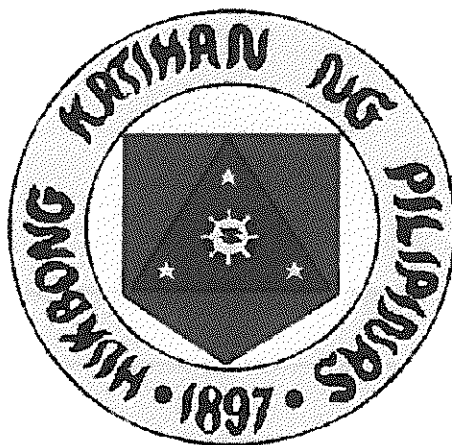


Army Vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride



ARMY

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oacpa.army2012@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS NEWS CLIPPINGS

25 June 2016

Saturday

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

NEWS HEADLINES

25 June 2016

UK shocks world: Brexit sends markets in freefall



Duterte vows day of reckoning vs Abu



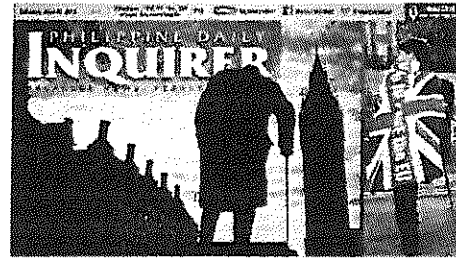
Comelec execs up in arms vs Bautista



Rudy kin to avoid 'awkward' moments



Cops vs cops in drug war probe



'Brexit' vote stuns world

Flot freed as Rodi vows to get Abus



PH economy seen to weather 'Brexit'

Global financial markets tumble following EU exit

Indian visa fees: PH on alert

Fence Abu for introduced Basilan kids to play football

Overseas: Overseas

PETRON TRACTIV



Abu Sayyaf frees Filipina hostage



Britain votes to leave EU; Cameron quits



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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Science and Technology
Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and
Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA)
Weather Division
ISO 9001:2008 Certified

WFS-02
Rev 1/05-06-2010

24-Hour Weather Forecast and Extended Weather Outlook for Selected Cities:

ISSUED AT: 5:00 PM 24 JUNE 2016

VALID BEGINNING: 5:00 PM TODAY UNTIL 5:00 PM TOMORROW

CITIES	24-Hr Weather, Winds and Sea Condition Forecast from 5PM today until 5PM tomorrow			Extended Weather Outlook Duration: 5PM until 5PM of the following day			
	24 JUN			25 JUN	26 JUN	27 JUN	28 JUN
Metro Manila	25°C 34°C	Light to Moderate South - Southeast Manila Bay: Slight to Moderate		25°C 34°C	24°C 34°C	25°C 31°C	25°C 31°C
Tuguegarao City	24°C 35°C	Light to Moderate Southeast		25°C 35°C	24°C 35°C	25°C 35°C	25°C 35°C
Laoag City	25°C 33°C	Light to Moderate Southeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate		25°C 33°C	26°C 32°C	26°C 33°C	25°C 32°C
Baguio City	17°C 25°C	Light to Moderate Southeast		18°C 25°C	17°C 25°C	17°C 24°C	16°C 24°C
SBMA (Olongapo) / Clark Zone (Angeles City)	26°C 33°C	Light to Moderate South - Southeast Subic Bay: Slight to Moderate		24°C 34°C	24°C 34°C	25°C 33°C	26°C 32°C
Tagaytay City	22°C 29°C	Light to Moderate South - Southeast		22°C 30°C	21°C 29°C	23°C 28°C	22°C 27°C
Lipa City	25°C 31°C	Light to Moderate South - Southeast		24°C 32°C	25°C 31°C	25°C 29°C	25°C 30°C
Legazpi City	26°C 33°C	Light to Moderate Southeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate		26°C 32°C	25°C 31°C	25°C 30°C	25°C 28°C
Puerto Princesa City	25°C 31°C	Moderate Southwest Coastal Waters: Moderate		26°C 31°C	25°C 32°C	25°C 31°C	25°C 29°C
Iloilo City / Bacolod City	25°C 32°C	Light to Moderate Southwest - South Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate		25°C 31°C	25°C 33°C	25°C 31°C	25°C 32°C
Metro Cebu	25°C 31°C	Light Southwest to Variable Coastal Waters: Slight		26°C 30°C	25°C 32°C	26°C 31°C	25°C 30°C
Tacloban City	25°C 31°C	Light Southwest to Variable Coastal Waters: Slight		25°C 32°C	25°C 32°C	26°C 32°C	26°C 33°C
Cagayan de Oro City	24°C 31°C	Light Southwest to Variable Coastal Waters: Slight		24°C 31°C	24°C 29°C	24°C 30°C	24°C 32°C
Valencia City	19°C 29°C	Light Southwest to Variable		20°C 27°C	20°C 28°C	19°C 28°C	19°C 29°C
Metro Davao	25°C 32°C	Light Southwest to Variable Coastal Waters: Slight		26°C 30°C	25°C 31°C	25°C 32°C	25°C 30°C
Zamboanga City	24°C 32°C	Light Southwest to Variable Coastal Waters: Slight		25°C 31°C	25°C 32°C	25°C 31°C	24°C 33°C

LEGEND:

	Clear Skies		Partly Cloudy to at times Cloudy with Rainshowers and/or Thunderstorms		Occasional Rains		Rains with Gusty Winds
	Partly Cloudy Skies		Cloudy Skies with Rainshowers and/or Thunderstorms		Monsoon Rains / Rains		Stormy
	Partly Cloudy to at times Cloudy with Rainshowers		Light Rains				

END OF FORECAST

PREPARED BY: MAGGE

CHECKED BY: MPM

Tracking the sky... helping the country!

WPEC BIR Road Davao, Quezon City

Tel/Fax: +632-9271541



24-HOUR PUBLIC WEATHER FORECAST

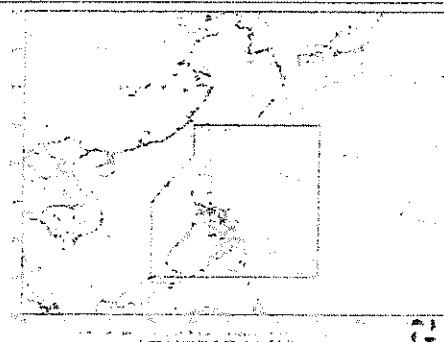
ISSUED AT: 5:00 PM 24 JUNE 2016

VALID BEGINNING: 5:00 PM TODAY UNTIL 5:00 PM TOMORROW

SYNOPSIS: INTERTROPICAL CONVERGENCE ZONE (ITCZ) AFFECTING VISAYAS AND MINDANAO. MEANWHILE, AT 4:00 PM TODAY, A LOW PRESSURE AREA (LPA) OUTSIDE THE PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR) WAS ESTIMATED BASED ON ALL AVAILABLE DATA AT 1,430 KM EAST OF MINDANAO (5.2°N, 138.1°E).

FORECAST: CLOUDY SKIES WITH LIGHT TO MODERATE RAINS AND THUNDERSTORMS WILL BE EXPERIENCED OVER VISAYAS, MINDANAO AND MIMAROPA. PARTLY CLOUDY TO CLOUDY SKIES WITH ISOLATED RAINSHOWERS OR THUNDERSTORMS WILL PREVAIL OVER METRO MANILA AND THE REST OF LUZON.

LIGHT TO MODERATE WINDS BLOWING FROM SOUTHWEST TO SOUTHEAST WILL PREVAIL OVER LUZON AND WESTERN VISAYAS AND COMING FROM THE SOUTHWEST TO VARIABLE OVER THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. THE COASTAL WATERS THROUGHOUT THE ARCHIPELAGO WILL BE SLIGHT TO MODERATE.



PAGTAYA: MAULAP NA PAPAIRIN NA MAY MAHINA HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMANG MGA PAG-ULAN AT PAGKIDLAT-PAGKULOG ANG MARARANASAN SA KABISAYAAN, MINDANAO AT MIMAROPA. BAHAGYANG MAULAP HANGGANG SA MAULAP NA KALANGITAN NA MAY PULU-PULONG MGA PAG-ULAN O PAGKIDLAT-PAGKULOG ANG IIRAL SA KAMAYNILAAN AT SA NALALABING BAHAGI NG LUZON.

MAHINA HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMANG HANGIN MULA SA TIMOG-KANLURAN HANGGANG SA TIMOG-SILANGAN ANG IIRAL SA LUZON AT KANLURANG KABISAYAAN AT MULA NAMAN SA TIMOG-KANLURAN HANGGANG SA PABAGO-BAGO NG DIREKSYON SA NALALABING BAHAGI NG BANSA. ANG MGA BAYBAYING DAGAT SA BUONG KAPULUAN AY MAGIGING BANAYAD HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMAN ANG PAG-ALON.

EXTREMES OF TEMPERATURE AND RELATIVE HUMIDITY FOR THE 24-HR PERIOD ENDING AT 4:00 PM TODAY AND RECORDED AT PAGASA WEATHER STATION, SCIENCE GARDEN, DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY:

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE:

4:00 PM TODAY — 33.6°C

MAXIMUM RELATIVE HUMIDITY:

5:00 AM TODAY — 86 %

MINIMUM TEMPERATURE:

3:00 PM TODAY — 26.0°C

MINIMUM RELATIVE HUMIDITY:

4:00 PM TODAY — 56 %

TIDAL PREDICTIONS ALONG MANILA BAY
(Courtesy of NAMRIA)

OVER METRO MANILA:

LOW TIDE TODAY:

8:22 PM 0.00 METER

SUNRISE / SUNSET

MOONRISE / MOONSET
AND ILLUMINATION

HIGH TIDE TOMORROW:

3:39 AM 0.50 METER

SUNSET TODAY:

6:28 PM

MOONRISE TODAY:

9:35 PM

LOW TIDE TOMORROW:

4:10 AM 0.50 METER

SUNRISE TOMORROW:

5:29 AM

MOONSET TOMORROW:

9:34 AM

HIGH TIDE TOMORROW:

12:45 PM 1.20 METER

SUNSET TOMORROW:

6:26 PM

ILLUMINATION TODAY:

87 %

For more information and queries, please call at telephone numbers 927-1335 and 927-2877 or log on to: www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph.

PREPARED BY: MAGGE

CHECKED BY: MPM

2

24 June 2016



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Ex-NPA rebel gets gov't reward

By Mario J. Mallari

Government officials in Nueva Ecija yesterday rewarded a former New People's Army (NPA) rebel with livelihood and cash assistance after voluntarily going back to the folds of the law.

Former NPA rebel June Ray Cabristante, who operated with the communists in Nueva Ecija province in the past, received a total of P65,000 financial and livelihood assistance under the government's Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP) for rebel-returnees.

Cabristante surrendered to the Army's 48th Infantry Battalion (IB), under Lt. Col. Eugenio Julio Osias IV.

Col. Felimon Santos Jr., commander of the Army's 703rd Brigade which has jurisdiction over 48th IB, commended Osias and his troops for the successfully convincing Cabristante to return to the folds of the law.

For his part, Maj. Gen. Angelito de Leon, chief of the 7th Infantry Division (ID), branded the surrender as clear proof of the effectivity of internal peace and security plan (IPSP) "Bayanihan."

Nueva Ecija Gov. Aurelio Umali awarded the P65,000 worth of assistance to Cabristante during simple ceremony at the provincial capitol.

Present during the awarding were Osias, Nueva Ecija Provincial Police Office Director Senior Supt. Manuel Cornel, Provincial DILG head Renato Bernardo and Provincial Social Welfare and Development head Leoncio Daniel.

25 June 2016

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Fierce Abu foe introduced Basilan kids to play football

By Julie Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—It was in early 2000 that the late church worker Liza del Puerto asked me to hook up with Tiny Perez before covering the remote villages of Basilan for television.

Tiny was Lt. Col. Cristobal Ju-

lian Paolo Pacificador Perez and he knew the place like the back of his hand.

He could provide a clear security assessment for journalists and humanitarian workers planning to go beyond Isabela City or Lamitan.

I was expecting a small per-

FIERCE/A16

From page A1

son, but was surprised to see a tall, muscular mestizo, who can't stop laughing even at jokes that are not funny.

When he greeted me with a gentle but firm handshake: "Lt. Tiny Perez po," he said.

It was a security assessment. Almost two dozen journalists were told to stay in Mt. Mahadji and were to leave only after the delivery of 200 sacks of rice. The Abu Sayyaf was holding more than 70 hostages from Tumahubong, Sumisip, including Claretian priest Fr. Rhoel Gallardo.

The security briefing was conducted by 103rd Army Brigade commander Col. Glicerio Sua. Everyone was in rapt attention, not even bothering to touch the delicious snack—except for Tiny.

Breaking the ice

Tiny broke the ice when he accidentally hit the fork laid on the table. He was trying to get the chocolate cake that was nearer to Sua. He beamed even when the icing ended up on his face.

Lt. Col. Andrew Bacala, now commander of the 4th Special Forces Battalion, described Perez, his *mistah*, as "a happy giant man."

Both of them graduated from the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) under the Maalab Class of 1993.

"Perez was baptized Tiny by our colleagues during cadet years, because he was so huge, like 5'9". Very athletic and always a smiling fellow," Bacala said.

Perez, in his early years at the PMA, was known as CJ, Paolo, Julian or Perez.

Jocelyn Pacificador Perez, Tiny's mother, described her son as "very gentle, thoughtful and charming."

"In fact, it was his younger sister who bullied him when they were small. Tiny just cried. When my daughter learned of Tiny's demise, she cried hard and I gently told her, you made him cry, now it's his time to make you cry," Jocelyn said.

Tiny was born in Cebu but grew up in Barangay Maligue in Isabela City, Basilan, when his family moved there. When peace and security were getting worse in Basilan, the family moved back to the Visayas and later to Manila.

Jocelyn said Tiny spent his younger days in Maligue.

"It was his best childhood. Tiny was a kind of boy who easily mingled with other people—Muslims or Christians—all friends to him. I understand why he decided to return to Basilan after graduating from the PMA," she said.

It was in 1998 when Perez and Bacala landed in Basilan as young lieutenants.

Bacala was company commander of the 24th Special Forces Coy while Perez commanded the 11th Light Armor Company.

Both of them got stationed in Barangay Balawatin in Isabela City and fought lost commands of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), Abu Sayyaf and other lawless elements.

In 2000, Perez was made the head of the 14th Military Intelligence Company or Mico.

Incoming National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. recalled how "Tiny was committed and effective in performing his task."



WARRIOR, PEACEMAKER Children affected by the worsening armed conflict learn to play football, thanks to the efforts of Lt. Col. Tiny Perez. Football for Peace, held at Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga City, is hosted by the Western Mindanao Command. Perez, who was shot dead on June 19, will be buried at Libingan ng mga Bayani on Sunday.

JULIE ALPALA/INQUIRER MINDANAO

"He was behind the successful neutralization of Abu Sayyaf during the 2001 crackdown in Basilan," Esperon, then brigade commander of the 103rd Infantry Brigade in Basilan, said.

In 2002, Perez was made the commanding officer of the intelligence unit of the 1st Infantry Division, but in between 2003 to 2005 and 2008, he served as one of the close-in security aides of Esperon.

Esperon was the commanding general of the Philippine Army and later the Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff.

'Everyone wanted Tiny'

Perez was the favorite of the top officials, particularly by colonels and generals.

"He always find ways and you never hear him complain. Everyone wanted Tiny," said one of Perez's classmates in the PMA, who did not want to be identified.

When Esperon retired from military service, Perez brought his family to Spain for his schooling. Over the yearlong stay in Spain, Perez made some realizations and vowed to bring changes in his approaches in the war against Abu Sayyaf.

In 2011-2012, a tamer, more matured Perez returned.

He once told the INQUIRER that he found an effective way to eliminate Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

Asked how, Perez said "I will get all the kids, even children of the Abu Sayyaf and I will lure them to stay with me, play soccer or football with me, read books or watch movies with me or I will bring them to school."

Perez said fighting the Abu Sayyaf in the battlefield "may lead to more bandits. We did that in the past, I am back and we still face the same problem, except this time, they are children of our enemies."

He then introduced football to the children in conflict areas and they instantly loved it. Many of the children he had lured into football also returned to school.

"You see, plucking out one child from a family of ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) then bring him to travel, let him play football

representing Basilan and meet other children and see him off to school, it's like winning the war against ASG hundredfold," Perez proudly said during the Football for Peace held in the province in May 2015.

Dedeth Suacito, executive director of Nagdilaab Foundation Inc. in Basilan, said, "Tiny is like a father to young generation of Basilan, he brought education and introduced football that has become favorite of the youth of Basilan."

Perez adopted some children, some stayed with him. "He produced scholars and looked for sponsors so children can continue their education. He even availed of loans so he can buy uniforms for football players and send them to play in Manila," Suacito said.

His son, Renzo Perez, plays for La Salle Green Hills and Dragons-Global FC U17 in the United Football League.

Peace efforts

In early 2012, Perez also started legwork in Basilan, bringing the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Hadji Dan Asnawi (114th BIAF) and the 104th Army Brigade under Gen. Charlie Galvez, into the peace table.

He was able to bring warring MILF and the MNLF to work together against Abu Sayyaf, says Al Barka Mayor Darussalam Ladjid.

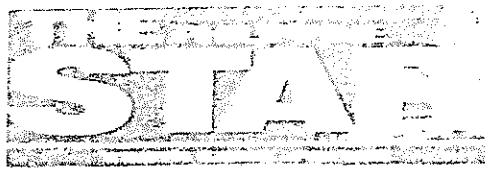
He was also part of the campaign that put down two notorious foreign terrorists—Mohammad Khattab and Najib Hussin, aka "Abu Annas." He also helped other units in Basilan in locating bomb-making facilities, particularly the one in Mohammad Ajul.

Perez was shot dead just outside his house in Barangay Guiwan here. He was 46.

Perez's wife Florie May said, "Tiny had become so engrossed in his advocacy, that every single project, he treated it like his own."

"He loved Basilan so much, the people, the communities, the food, the culture," she said.

25 June 2016



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Flor could not believe she was free

By ROEL PAREÑO
and EDITH REGALADO

Marites Flor woke up in disbelief when she was roused by her captor, who pushed her and untied her feet.

"Gising, gising, ihahatid kita (Wake up, wake up. I am going to accompany you)," Flor quoted her Abu Sayyaf captor as saying, as she narrated events leading to her release to president-elect Rodrigo Duterte yesterday.

Flor attended the turnover of command ceremony of the Davao City Police with Duterte as guest of honor.

Flor was released from captivity by the Abu Sayyaf a week after her Canadian boyfriend was beheaded by the gunmen.

Flor was among four people abducted nine months ago by the Abu Sayyaf from Samal island resort.

Flor's partner, Robert Hall, was beheaded after a ransom deadline lapsed last week and following a similar killing of the other Canadian John Ridsdel in April.

The fate of Norwegian hostage Kjartan Sekkingstad, who was abducted along with the three, remained unknown. The Abu Sayyaf is demanding a P300 million ransom for his release.

The Abu Sayyaf turned over Flor through an emissary and brought her to the house of Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan II before she was turned over to the custody of the military's Joint Task Force Sulu early yesterday.

During the turnover ceremony, Duterte revealed the efforts to free Flor and Sek-

kingstad.

Duterte said the negotiators managed to secure the freedom of Flor.

Details on how Flor was released were not immediately known but sources said P50 million was paid by negotiators to the bandits.

The ransom money was intended to secure the release of Sekkingstad not of Flor, sources said.

"The negotiators were double-crossed by the bandits," the source said, referring to a non-government organization based in Sulu that negotiated for the release of the Norwegian hostage.

The source said the NGO was commissioned by the family of Sekkingstad and by Norwegian authorities to negotiate for the release.

At the task force headquarters, Flor narrated her ordeal in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf.

Flor said there were several times that she was beaten by her guards.

Flor said they were constantly on the move, trekking through several areas in the mountains of Sulu to evade the pursuing government troops.

"We always march at night. Often it was so dark and I never knew the places we have been," she said.

Flor said they were always handcuffed by their captors to prevent them from escaping whenever they sensed the troops were closing in.

Flor turned emotional in narrating her nine-month or-

deal, especially during the last few days before Hall was beheaded by their captors.

"I can't be strong and can't hold it with the experience I have in nine months, the experience I went through with my fiancée for eight months yet he was beheaded. It was really painful," she said.

Flor said she was not aware that she would be freed until she was separated from Sekkingstad the other day.

Flor said she only found out that she would be freed when the leader of the bandit group woke her and told her to hurry up.

"I was not afraid. I really believed they were going to set me free," Flor said in Filipino.

The next thing she knew, she was dropped off in front of the Sulu governor's house early in the morning.

She was then flown to the Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom) headquarters in Zamboanga City where she underwent medical checkup and stress debriefing.

Flor narrated the incidents surrounding Hall's beheading.

Although she did not actually see how the bandits cut Hall's neck, Flor said she witnessed how the bandits dragged him away from her. She said from a distance, she had sensed that they had already killed him.

"Masaya sila kung may pinugutan sila ng ulo (They're happy when they behead someone)," Flor said of the incidents when the two Canadians were killed separately. — With Jaime Laude, Aurea Calica

25 June 2016

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Flor freed as Rody vows to get Abus

HER CAPTORS roused Marites Flor before dawn, and ordered her to pack up, telling her, "You are going home."

Flor, held hostage for nine months by the notorious bandit group Abu Sayyaf in strife-torn Mindanao, was released from captivity in Sulu on Friday, a week after her Canadian boyfriend was beheaded by the gunmen.

Flor's partner, Robert Hall, was beheaded after a ransom deadline lapsed last week, following a similar killing of the other Canadian hostage, John Ridsdel, in April.

President-elect Rodrigo Duterte, who will take his oath of office on Thursday next week, said the time would come when he would have to confront the Abu Sayyaf.

"There will be a time that I
FLOR/A5

From page A1

will have to confront the Abu Sayyaf," Duterte said after meeting Flor. "The kidnapping must stop."

Officials maintained that no ransom was paid, but a source said the Abu Sayyaf received P20 million to release Flor.

Presidential Communications Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. and military officials welcomed Flor's release, and vowed continuing operations against the militant group.

"We affirm the position taken by the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) in welcoming the release of Ms Marites Flor and reiterating its firm determination to continue ongoing operations to bring about the safe return of all remaining hostages," Coloma said.

Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, spokesperson for the AFP, said the safe release of the other captives remained a "vital objective of continuing military and law enforcement operations" against the Abu Sayyaf.

Flor was freed in Sulu, a southern archipelago known as a hideout of the bandits, the local police chief, Wilfredo Cayat, told Agence France-Presse.

Cayat did not give details on the circumstances of her release except that she was dropped off outside the house of local politician Abdusakur Tan on Jolo, the main island in Sulu.

Jesus Dureza, a politician from the area and incoming presidential adviser on the peace process, told Agence France-Presse he negotiated with the kidnappers on behalf of Duterte to win Flor's release.

"She told me her captors roused her at dawn and ordered her to pack up, telling her, 'You are going home,'" Dureza added.

Dureza later accompanied Flor on a private jet to the southern city of Davao for a meeting with Duterte.

Later talking with reporters in Davao City, Dureza said no direct negotiations took place between the Abu Sayyaf and the incoming administration.

"There was no negotiation in the sense that we did not get people to talk [with them]. But [Gov.] Sakur Tan helped," he said.

Dureza said no money was given in exchange for Flor's release.

A source said an Abu Sayyaf group under a certain Mujer Yadah got P20 million to release Flor and turn her over to Tan.

Dureza insisted no ransom was paid and attributed the release of Flor to his and Duterte's common friends. He did not identify who these were.

Flor told reporters she had no idea she would be freed anytime. When they removed her blindfold on Thursday for the first time in weeks, they never told her she would be released.

"I didn't know I was to be freed," she said. "I wanted to thank Sir Dureza, Sakur Tan, and especially the newly elected President Duterte."

Flor's mother, Flordeliza, said that while her family was happy about her release, they grieved over the death of Hall.

Flordeliza credited Duterte for the release of Flor. "We would like to extend our gratitude to Mayor (Duterte)," said Flordeliza. "It is sad that he was not in office (as President) yet when Hall was killed," she said.

Dureza said Flor would be taken home to Bukidnon so she could be reunited with her family.

The fate of Norwegian hostage Kjartan Sekkingstad, who was abducted along with Flor and the Canadians, remained unknown.

The four were seized in September from yachts at a tourist resort on Samal Island, about 500 kilometers to the west of Sulu.

Reports from Nikko Dizon, Julie Aurelio in Manila; Karlos Manlupig and Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao; and AFP and Reuters

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STA

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Duterte vows day of reckoning

President-elect Rodrigo Duterte welcomes freed hostage Marites Flor in Davao City yesterday.

vs Abu

7 Indonesian sailors seized; Pinay released

By ALEXIS ROMERO

President-elect Rodrigo Duterte has waded into the Abu Sayyaf crisis, securing the release of Filipina hostage Marites Flor and vowing a day of "reckoning."

"I don't want to pick a fight with anybody, but there will be a time. I have to confront Abu Sayyaf. It's not yet forthcoming," Duterte said yesterday during the turnover ceremony at the Davao City Police Office.

"Their kidnapping must stop. It has given us a very bad image," he added. "There will be a reckoning one of these days."

Duterte confirmed that negotiations were held to secure the release of Flor, who was present during the turnover rites in Davao City.

"We were able to negotiate for the release of Marites Flor," Duterte announced.

"Instrumental in the release was (incoming) secretary Jesus Dureza. Even (Sulu) Governor Abdusakur Tan, (II) also helped," Duterte added.

There are unconfirmed reports that Flor was released

after P50 million was paid for a Norwegian captive. Instead of the Norwegian, however, it was Flor who was released.

Flor was among four people kidnapped nine months ago by the Abu Sayyaf from a Samal island resort.

Her partner, Canadian Robert Hall, was beheaded after a ransom deadline lapsed last week and following a similar killing of fellow Canadian John Ridsdel in April.

The fate of Norwegian hostage Kjartan Sekkingstad is unknown. The Abu Sayyaf is demanding a P300-million ransom for his release.

Duterte said efforts are underway to free Sekkingstad.

"We have negotiated for their release, but only Flor was freed and I understand the rough seas prevented the Norwegian from being released,"

Turn to Page 8

Duterte From Page 1

Duterte said.

He said he is hopeful Sekkingstad will be released soon.

Norwegian Ambassador Erik Forner, who was attending the event in Davao, also said they were hoping that Sekkingstad would have been released already.

During the event, Duterte reiterated his warning to the Abu Sayyaf to surrender and release their hostages or face the consequences.

Strikes again

While Duterte spoke out against the Abu Sayyaf, Indonesia's foreign minister confirmed yesterday that seven Indonesian sailors have been taken hostage in the Sulu Sea in southern Philippines.

"We got confirmation of an incident of kidnapping involving Indonesian crew of a ship," Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told reporters in Jakarta.

She said the hijackings were carried out by two different armed groups in attacks on a tugboat towing a coal-carrying barge.

Six of the 13 crew on board were freed, Marsudi said, and were on their way back to Indonesia.

"We absolutely do not tolerate this. The government will try all options to free the hostages," Marsudi said.

The kidnapping of the Indonesian sailors occurred just before the Abu Sayyaf released Flor.

A security official said pirates linked with the Abu Sayyaf abducted the seven Indonesians from tugboat *TB Charles* 001 while sailing to Indonesia on Monday.

The official said the abduction was confirmed after the victims started calling their agency and their respective families that the Abu Sayyaf is demanding 20 million ringgit as ransom.

The official revealed the kidnapers belonged to the Muktadil brothers group.

He said the gunmen on two speedboats intercepted the Indonesian tugboat.

The official said the gunmen initially seized three crewmen who were identified as Captain Feri Arifin, chief engineer Muhammad Mahbrur Dahri and assistant engineer Edy Suryono.

The gunmen fled with their three captives and came back to seize the crew of *TK Robby* 152, which was being towed by *TB Charles*.

The official identified the four other captives as Chief Officer Ismail, Robin Peter, Muhammad Nasir and Muhammad Sofyan.

The official said the gunmen and their captives sped off toward the direction of Tawi-Tawi.

According to security officials, Arifin reportedly managed to call his family and informed them they were kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu who demanded 20 million ringgit for their release.

The official added that on Thursday afternoon, the other crewmembers also managed to contact their respective families and informed them of the incident.

Abu Sayyaf spokesman Muammar Askali claimed the Indonesians were turned over to them for "safekeeping."

Clueless

Armed Forces spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla Jr. said they are still verifying the reported abduction.

"We have yet to get direct and solid information regarding this kidnapping incident. The validation of this report is still ongoing," he said.

Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) spokesman Maj. Filemon Tan Jr. said they are still verifying the reports while troops have been alerted on the latest kidnapping by the Abu Sayyaf.

ping by the Abu Sayyaf.

Last month, gunmen kidnapped four Indonesian sailors and shot and wounded one crewmember of a tugboat off Tawi-Tawi.

The gunmen on a speedboat intercepted the *TB Henry* with its crew of 10 Indonesians off Pondo Sibugal in Sitangkai, an island town off Tawi-Tawi.

A batch of 10 Indonesian tugboat crewmembers were also taken last March 26 off East Kalimantan, Indonesia while en route to Manila.

The Indonesian tugboat *TB Brama* was recovered days later off Languyan town in Tawi-Tawi with no sign of the victims.

On April 1, four Malaysian sailors were kidnapped from a ship near Sabah's Ligitan Island. It is still unconfirmed who was responsible but initial information indicated the Abu Sayyaf was behind the snatch.

Indonesian authorities have voiced concerns that piracy in the Sulu Sea area, a major sea traffic lane for the world's top thermal coal exporter, could reach levels previously seen in Somalia.

Up to 18 Indonesians and Malaysians were kidnapped in three attacks on tugboats earlier this year by groups suspected to have ties to the Abu Sayyaf. All 14 Indonesian citizens were later released.

The Philippine military has said the militants have been targeting foreign crew of slow-moving tugboats because they can no longer penetrate resorts and coastal towns in Malaysia's eastern Sabah state due to increased security.

Last year, Malaysian Bernard Then was kidnapped from a seaside restaurant in Sabah, about 300 kilometers from Jolo, the Abu Sayyaf's stronghold. He was later killed by the bandit group.

The rise of sea hijackings prompted Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia to agree last month to carry out coordinated patrols to secure the region's busy waterways.

However, coordinated pa-

trols are yet to get underway.

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB)'s Kuala Lumpur-based Piracy Reporting Center said the shipping community had expressed concern over the rise in attacks.

Many Western and oth-

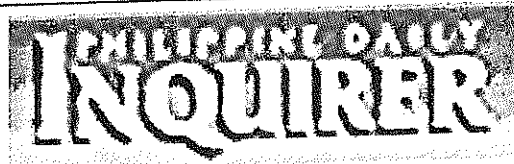
er embassies routinely issue warnings against traveling to southern Philippines because of the risk of being abducted by the Abu Sayyaf.

In the past, Abu Sayyaf has mainly targeted tourists as they can demand high ransom

for foreigners.

In a bid to curb kidnappings, Malaysia has imposed a temporary ban on the trade route between Sabah and the southern Philippines. – With Roel Pareño, Edith Regalado, Jaime Laude, Reuters

25 June 2016



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Indonesia stops PH coal shipments after kidnaps

JAKARTA—Indonesia's foreign minister said on Friday a halt on coal shipments to the Philippines would remain until Manila could secure its waters after seven Indonesian sailors were kidnapped, the latest in a string of abductions.

Philippine authorities could not immediately confirm the hostage-taking but said a Filipino woman held since September was freed on Friday by the Abu Sayyaf, a bandit group that has amassed tens of millions of dollars from kidnappings for ransom.

It was unclear whether the sailors were taken by the Abu

INDONESIA/AS

From page A1

Sayyaf, which has beheaded two Canadian nationals in recent weeks after ransom deadlines passed.

The group is still holding Malaysian seamen and Japanese, Dutch and Norwegians.

Somalia levels

Indonesia is concerned that piracy in the Sulu Sea, a major sea traffic corridor for the world's top thermal coal exporter, could reach levels previously seen in Somalia.

"The moratorium on coal exports to the Philippines will be extended until there is a guarantee for security from the Philippines government," Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told reporters.

Indonesia supplies 70 percent of the Philippines' coal import needs, which Indonesian data shows stood at about 15 million tons, worth around \$800 million, last year.

Analysts say \$40 billion worth of cargo passes through the Sulu Sea every year, including supertankers from the Indian Ocean that cannot use the crowded Malacca Strait.

Marsudi said earlier the seven Indonesians were kidnapped by two different armed groups in attacks on a tugboat towing a coal-carrying barge and that the government would "try all options to free the hostages."

Fourteen Indonesians were abducted in two separate assaults on tugboats in March and April but were freed in May.

In April, the Indonesian Navy instructed all commercial vessels to avoid piracy-prone waters near the southern Philippines.

Filipino captive Marites Flor was released at dawn on Friday near the house of the governor of the southern island of Jolo and was undergoing a medical checkup at a military hospital, the Philippine Army said.

Flor was abducted from a resort in September along with Canadian Robert Hall, who was beheaded on June 13.

There was no information on why she was freed or if a ransom had been paid.

"She is physically OK," said Maj. Filemon Tan, a spokesperson for the military's Western Mindanao Command.

Tan said troops were checking reports of the seven Indonesians being kidnapped.

Alarmed at the frequency of attacks, port authorities in some areas of Indonesia, particularly Kalimantan on the island of Borneo, have stopped issuing permits to ships taking coal to the southern Philippines.

Philippine officials said the government was working to deal with piracy and coal importers could tap other suppliers, which would push up costs for consumers.

"There will be additional transportation costs if the coal will come from Australia or Russia so that means additional costs," said Rino Abad from the Philippine Department of Energy.

The rise of sea hijackings prompted Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia to agree to hold coordinated patrols in future to secure the region's busy waterways.

Reuters

25 June 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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7 Indonesian sailors seized in Sulu waters

JAKARTA (Reuters) – Seven Indonesian sailors have been taken hostage in the Sulu Sea in the southern Philippines, Indonesia's foreign minister said on Friday, the latest in a string of abductions in the waters between the two Southeast Asian neighbors.

Indonesian authorities have voiced concerns that piracy in the Sulu Sea area, a major sea traffic lane for the world's top thermal coal exporter, could

reach levels previously seen in Somalia.

Analysts say \$40 billion worth of cargo passes through those waters a year, including supertankers from the Indian Ocean that cannot use the crowded Malacca Strait.

"We got confirmation (yesterday) of an incident of kidnapping involving Indonesian crew of a ship," Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told reporters.

She said the hijackings were carried out by two different armed groups in attacks on a tugboat towing a coal-carrying barge.

Six of the 13 crew on board were freed, Marsudi said, and were on their way back to Indonesia.

"We absolutely do not tolerate this. The government will try all options to free the hostages," Marsudi said.

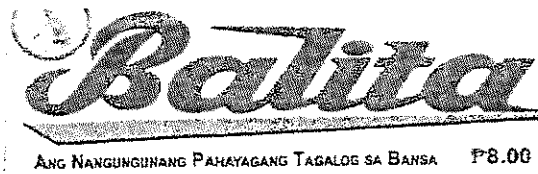
Up to 18 Indonesians and Malaysians were kidnapped in three attacks on tugboats earlier this year in Philippine waters by groups suspected of ties to the Abu Sayyaf militant network. All 14 Indonesian citizens were later released.

The Philippine military has said the militants have been targeting foreign crew of slow-moving tugboats because they can no longer penetrate resorts and coastal towns in Malaysia's eastern Sabah state due to increased security.

The rise of sea hijackings prompted Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia to agree last month to carry out coordinated patrols to secure the region's busy waterways.

However, coordinated patrols are yet to get underway.

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Internal security, mas dapat tutukan sa AFP modernization

Inihayag ni incoming Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief Lieutenant General Ricardo Visaya na mahalagang tutukan sa modernisasyon ng militar ang pagbili ng mga gamit para sa internal security operations kaysa pagdepensa sa teritoryo.

Ang pahayag ni Visaya ay bilang suporta sa sinabi kamakailan ni President-elect Rodrigo Duterte na pagsasayang

lang ng pera ang pagbili ng bansa ng mga fighter jet mula sa South Korea.

"The modernization will continue but he (Duterte) would like to start, to strengthen the internal operations capability," ani Visaya.

Kabilang sa mga ito ang pagbili ng mga sopistikadong helicopter na makalilipad kahit sa gabi, at mga fastcraft.

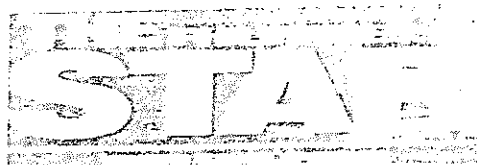
Kaugnay nito, inihalimbawa ni Visaya

ang kabuguan ng militar na mahabol ang mga dumukot sa dalawang Canadian, isang Norwegian at isang Pinay sa isang resort sa Samal Island noong Setyembre 2015.

Gayunman, sinabi ni Visaya na magpapatuloy ang upgrade sa external defense ng bansa dahil naaprubahan na ang mga programa para rito at kinukumpleso na lang, gaya ng mga fighter jet na may 10 pa ang ide-deliver.

Aaron Recuenco

25 June 2016



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Defense chief lauds P-Noy for backing military upgrade

By JAIME LAUDE

Outgoing Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin lauded yesterday the Aquino administration for fully backing the Armed Forces' capability upgrade.

He will step down on June 30, the day President Aquino ends his six-year term.

His successor is Delfin Lorenzana, a retired Army general.

Speaking before Army troops who tendered a testimonial for him at the parade grounds in Taguig City yesterday, Gazmin said he was happy to say that through the strong support of President Aquino, the military has gained significant progress

in the implementation of the Capability Upgrade and Modernization Program.

"He effected the release of P60.14 billion from July 2010 to April 2016 and extended to the Philippine Army its modest share from the implementation of the said program," he said.

Under the Aquino administration, the Army has acquired 114 units of M113A2 armored personnel carriers obtained through the US Excess Defense EDA program, Gazmin said.

The Army's procurement of armored and mobility assets and field equipment also resulted in the acquisition of six units of APCs and Armored

Recovery Vehicles from Israel, 120 units of field ambulances, various types of military trucks, 63,286 units of M4 assault rifles, including the requirements of the Marines, and various types of tactical radio equipment.

Gazmin told the assembled troops that the Army stands to benefit from certain military projects that are now either in contract implementation stage or in process of procurement.

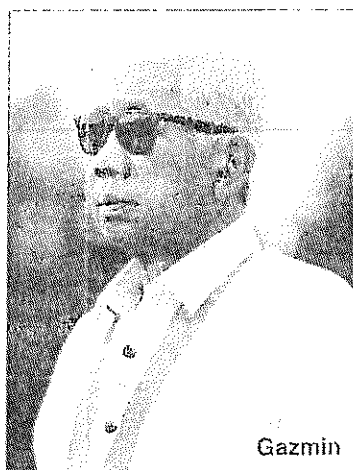
However, the fate of these projects for the Army or the entire Armed Forces remains to be known under the administration of president-elect

Rodrigo Duterte, who is highly vocal against the defense acquisition of FA50 lead-in fighter trainer supersonic jets.

However, Gazmin said he is glad that the Army is already headed to a state of professional modernity with its activation in 2011 of the Philippine Army Multi-Sector Advisory Board.

"I am possessed with a high degree of optimism and look up to the accomplishment of the Army vision," he said.

"By 2028, a world-class army that is a source of national pride. As I speak before you now, our combatants



Gazmin

continue to engage with the enemy in the conduct of major, minor and small unit operations against communists and

terrorists groups, and other lawless elements throughout the country."

Gazmin said the Philippine Army of today always demonstrated outstanding courage and determination to fight and defeat the enemies of the republic, whoever they may be.

"I depart from our defense department on June 30, 2016 contented and pleased that I am leaving behind my endeared institutions, the Philippine Army, the immortal monument of courage and patriotism in the defense of our citizenry and their treasured social and democratic ideals," he said.

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Farewell to Army: Gazmin cites P60-B military upgrade

By Julie M. Aurelio
and Toni Diane Bellen

AS HE began bidding farewell,

outgoing Defense Secretary
Voltaire Gazmin highlighted the
Aquino administration's efforts
to modernize the military,

which cost P60 billion in the last
six years.

During a testimonial review
at the Philippine Army head-
quarters in Fort Bonifacio on
Friday, Gazmin stressed the mil-
itary's "significant progress" in
its capability upgrade and mod-
ernization.

"Like you, as an Army man
myself, I am possessed with a
high degree of optimism and
look up to the accomplishment
of Army Vision: By 2028, a
world-class Army that is a
source of national pride," the
71-year-old defense secretary
said.

Gazmin will be bowing out
of the Department of National
Defense on June 30 as the Cab-
inet of President-elect Rodrigo
Duterte assumes office that
day.

He will be replaced by retired
military Gen. Delfin Lorenzana,
Duterte's appointee.

After a 32-year military car-
eer which ended in his retire-
ment as Army chief in 2000,
Gazmin served as ambassador
to Cambodia before his ap-
pointment as Aquino's defense
secretary in 2010.

In his speech during the
Army's honors for him, Gazmin

cited the P60.14 billion which
the Aquino administration allo-
cated for the military's modern-
ization program which also
benefited the Army.

Some of the Army's recent ac-
quisitions were 114 M113A2 ar-
mored personnel carriers from
the United States, six APCs and
four armored recovery vehicles
from Israel, 120 field ambu-
lances, mobility trucks, 63,286
M4 assault rifles, and tactical
radio equipment.

The outgoing defense secre-
tary noted that the Army will be
the beneficiary of future capa-
bility upgrades which are in the

contract implementation or
procurement stage.

He lauded the Army for its ac-
complishments against commu-
nists, terrorist groups and other
lawless elements, as well as its
role in humanitarian assistance
and disaster response during
calamities.

His mother unit, he added,
was also active in civic projects
through its Army engineer
brigades engaged in the con-
struction and repairs of roads,
school buildings, water sys-
tems, electrification platforms,
health centers and other infras-
tructure projects.

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The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

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Albay relief exercise set

LEGAZPI CITY—Albay hosts a new round of joint humanitarian partnership program on June 27 to July 11, involving some 1,000 troops from the US Navy and Australian Navy, among others, and the world's largest hospital ship, the *USNS Mercy*.

Dubbed "Pacific Partnership," the program started during the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and its consequent deadly tidal waves or tsunami. Pacific Partnership features an annual deployment of forces from the US Navy's Pacific Fleet in cooperation with regional governments.

The activity in Albay is under the auspices of the Philippine-US Mutual

Defense Treaty. The visiting troops will be joined by the Philippine Navy in South Luzon, and will be received by Albay Gov. Joey Salceda in ceremonies at the Albay Astrodome here city on June 27.

Salceda said Pacific Partnership provides an opportunity to enhance goodwill and cooperation among the region's military forces and governments, needed during disaster relief operations, and at the same time deliver humanitarian and engineering assistance to local stakeholders.

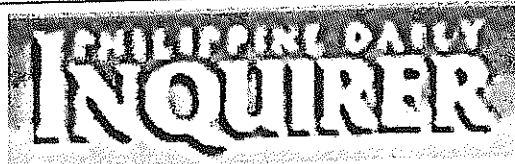
He said Pacific Partnership also opens up an opportunity for Albay to show off its eco-tourism wealth, being a

multi-awarded and fastest growing global tourism destination in the country. Albay, a Unesco World Biosphere Reserve is itself a UN global model for Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and a pioneer of novel strategies in disaster resiliency with its Green Economy program.

The world's largest hospital ship, *USNS Mercy*, serves as the centerpiece of the humanitarian activity.

Equipped with state-of-the-art medical facilities, its medical personnel with local troops, will treat some 4,000 local patients aboard the ship and in designated areas around the province.

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What happened to our military?

A FRONT-PAGE photo in the INQUIRER yesterday showed Indonesian President Joko Widodo standing beside a gun turret on the deck of an Indonesian Navy ship.

That photo, released by Reuters, was intended to show China that Indonesia was ready to do battle with the military giant in order to protect its sovereignty.

The Indonesian Navy ship looked new and spick-and-span the way a Navy ship should look.

As somebody who grew up in a military environment from the 1950s till the late

'60s, I could only shake my head in disappointment as I compared our Philippine Navy (PN) to the other navies in Southeast Asia.

We now have a puny Navy and Air Force.

In fact, we practically have a Navy with no ships and an air force with no planes.

But back in the '50s and '60s, we had plenty of naval ships.

We had the best Navy and Air Force in Asia, second to Japan.

Although PN ships were hand-me-downs from the United States they were relatively new as World War II had ended only a decade or two earlier.

PN ships patrolled our seas unchallenged. Philippine Air Force (PAF) jets and propeller-driven planes proudly flew our skies.

PAF C-47 (cargo) planes shuttled between Nichols (now Villamor) Air Base and different bases in the country, transporting soldiers and even their dependents.

PAF's giant Hercules aircraft, which were very new in the 1960s, were used mainly for transporting troops and equipment.

The Philippines had so many Air Force planes and helicopters and Navy warships and patrol craft that they were hard to count with one's finger; no exaggeration.

PAF's Blue Diamond squadron was the envy of our Asian neighbors.

During a turbulent period in an African nation in the early '60s, PAF fighter pilots were sent to augment the United Nations peacekeeping force there.

What happened?

Why is the Armed Forces of the Philippines the most under-equipped military force in the Asian region?

Aside from being corrupt, our past leaders didn't have foresight.

Our past leaders didn't think of buying modern arms because the country was too dependent on the US which had two military bases—Clark and Subic—in the country then.

The budget for arms went into the pockets of officials in the past administrations because,

anyway, there were second-hand military equipment from Clark and Subic.

If corruption is eliminated or at least minimized in the incoming administration of Digong Duterte, as he has promised, then the country will be able to buy all the military arms and equipment we need.

Perhaps PN ships and Air Force planes will be able to proudly patrol our seas and skies.

And, if our warships and aircraft are challenged within our territory, we will be able to answer the challenge.

Cebu Regional Trial Court Judge Raphael B. Yrastorza retired on March 3 this year after he suffered a stroke.

He depends on charitable foundations for his medication and rehabilitation.

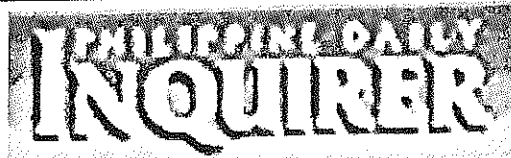
How long will Yrastorza and his family have to wait before the Supreme Court grants him his retirement and disability benefits?

ON TARGET



Ramon Tulfo

25 June 2016



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Foreign policy and national growth

AS WE mark 118 years of independence this month, to be simply a spectator is to be either a wastrel or a rascal, or both, amid a strong motivation to engage in facile algebra by substituting “aligned” and “nonaligned” for our terms. Precisely because of the trauma-inducing issues of our foreign relations—most especially over the territorial dispute with China in the South China Sea—it is our duty to reassert the principles and considerations that transcend our times.

COMMENTARY

Reynaldo V. Silvestre

The primordial and highest goal of our homeland is national survival. But there is a great and difficult distance between goals and their attainment: A nation-state is always confronted by the necessity of simultaneously fighting on two fronts—the internal needs of its society and its external relations with other nations.

Internal problems consist of the social imbalance between the affluent few and the impoverished many, leading to social discontent and injustice. They find expression in rebellion, dissidence and secessionism. Poor roads and bridges to serve as arteries of commerce; pitiful irrigation, rural electrification, flood control and related physical requirements; diversion of limited resources for the maintenance of public order and its territorial integrity—all these limit the citizenry's options in achieving a better life.

Our best hope lies in the use of the state's concentrated power, to determine the priorities and allocate resources accordingly, given the historic greed of the economic elite that has thwarted the national purpose.

What is not clear is the necessary connection between our internal and external problems and between our internal and external solutions.

The universe has become an interdependent unit, in which we must exist at peace with all. A fall in copper prices in the London Exchange drastically changes the lives of thousands of miners from Benguet to Surigao. A great sugar harvest in Louisiana can lead to misery among sugar plantation workers from Batangas to Negros, as our sugar may not be able to sell. Since our coconut oil production is dependent on European and American buyers, a drop in their consumption as they find substitutes will force bleak lives on thousands of coconut farmers.

Hence, to be tied to one market, as we have been in the past, is to be tied to one ideology and to be at the behest of one patron. We must return as payment for his patronage the self-respect of our people for his foreign policy and our blood for his wars. To be the friend of only one is to risk the contempt and the enmity of all others.

Foreign policy then is a major instrument to achieve domestic objectives and is crucial in our nation's life or death. It affects most critically our economy and security. A policy of self-reliance is not a choice but a necessity, with fortitude to do what must be done. We live not as we will, but as we must.

We need not belabor the absolute necessity of a prosperous economy. Nothing disarms insurgents, secessionists and rebels more effectively than national prosperity. It is glorious to be rich, as proclaimed by the Chinese communist premier Deng Xiaoping.

At present, the hotly contested issue that threatens regional peace and security is the conflict over boundaries in the South China Sea, through which a third of global maritime trade travels: 60 percent of South Korean, Japanese and Taiwanese energy supplies and 80 percent of Chinese crude oil imports. Beneath the seabed lie vast oil and gas reserves.

Filipinas permanently lost Scarborough/Panatag Shoal—or Bajo de Masinloc, its Spanish-era name—to China in June 2012 when President Aquino ordered two vessels from the Coast Guard and one from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, stationed at the shoal southeast of Zambales, to reroute to port. These ships had been anchored in the shoal's lagoon since April to arrest Chinese fishermen for illegal fishing, but were prevented by Chinese surveillance ships. He was advised by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV that Chinese ships circling the shoal had agreed to a “simultaneous withdrawal.” The Philippines agreed to withdraw its three ships, but China simply reduced its armada of 31 fishing boats and 50 dinghies to three maritime surveillance ships, and didn't withdraw them all together.

As a consequence, the sovereignty dispute was resolved by China's effective control over the shoal. It is unlikely to relinquish it. It has imposed a 15-nautical-mile perimeter restriction, and none of our vessels has since been able to enter the area. International law recognizes “occupation as ownership.” The federally-funded Center for Naval Analyses of the US Navy in Arlington, Virginia, in its November 2014 report, said America is unlikely to intervene in the territorial row, unless Chinese military officials attack elements of our armed forces: Washington takes no position on sovereignty claims.

The Philippines was easily duped by the Chinese that they would withdraw their ships from Scarborough if we did. They did not.

The Philippines has since lodged a case contesting China's territorial claim at the United Nations-backed Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague. Sadly, international law and UN conventions have no immovable weight against guns. Power in itself legitimizes, notwithstanding the ancient maps of Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio that prove the Philippines' legitimate claim.

President-elect Rodrigo Duterte's early pronouncement that he is open to bilateral talks with Beijing—as he awaits the ruling of the UN tribunal—augurs well for regional stability and growth. Both countries could agree that the disputed area constitutes a common heritage for humankind for joint exploration and benefit. Its demilitarization as a zone of commerce and international navigation would make the PH-US Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, with its dubious protection, pompously irrelevant.

To catapult Filipinas into a “nation of shopkeepers,” as Napoleon once insulted England in happier times, may lack the heady glamour of vast alliances, but it will define us most clearly, not as a Yankee ward, but as deeply committed to a prosperous life for all people in all nations.

Above all, we are constrained to depend upon our imagination of a better society to rally our people to such a pitch of loyalty so it cannot be subverted. This takes time and resources that can come only from mass prosperity.

Astute diplomacy and a policy of aloofness from hostile entanglements will give us the time and resources precious for national stability and growth.

Reynaldo V. Silvestre, a retired Army colonel, bemedaled officer and multiawarded writer, belongs to Class 1968 of the Vanguard in UP Diliman. He was teaching political science at UP Manila when called to active duty as first lieutenant in 1975.

25 June 2016



Pahina. 5

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Dear Sir,

Nagbigay ng instructions sa mga sundalo ang incoming Chief of Staff ng AFP na si Lt. Gen. Ricardo Visaya na ituloy lang ang military operations laban sa mga rebeldeng grupo kasama na ang NPA hangga't hindi nagbibigay ng ibang alituntunin ang bagong administrasyon. Ibig sabihin ituloy lang ng mga sundalo ang pagtugis sa mga rebeldeng grupo.

Hindi dapat nagre-relax ang mga Brigade at Battalion Commanders na naka-assign lalo na sa Mindanao bagkus ay patindihin pa ang operasyon laban sa mga rebeldeng NPA. Magiging mahigpit pa lalo ang AFP laban sa pagganit ng drugs ng mga sundalo, ayon pa rin kay Lt. Gen. Visaya. At nagbabala rin siya sa mga sundalo na huwag maniniwala sa mga sabi-sabi

tungkol sa coup d'état.

Maganda ang mga gustong mangayari ni Gen. Visaya. Panalangin ko lang na sana sa pag-upo ng bagong Presidente ng ating bansa, magiging payapa na ang ating isipan. Masyado na akong naguguluhan sa mga nababasa ko sa dyaryo at napapanood sa television.

SAMUEL TENORIO
Tarlac City

Dear Editor:

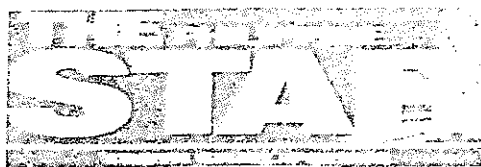
Nagsabi pala ang New People's Army na mas lalong paigtingin ang kanilang opensiba laban sa AFP at PNP hanggang sa pagbaba ng Aquino administration. Kaya pala panay-panay ang kanilang pag-ambush sa ating mga kapulisan at kasundaluhan. Matindi rin naman sila. Imagine, humihingi sila ng peace talk sa incoming Duterte administration and then sa buong kapuluan ng ating bansa ay namamayagpag ang kanilang operasyon?

Nagtataka lamang ako kung bakit hindi kasali sa usapang pangkapayapaan ang NPA? Samantalang armed group nila ito. CPP, NDF at pamahalaang Duterte lang ang mag-uusap? Dapat isama rin nila ang pinuno ng NPA. Baka naman meron din siyang ibabahagi sa usapan. Nang sa ganoon naman hindi siya maetsapuwera. Kaya tuloy abot-abot ang paghasik niya ng dilim nang sa ganoon nga naman mapansin din siya. May sarili ring mundo itong NPA. Hindi sumusunod sa CPP/NDF Central Committee. Kahit ipag-utos ang ceasefire, ayun tuloy-tuloy pa rin ang kanilang opensiba.

Para sa akin, CPP-NDF-NPA ay may kanya-kanyang component. May kanya-kanyang entity. Dahil hindi sila minsan nagkakatugma ng pamamalakad ng kanilang sistema. Iba ang sinasabi ng CPP-NDF at iba rin ang ginagawa ng NPA. Siyempre agawan 'yan ng power. Hindi naman nawawala ang struggle of power sa isang organisasyon.

TEENA A. MATURAN
Don Antonio Heights, Quezon City

25 June 2016



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At Ground Level

By SATUR C. OCAMPO



A tri-nation approach to South China Sea row

Early this week in Manila, the defense chiefs of the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia wound up discussions they began last month in Vientiane, Laos. They agreed to conduct "trilateral maritime and air patrols" in their "maritime areas of common concern," particularly in the Sulu Sea where the three countries share borders.

They will establish a working group that will identify the operational directions of tri-nation patrols, with each country putting up a maritime command center responsible for deploying its military assets for the patrols.

Rising criminality, piracy, kidnapping, and smuggling in the Sulu Sea are major problems, thus the need to enhance collaborative efforts against these concerns. A Department of Defense statement said the defense chiefs "reaffirmed the need, commitment and collective responsibility of the countries to address such threats that undermine peace, security and prosperity in the region."

Other steps agreed on: coordination of military activities on maritime security and putting up joint military command posts in specific locations; setting up a transit corridor - with designated sea lanes for ships entering the area of common concern; and establishing a trilateral database, information and intelligence sharing mechanism.

Although the ministerial-level accord particularly applies to the Sulu Sea, it can be upgraded and applied to the South China Sea. How so? One may point out that the Philippines and Malaysia (plus Vietnam, Taiwan and Brunei) are involved in maritime-claim disputes with China over portions of the South China Sea, however Indonesia is not.

But given the increasing incidents of confrontation and clashes - three times already within this year - between Indonesian naval vessels and Chinese Coast Guard ships guarding fishing boats poaching in Indonesian waters, the latter may soon be sucked into the maritime disputes.

The areas of intrusion are waters around the Natuna Islands in the South China Sea. For years, Indonesia saw no ground to complain as China had been stating that it recognizes Indonesia's sovereignty over the islands. This supports Indonesia's rightful assertion that the surrounding waters are part of its exclusive economic zones under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

However, after the third confrontation/clash last June 17, China's foreign ministry said "China and Indonesia have overlapping claims for maritime rights" in the surrounding waters of Natuna Islands. In effect, China is now claiming its rights over Indonesia's EEZ in that section of the SCS. But there was no fooling the commander of the Indonesian Navy fleet, whose warships confronted China's Coast Guard vessels in Natuna waters, fired warning shots and detained a Chinese fishing boat and its crew. He aptly described the fishing intrusion as a "ruse" to stake a claim over the waters.

"They need a presence, and their way to do it is with fishing boats," said Rear Admiral Achmad Taufic, adding: "We suspect that this is structured activity because they were guarded, which means that it was blessed by the [Chinese] gov-

ernment."

Flexing Indonesia's military muscles and sending China a stark message of his determination to assert sovereignty in the Natunas, President Joko Widodo, with his foreign minister and armed forces chief, last Thursday visited the place aboard a naval warship with fighter jets flying overhead.

These incidents follow a pattern: A few years earlier, Chinese fishing boats had repeatedly poached in the Philippines' Panatag (Scarborough) shoals. Then China claimed rights over the area. Worse still, since 2012 it has actually taken occupation of the shoals.

Indonesia now finds itself in the same boat (so to speak) as the Philippines vis-à-vis China's aggressiveness in laying claim over almost all of the South China Sea, via its so-called nine-dash line map that encroaches on the maritime claims of its neighbors.

In 2013 the Philippines filed a case challenging China's claim before the UN Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, in accordance with UNCLOS-prescribed procedures for resolving such disputes. The tribunal is reportedly set to issue its ruling in July - generally expected by observing nations to be in favor of the Philippines' stand. But China, which refused to participate in the court proceedings, has repeatedly declared it will not recognize any ruling, insisting that bilateral negotiations with each claimant-nation is the only acceptable means of resolving the various claims.

While China is a signatory to the UNCLOS and is morally bound to abide by the tribunal's decision, its obdurate stance owes to the fact that the tribunal has no clearly defined power to enforce its rulings. Nonetheless, if the Philippines wins the case, it will attain a moral high ground for winning over other UN member-countries to back up a diplomatic campaign to pressure or convince China to abide by the ruling.

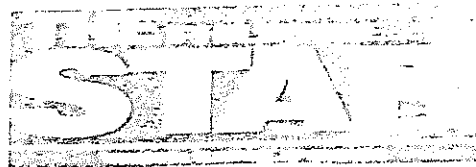
In light of these developments, the incoming Duterte administration can very well start by convincing the Malaysian and Indonesian governments primarily to work closely together, trilaterally as they have agreed to do in the Sulu Sea - while seeking common cause with Vietnam and Brunei.

It'll be instructive to review what happened to the short-lived Maphilindo (Malaya-Philippines-Indonesia), formed in Manila in July 1963. Initiated by President Diosdado Macapagal, the confederation aimed to deal with post-colonial concerns through *mushawarah* (regular consultations). Notable was the three nations' agreement not to allow foreign military bases to be used, directly or indirectly, to subvert the national sovereignty of any of them, and to abstain from using collective defense agreements to serve the particular interest of any of the big powers (read: the United States).

But with Malaya emerging as Federation of Malaysia -- a development manipulated by the British and the Americans, and which practically scuttled the Philippine claim to Sabah -- *mushawarah* gave way to Indonesian President Sukarno's *konfrontasi* (confrontation). Soon after, Maphilindo was gone.

* * *
Email: satur.ocampo@gmail.com
★

25 June 2016



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RC Cola, Petron eye lead share

Games today
2 p.m. - Petron vs Generika
4 p.m. - RC Cola vs Cignal

Petron and RC Cola-Army take on separate rivals today, both looking for victories and an early share of the lead with idle F2 Logistics in the Philippine Superliga All-Filipino Conference women's volleyball tournament at The Arena in San Juan.

The Tri-Activ Spikers tangle with a resurgent Generika side at 2 p.m. while the Lady Troopers collide with the Cignal HD Spikers in the 4 p.m. main game, seeking their second straight wins.

F2 Logistics shows the way with a 2-0 card on victories over Cignal and Amy's Kitchen.

Although the Tri-Activ Spikers lost the likes of Dindin Manabat, Fille Cayetano, Rachel Anne Daquis and Aby Marañon, they remain explosive as they acquired the services of FEU stalwarts Bernadeth Pons and Remy Palma following the recruitment of CJ Rosario, Bang Pineda and veteran Aiza Maizo-Pontillas.

Pons and Palma provided the rock-solid net defense while Maizo-Pontillas peppered the Foton Tornadoes with her stinging spikes to anchor their opening-day victory.

But Petron's resolve will be put to a tough test as it faces a young and hungry Generika side.

Standings Team	W	L
F2 Logistics	2	0
Petron	1	0
RC Cola-Army	1	0
Generika	1	1
Foton	1	1
Standard-Navy	0	1
Cignal	0	1
Amy's	0	2

Featuring rising stars Chloe Cortez, Shaya Adorador, Gen Casugod and Wensh Tiu with veteran playmaker Rubie de Leon at the helm, the Lifesavers bounced back from a Foton defeat to beat Standard Insurance-Navy in four sets.

Focus will also be on the RC Cola-Army-Cignal duel with the Lady Troopers coming from a three-set demolition of Amy's and Cignal reeling from a four-set loss to the Cargo Movers.

RC Cola-Army coach Kungfu Reyes said they are planning to go all out against the HD Spikers to brush off the rust in his veteran-laden squad.

"We have to switch our game a notch higher," said Reyes, who will bank on seasoned setter Tina Salak as well as Honey Royse Tubino, Jovelyn Gonzaga and Daquis anew.

Meanwhile, the league, bankrolled by KLab Cyscorpions, Asics, Grand Sports, Mikasa, Mueller and Senoh with TV5 as official broadcast partner, conducted its first tryout for the team that will compete in the FIVB Women's Club World Championship on Oct. 18 at the Mall of Asia Arena.

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ONLINE NEWS

25 JUNE 2016

www.philstar.com

Security tightened after roadside bombing in North Cotabato

By John Unson (philstar.com) | Updated June 24, 2016 - 10:32am

NORTH COTABATO, Philippines - The police and military again tightened security in areas vulnerable to attacks by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) following Wednesday's roadside bombing in Midsayap town.

Two soldiers, Private 1st Class Jestoni Bauzon and Sgt. Edwin Soria, both of the 62nd Reconnaissance Company of the Army's 6th Infantry Division (ID), and a high school student, Miriam Akis, were hurt in the blast.

The spokesman of BIFF, Abu Misry Mama, on Friday refuted the insinuations they were behind the bombing over a popular radio outfit in Cotabato City, the Catholic station dxMS.

He said they will not perpetrate roadside bombings near public schools where there are Muslim students.

BIFF commanders in Midsayap hinted, however, that they were behind the bombing.

They even warned of more attacks on military targets in retaliation for BIFF's heavy losses in encounters with Army units in hostile areas in Maguindanao province early this year.

Captain Joann Petinglay, spokesperson of 6th ID, said they need the cooperation of the public in thwarting roadside bombings by the BIFF.

The 6th ID and the provincial police offices in North Cotabato and Maguindanao have deployed more plainclothes personnel to guard public facilities and stretches of highways that are accessible to the group.

The injured Bauzon and Soria were riding an Army vehicle together with companions when BIFF bandits set off an improvised explosive device while they were maneuvering through a narrow road few meters away from the campus of a public high school in Barangay Olandang, Midsayap.

The IED, made up of a 105 Howitzer cannon round rigged with a blasting mechanism that can be detonated from a distance using a mobile phone, was packed with nails and fragments of cast iron with jagged edges.

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www.pna.gov.ph

Military, police operations to continue until all ASG hostages freed

By Priam F. Nepomuceno

MANILA, June 24 (PNA) — Military and law enforcement operations will continue until all Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) hostages are all freed.

This was disclosed by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla Friday when asked for a reaction on the release of Marites Flor by her ASG captors.

"The safe return of Ms. Marites Flor after more than nine months of captivity is a most welcome development. The safe release of other captives remains a vital objective of continuing military and law enforcement operations against the ASG," he added.

Flor, the girlfriend of beheaded Canadian captive Robert Hall, was freed by her captors around 4:30 a.m. in front of the home of Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan in Barangay Asturias, Jolo.

She was turned over to Joint Task Force Sulu at around 11 a.m. and there undergone medical examination and debriefing.

Hall was beheaded last June 13 while fellow Canadian John Ridsel was executed by the bandits last April 25 after the Philippine and Canadian governments decided to stick to no-ransom policy.

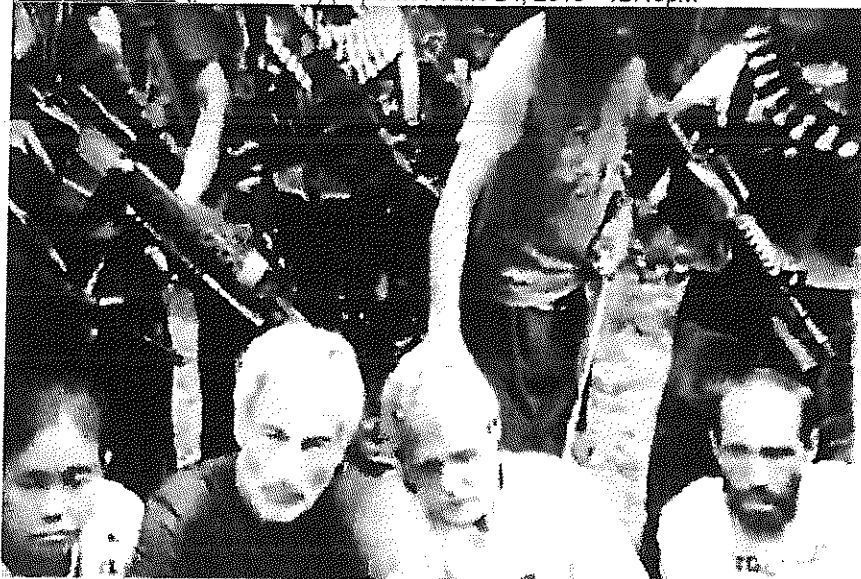
It was still unknown on whether ransom was paid to secure Flor's release. Still at the hands of the bandits is Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad. All four were kidnapped by the ASG during their attack on Samal Island last Sept. 21. (PNA)

JFM/PFN

www.philstar.com

Abu Sayyaf's Filipina captive freed unharmed

By Roel Pareño (philstar.com) | Updated June 24, 2016 - 12:48pm



An earlier file image posted on Site Intel Group's Twitter account shows Abu Sayyaf members with the Samal Island hostages.

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ZAMBOANGA CITY, Philippines - The Abu Sayyaf group freed unharmed the Filipina hostage Thursday night in Sulu but kept its Norwegian captive to assert their P300-million ransom demand.

Abu Sayyaf spokesman Muammar Askali alias Abu Rami said they freed Marites Flor about 8 p.m. Thursday and turned her over to an emissary.

The victim was released by the Abu Sayyaf group under Mujer Yadah.

While Flor was freed, Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad was left in the custody of the Abu Sayyaf group.

The two were among the four captives taken from Samal Island off Davao del Norte last September 21 and were brought to Sulu.

Their two other companions, Canadians John Ridsdel and Robert Hall, were separately beheaded in April and June after failure to pay the P300-million ransom for each captive.

According to a source, Abu Rami said they allegedly received P20 million for the release of the Filipina captive, who was later on brought to the house of Sulu Gov. Abdusakur "Totoh" Tan II.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), confirmed the release of Flor but said they have no details yet.

Tan said Flor was turned over to the custody of the Joint Task Force Sulu Friday noon and brought to the trauma hospital for medical check.

The military official said they are still trying to get details from the victim on how she was freed.

Abu Rami said they decided to release Flor, citing her condition after the two Canadians were executed.

"Palaging umiiyak na lang. Baka ano pa ang mangyari dito," the source said quoting Abu Rami.

However, when asked about the fate of Sekkingstad, Abu Rami said they will continue to assert their P300-million ransom demand.

The Abu Sayyaf gave no further detail on the present condition of the Norwegian captive.

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www.inquirer.net

Freed Abu Sayyaf captive Marites Flor now in Davao City

By: [Karlos Manlupig](#), [Nestor Corrales](#)

[@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Mindanao](#), [INQUIRER.net](#)

02:36 PM June 24th, 2016



Incoming Presidential Adviser to the Peace Process Jesus Dureza escorts Marites Flor inside the Davao City Police Office on Friday afternoon. Flor was just released by the Abu Sayyaf. **KARLOS MANLUPIG/INQUIRER MINDANAO**

DAVAO CITY—Marites Flor, the Filipina hostage freed by the Abu Sayyaf, arrived here on Friday afternoon.

“Marites (is) with me now. (We) just (landed) in Davao. Norwegian release still being arranged,” incoming peace adviser Jesus Dureza told [INQUIRER.net](#) in a text message.

Flor, along with Canadians Robert Hall and John Ridsdel and Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad, was kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf on Samal Island in September last year.

The Abu Sayyaf beheaded Ridsdel and Hall, Flor’s boyfriend, after their ransom demands were not met.

Dureza arrived with Flor at the Davao City police office past 2 p.m.

Flor was brought to the city police’s Camp Leonor in downtown Davao where she will be presented to incoming President Rodrigo Duterte.

Flor was freed on Thursday evening but was only turned over to Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan II on Friday morning. **IDL/rga**

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WESMINCOM verifying on whether 7 Indon sailors snatched by ASG

By Priam F. Nepomuceno

MANILA, June 24 (PNA) — The Western Mindanao Command (WESMINCOM) on Friday said it is still confirming reports that another seven Indonesian sailors were kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) terrorists in the Sulu Sea.

"With regards to the alleged kidnapping of 7 Indonesian sailors this morning, Indonesian authorities confirmed that there were seven Indonesians who were kidnapped by armed men. Though this report reached the WESMINCOM, we are currently validating the veracity of the report on the ground and will give details as soon as we have information with regards to this issue," said WESMINCOM spokesperson Major Filemon Tan.

This came in wake of the ASG bandits released of Filipina captive Marites Flor early Friday morning.

Flor, the girlfriend of beheaded Canadian captive Robert Hall, was freed by her captors around 4:30 a.m. in front of the home of Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan in Barangay Asturias, Jolo.

She was turned over to Joint Task Force Sulu at around 11 a.m. and underwent medical examination and debriefing.

"Western Mindanao Command is glad that Ms. Flor is now safe and is on her way back to her family and can enjoy a normal life with them again. We have no updates on the other kidnapping victims," Tan said.

Hall was beheaded last June 13 while fellow Canadian John Ridsel was executed by the bandits last April after the Philippine and Canadian governments snubbed the ASG's ransom demand.

It was still unknown on whether ransom was paid to secure Flor's release. Still at the hands of the bandits is Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad. (PNA)

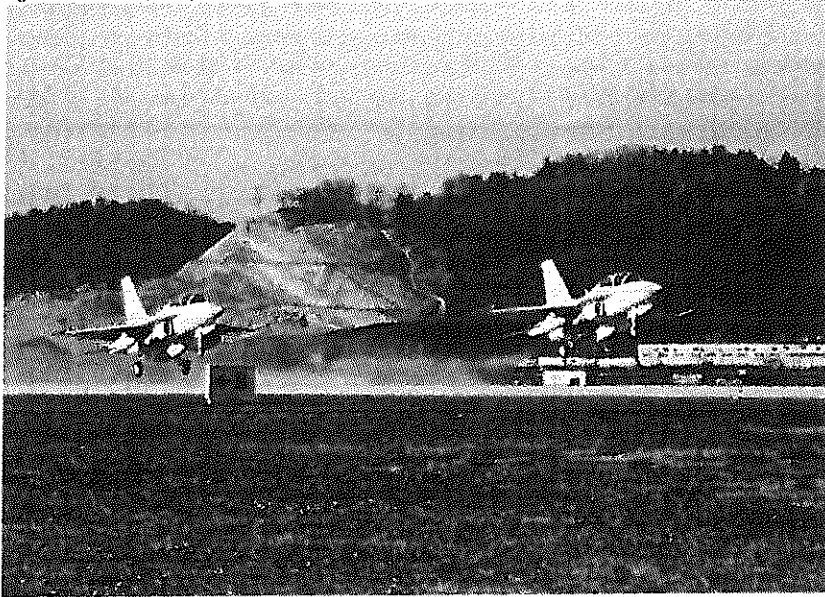
LGI/PFN

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AFP modernization to focus on fighting internal threats

(philstar.com) | Updated June 24, 2016 - 10:10am



The Philippine Air Force's first two units of the FA-50PH fighters jets arrived in the country in November 2015. **KAI/Released**

MANILA, Philippines (Philippines News Agency) — The continuation of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Modernization Program will give more focus on platforms that can be used to address the country's internal security threats, incoming AFP chief-of-staff Lt. Gen. Ricardo Visaya said.

"(President-elect Rodrigo Duterte) would like to start by improving and updating equipment use for internal security operations so he will prioritize the acquisition of modern helicopters and fastcrafts, with nightfighting capabilities," Visaya said on Thursday.

The acquisition of new equipment will help in dealing with the ongoing campaign against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and New People's Army threats.

Visaya said the acquisition of new equipment are included in the AFP Modernization Program as emphasized by the procurement of the night-capable AgustaWestland AW-109 attack helicopters of the Navy and Air Force.

The incoming AFP chief noted that the lack of night-capable helicopters and fastcrafts hampered the military response when the ASG attacked Samal Island and kidnapped four hostages last Sept. 21, 2015.

The bandit group kidnapped Canadians John Ridsel, Robert Hall, Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad and Hall's girlfriend Marites Flor on a resort in Samal Island.

Ridsel was beheaded last April 25 while Hall was executed last June 13 after the Philippine and Canadian governments snubbed the ASG ransom demand amounting to around PHP600 million for the two Canadians.

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Visaya said that the acquisition of equipment that will beefed up the external capabilities of the AFP will continue as part of the ongoing modernization program.

"It (modernization program) will continue, but items needed for internal security operations will be prioritized," he said in Filipino.

www.pna.gov.ph

Military hosts Olympic Day Celebration Friday

MANILA, June 24 (PNA) -- The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) formally hosted this year's Olympic Day Celebration at its headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Friday.

Olympic Day Celebration is an annual worldwide activity of International Olympic Committee adopted locally and is a day to promote a healthy and active lifestyle.

The celebrations were spearheaded by the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) and Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), AFP public affairs office chief Col. Noel Detoyato said.

A Solidarity Run, highlighting close cooperation between the military and sport agencies, was held at 5:30 a.m. at GHQ Parade Grounds.

Detoyato said an estimated 1,500 officers and enlisted personnel joined national athletes in the fun run.

Acting AFP chief Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda and POC president Jose Cojuangco, PSC representatives and other stakeholders were also present. (PNA)

JMC/PFN

www.rappler.com

US troops head to Albay for 2016 Pacific Partnership mission

The Philippines is one of the mission stops of Pacific Partnership 2016, the largest humanitarian and disaster response-preparation mission in the Indo-Asia-Pacific
Rhaydz Barcia

Published 7:59 PM, June 24, 2016



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PARTNERSHIP. Lieutenant Commander Kris Hooper, Pacific Partnership public affairs chief, says the partnership will be beneficial to both forces. Photo by Rhaydz B. Barcia/Rappler

LEGAZPI CITY, Philippines – Over 1,000 US troops will arrive in Albay on Monday, June 27, to provide humanitarian assistance and to exchange ideas on disaster management with their counterparts in the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the region.

The Philippines is one of the mission stops of Pacific Partnership 2016, the largest humanitarian and disaster response-preparation mission in the Indo-Asia-Pacific. It will run in Albay from June 27 to July 11.

Captain Tetreault Shawn of the US Marine Corps in charge of humanitarian assistance disaster relief (HADR) said they will work with Filipino soldiers and Philippines government partners in Albay province, considered as the "laboratory of natural disasters" and a United Nations model for climate change adaptation in Philippines.

"We want to learn disaster management approach from our Filipino counterparts during the course of the Pacific Partnership here. The Philippine Navy's quick response in disaster, and the people are very resilient. [They] immediately recover from the impact of natural calamities here," Shawn said,

The US forces will arrive in Legazpi City port on Monday afternoon onboard the USS Mercy, from Timor Leste.

Lieutenant Commander Kris Hooper, Pacific Partnership public affairs officer, said that mission in Albay will benefit both US and Philippine troops as they will learn from each other in terms of disaster response.

Bernardo "Raffy" Alejandro, Office of Civil Defense regional director, said the medical mission component of the Pacific Partnership will benefit as much as 3,000 poor patients.

"Majority of the patients will be treated aboard the USS Mercy ship hospital," Alejandro said, referring to the world's largest hospital ship.

The other components of the mission are engineering works and disaster management.

The engineering brigade of the US forces will construct school building along with Philippine soldiers in the towns of Daraga and Camalig.

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"This is the sixth salvo of humanitarian missions involving the US forces and the AFP in Bicol," Alejandro said. Albay was chosen for the mission stop because of its facilities, including a seaport, and the presence of a naval command.

Brigadier General Claudio Yucot, commanding general of the Army's 901st Infantry Brigade, said the Pacific Partnership is an annual deployment of forces from the US Navy's Pacific Fleet in partnership with the AFP. It is aimed at building inter-operability during disasters as well as security ties.

Pacific Partnership 2016 is also expected to conduct mission stops in Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia. — Rappler.com

www.inquirer.net

Gazmin to leave DND 'contented, pleased'

By: [Frances Mangosing](#)

[@FMangosing/INQ](#)

INQUIRER.net

04:08 PM June 24th, 2016



Outgoing Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin bids farewell to the Philippine Army on Friday. Gazmin, who will step down on June 30, spent most of his career in public service as an Army man. FRANCES MANGOSING/INQUIRER.net

The Philippine Army on Friday bade its farewell to outgoing Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, who spent most of his public service career as an Army man.

"Sir Volts, thank you for the outstanding service which you have rendered to the flag for the last 48 years. You have not only shown us by your deeds how great it is to be able to dedicate one's talents for the benefit of our country," Army chief Gen. Eduardo Año said in his speech during the testimonial review at Fort Bonifacio.

"You also have a set benchmark in public service which all of us strive to fulfill in our own ways," he said.

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

Gazmin, who will step down as defense chief on June 30, served as commanding general of the Philippine Army from July 1999 to October 2000.

In his speech, Año went back to Gazmin's career and achievements that spanned almost five decades. The outgoing defense chief, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1968, served his junior years as a custodian of the late Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. during his imprisonment at Fort Magsaysay in the early 1970s.

He later served in Mindanao for more than a decade, fighting secessionist groups.

In 1986, he served as the head of the Presidential Security Group (PSG) during the time of then President Corazon Aquino.

"It was a leadership role which Sir Volts would handle for the next six years with remarkable performance and strength of character," Año said.

Gazmin is a known father figure in the future President Benigno Aquino III.

"On some occasions, the young future President Aquino III would join the PSG personnel on duty for a round of singing, target shooting, or other recreational activities which Sir Volts implemented to relieve the boredom of what seemed to be an eternal watch over the safety and security of the President and her family," the Army chief said.

He also said Gazmin's "exemplary leadership of the PSG during those tumultuous years earned him the lifelong gratitude of the Aquino family."

Gazmin later served as defense attaché to the United States and then went back to the Philippines to command the 1003rd Brigade in Basilan, the Special Forces Regiment and the Special Operations Command.

Before he was the commanding general of the Army, he headed the Southern Luzon Command.

"During his stint as Army chief, Sir Volts was also able to make good on his promise to improve the welfare of the humble soldier. He implemented several initiatives that focused on leadership and training and doctrine development, proper force mix, equipment and systems modernization, and quality and well-motivated soldiers, which include their active involvement in the Army's non-traditional roles," Año said.

'Contented, pleased'

Gazmin, who will be replaced by incoming Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, said he was leaving the defense department "contented and pleased."

"I am happy to say that through the strong support of President Aquino, we have gained significant progress in the implementation of the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) capability upgrade and modernization program that effected the release of P60.14 billion pesos from July 2010 to April 2016 and extended to the Philippine Army its modest share from the implementation of the said program," he said.

Some of the additional assets for the Army during the time of Mr. Aquino included armored personnel carriers, M4 rifles, field ambulances and mobility trucks.

"I depart from our defense department on June 30, 2016 contented and pleased that I am leaving behind my endeared institution, the Philippine Army, the immortal monument of the courage and patriotism in the defense of our citizenry and their treasured social and democratic ideals," he said. **RAM/rga**

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