



Serving the people. Securing the land.

oacpa.army2012@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

25 February 2016

Thursday

TABLE OF CONTENTS

25 FEBRUARY 2016

PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER
1	Weather Forecast	-	PDI p. A14
NATIONAL NEWS			
2-4	1986 people power: Phl's gift to the world	Aurea Calica	Phil. Star p.1
ARMY RELATED NEWS			
5	Terrorist leader slain in Lanao del Sur	Elena Aben	Mla. Bulletin p.2
6	Head of local terrorist organization killed in Lanao del Sur	PNA	Tribune p.3
7	NPA bomb factory seized in ComVal	Victor Reyes	Malaya p.B3
8	Pabrika ng bomb ng NPA, natisod	Nonnie Ferriol	Abante p.6
9	NPA 'child soldier' isinuko	Alexander Lopez	Tempo p.4
10	NPA child bomber vgives up in ComVal	Zaida delos Reyes-Palanca	People's Tonight p.12
11-12	Army confirms 2 women killed in operations vs Abu Sayyaf in Lamitan City		www.newsinfo.inquirer.net
AFP RELATED NEWS			
13	Miriam seeks probe of 'lumad' evacuation center fire	Donna Pazzibugan	PDI p.A4
14-15	Attack on Haran	Alexander Lopez	Mla. Bulletin p.13
16-17	Lumad refugee camp set on fire	John Paolo Bencito	Standard p.A2
18	100 jihadist sent on bombing missions	Francisco Tuyay	Standard p.A1
19	Museum recreates people's struggle	Fernan Marasigan	Mla. Times p.A8
20	Lanao clashes continue; MILF denies involvement	Moh Saaduddin	Mla. Times p.A7
21	Sweldo ng guro, sundalo,pulis dodoblehin ni Duterte	RIT	Remate p.2
22	Sandigan convicts retired Marines general, 4 others	Alvin Murcia	Tribune p.4
23-24	China: PH cause of all tensions	Vito Barcelo	Standard p.A1
25	'Stop harassing Mindanao plantations'	James Konstantin Galvez	Mla. Times p.A7
26	28 PAF aircrafts 'show force' sa EDSA anniv	Joy Cantos	Ngayon p.2
27-29	Little known book bares US, Clark role in revolt	Tonette Orejas	PDI p.A10
ONLINE NEWS			
30-31	MILF leader urged probe on attacks on soldiers	John Unson	www.philstar.com

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


32-33	3 hospitalized as Davao lumad refugee camp torched		www.interaksyon.com
34	MILF's Bravo denies hand in ambush which killed soldier		www.cnnphilippines.com
35	Soldier cordon off area of armed group in Lanao Sur attacks		www.gmanetwork.com
36	AFP asks brave Cordillerans: list up & take Air Force exams		www.baguiomidlandcourier.com
37	Soldier's death in NPA clash refuted		www.mb.com.ph

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


25 February 2016

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER


Page: A14



www.panahon.tv

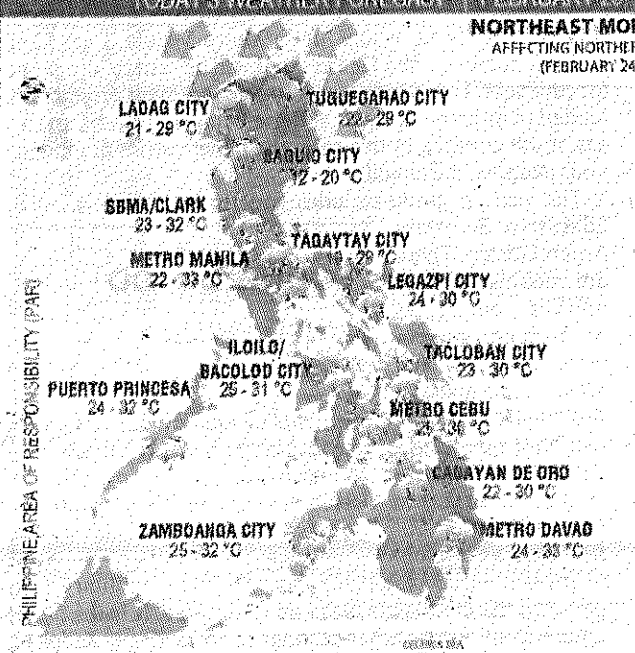


PanahonTV



TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | FEBRUARY 25, 2016 | THURSDAY

NORTHEAST MONSOON
AFFECTING NORTHERN LUZON
(FEBRUARY 24, 5:00 PM)



PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:16 AM	6:03 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
8:05 PM	7:42 AM
FULL MOON	LAST QUARTER
FEB 20 2:19 AM	MAR 3 7:10 AM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
6:31 AM	11:58 PM
0.01 Meter	0.70 Meter

Partly cloudy in a tower
cloudy with rainshowers

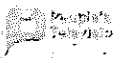


Partly cloudy in a tower
cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms


Clearly clear with rainshowers
and/or thunderstorms

Light rain

	FEB 24	FEB 25	FEB 26	FEB 27	FEB 28	FEB 29
METRO MANILA	22-32°C	22-32°C	18-29°C	19-20°C	23-30°C	23-29°C
TAGAYTAY	22-32°C	22-32°C	18-29°C	19-20°C	23-30°C	23-29°C
TUUEGARAO	22-29°C	23-30°C	23-30°C	23-29°C	22-31°C	23-31°C
LEGASPI	22-29°C	23-30°C	23-30°C	23-29°C	22-31°C	23-31°C
LADAO	19-29°C	20-30°C	25-32°C	25-31°C	23-33°C	23-32°C
PUERTO PRINCESA	25-32°C	25-31°C	25-32°C	25-31°C	23-33°C	23-32°C
METRO DAVAO	25-32°C	25-31°C	25-32°C	25-31°C	23-33°C	23-32°C
BAGUIO	13-21°C	13-21°C	24-31°C	24-31°C	25-32°C	25-33°C
ILOILO/BACOLOD	24-31°C	24-31°C	24-31°C	24-31°C	25-32°C	25-33°C
ZAMBOANGA	25-32°C	25-33°C	25-32°C	25-33°C	25-32°C	25-33°C
SBMA/CLARK	22-32°C	22-31°C	24-31°C	23-30°C		
METRO CEBU	22-32°C	22-31°C	24-31°C	23-30°C		

Watch PANAHOON TV everyday at 6:00 AM on PTV (Channel 4).



SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

25 February 2016



Page: 1

1986 people power: Phl's gift to the world

By AUREA CALICA

Thirty years ago today, Filipinos achieved the impossible and brought down a dictatorship.

The 1986 people power revolution inspired pro-democracy uprisings in other parts of the world and must not be forgotten by Filipinos, Malacañang said yesterday.

Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said Filipinos should "celebrate and rekindle the spirit of EDSA as it represents a high water mark in our history" with the triumph of democracy.

The peaceful revolt ended the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos and propelled Corazon Aquino to power.

"Demonstrating the primacy of people power is the Filipinos' gift to the world: we paved the way for the peaceful dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the return of democracy in South Korea and Romania," Coloma said at the launch of the People Power Experiential Museum at Camp Aguinaldo.

The Berlin Wall divided Germany from 1961 to 1989. A reunified Germany is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The German government has given the Philippines a section of the wall.

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

1986 people From Page 1

Based on reports, huge rallies challenged South Korea's strongman Chun Doo-hwa a year after EDSA, which eventually led to democratic reforms, among them the direct election of president.

The overthrow of the communist regime in Romania and other parts of the world also occurred a few years after EDSA.

Coloma said the executive branch would continue to work closely with the judiciary to ensure that all those who suffered during the Marcos regime get justice.

"The Human Rights Claims Board is processing more than 76,000 claims from individuals and surviving families of those who were killed, tortured or who disappeared during martial law," he said.

Funding for claims would be drawn from ill-gotten wealth recovered from the Marcoses and their cronies by the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

"The Philippines is probably the only country that has set up this institutionalized recovery and compensation processes through official government bodies," Coloma said.

Human rights victims during martial law assailed the slow justice, the reemergence of oligarchs and traditional politicians, as well as the return of the Marcoses to power 30 years after the relatively peaceful military-

backed people's uprising.

Reflect on EDSA

As the country prepares to elect its new leaders, voters should ponder the lessons of EDSA so they can be more discerning in their choice, Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. said.

He recalled that during the EDSA revolution, Filipinos were ready to lay down their lives to "end over two decades of a dictatorship where freedoms of expression and of the press were controlled, and the justice system was barely allowed to function."

"Significantly, this celebration comes during an election year - a genuine exercise under a democracy that was made possible because of EDSA," Belmonte said in a statement.

"In May, we choose new leaders. It should also be an occasion where voters should carefully assess choices based on history and our world-recognized achievement that was EDSA," he said.

"We are each called upon to do our role in choosing government leaders whom we can trust to continue to uphold the gains of EDSA and not set aside the very reason why we live in a democracy today," he added.

The Speaker said the country has taken great strides since February 1986 when Filipinos overcame fear and fought peacefully for genuine freedom.

He said a legacy of the revolution is the continued quest for good governance as well as for a just and lasting peace.

"Let us enjoy the fruits of our democracy and by all means, speak our minds in all fora where freedom of expression reigns," he said.

"This is our government and it is our responsibility to sustain what EDSA has won back for us," Belmonte said.

Noy's tales

In Talavera, Nueva Ecija, President Aquino recalled how martial law had turned his family's world upside down - especially with the arrest and detention of his father and namesake, then a senator - at Fort Magsaysay here along with fellow senator Jose "Pepe" Diokno.

He said his father and Diokno were blindfolded and handcuffed when flown by helicopter from Fort Bonifacio to Fort Magsaysay after martial law was declared.

"Whatever I am today, I was molded by everything that we have been through in our lives. And one of the most significant stories or chapters of our lives, of my life, is the declaration of martial law in our motherland, which happened in 1972," Aquino said.

He noted that though there had been squandered opportunities after EDSA, including what he called the lost decade under the Arroyo administration, there were still a lot of reasons to honor the first EDSA revolution.

"My father wrote an article published in the *Bangkok Post* that was critical of martial law imposed during the time of Mr. Marcos. Because of this article, the forces of the dictatorship were enraged," he said.

"He was secretly arrested in Fort Bonifacio, along with the late senator Jose 'Pepe' Diokno," he added.

"We did not know if our father was dead or alive. There are those even taking advantage and providing false information as to my father's whereabouts at the time," the President recalled.

He said a military officer on an Army truck arrived one day at their family's home on Times street in Quezon City to return the senator's personal belongings, including a toothbrush.

"My mother asked, 'Why were all his stuff being brought back, including the toothbrush?' And the simple answer from those who returned the things was that there was no need for them. Think about it, put yourself in my situation, you're 13 years old, the toothbrush was being returned. When do you not need a toothbrush? That gave us much anxiety," the President said.

He said they sought help from the Supreme Court which allowed him, his mother and his siblings to visit the senator.

"From the headquarters of the Philippine Army in Fort Bonifacio, we were brought to a faraway place, we do not know for sure

where, and in this place, it was dark, there was a camp, surrounded by barb wire and bamboo splits. At the time I felt we were brought to a concentration camp," the President said.

He said he was relieved to see his father but was shocked to realize he had lost so much weight.

"What was left to him before he faced us was his underwear, two pieces of T-shirt, two pieces of briefs. It was very important for my father to wear eyeglasses because he was nearsighted. Whenever he removed that, he would easily get dizzy. If you take the watch, you remove the so-called sense of time," he said.

"My father told us that he had been praying for so long to see us his family even just once. He prayed to the Virgin Mary and that was his request," Aquino said.

The President said his story and that of his family were just part of the millions of stories told by Filipinos who experienced injustice at the time.

Aquino said he was doing his best to make sure people are always empowered.

"Here in Talavera, if I'm not mistaken in 2010, we were campaigning, it was here when an elderly woman told me, 'You will be clashing with the heavyweights, you be careful.' I lived with that. I knew that what I got into was dangerous," the President said.

"We stopped their grisly wrongdoings, they would find a way to get even. That

is okay with me for as long as in the end I could say that I would leave you in a much better place than what I found. With your help, we can continue the changes," Aquino said.

About 10,000 people are expected to take part in the 30th celebration of the EDSA People Power today on EDSA in Ortigas in Quezon City.

President Aquino is expected to lead the celebration with other ranking government officials, diplomats, dignitaries and civil society groups at the People Power Monument. The event is expected to last until 1 p.m. tomorrow.

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Joel Pagdilao created a task force composed of the five police districts in Metro Manila to ensure peaceful and orderly celebration of the EDSA people power, said NCRPO spokesperson Chief Insp. Kimberly Molitas. She reminded the public of the closure of some portions of EDSA's north-bound lane, especially at the corner of Shaw Boulevard and White Plains, until 1 p.m. today.

"We have our troops on the ground ready for any eventuality," she said, adding Metro Manila is on full alert.

"We are all on duty on Feb. 25. All leaves of NCRPO personnel are cancelled, meaning we are all on duty."

- With Paolo Romero, Cecille Suerte Felipe, Romina Cabrera

February 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 2

Terrorist leader slain in Lanao del Sur

By ELENA L. ABEN

The military said it has killed the alleged leader of a local terrorist organization in ongoing clashes in Lanao del Sur.

Major Filemon Tan, spokesman, Armed Forces of the Philippines-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-Wesmincom), said intelligence reports indicate that among the 20 militants believe killed in the skirmishes was Omar Maute, one of the two brothers who led the attack against a detachment of the Army 51st Infantry Battalion in Barangay Bayabao, Butig town, Lanao del Sur late Saturday night.

The AFP had earlier said that around 40 members of the Maute brothers-led local terror group took part in the raid that triggered the continuing military operation.

As of press time, Tan said the weekend skirmishes between Army forces and the group of the Maute brothers has turned into a full blown military offensive with

troops continuing to pound the terrorists, using artilleries, gunships and armored personnel carriers.

The Wesmincom spokesman said that government troops bombarded for the second straight day on Wednesday the Maute brothers and their followers who are still holed up at Barangay Bayabao, while composite ground forces, including Scout Rangers, crawled in for the ground operations.

"They are still there and we are continuing to pound them with artilleries and rockets from helicopters, supported by armors on the ground," said Tan.

"Deretso ang airstrike ng OV-10 at mga MG-520 natin. Kapag medyo lumambot na yun, anytime soon papasukin na yan," he likewise said.

The Maute brothers used to be allied with a Jemaah Islamiyah operative Indonesian Ustadz Sanusi, who was killed by government security forces that raided his lair in Marawi City in November 2012.

25 February 2016



Page: 3

Head of local terrorist organization killed in Lanao del Sur

The Western Mindanao Command, citing intelligence reports, announced on Wednesday that local terrorist organization leader Omar Maute was killed in the ongoing military operations in Lanao del Sur.

Major Filemon Tan, Western Mindanao Command spokesman, said that Maute was one of the two brothers who led the attack against a detachment of the 51st Infantry Battalion in Butig, Lanao del Sur last February 20.

An estimated 40 to 80 lawless elements took part in the raid which lasted until early February 21.

Strafing and bombing runs also killed an estimated 15 to 20 of the bandits, Tan said.

He added that artillery and air strikes are still ongoing.

The Mautes are believed to be allied to elements of the Jemaah Islamiyah and have connections to a foreign terrorist neutralized in 2012.

PNA

25 February 2016

Malaya
The National Newspaper

Page: p3

NPA bomb factory seized in ComVal

BY VICTOR REYES

GOVERNMENT forces captured a bomb-making factory of the New People's Army after a firefight in Kapalong town in Davao del Norte Saturday, the military reported yesterday.

The operation also resulted in the recovery of dozens of explosives and materiel used in the manufacture of improvised explosive devices, among others.

Capt. Rhyan Batchar, public affairs officer of the Army's 10th Infantry Division, citing a belated report, said troops from 60th and 72nd Infantry Battalions were sent to sitio Muling in barangay Gupitan after receiving information that the NPA's Guerilla Front 34 is maintaining an IED factory in the area.

Batchar said the troops clashed with an undetermined number of rebels at around 5 a.m. Saturday for about 20 minutes. He said the rebels incurred casualties as evidenced by traces of blood in the rebel positions.

Recovered at the scene were two cal. 30 Garand rifles, five IEDs, 18 dynamites, an improvised grenade launcher, 11 cartridges of 60 mm grenade, seven cartridges of 40 mm grenade, four cartridges of anti-personnel landmine, 280-meter detonating cord, 11 boxes of 6.35 steel ball,

Sixty-five pieces of toggle switch, 200 pieces of Zener diode, 500 pieces of series lights, a soldering gun, an automatic voltage regulator, a mini lathe with accessories, a drilling machine, a bar cutter, a grinding machine, a sewing machine, and a single phase motor.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Army Core

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

people. Securing the land.

25 February 2016



Pahina. 6

Pabrikang bomba ng NPA, natisod

Hindi tinatanganan ng mga miyembro ng 60th Infantry Battalion (BI) ang isinagawang hot pursuit operation laban sa mga miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA) na sinasabing responsable sa nadiskubring factory ng improvised explosive device (IED) na natagpuan sa Barangay Gupitan, lungsod ng Kapalong, Davao del Norte.

Lumilitaw na bago ang pagkakadiskubre ay nakatanggap umano ng impormasyon ang militar mula sa ilang mga residente na nagsasabing mayroon umanong factory ng bomba sa nabanggit na lugar kaya agad na ikinasa ang nasabing operasyon.

Naging positibo naman ang nasabing impormasyon kaya hindi nabigo ang mga militar at nadiskubre ang tinaguriang factory sa pinakaliblib na bahagi umano ng Sitio Muling, Barangay Gupitan na pinama-

mahalaan umano ng mga rebelde sa ilalim ng Front Committee 34-SMRC na kumikilos sa bahaging New Corella, Talaingod, Davao del Norte at Compostela Valley province.

Narekober ng mga miyembro ng 60th (IB) sa nasabing factory ang dalawang garand rifle, 280 meter na detonating cord, improvised 60 millimeters grenade launcher, 200 meter na fuse time blasting cord, IED, isang vault M16 rifle, improvised 40 millimeter grenade launcher, 18 stick ng dinamita, 11 box ng steel ball na ginamit bilang shrapnel, 5 improvised anti-personnel landmine, 4 cartridge ng improvised anti-personnel landmine, automatic voltage regulator, mga cellphones, machines, at marami pang iba. Gayunma'y nabigo naman ang mga militar na mahuli ang mga NPA. (Nonnie Ferriol)

25 February 2016



Page. 4

NPA 'child soldier' isinuko

DAVAO CITY – Isang "child soldier" na diumanoy ginagamit ng New People's Army (NPA) bilang isang "bomber" ang isinuko ng kanyang mga tiyuhin sa 46th Infantry Battalion (IB) ng Philippine Army noong Martes sa Pantukan, Compostela Valley. Ayon kay Captain Rhyen Batchar, 10th Infantry Division chief information officer, humingi ng tulong mga tiyuhin ni "John" (hindi tunay na pangalan) sa Peace and Development Team (PDT) ng 46th IB para isuko ang binatilyo sa mga awtoridad. Itinago ng militar ang pangalan ng mga tiyuhin ng binatilyo para sa kanilang kaligtasan. Sinabi ni Batchar na ang bata ay sinanay at ginamit para magtanim ng mga Improvised Explosive Device (EID) sa mga lugar na dinadaan ng mga tropa ng gobyerno. "This activity of their nephew worried them. The child, they added, also received threats from the NPAs when he decided to go home and refused to perform his dangerous tasks," ayon pa kay Batchar. Kaagad na dinala si John sa Panutukan Police para sa pagtatala ng detalye ng kanyang pagsuko at pagkatapos ay inilipat siya sa pangangalaga ng Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). **(Alexander D. Lopez)**

25 February 2016



Page. 12

NPA child bomber gives up in ComVal

A 14-YEAR-OLD boy, who was said to be trained by the New People's Army (NPA) in planting bombs to specific targets, was surrendered by his uncles the other day in Pantukan, Compostela Valley.

Army's 10th Infantry Division (ID) spokesman Capt. Rhyen Batchar identified the young bomb planter only as John.

Batchar said the two uncles of the boy turned him over to the Peace and Development Team of the Army's 46th Infantry Battalion.

Reports said the boy would receive threats from the rebels every time he refused to do the task they give him.

From the 46th ID Peace and Development Team, the boy was turned over to the local branch of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

During tactical interrogation, John said that he was trained by the rebels to plant bomb or improvised explosive device (IED) in areas frequented by government forces.

It can be recalled that another child warrior, identified only as alias Dong, and another NPA member, Ronel Paas, alias Dondon, 35, were rescued by government forces when they were left wounded by their comrades at the height of the encounter with soldiers in the mountainous areas of Pantukan.

In line with this, Maj. Rafael Valencia, commander of Army's 10th ID, called on the rebels to stop recruiting minors to be part of their organization.

Zaida delos Reyes-Palanca

Army confirms 2 women killed in operations vs Abu Sayyaf in Lamitan City

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Feb 24): **Army confirms 2 women killed in operations vs Abu Sayyaf in Lamitan City**

But village chairman says military operations were triggered by rido

The military has admitted that soldiers killed two women – one of them an elderly — and wounded several others in its clash with Abu Sayyaf bandits last Monday, in Lamitan City.

In a statement issued about 15 hours after the raid, 1Lt. Sally Christine Prima, the military's spokesman in Basilan, said the "civilian casualties" were relatives of Abu Sayyaf members Totong Ujong and Nurhassan Lahaman.

Prima said the civilians "participated and provided cover during the encounter against the government forces."

Earlier, Maj. Gen. Demy Tejares, commander of the Joint Task Force Zambasulta, said elements of the 13th Scout Ranger Company were providing back up support to the Lamitan Police – headed by Insp. Insp. Gean Gallardo – in serving a warrant of arrest against Lahaman in Barangay Bohe Ibu on Monday when they clashed with Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Lahaman is an Abu Sayyaf member under Nurhassan Jamiri, according to Tejares.

Prima said as the soldiers were entering the village, they were met with gunfire around 5:42 a.m. "The government forces, while approaching the objective, was met by heavy volume of fire coming from the enemy... However, government forces were able to return fire and out-maneuvered the well-established defense position of the enemy, which ensued for about fifteen (15) minutes," she said.

Prima said after the clash, two civilians were killed and several others were wounded. **Maklimar Mamang, Bohe Ibu chair, identified the slain civilians as Ananang Ujong, 30; and Amparing Acapul, 65.**

Mamang said Ujong's husband, Totong, 31, and her children – aged 10 and 12, were also injured in the raid.

But he denied that there were any Abu Sayyaf members in the village, about five kilometers away from Lamitan proper.

"Since I was a child, I have not heard of any encounter here between the Abu Sayyaf and government forces. There is no Abu Sayyaf here, but family feud or rido is very common in our place," Mamang told the Philippine Daily Inquirer by phone.

He said that at the height of the raid, the soldiers had prevented village officials from entering Sitio Tamara, where the slain civilians resided.

He said based on the accounts of survivors, the firing was indiscriminate.

"First, there was no heavy encounter between two armed groups, there's no ASG here. Second, they launched a raid and killed two innocent women. They committed errors, their assets may

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

have provided them with false information,” Mamang said.

Gallardo said when the police arrived in the community, the Scout Ranger soldiers were already engaged in a firefight.

He said when the gunfire stopped and they searched the area, they saw the two dead women. Gallardo said the raid was prompted by a report that armed men were roaming the village.

“At about 3 a.m. of same date, government troops left from the 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion in Campo Uno in Lamitan City, Basilan, and upon arrival at Bohe Ibu, the rangers were able to encounter the (lawless) group, fire fights started at 6 a.m.,” a post-incident report that Gallardo sent to the Basilan provincial police office reads.

He said soldiers were able “to penetrate the temporary place of encampment (of the armed group), where several fox holes were discovered at the said place. The encounter ended at about 8:30 a.m. of same date,” he added.

Mamang said the Ujongs were workers in his family's coconut farm and were not Abu Sayyaf bandits or supporters.

Lahaman, on the other hand, has a standing rido against the Hamja family – which is reportedly close to the military and police, according to Mamang.

Mamang said he was demanding an investigation and the filing of charges against those responsible for the deaths of the two civilians and the wounding of the three others.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/768132/army-confirms-2-women-killed-in-operations-vs-abu-sayyaf-in-lamitan-city>

25 February 2016

INQUIRER

Page: Art

Miriam seeks probe of 'lumad' evacuation center fire

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Jaymee T. Gamil

PRESIDENTIAL candidate Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago demanded an investigation of the "state agents" who burned a lumad evacuation center in Davao City, the

latest act of violence against members of indigenous tribes in Mindanao.

Santiago said the government failed to protect the lumad who were driven out of their homes by the military and paramilitary groups and continued to be housed in refugees sites.

"I condemn in the strongest terms the alleged arson of the lumad evacuation center in Davao City and I urge authorities to investigate the incident promptly," she said.

"The indigenous peoples at the UCCP (United Church of Christ in the Philippines) Haran compound were driven out of their homes by violence. The lumad are now again rendered homeless. They deserved state protection but were instead harassed by state agents who once attempted to forcibly evict them," Santiago added.

"We have failed the lumad. Let us not renege further on our obligation," she added.

Reports said two unidentified men were seen setting fire to dormitories used by lumad evacuees at the UCCP compound in Haran, Davao City around 2 a.m. Wednesday. The fire razed the building and injured five people, including two children.

Militarization

Santiago earlier asked for a Senate inquiry into an earlier harassment in June 2015 when the Davao police and other armed personnel reportedly attempted to forcibly evict the lumad evacuees from the church compound.

She also sought an investigation into the reported militarization of indigenous communities and closure of schools for lumad children.

Santiago urged the next Congress to pass a law on the rights of internally displaced persons, which President Aquino vetoed in 2013.

Advocates for Mindanao indigenous people blamed the paramilitary group

Alamara for the fire.

Hours after the fire, the Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns issued a statement expressing belief "the incident was intentional."

"The lumad evacuees have been experiencing harassment from paramilitary group Alamara, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Rep. Nancy Catamco and government agencies to return to their respective communities," Salinlahi information officer Eule Bonganay said in a statement.

Intention to terrorize

The lumad have been seeking shelter at the church compound since last year, allegedly fleeing militarization in their areas.

The leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) also believed the fire was intentional.

Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes noted that "witnesses smelled gasoline on their roofs prior to the fire. Gasoline containers were also recovered outside the compound, according to reports."

"There appears to be an intent to terrorize the lumad evacuees and their supporters," Reyes said.

Sought for comment, AFP East Mindanao Command spokesperson Capt. Alberto Caber said it was "unfair" to immediately blame the fire on state forces.

"It is not fair to just make accusations. Anyone can accuse anyone, but for the truth to come out, let's wait for the results of the investigation" of the Bureau of Fire Protection, Caber urged, in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

25 February 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 13

Attack on Haran

By ALEXANDER D. LOPEZ

DAVAO CITY - Indigenous peoples, or lumads, who have been staying at an evacuation center inside a church compound here were thrown into panic when unidentified men went on a burning rampage yesterday dawn that injured five evacuees, including two children.

An explosion shook the Haran compound of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) here at 2 a.m. as a hut occupied by evacuees and a dormitory for church workers were set on fire by at least three men, who, witnesses said, were seen throwing torches to the roofs of the buildings and settlements inside the compound.

Jong Monson, secretary-general of Pasaka Lumad Organization told the Manila Bulletin here in an interview that the timely intervention of the evacuees, themselves, and the prompt arrival of firefighters kept the fire from spreading to the rest of the compound.

"This was intentional. We saw three men outside the compound threw woods with fire to the evacuation houses. We

also smell gasoline during that time," he said.

First to be set ablaze was a hut whose roof was nearly obliterated, then the adjacent dormitory.

The evacuees were able to recover a gallon of gasoline just outside the fence of the compound.

There are 800 lumad families, belonging to the Manobo tribe, currently staying at the Haran Compound, Monson stressed.

Most of the evacuees are from the areas of Talaingod and Kapalong in Davao del Norte and White Kulaman in Kitaotao, Bukidnon.

Meanwhile, militant partylist solons condemned the attack at the evacuation center, saying that the continued harassment of lumads should be investigated immediately.

"We denounce the latest attack by what we believe to be forces from paramilitary groups against our Lumad brothers and sisters. As if the Lumad evacuees have not suffered enough, now even their evacuation camp is again being targeted," said Kabataan Rep. Terry Ridon.

Victims of the fire have reportedly pointed to Alamara, a paramilitary

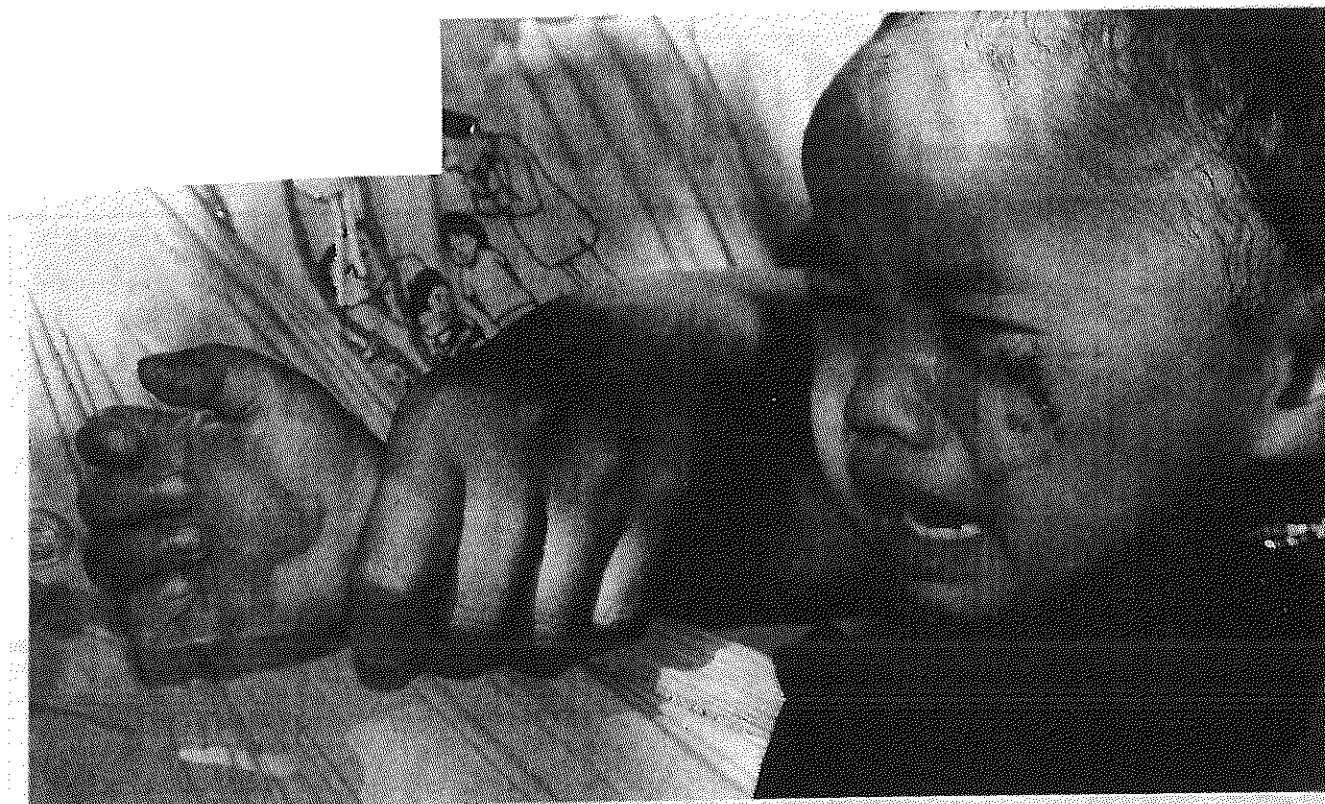
group allegedly enjoying the support of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as being behind the fire.

Gabriela Women's Party-list Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan said lumad families have also decried the lack of action to

the numerous cases of human rights violations that have already been filed against the paramilitary group and North Cotabato Rep. Nancy Catamco, chairperson of the House Committee on National Cultural Communities.

"The violations, harassment and killings continue and the lumads are being attacked without end. This fact alone shows the Aquino government's tolerance, if not its outright imprimatur to this ethnocide," Ilagan stressed.

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



ATTACK ON LUMADS - With burns on her face and hand, this two-year-old girl cries in pain after the attacks on the lumad evacuation center inside the Haran Compound of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in Davao City. (Alexander D. Lopez)

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

Army Chief Purpose: Serving the people, securing the land

25 February 2016

The
Standard
PHILIPPINE DAILY

Page: A2

Lumad refugee camp set on fire

By John Paolo Bencito, Sandy Araneta
and Macon Ramos-Araneta

UNIDENTIFIED men torched a refugee camp for displaced indigenous people or lumad in a church compound in Davao City Tuesday, sending five people—including two children—to hospital.

Witnesses from the lumad organization Pasaka said unidentified men in motorcycles set fire to the camp and dormitories inside the Haran compound of the United Churches of Christ of the Philippines, the temporary home for lumad refugees who were driven from their homes by paramilitary groups in Davao del Norte and Bukidnon since last year.

The men poured gasoline on the canvas roofs of the refugees tents, the witnesses said.

Three persons were taken to hospital with injuries, including two children.

The Bureau of Fire Protection in Davao City said its initial investigation showed that arson was the cause of fires that broke out on opposite ends of the Haran Mission House.

Various groups condemned the torching of the refugee camp.

"Military attacks continue to haunt the lumad, even tormenting those who sought safe shelter. This is an abominable act," said Kharlo Manano of the group Salinlahi.

"The incident also underlines the Aquino government's complete disregard of our indigenous peoples. Not one person of authority has been made accountable for the numerous human rights violations proliferating in indigenous communities—the very reason why over 700 lumad are currently displaced," Manano added.

Bayan Secretary General Renato Reyes added: "This latest incident is part of the continuing attacks against the lumad resistance. The perpetrators may have intended something more than just burning the compound. There also appears to be an intent to terrorize the lumad evacuees and their supporters."

Gabriela Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan called for an investigation to identify those responsible.

"The violations, harassment and killings continue and the lumad are being attacked without end," she said.

Those behind the fire were "worse than animals," said Anakpawis party-list

Rep. Fernando Hicap.

Anakpawis and several other militant groups have been supporting the lumad campaign against extrajudicial killings and harassment by armed groups associated with the military.

Hicap said President Benigno Aquino III should be held accountable for the incessant killings of the lumad.

"We hold the Aquino presidency ultimately responsible for this atrocity, when the whole country and world joined the call 'Stop Lumad Killings,' he just went on his way militarizing Mindanao and paved ways for mining and plantation operations," Hicap said.

Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago also denounced the attack.

"I condemn in the strongest terms the alleged arson of the lumad evacuation center in Davao City, and I urge authorities to investigate the incident promptly," the senator said.

"The indigenous peoples at the UCCP Haran compound were driven out of their homes by violence. The lumads are now again rendered homeless. They deserved state protection, but were instead harassed by state agents, who once attempted to forcibly evict them," Santiago said.

She was referring to an incident in June 2015, when the Davao police and other armed personnel reportedly attempted to forcibly evict the *lumad* evacuees from the church compound and back to their homes.

Santiago has earlier filed a resolution calling for a Senate inquiry on the June 2015 incident. She has also sought probes on the alleged militarization of indigenous communities and the reported closure of schools for *lumad* children.

"I urge the next Congress to fast-track the passage of the Rights of Internally Displaced Persons Act and to include in the bill specific provisions on the rights of indigenous peoples," Santiago said.

"We have failed the *lumad*. Let us not renege further on our obligation," she added.

25 February 2016

The
Standard
PHILIPPINE NEWS

Page: A1

100 jihadists sent on bombing missions

By Francisco Tuyay

AT LEAST 100 extremists have completed their training in bomb making from foreign jihadists and are being deployed on test missions in various areas of Mindanao, military sources said Wednesday.

The military issued the warning even as security forces contin-

ued their three-week long offensive against the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, a splinter group from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

The offensive has already killed an Indonesian jihadist and Omar Maute, the leader of a band of rebels that has been harboring foreign terrorists.

Maute, was killed by troops of the Army's 51st Infantry Battalion in Butig, Lanao del Sur over the weekend, but his wife, an Indonesian jihadist, is still hiding somewhere in Mindanao, the source said.

Maute is believed to have harbored Indonesian terrorist Mohammad Muktar, who was killed in the clashes at Butig.

Next page

100...

From A1

Muktar is believed to be part of a group of Indonesian and Malaysian jihadists who fled their homelands and sought refuge with extremists in Mindanao.

The foreign jihadists were the ones who trained the group of 100 extremists in bomb making somewhere in Liguasan Marsh near Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat, the source said.

As part of their training, the local extremists planted explosive devices in the towns of Datu Odin Sinsuat, Guindulungan, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Datu Hofer and Shariff Aguak in Maguindanao and in Pikit and Aleosan towns in North Cotabato, the source added.

The military had earlier reported that at least 18

government soldiers were injured by these bombs. Five civilians, including the town treasurer of Datu Salibo, were also among the casualties of the bombs planted by the extremist group.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said they were "always on the alert" for terrorist attacks.

The recruits were trained by Salahudin Hassan, a member of the Al Khobar group supporting the Jemaah Islamiya and Mumanda Ali, alias Mauwiya, a former military officer from Singapore, who took part in the 2001 bomb attack in Bali, Indonesia. He sought refuge in Mindanao in 2002.

The recruits include Jolo-based militants and extremists from Central Mindanao.

Similar reports of bombing missions by at least six ASG recruits under terrorist sub-leader Majan Sajid

juan, alias Mike, spread in Sulu after they were seen roaming Jolo last month, prompting Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado to put his troops on alert.

The more than 100 land mines found in Datu, Salibo were laid by the recruits as part of their test missions, the source said.

The military has been clearing the area of land mines.

Muktar was the second Indonesian militant to have been killed after security forces launched a campaign against the Abu Sayyaf Group in Sulu and BIFF in Central Mindanao.

Reports, meanwhile, indicated that members of the MILF's 102nd Base Command under Abdul-lah Makapaar, alias commander Bravo, were responsible for the ambush of an Army mechanized brigade in Butig town that left four soldiers dead.

The MILF's 102nd BC has been in an alliance with JI bomb expert Azahari, Dulmatin and Umar Patek, both masterminds of the 2002 Bali, Indonesia blast that left 202 people killed.

Dulmatin was killed in a firefight with Indonesian police in 2010 while Patek was captured by Pakistani security forces in Abbottabad on Jan. 25, 2011. Both were involved in a series of bombings in Mindanao during that period.

"Very significantly, there has been an alliance between MILF 102nd BC and foreign jihadists and it also appears that the MILF cannot control Bravo, the current MILF's regional commander in the Western Front Command," a source said.

"The MILF is avoiding the issue of Bravo's actions, it's like a good cop or bad cop tactic," the source added.

25 February 2016

The Manila Times

Page: A2

Museum recreates people's struggle

COL. Noel Detoyato, chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Public Affairs Office.

The world's first peaceful people power revolution rectified the dark past of the military, which was seen as one of the tools employed to quell dissent during the martial law years, according to Col. Noel Detoyato, chief of the Public Affairs Office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Martial law, according to Detoyato, was the dark era of the military that is now being portrayed in the "Experiential Museum" set up at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City (Metro Manila) on Wednesday as part of the observance of the 30th anniversary of the civilian-backed military revolt that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

"The dark past of the military was portrayed in the experiential museum and this is what we say, it is dark and it is past. We now have a transformed Armed Forces of the

Philippines," the official said.

Aimed at educating the youth about the history of martial law and the EDSA revolution, the museum combines elements of theater, cinema, photography, performances, installations, and other allied arts to recreate the struggle of Filipinos.

Officials said the museum is both engaging and educational so that young people may be better informed about the experience of the nation and the struggle for freedom and democracy.

The theme of this year's commemoration is "Pagbabago: Ipaglaban n'yo. Itutuloy ko."

Other highlights of the celebration, among others, is an air show to be led by the Philippine Air Force which will be using the two newly-acquired FA-50 fighter jets to perform high-speed opener pass.

The supersonic jets were seen flying Monday and Tuesday.

FERNAN MARASIGAN

25 February 2016

The Manila Times

Page: A7

Lanao clashes continue; MILF denies involvement

MARAWI CITY: An Army private was killed on Tuesday when his convoy came under attack in Wato-Balindong town, Lanao del Sur as it was on the way to reinforce troops pursuing an extremist group in another town.

Private First Class Emmanuel Buhilag of the 51st Infantry Battalion was the lone fatality in the ambush believed carried out by members of the Khilafah Islamiyah Movement (KIM) against the two military trucks around 11 am. The gunmen fled after an hour's exchange of gunfire with and mortar shelling from the soldiers.

The military convoy was on the highway in Bubong Cadapaan village on the way to Madalum town to reinforce soldiers in Butig town, said Col. Roseller Murillo, commander of Marawi city-based 103rd Infantry Brigade.

The ambush caused panic in surrounding communities and forced local authorities to close the Narciso Ramos Highway - the main road connecting Balindong town to Marawi City - for five hours. This was to save civilian travellers from getting caught in the crossfire.

Authorities believed that Tuesday's ambush was a "diversion tactic" by the KIM to prevent troops from reinforcing the unit already pursuing 300 of its members in Poktan village in Butig.

The trouble in Butig erupted four days ago when the KIM - which earlier pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) - attacked an Army detachment.

as Commander Bravo of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) - on Wednesday urged a joint ceasefire committee to investigate on the attacks.

Macapaar denied any MILF involvement in the recent attacks in Bayabao District in Butig and Bubong-Kadapaan in Balindong where three soldiers were killed in combat and more wounded.

He insisted that the MILF forces remained inside MILF camps as skirmishes in Butig went on.

Intermittent clashes erupted until Monday, stopping only after troops from Army's 103rd IB arrived and helped drive the extremists away with 105 Howitzer canons and aerial assaults by the Philippine Air Force fighter planes.

Displaced

About 7,800 civilians or 335 families from Butig fled to Marawi City as a result of the fighting.

They were provided with relief and medical assistance, according to Lanao del Sur Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

Assistance is also underway for 657 other evacuees that sought refuge in Masiu, Lanao del Sur.

The office was also validating reports of thousands of families that supposedly ran for safety in the towns of Lumbatan, Lumbayana and Poona-Bayabao.

Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Governor Mujiv Hataman has ordered an inquiry into the Butig and Balindong incidents to determine the extent of dislocation of local residents.

**MOH SAADUDDIN AND
JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL**

Involvement denied

In a related development, Abdullah Macapaar - more notorious

land.

25 February 2016



Pahina. 2

Sweldo ng guro, sundalo, pulis dodoblehin ni Duterte

BUO ang plano ng pam-bato ng PDP Laban bilang pangulo na si Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte na dagdagan at doblehin ang natatanggap na sahod ng mga guro, pulis at sundalo sa bansa.

Ayon kay Duterte, kilalang may tapang at malasakit na lingkod ng bayan, panahon na para kilalanin ang sakripisyo at pagtitiyagang ginagawa ng naturang sektor sa ating estado dahil napakalaki ang kanilang naiambag na serbisyo sa ating mamamayan.

Sinabi pa ni Digong, palayaw ng alkalde, na ang pagtataas ng sweldo sa mga sundalo at pulis ay isa sa nakikita niyang solusyon para magtatrabaho ito ng maayos at 'di na pumatol sa masamang gawain kagaya ng pakikipag-sabwatan sa mga kriminal, sindikato at pangongotong.

Malinaw sa datos na halos P15,000 lang kada buwan ang natatanggap na sahod ng may pinakamababang rango sa pulisya at sa kasundaluhan na kung susumahin ay hindi sapat para mabuhay ito ng maayos sa lipunan nitong ginagalawan.

Sa paliwanag ni Duterte, maliwanag na nagdarahap at sumasala sa oras ng pagkain ang mga sundalo at pulis pati na ang mga pamilya ng mga ito kaya't kailangan itong kailangin at tulongan ng pamahalaan.

Sa panig naman ng mga guro sa bansa, nakita rin ng

alkalde, na hindi rin sasapat para makabuhay ng isang pamilya ang kasalukuyang sweldo ng mga ito dahil ipinakita ng dalos P18,000 lamang ang natatanggap nitong sahod at ang masakit ay kakaitasan pa ito ng mga buwis na ipinapataw ng gobyerno.

"Trabahong kalabaw ang ipinakikita ng mga guro, sundalo at pulis natin sa bansa pero ang pagkilala ng pamahalaan na ibinigay sa kanila at hindi sapat para mabuhay man lang ng kaaya-aya," dagdag pa ng alkalde.

Nakita rin ni Digong ang pakikipagsapalaran ng mga sundalo at pulis sa araw na kung saan buhay ang kanilang palaging itinataya sa kanilang pagtupad sa tungkulin.

"Malinaw sa Mamasapano incident na buhay ang itina-ya ng ating mga kapulisan kaya't panahon na para biglan sila ng pagkilala at disenteng buhay," anang alkalde.

Idinagdag pa ni Duterte na malaki ang utang na loob ng bawat mamamayan at kabataang Pilipino sa mga guro dahil sila ang umuukit ng ating kinabukasan.

Kasama sa prayoridad ni Duterte na taasan ang budget ng edukasyon at tanggulang pambansa sakaling palarin siyang manalo bilang pangulo ng republika.

Gusto rin ni Duterte na wag nang pagbayarin ng buwis ang mga manggagawang at empleyadong sumasahod ng P30,000 kada buwan. **RIT**

25 February 2016



Page: 4

Sandigan convicts retired Marines general, 4 others

By Alvin Murcia

A retired general of the Philippine Marines and four others were convicted by the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division yesterday for illegal disposition of high-powered firearms in 2000.

The convicts are former Philippine Marines commandant Brig. Gen. Percival Subala, former Philippine Marines assistant chief of staff Col. Cesar de la Peña, and private individuals Edelbert Uybuco, Gerardo Vijandre, Manuel Ferdinand Trinidad and Michael Boregas.

The court said they were all found "guilty beyond reasonable doubt" of Illegal Disposition of Firearms which is under Section 1 of Presidential Decree 1866.

The six accused were sentenced by the court to suffer a minimum of four years and two months to a maximum of six years and eight months of imprisonment. They were also ordered to each pay a fine of

P30,000.

Based on the 69-page resolution penned by Fifth Division chairman Associate Justice Roland Jurado, the elaborate and illegal scheme participated in by De la Peña, Subala, Trinidad, Boregas, Uybuco and Vijandre would probably have gone unnoticed if not for the operation conducted by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group which resulted in the chance recovery of five of the 72 firearms which were about to be loaded onto pump boats in Zambales.

The resolution was concurred in by Associate Justices Elexander Gesmundo and Ma. Theresa Dolores Gomez-Estoesta.

Former Philippine Navy Capt. Teodoro Briones, a co-accused in the case, was acquitted after the prosecution failed to prove that he was guilty beyond reasonable doubt, thus the hold departure against him was ordered to be lifted along with

the bond he posted was to be returned.

The case against another co-accused, former Police Officer 4 Richard Zules, meanwhile, was ordered indefinitely archived as he remains at large. The court ordered the issuance of another warrant of arrest against him to order the authorities to continue their manhunt operations.

The Office of the Ombudsman in 2007 filed the information before the Sandiganbayan and stated the accused in June 2000 conspired to illegally disposed 72 units of cal. 9mm submachine guns "by making it appear that the Philippine Marines Corps. purchased the said firearms from Trimark Ventures Trading Corporation."

The high-powered guns, which were supposed to be delivered to the Philippine Marine Corps. Headquarters at Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City did not reach their destination and were delivered

instead to the office of Trimark at Windsor Towers Condominium, Legaspi Village in Makati City.

The Ombudsman said the supposed purchased firearms, which were then stored at the PNP Firearms and Explosives Division (FED) armory located inside the PNP Headquarters at Camp Crame, Quezon City, were released by the power of a Firearms License for Juridical Entity under the name of the Philippine Marines Corps as well as a purchase order approved by Subala.

Because of the said documents, accused Boregas with the consent of accused Trinidad, withdrew the firearms from the FED which were disposed to unauthorized persons.

The recovery of five pieces of MP5 assault sub-machineguns from the 96 assorted short firearms and rifles seized from a Taiwanese-led gunrunning syndicate on Oct. 5, 2000 in Subic, Zambales led to the filing of the case.

25 February 2016

The
Standard
~~DEFENSE~~

Page: A1

CHINA: PH CAUSE OF ALL TENSION

By Vito Barcelo

CHINA insisted Wednesday that the Philippines was the instigator of heightened tensions in the South China Sea and that Manila had violated agreements on maritime conduct by abandoning direct dialogue with Beijing.

The Department of Foreign Affairs declined to comment on the accusation by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi that the Philippines had reneged on the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct (DOC) of

Parties in the South China Sea between China and Southeast Asian nations.

Wang also branded the Philippines as the instigator of tension in the disputed South China Sea.

"One country, and let me not avoid mentioning the name: that is, the Philippines, has violated the stipulation of Article 4 of DOC and has given up on the dialogue and negotiations with the direct concerned parties of China, which is regrettable and which is ill-advised," Wang said in a statement.

The Philippines has filed an arbitration case against China before the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, the Netherlands. China has refused to participate in the proceedings.

Wang warned other claimant coun-

tries in the region from deploying naval power to enforce their claims.

"We don't hope to see anymore close-up military reconnaissance or the dispatch of missile destroyers or strategic bombers to the South China Sea. This is something we have a responsibility for under our non-militarization commitment," the Chinese foreign minister said.

But the Foreign Affairs Department said Wednesday it was trying to verify reports that China has deployed J-11 and JH-7 fighter jets on Woody Island, part of the Paracel island chain in the hotly disputed region.

In Washington, a Pentagon spokesman said it was not the first time China had sent fighter jets to Woody Island, but added the deployment of surface-to-air missiles on

the island was of greater concern.

China controls the Paracel chain, but Taiwan and Vietnam also claim it.

The Philippines, Brunei and Malaysia have conflicting claims with China as well over islands in the South China Sea.

Taiwan military officials confirmed the deployment of missiles on Woody Island.

China said these were for defense and denied it was militarizing the island.

In Washington, Navy Capt. Darryn James, a spokesman for US Pacific Command, confirmed a Fox report on the deployment of planes but said the Chinese have done it before.

The movement of planes was reported as US Secretary of State John Kerry hosted his Chinese counterpart, Wang, in Washington.

Next page

China: ...

From A1

Wang had been scheduled to visit the Pentagon earlier Tuesday but the visit was canceled due to a "scheduling conflict," officials said.

On Monday, the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies released satellite imagery showing what appeared to be a high-frequency radar installation under construction on an artificial island on Cuarteron Reef in the Spratlys.

China's land reclamation and military buildup in the South China Sea have drawn international condemnation and the United States has said it will continue to sail through waters claimed by Beijing.

The United States and China remained apart Tuesday over Beijing's alleged bid to use disputed areas in the South China Sea for military purposes.

"There are missiles and fighter aircraft and guns, artillery and other things that have been placed into the South China Sea" in addition to radars, Kerry told a joint press conference with Wang after their talks in Washington.

"We want to halt the expansion and the militarization of occupied features," Kerry said.

Wang challenged Washington's view, saying, "The South China Sea islands have historically been China's territory." He criticized the US military for operating inside what China claims to be territorial waters near contested areas since October last year.

"We don't hope to see any more close-up military reconnaissance or the dispatch of missile destroyers or strategic bombers to the South China Sea," Wang said.

The US military sailed a destroyer near the Subi Reef in the Spratly Islands in October and another near Triton Island in the Paracel chain in January. It also flew a B-52 bomber near Cuarteron Reef in December in a flight it says was unintentional.

Washington says the maneuvers are part of a so-called freedom of navigation operation aimed at demonstrating that the US government does not recognize any territorial claim near submerged features in the sea.

China has built artificial islands on Subi, Cuarteron and other reefs through reclamation work and constructed large-scale facilities on them.

With tensions escalating in the South China Sea, the US Army is discussing the possibility of sending mobile artillery units to the region.

Over the weekend, US President Barack Obama stated that his administration would continue to challenge Beijing's territorial claims in the South China Sea.

"We think China is resorting to the old style of might makes right, as opposed to working through international law and international norms to establish claims and to resolve disputes," Obama said in an interview with Channel News Asia.

The US and its Pacific allies have accused China

of building artificial islands on top of sensitive marine habitats to establish an air defense zone in the highly contested waterway. China maintains it has every right to build within what it considers to be its own territory, and has stated that the islands will be used primarily for humanitarian purposes.

Beijing has accused Washington of stirring unrest in the region, and new information of additional behind-the-scenes machinations have come to light.

According to a senior US Army official, the US may soon deploy mobile artillery, the kind traditionally used in land-based offensives, to the South China Sea, as defensive units.

"We could use existing Howitzers and that type of munition to knock out incoming threats when people try to hit us from the air at long ranges using rockets and cruise missiles," the official said.

Such a plan would require the cooperation of regional allies, who would have to approve the placement of the guns.

"A Howitzer can go where it has to go. It is a way of changing an offensive weapon and using it in dual capacity," the anonymous military official said. "This opens the door to opportunities and options we have not had before with mobile defensive platforms and offensive capabilities."

US Senator John McCain said the US should consider imposing sanctions on Chinese entities over its actions in the South China Sea.

"I think it's time for the United States government to explore the appropriateness

of sanctions against Chinese companies involved in the [land] reclamation that has destabilized the South China Sea and has caused massive environmental destruction across this maritime domain," McCain said during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on Tuesday.

McCain said he was worried China would "attempt to expel another country" from the disputed maritime region such as the Second Thomas Shoal or build new infrastructure at locations like Scarborough Shoal.

In response to such a move, McCain urged Washington to "consider clarifying" how US or Philippine forces would respond to an attack on that territory.

"We should also consider further steps for enhancing posture, improving infrastructure, funding additional exercises, pre-positioning additional equipment and munitions and building partner capacity throughout the Asia-Pacific region," McCain added.

The area of the Spratly Islands—a group of over 750 islands and reefs that are believed to hold significant oil and gas reserves—is disputed by China and a number of regional countries.

Countries laying claim to the islands say they serve as an important commercial shipping route.

In recent days, China has come under scrutiny for allegedly constructing radar installations on the Cuarteron Reef in the Spratly Islands, which is expected to boost the country's surveillance capabilities. **With PNA**

25 February 2016

The Manila Times

Page: A7

'Stop harassing Mindanao plantations'

AGRARIAN reform beneficiaries are appealing to the National People's Army (NPA) to stop harassing big plantations in Mindanao.

They also called on the Aquino administration to prevent such attacks that could shut down operations and trigger massive layoffs in these plantations.

"If the NPAs are truly for the people, why deprive the masses of their livelihood?" said Eduardo Maningo, a spokesman for beneficiaries.

Last year, the NPAs attacked Mindanao plantations almost on a monthly basis from January until November.

They burned heavy equipment, container vans and cargo trucks loaded with bananas in T'boli and Surallah in South Cotabato; Barobo and Lianga in Surigao del Sur; Quezon, Bukidnon; Maco, Compostela Valley; and Maasim, Sarangani province.

The assaults stopped when a Christmas ceasefire agreement was reached in December last year but resumed in late January.

The attacks from January 22 to February 19 this year was as many as those launched for the entire 2015.

There is concern that the attacks could stop the expansion of the plantations or force multinational corporations to pack up their operations altogether.

"The attacks have not yet resulted in any physical casualty to plantation workers but a much greater injury awaits, not only the farm laborers but also the economy in general," Maningo warned.

Banana plantations cover 83,000 hectares in Mindanao and employ 332,000 workers. The closure of plantation operations could cause as many as 2 million people, to include workers' families, to lose their livelihood.

Last week, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) said their fighters will shoot down aerial spray planes if plantations continue to use them.

JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ

25 February 2016



Pahina. 2

28 PAF aircrafts 'show of force' sa EDSA anniv.

Dalawampu't walong aircrafts ng Philippine Air Force (PAF) ang nakatak-dang magsagawa ng "air show" kaugnay ng pag-gunita sa EDSA People Power anniversary nga-yong araw.

Ayon kay PAF spokesman Col. Enrico Canaya, bilang paki-kiisa sa makasaysayang okasyon, paliliparin ang 15 SF 260 jets, dala-wang FA50 fighter jets, tatlong Bell chopper 412,

tatlong Augusta AW 109 chopper, tatlong UH-ID helicopter at dalawang UH-1H helicopter.

Ang dalawang UH-1H helicopter ang magsa-sagawa ng pagsasabog ng mga talulot ng bu-laklak na kabilang sa programa sa EDSA an-niversary.

Una nang inihayag ng AFP na ang paglipad ng mga eroplano ng PAF ay bahagi na rin ng pagsa-sanay sa naturang mga

aircrafts.

Nakatakda ring mag-sagawa ng Unity Walk ang mga opisyal ng PNP at AFP sa nasabing sele-brasyon.

Noong panahon ng EDSA 1 noong Pebrerp 25, 1986 ay malaki ang ginampanang papel ng militar, pulis, pari at mga sibilyan na nagkaisa sa mapayapang pag-aaklas para umiral ang demokrasya sa bansa. (Joy Cantos)

25 February 2016

PHILIPPINE ARMY INQUIRER

Page: 4/0

Little known book bares US, Clark role in revolt

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

A LITTLE known book published by a US Air Force unit contained small details that reveal the extent of the US government's role in the 1986 Edsa People Power revolt, including the planning for the evacuation of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos from Malacañang to Clark Air Base on his way to exile in Hawaii.

While mementos of the revolt have long been missing at the Clark Museum in the former US air base, a book published by the US Air Force unit that evacuated Marcos and his party from Malacañang on Feb. 25, 1986, contained details, or at least a version, of that historic exit.

Pictures of Marcos' hasty arrival in Clark and departure for Hawaii have not been released until now, years after the Philippine government converted the air base into an economic hub in the aftermath of the rejection by the Philippine Senate of a treaty that would have extended the stay of US bases in Clark and Subic.

The US 13th Air Force (13AF) shared its account in the chapter, "February 1986 Revolution," in the fourth edition of "An Annotated Pictorial History of Clark Air Base: 1899-1986."

The 13AF is integral to the US Pacific Air Force as a unit that is always "combat-ready, fully supplied and capable of instant mobility."

The book was put together by the 13AF's Office of History and written by its chief, David L. Rosmer.

Only edition

It was circulated mostly in the military, never seeing print again after its publication in 1986.

Ceferina Yopez, who served as national affairs adviser to a succession of 13AF commanders since 1949, used to have three copies of the book before the Philippine Senate rejection of the bases in 1991.

"All my copies were borrowed and never returned," she said. Her only copy now is donated in 2014 by Col. David Richardson, who served as an executive officer of a commanding general.

Yopez, former curator of the Clark Museum, considers the book valuable for its rare photographs and survey maps, some dating as far back as 1902 when the US established Clark as the Fort Stotsenburg base for cavalry horses.

"Like the museum, the book carried no snapshots of Marcos' stay in Clark, probably his second visit to the base since he raised the Philippine flag in Clark on Feb. 16, 1979, when the Philippines regained

sovereignty over the base lands.

The chapter ended with this note: "Although there were photographs taken during Marcos' brief stay at Clark [Air Base], they have not been cleared for release outside official US agency by the State Department."

Rosmer narrated the events leading to the bloodless revolt, opening the account with "For

20 years, Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos had been virtually synonymous with the Philippines."

That was until the assassination of Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. on Aug. 21, 1983, the snap election that Marcos called against Aquino's widow, Corazon, on Feb. 7, 1986, the breakaway of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Armed Forces vice chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, from Marcos on Feb. 22, and the massing up of people on Edsa following Jaime Cardinal Sin's appeal to protect the two officials.

'For her part, Mrs. Aquino has made no secret of the fact that she wanted the US to engineer Marcos' departure from the country and that she conveyed that message to the American authorities who approved the evacuation...'

'Two presidents'

Rosmer recalled that "on Tuesday, Feb. 25, the Philippines had two Presidents. Marcos in Malacañang and Cory at Club Filipino. Most of the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) had switched to the rebel side and loyalist forces from the North, under Brig. Gen. Tomas Dumpit, who supposedly were on their way to attack Enrile and Ramos, never materialized."

US President Ronald Reagan, Rosmer continued, "clearly had thrown his support to Aquino and the best could be hoped for was to beat a safe retreat."

"Both US Ambassador Steven Bosworth and The Joint US Military Assistance Group (Jusmag) Brig. Gen. Theodore Allen were in communication with Malacañang and Clark, as well as Washington," said Rosmer in the book.

"There was haste. The decision to evacuate Marcos to Clark," according to Rosmer, "was made later in the afternoon of Feb. 25. Five helicopters from Clark's 31st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS) flew south to Malacañang to get Marcos and his family, arriving at the base just after 9 p.m. on the same day."

Rosmer wrote: "Clark's most significant role, of course, was the evacuation of President Marcos, his immediate family and several advisors and confidants, including General [Fabian] Ver and Eduardo Cojuangco."

Planning the evacuation, he said, "began at the US Embassy once President Reagan's warn-

ing to Marcos against the use of force was received, but it was some time before the plan was accepted at Malacañang."

Planning the mission at Clark, he said, "began on the morning of February 25, by which time Lt. Col. Robert Stankovich's 31ARRS maintenance crews were frantically trying to ready every available helicopter for service (five were prepared)."

Original plan

The original plan was to evacuate Marcos and his party from the Palace grounds, which was revised because thousands of civilians had massed up around Malacañang. A site across the Pasig River was used.

"This caused some delay, some anxious moments, and a little confusion, but eventually everything came together and

President Marcos' party was taken out without incident on the first two helicopters," Rosmer said.

Maj. Gen. Gordon Williams, 13AF chief, and Allen, rode the first two choppers because "Washington considered Marcos' safe evacuation to be critical," he said.

'Considerable cargo'

Two other helicopters "extracted eight people and a considerable amount of cargo." The cargo contents were not disclosed.

With Marcos in Clark, additional security problems cropped up because the Clark Air Base Command of the Philippine Air Force, set up in Clark in 1979, had defected to the rebels or lived at the base.

The refugees, as Marcos and his party had been described, were first received at the headquarters of the 3 Tactical Fighting Wing (3TFW) of the US Air Force.

"Key 13AF and 3TFW personnel greeted the party and tried to make each individual as comfortable as possible under the circumstances," wrote Rosmer.

Overnight stay

"Meanwhile, Washington had to be consulted as to what course of action was to be followed. Eventually, the decision was that Marcos and his group would remain overnight and leave Clark the next morning. Later, this decision was amended to 'dawn,'" Rosmer continued.

He said Marcos, Imelda, their children and Ver were moved to the 13AF Distinguished Visitor Quarters. Yepez said this was the stately house beside the White House, the official resi-

dence of Philippine presidents in postbases years.

The rest of the group stayed at Chambers Hall (now the Holiday Inn), requiring residents to sleep elsewhere in the meantime.

"Not long after the group finally got settled in, the decision came from Mrs. Aquino, via Washington, that Mr. Marcos should leave as soon as possible, and the entire process had to be repeated," Rosmer said, adding that Cojuangco and some members of his family arrived in Clark, joining the evacuation.

"Along with the Marcos party, Clark AB personnel packaged up and sent out a considerable amount of 'personal effects'—the same ones that later were seized by US Customs officials in Hawaii and which became the subject of so much media controversy," Rosmer wrote.

Judgment withheld

"As they had done throughout the entire period of the revolution, key US personnel at Clark withheld moral judgments with regard to these 'personal effects' and simply followed instructions from Washington," Rosmer said. He gave no information on what these were or how much these were valued.

Despite this mission, Rosmer clarified that US military forces "adopted a policy of strict neutrality and noninvolvement."

Explaining the absence of US aircraft during the uprising, he said most of these were deployed elsewhere while the Clark runway was undergoing repair. Many troops and aircraft went to Korea for a military exercise.

While the Subic Naval Base in

Zambales was sealed off from the rebels because the command and local government were "pro-Marcos," Angeles City supported Aquino.

At the end of People Power I, Clark became safe haven to PAF's 6 T-28s, 5 T-33s, 7 F-8s, 2 F-47s, 2 C-130s, 11 F-5s, 1 MD-500 and 2 Twin Otters.

Rosmer admitted that Clark was prepared to deter loyalist forces, saying that "at any rate, USAF (United States Air Force) forces at Kadena (Japan) and USN (United States Navy) aircraft were ready to support Clark if it became necessary."

The last task of US military personnel in Clark was to sweep Malacañang clean of mines and explosives, he said. People Power I, Rosmer said, "caused hardly a ripple in the base's normal day-to-day activity."

Cory's desire

As to Marcos' allegation that he was duped by US officials that he would be flown to his home province of Ilocos Norte, Rosmer said: "While all the facts certainly are not known, it appears that this claim remains only that."

"For her part, Mrs. Aquino has made no secret of the fact that she wanted the US to engineer Marcos' departure from the country and that she conveyed that message to the American authorities who approved the evacuation," he added.

Rosmer hinted that more pieces of information are still out there, saying, "much remains to be written about the February revolution and the small, but important role that CAB (Clark Air Base) personnel played in it."

ONLINE NEWS

25 FEBRUARY 2016

MILF leader urged probe on attacks on soldiers

By [John Unson](#) (philstar.com) | Updated February 24, 2016 - 10:51am

LANAO DEL SUR, Philippines - The top Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) leader in this province on Wednesday urged the joint ceasefire committee to investigate on two attacks on soldiers the past five days by extremists inspired by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Abdullah Macapaar, known as "Commander Bravo," told reporters he was saddened by allegations they connived with local extremist factions that attacked soldiers in Lanao del Sur's Balindong and Butig towns.

Macapaar said they were not involved in the deadly forays by local ISIS-inspired groups in Bayabao District in Butig and in Bubong-Kadapaan in Balindong, which resulted to the deaths of at least three Army combatants.

The hostilities in Butig erupted last weekend when gunmen attacked a detachment there of the Army's 51st Infantry Battalion, killing two soldiers and wounding several others.

Sporadic clashes ensued until Monday and waned only after combatants from different units of the Army's 103rd Brigade in Marawi City, the capital of Lanao del Sur, arrived and helped drive the extremists away with 105 Howitzer canons and aerial sorties by fixed-wing aircrafts.

Local officials said there is indeed a need now for the government and the MILF's joint ceasefire committee and the Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team (IMT) to investigate on the Butig and Balindong incidents.

Hundreds of villagers in two barangays in Balindong were forced to evacuate to neutral areas on Tuesday when extremists attacked soldiers escorting tanks en route to Marawi City to augment the armor assets of the military units involved in clearing operations in Butig.

A soldier was killed in the ambush, which caused panic in the surroundings and forced local authorities to close to traffic the Narciso Ramos Highway, connecting Balindong town to Marawi City, for five hours to prevent motorists and commuters from getting caught in the crossfire.

Gov. Mujiv Hataman of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) on Tuesday night tasked his deputy, Regional Vice Gov. Haroun Al-Rashid Lucman, to conduct a deeper inquiry on the Butig and Balindong incidents and determine the extent of displacement of local folks displaced by the encounters.

Hataman also tasked the regional government's Humanitarian Emergency Assistance and Response Team (HEART) to extend relief and rehabilitation services to evacuees.

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

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

The HEART is an inter-agency disaster and emergency mitigation contingent operating under Hataman's ministerial control.

Macapaar told reporters, in a clandestine meeting Tuesday, their forces remained in their camps as the hostilities in Butig went on.

None of their men were also involved in Tuesday's ambush of soldiers in Balindong, he added.

He said they have religiously been complying with the July 1997 Agreement on General Cessation of Hostilities, one of the security protocols the government and MILF bilaterally formulated to prevent undue hostilities that can derail the Southern Mindanao peace process.

The enforcement of the ceasefire accord is being monitored since late 2003 by the Malaysian-led IMT, comprised of soldiers from Malaysia, Brunei, Libya and Indonesia and non-uniformed conflict resolution experts from Norway, Japan and the European Union.

Macapaar said they will welcome any probe by the IMT and the government-MILF joint ceasefire committee on allegations they were involved in the hostilities that rocked Lanao del Sur the past five days.

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

3 hospitalized as Davao lumad refugee camp torched

By: **InterAksyon.com**

February 24, 2016 7:34 AM

MANILA, Philippines -- (UPDATE 4 - 4:03 p.m.) Three persons, including two children, are in hospital after still unidentified men torched early Tuesday morning the evacuation camp and dormitories at a church-run compound in Davao City where hundreds of *lumad* refugees from Davao del Norte and Bukidnon have been staying since last year.

Two others, also children, suffered lesser injuries that did not require hospitalization.

The Bureau of Fire Protection in Davao City told media its initial investigation pointed to arson as the cause of the almost simultaneous fires that broke out on opposite ends of the Haran Misson House of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

Jong Monzon, secretary general of the Southern Mindanao lumad federation PASAKA, told InterAksyon.com the blaze was set in two stages, first at around 2:30 a.m. when what witnesses said were "three men on a motorcycle poured gasoline on the canvas roofs of the refugees' tents then threw a lighted torch."

Although this fire was put out quickly, Monzon said minutes later, "after police and media had arrived, there was an explosion from the dormitories at the other side of the compound where students and Haran workers are housed."

Rushing to the other side, he said they found the dormitories already blazing furiously and "a bag containing a 1.5-liter soft drink bottle full of gasoline."

A reporter of independent media outfit DavaoToday told InterAksyon.com that the dormitory housed boarders, mostly college students, including medical students, and call center agents, "who had nothing to do with the *bakwit* or anything political but lost their computers, their books, their clothes" and, in the case of five students who were sleeping at the time, their lives.

"Luckily the five were roused by their boardmates' pounding on their door," he said.

Haran has served as a refuge for more than 700 Manobo from Talaingod and Kapalong towns in Davao del Norte and from Bukidnon province who fled to Davao City early last year after soldiers and military-backed militia occupied their communities and tribal schools.

They were the first wave of what would later become an exodus of *lumad* fleeing their mountain villages as atrocities mounted throughout the rest of the year.

The worst evacuation was that of up to 4,000 *lumad* in Surigao del Sur following the September 1 murders in Lianga town of school administrator Emerito Samarca and Manobo leaders Dionel Campos and Datu Bello Sinzo by the Magahat militia. Most of the refugees remain at the sports center in the provincial capital Tandag City.

The Haran refugee camp became a cause celebre in late July when police attempted to forcibly evict the *lumad*, who Cotabato Representative Nancy Catamco, chair of the House committee on indigenous people, had accused of being fake evacuees and insisted return home despite their demands that the soldiers and militias pull out of their communities first.

Like the military, Catamco accused the *lumad* of being "manipulated" and "trafficking victims" of organizations the government openly accuses of being "legal fronts" of the communist rebel movement.

The next month, the military came under fire for an attempt to use a briefing by visiting United Nations special rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons Chaloka Beyani to help prove its accusations against the *lumad* refugees and their supporters.

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

But Beyani issued a strongly worded rebuke accusing the military of "gross distortion" of his views as he made clear that the refugees had fled for fear of government forces and militias.

Supporters of the refugees immediately condemned the arson, blasting the national government for ignoring the continuing plight of the *lumad* and voicing their suspicions the militias might be responsible.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, who is running for president, ordered city police to investigate the fire as he called on residents of the city for calm, assuring them the local government remained on top of the situation.

A statement issued by his spokesman Peter Lavina quoted Duterte as saying he sympathized "with the plight of the *lumad* and join their call for respect for their right to self-determination, right over their ancestral land, cultural integrity, meaningful economic growth, and justice."

Rival presidential bet Miriam Defensor-Santiago, in a separate statement, condemned the incident and said, "We have failed the *lumad*," referring to the state's failure to protect the refugees.

She also urged the next Congress to pass "fast-track the passage of the Rights of Internally Displaced Persons Act and to include in the bill specific provisions on the rights of indigenous peoples."

"We denounce the latest attack by what we believe to be forces from paramilitary groups against our *lumad* brothers and sisters. As if the *lumad* evacuees have not suffered enough, now even their evacuation camp is again being targeted," Kabataan Representative Terry Ridon said as he called on national and local authorities to investigate the incident and move against the perpetrators.

"What are our national and local officials doing to protect the *lumad*? The *lumad* evacuees, victims of internal displacement, have sought refuge in UCCP, yet these paramilitary groups again proved that they will stop at nothing to harm them, even resorting to arson in this latest attack," he said.

"This latest attack against the *lumad* just proves that the Aquino administration has no intention to hear their pleas," he added.

Renato Reyes Jr., secretary general of the *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan*, saw "an intent to terrorize the *lumad* evacuees and their supporters" as he challenged candidates in the May elections "to speak out against these atrocities and to put pressure on the national government to act swiftly to allow the *lumad* to return to their homes."

The *lumad* issue was not taken up during the first presidential debates held in Cagayan de Oro City last weekend.

MILF's Bravo denies hand in ambush which killed soldier

From CNN Philippines (Feb 24): MILF's Bravo denies hand in ambush which killed soldier

A commander of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's (MILF) army denied having a hand in an ambush on a military convoy that killed one soldier and wounded several others on Tuesday noon (February 23) in Balindong, Lanao del Sur.

Abdurahman Macapaar, alias Commander Bravo, of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) said his group had nothing to do with the attack in Barangay Bualan located a few miles from MILF's Camp Pokta.

Residents — some of whom needed to be temporarily evacuated during the firefight — recounted that a small group of unidentified masked men ambushed a three army trucks while the soldiers were escorting a heavy equipment carrier.

Balindong town mayor, Raisalam Bagul Mangondato, confirmed that the assailants were not from the MILF but were lawless elements.

Residents returned to their homes when the fighting had stopped.

Meanwhile, Bravo also said his troops were not involved in a firefight raging in another town, Butig, which erupted over the weekend.

Related: Thousands displaced by ongoing firefight in Lanao del Sur

Bravo also denied having allegiance with ISIS and said that he remained loyal to the MILF leadership.

<http://cnnphilippines.com/regional/2016/02/24/Soldier-killed-ambush-near-MILF-camp-Bravo-denies-involvement.html>

Soldiers cordon off area of armed group in Lanao Sur attacks

From GMA News (Feb 24): **Soldiers cordon off area of armed group in Lanao Sur attacks**

Government soldiers have already surrounded the area where members of a suspected new terrorist group in Mindanao have been hiding.

Armed Forces of the Philippine spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Paddilia told News To Go on Wednesday that the nameless armed group began to launch attacks in Lanao del Sur on Saturday, leaving three soldiers dead and six others wounded.

Padilla said that soldiers are closing in on the armed group, 40 of whose members were responsible for the attack on a military detachment in Barangay Bayabao in Butig town.

Citing a military source, Padilla said that members of the group are followers of Moro Islamic Liberation Front's 102nd Base Command head Edris Salindawan alias Abu Hanif.

The group is suspected to have links with international terrorist group Jemaah Islamiah.

Moreover, Padilla said security forces are coordinating with the MILF through a peace mechanism supervised by an ad hoc committee.

A military report on Tuesday said three soldiers were killed while six others were wounded in the clashes that also killed at least 20 members of the rebel group.

"This is subject to verification," Padilla admitted earlier.

"The initial information from various sources is that around 20 enemies were killed and scores wounded."

"The motive of the attack remains unknown," he added.

One of the fatalities, he said, was killed in an ambush on Tuesday morning and was among the troops sent to reinforce government forces in Butig.

Reinforcements were able to cordon off the enemies, whose number has swelled to more or less 80, Padilla said.

According to him, some 5,000 residents in areas covered by the operation fled their homes.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/556545/news/regions/soldiers-cordon-off-area-of-armed-group-in-lanao-sur-attacks>

AFP asks brave Cordillerans: list up & take Air Force exams

From the Baguio Midland Courier (Feb 24): **AFP asks brave Cordillerans: list up & take Air Force exams**

Cordillerans aspiring to be a soldier or an officer of the Philippine Air Force will have a chance to fulfill their dreams when they pass the examination to be held at the PAF Tactical Operations Group 1 at the Baguio Loakan Airport on Feb. 26 and 27.

Under the PAF recruitment program, all applicants must be natural born Filipino citizen, single with no legal obligation to support a child or children; must be 152.5 centimeters or 5 feet for both male and female.

The recruitment has two categories which is the enlisted personnel and officer.

Applicants for officer status must be a baccalaureate degree holder and aged 21 to 29 or born from Aug. 1, 1987 to Aug. 1, 1995 upon admission for training on Aug. 1, 2016.

Those applying as enlisted personnel must have completed at least 72 units in college, must be 18 years old but not more than 23 years old upon the date of enlistment on March 18, 2017. They are those born between March 17, 1993 to March 18, 1999.

Applicants must also be physically and mentally fit for military training and with good moral character.

Applicants must also submit accomplished application form, a photocopy of birth certificate authenticated by the National Statistics Office, and a photocopy of transcript of records.

Applicants are advised to bring the original copies of the said requirements for further verification.

Attached in the application form is a latest 2x2 ID photo which must be front, facial close-up, white background with name and signature of the applicant at the back of the photo.

Application form for officer's status and enlisted personnel can be downloaded at www.paf.mil.ph. Walk-in applicants will be accepted.

Physical defects such as tattoo, obesity, pierced ear/s for males and extra piercing for females, crossed eyedness, bow leggedness and excess or lacking finger would demerit or disqualify the application.

Applicants are also required to be in white t-shirt, maong pants and rubber shoes and must bring with them one black and blue ballpen and pencil with eraser and to be at the examination area before 7 a.m.

As in the past, candidate soldiers, while on training, will receive P14,295 as allowance and P20,494 after graduation. He will be designated as airman. Officer candidates on the other hand will receive P30,455 allowance while on training as P2Lt. and P35,785 as 2Lt.

For inquiries, call PAF TOG1 at Loakan Airport at (075) 447-3545; 0923-737-1055; 0917-800-1594 and 0939-902-0896. They may also inquire through email at opnstog1@gmail.com.

<http://baguio.midlandcourier.com.ph/region.asp?mode=%20archives/2016/february/2-21-2016/reg1.txt>

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

Soldier's death in NPA clash refuted

by Tara Yap

February 24, 2016 (updated)

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.