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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

14 August 2016

Sunday

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

NEWS HEADLINES 14 AUGUST 2016



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

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INQUIRER

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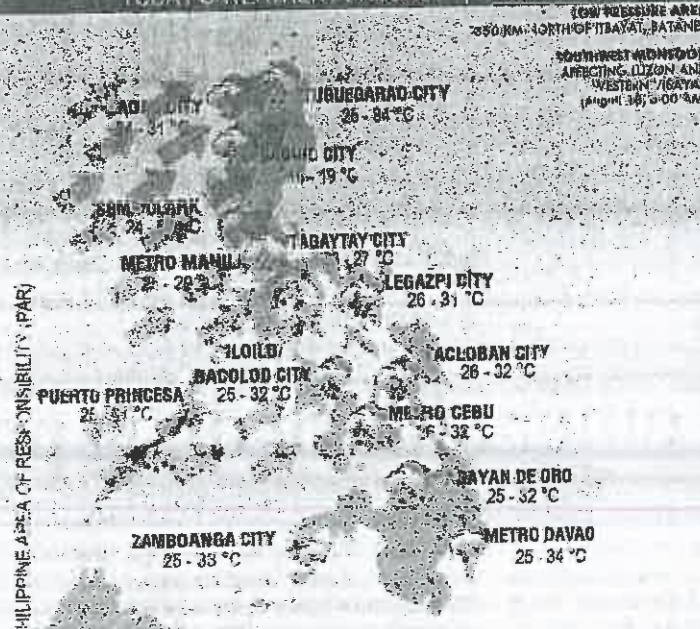
www.panahon.tv



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | AUGUST 14, 2016 | SUNDAY



PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

LOW PRESSURE AREA
250 KM NORTH OF ITABAYAT, BATANES

SOUTHWEST MONSOON
AFFECTING LITIAN AND WESTERN ILOCOS (August 13, 5:00 AM)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:42 AM	6:18 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
2:50 PM	1:45 AM
FIRST QUARTER AUG 11 2:41 AM	FULL MOON AUG 18 1:27 PM
LOW TIDE MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 3:10 PM 0.22 Meter	HIGH TIDE MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 7:20 AM 1.04 Meter

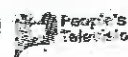


Partly cloudy to clear with showers and/or thunderstorms


Cloudy to clear with rain showers and/or thunderstorms

Thunderstorm

	AUG 13	AUG 14	AUG 15	AUG 16	AUG 17	AUG 18
METRO MANILA	25-26°C	24-28°C	22-27°C	22-26°C	26-33°C	26-33°C
TUGUEGARAO	25-33°C	26-34°C	25-30°C	25-30°C	24-34°C	25-33°C
LAOAG	24-32°C	24-32°C	25-30°C	25-30°C	26-34°C	25-33°C
BAGUIO	16-19°C	16-19°C	25-32°C	25-31°C	25-32°C	25-33°C
SBMA/CLARK	24-28°C	24-27°C	26-33°C	26-33°C		
TAGAYTAY						
LEGAZPI						
PUERTO PRINCESA						
METRO DAVAO						
ZAMBOANGA						
ILOILO/BACOLOD						
METRO CEBU						

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



SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

14 August 2016

INQUIRER

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Deal: Marcos burial in Ilocos

'92 accord bars late dictator from Libingan

Jaymee T. Gamit

THE 1992 agreement between the Ramos administration and the Marcos family providing for, among other things, the burial of President Ferdinand Marcos in Ilocos Norte province, remains binding, former Interior Secretary Rafael Alunan III said yesterday.

Alunan is one of the signatories to the agreement.

The agreement could be invoked by the family if the planned transfer of Marcos' body to a grave at Libingan ng mga Bayani, although Senahan ng mga Detained (Selid), a group of survivors of the military bases, said it would ask the Supreme Court to intervene in the matter.

Alunan was named in 1992 by then

'92 DEAL A17



FORMER President Fidel V. Ramos, Philippine special envoy to China, smiles for the cameras as he drops for push-ups to show his fitness at Camp Aguinaldo on Saturday.

BY PILLON

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From page A1

President Fidel V. Ramos to “represent the government” in discussions with the Marcos family, led by former first lady Imelda Marcos and represented by former Rep. Roquito Ablan, of conditions for the return of the dictator’s remains to the Philippines from Hawaii.

Toppled from power in a popular uprising in 1986, Marcos died in exile in Hawaii in 1989. President Corazon Aquino refused to allow the return of his body to the Philippines.

In a press conference with Ramos at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City yesterday, Alunan gave reporters a rundown of the conditions set by the government for the return of Marcos’ body.

Four conditions

The conditions were:

- The body would be flown straight from Hawaii to Ilocos Norte province.
- Marcos would be given honors befitting a major, his last rank in the Armed Forces of the Philippines.
- Marcos’ body would not be paraded in Metro Manila. “At that time,” Alunan explained, “the wounds were still fresh in the minds of many people, and we could not afford bloodshed and instability [on] our watch.”
- There would be no burial at Libingan ng mga Bayani. Alunan noted that Marcos had wanted to be buried beside the grave of his mother in Batac, Ilocos Norte.

“So those were the conditions, and we signed an agreement. I think the agreement is still in the archives of Malacañang, so if you wish to get a copy of the agreement that was signed between me and Congressman Ablan, please go ahead and secure a copy from Malacañang,” Alunan said.

The Marcos family flew the dictator’s body home on Sept. 7, 1993. From Hawaii, the body was flown to Guam then to Laoag, in Ilocos Norte.

Deal remains binding

Then Vice President Joseph Estrada, representing the government, was at Laoag International Airport to see the body.

But the Marcos family never buried the body, preserving it instead in a refrigerated crypt housed in a mausoleum beside the dictator’s ancestral home in Batac.

Asked if the agreement remained binding, Alunan said: “I would imagine so, because I was acting for and on behalf of the President of the Republic and the government.”

He added: “I would think that because the agreement is still in force, then both sides should honor it.”

The agreement was “never abrogated,” said Alunan, now senior adviser to Ramos, who has been appointed by President Duterte as special envoy to China.

“If President Duterte thinks otherwise, then that’s his prerogative. The Office of the President

is very powerful,” Alunan said.

Asked if he or Ramos would ask the Marcos family to comply with the agreement, Alunan replied: “We’re civilians [now]. We are [no longer] in government.”

Ramos, saying Alunan was speaking with authorization from him, added: “That’s for the Duterte administration. We did our job during our time.”

The 1992 agreement, particularly the fourth condition, could be invoked by opponents of the burial of Marcos at Libingan ng mga Bayani.

President Duterte, a friend of the Marcos family, has said he will allow the burial of the dictator in the heroes’ cemetery.

Mr. Duterte has said Marcos deserves to be buried at Libingan because he was a soldier and a president, regardless of any misdeeds.

No definite date has been set for the burial, but the Marcos family is expected to do it sometime next month.

The plan has sparked outrage among survivors of martial law atrocities and human rights advocates.

Let the people decide

But Mr. Duterte, trying to fulfill a promise to the dictator’s son, ex-Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., has refused to reconsider his decision.

At the Camp Aguinaldo news conference, Ramos suggested a way of breaking the standoff.

“In the [Arroyo, Aquino administrations] and now in the Duterte [administration], I’ve

said it very clearly. Let the people decide," he said.

"Who are the people? Our representatives and senators now sitting in Congress," he said.

"Get a resolution and it must be a majority [so Marcos could be transferred to Libingan]. But if it's not a majority, what is the will of the people? [Marcos remains in Ilocos]," he said.

Ramos said, however, that the matter was still for President Duterte to decide.

Divisive issue

"Am I within my powers under the Constitution to do this thing, or do I need to get a resolution or a majority opinion from the representatives of the people, who are the two Houses of Congress?" Ramos said.

"This is such a divisive issue and therefore there's the risk of eroding political capital, so being protective also of the new administration of President Duterte, it will not be wise to fight on so many fronts. He should choose his battles. And if this is an issue that is still emotional and divisive, perhaps he should just step back, consider some options," Alunan said.

Alunan cited a suggestion by Sen. Richard Gordon to have a "Libingan ng mga Pangulo" (Presidents' Cemetery) so there would no longer be any problem with the term "bayan" (hero).

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III said the best way to resolve the controversy was to

challenge the burial plan in the Supreme Court.

Speaking in a radio interview, Pimentel said he was not aware of the 1992 agreement.

He said President Duterte was looking only at the legality of allowing Marcos to be buried at Libingan. Based on regulations, this is allowed, he said.

But since the action is based on regulation or law, it means it can be raised to the Supreme Court, he said.

That is exactly what Selda is going to do. Dionito Cabillas, spokesperson for Selda, said the group would bring a petition for certiorari in the Supreme Court this week.

Edre Olalia, secretary general of the National Union of People's Lawyers, which will represent Selda, said the group would ask the Supreme Court to stop the burial of Marcos at Libingan because he was "not qualified [to be buried there], as his record of public service, especially rights violations, plunder and moral decadence, is not worthy of inspiration or emulation for generations."

But President Duterte's chief legal adviser, Salvador Panelo, said it was time the nation put closure to the question of burying Marcos at Libingan.

"Millions consider [Marcos] a hero. Whether we like or not, as president, he had also done great things for the country. [Being] a hero depends on perception," Panelo told a news forum in Quezon City yesterday.

Panelo said he did not think the 1992 agreement could "supplant the regulation" allowing Marcos' burial at Libingan.

He added that those claiming there was such an agreement "have not presented any document to support [their] claim."

Panelo also criticized the martial law victims opposing the burial plan, saying they had "no right to complain" about what they went through under the Marcos regime, as it was acting on the instinct of "self-preservation."

"You fought the government. You wanted to kill Marcos. Naturally he would fight back. So we have no right to complain if he imprisoned or killed [the enemies of his government]," Panelo, a former student activist, said.

He said everything was ready for Marcos' burial at Libingan, unless the Supreme Court intervened.

Despite the bad weather, at least 2,000 opponents of the burial would proceed with a rally against the plan at Rizal Park this morning.

The rally, which runs till noon, is expected to be participated in by artists, survivors of martial law abuses, former and current government officials opposed to the burial of Marcos at Libingan and ordinary citizens.

Among the former and current lawmakers expected at the rally are former Akbayan Rep. Walden Bello, Ifugao Rep. Teddy Baguilat and Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman.

With reports from Leila B. Salaverria and Jovic Yee

14 August 2016



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Victims of martial law seek TRO on FM burial

By RHODINA YILLANUEVA

Victims of martial law yesterday announced plans to file legal remedies at the Supreme Court to stop the hero's burial of dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The victims, through their lawyers from the National Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL), will file a petition for *certiorari* to secure a temporary restraining order and/or writ of preliminary injunction from the high court to stop the burial of Marcos at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

President Duterte had allowed the burial and ordered concerned agencies to prepare for state honors.

"If such misdeed happens, it will be a grave injustice to the thousands of victims of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, illegal arrests and detention, torture and harassment perpetrated by the Marcos fascist regime," said Trinidad Herrera, spokesperson of Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA).

"Marcos is no hero. He was a mass murderer, torturer and a plunderer. To confer national honors to Marcos is a defilement of the people's historic struggle against the tyranny of martial law," she added.

The group is also set to join the activities of Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses to Malacañang (CARM-MA), including the protest motorcade to the Libingan ng

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Victims From Page 1

mga Bayani next week.

"We reiterate our call to President Duterte to reconsider his decision to give such honors to a dictator, and instead hasten the process of indemnification of the victims and relatives. Even in the sunset years of our lives, we will continue to fight for justice for all victims of Martial Law and state fascism," Herrera said.

Hero's burial violates Ramos admin deal

A hero's burial for Marcos could also be a violation of a standing agreement between the Marcos family and the government under former president Fidel Ramos, according to former interior secretary Rafael Alunan.

The Ramos administration allowed the return of Marcos' remains from Hawaii but under certain conditions.

Among these conditions were that Marcos' remains will be flown directly to Paoay, Ilocos Norte from Hawaii; that he would be given honors befitting a major in the Armed Forces of the Philippines because that was his last rank in the AFP; that his remains would not be paraded in Metro Manila, and the burial will have to be in Ilocos Norte.

There will be no burial in

the Libingan Ng Mga Bayani.

"Those were the conditions that were signed as an agreement. I think the agreement is still in the archives of Malacañang," Alunan said.

The Marcos family demanded to have the remains of the dictator flown back to the country following his death in 1989 while in exile in Hawaii.

"We allowed the return of the remains because after all, he should not be forever detained in Hawaii and that is not his homeland and for this purpose, I assigned secretary Raffy Alunan to represent the government and with former representative Roquito Ablan acting on behalf of the Marcos family," Ramos said.

Asked if the hero's burial will invalidate the binding agreement, Alunan said that being a civilian and not part of the government, he could not offer an answer on the issue.

But Ramos stressed that the dying wish of the dictator was to be buried beside his mother, Josefa Edralin Marcos, in Paoay.

"As I understand it, the president (Marcos) expressed his wish to be buried beside his mother," Ramos said.

Ramos said he has been proposing to the Arroyo and Aquino administrations to let the people decide on the

Marcos burial through a joint resolution by both houses of Congress.

"Of course, the President has the authority to do anything within the resolution and enactment of Congress of the Philippines beyond the authority given to him under the Constitution as chief executive and as commander-in-chief," Ramos said.

Panelo: Support President's decision

Despite growing opposition, chief presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo said Duterte's decision "still stands" and called on the people to support it.

"The problem with this country is that its laws are not followed," he said, referring to the regulations on who are allowed to be buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Duterte reasoned that Marcos was both a former president and soldier, thus falling within the category of those that can be buried at the heroes' cemetery.

Panelo noted that Duterte is not violating any constitutional provisions in allowing the hero's burial of Marcos because he is just following the regulations issued by the AFP.

Panelo called on victims of Martial Law to put an end to the Marcos burial issue.

"I think it is about time we should put closure to this.

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It has been lingering... it has been pestering us in the last 30 years," he added.

Duterte earlier said he would allow those who are opposing the burial to rally in the streets for up to three months.

Duterte also blamed the "yellow forces" for not amending the rules on who could be buried at the heroes' cemetery when they were still in power.

"The President is just following and implementing the rules. He would even cuss at the police if they would not issue him a ticket for a traffic violation. That is the beauty of our current President," Panelo said.

"Ano pa magagawa nila dun kung nakalibing na siya (what can they do if he is already buried)?" he added.

Panelo also cited a Social Weather Station survey that says 55 percent of Filipinos agree to have the dictator buried at the heroes' cemetery.

The survey, conducted from Feb. 24 to 27 as reported by ABS-CBN, also said 59 percent of 1,800 respondents said Marcos deserved to "be buried with official honors" as against 41 percent who said that he should be given a "private burial only."

The choice between a state burial and a private burial for the late strongman was one of the 80 questions asked of 1,800 respondents chosen from 18 different regions. The survey

had a margin of error of plus/minus two percent.

Leni begs off from protest

Meanwhile, Vice President Leni Robredo will not attend the protest action in Rizal Park today against the hero's burial of Marcos.

"VP won't be able to go to the Luneta gathering (on Sunday)," vice presidential spokesperson Georgina Hernandez said.

The Office of the Vice President did not disclose the reason why Robredo begged off from the event.

On Friday, Jozy Acosta of the Coalition Against Marcos Burial in the Libingan ng mga Bayani said Robredo has confirmed her attendance.

"We didn't give a formal invitation to Ma'am Leni. We sent feelers since this is an open invitation for those who are willing to attend and from what I've heard she has confirmed her attendance just today (Friday)," Acosta was quoted as saying in a report.

Robredo, who is scheduled to attend a walkathon in Pasay City this morning, has vehemently opposed the burial of the former dictator at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

"How can we allow a hero's burial for a man who has plundered our country and was responsible for the death and disappearance of many Filipinos? Those who have

greatly committed crimes of moral turpitude to the Filipino people cannot be buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani," she said in an earlier statement.

"This decision will not bring unity to our country, it will only deepen the unhealed wounds of the survivors and family members of victims of the terrible years under the Marcos presidency," she added.

Robredo, who won by a hairline margin in the vice presidential race against former senator Ferdinand Marcos Jr., noted that the heirs of the former dictator continue to deny that the sins against the people happened.

"They continue to have no remorse and still prevent the return of the wealth that they stole," she said. "It is our responsibility to teach our children the heroism and sacrifice of our forefathers. And Mr. Marcos is no hero."

Other government officials supposedly confirmed their attendance to the activity, which will be held in protest of President Duterte's decision to bury Marcos at the heroes' cemetery.

The camp of Sen. Grace Poe, for instance, said yesterday that she has not confirmed her attendance, contrary to what the organizers said last Friday.

– With Jaime Laude, Janvic Mateo, Giovanni Nilles, Robertzon Ramirez

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 11

AFP bolsters PNP's Mindanao anti-crime drive

By MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City – The Philippine Army's North-eastern and Northern Mindanao 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division (4th ID) yesterday deployed additional combat maneuvering troops in the countryside to backstop the Philippine National Police (PNP) in its Law Enforcement Operations (LEO).

The 4th ID command group directed the field commanders of the 401st Infantry Brigade, 402nd Infantry Brigade, 403rd Infantry Brigade and operational control (Opcon) unit commanders to assist the PNP during LEOs.

Field unit commanders were also ordered to help the PNP protect all vital government and private installations as well as rural businesses so economic flow will not be disturbed.

The new directive was released yesterday following the burning of heavy equipment owned by the Del Monte Philippines at Field 87, Pineapple Plantation Zone 3, Barangay Impalutao, Impasugong, Bukidnon at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday.

Col. Jesse A. Alvarez, commanding officer of the 403rd Brigade immediately ordered the 1st Special Forces Battalion

(1st SFB) to send troops to support the PNP on their LEO to track down the perpetrators of the said burning incident, Capt. Joe Patrick A. Martinez, northeastern (Caraga region) and Northern (Region 10) 4th ID spokesperson said in a statement yesterday.

Community's cooperation

"To the people in the area I encour-

aged you to provide timely and relevant information about the activities and location of the perpetrators. We cannot let them roam around and continue sowing threats among the people in the area," Capt. Martinez said, quoting the statement of Colonel Alvarez.

Meanwhile, the operation of Dole Philippines Incorporated in Surigao del Sur is already back to normal as field

unit commanders of the AFP and PNP started extending security measures during the transport of harvested fresh banana products along the Maharlika national highway in Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Sur.

This giant banana company's operations were hampered recently when armed men torched millions of pesos worth of heavy equipment.

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Armed men burn heavy equipment

ANOTHER heavy equipment owned by the Del Monte Philippines Inc. was burned down by three unidentified men armed with handguns at Field 87 Pineapple Plantation, Zone 3, Barangay Impalutao, Impasug-ong, Bukidnon last Thursday, the military reported yesterday.

Initial investigation revealed that while Arnel Ortiz (not his true name), driver of the boom sprayer truck, was driving around the plantation, the said armed men stopped his vehicle and ordered him to disembark to avoid getting hurt while they pour gasoline around his truck.

Ortiz immediately escaped from the site and went to his co-workers to inform them about the incident.

Minutes later, the company workers saw the boom sprayer burning. Total estimated cost of damage was P6 million.

Colonel Jesse A. Alvarez, Commander of 403rd Infantry Peacemaker Brigade, said "Together with the PNP, we are still identifying the said perpetrators and their motive."

"To the people in the area, I encourage you to provide timely and relevant information about the activities and location of the perpetrators. We cannot let them roam around and continue sowing threats among the people here," Alvarez added.

Alvarez ordered the 1st Special Forces Battalion to send troops and support the PNP in tracking down the perpetrators.

Jun I. Legaspi

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Army: honors set for FM at burial rites; martial law victims ready lawsuit

By: Thom Andrade, InterAksyon.com
August 13, 2016 4:04 PM



In June 2014 file photo, a veteran walks past crosses marking graves of soldiers at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

INTERAKSYON.COM

MANILA - The Army confirmed Saturday it will render, as directed, military honors to former President Ferdinand E. Marcos when he is buried Sept. 18 at the Libingan ng mga Bayani (LNMB) in Taguig City, an event that this early is triggering protests from martial law victims, who are planning marches and a lawsuit. The Philippine Army (PA) said in a statement it has already received the orders for the internment of the late dictator, who took office in 1965 and then declared martial law and assumed legislative powers. Blamed for massive corruption and human-rights violations, he was ousted from power in 1986 by a church- and military-backed people's uprising.

The PA's statement said: "Based on the directive, the Army is required to provide vigil, bugler/drummer, firing party, military host/pallbearers, escort and transportation, and arrival and departure honors."

The Army said a protocol officer has been designated "to make lateral coordination with the family of the late former President Marcos on the details of the internment plan."

President Rodrigo Duterte has stood pat on his decision to allow Marcos's interment at the heroes' cemetery, which he said is reserved for former soldiers and presidents.

Marcos was a former president and soldier, even if doubts abound about his claimed heroic exploits, and this makes him qualified to be buried at the LNMB, Duterte had said earlier.

"The law is there existing... You read it a thousand times and you still arrive at a conclusion that he is qualified. Even if he is not a hero, he was a soldier," the President said.

Guidelines issued by the The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) allow former soldiers to be buried at the LNMB.

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ML victims' lawsuit

On Sunday, a broad coalition of groups opposed to the Marcos burial at the heroes' cemetery is mounting a protest at the Rizal Park.

On Saturday, Martial Law victims led by the Samahan ng Mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA) disclosed plans to go to the Supreme Court next week to stop the planned hero's burial.

Lawyers from the National Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL), will file a petition for certiorari which aims to secure the issuance of a temporary restraining order and/or writ of preliminary injunction from the High Court to stop the Department of National Defense and the Armed Forces of the Philippines from conferring national honors to Marcos through the burial at LNMB.

Trinidad Herrera, SELDA spokesperson, said in a statement that burying Marcos at the LNMB is a grave injustice to victims of extrajudicial killings torture and forced disappearance during the Martial Law years.

The injustice done to them is acknowledged by the State, critics of the Marcos LNMB burial said, pointing to the law mandating compensation for thousands of victims.

"If such misdeed happens, it will be a grave injustice to the thousands of victims of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, illegal arrests and detention, torture and harassment perpetrated by the Marcos fascist regime," said Herrera.

She was among the 9,539 members of the class suit against Marcos that was filed in, and won a judgment, in a Honolulu court in 1995.

"Marcos is no hero. He was a mass murderer, torturer and a plunderer. To confer national honors to Marcos is a defilement of the people's historic struggle against the tyranny of martial law," Herrera said.

SELDA will join the activities of the Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses to Malacanang (CARMMA), including the protest motorcade to the LNMB next week.

SELDA appealed anew to President Duterte to reconsider his decision to give honors to a dictator and instead hasten the process of indemnifying Martial Law victims and their relatives.

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<http://www.inquirer.net/>

Marcos to be honored as President at Libingan–AFP

By: Jaymee T. Gamil



Former first lady Imelda Marcos kisses the glass case that contains the frozen remains of former dictator and president Ferdinand Marcos on July 2, 2014. AFP FILE PHOTO

IT'S OFFICIAL: Deposed dictator President Ferdinand Marcos was to be honored not just as a former soldier, but as former head of state, in Libingan ng mga Bayani (Heroes' Cemetery) where, President Duterte announced in a memo on Sunday, he would be laid to rest.

This, as the Philippine Army, which oversees the cemetery for soldiers and dignitaries, officially received on Wednesday a directive from the Armed Forces of the Philippines to "provide all necessary military honors accorded a President" for the Marcos burial.

The military honors would include a vigil, a bugler or drummer, a firing party, a military host or pallbearers, escort and transportation, and arrival and departure honors. Dated Aug. 9, the directive was signed by Rear Adm. Ernesto Enriquez, AFP deputy chief of staff for reservist and retiree affairs.

In a phone interview on Friday, Army spokesperson Col. Benjamin Hao said they had already appointed a protocol officer to meet with the Marcos family to discuss details of the interment although the burial date has yet to be announced.

Hao, however, said that as early as last week, a private contractor, through the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office, has begun work on the 100-square-meter space allocated for Marcos in the cemetery's "presidential" section.

The section currently hosts the final resting place for three former Presidents: Carlos P. Garcia, Elpidio Quirino and Diosdado Macapagal. Marcos' plot would be next to Garcia's, Hao said.

As early as June, civilians protesting the idea of the dictator's interment at Libingan have been sneaking in on the guise of visiting their departed, to leave stones bearing the names of martial law victims on the then rumored Marcos burial plot.

Since then, security has been tightened at the cemetery. While Hao conceded that it was within the protesters' right to express their sentiments, they should follow procedures and seek a permit from the Taguig local government if they want to hold protest actions outside the cemetery.

"This is a national shrine. Let's maintain the solemnity of the place," Hao urged the public. **TVJ**

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No plan to launch coup vs Duterte - AFF

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY - The military is solidly behind President Duterte and will not launch a coup despite his having antagonized several personalities and groups with his unconventional style of fighting criminality.

Armed Forces Eastern Mindanao chief Lt. Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero gave the assurance on Friday as speculations emerged the Chief Executive's frequent visits to military camps across the country were meant to ensure the loyalty of the troops.

The President's unorthodox manner in fulfilling his campaign promise of change has rattled even people in authority like mayors, judges and police officials.

"The AFP is solidly behind our commander-in-chief. Rest assured any coup attempt is not possible against the President. No cause for any alarm regarding that matter," Guerrero said.

He said the President enjoys very solid support among the AFP's 90,000-strong personnel.

Besides, Guerrero said Duterte won in all military camps in the May 9 elections.

The AFP official also said there is nothing unusual about the President's visiting soldiers and policemen to show his support as he has always been doing since becoming mayor of Davao City decades ago.

"The President has always been supportive of the police and the soldiers when he was mayor," he said.

In his visits, the President has always shown "genuine concern" for the welfare of ordinary soldiers.

The visits were usually security briefings but the most awaited part was the "talk-to-the-men" segment, aired live on the government-run PTV-4.

The soldiers also enjoy taking selfies with the President, who always obliges.

A military officer who asked not to be identified told **The STAR** such visits were really morale boosting for ordinary soldiers, especially those assigned in high-risk areas.

"It is very important for us soldiers to see our commander-in-chief visiting and giving us his marching orders," he said.

But in all of his talks with soldiers at military camps, the President has emphasized that they should be loyal to the flag and not to him.

"Do not patronize me. Love of flag and of country should be what is important," the President said in his speeches.

After visits to the military camps, the President would make the rounds of police camps.

Since he assumed office

last June 30, the President has visited several military headquarters including the Army's 104th Infantry Battalion in Isabela City, Basilan, Western Mindanao Command headquarters in Zamboanga City, 6th Infantry Division at Camp Siongco in Awang Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

The President also visited the 7th Infantry Division at Fort Magsaysay in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija last July 26. Fort Magsaysay is the largest military reservation in the country as it is also the key training area of the

Philippine Army.

On July 28 the President visited the Southern Luzon Command at Camp Guillermo Nakar in Lucena City, Quezon

after which he proceeded to Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal and to the headquarters of the Philippine Army's Second Infantry Division.

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Let the Filipinos decide Marcos burial – FVR

By **AARON S. FRECUENCO**
and **JEFFREY A. RAMOS**

Whether or not former President Ferdinand Marcos should be buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani should be decided by the Filipino people through their representatives in the Senate and House and Representatives, former President Fidel V. Ramos said yesterday.

Ramos said this is his position as early as the time of ex-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who was also faced with the same dilemma during her nine-year term.

"I've said very clearly, let the people decide," said Ramos.

President Duterte's decision to allow the burial of Marcos as the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig was met with criticisms, with some groups even planning to elevate the issue before the Supreme Court.

Ramos explained that the only way to resolve the issue is to get the opinion of the people.

What does this mean? Through surveys by the SWS (Social Weather Stations)? No, that is not official. You have (a) plebiscite or referendum, no need," said Ramos. "I said officially let the people decide. Who are the people? Our representatives and senators now sitting in Congress representing and belonging to the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Philippines."

He said both the Lower House and the Senate could come up with a resolution on whether or not Marcos should be buried at the Libingan.

The resolution, he said, should get a majority of votes of the congressmen and senators in order to formalize the transfer of Marcos' remains to the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

"Eh kung hindi majority, anong will of the people? Dun ka muna kuya, ganun naman yan," said Ramos.

Ramos was among the so-called 1986 People Power Revolution heroes, the bloodless-revolt led to the ouster of the 20-year rule of Marcos.

'Stop the burial!'

Meantime, victims of Marcos' martial law said they intend to ask the SC to stop the burial of the late strongman at the heroes' graveyard.

The Samahan ng Mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA), a group of former political prisoners, said that it will lead martial law victims in seeking legal remedies before the High Court this week.

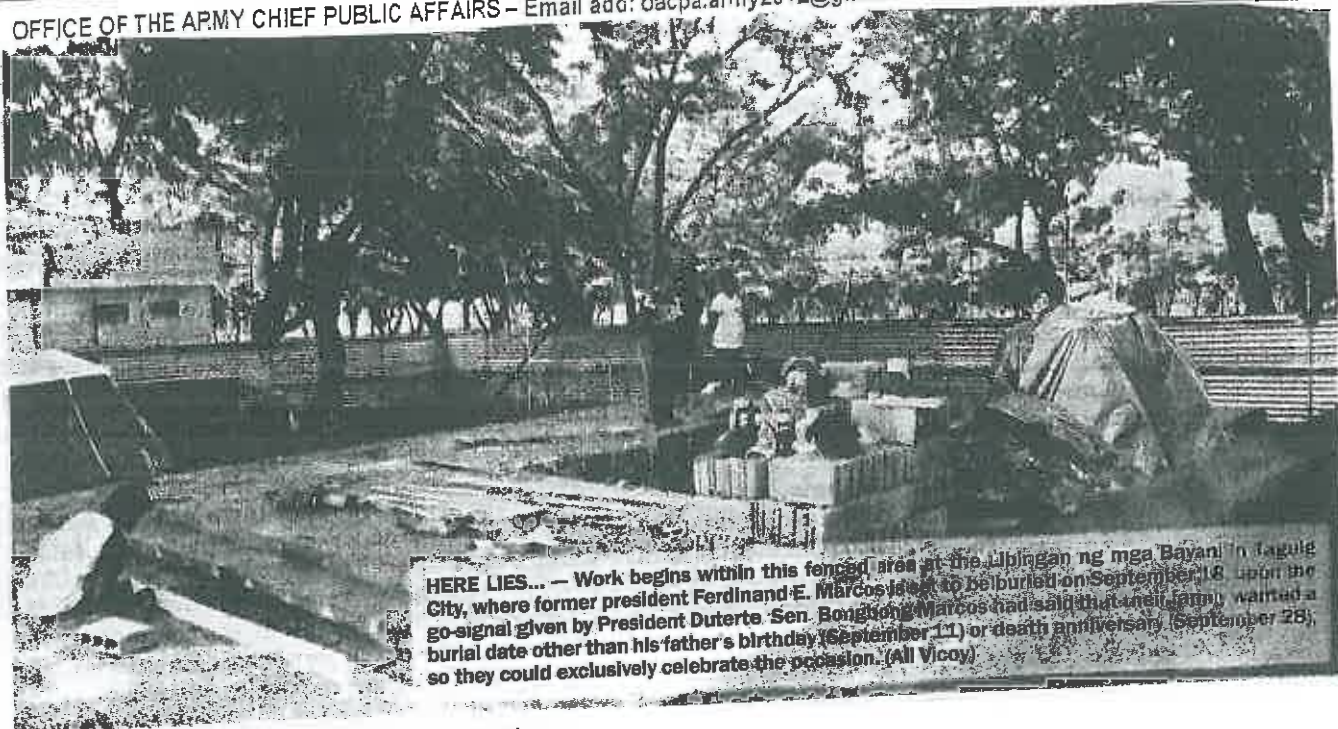
"Marcos is no hero. He was a mass murderer, torturer and a plunderer," said SELDA spokesperson Trinidad Herrera said in a statement released yesterday.

"To confer national honors to Marcos is a defilement of the people's historic struggle against the tyranny of martial law," added Herrera one of the 9,539 members of the class suit against Marcos that was filed and won in Hawaii.

Herrera said Martial law victims, through their lawyers from National Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL), will file a petition for certiorari which aims to secure from the SC a temporary restraining order (TRO) or a writ of preliminary injunction against the Marcos burial at LNMB.

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HERE LIES... – Work begins within this fenced area at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City, where former president Ferdinand E. Marcos is set to be buried on September 18, upon the go-signal given by President Duterte. Sen. Bongbong Marcos had said that his family wanted a burial date other than his father's birthday (September 11) or death anniversary (September 28), so they could exclusively celebrate the occasion. (All Vicoy)

1992 agreement

The remains of the late former president was allowed to be returned to the country in 1992 under the agreement that he would not be buried at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani, former Interior Secretary Rafael Alunan III disclosed yesterday.

In fact, the issue of the Libingan ng Mga Bayani seemed to be not an issue during the negotiations because the late strongman had expressed his wish before his death to be buried beside his mother, said Alunan who was appointed as the lead negotiator by then President Ramos.

Alunan said the burial of Marcos remains "in Paoay or anywhere in Ilocos Norte" is actually one of the four agreements he signed as representative of the Philippine government and former Cong. Roquito Ablan who then represented the Marcos family in a month-long negotiation for the return of Marcos cadaver.

Alunan said the four agreements were:

1. That the remains is flown straight from Hawaii (where the Marcos family sought refuge after they were ousted from power) to Paoay in Ilocos Norte;
2. That Marcos would be given honors befitting a major in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) which was his last rank;
3. That Marcos's remains would not be allowed to be paraded in Metro Manila; and,
4. That the burial will have to be done in Ilocos Norte, that there will be no burial at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani.

"We did not allow the remains to be paraded in Metro Manila because at

the minds of many people and we could not afford bloodshed and instability during our watch," said Alunan who was then the secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

For Alunan, the agreement is still in binding since he was acting as representative of the government when the agreement was signed.

"Well I would imagine so because I was acting for and behalf of the President (Ramos) of the Republic, and of the government," said Alunan when asked if the agreement is still binding.

But Alunan said that he is not sure if the agreement could be used as evidence amid attempts by some group to block the burial at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani by seeking the intervention of the SC.

"I don't know if that would be admissible evidence," said Alunan.

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Hidilyn's dream

THERE IS an alternate universe in Philippine sports, one that split off the current reality in 2014: when Hidilyn Diaz, in an agony of frustration over failed results in two Olympic Games and a bungled attempt to qualify for the Southeast Asian Games, decided to quit her sport.

Imagine that universe now: There is no triumphant homecoming of the heroine birthed

EDITORIAL

on the weightlifting stage of Rio de Janeiro, a precious silver medal slung

around her neck. There is only—still—a huge void in the Philippines' quest for sporting excellence and Olympic success, a black, barren space peopled by bickering sports officials, each trying to extricate himself from yet another debacle in the Summer Games.

That such an alternate reality could very well have been our present is proof of the dismal quality of Philippine sports officials. That Hidilyn Diaz could have thrown in the towel, but for the encouragement of a coach whose faith in her never faltered, indicts our sporting leadership and infrastructure.

"She lost focus after she was not able to compete and her allowance from the Philippine Sports Commission was considerably reduced," Diaz's coach, Alfonsito Aldanete, told reporters. "She wanted to just go to the United States to work as a fitness instructor."

It wasn't just the slash in Diaz's monthly allowance from P40,000 to P9,600 that illustrated how sports officials failed to recognize her potential and, subsequently, imagine what she could achieve. In fact, they couldn't be bothered to lift the sagging spirits of the weightlifter from Zamboanga City who would eventually fulfill the country's 20-year yearning for Olympic glory.

It was her coach who managed to convince the young woman to persevere one last time. He told her: You've given the sport 14 years, more than half your life. Give me 14 more months and you'll get a medal. And then, you can be as free as you want. You can go live your American dream. Go work there, if that's the life you choose. But give me these 14 months. Give yourself these 14 months.

That was the point where the cosmic timeline split. On one path, Diaz was way past persevering. On the other, the one that we live in right now, she said yes, put her heart on training mode one more time—and went on to bag the silver medal in the women's 53-kilogram weightlifting class in Rio. How rich that medal is in firsts: It is the first Olympic medal of any color for the Philippines since 1996, when boxer Onyok Velasco also won silver. It is the first Olympic medal for a Filipino woman. It is the first Olympic medal for a nonboxer in eight decades. It is the first Olympic medal won by an athlete from Mindanao.

For this, the Philippines has Diaz to thank. To a certain extent, her coach, too, for not giving up on her. And those who helped her even before the limelight fell on her petite frame.

This is no validation of a sporting fiefdom's reign. This is proof that an athlete and her little-known sports association can go far in terms of Olympic success despite operating largely under the limelight. Aldanete drew up a program that Diaz diligently followed, one that included the hiring of a nutritionist, who helped her adjust to a lower weight class; a psychologist, who chased away the demons of past failures; and a conditioning coach, who made sure that the athlete maintained her strength despite shedding a few pounds to compete in a lighter division.

This is their reward. This is their moment to savor. This is Airwoman First Class Hidilyn Diaz's success. She took one more shot at triumph and chose to stand on a pressure-packed stage in Rio to lift and hold aloft her, and her nation's, Olympic dream.

No amount of congressional citations, monetary rewards, fulsome praise, or offered benefits by publicity-hungry officials can take away the reality in which the nation now rejoices. A photograph of her, other than the one showing her strong, triumphant lift, is priceless: After receiving her medal, the 25-year-old stands with hand over her heart, looking at her flag as the anthem plays, tears spilling from her eyes.

<http://www.inquirer.net/>

Why Marcos shouldn't be buried in the 'Libingan'

By: Solita Collas-Monsod

Let's take a closer look at the Marcos burial issue. It started during Du30's election campaign in Ilocos Norte, when he promised that if he became president, Ferdinand Marcos would be buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani (LMB). As a campaign issue—I mean, when the issues are inclusive growth, corruption, poverty, drugs, criminality, “endo” labor practices, wages, how can the Marcos burial possibly be of the same level of importance? The only place in which the issue would resonate is Marcos' birthplace.

No offense to Ilocos Norte, and to people like neurologist Dr. Joven Cuanang, who owns Sitio Remedios, arguably the most famous tourist resort there. But Ilocos Norte, according to the 2000 census, registered a population of 514,000 persons (about the same as Makati City), and is the least populated province in the Ilocos Region (it has 12.2 percent of the total population).

I mention this only to show how many people would possibly be mortally offended if Marcos is not buried in the LMB, which is what Du30 is worried about. Compare that to the population of the Philippines. I would also remind the good people of Ilocos Norte that removing Marcos from there would also remove a tourist attraction. He is part of the package of tourist attractions that include the “Malacañang of the North.” So think twice about exporting him.

In any case, only three of the country's presidents (Elpidio Quirino [only recently interred there], Carlos P. Garcia and Diosdado Macapagal) are in the LMB. So it is safe to say there will be no shame if Marcos is not buried there. But there will be much pain if he is.

Mr. President, do you really think that people voted for you because you promised to bury Marcos in the LMB? If yes, don't you think you should ask either Pulse Asia or Social Weather Stations to settle the issue? Or perhaps to validate if the Filipino people want him to be buried there? I conducted my own little survey and asked randomly selected people from all walks of life—street cleaner, salesgirl, cigarette vendor, security guard, academic; young and old, male and female—if they voted for Du30. If the answer was yes, I asked an open-ended question: Why did you vote for him? No limit to the reasons given. I polled 20 Du30-ites, and none of them listed “because he promised to bury Marcos in the LMB” as an answer. Unfortunately, I failed to ask their place of birth, which I now think may be important. But surely some of them were Ilocano? Yes, but I don't really know.

So let's do it the scientific way. Let's get the people's pulse. Let's ignore for the moment the rising wave of protests against it, as more people get more aware. Marcos will be buried in the LMB because you, Mr. President, want to “keep your promise.”

Promise to whom? Who asked you to make it a campaign issue? No one has stepped up to accept responsibility. Was it the Ilocano people who asked you, or just a few Ilocanos surnamed Marcos? What proportion of the Ilocano people do they represent? My father, Juan Collas, was born in the Ilocos, so I claim Ilocano blood. And I don't think Marcos should be buried in the LMB. I wonder how many others think the way I do—that it would be an act of desecration against the heroes buried there, and against the soldiers buried there. We have to know.

My father was a journalist (Philippines Free Press in its heyday) before he joined Quirino's (Ilocano) administration. He used to be a fond friend of Marcos, even arranging for him to be a sponsor at my wedding. But after martial law was declared, and he and I used to go to the Supreme Court to hear the cases against martial law, he told me, “If I had known that Ferdinand would turn out like this, I never would have written in his defense.” (He was referring to the murder charges against Marcos in the Nalundasan case.) He never mentioned Marcos in a favorable light again.

Or maybe you have a sense of “utang na loob” to Marcos. Your father, I read somewhere, was part of Marcos' legitimate (pre-martial-law) administration. But I also read that your mother turned anti-Marcos during martial law. Mother knows best, Mr. President. Besides, personal feelings should have no bearing on your decision. Didn't you say that there are no friends (“walang kaibigan,” like President Joseph Estrada also once said) while in the government?

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There is an encouraging note here. It seems Du30 has (unwittingly) conceded that Marcos is not a hero—not when he had so much unexplained wealth, was responsible for the economic debacle that led us into a debt crisis, and had so many deaths, disappearances, and incarcerations (including Ninoy Aquino's, Pepe Diokno's, and all his political enemies') on his hands.

That is, at least, something. The downside is that Du30 is still insisting that Marcos be buried in the LMB because he was a soldier, period. And all soldiers are entitled to burial there.

But Mr. President, aren't soldiers buried in the LMB because it is assumed that they fought for their country? And soldiers who died fighting for their country are assumed heroes.

But Marcos certainly did not die for his country. As a matter of fact, the research done by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines shows that Marcos took advantage of whatever army connections he had for fraudulent money-making and self-aggrandizing purposes.

So, if he is not a hero, and not even worthy to be called a soldier, isn't it obvious, Mr. President, that he shouldn't be buried in the LMB? Isn't it obvious he should stay in Ilocos Norte?

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<http://www.gmanetwork.com/>

Palace orders AFP to activate Disaster Response Task Force

Published August 13, 2016 3:32pm

Malacañang on Saturday afternoon said it has ordered the activation of the Disaster Response Task Force due to continuous rains caused by the enhanced southwest monsoon.

Office of the Special Assistant head Secretary Christopher "Bong" Go said the Armed Forces of the Philippines has been ordered to activate the task force and get regular updates on flooded areas from the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the status of the Marikina River.

In a radio dzBB interview, Marikina City Mayor Marcelino Teodoro said that they have raised Alert Level 3 at the Marikina River.

Teodoro said that as of 3 p.m., water level at the Marikina River was 17.5 meters. He said the river's water level may continue to rise as they expect water from upstream rivers to flow down to the city's main tributary.

The mayor said residents in Barangays Nangka and Tumana have started evacuating.

Earlier, the La Mesa Dam management raised the red alert status.

La Mesa plant manager Teddy Angeles said water elevation at the dam as of noon has reached 79.62 meters, just 53 centimeters below the overflow level.

Angeles said they have recommended the evacuation of residents in areas that will be affected by the La Mesa Dam's overflow.

Communities along the Tullahan River in Quezon City and the Camanava area have been alerted against possible flooding.

Quezon City Mayor Herbert Bautista had said that some residents along the Tullahan River have been evacuated on Friday night. —ALG, GMA News

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<http://www.philstar.com/>

AFP on foot to validate ISIS presence in Mindanao

By Christine C. Cudis (philstar.com) | Updated August 13, 2016 - 12:30pm



The Philippine Army has boosted their intelligence units to confirm alleged presence of the Islamic State or ISIS in Mindanao. AP/File photo

DAVAO CITY, Philippines - The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) are now on its foot after President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered them to validate alleged presence of the Islamic State or ISIS in Mindanao. In a speech delivered by the president in Zamboanga del Sur on Friday, he told the Army to immediately arrest and deport ISIS indoctrinators once reports has been confirmed.

In an interview with Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) spokesperson Maj. Filemon Tan Sr. on Saturday, he said that the army has boosted their intelligence units to confirm these suspicions. "We have also strengthened our operations to prepare," he added.

Tan has refused to disclose more vital information as it may derail their tactical operations.

Duterte, on the other hand, included in his speech that even if those suspected Jihadist group members may be unarmed, it can be the start of ISIS threat in the country.

As cited in a report aired on Philippine Television 4, he said, "Just like the communists, this is alarming because of their power to condition innocent and unsuspecting minds."

The Army tasked to monitor Davao City 10th Infantry Division has also guaranteed that the people are in good hands as spokesperson Capt. Rhyen Batchar said Friday, "We intensified our efforts to strengthen the security of population centers in our area of operations from all possible threats."

On July 7 this year, the city was also caught off guard with Vice Mayor Paolo Duterte's revelation that he has been receiving threats from the international terrorist group.

However, Davao City Police Office (DCPO) Director Police Superintendent Michael John Dubria has clarified thereafter that they did not receive confirmed reports of any ISIS threat.

He added that the police are doing its best to protect the people.

"They have nothing to worry about. They have to be calm but still be vigilant," Dubria said.

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AFP chief willing to work with human rights groups in quest for lasting peace

MANILA, Aug. 13 (PNA) -- Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief-of-staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya has said he is willing to work with human rights groups in the quest for lasting peace in the country.

He made the statement during a joint flag-raising and oath-taking ceremonies held Friday as part of the starter for the celebration of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Month.

Visaya during the occasion reiterated the AFP's commitment to Human Rights (HR) and International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

"We have made significant progress in our HR-based military operations and want the AFP to be fully compliant to the IHL operations and we believe that we can achieve this with stronger and more constructive ties with human rights groups," he added.

He pointed out that for justice and peace to permeate the minds of all parties, HR groups should also look into and work on the human rights violations committed by the rebel groups.

"We are firm that the use of landmines by the communist armed group violates IHL and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. We also believe that their presence in Indigenous People's communities violates their rights as a people," Visaya said.

Meanwhile, the celebration of IHL Day here encouraged various government agencies, including the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Department of National Defense (DND) and AFP, to join the celebration through activities that promote awareness of Basic Human Rights.

The highlight of the event was the IHL Human Formation headed by the Philippine Red Cross, Quezon City Chapter, at the General Headquarters Grandstand and parade grounds.

This was followed by the 5-km. run for humanity participated in by 1,475 uniformed and civilian personnel.

The event also featured a bloodletting for donors from the AFP, Philippine National Police and Philippine Coastguard.

Starting Aug. 16, workshops will be conducted at the AFP Commissioned Officers Club (AFPCOC) and a photo exhibit showcasing the different aspects of Human Rights will go on display.

"The Armed Forces of the Philippines stand solidly behind President Rodrigo Duterte in his pledge to adhere to due process and rule of law," Visaya added.

"We will ensure that our renewed commitment today will be cascaded to our line units as we continue our rights and IHL-based military operations," he stressed. (PNA)

CVL/PFN

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<http://www.rappler.com/>

Catholic schools reject hero's burial for Marcos

Catholic schools urge President Rodrigo Duterte 'to urge the Marcos family to permanently bury Mr Marcos in Ilocos'



LATE DICTATOR. Former first lady Imelda Marcos (R) with children Ferdinand Jr (L) and Imee (C) singing the Philippine national anthem before the flag-draped coffin bearing the remains of late strongman Ferdinand Marcos during arrival ceremonies at Laoag city airport in Philippines on September 7, 1993. Photo by Romeo Gacad/AFP

MANILA, Philippines – The Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) on Saturday, August 13, opposed the burial of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos at the Libingan ng mga Bayani (Heroes' Cemetery).

They also called on Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte "to finally end all plans of burying Ferdinand E. Marcos at the Libingan, and to urge the Marcos family to permanently bury Mr Marcos in Ilocos."

"Mr Marcos does not belong in the Libingan ng mga Bayani," CEAP said in an open letter to Duterte.

"He was not a hero," the group added.

Founded in 1941, CEAP is the national association of Catholic schools in the Philippines. More than 1,200 schools belong to this group.

In rejecting a hero's burial for Marcos, CEAP cited the following:

Marcos' "fake and fabricated" military medals

His alleged orders to torture or kill his critics

His being a supposed plunderer "responsible for a failed economy"

The poverty due to this failed economy, "causing much of the massive criminality" that Duterte is fighting

CEAP's appeal to Duterte

Duterte wants Marcos buried in the Libingan ng mga Bayani because he said this will promote "healing" in the country.

CEAP, however, stressed in its letter to Duterte: "Given the gravity of Mr Marcos' crimes against the people and country, his burial at the Libingan will not heal or foster unity. It will invalidate all that many heroes have spent their lives fighting for – heroes such as your beloved mother, whom we honor and remember as one of the strongest crusaders in the fight for democracy and justice."

Referring to the President by his nickname Rody, CEAP said: "President Rody, we ask that you heal this festering wound. Let this be your legacy. Please do not allow the burial of Mr Marcos at the Libingan ng mga Bayani."

This comes as the Philippine Army is already preparing to give Marcos military honors at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Duterte asserted on Thursday, August 11, that Marcos deserves a hero's burial because he is a soldier and a former president. – Rappler.com

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Military camps visit ni Duterte, nagpapalakas sa morale - WestMinCom chief

By Bombo Elmar Acol

ZAMBOANGA CITY - High morale umano para sa militar ang patuloy na pagbisita ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa mga kampo ng militar para makipagkita ng personal sa mga sundalo.

Ayon kay Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo Dela Cruz, commander ng Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom), hindi rin sila binibigyan ng pressure o timeline ng pangulo sa tuwing binibisita sila nito lalo na sa utos nito laban sa armadong grupo kagaya ng Abu Sayyaf.

Ang palaging paalala lamang umano nito sa kanila ay huwag pabayaang ang kanilang tungkulin at gawin ang kanilang trabaho.

Nilinaw din ni Dela Cruz na ang pagiging seryoso ng pangulo sa kanyang mga sinasabi ay sapat na umano para mabigyan ng tapang ang mga sundalo na magpatuloy at gawin ang kanilang tungkulin.

"High morale ang mga sundalo with the president visiting the yung tropa natin so malaking bagay yun. Yun ang gusto naming naririg namin and the more na magsusumikap kami at hindi na kailangan ng pressure kasi ang sundalo pag pinagsabihan mo ng ganon talagang automatic yan," ang pahayag ni Dela Cruz.

Sa pangwalong pagkakataon ay muling bumisita kahapon si Duterte sa Camp. Gen. Teodulfo Bautista sa Jolo lalawigan ng Sulu.

Napag-alaman na sa walong beses na pagbisita ni Duterte sa mga military camp, dalawa umano rito ang bigong mapuntahan ng personal ng dating administrasyon.

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<http://retiredanalyst.blogspot.com/>

Military drill at Davao Naval Station

From the Sun Star-Davao (Aug 13)



DAVAO. Servicemen and personnel from the Navy, Army, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police, and the Davao Central 911 share lunch after the Joint Maritime Exercise on Friday, August 12, at the Naval Station Felix Apolinario in Panacan. (Christian Mark Lim)

TROOPS of Eastern Mindanao geared up Friday, August 12, at Naval Station Felix Apolinario (NFSA), Panacan Davao City for a joint marine exercise in a bid to test and intensify the level of preparedness in emergency and maritime security through a series of tactical operations.

Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao (NFEM) Naval Task Force Deputy Commander Captain Wilfredo Burgonio expressed his confidence that the skills, competence, and dedication of the security forces to respond to various scenarios were enhanced through this exercise.

"We have successfully pursued this endeavor which will enhance our capability and interoperability and readiness of the AFP, PNP and PCG units to respond on short notice to scenarios that warrant the conduct of law enforcement and tactical operations succeed," Burgonio said.

The event was participated by the different agencies including Eastern Mindanao Command of Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Coast Guard District Southern Mindanao of Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Police Regional Office of Philippine National Police (PNP) and Maritime Police of Nfem.

During the exercise, there were two scenarios that involve maritime interdiction.

First, there was a suspicious vessel and apprehended because of illegal actions.

The second scenario was the search and rescue for the passengers of the sunk vessel.

"This simply highlights the level of preparedness to respond to any form of emergency. It maybe a security emergency, a serious emergency concerning search and rescue of natural disaster," he added.

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25 hurdle 1st Philippine Navy reservists training in northern Luzon

From the Philippine Star (Aug 13)



Twenty-five men and women finished the first ever training course for Philippine Navy reservists held in northern Luzon held at the Philippine Military Academy. Philstar.com/Artemio Dumlaog

For former television journalist Andrew Pinero, 48, his seven-day rigid but enjoyable Philippine Navy reservist training jumpstarts his preparation for the future.

"Especially with the situation in the West Philippine Sea," he said. "When the time comes na kailanganin tayo ng bansa, handa ako."

Twenty-five "brave and willing" men and women finished the first ever training course for Philippine Navy reservists held in northern Luzon held at the Philippine Military Academy complex here on Saturday. Eleven women, which is almost half or 48 percent of the batch, joined the 04-16 class "Bakunawa" (sea dragon).

Lt. Commander Anthony De Leon, commander of the 112th Squadron, Northern Luzon Naval Reserve Command said the training aims to develop a high sense of volunteerism among the pioneer men and women. "We want to enhance and improve the image of the reservists," De Leon said, citing the road rage incident which involved reservist Vhon Tanto.

Being a reservist enhances the sense of service to community and service to country, De Leon added. Pinero, who eventually placed as topnotcher of the class, together with his 24 other classmates underwent a seven-day basic military course that included military and defense doctrines, map reading, firearms proficiency, field training exercises and other basic military skills.

The reserve naval officer said the training will also prepare the reservists when they are called into duty. But during peace time, naval reservists could become responders during disasters or extend community services or conduct environmental protection efforts within the community.

There are 15,000 Navy reservists in the whole of northern Luzon.

De Leon said there will be a second batch of trainees in October to add up to the increasing number of interested would-be Naval reserve officers.

"There are doctors, other professionals intending to join us," he said.

Reservists comprise 80 percent of the 120,000-strong Armed Forces of the Philippines. Only 20 percent are regular members.

According to De Leon, the campaign for Navy reservists is gaining up in the area as more Filipino patriots show fervor to serve and become ready when the time comes.

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AFP assures no ISIS in PHL amid

From the Business World (Aug 13)

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in a statement on Friday said it is "yet to establish the authenticity and, possibly, the source" of an alleged video by the Islamic State (ISIS) threatening to sabotage next year's Miss Universe 2017 to be held in the Philippines.

"That notwithstanding, we are taking the threat seriously. As in any threats, whether verified or not, it behooves the AFP -- in coordination with the PNP [and] other counterpart agencies -- to take appropriate measures to counter the threats," said a statement by the AFP's Public Affairs Office.

"We reiterate that there is no ISIS in the Philippines," the statement added, in contrast to President Rodrigo R. Duterte's recent statements of that particular threat in the country.

"What we have are groups claiming affiliations with ISIS in their bid to draw funds. It is not farfetched for ISIS to claim to have cells in the Philippines to show global membership," the statement noted.

"That said, the AFP Chief of Staff General Ricardo [R.] Visaya calls on our people to remain calm," the statement also said, adding that "Gen[eral] Visaya...calls on our people to be vigilant, not only because of the threat, but more so because security is a concern for everybody not only of the security forces."

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