

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



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[oacpa.army2012@gmail.com](mailto:oacpa.army2012@gmail.com)

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

**31 January 2016**

**Sunday**

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

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

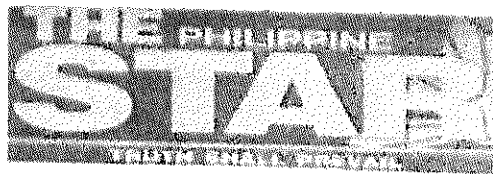
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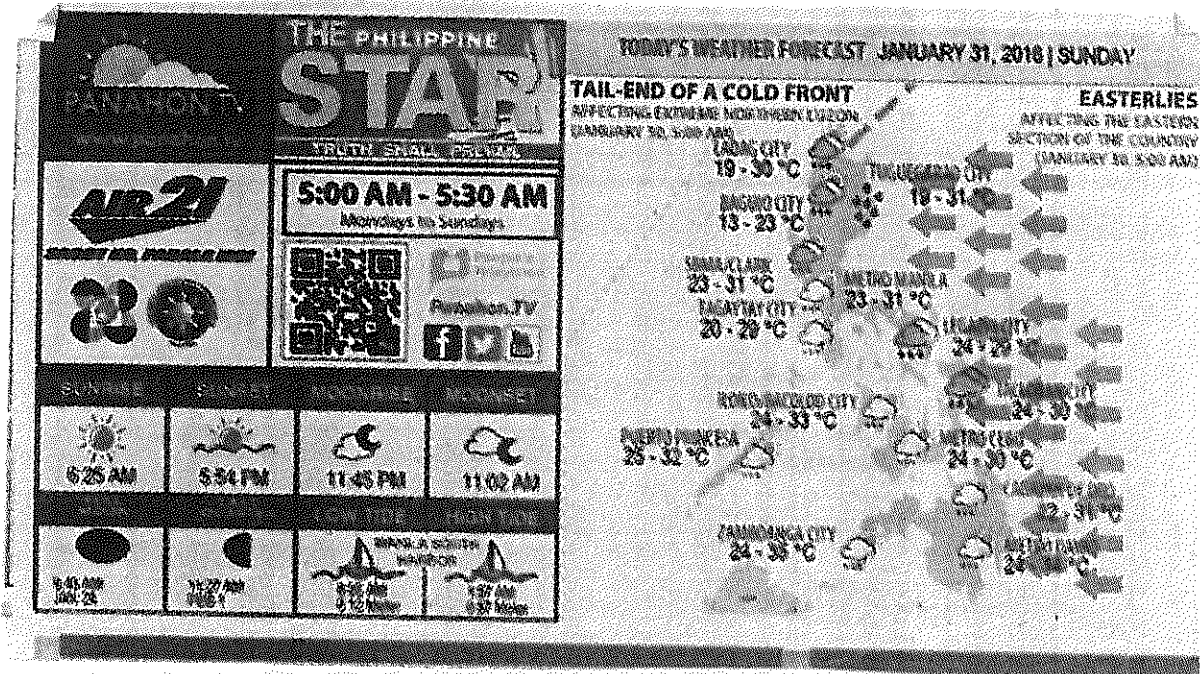
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EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	FEB 1 MON	FEB 2 TUE	FEB 3 WED	EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	FEB 1 MON	FEB 2 TUE	FEB 3 WED
METRO MANILA	23 °C 32 °C	22 °C 31 °C	23 °C 32 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25 °C 31 °C	25 °C 31 °C	24 °C 30 °C
TUGUEGARAO	20 °C 31 °C	19 °C 30 °C	19 °C 30 °C	ILIGAN/ BACOLOD	24 °C 33 °C	23 °C 32 °C	24 °C 33 °C
LAOAG	19 °C 29 °C	18 °C 29 °C	19 °C 29 °C	METRO CEBU	23 °C 29 °C	23 °C 29 °C	23 °C 31 °C
BAGUO	13 °C 22 °C	12 °C 22 °C	12 °C 22 °C	TACLOBAN	23 °C 29 °C	23 °C 29 °C	24 °C 31 °C
SARAWAK/ CLARK	22 °C 32 °C	22 °C 31 °C	22 °C 31 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	22 °C 30 °C	22 °C 30 °C	23 °C 31 °C
TAGAYTAY	20 °C 30 °C	19 °C 29 °C	20 °C 29 °C	METRO DAVAO	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 34 °C
LEGASPI	24 °C 30 °C	25 °C 31 °C	24 °C 29 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24 °C 34 °C	23 °C 33 °C	24 °C 34 °C

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rain showers

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rain showers and thunderstorms

Cloudy with rain and occasional strong thunderstorms

Light rain



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## Palace hopes healing process on Mamasapano incident to continue

Malacañang yesterday expressed hope that the healing process could now continue after all the questions on the Mamasapano incident were answered during the Senate hearing last Wednesday.

Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office Undersecretary Manuel Quezon III also fended off rumors that Malacañang managed to pacify Senate Minority Leader Juan Ponce Enrile so he no longer came out with new evidence against President Aquino in the reopening

of the Mamasapano investigation.

Quezon welcomed the pronouncement of Sen. Grace Poe, chairperson of the Senate committee on public order that conducted the probe, that there was no need to change her report after Wednesday's hearing.

"We thank the Senate for reiterating what we have been saying all along -- that the plan was presented (to Aquino) was apparently a plan that those who

By AUREA CALICA

presented it were not meant to or had no intention to follow; that the President was being given the wrong information by people who were supposed to give him a full and complete information," Quezon said.

The Palace official was referring to then Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Alan Purisima and sacked Special Action Force (SAF) commander Getulio Napeñas, who led "Oplan Exodus," the operation to arrest two terrorists hiding in a remote village in Mamasapano, Maguindanao on Jan. 25 last year.

"Perhaps there is only one regret that we might have, that we didn't expect that the field grade officer would not obey a lawful and logical order from the President, and that he made the whole thing even more difficult by reducing the number of troops involved. We believe that there are no questions left and that we are glad that the healing process can continue without politics getting in the way," Quezon said.

He added talks about a possible deal with Enrile were baseless.

"I'll answer that by pointing out that it would be difficult to base what Senator Enrile is going to do on what Senator Enrile has said, if only because Senator Enrile has often done something different from what he has said," Quezon pointed out.

"We can go back to the changing stories about martial law. It is a bit surprising that over the past 40 years, the stories (about martial law) were quite different every decade," he said, referring to Enrile who served as defense minister of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos.

Quezon said "the reality spoke for itself" during the hearing, since all concerned officials responded to the questions of the senators and the information, data and conclusion that came out before were the same.

Aquino had sought understanding over the botched operation and vowed to serve justice and provide assistance to the families of the 44 SAF members who were killed during the carnage.

### Reward not yet released

The PNP, meanwhile, clarified it has yet to release the P7-million reward money to the informant that provided the intelligence packet to the SAF for the capture of Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan.

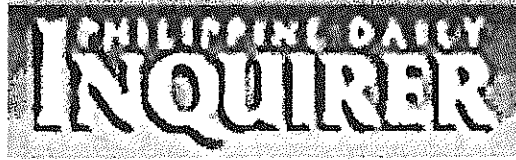
PNP spokesman Chief Supt. Wilben Mayor said an informant has surfaced but he has to undergo a process for the claim.

"There was a claimant but the claim is under process," he said.

Mayor declined to give additional details, saying the PNP has guaranteed the tipster's safety.

— Mike Frialde

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## US warship sails near isle in S. China Sea

WASHINGTON—A US Navy guided-missile destroyer sailed within 12 nautical miles of an island claimed by China in the South China Sea on Saturday, in an operation the Pentagon said was designed to challenge efforts to restrict freedom of navigation.

Pentagon spokesperson Capt. Jeff Davis said no ships from China's military were in the vicinity of the USS Curtis Wilbur when it carried out the operation near Triton Island in the Paracel Islands.

"This operation challenged attempts by the three claimants—China, Taiwan and Vietnam—to restrict navigation rights and freedoms," Davis said. *Reuters*

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# P-Noy to nix military pensions, too

By Gil Cabacungan

AFTER exercising a veto against a hike in Social Security System (SSS) pensions, President Aquino will also be taking a hard-line stance against a higher pension for retired military and police personnel if it would unduly burden the next generation, according to Communications Undersecretary Manuel L. Quezon III.

Quezon said Malacañang was exerting all efforts "quietly and behind the scenes" to ensure that the issue of military pensions would not stall the passage of the general Salary Standardization Law (SSL).

The new SSL is in danger of not being approved by the bicameral conference committee before Congress holds its final session day on Feb. 3, because of a conflict in the House and Senate versions regarding the handling of military pensions.

Congress will adjourn next week with the start of the official campaign period on Feb. 9.

In a radio interview, Senate President Franklin Drilon guaranteed that the SSL would be approved by Congress and signed by the President. Drilon was hoping the House would

agree to the pension "indexation" and allocate the estimated P18 billion additional fund in the 2017 budget.

Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. was also optimistic that Congress would agree and uphold the SSL bill.

The House had excised the provision on indexation or the pegging of pensions of retired uniformed personnel to current salaries. The position of the Department of Budget and Management is that this provision would require ballooning and unsustainable fund allotments from the government.

Over the last 13 years, the government has already accumulated P18 billion in unpaid pension adjustments to military officers based on a Marcos decree mandating a pension hike among retired military personnel at par with the pay hike of active soldiers. The government did not allocate funds for the pension increase starting in 2002. The Commission on Audit issued a ruling in May last year ordering the payment of pension arrears.

The Senate, however, is in favor of retaining the automatic increase in the pension of retired military and police as mandated by law with the implementation of a P226-billion salary hike for

1.53 million government employees spread over four years under the SSL.

The House has proposed to implement the salary hike because this has already been allocated in this year's budget—but without the indexation of military and police pensions. This matter would be dealt with in a separate bill.

The Senate proposed that the SSL be approved with the controversial pension indexation intact, but with a provision that this would be "subject to the availability of funds."

Malacañang said it did not want to leave the funding of military and police pensions to chance.

"It would be best to appeal to both the Senate and the House [of Representatives] to think not only of the benefits for the government workers but also to think of the implications of the funding that would be undertaken by the coming generations," Quezon said.

Quezon explained that once the military and police pensions would be based on current and not previous salaries, this would have dire implications on the next generation who would have no choice but to pay for the salary hike. "The pension rate would be based on a moving target

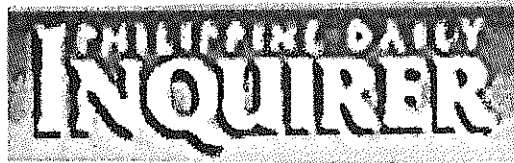
and this will grow so much that it will be impossible to finance through member contributions," Quezon said.

Quezon pointed out that the President himself had appealed to Congress in a Sona to reform the military and police pension system with the collapse of the Armed Forces and Police Saving and Loan Association Inc. during the Ramos administration. But Quezon said any reform should not be made at the risk of pushing the entire pension system to financial collapse.

"So we're hoping that members of the Senate and the House are discussing this thoroughly and that they are looking for a win-win solution," Quezon said.

Malacañang's opposition to the pension hike for military and soldiers mirrored the reasons given by the President when he vetoed the SSS bill granting a P2,000 pension hike to members. The President said the pension hike would imperil the SSS and push it to bankruptcy in 12 years to the detriment of 27 million members who would sacrifice for the sake of 2 million SSS retirees. But unlike the SSS pension hike, the indexation of military pension is mandatory under the law.

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## ‘Create 2 federal states in Muslim Mindanao for peace’

By Jaymee T. Gamil

WITH hope dying on the passage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), an ex-governor has proposed a drastic solution to achieve the “elusive

peace” in southern Philippines: Amend the Constitution to allow the creation of two federal states in Muslim Mindanao.

This was the formula proposed by former Tawi-Tawi Gov. Al Tillah,

which he presented at a media forum in Quezon City yesterday.

Tillah suggested that two federal states in Muslim Mindanao could be created—one for the island provinces of Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan and the “environs of Zamboanga,” and another for the landlocked provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur and neighboring provinces.

“This to me is the only viable solution to end the war in Mindanao,” he said.

Tillah expressed the hope the Philippines “will go with the federal system” and “amend the Constitution” through a constitutional convention.

“This government thinks the 1987 Cory Constitution is the Bible, the Quran. It is not. The United States Constitution has been amended several times. Why is it not possible to amend the Constitution... to serve the needs and times of our people and country?” Tillah said.

Tillah said the BBL—a key feature of the peace agreement the Aquino administration signed with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and which seeks to create an expanded Muslim region in Mindanao to replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao—can only achieve peace “to some extent, but not totally.”



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# 'US violated no treaty'

## Drilon: Americans have nothing more to explain on Mamasapano

By Leila B. Salaverria

SENATE President Franklin Drilon yesterday said he believed the United States had nothing more to explain regarding its role in the counterterrorism operation in Maguindanao province last year that left 44 Filipino police commandos dead.

Speaking in a radio interview, Drilon said the US role in "Oplan Exodus," the Philippine National Police Special Action Force (SAF) covert operation to take down Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, was part of the cooperation among countries fighting terrorism.

"We can't act on this alone. Intelligence sharing is one thing where all countries cooperate. This is war on terrorism," Drilon said.

The United States offered a \$5-million reward for the capture of Marwan, a suspect in the 2002 bomb attacks on two nightclubs in Bali, Indonesia, that killed 202 people, including seven Americans.

Marwan was killed in Oplan Exodus, but nine members of the strike force, the 84th Special Action Company (SAC), and 35 members of the 55th SAC, which served as the blocking force for the mission, were also killed in gun battles with Moro rebels in Mamasapano, Maguindanao, on Jan. 25, 2015.

Seventeen fighters from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and three civilians also died in the daylong

**US VIOLATED/A7**

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fighting.

### **JPE wants explanation**

Senate Minority Leader Juan Ponce Enrile said at a hearing on the Mamasapano clash on Wednesday that the government should explain why it allowed US participation in the SAF mission to capture Marwan, which he said was a law enforcement matter.

Enrile wanted to know whether the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) or any other agreement was used as a basis for the US cooperation in the SAF mission.

He pointed out that the VFA

covered only military cooperation between the Philippines and the United States, and it did not cover law enforcement, which involved criminal laws.

Criminal laws are strictly territorial, with few exceptions, he said.

### **Nothing violated**

In his radio interview yesterday, Drilon said the US role in Oplan Exodus did not violate any agreements between the Philippines and the United States.

No US base was set up in the Philippines for the Mamasapano operation so the Constitution was not violated, Drilon said.

"There was nothing violated in our treaty with America [or] under the Constitution," he said.

Former SAF chief Getulio Napeñas explained at the hearing on Wednesday that the United States was cooperating with the SAF because the force was the counterterrorism unit of the PNP.

### **US role**

Napeñas said the United States through the Zamboanga-based Joint Task Force Philippines trained the 84th SAC, provided real-time intelligence information to strike force during the operation, helped to evacuate the dead

and wounded after the clash, and conducted DNA identification of the slain Marwan.

### **Transcripts**

Transcripts of discussions during closed-door sessions of the Senate Mamasapano investigation released last week showed that the United States provided an "intelligence surveillance reconnaissance" plane to locate the 84th SAC, whose members were carrying a finger of Marwan that they had cut off after killing him for DNA testing.

The US tracking helped a Philippine Army unit locate and rescue the 84th SAC commandos.

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# Mamasapano debacle: All about money

By Ryan D. Rosaura  
Cagayan de Oro City

**T**HE HEFTY price tag of \$5 million for the capture, dead or alive, of Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, has caught the attention of the public in the aftermath of the tragic police operation to take him down in Mamasapano, Maguindanao province, last year.

How the bounty influenced the overall conduct of the operation is not yet established. But using the experience with Marwan, a Jakarta-based think-tank urged a rethinking of the role of rewards in the drive against Southeast Asian terrorists.

In its March 2015 report, "Killing Marwan in Mindanao," which drew only little attention then, the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (Ipac) noted that the momentum in the hunt for Marwan was "driv-

**SOLDIERS** arrive in Mamasapano town, Maguindanao province on Jan. 25, 2015, to help rescue Special Action Force commandos who were pinned down by Moro rebels following an operation to capture Marwan. (JEFFREY MALTEM)

en in part by the bounty, [and, in part by what appears to have been a single-minded focus on his death—not his arrest.]

Ipac added that these "may have militated against any serious effort to think about [the] impact" of the operation.

As with other terrorists, the bounty for Marwan's capture was put up by the Rewards for Justice program of the United States government. The program was credited for aiding the downfall of key Abu Sayyaf

leaders by encouraging the availability of information that led authorities to their locations.

As of 2012, the Texas-based intelligence firm Strategic Forecasting Inc. said, more than \$11 million in bounties were paid in the Philippines by the program.

The program's website listed as part of its success stories the capture of Philippine-based terrorists, all key figures of the Abu Sayyaf: Toting Craft Hanno, Khadaffy Janjalani (now

dead), Abu Solaiman and Hamsiraji Marusi Sali. It paid \$100,000 for Hanno, \$5 million for Janjalani, \$5 million for Solaiman, and \$1 million for Sali.

"The huge bounties placed on the heads of foreign jihadis have helped to burnish their reputations as world-class terrorists, perhaps out of proportion to their actual roles. They encourage killing high-value targets rather than making any effort to arrest

them alive," Ipac said.

In 2008, a Brussels-based think-tank already warned about the distorting effect of monetary rewards in the drive against terrorists in the country. In its report "Counter-Insurgency vs. Counter-Terrorism in Mindanao," the International Crisis Group (ICG) noted how military informants "equate amount of bounty with the importance of the individual concerned."

It cited the case of then

Philippine-based Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) operatives Umar Patek and Dulmatin. Dulmatin, who reports to Umar Patek, commanded \$10 million in reward for his capture while his boss only fetched \$1 million.

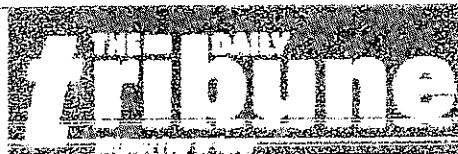
ICG also cited the views of an unidentified senior official of the Philippine National Police who said that the bounties "were leading to undue focus in individuals at the expense of more carefully thought-through strategies."

Today, the Rewards for Justice program lists four wanted terrorists in East Asia and the Pacific region whose capture will merit its bounty.

They are Isnilon Hapilon of Abu Sayyaf, up to \$5 million; Radullan Sahiron of Abu Sayyaf, up to \$1 million; and Indonesian JI operative Aris Sumarsono alias Zulkarnaen or Daud, up to \$5 million. Abdul Basit Usman of the Maguindanao-based Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, who was killed last year, is still on the list, with a reward of up to \$1 million.



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# MILF blames OPAPP for shelved BBL

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has blamed the Aquino administration, primarily the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) for the failure of Congress to pass the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL).

Both Speaker Feliciano Belmonte and Senate President Franklin Drilon had surrendered that the BBL is dead citing the narrow window left until the end of the current session of Congress.

MILF vice chairman Ghadzali Jaafar, in a television interview, blamed the lack of political will in the Aquino administration for the shelved BBL.

"I was told that one of the weaknesses or shortcoming they saw was in the leadership of OPAPP who presumed that Congress will follow the (peace) agreement signed," Jaafar said.

Jaafar claimed a source told him that the OPAPP did not exert enough effort to come to an agreement with lawmakers.

"Although the MILF regret the lost opportunity, we are not sad and we do not mourn the inability of Congress to pass the proposed law for the Bangsamoro government," he said.



JAAFAR

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# MILF blames OPAPP for shelved BBL

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He said the MILF leadership is intact and the rebel group continues to be strong.

"At this point in the struggle, our aim is to maintain and preserve our gains in the negotiations," Jaafar said.

The MILF meanwhile, said it may not take up the proposal of Sen. Chiz Escudero for the rebel group to guard the electricity grid in Mindanao which was the target lately of bombing attacks.

In its website, the MILF said "securing the transmission lines of the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) for people to continue access to power can well be a recommended act but for the MILF to simply announce that we commit to help secure these lines is more problematic than what meets the eye."

Both the short and long term implications and complications have far-reaching effects, it said.

The MILF said if the bombing stops, "then some people might suspect that the MILF is behind the act, because it had stopped it if the bombing continues, then the MILF would be pictured as inutile or has not done enough to prevent it from happening.

"Damn if you do, damn if you don't is still the rule here," it said.

**Pan de sal issue revived**

The MILF also denied involvement in the bombings saying it has nothing to gain from the destruction of the power network.

"We are upholding the integrity of the ceasefire and the peace process," it added.

"More importantly, the MILF is

not yet a full-fledged partner or part of the state; peace partners, yes. The proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) is still pending in Congress and its non-passage is more expected than its passage," it added.

"The success of this undertaking is still contingent to other considerations, say a good and effective Bangsamoro police, because by that time, the MILF weapons and combatants are decommissioned already," it added.

The MILF, nonetheless, commended Escudero for issuing the proposal saying that "an admission of the capability of the Moros to do more difficult tasks than just being able to bake pan de sal."

The MILF recalled that, "in 2008 at the time the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MoA-AD) was under intense discourse, he said that the Moros do not even know how to bake pan de sal, and therefore not fit to run a government."

"If the NGCP is really serious in seeking the intervention of the MILF, then perhaps the better part of judgment is to send a formal request for a meeting, or better still, to send someone to discuss the issue with the MILF," it said.

"In such a way, any agreement can be part of the overall scheme to promote peace in the region, and can be linked to relevant organs of the GPH-MILF peace process especially the ceasefire committees of the government and MILF. The MILF is not expert in making casual arrangements," it added.

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# FBI slapped with FOIA over Mamasapano

By Ted Tuvera

A US-based chapter of a militant group has invoked the Freedom of Information Act (FoIA) of the United States on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for it to produce documents related to its participation in the Mamasapano debacle that resulted in the death of 22 Special Action Force (SAF) commandos in January 25 last year.

Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan)-USA said it is now pressing the FBI to reveal its role in last year's massacre of Filipinos.

The group said similar FoIA requests will be sent to the National Security Division of the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, Department of State, Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, US Navy, US Army, US Air Force, and US Pacific Command regarding the Mamasapano Incident "to maximize the opportunity to unearth information about U.S. intervention in the Philippines."

"Over 60 Filipinos died and witnesses also saw the body of an American at

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the covert US-designed Mamasapano operation one year ago, yet the U.S. has still not come clean about the extent of its role in the carnage. We are filing this Freedom of Information Act request with the FBI because the Filipino and American people have the right to know the full truth about this botched mission," Bayan-USA chairman Bernadette Ellorin said.

US Ambassador to the Philippines Philip Goldberg admitted last Friday that the US has a limited involvement in the botched Operation Plan (Oplan) Exodus that targeted Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir alias Marwan.

Goldberg said the participation of American forces in the was in line with agreements that the US and Philippine governments have but which was disputed by local law experts that no such agreement exists since the pact between both countries was limited to the military and not the police force.

Goldberg also insisted that it was the Philippine government which requested US assistance.

"There was cooperation, that all of this is done within the legal framework, and that there are agreements, and everything was done consensually or at the request of the Philippine government," Goldberg said during a television interview.

Bayan-USA's FoIA request asks for documentation pertaining to the FBI's involvement in Oplan Exodus, including internal or inter-agency correspondence between David Bowdich, the Assistant Director in charge of the FBI Los Angeles Field Office, and the PNP Director General Alan Purisima, sacked SAF commander Director Getulio Napeñas, or other Philippine authorities, pertaining to Marwan's apprehension through the execution of Oplan Exodus; manuals or guidelines used by agents of the US in training the PNPSAF to execute Oplan Exodus, or other similar operations with the aim of apprehending Marwan; responses to requests from the Philippine government to assist in the evacuation of the dead and wounded in the aftermath of Operation Plan Exodus; results of the evidentiary analysis done by the

FBI Laboratory indicating the positive DNA identification of Marwan, and provision of any monetary award to the PNP SAF or other Philippine authorities in exchange for Marwan's positive DNA identification, such as the \$5 million reward that the US State Department offered for Marwan's arrest.

Oplan Exodus sent commandos of the Special Action Forces of the Philippine National Police (SAF-PNP) into territory of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), despite a ceasefire agreement and ongoing peace negotiations between the MILF and Philippine government at the time," Ellorin said.

The ensuing 12-hour battle resulted in the killing of seven civilians, 44 SAF forces and 22 members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF).

"Involvement of multiple U.S. agencies including the FBI became clear as both Philippine government and civilian organizations investigated the operation. Official reports by the (National) Bureau of Investigation and the Senate cited the presence of six Americans at the Tactical Command Post for the mission, including an American who ordered a Philippine major general to fire artillery," she added.

Napeñas admitted under sworn testimony that the tissue sample of alleged terrorist target Marwan was immediately brought by the SAF to American FBI agents waiting in General Santos City, bypassing PNP Headquarters or any other Philippine agency. "Witnesses cited by the Philippine media also reported seeing among the dead the body of a white American male, who is believed to have been involved in the operation even though the Philippine Constitution prohibits the participation of foreign troops in military operations on Philippine soil," Ellorin said.

"In November 2015, participants in BAYAN-USA's Peace Mission went to Mamasapano, where they spoke with widows of MILF fighters who shared accounts of white soldiers being sighted in the encounter, further pointing to US military involvement," she said.

"The US has dodged accountability for the Mamasapano carnage and countless more military-related crimes against the Filipino people, but Obama and Aquino continue to push for the implementation of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. It is senseless to give the US military increased access to Philippine territory for its war games, when it won't even admit any wrongdoing in an American operation that resulted in the killing of so many people," said Ellorin.

"When government agencies like the FBI refuse to willingly be transparent about their actions, the public has the responsibility to use FoIA requests and all the tools at our disposal to hold government to account," said BAYAN-USA Legal Desk member Jackelyn Mariano.

"In addition to requesting information from the FBI, BAYAN-USA plans to file FoIA requests with other agencies of the US government, including the Navy and the Army, to exercise our right to know the full truth about the US role in Mamasapano," added Mariano.

"Operation Exodus at Mamasapano clearly shows how the U.S. is carrying out its 'War on Terror' with no regard for the lives of Filipinos, whether combatants or civilians. It carries out its war on terror without regard for the national sovereignty of the countries where the alleged terrorists are supposedly hiding. In many countries, the US employs drones to target so-called terrorists, often ending up killing civilians. We demand an investigation into the US role in Operation Exodus and for the termination of agreements like the EDCA which embolden the US to carry out violent, covert operations with impunity. We demand accountability for the lives lost and the violation of Philippine sovereignty," Ellorin said.

#### **Man in the Palace**

The "mama sa palasyo" (man in the Palace), President Aquino, should be charged accountable over the death of the SAF 44, a retired Police General and a former SAF trooper himself said.

In a phone interview with the Daily Tribune, retired Gen. Diosdado Valeroso, who holds with him the so-called critical audio evidence that will accordingly

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confirm the President's supposed effort to cover-up the infamous Oplan Exodus carnage, said that he is convinced that there's nobody directly liable but the President himself.

"Every policeman will recognize who and what is defective with the Mamasapano massacre. And since there seems to be an oplan to cover up, obviously those who are summoned are expected to say what their higher ups would want them to say," Valeroso said.

"I share the logic of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile (SAF chief Gen. Getulio Napeñas) acted on higher orders. But since (resigned PNP Director Gen. Alan Purisima) was then suspended, and with the three of them, including the President, who was Napeñas' immediate superior? A suspended PNP Chief or the PNP's Chief Executive, the President himself? Obviously, it's the President," he explained.

Valeroso, who is withholding the identities of those involved in the taped conversation he holds, said that he finds it unfair and unjust for the President, through a supposed emissary, to request a cover up of the carnage just so to pass the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) before Congress.

Malacañang's BBL version is criticized by legislators for its supposed infirmities with respect to the Constitution as it seems to be a major compromise to the demands of the insurgent Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The MILF, together with the breakaway group BIFF, were the ones who relentlessly gunned the SAF 44, yet by far, nobody among the rebels are charged, Valeroso laments.

The retired Police official also decried that the lack of accountability and admission of guilt from the President's and Purisima's part and their "seemingly diversion of guilt on Gen. Napeñas" shows that Malacañang seems to be pressured by the MILF.

"It seems that they are afraid of the MILF. It seems that they do not have the courage and man up for justice for those who day by day risk their lives to fight for peace," an agitated Valeroso lamented.

"If it is peace that they want, then the President himself should exert his might to give justice to

the 44 young men who died while following a mission he plotted," he added.

The fallen SAF 44 were killed on their mission of arresting wanted terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir alias Marwan in who was situated in the insurgent Moros' territory in Tukanalipao, Mamasapano, Maguindanao.

Valeroso also took swipe of the Senators who are trying to bar him from making the controversial audio recording public.

Prominently, among those who scared Valeroso of raps in having a supposed wiretapped possession is Senate President Franklin Drilon, President Aquino's thorough Liberal Party (LP) ally, who, too, was the one who exerted much effort to divert the issue of President Aquino's direct guilt into grilling Napeñas — who seemingly wasn't given the chance before the Senate floor the premises set by Malacañang allies in the Senate — to seemingly absolve the President from any charge.

Ironically, Drilon, together with then legislator Noyon Aquino, was among those who upheld to make then controversial Hello Garci tapes of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo public before.

Valeroso said that their reluctance to make his tape public shows "the true colors of the administration".

"Are they afraid? Afraid of what? Of the truth? If they are guilty, then they must be afraid. But I tell them. With my evidence, they must be terribly afraid," Valeroso warned, adding that he might publicize the audio recording within the week.

The retired General also fired back at his critics who accuse him of dipping his fingers too much on the case that he's not involved in the case and that he's a close ally of persistent anti-BBL legislator Sen. Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr.

"Those who say such do not have the balls to stand face to face with me. I'm not a politician, so why join or elaborate about my friendship with Sen. Marcos?" he said.

#### **Coronel: It's SAF's fault**

For Malacañang's representatives in the negotiations with the MILF, it is the Philippine National Police Special Action Force (PNP-SAF) that should be blamed in the botched oplan Exodus that lead to the bloody Mamasapano

massacre of 44 elite commandos.

Chief government negotiator Miriam Coronel-Ferrer insisted yesterday that the SAF, before pursuing wanted Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir alias Marwan in an MILF territory in Baranggay Tukanalipao, Mamasapano, Maguindanao should have first coordinated with the rebel groups first.

"Had the SAF coordinated with the ceasefire mechanisms, there could never have been a Mamasapano (carnage) as we have seen in the past," Ferrer said yesterday during the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP) 9th national congress in Punta de Fabian, Rizal.

The 44 SAF troopers were relentlessly gunned by members of the MILF and its breakaway group Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). Despite such, not one from any of the suspect groups were charged.

The GRP chief negotiator also blames the SAF for not subscribing to the MILF's ceasefire mechanisms, which is apparently a compromise set — not by the state — but by the MILF since 2002.

"As an organization, we don't see the MILF participating in the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao and national elections," Ferrer added.

She further explained that the MILF has a standing policy and a recent statement that they won't participate in elections.

The government's negotiator also kept on insisting that the criticized Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) should still be passed, contradicting the critics who already said that it won't prosper and that it now seems to be dying a natural death in both the House of Representatives and in the Senate.

Ferrer particularly scored the major proponent of an alternative BBL at the Senate, Sen. Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. who was very vocal against the Malacañang MILF version of the BBL due to accordingly unconstitutional provisions.

Ferrer also said that the not passing of the BBL hinders a lot of projects and programs in the Bangsamoro region. She added that as of January 2016, the MILF's 30 percent done with its decommissioning of arms process.

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# The Manila Times

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## GPH-MNLF-OIC agree on joint communiqué

**COTABATO CITY, Maguindanao:** The Philippine government, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and the 57-nation Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have finally agreed in a Joint Communiqué to move on with the peace process from review to implementation.

The communiqué, signed in Jeddah on January 26, marked the conclusion of the Tripartite Review Process (TRP) on the Implementation of the 1996 GPH-MNLF Final Peace Agreement (FPA).

It identified four key areas – the establishment of Bangsamoro Development Assistance Fund, co-management of strategic minerals, participation of MNLF in the Bangsamoro Parliament, and creation of Tripartite Implementation Monitoring Committee.

The Bangsamoro Development Assistance Fund will be used for socio-economic development projects for MNLF communities. Also, the agreement on the co-management of strategic minerals will be referred to the Oversight Committee created by RA 9054 (Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao) for the continuation of its devolution process.

It will also bolster the MNLF participation in the Bangsamoro Transition Commission on the envisioned Bangsamoro Parliament, and the creation of the Tripartite Implementation Monitoring Committee to oversee the consensus arrived at by the TRP.

The communiqué was signed by Undersecretary Jose Yusuf Iribani Lorena, for the Philippine government; lawyer Randolph Parcasio and Muslimin Sema for the MNLF; with OIC Secretary General Iyad bin Amin Madani for the 57-nation Islamic organization.

*The Manila Times* tried to reach MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari to comment in the signed Communiqué but only MNLF secretary general Ustadz Murshi Ibrahim gave a statement.

"The agreement signed by the MNLF-OIC-GPH at the conclusion of two-day meeting in Jeddah, is a better step for abiding peace in Morolandia," Ibrahim said.

Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (Opapp) Secretary Teresita Quintos Deles, who headed Philippine delegation said "this is an important milestone we have reached the convergence of the two Bangsamoro peace processes."

Meanwhile, a memorandum signed by Misuari announced the holding of the MNLF Leadership Assembly at the Astana (Palace) in Indanan, Sulu to discuss the results of the tripartite peace review conference in Jeddah.

The gathering, which date was not specified, is expected to be attended by armed and unarmed card-bearing MNLF members, at the same venue it was held earlier this month.

**JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL**



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## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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# Palparan loses bail bid in kidnapping rap

By Carmela Reyes-Estrope  
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF MALOLOS—It has not been a good month for detained retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan.

On Jan. 22, a Bulacan court junked Palparan's second appeal for the grant of bail after it turned down his first request last year, according to documents obtained on Thursday by the National Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL).

Palparan and two other soldiers, Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado and S/Sgt. Edgardo Osorio, have been standing trial for the kidnapping and illegal detention of University of the Philippines students Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan, who were allegedly taken by soldiers in 2006. A fourth accused, M/Sgt. Rizal Hilario, is at large.

In November last year, Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales affirmed her office's Feb. 9, 2015, decision to charge Palparan with the 2006 kidnapping of Raymund Manalo, a farmer. A copy of the Ombudsman's ruling was received by NUPL on Jan. 28.

Manalo was a government witness who testified last year



**PALPARAN**

against Palparan in the Empeño-Cadapan kidnapping trial.

Palparan was upset about the latest court developments, said his counsel, lawyer Diosab Formilleza.

Last year, the retired general had asked the court to grant him bail, arguing that evidence against him was not substantial enough. He made a second appeal after the bail request was denied.

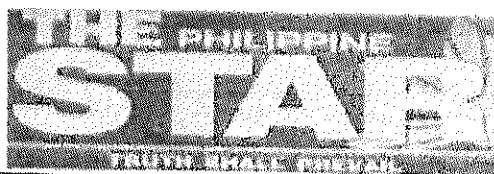
But Judge Alexander Tamayo of Branch 15 of the Bulacan Regional Trial Court dismissed Palparan's motion for reconsideration, after concluding that the former general had "no new compelling grounds... worth a reconsideration."

"The evidence presented by the prosecution is strong, sufficient to substantiate the present criminal charges and it is now up for the accused to refute further the evidence presented against him," Tamayo said in his Jan. 22 decision.

Under these circumstances, "the court believes that bail in favor of the accused should not be allowed," the judge said.

*With a report from Ron Lopez, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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## **Lumad teacher survives another slay attempt by NPA**

TALAINGOD, Davao del Norte – A teacher of a *lumad* daycare center that the New People's Army (NPA) has reportedly long wanted dead survived another attempt on his life in this town on Tuesday

night.

Joel Daunsay, 26, of Central Baugan, Barangay Palma Hill, cheated death when the guns of the assassins jammed when they tried to shoot him.

The assassins left in haste,

failing to kill their target.

"Someone knocked on our door at around 9:30 p.m. When I opened it, two men were pointing guns to my head," he told **The STAR**.

By JAIME LAUDE

He said he managed to mutter "why" to his assassins. One of the gunmen answered him by pulling the trigger.

The gun did not go off, prompting the assassin to re-

load, but it failed to fire for the second time.

The second assassin, apparently a back up, shot Daunsay, but his gun also did not fire.

"The commotion attracted

the attention of my neighbors, forcing the assassins to flee. I prevented my relatives from running after the armed men as it might only worsen the prevailing conflict in our community," he said.



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## NPA, nanunog sa Bukidnon

The New People's Army staged simultaneous attacks and destroyed heavy equipment owned by Dole Philippines Inc. and Del Monte Philippines Inc. in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon yesterday.

Capt. Joe Patrick Martinez, Army 4th Infantry Division public affairs officer, said the first attack occurred at around 1 a.m. in Sitio Upper Gabunan, Barangay Casisang.

Ang mga rebelde na kabilang sa NPA Guerilla Front 6, North Central Mindanao Regional Committee, fired at a mega spray truck of Dole Philippines Inc.

Pagkatapos ng isang oras at about 2 a.m., two bulldozers owned by Del Monte Philippines Inc. were torched by a separate group of NPA in Field 97, Zone 6,

Barangay Impalambong.

Martinez said isang boom spray owned by the Lapanday pineapple plantation ay sinunog din ng five NPA insurgents in Sitio Hagwaon, Barangay Laguitas.

Troops from the 4th ID 403rd Brigade based in Malaybalay City in coordination with the local police were immediately dispatched to the incident sites, according to Martinez.

Martinez said soldiers from the 1st Special Forces Battalion based in Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon ay tumutugis na rin sa mga rebelde.

The military said extortion was the motive behind the attacks.

Ayon sa mga sundalo, the NPA have long been demanding "revolutionary tax" from business establishments, specially multinational companies, in the

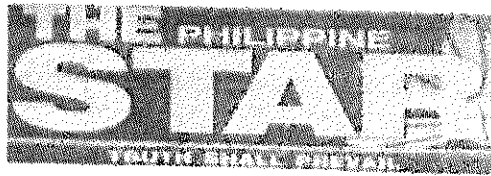
province.

According to Martinez, the companies consistently refuse to heed the rebels' demands.

Col. Jesse A. Alvarez, commander of 403rd Brigade, said the attacks are meant to force the owners or the management of businesses in the province to give in to the NPA's extortion activities.

"There are similar plans by the NPA against other targeted companies and businesses but were pre-empted by our troops," said Alvarez, citing the case of a foiled arson attempt against the Mindanao Agri-Traders Inc. in Barangay Soriano, Cabadbaran City and the apprehension of the suspect, na nakilalang si Jephthe Cangke Butal, by troops from the 29th Infantry Battalion. **(Elena L. Aben)**

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## Abu Sayyaf tagged in Sulu bombing

ZAMBOANGA CITY – The military yesterday identified two suspects in the bombing of a karaoke bar in Jolo, Sulu on Thursday night.

Abu Sayyaf bandits Namil Ahajari, alias Gapas, and Roger Saji were behind the attack, said Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, commander of Joint Task Group Sulu, citing intelligence reports.

No one was reported hurt, but the blast damaged the bar owned by former Talipao vice mayor Mijan Hasim.

Arrojado said the attack was part of the diversionary tactic of the group led by Radullan Sahiron amid intensified military operations against the bandits in Patikul and Talipao towns.

He said intelligence reports also showed the bandits are targeting the areas frequented by military personnel such as Barangay Kakuyagan and Serarantes street in downtown Jolo.

He said the troops have been alerted on possible attacks of the Abu Sayyaf in retaliation for the military offensive.

– Roel Pareño

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## AFP inalerto vs Sayyaf bombings

Inalerto na kahapon ni Joint Task Group (JTG) Commander Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado ang tropa ng militar kasunod ng pagkakasiwalat ng planong pagsasagawa ng serye ng pambobomba ng bandidong Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) sa downtown ng Jolo, Sulu.

Ayon kay Arrojado, namonitor ng mga intelligence operatives ang grupo ni Abu Sayyaf bomber Namil "Gapas" Ahajari kasama ang mga kasamahan na magsagawa ng pambobomba sa kapitolyo ng Jolo.

"Accordingly, said

hostile plan/action is to divert the focus of military troops currently conducting military operations targeting their group in the hinterlands of Patikul & Talipao municipalities," ayon pa kay Arrojado.

Samantala, nabunyag din ang nasa likod ng pambobomba sa videoke bar sa Tabak Village sa Brgy. Busbus, Jolo noong Enero 28 ng gabi na ang grupo ni Abu Sayyaf member Roger Saji na kasamahan ni Gapas.

Inihayag pa ni Arrojado na partikular na target ng Abu Sayyaf

ay ang Brgy. Kakuyagan kung saan madalas na makita ang presensya ng tropa ng militar sa Serantes Street gayundin ang mga namamalengke sa hanay ng mga sundalo.

Ayon pa sa heneral, nagpapatuloy naman ang law enforcement operations laban sa grupo ng mga bandido na hawak pa rin ang mga nalalabing bihag.

Kabilang sa mga nalalabing bihag na target ng search and rescue operations ay ilang dayuhan na ipinagpapalipatlipat ng taguan sa kagubatan ng Sulu. *Joy Cantos*

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Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko bid farewell as they board their plane during send-off ceremonies led by President Aquino yesterday.

BOB GUMBAN

## Japan royals end state visit

President Aquino led the sendoff ceremony for Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, who ended their five-day state visit to the Philippines yesterday.

The 82-year-old emperor and his wife, 81, had a full schedule while in the country, including visits to technical and agriculture institutions as well as to shrines honoring the war dead.

The Palace said their state visit deepened the friendship and people-to-people ties as well as the strategic partnership between the two countries.

The royal couple arrived at the Balagbag Ramp of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at 11:45 a.m. and were given departure honors.

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## Japan From Page 1

Also present during the send-off rites were presidential sister Pinky Aquino-Abellada, Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario, Public Works and Highways Secretary Rogelio Singson, Transportation and Communications Secretary Joseph Emilio Abaya and Ambassador to Japan Manolo Lopez.

The couple's visit coincided with the 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the Philippines and Japan. It was the couple's first visit to the country as Emperor and empress.

Akihito and his wife first visited the Philippines in 1962 and were received by then president Diosdado Macapagal.

The highlights of the impe-

rial couple's visit include a meeting with Aquino at Malacañang, wreath laying at the Rizal Park and at the Libingan ng mga Bayani and a visit to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority's Language Skills Institute.

The emperor and empress also went to the Japanese Memorial Garden in Caliraya and toured the International Rice Research Institute in Los Baños, both in Laguna, on Friday.

At the IRRI, they were briefed on the organization's efforts to ensure global food security and were told of Japan's contributions to the organization.

IRRI director general Matthew Morrell talked about the institution's mandate, its current work and how Japan

contributed to its research efforts on rice production.

Japan was one of IRRI's financial donors in 2015, joining other big contributors like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the US and Australian governments.

Japan has also contributed 81 scientists to IRRI since 1960 and during IRRI's first board meeting in 1960, Japanese geneticist Hitoshi Kihara was elected as first chairman of the IRRI program committee.

In his toast during the state banquet for the imperial couple Wednesday night, the President thanked them for choosing to come to the country "at this point in your lives."

"While traveling to our shores in the 1960s might have taken longer, Your Majesties may have found it less taxing back then," Aquino said.

adding Filipinos were deeply honored by their presence as "respected symbols 'achieving peace everywhere' you go."

He also wished them "great happiness and good health."

The President also cited the long history of friendship between the Philippines and Japan, while praising the latter's being a consistent, able and trustworthy partner for progress.

Japan was the Philippines' top trading partner in 2014 and its largest source of official development assistance.

Japan is also a vital partner in the Mindanao peace process and in the region's development, Aquino said.

Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office Undersecretary Manuel Quezon III said "Japan has also been helping

us enhance our long-term disaster management capabilities." He cited Japan's readily coming to Philippine aid in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yolanda in 2013.

"Coming at this auspicious time, Their Majesties' visit further deepens the friendship between our two countries, strengthening the foundation of our bilateral relations for years to come," Quezon said.

### Militaristic past

But amid the strengthening ties between the Philippines and Japan, a militant youth group has expressed opposition over reports of a possible military agreement between the two countries.

In a statement, Anakbayan said forging a Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) that would allow the stationing of Japanese troops in the country

would bring back memories of Japan's brutal occupation during the Second World War.

"We have not forgotten the cruelties and abuses inflicted by the Japanese Imperial Army against the Filipino people," Anakbayan chairman Vencer Crisostomo said.

"There has not been any real closure of this matter and yet here we have the Aquino government inviting Japanese troops to our backyard," he added.

Crisostomo noted the absence of a clear apology on the part of the Japanese government for its past crimes.

In addition to the apology, he demanded that the Japanese government provide state compensation for Filipino victims of Japanese brutalities during the war – Aurea Calica, Janvic Mateo



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## #Journeyto30 State of rebellion; state of cohesion

By EPI FABONAN III

This past week, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) seems to have found its voice in the reopening of the Senate inquiry on the botched police operation in Mamasapano a year ago. In a PowerPoint presentation during

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## State

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the inquiry, AFP deputy chief of staff for operations Maj. Gen. Angelito de Leon showed a photo of retired police director Getulio Napeñas, who directed the operation to capture wanted international terrorist Marwan.

The photo, taken in the afternoon of Jan. 25, 2015, hours after the Mamasapano clash, showed Napeñas smiling and in civilian attire while meeting with military counterparts at the AFP 1st Mechanized Brigade headquarters.

"Here, Director Napeñas and party were still in civilian attire and can even afford to smile in spite of the dire situation faced by his troops in the encounter site," De Leon said, adding that the former Special Action Force (SAF) commander was "detached from the reality" and had a "walk-in-the-park" mindset about the operations.

De Leon's words represent the AFP's united front regarding its responsibility in the Mamasapano clash, and speak of the current overall cohesive state within the military organization.

But the AFP wasn't always a solid institution. Its past is replete with divisive actions and power struggles that tested the unity of the organization and threatened the security of the nation.

One such event was the Oakwood mutiny on July 27, 2003 that took place at the Oakwood Premier serviced apartments in Makati City. The Philippine STAR captured in its July 28, 2003 front page the moment when leaders and members of the so-called Bagong Katipuneros (also known as the Magdalo Group), led by Army Capt. Gerardo Gambala and a young and feisty LtSG Antonio Trillanes IV, aired

their grievances against the administration of then-president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the chain of command of the AFP.

The Magdalo Group lamented the sorry state of the armed forces, beleaguered as it was by a lackluster modernization program, inadequate services for wounded and sick soldiers, lack of death benefits for families of soldiers killed in action and corruption, among others.

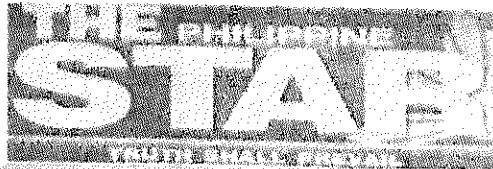
More than a decade after the mutiny, some of the mutineers' grievances remain unaddressed and unresolved. Although there is much progress with the modernization program following the acquisition of two US Coast Guard cutters as frigates, the purchase of new land, air and naval assets, and the procurement of new military equipment for the different branches of the armed forces, the AFP still remains one of the least formidable in Southeast Asia.

The Philippines currently ranks 40th in the Global Firepower 2016 Power Index, behind Indonesia (12th), Thailand (20th), Vietnam (21st), Singapore (26th) and Malaysia (35th), but ahead of Myanmar (44th), Cambodia (94th) and Laos (117th).

With the internal and external threats that continue to hound our porous borders and multicultural society, our armed forces still have to improve by leaps and bounds before we can attain a truly competent defense and security posture for our nation.

We can only do that if the AFP remains steadfast, committed and consistent with its modernization and fight against corruption, and if our soldiers remain united and faithful to such cause.

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## AFP wants custody of Marcelino

The military yesterday requested custody over Marine Lt. Col. Ferdinand Marcelino from the Department of Justice.

The Philippine Navy said Marcelino is an active military officer subject to military law and should be confined in a military-controlled facility while under investigation for his supposed infractions for possible violations of the Articles of War.

"We need to ensure his safety while under detention during the pendency of the

preliminary investigation," Navy spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo said.

Marcelino, along with a Chinese national, was arrested last week in a raid on a suspected shabu laboratory. Lawmen seized some 76 kilos of illegal drugs worth P383 million from the suspected laboratory in Binondo, Manila.

He is currently under custody of the police Anti-Illegal Drugs Group (AIDG) in Camp Bagong Diwa of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) facing drug

By JAIME LAUDE

charges filed against him by fellow anti-narcotics authorities before the DOJ.

Marcelino served as former Director of the Special Enforcement Service of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), the same outfit that arrested him last week.

Marcelino maintained he was on a mission order doing surveillance on the shabu laboratory when he was arrested.

The BJMP, meanwhile, said they were only providing

"temporary safekeeping" for Marcelino.

BJMP spokesman Chief Insp. Xavier Solda said they merely accommodated the request of the AIDG to keep Marcelino under custody while the case is being heard before Senior Deputy Prosecutor Theodore Villanueva of the DOJ.

"The detention of Col. Marcelino is in the nature of temporary safekeeping only at Quezon City Jail Annex," Solda said.

Arevalo said the Marines will ask for the transfer of Marcelino to their barracks detention under Executive Order 106, which set the guidelines for

uniformed personnel facing charges.

Arevalo stressed Marcelino's life could be in danger since he neutralized criminal syndicates and contributed to the prosecution and conviction of prominent individuals.

Earlier, former PDEA director Dionisio Santiago called on Marcelino's colleagues in the military to keep an eye on him while under police detention, saying the arrested Marine officer will not stay long inside jail if he is left alone.

"To ensure his safety, the Navy leadership finds it appropriate to detain him at the Philippine Navy detention facility," Arevalo said.

Arevalo said provisions of Section 3C, Executive Order 106 said servicemen facing

criminal charges should be delivered to the nearest military authorities.

Arevalo said the Navy does not tolerate misdeeds among its personnel and the request for custody should not be misinterpreted.

"If anyone of us is accused of committing an offense, we will actively participate in ensuring that there will be an unhampered conduct of investigation. As such, we undertake to present the aforementioned Navy officer at anytime when so ordered by the Department of Justice, the Office of the City Prosecutors of Manila, or any court of law," Arevalo said.

For the meantime, Arevalo said the Navy is affording Marcelino his constitutional rights.  
– With Cecille Suerte Felipe

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## Philippine Navy, hiniling ang kustodiya kay Marcelino

Hiniling ng Philippine Navy (PN) sa Department of Justice (DoJ) na ibigay sa kustodiya ng navy si Lt. Col. Ferdinand Marcelino, na idinadawit sa P320-million drug bust, upang matiyak ang kaligtasan ng marine officer.

Sinabi ni Col. Edgard Arevalo, tagapagsalita ng PN, na hinihiling nila ito para matiyak ang kaligtasan ni Marcelino habang isinasagawa ang preliminary investigation.

"As a former Director of the Special Enforcement Division where neutralized criminal syndicates and contributed to the prosecution and conviction of prominent individuals, his life is in peril. To ensure his safety, the Navy leadership finds it

appropriate to detain him at a Philippine Navy detention facility," dagdag niya.

"Since Lt. Col. Marcelino is in the active service, he is subject to military law. Thus, we need to place him under confinement at our detention facility while facing investigation before a body tasked to determine his liability under the Articles of War," diin ni Arevalo.

Binigyang-diin ng tagapagsalita ng PN na ang kanilang kahilingan ay nakaangkla sa mga probisyon ng Section 3c, Executive Order Number 106, series of 1937, na nagsasaad na ang isang tauhan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines na inaresto ng pulisya o ng iba pang law enforcement agencies dahil sa diumano'y pagkakasangkot sa krimen ay dapat na kaagad isuko sa AFP authorities.

"We reiterate that the Philippine Navy does not tolerate misdeeds among its personnel. If anyone of us is accused of committing an offense, we will actively participate in ensuring that there will be an unhampered conduct of investigation. As such, we undertake to present the aforementioned Navy Officer at anytime when so ordered by the Department of Justice, the Office of the City Prosecutor of Manila, or any court of law," dagdag niya.

"That said, we are affording to him the constitutional guarantee to be presumed innocent unless otherwise proven following due process that he is likewise entitled to," diin ni Arevalo.

PNA



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## Drilon to Noy: No more time to approve BBL

By MARVIN SY

With hardly any time left before the adjournment of Congress on Friday, it's definitely a no go for the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), Senate President Franklin Drilon yesterday reported having told President Aquino.

"I sent word to the President that this is going to be very difficult. This is a local bill that

must originate from the House of Representatives. Now it appears that it won't be approved in the House of Representatives because they are having difficulties with getting a quorum," Drilon said over radio *dwlZ*.

If there was any hope in Malacañang that the BBL could still be ap-

proved between now and June 30, Drilon said his counterpart Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. had all but extinguished it with his own pronouncements that the BBL is dead in the 16th Congress. Session resumes on May 23.

At Malacañang, Presidential Communications Operations Office Secre-

tary Herminio Coloma Jr. has called on stakeholders to "keep the wheels of the peace process running" should the BBL fail to make it in Congress.

Drilon emphasized that the Senate, even if it wants to, cannot act on the BBL until it is approved by the House and transmitted to the upper

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## Drilon

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chamber

"The BBL cannot be transmitted to the Senate before we adjourn. So there is no more time," he said.

But he stressed the BBL would continue to be on the top of the agenda of the Senate in its last three session days next week. This has been the case in the past few months but it has not pushed legislators to deliberate on the matter during session.

For weeks, Senate Minority Leader Juan Ponce Enrile has been interpellating the sponsor of the BBL, Senator Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in the plenary.

He is not even half way through his interpellation and there are still other senators who wish to say their piece about the bill.

Drilon said the reality is "the election campaign is already here" and so many of the candidates are already busy going around the country.

For instance, Marcos and Majority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano are now busy campaigning and may not be in the position to finish the debates on the BBL.

"The President strived to get this passed but under the circumstances, the stars did not align themselves, as they say," Drilon said.

"This is why I have been saying that the BBL was the 45th victim of the Mamasapano (clash) because if our attention

was not diverted by the Mamasapano hearings, then we probably would have finished this earlier," he added.

### Mamasapano to blame

Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano III also said it was the Mamasapano carnage that doomed the BBL and not the President, who "really pushed hard for its approval."

"The process of considering and approving the proposed Bangsamoro law was smooth sailing until the Mamasapano incident," he said, as he reminded critics that Congress was not to blame either.

He stressed that the incident "made the political environment not conducive for passing the BBL bill."

Albano added he was for approving the measure "because I wanted to give the envisioned new autonomous Bangsamoro regional government a chance to work for the benefit and welfare of the people of Mindanao."

The proposed law was the product of peace negotiations between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Investigations by the Philippine National Police fact-finding board and the Senate have blamed the MILF for the death of 44 elite police commandos in Mamasapano, Maguindanao on Jan. 25 last year -- With Aurea Calica, Jess Diaz