

Army Vision: By 2029, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride



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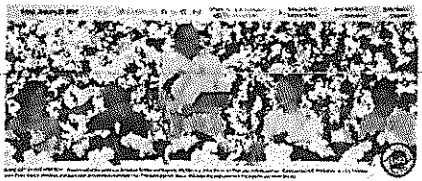
29 January 2016

Friday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land

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

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Poe: Adverse SC ruling will be sad

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Economy grows 6.3% in 4th quarter, 5.8% in 2015

SAF 44 case to be resolved in 4 weeks

Early school registration set



Comelec sees 7-way race

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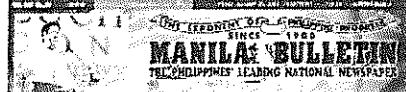
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MANILA BULLETIN

THE PHILIPPINE LEADING NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

Economy grows 6.3% in Q4

PH growth 4th in Asia next to India, China and Vietnam

Emperor Akihito cites Rizal's role in fostering PH-Japan ties

Had Mamasapano frame game senators after PNY ATP



The Manila Times

Trusted since 1898

PH, Vietnam warn Taiwan

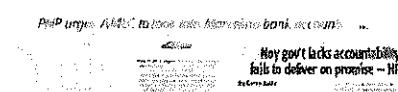
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Govt braces for OFWs' displacement

SAF 44 would still be alive if PNoy did not mess up - Marco

Lawmakers give up Bangsamoro measure

Receives Lu Atienza's letter



Tribune

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The Manila Times

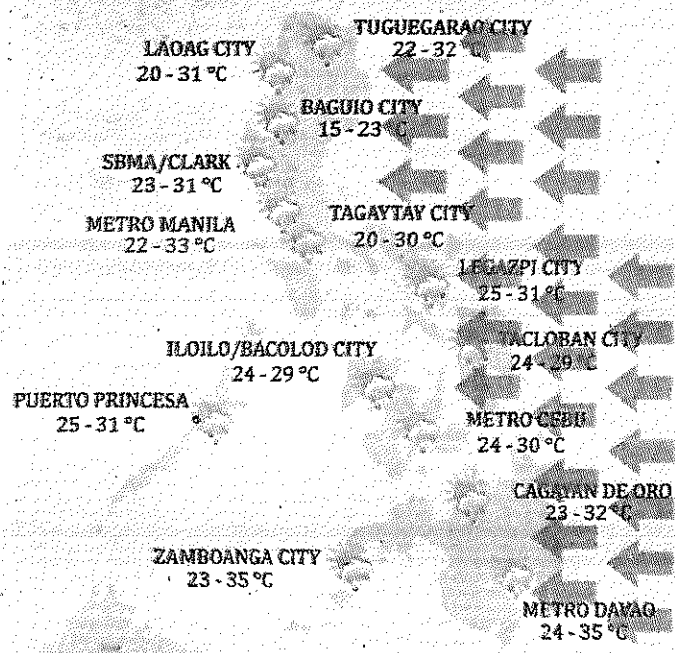
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TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST JANUARY 29, 2016 | FRIDAY

EASTERLIES
AFFECTING THE EASTERN
SECTION OF THE COUNTRY
(JANUARY 28, 5:00 PM)

SUNRISE
6:25 AM
MOONRISE
10:11 PM

SUNSET
5:53 PM
MOONSET
9:45 AM



FULL MOON
JAN 24
9:46 AM

LAST QUARTER
FEB 1
11:27 AM

LOW TIDE
8:13 AM
-0.01 Meter

HIGH TIDE
12:40 AM
0.82 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

Light rains

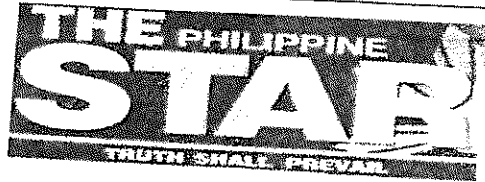
	JAN 30 SATURDAY	JAN 31 SUNDAY	FEB 1 MONDAY		JAN 30 SATURDAY	JAN 31 SUNDAY	FEB 1 MONDAY
METRO MANILA	23 - 33 °C	23 - 33 °C	24 - 34 °C	BAGUIO	14 - 22 °C	13 - 22 °C	13 - 22 °C
METRO CEBU	24 - 31 °C	25 - 31 °C	25 - 32 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C	24 - 31 °C
METRO DAVAO	23 - 34 °C	23 - 34 °C	22 - 33 °C	BORACAY	23 - 35 °C	24 - 35 °C	24 - 35 °C

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SAGIT RD, PUEBLA RD

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Comelec sees 7-way race

By SHEILA CRISOSTOMO

With barely six days left before it finalizes the voter's lists, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) said yesterday that voters might see seven people racing for the presidency on May 9.

Comelec Chairman Andres Bautista noted that the seven might make it to the Certified List of Candidates to be finalized on Wednesday.

"There will be seven. Most likely it will be the 'magnificent seven'," Bautista said in an interview.

He identified them as: Vice President Jejomar Binay (United Nationalist Alliance); Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago (People's Reform Party); Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte (Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan); Mel Mendoza (Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino); Sen. Grace Poe (Independent); Mar Roxas (Liberal Party), and Rep. Roy Señeres (Partido ng Manggagawa at Magsasaka Workers and Peasants Party).

Earlier, he announced the six qualified candidates for the vice presidency as Senators Alan Peter Cayetano, Francis Escudero, Ferdinand Marcos Jr., and Antonio Trillanes, all independent; Sen. Gregorio Honasan of UNA and Camarines Sur Rep. Leni Robredo of LP.

Comelec decided yesterday to uphold an earlier ruling of the First Division, which declared independent Dante Valencia as a nuisance candidate because of his failure to prove that he could mount a nationwide campaign.

"The en banc had reached a final decision to declare him a nuisance candidate. But, he can

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Comelec From Page 1

still go to the Supreme Court to seek a temporary restraining order if he wants to question our decision,” Bautista said.

The poll chief admitted the commission also debated on whether or not to retain Mendoza on the list.

“Some of us believe that (having a) political party should not be used as sole ground but (we also have to look into) the candidate’s personal qualifications. But that is the en banc’s decision – that he is a nominee of a known politi-

cal party,” Bautista explained.

Mendoza, 40, is a resident of Barangay Minuyan, San Jose del Monte in Bulacan and works as an assistant project officer.

Based on the Comelec timeline, it would have to finalize the lists of candidates by Feb. 3 because the printing of official ballots at the National Printing Office will start five days later.

Comelec also decided that candidates who have a pending disqualification case shall still be included in the ballots and their votes considered

“stray” in the event they lose their cases.

Both Duterte and Poe have pending disqualification cases before the Comelec and the Supreme Court (SC).

All four disqualification cases against Duterte are yet to be resolved as the commission waits on its First Division to decide on a motion to inhibit Comelec Commissioner Rowena Guanzon from the proceedings.

Poe also waits on the SC to rule on the appeal she filed against the Comelec resolutions, which disqualified her from the presidential race.

1 January 2016

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New US assault rifles bolster Mindanao troops' firepower

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City - As part of the modernization program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division (4th ID) received 2,819 new US-made assault rifles recently, a regional Philippine Army spokesman yesterday said.

Capt. Joe Patrick A. Martinez, regional Army spokesman said the 4th ID also received brand-new 200 Hareris radio units.

The brand-new war materiel were presented during the turn-over ceremony where Province of Dinagat Islands (PDI) lone district solon Rep. Arlene G. Bag-ao was the guest of honor and speaker held at 4th ID command center at Camp Edilberto Evangelista in Cagayan de Oro City.

The AFP has been using the 5.56 mm M16 rifle from the United States military which are leftovers from the Vietnam War era.

The 4th ID is the largest maneuvering Army division in Mindanao and is one of the early recipients of these rifles in the country's second largest island.

In a press statement, Capt. Martinez said these brand new war materiel will be initially distributed to the 4th ID's six line units.

These are the 4th Division Reconnaissance Battalion, 8th Infantry Battalion (8th IB), 26th IB, 29th IB, 30th IB, 36th IB and the 58th IB.

Meanwhile, Brig. Gen. Paul T Atal, Assistant Division Commander of

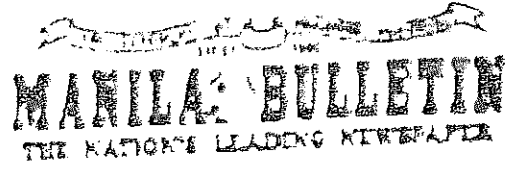
the 4th ID said these newly acquired rifles will boost government forces' capabilities.

"Your Army, with the issuance of the newly acquired R4s, will be better equipped to meet security challenges in the field and the R4's compact design and superior features consequently improves the capability of individual soldiers," Atal said.



A.F.P. FIREPOWER - Dinagat Islands Rep. Arlene Bag-ao and 4th Infantry Division's Brig. Gen. Paul T. Atal inspect the new rifles and other equipment recently turned over to the Armed Forces of the Philippines at Camp Evangelista in Cagayan de Oro City recently. (Photo courtesy of 4th ID-PAO)

24 January 2016



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NPA amazon killed in Davao clash

DAVAO CITY – A New People's Army (NPA) amazon was killed during an encounter with the elements of 73rd Infantry Battalion Wednesday morning in Sitio Tinungkaan, Barangay Danwata, Malita, Davao Occidental.

An M653 rifle was recovered from the fatality at the Davao encounter site, the 10th Infantry (Agila) Division said.

"The armed encounter occurred when the soldiers chanced upon around 20 NPAs led by alias Joey at around 5 a.m. After an hour-long firefight, the NPAs scampered in different directions leaving behind their dead female comrade," Capt. Rhyen Batchar, chief information officer of the 10th ID said.

Pursuit operations are still ongoing in the area while the authorities are still establishing the amazon's identity.

73rd IB commander Lt. Col. Ronnie Babac said their forces will sustain efforts to force the remnants of the NPA units operating in the boundaries of Davao Occidental and Sarangani to abandon their armed struggle, return to the folds of the law and live peaceful and progressive lives.

The NPAs in the Davao Occidental-Sarangani areas suffered major setbacks in 2014 and 2015.

Plantation attacked in Misamis

Meantime in Misamis Oriental, at least 20 suspected NPA rebels swooped down on a plantation site of Del Monte Philippines, Incorporated (DMPI) and set ablaze various plantation equipment and assets in Barangay San Juan, Balingasag town.

A report from Balingasag Municipal Police Station said the perpetrators burned a bulldozer, an owner-type jeep and a generator set.

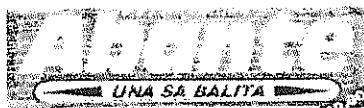
The Balingasag police said estimated damage to property is P15 million.

The equipment were reportedly owned by a DMPI contractor.

The incident took place at around 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday at the 25-hectare pineapple plantation of the food firm.

No one was reported hurt during the incident. (Alexander D. Lopez and Mike U. Crismundo)

29 January 2016



Pahina. 6

Amasona napatay ng sundalo sa NPA clash

ZAMBOANGA CITY --- Napatay ng mga sundalo ang isang babae na diumano'y miyembrong rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) sa isang sagupaan sa bayan ng Malita sa Davao Occidental sa Mindanao.

Kinumpirma rin ito kahapon ng 10th Infantry

Division at sinabing nagkaroon umano ng labanan sa Barangay Datu Danwata matapos na matiyempuhan ng mga sundalo ang halos 20 mga rebelde sa lugar.

Nabawi rin ng mga tropa mula 73rd Infantry Battalion ang isang automatic rifle, ngunit hindi

pa mabatid ang identidad ng napaslang na babaeng amasona. Patuloy rin umano ang operasyon ng militar kontra NPA sa naturang bayan.

Matagal ng nakikibaka ang mga rebelde upang maitatag ang sariling estado sa bansa. (Al Jacinto)

Lady rebel killed in Davao Occidental clash

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 28): Lady rebel killed in Davao Occidental clash

A lady rebel was killed in an armed encounter between government forces and the communists New People's Army (NPA) rebels on Wednesday morning in Sitio Tinungkaan, Barangay Danwata, Malita, Davao Occidental.

The army's 10th Infantry (Agila) Division spokesperson Army Captain Rhyan Batcharsaid the encounter took place when the soldiers chanced upon around 20 NPAs, led by alias Joey of guerrilla front 71.

The clash lasted for almost an hour where the government troopers were able to recover the dead body of the woman rebel and an M653 Rifle, popularly known as a 'baby armalite'.

Pursuit operations are still on-going in the area while the army is still determining the identity of the dead NPA member, Batchar added.

73rd IB commander Lt. Col. Ronnie Babac also told reporters on Wednesday that their forces would pursue efforts to force the remnants of the NPAs operating in the boundaries of Davao Occidental and Sarangani to abandon their armed struggle, return to the folds of the law and live peaceful and progressive lives together with the majority of the Filipino people.

The NPAs in the Davao Occidental-Sarangani areas suffered major debacles in 2014 and 2015, he said.

Babac said that on Oct. 1, 2014 at Barangay Kinangan, Malita, three NPAs were killed and two captured, 12 high-powered firearms and three IEDs were recovered by the army while on Feb. 16, 2015, seven NPAs were killed and nine high powered firearms and three IEDs were recovered in Barangay Datal Anggas, Sarangani Province.

10th ID commander Major General Rafael Valencia lauded the bravery of the soldiers while he expressed his grief on the death of the woman rebel.

"We extend our condolences to the bereaved family of the fallen Amazon. It is now high time for the CPP-NPA to realize the futility of the armed struggle, which has only brought miseries to many Filipino families," Valencia said.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=851489>

21 January 2016

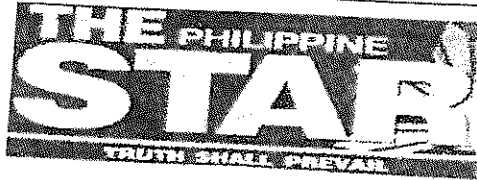
Standard

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Opening act. Brigadier General Paul Atal and barangay chairman Mary Cor Calizo of Patag, Cagayan de Oro City, open the Barrio Fiesta sa Kampo to commemorate the 46th founding anniversary of the 4th Infantry Diamond Division.

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SAF 44 case to be resolved in 4 weeks

By GHIO ONG

In three to four weeks, the Department of Justice would be able to come up with a resolution on the Mamasapano tragedy, acting Justice Secretary Emmanuel Caparas said yesterday.

“Please expect us to resolve that – give us three to four weeks to be able to do that,” Caparas told reporters.

He said state prosecutors working on the case would “go over everything that has been gathered.”

The DOJ on Dec. 17 concluded after three hearings its preliminary investigation into the

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killing of 35 members of the police Special Action Force (SAF) by guerrillas belonging to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and some private armed groups in Mamasapano, Maguindanao last year.

No charges have been filed against anyone for the killing of the nine other SAF members as no witnesses have come forward to identify suspected killers.

The investigation involves some 13 commanders of the MILF and six of the BIFF. Four of the respondents have submitted affidavit denying the charges of direct assault with murder.

Investigators are also examining videos of the killings that went viral on social media.

Caparas also said he did not expect the outcome of the Senate hearing on the Mamasapano carnage last Wednesday to affect the drafting of a resolution.

"In our assessment, there's nothing really new there, so whatever is on the table now, we continue," he said.

At Malacañang, Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said last Wednesday's Senate hearing failed to establish President Aquino's direct link to the police operation that led to the deaths of 44 SAF commandos.

He said the President had been fed the wrong information by some police officials particularly then SAF commander Getulio Napeñas.

Coloma said that while the Office of the Ombudsman is now conducting a probe on Napeñas, Congress would have to take steps to avoid a repeat of the Mamasapano incident - specifically, reviewing the PNP Law.

He said it was largely Napeñas' failure to make the necessary coordination with the Armed Forces of the Philippines that threw the SAF operation in disarray.

Coloma also pointed out that in a photo taken at 4:14 p.m. on Jan. 25 last year or hours after the bloody encounter, Napeñas did not appear concerned about the fate of his men.

"He did not have a mindset of a commander seriously concerned with the welfare of his troops and he belittled the seriousness of the situation. All of these are important responsibility of a commander," the presidential spokesman said.

"In all instances, the Aquino administration adhered to the truth. Our position has been transparent, the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police and the government did not conceal anything and answered all questions that were thrown in various investigations regarding this," Coloma pointed out.

He also said the nation had been witness to the pronouncements of Napeñas, the AFP and PNP officials that there was no stand down order from the President. Napeñas said Purisima told him to order the SAF operatives to hold their positions because they were talking to the MILF.

"That is why in my view, as witness to the seven-hour investigation, the allegations of Senator (Juan Ponce) Enrile were effectively answered and belied," Coloma said.

He added Napeñas' allegations that the military was compromised and should not be told about sensitive operations were baseless.

"That is the personal opinion and assessment of Director Napeñas that does not necessarily reflect the situation, the overall situation," Coloma said.

Nothing established

At the Senate, Aquino's allies reiterated that he should not be held liable for the Mamasapano carnage.

Senate President Franklin Drilon noted that nothing was established against President Aquino's liability after hours of the chamber's discussion on the issue last Wednesday.

"The nearly seven-hour

hearing would show that it was actually Napeñas who crafted Oplan Exodus. It was he in fact who signed the Oplan Exodus as author of the document," the Senate president said.

"He deliberately disregarded the President's instruction to coordinate with the AFP and as a result of that it was Napeñas who compartmentalized the operation of Mamasapano to himself and Purisima because of his distrust of the AFP," Drilon added.

While there was "nothing earthshaking" about last Wednesday's hearing, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III said nothing could prevent Enrile from filing a separate report or opinion on the Mamasapano incident.

In case a criminal case is filed against President Aquino after his term ends on June 30, Pimentel said the burden would be on the person who would pursue charges against the president as private citizen.

The Senate president reiterated that Cabinet members, police and military officers negated the "assertions on stand down."

Although he said he does not want to pre-empt Senate committee on public order and dangerous drugs chairperson Sen. Grace Poe, Drilon echoed her statement that there is nothing more to add to the 129-page committee report after Wednesday's reopening of inquiry.

The Poe report had found Aquino ultimately responsible for the Mamasapano tragedy.

Drilon said the committee report has not been approved by the Senate. A total of 20 senators have signed the report. Those who did not sign were Drilon, Enrile, Senators Lito Lapid and Antonio Trillanes IV.

"I do not know if she will submit that report to the Senate for approval, in which case it will be debated upon. As of now it remains a committee report that has not been acted upon by the Senate," Drilon said. — With Aurea Calica, Christina Mendez, Helen Flores

21 January 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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End Mamasapano blame game, senators urge PNP, AFP

By **HANNAH L. TORREGOZA**

Senators yesterday sought an end to the blame game between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) over the death of the Special Action Force (SAF) commandos last year.

Senator Francis "Chiz" Escudero said he noted that even during the re-opening of the Senate inquiry into the bloody Mamasapano operation last Wednesday, police and military officials still pointed fingers at each other on who was to blame for the botched operation.

"Since we started the hear- ► **15**

End Mamasapano blame... ◀1

ing and until now, our officials are still pointing fingers at each other. Command responsibility is important and I believe in it. But it seems everyone is making command but no one is accepting any responsibility," said Escudero, who is running for vice president in the coming May national elections.

He said that the joint hearing, led by Senate Committee on Public Order chair Sen. Grace Poe Llamanzares, again highlighted the lack of intelligence, poor planning and coordination, and failure of communications between and among key law enforcement agencies from the beginning up to the extraction of the last SAF trooper trapped at the battle scene in Mamasapano, Maguindanao.

During the hearing last Wednesday, Senate Minority Leader Juan Ponce Enrile blamed President Aquino for compartmentalizing the operation, limiting the details and planning of Oplan Exodus to a few number of people, including himself and then suspended PNP chief Alan Purisima and SAF Director General Getulio Napeñas.

But Presidential Communications Operations Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said it was actually Napeñas who acted alone. He said the former SAF chief disobeyed President Aquino's order to coordinate with the military about the anti-terror mission. He added that such order from the President's should not be considered an interference but a mere guidance to ensure the success of the operation.

Enrile also accused the President of deliberately keeping other Cabinet officials, the AFP and PNP leadership out of the loop. While the operation successfully neutralized Malaysian terrorist Zulkilfi bin Hir or "Marwan" who is one of the targets of the operation it resulted in dire consequences.

At least 44 members of the PNP elite force died in a firefight against mixed troops of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), and other private armed groups while trying to make their way out following the killing of Marwan.

Enrile also claimed that President Aquino failed to take any effective action to prevent the slaughter of the 44 police commandos. The senator added the President tried to hide from Purisima to escape accountability and responsibility for the bungled anti-terror raid.

Coloma, however, insisted that the

President did everything he could to save the policemen contrary to the allegations hurled by Enrile.

Malacañang said Enrile's attempt to pin the blame on President Aquino for the Mamasapano debacle was a dud.

The reopening of the Senate hearing on the Mamasapano incident only proved anew the liability of Napeñas for the lapses of the police operation, Presidential Communications Operations Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said.

"The allegations made by Senator Enrile have been effectively addressed and proven wrong in the Senate hearing last Wednesday," Coloma said in a Palace press briefing.

"The hearing showed Director Napeñas' lack of awareness about the real situation of his troops in Mamasapano and the serious lack of coordination between him and the Armed Forces of the Philippines that put the lives of the SAF 44 at risk," he added.

Likewise, Coloma also denied speculations that Aquino supposedly issued a "stand down" order to the military at the height of the deadly encounter between the SAF troopers and Muslim rebels in order to protect the fragile peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Testifying at the hearing, AFP officials said the operation was doomed from the start since there is lack of a solid contingency plan, strategic planning, full scale logistics, among others.

Escudero said it would have been more acceptable if at least one of these security officials admitted command responsibility for what had happened in Mamasapano.

Correct institutional defects

Sen. Gregorio Honasan II said he hopes fellow lawmakers would work to address the institutional damage on the PNP and the AFP by crafting new laws and amending existing ones, instead of looking for personalities to blame.

"There were new issues that cropped up during the hearing, but what is important here is that, in aid of legislation, we correct these institutional defects," Honasan said.

"We need a positive approach here, let's help and let's not use this for any other motive," added the senator.

"Both of them have a mission, that is to serve a warrant, to ensure peace and order and fight those who are against peace," he pointed out.

The reopening of the hearing, Honasan said, not only shed light on new details of the case, but also saw the need to put an end to compartmentalization.

"We all saw the need to put an end or prevent this compartmentalization. We uncovered the extent of the lack of coordination. That both camps were negligent," he said.

A former military officer and leader of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM), Honasan agreed there should have been collective responsibility and accountability, but the need to address the institutional damage is paramount.

"Let's stop looking for people to blame, who should be punished, and who should be absolved. It's the courts that would determine that. It will not serve public interest if the blame game continues," said Honasan.

But everything boils down to miscommunication, Sen. Juan Edgardo "Sonny" Angara said, as he pointed out President Aquino was misinformed of the gravity of the situation on that fateful day.

"I think the President thought the SAF has a huge force because on his third text (message) to Gen. Purisima, he was asking if they really sent 160 troops," Angara pointed out in an interview over Radio DZMM.

"It wasn't clear to him how many were the casualties and the gravity of the situation," he pointed out.

Poe said there is no need to draft a new committee report as there is no new evidence on the deadly clash that would change the findings of the committee report they released last year.

The Senate reopened the hearing upon the request of Enrile, who cited new evidence that would pin down Aquino.

With the lessons arising from the incident, Coloma said the military and the police have committed to strengthen mechanisms of coordination to prevent a repeat of the bungled Mamasapano operation.

He also expressed hope that Congress would also review the PNP Law and determine possible sanctions on police officials committing neglect of duty.

On the role of the United States in the Mamasapano operation, Coloma defended that such alliance with the foreign power was part of the global campaign against terrorism.

He assured that the government follows rules and regulations concerning defense pacts with the United States in terms of the counter terrorism drive.

Standard

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By Sandy Araneta
and Macon Ramos-Araneta

It has been established that the bloody offense was a US-backed operation and that US agents, possibly from the notorious Central Intelligence Agency, were directly involved. No less than the puppet President Aquino was tapped to direct the operation, said Anakbayan chairman Vencer Crisostomo.

"Clearly, Aquino has committed treason," Carostenio said, adding that Aquino "secretly implemented an illegal offensive, tapped a suspended official, broke the chain of command and the ceasefire agreement with the Bangsamoro which led to the death of more than 60 Filipinos, 44 of which his own government's police operatives." *Next page*

From A1

Bañez said that this is an insult to the victims of the Mamasapano operation and the Filipino people.

"Our countrymen were thrown to the lions... for the sake of an operation directed and funded by the US. Their lives were taken from them just to satisfy the interest of the American government."

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said Bañez.

"No one in the government has the power to give permission to the US military force to operate other than the Philippine President. He allowed this operation and took part in crafting the plans on how to execute Operation Exodus," she said.

But the Palace on Thursday denied allegations by Senator Juan Ponce Enrile that the President "compartmentalized" the ill-fated Mamasapano operation.

"It is not true that this was an insulated incident, [that it was] compartmentalized, that the President was the only one who knew the whole story," Communications Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said in a press briefing. "This was part of the whole intelligence situation which was actively monitored by the whole government."

Coloma said what the President knew was the concept of Oplan Exodus, which aimed to neutralize two high-value terrorist targets, as presented to him by Napeñas.

Over 60 people, including 44 SAF elite troopers from the PNP were killed in the gun battle with Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters rebels and private armed groups.

Marwan, who was then listed as one of the Most Wanted Terrorists by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and had a \$5-million bounty on his head, was also killed in the Jan. 25, 2015 operation.

The Mamasapano incident created a political firestorm that sent the President's popularity ratings to their lowest level and has threatened the peace process between the government and the MILF.

During the reopening of the Mamasapano probe Wednesday, Enrile accused Aquino of excluding government, police, and military officials from the operations.

Senator Francis Escudero said one year after the bloody incident, law enforcers were continuing to point fingers at who should take responsibility for the death of the 44 police commandos.

"I believe that command responsibility is important. It seemed that all of them have command responsibility, but nobody would want to admit liability," Escudero said.

The joint hearing on Wednesday once again highlighted the lack of intelligence, poor planning and coordination, and failure of communications between and among government agencies to ensure the success of the operation from the beginning up to the extraction of the last SAF trooper trapped in the area.

Dubbed Oplan Exodus, the operation successfully took down wanted international terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, but left 44 members of the police commando dead as they were making their way out.

Escudero said it would have been more acceptable if at least one of these security officials admitted command responsibility for what had happened in Mamasapano, Maguindanao on Jan. 25, 2015.

Senator Antonio Trillanes IV criticized Napeñas for putting the blame on the Armed Forces of the Philippines, when his own men also failed to provide support to the embattled elite police commandos.

Napeñas has repeatedly criticized the AFP for refusing to provide artillery support. He said the other SAF troopers could not help the 55th Special Action Company, which acted as a blocking force, because of the intensity of the fighting in Barangay Tukanalipao.

However, Staff Sgt. Whilmer Jaranilla, team leader of the 61st Division Reconnaissance Company, stood pat on his assertion that the 130-strong 41st, 42nd and 45th SAC were just waiting near the river and resting beside banana trees.

Senator Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday decried the Department of Justice's shabby treatment of the family of the 44 commandos of the Special Action Force commandos slain in the Mamasapano massacre.

He noted that in the first e-mail sent to him dated Dec. 8, 2015, the SAF 44 kin, whom he did not name for security reasons, complained about the cancellation of the scheduled preliminary investigation on the Mamasapano case on Nov. 11 and 27.

The complainant cited the Nov. 27 hearing that was cancelled despite the presence of the representatives of 35 SAF commandos from the 55th Seaborne Company as well as the lawyers of some of the respondents.

"Many of the families of the slain SAF 55 are from Visayas and Mindanao. We were travel weary and we spent money for our fare in going to Luzon and hotel accommodation only to be informed later that the hearing is cancelled," the letter sender said.

In a subsequent e-mail to Marcos, dated Jan. 18, 2016 the SAF 44 kin said they were again told the scheduled Jan. 14, 2016 hearing was cancelled because the case was already submitted for resolution.

"If this is how we treat those that have given their lives in defense of the country, what is the fate of the ordinary citizen?" Marcos said.

Marcos said that upon receiving the first e-mail, he immediately wrote then acting Justice Secretary Alfredo Caguioa on the status of the preliminary investigation but he has yet to receive any response. "More than a month has passed since I wrote the DoJ to endorse that e-mail for appropriate action but until now I have not received even a cursory reply to assure me that they would attend to the matter," Marcos said.

With the appointment of Caguioa to the Supreme Court, Marcos had also urged his replacement, Undersecretary Emmanuel Caparas to prioritize the resolution of the Mamasapano case, noting that a year after the tragic incident no case has been filed in court against the suspects.

He said no word or gesture can assuage the pain of the families of the slain policemen.

"Only justice will bring that. Only justice will do," Marcos said.

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January 2018

The Manila Times

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Police, AFP ties still strong—PNP spokesman

RELATIONSHIP between the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) still remain strong, the spokesman for the 150,000-strong police organization said on Thursday.

The statement came from the PNP spokesman, Chief Supt. Wilben Mayor, after reopening of the Senate probe of the Mamasapano operation that resulted in

the death of 44 members of the elite Special Action Force (SAF) of the PNP in Maguindanao on January 25 last year.

The PNP spokesman said in a news briefing in Camp Crame in Quezon City that both members of the PNP and AFP are "both professional and their primary concern is the safety and the security of the country and its people, more than their self-interest and emotion."

He described only as incidental an exchange of words between AFP and PNP officials during Wednesday's reopening of the Senate inquiry into Oplan Exodus that targeted high value terrorist targets.

"We cannot jeopardize or compromise the fate of the Filipino people and of the country," Mayor said.

ANTHONY VARGAS

29 January 2016

Malaya
The National Newspaper

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Sayyaf bomb plot foiled

BY VICTOR REYES

GOVERNMENT forces foiled an Abu Sayyaf plan to bomb a police station in Jolo, in Sulu Wednesday night, the military said yesterday.

Two men hurled a black backpack, which later turned out to be containing an improvised bomb, at the back of a prowl car which was parked near the station of the 6th Maneuver Platoon of the PNP's Provincial Public Safety Company in barangay San Raymundo.

Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, commander of the military's Joint Task Group Sulu, said a "concerned citizen" informed the task force of the incident around 7:20 p.m., immediately after witnessing the event.

29 January 2016

MANILA BULLETIN

Police seek help to check Marcelino's bank account

'Misencounter,' chief's animosity, drug syndicates blamed for arrest

By AARON B. RECUENCO
and LEONARD D. POSTRADO

Police are now coordinating with the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) to check on the bank records of Marines Lt. Col. Ferdinand Marcelino who was arrested inside a shabu laboratory in Manila last week.

This, after anti-narcotics policemen seized several deposit slips which shows inflow of some P2.2 million to the bank account of Marcelino last year alone.

"Our director (Senior Supt. Antonio Gardiola) has already requested for a complete and thorough financial investigation to determine if those are money-laundering activities," said Chief Insp. Roque Merdegia, Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force (AIDG).

A check on the deposit slips revealed that the biggest deposit was P500,000 on May 26 last year followed by another P200,000 a month later. Another P300,000 was deposited on July 31. The lowest deposit was P30,000 which was made on March 4.

"We also found P86,000 cash from his bag, along with a handgun," said Merdegia.

Not allowed to carry gun

"Our director also ordered the filing of additional case against him because of the .45 pistol seized from him," said Merdegia.

He said the gun has expired license and that Marcelino is not allowed to carry handgun because of the existing nationwide gun ban.

Marcelino is currently detained at the AIDG headquarters at Camp Crame.

Not convincing

Asked of the defense of Marcelino that he has been helping the government in the campaign against illegal drugs, Merdegia said the claim is not convincing.

He said that upon his arrest in the shabu laboratory wherein some P383 million worth of shabu was seized, Marcelino was asked to produce any document that would prove his role in any existing anti-illegal drugs activities. But 48 hours later, Marcelino did not produce anything.

"Now he has another argument, attack-

ing the PDEA (Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency) Director General (Arturo Cadac). For us, he is not telling the truth. What he has been saying are purely alibi, denial which will not stand in court," said Merdegia.

'Misencounter'

Meanwhile, Dennis Manalo, lawyer of Marcelino said he suspects that the drug syndicates' invisible hands were responsible to what he described as a "misencounter" between his client and members of the joint Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and Philippine National Police (PNP) team during a drug bust in Manila recently.

"I am starting to entertain the idea that the drug syndicates who are behind the operations in the area were able to maneuver things in such a way two agencies in government who are dealing with drug investigation would have a misencounter," Marcelino's lawyer told reporters late Wednesday afternoon after the first preliminary hearing of the drug case.

Violations

In his eight-page, counter-affidavit which he submitted to Senior Deputy State Prosecutor Theodore Villanueva, Jr., Marcelino blamed PDEA chief Arturo Cadac, Jr. who had been "historically irated" at him for his continued involvement in the anti-drug campaign of the government, for his arrest.

"His animosity towards me is known in PDEA. I have been informed of his verbal tirades against me, one of which I recall, when I was in Hongkong attending a court hearing," the ex-PDEA stressed.

Marcelino also believed that his former boss took offense on his criticism that 95 percent of the Philippines remains infested with illegal drugs despite the increasing budget of PDEA.

Hunger strike

Believing that he was unlawfully arrested and implicated in the Manila drug bust, Marcelino went on a hunger strike. Marcelino told reporters waiting outside the office of Deputy State Prosecutor that he will be starving himself until he has been set free from detention.

Air Force invites bid for P15 million spares

THE Philippine Air Force is buying spares amounting more than P15 million for repair and maintenance of one of its PZL W3-A Sokol aircraft.

An invitation to bid posted on the government website Philippine Government Electronics Procurement System (PhilGEPS) said the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) through the Air Force's Bids and Awards Committee approved the P15,936,175.00 allocation for the spares.

Col. Enrico Canaya, Air Force spokesman, said the bidding was

just one of the many programming for spares.

While there are spares at Air Force warehouses, according to Canaya, it is conducting bidding on other items as part of its requirements and programming.

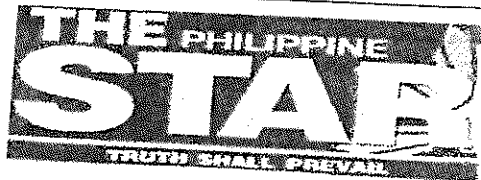
The Air Force has eight Sokol but one crashed in Marawi City, Lanao del Norte, in 2014.

They were acquired by the government from Poland for P2.8 billion.

Sokol is a medium-sized, twin-engined, multipurpose helicopter manufactured by PZL-widnik.

FERNAN MARASIGAN

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EDITORIAL

Disorganized

In terms of command responsibility for the deaths in Mamasapano last year, Senate Minority Leader Juan Ponce Enrile and the congressional committee headed by Sen. Grace Poe reached similar conclusions after the reopening of the probe the other day.

What was new for the public was the release of detailed exchanges of text messages among President Aquino, Alan Purisima who at the time was suspended as Philippine National Police chief, top officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, acting PNP chief Leonardo Espina and the commander of the police Special Action Force, Getulio Napeñas.

The text exchanges must have been presented to the senators last year in executive session since they didn't find the messages new. The exchanges, combined with the testimonies of the military and police officers who attended the inquiry the other day, revealed a lack of coordination among security agencies that is worrisome in a country facing several serious armed threats.

Apart from supporting efforts to give justice to the 44 slain SAF commandos, the Senate probe should lead to changes in operational links between the military and police. Purisima, who was described by the Senate committee last year as the de facto commander of the operation, repeated that the manhunt for top Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias

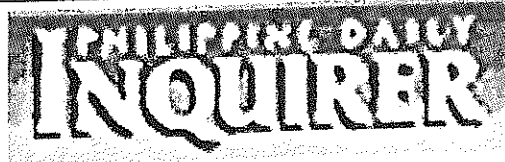
Marwan, had to be compartmentalized because the military had been "compromised," apparently by the peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

While no one will admit it, there must have been resentment within the AFP that it was kept out of the loop, especially after news spread that Marwan had been neutralized and the SAF had accomplished its mission. In an age where everyone has a mobile phone, PNP and AFP officers did not think of calling each other directly to discuss the quickest way to extract the SAF from a massacre. Instead Napeñas texted his SOS for artillery bombardment, and the AFP texted back its request for more detailed coordinates. At the end of a long, bloody day, help arrived too late for the SAF 44.

Turf wars are common among security agencies around the world, but these can be set aside in the name of national interest. Safeguarding a peace process need not be incompatible with hunting down terrorists, especially one wanted for the nightclub bombings in Bali, Indonesia that left 202 people dead.

The tragedy in Mamasapano must lead to better coordination between military and police forces, with civilian authorities deciding which one should take the lead in counterterrorism. There is such a thing as interoperability, the lack of which, as Mamasapano has shown, can have dire consequences.

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Enrile's dud

WE THOUGHT Senate Minority Leader Juan Ponce Enrile had the goods on President Aquino. On Monday, he took to the Senate floor to make a declaration.

"I would like to make it on record that I have evidence: one, that the President of the Philippines, Benigno Aquino, was actively and directly involved in the planning and preparations of Oplan Exodus; two, that on the

EDITORIAL day of the actual operations, he was monitoring the operations while he was on his plane going to Zamboanga City; and three, that while the operations were going on, and Special Action Force troopers were being slaughtered, he did not do anything at all to save them."

On Wednesday, the Senate committee on public order and dangerous drugs resumed its inquiry into the Mamasapano tragedy which had claimed the lives of 44 SAF troopers, three civilians, and 17 Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels. The resumption was upon the express request of Enrile, who missed last year's hearings because he was in detention at a police hospital on plunder charges. The committee chair, Sen. Grace Poe, with the backing of committee members, gave Enrile ample time to present his evidence; hours after directing sometimes leading questions to various witnesses called to the Senate, Enrile ended up proving nothing much, and certainly nothing new.

He treated the SAF commander who planned Oplan Exodus (Getulio Napeñas) like a friendly witness, and threw questions at the former Philippine National Police chief (Alan Purisima) who was involved in the decision-making, and the retired and active military officers who had some knowledge of the unfolding nightmare in the cornfields of Mamasapano, Maguindanao (including former Armed Forces chief of staff Gregorio Catapang), as though they were hostile ones. He offered a framework specifying the eight responsibilities of the President, from asserting that Mr. Aquino "actively and directly participated" in the planning of the operation to accusing him of having deliberately "compartmented" the decision-making to charging that he did nothing to prevent the "slaughter" of the SAF troopers. He repeatedly sneered at Purisima's attempts to elaborate on his answers and also repeatedly scolded the military representatives present for failing, in his view, to come immediately to the rescue of the SAF troopers.

But at the end of some seven hours of testimony, Poe closed the proceedings with the correct summary: After all the hue and cry, Enrile had offered nothing new.

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The opposition senator, who has served in public office almost continuously since the 1960s, admitted as much. "There will be no changes in the findings. I just focused on the role, responsibility and accountability of the President in the debacle," he said.

In truth, what Enrile did was to claim the SAF officers' version of events as his own. We should have expected this; after all, he said he met some SAF survivors while he was in hospital detention. It was then that he resolved to move for a reopening of the Senate inquiry. What gave it all away was something truly telling: He gave short shrift to the military's contrasting version—a remarkable attitude, given his long service at the Ministry, and then the Department, of National Defense.

The military had the least involvement in the Mamasapano tragedy, precisely because Napeñas and the SAF saw the Army as "compromised." And when the time came for the SAF to seek support and reinforcements from the AFP, the requests were fragmentary and incomplete. It was only at the end of a very long day that the SAF command post in Maguindanao was able to provide the Army the information it needed to use its artillery.

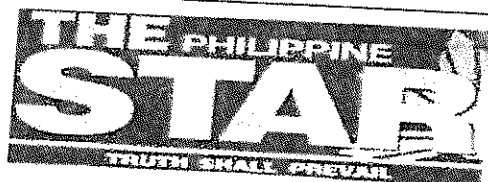
And yet despite being kept in the dark, and despite the SAF's maddening lack of professionalism (such as the use of a Google map instead of a tactical one), the Army was still able to send help. But instead of recognizing the AFP's assistance, Enrile repeatedly took it to task.

He must have thought that 44 dead troopers constituted proof that the SAF version of events was correct. He was wrong. In the long Mindanao conflict, the AFP has shed more blood, made greater sacrifices, than even the PNP's elite unit. But the number of dead, or even the manner of dying, had nothing to do with the truth. The truth was, the SAF planning for the Mamasapano operation was criminally inadequate. That Enrile had nothing to say about this lapse is proof—that he had been biased from the start.

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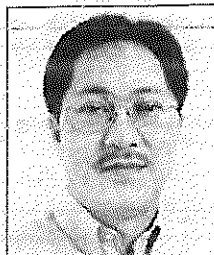
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Gotcha

By JARIUS BONDOC



Mamasapano review: 3 items still hanging

The Mamasapano re-inquiry iterated earlier findings but again ignored some grave issues. Administration senators as before shielded President Noynoy Aquino from political booby traps. Generals one by one, in the televised hearing, were asked if anyone had barred them from aiding the beleaguered SAF-44. Their unanimous "no" blunted the drift of Minority Leader Juan Ponce Enrile that P-Noy, to save a truce with Moro rebels, deceitfully had allowed the massacre. They came to the same old ending: P-Noy was wrong in letting a suspended PNP chief direct the takedown of international terrorists.

Three items were heard only in passing, as in the first inquiry:

First is the PNP intelligence distrust of the AFP in operations against "HVTs," or high-value targets. Unexplained then as now was SAF head Getulio Napeñas' response to P-Noy's instruction to coordinate his raid with the military: "Sir, with due respect, the AFP is compromised." That led to revising the O-Plan Exodus against mass bombers Marwan and Basit Usman. Employed was the tactic of "T-O-T" (time on target), or giving the concerned officers details only at launch of operation.

PNP sources say the distrust runs long and deep, particularly in Muslim

Mindanao. Too often, when PNP commanders informed military counterparts well beforehand of, say, a raid, "word of it would reach the enemy."

Perhaps it was by duty. A cease-fire binds the Army to in turn tell truce monitors of the impending police action. The monitors in turn alert the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to stay away. The latter also is able to preempt damage on its units, thus foiling the PNP's element of surprise.

It can also be due to carelessness. A SAF general recounts a past operation that needed aerial bombing. When the Air Force prepared to scramble fighter craft, all MILF units in the vicinity went on red alert. "Some enlisted men have relatives in MILF-controlled barrios," the general shakes his head.

It could be due to the PNP and AFP's conflicting missions. The former is tasked to disband private armies, especially during elections. The latter, to foil at all costs any rebel sabotage, would arm politicians even with machineguns. Invariably resentments flare, even between "mistahs," or batch mates, from the Philippine Military Academy.

Entwined with the distrust is the second issue: fights over rewards and credits. To be credited with successful delicate missions is the passport to plum promotion in both the PNP and AFP. Monetary rewards are icing on the cake.

The PNP Board of Inquiry on the Mamasapano Massacre hinted at this in its sole paragraph about the distrust. Recounting the genesis of Exodus from O-Plans Wolverine 1 to 3 and Terminator 1 to 2, it reported: "According to Napeñas, the aborted missions in the past caused uncertainties and suspicion, so much so that he decided against informing or working with the AFP in the succeeding operations against HVTs. He speculated that sensitive intelligence and operational

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Why does the SAF distrust the AFP, the reward remains uncollected, and justice is unserved?

information were deliberately leaked whenever 'big operations' against HVTs like Marwan and Usman were conducted. Napeñas lamented that '(t) he subjects are being coddled by the MILF, whose members have a lot of contacts in the AFP.'"

The hunt for Marwan and Usman was one such "big operation." The targets were so big that there were rewards for their capture: \$7 million from the US State Department, and P7.5 million from the Philippine government.

The MILF was coddling the terrorists for sure, and helping them elude past dragnets. But Wolverine, Terminator, and Exodus also hinged on crucial tips from certain rebels. PNP intelligence was able to pinpoint Marwan and Usman's adjacent hideouts from informants on-site, one of them codenamed Bonanza. They knew of the huge bounty; the amount was beyond the wildest dream of Moros so used to the hard life of the neglected. They were willing to share the prize with their handlers. Lawmen are prohibited from receiving rewards, but the enticements from informants are tempting: "We will buy houses and lots and SUVs, then retire together." The rewards remain uncollected.

Bounty hunters viciously compete. The SAF complains that, months ahead

of Exodus, the Army 6th Infantry Division had launched its own raid to get Marwan using the old PNP intelligence. "It failed," they guffaw.

In another case AFP higher-ups aborted an air rescue of encircled policemen when they found out it was an operation to get Marwan. The PNP officers hold a grudge to this day.

A senator said such bounty hunting costs lives. Recounted was an Army colonel in Basilan who, with no clearance from superiors, dispatched 19 soldiers to arrest an MILF chieftain wanted for the massacre of 11 Marines. The 19 soldiers were themselves killed in ambush by the same MILF brute, and the colonel was demoted after court martial.

Lastly, justice remains elusive one year after the massacre of the SAF-44. Not tackled by the senators is why the Dept. of Justice is taking so long to indict the 92 identified massacrers from the MILF and its breakaway but blood-related Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.

The 92 were shooters in the "pintakasi" (gang-up) at a cornfield in Barrio Tukanalipao, in which were encircled and mowed down 35 SAFs. In suspended animation is the killing in the next barrio of nine more SAFs who repeatedly were ambushed after neutralizing Marwan. The MILF refuses to return their looted uniforms, weapons, and personal effects. Yet Malacañang is egging the senators to enact a Bangsamoro Basic Law that would let the massacrers rule Muslim Mindanao.

* * *

Catch *Sapul* radio show, Saturdays, 8-10 a.m., DWIZ (882-AM).

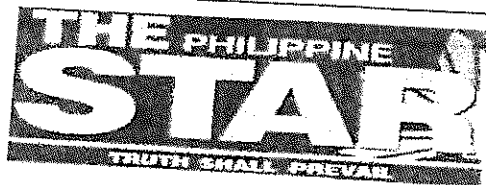
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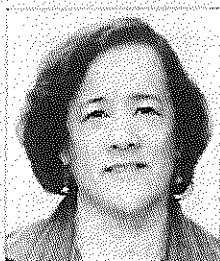
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Commonsense

By MARICHU A. VILLANUEVA

SAF44 Senate probe redux

For all intents and purposes, the reopening of the Senate investigation into the Mamasapano incident achieved nothing but merely reopened old wounds. If we are to believe the public pronouncement of Senate minority leader Juan Ponce-Enrile, he achieved though his objective to help speed up the slow grind of justice for the 44 troopers of the Philippine National Police-Special Action Force (PNP-SAF) killed in that botched Oplan Exodus on January 25 last year.



The Senate probe into the Mamasapano incident was reopened upon the formal manifestation by Enrile who failed to participate during the first public hearings last year. While undergoing plunder trial for the alleged "pork-barrel scam," Enrile was then under "hospital detention" at the PNP General Hospital located inside PNP Headquarters at Camp Crame in Quezon City.

It was during his hospital detention that Enrile got to interact with some of the wounded SAF troopers involved in Oplan Exodus who were treated there, including grieving families of SAF men. Call it fate, but it was the opportunity that fell on the lap of the opposition leader.

As far as Enrile is concerned, he still subscribed to the failure of leadership by President Benigno "Noy" Aquino III that caused the tragic end of the 44 SAF troopers in Oplan Exodus. Though decimated, they succeeded to kill Malaysian bomb maker Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, the principal subject of the warrant of arrest of the SAF mission.

Senate president Franklin Drilon led administration allies at the Senate, aided by the top military and police brass summoned to the public hearing the other day, in circling the wagons around President Aquino in the face of Enrile's perorations against their embattled Commander-in-chief.

During and after the Senate hearing, Aquino allies all pointed to ex-SAF chief Getulio Napeñas as solely responsible. President Aquino immediately relieved Napeñas as SAF chief after the bungled police operation. They pinned the ex-SAF chief even after erstwhile PNP director-general Alan Purisima admitted anew having acted as go-between of Napeñas and President Aquino while he was then serving the Ombudsman's six-month suspension.

At the end of almost seven hours of public hearing, Poe declared the final Senate Committee Report stands as submitted.

Presenting their findings before the media three months after they wrapped up the first Senate probe, Sen. Grace Poe rendered her Committee Report pointing to President Aquino as "ultimately responsible for the outcome of the Mamasapano mission." The PNP Board of Inquiry (BOI) earlier came up with almost the same conclusion.

A day after the latest Senate hearing, newly installed acting Department of Justice (DOJ) Secretary Emmanuel Caparas announced his intention to prosecute to the fullest all those involved in the killing of the 44 SAF troopers. After three hearings, the DOJ-then headed by Secretary Leila de Lima – concluded on December 17 its preliminary investigation of 90 commanders and members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF); the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), and members of other private armed groups tagged in the killing of 44 SAF troopers in Barangay Tukanlipao in Mamasapano that fateful day.

All the accused, mostly identified as "John Does," were slapped with charges of direct assault with murder and theft. The theft charges were related to high-powered firearms, mobile phones and other personal valuables stolen from the dead SAF men.

DOJ prosecutors subsequently filed criminal complaints against 13 MILF commanders and six BIFF commanders. On January 14, they terminated the preliminary investigation proceedings. Apparently inspired by the last and final Senate probe into the Mamasapano incident, Caparas initiated his own reopening of the case.

"Please expect us to resolve that, give us three to four weeks to be able to do that," the acting DOJ secretary told media yesterday. At least, the timetable set by Caparas for himself still falls within the remaining months in office of the outgoing administration.

Caparas' vow to bring elusive justice to the widows and families of the slain SAF44 would do well to help his nomination to the Aquino Cabinet. He must be confirmed by the Commission on Appointments before the 16th Congress adjourns on February 5 as most lawmakers will hit the campaign trail for the May elections.

Caparas took over from former justice secretary and now Supreme Court (SC) associate justice Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa. Prior to his new post at the High Court, Caguioa replaced De Lima when the latter resigned from DOJ in October last year to run as one of the 12 senatorial candidates of the ruling Liberal Party (LP) of President Aquino. Incidentally, both Caparas and Caguioa are former classmates of Aquino at the Ateneo de Manila University from grade school to college.

Thankfully, as chairperson of the Senate committee on public order that looked into the Mamasapano incident last year, Poe declared this case closed. The House of Representatives which did their own legislative inquiry last year into the same case have not made public up to now their final Committee Report, if they even had one submitted.

Summarizing the key points raised at the Senate hearing last Wednesday, she put everyone on notice no new information came out to warrant a revision or amendment of the final Senate Committee Report she rendered last year.

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Twenty-one senators signed the Poe Committee Report and by that number, it was good as approved without going through plenary debate.

At the end of almost seven hours of public hearing, Poe declared the final Senate Committee Report stands as submitted.

Poe boldly said last year, President Aquino should own up responsibility for the botched Oplan Exodus. That was deeply etched into the President's psyche from then on. Her standing up to President Aquino swept her onto the top spot in presidential mock polls last year. Now, she is facing several disqualification cases in the coming presidential race.

Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan and ex-SAF chief Getulio Napeñas are guests today at the Kapihan sa Manila Bay at Café Adriatico in Remedios Circle in Malate.

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



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Kontsabahan ng AFP at mga bandidong Muslim?

'UNCOVERED'



**NI MARLON
PURIFICACION**

@marlonpuri

PARANG mga batang nagtuturuan sina dating Special Action Force (SAF) chief Director Getulio Napeñas at mga opisales ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) kung bakit nakatay nang wala sa oras ang 44 comandos sa Mamasapano.

Wala man tayong narinig na bagong pasabog mula kay Senate Minority Leader Juan Ponce Enrile, napatunayan pa rin sa nakalipas na

Senate inquiry na hindi lamang si Napeñas ang may kasalanan sa palpak na Oplan Exodus kundi ang Pangulong Noyoy Aquino mismo dahil pinayagan nitong maki-alam si suspended PNP chief Director General Alan Purisima.

Isang taon na ang nakalipas, wala pa ring papanagot mula sa hanay ng Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) at ang kapanalig na Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) na kahit libong bilang na pulis at military siguro ang kanilang patayin, katayin at imasaker ay balewala lamang sa gobyernong Aquino.

Ang masakit nito, wala na ngang nakakamit na hustisya, wala pa ring umaamin mula kina PNoy, Purisima at Napeñas kung sino ang tunay na may kasalanan sa palpak na Oplan Exodus.

"Somebody is lying

here in front of us. You are denying the participation of the President? Then why did you ask for his confirmation and approval? ... If he isn't involved, if his role is just to listen and say nothing, then why did you not say this for his consideration and approval?" sabi ni Enrile nang komprontahin si Purisima sa pagdinig noong Miyerkules.

"President Aquino wantonly disregarded the command systems of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police and directly assigned the assignment with persons who before and at the time of the gruesome massacre was not an active part of either the AFP and or the PNP," dagdag pa ni Enrile.

Isang video presentation ang inihandang AFP sa nagdaang pagdinig. Sa nasabing video, nadi-

in nang husto si Napeñas dahil ipinakita rito na ilang tropa ng SAF ang nakatambay lamang malapit sa lugar ng bakbakan, habang hindi rin ito naka-uniporme at nakukuha pang ngumiti habang nakikipagbakbakan ang kanyang mga tauhan sa kuta ng mga bandidong Muslim.

Iba na ang timpla ng pagsasalita ni Napeñas ngayon. Buo na ang loob nitong ituro nang husto sina Purisima at militar na aniyay nagkulang sa pagbigay suporta sa kanilang operasyon.

Dati, halos kontrolado ang mga pinagsasabi nito, pero ngayong tumatakbo na siya sa pagka-senador ay mukhang nag-iiba na ang kanyang tono.

Kung akala ng opisyal na to ay makakakuha siya ng boto sa mga pinaggagawa niyang ito ay nagkakamali siya.

Maraming tanong ang

taumbayan para sa kanya. Una na rito ay bakit ngayon lang siya nag-sasalita ng ganito, gayung noong unang sigwada ng imbestigasyon ay para itong isang maa-mong tupa nung humarap sa pagdinig.

Hindi ba't lahat ng resource person sa Senado ay pinanumpa muna bago isalang sa pagdinig? Hindi kaya dapat silang kasuhan sa mga pabagubago nilang testimonya? Dapat malaman kung ano ang tunay na dahilan kung bakit noong una ay hindi siya nag-sasabi ng totoo. Paano pa natin pagkakatiwalaan ang opisyal na ito ngayong tumatakbo na siya sa darating na halalan.

Kung ako ang tata-nungin, hindi na dapat pa siyang pagkatiwalaan ng taumbayan dahil iba-iba ang testimonya nito.

Ang dapat kay Napeñas, sa halip iboto

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ng taumbayan ay kasuhan pa ng pamahalaan.

Maraming elemento ang dapat ikonsidera sa pumalak na SAF operation.

Una na rito ay bakit nga ba kailangang i-bypass ni PNoy ang chain of command ng AFP at PNP at ang direktang binigyan nito ng kontrol ay ang suspendedong si Purisima.

Dapat ay mahubaran ng maskara ang sinasabing kontsabahang sa pagitan ng AFP at mga bandidong Muslim na nagkakanlong sa teroristang katulad ni Marwan kaya tuloy nagkaroon ng tinatawag na 'time on target'.

Dapat malaman din kung bakit hinayaang makialam ang mga Amerikano sa police operation. Mawala na rin dapat ang katakawan ng ating mga opisyal sa 'reward system' kaya sila mismo ay naglilihiman o nagsusunugan ng trabaho sa halip na

makamit ang pinakalayunin ng ating kapulisan at kasundaluhan -- ang manatiling tahimik, payapa ang bansa sa pamamagitan ng pagsugpo sa mga terorista't kriminal.

Higit sa halat, bukod kina PNoy at Purisima, dapat ay managot si Napeñas sa kapalpakan ng Oplan Exodus dahil hindi magandang tingnan sa isang opisyal na kapag namasaker ang kanyang mga tauhan ay ituturo niya ang sisi sa ibang opisyal.

Sa prinsipyo ng 'command responsibility', mula kay PNoy hanggang kay Napeñas, may pananagutan sila na dapat nating tawaging 'command accountability'.

Sabi nga ni Senador Francis 'Chiz' Escudero, ang daming may 'command' sa AFP at PNP, pero pagdating na sa tunay na tinatawag na responsibility, nawawala sila lalo na't kapalpakan ng trabaho ang pinag-uusapan.

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Only seven days left for Congress to approve BBL

Second, the BBL became a victim of the Mamasapano tragedy. Forty-four Special Action Force

Thus, unless the President with his persuasive powers and the leaders of Congress manage a miracle, the BBL may not make it in this session of Congress. But the Bangsamoro peace program remains a goal that must be pursued by our officials and the leaders of the Moro people in Mindanao. As soon as the new administration assumes office on June 30, it should immediately push for this initiative, build on the worthy efforts of the past, and bring to fruition this dream of peace and development and progress for Mindanao and the entire country.

Online News

29 January 2016

MODERNIZED II 4ID Receives New Assault Rifle from US

www.dwdd.com

CAMP EVANGELISTA, Cagayan de Oro City — As part of the modernization program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines the 4th Infantry "Diamond" Division, Philippine Army received the newly acquired, US made, R4 assault rifle at 3:00 p.m. here yesterday, January 26, 2016.

Congresswoman Arlene J Bag-ao of Dinagat Island was the Guest of Honor and Speaker during the ceremony. She was received by the 4ID Assistant Division Commander Brigadier General Paul T Atal D.P.A. AFP. The ceremony symbolizes the 4th Infantry 'Diamond' Division's cognizance of civilian supremacy over the military.

For a long time, the AFP is using the 5.56mm M16 rifle from the United States military which are leftover during the Vietnam War era. Today, the soldiers will now be turning over their individual firearms and exchange it for the new Remington R4 rifles. 4ID is one of the early recipients of this rifles in Mindanao. The unit received 2,819 R4 assault rifles and 200 Harris radio.

There are six (6) line units under 4ID which have already received these new armed assets namely; 4th Division Reconnaissance Battalion, 8th Infantry "Dependable" Battalion, 26th Infantry "Ever Onward" Battalion, 29th Infantry "Matatag" Battalion, 30th Infantry "Python" Battalion, 36th Infantry "Valor" Battalion and 58th Infantry "Dimalulupig" Battalion.

Brigadier General Paul T Atal, Assistant Division Commander, 4ID said, "Your Army, with the issuance of the newly acquired R4s, will be better equipped to meet security challenges in the field. Moreover, the R4's compact design and superior features consequently improves the capability of individual soldiers. Proving that the 4ID is now closer to a 'World-Class Army' vision leading the soldiers to a better, more responsible and professional peacekeepers."

"Since the troops in the field equip with their new high-tech military equipment, we will ensure the sustainment of the gains already being made and shall aid in expediting the declaration of other areas as conflict manageable and ready for further development," BGen Atal added.

In her message, Congresswoman Bag-ao cited the current behavior of the people in Dinagat Island since most of them experienced the abuses committed by the military during Martial law, wherein some of them were forced to go to the mountains and join the armed struggle against the government. Compared to our soldiers today, there is a very big difference in terms of their training and discipline, they are more skilled and professionals. So, I appreciated very much the bearing and attitude bestowed by our soldiers today. "I have never seen nor heard any of the men in uniform abusing the rights of the civilians".

Security forces foil Abu Sayyaf bombing plot

By Roel Pareño (philstar.com) | Updated January 28, 2016 - 6:21pm

ZAMBOANGA CITY, Philippines - Government security forces foiled an attempt of the Abu Sayyaf group to stage a bombing attack in downtown Isabela City, Basilan after the bombers deploying the improvised bomb was alerted military intelligence, police said.

Police said the improvised explosive device (IED) fashioned through a cooking pot was subsequently recovered after it was abandoned outside a bazar about 3:25 a.m. along Roxas Avenue, Barangay Isabela Proper.

Police Superintendent Jerome Afuyog Jr., city police chief of Isabela City, said intelligence operatives of the 15th Special Forces Company, who were deployed and roving in the downtown, spotted a motorcycle without plate number with two riders carrying a suspicious item near the vicinity of Sta. Isabel Cathedral.

The suspects who sensed that they were being tailed by the intelligence operatives dropped their suspicious baggage upon reaching the Mabuhay Trading and sped off toward Barangay Kaumpurnah.

The intelligence operatives immediately alerted its K-9 team and police and military explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams that conducted safety procedures and detonated the suspicious item with water disruptor.

The police and Scene of the Crime Operatives discovered that the suspicious item contained IED.

The police said among the components recovered were: a piece cooking pot as container, a unit cellphone as firing switch, one piece rocker switch, pieces of light emitting diode colored red and green, a piece of silicon control rectifier, three pieces resistors 1000 ohm, a 2200ohm resistor, ammonium nitrate fuel oil weighing more or less 3 kilograms, two pieces improvised electric blasting cap, and three-feet long detonating cord.

The EOD team technical analysis confirmed that the recovered item was an IED and has the capacity to destroy lives and properties.

DND allocates Php50-M to build military camp in Zambo

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 28): DND allocates Php50-M to build military camp in Zambo

The national government through the Department of National Defense (DND) has allocated Php50 million for the construction of a military facility in "ground zero" area.

The military facility that will take charge of the security measures in the barangay and its neighboring areas will be constructed in Barangay Rio Hondo.

Barangay Rio Hondo has been dubbed as a ground zero area as it was the center of skirmishes between the government forces and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) members during the 21-day September 2013 siege.

Mayor Ma. Isabelle Climaco-Salazar said the acquisition of the Mindeva property in Barangay Rio Hondo where the military base will be constructed has already been finalized.

Salazar said the property cost of Php50 million will be funded by the national government through the DND in coordination with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

She said the groundbreaking ceremony will take place soon with DND Undersecretary Alexander Pama, who is also the executive director for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), leading the rites.

The military facility forms part of the Zamboanga City Roadmap to Recovery and Reconstruction (Z3R) plan intended to improve the overall environment of the affected communities, minimize adverse impacts and relocation and improve public safety and security of the community.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=851560>

Military EOD team disarms bomb found at Maguindanao bus terminal

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 28): Military EOD team disarms bomb found at Maguindanao bus terminal

Military bomb disposal experts on Thursday safely disarmed a bomb found at the public bus terminal in Barangay Poblacion, Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao.

A report from the military's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit said the bomb was rigged from a 61-mm mortar explosive that was placed inside a black bag and left at the passengers' lounge of the terminal.

Alert bus terminal personnel reported to authorities on the discovery of the bomb around 2:15 p.m, which prompted the EOD team to rush to the scene and safely cordoned the area from the public.

Aside from the mortar explosive, also recovered from the bag were an MK2 hand grenade, a blasting cap, detonating cord, and a nine-volt battery.

Authorities are still verifying reports that a young boy earlier dropped off the bag containing the bomb at the terminal.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=851541>

Marine General say SAF44 is “politically exploited”, Soldiers die also but no complains

<http://themaharlikan.info/>

MANILA, Philippines – Major General Alexander Balutan of the Philippine Marines believes that the deaths of the SAF44 are now “politically exploited and sensationalized”.

When we soldiers lose our comrades, we bury our dead without complaining and go back to the battlefield, according to the Marine General.

“Several Marines or soldiers offered their precious lives yet they did not complain, no cry for justice, fringe benefits nor blame anyone. We solemnly buried our dead heroes and consoled the many wounded, wiped our tears and fought again,” said by the General on his facebook post.

“For we know well the meaning of our sacred oath for sake of our Motherland,” he added.

In 2007, 23 Marines were overrun by Islamist rebels and the Abu Sayaff in Tipo Tipo, Basilan, all of them were massacred, 14 of them were beheaded. Some of the soldiers went home headless to their families or was severely mutilated.

While in 2011, a platoon of army special force were ambushed by the MNLF and the Abu Sayyaff Group in Al Barka Basilan, out of the 40 SF men, half of them were killed and the rest were all wounded in action.

Yet you’ll never hear Army men complain much more of hearing from their own families while the SAF44 had all the state benefits and public recognition they could have.

Gen. Balutan clarified that he had nothing against the members of SAF, but sympathized with them.

He said that in his personal opinion, the issue on SAF was being “sensationalized” and “exploited.”