, 2017)

THE ANNUAL celebration of the Cordillera Month will focus on the youth.

National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) assistant regional director Jade Aquino said engaging the young ones in the pursuit of regional autonomy is not limited to forums and lecture.

For this year's celebration, activities centered to the youth include provincial tree planting with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) – Education Assistance Program (EAP) grantees, youth contest for regional autonomy, Cordillera Got Talent, and concert for regional autonomy.

On July 9-31, the provincial tree planting will be conducted by 1,300 NCIP-EAP student grantees as a way of enhancing the IP youth's protection of ancestral domains, giving back to the grant they are receiving, and responding to climate change, said NCIP director Roland Calde.

For the students to maintain their grants, the families of each student must participate in the maintenance of the trees as Calde added by the end of the year, an estimate of 7,000 trees will be maintained.

The Cordillera Got Talent and youth concert for regional autonomy will be held July 14, where the original compositions regarding the pursuit for self-determination would be played, said Aquino.

Earlier this year, *A Victory Postponed*, a book published by NEDA about the struggle of 10 former members of the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) for self-governance in the Cordilleras, is being distributed to both private and public schools.

The play 'Song of Mateo' was conducted at the Baguio City High School in February this year which depicts the life of about [sic] Cordilleran hero Mateo Cariño, who championed the legal battle against Insular Government, securing the doctrine of Native Title.

Aquino added exposing the youth to different kinds of medium is one of the better ways to engage children in regional autonomy. *(By: Arianne Jo Julaton / UP Baguio intern)*

SSB News Article #7

(Published in SunStar Baguio on July 10, 2015)

MEMBERS of the Cordillera Regional Development Council (RDC) called for unity among Cordillerans in order to achieve autonomy during the kick-off program of the unity gong, as part of the celebration of the Cordillera's 30th anniversary.

Each year, the unity gong is relayed among Cordillera provinces starting July 8 until the 14th which kicked off in Benguet province and will traverse the different provinces in the region.

This year's gong is bigger compared to last year, which, according to Benguet Governor Cresencio Pacalso signifies something bigger for all residents of the region which is autonomy.

"In RDC, we believe that we can actually improve and develop better under an autonomous set-up," said RDC vice-chairperson and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) regional director Milagros Rimando.

The clamor of autonomy continues as RDC Chairman and Baguio City Mayor Mauricio Domogan asked Cordillerans to be united in order to convince the national government in the region's bid for autonomy.

"Unity is the key to our autonomy," Domogan said. "Believe it or not, the national government does not want to give us our autonomy which is why they are looking for a justification to not grant it to us. And the justification that can really derail our clamor for autonomy is our disunity. The moment that we are disunited, the national government will say it is our own fault because we do not want autonomy."

Illustrating the benefit of having autonomy in the region, Domogan cited how tax collection under an autonomous set-up will benefit the Cordillera.

According to Domogan, Benguet Corporation and the Lepanto Mines, two of the biggest gold and copper-mining companies, respectively, pay their taxes in Makati. The resources they use, however, is from the Cordillera.

Under an autonomous set-up, investors would have to pay their taxes within the municipalities and provinces in the Cordillera where they do their business, according to Domogan.

"This is the future of the Cordilleras. The future of the children of our children," Domogan said.

"Whether you like it or not, whether I like it or not, whether we are autonomous or not, you and me will be affected. That again, will tell us that, indeed, this is the future

of the Cordilleras which is why to all of us, therefore, let us contribute to achieve autonomous, the Cordillera unity.”

For this year, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP-CAR) and Benguet will lead the gong relay.

The gong, a percussion instrument from the highlands, is used by Cordilleran tribes when celebrating their rituals in order to ward off evil spirits. *(By: Jenny Alexis Caburian and Arriane Jo Julaton / UP Baguio interns)*

SSB News Article #8

(Published in SunStar Baguio on July 15, 2017)

PRESIDENTIAL Adviser on the Peace Process Sec. Jesus Dureza vowed House Bill 5343 as urgent to be certified [*sic*] by Malacañang before the year ends.

Dureza, who attended the Baguio leg of the Cordillera Unity Gong relay on Friday assured the new house bill will be certified by President Rodrigo Duterte this year.

“I ask the president not to leave the Cordilleras behind and he is willing to meet the group on Tuesday (July 18) so you the leaders can to [*sic*] express the desires of the Cordillerans,” said Dureza.

The OPAPP official also lauded the seven lawmakers from the region, despite their differences, have worked as one for the bill.

Dureza emphasized the importance of unity, not only among the officials but also with the ordinary people who must know and understand that they must support autonomy.

If the house bill “An Act Establishing Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC)” is passed, Dureza warned government officials must not be lax.

“Don’t think that there is magic and that everything will be well and good. The bigger challenge will be how to run an autonomous region and how to meet the expectations of people,” he said. Dureza added the road to peace “is not a paved road,” that’s why he encouraged everyone to move forward and keep the course towards autonomy.

As a champion for the Cordilleras dream of autonomy, Dureza was also adopted as a son for his unparalleled and support and sincere efforts towards peace and development in the region/

A certificate, kalasag (shiel), tubai (spear), wanes (g-string) and gangsa were given to Dureza as part of the adoption rights at the Unity Gong Relay at the city hall grounds.

Dureza was named “Mansapit,” which is a Kankana-ey term for peace maker and savior.

The government official said being adopted by a region is very important to him, and that he hopes he deserves it. However, he said that his contribution must not be taken as something that is very outstanding because it is the government’s responsibility to help.

“Pag nasa gobyerno tayo, basic yun eh. You are even duty bound to do what is to be done. We have to do the best that we can,” said Dureza. *(By: Arianne Jo Julation / UP Baguio intern)*

SSB News Article #9

(Published in SunStar Baguio on July 21, 2017)

A MEETING with President Rodrigo Duterte has put the bid for autonomy in the forefront.

Baguio Mayor Mauricio Domogan with representatives from Abra, Kalinga, Ifugao, Mountain Province and Apayao faced the president at the Palace Tuesday night in a show of unity asking for support in the move to create an autonomous cordillera [*sic*] region.

Duterte has agreed to support House Bill 5343 and label it as urgent in time for the convening of Congress along with the Bangsamoro Basic Law where Cordillera advocates hope to hurdle and be able to get funding for the plebiscite eyed for next year.

Duterte met Cordillera Congressmen, Governors, Mayors, Board members with the Regional Development Council to listen to concerns and priority projects aired by the group.

Domogan said if the Bill passes through Congress this year, a plebiscite could be mounted April of 2018 [*sic*] which will determine the region's fate.

The mayor, who also chairs the Cordillera Regional Development Council admitted the effort is one of the last options of the region in its epic attempt to attain autonomy after two failed plebiscites in 1990 and 1998, stressing the urgency of the Congress approval to be able to get a chink [*sic*] in the budget to fund the plebiscite.

Domogan added sustained efforts in the information campaign for autonomy bid as well as a constant follow up with Congress is needed to set the ball rolling for the plebiscite.

House Bill 5343 "An Act Establishing the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC)" is seen by lawmakers as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources.

It is believed, Cordillera autonomy will bring the national attention as well as the benefits of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multi-cultural policies for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).

Autonomy is aimed to enhance the benefit and entitlements of government employees here establishing regional identity, and fast-tracking development, giving leaders the power to manage political affairs.

The quest for autonomy started in Executive Order 220 in 1987 which created the Cordillera Administrative Region with the Constitution providing that the autonomous region in the Cordilleras shall consist [*sic*] of provinces, cities, municipalities and geographical areas sharing common and distinctive historical and

cultural heritage, economic and social structures, and other relevant characteristics within the framework of the Constitution.

Domogan said the meeting with the president also included the construction of the Cordillera infrastructure program aims to pave over 133 national and local roads spanning at least 98 kilometers.

The rehabilitation of the Loakan airport was also taken up which needs a P400 million budget to be made functional. *(By: Maria Elena Catajan)*

Annex II.I

CODING SHEET

Framing of Cordillera as a Region

CODES

BAGUIO MIDLAND COURIER	
BMC 1	<p>Go said if the Cordillera becomes an autonomous region, it will have more leverage in becoming an independent state, along with other states that will be established under the federal form of government.</p>
BMC 2	<p>“We hope there’s one united effort by all towards autonomy for the Cordillera. In the roadmap of peace, you may have different roots but there is only one destination; so let’s now try and converge this different roots that we have towards one destination, which is autonomy for the Cordillera,” Dureza said.</p> <p>He said [<i>sic</i>] is committed to support the region’s bid for autonomy as long as it stays united in its pursuit.</p> <p>“There should be a stronger clamor for autonomy,” he said.</p> <p>He said Opapp [<i>sic</i>] is open to engage with the diverse groups in order to attain autonomy for the Cordillera.</p> <p>Domogan, also the RDC-CAR chair, said the historical injustice to the region is that it has been “neglected for a long period of time” by the national government that’s why support for the bill if needed.</p> <p>“Because of situations we cannot control, we have many factions. I am giving my members two weeks to study and strategize to unite the different factions,” Ngao-I said.</p>
BMC 3	<p>“Autonomy mean an enhanced Cordillera identity and self-determination and having responsive policies for the region and its people,” Domogan said.</p> <p>“We must bring to them the message and our belief that autonomy will help us pursue a development path that is sustainable and responsible</p>

	<p>to our needs, our diverse cultures, and our uniqueness as a region towards peace and development for all Cordillerans,” he added.</p> <p>Aside from the 1987 Constitution, the promise for autonomy by the national government is embodied in Executive Order 220, which created the Cordillera Administrative Region.</p> <p>The President Corazon Aquino issued EO 220 as a prize for the signing of peace accord forged between the Aquino administration and the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) then led by slain renegade priest Conrado “Ka Ambo” Balweg in Mount Data Hotel in Mountain Province in 1987.</p>
BMC 4	<p>First, Dureza reminded Cordillera autonomy is not about political leaders and key [sic] because the most important sector for the advocacy is the public.</p> <p>“The bigger table is the public. Despite the unity among officials and leaders, you must address the ordinary public. They must understand and support the cause,” said Dureza, who was the guest of honor and speaker during the 30th CAR foundation day.</p> <p>Second, Dureza said even assuming the HB 5343 is certified as an urgent bill, there is a no magic formula to meet the bigger expectations of Cordillerans that peace and development will be further enhanced in the region.</p> <p>“The bigger challenge is how to meet the high expectations of the Cordillerans following the two unsuccessful attempts to establish an autonomous region,” he said.</p> <p>Aside from the 1987 Constitution, the promise for autonomy by the national government is embodied in Executive Order 220, which created the Cordillera Administrative Region.</p> <p>Then president Corazon Aquino issued EO 220 as a prize for the signing of peace accord forged between the Aquino administration and the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) then led by slain renegade priest Conrado “Ka Ambo” Balweg in Mount Data Hotel in Mountain Province in 1987. However, Cordillerans overwhelmingly rejected the organic acts for the autonomous setup in the Cordillera in plebiscites in 1990 and 1998.</p>

BMC 5	<p>He said he recognizes the desire of the Cordillera and the Bangsamoro people for self-determination and the need to develop their own regions, citing colonial ruling and unitary form of government that led to the uneven development of the country.</p> <p>“He was able to explain the need of the Cordillerans to be given also the opportunity to govern themselves through Cordillera Autonomous Region eventually to install a federal setup in the country,” Dureza said.</p> <p>The RDC chair, meanwhile said he hopes Duterte will include in his state of the Nation Address (SONA) tomorrow, July 24, the improvement of Cordillera’s road network and modernization of the Loakan Aripport [<i>sic</i>] – the region’s lone commercial airstrip as priority projects.</p> <p>The mayor said he asked the President to order the departments of Public Works and Highways and Interior and Local Government to allot funds for the Cordillera road infrastructure program and the modernization of Loakan Airport.</p> <p>The realization of these infrastructure projects is seen to enhance Cordillera’s accessibility.</p>
BMC 6	<p>Failure to achieve autonomy before the 1987 Constitution is amended could mean the end of the road for the Cordillera’s long-time bid for independence.</p>

BAGUIO CHRONICLE	
BC 1	<p>In the HB 5343’s explanatory note, the proponents see the Cordillera autonomy as the “most effective option” to provide the region with the needed foundation to pursue sustainable development “as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources.”</p>
BC 2	<p>Dureza, however, warned that certification of the region’s autonomy does not necessarily translate to success because Cordillera does not only consist of government officials. He explained that the larger table consists of the public and it is very important that the citizens understand the benefits of the Cordillera being an autonomous region.</p>

	<p>“Even if it is signed and if it is not supported by the people, it will be worthless,” said Dureza, citing the case of Bangsamoro Basic Law wherein its own citizens are doubtful of its legitimacy. He added that the ordinary people must be addressed so that they will come to support the autonomy of Cordillera.</p>
BC 3	<p>In July 15, 1986, former President Corazon Aquino issued Executive Order 220 creating Cordillera Administrative Region with mandate to administer the affairs of the government in the region, and prepare for the establishment of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.</p>
BC 4	<p>WE are now ripe to achieve autonomy.</p> <p>But Rep. Ronald Cosalan of neighboring Benguet said that things are still hazy in the autonomy front.</p> <p>“The people of Benguet has time and again rejected the idea of autonomy but I will consult the people again and see what they think of Cordillera Autonomous Region of a Federal State [sic],” said Cosalan.</p> <p>As of 2017, Domogan said 183.3 kilometers of road in the Cordilleras are not yet paved. The national roads still need PHP3.74 billion allocation while the local roads need PHP1.47 billion.</p>

SUNSTAR BAGUIO	
SSB 1	<p>Article 10 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the regions in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordilleras, as territorial and political subdivision, will enjoy local autonomy.</p> <p>According to the solons, Cordillera autonomy is seen as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources.</p> <p>The rationale of the proposed measure is to establish a political entity, provide for its basic structure of government in recognition the cause of the Cordillerans and to secure their identity and posterity allowing for a meaningful self-governance</p>

	<p>“Cordillera autonomy will bring to national attention the benefit of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multicultural policies for Cordillerans,” the lawmakers explained.</p>
SSB 2	<p>The CAR chief executives cited in the bill’s explanatory note the “Cordillera autonomy is seen as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources. Cordillera autonomy will bring the national attention as well as the benefits of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multi-cultural policies for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).”</p>
SSB 3	<p>“In the Cordillera region, madaming grupo, mayroon pang nagkwatak watak and we can understand that since the Cordillera has a very diverse culture, people and tradition; there should be one united effort from all towards autonomy in the Cordillera region,” the official said.</p>
SSB 4	<p>“We, the Cordillerans recognize our differences but we remain united by our shared goal to achieve regional autonomy in order to establish our permanent Cordillera identity, to accelerate the region’s socio-economic development and to have responsive policies for the Cordillera within the context of our common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic structures and other relevant characteristics do declare our commitment to support the establishment of an autonomous region of the Cordillera towards federalism,” the declaration stated.</p>
SSB 5	<p>National Commission on Indigenous People [<i>sic</i>] regional director Atty. Roland Calde added the 30th anniversary of the region is not more of a celebration, but a struggle rooted from the indigenous peoples [<i>sic</i>] struggle to be free from an oppressive system of government.</p> <p>“It’s not more of a celebration, but for us, that would be thirty years of our struggle for autonomy. This struggle has been started by the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera themselves and we are now here at 30 years, and still, we are struggling for our autonomy,” added Calde.</p> <p>“Pag tayo nagging part ng isang federal state na composed of many regions, kawawa naman tayo so balik tayo sa dati. Maiipit tayo na maliit na rehiyon na makikipag-agawan ng pondo doon sa mas malalaking regions,” Aquino said.</p>
SSB 6	<p>Earlier this year, A Victory Postponed, a book published by NEDA about the struggle of 10 former members of the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) for self-governance in the Cordilleras, is being distributed to both private and public schools.</p>
SSB 7	<p>“In RDC, we believe that we can actually improve and develop better under an autonomous set-up,” said RDC vice-chairperson and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) regional director Milagros Rimando.</p> <p>“Unity is the key to our autonomy,” Domogan said. “Believe it or not, the national government does not want to give us our autonomy which is why they are looking for a justification to not grant it to us. And the justification that can really derail our clamor for autonomy is our disunity. The moment</p>

	that we are disunited, the national government will say it is our own fault because we do not want autonomy.”
SSB 8	The OPAPP official also lauded the seven lawmakers from the region, despite their differences, have worked as one for the bill.
SSB 9	<p>Duterte has agreed to support House Bill 5343 and label it as urgent in time for the convening of Congress along with the Bangsamoro Basic Law where Cordillera advocates hope to hurdle and be able to get funding for the plebiscite eyed for next year.</p> <p>The mayor, who also chairs the Cordillera Regional Development Council admitted the effort is one of the last options of the region in its epic attempt to attain autonomy after two failed plebiscites in 1990 and 1998, stressing the urgency of the Congress approval to be able to get a chink [sic] in the budget to fund the plebiscite.</p> <p>House Bill 5343 “An Act Establishing the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC)” is seen by lawmakers as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources.</p> <p>It is believed, Cordillera autonomy will bring the national attention as well as the benefits of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multi-cultural policies for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).</p> <p>The quest for autonomy started in Executive Order 220 in 1987 which created the Cordillera Administrative Region with the Constitution providing that the autonomous region in the Cordilleras shall consisting [sic] of provinces, cities, municipalities and geographical areas sharing common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic and social structures, and other relevant characteristics within the framework of the Constitution.</p> <p>Domogan said the meeting with the president also included the construction of the Cordillera infrastructure program aims to pave over 133 national and local roads spanning at least 98 kilometers.</p>

CATEGORIES

	CODES	CATEGORIES
BMC 3	Aside from the 1987 Constitution, the promise for autonomy by the national government is	

	<p>embodied in Executive Order 220, which created the Cordillera Administrative Region.</p> <p>The President Corazon Aquino issued EO 220 as a prize for the signing of peace accord forged between the Aquino administration and the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) then led by slain renegade priest Conrado “Ka Ambo” Balweg in Mount Data Hotel in Mountain Province in 1987.</p>	
BMC 4	<p>Aside from the 1987 Constitution, the promise for autonomy by the national government is embodied in Executive Order 220, which created the Cordillera Administrative Region.</p> <p>Then president Corazon Aquino issued EO 220 as a prize for the signing of peace accord forged between the Aquino administration and the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) then led by slain renegade priest Conrado “Ka Ambo” Balweg in Mount Data Hotel in Mountain Province in 1987. However, Cordillerans overwhelmingly rejected the organic acts for the autonomous setup in the Cordillera in plebiscites in 1990 and 1998.</p>	Creation of Cordillera Administrative Region
BMC 6	<p>Failure to achieve autonomy before the 1987 Constitution is amended could mean the end of the road for the Cordillera’s long-time bid for independence.</p>	Cordillera’s bid for autonomy
BMC 1	<p>Go said if the Cordillera becomes an autonomous region, it will have more leverage in becoming an independent state, along with other states that will be established under the federal form of government.</p>	
BMC 3	<p>“Autonomy mean an enhanced Cordillera identity and self-determination and having responsive policies for the region and its people,” Domogan said.</p> <p>“We must bring to them the message and our belief that autonomy will help us pursue a development path that is sustainable and responsible to our needs, our diverse cultures, and our uniqueness as a region towards peace</p>	Autonomy’s impact on Cordillera

	and development for all Cordillerans,” he added.	
BMC 5	He said he recognizes the desire of the Cordillera and the Bangsamoro people for self-determination and the need to develop their own regions, citing colonial ruling and unitary form of government that led to the uneven development of the country.	
BMC 5	He was able to explain the need of the Cordillerans to be given also the opportunity to govern themselves through Cordillera Autonomous Region eventually to install a federal setup in the country,” Dureza said.	
BMC 2	<p>“We hope there’s one united effort by all towards autonomy for the Cordillera. In the roadmap of peace, you may have different roots but there is only one destination; so let’s now try and converge this different roots that we have towards one destination, which is autonomy for the Cordillera,” Dureza said.</p> <p>He said [<i>sic</i>] is committed to support the region’s bid for autonomy as long as it stays united in its pursuit.</p> <p>“There should be a stronger clamor for autonomy,” he said.</p> <p>He said Opapp [<i>sic</i>] is open to engage with the diverse groups in order to attain autonomy for the Cordillera.</p>	Diversity among Cordillerans
BMC 2	“Because of situations we cannot control, we have many factions. I am giving my members two weeks to study and strategize to unite the different factions,” Ngao-I said.	
BMC 4	<p>First, Dureza reminded Cordillera autonomy is not about political leaders and key [<i>sic</i>] because the most important sector for the advocacy is the public.</p> <p>“The bigger table is the public. Despite the unity among officials and leaders, you must address the ordinary public. They must understand and support the cause,” said</p>	General public in Cordillera

	Dureza, who was the guest of honor and speaker during the 30 th CAR foundation day.	
BMC 4	<p>Second, Dureza said even assuming the HB 5343 is certified as an urgent bill, there is a no magic formula to meet the bigger expectations of Cordillerans that peace and development will be further enhanced in the region.</p> <p>“The bigger challenge is how to meet the high expectations of the Cordillerans following the two unsuccessful attempts to establish an autonomous region,” he said.</p>	
BMC 2	Domogan, also the RDC-CAR chair, said the historical injustice to the region is that it has been “neglected for a long period of time” by the national government that’s why support for the bill if needed.	National government’s view of Cordillera
BMC 5	<p>The RDC chair, meanwhile said he hopes Duterte will include in his state of the Nation Address (SONA) tomorrow, July 24, the improvement of Cordillera’s road network and modernization of the Loakan Aripport [<i>sic</i>] – the region’s lone commercial airstrip as priority projects.</p> <p>The mayor said he asked the President to order the departments of Public Works and Highways and Interior and Local Government to allot funds for the Cordillera road infrastructure program and the modernization of Loakan Airport.</p>	Cordillera’s need for national government support
BMC 5	The realization of these infrastructure projects is seen to enhance Cordillera’s accessibility.	

	CODES	CATEGORIES
BC 3	In July 15, 1986, former President Corazon Aquino issued Executive Order 220 creating Cordillera Administrative Region with mandate to administer the affairs of the government in the region, and prepare for the establishment of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.	Creation of Cordillera Administrative Region

BC 4	WE are now ripe to achieve autonomy.	Cordillera's bid for autonomy
BC 5	CORDILLERA and autonomy. The two words connected in a sentence was perhaps the most anticipated pronouncement in President Rodrigo Duterte's State of the Nation Address on Monday by Cordilleran officials and autonomy advocates.	
BC 5	"Although we did not get our wish that he will mention it in his SONA, it does not discourage us because he pledged (that it will be an urgent bill) on our meeting with us," Rimando said.	
BC 1	In the HB 5343's explanatory note, the proponents see the Cordillera autonomy as the "most effective option" to provide the region with the needed foundation to pursue sustainable development "as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources."	Autonomy's impact on Cordillera
BC 4	But Rep. Ronald Cosalan of neighboring Benguet said that things are still hazy in the autonomy front.	Diversity among Cordillerans
BC 4	"The people of Benguet has time and again rejected the idea of autonomy but I will consult the people again and see what they think of Cordillera Autonomous Region of a Federal State [<i>sic</i>]," said Cosalan.	
BC 2	Dureza, however, warned that certification of the region's autonomy does not necessarily translate to success because Cordillera does not only consist of government officials. He explained that the larger table consists of the public and it is very important that the citizens understand the benefits of the Cordillera being an autonomous region. "Even if it is signed and if it is not supported by the people, it will be worthless," said Dureza, citing the case of Bangsamoro Basic Law wherein its own citizens are doubtful of its legitimacy. He added that the ordinary people must be addressed so that they will come to support the autonomy of Cordillera.	General public in Cordillera

BC 4	As of 2017, Domogan said 183.3 kilometers of road in the Cordilleras are not yet paved. The national roads still need PHP3.74 billion allocation while the local roads need PHP1.47 billion.	Cordillera's need for national government support
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	CODES	CATEGORIES
SSB 1	Article 10 of the 1987 Constitution mandates the regions in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordilleras, as territorial and political subdivision, will enjoy local autonomy.	Creation of Cordillera Administrative Region
SSB 9	The quest for autonomy started in Executive Order 220 in 1987 which created the Cordillera Administrative Region with the Constitution providing that the autonomous region in the Cordilleras shall consist of provinces, cities, municipalities and geographical areas sharing common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic and social structures, and other relevant characteristics within the framework of the Constitution.	
SSB 5	National Commission on Indigenous People [sic] regional director Atty. Roland Calde added the 30 th anniversary of the region is not more of a celebration, but a struggle rooted from the indigenous peoples [sic] struggle to be free from an oppressive system of government. "It's not more of a celebration, but for us, that would be thirty years of our struggle for autonomy. This struggle has been started by the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera themselves and we are now here at 30 years, and still, we are struggling for our autonomy," added Calde.	Cordillera's bid for autonomy
SSB 6	Earlier this year, A Victory Postponed, a book published by NEDA about the struggle of 10 former members of the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) for self-governance in the Cordilleras, is being distributed to both private and public schools.	

SSB 1	<p>According to the solons, Cordillera autonomy is seen as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources.</p> <p>The rationale of the proposed measure is to establish a political entity, provide for its basic structure of government in recognition the cause of the Cordillerans and to secure their identity and posterity allowing for a meaningful self-governance.</p> <p>“Cordillera autonomy will bring to national attention the benefit of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multicultural policies for Cordillerans,” the lawmakers explained.</p>	<p>Autonomy’s impact on Cordillera</p>
SSB 2	<p>The CAR chief executives cited in the bill’s explanatory note the “Cordillera autonomy is seen as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources. Cordillera autonomy will bring the national attention as well as the benefits of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multi-cultural policies for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).”</p>	
SSB 5	<p>“Pag tayo nagging part ng isang federal state na composed of many regions, kawawa naman tayo so balik tayo sa dati. Maiipit tayo na maliit na rehiyon na makikipag-agawan ng pondo doon sa mas malalaking regions,” Aquino said.</p>	
SSB 7	<p>“In RDC, we believe that we can actually improve and develop better under an autonomous set-up,” said RDC vice-chairperson and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) regional director Milagros Rimando.</p>	
SSB 9	<p>House Bill 5343 “An Act Establishing the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC)”</p>	

	<p>is seen by lawmakers as the most effective option to provide the region with the needed solid foundation to pursue sustainable development as the region hopes to benefit from the management and use of its natural resources.</p> <p>It is believed, Cordillera autonomy will bring the national attention as well as the benefits of accepting and promoting cultural diversity through the formulation of multi-cultural policies for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).</p>	
SSB 3	<p>“In the Cordillera region, madaming grupo, mayroon pang nagkwatak watak and we can understand that since the Cordillera has a very diverse culture, people and tradition; there should be one united effort from all towards autonomy in the Cordillera region,” the official said.</p>	Diversity among Cordillerans
SSB 4	<p>“We, the Cordillerans recognize our differences but we remain united by our shared goal to achieve regional autonomy in order to establish our permanent Cordillera identity, to accelerate the region’s socio-economic development and to have responsive policies for the Cordillera within the context of our common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic structures and other relevant characteristics do declare our commitment to support the establishment of an autonomous region of the Cordillera towards federalism,” the declaration stated.</p>	
SSB 8	<p>The OPAPP official also lauded the seven lawmakers from the region, despite their differences, have worked as one for the bill.</p>	
SSB 7	<p>“Unity is the key to our autonomy,” Domogan said. “Believe it or not, the national government does not want to give us our autonomy which is why they are looking for a justification to not grant it to us. And the justification that can really derail our clamor for autonomy is our disunity. The moment that we are disunited, the national government will</p>	National government’s view of Cordillera

	say it is our own fault because we do not want autonomy.”	
SSB 9	Duterte has agreed to support House Bill 5343 and label it as urgent in time for the convening of Congress along with the Bangsamoro Basic Law where Cordillera advocates hope to hurdle and be able to get funding for the plebiscite eyed for next year.	Cordillera’s need for national government support
SSB 9	The mayor, who also chairs the Cordillera Regional Development Council admitted the effort is one of the last options of the region in its epic attempt to attain autonomy after two failed plebiscites in 1990 and 1998, stressing the urgency of the Congress approval to be able to get a chink [<i>sic</i>] in the budget to fund the plebiscite.	
SSB 9	Domogan said the meeting with the president also included the construction of the Cordillera infrastructure program aims to pave over 133 national and local roads spanning at least 98 kilometers.	

THEMES / FRAMES

CATEGORIES	THEMES
Creation of Cordillera Administrative Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cordillera Administrative Region was created as a result of a peace pact ● Cordillera was created with a promise of transition into an autonomous region
Cordillera’s bid for autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cordillera has been clamoring for regional autonomy
Autonomy’s impact on Cordillera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thirty years after its establishment, Cordillera remains a disadvantaged region ● There is lack of recognition of Cordilleran identity
Diversity among Cordillerans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cordillerans do not have a united stand on the proposed regional autonomy
General public in Cordillera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The general public lacks voice as to whether they are for or against regional autonomy
National government’s view of Cordillera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cordillera is a neglected region

Cordillera's need for national government's support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regional government relies on national government for the region's development.
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THEMES / FRAMES OF NARRATIVE

BAGUIO MIDLAND COURIER	
BMC 3; BMC 4	Cordillera Administrative Region was created as a result of a peace pact
BMC 3; BMC 4	Cordillera was created with a promise of transition into an autonomous region
BMC 6	Cordillera has been clamoring for regional autonomy
BMC 1; BMC 3	Thirty years after its establishment, Cordillera remains a disadvantaged region
BMC 3	There is lack of recognition of Cordilleran identity
BMC 2	Cordillerans do not have a united stand on the proposed regional autonomy
BMC 4	The general public lacks voice as to whether they are for or against regional autonomy
BMC 2	Cordillera is a neglected region
BMC 5	The regional government relies on national government for the region's development

BAGUIO CHRONICLE	
BC 3	Cordillera was created with a promise of transition into an autonomous region
BC 5	Cordillera has been clamoring for regional autonomy
BC 1; BC 4	Thirty years after its establishment, Cordillera remains a disadvantaged region
BC 4	Cordillerans do not have a united stand on the proposed regional autonomy
BC 2	The general public lacks voice as to whether they are for or against regional autonomy

SUNSTAR BAGUIO	
SSB 1; SSB 9	Cordillera was created with a promise of transition into an autonomous region
SSB 5; SSB 6	Cordillera has been clamoring for regional autonomy
SSB 1; SSB 2; SSB 5; SSB 9; SSB 7	Thirty years after its establishment, Cordillera remains a disadvantaged region
SSB 1; SSB 2; SSB 9	There is lack of recognition of Cordilleran identity
SSB 3; SSB 4; SSB 8	Cordillerans do not have a united stand on the proposed regional autonomy
SSB 7	Cordillera is a neglected region
SSB 9	The regional government relies on national government for the region's development

ANNEX II.II

CODING SHEET

Framing of the Proposed Creation of the ARC

CODES

BAGUIO MIDLAND COURIER	
BMC 1	<p>Abstract Another bill was filed proposing for the creation of the Autonomous Region for the Cordillera.</p> <p>Orientation The bill, signed by all Cordilleran lawmakers, the third one filed in Congress which seeks to create an autonomous region in the Cordilleras.</p> <p>Complicating Action There are different positions in Congress on the creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera. Hence, the Cordillera lawmakers are seeking for the support of President Rodrigo Duterte by certifying the autonomy bill it as urgent so that the Congress could prioritize it.</p> <p>Evaluation Having an autonomous status will give an edge to the Cordilleras in case the country shifts into a federal form of government.</p> <p>Resolution While the House Bill is filed, the Cordilleran leaders have to seek the support of President Rodrigo Duterte and lawmakers in Congress for it to be passed.</p>
BMC 2	<p>Abstract All Cordillerans - key officials, civic groups, and ordinary people should be united and be supportive of the proposed creation of the Autonomous Region for the Cordillera.</p> <p>Orientation Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza, who handles peace talks and negotiations related to internal conflict and rebellion, enjoined the Cordillerans to unite to show their desire for autonomy. This was during a forum held by government agencies at Mt. Data Hotel, the place where the government, through former President Corazon Aquino and the Cordillera Peace Liberation Army entered into a peace pact agreement in 1986.</p> <p>Complicating Action</p>

	<p>Dureza emphasized that the national government, through the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process is willing to support the region’s bid for autonomy as long as the people has a united stand.</p> <p>Evaluation The Cordilleran people has to further convey their common stand on being autonomous to persuade the national government that the people of the region do want and need it.</p> <p>Resolution Factions with opposing views and different interests will have to discuss to possibly unify and speak the same language in the talks on autonomy.</p>
BMC 3	<p>Abstract President Rodrigo Duterte’s support to the region’s clamor for autonomy will increase the odds of legislation of the autonomy bill.</p> <p>Orientation Pres. Duterte, the highest ranking official of the country who is known to be a decisive leader, can influence the actions of the Congress of the Philippines on the autonomy bill by certifying it as a priority bill.</p> <p>Complicating Action Cordilleran leaders, both elected officials and heads of regional government agencies, are hoping to persuade Pres. Duterte that the Cordillerans strongly aspire to have a regional autonomy.</p> <p>Evaluation The Cordillera leaders are hopeful that the region’s clamor for autonomy will be heard by the Duterte administration. The region, should become autonomous before the government shifts into federalism, which, the President himself propound.</p> <p>Resolution The Cordilleran leaders are planning to meet Pres. Duterte to personally show their united support to the region’s autonomy bid.</p>
BMC 4	<p>Abstract The national government is willing to listen to the people of the Cordilleras about their proposed regional autonomous setup.</p> <p>Orientation A meeting with Pres. Duterte, to be attended by Cordilleran government leaders has been setup. This meeting is seen as an avenue for the latter to show their common stand on autonomy.</p> <p>Complicating Action Despite the good news that Pres. Duterte will meet the Cordilleran leaders, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza is sending a message that meeting the President is not enough to push for the proposed creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera. The public should also be convinced to support regional autonomy.</p>

	<p>Evaluation The creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera does not lie on the hands of government leaders alone. The ordinary people in the Cordilleras will have to vote for or against the proposed autonomy in a plebiscite.</p> <p>Resolution While efforts are in place to bring attention to the proposed creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera to the national government, the Cordilleran leaders should also work on bringing the matter to the general public in the region to make sure they understand what autonomy means for them.</p>
BMC 5	<p>Abstract President Rodrigo Duterte recognizes the need of the Cordillera to become an autonomous region, and supports the proposal for it to be one.</p> <p>Orientation President Duterte met with Cordillera officials and listened to their aspirations to become an autonomous region.</p> <p>Complicating Action President Duterte vowed to certify the region’s autonomy bill as urgent and endorse it to the House of Representatives and the Senate.</p> <p>Evaluation The region is one step ahead in its autonomy bid.</p> <p>Resolution Cordillera officials are anticipating Pres. Duterte to mention Cordillera’s bid for regional autonomy and eventually, for him to pronounce it as urgent and endorse it to the House of Representative and the Senate.</p>
BMC 6	<p>Abstract The autonomy bill seeking for the creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera needs to be passed as soon as possible.</p> <p>Orientation The autonomy bill needs to be passed immediately so that necessary succeeding activities, such as a plebiscite, can be conducted in 2018. If autonomy gets a favorable vote from the Cordillera people, an executive budget should be prepared for inclusion to the country’s national budget for 2019.</p> <p>Complicating Action Regional Development Council-CAR Chairman Mayor Mauricio Domogan emphasized that if the timetable is not met and an executive</p>

	<p>budget is not included in the country's national budget, the administration of an autonomous region in the Cordillera may not be executed.</p> <p>Evaluation If the Cordillera region does not become autonomous before the 1987 Constitution is amended to shift to a federal form of government, it may never achieve regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution All possible efforts to meet the timetable should be exhausted. Cordillera lawmakers should lobby the autonomy bill in Congress while looking for someone to sponsor a counterpart in the Senate. Other regional officials should also intensively conduct a massive information drive at the grassroots level to educate the Cordillerans about the regional autonomy in preparation for a plebiscite.</p>
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BAGUIO CHRONICLE	
BC 1	<p>Abstract Government support is needed in the passage of House Bill 5343, or the act seeking for the creation of an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC).</p> <p>Orientation Two autonomy bills were previously filed in Congress under the Aquino administration. Both, however, failed to be enacted.</p> <p>Complicating Action The Cordilleran lawmakers are banking on the support of the Duterte administration.</p> <p>Evaluation Although Cordilleran leaders are hopeful this time than in the previous administration, they are not fully confident that indeed the Duterte administration will support the proposed creation of ARC.</p> <p>Resolution This might be the last attempt of the Cordillera to attain regional autonomy.</p>
BC 2	<p>Abstract The common people in the Cordilleras should know about and push for autonomy.</p> <p>Orientation The creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera does not only need passage of the autonomy bill into a law by lawmakers in Congress, but also the vote of all Cordillerans during a plebiscite.</p> <p>Complicating Action</p>

	<p>Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza emphasized the region’s bid for autonomy should not focus only on government officials, but also of the general public.</p> <p>Evaluation The government is still doubtful if indeed, the Cordillerans fully understand the meaning of regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution Cordilleran government officials should exert more effort in addressing the public in the talks about autonomy.</p>
BC 3	<p>Abstract The Cordillera region needs President Rodrigo Duterte’s support on the proposed creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.</p> <p>Orientation Local chief executives from the region are signing a joint resolution, urging President Duterte to certify the autonomy bill as urgent and endorse it to the 17th Congress.</p> <p>Complicating Action To convince President Duterte, the resolution emphasizes how the concept of regional autonomy is parallel to the principles of federalism which is being pushed under the current administration.</p> <p>Evaluation President Duterte, being the highest official in the country, has a vital role in achieving regional autonomy. He can declare the autonomy bill as a priority bill which should be looked into by the lawmakers in Congress.</p> <p>Resolution Other local chief executives who weren’t present during the Mayor’s Summit have yet to sign the resolution to show that they are one with the other mayors in convincing President Duterte to certify the autonomy bill as urgent.</p>
BC 4	<p>Abstract President Rodrigo Duterte supports the Cordillera’s autonomy bid.</p> <p>Orientation Pres. Duterte told the Cordilleran officials that he will certify the autonomy bill as urgent and endorse it to the 17th Congress during a meeting held in Malacanang.</p> <p>Complicating Action After the meeting, Benguet Representative Ronald Cosalan said in a statement that his people in Benguet has rejected the idea of regional autonomy, but committed to consult them anew.</p>

	<p>Evaluation President Duterte’s support is not enough to attain the desired regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution The people of Benguet should be convinced to vote for autonomy. A lawmaker at the Senate should also be convinced to file an autonomy bill to counterpart the one filed at the House of Representatives.</p>
BC 5	<p>Abstract The creation of an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera is not a priority of the Duterte administration.</p> <p>Orientation President Duterte, who earlier promised to certify the region’s autonomy bill as urgent, did not mention it in his State of the Nation Address, did not declare it as priority bill, nor endorse it to Congress for action.</p> <p>Complicating Action Regional officials remain hopeful that although President Duterte did not certify the autonomy bill as urgent, it can progress in the legislative arena.</p> <p>Evaluation The Bangsamoro Basic Law, which is an organic act seeking for the establishment of a new autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao has taken precedence over the proposed creation of an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.</p> <p>Resolution Regional officials will continue its efforts, both at the national and regional level, to pursue regional autonomy.</p>

SUNSTAR BAGUIO	
SSB 1	<p>Abstract Cordillera lawmakers attempt to attain regional autonomy anew.</p> <p>Orientation A revived bill seeking for the creation of an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera has been filed at the House of Representatives.</p> <p>Complicating Action</p>

	<p>Lawmakers have expressed that the Cordilleras needs to become autonomous to pursue sustainable development with self-determination.</p> <p>Evaluation The filing of a revived autonomy bill is a manifestation that the Cordilleras strongly aspire for regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution Although the autonomy bill is filed in Congress, not only lawmakers will decide whether the region should be granted autonomy or not. The Cordillera constituents will eventually be the ones who will decide on it.</p>
SSB 2	<p>Abstract The new Cordillera autonomy bill has a good chance of getting enacted into law.</p> <p>Orientation The recently filed autonomy bill, or the House Bill 5343, at the House of Representatives is an improved version of the House Bill 4649 which was filed in the 16th Congress.</p> <p>Complicating Action The Regional Development Council’s efforts in the previous years campaigning for autonomy has paid off with the filing of another bill may finally create an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.</p> <p>Evaluation House Bill 5343 is better than the previous autonomy bills filed in Congress since it is a result of rigorous multi-stakeholder consultation.</p> <p>Resolution The revived autonomy bill should be ratified so that the people in the region can vote in a plebiscite.</p>
SSB 3	<p>Abstract Unity among Cordillerans will help the region achieve an autonomous status.</p> <p>Orientation The government wants to make sure that all Cordillerans have a united stand in the proposed creation of an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera.</p> <p>Complicating Action The Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army – Cordillera Bodong Association expressed support on the proposed regional autonomy for the Cordillera.</p>

	<p>Evaluation People are coming together to show how much they want regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution The CPLA-CBA will have to exert effort to unite its factions and for them to have a united stand on the issue of regional autonomy.</p>
SSB 4	<p>Abstract The autonomy bill is gaining support from stakeholders.</p> <p>Orientation Civil society organizations and other groups have expressed support on the autonomy bill during a regional consultation at Mt. Data Hotel.</p> <p>Complicating Action Participants to the consultation acknowledge their differences but showed common desire for regional autonomy.</p> <p>Evaluation Cordillerans are showing the national government that the people of the region have a united stand on regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution Regional leaders will advocate for regional autonomy and how it is similar to federalism to increase the awareness of the general public.</p>
SSB 5	<p>Abstract The Cordilleras should become autonomous before the country shifts to a federal type of government.</p> <p>Orientation The region is celebrating its 30th founding anniversary. This also means 30 years of wait for the promise of regional autonomy to come true.</p> <p>Complicating Action Officials of the region are expressing support to federalism. However, they are calling for regional autonomy to come first.</p> <p>Evaluation Regional officials are not fully supportive of the government's plan to shift to federalism but are expressing support to it to convince the national government that it is, somehow, similar to regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution</p>

	<p>Regional officials are campaigning for autonomy vis-à-vis federalism.</p>
SSB 6	<p>Abstract The youth should be involved in the talks about regional autonomy.</p> <p>Orientation The youth constitute a part of the Cordilleran population who will vote for or against autonomy during a plebiscite.</p> <p>Complicating Action Several activities are slated for the youth during the Cordillera month celebration in July.</p> <p>Evaluation The youth play a role in promoting and in voting for regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution Different types of media and activities will help reach the youth sector to educate and engage them in the regional government's advocacies.</p>
SSB 7	<p>Abstract Unity among Cordillerans could help the region attain autonomy.</p> <p>Orientation Regional officials continue to call constituents of the region to unite and have a common stand on regional autonomy, during the celebration of the Cordilleras' 30th anniversary.</p> <p>Complicating Action Regional officials are enjoining the Cordillerans to unite to persuade the national government to support their clamor for autonomy.</p> <p>Evaluation Showing unity could give the government no excuse not to grant Cordillerans regional autonomy.</p> <p>Resolution A regional autonomous status will affect all Cordillerans, therefore, they should all support it.</p>
SSB 8	<p>Abstract The government will support regional autonomy for Cordillera as long as its people have a united stand on it.</p>

	<p>Orientation Presidential Adviser on Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza spoke on behalf of President Rodrigo Duterte saying the administration support the proposed creation of an Autonomous Region of the Cordillera as long as the leaders address the general public who has a larger stake on the matter.</p> <p>Complicating Action Dureza emphasized that the regional officials should not only focus on the passage of the autonomy bill, but also in making sure the general public’s concerns or expectations are addressed and met.</p> <p>Evaluation Regional autonomy is not only about government leaders. More importantly, it is about the people.</p> <p>Resolution Cordilleran leaders should keep their efforts to promote regional autonomy so that people could be informed and finally be united.</p>
SSB 9	<p>Abstract The Duterte administration supports the proposed autonomy setup for the Cordilleras.</p> <p>Orientation In a meeting at the Malacañang with Cordilleran leaders, President Duterte gave his word to certify House Bill 5343, or the region’s autonomy bill, as urgent.</p> <p>Complicating Action Cordillera leaders are holding President Duterte to his word hoping that after the passage of bill, funds could be provided for the conduct of a plebiscite.</p> <p>Evaluation Government support needed in attaining regional autonomy has been earned.</p> <p>Resolution Efforts should be consistent in Congress, to lobby the autonomy bill, and in the region, to further educate the people of the region about regional autonomy.</p>

CATEGORIES AND THEMES/FRAMES

NEWSPAPER	NARRATIVE NO.	CATEGORY	THEME / FRAME
Baguio Midland Courier	BMC 1	A bill was filed seeking for the creation of the Autonomous Region of the Cordillera (ARC).	Cordillera needs to be autonomous.
	BMC 2	Cordillerans must have a united stand on the proposed creation of ARC.	Cordillerans should support the proposed creation of ARC.
	BMC 3	President Rodrigo Duterte's support may boost the region's autonomy bid.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.
	BMC 4	The national government is willing to listen to the Cordillerans' clamor for regional autonomy but Cordilleran people should also be addressed.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC. Cordillerans should support the proposed creation of ARC.
	BMC 5	President Duterte supports the creation of ARC.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.
	BMC 6	The passage of the autonomy bill is urgent.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.
Baguio Chronicle	BC 1	The support of the national government is needed for the passage of the region's autonomy bill.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.
	BC 2	The Cordillerans should be informed more about the proposed regional autonomy in Cordillera.	Cordillerans should support the proposed creation of ARC.

	BC 3	President Duterte's support on the proposed creation of ARC is needed.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.
	BC 4	President Duterte supports the creation of ARC.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.
	BC 5	The creation of ARC is not a priority of the Duterte administration.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.
SunStar Baguio	SSB 1	Cordillera lawmakers propose for the creation of ARC anew.	Cordillera needs to be autonomous.
	SSB 2	The revived autonomy bill has a good chance of being enacted into law.	Cordillera needs to be autonomous.
	SSB 3	Unity among Cordillerans will boost the region's autonomy bid.	Cordillerans should support the proposed creation of ARC.
	SSB 4	The autonomy bill is gaining support from stakeholders.	Cordillerans should support the proposed creation of ARC.
	SSB 5	Cordillera's regional autonomy should be granted before the country shifts to a federal type of government.	Cordillera needs to be autonomous.
	SSB 6	The youth should be involved in the talks about the proposed regional autonomy.	Cordillerans should support the proposed creation of ARC.
	SSB 7	Unity among Cordillerans could help the region attain autonomy.	Cordillerans should support the proposed creation of ARC.
	SSB 8	The government will support the proposed creation of ARC if the common people are addressed.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.

	SSB 9	The Duterte administration supports the proposed creation of ARC.	Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.
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THEMES/FRAMES OF EACH NARRATIVE

FRAMES	NARRATIVES
Cordillera needs to be autonomous.	BMC 1 SSB 1; SSB 2; SSB 5;
Cordillerans should support the proposed creation of ARC.	BMC 2; BMC 4 BC 2; BC 4 SSB 3; SSB 4; SSB 6; SSB 7;
Government support is needed in the creation of ARC.	BMC 3; BMC 4; BMC 5; BMC 6; BC 1; BC 3; BC 4; BC 5 SSB 8; SSB 9

ANNEX II.III

UNDERLYING POSITIONS OF COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS ON THE PROPOSED CREATION OF THE ARC

Baguio Midland Courier. The narratives published by Baguio Midland Courier spoke outright endorsement of the proposed creation of the ARC to the national government and the Cordilleran people. The newspaper published narratives which lay stress on the urgency of the creation of an autonomous region in the Cordillera before the planned shift to a federal type of government materializes as it will give more leverage to the region. These press the national government to take legislative action on the pending autonomy bill filed in Congress. In some narratives, underscored were statements from the national government signifying support needed by the region if its people are amicably amenable to the creation of ARC. One narrative also talked about a meeting with President Rodrigo Duterte, who reportedly vowed to certify the autonomy bill as urgent. It is through these narratives, which show the approval of the government, that Baguio Midland Courier puts forward regional autonomy to different audiences for consideration.

Baguio Chronicle. Analysis of the narratives reveal that for this community newspaper, the proposed regional autonomy for Cordillera is tentative. The certainty of the proposed creation of the ARC lies heavily on the national government and the general public. In general, the narratives published by Baguio Chronicle follow the events of getting government support – from a mere statement of need for support, to formally asking for it, earning it, and failing to get what was promised. Some of its

narratives also implied that Cordillerans, at least some, have yet to be convinced to be in favor of regional autonomy. The narratives indicate that there are still a lot of things left to do to persuade the national government and the Cordilleran people. Among the community newspapers, it was only Baguio Chronicle which conveyed the message that the proposed creation of the ARC is not a priority of the current government administration. Based on these framing of narratives, it can be inferred that regional autonomy is indefinite. The creation of the ARC remains a pending matter which will have to wait, unless prioritized by the Duterte administration. In addition, the vote of the Cordillerans on regional autonomy also remains undetermined until efforts are put in place to fully inform them about it.

SunStar Baguio. SunStar Baguio has the most published news articles related to autonomy. This may be attributed to the fact that the community newspaper is circulated daily. While the narratives published in this publication are driven by different events, they share common frames – the need for the Cordillera to become an autonomous region, and that it could only be made possible through government and public support. SunStar Baguio beat the drum for regional autonomy by expressing optimism in its narratives. The narratives talked about the better chance of the new autonomy bill to be enacted to law, the support it gained from various stakeholders, youth engagement in the talks about regional autonomy, and the support it got from the Duterte administration. Confidence can be discerned from the narratives as they give the impression that the need for government support and unity among the public is already satisfied.