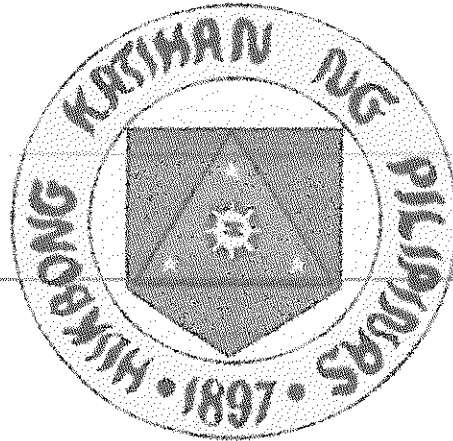


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11 December 2016

Sunday

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NEWS HEADLINES

11 DECEMBER 2016

China's ARMY is...
Liberian president...
What we know...
Lent: I would have wanted to stay

TOP KILLING STAB

Palace: We don't condone EJKs

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DOJ allows De Lima to travel abroad

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11 awardees of this year's TOYM bared

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Sunday INQUIRER

PHILIPPINE NEWS

DOJ allows De Lima to travel abroad

Palace: We don't condone EJKs

CHIR on Phil rights record: We could do better

Spreading fake news is like eating poop - Pope

DOJ allows De Lima to travel abroad

Duterte: Che-cha to also cover economic provisions

11 awardees of this year's TOYM bared

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KILLERS STRIKE ON EVE OF INT'L HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

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TAIWAN LOBBY scores, as rival factions continue to fight the Chinese civil war

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DOJ allows De Lima to travel abroad

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Coming soon: Tax-free balikayan boxes for OFWs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

11 DECEMBER 2016

PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER
1	Weather Forecast	-	Phil. Star p.12
NATIONAL NEWS			
2-3	Palace: We don't condone EJKs	Christian Mendez	Phil. Star p.1
4-7	Killers strike on eve of Int'l Human Rights Day	Jodee Agoncillo	PDI p.A1
ARMY NEWS			
8-9	3 soldiers killed in clash with Abu Sayyaf		www.rappler.com
AFP RELATED NEWS			
10-11	Police, military on full alert for holidays	Jaime Laude	Phil. Star p.5
12	Five Maute terrorists killed in clash with MILF		Mla. Bulletin p.1
13	ASG leader in Samal kidnapping slain in Sabah	Francis T Wakefield	Mla. Bulletin p.20
14-15	Malaysia troops intercept 5 Abus	Francisco Tuyay	Standard p.A1
16	Abu leader in kidnapping, beheading slain in Sabah	AFP	PDI p.A6
17	ROTC cadets eyed for disaster relief	PNA	Mla. Times p.A3
18	Destabilizer vs Digong mabibigo – AFP	Joy Cantos	Ngayon p.2
19	Duterte tells NPA rebels; Stop extortion, harassment activities	Ted Tuvera	Tribune p.3
EDITORIAL/COMMENTARY			
20	Filipinos glad to see US do West Phil Sea maneuvers but not our government		Mla. Times p.A4
ONLINE NEWS			
21	3 Suspected ASG members killed in kidnap attempt off Sabah		www.rappler.com
22-23	ROTC cadets show human assistance, disaster relief capabilities during summit		www.rappler.com

December 2016



Page: 12

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www.panahon.tv

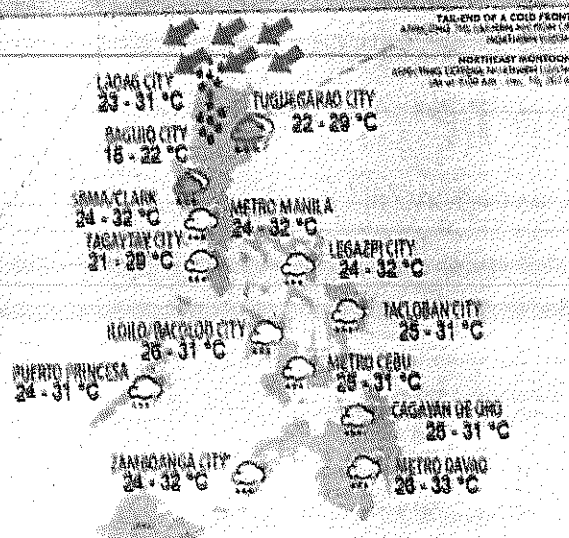
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6:08 AM DEC 12
10:07 PM DEC 11
7:55 PM DEC 12

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST DECEMBER 11, 2016 / SUNDAY



EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	DEC 12 MON	DEC 13 TUE	DEC 14 WED	EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	DEC 12 MON	DEC 13 TUE	DEC 14 WED
METRO MANILA	25°C 32°C	24°C 32°C	25°C 32°C	PUERTO PRINCESA	24°C 31°C	23°C 30°C	23°C 30°C
TUGUEGARAO	22°C 29°C	21°C 28°C	21°C 27°C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	25°C 31°C	25°C 30°C	25°C 30°C
LAOAG	22°C 30°C	21°C 29°C	20°C 28°C	METRO CEBU	25°C 31°C	24°C 30°C	25°C 30°C
BAGUIO	14°C 21°C	13°C 21°C	13°C 20°C	TACLOBAN	24°C 31°C	25°C 31°C	24°C 30°C
SBMA/CLARK	24°C 31°C	23°C 30°C	22°C 29°C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	24°C 31°C	25°C 31°C	24°C 30°C
TAGAYTAY	21°C 29°C	20°C 28°C	20°C 28°C	METRO DAVAO	25°C 32°C	25°C 32°C	25°C 32°C
LEGAZPI	24°C 32°C	23°C 31°C	23°C 30°C	ZAMBOANGA	25°C 33°C	25°C 32°C	24°C 32°C



December 2016



Page: 1

Palace:

We don't condone EJKs

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Despite growing concerns over rampant rights abuses in President Duterte's violent war on criminality, the government is one with the international community in observing International Human Rights Day, Malacañang said yesterday.

Presidential Communications Office Assistant Secretary Ana Marie Banaag said the administration is not tolerating extrajudicial killings, contrary to reports in international media regarding the rising number of deaths in the conduct of Duterte's war on drugs.

"Yes, we are one with all the Filipino people and all those celebrating

worldwide Human Rights Day – we (do not) condone human rights violations and we are against any extrajudicial killings," Banaag said over state-run *Radyo ng Bayan*.

She also said President Duterte and his Cabinet are continuously working to make lives better for the Filipino people as proven by the all-time high consumer confidence in-

dex, improving peace and order and the honest-to-goodness campaign against corruption.

"That is so true that this government, this administration, the President is working so hard and it is not all about the drug war, it is all about a lot of things that the President is concerned about and especially so,

Turn to Page 4

Palace From Page 1

alleviating the plight of the Filipino people," she pointed out.

Banaag also underscored the need for the people to look at the more positive developments happening under the barely six-month-old administration rather than focus on the issues brought about by the President's vicious campaign against

drugs.

"This is what we can see if we focus on the good side, specially now that it is Christmas season, right? That there are many developments in the country, which are subject of the President's priorities," she said.

"All sectors in the government are working and doing their best to improve the

country, and these are shown in impressions of our fellow countrymen and the positive outlook of the business sector in our country," Banaag added.

On Friday, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said results of the latest quarter Consumer Expectation Survey (CES) showed a new record confidence index of 9.2 percent in the fourth

quarter from the previous 2.5 percent in the third quarter.

"This is the second consecutive quarter that consumer confidence registered a positive reading, indicating that the number of households with optimistic views increased and outnumbered those with pessimistic views," Guinigundo said.

He said the confidence index had been in the negative

territory since the CES was launched in the first quarter of 2007. It only turned positive in the third quarter of this year.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and set its observance every Dec.10 in 1950 through resolution 423.

For this year, Human Rights Day is a reaffirmation of "our common humanity"

and for everyone to stand up for the rights of others – in the streets, in schools, public transport, and on social media.

"It starts with each of us. Step forward and defend the rights of a refugee or migrant, a person with disabilities, an LGBT person, a woman, a child, indigenous peoples, a minority group or anyone else at risk of discrimination or violence," the UN said on its website.

|| December 2016



Page: A1

KILLERS STRIKE ON EVE OF INT'L HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

STORY BY JODEE A. AGONCILLO AND DEXTER CABALZA

On a night of Christmas parties, motorcycle-riding gunmen took no break and found their targets. Their attacks left several alleged drug addicts and pushers dead, and happened, ironically, as the country joined the world in marking International Human Rights Day. Hundreds of activists joined marches to call on the government to end its violent rethoric or risk a public backlash.

A2

No holiday for killers

Latest attacks by gunmen on motorcycles happened on eve of International Human Rights Day and on night of Christmas parties

FROM A1

By Jodee A. Agoncillo
and Dexter Cabalza
@Team_Inquirer

On a night of Christmas parties and heavy holiday traffic, motorcycle-riding gunmen took no break and found their targets.

Their attacks happened as the Philippines joined the world in marking International Human Rights Day, with hundreds of protesters turning up across the metropolis on Saturday to voice their concern over the growing number of extrajudicial killings under the government of President Duterte.

In Pasig City, separate attacks carried out from late Friday till the wee hours of Saturday killed three residents and critically wounded another, with the police saying that all the victims were on their watch list as drug peddlers and users.

Around 1:50 a.m. on Saturday, time stopped for watch repairman Ismael Pangcoga, 46, after armed suspects stormed his house on Afable Street, Barangay Sagad, as he was resting with his family. He died on the spot from several gunshot wounds to the body.

Two hours earlier, 45-year-old manicurist Evelyn Coloma was shot and critically wounded in Purok 2 in Barangay Pineda.

Coloma's daughter was in the toilet when gunshots were heard. She rushed outside and saw her bloodied mother slumped on the ground and the gunmen fleeing on a motorbike.

Coloma remained under observation at the hospital as of Saturday. Like in Pangcoga's case, the Pasig police said Coloma was also on the local list of users and pushers.

Around 11:30 p.m. Friday, 26-year-old Gerard John Amandi, was shot dead along Esguerra Street, Barangay Pinagbuhatan, also in Pasig.

Around 9:40 p.m., 32-year-old Jhonace Ryan Dotaro was shot dead on Villa Tupaz Street in Barangay San Joaquin while eating dinner with his partner. Four assailants barged into the house and shot him in the head and body, before escaping.

Hot spots

Barangays Pinagbuhatan, Sagad, Pineda and San Joaquin are considered hot spots of illegal drug activity in Pasig, where 112 cases of vigilante-style killings—which the police euphemistically call “deaths under investigation”—have been recorded since July.

Elsewhere in the metropolis, the families of three more men tagged by the police as drug suspects would be spending Christmas in mourning.

Medel Maglonat, 40, a notorious drug pusher in Parañaque City's Marcelo Green barangay was gunned down around 8:45 a.m. on Friday by men on a motorbike.

In Pateros, two residents included on the watch list were also killed on Friday. The victims were identified as John Lester Certeza, 41, of P. Rosales Street, Barangay Sta. Ana; and a man known only as “Baton,” who

55 Local: 5285, 5295



Catholic nuns join protest rally in Mendiola near Malacañang to observe International Human Rights Day in the country. —MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

was shot on M. Almeda Street, Barangay Sto. Rosario-Silangan.

Pateros police chief, Supt. Joel Villanueva, noted that the three attacks had something in common: They involved four motorcycle-riding hit men wearing helmets and bonnets.

As hundreds marched to mark Human Rights Day on Saturday, President Duterte's office said it wanted the police to investigate the thousands of deaths blamed on vigilantes.

More than 5,000 people have been killed in the antidrug campaign, either by unknown vigilantes in drive-by shootings or by policemen who supposedly shot them for putting up a fight during arrests. Some have been found abandoned on the

streets, their bodies mutilated.

The activists urged the government to put an end to the killings, warning that growing public discontent could lead to a fate similar to that of deposed dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

They said Mr. Duterte should concentrate on solving grinding poverty, which they claimed was the root cause of the drug menace.

"The vigilante groups are being prodded by his pronouncements that encourage impunity. If you say [to the police] that 'I have your back, just do your job,' that is an open encouragement for these violations to continue and for gross violations of the law [to be committed]," Karapatan secretary general Cristina

Palabay told the Inquirer.

Palabay noted that it would be wise for Mr. Duterte to "re-think" now his government policies, particularly toward human rights, or else he would soon "face challenges in his presidency."

"Historical experience showed us that even if open fascist rule exists, the citizens still fight back," she said, pointing to the Filipinos' triumphant struggle against the Marcos dictatorship three decades ago.

Under Marcos' dictatorship, 3,257 were killed, 30,000 were tortured and 70,000 were arrested for opposing his mailed-fist rule. He and his family went into exile in Hawaii in February 1986 following a bloodless revolt.

In Defense of Human Rights

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and Dignity Movement (iDefend) stressed it was important for the public to speak up and become the “critical opposition,” which would urge the President to do what is right and proper.

“The number of those killed in ‘Oplan Tokhang’ has increased,” added Irma Balaba of the National Council of Churches of the Philippines. She said that while the poor were grieving, the police were “having a party shooting and killing.”

“It’s said that a regime that said it espouses change is showing signs of being a fascist state,” she said.

Reject

Assistant Communications Secretary Marie Banaag stressed the government rejects extrajudicial killings, which she claimed were all being investigated by police.

Mr. Duterte, who has lashed out at critics of his antidrug campaign, had said that the vigilante-style deaths were not state-sponsored and were due to in-fighting among rival drug gangs. He has bristled at international calls for him to observe human rights, cursing US President Barack Obama, the United Nations and the European Union.

He has since softened his tone after a phone conversation with US President-elect Donald Trump, whom he said supported his unrelenting and bloody campaign.

The President recently vented his ire on human rights defenders who he said blamed him for ordering the deaths. —WITH REPORTS

FROM JOVIC YEE, LEILA SALAVERRIA AND
KRISTINE FELISSE MANGUNAY INQ

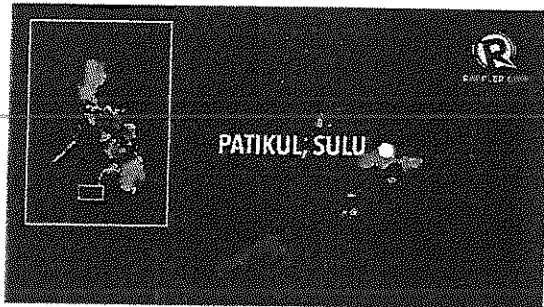
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3 soldiers killed in clash with Abu Sayyaf

From Rappler (Dec 10): **3 soldiers killed in clash with Abu Sayyaf**

The group that clashed with the military is believed to be led by Abu Sayyaf senior leader Radullan Sahiron



Three soldiers were killed and 10 others wounded in a clash with the Abu Sayyaf Group in Patikul, Sulu, Saturday morning, December 10, according to sources in the security sector.

The 35th Infantry Battalion led by Lieutenant Colonel Vlademir Villanueva was conducting focused military operations in the area of Bud Taming in Barangay Kabbon Takkas when they encountered a group of over a hundred members of the Abu Sayyaf at around 10 am on Saturday.

The group that clashed with the 35th IB is believed to be led by Abu Sayyaf senior leader Radullan Sahiron and sub-leaders Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan, Yasser Igasan, and Muier Yadah.

They exchanged gunfire for nearly two hours before the Abu Sayyaf withdrew with an undetermined number of casualties, according to the sources.

Rappler is withholding the names of troops killed in the encounter pending notice to their families. Two Huey choppers immediately airlifted government casualties where they could be given medical attention.

The firefight with Sahiron's group means the military had gotten close to the Abu Sayyaf leaders, subjects of the troops' months-long manhunt.

The military intensified operations against the Abu Sayyaf as President Rodrigo Duterte expressed fears about the influence of the Islamic State (ISIS) among extremists in the region, particularly about plans to establish a caliphate in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines.

The Abu Sayyaf is one of the country's homegrown terrorist groups that pledged allegiance to ISIS. (READ: 4 PH terror groups link up with pro-ISIS fighters in region)

The peace process with the communist National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) allowed the military to move troops to Sulu to address the Abu Sayyaf threat.

Attacks in other parts of Mindanao, including the bombing of the night market in Davao City and the Maute Group's occupation of the Butig Municipal Hall, are believed to be tactics to divert military attention from the

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

It was apparently a covert anti-kidnapping operation. Malaysian maritime policemen ended up killing 3 suspected ASG members, the initial report reaching the military said.

Philippine military and police officials have been validating this initial report with their Malaysian counterparts as of posting time.

There was no information whether Malaysians were injured or killed in the firefight that ensued.

The AFP said Hamid's death "is a big blow to the ASG as it neutralized one of the notorious bandit leaders and will degrade their capability for spotting and kidnapping victims in the future."—

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/155125-abu-sayyaf-kidnap-malaysian-policemen-sabah>

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11 December 2016



Page: 5

Police, military on full alert for holidays

By JAIME LAUDE and ROBERTZON RAMIREZ

The police and military are on full and red alert amid the high terror threat in Metro Manila due to the holiday season.

The National Capital Regional Police Office (NCRPO), for its part, said it was on full alert for the Miss Universe pageant to be held here in January, although there are no specific threats to the event itself.

National Security Adviser Secretary Hermogenes Esperon Jr. confirmed the threat without identifying the groups plotting to sow terror in the National Capital Region and other key areas.

But he said government security forces were closely watching the activities of these groups or individuals.

"We have recovered bombs. So indeed there's a Level 3 terror threat. But this is not to scare people... concerned (military) troops are on red alert while the police (are) on full alert," he said.

Esperon was referring to the recent foiled bombing of the US embassy with the use of an improvised explosive device (IED) and the recovery of another IED in Bulacan last Wednesday.

Combined military and police operations resulted in the arrest of four suspected Muslim extremists with links to the Maute terror group.

To counter these prevailing security concerns, Esperon said the Philippine National Police (PNP) increased its police visibility and patrol operations, while military and police intelligence work had been doubled.

He also said a combined ready strike force had been organized to directly deal with these groups or individuals if ever they would make a move in the metropolis.

"These are possible threat groups," Esperon said when asked if the terror threats were coming from the ranks of the Balik-Islams, the Maute group or the Ansar al-Khalifah in the Philippines, which are based in Manila and other key areas.

Esperon called on the public to be vigilant and report unusual activities to authorities.

Miss Universe preparations

For his part, NCRPO director Chief Supt. Oscar Albayalde said the full alert status was imposed as some Miss Universe candidates started arriving in the country on Friday.

The Philippines is the host

country of the 65th Miss Universe pageant on Jan. 30.

Albayalde said one police-woman would be assigned to escort each candidate.

Instead of putting up checkpoints, Albayalde said police officers would be going around the venues for the activities related to the pageant.

But he said the candidates and the public have nothing to worry about since the PNP did not receive any threats to the event.

For the regional events, Albayalde said that personnel of the Police Security Protective Group would escort the candidates in coordination with the local security group.

In Baguio City, the 250-strong Hotel and Restaurant Association of Baguio (HRAB) said nothing could stop the City of Pines from hosting the Miss Universe contestants.

A local court denied HRAB and the local government's conduct of a month-long fundraising Christmas bazaar at the Melvin Jones grandstand but Andrew Pinero, the group's media officer, said they would continue to do their part to promote the city to the world.

The bazaar was supposed to generate additional funds for the local organizers to be able to defray the huge expenses to be incurred during the visit of some 24 contestants to the city.

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HRAB has paid P14 million out of the total P25 million hosting fee to the international organizers of the pageant to guarantee the visit of the selected contestants to the city on Jan. 18. The first tranche of P7 million was paid to the organizers last Nov. 7 upon signing of the contract, while the second tranche was paid last week. The third and fourth tranches will be paid sometime in January, before the contestants' visit.

Aside from the P25-million (\$500,000) hosting fee, HRAB will be responsible for the payment of the withholding tax, income tax, food, accommodation, transportation and the four floats to be used by the contestants when parading around the city.

In Lingayen, Pangasinan, Metro Manila Development Authority chairman Thomas Orbos said during the Breakfast Club media forum at President Hotel that more roads would be opened to the public not just for the Miss Universe pageant but to ease traffic in general. – With Artemio Dumlao, Eva Visperas

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December 2016



Page: 1

Five Maute terrorists killed in clash with MILF

COTABATO CITY (PNA) — Five members of the Maute terror group who were evading military troops hot on their trail were killed in a clash with Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) fighters in the boundary of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur provinces yesterday.

According to MILF vice chair for military affairs Von Al Haq, MILF fighters said the clash with the Maute group began Friday morning in the thick forests of Mt. Cararao.

"They were trying to cross the border obviously to avoid the military operations in ►8

Five Maute terrorists killed in clash... ◀1

Butig," Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., 6th Infantry Division chief, told reporters.

From Friday's clash, the fighting continued until yesterday wounding one MILF fighter.

Under the government and MILF peace agreement, the military and Moro rebels are bound to cooperate in interdicting criminals and terrorists in areas identified as MILF communities.

Governor Mujiv Hataman of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has instructed Vice Governor Haroun Al-Rashid Lucman, also the region's social welfare secretary, to determine if the clashes have resulted in the dislocation of civilians.

Social workers in the region have distributed tons of relief supplies in Butig, site of Maute-military clashes that affected 11 barangays and displaced 3,468 families.

The military reported 65 Maute terrorist group members killed while the Army suffered three fatalities and 19 injured.

The military, using heavy artillery and air strikes pounded on Maute strongholds in Butig municipality, Lanao del Sur after raising the Islamic state in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) flag at the old town hall to mark their territory last November 26.

The 103rd Brigade under Col. Roseliero Murillo raised the Philippine flag again in Butig on November 30 after clearing the area of terrorists and allowed the return of residents to their homes after assuring their safety.

The military operation against the terrorist group, however will continue in areas where retreating members have sought refuge to prevent them from regrouping and sowing terror anew.

|| December 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 20

ASG leader in Samal kidnapping slain in Sabah

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

The leader of the Abu Sayyaf Group, which kidnapped three foreigners and a Filipina in Samal Island in 2015, was killed with two of his cohorts in a clash with Sabah authorities in Lahad Datu, Malaysia as their bid to carry out another kidnapping was foiled Thursday.

This was confirmed Saturday by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Western Mindanao Command (WesMin-Com) spokesperson Army Major Filemon Tan Jr., who said validated reports showed that Abraham Hamid, leader of the Samal kidnapping incident, and two of his still unidentified cohorts, were killed in a shootout with Malaysian authorities.

Tan said two other Abu Sayyaf members were apprehended and were identified as Samsung Aljan and Awal Hajal, while two others were declared missing.

Hamid, an ASG spotter, was identified as the leader of the Abu Sayyaf faction which kidnapped Robert Hall, John Ridsdel, Kjartan Sekkingstad and Maritess Flor on September 21, 2015 at the Ocean View Resort in Camudmud, Samal City, Davao del Sur.

He was also tagged in the kidnapping of four Indonesian crew members of Tugboat Henry recently.

The said Abu Sayyaf members were prevented by security forces in Sabah from executing their kidnapping plans by engaging them in a surprise shootout.

Tan said the speed board utilized by the Abu Sayyaf members was sunk during the fight.

Tan said the death of Hamid was a big blow to the ASG because it will degrade the bandit group's ability to spot and eventually kidnap victims in the future.

|| December 2016

The
Standard
DEFENDING THE NEWS

Page: A1

MALAYSIA TROOPS INTERCEPT 5 ABUS

By Francisco Tuyay

MALAYSIAN security forces killed a leader of the Abu Sayyaf kidnapping group and captured two of his cohorts in a foiled kidnap attempt in Lahad Datu, Malaysia Saturday afternoon.

The attempted kidnapping occurred only hours after three soldiers were killed while 10 others were wounded in a clash with the Abu Sayyaf group in Patikul, Sulu on Saturday morning.

Major Filemon Tan, spokesman of the Western Command, said Malaysian authorities are still looking

for two more Abu Sayyaf bandits who disappeared after Malaysian navy vessels sunk their speedboat around 2:40 p.m. Saturday.

Tan identified the slain Abu Sayyaf leader as Abraham Hamid, who is believed to have been responsible for the kidnapping of two Canadians, one Norwegian

and a Filipina at a beach resort in Samal City on September 21 last year.

Malaysian authorities said Hamid and his men had just landed at the shore of Lahad Datu town in Sabah on an alleged mission to snatch another batch of victims when they were intercepted by Malaysian security forces.

Hamid is also believed to be behind the attack on the Indonesian tugboat *Henry* which was traversing waters between Tawi-Tawi and Lahad Datu when the bandits intercepted them and forcibly took four of their five crewmen hostage.

"The death of Hamid is a big blow to the ASG as it neutralized one of the notorious bandits lead-

MALAYSIA...

From A1

er and will degrade their capability for spotting and kidnapping victims in the future," Tan said.

Tan said the two captured ASG bandits were identified as Samsung Aljan and Awal Hajal.

The foiled kidnapping happened shortly before the start in January of a joint army training program agreed between the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia to secure the Sulu Sea from rampant piracy.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana had earlier explained that the trilateral training would begin with each of the three countries training their own army personnel in January 2017 before joint training later in the year. **Turn to A2**

The military training will take place in Indonesia's Tarakan in North Kalimantan, Malaysia's Tawau in Sabah, where Lahad Datu is located, and the Philippines' Bongao Island.

Indonesian Defense Minister Ryamizard Ryacudu said the three training locations would later become outposts for a joint task force assigned to help secure Sulu waters.

The trilateral training was agreed between Lorenzana, Ryamizard and Malaysian defense minister Hishammuddin Hussein in a series of meetings that started in August.

Earlier on Saturday, the 35th Infantry Battalion, led by Lieutenant Colonel Vladimir Villanueva, was holding military operations in Barangay Kabbon Takkas in Patikul when they encountered a group of over a hundred members of the Abu Sayyaf at around 10 a.m.

The group that clashed with the 35th IB is believed to be led by Abu Sayyaf senior leader Radullan Sahiron and sub-leaders Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan, Yasser Igasan, and Mujer Yadah.

Tan said the firefight with Sahiron's group means the military was already close to the group of the Abu Sayyaf leaders, subjects of the troops' months-long manhunt.

11 December 2016



Page: AG

ABU LEADER IN KIDNAPPING, BEHEADING SLAIN IN SABAH

Malaysian security forces have killed a key member of the Abu Sayyaf in a shootout in waters off Sabah in Borneo, the Philippine military said on Saturday.

Abraham Hamid had led the kidnapping of several foreigners from a tourist resort in the south last year, two of whom were later beheaded.

"The death of Hamid is a big blow to the (Abu Sayyaf) as it neutralized one of the notorious bandits and will degrade their capability for spotting and kidnapping victims in the future," said regional military spokesperson Maj. Filemon Tan.

Two other militants were killed alongside Hamid in the shootout with Malaysian police in Lahad Datu in eastern Sabah, he said.

Ransom

The Abu Sayyaf beheaded two Canadian hostages after demands for millions of dollars were not met, but released two others, a Norwegian and Filipina, after ransoms were believed to be paid.

Tan said Hamid had also been involved in the kidnapping of four Indonesian crewmen in April.

There have been a spate of kidnappings of Malaysian and Indonesian sailors at sea in recent months that have been blamed on the Abu Sayyaf.

3 killed, 2 arrested

While Hamid and two militants were killed, Sabah security forces have arrested two others, Tan added.

Sabah police chief Abdul Rashid Harun told AFP the incident was the Malaysian authorities' first direct confrontation with suspected kidnappers in the waters off eastern Sabah.

On his blog, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak praised his security forces and said Kuala Lumpur and Manila would cooperate to fight the recurring kidnappings.—AFP

11 December 2016

The Manila Times

Page A3

ROTC cadets eyed for disaster relief

THE humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) capabilities of the Reserve Officers Training Corps were highlighted during the 2nd National ROTC Summit on Saturday.

There is more to ROTC than military drills and formations under the scorching sun, Colonel Edgard Arevalo, Armed Forces of the Philippines public affairs office chief, said, citing ROTC units can act as force multipliers during calamities and provide initial HADR efforts.

The summit, held at the AFP parade grounds in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City (Metro Manila), is in line with President Rodrigo Duterte's order to re-institutionalize the ROTC program.

Some 600 ROTC cadets and cadettes participated in Saturday's activities.

"The key initiative of the summit is to re-institutionalize the ROTC Program in response to President Duterte's pronouncement and the military's own desire to revive one of its sources of qualified, disciplined, and nation-loving leaders of the country," Arevalo said.

This year's theme is "Paghubog

sa Kabataang Pilipino Tungo sa Makatao, Makabayan at Makabansang Mamamayan," he added.

ROTC training was introduced to the Philippines in 1912, when the Philippine Constabulary commenced with military instruction at the University of the Philippines.

It has been the main source of reservists in the Armed Forces. The number of ROTC enrollees, however, significantly declined in 2002-2003, following the implementation of Republic Act No. 9163 on the establishment the National Service Training Program, which made the ROTC optional as one of its components.

"We aim to showcase the advantages of the ROTC program," AFP chief Lt. General Eduardo Año said. "The program will develop the youth's leadership skills, discipline and love for the country."

"The nation needs prepared citizen soldiers to defend and serve the country. We have to show the youth that the ROTC program is the best means to train them as they rise up to the occasion to serve and defend our country when needed," he added. **PNA**

|| December 2016



Pahina. 2

Destabilizer vs Digong mabibigo – AFP

Mabibigo ang sinumang grupo ng mga destabilizer na patalsikin sa puwesto si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte dahil tapat sa administrasyon at handang magtanggol dito ang mga sundalo ng Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Ayon kay AFP Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año, tapat sa sinumpaang tungkulin at Chain of Command ang AFP troops para mabuyo sa anumang uri ng destabilization.

Una nang isiniwalat ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na pinaplano umano ng mga 'dilawan' na patalsikin siya sa kapangyarihan sa pamamagitan ng isang kudeta.

Sa kabila nito, sinabi ni Año na wala silang namon-monitor na may mga grupong nagtatangka na ibagsak ang administrasyon ni Pangulong Duterte pero patuloy namang nakaalerto sa lahat ng oras.

Sakali namang may magtangka, ayon kay Año, ay hindi ang mga ito magtatagumpay. (Joy Cantos)

|| December 2016



Page: 3

Duterte tells NPA rebels: Stop extortion, harassment activities

By Ted Tuvera

President Duterte last Friday warned his “friends” — the communist New People’s Army (NPA) — to stop extortion and harassment activities in Mindanao.

In his speech during the groundbreaking ceremony of a hydroelectric power plant in Bukidnon, the Commander in Chief addressed the rebels telling them not to destroy government or private projects and infrastructures that benefit the people in the countryside.

“The NPA operates like this: if

you don’t give them (money), they’ll burn you. Listen to me: Don’t you dare move anything’s that for the people — energy, communications, everything. You have better just stop,” Duterte said.

The President also turned the tables for the Reds, saying that instead of giving in hastily to their demands in the ongoing peace talks, it is the Philippine government’s will that should prevail.

“I have given so much too soon. Do not put the term there, don’t give me a timeline because this will be a long and winding road for the negotiations,” he said.

“Yes, (the NPA) are my friends but it is always the interest of the government that should prevail,” Duterte stressed.

But if the Commander in Chief wants to minimize harm in his home-island of Mindanao from the NPA’s operations, Duterte wants the guerrillas to consider invading “imperial Manila.”

“Go and collect your revolutionary taxes from those in Manila. Go there and raid those big corporations. I’ll instruct you where they are,” he said.

Meanwhile, the National Democratic Front (NDF), in a

statement, mulled that a bilateral ceasefire agreement could be inked on the third week of January.

“The NDF has already announced its willingness to sit down with the government peace panel and work on a bilateral ceasefire accord and have it ready for signing by the third week of January by the parties’ respective principals,” NDF chief negotiator Fidel Agcaoili said.

Agcaoili, however, said that they are thinking twice on the President’s sincerity to deliver the release of their nabbed comrades once a bilateral pact — which is Duterte’s very condition — is signed.

December 2016

The Manila Times

Page A4

Editorial

Filipinos glad to see US do West Phil Sea maneuvers but not our government

WE agree with the Gulf News comment and report last week (on Dec. 8) that the Philippine government "is highly unlikely to allow the US military to use Philippine territory as a springboard for so-called freedom of navigation operations (FONOPs) through disputed parts of the South China Sea" quoting Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana.

The Stratfor brief retelling of the report said: "Manila hopes to avoid antagonizing China, Lorenzana said. US naval vessels and aircraft sometimes stopped in the Philippines during such operations under the previous Philippine government. Meanwhile, the Philippine Coast Guard received on Dec. 8 the second of 10 multi-role response vessels pledged to it by Japan. The Philippine president's diplomatic agenda and unorthodox approach have enabled him to reap the benefits of multiple partnerships, but that freedom won't last forever."

Last October, Sec. Lorenzana was also reported to have said that "Plans for joint patrols and naval exercises between the Philippines and the United States have been put on hold." Agence France Press reported on Oct. 7 that Sec. Lorenzana also said that the 107 US troops operating surveillance drones against Muslim militants in Mindanao would be asked to leave once the Philippines acquires those intelligence-gathering capabilities for itself. Mr. Lorenzana also said that the Philippines intends to buy weapons from other countries like China and Russia, and the Philippines could make up for a loss in US military aid.

Did our Defense Secretary make those statements after having been upbraided by the President? These later statements were, according to Stratfor, "a notable about face for Lorenzana" because "he had earlier suggested that President Rodrigo Duterte's threats to end the Philippines' military partnership with the United States were grounded in a lack of understanding about the benefits of the alliance. Unless the US begins to make its military aid conditional on, say, human rights improvements, the benefits of the deal for the Philippines will continue to be substantial and serve the country's strategic imperatives in the South China Sea."

After President Duterte's lavishly happy visit to China in October, there was what Stratfor calls a "strategic recalibration on both sides." And soon our two countries seem to be about to adopt a joint mechanism of control over Scarborough/Panatang shoal.

But the fact is that China has decided to occupy Panatang and has stationed its Coast Guard firmly around it to exercise control over it.

Earlier it was the Chinese Navy that had blockaded Panatang.

China has allowed Filipinos to fish in the waters around Panatang. And it looks as if things are back to normal now. But our fishermen are saying that unlike before they are able to do their livelihood only outside our shoal and with the permission of the Chinese Coast Guard.

Sooner or later the Philippine Republic will have to assert its right over Panatang because it clearly belongs to us. But it won't act now because we don't want to antagonize China, which is a major trading partners and a future source of greater wealth for us in tourism and greater commercial income.

So when will we be able to assert our sovereignty over Panatang?

Maybe only after dramatic events in world history have happened, and we Filipinos have become people of the Chinese province of the Philippines.

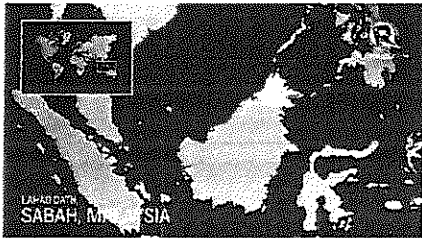
ONLINE NEWS

11 DECEMBER 2016

3 suspected ASG members killed in kidnap attempt off Sabah

From Rappler (Dec 10): 3 suspected ASG members killed in kidnap attempt off Sabah

(UPDATED) Little did the abductors know that the 'fishermen' they wanted to kidnap were Malaysian maritime policemen



Three suspected members of the terrorist Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) were killed after reportedly trying to kidnap "fishermen" who turned out to be undercover Malaysian maritime policemen.

Major Filemon Tan, spokesman of the Western Mindanao Command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), confirmed that 3 ASG members were killed, two were apprehended, while two others were missing after the incident.

This happened off Sabah and Borneo, between Lahad Datu and Semporna, past 9 pm on Thursday, December 8.

In a statement, the AFP identified one of the casualties as Abraham Hamid, known as an ASG spotter, also reportedly the leader of ASG members involved in the kidnapping of Robert Hall, John Ridsdel, Kjartan Sekkingstad, and Maritess Flor in a Samal City resort in September 2015.

Hamid was also allegedly involved in the kidnapping of 4 Indonesian crew members.

The two other casualties were suspected ASG members Samsung Alijan and Awal Hajal.

The AFP said ASG members "were prevented by security forces in Sabah from executing their kidnapping plans by engaging them in a surprise shootout."

Covert anti-kidnapping ops

Based on initial information reaching the military, 6 fully armed men on a speedboat boarded a Malaysian fishing boat and attempted to abduct its crew members.

Little did the abductors know that the people they wanted to kidnap were Malaysian maritime policemen disguised as fishermen.

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

ROTC cadets show human assistance, disaster relief capabilities during summit

From the Philippine News Agency (Dec 10): ROTC cadets show human assistance, disaster relief capabilities during summit

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"The nation needs prepared citizen soldiers to defend and serve the country. We have to show the youth that the ROTC program is the best means to train them as they rise up to the occasion to serve and defend our country when needed," the military official stressed.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=947343>

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

Abu Sayyaf.

The Maute Group, which previously raised the ISIS black flag in Butig, is also inspired by the foreign terrorist group.

Malaysia has been helping the Philippines in the fight against the Abu Sayyaf, too. On Thursday, December 8, 3 Abu Sayyaf leaders were killed in Sabah when they tried to kidnap fishermen who turned out to be undercover Malaysian maritime cops.

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/155144-soldiers-killed-abu-sayyaf-clash-sahiron>

Posted by Retired Analyst at 1:50 AM

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