

THE DAILY TRIBUNE

Duterte hogs CNN spotlight, named ‘best for Asia’ in 2016

- Written by [Ted Tuvera](#)
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And the Asia’s Best Year goes to President Rodrigo Duterte!

This as the US-based Cable News Network (CNN) declared the tough-talking leader as “Asia’s Big Winner” in 2016.

While the President has attracted criticism overseas – human rights activists have accused him of state abuse over the extrajudicial killings from his narcotics crackdown, the CNN report was quoted as saying: “For now, the Philippine leader’s unconventional moves seem a harbinger of things to come. This is no pivot to China, but a disruption of the old normal.”

“Rodrigo Duterte ended 2016 seeking to rebalance his nation’s ties, improve the life of the average Filipino and make the Philippines — a one-time economic and trade powerhouse — great again,” it added.

The Japan Times, in its year-end review for CNN of Asia’s winners and losers, claimed that Duterte had the best year in Asia last year for winning the “presidency in a landslide last May and subsequently upending, rethinking and reshaping the state of affairs — for good or for bad — at home and abroad.”

The CNN named impeached South Korean President Park Geun-hye as one of the individuals who had the worst year in Asia in 2016.

Palace inspired Malacañang, for its part, expressed elation over an opinion story written by CNN writers Curtis Chin and Jose B. Collaso hailing the

President. “It’s heartening to know that certain media agencies are able to notice the good things the President is doing,” presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella told a media briefing. “And for that Asia’s Best Year goes to Duterte,” he said.

Chin and Collazo commended Duterte for his intensified war on drugs which, he claimed, has contaminated four million Filipinos.

The two CNN writers also cited his 77-percent trust and approval rating based on the Social Weather Stations survey.

Duterte has also been cited for declaring a separation of foreign policy with the Philippines’ long-time close ally United States while renewing friendship with China and Russia.

The Palace official also welcomed the Japan Times article carrying the CNN story stating Asia’s Best Year goes to President Rodrigo Duterte. Just recently, Duterte was also named Person of the Year for 2016 by the Chinese Magazine Yazhou Zhoukan, the equivalent of Time magazine in the Chinese-speaking world.

Duterte made his debut on Forbes Magazine’s list of the most powerful personalities in the world – ranking 70 in the list — alongside his “idol” Russian President Vladimir Putin who remains as the most powerful personality for the fourth straight year and as well as his other “friends” US President-elect Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

An excerpt of Forbes’ description of Duterte reads: “The former mayor of Davao City was elected president of the Philippines in May 2016 on the strength of a campaign that promised the swift execution of drug users and other criminals, and his war on crime has already resulted in the killing of thousands of people.”