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NEWS CLIPPINGS

24 February 2016

Wednesday

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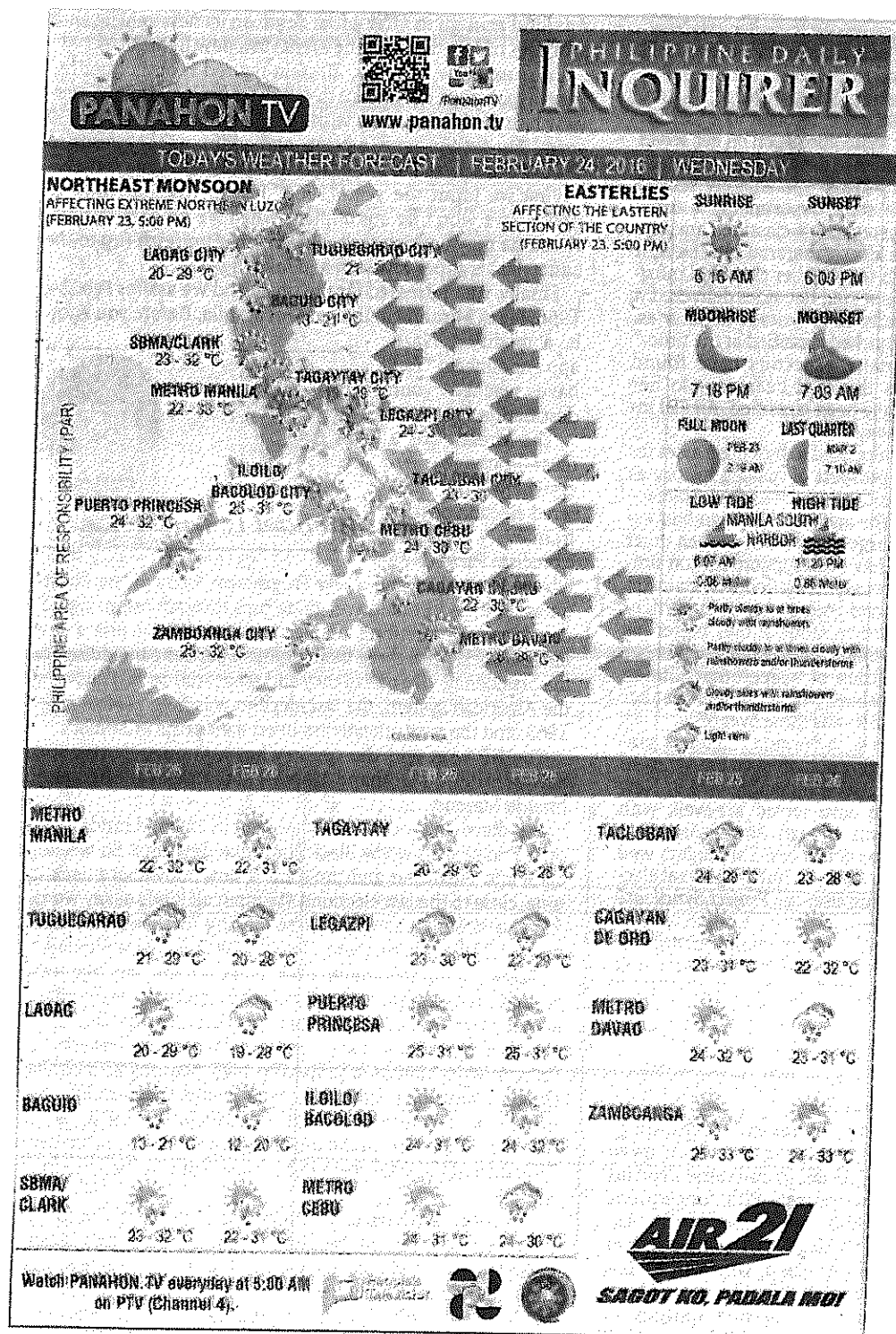
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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

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Poe makes final plea to SC

This foundling left us, says detractor

By Jerome C. Aning

WITH THE Supreme Court poised to issue a decision soon, Sen. Grace Poe has made a final plea to nullify a bid to disqualify her from the presidential race, while her opponents urged the high tribunal "to assert to one foundling who abandoned us that she can only return to our embrace on our own terms, in the clear language of our Constitution."

In a 349-page memorandum, Poe's legal team led by Alex Poblador maintained that the front-runner in voter preference polls had met the citizenship and residency requirements to run for President in the May 9 general elections,

POE MAKES/A8

contrary to two decisions of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) that had canceled her certificate of candidacy (COC).

The lawyers disputed the Comelec's assertion that the senator committed material misrepresentation when she indicated in her COC that she was a natural-born Filipino and that she would be a resident of the Philippines for "10 years and 11 months" by May 9, 2016, which is way beyond the 10-year residency requirement for presidential candidates in the 1987 Constitution.

Antonio Contreras, a political science professor and one of the four petitioners seeking Poe's disqualification, said the right to vote and to be voted upon "must and should bow to the parameters set by the Constitution."

Rule of law

"This is the time when we are called not only to uphold the rule of law but to assert to one founding who abandoned us that she can only return to our embrace on our own terms, in the clear language of the Con-

stitution," Contreras said.

"It will only make us more sovereign, for we will merely insist that we have laws that apply to aliens who visit us, even if they are former citizens of our republic," he said in his 60-page memorandum.

A foundling, Poe has not established the identity of her biological parents. She was adopted by movie stars Fernando Poe Jr. and Susan Roces, later moved to the United States, renounced her Filipino nationality and became a US citizen.

The Philippine Constitution explicitly states that "no person may be elected President unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines ... and a resident of the Philippines for at least 10 years immediately preceding such election." It goes on to say that "natural-born citizens are those who are citizens of the Philippines from birth without having to perform any act to acquire or perfect their citizenship."

Ruling out soon

Despite demands that it speed up resolution of the case with the approaching elections, the Supreme Court held five weekly sessions to hear oral ar-

guments, which ended last week. The parties were then told to submit their respective memoranda by last Monday before issuing a decision.

Court sources indicated a ruling may be forthcoming any time soon.

In their position paper, Poe's lawyers told the high court that the Comelec's decision to cancel Poe's COC was "somewhat premeditated, and that bias and impartiality tainted the Comelec's acts."

They lamented how the Comelec "changed and manipulated at every turn" the rules of the game in deciding Poe's case "to achieve the singular objective of denying due course to her COC, and ultimately, removing her name from the official ballot."

The Comelec, Poe's lawyers said, denied the senator of her right to due process when it disregarded the overwhelming evidence proving that although a foundling, she is a natural-born citizen and that she has been a resident of the Philippines since May 24, 2005.

"Fueled, as they were, by arbitrariness and, at times, by apparent hostility, the Comelec's acts constitute grave abuse of discretion," the lawyers said.

A foundling, Poe's legal counsels said, is a natural-born Filipino citizen based on the generally acceptable principle of international law, which presumes foundlings to be natural-born citizens of the country where they were found.

"As importantly, the burden to prove that petitioner is not a natural-born Filipino citizen rested on the private respondents, because petitioner is presumed by law to be qualified for the office for which she now seeks to run," they explained.

"A person who does not know

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LAST STAND Sen. Grace Poe makes a final plea in the Supreme Court to stop her disqualification from the presidential elections by the Commission on Elections, which claims she is not a natural-born Filipino and has not met the residency requirement for a presidential candidate.

who her parents are may in fact and in law be a natural-born Filipino. 'Unknown' parents may in fact be Filipino parents. If it is entirely possible that Senator Poe was telling the truth ... then the Comelec cannot conclude that what she said was false," they said.

Common sense

The lawyers said all doubts should be resolved in favor of foundlings like Poe, consistent with the present constitutional guarantees of full protection of human rights, special protection to the children, social justice, and equal protection and nondiscrimination against disadvantaged and vulnerable classes.

"A contrary interpretation will be baseless, unjust, discriminatory, contrary to common sense—in violation of the equal protection clause of the Constitution," they added.

The lawyers said the Comelec "acted whimsically and capri-

ciously, ignored settled jurisprudence and disregarded the evidence on record" when it ruled that Poe made a false material representation as to the period of her residence.

Based on records, Poe began to settle permanently in the Philippines on May 24, 2005, they said. After that, she enrolled her children to local schools in June 2005, purchased property in the late 2005, constructed her family home in Quezon City in early 2006, and sold their US property in 2006.

Solicitor General Florin Hilbay, in his paper, reiterated the "statistical certainty" that Poe is a natural-born Filipino, echoing the positions of Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno and Justices Marvic Leonen and Francis Jardeleza reflected in their questioning of antagonists during the oral arguments.

In its memorandum, the Comelec held its ground, asserting that Poe had lied.

"Nothing can be a clearer case of a material misrepresentation," the Comelec said. "A foundling is not among those enumerated in the Constitution as to who are citizens of the Philippines," it said.

Sense of duty

The initiators of the disqualification case reiterated that the Comelec did not err.

A law dean, Amado Valdez, said in his 39-page paper that the "Comelec acted with fairness, justice and sense of duty, according to the urgency of circumstances when it issued a resolution canceling [Poe's] COC because of false entries about her citizenship and residency."

Lawyer Estrella Elamparo underscored the importance of ascertaining Poe's natural-born status.

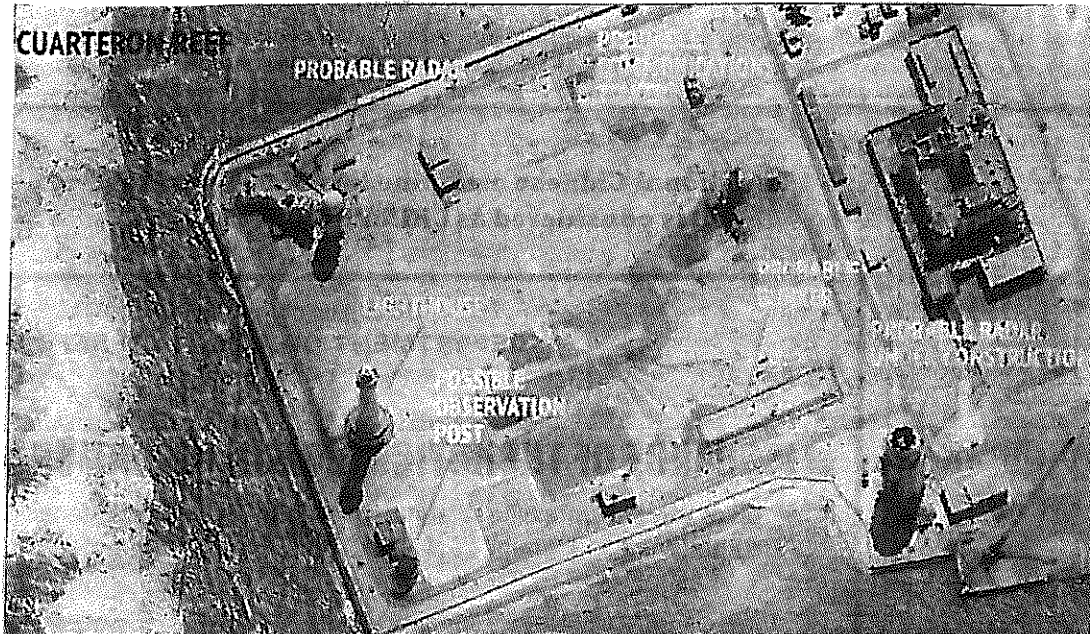
"[T]he stringent requirements for the presidency do not just ensure that the person elected will have the capacity to carry the weight of the office's responsibility, such requirements are also to ensure that the Filipino people will stay united behind their leader—confident in the fact that when the most crucial decisions are made, his/her heart and mind will be subservient to the interests of none other but our country," she said.

Former Sen. Francisco Tatad said: "One seeking the presidency should be constitutionally qualified, and there are no ifs and buts in this. Being not a natural-born Filipino citizen and for failing to meet the minimum residency qualification, respondent should be disqualified from running for President, lest the commission will countenance a grievous violation of the fundamental law." *With a report from Tarra Quismundo*

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A Jan. 24, 2016 satellite image released by the Center for Strategic and International Studies shows Cuarteron Reef with what is likely a high-frequency radar array, which could put US and allied stealth aircraft at risk.

China may be installing powerful radar on disputed reef

BEIJING – Beijing is installing radar facilities on its artificial islands in the disputed South China Sea, an American think tank has said, in a move that could “significantly change” the operational landscape.

Satellite imagery of Cuarteron (Cuarteron) Reef in the Spratly islands released by the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) shows what appears to be a high-frequency radar installation as well as

a lighthouse, underground bunker, helipad and other communications equipment.

The photographs come only a week after US officials said China had deployed surface-to-air missiles in the Paracel

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islands further north, and with tensions mounting in the strategically vital region.

"Placement of a high frequency radar on Cuarteron Reef would significantly bolster China's ability to monitor surface and air traffic coming north from the Malacca Straits and other strategically important channels," said CSIS's Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.

Images of other small reefs nearby which China has transformed into artificial islands – Burgos (Gaven), Hughes and Mabini (Johnson South) – revealed other features identified by CSIS as possible radar towers, gun emplacements, bunkers, helipads and quays.

CSIS said that while the earlier deployment of HQ-9 surface-to-air missiles was "notable," it "does not alter the military balance in the South China Sea."

But it went on: "New radar facilities being developed in the Spratlys, on the other hand, could significantly change the operational landscape."

The US has in recent months sent warships to sail within 12 nautical miles – the usual territorial limit around natural land – of a disputed island and one of China's artificial constructions in what it says is a defense of the right to free passage.

Beijing claims almost the whole of the South China Sea – through which a third of the world's oil passes – while several other littoral states have competing claims,

as does Taiwan.

Last week China confirmed it had placed "weapons" on Woody Island in the Paracels, defending what it said was its sovereign right to do so.

Beijing says it defends the right to freedom of navigation, and insists its island building aims to provide public goods, such as search and rescue facilities, but maintains it has the right to deploy necessary "self-defense" capabilities.

Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi was heading to Washington yesterday for talks with US Secretary of State John Kerry, where the issue was expected to be on the agenda.

Kerry told reporters last week: "There is every evidence, every day, that there has been an increase of militarization of one kind or another. It's of a serious concern."

US President Barack Obama last week called for "tangible steps" to lower tensions in the region. – AFP

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3 killed, 3 wounded in Lamitan shootout

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Three civilians, including two women, were killed while three others were wounded when they were caught in the crossfire during an encounter between suspected Abu Sayyaf members and police and military personnel in Lamitan, Basilan on Monday.

Eddie Haramai, Ananang Odiong and Amparing

Akalul died at the scene, said Maklimar Mammang, chairman of Barangay Bohe Ibu.

Odiong's husband Ato-tong and their two children were wounded and brought to a hospital for treatment.

1st Lt. Sally Prima, spokesperson for the 104th Infantry Brigade, said government forces were patrolling Sitio Tamara when an undeter-

mined number of armed men fired at them at 5:43 a.m.

Military reports said the armed men were under Abu Sayyaf member Nurhassan Lahaman, who has a pending warrant of arrest for illegal detention for his participation in the Lamitan siege in 2001 and the murder of a businessman. – Roel Pareño, Alexis Romero

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Soldier's death in NPA clash refuted

By TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY — No government soldier was killed in a clash with the New People's Army (NPA) in Tapaz, Capiz.

Lieutenant Colonel Ray Tiongson, spokesman of the Philippine Army's 3rd Infantry Division (3rd ID), said there was no casualty from the 61st Infantry Battalion (61st IB).

Tiongson's statement was meant to refute claims posted on social media site, Facebook, last February 21, 2016 by the rebel New People's Army (NPA) - Central Panay command under Jose Percival Jr. that a government soldier died during a 10 a.m. encounter between rebel forces and the Philippine Army last Sunday, Feb. 21.

"There is no truth to it. If a soldier died, we don't hide it. We are accountable to the public," Tiongson told Manila Bulletin.

Tiongson surmised that the NPA was aiming to boost its morale by spreading propaganda via social networking sites and even sending statement by email to members of media in Capiz.

Meanwhile, the 3rd ID is urging the NPA to respect the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

This was after two cops in Candoni, Negros Occidental were killed by suspected NPA cadres last February 19. When the patrol car where the two policemen were riding was on its way back to the station after responding to a hacking incident, the NPA peppered it with bullets.

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Reds claim killing 11 gov't troops in a week

From the often pro-CPP Davao Today (Feb 23): **Reds claim killing 11 gov't troops in a week**



Members of the New People's Army in Compostela Valley Province (File photo)

The New People's Army (NPA) said they killed 11 military troops wounded six others after launching five military actions from February 16-20 in the north central part of Mindanao.

In an emailed statement, Allan Juanito, spokesperson of the NPA, said their South-Central Bukidnon Subregional Command (SCB-SRC) killed two Army soldiers after an operation against the 8th Infantry Battalion in Barangay Can-ayan, Malaybalay City at around 2:00 pm on February 16.

On Friday, February 19, another encounter occurred in Sitio Tagiptip, Brgy. Iba, Cabanglasan, Bukidnon between an NPA team and six soldiers under Charlie Company of the 8th IB.

Juanito said three died on the AFP's side, including an member of the paramilitary Alamara group. Three were wounded.

He said, on the same day, an alleged criminal who was evading arrest by a unit of the NPA's Western Agusan Norte – Agusan Sur (Wanas) Subregional command was killed in Brgy. Oromica, Esperanza, Agusan del Sur.

Meanwhile, on February 20, Juanito said five government forces were killed and three were wounded in two separate operations of the NPAs against the 23rd IB troops in Sitio Calaitan, Brgy. Sangay, Buenavista, Agusan del Norte. The first operation occurred between a column of 23rd IB soldiers at around 11:48 noon time, while the second occurred against another column at around 3:15 in the afternoon.

<http://davaotoday.com/main/todays-news-to-go/reds-claim-killing-11-govt-troops-in-a-week/>

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Army, PNP slam rebels

From the Visayan Daily Star (Feb 24): **Army, PNP slam rebels**

The Armed Forces of the Philippines and National Police yesterday slammed the New People's Army for admitting that they were behind the recent ambush of policemen in Candoni, Negros Occidental.

"It was plain murder, that was done with treachery, and cannot be justified," Lt. Col. Rey Tiongson, 3rd Infantry Division spokesman, yesterday said.

Tiongson dismissed claims that the slain and injured policemen were involved in illegal activities and called them a mere propaganda, to justify their atrocities.

Chief Supt. Conrado Capa, regional police director of Negros Island Region, said he is fuming mad over the ambush and killing of the Candoni policemen, who were just performing their normal and a routine assistance function.

Capa said the policemen were not even engaged in security operations against the New People's Army.

The ambush in Brgy. Caningay, Candoni, claimed the lives of two policemen, and caused injuries to four others, including two civilians. They were also stripped of their police uniforms, personal belongings and firearms by the NPA.

By conducting an ambush against policemen and also causing injuries to two civilians, what were the NPA trying to prove, Romeo Baldevarona, chairperson of the Committee on Human Rights in Negros Occidental, asked yesterday.

As accusations that the policemen had been linked to illegal activities, Baldevarona said they should have been given a warning, and not by killing them instantly.

Tiongson said the NPA should realize the futility of their armed struggle, which is against the interest of the people. "There are civilians who were victims of their treacherous act", he added.

He maintained that the NPA ambush is a blatant violation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, of which the rebel group is a signatory.

Baldevarona said he noted that there is no compliance with CARHRIHL, which he describes as a "most violated" agreement.

Municipal officials and residents of Candoni are holding a prayer vigil today in the town poblacion, in connection with the ambush incident.

Baldevarona said that as soon as they complete their investigation of the incident, they will recommend financial assistance to the families of the slain and injured Candoni policemen.

Senior Supt. William Senoron, officer-in-charge of the Negros Occidental Police Provincial Office, said yesterday that Pacheco and Peralta will be accorded full police honors during their burial on Sunday.

jc

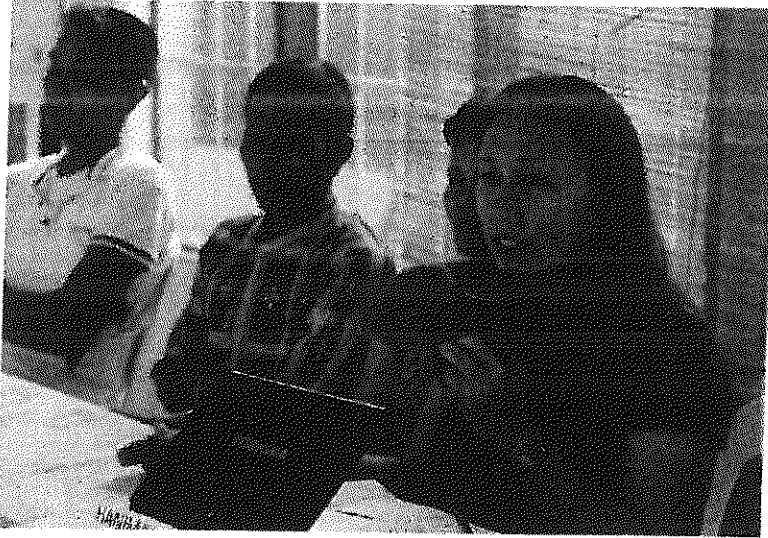
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Pantukan human rights violation probe begins

From the often pro-CPP Davao Today (Feb 23): **Pantukan human rights violation probe begins**



Hanimay Suazo, secretary general of the group Karapatan-SMR (File photo)

At least 500 human rights advocates joined on Tuesday, February 23, a two-day national fact-finding mission to probe the incidents of alleged military attacks on farmers and small-scale miners in Pantukan, Compostela Valley province.

Hanimay Suazo, spokesperson of Karapatan-Southern Mindanao, said the National Humanitarian and Peace Mission will be held in Barangay Napnapan in Pantukan to trace the link between the series of attacks against communities of small scale miners and the involvement of the military's 46th Infantry Battalion and 10th Infantry Division.

The probe comes after the killings of an anti-activist local official and a small-scale miner, while a 14-year old boy was wounded. However, the military claimed that the boy is a New People's Army "child warrior" whom they have "rescued".

The victims include Teresita Navacilla, a purok chair and convener of the Save Pantukan Movement who was shot in her store last January 27 and died at the hospital on January 30; and Ronel Paas, a small-scale miner who was shot in the chest in a case of indiscriminate firing by soldiers in their village last February 9.

The small scale miner was also reported as an NPA member killed in an encounter.

"We would be looking into the links of the entry of a large-scale mining to the deployment of soldiers to the community," said Suazo.

<http://davaotoday.com/main/todays-news-to-go/pantukan-human-rights-violation-probe-begins/>

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30 BIFFs killed in Maguindanao – AFP

By ELENA L. ABEN

More than 30 members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) have been killed in continuing military operations against the brigand group in Maguindanao.

This was disclosed by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs office chief Col. Noel J. Detoyato in a press briefing at Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo.

Skirmishes between government forces and BIFF gunmen started Febru-

ary 5 when members of the bandits group attacked and torched a dredging project in Butilen River, Datu Salibo, Maguindanao.

Detoyato said that as of reporting time, more than 30 BIFF men were reported killed based on the visuals of government troops and through the use of technology.

“Series of combat operations yan, during the clearing (operations) may mga resistance, yun nadadagdagan ang casualties ng kalaban,” according to the AFP PAO chief.

Detoyato said government troops are

still conducting operations in the area.

“We have to drive away yung resistance ng mga armado para matapos yung (flood control) project,” added Detoyato.

He also said that the military has yet to recover the bodies of the slain enemies, citing difficulties in crossing and moving through the marshy terrain in the area.

Earlier, AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla announced that Army explosives ordnance experts have disarmed some 100 improvised explosive devices (IED) and other booby traps laid by the BIFF in Barangay Tee, Datu Salibo town which has been turned into a bomb making center by the brigand group.

Padilla said government troops are currently conducting clearing operations in the area after series of clashes with the BIFF over the past two weeks.

He added that three soldiers have been wounded as a result of the clearing operations.

The AFP spokesman likewise said that BIFF members have already left the village, some of whom may have gone underground.

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20 terrorists, 3 soldiers slain in Lanao Sur clashes

By ELENAL ABEN

At least 20 members of a local terrorist group and three soldiers were killed in series of skirmishes in Lanao del Sur, the military said yesterday.

Brig Gen. Restituto Padilla, spokesman of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said fighting broke out late Saturday night when the local terror group whose leaders were identified only as Maute brothers attacked an Army detachment in Barangay Bayabao Poblacion, Butig town, Lanao del Sur.

my side, though the number of casualties from the group of the Maute brothers is still subject for verification.

Earlier reports said that among those killed from the enemy side was a foreign national, but Padilla said that they have yet to confirm this.

The troops operating on the ground were supported by Air Force OV10s that conducted bomb runs on known enemy positions and MG520s that provided close air support for maneuvering units.

"May artillery support din," he added.

"The motive for the attack remains unknown and our troops were able to defend their position," Padilla said, adding that two soldiers were killed and six others were wounded in the attack.

"When reinforcement arrived late weekend, the group of the Maute brothers was cordoned off by our troops," said Padilla.

According to the AFP spokesman, the enemies are still holding their position as of press time.

He further said that around 20 were killed and scores wounded from the ene-

Yesterday at around 10:45 a.m., armed men ambushed a convoy of troops from the 5th Mechanized Battalion on their way to reinforce the engaged soldiers in Barangay Bayabao Poblacion.

The ambush took place in Barangay Pantara-Bato, Tugaya town, Lanao Del Sur. One soldier was killed and another wounded as a result of the incident.

Asked who staged the ambush, Padilla replied, "Maaring kasama din nila (group of Maute brothers) or kamag-anak."

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AFP, MILF to protect Cotabato road project

COTABATO CITY (PNA) – Despite security threats, the construction of a farm-to-market road that will connect barangays from the towns of Aleosan and Pikit in Cotabato province will soon start after a firm commitment was made by the joint ceasefire mechanisms of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Much unlike a government project in nearby Maguindanao province which has been the object of harassment by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), construction of the five-kilometer Pagangan-Tubak, Aleosan-New Valencia-Bualon-Pamalian, Pikit Road would proceed as planned with the government and MILF agreeing to secure the project.

The project, which is under the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan

(PAMANA), the national government's convergence program that extends development interventions to isolated, hard-to-reach and conflict-affected communities, was stalled after threats were made by BIFF leader Sheik Muhidin Amimbang, who demanded P500,000, in exchange for the bandits' commitment not to attack the project's contractor and its workers.

When barangay officials did not respond to the threat, the BIFF burned a closed van owned by the DPWH-project contractor Sunstone Construction and strafed the house of Barangay Pagangan Chairman Gregorio Guanzon.

"We will not let any lawless group sabotage a project for the people. The ceasefire mechanisms of the government and the MILF will work with our security mechanisms to help ensure the security and welfare of the work-

ers and construction facilities in the area," said GPH Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) Secretariat Director Carlos Sol, Jr. during a coordination meeting hosted by the Municipal Peace and Order Council of Aleosan earlier this month.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the ceasefire mechanisms of the parties which include the GPH-MILF CCCH, Team Site 1 of the International Monitoring Team - M10; Local Monitoring Team of Cotabato province; Provincial Local Government of Cotabato Province; Municipal Local Government of Aleosan; Barangay LGU of Pagangan, Aleosan; Representatives of the DPWH Cotabato Province; the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP); and the Philippine National Police (PNP).

"We should be supportive [of] the development projects [by] the Government in Mindanao," Sol added. Butch Malang of the MILF CCCH said that "[t]he MILF will support and participate on security matters relative to the completion of the project."

Lt. Col. Romeo Bautista, Commanding Officer of the 45th Infantry Battalion, Sixth Infantry Division, has committed military personnel to secure the project facility and set up a temporary patrol base.

When finished, the road is expected to benefit more than 300 households. Most people in the barangays where the road will be built are Bangsamoro and civilian members of both the MILF and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

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Foreign terrorist, five cohorts slain in Lanao Sur firefight

By Mario J. Mallari

A foreign terrorist and five of his cohorts were killed during intense clashes between government ground forces, aided by air and artillery support, and the armed group in Butig, Lanao del Sur province since Saturday.

Sources identified the slain Indonesian terrorist as one Mohammad Muktar. His five local cohorts were not identified.

On the other hand, two soldiers were reportedly killed during the clashes.

Yesterday at around 10:45 a.m., elements of the 2nd Mechanized Infantry Battalion were ambushed, resulting in one soldier wounded in action, along Barangay Cadapaan, Balindong town, Lanao del Sur.

Maj. Filemon Tan, spokesman for the military's Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom) said that firefight was still ongoing as of press time yesterday.

"We are having a hard time getting information because our troops are busy operating against the enemies," Tan said.

Tan said that on Monday artillery and air support were provided to ground troops from the 55th Infantry Battalion, 51st IB and 41st IB operating against the armed men in Barangay Poctan, Butig town where the clashes started Saturday.

The military sent out OV-10

bomber planes and MG520 attack helicopters to provide air support while 105 Howitzers delivered artillery.

Unofficial report said that at least four other terrorists were killed during the clashes.

The military is yet to identify what particularly group was encountered in Butig but sources said that it was the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF).

Relatedly, the military is still conducting clearing operations in Maguindanao against members of the BIFF who continued to put up resistance in Datu Salibu town.

Col. Noel Detoyato, public affairs office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said that about 30 BIFF rebels have killed since Feb. 5 when the BIFF attack a government project in the said town.

Detoyato, however, said that no body was recovered as of yesterday. "They (corpses) are being recovered by their comrades," he said.

Clearing operations are ongoing in Barangay Tee, where there is ongoing flood-control project. The area is a known stronghold of the BIFF.

"Barangay Tee is a traditional community of the BIFF, that is why they are resisting. If the area is made accessible, they will lose their stronghold," said Detoyato.

"Our troops are continuously pushing the enemies to allow completion of the government project there," he added.

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Experiential museum, air show highlights of EDSA anniversary

ALEXIS ROMERO and NON ALQUITRAN

An "experiential" museum and an air show will be among the highlights of tomorrow's commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the people power revolution that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

The military yesterday reminded those who want to visit the People Power Experiential Museum at Camp Aguinaldo to follow camp rules and to cooperate with organizers of the tour.

The People Power Experiential Museum that combines elements of theater, cinema, photography, performances and installations will be open to the public from Feb. 25 to 26.

The museum was set up to educate the youth about martial law and the 1986 revolt. The experiential museum has nine halls depicting the oppression of martial rule, the struggle of Filipinos to awaken the nationalistic spirit of the masses and the unity of those who went to EDSA to call for democracy.

"The provisions of the Comelec (Commission on Elections) gun ban are also in effect. We have security personnel at each gate. They just need to follow directions," Armed Forces public affairs chief Col. Noel Detoyato said.

Detoyato said the first screening of visitors would be conducted by the EDSA People Power Commission. He said museum visitors may use Gate 5 of Camp Aguinaldo on White Plains Avenue.

"We will have very limited parking space because our parking space here will be occupied by portions of the experiential museum. We recommend that they leave their cars along White Plains," he added.

Air show

The Air Force, for its part, will show off close to 30 air assets during the celebration.

Air Force spokesman Col. Enrico Canaya said the two newly acquired lead-in fighter trainer jets would perform a high-speed opener pass during the program.

Fifteen SF-260FH aircraft, three Bell 412 combat utility helicopters, three UH-1D helicopters and three AW-109 helicopters will also perform a fly-by.

The military has not monitored threats that could disrupt the celebration of the EDSA Revolution's 30th anniversary.

Col. Vic Tomas, deputy commander of the Armed

Forces Joint Task Force National Capital Region, said they are working closely with their police counterparts to ensure the safety of those who will join the EDSA rites.

"I believe it will be something worth remembering again. We were the first in the world to come up with a very peaceful revolution and many countries followed suit," Tomas, who was a young lieutenant during the 1986 bloodless revolt, said.

However, National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Joel Pagdilao said the 18,000-strong NCRPO would be on full alert status as they have to deal with anti- and pro-people power revolt rallies in several areas of the metropolis.

"We received no intelligence report regarding any threat on the people power anniversary as of today. But we are on high alert to secure the area of celebration and other parts of Metro Manila where protest rallies are scheduled to be held," said Pagdilao in an interview. "We are still on full alert status."

Essay writing tilt

Also part of remembering the heroes of the anti-dictatorship struggle, campus journalists in high schools and colleges in Metro Manila are invited to take part in the Ditto Sarmiento Essay Writing Competition.

Now on its second run, the competition is a tribute to young campus journalists who lost their lives fighting for freedom of expression during martial law.

The competition was named after Abraham "Ditto" Sarmiento Jr. who was a 27-year-old editor-in-chief of the *Philippine Collegian*. He died of illness shortly after his release from months of detention.

The Ditto Sarmiento Essay Writing Competition is organized by the UP Alpha Phi Beta Fraternity in partnership with the *Philippine Collegian*.

The 30th anniversary of the People Power revolt will also feature the traditional salubangan, a reenactment of the solidarity between soldiers and civilians that led to the toppling of the Marcos dictatorship.

Children of EDSA heroes and youth leaders will also participate in the salubangan to symbolize their commitment to keep the ideals of EDSA alive.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Dad to bring kids to Edsa museum

By Julie M. Aurelio

WHEN it opens this week, Col. Noel Detoyato wants to bring his children to the People Power Experiential Museum so they may see for themselves what he experienced 30 years ago.

"I want them to see what I went through," the public affairs office chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines said. "I can proudly say I was there at Edsa, in front of the gates of Camps Crame and Aguinaldo."

Detoyato's wish for his children should come true when the museum opens on Thursday.

Detoyato was 21 and in his

second year at the Philippine Military Academy when the revolution broke out on Feb. 22, 1986.

Detoyato was in Metro Manila when he learned of the call to go to Edsa from soldiers who were his neighbors.

"When we went to Edsa, there were a few people on the first day ... Then the people just massed up," he said.

The demonstrations lasted until Feb. 25 when Ferdinand Marcos was booted out of power.

Detoyato said he went to the rallies for four days with his friends, walking through the length of Edsa and White Plains Avenue.

Loudspeakers played "Mam-

bo Magsaysay," a campaign ditty of former President Ramon Magsaysay in the 1950s.

"All I can hear was 'Mambo Magsaysay' all over Edsa. Some people were even climbing the lampposts in the middle of Edsa," he said.

"I was just there initially because I was curious about what was happening. When we got there, it was as if there was this contagious electric shock going through people. People kept on coming and walking the whole stretch," he said.

It was as if everyone knew each other, strangers sharing their food with everyone.

Detoyato recalled getting a

free meal at White Plains and helping give out free *pan de sal*.

"There was this euphoria ... as if everybody knew everybody," he said.

On the last day, the crowd had swollen to the millions. He heard of Marcos' ouster on radio and television when he got home.

Now, Detoyato wants his children to have a glimpse of what his generation went through.

"We want our soldiers to expose their children to this so they can appreciate the work of their parents," he said. "We want our youth today to see what happened 30 years ago so they will appreciate its historical value."

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www.visayandailystar.com

NPA owns Candoni ambush

From the Visayan Daily Star (Feb 24): NPA owns Candoni ambush

The New People's Army yesterday claimed responsibility for the ambush on a police patrol car in Taytay Panaculan, Barangay Canigay, Candoni, that left two policemen dead and others injured on February 18.

The NPA warned civilians from riding on police and Army vehicles because they are legitimate military targets, and should avoid their being used as shields during rebel attacks.

Andrea Guerrero, spokesperson of the NPA Armado Sumayang Jr. Command Southwest Negros Guerilla Front, claimed in a statement that the ambushed PNP unit is well known for its protection racket of those engaged in illegal gambling and illegal drug pushing in Candoni town.

But Senior Supt. William Señorón, Negros Occidental OIC police director, denied the NPA claim, saying the Candoni police have been actively involved in the arrests of those engaged in illegal drugs and gambling, and the filing of charges against them.

The Candoni police have a lot of accomplishments, Señorón said, citing the arrest of Jey-Jech Manzano, son of former Candoni Mayor Jechonias Manzano, on February 7 during anti-drug operations that yielded about P198,000 worth of suspected shabu.

But the target of the buy-bust operation identified as former PO3 William Escalada managed to escape and is still being pursued, he said.

Guerrero said the February 18 ambush on the police was staged with the cooperation of residents who reported the presence of illegal drugs and gambling operators in the town. The staging of the ambush is a failure of police intelligence work and of the administration of Mayor Cicero Borromeo that has allocated a large intelligence fund for counter insurgency work, Guerrero said.

Guerrero said two policemen were killed and three were injured in the ambush, and their troops were able to recover two armalite assault rifles, a .45 caliber pistol, bullets and magazines of M-16 rifles.

The civilian who was injured was not on board the police vehicle that was ambushed but on a tricycle that passed the area, Guerrero said.

While the NPA claimed three were injured, the police said four were injured.

Killed was Police Officer 1 Henry Vell Pacheco and PO2 Joe Harry Peralta, and injured were P O2 Jay Arroyo, PO1 Modesto Bena, civilians Rey Duales, 38, who was on board the vehicle and Julius Miravalles, 33, who was in his house nearby, Señorón said.

He also said three M-16 assault rifles and two 9mm pistols of the Candoni policemen were taken by the rebels, contrary to the claim of the rebels.

Guerrero alleged that the Army based near the ambush site did not immediately aid the ambushed policemen, as was the case in the Mamapasano incident.

Señorón said that is not true, the police was working in close coordination with the Army.

It was agreed that the police would enter the area first, he said.

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

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

Señoron said it is good that the NPA claimed responsibility for the ambush as it backs their initial findings. He said they are conducting pursuit operations on the culprits, and investigating who their conduits are.

Negros Occidental Gov. Alfredo Marañon Jr. said no words in the dictionary can describe the atrocities committed by the NPA, referring to the Candoni ambush.

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

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PHILIPPINE ARMY INQUIRER

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Lady Troopers blast Victorias

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BIÑAN, Laguna—RC Cola-Army displayed the type of game that separates the women from the girls, destroying neophyte squad New San Jose Builders, 25-15, 25-20, 25-15, last night to remain unbeaten in the Philippine Superliga Invitational Cup at Alonte Sports Arena here.

The Lady Troopers, starring gunners Rachel Daquis and Jovelyn Gonzaga, didn't flinch against the young Victorias with Gonzaga pacing the victors with 14 points.

The win was the third straight for RC Cola.

"We played consistently," said Gonzaga, adding they prepared against the Victorias the same way they prepared against other teams.

STANDINGS	W	L
RC Cola-Army	3	0
F2 Logistics	2	1
Foton	1	2
NSJB	0	3
Signal	x	x
Petron	x	x

GAMES MARCH 8
(San Juan Arena)
4 p.m.—F2 Logistics
vs New San Jose
6 p.m.—Petron
vs Signal

"We never take anybody lightly"

Daquis finished with 12 points on top of seven excellent digs, while Honey Royse Tubino accounted for 11 points.

Later, F2 Logistics held off Foton, 25-23, 25-22, 25-19, to post

its second win in three games. Foton dropped to 1-2 going to the next round.

Team captain Cha Cruz finished with 14 points, including 10 spikes, for the Cargo Movers.

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GPH-MILF ceasefire mechanisms to ensure Cotabato road project completion

From the Philippine News Agency (Feb 23): **GPH-MILF ceasefire mechanisms to ensure Cotabato road project completion**

Despite security threats, the construction of a farm-to-market road that will connect barangays from the towns of Aleosan and Pikit in Cotabato province will push through, thanks to the firm commitment of the joint ceasefire mechanisms of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to ensure security towards project completion.

In November 2015, Phase 1 of the concreting of the 5-kilometer Pagangan-Tubak, Aleosan-New Valencia-Bualon-Pamalian, Pikit Road started as a project under the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA), the national government's convergence program that extends development interventions to isolated, hard-to-reach and conflict-affected communities.

The said project is undertaken through the Department of Agriculture's PAMANA FY 2015 fund and implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

The road is expected to benefit more than 300 households when completed. Most people in the barangays where the road will be built are Bangsamoro and civilian members of both the MILF and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

However, on Jan. 15, work on the project was suspended due to extortion and security threats received by the local government of Barangay Pagangan from Sheik Muhidin Amimbang, chief of staff of brigands Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). Amimbang sent a letter demanding for a certain percentage of the project cost which amounted to more than half-a-million pesos (PHP500,000.00).

When the barangay officials did not respond to the threat, the BIFF burned a closed van owned by the DPWH-project contractor Sunstone Construction and strafed the house of Barangay Pagangan Chairman Gregorio Guanzon.

"We will not let any lawless group sabotage a project for the people. The ceasefire mechanisms of the government and the MILF will work with our security mechanisms to help ensure the security and welfare of the workers and construction facilities in the area," said GPH Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) Secretariat Director Carlos Sol, Jr. during a coordination meeting hosted by the Municipal Peace and Order Council of Aleosan earlier this month.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the ceasefire mechanisms of the parties which include the GPH-MILF CCCH; Team Site 1 of the International Monitoring Team - M10; Local Monitoring Team of Cotabato province; Provincial Local Government of Cotabato Province; Municipal Local Government of Aleosan; Barangay LGU of Pagangan, Aleosan; Representatives of the DPWH Cotabato Province; the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP); and the Philippine National Police (PNP).

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

"We should be supportive [of] the development projects [by] the Government in Mindanao," Sol added. Butch Malang of the MILF CCCH said that "[t]he MILF will support and participate on security matters relative to the completion of the project."⁸

AFP LTC Romeo Bautista (GSC) PA, Commanding Officer of the 45th Infantry Battalion, 6ID, PA meanwhile, has committed military personnel to secure the project facility and set up a temporary patrol base.

The PNP is already conducting its investigation into the extortion issue as well as the acts of violence committed as it prepares to file a case against the BIFF.

Participants to the meeting agreed that the security cooperation between the GPH and MILF shall be established before the start of the project in order to secure the equipment, personnel and others involved in the road project implementation.

In the past, the combined efforts of the ceasefire mechanisms under the Bangsamoro peace process have likewise been instrumental in securing other project facilities against the threats of armed elements and in keeping the peace on the ground.

Testament to this is the decision of the GPH and MILF negotiating panels to renew the mandates of the International Monitoring Team (IMT) and the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group (AHJAG) in their recent meeting in Malaysia.

Aside from monitoring the implementation of the cessation of hostilities between the GPH and the MILF, the IMT also monitors the humanitarian, rehabilitation, development and socio-economic assistance aspects of the signed agreements, the observance of international humanitarian laws and respect for human rights, and the verification and reporting on basic undertaking of the Parties to protect civilians and civilian communities.

The AHJAG, on the other hand, is responsible for coordinating, monitoring and disseminating information between the GPH and the MILF in order to isolate and interdict all criminal syndicates/kidnap-for-ransom groups and other criminal groups operating in Bangsamoro communities and nearby areas.