

量少年别人们外

Serving the people. Securing the land.

oacpa.army2012@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS NEWS CLIPPINGS

12 April 2016

Tuesday

TABLE OF CONTENTS 12 APRIL 2016

BACE						
PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER			
1	Weather Forecast		PDI p. A18			
NATIONAL NEWS						
2-3	Duterte, Bongbong surge to top - SWS	Helen Flores	Phil Star p. 1			
ARMY RELATED NEWS						
4	Army chief: Slain Moroccan was ISIS conduit	Florante Solmerin	The Standard p. A1			
5	Photo: Visit	AFP	The Standard p. A3			
6-7	2 generals seek probe of Basilan carnage	Julie Alipala	PDI p. A1			
8-9	'We'll hunt them day and night	Jaime Laude	Phil Star p. 1			
10-11	Army hits back at Abu Sayyaf bandits, kill 13 in new firefight	Rene Acosta	Business Mirror p. A7			
12-13	13 Abu Sayyaf bandits slain in Basilan pursuit operations	Elena Aben	Mla Bulletin p. 1			
14	8 more Abu Sayyaf dead in Basilan	Victor Reyes	Malaya p. B1			
15	AFP retaliates; 13 Abus killed in ongoing clash in Basilan	Mario Mallari	Tribune p. 3			
16-17	13 Abu Sayyaf men killed in new firefight, says AFP	Julie Alipala	PDI p. A18			
18	Soldiers push hunt for Abu rebels	Joel Sy Egco	Mla Times p. 1			
. 19	4 sa 18 sundalong napatay, pinugutan	Rhoderick Beñez	Ngayon p. 6			
20	AFP, tuloy ang giyera vs Abu Sayyaf	Nonoy Lacson	Balita p. 5			
21	Sayyaf sa Basilan dinudurog	Boyet Jadulco	Abante p. 6			
	AFP nagluksa; Flag ceremony emosyonal	Betchai Julian	Abante p. 6			
22	Zambo siege awardee named special ops chief	Victor Reyes	Malaya p. B1			
23	'A tragedy': ARMM guv mourns death of 18 soldiers in Abu Sayyaf clash	John Unson	www.philstar.com			
24-25	Abu Sayyaf death toll rises to 13 as military pursues 'no let-up' operations	Roel Pareño	www.philstar.com			
26	ASG leader in critical condition; intensified ops in Basilan–AFP	Frances Mangosing	www.inquirer.net			
27-28	AFP top officials ipinatawag ni P-Noy re: Basilan clash	Analy Soberano	'www.bomboradyo.com			
	'Walang air support dahil foggy ang	Analy Soberano	www.bomboradyo.com			

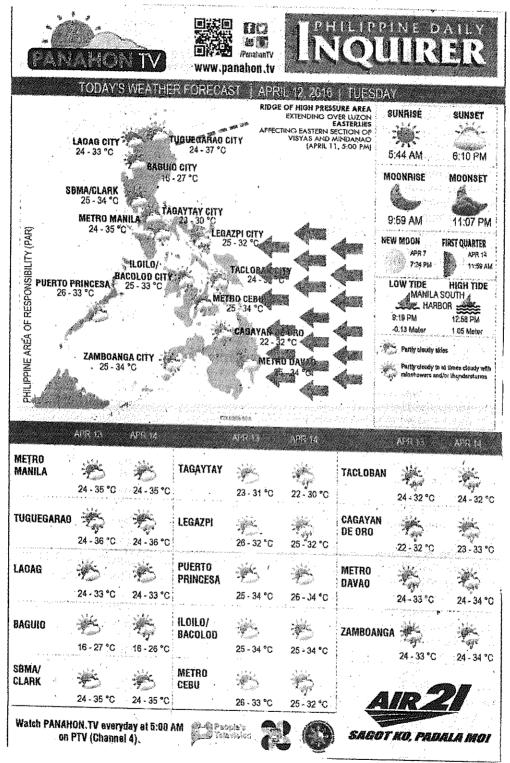
	panahon' - AFP				
∠9-30	AFP: Bad weather hampered air support in Basilan clash	Jaime Sinapit	www.interaksyon.com		
	BASILAN CLASH 13 more ASG fall as battle at Tipo-Tipo raged at the weekend	Jaime Sínapit	www.interaksyon.com		
31	Authorities clueless on Buluan bombing try	Moh Saaduddin	Mla Times p. A3		
32	NPA rebels burn 5 trucks	Ben Serrano	Phil Star p. 16		
33	Sky diver sugatan sa Palarong Pambansa	Jorge Hallare	Ngayon p. 6		
34	Kin of ASG leader nabbed in Basilan	Victor Reyes	Malaya p. B2		
35	Another ASG man in kidnap falls	Anthony Vargas	Mla Times p. A7		
	AFP REL	ATED NEWS			
36	Navy rescues 2 Turkish sailors off Zamboanga	Al Jacinto	Mla Times p. A1		
37	Photo: Sailors rescued	Navy Photo	Malaya p. B6		
38-40	Scarborough Shoal: China's next strategic military base	Rene Acosta	Business Mirror p. A4		
41-42	G7 foreign ministers oppose sea row provocation	Reuters, AFP	Phil Star p. 1		
4 3	Photo: Beach Front	AFP	The Standard p. A7		
44	Photo: Balikatan	The state of the s	Tribune p. 1		
45	Photo: Balikatan	Tara Yap	Tempo p. 2		
46	Photo: Freedom March	Jojo Riñoza	Balita p. 5		
47	Photo: Death March	Jojo Riñoza	Tempo p. 4		
	COMMENTA	RY/EDITORIAL			
48-49	18 soldiers killed in Basilan	Ernesto Maceda	Phil Star p. 13		
50	A foothold for ISIS		Philt Star p. 12		
51-52	Gone for Good	Jojo Robles	The Standard p. A8		
53	Leader with an iron hand	Ramon Tulfo	PDI p. A8		
54	MILF must first prove sincerity by eradicating ASG	Maria Margarita Aytona	PDI p. A14		
55-56	What is Squad X, and how will it change the US Army	David Axe	Malaya p. B4		
57-58	We continue to hope for kidnap victims		Mla Bulletin p. 10		
SPORTS NEWS					
59	Army win big boost to Phi volley	-	Phil Star p. 19		
60	RC Cola-Army pinatunayang angat na ang Volleyball ng Pinas	~	Ngayob p. 15		

milly vision, by 2020, a grand diassitality and to a obulde of hodolical

/2 April 2016



Page: Als



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

April 2016



Duterte, Bongbong surge to top - SWS

Five weeks before the May elections, presidential aspirant Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte and vice presidential bet Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. have surged to the number one spot in the latest quarterly Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey.

By HELEN FLORES

Duterte grabbed the lead from former frontrunner Sen. Grace Poe in

the presidential race, the pollster

Results of the SWS first quarter

survey conducted from March 30 to April 2 showed that 27 percent of

respondents preferred the toughtalking Duterte.

Duterte's rating was four

points up from the 23 percent he obtained in the March 8 to 11 poll.

Poe, United Nationalist Alliance (UNA) candidate Vice President Jejomar Binay and Liberal Party (LP) standard bearer Manuel Roxas II are statistically

Turn to Page 6

tied for second place, with scores of 23 percent, 20 percent and 18 percent, respectively.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Sanliago's rating remained steady at three percent.

Poe's rating went down six

points from 29 percent. Binay's score also dropped two points from 22 percent.

Roxas lost a point from [19 percent in the previous

The survey used face-toface interviews with 1,500 jadults nationwide – 1,377 or 192 percent of them registered ivoters.

It has sampling error marigins of plus or minus three percentage points.

Results of the latest SWS survey were published in BusinessWorld yesterday.

Bongbong takes solo lead

Marcos, runningmate of Santiago, took the solo lead in the vice presidential race, garnering 26 percent from 25 percent in the previous

Sen. Francis Escudero, who is running with Poe, and LP bet Camarines Sur Rep. Leni Robredo are statistically tied for second spot with 21 percent and 19 percent, respectively.

Escudero lost seven points from 28 percent in the previous poll. Robredo's score dropped by three points from 22 percent.

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, who is running with Duterte, to 13 percent.

Binay's runningmate, Sen.

Gregorio Honasan, also gained a point with five percent from four percent.

Independent candidate Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV was tied with Honasan with five percent, unchanged from the previous survey.

Duterte camp elated

The camp of Duterte said it was elated with the results of the latest SWS presidential survey but maintained it cannot be complacent.

"While we are elated with the results of the recent surveys, we still believe the final arbiter of who will be elected as president is the people... that will be known on election day," Maribojoe Mayor Jun Evasco, Duterte's campaign manager, said.

"We cannot celebrate yet gained a point from 12 percent—until the May 9 election is over. It is not over until it's over," Evasco added.

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

He asked the mayor's supporters to double their efforts with less than a month before the elections.

"We urge our followers to continue to work harder and make sure their support and the results of the surveys are translated into votes," Evasco said.

Binay unfazed

Binay's camp, meanwhile, remained unfazed as it shrugged off the results of the latest SWS survey.

"A closer reading of the SWS survey shows downward movements for both Mayor Duterte and Senator Poe," UNA campaign spokesman Rico Quicho said.

Quicho said the numbers of Duterte and Poe actually dropped and that of Binay increased, compared with the SWS poll conducted on March 30.

In the previous survey, Duterte scored 31 percent while Poe obtained 34 percent. Binay's rating went up by three points from 17 percent, while Roxas' score increased by a single point.

Vice President Binay is grateful for the results of the survey. Despite the attacks hurled against the Vice President, his steady rise shows the strength of his core supporters," said Quicho.

"He will work harder together with our various support groups as election day nears," he added:

Poe. Chiz reassess strategy

Poe and Escudero will adjust their campaign strategy after they both fell to second place in the latest SWS survey.

Escudero said the survey results served as a challenge to step up their campaign.

would reach out to more people and explain their platform.

Poe's spokesman Valenzuela Mayor Rex Gatchalian said the survey results would guide their team as they plan their next moves.

Robredo worried

Robredo said she was worried over the results of the latest SWS survey that showed Marcos topping the poll.

"I'm worried. Even if he's not at the top, even if he's in the fourth or fifth places in the survey. I'm still worried because there are still many who believe he deserves to be elected, considering he has yet to atone for their sins in the past," Robredo told reporters.

Robredo was referring to the alleged hidden wealth accumulated by the Marcoses and the atrocities during martial law.

With Perseus Echemina-Escudero said he and Poe da, Robertzon Ramirez, Janvic Mateo, Christina Mendez, Paolo Romero

FORPR	ESID	ENT .
SWS	MAR. 30 - APR 2	MAR. 8-11
DUTERTE	27%	23%
POE	$\frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}$	29% *-
BINAY	20%	22% *
ROXAS	18%	19% =
SANTIAGO	3%	3%

FOR VICE	PRESID	IENITE
· SWS	MAR. 30 - APR 2	
MARCOS	26%	MAR. 1-8 25% →
ESCUDERO	249	4970 F
ROBREDO	19%	22% ►
CAYETANO	13%	12% →
HONASAN	5%	4% ▲
TRILLANES!	5%	5%, 144

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS - Email add: oa

5285, 5295

12 April 2016

Glandard

Page:

Army chief: Slain Moroccan was ISIS conduit

By Florante S. Solmerin, Sandy Araneta and Francisco Tuyay

ARMY chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año said Monday the Moroccan killed in the government offensive against the Abu Sayyaf was the conduit between the bandit group and Islamic State terrorists.

"Last year, he came up on the radar of our intelligence service because he was

trying to link up the Abu Sayyaf to the Middle East terrorist group," Año said, referring to Mohammad Khattab.

Khattab, a bomb expert, has been living in the country for the last three years, Año said.

Armed Forces spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said Monday at least 13 more Abu Sayyaf gunmen died as the military pressed more attacks Sunday against the fleeing bandits in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan.

On Saturday, at least 18 soldiers and five bandits were killed when the Abu Sayyaf ambushed the advancing soldiers.

Padilla said bad weather prevented the Air Force from sending close air support for the ground troops that day. **Next page**

Because the attack helicopt and bomber planes such as the OV-10 were grounded by bad weather, ground commanders had to rely on their artillery bombardment targeting enemy positions.

He denied public criticism that casualties could have been avoided if the troops had enough equipment and air assets during the critical moments of the battle.

The national headquarters of the military and police and all camps of the uniformed services across the country flew the flag at half-staff over the death of the 18 soldiers.

"Flags are flown at half-mast to mourn the death of our soldiers, our heroes who offered the ultimate sacrifice, their lives, last Saturday, our national Day of Valor," Padilla said. "We fly it at half mast to honor their gallantry and sacrifice." On Sunday night, Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Hernando Iriberri informed President Benigno Aquino III last Sunday night on the progress of continuing operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines against Abu Sayyaf and other lawless elements in Basilan after their return from Zamboanga City, Malacañang said on Monday.

"These operations were intensified since December 2015 and have resulted in neutralizing high-value terror suspects, including Malaysian Mohd Najib Hussein (a.k.a. Abu Anas), Moroccan Mohammad Khattab and Ubaida Hapilon, son of senior ASG leader Isnilon Hapilon," said Communications Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr., in a statement.

"Both officials informed the President that, in accordance with his instructions, pursuit operations are still being conducted and that the troops are fully equipped and adequately supported," said Coloma.

Eighteen soldiers were killed while six were critically wounded during a 10-hour firefight in Barangay Baguindan in Basilan's Tipo-Tipo town Saturday.

The military said five were killed on the enemy side, including Khattab and Ubaida Hapilon, son of senior ASG leader Isnilon Hapilon.

Padilla said the terrorists attempted to behead two of the slain soldiers but were prevented from doing so.

Western Mindanao Command spokesman Maj. Filemon Tan said the wounded soldiers were all taken to military hospitals in Zamboanga City and were undergoing treatment as of Sunday.

"Military operations will continue without letup as we seek the withdrawing bandits and hold them accountable for their crimes," he said. "Our soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice so that the people of Basilan will be free from terrorists and secure a peaceful and bright future for their next generation," he added.

On Friday, police in Zamboanga City arrested a close relative of the Abu Sayyaf chieftain, Hapilon.

Criminal Investigation Detection Group Director Victor Deona identified the ASG member as Bantong Basinti, uncle of commander Hapilon, who was involved in the kidnapping of plantation farmers in Basilan province.

C AFFAIRS - Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

April 2016

1

2 generals seek probe of Basilan carnage

By Julie S. Alipala in Zamboanga City and Julie M. Aurelio in Manila

FAMILIES of the 18 slain soldiers seeking justice and asking for details on how they died were told not to talk to journalists even as two generals demanded a military investigation into the carnage, the INQUIRER learned yesterday.

Military authorities declined to discuss with reporters details of the 10-hour encounter with Abu Sayyaf bandits in Tipo-Tipo on Basilan on Saturday in which 52 other soldiers were wounded.

"We want justice. It is difficult for us to speak right now, but we have many questions on our minds. Right now, all I can say is we want justice," said Lady Labial, wife of slain Cpl. Dionesio Labial from Sirawai, Zamboanga del Norte.

"I lost my voice from crying," said Inday Monte, who lost her eldest son, Pfc. John Monte in the worst incident to hit the security services since 44 Special Action Force troopers were massacred in Mamasapano, province, Maguindanao Jan. 25 last year.

Monte and her husband Ruben traveled from Baroy in Lanao del Norte, 12 hours away over land, to find out what had 2 GENERALS / A18

happened in Tipo-Tipo. "There were so many deaths. I came here to see so many deaths.'

Inday said as she tried to control her emotions so as not to get the attention of the soldiers watching them at the St. Peter Funeral Home in Zamboanga City, where eight of the dead remained as of yesterday. She said they were not allowed to speak to journalists.

This is my first time to set foot in Zamboanga. First and maybe last. I am here to bring my son back home," she said.

13 Abu Sayyaf men killed

Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said troops had killed 13 Abu Sayyaf bandits in military operations in the same area in Tipo-Tipo where 150 of the insurgents sprang the ambush on the soldiers, most of them belonging to the 44th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army, on Saturday.

We have not stopped in our operations to pursue the Abu Sayyaf," Padilla said in a news briefing at the AFP headquarters. He said the offensive started on Sunday morning. (See story above.)

Padilla announced that flags in all military camps would be flown at half mast for a week "to mourn the deaths of our soldiers, our heroes who offered the ultimate sacrifice."

On Sunday, AFP chief of staff Gen. Hernando Iriberri, Army chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año and OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUF Gazmin flew to Zamboanga ny2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295 Army Core City to visit the wounded and

condole with the families of the dead, who were all from Mindanao, except for one whose body was flown to Isabela province yesterday.

The Philippine National Police issued a statement expressing condolences and honoring "true heroes who offered the supreme sacrifice so that Filipinos will continue to live in peace."

Heads should roll

Two ranking military officials said the AFP should conduct an inquiry into the Tipo-Tipo ambush.

"What happened was a failure of leadership from top to bottom for lack of experience, failure of intelligence and failure of realistic planning to include intelligent mission planning," said a general, who asked not to be

ு பாட்டு சாது அது people. Securing the land.

named. He said the brigade up to the Western Mindanao Command should be held liable.

Another general said heads should roll. He said Maj. Gen. Mayoralgo del Cruz, the regional military chief, was micromanaging the operations at the expense of soldiers' lives. "He planned it. He even went to the battalion headquarters before the troops jumped off. This is super micromanagement, a three-star general wanting to do the 2nd Lieutenant job," the officer said.

Iriberri, in an interview on Sunday in Zamboanga, said that it was too early to call for a probe. "As we speak, an operation is ongoing in Basilan," he said.

In an interview at the funeral home, Jennylyn Alani, wife of Cpl. Jayson Alani of La Piedad, Isabela City, said her husband called her up on Friday night.

"He told me to take care of our children and that I should not miss eating. I even told him that he was giving me the creeps because it was like he was saying goodbye," Jennylyn said.

Jennylyn said her husband was on break for a week, but got recalled in April 4. "He received a call that they must all report at once," she said. The 44th Infantry Battalion arrived in Basilan last week.

Jennylyn said she wanted to know what really happened. She said her husband called her on Friday night, informing her that they would be moving to Tipo-Tipo on Saturday morning. She learned of her husband's death at 9 p.m. Saturday. No one, however, briefed her about what happened.

Military honors awaited

Gemma Alani, younger sister of Cpl. Jayson Alani, told the Inquirer, "We will only be at peace if we know what really happened." She said it took 24 hours before the family were able to see the body of her brother. She said military officials told them that they should not talk to journalists until the remains of the soldiers had reached their hometowns.

"Where are the military honors? It would have been good for us to see our brother and his comrades given honors. Why

would they want to keep our emotions down?" Gemma asked.

She said many families had rushed to the St. Peter's Funeral Homes on Sunday morning but were told to wait as bodies were still being recovered from the encounter site.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesperson of the Western Mindanao Command, said that a dedicated military honor will be given to fallen soldiers. "They are being taken cared of by their mother unit, the 1st Infantry Division," Tan said.

The mother of 1st Lt. Remigio Licenia urged the government to pursue the killers of her 28-year-old son, who had served as a teacher at the Rang-ayan National High School in Ilagan City, Isabela, before joining the army.

"We condemn the killing of my son and the soldiers who had been serving the people. They must pay," said Maria Clara Bundoc-Licenia. The remains of Licenia arrived at nearby Gamu town in Isabela yesterday. With a report from Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon, and Jaymee T. Gamil in Manila

April 2016



'We'll hunt them day and night'

AFP kills 4 more Abus

By JAIME LAUDE

Four Abu Sayyaf members were killed in renewed fighting last weekend in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan as military reinforcements conducting pursuit operations hit hard at the militants that earlier gunned down 18 soldiers, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reported yesterday.

Padilla, AFP spokesman, said soldiers clashed with the bandits Sunday in Barangay Baguindan in Tipo-Tipo

The latest killings brought to 13 the death toll of the Abu Sayyaf since fighting started last Saturday. Five bandits were earlier killed.

"The death of four Abu Sayyaf is in line with continuing operations against the bandit group in Basilan as perdirective from the top military leadership, Padilla said, adding that scores of bandits were wounded.

Additional troops from the AFP's elite anti-terror force, the

Brig. Gen. Restituto Light Reaction Company (LRC), and the Army Scout Rangers were dispatched to Basilan to help track down the bandits led by Isnilon Hapilon and Furuii Indama.

> AFP chief Gen. Hernando Iriberri has ordered the troops to conduct sustained operations against the enemy.

> "We have deployed additional troops to the island. Day and night we will go after these bandits," an informed military source said.

> Aside from Basilanbased units, troops from Sulu were also deployed to go after the Abu Sayyaf involved in kidnap for ransom operations in

> > Turn to Page 8

the region and in Sabah.

Informed sources said that Muslim burial rites. last Sunday's fighting broke out when dozens of Abu Sayyaf members were trying to recover the body of a Moroccan terrorist, Mohammad Khattab, who was killed during the encounter with government troops the previous day.

The bandits killed 18 soldiers and wounded 56 others during clashes last Saturday. Some were reportedly beheaded.

Khattab, passing himself off as an Islamic preacher, had been the conduit between the homegrown terrorists in Mindanao and Middle East-based international network, until the troops finally caught up with him in Basilan.

He was killed during the clash with elements of the Army's 44th Infantry Battalion (IB).

Sources said pursuing troops prevented the bandits from retrieving the body of Khattab.

The remains of the Moroccan terrorist are now in military custody and would be buried in accordance with

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman for Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said operations are continuing against Radullan Sahiron, Indama and their gang.

"The operation is continuous and there is no letup in going after the Abu Sayyaf group," Tan said.

The military said the killing of Khattab has apparently preempted possible bombings and stopped the training of local bomb makers of the Abu Sayyaf.

Khattab was one of two foreign terrorists based in Basilan.

His companion, Malaysian bomb expert Mohammad Najib Hussein alias Abu Anas, was killed last Dec. 15 in Al-Barka, Basilan.

"We preempted possibility of bombing attack because we neutralized Mohammad Khattab. He could no longer pass on his terroristic trade craft,"

Tan said they could not confirm if Khattab and Hapilon are espousing the Islamic State

April 2016

BusinessMirror

Page. ##

Army hits back at Abu Sayyaf bandits, kill 13 in new firefight

By Rene Acosta & @reneacostaBM

And David Cagahastian & @davecaga

OVERNMENT forces killed 13 Abu Sayyaf bandits in the continuing operations against the armed group in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan, following the day-long gunbattle on Saturday, the military reported on Monday.

Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, Armed Forces spokesman, said the 13 bandits were killed on Sunday by troops from the 44th Infantry Battalion, the same Army unit that figured in the almost 10-hour firefight with the group of commander Isnilon Hapilon on Saturday.

The bandits returned to Sitio Bayoko, Barangay Baguindan, Tipo-Tipo, apparently to retrieve the bodies of their dead companions, including Moroccan Mohammad Khattab, triggering a firefight for about six hours that began at past 9 a.m.

Khattab, a foreign terrorist and supposedly a facilitator of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) contacts with international terror organizations, including the Islamic State, was among those killed during the gunbattle on Saturday in Barangay Baguindan. He is also reportedly an

instructor on bomb making.

The soldiers also killed Hapilon's son Ubaida and another Abu Sayyaf leader Radzmil Jannatul along with two others. Twenty other bandits were wounded in the Saturday encounter, the military said.

On the other hand, 18 soldiers were killed, while 53 others were wounded during the firefight.

Padilla said the 13 bandits were killed during Sunday's encounter as the government continued its operations against the group of Hapilon.

He said no soldier was killed or wounded in the Sunday encounter.

President Aquino, meanwhile, ordered the military to step up the offensive against the ASG after the reported deaths of 18 Army troops, including an officer, in a firefight in Basilan during the weekend.

Aquino summoned Defense Secretary Voltaire T. Gazmin and Gen. Hernando Iriberri, Armed Forces chief of staff, to Malacañang on Sunday night to review the operations against the ASG.

Communications Secretary Herminio B. Coloma Jr. said Aquino specifically ordered pursuit operations to be conducted following the firefight on Saturday.

The President also ordered the two officials to ensure that the military units involved are fully equipped and adequately supported by other government forces.

Coloma said the intensified operations against the Abu Sayyaf started last December and have already resulted in the killing of high-value bandits, including Malaysian Mohd Najib Hussein alias Abu Khattab and the younger Hapilon.

In Basilan an Abu Sayyaf bandit, who is the nephew of the emir of the group, was arrested over the weekend by a team of soldiers and policemen.

Bantong Basinti, nephew of Abu Sayyaf emir Radullan Sahiron, was captured on Friday in Barangay Bulansa, Lantawan, Basilan, said Director Victor Deona, commander of the National Police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

Deona said on Monday that Basinti was arrested by a team of CIDG agents, members of the police's Basilan Provincial Public Safety Company and Air Force intelligence operatives on the strength of a warrant of arrest.

He said Basinti, an Abu Sayyaf bandit under the direct command of Sahiron, his uncle, is wanted for eight counts of kidnapping and serious illegal detention.

Basinti and the Hapilon's group were behind the kidnapping of 10 employees of the Golden Harvest Plantation on June 11, 2001. One of the victims was beheaded in that incident.

Meanwhile, three men were arrested inside a mall in Cotabato City for possessing highpowered firearms.

They were identified as Ismael Kamsa, Kle Tambara and Jomer Anggarwho were arrested by troops from the CIDG-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Office, the Army, the National Police Special Action Force and the Cotabato City police command.

Seized from the three were an M-16 carbine, two caliber .45 pistols, ammunition magazines and ammunition.

The three were arrested the Alnor Mall on Sinsuat Avenue, Cotabato City. The CIDG-ARMM commander, Supt. Jimmy Daza, said the trio are believed to be members of a private armed group based in Barangay Kalanganan, Cotabato City.

12- April 2016

20 TONE ! O BEEL MEDICAL

13 Abu Sayyaf bandits slain in Basilan pursuit operations

By ELENA L. ABEN

Government forces killed 13 militants in continuing operations against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) that killed 18 soldiers last Saturday in Basilan, the military announced yesterday.

Maj. Filemon Tan, spokesman, Western Mindanao Command (Wesmin-

com), said six other militants, including ASG commander Furuii Indama who has a multi-million peso bounty on his head, were also wounded in the clash. Tan said they received reports that Indama is in critical condition.

Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, spokesman, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said the latest encounter 16

occurred Sunday in Barangay Baguindan in Tipo Tipo town, the same area where heavy fighting took place last Saturday that left 18 soldiers and five ASG gunmen dead.

"Thirteen ASG bandits were reported killed in Sunday's operations in Barangay Baguindan," Padilla said in a press briefing at Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo.

No casualties were reported on the government side during the fighting that broke out in the morning and lasted until around 3 p.m.

"With this, the number of slain ASG since April 9 has now climbed to 18," said the AFP spokesman, noting that the bandit group also suffered more than 20 injured during the bloody encounter the day before.

Padilla said it is possible that some of the latest fatalities from the ASG were among those wounded in Saturday's gun battle.

He added, however, that they are still awaiting report from the Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom) if the bodies of the slain ASG men were recovered.

Bad weather

In the same press briefing, Padilla said military air assets were on standby , provide support to the troops that conducted Saturday's offensive.

However, due to bad weather, he said the military aircraft were not able to provide the needed close air support to the soldiers on the ground.

However, Former Tipo-Tipo mayor Joel Maturan, now United Nationalist Alliance (UNA) gubernatorial candidate in Basilan, told the Manila Bulletin that fresh troops have been deployed to the conflict site since Saturday, an indication that an all-out war against the ASG will continue in the forests of Tipo-Tipo.

Air support

Maturan said helicopter gunships continue to hover over the conflict site to provide aerial cover for the ground troops running after the ASG bandits.

Soldiers are noticed in major roads leading to the hostility sites and military checkpoints have been established very close to each other along roads leading to Baguindan and Silangkum to prevent other ASG bandits from supporting their comrades led by senior leaders Isnilon Hapilon and Furigi Indama.

Malacañang assured that security forces are "fully equipped and adequately supported" in their pursuit operations against the ASG.

Presidential Communications Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Hernando Iriberri informed President Aquino Sunday night on the progress of continuing operations of the AFP against the Abu Sayyaf and other lawless elements in Basilan.

"Both officials informed the President that, in accordance with his instructions, pursuit operations are still being conducted and that the troops are fully equipped and adequately supported," Coloma said.

With the pursuit operations, Maturan said the outnumbered ASG bandits are now adopting a "guerrilla" style of fighting the soldiers, taking DEFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS advantage of their familiarity with the forest terrain.

Somy Core Porpose Serving the people Serving the land

"They can inflict large casualty to government troops running after them since they know the terrain, they know where to wait for the military to ambush them, and they know where to find an exit to elute pursuing soldiers," Maturan said.

"What is good in here, the members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) who live near the conflict site have evacuated to a safer site and did not dip their fingers into the conflict," added -

9 Jundreds of residents living near ॐ onflict site have also evacuated

to safer ground to avoid being caught in the crossfire.

Maturan urged the military not to stop their operations against the group to prevent them from regrouping and regaining strength.

"If the ASG will not run out of bullets, they will certainly run out of food and this can make them weak in fighting the soldiers," Maturan said.

Bishop angered

The latest clash in Basilan has angered a Mindanao prelate.

Basilan Bishop Martin Jumoad said it is very depressing when "our government forces are seemingly 'defeated' with 18 soldiers as casualties."

"I am really depressed and angry why our soldiers are killed like chickens in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf," he said.

The prelate questioned why government forces cannot seem to overcome the terrorist group.

"What is happening to our government? Jumoad asked.

"What is happening to our military school? There is a need to revisit and reevaluate how come our soldiers cannot overcome the Abu Sayyaf?" he added.

The Basilan bishop said, "If our own soldiers cannot neutralize the Abu Sayyaf, how much more for the Chinese soldiers in the Philippine Sea?"

"I pity our national defense. The

Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285-5295

Abus are laughing at our schooled military men!" said Jumoad.

Flags at half-mast

As the nation mourns the death of 18 soldiers who figured in the bloody clash with the ASG, flags were flown at half-mast at all military camps in the country.

"Flags are flown at half-mast to mourn the death of our soldiers...our heroes who offered the ultimate sacrifice, their lives, last Saturday, our national Day of Valor, in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan in a day long encounter against elements of the ASG," Padilla said.

"We fly it at half-mast to honor their gallantry and sacrifice," he added.

Meanwhile, Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) agents arrested Bantong Basinti, Hapilon's nephew, in a raid in a remote area in Lantawan town.

Director Victor Deona, CIDG head, said Basinti was involved in various kidnap-for-ransom activities in recent years, among them the Golden Harvest Plantation kidnapping in 2011.

"He is actually facing eight counts of kidnapping with serious illegal detention after he was identified in those kidnapping activities in the past," said Deona. (With reports from Nonoy E. Lacson, Madel S. Namit, Leslie Ann G. Aquino, PNA, and Aaron B. Recuenco)

12 April 2016



Page: B1

8 more Abu Sayyaf dead in Basilan

BY VICTOR REYES

THE military yesterday said eight more Abu Sayyaf members have died in clashes with government troops in Basilan Saturday and Sunday, bringing the enemy's death toll to 13 men.

The military had 18 fatalities and 53 wounded.

Four of the latest reported Abu Sayyaf fatalities died after elite Scout Ranger and Special Forces soldiers clashed with the remnants of the group in Barangay Baguindan in Tipo-Tipo town around 9 a.m. yesterday.

The other four died Saturday. They were among the wounded 20 wounded in the Saturday clash.

The military earlier said Saturday's almost 10-hour gun battle left four Abu Sayyaf men and Moroccan terrorist Mohammad Khattab dead, and 20 other Abu Sayyaf bandits wounded.

Maj. Filemon Tan, spokesman of the military's Western Mindanao Command, said a 40-minute firefight erupted Sunday as troops were pursuing the 120-man Abu Sayyaf group they first encountered last Saturday. The firefight also resulted in the wounding of six Abu Sayyaf men, including Abu Sayyaf leader Furuji Indama who, Tan said, was "critically wounded."

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said flags in military camps throughout the

See 8 MORE➤ Page B6

country flew at half staff on Sunday to mourn the death of the 18 soldiers, mostly from the 44th Infantry Battalion.

The flag will be flown that way for a week. "This is recognition of the heroism of our soldiers," Padilla said.

Padilla also disclosed that close-air support from MG-520 helicopters and OV-10 bomber planes for the engaged troops in last Saturday's fighting was delayed by bad weather.

He said aerial bombardment came only on Saturday noon when the weather cleared. The fighting broke out around 9 a.m.

Padilla without the aerial support, military ground commanders opted to deliver artillery rounds on the enemy forces.

"The air assets that were supposed to bombard the targets could not deliver because the ceiling (cloud) was too low. Weather was bad," he said.

On lapses that may have been committed by the soldiers, Padilla said this is not the time to blame, adding the military's focus now is pursuing the Abu Sayyaf remnants.

"This is a time to focus because the enemy is just right there and we need to find them," said Padilla. He said investigation may be pursued later but "now let us concentrate on the tactical nature of the hunt."

12 April 2016

AFP retaliates: 13 Abus killed in ongoing clash n Basilan By Mario J. Mallari Ongoing government operations

against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Basilan has resulted in the death of 13 members of the rebel group as the military leadership yesterday vowed it will come out stronger and determined to run after the Abu Sayyaf group following the killing of 18 soldiers in clashes with the terrorists in Basilan last Saturday.

Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, AFP spokesman, said that the order of AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hernando Iriberri is to sustain the intensified combat operations against the ASG band of Isnilon Hapilon and Furuji Indama in Basilan.

As of press time vesterday, Padilla said that eight more terrorists have been confirmed killed - bringing to 13 the total number of slain Abu Sayyaf bandits since Saturday.

"Thirteen ASG bandits were reported killed in Sunday's operations in Barangay Baguindan, (Tipo-Tipo), Basilan," he said, quoting reports coming from Western Mindanao Command (WMC) head Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo Cruz.

Padilla said that while the entire 125,000-strong AFP is mourning, the troops are now more determined to track down the Abu Sayyaf.

"We are sad losing our men but

will come out of this much stronger and determined. We can only honor our heroes by putting value to their deaths and continuing with our mission to finish off the enemies of freedom and peace," Padilla said.

"As directed by the chief of staff, there will be no letup in the operations. As the old saying goes, the more our soldiers bleed, the fiercer and braver they go after the bandits," he added

Eighteen troops were killed while 53 others were wounded after 10-hour clashes erupted in the outskirts of Barangay Baguindan, Tipo Tipo town last Saturday.

Elements of the Army's 44th Infantry Battalion (IB) and 4th

Special Forces Battalion (SFB) engaged the group of Hapilon and Indama as part of the intensified combat operation against the terrorists.

Among the terrorists killed was Moroccan Mohammad Khattab. tagged as a bomb-making expert.

Col. Noel Detoyato, AFP-Public Affairs Office chief, said that the flag was placed at half-mast yesterday in Camp Aguinaldo, the general headquarters of the AFP, and other major military camps nationwide in honor of the fallen 18 soldiers.

Meanwhile, the Philippine National Police (PNP) leadership yesterday expressed sympathies to the AFP and the families of the 18 slain soldiers in Basilan.

"The PNP extends our sincer condolences to the fami colleagues and friends of the fall brothers-in-arms from the Arm Forces of the Philippines," sa Chief Supt. Wilben Mayor, Pl spokesman.

Mayor noted the coinciden that the 18 troops from the Arm 44th Infantry Battalion (IB) ga the ultimate sacrifice "rightfu so on the Day of Valor (April § during 10-hour clashes with A Sayyaf bandits.

"These men represent t finest in soldiery, men who a willing to stand to watch over t rest of us to have our freedo They are great men, distinguish officers and outstanding pub servants," said Mayor.

after we mourn their death, we CAFFAIRS - Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285. 5295

/2 April 2016

LAUCUL RER

Page: H/

13 Abu Sayyaf men killed in new firefight, says AFP

By Julie M. Aurelio

THIRTEEN Abu Sayyaf members have been killed in military operations since Saturday's 10-hour firefight in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan, the Armed Forces of the Philippines said yesterday.

In a press briefing in Camp Aguinaldo, AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said government troops engaged a small band of bandits on Sunday in Barangay Baguindan in the same area where 18 soldiers were ambushed and killed on Saturday.

"We have not stopped in our operations to pursue the Abu Sayyaf," Padilla said.

Sunday's gunfight began at around 9 a.m. and lasted until midafternoon, with no losses on the side of the government troops. An initial eight Abu Sayyaf members were killed on Sunday.

On Saturday, troops encountered 150 members of the Abu Sayyaf group led by Isnilon Hapilon and Furuji Indama in Tipo-Tipo, the firefight lasting 10 hours. The gun battle resulted in one of the biggest casualties suffered by government troops in a single day in recent years.

The encounter left 18 soldiers dead and six others critically wounded, while a Moroccan terrorist identified as Mohammad Khattab and Hapilon's son Ubaida Hapilon were killed on the enemy side.

On the enemy side, five were initially reported dead including subleader Radzmil Jannatul, while 20 were wounded.

Most of those killed and injured were from the 44th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army.

Burial, financial assistance

The 18 soldiers killed in action will be given military honors when the remains are transported to their hometowns, and even during the burial.

Of the 18 soldiers, 13 were Christians while five were Mus-

lims. The Abu Sayyaf even attempted to behead a Christian and a Muslim soldier but did not succeed as government troops managed to recover the bodies.

The AFP is preparing the benefits to be received by those wounded in battle as well as the families of those killed in action. The military is also offering burial assistance to the bereaved.

Padilla said the benefits include special financial assistance equivalent to six months' salary, P50,000 insurance, scholarships for children and cash benefits from different organizations such as P100,000 from the Philippine Army's finance organization cooperative.

On the other hand, those wounded will receive assistance ranging from P50,000 for minor wounds to P100,000 for major injuries.

Padilla noted that some of the soldiers who suffered minor injuries were raring to be dis-

charged and go back to the field to fight the Abu Sayyaf.

"A soldier once wounded only grows more brave. They want to go back to battle. You can expect that we will intensify our operations to keep our communities safe," he said.

Extremely close range

Padilla described Saturday's firefight as a "meeting engagement" or fighting in extremely close range, coupled with improvised explosive devices (IED) planted by the enemy.

Initially, the military operation was supposed to be carried out with close air support and artillery bombardment, but bad weather in the morning prevented a clear view for aerial bombardment.

The aircraft hovered in the area, finally providing the much needed close air support came by noon when the weather cleared, giving a clear view for the pilots to fire.

Used for the air attacks were

the OV-10 Bronco light attack aircraft and the MG-520 light attack helicopters, while Huey helicopters were used to airlift the wounded and dead.

"The close air support was able to deliver bombardment during Saturday afternoon so the enemy was forced to stay away," Padilla said, noting that the enemy was at times only 10 meters away.

Joint Task Group Basilan

Most of the casualties on the government side were sustained in the morning due to the IED explosions, although artillery bombardment was doubled to make up for the initial lack of aerial attacks.

Padilla said that all available assets were deployed to help the ground troops fight the enemy, contrary to claims that the soldiers fought with little support.

There were no sightings of the Abu Sayyaf's kidnap victims, which includes three foreigners and a Filipina seized from Samal Island in Davao last September.

He added that the Joint Task Group Basilan had been carrying out successful military operations against the Abu Sayyaf for the past month and that Saturday was the first major loss for the military.

"There were many ground troops maneuvering. It so happened that the 44th Infantry Battalion met the strongest force of the Abu Sayyaf, and they died of the IEDs planted by the enemy near their camp," the military official said.

While the military may conduct an investigation on what happened during the military operation last Saturday, the AFP said it is focusing on continuing the non-stop operations and not play the blame game for now.

"This is not the time to blame, this is a time to focus because the enemy is just right there and we need to find them and get to them," Padilla said.

12 April 2016

The Manila Times

Page:

Soldiers push hunt for Abu rebels

BY JOEL M. SY EGCO SENIOR REPORTER.

STATE troops have pressed a manhunt for the Abu Sayyaf bandits who killed at least 18 soldiers during a fierce clash in Basilan over the weekend.

President Benigno Aquino 3rd has ordered the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to pursue without let-up the bandits who also injured more than 50 soldiers, Palace Communications Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said on Monday.

The order, Coloma added, was given directly to Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and AFP chief Gen. Hernando Iriberri who were summoned to a meeting on Sunday night.

"Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and Armed Forces of the Philippines [AFP] Chief of Staff Gen. Hernando Iriberri informed President Aquino last night on the progress of continuing operations of the AFP against Abu Sayyaf and other lawless elements in Basilan after their return from Zamboanga City yesterday [Sunday]," he told reporters.

The official gave no further details about the meeting except that the deadly clash was an offshoot of intensified military operations against the ASG.

> HuntA2

Soldiers

"Both officials informed the President that pursuit operations are still being conducted and that the troops are fully equipped and adequately supported," Coloma said.

Also killed in the recent encounter were Moroccan terror suspect Mohammad Khattab and Ubaida Hapilon, son of senior ASG leader Isnilon Hapilon.

The Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom) said three other bandits died on Saturday in the gunbattle that lasted 10 hours in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan. One was identified as rebel commander Radzmil lannatul.

Mujiv Hataman, governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, also on Monday consoled with the families of the slain soldiers.

"We also pray for the recovery of the more than 50 soldiers who were wounded in the same encounter. Our thoughts and prayers are with our soldiers and their families, and in this time of mourning we would like to express our deepest condolences to those who have lost their loved ones to an act of cowardice committed by a terror group that has brought nothing to our shores but death and grief," he said.

What happened in Basilan, Hataman said, was a tragedy that "reminds us that there are those who among us who still tread the path of terror, and those who would stop at nothing to breed hatred and suffering among our people."

WITH AL JACINTO

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

12

April 2016



Pahina.

4 sa 18 sundalong napatay, pinugutan

NI RHODERICK BENEZ

NORTH COTABATO -Apat sa 18 sundalong napatay sa Basilan encounter laban sa grupo ng Abu Sayyaf ay sinasabing pinugutan.

Tikom naman ang bibig ng pamunuan ng Western Mindanao Command kaugnay sa ulat na apat sa 18 sundalong napaslang sa madugong enkwentro ay pinugutan.

Ayon naman kay sa Army's regional spokesman na si Maj. Felimon Tan na batay sa ulat na naibinigay sa kaniya na ilan sa mga sundalong napatay ay pinutulan ng ilang parte ng kanilang katawan.

Hindi naman binanggit ni Tan kung anong bahagi ng katawan ng mga sundalo ang pinutulan.

Wala pa ring official report ang militar kaugnay sa napaulat na beheading.

Sa ngayon ay umakyat na sa 56 sundalo ang nasugatan at anim ang nasa kritikal na kalagayan.

Nabatid na halos maubos ang tropa ng 44th Infantry Battalion dahil sila ang unang humarap sa matinding bakbakan laban sa 120 Abu Sayyaf na pinamumunuan nina Kumander Isnilon Hapilon at Furuji Indama.

Kasama rin sa nakipagsagupaan ay ang tropa ng 4th Special Forces Battalion at 14 Cavalry troops.

Sinasabing marami rin mga armas ang hindi pumutok kaya mas lalong nadiin ang mga sundalo sa bakbakan subalit hindi muna nagkomento ang militar sa mga naglabasang impormasyon.

Kabilang sa mga sundalong napatay ay sina Army 1Lt. Remegio Licena, Cpl. Redel Perolino, Pfc. Doren Aspurias, Pfc. Marjun Duhaylungsod, Pfc. Marjun Monte, Sgt. Jayson Alani, S/Sgt. Makin Jarani, Cpl. Rodelio Bangcairin, Sgt. Paterno Oquino, Cpl. Noel Else, Cpl. Dionisio Cpl. Reezvi Archcelo Gandawali, Sgt. Akmad Usman, Pvt. Dunemark Gil Saldivar, Cpl. Daruis Bulan at si Cpl. Ibrahim Palao.

Gayunman, walang inaasahang funeral honor na ibibigay ng Armed Forces of the Philippines sa mga labi ng 18 sundalo na napatay sa bakbakan noong Sabado sa Sitio Bayoko, Barangay Baguindan sa Tipo-Tipo, Basilan.

Hindi na pinagamit kahapon ang gymnasium na handang-handa na sana para sa panonood ng mga sundalo sa laban ni Manny Pacquiao at Timothy Bradley dahil dito ilalagay ang mga labi para sa gagawing funeral honor ngayong araw.

Tiniyak naman ng AFP na makakatanggap ng mga kaukulang benebisyo kabilang ang burial benefits ng naulilang pamilya ng mga sundalo kabilang dito ang P.1 milyon at bibigyan naman ng tig P50,000 pinansyal na tulong ang mga nasugatan.

Samantala, lumobo na sa 36 ang napatay sa Basilan encouter matapos na malagasan pa ng 13 ang bandidong Abu Sayyaf habang 83 naman ang nasugatan kabilang ang 53 sundalo sa ikalawang araw ng pagsiklab ng sagupaan sa pagitan ng tropa ng militar at terrorist grupo sa Tipo-Tipo, Basilan, ayon sa opisyal kahapon. Dagdag ulat ni Joy Cantos

12

April 2016



Page.

BILANG GANTI... AFP, tuloy ang giyera vs Abu Sayyaf

NI NONOY E. LACSON

ISABELA CITY, Basilan – Nagpapatuloy ang pag-ulan ng bala, kasalit ang maya't mayang pagratrat ng mga baril sa kagubatan ng magkaratig na barangay ng Baguindan at Silangkum sa Tipo-Tipo, Basilan, na 18 sundalo ang napatay habang 56 na iba pa ang nasugatan nitong Sabado, sa engkuwentro sa Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), na pinamumunuan nina Isnilon Hapilon at Furigi Indama.

Sinabi ng dating alkalde ng Tipo-Tipo at kandidato ngayon para gobernador ng Basilan na si Joel Maturan na nagdadagdag ang militar ng mga sundalo sa lugar ng labanan simula nitong Linggo ng hapon, dahil sa pagpapatuloy ng labanan sa Tipo-Tipo.

Aniya, nakasuporta ang mga helicopter gunship ng militar sa mga sundalong nakikipaglaban sa mga miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf na pumatay sa 18 tauhan ng Philippine Army at pumugot sa apat sa mga ito nitong Sabado.

Sinabi ni Maturan na nagkalat ang mga sundalo sa mga pangunahing lansangan patungo sa lugar ng labanan, at magkakalapit din ang military checkpoint papasok sa Baguindan at Silangkum upang mapigilang masaklolohan ang mga bandidong naipit sa kagubatan.

"What is good in here, the members

of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) who lives near the conflict site has evacuated to a more safer site and did not dip their finger into the conflict," ani Matiran

Daan-daang residente malapit sa lugar ng labanan ang nagsilikas na upang maiwasang maipit sa engkuwentro.

"The military must not stop their operations against the ASG to prevent

the group from regrouping and gain strength again," sabi pa ni Maturan. "If the ASG will not run out of bullets, they will run out of food and this can make them weak in fighting the soldiers."

Kasabay nito, sinabi ni Maturan na naniniwala siyang hindi kasama ng mga nakikipagbakbakang bandido ang mga bihag nito.

April 2016



Pahina.

Sayyaf sa Basilan dinudurog

Sa kabila ng malang gobyerno, tuloy pa rin ang operasyon ng militar laban sa mga Abu Sayyaf sa Basilan.

ho ang ipinabatid nina Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin at Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff Gen. Hernando lmben kay Pangulong Benigno Aquino III nang makipagpulong sila kamakalawa ng gabi sa commander in chief.

Tiniyak naman ng dalawa na ang mga sundalong tumutugis sa mga miyembro ng Abu Sayyafay kargado ng bala at kagamitan at may mga nakaantabay na suporta.

Ang dalawa ay pinulong ni Pangulong Aquino nitong Linggo ng gabi matapos mamatay sa sagupaan sa Abu Sayyaf ang 18 sundalo sa Basilan, 4 dito ay pinuguan pa ng ulo.

Sa kanilang report sa king casualty sa puwersa Pangulo, isinagawa ang operasyon upang mahuli ang high-value terror suspects sa Basilan.

"Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hernando Iriberti informed President Aquino last night on the progress of continuing operations of the AFP against Abu Sayyaf and other lawless elements in Basilan after their return from Zamboanga City yesterday," paglalahad ni Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) Sec. Herminio Coloma Jr.

Both officials informed the President that, in accordance with his instructions, pursuit operations are still being conducted and that the troops are fully equipped and adequately supported," ani Coloma. (Boyet Jadulco)

AFP nagluksa: Flag ceremony maemosyonal

Naging emosyonal kakilanlan ng ilan pang ang idinaos na flag raising niga nasawi dahil hindi pa ceremony kahapon ng umaga sa Camp Aguinaldo kasabay ng pagbibigay ng panalangin ng mga uniformed at non-uniformed personnel ng AFP para sa 18 sundalo na nasawi.

Samantala, hindi na nasunod ang plano sanang funeral honor na ibibigay ng AFP sa Western Mindanao Command sa mga labi ng mga sundalong nasawi dahil sa ipinalabas na kautusan ng isang defense official na agad ipauwi sa kanilang mga pamilya ang labi ng mga sundalo. Mariin ding itinanggi ni AFP Public Affairs Office Chief Col. Noel Detoyato, na ilabas ang mga pangalan o pag-

lahat narimpormahan ang mga naulilang kaanak

"Sa oras na maimpormahan na ang lahat ng mga kaanak, maaari nang isapubliko ang lahat ng pangaian ng mga nasawi at nasugatan sa bakbakan," wika ni Detoyato.

Kasabay nito, inilagay na rin sa half-mast: ang watawat sa harap ng gusali ng national head quarters ng AFP, at maging sa iba pang tanggapan bilang paghuluksa na rin.

Matatandaan sumiklab ang bakbakan (kamakalawa kung saan nasawi ang 18 sundalo at 56 ang iniulat na nasugatan na tumagal ng 10 oras. (Betchai Julian)

Army Vision: By 2020, a world-blass miny blacks a source of many

1-2 April 2016



Page: <u>B1</u>

Zambo siege awardee named special ops chief

BY VICTOR REYES

AN Army general who played a key role in quelling the Zamboanga siege by Moro National Liberation Front fighters in September 2013 had been designated as the new commander of the Army's Special Operations Command.

Brig. Gen. Danilo Gines Pamonag took over as the chief of the elite unit yesterday in rites presided by Army chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Ano at the SOCOM headquarters in Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija.

Pamonag will remain as the concurrent commander of the US-trained Light Reaction Regiment, pending the appointment of a replacement at the LRR, said Army spokesman Col. Ben-

See ZAMBO > Page B6

jamin Hao.

Pamonag was the commander of the military's Joint Special Operations Group that led the operations against hundreds of MNLF that seized Zamboanga City and held about 160 hostages as part of MNLF's cause for independence.

Pamonag had been conferred by President Aquino with the Distinguished Conduct Star, the second highest military decoration in combat behind the Medal for Valor, for

his feat during the Zamboanga siege.

The operations resulted in the death of at least 200 MNLF fighters and rescue of around 195 civilians held captive by the group. Dozens of soldiers and civilians also died in the 20-day campaign.

Pamonag is a member of the Philippine Military Academy class of 1985 and was the first Filipino awardee of the US Special Operations Command medal.

Last year, he was selected by the Metrobank Foundation as among the Ten Outstanding Philippine Soldiers in recognition of feat during the Zamboanga siege.

"We expect Brig. Gen. Pamonag to increase the training readiness of the SOCOM. He plans to build a world-class counter-terrorist training facility," said Hao.

Asked about the qualities of Pamonag that prompted his designation as SOCOM commander, Hao said: "Ang sabi ni CGPA (Commanding General, Philippine Army) is kanyang katapangan at pang-unawa."

ONLINE NEWS

www.philstar.com

'A tragedy': ARMM guv mourns death of 18 soldiers in Abu Sayyaf clash

By John Unson

COTABATO CITY - The executive department of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is mourning the deaths of the 18 soldiers killed in the 10-hour encounter last Saturday in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan.

ARMM Gov. Mujiv Hataman, chairman of the regional peace and order council, said eight of the slain combatants of the Army's 44th Infantry Battalion (4th IB) were residents of the ARMM.

"We mourn their deaths and pray for the recovery of the soldiers who sustained gunshot wounds and blast injuries during the encounter," said Hataman, who hails from Sumisip town in the same province.

The hostilities in Barangay Baguindan, an isolated area in the municipality of Tipo-Tipo in Basilan, involved heavily-armed Abu Sayyaf bandits led by Isnilon Hapilon and 44th IB personnel running after them following last month's takeover by soldiers of their lair in a nearby town.

The soldiers were trying to break through a coconut farm west of Barangay Baguindan when the bandits, positioned at hills nearby, attacked from different directions with AK-47 Kalashnikovs and M14 and M-16 assault rifles.

At least 18 soldiers were killed in the firefight which resulted in the deaths of nine Abu Sayyaf gunmen, two of them believed to be Moroccans wearing shirts with an insignia of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

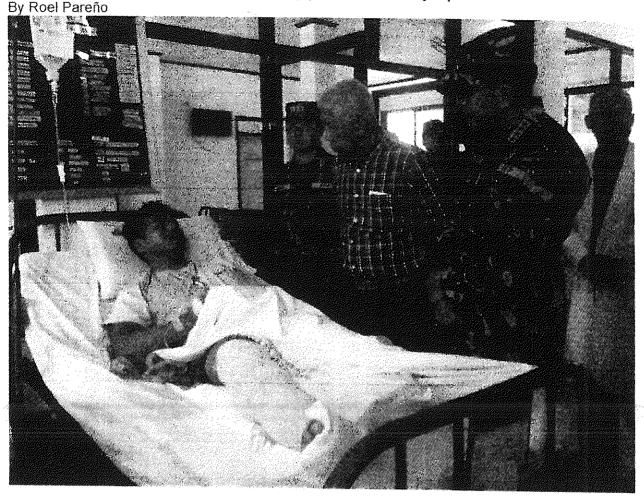
"What happened is a tragedy that once again reminds us that there are those among us who still tread the path of terror and stop at nothing to breed hatred and sufferings among our people," Hataman said.

Saturday's military offensive against the Abu Sayyaf in Tipo-Tipo that went haywire was meant to flush the group out of their last bastion, Barangay Banguindan.

The Abu Sayyaf in Basilan was behind the spate of recent roadside bombings and deadly attacks on soldiers guarding infrastructure projects in the island province, a component area of ARMM.

www.philstar.com

Abu Sayyaf death toll rises to 13 as military pursues 'no let-up' operations



A wounded soldier talks with Gen. Hernando Iriberri, Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, and Army chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año at a military hospital in Zamboanga City. Roel Pareño/File photo

ZAMBOANGA CITY - The death toll on the side of the Abu Sayyaf increased to 13 as the military vowed a 'no let-up' operation in Basilan against the group.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) spokesman, said troops from the 4th Special Forces Battalion and 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion encountered the fleeing Abu Sayyaf faction under Radullan Sahiron and Furuji Indama.

According to the military, there's no increase in the number of casualties on the government side following the latest encounter Sunday morning against members of the terror group in Tipo-Tipo town.

He said the encounter occurred around 8 a.m. outside the village of Baguindan, the same area as the 10-hour bloody encounter last Saturday that left 18 soldiers killed and 56 others wounded. At least five Abu Sayyaf members were killed while 20 others were wounded that same day.

Abu Sayyaf leader among wounded

Meanwhile, Sunday's encounter led to the death of four while more than six got wounded among the Abu Sayyaf, Tan said. The number rose on Monday, when four of the 20 wounded Abu Sayyaf members in Saturday's encounter died, bringing the total to 13.

"We are on pursuit operation and our troops engaged again. We have to confirm the reports on the ground that 4 other Abu Sayyaf members were killed," Tan said.

Among those wounded in the Sunday encounter was Abu Sayyaf leader Indama, who was critically hit by the military attack.

The military official also clarified that the name of Hapilon son who was killed last Saturday was Amah and not Ubaida as earlier reported.

He added that Ubaida Jannatul is a relative of Abu Sayyaf leader Radzmil Jannatul.

Tan said Westmincom chief Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo dela Cruz visited the troops on the ground in Basilan to ensure the continuous operation.

"The operation is continuous and there is no let-up in going after the Abu Sayyaf group," Tan said.

He said they already have deployed a big number of forces to ensure the "no let-up operation" against the group of Hapilon and Indama.

Bomb training preempted

Meanwhile, the military said the neutralization of Moroccan terrorist Mohammad Khattab also preempted the possibility of bombing attacks and the transfer of bombing techniques to the Abu Sayyaf.

Khattab, a bomb expert and jihadist, was killed during the Saturday encounter. He was one of the two foreign militants being hunted down in Basilan. His other companion Malaysian bomb expert Mohammad Najib Hussein alias Abu Anas was killed during a week-long offensive last December 15 in Al-Barka town.

"We preempted [the] possibility of [a] bombing attack because we neutralize Mohammad Khattab. He could no longer pass on his terroristic trade craft," Tan said.

Tan said they cannot say whether Khattaf and Hapilon, both espousing the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), are acknowledged members of the international terrorist group ISIS.

"Many people are riding on the hype of ISIS worldwide. This does not necessarily mean that if these people [are] trying to project ISIS, the ISIS will acknowledge them," Tan added when asked if Khattab belonged to the ISIS group.



www.inquirer.net

ASG leader in critical condition; intensified ops in Basilan-AFP

By: Frances Mangosing

Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf group (ASG) leader Furuji Indama is in critical condition following an encounter with Army soldiers that also led to the death of 18 government forces and at least 50 wounded, the military said.

Major Filemon Tan, spokesperson of the Western Mindanao Command, said on Monday that based on intel reports, Indama was critically wounded and eight more Abu Sayyaf members were killed after the Saturday fighting that left five militants dead, which included foreign terrorist Mohammad Khattab.

Indama has a multi-million bounty on his head and has been blamed for cases of murder and kidnapping.

Of the 20 wounded Abu Sayyaf members on Saturday, four died and another four were killed on Sunday's intensified operations.

After the daylong gunbattle on Saturday that left the government with heavy casualties, Tan said the Armed Forces of the Philippines on Sunday has deployed six battalions, doubling its brigade-size force to go after Indama and Isnilon Hapilon, one of the Abu Sayyaf's senior leaders.

Hapilon's son, Amah, was also wounded (not Ubaida as earlier reported) from Saturday's gunbattle.

Saturday's fighting in Brgy. Baguindan in Tipo-Tipo was the biggest combat loss for the government in a single day this year. AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the operations were long planned and was part of their continuing efforts to go after the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

"It just happened that the 44th Infantry Battalion encountered the Abu Sayyaf in an area where they are strongest," he told reporters at Camp Aguinaldo.

Padilla explained that it was a "very close encounter" and some of the troops fought with the enemy at the distance of 10 meters.

Aerial bombardment was also delayed by a few hours because of poor weather conditions. Instead, the military used its alternate plan and doubled its artillery strikes, Padilla said.

"It was supposed to be both [aerial bombardment and artillery] if the opportunity and circumstances allowed. But since there was intervening factor of the weather the helicopters were not able to enter so we doubled our artillery preparatory fires," he said.

Padilla denied reports that the troops on the ground lacked support, "All the equipment and assets they needed were at their disposal."



Air support for the fighting that started at 8a.m. came by midday which prevented the Abu Sayyaf from closing in.

"When the weather cleared, the OV-10s came in and they launched fires the whole afternoon on Saturday and the enemies were not able to come closer," Padilla said. JE

www.bomboradyo.com

'Walang air support dahil foggy ang panahon' - AFP

By Analy Soberano

Nagpaliwanag ang pamunuan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) kaugnay sa report na hindi kaagad nakapagpadala ng closed air support ang Philippine Air Force (PAF) sa mga napapalabang tropa ng Philippine Army sa Tipo-Tipo, Basilan.

Ayon kay AFP spokesperson BGen. Restituto Padilla, dahil sa sama ng panahon kung kaya't hindi kaagad nakapag-deploy ng air assets ang Philippine Air Force (PAF).

Sinabi ni Padilla na masyadong mahamog o foggy noong Sabado ng umaga kung kaya't hindi nakikita ng mga piloto ang target area sa ground na siyang naging hadlang para hindi makapasok sa lugar ang mga eroplano ng military.

Pahayag ni Padilla, magiging delikado para sa ibang tropa ng gobyerno kung magpapakawala ng bomba ang mga bomber planes ng PAF nang walang malinaw na vision.

Dahil dito nagpasya ang ground commander na gumamit ng artillery bombardment sa nasabing operasyon.

Naniniwala si Padilla na magiging mas malakas sana ang pag-atake ng mga tropa kung kapwa mayroong artillery bombardment at closed air support.

Iginiit ni Padilla na nakahanda ang lahat na puwersa ng military maging ang kanilang mga assets subalit hindi ito ipinahintulot dahil sa sama ng panahon.

Aminado ang heneral na malakas ang puwersa ng mga bandidong Abu Sayyaf na nakasagupa ng militar.

Aniya, tanghali na nang naituloy ang pagbibigay ng close air support na siyang nagpataboy sa mga kalaban.

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

28

www.interaksyon.com

AFP: Bad weather hampered air support in Basilan clash

By: Jaime Sinapit

MANILA - The Philippine Air Force (PAF) was not able to dispatch timely close air support for the ground troops engaged in a firefight Saturday last week against more than 120 armed fighters of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan because of bad weather, Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, spokesman of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said Monday.

The government forces lost 18 lives in the encounter.

All the fatalities were members of the Army's 44th Infantry Battalion. The first salvo of battle broke out on Saturday.

Also killed were at least five ASG gunmen, including the son of sub-leader Isnilon Hapilon identified as Ubaida, and Moroccan terrorist Mohammad Khattab.

Padilla reported that there have been 13 additional ASG fatalities from continuing pursuit operations Sunday firefight as government troopers pressed on against the fleeing bandits.

Padilla explained that, in any big military operation, the PAF Tactical Operations Group (TOG) is always part of the mission, tasked to provide close air support for the ground boots.

It so happened that the attack helicopters and bomber aircraft, such as the OV-10, were grounded by bad weather, and so the ground commanders had to rely on their artillery bombardment targeting enemy positions.

Padilla doused off public criticisms that casualties could have been avoided if the AFP had enough equipment and air assets to use during the critical moments of the battle.

www.interaksyon.com

BASILAN CLASH | 13 more ASG fall as battle at Tipo-Tipo raged at the weekend By: Jaime Sinapit

MANILA - Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Brig. General Restituto Padilla said Monday at least 13 more gunmen of the Abu Sayyaf Group perished as the military pressed more offensives against the fleeing bandits Sunday in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan.

"Western Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo de la Cruz confirmed the count of 13 dead on the side of the Abu Sayyaf in the wake of continued operations by the military," Padilla told reporters during a press briefing.

The firefight was the result of hot pursuit operations by the military against the fleeing group headed by ASG sub-leaders Isnilon Hapilon Radzmil Jannatul alias Kubayb.

On Saturday last week, at least 18 soldiers and 5 bandits were killed, along with up to 80 other combatants reportedly wounded when the bandits staged an ambush that sparked the 10-hour firefight.

A Morocccan terrorist identified as Mohammad Khattab, and Hapilon's son Ubaida, were said to be among the fatalities on the ASG side.

Jannatul was among the reported wounded.

With the 13 additional ASG casualties, Padilla said the slain bandits have climbed to 18, so far.

But he added that authorities are still waiting for confirmation through a final report from the ground about the new number of slain bandits.

"We expect additional fatalities on their side in the next few hours or coming days because many of them were seriously wounded and being carried or dragged by their comrades as our troops relentlessly pursuing them," Padilla said.

Padilla said Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Hernando Iriberri ordered the insertion of more troops in Tipo-Tipo to encircle and constrict the area where the Hapilon and Jannatul's group was hiding and fighting for their lives.

The AFP said the offensive has "no time frame."

Gen. Hemando Delfin Carmelo Iriberri, AFP chief-of-staff, during his visit Sunday to the soldiers wounded in the 10-hour fire fight, said the government forces are not giving any time frame, and the military operations will continue without let up "as we seek the withdrawing bandits and hold them accountable for their crimes."

"We are dictated by our mission, not by time," Iriberri underscored.

Iriberri visited the troops in Zamboanga together with National Defense Sec. Voltaire Gazmin and other top military officials. (With a report from Philippine News Agency)

12 April 2016

The Manila Times

Page: #3

Authorities clueless on Buluan bombing try

BULUAN, Maguindanao: Authorities here on Monday remain clueless as to the motives and the suspects behind the bombing attempts that could have threatened thousands of people celebrating the town's 80th founding anniversary.

But officials belied insinuations that the bombing attempt has something to do with politics as election day nears.

Approximately 10,000 people were commemorating the foundation day of Buluan on Saturday with Davao City mayor and presidential candidate Rodrigo Duterte when two improvised explosive device (IEDs) were uncovered.

Philippine Army bomb experts recovered the IEDs planted along roadside fences in Barangay Poblacion at about 8:30 p.m., kilometers away from the crowd.

The IEDs were rigged with two plastic bottle containers filled with 2 kilos of black powders, blasting caps, detonating cords, triple AAA batteries, concrete nails, bolts, nuts, wireless remote control and other explosive components.

Buluan Municipal Police Chief

Senior Insp. Gani Miro said they are closely looking into the incident to identify the culprits.

Meanwhile, Buluan Vice Mayor King Jhazzer Mangudadatu belied reports that the attempts were related to politics in Maguindanao, which was recently cited as among areas of concern by the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

Mangudadatu, eldest son of Maguindanao Gov. Esmael "Toto" Mangudadatu, did not mention possible culprits but hinted that they usually target camps of government forces.

"It was not a politically motivated attack as the bombs were planted near the police station, away from the crowd," he said.

The known threat group operating in the province are members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) who have a record of harassing military and police detachments.

It is also feared that the rebel group, which has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (IS), will stage disturbances during the election.

MOH SAADUDDIN

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

12 April 2016



Page: 16

NPA rebels burn 5 trucks

BUTUAN CITY – Suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels burned five trucks used in hauling logs in Esperanza, Agusan del Sur before midnight on Friday.

Col. Alexander Macario, 401st Infantry Battalion (IB) commander, said businessmen Wilbert Gonzales, Danny Gravino and Ricky Villarente of Prosperidad town owned the trucks.

The burning of the trucks was reportedly due to the refusal of the businessmen to pay the full amount of the so-called "revolutionary tax" of the NPA.

Capt. Jasper Gacayan, 401st IB spokesman, said pursuit operations for the rebels have been launched.

– Ben Serrano

12

April 2016



Pahina.

Sky diver sugatan sa Palarong Pambansa

LEGAZPI CITY, Albay -Sugatan ang isang sarhento ng Phil. Army na miyembro ng Sky Diving team matapos itong mag-parachute bago bumagsak sa maling lugar sa grand opening ng Palarong Pambansa kahapon.sa Legazpi City, Albay

Nagtamo ng bali sa kaliwang kamay at sugat sa llang bahagi ng katawan saka isinugod sa Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital ang biktimang si Staff Seargent Alfred Lucas ng 9th Division ng Phil. Army na nakabase sa bayan ng Pili, Camarines Sur.

Naitala ang insidente ' bandang alas-4 ng hapon

noong Linggo sa Provincial Napoleon Sevilla ng Phil Sports Complex sa loob ng Army Special Operational Bicol University Compound University.

Nabatid na si Lucas ay isa sa apat na sky diver na tumalon mula sa chopper at nag-parachute subalit hindi nakuha nitong lumapag sa oval ng sports complex.

Bumagsak ito sa konkretong outer edge ng swimming pool kaya nabali ang kanyang kamay at diretso rin itong nahulog sa tubig kung saan muntik pang malunod kung hindi naagapan ng rescue team.

"Malakas na ihip nang hangin ang sanhi kaya hindi nakalapag si Lucas sa track oval;" pahayag ni S/ Sgt. Army Special Operational Command. Jorge Hallare

12 April 2016



Page: B2

Kin of ASG leader nabbed in Basilan

BY VICTOR REYES

A MEMBER of the Abu Sayyaf group was arrested by operatives of the PNP-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Lantawan town in Basilan on Friday, police reported yesterday.

Arrested Bantong Basinti is a nephew of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, according to Senior Supt. John Guyguyon, head of the CIDG-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Basinti was nabbed at around

2:35 p.m. last Friday in Barangay Bulansa, Lantawan town. He had an arrest warrant for eight counts of kidnapping and serious illegal detention.

Basinti was among the Abu Sayyaf men involved in the June 11 kidnapping of workers of the Golden Harvest Plantation in Lantawan town. Eight of the victims were killed by the group.

CIDG operatives launched the operation after receiving a tip about the presence of Basinti in the barangay. Guyguyon said the

raid was conducted in coordination with the military.

The CIDG also announced the arrest of three suspected members of a private armed group in Cotabato City, also last Friday.

The three were identified as Ismael Kamsa, Kle Tambara, and Jomer Anggar, who yielded a baby Armalite rifle, two cal. 45 pistols, magazines and several rounds of ammunition.

They were arrested at around 7:30 p.m. Friday at Al-nor mall along Sinsuat Ave. in Cotabato City.

April 2016

The Manila Times

Page: H7

Another ASG man in kidnap falls

THE PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) on Monday said another member of the Al-Qaeda linked Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) involved in the kidnapping of plantation workers in 2001 was arrested.

ASG member Bantong Basinti, who is under the group of ASG commander Isnilon Hapilon, his uncle, was nabbed by CIDG operatives in Western Mindanao, supported by elements of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) and Basilan Provincial Public Safety Company (PPSC) based on a warrant of arrest for eight counts of kidnapping and serious illegal detention.

Basinti was nabbed early on Friday in Barangay Bulansa in Lantawan town, Basilan.

Basinti and Hapilon's Group were involved in the kidnapping of more than a dozen workers of Golden Harvest Plantation in a remote village in Lantawan on June 11, 2001.

Early last week, an ASG member identified as Munib Bararuddi who is wanted for eight counts of kidnapping and serious illegal detention was also arrested in Zamboanga City.

Joint operatives of CIDG Zamboanga and the intelligence unit of the 3rd Air Wing Division, 530th Air Base Wing (ABW) of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) captured Bararuddi along the shoreline of Lampinigan Island in Barangay Dita.

In another operation, three men believed to be potential members of a private armed group were arrested on Friday evening in the village of Kalanganan in Cotabato City.

Seized from the three — Ismael Kamsa, Kle Tambara and Jomer Anggar — were a baby Armalite, two caliber .45 pistols, magazines and several rounds of ammunition. They will be facing charges for violation of R.A. 10591 (Firearms and Ammunition Law).

ANTHONY VARGAS

nail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

e. Securing the land.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFF

Army Core Pu

12 April 2016

The Manila Times

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF coPUBLIC AFFAIRS - Email additioacpalarmy/2012@gmail.com - Telino. (02) 845-9555 Local, 5285-5295

Page: A1

Navy rescues 2 Turkish sailors off Zamboanga

BY AL JACINTO SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

AMBOANGA CITY: The Philippine Navy rescued two Turkish sailors after their boat drifted near Zamboanga City in Mindanao, officials said on Monday.

Lieutenant Jose Covarrubias, naval spokesman, said Ahmed Tabran, 60, and Burcu Botanoglu, 54, were safely rescued and brought to

a naval station in Zamboanga City.

Covarrubias said they received a distress call from the sailboat Stormbird after its engine broke down off Sibago Island in Basilan province over the weekend. He said the boat drifted further towards Zamboanga, where patrol boats towed it to the naval base here.

The boat, whose last port call was in Salam Island in Davao del Norte province, was heading to

Kudat in Malaysia when its ϵ gine broke down while traversithe province of Basilan, whe security forces are currently btling Abu Sayyaf rebels.

Meanwhile, Mayor Beng C maco commended the Navy the rescue of Turkish sailors.

Tabran and Botanoglu al thanked the Philippine na officers for quickly respondi to their distress call.



/2 April 2016

Malaya
The National Newspaper

Page: BG



Sailors rescued. Turkish sailors Ahmed Tabran and Burcu Botanoglu are presented to media by Philippine Navy officials after they were saved in waters off Zamboanga City.

NAVY PHOTO

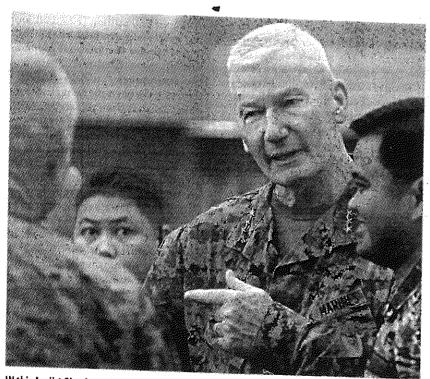
April 2016

BusinessMirror

Scarborough Shoal: China's next strategic military base?

BY RENE P. ACOSTA | @ReneAcostaBM

FTER setting up a combination of naval and air bases on reefs that it has reclaimed near Palawan in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea), China is extending deeper into Luzon by training its sights on Scarborough Shoal as the next base for its warships and fourth generation of fighter aircraft.



IN this April 4 file photo, Lt. Gen. John Toolan (center), commander of the United States Marine forces in the Pacific, speaks with Vice Adm. Alexander Lopez (right) at the start of their annual joint military exercise, involving thousands of US and Philippine military personnel, amid the current South China Sea tensions, at a military base in Quezon City. Tensions in the South China Sea are rising, pitting China against smaller and weaker neighbors who all lay claim to a string of isles, coral reefs and lagoons, rich in fish and potential gas and oil reserves. AP

Although it has already been exercising de-facto control over the shoal, after seizing it from the Philippines in 2012, following a naval standoff, Beijing wants to develop Scarborough Shoal into a military base, one that would complete its domination of the region and far beyond.

There are three reasons Chinese military planners wanted full control of the shoal and turn it into a military fortress.

One, it would provide China a full and unimpeded access to Luzon, including its northernmost area, or in the military parlance, it would put the country's biggest islandwithin a striking distance of Chinese warships and fighter jets;

Second, the rich waters of the shoal, which has been a traditional fishing ground for Filipino fishermen for a number of generations, could help pinch in for Beijing's hunger and growing need of marine products; and

Third, were the words of Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio who said it would allow China to have easier and unguarded access to the Pacific Ocean through the Bashi Channel, allowing it to attack the mainland United States, particularly Hawaii, in the event of a war.

The Bashi Channel, off Batanes, part of the Luzon Straight in the Pacific Ocean, is a waterway in between the Philippines and Taiwan.

Carpio said he would not be surprised if Beijing would soon start developing Scarborough Shoal and turn it into a base for its vessels and aircraft, just as what it did with the Subi, Fiery Cross and Mischief Reefs in the South China Sea.

Subi Reef, which was seized by China from the Philippines in 1988 and located just 12 nautical miles from Pagasa Island, has been reclaimed and turned into a military base. On the other hand, Fiery Cross was developed into a 274-hectare air base with a 3-kilometer runway.

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

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

Carpio's theory seems to be supported by statements of US military officials who claimed two weeks earlier that Chinese survey ships were undertaking survey activities within and around Scarborough's lagoon.

The US officials also said they have noticed the unusual presence of more Chinese ships in the area, observations that the Armed Forces would neither confirm nor deny. having gotten used to the regular patrols or stationery presence of Chinese ships in the area.

Scarborough Shoal and its lagoon measures 58 square miles or about 15,000 hectares and it is located just 124 nautical miles from Zambales.

Carpio, who recently delivered a lecture about the country's territorial dispute with China at the Armed Forces General Headquarter in Camp Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City, said the shoal is rich in fish and other marine resources and is a "high-tide elevation with the biggest rock protruding 12 meters above water at high tide."

He said once the shoal turns into a Chinese military base teeming with People's Liberation Army Navy ships and Air Force planes, then it could support activities or could serve as a launching pad for Beijing's military operations in the Pacific Ocean.

The biggest part of such operations were to attack the US by crossing the Bashi Channel.

Domestically, however, it will afford China to take full control of Luzon with relative ease in case of a war.

A senior military official who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue, agreed with the observations of Carpio, saying the shoal remains the avid "object of conquest" by Beijing due to its strategic location, one that fully supports China's domination of the region.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBL

He said that, while China already controls the shoal up to the point that it has negated a similar maritime patrol by the Philippine government, Chinese generals were drooling for the time that they could start the reclamation or the construction.

"If this will happen, it is interesting to know what the national government will do, its response. Of course, on the part of the military, we will not easily give away the shoal, but it depends on the decision or course of action of the national leadership," he said.



Size of Scarborough Shoal and its lagoon, located just 124

nautical miles from Zambales

The military official, however, admitted that the Philippines and no one, not even the US, could stop China once it starts its reclamation or its development of the Scarborough Shoal. The only question is, when will it happen?

He noted that when Beijing began its reclamations in the South China Sea, both the US and the Philippines took no stronger actions, other than comforting themselves with sharp rhetorics against such activities, which later unearthed bases and military airfields.

Manila merely filed a staccato of diplomatic protests, while assuring Filipinos that the maritime issue would soon end, given that the Permanent Court of Arbitration will decide on the case, which Filipino officials said should be in favor of the country.

On the other hand, the US, which was supposed to be the most powerful military in the world and the self-appointed world's maritime police just repetitively issued condemnations, despite its stance that what China has occupied and declared as part of its sovereign territory, were part of international waters where international naviga- : ople. Securing the land.

tion and overflights were supposed to be guaranteed.

"It did nothing, other than monitoring, watching these constructions," the military official said of the US, adding "it will be the same case once China undertakes activity in the Scarborough Shoal."

Literally, and for the slighter purpose, this will take place once American troops and their equipment will temporarily station at Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, one of the military bases that will host US forces and their assets under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

"For us, we may not expect a total game changer with China in the event that the UN court will decide in our favor, diplomatically, maybe. But for the sake of security, it will not. China had refused to participate in the proceedings and so what will you expect? It follows that it will not abide by the decision," the military official said.

"It takes a harder action, a more decisive one to deal with China on the issue of dispute," he added.

Sadly, however, the government does not have one, not even a national security policy for the West Philippine Sea as observed by former military intelligence chief Maj Gen Francisco Cruz before he retired in 2012.

"The National Security Council [NSC] has not drafted a national security strategy that should directly address the KIG [Kalayaan Island Group] issue. This is reflec tive of the poor sense of urgency on the part of policy-makers. In July 1999, four years after the discovery of Chinese structures on Mischief Reef, the task of formulating the strategy was delegated to the Cabinet Committee on Maritime and Ocean Affairs, chaired by the secretary of Foreign Affairs," Cruz said x

!@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

"Today the government is still bereft of a coordinated strategy that would employ the country's elements of national power to assert sovereignty and protect its interests in the West Philippine Sea," he added.

In December last year the Armed Forces Western Command chief Vice Adm. Alexander Lopez said the national security policy in territory being contested by China is to restrain civilians from sauntering there because it would antagonize Beijing.

The strategic importance of the Scarborough Shoal, apart from being considered a maritime territory of the country, was underscored by the decision of the Navy leadership over the weekend to reactivate

the Naval Forces Northern Luzon (NFNL) after having been merged with the Naval Forces West (NFW) based in Palawan.

"The reconstitution of NFNL and NFW signified the reversion of Navy to its previous organizational setup prior the establishment of Naval Forces Northwest [NFNW] in May last year as a result of the merger of the two aforesaid naval forces," the Navy said through its Spokesman LCdr. Marineth Domingo.

"Said reconstitution followed after the higher headquarters approved the nullification of NFNW, which was then established in the rationale of employing Naval Forces in the proactive control of our seas and the denial of its use to an adversary. While the basis of merging NFNL and NFW to form NFNW last year remains valid, the command decided to reactivate the two Naval Forces on the thrust of higher headquarters and unified commands to have a more focused naval operations in their respective area of responsibility," it added.

Before it was merged, Naval Forces Northern Luzon was under the operational control of the Armed Forces Northern Luzon Command, and its primary focus was the shoal.

Carpio called a Scarborough military base or the other Chinese bases in the West Philippine Sea as China's "Pearl Harbor" in Southeast, Asia, referring to the US's Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

Carpio said that beginning last year, Beijing has shifted from "off-shore water defense" to the "combined offshore water defense and open-seas protection" as laid out by China's military strategy

"The China military strategy states that the traditional mentality that land outweighs the sea must be abandoned and great important has to be attached to managing the seas and oceans protecting maritime rights and interests," he said

"China's grand design is to control the South China for economic and military purposes. It wanted all the fisheries, oil gas and mineral resources within its 'nine_dash line.' China already takes 50 percent of the annual fish catch on the South China Sea. China per-capita fish consumption is the highest in the world at 35.1 kilograms a year, while the rest of Asia's per-capita consumption is only 26.6 kg per year," Carpio added.

Nine-dash line is China's excessive territorial claim which covers 85.7 percent of the total maritime waters of the South China Sea.

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

12 April 2016



Page: ______

G7 foreign ministers oppose sea row provocation

HIROSHIMA – Foreign ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) advanced economies said they strongly oppose provocation in the East and South China Seas, where China is locked in territorial disputes with nations including the Philippines, Vietnam and Japan.

"We express our strong opposition to any intimidating coercive or provocative unilateral actions that could alter the status quo and increase tensions," the foreign ministers said in a statement yesterday following a meeting in this Japanese city.

In an apparent reference to China's territorial spat with the Philippines, the group also called on countries to observe hiroshima, a monternational maritime laws and implement any binding from Beijing.

judgments delivered by courts and tribunals.

Manila has asked the International Court of Arbitration in The Hague to decide on its dispute with Beijing. A ruling is expected by June.

China is building islands on reefs in the South China Sea to bolster its claims. Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also have claims on the waters that are believed to have huge deposits of oil and gas and through which about \$5 trillion in trade is shipped every year.

The United States has said it is keen to raise the issue of China's territorial ambitions in the South China Sea at a G-7 foreign ministers' meeting in Hiroshima, a move that would likely draw an angry response from Beijing.

State Department spokesman Mark Toner told reporters in Washington last Friday the US should discuss security issues any time it meets with key partners in Asia. "What we want to see happen in the South China Sea is important. It's important to the region, it's important to the stability of the region, so I would suggest that those topics should be on the table."

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last Saturday said the G-7 meeting that began yesterday should not "hype" the South China Sea issue. He made the comments at a meeting with British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond in Beijing, according to a statement on the ministry's website last Saturday.

While host nation Japan

decides on the agenda for the two-day meeting, it is likely to agree to any request from the US to discuss the South China Sea, as it has in recent months stepped up its criticism of roshima yesterday morning, China's activities in the water a key maritime artery for trade and energy shipments.

While none of the six states that have overlapping claims in the resource-rich sea is present in Hiroshima, any implied criticism would be seen in Beijing as a political move to put pressure on China.

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and US Secretary of State John Kerry are scheduled to speak after the meeting closes this afternoon.

China has shown increasing assertiveness in its claims, constructing artificial islands them. The US has challenged its "excessive" claims, conducting freedom of navigation operations close to these islands.

Kerry, who arrived in Hibecame the first US Secretary of State to visit the atomicbombed city. His landmark trip is seen as possibly paving the way for President Barack Obama to become the first serving US president to visit the city next month, when he comes to Japan for the G-7 summit, which will take place in another part of Japan.

The Hiroshima meeting, part of the run-up to the summit, also includes top diplomats from nuclear-armed Britain and France, and Canada, Germany, Italy, host Japan and the European Union. The and placing military facilities on ministers discussed issues

including the Middle East, the refugee crisis, the conflict in Ukraine and global terrorism.

Ministers have so far said little about the content of the meetings, though Kerry tweeted that they had a big foreign policy agenda to cover" - mentioning topics such as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria militant group as well as "Asia regional issues and global threats."

But it is the location of the talks - one of two cities where the US dropped an atomic bomb in 1945, ending World War II - that has captured the imagination of the Japanese public. Many hope it will promote greater understanding of Japan's staunch anti-nuclear stance as the only country to suffer an atomic attack.

- Reuters, AFP

12 April 2016

Standard

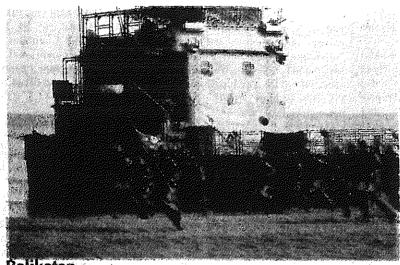


Beach front. Philippine Marines take position during a beach landing as part of the 11-day 'Balikatan' annual joint US and Philippine military exercises at the San Jose airport in Antique province in central Philippines. US and Philippine troops began major exercises on April 4 as China's state media warned 'outsiders' against interfering in the South China Sea territorial disputes. AFP

12 April 2016



Page: ______



Balikatan Philippine Marines take position during a beach landing as part of the 11-day Balikatan' annual joint US and Philippine military exercises in San Jose,

|2 April 2016



Page. _____



FILIPINO soldiers wait for the MV 22-Osprey aircraft of the United States to land at the defunct Evelio Javier Airport in San Jose town, Antique province as part of the 32nd Balikatan Exercises or the joint military exercises between two allied countries. (Tara Yap)

/2 April 2016



Page.



FREEDOM MARCH Nag-alay ng panalangin si US Marines Technical Sgt. Aracelli Alarcon, taga-Texas at kabahagi sa 2016 Balikatan Exercises, sa ilang pinaniniwalaan niyang kaanak na nasawi sa Bataan Death March, sa harap ng Wall of Heroes Memorial Capas National Shrine sa Tarlac. Dumalo si Alarcon sa Capas Freedom March, ang re-enactment ng Bataan Death March, kahapon bilang bahagi ng paggunita sa Philippine Veterans Week (Abril 5-11).

12 April 2016



Page.



FORMER President Fidel V. Ramos leads the troop inside the Capas National Shrine during the Capas Freedom March, a re-enactment of Bataan Death March during the Japanese occupation that ended in Capas, Tarlac. About 3,000 participants join the march that started at Death March Monument on McArthur Highway to the Capas National Shrine near Camp O'Donnel, Capas, Tarlac, April 11,2016. (Jojo Riñoza)

April 2016



Search For Truth

By ERNESTO M. MACEDA

18 soldiers killed in Basilan

During a 10-hour bloody clash with the extremist Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) rebels, 18 soldiers of 4th Special Forces Battalion and 44th Infantry Battalion died and 56 others were wounded in a stronghold of the rebels in the town of Tipo-Tipo, Basilan. The intense clashes came after a ransom deadline set by the communist rebels, who had threat-



ened to kill a Norwegian and two Canadian hostages and a Filipina they kidnapped last September if ransom

is not paid by Friday.

General Hernando Irriberi had ordered non-stop operations against the militants. Irriberi praised the soldiers for their gallantry in battle. "Despite heavy enemy resistance and advantage in the familiarity with the terrain in Basilan, our troops fought gallantly. We salute our troops as they displayed the finest traditions of soldiery and bravely fought the bandits with utmost valor," Irriberi said.

Maj. Filemon Tan, spokesman for the Western Mindanao Command (WMC) said five bandits, including a Moroccan fighter, Mohammad Khattab and Ubalda, a son of Hapilon, were killed in the ferocious fighting.

Earlier, because of their ineffectiveness as ground commanders in the campaign against the ASG and other private armed groups in their area of responsibility, the commanders of the Joint Task Group Sulu and Tawi-Tawi were relieved from duty.

As ASG plagued four presidencies, Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto said that finishing off the Abu Sayyaf is the president's last job and the next

president's first.

Meanwhile, in Lanao del Sur, Marawi City Mayor Fahad Salic, a former husband of Alma Moreno, and his driver, Tayrudin Gunting, were ambushed as they were leaving Pryce Hotel in Cagayan de Oro.

Salic sustained gunshot wounds in his buttocks, back, and right leg. His driver suffered a gunshot wound in

his face.

Vice President Jejomar Binay is urging the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to speedily act on the assassination attempt against Mayor Salic.

Aquino admits 'noynoying' on Kidapawan

A week after the bloody dispersal of hungry farmers in North Cotabato, demanding rice from the government, President Benigno Simeon Aquino finally broke his silence, which the peasant group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) described as "an admission that Aquino was 'noynoying' or prefending to be busy on the impact of drought and justice to the farmers."

KMP chairperson Rafael Mariano said Aquino's late statement betrays his weak leadership, indecisiveness and downright stupidity, coupled with brazen lies and cheap alibi. "It took Aquino two days to call for a meeting that he himself postponed because according to the President, if his Cabinet members were not ready, nothing will happen in their meeting as it would take time to gather the data. Isn't that stupid?" Mariano said.

Until now, the President is silent on the impacts of the prolonged drought and hunger, the just legitimate demand for food and calls for justice," Mariano added.

Manny Pacquiao wins

"Right now my decision is to retire, but who knows. My heart is fifty-fifty. I am committed to my family to get back home and spend more time with them. I'd like to focus to serve the people in the Philippines. That's my priority," Manny Pacquiao said in his post-fight press conference.

"Let me enjoy my retirement first. I am not there yet so I don't know what the feeling is. I have made my

decision," he added.

Pacquiao's trainer, Freddie Roach said his prized ward still had some fights left in him. Pacquiao agreed. "My body is still okay."

Pacquiao knocked down Timothy Bradley twice in the seventh and ninth round

Binay hits Duterte

Vice President Jejomar Binay hit Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte as an "embodiment of arrogance and prevarication. This is of course aside from his being a self-confessed killer.

"Mayor Duterte, you were always bragging that you have killed a lot of people, but now you're denying it. Make up your mind, Mr. Executioner. The presidency is not for the unprincipled and inconsistent. It is not for liars, braggarts and most especially merciless killers," Binay said.

In Unisan, Quezon, Binay predicted he will win by four million votes, due to his big ground organization. Meanwhile, an estimated 10,000 people attended a

Duterte rally in Filinvest in Alabang, Muntinlupa. Duterte was six hours late. The latest survey placed Duterte, with 27 percent, ahead of Grace Poe at 23 percent.

Bongbong targeted at VP debate

Vice presidential candidates led by Senator Alan Peter Cayetano ganged up on Senator Bongbong Marcos at the vice presidential debate over his father's record on corruption and human rights.

By the way he was hammered by the other vice presidential candidates, Bongbong Marcos appeared to be the man to beat in the VP race. The latest Social Weather

Stations (SWS) survey placed him on top.

Referring to the \$10 billion allegedly stolen by the Marcos family, Cayetano said: "Just wait if you make him Vice President, the stolen money might reach \$100 billion."

Rep. Leni Robredo, the Liberal Party's VP bet, insisted that the Marcoses should return the stolen wealth.

Bongbong Marcos replied: "I cannot give what I do not have. I have no knowledge of it."

Tidbits

It's a close fight for Governor of Bulacan between reelectionist Gov. Wilhelmino Sy Alvarado and former Gov. Josefina dela Cruz.

Comelec reported glitches in the Vote Counting Machines (VCM) in Hong Kong, Dubai and Riyadh.

Department of Health (DOH) Sec. Janet Garin advised candidates to avoid campaigning between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to avoid heat stroke

The Golden State Warriors defeated the San Antonio Spurs for its 72nd victory.

Three policemen were arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for the kidnap murder of businesswoman Adora Lazatin.

In Parañaque, Mayor Edwin Olivarez is running unopposed.

April 2016

EDITORIAL



A foothold for ISIS?

Relatives and friends mourned the soldiers who died from gunfire and improvised explosive devices set off by the Abu Sayyaf in clashes that started Saturday morning in Basilan. The Armed Forces of the Philippines yesterday reported killing 13 more bandits, but the AFP's own death toll of 18 is among the highest ever in its decades-old battle with the terrorist

Among the enemy casualties was Ubalda Hapilon, identified as a son of top terrorist Isnilon Hapilon, who has a \$5-million prize on his head. An intriguing casualty was Mohammad Khattab, described by military intelligence as a Moroccan instructor in producing IEDs and a preacher of Islamic jihad.

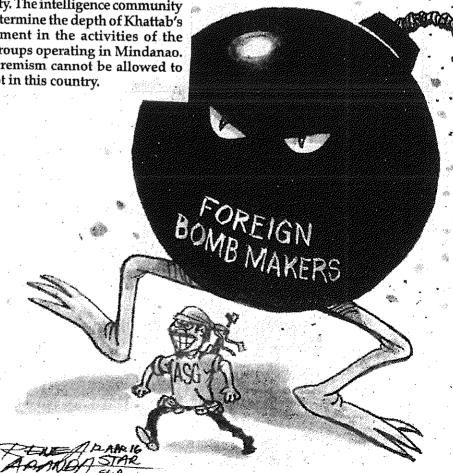
According to the AFP chief, Khattab was trying to unify and organize kidnap-for-ransom groups for affiliation with an international terrorist organization. The AFP did not identify the organization, but there have been recent reports - denied by the military - that the extremist Islamic State of Syria and Iraq has Mindanao.

knowhow in producing the IEDs that take root in this country.

inflicted so much harm on the soldiers, although the Abu Sayyaf has been making improvised explosives for many years with help from the Southeast Asian terror cell Jemaah Islamiyah. The presence of a foreign jihadi bomb maker, especially one who joins the Abu Sayyaf in a firefight with state forces, should stir deep concern in this country as governments worry about the spreading influence of ISIS.

Belgium just recently suffered its worst terrorist attack courtesy of ISIS, with the suspects linked to the same group that launched nearsimultaneous attacks in Paris on Nov. 13 last year that left about 130 people dead in the French capital. Reports said Germany is moving to thwart a similar attack in one of its cities.

If Khattab is part of ISIS, containing this threat will take more than killing him. Thanks to global connectivity, ISIS can recruit all over the world and wage a borderless war, influencing local jihadis to commit crimes against humanity. The intelligence community must determine the depth of Khattab's been trying to gain a foothold in involvement in the activities of the threat groups operating in Mindanao. Khattab could have imparted the ISIS extremism cannot be allowed to



OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Army Core Purp

12 April 2016

GONE FOR GOOD



LOWDOWN JOJO A. ROBLES

REMEMBER Al-Barka? I

Nincteen soldiers died in that sixth-class municipality of Basilan province in October 2011, just a little over a vear after President Novnov Aquino took over the highest post in the land. A group of 40 soldiers from the Army's Special Forces, sent to Al-Barka to pursue a gang of kidnappers, encountered a superior force of 90 members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front; the troopers were ruthlessly gunned down by the Moro rebels, who claimed the government forces had intruded into their territory.

Aquino was much more energetic back then. He called a command talks had something to do conference 111 Camp Aguinaldo right after the killings, even if he knew that no's heart's desire of a new his government was deep into peace negotiations with the Muslim rebels.

What a difference five vears make. Over the weekwere killed by a big force

of allowed members of the Abu Sayyaf Group in Tipo-Tire nown, also in Barrian. the soldiers had also have missing lidhop-lie ber som gangs and were parent a bigger operation that nogan earlier this your

Aquino has not made his presence felt dus time around. There has been no statement from the President as of late yesterday, even if-like in the aftermath of Al-Barka in 2011 -the military has already ordered the lowering of flags in all military bases to half-mast in honor of the slain troops.

Truth to tell, nothing did come out of Aquino's posturings after the Al-Barka killings. Perhaps the MILF's insistence that it was just fending off attacking soldiers and the implied threat that leaning on the rebels too hard would endanger the peace with that.

But now, when Aquipeace agreement with the MILF has gone down the Palace drain, he seems to have completely lost interest in the death of the sol-



Aquino doesn't care if people live or die. These days. he doesn't even care to comment anymore.



have lost interest in almost everything, with the possible exception of campaigning for his Liberal Party's candidates, so that they may "continue the gains" of his administration.

Over the past couple of weeks. Againo has only grudgingly commented (or said nothing at all in public) about the killing of three farmers who were demanding rice in Ridanawan City and the five-hour blackout end just past, 18 soldiers diers under his command, at the Ninoy Aquino In-Actually, Aquino appears to ternational Airport that

inconvenienced 14.000 six line passengers.

Compare Agrinds quick congrambton reaction to the victory of Manny Pacquiao in his latest boxing match and his deathly silence regarding those three far more important incidents and you'll get my meaning. (Aquino has publicly discussed the Kidapawan incident, ves but only to explain that he learned about it only after the farmers had been violently dispersed and that he was ill at the time.)

I've long been convinced that Aquino doesn't really care if people outside his family and his close circle of friends and political allies live or die. These days. he doesn't even care to comment anymore.

Of course, there was also that strange incident involving the 44 slain members of the PNP Special Action Force, whose arrival in coffins in Manila in January last year was ignored by Aquino-who just had to attend the opening of a carassembly plant on the same day. I guess dead soldiers are just not that high on the list of people that Aguina

Continued on Al-

the nominal commander-in-chief of the military is "dying" to meet.

As for protesting and beaten-down peasants, they're so three decades ago. When Aquino's mother unleashed the bloodthirsty Manila police on hundreds of farmers seeking genuine land reform outside of Malacañang, killing 13 of them, Noynoy was just assaying the role of the fun-loving bachelor president's son and could not be bothered. (Years later, in 2004, as nominal—yes, that word again—head of security of his family's Hacienda Luisita, Aquino would witness the killing of 14 protesting peasants on their estate; it never seemed to bother him afterwards.)

Now, it seems, it would take nothing short of a catastrophe of, say, Yolanda-like proportions to get a rise out of Aquino, 80 days before he steps down. But since we know, from painful experience, just how lacking in empathy Aquino was after the typhoon hit, there's not even a guarantee that a cataclysmic event would rouse the President from his current stupor.

Last week, a sympathetic newspaper report, probably written to convince us that Aquino had no intention of staying one day longer than his contracted six years in office, said that the President has started packing preparatory to moving back to his mother's old house on Times Street. Given the deafening silence from Aquino since all hell seems to have broken loose, I think Aquino has already long left the Palace building in spirit.

Of course, you can actually argue, given Aquino's performance-challenged rule, that he was never there all throughout. The only good thing I can see in all this is, by end of June, Aquino will really be gone for good.

/2 April 2016



Page: HB

Leader with an iron hand

THE ARMED Forces should change its tactics because government troops always end up being clobbered during encounters with enemies of the state.

Nowhere is the lack of tactics more evident than in the death of 18 soldiers and the wounding of six others in their recent clash with the Abu Sayyaf, a ragtag group of Moro bandits.

The soldiers fought the Moro band for 10 hours in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan province.

What happened to the maneuvers the soldiers learned in their training?

That span of time would have been favorable to the government troops because they had helicopter gunships and probably jet fighters at their beck and call.

But what happened to the OV-10 propeller-driven fighters of the Air Force which could have strafed and bombed the position of the enemy?

Huey helicopters, each armed with machine guns on both sides, could have flown low and strafed the ambushers of the troops.

And what happened to the 21 attack helicopters Defense Secre-

tary Voltaire Gazmin had ordered from Rice Aircraft Services Inc. (Rasi), a supposedly reputable US aircraft manufacturer?

Those helicopters could have been used in Basilan had they been available.

Defense Gazmin has filed libel and other cases against Rhodora Alvarez, former Rasi country representative, who had accused him of rigging the P1.2-billion contract to buy 21 refurbished Huey choppers.

The cases are meant to harass Alvarez who said that officials of the Department of National Defense (DND) and some Philippine Air Force brass chose Rasi in exchange for a 7-percent commission.

Of the 21 refurbished choppers delivered, only two can fly.

Gazmin said no irregularities were committed in pushing for the contract according to the results of the investigation he had ordered.

But of course, how could investigators accuse their boss Gazmin of irregularities?

The problem with Gazmin



and other Aquino administration officials, for that matter, is they think the public is stupid!

Three policemen, one of them with the rank equivalent to a lieutenant in the Army, have been tagged in the kidnapping, robbing and killing of a businesswoman.

The victim's body, 50-year-old Adora Lazatin, was found sealed in a drum floating in the Pasig River.

The National Bureau of Investigation identified the police official as Insp. Eljie Jacobe of the National Capital Region Police Office.

The involvement of policemen in crimes—especially heinous ones such as kidnapping, murder, robbery and rape—has become so common the citizenry is no longer outraged.

Why is the citizenry not out-

raged? Because they have become callous to so many reports of abusive and arrogant cops.

Coupled with the citizenry's indifferent attitude is the government's apathy toward the oppression of ordinary citizens by the very people who are supposed to protect them.

Especially in this administration whose leader, President Novnov, is not feared by cops.

Policemen think P Noynoy is a joke and a clown, according to former Manila Times columnist Rick Ramos.

Only a Rody Duterte presidency can stop policemen's involvement in crimes.

In Davao City, the mention o Duterte's name sends chills down the spines of criminals, as well a abusive cops.

The dreaded Davao Deatl Squad, the creation of which i attributed to Duterte but which he denies (naturally), does not distinguish between notoriou criminals and abusive cops; bot types end up dead.

The need of the hour is a leade with a "kamay na bakal" or iro hand, and only Duterte has it.

12 April 2016



MILF must first prove sincerity by eradicating ASG

THE APRIL 2 editorial ("More banditry") brought to the fore once more the menace the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) has been foisting upon this country. Why this ragtag group of only about 300 kidnap-for-ransom bandits cannot be obliterated by an Army of about 90,000 soldiers is a really frustrating wonder.

One reason given was that most ASG members are relatives of their counterparts in the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) which in the past had signed a "peace agreement" with the government, which paved the way for the creation of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, with MNLF founder and head Nur Misuari its governor at one time. Reportedly, some MNLF members protected those bandits and the government was totally helpless in bringing them to justice.

Then enter the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) which took over the "rebellious role" the MNLF used to play, as the former

played a new role in the peace charade. Like the MNLF, the MILF also admitted that many of its members have relatives in the ASG. There is hardly any doubt that the MILF is also protecting those bandits who live in territories the MILF controls. Is it ever any wonder why the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law is going

nowhere in Congress?

Through the proposed law, the MILF seeks to exercise exclusive authority to control and govern most of Mindanao in lieu of the disgraced and corrupt MNLF. It is another joke foisted upon all of us! Outside of the government "peace panel" that steadfastly entertains the delusion that only the MILF can bring about peace in the south, everyone else wants that rebel group to first prove its sincerity by putting the kibosh on the banditry of the ASG once and for all. Alas, this is asking for the moon!

-MARIA MARGARITA AYTONA, marimar_ay@yahoo.com

12 April 2016



Page: 34

What is Squad X, and how will it change the US Army?

BY DAVID AXE

THE US military has launched a program to equip its front-line soldiers with the latest battlefield technology. The Squad X initiative would give an Army or Marine Corps squad new computerized weapons, the latest smartphone-style communications and even easy-to-use robot helpers.

The program aims to help the troops "have deep awareness of what's around them, detect threats from farther away and, when necessary, engage adversaries more quickly and precisely," according to Army Major Christopher Orlowski, who's managing the Squad X effort on behalf of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the Pentagon's cutting-edge science department.

Squad X is still just a concept. It'll be up to Orlowski, other DARPA officials and the defense industry to determine exactly what technology the program includes. But one thing is clear: The government wants to profoundly change the way squads move, communicate and fight.

The problem is, the military has tried these sorts of technical advances before. Several times, in fact. Not only did the previous attempts fail, they cost American taxpayers billions of dollars.

So Orlowski and the advanced research agency have their work cut out for them. Meanwhile Americans have plenty of reasons to be skeptical they'll succeed – and not just because the Pentagon has repeatedly failed to manage complex weapons programs without cost overruns and technical problems, the prime example being the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

The Pentagon launched Squad X in 2013, to solve longtime serious problems. A squad, which is roughly a dozen troops, is the smallest conventional military unit capable of fighting independently. A "dismounted" squad – meaning traveling on foot rather than in vehicles – usually carries rifles, grenades, a few machine guns and several radios. It depends on larger units for speedy transportation, heavy firepower and long-range communications.

Today, and throughout recent history, squads have fought under major constraints. Squad members constantly struggle to keep track of each other and the enemy. They can only see what's in their direct line of sight – and can only shoot what they can see.

"Dismounted squads lack the detailed situational awareness, robust networked communications and data-sharing capability that supports the ability to consistently anticipate the tactical situation," the Pentagon explained in its initial Squad X announcement.

That's why squads are easily surprised "due to their lack of real-time data about squad members, their surrounding environment and the threats present," the Defense science agency added.

The Pentagon tried as far back as the late 1990s to solve these problems. Then, the focus was on networking – that is, connecting every soldier to every other soldier as well as to other units and even to distant planes and command posts.

The Army's Land Warrior program, launched in 1993, tried to equip every soldier with his own high-tech radio and wearable computer, plus an eyepiece projecting an airplane-style Heads-Up Display. Every soldier would see the position of every other soldier — and the enemy — as an icon on a digital map displayed on the eyepiece.

With a glance, a soldier would fully understand how a battle was unfolding. Allied forces on the ground, in the sky and even in space would constantly add updated information to the trooper's personal display, transmitting that data potentially thousands of miles.

At least that is what was supposed to happen.

It took the Army 15 years and a half-billion dollars to produce a few sets of the Land Warrior gear. It equipped a Washington State-based infantry unit and sent them to Iraq in 2007, to test the hardware in combat.

The infantrymen hated the gear. At 16 pounds, it was far too heavy. And its 1990s-vintage processors and software were slow by 2007 standards. "It makes you a slower, heavier target," Sergeant James Young complained to Popular Mechanics.

The Pentagon belatedly canceled Land Warrior – sort of – in 2007. In fact, Land Warrior survived as an Army program called "Nett Warrior." The new initiative, launched in 2010, replaced the wearable computer and eyepiece with a smartphone connected to a lightweight radio.

Strapped to a soldier's chest, the smartphone functions as a tiny computer screen that displays a map showing the locations of other soldiers. A soldier can send text messages to his squadmates instead of shouting or speaking into the radio.

But Nett Warrior suffered some of the same problems as Land Warrior. Its map showed other soldiers in the wrong locations. It suffered unbearable lag.

Soldiers testing the gear in New Mexico in 2011 were blunt. "It ain't ready," one private told the trade publication Breaking Defense.

The Army is still trying to work out the kinks in Nett Warrior. Meanwhile, it has bought thousands of sets that cost millions of dollars.

The advanced research agency hasn't yet selected specific technologies for the Squad X program, but official concept art released with the announcement suggests what kinds of gear it hopes to include in Squad X.

The art depicts a soldier firing a tiny, precision-guided "smart" munition from his otherwise standard-looking assault rifle. It's a striking idea — but one that could be years away from actual use in combat. The military has only recently begun to experiment with tiny, maneuverable projectiles smart enough to track a target and also small enough to be fired from, say, a rifle.

The drawings also show soldiers accompanied by a wide range of robots, including self-driving jeeps, low-flying surveillance drones, four-legged cargo robots and humanoid-looking bots that appear to be scouting ahead of the soldiers. All these types of robots do exist in prototype. As with the smart munitions, however, it could be years before they're ready for use in combat.

The captions on the artwork indicate that all the soldiers, robots and munitions constantly gather and share information, to create a kind of small-scale battlefield data network — one that constantly adapts to local conditions and might not necessarily depend on satellites or any other long-range communications, as many of today's military networks do. These ad-hoc networks have long been a dream of Pentagon technologists.

The promotional art lends Squad X a science-fiction vibe. But that doesn't mean the program has totally lost touch with reality. With

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

Squad X, Orlowski and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency clearly hope to address problems that Land Warrior and Nett Warrior tried — and failed — to solve more than 20 years ago. They insist this third attempt is different from the earlier efforts.

For starters, Squad X is watching its weight. The new advanced technology "will minimize system size, weight and power," the research agency said, "so that they are soldier-portable." In total, it would have to weigh less than Land Warrior's 16 pounds to please soldiers who complained about the earlier technology.

As commercial-grade phones, cameras, radios and drones get smaller and lighter by the day, it at least seems possible for the agency to

outfit squads without overloading them.

The Squad X initiative is also trying to avoid the network latency, or lag, that plagued both Land Warrior and Nett Warrior. As the advanced research agency explained, "the capacity of modern sensors to generate and distribute collected data... can quickly saturate even advanced wireless radio networks."

To prevent this, Squad X tech aims to rely on wireless devices that are "short-range, high-bandwidth ... low-power, covert and resistant to electronic warfare countermeasures."

Indeed, the research agency requires that the new hardware work even on a "GPS-denied" battlefield – where the enemy has blocked access to the navigational satellites that US troops rely on.

That requirement doesn't overestimate America's potential enemies. When Land Warrior and Nett Warrior launched, the United States enjoyed superiority in what the military calls the "electromagnetic domain." In other words, US forces could count on their radio signals getting through unimpeded.

But in recent years Russia, China, Iran and other countries have refined technology that can jam global-positioning-system signals. US forces can no longer assume that GPS will work during wartime – so Orlowski and his research agency aren't assuming that, either, as they

oversee the Squad X effort.

The science agency is counting on drones to fill in where GPS fails. Squad X aims to "increase squad members' real-time knowledge of their own and teammates' locations ... through collaboration with embedded unmanned air and ground systems. Capabilities of interest include robust collaboration between humans and unmanned systems." – Reuters

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

12 April 2016



Page: 10

We continue to hope for kidnap victims

cision of the Abu Sayyaf to release a former Italian Roman Catholic missionary priest turned businessman, Rolando del Torchio, who was kidnapped at his Pizza Pie House in Dipolog City in October, 2015. Del Torchio, 57, was found by a police recovery team aboard a commercial ferry at the Jolo port in Sulu, bound for Zamboanga City, last Friday.

Still being awaited is word on Canadians John Ridsdel and Robert Hall, Norwegian Khartan Sekkingstad, and Filipina Marites Flor who were kidnapped from a resort on Samal Island in Davao Gulf in September, 2015. From the Davao area, the captives were somehow moved across southern Mindanao to Sulu in the southwest in the succeeding weeks, so that they were soon reported to be in the Jolo jungles. There, last March, the Abu Sayyaf displayed its captives on its website with a demand for P1-billion ransom for each of the foreign victims.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) troops

have been pursuing the Abu Sayyaf all this time. "Our priority is the safe rescue of the hostages," the AFP Public Affairs Office chief said. "We will go on with our focused operations based on information at hand."

The Philippine government is against any payment of ransom. But that has not kept kidnap victims from appealing to their families and their governments on the matter of ransom. In its last video post, the Abu Sayyaf had one of its Canadian victims appeal directly to Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau.

Last Sunday, there was a gunbattle between the Abu Sayyaf and government soldiers in Basilan, with the former suffering 5 dead against 18 of the Armed Forces. But not a word about the hostages in Jolo.

With the release of Italian Rolando del Torchib in Jolo the other day, the nation is reminded that the Samal victims, along with several others, are still in Abu Sayyaf hands. We continue to hope that they too will soon be released from captivity and that their misery will soon come to an end.



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

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



12 April 2016



Page: ____

Army win big boost to Phl volley

RC Cola-Army's surprise victory over the fancied Est Cola of Thailand in the PLDT Home Ultera Philippine Superliga Invitational Conference served Philippine volleyball in good stead as the country tries to regain its once lofty status in the region.

The Phl has never beaten a Thai squad since the Filipinas reigned supreme in the 1993 SEA Games in Singapore. But the gutsy Lady Troopers ended that streak with a four-set victory last weekend.

"RC Cola-Army's win over Est Cola proved that there is still hope as far as our national team program is concerned," said PSL president Ramon Suzara.

He said that with the proper training, players, exposure and overall national team program, the Philippines can still reclaim their once top

ranking, at least in the regional arena.

"That's why we have to sustain this momentum. We have to rally around our players and provide them all kinds of international exposure they need. We still have what it takes to win over other countries. It's not yet late," said Suzara.

Petron coach George Pascua said they are very grateful to the

Petron coach George Pascua said they are very grateful to the PSL for inviting a top club team, which paraded the young core of Thailand's national team B that is steeped in experience in continental and world tourneys.

"Regardless of the result, it was a such a great learning experience for us," Pascua said.

The PSL has taken the lead in giving local players the much-needed international exposure.

April 2016



RC Cola-Army pinatunayang angat na ang volleyball sa Pinas

sa bansa.

Isang magandang patunay ang kampeonato ng RC Cola-Army sa katatapos lang na 2016 PLDT Home Ultera Philippine Superliga (PSL) Invitational Conference kung saan pinatumba nito ang powerhouse Est Cola-Thailand sa championship round.

Ayon kay PSL president Ramon "Tats" Suzara, untiunti nang nakakasabay ang Pilipinas sa malalakas na koponan sa rehiyon kabilang na ang many-time Southeast Asian Games champion Thailand.

At hindi malayong maibalik ang magandang reputasyon ng Pilipinas sa mundo ng volleyball kung magtutuluvfuloy lamang ang magandang programa para sa mga Pinay spikers.

"We have to sustain this momentum. We have to rally exposure they need. We still have what it takes to win over de Manila University. (CCo)

Tunay na umaangat na nga ang lebel ng volleyball other countries. It's not yet late," wika ni Suzara na opisyal ng Asian Volleybali Confederation (AVC) at International Volleyball Federation (FIVB).

Kilalang-kilala ang Pilipinas bilang powerhouse team noong dekada 90.

Nasungkit pa ng Pilipinas ang pinakahuling gintong medalya ng bansa sa SEA Games noong 1993 edisyon na ginanap sa Singapore. Subalit mabilis na lumakas ang

Thailand dahil sa magandang programa nito. Sa katunayan, pinuri ni Est Cola-Thailand coach Chamnan Dokmai ang mahusay na paglalaro ni De La Salle University setter Kim Fajardo na posible aniyang kunin bilang guest player sa isang malaking liga sa Thailand.

llan pang mga manlalaro sa Pilipinas ang nililigawan ng mga foreign teams kabilang na sina 6-foot-5 Jaja Sanaround our players and give them all kinds of international tiagoing National University at Alyssa Valdezing Ateneo

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

