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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS NEWS CLIPPINGS

09 April 2016

Saturday

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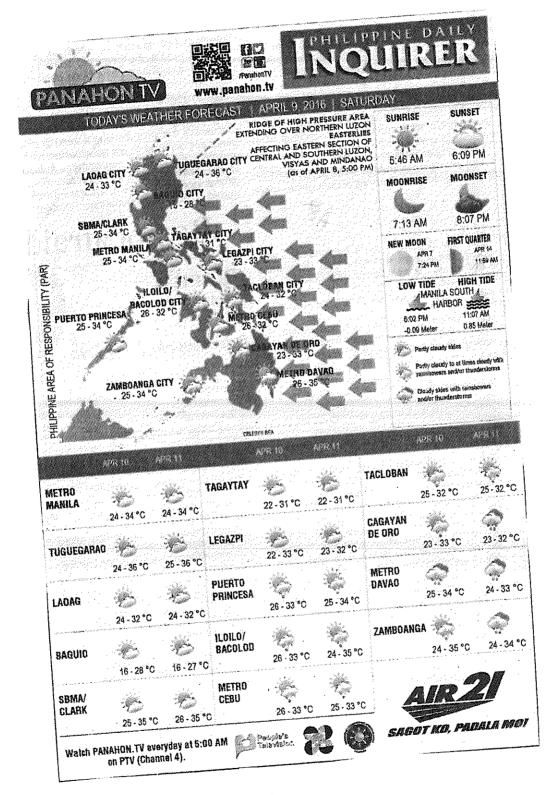
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nialso m ith INC officials

Meeting lasted one hour, says Robredo

By Julliane Love de Jesus Inquirer.net

LIBERAL Party standard-bearer Mar Roxas and his vice presidential running mate, Leni Robredo, apparently met with the Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) leadership on the same day that rival presidential candidate Grace Poe confirmed having met with a high-ranking minister of the bloc-voting religious sect.

Robredo said she and Roxas met with INC leaders on March 30 but would neither confirm nor deny whether the

P-Noy: He's no longer the Binay I knew / A13

By Nikko Dizon

HE IS no longer the Jejomar Binay that he knew.

Exactly one month before Election Day, President Aquino yesterday delivered his most scathing diatribe yet against Vice President Jejomar Binay, an erstwhile ally and family friend, in Makati City, the latter's stronghold for the past three decades.

President Aquino said that the Binay he knew was one who was selfless and stood up against martial law.

The President said that Binay earned his admiration 30 years ago, when as the Edsa People Power Revolution unfolded, Binay accompanied him back to his sisters who were at home on Times Street even when his own life was in danger.

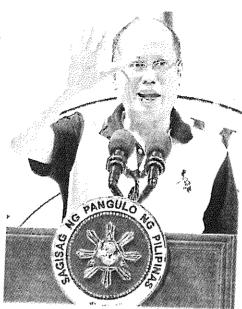
"And that time, I really became close to him because he put our welfare first before his. That was 30 years ago. It was clear to him that it was others first before himself." Mr. Aquino said.

Then addressing Binay directly, the President said:

"It is true that we counted on each other. We were against the dictatorship and we were ready to sacrifice our lives for our fellow men That was how we had a deep relationship."

"It was very clear during those days who Jejomar Binay was. Today, my question is: "Where has the Jejomar Binay I knew before gone?" Mr. Aquino asked.

Some 3,000 Makati City residents that al-



WHAT HAPPENED President Aquino finally speaks about the violent dispersal of farmers at the Kidapawan rally last week that resulted in the deaths of three protesters, during a meeting with local officials at Makati Coliseum on Friday.

so included beneficiaries of the government's conditional cash transfer program and the lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual community and people with disabilities filled Makati Coliseum yesterday, cheering as the President delivered solid punches against Binay.

Although obviously still under the weath er. President Aquino was in fighting form

Binay was the only candidate that President Aquino has named in a stump speech since the campaign began.

"Your former mayor here called me in competent and callous. But my question to him is, how has someone who is incompetent and callous turned a former sick man of Asia' into 'Asia's rising tiger?' Can an incompetent person lead the modernization of the Armed Forces, the police and even the fire bureau? Is it callousness and incompetence if one is able to bring health services to the poorest 40 percent of our population and bring the conditional cash transfer program to almost 4.6 million households?" Mr. Aquino said in Filipino.

The President said his concern for the people went beyond giving them cake, referring to the practice of the Binay city administration of giving birthday cakes to testidents who are senior citizens.

"He has been facing corruption allegations since 2014. Am I the only one who is waiting for a clear answer from this person who is among those wanting to be President of the Philippines?" Mr Aquino asked

Binay cut ties with President Aquino in June last year at the beight of the Senate in vestigation of his alleged graft-lader deals when he was still mayor of Makaii City.

Binay declared himself the leader of the opposition and has since been critical of Mr Aquino and his administration

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Int'l search and rescue group visits Army HQ in Taguig City

Members of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) visited the Philippine Army (PA) headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City last April 6 to assess and evaluate its disaster response preparedness and capability.

INSARAG is a network of countries and organizations dedicated to urban search and rescue and operational field coordination.

PA chief-of-staff Brig. Gen. Robert Arevalo welcomed the INSARAG Scoping Mission Team, which was headed by Yosuke Okita. "We are not here to judge you. We are here to support you," Okita said.

In his speech, Arevalo underscored the importance of increasing professional excellence in disaster response and humanitarian assistance.

Our accustry will greatly benefit in this INSARAG mission, being a country besidge by typhoons and disasters yearly. This INSARAG capacity assessment mission will definitely widen our understanding and appreciation on the future of disaster response and the needed

strategies that will further enhance capabilities," he added.

The 525th Engineering Combat Battalion, the PA's designated disaster response units conducted a capability demonstration is showcase its urban search and rescite capabilities.

Meanwhile, the PA continues to develope organize, train, equip, support and sustains. Army forces for the conduct of prompt and sustained humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

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www.interaksyon.com

MISTAKEN FOR NPA | Army keeps mum about soldiers who shot boy dead in Davao City

From InterAksyon (Apr 8): MISTAKEN FOR NPA | Army keeps mum about soldiers who shot boy dead in Davao City

Reports reaching Manila indicated that the command of the Philippine Army's 2nd Scout Ranger Battalion of the 10th Infantry Division, whose elite unit was tagged for the fatal shooting of a 12—year-old boy on April 1 in Davao City has been tight-lipped about the names of the seven soldiers belonging to its 6th Scout Ranger Company (6SRC) who figured in the incident.

The boy's uncle survived the shooting.

According to the division spokesman, Capt. Rhyan Batchar, the aggrieved family of Daniel Ferrer did not press charges, although, as far as military law is concerned, there is a case against the perpetrators of the killing.

"While it is true that the parents of Daniel voluntarily executed an affidavit of desistance, this will not preclude the Special Operations Command (SOCOM), which is the parent unit of the 2SRB, from conducting further investigation in order to determine any administrative liability of the soldiers in this unfortunate incident," Batchar said.

"The seven soldiers are now restricted to barracks while the investigation is on-going. As of now, their names are being withheld until the investigation has clearly established their involvement. The BOI (Board of Inquiry) and the investigation to be made by SOCOM will not preclude any investigation that may be conducted by other agencies," he added.

The military described the incident as an "accidental shooting" that happened in Sitio Mitundo, Barangay Baracatan in Toril district.

Earlier, Batchar said the elite forces were on combat operation when they spotted the boy and a companion carrying what appeared to be a gun. The boy was later identified as Daniel Ferrer and his companion was his uncle Danny Pile.

The soldiers fired at the Ferrer and Pile.

"One was able to jump for cover and run away, leaving behind his firearm," Batchar was quoted as saying in a report.

He said the "firearm" that Pile was carrying turned out to be an airgun.

Batchar said the soldiers violated the Rules of Engagement.

"First, the troops failed to exercise due diligence to ascertain their target before discharging their firearms, contrary to the provision in Internal Peace and Security Plan Bayanihan ROE on the use of force against the enemy, which states that 'identification of target must be by visual means'," he said.

http://interaksyon.com/article/126184/mistaken-for-npa--army-keeps-mum-about-soldiers-who-shot-boy-dead-in-davao-city

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Abu bandit nabbed in Sulu

I ZAMBOANGA CITY – Joint police and military operatives arrested on Tuesday an Abu Sayyaf bandit over the kidnapping of plantation workers.

Munib Bararuddi, a follower of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, was tagged in the kidnapping of eight Golden Harvest workers in Barangay Tairan in Lantawan town on June 11, 2001.

Bararuddi was collared on Lampangan island before 4 a.m. based on a warrant for eight counts of kidnapping and serious illegal detention.

He was the third Abu Sayyaf bandit arrested since security forces intensified operations against the militants amid a spate of kidnappings and bombings in Mindanao.

Meanwhile, members of the First Scout Ranger Battalion were given an award by Joint Task Group Sulu on Tuesday for their recent encounters with the Abu Sayvaf that left 73 militants dead and scores wounded.

The encounters also resulted in the rescue of Swiss hostage Lorenzo Vinciguerra and Coast Guard personnel Gringo Villaruz and Rod Pagaling last year

The Army battalion was deployed to Sulu in October 2014 to reinforce soldiers running after the Abu Sayyaf.

- Roel Pareño

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Pahina. 2

Construction firm inatake ng NPA rebels

Mindoro at dito ay sinunog ang mga heavy equipments dito kamakalawa ng gabi

Sa ulat na natang- rebelde gap ni Lt. Col. Ange- Binu

Inatake ng mahigit lo Guzman, bandang rebelde ng gasolina ang sampung rebeldeng New alas-10:00 ng gabi nang grader at backhoe dito People's Army (NPA) umatake ang mga reang isang construction beldeng komunista sa sa maabo at pagkatapos firm sa Brgy Poypoy, Algemar Construction at Calintaan, Occidental walang nagawa ang mga Lumilitaw sa imbestisecurity guard, empleyado at mga manggagawa rito dahilan sa matinding takot sa mga armadong

gasyon na pangingikil ng revolutionary tax sa pangasiwan ng construction company ang motibo ng panununog ng mga Binuhusan ng mga rebelde. - Joy CantosOFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF ccPUBLIC AFFAIRS - Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

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Ständard

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rhead selfies. Filipino Marines take selfies with a decommissioned 305mm M1890 mortar carriage at Battery Way in Corregidor Island in Cavite on turday. DANNY PATA

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Balikatan soldiers on despite trooper's death

By Allan Macatuno and Armand Galang Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—The training of paratroopers, who are taking part in Balikatan 2016 war games with the United States, has not been suspended despite the death of a Philippine Air Force (PAF) airman during a jump exercise here, an official of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said on Friday.

"All will continue as planned. No changes will happen," Capt. Celeste Frank Sayson, Balikatan spokesperson, said in a text message on Friday.

On Thursday afternoon, Airman 2nd Class Jover Dumansi of the PAF's 710th Special Action Operations Wing took part in a proficiency jump exercise but was dragged by strong winds toward the sea near the Subic Bay International Airport.

Twenty paratroopers from

the 710th Special Operations Wing conducted the proficiency jump exercises near the airport. Dumansi was one of the 10 jumpers in the first batch.

A force protection team from the Philippines and the United States sped toward where Dumansi dropped but the rescue and recovery operation took 15 minutes. Dumansi was taken to the Unihealth Hospital here but was declared dead at 6 p.m.

"The accident was an isolated case and, hopefully, would not happen again," Sayson said.

Dumansi's body was released from the hospital and taken to a funeral home in Subic, Zambales. His relatives had been notified about his death, Sayson said.

"Definitely, he died in the line of duty, so his family will be receiving benefits," he added.

Dumansi, was not new to the exercise. He was an experienced jumper, being part of an elite unit of the Air Force.

Sayson said the mishap was an "isolated, freak accident."

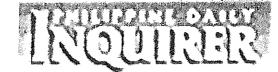
Other airborne exercises are scheduled to be held in the following days.

Balikatan 2016 began on April 4 and will end on April 16. War games are being held in various training sites in the country, including Crow Valley in Tarlac, Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, Clark Air Field in Pampanga, Palawan and Panay.

In Nueva Ecija, the Army's 7th Infantry Division had advised residents of Barangay Palali in General Tinio town against going to nearby mountains where troops test fired 105-mm and 155-mm Howitzer cannons yesterday, the command spokesperson said.

Close to 600 troopers from the US Army Pacific Command were joined by Filipino soldiers in the series of combat training in the vast Fort Magsaysay reservation. With a report by Julie M. Aurelio OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS - Email add: oacpa,army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285. 5295

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US defense chief coming for war games amid China tension

By Estrella Torres

UNITED STATES defense secretary Ashton Carter will be in Manila next week to meet with his Philippine counterpart in connection with the Balikatan joint exercises between Philippine and US forces to increase Philippine military capability in in the disputed South China Sea.

"Carter will visit next week because the Philippines is an

his country. We are working closely with our Filipino counterparts to investigate the incident," said Goldberg.

Tension bad for business

In the same forum, Philippine ambassador to the US Jose Cuisia Jr. told US businessmen in the Philippines to make a stand amid China's aggressive military buildup and activities that he said pose uncertainties to businesses in the Southeast Asian region.

important ally of the United States. [The visit] comes in conjunction with the Balikatan exercises," said US ambassador to the Philippines Philip Goldberg in an interview with reporters yesterday at an American Chamber of Commerce meeting in Makati City.

Goldberg said Carter will meet with key government officials during the visit. "Secretary Carter will also hold meetings with the (US and Philippine) troops involved in the Balikatan

"I encourage Amcham (American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines) to articulate in no uncertain terms that the business community will not tolerate the current situation in the South China Sea dictated by China," he told US businessmen gathered at the event.

"A militarized and tensiongripped South China Sea where the rule of the cannon prevails is not good for business," he said.

Cuisia said there were ongo-

exercises which is important to him as defense secretary," he said.

Goldberg, meanwhile, extended his condolences to the family and friends of a Filipino Air Force officer who died in a tragic accident during the Balikatan exercises.

He said the US embassy was working closely with Philippine authorities to investigate the incident.

"He will be remembered for his great courage and service to

ing discussions to increase naval defense through joint patrol activities in the disputed South China Sea territories.

Cuisia also told the forum that the United States was providing its biggest military assistance to the Philippines this year since 2001, allocating \$121 million in military aid.

"It is the biggest for sometime since the United States resumed fund assistance in 2001 following the US bases removal in 1991," he said.

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Phl gets US military aid boost amid sea row

The United States has allocated more than \$120 million in military aid to the Philippines this year, the biggest in about 15 years, a Filipino diplomat said yesterday. The aid comes amid rising tensions with China over the disputed South China Sea.

Philippine Ambassador to Washington Jose Cuisia said Manila was also in talks with the United States to acquire a fourth Hamilton-class cutter to strengthen Philippine capability to patrol its waters.

b water ant the dargest-ever

land reclamation and the construction of air and port facilities on some isles and reefs.

The Philippines has sought international arbitration on the dispute and a decision is expected late this month or in early May.

Cuisia also urged American business leaders to articulate that the business community will not tolerate the current situation in the region that is dictated by China.

"While the diplomats, lawyers and military strategists work

allocation from the US government this year to enhance the defense and security of our country," he told members of the American Chamber of Commerce in Manila.

Cuisia said Manila received \$79 million in annual military aid this year, compared to about \$50 million in 2015.

He said Manila would get an additional \$42 million from the new US Southeast Asia Maritime Initiative, a maritime capacity-building program announced by US Defense Secrefar who is visiting

past year or so has included on avoiding military conflict, the voice of the business community is just as powerful. I encourage AMCHÂM (American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines) to weigh in on the issue to ensure that business interests are protected," Cuisia said during the American businessmen's general membership meeting and business leadership program in Makati.

He said that sustained economic growth and prosperity are underpinned by political stability and "no single country should be allowed to jeop-

Manila next week

The two amounts represent the biggest amount of military aid since 2000, when the US military returned to its former colony after the American bases closed in 1992.

China claims almost the entire South China Sea, believed to have huge deposits of oil and gas. Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also have claims to parts of the waters, through which about \$5 trillion in trade passes every year.

Beijing's more assertive pursuit of its claims over the

ardize the region's peace and security?

The US has always maintained that its economic prosperity is closely linked to the Asia-Pacific.

US Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker said that the potential for deepening economic engagement is tremendous.

Cuisia echoed that the potential is great but this could only happen if peace and stability in the South China Sea remain as constant variables.

- Pia Lee-Brago, Reuters

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Fage: 15

AFP to exhaust efforts to rescue Samal hostages

ZAMBOANGA CITY

-Military operations to rescue three foreigners and a Filipina taken from a resort on Samal island in December continue as the deadline issued by the Abu Sayyaf ended yesterday.

"We are doing everything to address the threat and

ultimately solve the problem," Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman for the Western Mindanao Command, said yesterday.

Tan refused to elaborate on their options, saying it might jeopardize the operations and endanger the lives of the hostages.

Joint Task Group Sulu is leading the operations

Sources said the military intensified its operations amid reports that third-party negotiations for the release of Canadians John Ridsdel and Robert Hall, Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad and Marites Flor

failed.

Abu Sayyaf bandits gave the families of the hostages one month from March 8 to meet their demands. The kidnappers demanded a P1-billion ransom for each of the hostages.

"We are taking the threat seriously and we

are doing everything to resolve the problem," Tan said.

A source said the Abu Sayyaf insisted on the payment of ransom during the negotiations. It was not known if the deadline was extended. — Roel Pareño, Jaime Laude

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US condoles with Pinoy soldier who died in Balikatan

The United States expressed condolences to the family of the Filipino paratrooper who died in an accident during the joint Balikatan military exercise on Thursday.

US Ambassador Philip Goldberg said the accident was "tragic"

Airman 2nd Class Jover Dumansi of the Philippine Air Force 710th Special Operations Wing who parachuted from a C130 plane in an exercise with US forces died after a wind gust blew him out to sea instead of to an airport drop zone.

"I wanted to express our condolences on the loss of Airman Dumansi and reach out to the family and to the public and say that that was of course a tragic accident and we wish them all our condolences," Goldberg said.

The US embassy in Manila expressed its deepest condolences to the family and friends of Dumansi

"He will be remembered for his great courage and service to his country," the embassy said in a statement. "We are working closely with our Filipino counterparts to investigate the incident," the embassy added.

Capt. Celeste Frank Sayson, Balikatan 2016 spokesman for the Philippines. said an investigation is being conducted surrounding

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

Dumansi's fatal jump

Sayson said Dumansi was among the first Filipino parachutists who jumped with their US counterparts during the combined air proficiency parachuting exercises at about 3:25

Dumansi was dragged by a sudden draft, landing him in the sea off the coast of Subic airport, instead of on the designated landing point.

An Army jump expert said Dumansi's reserve chute could have been filled with seawater,

p.m., with a designated landing zone at Subic airport.

Sayson described Dumansi as an expert paratrooper, being with the SPOW, an elite unit of the Air Force.

Initial investigation showed

dragging the victim down before he was rescued.

When retrieved, Dumansi was reportedly still alive and given first aid while being rushed to the Unihealth Hospital in Subic. However, Dumansi died while undergoing treatment. – With Jaime Laude

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POW No. 24 tells of cruelty, hunger, sickness in Death March

By Lt. Col. Federico A. Peralta

DURING World War II, I served in Bataan with the 2nd Regular Division PC (United States Armed Forces in the Far East, or Usaffe) under Gen. Guillermo Francisco.

I arrived in Bataan on New Year's Day of 1942 with the contingent of the division surgeon, Col. Jose Gonzales Roxas. Our division was given the mission to defend the southeastern coast of Bataan.

The sector was comparative-POW NO. 24/A14 ly quiet except for the presence of Japanese snipers that infiltrated our sector. But by March, we began to feel the lack of food. It became so critical that we only subsisted on softboiled rice twice a day with canned sardines or salmon as viand alternately.

To augment our dwindling supplies, we slaughtered carabaos and pigs that belonged to civilians who lived nearby. Monkeys were eaten and even stray dogs were not spared.

At that time, the Usaffe defenders, whose numbers had been decimated by disease, injury and death, fervently hoped for provisions from America to arrive.

One bright hope of the beleaguered Filipino-American troops was the expected arrival of a "one mile convoy" in a matter of days that would bring personnel, supplies and materials.

The convoy never arrived.

Instead, the Japanese reinforcement came and launched a major offensive in the early part of April. They bombed the hospitals and ammunition dumps.

Taking advantage of their superiority and firepower, the Japanese broke through our lines and all of our efforts to stop the enemy's advance were futile. With no naval support, inadequately equipped and badly outnumbered, the Usaffe defenders faced a hopeless situation.

Realizing our desperate condition, the American commander, Maj. Gen. Edward King, ordered the soldiers to stop all resistance. After the surrender, the Japanese ordered the troops to march from Bataan to San Fernando, Pampanga.

Death March

Thus began the infamous Death March, one of the most tragic episodes of the war that lasted for four days and four nights, covering a distance of 106 kilometers, of which I was one of the survivors

During the first day, thousands of us who formed a kilometric line of marchers, four abreast, trekked with avid enthusiasm that at the end of the journey transportation would be available to bring us to our homes.

It turned otherwise, and we were concentrated instead. A notice was passed around "that the Japanese could guarantee our lives if we do not escape, and those who will, will be shot."

I was one of those who did not take any chances to escape, inspired by the thought that I might still see my family someday. There were those who took the risk and escaped, some were lucky, some were shot dead.

Despite the difficulties, the marchers continued night and day, rain or shine, with brief halts during the night. Some of those who were dog-tired collapsed, the rest carried on—wet, cold, hungry and afraid.

The Japanese guards were harsh and cruel. Anybody who broke the line because of a malaria attack and dysentery were subjected to ridicule and gunned down. Hundreds of marchers who could no longer walk were brutally beaten up and kicked by heartless guards.

After a brief halt caused by the misalignment of the marchers, I was separated from my friends. Early the following morning, I experienced my first

14

malaria attack and was chilled to the bones. I rolled myself down toward the soft shoulder of the road and landed on a sugarcane field.

Strange episode

After the attack, although weak and exhausted, I managed to twist off a stalk of sugarcane. But I was seen by a group. of Japanese on patrol. They shouted, "Kurah! Kurah!" and gestured to me to approach.

"This is my end," I told myself, but prayed so hard for help and deliverance. Without much choice, I approached the Japanese and resigned to

my fate.

But my faith in God was greater. For every second that I stood before the Japanese, I expected to be slapped, kicked and even shot.

To my astonishment, they laughed out loud. Probably, it was because of my appearance and to gloat at our defeat and

subjugation. They told me to follow them and we walked until we reached their tent under a huge mango tree.

"You doctor?" one of them asked me.

"No," I said. They thought I was a doctor because of the Red Cross brassard on my left arm and from the first aid kit that I had.

"I'm a medical aide," I told

They took my first aid kit and rummaged through its contents. They took turns in figuring out what the items in the kit were for.

Food

--(BIDS THE WENT OF BEFUELD WERE FELICINES AND LODGE A TOLIC OF BUILDING

At that moment, the bowl of rice and the aroma of smoked fish on the table caught my attention. My mouth watered, as I was without enough food the past days.

Surprisingly, the Japanese invited me to eat. Without waiting for a second invitation, I ate to my heart's content. I ate

like a glutton.

While I was eating, one of the Japanese took the thermometer he found in my first aid kit and began to use it.

The others found the adhesive tape and bandages handy. Some took the Atabrine and

Ouinine tablets.

While they were busy deciding who should take the rest of the contents, I continued to eat as fast as I could.

In no time, I consumed everything on the table. I regained

my composure and was fully satisfied.

Then I found out that nothing was left inside my first aid kit except the emergency medical tags and the 5-cc hypodermic syringe.

The Japanese gave me a bag of rice and a bottle of fresh water-perhaps, the price for my first aid kit. Truly, God heard my prayers and protected me.

They ordered me to go and I did, hurriedly. It was almost noon when I rejoined the march.

Not all Japanese were bad

I walked animated with the thought that after all, not all Japanese were cruel and inhuman, some were kind and considerate.

I walked with renewed vigor until I saw a man slumped on the ground by the pond, bleeding and reaching for a fruit on an overhanging bough. When he got it, he was shot.

Some of us were hit with rifle butts when we attempted to drink from the artesian wells

along the road.

The night overtook me in Limay, a town in Bataan overlooking the sea, where we were allowed to rest for the night.

Most of my comrades took time out to cook whatever they could. I looked around and saw the city of Manila across the bay I knew that the journey's end was near.

I also saw Corregidor to my right, the pitiful target of continuous artillery barrage.

I managed to improvise a bed out of cogon grass. I lay down and stretched myself flat.

The breeze was cold. I reviewed the past and evaluated the future then fell asleep.

Not long afterward, I woke up with a lassitude and severe headache and fever. I knew I would chill again and I did. The attack was so terrible that my teeth rattled.

"Continue the march!" the Japanese guards shouted.

Moving wearily and laboriously like living skeletons, we marched on. Aligning and realigning four abreast was total harassment. In all that commotion, I lost my bag of rice and broke my bottle of water.

After we had walked for almost two hours, I heard the guards yelling, this time to align ourselves in single file, as they dashed toward the rear of the column. I knew they had something in mind again.

We stood still. Then I noticed a checkpoint ahead where everyone was being FIGE OF THE ARMS OF EFFICE CLAFFARE End acc lacra arms 2002 380 a community of Exemples and the second seco

physically searched.

Search and seizure

Disregarding all rules of civilized warfare, everything valuable to the prisoners were confiscated—money, watches, jew- & Concentration camp elry, fountain pens and anything that suited the guards' fancy.

As I approached the checkpoint, I made up my mind to give up my Elgin watch and money I had on me.

A Japanese officer was supervising the search and inspection while noncoms did the confiscation. Money and watches were preferred.

Nothing escaped detection by the greedy guards. Money folded and hidden in pants' seams were found and taken. But some prisoners who looked destitute and weak were allowed to go unmolested.

As the search was rigid, three hours had passed before my turn came. The guards had watches strapped on from wrist to elbow and they readily noticed my watch, which I gave right away to divert their attention so that they would not search me further.

But one guard saw my gold necklace with a crucifix, which I handed over with a prayer.

My original plan of diverting their attention worked and I was not searched further. Had that happened, the money taped to the sole of my foot could have been found.

It was very late in the afternoon when we reached Lubao town in Pampanga. It rained so hard and since it was already dark it was easy for us to slip away unnoticed hoped they would spare the The situation was so inviting that many took advantage of it, especially those living in the vicinity and neighboring provinces.

We reached San Fernando the following day, the final day of the march. We were crammed into five warehouses that although large could hardly accommodate all of us.

My malaria attack was over when we were marched again, this time to the railroad station. We were put on railway boxcars and taken to Capas, Tarlac province.

From there, we walked 8 kilometers to Camp O'Donnell. On our way, we were greeted by sympathetic people who lined the roadsides. They gave us fruits, rice cakes and drinks. They wept and prayed because of the uncertainty that we faced.

Our group reached Camp

Prisoner count

A physical inventory by the guard was scheduled in the morning. Any shortage of or an O'Donnell in the afternoon of excess in the number of patients April 15, 1942. The camp, without reasonable explanations which used to be a training could result in grave reprimand or punishment. A hard punch or verted into a concentration whipping with a rifle butt in the camp for war prisoners. face was often the punishment.

remedied the excess or shortage ipino group was under one Filof patients by loaning some ipino general. from other wards and vice versa. The discrepancies happened Ailing prisoners simply because patients got lost! on their way and ended up in of malaria and dysentery and the wrong wards in returning were malnourished so the camp from the latrines.

Daily calisthenics (rajo taiso to the Japanese) was conducted Sphere" in Nippongo.

than not, the rice was unevenly patients in the lower deck. cooked, not to mention prepared had boiled sweet potatoes.

the meat was distributed to the and defecated unknowingly. kitchens. Once the beef was cooked, it barely reached the se- were totally taken by illness just riously ill patients in the wards. died, mouths open and devoured Of course, the lion's share went by flies. I usually had 15 or 25

food and only the fittest got to eat. Commotion and pandemonium happened during meals, a to each his own kind of thing.

place for soldiers, had been con-

We were soon divided into We assistant ward masters groups and subgroups. The Fil-

The majority of us were sick eventually became a veritable hospital ward.

It was made of light materials and we were made to recite and could accommodate 100 to aloud "The Doctrine of the 150 patients on its two decks. South-East Asia Co-Prosperity Some of the barracks were so old and dilapidated that one of the The food served was balled upper decks collapsed, resulting rice rolled in salt. More often in serious injuries to a number of

I was designated assistant by dirty hands. At other times we ward master at wards with more or less 80 patients. In the Cows commandeered by the afternoon, I segregated the seri-Japanese were slaughtered and ously ill patients who urinated

Some of the patients who to the kitchen personnel. dead patients in the morning, There was always a struggle for and likewise at the other wards.

Profiteers

Canned goods found their way to the camp through the grass detail-people sent out to get grass for the guards' horses. The buy-and-sell business was done in Capas.

The goods brought to the camp were sold at exorbitant prices. I remember buying a can of sardines for P50 and a can of corned beef for P80.

Prisoners who were never assigned to the grass detail became victims of fellow prisoners who turned profiteers. In the same manner, the lack of medicine

made some prisoners rich overnight. Quinine tablets were

sold at P5 each and sulfa drugs were went for P10 a tablet. Those of us who did not buy

medicines because we found the cost steep or we had no money, boiled guava tree bark, which had medicinal properties good for diarrhea and dysentery.

Security inside the camp was quite strict and rigid. The camp was enclosed with double livewire fences. I saw a prisoner shot dead while attempting to escape-meant to discourage the rest of us from doing the same.

No sanitation

With utter disregard for the elemental rules of hygiene and sanitation, the Japanese never provided us with proper facilities for waste disposal. Latrines were far from the wards and were just straddle trenches. In no time, they were full and looked like boiling pits with maggots feasting on the filth.

At night, prisoners afflicted with diarrhea were forced to stop anywhere, and evidence of their nocturnal suffering was visible in the morning.

Water was so scarce, no one took a bath during our entire four-month confinement in the concentration camp. As a result, most of us were afflicted with body lice, which bit and made us quite uncomfortable at night.

In the morning when the sun was up, all of us, regardless of rank and position, were busy killing lice, which hid in the seams of our pants.

Deaths rise

Deaths increased daily from 100 a day during the first month to nearly 300 or more in the early part of August. The bodies were just wrapped in army blankets slung on bamboo poles and taken to the burial place.

Burial details were twice a day, morning and afternoon. The graves were dug to accommodate five or more bodies but as deaths increased tremendously, bigger and wider graves were dug to fit 20 or more bodies.

Since more graves were to be dug, oftentimes burial was hurriedly done, thus some hands and feet were uncovered.

I could have been one of those who perished had I not been released. My prayers to see my family were answered. God was with me all the time.

On Aug. 4, 1942, I was released on parole with the second batch as Prisoner of War No. 24.

(Editor's Note: Lt. Col. Federico A. Peralta kept his release paper written mostly in Japanese. Upon release, he was among those made to board the train to Manila. His older sister, a Benedictine religious, had him met at the train station. He stayed for a while at St. Scholastica's College and wore clothes borrowed from a priest.

Peralta wrote this piece in 1992, the 50th anniversary of the Death March. He died in the United States in 1995 at that age of 80. Peralta and his wife, Maria Luisa, raised nine children. He left this manuscript with his daughter Celeste. He taught for many years at the Philippine Military Academy before he retired. Peralta never received compensation for his war service despite repeated followups. He is the uncle of INQUIRER columnist Ma. Ceres P. Doyo.)

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Shrine of Valor: Landmark of heroism

By MARK ANTHONY O. SARINO

Today, April 9, the country commemorates Araw ng Kagitingan or the National Day of Valor in honor of the Filipino soldiers who fought beside the American forces to defend the country from the Japanese army. History tells of the battle - how the Japanese forces emerged as victors on April 9, 1942 after pulverizing the joint Filipino and American soldiers' resistance, pursuing them from the lowlands of Bataan up to the top of Mt. Samat. The battle ended the resistance.

The major landmark to remind Filipinos of that battle is the Shrine of

Shrine of Valor: Landmark... •1

Valor (Dambana ng Kagitingan) which towers on top of Mt. Samat.

Brigadier General Restituto Aguilar of the Philippine Veterans' Affairs Office (PVAO) Veterans Memorial and Historical Division, is proud of the shrine's significance in the Second World War.

"Though not the highest peak in Bataan, it gave our soldiers back then a better vantage of where the enemies would come from," Aguilar, who is also the shrine's chief curator, told the Manila Bulletin. The site is where hundreds of soldiers stood their ground knowing that would be their last battle.

Completed and inaugurated in 1970, the Shrine of Valor, according to Bataan's official website, comprises a land area of roughly 73,665 hectares which consists of a colonnade and the memorial cross (555 meters above sea level) on Mt. Samat. Former President Ferdinand E. Marcos envisioned the shrine as an appropriate memorial to those who perished fighting for the

country's freedom during World War II (WWII).

"Even if our soldiers were facing heavy enemy firepower, our troops still managed to continue fighting to the very end, while taking cover from the man-made small caves they've built," Aguilar said. "But that did not last for long."

He said that the country had lost the air support when almost all the American fighter jets stationed in Clark got wiped out while most of the pilots were eating lunch.

"As time went by, the Japanese forces crept closer to Samat's defense perimeter near Pilar and Bagac, giving Brigadier General Edward King, Bataan's commanding officer, no option but to wave the white flag," Aguilar said.

Heroism knows no age

"Majority of our war veterans were only 19 or 18 years old that time. Gue-

rilla fighters, some of them only 12 years old, also fought alongside our front liners," Aguilar said. He noted that "many soldiers then would only eat porridge once a day. Most of them had already gotten sick, but still wanted to keep on fighting."

Aguilar then likened the Filipino soldiers' selfless act of valor to how Jesus Christ redeemed His people from their sins.

"The towering cross atop Mt. Samat also symbolizes our being Christians and Jesus Christ's sacrifices to deliver us from our sins. I think our soldiers pulled off the same deed for us during the war years to safeguard our freedom," Aguilar said.

In war, nobody wins

Aguilar, who used to be a combat soldier, said nobody wins in war. "We can no longer turn back the hands of time. They may have won, but many of them perished in the process, as well."

The lesson he learned from what had happened: Always be ready to fight for the nation, whatever it takes.

Aguilar urged the youth to always find time to read history books. "Sadly, the existing education curriculum hardly tackles the lessons learned from the war years to stir awareness among the minds of the young. No wonder a large chunk of the population barely knows history," Aguilar said.

"For our part, we are authoring books on what took place during WWII, before we run out of war veterans who had carried out crucial tasks," Aguilar said.

This year's rites

Today, for the last time in his sixyear term, President Aquino will lead the commemoration ceremonies at the Mt. Samat National Shrine in Pilar, Bataan. He will address the country's war veterans to assure them of the state's role to take care of them.

With him will be members of the Cabinet, war veterans, youth representatives, other sectors, and the Ambassadors of United States of America and Japan will also be there, Aguilar said. They will be welcomed by Bataan Gov. Abet S. Garcia and town and city

mayors.

Part of today's ceremonies will be the awarding of winners of the painting and essay writing contests by Defense Undersecretary for Civil, Veterans and Retiree Affairs Jesus C. Millan, Philippine Veterans Affairs Office Administrator Ernesto G. Carolina, and Director for External Partnership Services Margarita Ballesteros of the Department of Education.

The second part of the program will be the wreath-laying ceremonies to be led by President Aquino.

Formerly known as "Bataan Day," April 9 was renamed as "Araw ng Kagitingan" by Executive Order No. 203 signed in 1987.

After the Fall of Bataan, the Death March started from Bataan to San Fernando, Pampanga where the prisoners of war were loaded into poorly ventilated train cars and brought to Tarlac where they marched about 20 kilometers to Camp O'Donnel in Capas, Tarlac. Thousands of prisoners died along the way. (With a report from Mar T. Supnad)

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Paratrooper's death won't halt 'Balikatan'

By GENALYN D. KABILING and JONAS REYES

alacañang is not inclined to seek the suspension of this year's joint Balikatan exercises between the Philippines and United States despite the death of a Filipino soldier in a skydiving accident.

Presidential Communications Operations Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. acknowledged the death of the paratrooper was "an unfortunate accident" but the military drills would continue.

"Joint exercises are part of the PH-US strategic partnership as provided for in various agreements," Coloma said in text message.

A paratrooper of the Philippine Air Force (PAF), taking part in a parachute drop-off training exercise with United States military counterparts, here, missed his landing zone and ended up in the water where he drowned last Thursday

Captain Celeste Frank Sayson, PH-US Balikatan 2016 spokesman, identified the fatality only as a member of

PAF's 710 Special Operations Wing.

The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) rescue team led by Dr Julius Ceasar Farin tried to revive the soldier en route to Baypointe Hospital, but was declared dead at the hospital at 5:25 p.m.

The PAF paratrooper had jumped off a C-130 plane during a training exercise and was supposed to land on a marked spot on the runway of the Subic Bay International Airport (SBIA) but

missed his target. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has refused to give any other details of the incident while the US military will reportedly make an investigation into the incident.

Navy unit reactivated as military Scarborough Shoal shifts focus on

By Rene Acosta

THE Armed Forces on Friday reactivated Naval Forces Northern Luzon (NavForNL) that will focus on the Scarborough Shoal that has been effectively occupied by China.

Naval Forces Northern Luzon was returned to its former status as another naval unit more than two years after it was merged with the Naval Forces West (NavForWest) based in Palawan.

NavForNL will be under the Armed Forces Northern Luzon Command that is based in President Aquino's home province of Tarlac.

"With the demands of our present maritime situation and the need to have focus on naval operations in these areas of responsibility, the Navy leadership deemed to reconstitute these two organizations

[NavForNLandNavForWest],"Navy Acting Spokesman LCdr. Marineth Domingo said

Vice Adm. Caesar Taccad, Navy flag officer in command, presided over on Friday the reactivation of the two naval forces as separate units, installing Commo. Danilo Rodelas as commander of the Nav-ForWest and Capt. Albert Mogol as acting commander of NavForNL.

"These two units were brought back to their original set up," Domingo explained. The Navy merged the NavForNL with the NavForWest more than two years ago, forming Naval Forces Northwest, with the commander of the Armed Forces Western Command exercising operational control over it.

The merger of the two naval forces was implemented after China seized Scarborough Shoal, located near Zambales, following a standoff with BRP *Gregorio del Pilar* in 2012. Beijing now exercises de facto control over the shoal.

The merger of the two naval units was questioned then, especially that Naval Forces Northwest was based in Palawan, given that Scarborough Shoal, apart from being the subject of a dispute with China and where Filipino fishermen are irregularly harassed by Beijing, is near the waters of Central Luzon.

However, the military leadership explained at that time that the merger was made in order for just one unit to be taking care of the West Philippine Sea's maritime security.

Domingo said the two units were reconstituted to their former status so that they could take on their original maritime security concerns, other than having "distinct naval components.

"Kasi dati when it was merged into one, parang naguguluhan iyong Northern Luzon. Ngayon naging distinct na siya, may kanya-kanya na sila ngayong operational command," she said.

Last month Lt. Gen. Romeo Tanalgo, a Marine, assumed as command of the Nolcom, swapping his position as Armed Forces vice chief of staff with then Nolcom chief Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda upon the orders of Aquino.

Miranda and Tanalgo are both members of Philippine Military Academy Class of 1983.

The Armed Forces Public Affairs Office chief, Col. Noel Detoyato, said the appointment of Tanalgo as Nolcom chief was made out of maritime consideration, apparently referring to problem involving Scarborough Shoal.

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Abus free Italian: P130 M paid?

By JAIME LAUDE and ROEL PAREÑO

Rolando del Torchio was released by Abu p.m. when the priest-Sayyaf bandits and re- turned-restaurant ownin Jolo, Sulu, reportedly after payment of P130 million in ransom.

Supt. Wilfredo Cayat, Sulu police provincial commander, reported

Italian former priest that they recovered Del Torchio at about 7:30 covered by government er was already on the security forces last night boat KC Beatrice bound for Zamboanga City.

Cayat's team was backed by the Coast Guard, maritime police, the Anti-Kidnapping

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Group and Joint Task Force Sulu in the recovery efforts.

It was not clear if Del Torchio had companions or who had tipped off the authorities about his presence in the boat.

Del Torchio was in poor health and brought to the mili-



Del Torchio

tary trauma hospital at Camp Teodulfo Bautista in Busbos, Jolo, for medical treatment.

Intelligence reports showed that Del Torchio was released by his kidnappers after a series of negotiations that ended in the payment of the P130-million ransom, an informed source told The STAR.

Del Torchio was kidnapped in his Ur Choice Bistro Pizza along Quezon Avenue, Barangay Miputak in downtown Dipolog City in Zamboanga del Norte last Oct. 7. Ten gunmen pretending to be customers barged into his restaurant and tank him away.

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AFP, PNP officers disappointed at Marquez's kid glove treatment

By Mario J. Mallari and Angie M. Rosales Retired and active police and military officers are disappointed over the "kid glove" treatment of Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Ricardo Marquez on four generals who reportedly met with individuals identified with Liberal Party standard-bearer Mar Roxas.

Tribune sources, who requested anonymity, said Marquez should have immediately ordered the administrative relief of Director Generoso Cerbo Jr. and Chief Superintendents Renier Idio, Bernardo Diaz and Ronald Santos after they were spotted with retired PNP Deputy Director General Marcelo Garbo Jr. at Novotel in Quezon City last Saturday.

"Garbo is identified with the LP and is openly supporting Roxas, meeting with him at this time is inappropriate for the four police generals," a retired general told the *Tribune*.

"It is easy to say that the neeting was personal, but they should all be aware this is election time... nobody will believe that they did not discuss election issues even in the barber shop, that's the hot topic today," he added.

Marquez said unless a formal complaint with solid evidence is presented against his officers, he will give them the benefit of the doubt and will not relieve them.

"If somebody can tell me they were talking about politics in that meeting, I will relieve them," Marquez said, despite the fact that a staff of Roxas was in that meeting.

"If there are complaints my officers were there to discuss partisanship, to discuss how certain politicians could be provided with anything so that they will win then

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AFP, PNP officers disappointed at Marquez's kid glove treatment

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we will relieve our officers," he added.

But the retired general stressed "for the chake of the entire police organization, the chief PNP should act decisively against these generals the keep the organization apolitical."

rO Cerbo is the chief of the PNP-Directorate for Intelligence while Idio is the director of the Cagayan Valley police. Santos is the deputy regional director for administration of the Southern Tagalog police and Diaz of the Western Visayas police.

The four, wearing civilian clothes, were ereportedly spotted at the Novotel at the Araneta icenter in Quezon City last Saturday, along with retired PNP Deputy Director General Marcelo tharbo Jr. and Maj. Gen. Oscar Lactao, Inspector General of the Armed Frees of the Philippines (AFP).

Garbo is identified with the LP and is reportedly supporting the presidential bid of Roxas.

Also reportedly present during the meeting swas a certain Thea Reyes, who is supposedly a staff Roxas.

If The source noted that to erase any doubts con the four generals, Marquez should have mordered their administrative relief and called for an investigation.

"Instead of just taking their explanation, the exhief PNP should have called for a probe to house any doubts against the officers," the Source added.

Another source, a Camp Crame-based official, noted that the four involved PNP generals are all members of the Philippine Military Academy "Maharlika" Class of 1984, which has Roxas as honorary member.

"They are mistals of Roxas and they were talking with Garbo who is identified with the

Liberal Party and Roxas. What will they talk about?" the second source asked.

"While we are giving them the benefit of the doubt, it would be proper for them to be administratively relieved to insulate the entire PNP organization from partisan politicis," he added.

In Calaca, Batangas - LP standard bearer Roxas was practically caught with his pants down on his alleged collusion with police generals in carrying out his presidential campaign.

Vice presidential candidate Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero made this claim yesterday following reports on the alleged attendance of some active Philippine National Police (PNP) generals in an LP meeting in a hotel in Cubao, Quezon City last weekend.

Escudero said the incident practically confirmed reports coming their way that Roxas has been in close coordination with PNP officials in most of the LP's sorties.

"We have heard of this a long time and that he is recruiting active and retired generals of the PNP. It is just now that they have been caught. Perhaps, they were caught in camera and photographs at the hotel, "he said in an interview with reporters.

As such, Escudero said they will be filing a formal complaint against some active PNP officials and slap them with electioneering and partisan political activity charges.

Escudero is not inclined to believe in the alibi given by concerned PNP officials identified as Dir. Generoso Cerbo Jr., chief of the PNP directorate for intelligence and Chief Supts. Rainer Idio, Bernardo Diaz and Ronald Santos that it was just a chance encounter with a staff of Roxas at the Novotel Hotel.

"That is considered an election offense,"

As of this writing, the senator said he has already asked their lawyers to draft the complaint notwithstanding the immediate and proper action from Marquez as the PNP chief himself publicly assured when the issue first came out nearly a week ago.

Escudero said it was "not proper and highly irregular" for said PNP officials to meet with the LP campaign officers, especially since active police personnel are barred from participating, directly or indirectly, in partisan politics or electioneering.

He said the Partido Galing at Puso will file a formal complaint against the erring police officials before the office of PNP chief Director General Ricardo Marquez.

Roxas had explained that his staff met with the embattled PNP officials by chance and merely had social conversations since they previously worked together at the DILG.

Also yesterday, Escudero condemned the reported disruption of some unidentified armed men in a political gathering held by Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Laban ng Bayan (PDP-Laban) in Sorsogon last April 1.

"I seek the immediate investigation by the PNP of this incident to ensure that candidates running for various elective posts and their supporters are safe and secure to campaign during this election season," he said.

"Such attempts to coerce and intimidate candidates and the electorate, particularly with the use of high-powered guns, have no place in a democratic country like ours. I hope this incident will not be used by our political rivals to promote unfair and untrue attacks against us by confusing and distracting voters in order to advance their political bids," he said.

The voting public, Escudero said, should be allowed to exercise their rights to freely choose the candidates they want to elect in the coming May 9 national and local elections.

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Marine soldier, 2 armed men slain in Palawan encounter

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY — A corporal of the Marine Battalion Landing Team (MBLT) 12 stationed in southern Palawan was killed early Thursday morning in a firefight with still unidentified armed men that lasted an hour at Sitio Boal-boal, Barangay Bonobono, Bataraza.

Major Moli Alamia of the MBLT 12 said Corporal Alex de Guzman died after he was hit by a bullet on the forehead during the heavy exchange of gunfire in Bono-bono, just a few meters from the highway on a high ground area.

He said that the incident happened around 6:10 a.m. and ended an hour after.

De Guzman, who is from Jolo, Sulu, was shot by one of allegedly 10 men, who were all carrying highpowered guns.

The MBLT 12 officer furthered De Guzman was part of an eightman team that was just on regular patrol because of the coming local elections in the said barangay when the armed men engaged them by shooting first. De Guzman was the only fatality of the encounter, said Alamia, while two were also dead in the enemy side, and others wounded.

When asked about the identity of the armed men or if the incident was election-related, MBLT 12 Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Neph Padua said they are still determining their identities with the help of the Palawan Provincial Police Office (PPO).

On it being election-related, he said there are factors to consider before such conclusion is drawn

"With the help of the Provincial Police Office (PPO), we will get down to the bottom of this latest incident in Bataraza," Padua said, declining to give further details pending investigation.

Bataraza, a first class municipality in the province of Palawan, is under the areas of concern list of the police and the military following a series of shooting incidents in the past months, according to Padua. PNA

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2 naval units reactivated amid West Phl Sea dispute

The Philippine Navy has reactivated two of its naval units to address maritime security concerns in the West Philippine Sea.

The La Union-based Naval Forces Northern Luzon (Navfornol) and Palawan-based Naval Forces West (Navforwest) were activated starting yesterday. The two naval units were disbanded two years ago to form the Naval Forces North-West in Palawan.

"With the demands of our maritime situation and the need to focus on naval operations in these areas of responsibility, the Navy leadership decided to reconstitute these two organizations," said Lt. Cmdr. Marineth Domingo, Navy acting spokesman. "The two units were brought back to their original setup."

Navy chief Vice Admiral Caesar Taccad installed Commodore Danilo Rodelas as commander of the Navforwest and Capt. Albert Mogol as acting commander of Navfornol. — Jaime Laude

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Page.

TONIGHT

Gen. Iriberri's 'parting words



By Paal Gatierrez

BAGO ang lahat, gusto nating ipaabot sa lahat ng kasapi ng National Press Club (NPC) na mayroon tayong FREE SHOWING ng Pacquiao-Bradley Third Fight oukas, sa Bulwagang Plaridel.

Sa tuwing may laban si Pacquiao, ang libreng pa-nood sa kanyang mga laban ay isa sa mga ginagawa ng NPC para na rin sa kasi-yahan nating lahat kaya, magkita-kita, magsamasama tayo bukas!

At siyempre, ang muli At siperinfe, and man ating passasalamat sa Solar Sports' sa kanfilang patuloy na pagsuporta sa programang ito ng NPC. Salamat po, mga bosing sa Solari

Maligayang kaarawan na rin bukas kay Elizabeth Malil Aspiras ng La Union at Baguio. Harinawang ganap kang maka-recover sa iyong matinding karam-daman at maibalik ang daman at manbank ang iyong nawalang paningin. May tulong at awa ang Diyos kaya, huwag kang "bibitaw," hane? "***

Last Wednesday, I got a press statement from

the 10th Infantry 'Agila' Division detailing the farewell visit of our good friend, outgoing AFP chief of staff, Gen. Hernando Iriberri where his significant "parting words" is for all our soldiers to "always do the right things."
"Gawin lang natin

palagi ang tama nang ang ating mga mamamayan ay ating mga mamamayan ay mamuhay nang payapa," thus said 'Gen. Dodo, whose physique and bearing no one would believe is one "ripe" for retirement.
Yes, dear readers, sino magsasabing "liyebo" '50 na itong si Gen. Iribernich, sa tikas at tindig, kayan sitang makatath.

pa nitong makatatlo

pa nitong makatatio - tat-long ikot sa oval ng Camp Aguinaldo, hehehel It may well be that Gen. Iriberri would be retiring from a very dis-tinguished military career inst several masts before just several weeks before the change of administration when the votes for our new president have all been counted and the winner proclaimed.

For still fresh in my mind - and also to those in the military familiar with what happened in

June 2010 -- was the shabby and vindictive manner by which PNoy forced into retirement, PGMA's last chief of staff, the well-respected (and whom I will always consider a true and dear friend), Gen. Delfin Bangt.

Ilang beses ko na rin namang naisulat dito ang kabastusan na ginawa ni PNoy kay Gen. Bangit — PNoy kay Gen. Bangit—while he was still a sitting chief of staff and even while he was already a dead chief of staff—kaya hindi ko na

of start - kaya finant to he unlitin pa dito.

Suffice it to say that the way this president treated Gen. Bangit was among the reasons why, early on, I began to wonder if PNoy is indeed a compliced. gentleman and a civilized person? Tanong ko sa sarili ko noon:

parili ko noon:

Dapat ba talagang paniwalaan at, pagtiwalaan at, pagtiwalaan at, pagtiwalaan ang presidenteng ito? O sige, Prince Xavier Alcantara, ikaw na, nga ang sumagot sa tanong ko hinggil dito sa ninong mo, hehehe!!

Well, now that he is shout to sten down from

about to step down from office and hopefully into oblivion, the majority of oblivion, the majority of our people were relieved to learn that all those had things they were say-ing against PNoy when he was still running for president have come true, aguy, aguy, agh, hehele Anyway, here's a toast

to Gen. Iriberri and thank you also for the kindness you've accorded to me in you've accorded to me in many of our brief encounters. The AFP and our Republic would always be grateful to your services, you can bet on that!

And speaking of the Agila Division, another statement I got disclosed that members of the Scout

Rangers involved in the "accidental (and fatal) shooting" of Daniel P Ferrer last April 1 in Toril District, Davao City, remains under camp re-striction pending the re-sult of an ongoing official investigation.

"We sympathized with the family of Daniel for their loss. The members of 2SRB (2nd Scout Rangers Battalion) voluntarily initiated a "pass the hat" or "ambagan" to raise money as immediate financial assistance for the burial

of Daniel.

"While it is true that the parents of Daniel voluntarily executed an Affidavit of Desistance before Idayt.or Desistante better the barangay officials of Bgy Sibulan this will not preclude the Special Opera-tions Gommand (SOCOM), which is the parent unit of the 2SRB, from conduct-ing further investigation in order to determine any administrative liability of the soldiers involved in this unfortunate incident thus reads the statement released by the division's chief PIO, Capt. Rhyan P.

Batchar. Well said, Captain!

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(A April 2016



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Equipped for valor

Today as the nation once again pability. honors the courage of those who fought during World War II, Filipino soldiers are conducting joint military exercises with their American counterparts. Military personnel of the two countries also fought alongside each other during the war, and suffered together in the Death March from Bataan to Tarlac.

Bilateral defense ties, soured by the shutdown of US bases in 1992, have since become stronger as the two allies face common external threats. The Philippines has turned to allies, now including wartime enemy Japan, to develop minimum credible defense capability.

Modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines intensified after China took control of shoals in the West Philippine Sea and began building artificial islands in the Spratly chain. With Filipinos kept out of traditional marginal livelihoods, the nation in boosting external defense ca-

Apart from defending national territory, modernization is needed to improve AFP capability for rescue and other disaster response operations. Time is of the essence during disasters; the speed of response often spells the difference between life and death. The nation cannot wait for help to arrive from other countries before major rescue and other disaster relief operations can be launched. Those who undertake these operations often risk life and limb and also deserve to be recognized for their bravery on this special day for honoring valor.

The AFP is not lacking in men and women who are prepared to risk their lives in the service of the nation. They honor the memory of those whose bravery and sacrifice during World War II are remembered today. The nation must show its appreciation by giving fishing grounds and deprived of these courageous and dedicated public servants the necessary has found it necessary to invest equipment for carrying out their missions.

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CELEBRATION

74th 'Araw ng Kagitingan' commemoration

HE 74th anniversary of Araw ng Kagitingan (Day of Valor) on April 9 honors the valiant defenders of Bataan, Corregidor, and Bessang Pass. As a prelude to Araw ng Kagitingan, Philippine Veterans Week is observed on April 5-11 to promote, preserve, and memorialize the ideals and heroism of Filipino veterans who valiantly fought for freedom and democracy.

The twin events will have separate activities, but the objectives is the same: honor Filipino soldiers and veterans by remembering their noble and patriotic deeds in defense of country and people and their role in promoting sovereignty and national security. This year's theme is "Isabuhay ang Kagitingan, Kapayapaan ay Pagkaisahan, Kamtin and Mithiing Kaunlaran."

Focal point of celebration on April 9 is Dambana ng Kagitingan (Shrine of Valor) atop Mt. Samat in Pilar, Bataan, where President Benigno S. Aquino III is expected to give his message before an audience of veterans and their kin, government officials, educators, and representatives of the United States



and Japan in the Philippines. The three nations are now allies for the attainment of peace, stability, and progress.

Philippine Veterans Week starts with a sunrise ceremony and wreath-laying at Libingan ng mga Bayani. There will be a review in veterans' honor by Armed Forces of the Philippines; a tribute to Filipino heroes at historic Corregidor Island, where there will be tolling of bell, reciting of pledge of patriotism, tour, and light-andsound show at Malinta Tunnel; and "Paggunita sa Capas" to honor

those who perished in the Death March. There was free special screening of historical film Heneral Luna, as well as symposium on Images of Valor and Victory, and book launch of "For Love of Freedom: Pursuit of Freedom From Want" by Dr. Senen Asuan.

Araw ng Kagitingan recalls the surrender of over 76,000 soldiers - 67,000 Filipinos, 11,796 Americans and 1,000 Filipino-Chinese - by United States Army Chief Major General Edward P. King to the Japanese Army on April 9, 1942, after a gallant stand that ended with the Fall of Bataan and Fall of Corregidor and the 145-kilometer Death March from Mariveles, Bataan, that ended in Capas, Tarlac.

Congress passed Republic Act 3022 in 1961 declaring April 9 of every year as Bataan Day. Letter of Instruction No. 1087 on November 26, 1980, made Araw ng Kagitingan a public holiday to honor the soldiers who sacrificed for the country during World War II. Executive Order No. 203 on June 30, 1987 proclaimed April 9 as Araw ng Kagitingan.

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EDITORIAL

Fortifying PH forces

HER remarks are quite remarkable considering that she's the only presidential candidate to openly, brazenly declare what constitutes

a fiercely independent foreign policy statement.

What makes it even more significant is that her remarks were given during this period of continuing tension over overlapping territorial claims in the vast sea separating mainland Asia from South East Asian countries.

No other presidential candidates has saw strongly expressed opposition to or repudiation of dependence on a foreign power for the country's defense and security requirements.

Such nationalist position can rally a broad spectrum of patriotic voters

However, patriotism, ironically, can be a divisive issue as shown by the

experiences of past candidates for the highest office in the land.
Still, we wish the feisty lady lawmaker all the luck in her quest for the

presidency and so let us allow her to make her case and argue her points. Amid the fresh round of military exercises between the Philippines and the U.S. and a lingering territorial dispute with China, presidential candidate Miriam Defensor Santiago urged the government to move toward self-reliance and end its dependence on American forces for national security.

"The Philippines will have to once and for all abandon its full-spectrum dependence on America as a guarantor of its national security," said Santiago, who is a major critic of the Visiting Forces Agreement and the

Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement at the Senate.

The lady law maker noted that both the VFA and the EDCA are silent on the extent of American commitments to the Philippines, while imperiling the country's sovereignty and welfare. It is also unclear whether the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1951 covers the West Philippine Sea disputes,

Instead of relying on the U.S., or acquiescing to China, the Philippines will have to augment its surveillance, reconnaissance, and intelligencegathering capabilities in order to effectively monitor developments in its surrounding waters, preferably at least within its 200- nautical-miles

exclusive economic zone," Santiago said. She then yowed a refurbished, empowered, and well-equipped Philippine Coast Guard if elected president, to protect the country's territorial integrity through civilian law enforcement operations against illegal, underreported, and unregulated fishing, especially from China and Vietnam.

Santiago said white-hull coast guard forces, not grey-hulled naval vessels, should primarily be deployed in the West Philippine Sea. "The moment the Philippines employs naval vessels for law-enforcement operations, as it did during the Scarborough Shoal standoff in 2012, it risks escalation and all-out war," she added.

The law maker also said that in the issue of territorial integrity, the Armed Forces should be developed only second to the Coast Guard. She noted, however, that it is crucial for the AFP to adopt a more outward, maritime-centered security doctrine, instead of focusing on domestic

Obviously, the Philippines or any regional state can never match Chinese defense spending, but we will have to have to develop minimum deterrence capabilities that allow us to resist and inflict sufficient retaliation if China continues to undermine Philippine territorial integrity, Santiago said.

Once elected, she said she would fortify Philippine presence in disputed areas, by effectively maintaining, if not augmenting, its facilities in Pag-Asa, Ayungin, and other features under its control, in order to provide minimum necessary protection against Chinese adventurism. Impeccable stuff of state craft, don't you think?



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Bataan has fallen

THE BATTLE of Bataan was fought on Jan. 7-April 9, 1942, or 74 years ago, by the Usaffe (US Armed Forces in the Far East) commanded by Gen. Douglas MacArthur. It was the most intense phase of Japan's invasion of Filipinas during

Japan's annihilation of the US naval fleet at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 8, 1941, left Bataan and Corregidor the only Allied

strongholds in the region amid MacArthur's failed plan: total defense of the islands by stopping the enemy on the beaches.

COMMENTARY

Reynaldo V. Silvestre

Sadly, his "paper" army never had Washington's approval from the very start due to his ambition to run as US president

versus Franklin Roosevelt. On April 3, Good Friday, the 65th "Summer" Brigade of Lt. Gen. Akira Nara led the mopping-up campaign in Bataan, coinciding with the death anniversary of Japan's first emperor, Jimmu. The neophyte unit had a strength of 7,500 mostly overage soldiers seeing battle for the first time. Arrayed against it were mountains it had never explored, jungles it had no maps of, and the Usaffe composed of 65,000 Filipinos, 15,000 Americans, and 10,000 soldiers of the US Army and the Philippine Constabulary. There goes the myth of Japan's superior forces in Bataan, after Nara captured Mt. Limay, facing the northern slope of Mt. Samat on April 9, the defense ironically led by Gen. Vicente Lim, his classmate at Fort Benning Infantry School in 1928.

Greatly humiliated, Maj. Gen. Edward King Jr. unconditionally surrendered the Usaffe to Col. Motoo Nakayoma, stressing that he represented only himself. It was the greatest capitulation in US history since the Civil War in the Battle of Harpers Ferry in 1862.

On May 9, Lt. Gen. Jonathan Wainright surrendered 10,000 troops in Corregidor to Lt. Gen. Masaharu Homma "with broken heart and head bowed with sadness, but not in shame."

It's time to debunk the fancy myths about sacrifice against "overwhelming odds," if we are to adhere to a people's view of our history. John Toland's "But not in Shame" bared it all—a prodigious and painstaking research on the six months after Pearl Harbor (Signet Books, 1961).

Unknown to MacArthur, the Pensacola convoy bound for Manila with planes and men were diverted to Fiji on Dec. 8. Troopships President Johnson, Bliss, Etolin and President Garfield were ordered back to San Francisco. In Manila, by nightfall, two destroyers undergoing repair in Cavite, to include supply ships, left port (pp. 73-74).

Washington's order to turn back was prompted by the fear of losing more men and ships after Pearl Harbor. But Wake had not fallen, Guam still stood, and the Pacific was still American water and could have been kept with a little display of nerve. With the Pacific open, supplies would pour into Filipinas and Allied bastions in the Far East, like the Atlantic was kept open throughout the war despite zealous German U-boots (p. 215). But Washington took no risk, made no effort to send supplies, gave up the Pacific on the first day of the war-hence Bataan fell!

Unknown also to MacArthur was a secret British-American military pact concluded long before Pearl Harbor: Adolf OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBL Hitler was the threat to the democracies and all supplies and 10. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295 men must go to Europe. It was agreed by the high commands of both that the main strategy in the Far East would be defensive. Paradoxically, America declared war against Japan but forthwith fought the Germans.

Army Core

Thus, when Manila was about to fall on a Christmas week, Roosevelt had a tayo-tayo lang conference with Winston Churchill, during which they agreed that Europeans in peril from Hitler had the priority over Orientals in peril from Hideki Tojo. The colonies in Asia could wait.

Angered by the US sellout, President Manuel L. Quezon proposed to Roosevelt the grant of immediate independence, a neutral Philippines, withdrawal of the armies of US and Japan, and that neither should occupy bases on the

islands. Roosevelt rejected the proposal.

Dismayed, Quezon resigned and sent a savage letter to Roosevelt on Jan. 31: "This war is not of our making. We decided to fight by your side and we have done the best we could and we are still doing as much under the circumstances. But how long are we going to be left alone? ... I want to decide in my own mind whether there is justification for allowing all these men to be killed when for the final outcome of the war the shedding of their blood may be wholly unnecessary" (p. 178).

War Plan Orange-3 (WPO-3) was effected on Dec. 22, after MacArthur's 11th and 71st Divisions were routed by the advancing Japanese: a last-resort measure in case of a successful enemy invasion to retreat to Bataan and Corregidor and keep Manila Bay open for reinforcements by the US

navy for six months (p. 134).

Did the authors of WPO-3 have definite word from Washington that the navy could be expected, or at least some effort would be made to send help within six months? If none, and all indications were that Washington had been very discreet and coy, then Bataan was a bureaucratic crime—the use of a plan with utter disregard for its intention or the conditions it presupposed. Filipinos fought in Bataan for a plan—to fight until ships came. They fought and died because none came, and none was ever coming in the first place.

There is no evidence that the horrors of the Death March were planned by Homma and his staff. They planned a quick and orderly transfer from Bataan to Capas of the prisoners of war—to be gathered in Balanga then carried on trucks to San Fernando—whom they estimated to number only 25,000-35,000 at the end of the fighting (p. 341).

Organization collapsed on how to transport over 70,000 prisoners on only 200 trucks. So they were marched by Japanese soldiers wearied by battle, vexed by the chore, and

despising those who had surrendered. The Japanese manual reads: "To be captured not only means disgracing the army, but your parents and family will never be able to hold up their heads again. Always save the last round for yourself" (p. 361).

We boast that our holdout in Bataan for three months fatally upset Japan's war timetable. Absolute nonsense. Homma expected to take Bataan in six months; he did it in three. The Japanese advanced according to schedule all over Southeast Asia, spilled over its extreme limits into the shore of Australia by the first week of May, swept up the whole of the East Indies, and annihilated the Allies' Pacific fleets in the process

Bataan had no military value except as propaganda, and its conquest was a matter of pride. Homma belonged to the antiwar, pro-West faction in Japan and was an archenemy of Tojo (p. 111), who wanted him to fail—with poor maps, bad intelligence reports, and taunted for delay in the mopping-up operation (p. 208). But he chose to win and was hanged by the victors for proving himself a better general than MacArthur.

Today, there will be the usual rhetoric on Bataan as a symbol and inspiration of the free man's readiness to fight for his liberties to the end. But how? Thousands of its defenders were still alive to surrender! It can be an inspiration only to dupes, and should be an old warning to this nation that cries, "Put not your trust in foreign princes"—especially under a US-sponsored 5555 Loca 5285 5295 Edca recently upheld by the Supreme Court as constitutional.

OFFICE OF THE ARMS CHIEF PUBLIC AFFA

Reynaldo V. Silvestre, a retired Army colonel, bemedaled officer and multiawarded writer, belongs to Class 1968 of the Vanguard in UP Diliman, and was teaching political theory at UP Manila when called to active duty as first lieutenant in 1975.

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Pahina. 5

EDITORYAL

ARAW NG KAGITINGAN, ARAW NG PAGLIMOT NG MGA KANO

ARAW ng Kagitingan ngayon at tinutukoy ang 76,000 sundalong Filipino at Amerikano na sumuko sa araw na ito sa mga Hapon noong 1942 kaugnay ng Ikalawang Digmaang Pandaigdig.

Kung bakit tinawag itong Araw ng Kagitingan ay lumalabas na pang-consuelo de bobo, lalo na sa mga sundalong Filipino, na nagbuwis nga naman ng buhay para sa pambansang kalayaan mula sa kuko ng mga mananakop na Hapon.

Ayon sa mga historyador, humantong sa pagsuko ang pagtakas ni General Douglas MacArthur noong Marso 11, 1942 at pag-abandona na rin ng mga Kano sa Pilipinas hanggang Oktubre 10, 1945 na pagbabalik ng nasabing heneral.

Bago pa mag-Pasko noong 1942, humihiling na ng tulong si noo'y Pangulong Manuel Quezon kay American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt na nagsabi namang bumibiyahe na ang mga barkong naglalaman ng mga tulong.

Pero kasinungalingan lamang pala lahat ito at sa halip, ang laban sa Europa laban sa Germany at Italy ang Inasikaso ng mga Amerikano at itinuring nang walang halaga ang Pilipinas.

Noon ngang Abril 9, 1942, sumuko dahil sa gutom, hirap at sakit ang mga inabandonang pwersa upang masakerin lang ang mga ito mismo sa Bataan at pagpapatayin ang mga ito sa 140 kilometrong Death March hanggang Capas, Tarlac.

Upang magkaroon ng tunay na kahulugan ang Araw ng Kagitingan, magandang ipangaral ang sana'y hindi pagiging pulubi ng mga Filipino sa kahit sinong dayuhan sa mga laban para sa pambansang kalayaan at pagmamahal sa bayan.

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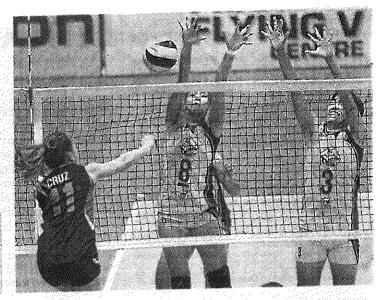


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RC Cola-Army's
Jovelyn Gonzaga (8)
and Joanne Bunag
elevate to stop Cha
Cruz of F2 Logistics
in yesterday's game
at Filoil Flying V
Center in San Juan.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

GAMES TODAY (Fil-Oil Flying V Center, San Juan) 12:30 p.m.—Petron vs F2 Logistics 2:30 p.m.—EST Cola vs RC Cola-Army



Superliga: RC Cola-Army seals title clash with EST

By Marc Anthony Reyes

RC Cola-Army and visiting EST Cola of Thailand crushed their respective opponents last night to set the stage for a titular showdown in the Philippine Superliga Invitational Cup at Fil-Oil Flying V Center in San Juan.

EST Cola needed just one blitzkrieg in the third set to frustrate two-time champion Petron, 25-12, 25-12, 25-23, for its second win in as many games. The youthful Thai team will face the Lady Troopers today for the crown.

Earlier, RC Cola-Army imposed its might against F2 Logistics to post their second successive win, 25-21, 25-20, 25-16.

The Tri-Activ Spikers struggled in the first

two sets but tested the Thais in the third and led by as much as 14-10 and 23-20.

Srithong Wipawee and Sasiporn Janthawiset, however, combined to score five straight points to put things in order Sutadtha Chuewulim topscored for EST Cola with 14 points.

"Our objective is to beat EST Cola," said RC Cola-Army coach Emilio "Kungfu" Reyes. "But we didn't take the local teams for granted."

F2 Logistics reeled with 0-2 record in the final round and will try to redeem itself in today's game against Petron.

"We will try to control the tempo of the game (against EST Cola) because we can't match them speed for speed," said Reyes.

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

ONLINE NEWS 09 APRIL 2016

www.inquirer.net

Navy restructures Luzon forces amid sea dispute

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Apr 8): Navy restructures Luzon forces amid sea dispute

The Philippine Navy has reactivated the division of its operational commands in Luzon, almost a year after merging its field units, in its aim to strengthen the country's maritime domain.

"We reactivated the two naval operations command—the Naval Forces Northern Luzon and the Naval Forces West. It used to be the Naval Forces Northwest," acting Navy spokesperson Lt. Cmdr. Marineth Domingo told media on Friday.

<u>Last year, the Navy merged the Naval Forces Northern Luzon in La Union and the Naval Forces</u>

<u>West in Palawan under the Naval Forces Northwest to combine their facilities and equipment amid China's aggressiveness in the South China Sea (West Philippine Sea).</u>

<u>Domingo explained that the units were restored to their previous state for them to have focus on naval operations. While the merged unit had the same responsibilities, it created confusion in communication lines, prompting the leadership to reconstitute it back to its past form.</u>

Navy chief Vice Adm. Caesar Taccad led the ceremonies for the reinstallation of the two units on Friday.

"It does not diminish the two operational commands. It does not diminish the capability and capacity nung two operational commands nation it's just that they were given the distinction now, mas naging distinct languages are not in support so ating higher headquarters," she said.

The Naval Forces West is under the command of the Commodore Danilo Rodelas while the Naval Forces Northern Luzon is commanded by Capt. Albert Mogol in an acting capacity. http://globalnation.inquirer.net/138456/navy-restructures-luzon-forces-amid-sea-dispute

www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

Convicted terrorist Umar Patek wants to help in hostage negotiations

From the Jakarta Post (Apr 8): Convicted terrorist Umar Patek wants to help in hostage negotiations

Widespread panic over the fate of 10 Indonesian sailors taken hostage by the Abu Sayyaf terror group in Sulu Island, the Philippines, has upset Umar Patek, a convicted terrorist currently serving time at the Surabaya Class 1 Penitentiary in Porong, Sidoarjo, East Java.

Umar says he is ready to help the Indonesian government negotiate with Abu Sayyaf militants, Kompas.com reported. The convicted terrorist claims he is acquainted with the leaders of the Abu Sayyaf militant group.

At the peak of his career, Umar was elected a council member of Abu Sayyaf under the leadership of Khadaffy Janjalani for the period 2005-2006. Council leadership positions were held by senior leaders in Abu Sayyaf. The council determined the policy of the group.

The leaders of the Abu Sayyaf faction currently holding the 10 Indonesians hostage are Al-Habsi Misaya and Jim Dragon, alias Junior Lahab.

Umar claims that when he was still a member of the Abu Sayyaf group, Jim was considered a senior figure. Meanwhile, Al-Habsi was considered a junior member.

At that time, he elaborated, Al-Habsi's duties were focused more on handling the documentation of hostage executions such as the execution of seven workers from the Philippines in 2007.

"I knew them well. Based on a sense of humanity, I offer myself to help the government. This is because the Indonesian government's calls to the group, with support from the Philippine government, will not be effective. Abu Sayyaf considers the Philippines an enemy," says Umar.

The terror convict further said that Indonesia had significant leverage in its bargaining position for the release of the 10 crewmen. This was because the hostages were from Indonesia, a Muslim country.

Moreover, Umar says Al-Habsi and Jim have soft personalities and are open to communicating with anyone. They are not affiliated with the Islamic State movement.

"The chance for success in the negotiation process is about 80 percent. It is likely that they don't know the 10 hostages are from Indonesia," says Umar, who once fought in 2005 against a joint Philippine and US task force in Talayan, Sulu Island, the Philippines.

In 2003, an Indonesian citizen, identified only as Zulkifli, was taken hostage by Abu Sayyaf and released shortly after the militant group learned that he was from Indonesia.

It was Umar that persuaded Abu Sayyaf leaders to release Mary Jean Lacaba, a member of the International Committee of the Red Cross. He asked Albader Parad, an Abu Sayyaf leader, to release Lacaba, saying that torturing women is forbidden under sharia. Lacaba was released in Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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

April 2009.

Umar was arrested in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on Jan. 25, 2011. four months before Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was killed in a security operation conducted by US Special Forces in the same city.

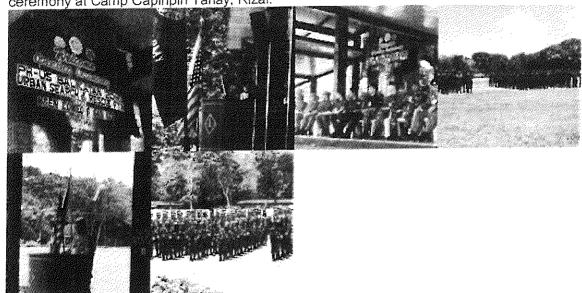
Umar is serving a 20 year sentence due to his involvement in the first Bali bombing in 2002. After the Bali bombing, he flew to the Philippines to join with Abu Sayyaf.

http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/04/08/convicted-terrorist-umar-patek-wants-to-help-in-hostage-negotiations.html

www.dwdd.ph

BK 2016 | Urban SAR Training Officially Starts in Tanay

CAMP CAPINPIN, Tanay Rizal (DWDD) – As part of this year's PH-US Balikatan Exercise (BK16), the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Field Training Exercise (FTX) formally opened today, April 8 in a ceremony at Camp Capinpin Tanay, Rizal.



The said exercise will be conducted by combined elements of the US Hawaii National Guard (HING) and the Southern Luzon Command (SOLCOM) of the AFP. MGEN Romeo G Gan. Commander of 2nd Infantry Division. Phil Army welcomed the participants lead by BGEN Kenneth S Hara. the Duputy Adjutant General of the Hawaii National Guard.



The USAR FTX is focused on the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) staff exercise of SoLcom's Unified Command Staff concurrently ongoing at Camp Aguinaldo. In his remarks, BGEN Hara emphasized the US' commitment to assist in enhancing the capabilities of the AFP in addressing our core security concerns which includes not only territorial defense but also man-made and natural disasters.

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



MGen Gan likewise cited the significance of this USAR training to the AFP given the magnitude of the potential earthquake that could devastate Metro Manila. The USAR training is intended to enhance the capability of the AFP personnel particularly the Reserve units under SOLCom, as well as to share HADR TTPs and personal experiences between US HING and AFP. A total of 125 active Reserve AFP personnel participates in the training and a team from Army's 525th Engineer Construction Battalion assisting the HING during the course of the training. LMC / MCAG / Photos by AW2C Maricel N Batara

www.dwdd.com

SKY WARRIOR II A2C Dumansi, an "Experienced Parachutist"

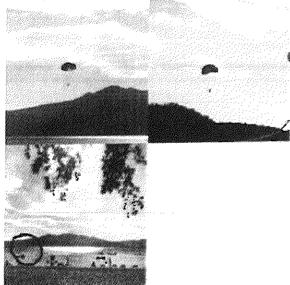
MANILA (DWDD) - "It has no direct effect to the existing Balikatan exercise and is considered an isolated incident, this is a freak accident, and we cannot control nature"







This was the statement made by Capt Celeste Frank Sayson, Public Affairs Officer of the Joint Balikatan Media Bureau, in regards the tragedy that struck the PH-US Balikatan 2016 Military Exercises yesterday when an airman, identified as A2C Jover Dumansi of the 710th Special Operations Wing (SPOW) of the Philippine Air Force, experienced "wind drag" that blew him away from the main landing zone towards the nearby sea which was more or less 30 feet deep.



The 710th SPOW was conducting Parachute Proficiency Exercises with the 320th Special Training Squadron of the United States Air Force.

Capt Sayson also assured the public that A2C Dumansi is a seasoned paratrooper, having done airborne operations so many times, and what happened to him was purely an accident. All safety precautions are in place.

He added that all other airborne operations / exercise between the US-PH Air Force, Marines and Army would still continue as scheduled. AES / MCAG / Photos Courtesy of Elaine Joy Cruz / Leah Burgos and Ervin Bajala.

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