

Army Vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride



Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

02 April 2016

Saturday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land

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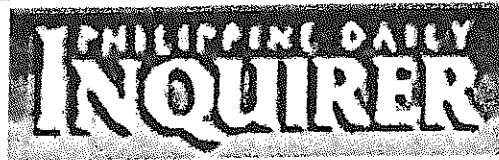
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TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | APRIL 2, 2016 | SATURDAY

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

LAOAG CITY 23 - 30 °C
TUGUEGARAO CITY 24 - 35 °C
BAGUIO CITY 15 - 24 °C
SBMA/CLARK 24 - 34 °C
TAGAYTAY 21 - 31 °C
METRO MANILA 24 - 34 °C
LEGAZPI CITY 25 - 31 °C
ILOILO/BACOLOD CITY 25 - 34 °C
TACLOBAN 23 - 32 °C
PUERTO PRINCESA 24 - 32 °C
METRO CEBU 25 - 32 °C
CAGAYAN DE ORO 23 - 32 °C
ZAMBOANGA CITY 24 - 34 °C
METRO DAVAO 26 - 35 °C

RIDGE OF HIGH PRESSURE AREA
EXTENDING OVER NORTHERN LUZON
(APRIL 2, 5:00 PM)

EASTERLIES
AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF
CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN LUZON, OF
VISAYAS AND OF MINDANAO
(APRIL 2, 5:00 PM)

SUNRISE
5:51 AM

SUNSET
6:08 PM

MOONRISE
1:19 AM

MOONSET
1:08 PM

LAST QUARTER
MAR 31 11:17 PM

NEW MOON
APR 7 7:24 PM

LOW TIDE
12:53 PM
-0.01 Meter

HIGH TIDE
4:49 PM
0.82 Meter

MANILA SOUTH HARBOR

Partly cloudy with rain

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainstorms and/or thunderstorms

APR 1		APR 2		APR 3		APR 4		APR 5		APR 6	
METRO MANILA	24 - 34 °C	25 - 34 °C	TAGAYTAY	22 - 31 °C	22 - 32 °C	TACLOBAN	23 - 32 °C	23 - 33 °C			
TUGUEGARAO	24 - 35 °C	25 - 35 °C	LEGAZPI	25 - 32 °C	26 - 32 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	22 - 32 °C	22 - 32 °C			
LAOAG	23 - 31 °C	24 - 32 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	24 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C	METRO DAVAO	26 - 35 °C	26 - 35 °C			
BAGUIO	15 - 25 °C	16 - 25 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	25 - 34 °C	25 - 34 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24 - 34 °C	25 - 35 °C			
SBMA/CLARK	24 - 34 °C	24 - 35 °C	METRO CEBU	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C						

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SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

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Cops open fire: 2 die in farmers' protest

By MIKE FRIALDE

The farmers wanted rice and drought-resistant vegetable seeds as El Niño had dried up their crops, and refused to leave the highway unless their demands were met.

As police crowd dispersal units moved in yesterday to clear the road, violence erupted. Rocks were hurled and gunfire erupted.

When the smoke cleared, a farmer lay dead, another was dying and about 30 others were wounded. Police reported that about 40 of their personnel were also injured, two of them critically.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has launched an investigation.

For three days, no one could pass through the main highway in North Cotabato as about 6,000 farmers blocked a portion of the road, demanding government assistance after an ongoing drought ravaged hundreds of thousands of hectares of farmland.

Then the police moved in. "Loud bursts of gunfire erupted," Norma Capuyan, leader of a farmer's group told reporters. "There was heavy volume of fire. We ran

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Cops open From Page 1

to a church compound and the police surrounded us.”

A farmer died at the scene and about a dozen others were wounded in the legs and shoulders, Capuyan said.

She added that the police first tried to disperse them with water cannon, but started shooting when they held their ground.

“The PNP is consolidating all information as regards the incident... in the Cotabato-Davao Highway, Kidapawan City. We believe that, in the spirit of thoroughness and fairness, a complete and accurate narrative must be constructed,” PNP spokesman Chief Supt. Wilben Mayor said in a statement.

The dead were identified as Rogeli Daelto and Victor Lumugdang, both of Arakan municipality. The nine injured farmers were identified as Ricky Maat, Ejay Salaber, Alce Awi, Mario Ansabo, Roland Jampas, Darwin Madio, Leo Deyong, Roger Imuy and Rodolfo Tan.

Sources from the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said that one of their senior officials in Mindanao, Sheena Duazo, was also injured in the incident, but this has yet to be confirmed.

Mayor claimed that 40 police officers were also injured after the protesters allegedly attacked the law enforcers. Two of the policemen were in critical condition.

Without any permit, the farmers allegedly converged in Kidapawan City, North Cotabato's provincial capital. They demanded government subsidies including the 15,000 sacks of rice that North Cotabato Gov. Emmylou Talifo-Mendoza allegedly promised to them as relief.

They also asked for seeds of drought-resistant vegetables

and other provisions to mitigate the hunger now stalking their communities because of the drought linked to El Niño. The region has been suffering from drought since late November.

The Department of Agriculture said that more than 300,000 hectares of farmland had been affected by the drought, causing losses of about P5.3 billion in rice and corn.

The Cotabato-Davao Highway was blocked after 6,000 farmers and their supporters began gathering at 6 a.m. last Wednesday. They set up barricades that blocked portions of the highway. Thousands of commuters and motorists were affected by the blockade.

Kidapawan City Mayor Joseph Evangelista on Thursday said Governor Mendoza was ready to hold a dialogue the night before with the leaders of the farmers.

However, none of the protesters came to the city hall to meet the governor and discuss their demands.

How the clash started

Witnesses told reporters yesterday that the clash started when policemen and social welfare workers arrived to gather the children that were brought to the rally by some demonstrators, led by the Mindanao-based officials of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

Local officials earlier said they received reports that communist New People's Army rebels allegedly coerced the farmers who barricaded the highway.

There were also rumors that presidential candidate Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte would arrive and talk to the farmers.

The PNP's Mayor said that

“acting upon guidance from Governor Mendoza,” the PNP troops under Sr. Supt. Alexander Tagum conducted an operation to clear the highway in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to rescue the minors who joined the demonstration.

“But before the PNP could start their operations, the protesters attacked them with poles and pieces of wood. Large rocks were also thrown at the policemen and at the stationary fire truck deployed to the area. A commotion followed, which resulted in injuries to the policemen and rallyists. As of last count, 40 policemen have been injured, with two in critical condition due to head trauma. We are consolidating information as regards the injured and two reported casualties on the side of the rallyists. All those injured were immediately brought to nearby hospitals to receive medical care,” the PNP report said.

Mayor said several rallyists were also arrested, including an alleged commander of the NPA from Barangay Basak, Magpet, North Cotabato.

“We reiterate that our policemen are trained and instructed to always exercise maximum tolerance, while at the same time remaining vigilant so that they may respond in a calibrated manner to threats. Certain pieces of information remain conflicting. We continue to conduct an investigation to consolidate a thorough report on the incident. We request that the public approach this issue with fairness and proper discernment as we pursue the truth,” Mayor said.

The protesters, the PNP said, raised issues concerning El Niño and the non-distribution of National Food Authority (NFA) rice with the declaration

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

of a state of calamity by the local government unit.

Mayor assured the public that any violation of the PNP's rules and regulations will be dealt with the appropriate penalty.

"We reiterate that an investigation is ongoing. We will update the public on any findings," he said, adding that anyone responsible for the tragic incident would be held accountable.

Palace seeks accountability

Malacañang vowed yesterday to determine accountability in the dispersal of protesting farmers in Kidapawan City.

Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said Interior Secretary Mel Senen Sarmiento reported that the provincial government had assumed responsibility for the law-enforcement operations related to the mass action on the Davao-Cotabato Highway.

The PNP, Coloma said, "is conducting a thorough investigation."

"Accountability is being established and appropriate sanctions will be meted out if justified by the findings of the investigation," Coloma said.

The United Nationalist Alliance (UNA) of Vice President Jejomar Binay condemned yesterday the violent dispersal of the farmers.

"Vice President Jejomar Binay deplores the use of violence to disperse farmers in Kidapawan who were demanding rice from government. They were asking for rice, but they were given bullets," UNA campaign spokesman Rico Quicho said.

"Hunger is a reality that must be addressed not by violence but by compassion and concrete programs to improve the lives of the poor," he said.

The camp of Duterte strongly condemned the bloody dispersal.

"President Aquino cannot escape blame and responsibility for the bloody assault against the hungry farmers demanding for food after a prolonged dry spell," said Mayor Leoncio Evasco of Maribojoc, Bohol, who is also Duterte's campaign manager.

"A hungry people demanding food do not deserve to be shot," Evasco said.

Evasco also called on government to conduct an inquiry into the incident.

Liberal Party (LP) presidential bet Manuel Roxas II condemned the violent dispersal of protesting farmers in Kidapawan City.

"The first task of the day is to restore order in the area and make sure that no clash happens again. The wounded on either side should be tended to," Roxas said.

"I call on the PNP and other concerned agencies to investigate as to the true cause of the clash and, if warranted, punish those who may be accountable," he added.

Presidential candidate Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago lambasted what she described as "inhumane" the dispersal of farmers and indigenous peoples protesting insufficient food supply in their areas.

Santiago said the government should be held accountable for the violence, adding that this violated the constitutional right to freedom of assembly.

"It is vile enough that this administration has failed to support the farmers and *lumads* of Kidapawan during the prolonged drought in Mindanao. But it is downright inhuman for them to shoot at the same people begging for help," the senator said.

LP vice presidential bet and Camarines Sur Rep. Leni Robredo said she was saddened by the incident.

"The cause of the violent incident should be investigated and

those who are behind it should be held accountable," she added.

Vice presidential candidate Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. denounced the violent dispersal of protesting farmers, saying the use of bullets was "completely unnecessary."

"I deplore the use of bullets to answer the legitimate demands of our farmers and their families in North Cotabato. They are hungry and they are just asking for food so they can feed their families," he said, adding that the police should have instead negotiated with the protesters.

Vice presidential bet Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano also condemned the violent dispersal of the protesting farmers and *lumads*.

"There is no reason in this world to shoot farmers who were merely demanding from the government help from the oppressive drought. This is totally unacceptable. This is the height of impunity," Cayetano added.

Cayetano also said that he and his runningmate Duterte would seek justice for the farmers.

Migrante, the group of overseas Filipino workers, condemned the bloody dispersal and blamed the Aquino government's ineptness.

The group also pressed for the filing of criminal charges against those involved in the shooting and demanded the immediate pull-out of the police in Kidapawan.

Members of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) also lambasted the Aquino government and the police for the violent incident.

KMU said Aquino and PNP officials should be held accountable for their heinous crime against the farmers and *lumads*.

—With Aurea Calica, Perseus Echeminada, Helen Flores, Mayen Jaymalin, Rainier Allan Ronda, Alexis Romero, John Unson, Reuters

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2 soldiers killed in NPA attack

Two soldiers were killed and another was wounded when suspected New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas opened fire at a command post in Bukidnon on Tuesday.

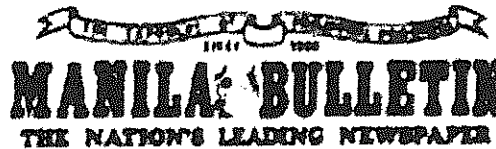
The bodies of Privates Nicol Sermito and Norbert Romanillos were recovered only on Wednesday, said Capt. Lorenzo Siobal, spokesman for the Army's 403rd Infantry Brigade.

The wounded soldier was identified as Sgt. Elmer Cabingi. Siobal said the victims were part of a team conducting security operations in Upper Lubuna, Barangay Casisang in Malaybalay City. "Our soldiers were eating and caught off guard," he said.

– Jaime Laude

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25 deadly clashes between AFP, NPA in March

By MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

BUTUAN CITY – Two suspected members of the New People's Army (NPA) were killed while an undetermined number of other rebels were believed wounded when government security forces and communist insurgents clashed anew in two separate encounters in the hinterlands of Agusan del Norte, military reported yesterday.

Military report also said the latest skirmish between the remaining members of NPAs was for the 24th armed encounter for the past month.

At 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, a team from the 29th Infantry Battalion (29th IB) was on a mission to support law enforcement operations (LEO) in the outskirt areas of Barangay Telesfora, in Tubay town, Agusan del Norte, when it encountered the NPA rebels, who were reportedly conducting trying to extort revolutionary tax from local residents, military report said.

The encounter lasted for 15 minutes that eventually pushed the NPA to withdraw out of the engagement area. The 29th IB troops recovered an AK47 rifle and live ammunitions.

In the adjacent town of Santiago of that same province, another team from 29th IB was also conducting support to LEO at the outskirts of Sitio Tabon of Barangay San Isidro when it engaged another NPA group.

The encounter occurred at 3:45 p.m. and lasted for about 30 minutes before the insurgents scampered to different directions.

People in the area said they saw the retreating rebels carrying with them two dead comrades, added Lt. Col. Ariel Orio, commander of the 29th IB, in his initial report.

As of press time, troops from the 29th IB were still pursuing the remaining NPA members in the hinterland areas of Agusan del Norte.

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Reds 'recruit pa more' in CL – military

By **STEVE A. GOSUICO**

FORT Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija -- The communist New People's Army (NPA) is on a so-called "recruit pa more" mode in Central Luzon as their remnants have resorted to criminal activities such as banditry and extortion, victimizing businessmen and contractors, the military here said.

Col. Felimon T. Santos, commander of the Army's 703rd Infantry Brigade, said this massive recruitment plan by the

rebel group to entice more civilians into their fold was contained in subversive documents recovered by the Army following an encounter with a 10-man rebel band in Carranglan town on Wednesday.

The 30-minute encounter resulted in the death of one alias Paulo, a rebel political officer, and the capture of another rebel identified as Jeofrey Tolentino, 19, alias Ryan/Yuri, and the seizure of a cache of firearms and ammunition.

Santos said a notebook which was among those recovered when the

rebels fled revealed that members of the underground movement in the region are under instructions to heighten recruitment of new members.

He said the recruitment plan was apparently to make up for the loss of many members due to armed encounters as well as the return of some of them to the folds of the law.

The 703rd IB chief said only remnants of the NPAs are operating in the 703rd IB's jurisdiction covering eastern Pangasinan and in the boundaries of Nueva Ecija and Nueva Vizcaya.

Santos said the remaining rebel forces have lost their idealism and are now merely engaged in banditry and criminal activities such as extortion.

Maj. Gen. Angelito M. de Leon, commanding officer of the Army's 7th Infantry (Kaugnay) Division who directed the operations of the 703rd IB, said the guerilla band belongs to one Ka Omeng.

He said Omeng's group has been extorting P1 million from the PCP in exchange for the trouble-free construction of the project.

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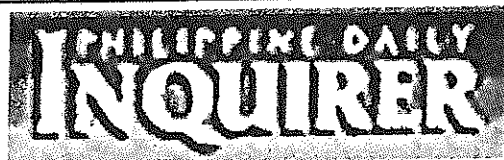


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2 NPA todas sa Agusan encounter

Dalawang hinihinalang miyembro ng New People's Army ang namatay samantalang maraming iba pang pinaniniwalaang nasugatan sa dalawang magkahiwalay na engkuwentro sa kabundukan ng Agusan del Norte noong Miyerkules. Inilalat ng military na nagpapatrulya ang isang team ng 29th Infantry Battalion sa Barangay Telesfora, Tubay, nang makasagupa nila ang mga NPA na nangingikil umano sa mga residente. Tumagal ng 15 minuto ang engkuwentro bago tumakas ang mga NPA. Makaraan ng ilang oras, nakasagupa naman ng 29th IB habang nagpapatrulya ang mga NPA na nangingikil umano sa mga residente ng Sitio Tabon, Barangay San Isidro, Santiago. Nagkaroon ng 30 minutong engkuwentro bago tumakas ang mga NPA dala-dala ang katawan ng dalawa nilang miyembro. Tinutugis na ng 29th IB ang mga NPA na kanilang nakasagupa. Pagkatapos ng mga engkuwentro, nanawagan si Major Gen. Benjamin R. Madrigal Jr., commanding general ng Army 4th Infantry Division, sa mga NPA sa Caraga na sumuko na. **(Mike U. Crismundo)**

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P-Noy to lead heroes' day rites

By Julie M. Aurelio

PRESIDENT Aquino will lead the Araw ng Kagitingan rites atop Mt. Samat National Shrine in Pilar, Bataan, on April 9 highlighting the celebration of Philippine Veterans Week from April 5 to 11.

In various activities scheduled next week, the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) will fete 45 war veterans, both living and dead—the largest number of awardees in recent years.

"We want to honor as many veterans as possible, because most of our veterans are already old and bedridden," said Restituto Aguilar, chief of the PVAO veterans memorial and historical division.

The World War II veterans will be feted in a parade in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, on April 5; a tribute on Corregidor Island, Cavite, on April 7; a ceremony at Capas, Tarlac, on April 10; and a concluding sunset ceremony at the Libingan ng mga Bayani on April 11.

In a press conference in Camp Aguinaldo on Friday, the PVAO said current and former government officials have been invited to grace various events, among them Philippine Army chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año, Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, Undersecretary for Veterans and Retiree Affairs Jesus Millan and Bases Conversion and Development Authority President Arnel Paciano Casanova.

Other guests include military general Jose Magno, a veteran of the Vietnam War, and former Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Of the 45 veterans to be awarded, 25 are already dead while the rest are still alive, mostly in their 80s and 90s.

Aguilar noted that last year, only 30 old soldiers and guerillas of World War II were recognized.

"We are honoring more of our heroes this year. All of them have made very significant contributions during the war that helped liberate our country," the official said.

Among the awardees, the highest-ranked is the late Commodore Heracleo Alano, a former flag officer in command of the Philippine Navy. He was a third lieutenant assigned to the Philippine Navy's Offshore Patrol before the war broke out and was awarded a silver star during the war for his heroism.

He also joined the guerillas in Bohol, counting among his subordinates ex-Pres. Carlos Garcia who later appointed him Navy chief.

Alano died in 1983 at the age of 68 and has a Navy coastal patrol boat and the Naval Base in Cavite named after him.

Among the living veteran awardees, Col. Guillermo Garcia of the Philippine Air Force is the highest-ranked and will be turning 98 this year. He was part of the Air Corps which spied on the activities of the Japanese during the war.

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Noy concedes: Phl can't match Beijing's military might

By DELON PORCALLA

President Aquino has conceded it would be foolish for Manila to even think that it can match Beijing's superior weaponry and military might.

Aquino made the remark during a recent Liberal Party sortie in Caloocan City, where he told the crowd gathered by Mayor Oscar Malapitan and Rep. Edgar Erice the reason the Philippine government had to bring China before an international tribunal over the maritime issue.

This is where the Philippines can win its case against China – by bringing the Chinese government before the Arbitral Tribunal where it will be rules-based and in adherence to the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea.

Aquino stressed he has the obligation, as leader of the country, to protect its maritime interests and territories from foreign incursion.

The issue was raised as Aquino defended

his government's continued refusal to acquire surface-to-air missiles – which independent presidential candidate Sen. Grace Poe has lamented – in order to protect the country's maritime territory from China.

Aquino admitted the government has the funds to procure the weapons, but stressed this is "easier said than done" as acquiring such heavy weaponry would require very serious study – like on what platform would this be placed, in a warship, mobile or stationed permanently.

Aquino said he had to prioritize use of the country's resources and put primal consideration on the government's poverty alleviation efforts, since the military will definitely never match the power of China.

Putting surface-to-air missiles at the disputed Kalayaan Group of islands may likewise be perceived by China as a threat

and might result in a "preemptive strike" that may further worsen the ongoing tensions between Manila and Beijing, or other claimant-countries.

Acquiring the missiles will only endanger the country's fiscal position as there will be no more budget allocation for the government's flagship conditional cash transfer program, infrastructure projects and the like.

It was thus more practical on his part to modernize the Armed Forces of the Philippines

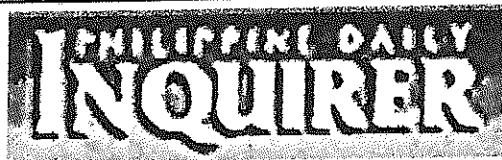
(AFP) and enhance even more the capability of soldiers to protect the Filipinos and the Philippine territory by providing them with better weapons and logistics.

Aquino earlier revealed plans to possibly acquire submarines as part of the country's defense strategy in protecting its maritime interests.

Aquino later said it would be better to allocate more funds in fighting insurgency in the countryside and address local terrorism brought by the bandit group Abu Sayyaf in war-torn Mindanao, in order to keep the citizens out of harm's way.

– With Helen Flores

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US, Japan warships arrive for war games

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—This former American naval base has started hosting vessels from the United States and Japan, ahead of the joint military exercises between Filipino and US troops, government officials said.

Seven ships from the United States and three Japanese vessels have either arrived or expected to dock here during the weekend for this year's Balikatan 2016 exercises. Japan is participating as an observer.

According to the US Pacific Command, US Marines participating in the annual war games have also started to arrive in the country early this week.

Balikatan is an annual bilateral training exercise between the Philippines and the United States. It is designed for various missions such as humanitarian assistance, maritime law enforcement and environmental protection, according to a statement issued earlier by the US Embassy in Manila.

This year's Balikatan will take

place from April 4 to 16, in various training sites in the country, including Grow Valley, Fort Magsaysay, Clark Air Field, Subic Bay, Palawan and Panay.

Yesterday, replenishment oiler ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE-9) and dock landing ship USS Harpers Ferry (LSD-49) dropped anchor at the Alava pier here, according to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

Another replenishment oiler vessel, USNS Rappahannock (T-AO-204), arrived here a day earlier.

Supply ship USNS Sacagawea (T-AKE-2), dry cargo ship USNS Maj. Stephen W. Pless (T-AK-3005), oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl (T-AO-193), and Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Fitzgerald (DDG-62) are expected to arrive today.

Capt. Lued Lincuna, Philippine Navy spokesperson said the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) would be sending its Oyashio-class Japanese diesel-electric submarine (SS-511) to Subic Bay for a

goodwill visit on April 3.

The Japanese submarine will be escorted by two destroyers, JS Setogiri (DD-156) and JS Ariake (DD-109). It will stay in Subic until April 6, Lincuna said. This would be the submarine's first visit to the Philippines in 15 years, according to Japanese Navy.

An undetermined number of military vehicles, mostly Humvees and amphibious, have been temporarily stored at the Subic Bay International Airport (SBIA).

SBMA Chair Roberto Garcia said the vehicles would be used by Balikatan participants.

Throughout the Balikatan, Filipino and US forces will work together to enhance maritime law enforcement throughout the Philippines in order to meet annual training requirements, and enhance techniques, tactics, and procedures as a critical part of interoperability of our forces, the embassy's statement said.

Allan Macatuno, Inquirer Central Luzon

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Troops capture BIFF commander in Cotabato

By Mario J. Mallari

Government troops captured a commander of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter Special Operation Group (BIFF-SOG) during an operation in Cotabato City on Thursday, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) announced yesterday.

Director Victor Deona, CIDG chief, identified the arrested BIFF leader as Zainudin Kawilan, who is wanted for double murder.

Kawilan was nabbed by detectives of CIDG-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) under Supt. Jimmy Daza, together with the Philippine Army, PRO-ARMM, Cotabato City police station, and Regional Intelligence Unit-15.

The arrest was made by virtue of an arrest warrant against Kawilan who was collared at

around 11:30 a.m. in Cotabato City.

Daza said that Kawilan is responsible in the series of harassment against military installation and the killing of military personnel in Salvo, Pagatin, Mamasapano and Shariff Aguak, (SPMS) box area.

According to Daza, Kawilan is also involved in gun-for-hire activities in Central Mindanao.

Only last February, BIFF elements engaged government forces in weeks of clashes in Maguindanao, particularly in Datu Salibu town where they attacked a government project.

It was not clear, however, if Kawilan was with the BIFF band that launched the attacks in Satu Salibu.

Branded as "peace spoiler," the BIFF is a breakaway faction of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front which is talking peace with the government.

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NGAYON
Diyaryong disante ng masang intellihente

Pahina. 6

Detachment binomba: Sanggol utas, 2 pa sugatan!

MAKILALA, North Cotabato - Napatay ang pitong buwang sanggol makaraang tamaan ng ligaw na bala matapos na sala-

kayin at bombahin ng mga rebeldeng New People's Army o NPA ang detachment ng mga sundalo sa Sitio Alang-alang, Barangay

Nina RHODERICK BENEZ at JOY CANTOS

Kisante, Makilala, North Cotabato kamakalawa ng gabi.

Kinilala ni P/CInsp. Elias Diosma Colonia, hepe ng Makilala Police ang nasawing sanggol na

si Joylyn Dado habang sugatan ang dalawang menor-de-edad na sina Judith Darino, 17 at John Patrick Binoy, isang taong gulang nang tamaan ng shrapnel sa isang pagsabog at ngayon ay ginagamot sa Makilala Medical Specialist Center.

Sinalakay umano ng mga 'di matukoy na bilang

ng mga rebeldeng NPA ang detachment ng militar dakong alas-8:00 ng gabi.

Inilunsad ng mga NPA ang pag-atake tatlong araw matapos nilang ipagdiwang ang kanilang ika-47 taong anibersaryo.

Dahil dito, nagkaputukan ang tropa ng pamahalaan at ang rebeldeng grupo na tumagal ng 15 minuto.

02 April 2016



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Marine in hot water for rude post against Zamboangueñas

By NONOY E. LACSON

ZAMBOANGA CITY – A Marine is in hot water for calling Zamboangueñas “malandi, pokpok (flirty, prostitute), social climber.”

An irate Zamboanga City Mayor Maria Isabelle Climaco has called for an immediate investigation into the malicious and derogatory online post by a member of the Philippine Marines, calling the Zamboangueñas as “malandi, pokpok at social climber.”

The allegedly derogatory remarks were posted by Marine soldier Nelson de la Noche in Facebook and has gone viral in social media.

The original post of the account Nelson de la Noche stated: “Yes it is funny. Halos lahat ng babae sa Zamboanga

ay malandi, pokpok at social climber. Parang ganito lang yan, nasa gitna ng dalawang hita niyo ang utak niyo.”

The post has gone viral and has drawn angry reactions from netizens.

In a letter to AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hernando Iriberry last March 29, Climaco said people should exercise prudence in using social networking sites, especially if one is part of an organization that should highlight integrity and honor.

“The undersigned’s office received complaints about a viral post in the social networking site Facebook of a malicious and derogatory post by a member of the Philippine Marine Nelson de la Noche, generalizing the Zamboangueñas with offensive statements,” the mayor stated in her letter to Iriberry.

02 April 2016

The Standard

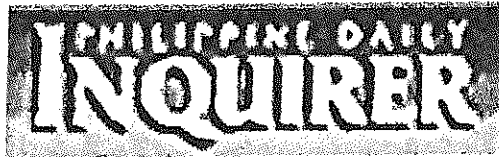
DEFINING THE NEWS

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Election duty. Philippine Air Force soldiers arrive at the Manila Police District headquarters in Manila on Friday after they were deployed for election security duties. **DANNY PATA**

12 April 2016



Page: A14

More banditry

OFTEN LEFT unmentioned in the cacophonous presidential back-and-forth—and certainly yet to be taken up as an issue in the presidential debates—is what the candidates plan to do with the Abu Sayyaf and other rogue groups in the South. That the problem of lawlessness and terrorism in remote areas of Mindanao hardly merited a mention in the first two debates is an indication of how banal the evil has become in the national consciousness—a persistent canker, but so distant from the concerns of the usual chattering classes that no one has even raised with the candidates the heinous number of captives the kidnap-for-ransom gang has notched up: now 24.

EDITORIAL

The number was only 14 for some time, but on Saturday afternoon or Monday night (the reports are conflicting), 10 more were added: Abu Sayyaf gunmen abducted a boatload of Indonesians who were ferrying coal from Borneo island to the Philippines. Seemingly taking a leaf from Somali pirates who hijack vessels that pass through their part of Africa, the Abu Sayyaf bandits reportedly boarded the tugboat Brahman 12 while it was in Sulu waters, took the crew members captive, and towed the vessel to land; it later drifted toward the coastal village of Tubig Dakula in Languyan, Tawi-Tawi, where it was recovered.

The boat was found to have been stripped clean by the bandits: The navigational equipment and the personal possessions of the crew were all gone. And the 10 Indonesians have vanished along with their captors; they are believed now to be in the jungles of either Sulu or Basilan. But before contact was completely lost, a crew member was reportedly able to sneak a call to the boat owner, using a Taiwanese line, to say that gunmen had taken over their vessel.

The Indonesian foreign ministry itself has confirmed the basics of the hijacking by revealing that the boat owner subsequently received two phone calls from the Abu Sayyaf. The group was demanding ransom of P50 million for the kidnapped Indonesians.

Of the 14 held captive by the Abu Sayyaf before this incident, seven are foreigners: one Dutch, one Japanese, one Chinese, two Canadians, one Norwegian and one Italian. The 10 Indonesians represent the biggest catch of foreigners recently kidnapped by the bandit group, and if the other captives' fate is any indication, it would take some time for them to regain their freedom. Incredibly, the Abu Sayyaf is said to maintain a Facebook page, and on it a video has been posted where the group threatens to kill the hostages unless the P50-million ransom demanded is paid by April 8.

What has the Armed Forces said to all this? That the abduction was possibly "diversionary tactics to ease the pressure on [its] besieged forces ... following the continuous tactical successes of the security sector against lawless elements and extremists in the islands of Basilan and Sulu." That was the statement, characterized as an "initial assessment," made by AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla on Wednesday, or three or four days into the incident. It's classic nonspeak, neither confirming specifics nor offering a concrete update, except for the pro-forma "there will be no letup in focused military operations in these areas" on how authorities are responding to the latest atrocity from what the AFP has often described as a spent force. Note, however, the self-congratulations that the spokesperson managed to insert into the statement.

The kidnapping of the Indonesians may present another wrinkle beyond the diplomatic and security dilemmas. A source of this paper said that the boatmen were actually working on vessels engaged in illegal mining in Tawi-Tawi, and that local politicians and military officers were behind the illegal operations. If that's true, the well-placed syndicate would have reason to hush up the incident, keep it out of the headlines as much as possible, and scrub any hint of a bigger story in the Indonesians' plight beyond the now cut-and-dried, kidnap-for-ransom narrative.

Clear answers are needed from the military and the government on yet another daring poke in the eye by the Abu Sayyaf—one that, on top of the \$81-million money-laundering heist, would certainly further damage the Philippines' international standing, as a country seemingly overrun by bandits whether in the banking industry or in the remote countryside.

And the presidential candidates ought to be asked the P50-million ransom question: How will they deal with these bandits?

82 April 2016



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At Ground Level

By SATUR C. OCAMPO



Pursue diplomacy, restrain belligerence in sea dispute

Starting Monday the 15th annual US-Philippine joint (Balikatan) military exercises under the 1999 Visiting Forces Agreement will roll out in various sites in the country. Nearly 10,000 American and Filipino soldiers will undergo 10 days of training in warfare.

This is a massive exercise for the US, which will deploy 55 aircraft, including its much-touted Ospreys, and at least five warships. For its part, the AFP will use two brand-new FA-50 fighter jets, S-211s, and two refurbished former US battleships.

Balikatan this year will take place within the framework of the recently announced deal which essentially allows American military forces to build facilities and pre-position war materiel in five mini US bases within existing Philippine facilities. (The Supreme Court gave the green light last month to the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement or EDCA, under which the new scheme will fall.)

War buffs are anticipating the “showcasing” by the US – in live-fire exercises at the Crow Valley gunnery range in Capas, Tarlac – of its newest addition to a multiple-launch rocket system called Himars (high-mobility artillery rocket system).

Touted as an anti-aircraft, anti-ship, and ground-warfare asset, the Himars’ supposed edge is that it’s fired from a highly mobile wheeled chassis, which can be rapidly moved away “before enemy forces can locate its launching site,” thus evading a missile counter-attack. Its operation “engages artillery air-defense concentrations, trucks, light armor and personnel carriers, (plus) support troops and supply concentrations,” according to one newspaper report based on documents provided by the *Balikatan* public affairs office.

“Later,” the report adds, the Himars “will be brought to Palawan although it would not be doing some live-fire exercises in Palawan.” The most likely place will be the Antonio Bautista Air Base in that province – one of the five military bases offered for US access. That’s where the questions begin to arise.

The airbase faces the South China Sea and the Spratly islands, where China has constructed artificial islands on islets and reefs and set up airport and seaport facilities. China has ignored the protests and denunciations of neighboring countries also laying claim over these maritime areas: the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Taiwan.

After showing off the Himars’ warfare capabilities in the Balikatan exercises, for what purpose has the US decided – with the P-Noy government consenting – to move these weapons to Palawan? The Himars being parked there will surely spur China to claim that it’s a “provocative act” by both the US and the Philippines. The objective effect will be to aggravate the tensions in the South China Sea.

(To recall, in 2012 China seized control of the Scarborough or Panatag shoal that the Philippines rightly claims as our fishing grounds, since it’s well within our 200-nautical-mile exclusive

economic zone as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.)

Provoking more conflict won’t do any good. All the parties involved must persist in pursuing diplomacy and restrain belligerent initiatives and responses by everyone. This, to my mind, is the appropriate, responsible stance in disputes that may take a long time to resolve.

Having said that, I see a positive factor in the pushback by citizens, including church leaders, against the virtually continual stationing of US forces and facilities inside AFP bases in their localities.

In Cagayan de Oro, some bishops and multisectoral groups are preparing for concerted action on April 7, protesting against American military presence in Lumbia Air Base in the city.

They are highlighting century-old lessons learned from the Battle of Cagayan de Misamis on April 7, 1900 – a little-known uprising against American forces occupying the area. The Filipinos failed in their desperate attack launched against the military barracks, but those who sacrificed their lives are now recognized as heroes.

To encourage participation in the protest, forums are being held to discuss the 1900 uprising. “Education on history and nationalism is vital,” said Bishop Rudy Juliada of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente. “Many of us do not know our past, we do not know how local heroes fought for freedom, and because of lack of knowledge we are not critical on the [current] issues.”

The organizers aim to build a multisectoral alliance against EDCA, to include interfaith groups, local government officials, homeowners, the academic community, farmers, indigenous peoples, business groups, and lawyers.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

From the Catholic information service UCAN News, I came across statements from two church leaders criticizing EDCA and opposing the renewed presence of US troops here.

Bishop Roberto Mallari of the San Jose diocese in Nueva Ecija (whose jurisdiction includes Fort Magsaysay in Laur) pointed out: "US military bases in the country will create more problems than solutions." If EDCA is intended to modernize the AFP, he doubted it could happen. Further, he said that with US military presence the church "fears an increase in human rights violations."

For his part, Bishop Pedro Arigo of Palawan warned that the installation of US military facilities in his province would aggravate tensions between Chinese maritime forces and Filipino fishermen. And "because our own government is incapable of providing strong military support," he lamented, "many Palawan residents will take [the US military presence] as a necessary evil."

Rape cases, prostitution, drug problems and increased HIV/AIDS incidence will become bigger problems once the foreign military presence is established, he said.

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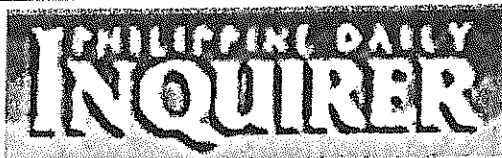
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Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

02 April 2016



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'Bloody rebellion part of problem'

IN THE run-up to the 47th anniversary of its founding, the New People's Army escalated its campaign of violence, as if to remind the Filipino people that it is still a force to be reckoned with, capable of inflicting harm on its perceived enemies—that is, the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police, and any person or entity that refuses to pay what it calls "revolutionary" and "permit to campaign" taxes.

The violence perpetrated by the NPA is totally out of tune with the desire of the Filipino people to live in peace. We have just come out of the Holy Week with its message of peace and redemption for all mankind. And we are entering the intensity of the campaign period preparatory to exercising our right to elect the next leaders of our country come May.

Our people deserve their right to fair, free and peaceful elections, but this is not possible under the regime of arson, extortion and murder being imposed by the NPA in the countryside.

We invite the NPA and its mother organization, the Communist Party of the Philippines, to heed the call of the Filipino people to end their violent struggle against the government and discuss the issues that divide us in a sincere, honest and peaceful dialogue. There is no issue that cannot be resolved between well-meaning Filipinos who are determined to secure a better life for all our people.

After 47 years of armed struggle, the CPP and NPA must realize that, in spite of their avowed intentions to resolve the ills of society, their bloody rebellion has become part of the problem.

We therefore invite our armed brethren to be part of the restoration of democracy that we regained in 1986 via a peaceful struggle against an entrenched dictatorship. Just imagine what we, the Filipino people, united in our desire for peaceful change, can accomplish if we work on our issues jointly and creatively, in peace.

—ALEXANDER A. PADILLA, chair,
PH gov't peace negotiating panel

02 April 2016



Pahina. 19

114-KM DEATH MARCH TRAIL RUN, PAGSALUDO SA BATAAN HEROES

SASALUDUHANG muli ng mga namamanatang mananakbo ang mga Bayani ng Bataan sa pamamagitan ng pinakamatandang taunang salit-salitang takbuhang 'di pang-kompetisyong pagtahak sa ruta ng 1942 Death March Trail na walang butaw o registration fee sa Abril 8 at 9.

Tulad ng dati, sisimulan sa Death March kilometer post 0 marker ng Mariveles, Bataan kung saan mangunguna si Jesse Concepcion, kasama ang kinatawang si local civil registrar Ross Romero ang taga-Provincial Tourism Office, sa seremonyang sisindihan ang simbolikong sulo ng kalapangan ng isang buhay na bayani at ipapasa sa founding organizer, na si Edmundo Paez, pangulo ng Safer Runners ng Fernando, para sa "Walk with the Heroes" phase, bago itakbo pa-Ciudad de San Fernando.

Makakasama rin ng running club ang Philippine Army's Special Services Center, ASCOM, AFP's TRADOC, Mechanized Infantry Division, Runners Plus, Sta. Rosa City RC, Rotary Club of Baywalk – Manila, Mariveles RC, Caloocan North RC at iba pa sa Tribute Run na magpapalipas ng gabi sa Guagua, Pampanga. Kinabukasan ay tatakbo pa-Bacolor para sa taunang Visita Iglesia sa San Guillermo Church, na katuwang ang Milo, UNILAB Active Health at iba pang mga sponsors.

Matapos ang simpleng palatuntunan sa Death March Km. 102 (Sto. Niño Railway Station, City of San Fernando), kasama sina Edwin Santiago, sasakay ang runners sa back-up vehicles patungong Sto. Domingo Railway Station ng Capas, Tarlac at doon sisimulan ang natitirang 12-km. Infamous Trail na magtatapos sa Capas National Shrine (Camp O'Donnell).

(Ed Paez)

ONLINE NEWS

02 APRIL 2016

Rebels torch P35-M construction equipment in Zambo

By Roel Pareño (philstar.com) | Updated April 1, 2016 - 4:16pm

ZAMBOANGA CITY, Philippines - Heavily armed suspected communist insurgents burned Thursday night five heavy equipment for road construction in a village of Sindangan town, Zamboanga del Norte, according to police official.

Chief Superintendent Miguel Antonio Jr., Western Mindanao Police director, said about 60 armed men swooped down at Sitio Barille, Barangay Talinga about 8:30 p.m. where the equipment, including three units of backhoe and two bulldozers were kept.

Antonio said the watchmen of the heavy equipment, owned by the ESR Construction Supply, scampered for safety as the gunmen surrounded the site.

The gunmen reportedly poured gasoline on the equipment and set it on fire.

According to Antonio, the gunmen also fired shots at the road roller before they fled the area.

The police forces of Sindangan backed by the 20th Special Force and 42nd Infantry Battalion immediately responded but failed to apprehend the suspects.

Based on the estimate of police authorities, the damaged heavy equipment were worth P35 million.

Antonio said police elements of the Sindangan Municipal Police Station are conducting the investigation on the attack.

Local authorities initially suspected extortion as the possible motive for the destruction of road construction equipment.

DND signs P5.36-B anti-submarine helicopter deal

By Patricia Lourdes Viray (philstar.com) | Updated April 1, 2016 - 5:00pm

MANILA, Philippines – The Department of Defense signed a contract worth P5.36 billion for the acquisition of anti-submarine helicopters for the Philippine Navy.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and AgustaWestland Limited Senior Vice President Stefano Bortoli on Tuesday inked the deal for two AW-159 anti-submarine helicopters.

"After more than four decades of aspiring to improve its capability, our Navy has found optimism in this anticipated acquisition of a new state of the art equipment and weaponry to address the requirements of anti sub-surface naval operations," Gazmin said.

The helicopters are expected to be delivered within 900 days after the signing of the notice to proceed.

The DND allotted P5.4 billion for the contract where AgustaWestland Limited emerged as the single calculated bidder.

"With the eventual availability and utilization of these new air assets, our navy can conduct naval operations with a high degree of confidence and reliability," the Defense chief said.

Defense Undersecretary Fernando Manalo earlier revealed that many countries had offered to sell military equipment to the country for the military's modernization program.

The military recently acquired new assets such as the South Korean-made FA-50PHs, Bell 205 combat utility helicopters, Airbus Military C-295 transport aircraft, new M-4 rifles and refurbished armored personnel carriers.

1 killed, 13 wounded in farmers' protest in Kidapawan

(UPDATED) The protesting farmers are asking for help from the government due to the effects of a drought in the area

Rappler.com

Published 11:50 AM, April 01, 2016

Updated 7:15 PM, April 01, 2016

MANILA, Philippines (7th UPDATE) – At least one farmer was killed and 13 others were wounded Friday, April 1, when police dispersed a farmers' protest action in Kidapawan City, reports said.

Two policemen are also "under critical condition" due to head trauma while 40 cops were hurt in the incident, the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Malacañang said in separate statements.

The identity of the slain farmer was not immediately known. But the PNP said they arrested a number of protesters, including "an individual reported to be an NPA [New People's Army] Commander from Brgy. Basak, Magpet, North Cotabato."

Police said about 3,000 protesters blocked the Davao-Cotabato Highway starting Wednesday, March 30, to demand government assistance in the wake of the effects of drought in the area. (Organizers put the number of protesters at 5,000.)

The Kidapawan City police dispersed the protest shortly before 11 am Friday and shot at the farmers, according to Kilab Multimedia on its Facebook page.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said soldiers joined the dispersal. "Shots from M-16 rifles were allegedly fired," it added in a statement.

Kidapawan City Mayor Joseph Evangelista said the farmers were demanding that North Cotabato Governor Emylou Taliño-Mendoza release 15,000 sacks of rice to them, but Mendoza reportedly refused to talk to them.

The protesters said the money can be sourced from the province's calamity fund, adding

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they have been severely affected by drought in the past several months.

Mindanews reported that "North Cotabato's Crop Damage Report Summary as of February 17 listed 36,915 farmers affected by the drought, mostly corn, rice, rubber and coconut farmers." The province has been under a state of calamity on January 19, Mindanews added.

Mendoza is running for reelection unopposed.

Mayor Evangelista held a crisis meeting with the police and local authorities after the dispersal.

Governor's orders?

PNP spokesman Chief Supt Wilben Mayor said they are investigating the incident and will hold "anyone responsible for this tragic incident accountable."

In a chronology of events, the PNP said the permit to rally lapsed Friday morning. The highway protest that began 6 am March 30 brought together farmers, members of indigenous groups, and other cause-oriented groups.

"Their presence continued to disrupt public movement in one of the major transportation arteries of Mindanao," the PNP said in a statement.

Upon "guidance" from the governor, the local police moved to disperse the crowd past 10 am Friday and coordinated with the Department of Social Welfare and Development "to rescue minors who were part of the picketline," the PNP added.

"Before the PNP could start their operation, however, protesters attacked them with poles and pieces of wood. Large rocks were also thrown at the policemen, and at the stationary fire truck deployed to the area," according to the PNP.

Presidential candidates condemned the incident in separate statements.

The New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) also asked government to investigate what happened especially how the police acted during the dispersal. Government must

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Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

"hold accountable anyone found responsible regardless of rank or affiliation," HRW said. – **Rappler.com**

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