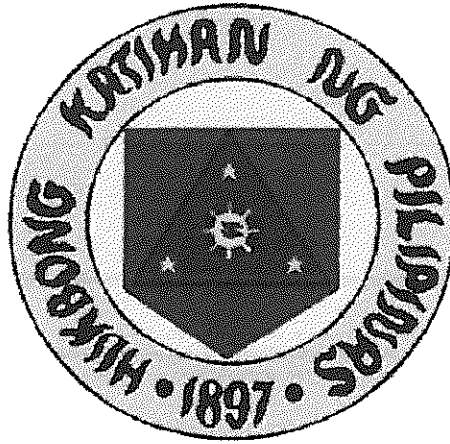


*Army Vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride*



# **ARMY**

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

**16 January 2016**

**Saturday**

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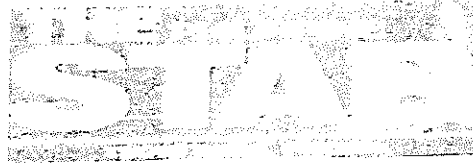
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16 January 2016



16

**PANAHON TV**

**AIR 21**  
BAGOT NG PABULA NG

**20**

**5:00 AM - 5:30 AM**  
Monday to Saturday

**STAR**

**6:25 AM** **5:40 PM** **11:05 PM** **11:45 PM**

**7:00 AM** **7:30 AM** **10:00 AM** **10:30 AM**

**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST JANUARY 16, 2016 SATURDAY**

**NORTHEAST MONSOON**  
TAPERING DOWN WITH LIGHT  
TAIL END OF A COLD FRONT  
WINDY TO CALM WITH SQUALLY  
CLOUDS WITH RAIN  
STARTING 1:30 PM

<b>LARANG CITY</b> 21-29°C	<b>TUGUEGARAO CITY</b> 21-31°C
<b>IRIGAYEN CITY</b> 14-24°C	<b>SARAWA LAWN</b> 23-32°C
<b>TAGAYTAY CITY</b> 19-30°C	<b>METRO MANILA</b> 23-32°C
<b>ALBUQUERQUE CITY</b> 23-33°C	<b>LEGASPI CITY</b> 24-33°C
<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b> 25-32°C	<b>TALLAHAN CITY</b> 24-30°C
<b>LAOAG</b> 25-32°C	<b>METRO CEBU</b> 25-31°C
<b>LAOAG CITY</b> 25-33°C	<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b> 23-32°C
	<b>METRO DAVAO</b> 25-32°C

EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	JAN 17 SUN	JAN 18 MON	JAN 19 TUE	EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	JAN 17 SUN	JAN 18 MON	JAN 19 TUE
METRO MANILA	22°C 32°C	21°C 31°C	21°C 31°C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25°C 32°C	25°C 31°C	24°C 31°C
TUGUEGARAO	21°C 31°C	20°C 30°C	20°C 30°C	ILOILO/ BACOLOD	24°C 32°C	23°C 30°C	23°C 30°C
LAOAG	21°C 30°C	20°C 29°C	20°C 29°C	METRO CEBU	25°C 31°C	24°C 30°C	24°C 31°C
BAGUO	16°C 26°C	16°C 24°C	16°C 23°C	TACLOBAN	24°C 31°C	24°C 31°C	24°C 30°C
SBMA/ CLARK	22°C 32°C	22°C 31°C	22°C 31°C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	23°C 32°C	23°C 31°C	22°C 31°C
TAGAYTAY	19°C 29°C	18°C 28°C	18°C 28°C	METRO DAVAO	24°C 31°C	24°C 31°C	24°C 30°C
LEGASPI	23°C 31°C	23°C 31°C	24°C 31°C	ZAMBOANGA	25°C 34°C	24°C 34°C	24°C 33°C

**Partly cloudy with rain showers**

**Partly cloudy with rain showers and/or thunderstorms**

**Light rain**

16 January 2016



Page: A1

# Binay leads amid graft raps

## Bongbong closes in on Chiz; Leni third

By Rafael L. Antonio and Kate Pedroso, *Inquirer Research*

WITH less than four months to go before the crucial 2016 presidential election, and despite a barrage of graft allegations, Vice President Jejomar Binay has reemerged as the front-runner to become the country's next President, according to the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey.



The survey, first published in the *BusinessWorld* newspaper, also showed Sen. Bongbong Marcos, among the vice presidential aspirants, closing in on the front-runner, Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero.

Binay, whose poll numbers plunged last year when allegations emerged that he and his son, both former mayors of Makati City, had taken huge

kickbacks from municipal projects, had regained a clear lead with 31 percent expressing a preference for him in the Jan. 8 to 10 survey period, the SWS said.

With an error margin of plus or minus 3 percentage points,

**BINAY/A18**

**Incumbent, former senators leading race / A18**

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erstwhile front-runner Sen. Grace Poe, who was tied at No. 1 with Binay in the previous December survey, was now in a statistical deadlock with the ruling Liberal Party standard-bearer Mar Roxas, at 24 percent against Roxas' 21 percent.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte's 20 percent rating was unchanged from the December survey.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago scored 3 percent (from 4 percent).

In the vice presidential race, Escudero remained the top contender at 28 percent, down from 30 percent in December, followed closely by Marcos with 25 percent, up by 6 points from 19 percent. Behind Marcos were Camarines Sur Rep. Leni Robredo with 17 percent (from 19 percent), Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano with 14 percent (from 17 percent), Sen. Gringo Honasan with 8 percent (unchanged) and Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV with 3 percent (from 5 percent).

### **Not too fast**

Analysts said the latest survey results did not mean that Binay, who released a statement through his spokesperson that he was "humbled" by the latest survey results, was already a winner.

"It is too early to say that Vice President Binay is already pulling away. A lot can still happen in three months," said political science professor Edmund Tayao.

Many Filipino voters have yet to make up their minds months before the May 9 elections, noted political analyst Ramon Casiple of the Institute for Political and Electoral Reform think tank.

"Binay's lead of 7 points is only a little over the margin of error and may still change," said Tayao, noting that the three other candidates behind Binay are in a statistical tie.

Tayao said the increase in Binay's ratings could be attributed to his campaign style, as well as to issues that have also plagued the other presidential candidates.

"Binay's ratings increase could also be due to the fact that other candidates have issues of their own, which may have caused some of their supporters to transfer to Binay," he said.

"It is also worth noting that the Vice President has been extensively campaigning all over the country. The traditional campaign mode of going around, meeting people personally is an advantage on his part," Tayao said.

Casiple explained the ratings rise to the fact that "some people are cynical, reasoning that all politicians are corrupt anyway."

Casiple said some support for Poe and Duterte eroded due to the disqualification cases filed against them.

The Commission on Elections ruled last month that Poe, a

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**WOOFING OFWS** Vice President Jejomar C. Binay shares a light moment with five overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) staying at the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (Polo) Center in Dubai on Thursday. Binay later handed the five OFWs—(from left) Rosminda Bauí, Leowilyn Tan, Lucresia Insesto, Angelyn Tak and Belsie Espine—plane tickets for Manila.

OVP PHOTO

foundling of unknown parentage who was adopted by movie stars Fernando Poe Jr. and Susan Roces, was not a natural-born Filipino and lacked the required 10-year residency to run for President. The case is on appeal at the Supreme Court.

Duterte registered as a candidate after the Oct. 16, 2015, deadline to replace another candidate who backed out. He is also facing several disqualification cases on this issue.

Reacting to the latest SWS voter preference survey results, Poe yes-

terday called on her supporters to inform the public that she remains a candidate for President.

A spokesperson for Binay, who is in Abu Dhabi, released a statement on his behalf yesterday. "The Vice President is humbled by the people's trust in his capability to lead our country," said the statement from Rico Quicho, Binay's spokesperson for political affairs.

#### Ilocano vote

The Liberal Party spokesperson, Barry Gutierrez, was unimpressed

by Binay's front-runner reemergence, saying it was only the "fruit" of his early campaigning. "The moment Binay sat as Vice President, he already started campaigning for President," he said.

"Like we always say, the real survey is in May," said Gutierrez.

Meanwhile, Tayao noted that name recall and the "Ilocano vote" could be the factors behind the increase in Marcos' rating.

"The Marcos name still has recall, and this is still a plus for Senator Marcos," he said.

The so-called "Solid North" could also be a factor in Marcos' favor. "The Ilocano vote has been proven to have delivered in previous elections," Tayao said.

As to whether or not the martial law regime of Marcos' dictator father was a factor, Tayao said: "It's not that the people have forgotten. It could be that many have been disillusioned with the Edsa revolution because some expectations were not fulfilled."

"A lot of people are also judging Marcos based on his performance in the Senate. His reputation is that of an able senator," Tayao said.

The survey used 1,200 respondents nationwide. The SWS said it used face-to-face interviews with validated voters, or registered voters whose digital biometrics had been validated by the Commission on Elections. *With reports from DJ Yap, Leila B. Salaverria, Tarr a Quismundo and AFP*

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### **3rd ID chief dares new Army battalion commander to excel in peace efforts**

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 15): 3rd ID chief dares new Army battalion commander to excel in peace efforts

**Brig. Gen. Harold N. Cabreros, the commanding general of the 3rd Infantry Division of the Philippine Army, on Friday challenged the incoming commander of the 79th Infantry "Masaligan" Battalion to surpass the performance of his predecessor in efforts to achieve lasting peace in Negros.**

**Cabreros was the guest of honor and speaker during the turnover of command of the 79th IB from Col. Harold Anthony Pascua to Lt. Col. Roderick Garcia, held at the battalion headquarters in Camp Leon Kilat, Tanjay City in Negros Oriental.**

In his message, Cabreros lauded and thanked Pascua for his excellent performance during his term as battalion commander, citing his unit's achievements that have contributed to making Negros Oriental almost free from the problem of insurgency.

At the same time, Cabreros also expressed confidence that Garcia perform just as well, what with the experience, training and other credentials that the latter possessed.

First order of the day for Garcia is to continue what his predecessor had started, **more importantly pursuing efforts under the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Internal Peace and Security Plan (IPSP) Bayanihan**, said Cabreros.

Cabreros highlighted the importance of the Army being able to foster good relations with the local government units, non-government organizations and the people who are their partners in the Bayanihan program of attaining lasting peace.

He urged the 79th IB troopers to give their all-out support to Garcia, adding that as he met with them, he gave them one word as a reminder for them to carry on each day.

That word, which he said started with the "big letter O," is obedience, according to Cabreros.

"Observe obedience to the oath you took when you entered the military service to selflessly serve our country and our people", Cabreros said.

Also, observe obedience to the laws of the land, to rules, regulations, directives and policies of the military organization, to the commitment and obligation to your families and finally to the word of God, Cabreros added.

The Army general also emphasized the role of the Army's partners especially in the IPSP Bayanihan as he called on them to continue their support for peace to prosper.

Cabreros stressed that there was still much work to be done and "we are still in the midst of winning the peace in Central and Western Visayas".



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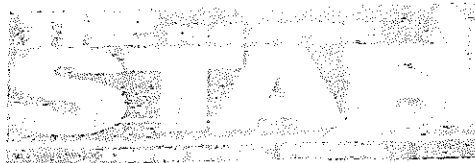
"There is still much ahead of us... and this entails strengthening and intensifying our partnership and collaboration with all our stakeholders and advancing our skills and programs complementary to the IPSP Bayanihan", Cabreros added.

**Cabreros officiated the turnover of command of the 79th IB which was also highlighted by the promotion of Pascua from the rank of Lt. Col. to Colonel.**

YESNU!

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16 January 2016



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# Noy orders no let-up in hunt for Abu Sayyaf

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY — President Aquino ordered troops to hunt down the Abu Sayyaf without let-up and secure all remaining hostages, a ranking military official said here yesterday.

Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo de la Cruz, commander of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said the President issued the marching orders to the troops in Basilan

and Sulu.

"The order of the President, our commander-in-chief, we will pursue the operations here without let-up," De la Cruz said.

"It is important that once and for all we complete this (operation) so that our fellowmen will feel that they are safe and secured here," De la Cruz added.

Armed Forces of the Philip-

ines (AFP) chief Gen. Hernando Iriberri flew to Mindanao yesterday to oversee the presidential order against the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan and Sulu.

"He went there to reiterate the message of the President against the Abu Sayyaf and all lawless groups," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said.

The presidential order came

amid reports that one of two captive Canadians taken hostage by the Abu Sayyaf had fallen ill.

The military said it was verifying reports that John Ridsdel got sick and was seen being dragged by Abu Sayyaf bandits while evading pursuing government troops.

Ridsdel, 68, and fellow Canadian Robert Hall, Norwegian

Kjartan Sekkingstad and Filipina Marites Flor were abducted last Sept. 21 in Samal Island off Davao province and are believed to be held captive in Sulu.

However, De la Cruz said they have no report to confirm the condition of the hostages.

He said they have no concrete evidence on whether the victims were indeed brought in their area of operation.

Westmincom covers Cen-

tral and Western Mindanao, including Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

"If they are here we have been operating and our soldiers are not taking breaks. And they would rather conduct the operation just in case we can rescue not just the Canadians but all the victims still held by the Abu Sayyaf," De la Cruz added.

— With Jaime Laude

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

## **Former rebels in Davao Occidental receive financial assistance**

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 15): Former rebels in Davao Occidental receive financial assistance

The local government here awarded Php 5,000 cash assistance to nine former members of New People's Army (NPA) who surrendered to 73rd Infantry Battalion (IB).

The assistance given was not a part of the livelihood assistance under the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP) of the government for the former NPA rebels but from the local government funds.

This was the second batch of former rebels who received financial assistance from the local government here.

"The financial assistance was given to them to show the sincerity of the LGU to help those who opted to rejoin the mainstream society," Mayor Benjamin Bautista said.

According to Lt Col. Ronnie Babac, 73rd IB commander, the financial assistance awarded to the former rebels (FR's) was a successful collaborative effort of the local government unit and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in support to the unit's mission and government campaign to help the rebels who return to the folds of the law.

"This activity will surely convince the rebels who are still in the movement to lay down their arms and return to their families. Moreover, the event would not be achieved if not with the support of the concerned government agencies especially the LGU of Malita, Davao Occidental" Babac added.

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## 2 suspected 'IS-inspired' terrorists, 2 others killed in Lanao del Sur

By: Richel Umel

09:49 PM January 15th, 2016

RECOMMENDED

ILIGAN CITY—Four people, including two suspected local terrorists whom authorities described as IS-inspired, were killed in separate but related incidents in Lanao del Sur on Friday morning.

Col. Roseller Murillo, commander of the Army's 103rd Infantry Brigade based in Marawi City, said the first incident took place in Buadipuso Buntong town when civilians Panundi Sultan and son, Noble, were verifying the reported presence of a group of armed men in an area in Barangay Gata mid-morning on Friday. They were killed when fired at by the armed men.

Upon hearing that the father and son were killed, Sultan's relatives—who were also armed—retaliated and engaged the armed men in a shootout, Murillo said.

One of the men, who was wearing a headband with the IS symbol, was killed in the process while his companions had retreated.

Murillo described the slain armed suspect as IS-inspired.

The second incident took place in Barangay Lilod in Maguing town, where elements of the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion clashed with the retreating group from Buadipuso Buntong. He said in the Maguing encounter, soldiers also killed one of the armed men and recovered an M-4 assault rifle.

"We are closely monitoring the movement and veracity of reported locally-inspired ISIS group operating in Lanao del Sur and Marawi City," Murillo said.

(6 January 2016

## INQUIRER

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# Cebu port eyed for US ships seen too small

By Carmel Loise Matos  
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—The plan to use two Philippine military bases in Cebu as military hubs of United States military forces may have to be postponed as far as the city's naval base is concerned.

The docking port at the Naval Base Rafael Ramos (NBRR) in Barangay Canjula, Lapu-Lapu City, is too small for vessels the size of those operated by the US Navy.

The port could not even accommodate BRP Gregorio del Pilar, a frigate, which had to be docked at the Cebu International Port when it visited Cebu last year.

While the depth of the water in the base is apt for big vessels, the port is too small,

according to officials.

The Mactan Benito Ebuen Air Base (MBEAB), also in Lapu-Lapu City, can host US Air Force planes, however.

A source at the Philippine Air Force's 2nd Division told the INQUIRER that the current runway and hangar of the MBEAB can accommodate aircraft as big as the US Boeing C-17.

It can also accommodate military C-130 planes as well.

The MBEAB and the NBRR were among the eight bases offered by the Philippines to the United States as temporary bases for equipment storage and supplies under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement that was recently declared as constitutional by the Supreme Court.

The six other places are Basa Air Base in

Pampanga; Clark Air Base in Pampanga; Lumbia Airfield in Cagayan De Oro; Antonio Bautista Air Base in Puerto Princesa, Palawan; a naval base in Palawan; and Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija.

But there might be a need to develop the NBRR to accommodate the US Navy ships.

The source said the current docking port could take only vessels as big as a landing craft, which has a capacity to carry 2,280 tons of cargo.

The Navy officer said there was a plan to develop the NBRR since the Philippine Navy wanted to transfer its fleet to the Navy base in Lapu-Lapu due to its strategic location.

He added that there were plans to reclaim some areas there to accommodate new offices. But these are still subject for

approval, he said.

But the NBRR is also too small for military exercises, said the source.

"It can be used as a holding area but if there are military exercises, we have to look for other places in Cebu to do that," said the source.

It's a different story when it comes to the MBEAB.

The PAF source said there is an ongoing expansion of the air base.

According to the PAF website, the MBEAB, which was known before as Mactan Air Base, served as an emergency landing strip for the US bombers in 1956.

It was used as an outpost until the Vietnam War when it served as an air transit point for American troops and supplies bound for the war zone.

After the war, it was transferred to the PAF.

The MBEAB has a 10,000-foot long runway which is now being shared with the Mactan Cebu International Airport.

Militant groups planned to hold protest actions should the US be allowed to use the two Cebu bases.

Jaime Paglinawan, chair of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in Central Visayas, said the plan of the Philippine government may do more harm than good to Cebuanos.

Paglinawan said US military presence could open the doors to more abuses on women and transgenders.

He cited the recent case involving US Marine Lance Cpl. Joseph Scott Pemberton who had been convicted of killing transgender Jeffrey "Jennifer" Laude.

"This should not happen here in Cebu," Paglinawan said in a phone interview.

Paglinawan warned of massive protest actions against US military operations in Cebu.

He said prostitution became widespread in 1991 when American soldiers were stationed in Cebu due to the Visiting Forces Agreement.

January 2016



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# China opens disputed islands to investors

BEIJING—China will invite private investors to build infrastructure on islands it controls in the disputed South China Sea and will start regular flights this year to one of them, state media said on Friday, moves likely to anger other claimants.

China claims almost all of the energy-rich waters of the South China Sea, through which more than \$5 trillion of maritime trade passes each year. The Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Malaysia and Taiwan have overlapping claims.

In 2012, China set up what it calls Sansha city, based on Woody Island in the Paracels, to administer its islands there.

Though China calls it a city, its permanent population is no more than a few thousand. Many of the disputed islets and reefs in

the sea are also uninhabited.

Sansha's deputy mayor, Feng Wenhai, said they would welcome private investment and "will initiate public-private-partnership programs," state news agency Xinhua said.

"The city will also push forward the planning and construction of a maritime medical rescue center. Submarine optical cables will be laid and put into use this year, and WiFi will cover all inhabited islands and reefs," Feng said.

The airport on Woody Island

will also launch regular flights this year, Feng added, without elaborating.

China took full control of the Paracels in 1974 after a naval showdown with Vietnam.

Hundreds of Vietnamese demonstrated in Hanoi when China established Sansha city and invited oil firms to bid for blocks in offshore areas that Vietnam claims as its territory.

## China-Vietnam tensions

Tensions between China and Vietnam have flared in recent weeks, after Chinese civilian aircraft conducted several test landings on the disputed Fiery Cross Reef, one of three runways China has been building for more than a year by dredging sand up onto reefs and

atolls in the Spratly Islands.

Vietnam says China's landings were on an "illegally" built reef, and has vowed to defend its sovereignty through peaceful measures.

On Friday, Chinese state media showed pictures of what it said was the first batch of civilian passengers to arrive by plane on Fiery Cross Reef, family members of troops based there, though it only appeared to be two women and two young children.

"Everyone rapturously looked around at the island's beautiful scenery," read a caption underneath one of the pictures carried on the website of Chinese news portal Sina, showing the four of them standing on the tarmac in front of two civilian aircraft. *Reuters*

## Comelec ratifies Guanzon filing

By Tina G. Santos

THE COMMISSION on Elections (Comelec) yesterday released a resolution to "ratify and validate" the comment filed by Commissioner Rowena Guanzon with the Supreme Court on Sen. Grace Poe's disqualification cases.

At the same time, it designated Commissioner Arthur Lim to be the lead counsel of the poll body on the matter.

The commissioners issued the resolution apparently to clear the air after Comelec Chair Andres Bautista initially dismissed as "unauthorized" the comment Guanzon had submitted to the high court.

The resolution stressed the full approval of

the Comelec en banc to the document filed, which upheld the disqualification of Poe by the poll body's First and Second Divisions. The divisions had ruled on the petitions of former Sen. Francisco Tatad, De La Salle University professor Antonio Contreras, former University of the East college of law dean Amado Valdez, and former Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) lawyer Estrella Elamparo.

All seven members of the Comelec signed the resolution but Bautista wrote a handwritten comment, saying the resolution was "subject to continuing discussions regarding the procedure in the filing of pleadings in the Supreme Court and the creation of an Ethics Committee."



16 January 2016

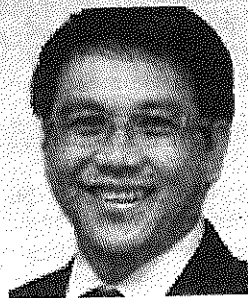
# INQUIRER

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## Spare Clark from Edca, govt urged

**CLARK FREEPORT**—A militant group headed by businessmen has asked the government to spare the Clark Freeport from use by US military forces under the controversial Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (Edca) between the Philippine and US governments.

Ruperto Cruz, head of the group Pinoy Gumising Ka Movement, said Clark should serve as the country's main alternative international airport.



CASANOVA

"With China's bullying, the Philippines needs the Edca to improve our defense and security. Subic ideally serves that purpose for now because its airport and seaport are still intact," Cruz said.

Emigdio Tanjuatco III, president of the Clark International Airport Corp., said the facility had been used during annual military exercises between the Philippines and the United States.

He said arrangements under Edca "shouldn't get in the way of Clark development."

The development of former US base lands in the country is overseen by the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA).

As a seaport and airport, Subic and Clark are important facilities both for trade and national security, said Arnel Paciano Casanova, BCDA president and chief executive officer.

Subic Freeport is a better fit for military use, Cruz said.

The Philippines has offered eight facilities to the United States under Edca, which was recently upheld by the Supreme Court as constitutional.

**'They shall remain as free ports that promote trade and they will serve as well our national security interest'**

"We see Edca as enhancing both [those roles]. They shall remain as free ports that promote trade and they will serve as well our national security interest," he said.

In Subic, the Armed Forces of the Philippines plans to renovate some of the old military barracks inside the former US naval station.

Roberto Garcia, chair of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, said the dilapidated military barracks located at the Upper Marine Amphibious Unit Camp in the free port

would be rehabilitated this year to house some 500 AFP personnel.

The government will spend P80 million for the restoration of the facilities that include a 13-ha portion of the Subic Bay International Airport, where shipping giant Federal Express used to operate. Twelve trainer jets that the government bought from South Korea will be stationed in Subic.

But Casanova clarified that the 300-ha Air Force City occupied by the Philippine Air Force here is not a military camp but part of the economic zone.

After Mt. Pinatubo's eruptions in 1991 damaged the Basa Air Base in Floridablanca town, the PAF moved many of its units to Clark.

"[Ensuring] national security is the basis of their stay in Clark," said Casanova at a forum of the Capampangan in Media Inc. here.

Casanova said that for "logistics purposes," the US military can build warehouses and hangars at the Air Force City under Edca.

Clark is one of the eight locations eyed for use under Edca. *Tonette Orejas and Allan Macatuno, Inquirer Central Luzon*

16 January 2016

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

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## ASG man linked to Malaysia kidnap nabbed in Zamboanga

By ELENA L. ABEN

A member of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) reportedly involved in the April, 2000 abduction of foreign tourists in Sipadan, Malaysia, has been arrested in Zamboanga City, police said yesterday.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) said Abdul Munap alias "Munap Saimaran," was arrested at around 5 p.m. Wednesday along P. Lorenzon St., in Zamboanga City by combined elements of the CIDG and the 30th Counter Intelligence Squadron of the 300 Air Intelligence and Security Group of the Philippine Air Force (PAF).

►9

Munap has standing warrants of arrest for a string of cases for serious illegal detention and kidnapping for ransom.

He is being tagged as among the suspects in the April 23, 2000 kidnapping of 21 people from the dive resort

island of Sipadan. The hostages, who were taken to Sulu, include Germans, French, South Africans, Finns, Lebanese, a Malaysian, and Filipinos.

The victims were rescued months later.

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## EDCA to enhance Phl defense, security capabilities – Noy

The Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) between the Philippines and the United States could enhance the interoperability between the two countries in terms of defense and other activities, President Aquino said yesterday.

"Anybody who is reasonable will see that this agreement is an enhancement of both our countries' abilities, rather than a threat to anyone else," he said.

The Supreme Court upheld the accord early this week, saying it was constitutional and need not be ratified by the Senate, being an executive agreement.

Speaking at the East-West Center Association International Conference at the Manila Hotel, Aquino cited EDCA as an example of complementary relationship to address needs the area.

The AFP has offered the US military use of eight Philippine bases, including Clark and Subic, a former US Navy base, under the EDCA.

In a forum at Clark, BCDA president and chief executive officer Arnel Paciano Casanova said under the law, Clark can no longer be classified as a military reservation but a freeport.

"The PAF area in Clark is part of the freeport. The stay of the PAF at Clark is temporary and is renewable every five years," he said.

Casanova said he favors the use of Clark by the US military under EDCA, citing the "need for a balance of power for national security."

He admitted, however, that the BCDA has yet to be consulted by the Department of National Defense or the AFP

and improve capacities.

"As we are all aware, the Philippines has a long standing Mutual Defense Treaty with the US. We have the Visiting Forces Agreement as an adjunct of that. Under the Mutual Defense Treaty, we are obliged to come to the defense of one another and assist each other in times of need," the President said.

"My question is – how do we do that if we are not familiar with each other's resources, equipment, doctrines and limitations?"

"To my mind, EDCA has a very practical purpose for developing our own armed forces: all the modern hardware carries a significant price tag, yet with EDCA, we have a chance to try the cutting-edge equipment and see just how suitable they are to our needs, without having to buy them first," Aquino said.

on the possible US military use of Clark or whether US military activities would be limited to the 300-hectare area occupied by the PAF.

Casanova said he sees nothing wrong with the US military putting up structures, such as warehouses at Clark.

He also assured Central Luzon folk that the operation of the US military would not disrupt civilian passenger activities at the Clark International Airport, stressing that civilian aircraft would be given priority in the use of either of the two 3.2-kilometer runways, except during times of emergency.

After the SC ruling on EDCA, Armed Forces spokesman Col. Restituto Padilla said the government offered eight bases in the Philippines for US military use. Padilla said, however, the

"If the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) would get to train with the US, a far more advanced force, they could learn from them the strengths and shortcomings in using such equipment and they could even redefine and understand such under their own parameters."

He said the US, on the other hand, gets to learn how to make do with fewer resources, which in a conflict situation is a high probability.

### 'Freeport not military base'

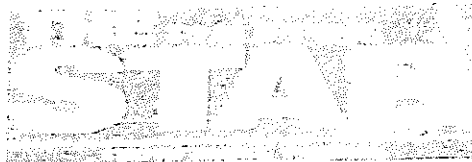
On the other hand, the head of the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) clarified that the freeport cannot be classified as a military base despite its hosting units of the Philippine Air Force, which occupies 300 hectares of land in offer still has to be finalized.

Meanwhile, Kalayaan town, a fifth-class municipality on Pag-asa Island in the Spratly archipelago, stands to benefit from the SC ruling enforcing the EDCA.

Kalayaan town Mayor Eugenio Bito-ono Jr. said while he is not privy to the details of EDCA, he believes it would boost security on the island.

"I believe it will help, specially in surveillance capabilities and training," Bito-onon said, referring to China's aggression in the South China Sea.

Bito-onon said EDCA would bolster interoperability capabilities between Filipino and US troops and in the process make China think twice before making a military move against the country. — Aurea Calica, Jaime Laude, Ding Cervantes



1. 2. 3. 4.

By ALEXIS ROMERO

Launching is a Navy term that refers to the removal of a ship from dry dock to allow it to float at sea for the next stage of tests. A ship is launched to ensure that it is working properly before delivery to its buyer.

"The acquisition of the strategic sealift vessels is a very im-

In 2014, **The STAR** reported that shipbuilder PT PAL Indonesia won the bidding for the purchase of two brand new strategic sealift vessels for the

PT PAL offered to build the vessels for \$86,980,000 or about P3.864 billion, well within the budget ceiling of P4 billion.

The first strategic sealift vessel will be delivered in May while the second ship is

The strategic sealift vessels could be used to perform civil-military operations and can transport a large number of soldiers, logistics equipment and supplies.

They can also accommodate three helicopters and can support disaster relief operations.

Padilla said the ship could also be deployed as a com-

mand and control center that can coordinate rescue, recovery and retrieval efforts.

"This ship can also be used as floating hospital in case our health center and hospitals in provinces that were affected by disasters become unavailable," he said.

Padilla said the vessel could also be used as a supply ship in the West Philippine Sea and other Philippine territories.

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## Suspect in Sidapan kidnapping falls in Zambo operations

By Mario J. Mallari

An Abu Sayyaf man, tagged in the 2000 kidnapping in Sipadan, was captured by combined police and military operatives in Zamboanga City on Wednesday, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) announced yesterday.

Director Victor Deona, CIDG director, said that Abdul Munap,

who uses the aliases Said and Munap Saimaran, was collared during an operation along Lorenzo Street, Zamboanga City.

Munap was arrested at around 5 a.m. by elements of the CIDG-Zamboanga, Air Intelligence and Security Group of the Air Force and Regional Intelligence Division-9.

Deona said that Munap was among the Abu Sayyaf terrorists

who pulled off the April 23, 2000 raid at a Sipadan diving resort and abducted more than a dozen foreign tourists.

Munap is wanted for kidnapping and serious illegal detention.

The kidnap victims, mostly Europeans, were brought to Sulu. Most of the victims were either freed or abandoned after paying ransom.

Meanwhile, two other wanted

individuals were captured by CIDG operatives during separate operations on Wednesday.

Nabbed were Terecel Culla, who is listed as Batangas City's Number 9 most wanted, and Emmanuel Villarias, tagged as Daus, Bohol most wanted man.

On Thursday, Itogon, Benguet's No. 3 most wanted person - Hanna Lee del Rosario, was captured in Baguio City.

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## INQUIRER

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# Peace is everyone's business

A GROUP of us had the unique opportunity to join a dinner this week with the Norwegian special envoy to the Colombian peace process, Ambassador Dag Nylander. The small dinner was held at the Makati residence of Ambassador Erik Forner of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in the Philippines. Ambassador Nylander is in the Philippines to share his experiences in cofacilitating the Colombian peace process with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and in participating in the current round of negotiations that has achieved numerous breakthroughs and is expected to culminate in a political settlement in the first semester of 2016.

We are all too aware that in the Philippines, there remain two critical peace processes that have so far eluded a final political settlement—one with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the other with the National Democratic Front (NDF). Ambassador Nylander's key message is that, in his experience with Colombia, three critical elements are essential to moving a peace process forward.

The first is commitment by both parties to the belief that peace is possible. Such a commitment must translate to concrete and often bold and brave initiatives that build confidence in the process. On the other hand, a deficient understanding and analysis of the conflict by representatives of both parties will make commitment impossible.

The second is inclusion of stakeholders. Often, a peace process fails because key stakeholders are left out of the dialogue and the critical discussions and debates from which a settlement can be distilled. In Colombia, the key stakeholders included are women, indigenous peoples, the military and police, and groups of abuse victims. The ambassador warns, however, that there has to be realistic limits to inclusion.

The third is the involvement of an independent party. This is simply about accepting outside help from the international community and acknowledging that the peace process is not purely an internal matter that we must resolve ourselves.

## BUSINESS MATTERS

*Peter Angelo V. Perfecto*



In the peace process with the MILF, it can be argued that these three elements are present, thus contributing to its much more advanced stage compared to the process with the NDF. Certainly, a bold and brave initiative that demonstrated the government's commitment was the meeting in Japan of President Aquino, early in his term, with MILF chair Al Haj Murad Ebrahim. The MILF dubbed that meeting as "a great leap forward" and it put the peace process on a fast track toward achieving political settlement.

From the two roundtable discussions that the business community had with the government, it can be gleaned that there were significant efforts made to ensure broad stakeholder inclusion. Could the level of inclusion have fallen short, as demonstrated by the Mamasapano incident? Apparently, the Philippine National Police saw nothing wrong with pursuing an operation that would clearly have put at risk a process that was nearing conclusion. Was the PNP not sufficiently "included" in the process? Or was this, on the part of the President when he authorized the operation, a most unfortunate moment of relaxing his commitment to the process?

Over dinner, Ambassador Nylander said the current process with the FARC did have its own "Mamasapano" that, fortunately, did not derail their peace train. How they went beyond their "Mamasapano" is something our legislators may want to learn from the ambassador and understand.

The Philippines' helping hand from outside is primarily Malaysia, with a number of other international friends, including Norway, providing



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additional critical support. Not many may know, for example, that a multinational force acting as a third-party monitoring team (TPMT) has been present in Mindanao and has helped address and prevent confrontations. The TPMT also contributed significantly toward easing tensions on the ground after Mamasapano.

Norway has also been providing outside help to the peace process with the NDF although the process is stalled under this administration. The visit by Ambassador Nylander is part of Norway's continuing commitment to peace efforts in the Philippines. I understand that it continues to encourage and facilitate dialogue, not just between the Philippine government and the NDF but also among key stakeholders. My presence at the dinner table together with Vic Lao of the Mindanao Business Council is Norway's way of encouraging Philippine business to get involved in this other peace process.

Ambassador Forner of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in the Philippines explained to me that it is their hope to see Philippine business become part of the negotiations when the peace process with the NDF resumes. As in the Colombian experience, there is a chair at the peace table occupied by a representative of the Norwegian business community.

Responding to the challenge, Vic Lao and I confirmed that at the very least, our respective organizations and our members are committed to helping bring about a just and lasting peace in the country. Clearly, one role is to help bring investments into conflict areas to help boost the economy and create jobs once components of a political settlement are put in place. On my part, I reiterated that there is growing commitment in the business community to pursuing truly inclusive businesses and that inclusive business models must be built in and around the conflict areas sooner rather than later.

After all, as I have said before, peace is everyone's business.

*Peter Angelo V. Perfecto is executive director of the Makati Business Club.*

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16 January 2016



Pahina. 5



## Terorismo na naman ang laman ng balita

JAKARTA, Indonesia naman ang bagong biktima ng terorismo, at marami ang nagsasabing kapareho ng estilo ng pag-atake sa Paris ang ginawa sa Jakarta noong Huwebes. Limang terorista ang unang nagpasabog ng bomba sa Starbucks. Namaril naman ang dalawa sa kanila habang patakas na, may dala pang mga hostage. Rumesponde naman ang mga pulis at napatay ang dalawa, pero nakapatay na rin sila ng sibilyan. Dalawa naman ang sumakay ng motorsiklo at pinasabog ang sarili nila sa isang istasyon ng pulis. Malinaw na ang target ng mga terorista ay mga negosyong dayuhan at mga turista mismo. Ang lugar kung saan ginawa ang pag-atake ay karaniwang pinupuntahan ng mga dayuhang turista. Maraming embahada rin sa lugar. Sa ngayon, nasa dalawa ang patay at 19 ang sugatan. Maaari pang tumaas ang tala ng mga namatay at sugatan. Wala naman daw namatay na Pilipino sa Jakarta. Ang limang terorista ay napatay ng mga pulis.

Noong Martes lang, isang bomba naman pinasabog umano ng ISIS sa Istanbul, Turkey, kung saan 10 turistang German ang namatay. Tila nagbigay pa ng pahiwatig na susunod nga ang Indonesia. Kaya ngayon, alerto na ang lahat ng bansa sa rehiyon, dahil malinaw na walang pinipili ang ISIS sa kanilang ginagawang terorismo. Ang Indonesia ay may pinakamaraming Muslim na populasyon sa buong mundo. Bagama't ang target ay mga turista, partikular mga taga-Kanlurang bahagi ng mundo, tiyak na may madadamay na kapwa Muslim.

Alerto na ang bansa. Itinaas kaagad ng AFP ang security alert. Bagama't wala pa raw patunay na nakapasok na ang ISIS sa bansa, hindi pa rin nagiging kampante ang lahat. Ang dalawa sa mga umatake sa Jakarta ay isang Algerian at isang Dutch o Canadian. May mga sumusuporta sa ISIS mula sa halos lahat ng bansa sa mundo, kaya hindi masasabi talaga kung sino ang mga ito. Hindi masasabi kung may nakapasok na sa bansa.

Hindi ito magandang simula sa taong ito. Mga insidente ng terorismo ang laman ng balita ngayon. Huwag lang sana umabot sa Pilipinas. Tandaan na aktibo pa rin ang Abu Sayyaf at BIFF, at hindi nakapagtataka na suportado rin nila ang ISIS. Dapat talaga madurog na ang dalawang grupo na ito, bago lumaki pa at masuportahan pa ng ISIS.

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## Cavaliers take on PNP 5, eye second semis berth

ARMED Forces of the Philippines tries to secure the second and last outright semifinal berth when it battles Philippine National Police tomorrow in the 4th UNTV Cup at the Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig.

Game time is set at 4:30 p.m. with the AFP Cavaliers out to rebound from a 76-96 loss to the National Housing Authority Builders last week.

Unlike the Cavaliers, the PNP Responders are coming off a morale-boosting 68-66 win over Judiciary, thanks to the 27-point

STANDINGS	W	L
MMDA	7	2
AFP	6	2
PNP	5	3
BFP	5	3
Judiciary	5	4
Malacañang	5	4
NHA	4	4
Senate	3	6

**GAMES TOMORROW**  
(Ynares Sports Arena, Pasig City)  
3 p.m.—BFP vs NHA  
4:30 p.m.—AFP vs PNP

performance of former University of the East guard Ollan Omiping.

The Builders clash with the Bureau of Fire Protection Firefighters at 3 p.m. with the former hoping to ride the momentum of their massive win over the Cavaliers to

advance to the quarterfinals.

Expected to lead NHA is Tony Lustestica who erupted for 29 points in the team's lopsided win over AFP.

Former Letran star Boyet Bautista and Eugene Tan will spearhead AFP's assault.

## ONLINE NEWS

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

### Jakarta Attacks Stoke Fears Islamic State Could Target Philippines

From the Wall Street Journal (Jan 15): Jakarta Attacks Stoke Fears Islamic State Could Target Philippines

*Abu Sayyaf leaders have previously sworn allegiance to Islamic State*

The Islamic State-linked attacks on Indonesia's capital have stoked fears that the Philippines—home to more than five million Muslims—could be next on the extremist group's list of targets.

While the extent of Islamic State's influence in the Philippines is unclear, delays to a landmark peace deal with the country's main Islamic rebel group could embolden splinter organizations that reject the plan and allow Islamic State to make inroads into disaffected Muslim communities, security experts have warned. Officials said they believed the perpetrators of Thursday's attacks were involved in a local Islamist group and funded by an Indonesian militant with ties to Islamic State. Photo: AFP/Getty

"It's definitely time to start taking the threat [of Islamic State] more seriously," said Steven Rood, the Asia Foundation's representative in the Philippines, pointing out that two foreign nationals—an Indonesian and a Malaysian—had been killed in recent clashes between the Philippine military and Islamic rebels. The presence of foreign fighters in the Philippines hints at transnational links between Southeast Asia's militant groups, he said.

In 2014, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the country's dominant Islamic rebel group, signed a peace agreement with the government of the Philippines—a predominantly Roman Catholic country -- that would establish a new autonomous region on the southern island of Mindanao, which is about 20%-25% Muslim. But smaller groups have boycotted the process. The Islamic Front is based in Mindanao and has little influence in the nearby Sulu archipelago, a string of small islands where extremist groups including Abu Sayyaf have their jungle bases. Islamic State's links to the deadly attacks in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta show the expanding reach of the extremist group in Asia, raising fears of a return of Islamist-inspired violence in the region.

Moreover, the deal has become bogged down in the Philippine Congress, with some lawmakers wary of handing too much power to former Muslim rebels.

Abu Sayyaf leaders have previously sworn allegiance to Islamic State in videos published online, but the Philippine authorities have dismissed these as attempts to increase the group's notoriety to secure higher ransoms for their frequent kidnappings. Most recently in September Abu Sayyaf snatched two Canadians, a Norwegian and a Filipino from a Mindanao resort, and then prominently displayed the black flag of Islamic State in a video demanding ransom money.

A new video showing Filipino militants from Abu Sayyaf and other lesser-known groups training in front of the Islamic State flag emerged earlier this month. Philippine military officials have denied that Islamic State has any foothold in the country. They didn't respond to questions on Friday.

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

Zachary Abuza, a Southeast Asian security expert at the U.S. National War College, said it is time the Philippines acknowledged the threat posed by Islamic State, while also being careful not to overplay it. "There is clearly some [Islamic State] presence in the south," he said, warning that the relatively unsophisticated attacks staged in Jakarta are "very much within the capabilities of militants in the Southern Philippines."

The challenge for the Philippine authorities is to "keep them contained" in their southern base areas and prevent attacks on Manila or other Philippine cities, Mr. Abuza said.

Philippine lawmakers should expedite the stalled peace plan to deny extremists an opportunity to win over the country's disillusioned young Muslims, Mr. Rood argued.

"The [Islamic Front] have clearly said they're committed to the path to peace no matter what, and if they're not achieving anything, it's harder to keep arguing that you can fight for Islam through peaceful means," he said.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/jakarta-attacks-stoke-fears-islamic-state-could-target-philippines-1452838043>

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

## **Philippines worried by reports of 'ill' Canadian hostage**

From the Fulton County News (Jan 13): Philippines worried by reports of 'ill' Canadian hostage

*Military says yet to confirm reports that Abu Sayyaf militants carrying 68-year-old mining firm chief as they evade troops*

The Philippines' military expressed concern Wednesday over reports about the deteriorating health of one of two Canadians abducted from a resort on a southern island four months ago.

Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, Joint Task Group Sulu commander, said in a text message that reports of al-Qaeda-linked militants carrying the ailing John Ridsdel, 68, as they evade troops had yet to be confirmed.

"But such information would be concerning if true," he said of the president of TVI Minerals Processing, Inc., a firm providing mineral mining services, with its main office in Pasig City but with business interests in southern Mindanao island.

Ridsdel was abducted from Samal island in September alongside fellow Canadian Robert Hall, Norwegian resort owner Kjartan Sekkinstad and a Filipino female companion.

The Abu Sayyaf militant group has demanded a ransom of 1 billion Philippine pesos (\$21 million) for the release of each of the foreigners.

A video released on YouTube in early November showed the four hostages flanked by armed men in black garb against what appears to be a Daesh flag.

The video appears to show Ridsdel appealing for the ransom to be paid.

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"We're being ransomed each for 1 billion pesos," he said. "I appeal to the Canadian Prime Minister and the people of Canada, please pay this ransom as soon as possible, or our lives are in great danger."

The Abu Sayyaf released several videos of the hostages late last year at undisclosed jungle locations.

Arrojado said troops are continuing to pursue the escaping militants to prevent them from slipping out of the operation zone.

Aside from the Norwegian and two Canadians, the Abu Sayyaf is currently holding other foreigners including a Dutch man kidnapped more than three years ago in Tawi-Tawi island and a former Italian priest seized last year in Zamboanga del Norte province.

Since 1991, the Abu Sayyaf — armed with mostly improvised explosive devices, mortars and automatic rifles — has carried out bombings, kidnappings, assassinations and extortions in a self-determined fight for an independent Islamic province in the Philippines.

It is notorious for beheading victims after ransoms have failed to be paid for their release.

<http://www.newsfultoncounty.com/world/news/1324572-philippines-worried-by-reports-of-ill-canadian-hostage>

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[www.inquirer.net](http://www.inquirer.net)

## **AFP chief visits Sulu, Zamboanga amid alert following Jakarta attack**

*By: Frances Mangosing*

*09:41 PM January 15th, 2016*

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Hernando Iriberry visited Sulu and Zamboanga in Mindanao on Friday amid heightened security alert in the wake of Jakarta attacks.

"He has gone there also to reiterate our message to everyone in the AFP that we have gone on heightened alert because of the recent incidents that have occurred in Jakarta. We are in solidarity with our Indonesian brothers regarding these attacks. We'd like to prevent any others from happening in the region," AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla told reporters at Camp Aguinaldo on Friday.

Iriberry is scheduled to visit Basilan on Saturday.

The Philippine military heightened its security alert after the explosions in Indonesia's capital on Thursday, supposedly staged by the ISIS.

Iriberry also extended his gratitude to soldiers in these areas "due to their sacrifices especially they have been making this last holiday season," Padilla said.

The soldiers did not take a holiday break and many stayed because of the stepped up military and law enforcement operations, he explained.

President Benigno Aquino III ordered to intensify their operations against militants after a Malaysian captive of the Abu Sayyaf was beheaded last November in Sulu.

"The mission has not changed. The President's instruction has not changed. We are committed to finish this mission to its fruitful end until every kidnap victim has been rescued and until every issue on security in the area has been solved," Padilla said.

As the ISIS attacks get close to the Philippines, with the latest one supposedly in Indonesia, Padilla reiterated that "there is no credible and verified link to any international group."

No specific security threat has been monitored in the Philippines after the attacks in Indonesia, other than those from Abu Sayyaf and Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.

"Nothing has been monitored," Padilla said.

Security forces are also continuing with their military and law enforcement operations but Padilla said "there is no drastic and significant change in our posture

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