

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



**ARMY**

Serving the people. Securing the land.

[oacpa.army2012@gmail.com](mailto:oacpa.army2012@gmail.com)

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
**NEWS CLIPPINGS**

**15 April 2016**

**Friday**

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

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

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### 15 APRIL 2016

PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER
1	Weather Forecast		PDI p. 18
<b>NATIONAL NEWS</b>			
2-4	Binay vows to run after Duterte 'death squad'	Christine Avedaño	PDI p.A1
<b>ARMY RELATED NEWS</b>			
5-6	Abu death toll in Basilan clash climb to 31	Roel Pareño	The Phil Star p.18
7	NPA executes abducted Isabela vice mayor	Mario MALLARI	The Daily Tribune p.2
8	Sundalo inginuso sa torture	Al Jacinto	Abante p.6
9-10	Daesh-affiliates claim role in Philippine army deaths	-	<a href="http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com">www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com</a>
11	Army's 1ID commander says due honors were given to slain soldiers	-	<a href="http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com">www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com</a>
12	PHOTO: Artillery rocket system	Camille Ante	Manila Bulletin p.8
13	In photo: Fallen warrior		Mla. Times p.A1
<b>AFP RELATED NEWS</b>			
14-15	IS claims Basilan ambush	Nikko Dizon	PDI p.A2
16-18	Carter bares sustained Phi-US maritime patrols	Aurea Calica	The Phil Star p.1
19	'Abu Sayyaf' days are numbered	Genlayn Kabilling	Manila Bulletin p.2
20-22	US says military, aircraft to stay	AFP	The Daily Tribune p.1
23	Military, police raise doubts on ISIS claim in Mindanao Clashes	Mario MALLARI	The Daily Tribune p.1
24-25	AFP confirms it coordinated with the MILF on Basilan operations	-	<a href="http://www.pna.gov.ph">www.pna.gov.ph</a>
26	Malacañang orders AFP pension fund abolished	-	Manila Bulletin p.6
27-29	ISIS is making inroads in the Southern Philippines and the implication for Asia are alarming	-	<a href="http://www.pna.gov.ph">www.pna.gov.ph</a>
30	Task force formed to probe Isabela vice mayor's slay	Raymund Catindig	The Phil Star p.A29
31-33	US, PH start joint patrols in disputed sea	Nikko Dizon	Inquirer.net

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

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


34-35	US fires long-range missiles in Balikatan war games	-	Inquirer.net
36	Balikatan' 2016 more focused in command-and-control	-	<a href="http://www.pna.gov.ph">www.pna.gov.ph</a>
<b>EDITORIAL / OPINION</b>			
37	A recycled US colony	Isabel Escoda	PDI p.A16
38-39	Taking sides in the war within Islam	Bernard Levy	PDI p.A17
<b>ONLINE NEWS</b>			
40	AFP denies ISIS hand in BAsilan clash	-	<a href="http://www.pna.gov.ph">www.pna.gov.ph</a>
41	PAF recommends permanent deployment of firefighting chopper in the region		<a href="http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com">www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com</a>
42	Malaysia closes Sabah border to southern Philippines		<a href="http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com">www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com</a>

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


15 April 2016

# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER


Page: A18



**PANAHON TV**

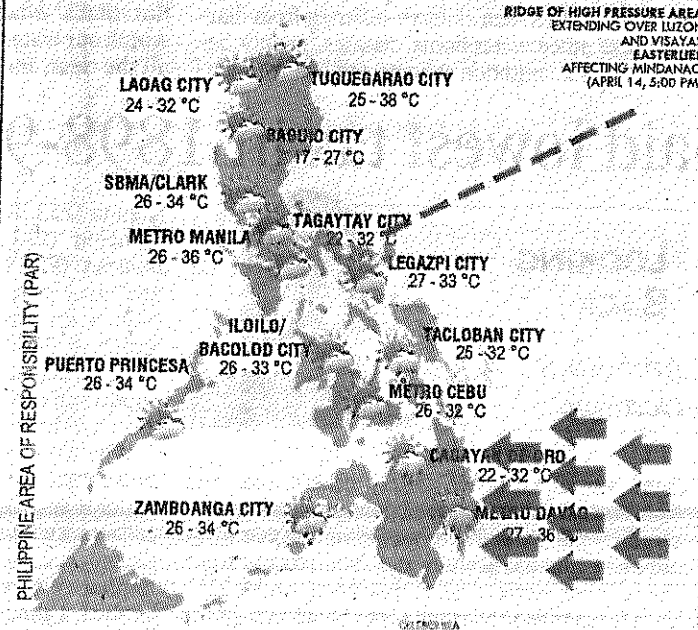


**PanahonTV**  
www.panahon.tv



**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | APRIL 15, 2016 | FRIDAY**



**RIDGE OF HIGH PRESSURE AREA**  
EXTENDING OVER LUZON  
AND VISAYAS  
AFFECTING MINDANAO  
(APRIL 14, 5:00 PM)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
5:42 AM	6:10 PM

MOONRISE	MOONSET
12:43 PM	12:51 AM

FIRST QUARTER	FULL MOON
APR 14 11:59 AM	APR 22 1:24 PM

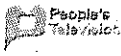


LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 11:49 PM -0.06 Meter	3:50 PM 0.90 Meter

Partly cloudy skies

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

APR 16		APR 17		APR 18		APR 19	
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	26 - 36 °C	26 - 36 °C	23 - 32 °C	22 - 32 °C	26 - 32 °C	26 - 33 °C	
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	25 - 37 °C	25 - 37 °C	27 - 32 °C	26 - 33 °C	23 - 33 °C	23 - 33 °C	
<b>LAOAG</b>	24 - 32 °C	24 - 33 °C	26 - 34 °C	25 - 33 °C	26 - 35 °C	26 - 36 °C	
<b>BAGUIO</b>	17 - 26 °C	16 - 26 °C	25 - 34 °C	25 - 34 °C	26 - 34 °C	26 - 35 °C	
<b>SBMA/CLARK</b>	26 - 35 °C	25 - 35 °C	26 - 33 °C	26 - 34 °C			
<b>TAGAYTAY</b>							
<b>LEGAZPI</b>							
<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b>							
<b>ILOILO/BACOLOD</b>							
<b>METRO CEBU</b>							
<b>TACLOBAN</b>							
<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b>							
<b>METRO DAVAO</b>							
<b>ZAMBOANGA</b>							

Watch PANAHON.TV everyday at 5:00 AM on PTV (Channel 4).

**AIR 21**  
**SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!**

15 April 2016

PHILIPPINE DAILY  
**INQUIRER**

Page: 41

# Binay vows to run after Duterte 'death squad'

## Davao mayor accused of extrajudicial killings

By Christine O. Avendaño and Nina P. Calleja

IT was the turn of Vice President Jejomar Binay yesterday to threaten Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, one of his rivals for Malacañang, with imprisonment.

Binay vowed that if he was elected President, he would go after and punish Duterte and his so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS) for extrajudicial killings in Davao, which included children and journalists.

The presidential standard-bearer of the opposition United Nationalist Alliance said he would form an independent commission to investigate the "summary executions and human rights violations" being blamed on Duterte and the supposed death squad.

"It's time for DDS, along with Duterte, to answer to God and the law of our country," Binay said in a statement.

On the third straight day of the attack and counterattack

with the threat of the mayor's camp, aired on Wednesday by Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III, to send him to jail on corruption charges should Duterte win the election.

### First 'big fish' in jail

"Binay would in all likelihood be the first big fish to be sent to jail with the preponderance of evidence of corruption against him during his stint as Makati mayor for more than 20 years," Pimentel, president of Duterte's party, Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban), said in a statement.

Binay, running third in the polls less than four weeks before the balloting, had for days been asking voters not to elect Duterte as President, citing the mayor's admission that he was part of the supposed death squad and that he had killed criminals.

The Vice President accused Duterte of killing poor people, including children.

He said the independent commission that he planned to form to investigate the extrajudicial killings in Davao may be made up of former members of the Supreme Court, human rights groups, the National Press Club and the Commission on Human Rights.

Responding from Cebu City, Duterte said he would continue killing criminals.

"I will do it again and again," Duterte told reports after hearing about Binay's statements.

Duterte said no charges had been brought against him over

### Are journalists criminals?

"If I become President, I will send to jail child killers and those who kill the poor. I will jail those killing journalists," Binay said in his latest attack on Duterte.

The death squad has become "untouchable" because Duterte has admitted being part of it, Binay said.

He scoffed at the claim of Duterte's camp that they only kill criminals, asking if they considered journalists critical of the mayor criminals.

"Jun Pala, Ferdy Lintuan and Rene Galope were journalists in Davao who exposed corruption and bad governance of Duterte. They were killed by DDS. In the eyes of Duterte, journalists, whom he had called 'noisy' and 'talkative,' are criminals who should be killed. Is this the kind of President that you want?" Binay said.

He gave assurance that under his presidency, Duterte and the death squad will be punished.

"But because we respect the law, we will give Mr. Duterte and DDS the chance to defend themselves," Binay said. "We will give [them] the chance to explain to the law—something they denied to their victims."

the supposed death squad in Davao City.

He said even former Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, who is now running for a Senate seat, had not brought a case against him.

### Pimentel criticized

He added that when his former political rival, Prospero Nograles, brought up the extrajudicial killing of criminals in Davao City, it only helped him win the election.

"Davao City does not like criminals," Duterte said.

Binay's campaign spokesperson, Rico Quicho, yesterday

criticized Pimentel for being silent on the human rights charges against Duterte, and said the senator was "duping the people."

Quicho said Pimentel continued his political persecution of Binay by chairing the Senate blue ribbon subcommittee that investigated the corruption charges against the Vice President.

But Pimentel was "sheepishly quiet" on the human rights violations committed by Duterte, he said.

It was Duterte who came back, saying: "I'd like to remind Binay that he is facing

plunder cases, along with his wife. Do you want Malacañang to be filled with people accused of corruption?”

“Let’s see each other in Muntinlupa,” he said, referring to the national penitentiary.

#### **DQ cases financier**

Duterte also disclosed that he was angry with Binay because it was the Vice President who funded the disqualification cases brought against him in the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

“He funded my disqualification (DQ) cases,” he told reporters, adding that he had

“A-1” information about the matter.

He said his informant was someone who worked in the government and was close to the Binays.

“I learned about it only recently,” he said, adding that he at first thought the financier was his other rival for Malacañang, Liberal Party presidential standard-bearer Mar Roxas.

Four petitions for Duterte’s disqualification from the presidential race had been filed in the Comelec, which dismissed all of them for lack of merit.

April 2016



Page: 12

## Abu death toll in Basilan clash climbs to 31

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Casualties are mounting among the Abu Sayyaf as the military continued operations against the bandit group, with 31 militants killed so far in Basilan.

Ground operation spokesman Maj. Filemon Tan Jr. said the bandit group suffered more casualties in five days of sustained military operations in Tipo-Tipo since last week.

"The operation is ongoing. We have 31 enemies killed, there were three critically wounded and two others were captured," he said.

Tan added the troops overran a camp located in Sitio Bayoko, Barangay Baguindan, which the Abu Sayyaf used as a holding area and explosives training ground.

"These figures were reported, validated and confirmed on the ground. We have names," Tan said. He added that the government casualty remained at 18 killed and 56 wounded.

Army chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año said they are validating

reports that among those killed was Abu Sayyaf leader Furuji Indama.

Indama was hit while leading his men in trying to recover the body of Moroccan terrorist Mohammad Khattab during the firefight with government troops last Saturday.

"This is still being validated. Until his body is found, I can't confirm this," Año said.

Tan, however, confirmed three Abu Sayyaf were captured during clearing operations last Tuesday.

He said the suspects were wounded when they were spotted by troops scouring the area.

According to Tan, the three wounded gunmen tried to run away but were chased and captured after a brief firefight.

He said the three were brought to the Basilan General Hospital for initial treatment. However, one of them died while on medical evacuation transit to Zamboanga City.

One of the two remaining suspects claimed he is a member

of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) ceasefire monitoring team, Tan said.

He said the military is coordinating with the government's Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostility with their MILF counterpart.

Meanwhile, the military gave assurance that an investigation was conducted on the alleged torture of the captured suspects.

"Be that as it may, emotions were high in the battle area. If there were indeed instances of possible abuse, we are investigating and we are not tolerating such acts," Tan said.

The Regional Human Rights Commission (RHRC) of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has begun its investigation on the alleged torture on the suspected Abu Sayyaf militants captured by the military.

ARMM-RHRC special investigator Abdillah Alik said they are gathering information on the reported torture that allegedly



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

claimed the life of one suspected militant.

Alik said they have yet to interview the two wounded.

### **Propaganda**

At the same time, the military downplayed reports that the extremist Islamic State (IS) was behind last week's attacks in Tipo-Tipo.

Tan said it would be inconsistent for the IS or ISIS to attack military vehicles in a remote area.

Despite the reports, the military said it doubted the claims of IS, saying it might be just fabrication and propaganda.

"If you see their figures, there are a lot of inconsistencies," Tan said.

Tan said they believed the report is part of propaganda, since the people behind the claim were not identified.

"If you read the report, they did not name the people who were involved there and if they have links with the bandits here in Basilan," he said.

However, Tan said the military is looking into the source of the claims.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin also downplayed the reports that the IS claimed responsibility for last week's killing of 18 soldiers in Basilan.

"The (Abu Sayyaf) group in Basilan is trying to organize and be affiliated with ISIS. But so far, our information says that there is no ISIS... organization here in the Philippines," Gazmin told local and foreign journalists in a joint press conference with his US counterpart, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter.

Carter observed that "from our local perspective, but around the world, you do see the phenomenon in several places of groups that formerly existed."

"And we are conducting terrorist operations... rebrand in association with ISIL, so we see that in other places as well," he pointed out. "That's one of the reasons why it's so important that ISIL be destroyed in Syria and Iraq," Carter said, using

another name of the IS.

Carter believes "there is no such thing as an Islamic state based upon this hateful ideology."

"So it is a worldwide phenomenon of others who have associated themselves with ISIL and that maybe what we are seeing here by groups in the Philippines so that would be consistent with a pattern you've seen around the world," the US official added.

Carter said this is "just another reason why it's important to defeat ISIL, which we will do."

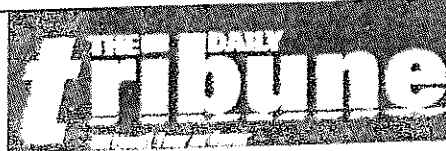
Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Brig. Restituto Padilla also dismissed reports that the IS was behind last week's attacks in Basilan. He said the claims are mere propaganda.

Padilla said the inconsistencies of the published reports from supposed sources abroad on what really happened in Basilan last Saturday only showed that IS has no direct role in the attack. – **With Delon Porcalla, Jaime Laude, Mike Frialde, Janvic Mateo**

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

6  
Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

15 April 2016



Page: 2

## NPA executes abducted Isabela vice mayor

By Mario J. Mallari

Communist New People's Army (NPA) rebels abducted then executed a vice mayor in Isabela province on Wednesday.

Killed was incumbent Jones Vice Mayor Ronaldo Lucas, who was initially abducted by more or less 30 NPA rebels while distributing cash assistance for farmers in Barangay Dicamay at around 11 a.m.

Maj. Gen. Lysander Suerte, commander of the Army's 5th Infantry

Division (ID), said that the NPA's Benito Tesorio Command admitted responsibility for the killing of Lucas.

Suerte said that at around 11:30 a.m., a certain Ka MJ, who introduced himself as leader of the NPA's Benito Tesorio Command, announced in a local radio station that they had killed Lucas.

It was not clear, however, what prompted the killing.

Councilor Clarito Villa of Barangay Dicamay Dos reported at around 2 p.m. to the Jones municipal

police that Lucas was found sprawled dead beside his vehicle along the road in the said village.

Suerte condemned the killing of Lucas, who was distributing cash relief assistance to El Niño affected farmers when snatched.

"I condemn the NPAs for their grave violation of Human Rights and the crimes committed against the people," Suerte said.

"The criminal act is the result of the NPAs failure to push their nonsense armed struggle," he added.

15 April 2016



Pahina. 6

## Sundalo inginuso sa torture

**ZAMBOANGA CITY** — Hindi pa man nasisimulan ang imbestigasyon sa lapses ng militar sa Basilan clashes na kumutil sa buhay ng 18 sundalo ay muli na namang naeskandalo ang Western Mindanao Command matapos na masawi ang isa sa tatlong lalaki na hinuli ng mga sundalo sa lalawigan.

Namatay si Hakim Maruan, matapos na umano'y pahirapan ng mga sundalo. Binunot pa umano ang mga ngipin at kuko nito sa paa at kamay at halos mabasag ang bungo sa torture na dinanas.

Ang dalawa pang dinakip ng militar na sina Jung Aujal, at Ibno, ay pinahirapan rin ng mga sundalo at ngayon ay nasa pagamutan pa rin dahil sa mga tinamong pambubugbog. Si Ibno ay halos hindi na makapagsalita dahil sa mga sugat na tinamo ngunit positibo nitong sinabi sa kanyang pamilya na mga tro-pa ng militar ang nagpahirap sa kanya.

Nanindigan naman ang Western Mindanao Command sa ilalim ni General Mayoralgo dela Cruz na Abu Sayyaf ang tatlong nadakip. Ngunit nabatid na si- na Aujal at Ibno ay mga lehitimong miyembro ng Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) at wala umanong kinalaman sa Abu Sayyaf.

Sinabi ni Aujal na binalikan lamang nito ang kanyang bahay sa bayan ng Tipo-Tipo matapos ang labanan nang sila ay dinakip at pilit na pinaaamin na mga miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf. Wala pang pahayag ang MILF ukol dito. (Al Jacinto)

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

[www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com](http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com)

## Daesh-affiliates claim role in Philippine army deaths

From the Anadolu Agency (Apr 14). Daesh-affiliates claim role in Philippine army deaths

*Jund al-Khilafah claims 3 of its 'martyrs' killed in bloody encounter in south. many other members wounded*



Local and foreign militants identifying themselves as members of a one-time al-Qaeda splinter group have claimed involvement in the deaths of 20 army soldiers in a bloody battle in a conflict-wracked island province in the Philippines' south over the weekend.

The group -- Jund al-Khilafah -- was previously a faction of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, the al-Qaeda affiliate in North and West Africa. It is reported to have broken allegiance from al-Qaeda and pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of Daesh.

On Thursday, the Manila Times quoted the group as saying that three of its "martyrs" were killed in the bloody encounter.

The Philippines army has been referring to all the dead militants as Abu Sayyaf members, although several were pictured wearing Daesh insignia.

The Daesh-affiliated al-Furat Media Foundation website has reported Jund al-Khilafah as saying that many of those wounded were also members, including a commander who sustained a slight wound to his forehead.

Army Core Purpose: <sup>g</sup>Serving the people. Securing the land.

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

They also claimed to have recovered one dozen M4 rifles and a 90mm recoilless rifle from the dead soldiers.

Saturday's encounter took place in the village of Baguindan, Tipo-Tipo town, in Basilan province. A nine-hour firefight between the army and the militants lasted until about 4 p.m. (0800GMT) with the militants eventually withdrawing in 10 different directions.

The soldiers -- belonging to the Philippine army's 44th Infantry Battalion, the 4th Special Forces Battalion and 14 Cavalry units -- were attacked while conducting military operations against the Abu Sayyaf.

The army is reported to have recovered the body of the Jund al-Khilafah-claimed members.

On Thursday, the army denied a report from the Daesh-affiliated Amaq Agency that claimed around 100 Filipino soldiers had died in the incident.

The military has said around 20 soldiers were killed along with 28 Abu Sayyaf members.

"There is no truth to the report [by Amaq]. It is a mere propaganda by sympathizers of this terrorist group," Major Filemon Tan told Anadolu Agency in an interview Thursday.

He declined to comment further on the issue, but downplayed another Daesh claim that it had detonated explosives on seven trucks carrying soldiers in Basilan.

In videos uploaded to the internet, Jund al-Khilafah has claimed that the Abu Sayyaf has been divided into two factions -- Harakatul Islamiyah controlling the Abu Sayyaf strongholds in Basilan, and Jundul Tawhid the group's areas in Sulu.

The militants in Basilan are reported to be headed by Isnilon Hapilon, while the Sulu militants are being led by Malaysian national Mohd Amin Baco.

Last month, Baco appeared in an al-Furat video released online pledging allegiance to the Daesh's self-proclaimed caliphate along with dozens of young Filipino militants.

The Philippines government is involved in a peace process with the region's one-time largest rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation front (MILF), however a final agreement has been shelved during the country's presidential election.

Both the government and the MILF have warned that while the agreement is on hold "terrorist" groups may try and take advantage of local frustrations.

<http://aa.com.tr/en/world/daesh-affiliates-claim-role-in-philippine-army-deaths/554890>

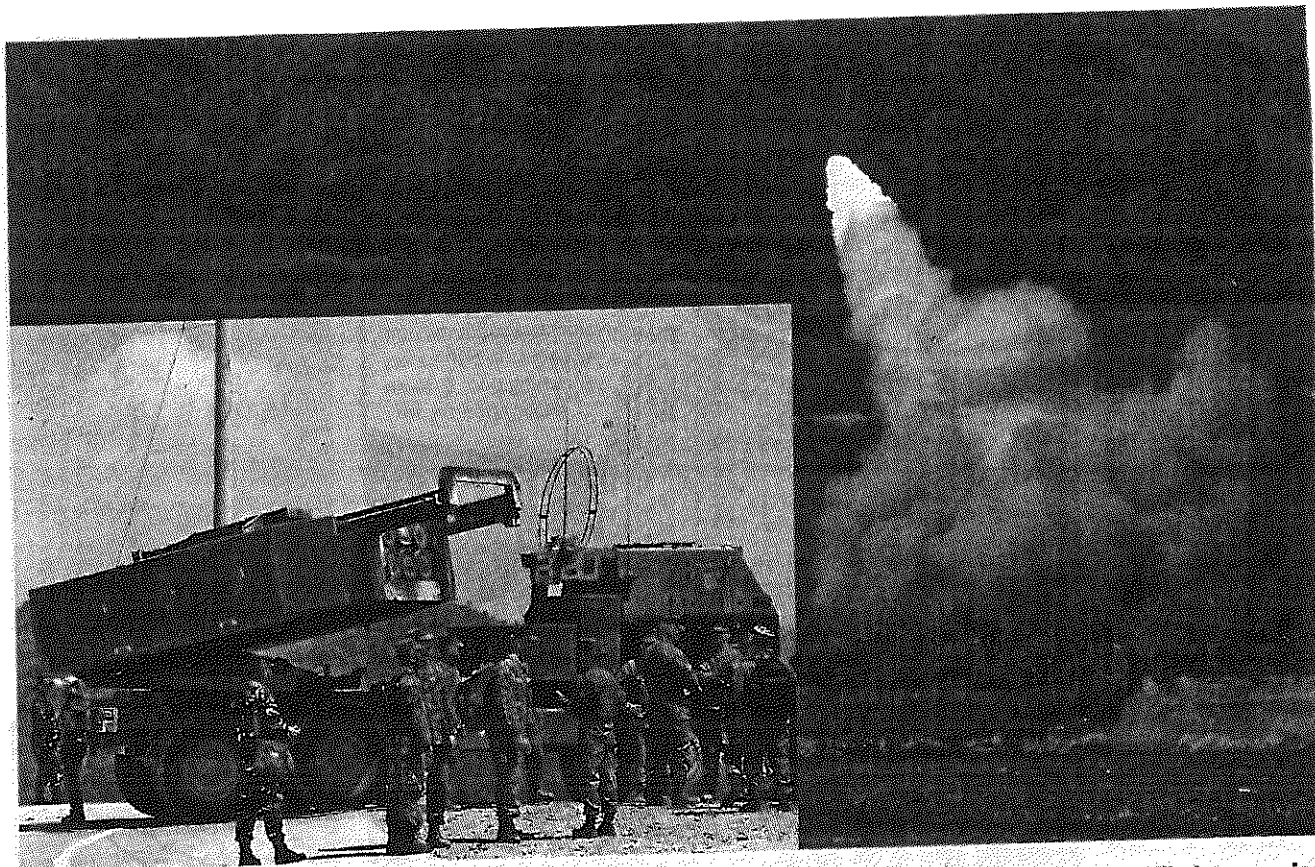
16

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

15 April 2016

**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 8



**ARTILLERY ROCKET SYSTEM** – A High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (inset) fires a TACS missile during the Balkatan exercise at the Crow Valley in Capas, Tarlac, yesterday. The Armed Forces of the Philippines is looking into the possibility of acquiring the artillery rocket system. (Camille Ante)

15 April 2016

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Page: 12

# IS claims Basilan ambush

CAIRO—The jihadist Islamic State (IS) has claimed responsibility for clashes between the extremist Abu Sayyaf linked to the group and Philippine troops this week that led to the death of 18 soldiers, a claim that the Philippine government has dismissed as “purely propaganda.”

“With the grace of God we were able to detonate seven trucks carrying soldiers,” an IS statement said.

The attack led to the death of three of the extremists, the statement added.

SITE Intelligence, a US-based group that tracks online activity of jihadist organizations, reported the IS had claimed responsibility for killing nearly 100 members of the Philippine government and had blown up seven trucks transporting them. SITE cited an April 15 statement carried by the IS’ Amaq news agency.

This was denied by the Philippine military which yesterday said there was no evidence directly linking Muslim rebels in the country’s south to the jihadist group.

Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the IS claim was a propaganda and its statement had “many gaps and inconsistencies.”

“We are still looking for proof to make a link,” he said. “There is no direct link as far as we know and based on our assessment.”

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and his visiting US

counterpart Ashton Carter yesterday also dismissed the IS jihadist group claim that extremists affiliated with it had killed scores of government soldiers.

### No IS in the PH

“The [Abu Sayyaf] group in Basilan is trying to organize and be affiliated with IS, but so far the information says there is no formal IS organization here in the Philippines,” Gazmin said at a joint press conference with Carter yesterday.

Carter said different terrorist groups trying to “affiliate with or rebrand association with the IS” has become a “worldwide phenomenon.”

“It is a worldwide phenomenon that groups associate themselves with IS. That may be what we are seeing by groups here in the Philippines. If so, that would be consistent with the

pattern that we see around the world and this is why it is important to defeat IS,” Carter said.

The Islamic State, by which the group now calls itself after it proclaimed a worldwide caliphate in 2014, is also known in other translations as ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) and also as Daesh, an acronym derived from its Arabic name, ad-Dawlat al-Islamiyah.

The military has reported 46 people killed in battles this week between its troops and about 120 Abu Sayyaf in a 16-hour assault in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan. Fighting raged for a sixth day yesterday.

The army said the military had attacked a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf on the island.

Security experts and some media have criticized the handling of Saturday’s initial encounter with the Abu Sayyaf, saying the

military has repeatedly underestimated the extremists.

The military has pulled out the Army unit that engaged the Abu Sayyaf, replacing them with fresh troops, backed by artillery, tanks and aircraft, in pursuit operations.

### **Decisive victory**

"We lost only 18 soldiers but killed 28 Abu Sayyaf members since fighting began on Saturday. Our troops continued to pursue them and we will not stop until we achieve a decisive victory," Padilla said. More than 50 other soldiers were wounded.

The Abu Sayyaf, a small but violent group known for extortion, kidnappings, beheadings and bombings, has posted videos or social media pledging allegiance to IS militants in Iraq and Syria.

The group has attracted foreign fighters from Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa to

the troubled south of the Philippines, home to a Muslim minority and several Muslim rebel groups.

But Padilla said there was still no evidence that the IS had ties with the Abu Sayyaf.

The presence in Basilan of Moroccan bomb expert Mohammed Khattab, who was killed in the fighting, may have prompted the IS to claim responsibility, sources said.

But even as the government is looking into the IS claim, the sources said Khattab does not have a "solid link" with the jihadist group.

A high-ranking military official said the reports that the dead Khattab was found to be wearing an explosive vest, indicating a suicide mission, and an IS shirt may have caught the attention of the IS in the Middle East and led to the claim.

*Reuters with Nikko Dixon*



1 April 2016



Page: 1

## Carter bares sustained Phl-US maritime patrols

The United States and the Philippines have started joint patrols in the West Philippine Sea, with high-value and high impact rotational exercises being readied on a regular basis

by both militaries, US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced yesterday.

In a press conference with Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin after a courtesy call on

President Aquino at Malacañang, Carter said the patrols would continue to help build the two countries' interoperability as well as improve Philippine Navy capability "even

as these patrols contribute to the safety and security of the region's waters."

The US official said a "contingent of US aircraft and their

Turn to Page 10

crews and pilots that participated in Balikatan will remain behind at Clark Air Base," and such arrangement would be done on a regular basis.

Gazmin said he expects US presence to "deter uncalled-for actions by the Chinese."

Carter's declaration comes just days after Philippine Ambassador to Washington Jose Cuisia Jr. asked the US for help in convincing China not to build in the nearby Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal. China has built man-made islands in other contested spots in the South China Sea.

Admiral John Richardson, chief of naval operations, was quoted in reports as saying he was seeing unusual ship activities near the shoal, including some survey ships, although there were no physical signs of reclamation yet.

Initially, five A-10C Thunderbolt II ground attack aircraft, three HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and an MC-130H special operations aircraft – along with 200 airmen, including pilots – would stay after the Balikatan to continue training with Filipino forces and "lay the foundation for joint air patrols to complement ongoing maritime patrols," Carter said.

OFFICE ( Carter also said a com-

mand control unit would remain behind to continue exercising combined US-Philippines command and control capabilities and support increased cooperative activities in the region.

"With these steps, we're making our strong alliance even stronger. Our efforts to do more together demonstrate America's unbreakable commitment to the defense of this nation," the US official said.

"The stability and security of the Asia Pacific and the principles have helped so many in the region to rise and prosper. And that's not a new commitment. That's not something new this year. But it's one we have met decade after decade," Carter said.

He said he had productive discussions with Philippine officials on matters concerning the implementation of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement between Washington and Manila as well as the US maritime security initiative in the region.

"And of course not all change is positive. Indeed in the South China Sea, China's actions in particular are causing anxiety and raising regional tensions," he said.

"Countries across the Asia Pacific are voicing concerns

with China's land reclamation which stands out in size and scope, as well as militarization in the South China Sea," he added.

"They are voicing these concerns publicly and privately at the highest levels in regional meetings and also in global fora," he pointed out.

### Reaching out

He said the developments have prompted countries in the region, both longstanding allies and new partners, to reach out to the US.

"And we are answering that call. We're standing with these countries. We're helping them build capacity, reaffirming commitment to their and region security with increased posture. We're supporting their request for intensified regional diplomacy, not increased tensions," Carter stressed.

"And we always will, here and everywhere. Nothing will deter us from defending our core interest in freedom of navigation and overflight," he stressed.

Asked whether the joint patrols cover disputed areas, Carter said they could not divulge operational matters but that a general answer would be that military activities could be planned for a broad range of situations.

"Maritime activities, natural disasters, accidents, inci-

al: 5285, 5295

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

agents, provocations... and from the American point of view, our alliance covers all of Philippine territory," he said, citing Article 4 of the Mutual Defense Agreement.

Carter said US President Barack Obama has made it clear that America's commitment to the Philippines is ironclad.

He said US alliance with the Philippines and other countries in the region, "nurtured over decades," has preserved stability and security in the region and helped "so many here and around the Asia Pacific to rise and to prosper."

"With respect to Chinese claims in the South China Sea and with respect to the claims of all other parties to disputed territories in the South China Sea, the American position is very clear, it's been consistent for a long time, which is: these things should be settled peacefully and lawfully," Carter emphasized.

He also announced plans to visit the Antonio Bautista Air Base in the southwest of Palawan, one of areas covered by EDCA for US utilization.

Carter reiterated the \$425-million, five-year commitment by the US Depart-

ment of Defense to help countries like the Philippines to share information and identify potential threats as well as work collaboratively to address common challenges in the region's waters.

"We've just released the first tranche of money and nearly 80 percent, more than 80 percent, almost \$42 million will be coming here to the Philippines. With these steps, the US-Philippines alliance is as close as it has been in years," Carter said.

Carter is set to speak today at the closing ceremony of the Balikatan exercises.

### **New weapon eyed**

Vice Admiral Alexander Lopez, commanding general

of the Palawan-based Western Command, said the military should strongly consider acquiring US-made High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), the capability and effectiveness of which were proven during the Balikatan exercises.

"We have seen the capability – highly mobile, lethal... So I think that's one of the capabilities that we want to have," Lopez said of the HIMARS.

He said even Gazmin and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Hermando Iriberry were impressed with the weapons system, which was tested in a live fire drill.

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

Lt. Gen. John Toolan, commander of the US Marine Corps in the Pacific and Balikatan director for the US, said HIMARS has a range of 300 kilometers.

"HIMARS has also the capability that we're going to test to shoot from the deck of a ship, so you really need a solid ground to be able to fire from the deck of a ship," he said.

Toolan described this year's joint military drill as unique as it has moved to a higher level of command-and-control scenarios, with small unit leaders from both the US and Philippine militaries working very closely in handling combined-arms mock operations.

"This year we have done a lot of interesting things. We have operated and distributed method with forces, small forces with capabilities to bring lethal fires to bear on the target, we have actually worked very closely with the headquarters, at the command-and-control level so that we've built in command-and-control and I think the coordination mechanism has worked in a combined fashion," he said.

The coordinated maneuver involved Philippine Air Force's S211 sub-sonic jets, UH-1H Bell helicopters and US military's Cobra and Chinook helicopters as well as Ospreys.

Asked if the US Pacific Command is planning to deploy the HIMARS and the Ospreys in the Philippines to bolster the country's maritime defense, Toolan said it's not in the plan.

"But obviously with the mo-

bility of HIMARS, you could use it anywhere. You know the truth of the matter is that we're allies and so you know as allies, we need to work together and I think that we'll be more than happy to share," he said.

Toolan also said the US servicemen who got involved in a brawl with local policemen in Palawan had been sent home and would be made to face military justice.

"We have very strict rules. Those guys know they violated the rules and they were sent home immediately and they're gonna be dealing with trouble when I get back," Toolan said.

He was referring to last April 2's brawl between four to five US servicemen and three Puerto Princesa City-based policemen, two of them officers, inside Club 54, a girlie bar in the city.

The incident could have gone unnoticed had a video recording of it not gone viral.

Asked what awaits the erring US servicemen upon his return, Toolan said "some kind of uniform code of military justice."

He said the incident appeared to be an isolated one, noting some 6,000 US troops were involved in the Balikatan, directly and indirectly.

"So far we've done a pretty good job, every once in a while, there's a crack but then we lay the hammer down," he said.

The Philippine National Police (PNP), for its part, has also relieved the three unnamed policemen from their post in Puerto Princesa City while an investigation is ongoing. – Aurea Calica, Jaime Laude, Rudy Santos

12  
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.

April 2016

**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 2

# 'Abu Sayyaf's days are numbered'

By GENALYN D. KABILING

**Z**AMBOANGA CITY - The reign of terror of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) will soon be over, President Aquino declared last Wednesday.

In his recent visit here, the President expressed confidence on the imminent downfall of the ASG led by Isnilon Hapilon and Furuji Indama amid relentless military offensives in Basilan.

"Itong tinutugis natin sa Basilan kasalukuyan, batid naman ninyo kung gaano kabigat ang mga kriminal na pagkatagal-tagal na hinahabol natin [On those being pursued by the government in Basilan, you all know how tough these criminals are, how we have long been running after them]," Aquino told families of the soldiers recently killed in an encounter with the bandits.

"Mukhang sa wakas, matapos na ang lagim na ginawa nila at malaking bahagi ang tinulong ng inyong mga kamag-anak sa pagsupil nitong dalawang pinaghahabol ng

lampas dekada na naghahasik ng lagim [At long last, it seems their reign of terror will end. The contributions of your loved ones in neutralizing these two individuals, whom we have been hunting down for more than a decade for sowing terror, have been a great help]," he added.

The commander-in-chief flew to Zamboanga City last Wednesday mainly to meet with the relatives of the 18 soldiers killed in a clash with the ASG in Tipo, Tipo Basilan clash last weekend, promising government support and pursuit of justice for their loved ones.

Aquino also visited the wake of one of the soldiers killed in the bloody encounter as well as checked on the condition of several other injured soldiers at a government hospital here.

Aquino said the Palace will ask the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to allow the release of resources for the soldiers' kin from President's Social Fund despite being the campaign season.

15 April 2016

THE ARMY  
Tribune

Page: 1

# US says military aircraft to stay

The extent of the American military presence in the country as a result of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) which the Supreme Court earlier had affirmed as an executive agreement unfolded yesterday, revealing EDCA's character as more than the revival of the US military base treaty.

The Senate, in a vote of 12 to 11, adopted a motion in 1991 to reject the extension of the US military bases agreement.

The SC affirmed that EDCA was an executive agreement which implemented existing treaties such as the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT).

Though US Defense Secretary



**The real score** President Aquino receives US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter at Malacañang yesterday. The US claimed it has launched patrols in the West Philippine Sea with Philippine forces and will temporarily deploy 275 troops and five warplanes in the country, escalating its presence amid a territorial dispute with China.

AFP

Ashton Carter, the US said it has launched joint South China Sea naval patrols with the Philippines, escalating its presence as it accused Beijing of "militarizing" a region which is locked in a territorial dispute with China.

In a show of strength, Carter also announced at a press briefing that 275 troops and five A-10 ground attack aircraft currently in the country for annual war games will remain in the country temporarily.

The moves are likely to infuriate China, but Carter said Washington's efforts to strengthen its military role in the region was not done "in order to provoke".

The Pentagon chief said the US was responding to regional anxiety over China's muscular actions in the South China Sea, including building artificial islands over disputed reefs.

"Countries across the Asia-Pacific are voicing concern with China's land reclamation, which stands out in size and scope, as well as its militarization in the South China Sea," Carter said.

Turn to page 7

26

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

From page 1

The joint naval patrols, which began last month, "contribute to the safety and security of the region's waters," he said after meeting with President Aquino.

Beijing has reclaimed several reefs claimed by Manila and built structures on them that the Philippines says are designed for military use – a charge China denies.

Carter announced that 275 American troops, among about 5,000 military personnel taking part in the annual Balikatan (shoulder to shoulder) war games, are to stay behind after the exercises end on Friday.

Five A-10C Thunderbolt ground attack planes and four other aircraft will also remain until the end of the month.

Some 200 of the US personnel are to train Filipino soldiers, as well as "conduct flight operations in the area, including in the South China Sea", Carter said.

These activities will "lay the foundation for joint air patrols to complement ongoing maritime patrols," he added.

The remainder of the US personnel will be stationed at a Manila military base on an unspecified "rotational" basis to form a "command and control" unit to support increased activities between the two allies, Carter said.

The deployments are part of a deal under which Manila has allowed American forces to rotate through five Philippine bases – some of them close to the South China Sea. Apparently, more bases are to be occupied by American troops.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin welcomed the US announcement, adding he hoped the increased presence will "deter uncalculated action by the Chinese".

#### US holds South China Sea patrols

The US has campaigned on freedom of navigation in the strategic waterway. To drive home its point it has sent bombers and warships on patrol close to the Chinese construction activity in recent months, angering Beijing.

As part of the Balikatan exercises in the northern Philippines, US forces also fired missiles at long-distance targets as part of a simulated assault of imaginary enemy-held territory.

"The truth of the matter is we are allies and as allies, we need to work together," Lt.-Gen. John Toolan, the US Marine Corps Pacific commander told reporters.

Carter's announcement Thursday came ahead of a decision this year by a United Nations-backed tribunal on a legal challenge by Manila to China's territorial claims.

The US Defense Department announced that the US and Philippines have twice conducted joint patrols in the disputed South China Sea, once in March and once in April, and said it plans to continue regular joint patrols in the future.

The 275 servicemembers will remain in the Philippines through the end of the month, but are expected to be replaced by follow-on personnel, a defense official said on condition of anonymity.

"We do expect additional rotations to occur," the defense official said.

Follow-on forces also could

include different aircraft than those remaining this month, the defense official said.

"Follow-on rotations of additional aircraft will be determined in consultation with our Philippine allies," said a Defense Department fact sheet provided to reporters.

Up to 75 Marines will be assigned to Camp Aguinaldo, near Manila, where they "will support increased operations in the region and will enhance our combined [command and control] capabilities," according to the fact sheet.

The rotating forces also will include 200 airmen who will operate out of Clark Air Base on Luzon Island.

The US based about 20,000 personnel at Clark prior to the base's closure in 1991, after it suffered catastrophic damage from Mount Pinatubo's eruption. Then in 1992, the US Navy left Subic Bay – once one of the largest overseas US bases – after the Philippines rejected a new lease.

However, the Philippines now finds itself in an escalating conflict with China over territory and fishing rights in the South China Sea. It's one of a handful of countries in the region that has grown wary of China's rapid militarization of the sea, which includes newly built artificial islands equipped with weapons, radar systems and military-ready airstrips.

The 200 or so US airmen will deploy from various bases in the Pacific to support five A-10C Thunderbolt II attack aircraft from the 51st Fighter Wing at Osan Air Base, in South Korea; three HH-

21  
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.

60G Pave Hawk helicopters from the 18th Wing at Kadena Air Base, Japan; and a MC-130H Combat Talon II special operations aircraft.

Defense officials would not specify where the Talon was based. The Talon specializes in delivering and extracting special operators into contested areas and has a suite of sensors that can be used to support rescue and humanitarian missions.

In March, the US announced it would rotate troops to the following five Philippine bases: Antonio Bautista Air Base, Fort Magsaysay, Lumbia Air Base, Basa Air Base and Mactan-Benito Ebuen Air Base. The announcement came after a Philippine court earlier this year approved the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, which the two sides signed in 2014.

One of the bases, Antonio Bautista Air Base, is on Palawan Island. It is about 100 miles away from some of the Spratly Islands, a collection of rocks and small islands claimed by several countries in the region.

Carter announced Wednesday that the US plans to expand its presence beyond those five bases to include Clark Air Base and Camp Aguinaldo.

The Pentagon has not yet announced details for basing troops at the other five bases.

#### **US fires missiles in Philippines war games near South China Sea**

Glowing projectiles lit up the Philippine sky from an advanced US long-range missile system on Thursday, in war games aimed at boosting their military alliance in the face of an increasingly assertive China.

The High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) was the star of a simulated assault exercise by 5,500 US and Philippine soldiers, unleashing six missiles at distant targets from a dry riverbed three hours' drive from Manila.

US Marine Cobra attack helicopters and Philippine S211 jets also buzzed over the Crow Valley training range as Filipino and US troops acted out the capture of imaginary enemy-held territory.

The exercises were staged in the shadow of a festering dispute between the poorly equipped US ally and regional giant China over islands, reefs and waters in the resource-rich South China Sea.

"The truth of the matter is we are allies and as allies, we need to work together," Lt.Gen. John Toolan, the US Marine Corps Pacific commander told reporters, referring to the missile system.

"I think we will be more than happy to share," he said when asked if the US would deploy HIMARS to the Philippines in the case of armed conflict over the South China Sea.

The system's range is 300 kilometers, Toolan said, meaning it could hit vessels far from the Philippine landmass.

China claims most of the South China Sea, even waters and rocks close to the coasts of several neighbors that overlap with their claims.

Beijing has reclaimed several reefs claimed by Manila and built structures on them that the Philippines alleges were designed for military use – a charge China denies.

#### **'Highly mobile, lethal'**

Although the United States has not taken a stand on the conflicting claims to the South China Sea, it has opposed China's efforts to claim the waters and has stressed freedom of navigation in the vital sealane.

"We have seen the capability. It is highly mobile, lethal. So I think it is one of the capabilities we want to have," Philippine Navy Vice-Admiral Alexander Lopez said as he watched the missile firing.

Lopez, the commander of Filipino forces in the South China Sea, told reporters this would "raise the skill and the respect for your armed forces, not only for the Filipinos but also in our region".

Toolan said the two-week maneuvers displayed the capability of both armies to deploy rapidly across the Asian archipelago.

The truck-mounted missile system had been flown aboard a giant military transport plane to an airport near the Crow Valley firing range earlier in the day from the western Philippine island of Palawan.

The Philippines has been improving its defence ties with the United States to help upgrade its capability to defend its territory.

The Philippines has allowed American forces to rotate through five Philippine bases including one on Palawan and another in the north, both close to the South China Sea.

Asked if HIMARS systems would be deployed in these five bases, Toolan said: "That's not necessarily in the plan but obviously, with the mobility the HIMARS gives you, you can use it anywhere." **AFP**



15 April 2016

THE DAILY  
**Tribune**

Page 1

## Military, police raise doubts on ISIS claim in Mindanao clashes

By Mario J. Mallari

Government security forces have dismissed as "purely propaganda" Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) claim that its fighters were responsible for a number of bloody encounters

with government troops in Mindanao, stressing there was no evidence directly linking southern Muslim rebels to the group.

SITE Intelligence, a US-based group that tracks online activity of jihadi organizations, reported ISIS had

Turn to page 3



From page 1

claimed responsibility for killing nearly 100 Philippine soldiers and had blown up seven trucks transporting them.

But Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla Jr., spokesman of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said contrary to what the ISIS reportedly claimed, there were no trucks hit by bombs during the fighting.

At least 18 soldiers were killed in a 10-hour gun battle in Tipo-Tipo town last April 9.

"We lost only 18 soldiers but killed 28 Abu Sayyaf members since fighting began on Saturday. Our troops continued to pursue them and we will not stop until we achieve a decisive victory," he stressed.

According to him, the terror group is trying to sow fear.

"Our initial assessment is that this is part of the propaganda that ISIS or the Daesh is trying to do on the part of the groups here in the Philippines," Padilla stressed.

He maintained that the military has not validated the presence of ISIS in the country, but merely groups, like the Abu Sayyaf, that

want to identify themselves with Da'esch.

But a previously obscure group discounted by the military as a small-time extortion gang in March launched an assault on a remote army outpost on Mindanao, the largest southern island.

The attack triggered a week of fighting that the military said left six soldiers and at least 12 militants dead, and forced more than 30,000 people to flee their homes.

The gunmen flew ISIS flags during the fighting, and bandanas with the group's insignia were found when soldiers overran their base, a two-story concrete building, according to the military.

Chief Supt. Wilben Mayor, spokesman of the Philippine National Police (PNP), for his part, echoed Padilla's statements.

"Up to this time, we have not received validated information regarding the presence of that group. While there are groups that sympathize or are inspired by that particular group but then again there is no validated information on the presence," he stressed.

The military operation targeted the group of Abu Sayyaf

leaders Isnilon Hapilon, who had pledged allegiance to ISIS in 2014, and Furuji Indama, who was declared critically wounded.

As of yesterday, pursuit operations are still continuing.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman of the AFP's Western Mindanao Command, said as of noontime yesterday a total of 31 Abu sayyaf terrorists had been killed.

Among those killed was Moroccan Mohammadi Khattab, tagged as an expert in bomb-making.

"The enemies are still there...pursuit operations are still ongoing," said Tan.

The killing of Khattab raised suspicions that Hapilon's group is really linked with ISIS.

*Time Magazine*, meanwhile, quoted Rohan Gunaratna, an international terrorism expert at S. Rajaratnam School of Security Studies in Singapore, as saying "It's very likely that (Abu Sayyaf) will declare a satellite of the caliphate in the coming year."

"Once that is done, it will be much more difficult to dismantle these groups."



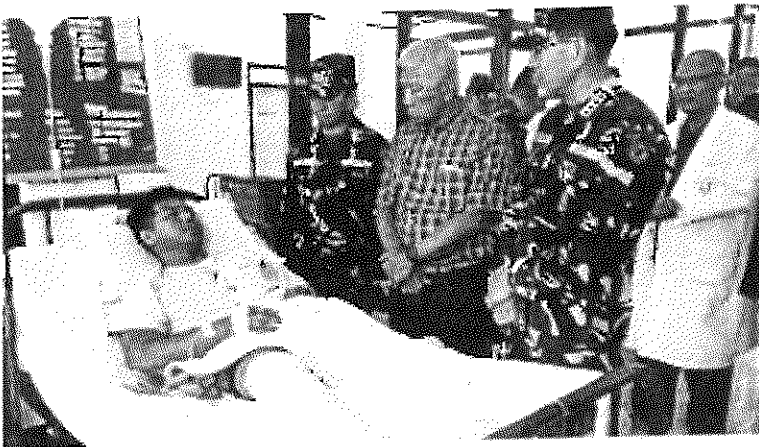
Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

[www.pna.gov.ph](http://www.pna.gov.ph)

## AFP confirms it coordinated with the MILF on Basilan operations

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Apr 14): AFP confirms it coordinated with the MILF on Basilan operations

*General confirms that 'Abu Sayyaf suspect' is an MILF man; Probe underway on why suspect was where he should not be*



*SURVIVOR'S STORY: AFP Chief of Staff Hernando Iriberry and Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin listen to the story of Capt. Kiblas Mauricio, who survived the clash with Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan on Saturday, Apr. 9, 2016. JULIE S. ALIPALA / INQUIRER MINDANAO*

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) coordinated with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) prior to its operation in the village of Baguindan in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan on April 9 that left 18 soldiers dead and 56 others wounded.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesperson of the Western Mindanao Command, said the coordination, made through the Joint Coordination Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (JCCCH), was "part of the mechanism" to maintain the ceasefire between the MILF and the Philippine government and prevent miscommunication that could lead to fatal encounters.

Brig. Gen. Glenn Macasero of the government's CCCH confirmed to the Philippine Daily Inquirer that prior coordination was made with Hadji Dan Asnawi, commander of the MILF's 114th Base Command, and Hamsa Sapanton, commander of the MILF's Provincial Police Force.

"We have implemented this to avoid confrontation between the military and the MILF," Macasero said.

"We have talked to the base commander, then the MILF CCCH to establish and relay the general area of operations, and the men of Hamsa Sapanton of the provincial police force were re-positioned, they were relocated from Baguindan to Bohe Piyang," Macasero said.

Almost 200 MILF members were also relocated and they gave way to the troops for the conduct of

Army Core Purpose: Serving <sup>29</sup>the people. Securing the land.

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

operations, he added.

Macasero said details of the operation "were not made known to the MILF, except for the general area of operation."

Also included in the agreed ground rules was the relocation of civilians and the MILF out of Baguindan.

"If there is anyone from the MILF or civilians (who violate this ground rules), they can be considered aiding the lawless elements that are subject of this operation," Macasero said.

The MILF in Basilan confirmed that prior coordination was made by the military.

An MILF source told the Inquirer that Asnawi and other MILF commanders regularly met for the gradual relocation of its people to safer areas.

"The group of Asnawi has been helping the soldiers. They have been securing some areas as blocking force, day and night. We know the people are getting tired, some are hungry and we cannot move a lot, but we respect this because we want peace here," the source said.

The MILF source also confirmed that the MILF has started investigating what happened in the morning of April 9. "just to be sure that no MILF was involved."

Macasero also admitted that one of the three arrested Abu Sayyaf suspects in Baguindan was Jong Aujal, a member of the local ceasefire monitoring force, who has been hospitalized after being allegedly tortured by soldiers from the Philippine Marines.

"This is under investigation right now. The MILF knows the ground rules and we are wondering why he was there in the area," Macasero said, adding that they have asked the International Monitoring Team to investigate the case.

Aside from Aujal, a certain Rakim Maruan is in critical condition, after his fingernails, toenails and teeth were allegedly extracted during torture. Another alleged torture victim, identified only as Ibno, a member of the MILF Police Force, was killed.

The MILF source said Aujal was not from Baguindan, but from the village of Linuan.

"The MILF is puzzled why Linuan people got inside Baguindan despite the ground rules," the source said.

More than 100 Abu Sayyaf bandits led by Isnilon Hapilon were the targets of the April 9 operation, Tan, the Wesmincom spokesperson, said.

Government troops were able to overrun a 25-bunker camp on Tuesday.

"Fifty-nine sacks of rice, dried goods, detonating cords for the improvised explosive devices and medical paraphernalia were recovered in the camp," Tan said. <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/779583/afp-confirms-it-coordinated-with-the-milf-on-basilan-operations>

25

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

April 2016

**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 6

# Malacañang orders AFP pension fund abolished

**M**alacañang has ordered the abolition of the Armed Forces of the Philippines-Retirement and Separation Benefits System (AFP-RSBS) in an effort to curb inefficient public spending.

Memorandum Order No. 90 signed by Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr. said the interest liability of AFP-RSBS continues to grow and the Government-Owned and/or Controlled Corporation (GOCC) now faces a depletion of its retained earnings by the end of November 2016.

The memorandum noted that the pension and benefits of retired AFP personnel continue to be funded through the General Appropriations

Act (GAA).

"The GCG (Governance Commission for GOCCs) finds the abolition of AFP-RSBS to be the best interest of the State in order to improve national productivity and reduce ineffective and inefficient spending of public funds," it said.

Pursuant to the liquidation of AFP-RSBS's assets, the memorandum approved the privatization of its wholly-owned subsidiaries, namely Monterossa Development Corp. (MDC) and Southern Utility Management and Services Inc. (SUMSI).

The AFP-RSBS Board, which shall act as the Board of Liquidators subject to oversight by the Governance Commission, is directed to cease collecting

members' contributions and accrual interest, and collect all indebtedness due to the AFP-RSBS.

The Board shall continue corporate operating budget for the continuation of leasing services, refund of AFP-RSBS members' contributions as they fall due, and servicing of existing membership loan programs.

It shall also enter contracts for the sale of all its real estate assets, golf and country club shares and all other personal properties.

Affected officials and personnel of AFP-RSBS may avail the separation benefits in addition to retirement or separation benefits allowed under existing laws.

26

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

[www.pna.gov.ph](http://www.pna.gov.ph)

## ISIS Is Making Inroads in the Southern Philippines and the Implications for Asia Are Alarming

From Time (Apr 14): ISIS Is Making Inroads in the Southern Philippines and the Implications for Asia Are Alarming



*Islamist extremism is growing in Mindanao, with serious security implications for the region and beyond*

Musa Muhammad stands at the site where 400 Islamist militants launched an invasion of the southern Philippine city of Zamboanga little over two years ago, sparking 20 days of heavy fighting with security forces. The ruins of his old house can be found there, amid several hundred other razed homes. Since then his family has lived in a sports stadium, refusing to move to a newly built house in another part of town.

"This has been our home for 50 years," he says. "We're afraid, but we'll never leave."

The Moros ("Moors"), as the Muslims of the southern Philippine region of Mindanao are called, are known for their intransigence. For centuries, they fought the Spanish, Americans and Japanese for their independence. Today, they are fighting Manila too. Some 120,000 people have died, and millions have been displaced, in the past 40 years of insurgency. (Muddying the picture, a separate communist insurgency is also sporadically waged in parts of Mindanao by the New People's Army, which is thought to consist of some 3,200 fighters.)

Yet many Moros, like Musa, are not victims of a heavy-handed central government but the casualties of infighting among their own kin. The battle at Zamboanga, which led to the destruction of Musa's home, started off when factions of one rebel group, the Moro National Liberation Front, wanted to signal their displeasure with the peace negotiations with Manila then being carried out by another rebel group, Moro Islamic Liberation Front. It took 3,000 troops to end the rebel occupation of several districts of the city, in an operation that saw 51 insurgents killed and drove 70,000 people from their homes.

27  
Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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

Now those talks have stalled and, in the frustrated void that has followed their collapse, extremism has taken root. Several Moro outfits have pledged allegiance to terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS) and carried out attacks in its name.

One of those groups is the Abu Sayyaf militia, whose head Isnail Hapilon — now styled Sheik Mujahid Abu Abdullah al-Filipini — has been appointed ISIS's leader in the Philippines. Presently, the Philippine army is attempting to strike at the group's jungle stronghold on the island of Basilan.

In one of the bloodiest days for the armed forces in years, 18 soldiers were killed and over 50 wounded on April 9. ISIS claimed responsibility for the killings. Shortly after, Abu Sayyaf beheaded two Filipino hostages. (The group is also holding 10 Indonesians, two Canadians and a Norwegian captive.)

"It's very likely that [Abu Sayyaf] will declare a satellite of the caliphate in the coming year," says Rohan Gunaratna, an international terrorism expert at S. Rajaratnam School of Security Studies in Singapore. "Once that is done, it will be much more difficult to dismantle these groups."

Already, up to 1,200 Southeast Asians have joined ISIS in the Middle East. Experts now worry that an ISIS stronghold in the southern Philippines will act as a regional lure, providing extremists from across Asia with a place to gain combat experience, before they set out to attack Asian targets or even targets further afield. The Jakarta attack in January that killed four civilians is just a taste of what could come, says Greg Barton, chair in global Islamic politics at Deakin University in Melbourne.

"Next time they won't mess around with pistols but bring assault rifles," says Barton. "That's all it takes to turn amateurs into a lethal bunch of killers."

Some claim that the biggest threat currently is that competing, ISIS-inspired groups would seek to upstage each other with small-scale attacks. However, organized, international networks still exist, even if the influence of al-Qaeda, which once funded training camps in the southern Philippines, has waned along with that of its affiliates.

Indonesian operatives are already trading Syria-hardened tutors for weapons and training grounds in Mindanao, reports the ISIS Study Group, an intelligence collective run by the Washington, D.C., think tank Center for a New American Security. The area is evidently attracting insurgents from further afield too. Mohammad Khattab, an alleged bombmaking instructor from Morocco, was reportedly among the five killed militants on Basilan earlier in April. There have been rumors of Muslim Uighurs from China in the area. And in January last year, Zulkifli bin Hir — a Malaysian described as a key facilitator between Indonesian and Filipino extremist groups — was cornered and killed in Mamasapano in central Mindanao, but at the cost of 44 deaths among the Philippine army's Special Action Force. Five civilians also lost their lives in an operation that turned the tide of support against President Benigno Aquino III's peace negotiations with the Moro separatists.

"Before the Mamasapano tragedy, it looked really promising," says Richard Javad Heydarian, a security expert at De La Salle University in Manila. "There were even rumors that Aquino would be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Unfortunately a lot of journalists sensationalized the story, fanning anti-Muslim

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

sentiment. Politicians running for office have then been trying to score political points on this."

Further talk of a new, autonomous province within the Philippines for the Moro — it would be called Bangsamoro — has now been suspended until the general elections in May. In the meantime, says terrorism expert Gunaratna, intolerance is putting down deeper roots. As an example, he points to the March 1 assassination attempt on a Saudi cleric, Aaidh al-Qarni. The preacher, who has been on ISIS hit lists, was shot while visiting Western Mindanao State University in Zamboanga for a two-day symposium.

"Recent arrests in Malaysia and Indonesia clearly show that a new terror attack from ISIS in the region is imminent," Gunaratna warns. "And the next one will be bloodier."

<http://time.com/4295395/isis-zamboanga-mindanao-moro-islamist-terrorist-asia-philippines-abu-sayyaf/>

15 April 2016



Page: 129

## Task force formed to probe Isabela vice mayor's slay

TUGUEGARAO CITY – A special task force has been formed to look into the killing of Jones, Isabela Vice Mayor Ronaldo Lucas by New People's Army (NPA) rebels. Superintendent Vicente

Valdez, Isabela police assistant director for operations, will head the task force.

Valdez said the result of the probe would be considered in deciding whether to declare Jones an election hot spot.

Senior Superintendent Leon Rafael, Isabela police chief, said personnel of the 86th Infantry Battalion and Police Provincial Public Safety Company launched a manhunt for the rebels, who are reportedly

under the Benito Tesorio command.

NPA guerrillas seized Lucas during a campaign sortie in Barangay Dicamay on Wednesday morning. His body was found along the road around 2 p.m.

In a statement, the NPA said Lucas, whom they accused of vote buying, was also involved in the killing of Vice Mayor Florante Raspado during a session of the municipal council last year. – Raymund Catangig

30

# US, PH start joint patrols in disputed sea

by Nikko Dizon

[@inquirerdizon](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#)

01:41 AM April 15th 2016

U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter, left, talks with his Philippine counterpart Voltaire Gazmin during their joint press conference at the Malacanang presidential palace in Manila, Philippines on Thursday, April 14, 2016. The United States on Thursday revealed for the first time that American ships have started conducting joint patrols with the Philippines in the South China Sea, a somewhat rare move not done with many other partners in the region. (Romeo Ranoco/Pool Photo via AP)

The United States and the Philippines have begun joint patrols in the disputed South China Sea under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (Edca). US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said Thursday.

Speaking at a joint news conference with Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin in Malacañang, Carter also announced that US troops and military equipment would be sent on regular rotations in the Philippines under Edca.

The enhanced security cooperation between the United States and the Philippines comes amid increasingly assertive territorial claims by China in the South China Sea.

Carter said the joint patrols in the South China Sea, a somewhat rare move for the United States not done with many other partners in the region, began last month.

"We believe that such operations will help us fulfill our priority to develop our maritime security and domain awareness, which are currently on top of our agenda," Carter said.

The Pentagon chief, who arrived on Wednesday on an Asian tour that included witnessing joint military exercises between US and Filipino forces in the Philippines, paid a courtesy call on President Aquino at the Palace, where they discussed the territorial dispute between the Philippines and China among other common concerns.

Gazmin and Carter also held bilateral talks before facing Filipino and American journalists.

Carter said the joint patrols would "continue to help build our interoperability and improve the Philippine Navy even as these patrols contribute to the safety and security of the region's waters."

US military buildup



He said the United States would be keeping nearly 300 troops, including US Air Force commandos armed with combat aircraft and helicopters, in the Philippines through the end of the month.

The US plan is part of a military buildup, sure to inflame tensions with China in the South China Sea, almost all of which China claims, including waters close to the shores of its smaller neighbors in the region.

Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Taiwan have competing claims in the resource-rich South China Sea.

Washington regularly criticizes Beijing for building artificial islands on reefs in the Spratly archipelago and developing military facilities on them, including airstrips, to intimidate the other claimants.

China has rejected the criticisms, insisting it has "undisputed sovereignty" over the South China Sea, a claim that the United States has challenged by sending warships and warplanes to the disputed region on so-called freedom-of-navigation operations.

Carter said the US troops who would stay behind after the annual Balikatan war games would "lay the foundation for joint air patrols to complement ongoing maritime patrols."

#### US planes

He said the US planes to be left behind were five A-10C Thunderbolt II ground attack aircraft, three HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and an MC-130H special operations aircraft.

Carter said he would visit the Antonio Bautista Air Base in Palawan, one of five Philippine military bases that would be opened to US troops and equipment under the Edca.

He said a command and control unit of American personnel would also remain in the country for continued training.

Carter was referring to a secure communications network of the US military.

Peter Paul Galvez, spokesperson for the Department of National Defense, said the Armed Forces of the Philippines was developing a similar communication system "so that we don't have to rely on mobile phones anymore."

#### \$40-million assistance

Last week, the Pentagon announced that the United States would send about \$40 million in military assistance to the Philippines to beef up intelligence sharing, surveillance and naval patrols.

Carter said the aid would include an enhanced information network for classified communications, sensors for patrol vessels and an unmanned aerostat reconnaissance airship.

The patrol sensors and surveillance equipment will help the Philippines keep a watch over its territory, including areas where there are overlapping claims in the South China Sea.

#### Disputed areas

Asked if the joint patrols would be conducted in disputed areas in the South China Sea, Carter said he could not discuss operational matters.

"But our military-to-military activities plan for a broad range of activities—from maritime activities to natural disasters, accidents, incidents, provocations. From the American point of view, our alliance covers all of the Philippine territory," he said.

#### Troop rotation

The US troops staying after the war games are expected to leave at the end of the month, but other US forces and aircraft would do similar rotations into the Philippines in the future.

A defense official would not say how frequently those rotations would happen, but said the size, schedule and makeup would fluctuate. The official was not authorized to discuss the issue publicly so he spoke on condition of anonymity.

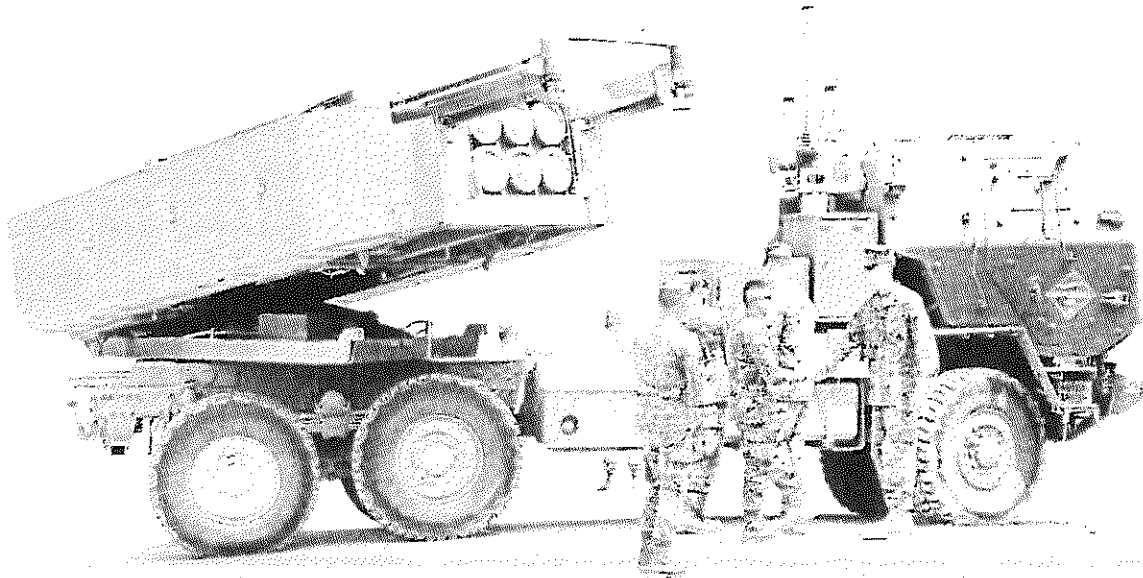
The increased troop presence is part of a broader US campaign to expand its assistance to the Philippines, as America shores up its allies in the Asia-Pacific region.

And it comes as the United Nations Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague rules in coming weeks on the Philippines' challenge to China's sweeping claims in the South China Sea.

China has said it will not recognize any ruling by the court and proceeded to build outposts in the Spratlys in anticipation of the tribunal's decision. *With a report from AP*

# US fires long-range missiles in Balikatan war games

07:27 AM April 14, 2016



**LONG-RANGE MISSILE SYSTEM** Filipino and US soldiers stand in front of a US military M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (Himars) launcher during the live fire exercise of Balikatan 2016 in Capas, Tarlac, on Thursday. Lynillon

CAPAS, Tarlac—Glowing projectiles lit up the Philippine sky from an advanced US long-range missile system on Thursday, in war games aimed at boosting their military alliance in the face of an increasingly assertive China.

The High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (Himars) was the star of a simulated assault exercise by 5,500 US and Philippine soldiers, unleashing six missiles at distant targets from a dry riverbed three hours' drive from Manila.

US Marine Cobra attack helicopters and Philippine S211 jets also buzzed over the Crow Valley training range as Filipino and US troops acted out the capture of imaginary enemy-held territory.

The exercises, called Balikatan (shoulder to shoulder) 2016, were staged in the shadow of a festering dispute between the poorly equipped US ally and regional giant China over islands, reefs and waters in the resource-rich South China Sea.

"The truth of the matter is we are allies and as allies, we need to work together," Lt. Gen. John Todjan, the US Marine Corps Pacific commander and war games director for the US side, said when asked by reporters if the United States had plans of lending the missile system to the Philippines in case of armed conflict over the South China Sea.

"I think we will be more than happy to share," he said.

The system's range is 3,000 kilometers, Toolan said, meaning it could hit vessels far from the Philippine landmass.

It costs around \$5 million.

China claims most of the South China Sea, even waters and rocks close to the coasts of several neighbors that overlap with their claims.

Beijing has reclaimed several reefs claimed by Manila and built structures on them that the Philippines alleges were designed for military use, a charge China denies.

### 'Highly mobile, lethal'

Although the United States has not taken a stand on the conflicting claims to the South China Sea, it has opposed China's efforts to claim the waters and has stressed freedom of navigation in the vital sea-lane.

"We have seen the capability. It is highly mobile, lethal. So I think it is one of the capabilities we want to have," Philippine Navy Vice Adm. Alexander Lopez, war games director for the Philippines, said as he watched the missile firing.

He said the missile system, being highly mobile, could be deployed anywhere in the Philippines.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin was also impressed by the performance of the missile system, he added.

Lopez, the commander of Filipino forces in the South China Sea, told reporters this would "raise the skill and the respect for your armed forces, not only for the Filipinos but also in our region."

Toolan said the two-week maneuvers displayed the capability of both armies to deploy rapidly across the Philippines.

The truck-mounted missile system had been flown aboard a giant military transport plane to an airport near the Crow Valley firing range earlier in the day from the western Philippine

Island of Palawan.

Toolan said the US military planned to test the missile system aboard a sea vessel.

"We are going to test it off the deck of a ship. So when it reaches 300 km, it's a pretty good distance," he said.

The Philippines has been improving its defense ties with the United States to help upgrade its capability to defend its territory.

The Philippines has allowed American forces to rotate through five Philippine bases, including one on Palawan and another in the north, both close to the South China Sea, under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, or Edca.

Asked if Himars systems would be deployed in these five bases, Toolan said, "That's not necessarily in the plan but obviously, with the mobility the Himars gives you, you can use it anywhere." *Reports from AFP and Julie M. Aurelio*

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

[www.pna.gov.ph](http://www.pna.gov.ph)

## 'Balikatan' 2016 more focused in command-and-control

From the Philippine News Agency (Apr 14): 'Balikatan' 2016 more focused in command-and-control

This year's "Balikatan" exercises are different from the others as both American and Filipino units have focused a lot of efforts in providing higher level of command-and-control, a ranking US military announced Thursday.

"(The) 'Balikatan' this year was a little bit unique and that we focused a lot of efforts at the higher level of command-and-control so what you saw here today are small unit leaders are working very closely together," US "Balikatan" exercise director Lt. Gen. John Toolan said.

He was referring to Thursday's live-fire exercises at Crow Valley, Capas, Tarlac which demonstrated "combined-arms" operations between the two militaries.

Toolan also said both the Philippines and the US are also working to try and tie the command-and-control of forces throughout the entire country.

"And I think we made a lot of progress there," he added.

Toolan stressed that this year's "Balikatan" exercise is a sort of a graduation exercise as a lot of interesting things were done during the two-week maneuvers which started last April 4 and will end on Friday.

"This year we have done a lot of interesting things, we have operated in a distributed method with forces, small forces with capabilities to bring lethal fires to bear, on the target, we have actually worked very closely with the headquarters, at the command-and-control level so that we've built in command-and-control and I think that the coordination mechanism (will allow to work) in a combined fashion," he added.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=876506>

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

nb

15 April 2016

# INQUIRER

Page: Alle

## A recycled US colony?

### COMMENTARY

*Isabel T. Escoda*

IS THE Philippines today turning into an American colony once again? What prompts that question has to do with two main issues. One is the fact that the Philippine government has offered the Americans the use of five strategic sites to guard against China's further encroachments, possibly also to keep a peripheral eye out for Islamic terrorism. (As expected, some nationalists have protested the country's perceived loss of sovereignty, balking at the fact that the established feudal system which they say is abetted by the Americans will be further entrenched.)

The other issue has to do with a presidential candidate who may win the race in May. Such an eventuality could make the Philippines the only country in the world where the presidential palace will be inhabited by a chief executive's alien offspring. That doesn't seem to bother the candidate's supporters. Having American citizens living in Malacañang is apparently quite acceptable to them.

The wording in the military agreement between the Philippines and the United States skirts the use of the word "bases" and instead says that the use of locations in Luzon, Cebu, Mindanao and Palawan will be for a "rotational presence" where US ships and aircraft will be deployed for maritime security and humanitarian operations. The choice of words may be because it wasn't too long ago that Filipino nationalists succeeded in ousting the Americans from their air and naval bases at Clark Field and Subic Bay. Which makes the present new arrangement, the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, somewhat delicate, though the pact makes no bones about continuing "joint war games" and "Balikatan" exercises.

This brings to mind that movement back in the early 1970s when the members of a vocal group began calling for the Philippines to be made the 51st state of the United States. The group called Philippine Statehood USA claimed a membership of close to a million, which struck many people, Filipino and foreign, as bizarre. Indeed, those days seemed to be "more fun" (and games) in the Philippines before that slogan promoting tourism was coined.

Now and then some media mavens will recall the words of the first president of the Commonwealth republic, Manuel L. Quezon, who said: "I would rather have a country run like hell by Filipinos than one run like heaven by the Americans." A few pundits hark back to that statement somewhat wistfully, but they may not want to endorse it, for fear of being labeled unpatriotic.

Among some domestics working in Hong Kong, I once met an Ilocano woman who, having seen what the British had wrought in that well-run colony, declared it was a pity that America, and not Britain, had colonized the Philippines. Writing in the now-defunct satirical magazine "Spike" in 2004, I reported my conversation with her in which she stated her refusal to vote in our next presidential election. She trotted out the standard line about not expecting change to happen—"Wala namang magbabago"—as many others have done in our other elections.

The woman's wish for British colonization reminded me that the Spanish were ejected from Manila by the British in 1762, when Rear Adm. Samuel Cornish and Brig. Gen. William Draper sailed into Manila Bay and occupied the city. They apparently had no designs on the rest of the archipelago. So did they give Manila back to the Spanish less than two years later in 1764, because they had found the natives unmanageable?

Is the Philippines today too politically fragmented and economically lopsided to be a truly unified nation? The observable disillusionment replacing the euphoria over the Edsa "revolution" just 30 years ago suggests that the proud event has lost its luster. Unfortunately, memories of the dark era of martial law have grown dim, with educators today admitting their failure to fully explain the dictator's depredations to the younger generation. So that ignorance has allowed Ferdinand Marcos' offspring to thumb their noses at their own people as they plotted their way back to Malacañang.

Santayana's words have become a cliché about those who can't remember the past being condemned to repeat it. It is Hegel's words which surely are more relevant to the Philippines today:

"What experience and history teach is that people and governments never have learned from history, or acted in principles deduced from it. Each period is involved in such peculiar circumstances, exhibits a condition of things so strictly idiosyncratic, that its conduct must be regulated by considerations connected with itself, and itself alone."

*Isabel T. Escoda is a freelance journalist formerly based in Hong Kong.*

37

15 April 2016

# INQUIRER

Page: A7

## Taking sides in the war within Islam

PARIS—French Prime Minister Manuel Valls was right when he recently said that there is no good excuse for jihadism. Rejecting the culture of excuses, said Valls, also meant resisting the temptation to dwell on explanations of the jihadist impulse.

And Valls was right again on April 4 when he warned against the danger of an ideological victory for Salafism, the doctrine underlying jihadism, which views Europe (and, within Europe, France) as prime ground for proselytization.

Successive French governments, over three decades, abdicated responsibility for engaging in this debate. But while passivity may have ensured social peace in the short term, it enabled values other than those of the republic to take root in wide swaths of French cities. And this was followed by willful blindness, as governments refused to recognize that militant Islamic fundamentalism was actually Islamo-fascism, the third global variant of totalitarianism that die-hard critics had been decrying for a quarter-century.

This failure of government was abetted by the complicit myopia prevailing at the extremes of the political spectrum. In 2012, Marine Le Pen, the leader of the far-right National Front, lumped together (in order to condemn them both) the religious symbol that is the yarmulke and the political emblem that is the veil. And just this month, Green senator Esther Benbassa claimed that a miniskirt is no less alienating than a *chador*. What were Le Pen and Benbassa doing if not making acceptable a form of barbarism whose occasionally human face should never allow us to forget that people are killing, maiming and raping in its name?

Compounding the problem is the well-known advantage that extremists have over moderates, by virtue of yelling the loudest. Just as the Montagnards drowned out the Girondins in the Legislative Assembly during the French Revolution, the rabid jihadists are drowning out the large number of Muslims who want nothing more than to be left alone to practice their faith in peace and with respect for others and the law.

And finally, there is the timorous backpedaling

### WORLD VIEW

*Bernard-Henri Lévy*



we tend to see from our leaders whenever religious fanatics stigmatize those who offend them. Yesterday it was the Indian novelist Salman Rushdie; today it is the Algerian novelist Kamel Daoud. The first reflex of too many leaders at such times is to stigmatize the victims a second time, by suggesting that they were asking for it.

In any event, the result is plain: Appeasement of violent radicalism only encourages more of the same. As a consequence, we find ourselves in an undeclared state of intellectual emergency, one that, regrettably, has given rise to the states of emergency that our governments proclaim in the wake of terrorist attacks.

Dealing with this emergency requires, above all, saying and doing the opposite of what has most often been said and done. Specifically, we must call a spade a spade. An Islamist may be a lost Muslim or a Muslim gone astray, but he or she is a Muslim all the same. We must stop repeating ad nauseam that these aberrant Muslims have "nothing to do with Islam."

In other words, we must acknowledge that two Islams are locked in a fight to the death, and that because the battlefield is the planet and the war threatens values that the West embraces, the fight is not solely the Muslims' affair.

Once we do that, we must devote ourselves to identifying, untangling and exposing the networks of Islamic hate and terror with the same energy and ingenuity that are now being applied to unraveling the global schemes of tax evaders. How long will we have to wait for the Panama Papers of Salafism? What is stopping the great newspapers from flush-

88

ing out from the dark web the Mossack FONSECAS of global jihad and its criminal offshore companies?

We must also aid, encourage and ideologically arm Muslims who reject the Islam of hate in favor of an Islam respectful of women, their faces, and their rights, as well as of human rights in general. Is that not what we did in the not-so-distant past with regard to the brave people we called dissidents in the Soviet world? And were we not right, at the time, to ignore those who told us that the dissidents were a minority who would never, ever, prevail against the granite ideology of communism?

That means protecting and defending Daoud (to take just one current example), a French-language writer of Muslim origin who suggested that those seeking sanctuary in Europe would do well to learn to appreciate European values. For that, Daoud has been saddled with a double fatwa: one from his "assassin brothers," to borrow the Algerian-French journalist Mohamed Sifaoui's phrase, and another from a handful of supposedly progressive and antiracist French intellectuals who accused him of "recycling the most hackneyed clichés of Orientalism" when he urged Arab men to respect the dignity of women.

Genuine antiracists, anti-imperialists, and believers in republican democracy must take the side of the Islam of moderation and peace in its war against the criminal Islam of the Salafists. It is a war that is ideological, theological and political, a war that cuts across worlds, cultures, and what we are right to call civilizations, from the lost city neighborhoods of France to those areas—for example, Kurdistan, Morocco, Bosnia, and Bangladesh—where enlightened Islam remains alive and well. That, in broad strokes, is our urgent task. This is our war.

*Project Syndicate*

*Bernard-Henri Lévy is one of the founders of the "Nouveaux Philosophes" (New Philosophers) movement. His books include "Left in Dark Times: A Stand Against the New Barbarism."*



## ONLINE NEWS

15 APRIL 2016

[www.pna.gov.ph](http://www.pna.gov.ph)

### AFP denies ISIS hand in Basilan clash

From the Philippine News Agency (Apr 14): **AFP denies ISIS hand in Basilan clash**

**The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Thursday vehemently denied reports claiming that Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorists is responsible for the attack that killed 18 soldiers and wounded 53 others in Basilan last April 9.**

**"I would like to address the first issue on the announcement of the ISIS group, (coming from Cairo, Egypt) owing to the attack on Philippine forces in the island of Basilan. First of all I like to say that this is not true," AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said.**

Reports claimed that ISIS terrorists they have blown seven military trucks, killing 23 soldiers in the process.

"The attack was initiated by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and (reports claiming that ISIS have staged the ambush) are not true and inconsistent with real events on the ground and we assess that this is mere propaganda on the part of the larger group because they have taken notice of the events in this country," he added.

"As it is, we encourage everyone not to give this value because this is very inconsistent with what is really happening on the ground and as such we are bent on finishing whatever operations we have ongoing," Padilla stressed.

As this develops, the number of ASG bandits killed in ongoing operations in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan since last April 9 has now climbed to 31.

The AFP spokesperson said about half of this number are for validation even as military units continue to scour the grounds to ensure that all of the bandits are neutralized for the betterment of the country.

No government losses were sustained in these operations, he added.

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

[www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com](http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com)

## **PAF recommends permanent deployment of firefighting chopper in the region**

From the Philippine Information Agency (Apr 13): PAF recommends permanent deployment of firefighting chopper in the region

The Tactical Operations Group XI of the Philippine Air Force has recommended the permanent assignment of a chopper in Davao Region that can be used in rescue operations and has firefighting capability.

Lt. Colonel Jose Ritchie Pabilona, commander of the TOG XI said a chopper with rescue and firefighting capability is crucial in saving lives and property especially now that fire occurs in both the urban communities and rural areas like the Mt. Apo National Park.

"We need a helicopter here that can be used in both rescue missions and firefighting," he said.

Speaking in the AFP-PNP Press Corps briefing conducted at the Davao City Police Office, Pabilona reported that based on the 77 sorties conducted in 83 flying hours since March 28 up to April 11, a total of 72 Bambi bucket operations had been conducted by the 505th Rescue Group using their helicopter to stop the fire.

He said the support two choppers dubbed as Super Delta Helicopters also conducted a total of 217 crushed ice operations.

Pabilona noted that the cloud seeding operation conducted by the Department of Agriculture with the support of the 900th Air Group of the Philippine Air Force also helped in putting out the fire.

"Now that the fire is totally out, we are awaiting the final declaration by the Bureau of Fire Protection," he said.

Pabilona said the Super Huey chopper has been sent to Bukidnon Province to help put out the fire, this time in Mt. Kitanglad.

Captain Rhyal Batchar, spokesperson of the 10th Infantry Division said a total of 117 troops had been pulled out already from Mt. Apo Sunday, April 10 when the fire was finally controlled.

Major Ezra Balagtey, spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command said that the military is currently assessing the situation in Mt. Apo and on standby to respond to where their assistance is needed.

<http://news.pia.gov.ph/article/view/2381460531992/paf-recommends-permanent-deployment-of-firefighting-chopper-in-the-region>

41

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

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

[www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com](http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com)

## Malaysia closes Sabah border to southern Philippines

From Update.Ph (Apr 14): Malaysia closes Sabah border to southern Philippines

The Malaysian government has closed its Sabah border to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in a protest to the recent kidnapping of Malaysian nationals by the extremist Abu Sayyaf Group operating between the waters of Sabah and ARMM island-provinces in southern Philippines.

Lawyer Laisa Alamia, ARMM executive secretary, said Malaysian authorities implemented a blockade since last week to Tawi-tawi, an ARMM province component nearest to Sabah, which halted the centuries – old barter trading activity in the area between Malaysia and the Philippines.

“The ASG kidnapping activity is now a national issue that is why (ARMM) Governor Mujiv Hataman is currently in Manila talking to Malacañang about this,” she told newsmen Thursday during a press briefing regarding updates on the region.

On April 2, armed ASG militants onboard a speedboat snatched four Malaysian nationals from a ship off the east coast of Sabah and sped-off towards the direction of the Philippine territory after the incident.

Five other crew members of the ship from Myanmar and Indonesia were not harmed and left behind by the ASG abductors.

Malaysia has strongly condemned the abduction, pressing it to close its border to ARMM over an indefinite period of time.

“The nagging security problem in the region’s island-provinces remain foremost in the agenda of the government’s peace efforts in the south,” Alamia stressed

She said negotiations between ARMM and Malaysian government are underway to reopen Sabah to Tawi-tawi and resume the customary barter trade in the region.

<http://www.update.ph/2016/04/malaysia-closes-sabah-border-to-southern-philippines/4326>

42

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