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## OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS NEWS CLIPPINGS

09 March 2016

Wednesday

## Table of Contents

## 09 March 2016

Page Nr•	Title	Writer	Newspaper	
1	Weather Forecast	•	PDI p. A18	
NATIONAL NEWS				
2-4	SC: Poe can run for President	Tarra Quismundo	PDI p.A14	
ARMY RELATED NEWS				
5	Soldiers in Lanao Sur offensive get medals	Jaime Laude	Phil. Star p.16	
6	Abu man nabbed in Sulu	Roel Pareño	Phil. Star p.16	
7	School aid	Alexander Lopez	Mla. Bulletin p.12	
8	NPAs raid police station in Samar	Robert Dejon	Mla. Times p.A7	
9	Army, civic groups extend assistance to remote schools in Compostela Valley	PNA	www.pna.gov.ph	
10	6 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Division hosts Army combat skills enhancement trainers training	PNA	<u>www.pna.gov.ph</u>	
11	Army division commander honors soldiers hurt in fight with BIFF	PNA	www.pna.gov.ph	
12	Army, PNP hunt down suspects in ambush of passenger bus in N. Cotabato	PNA	www.pna.gov.ph	
AFP RELATED NEWS				
13	No IS threat in PhI – Palace	Delon Porcalla	Phil. Star p.7	
14	MILF warning on IS just a bluff, says Gringo	Christine Avendaño	PDI p.A13	
15	IS threat 'psychological warfare'	Christine F Herrera	Standard p.A2	
16	ASG man arrested in Patikul encounter	Zaida delos Reyes- Palanca	People's Tonight p.10	
17	Driver, passenger shot dead in Cotabato bus attack	w	Mla. Bulletin p.12	
18	Asia's defense, security top agenda in PH- US- Japan meet	Francisco Tuyay	Standard p.A5	
19	Phi, Japan, US hold talks to enhance defense cooperation	Jaime Laude	Phil. Star p.7	
20	P-Noy names Fallorina new Air Force chief	Nikko Dizon	PDI p.A2	
21	PAF acquires 2 new cargo planes from US	Jaime Laude	Phil. Star p.7	

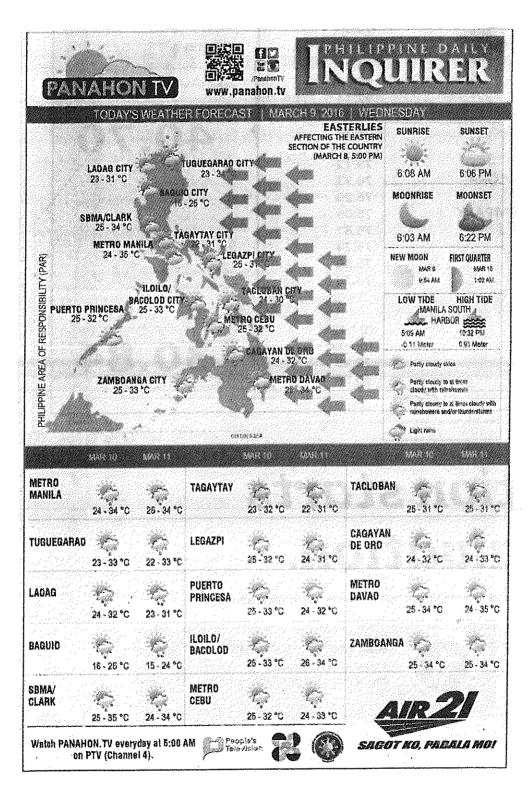
Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

SPORTS					
22	AFP trips PNP, forces KO match		Mla. Bulletin p.15		
COMMENTARY / EDITORIAL / OPINION					
23-25	Mindanaoans fear a bogus election more than the rebels	Francisco S Tatad	Mla. Times p.A1		
ONLINE NEWS					
26	Military holds Sayyaf man in Philippines	-	www.mindanaoexaminer.com		
27	Suspected Abu Sayyaf member captured in Sulu clash	-	www.pna.gov.ph		

 $\mathcal{U}^{0}$  March 2016



Page: A 18



March 2016



# C: Poe can run for President

o word on how citizenship, residency issues were decided

### By Tarra Quismundo

THE SUPREME Court has cleared the way for Sen. Grace Poe to run for President, voting to reverse the Commission on Elections (Comelec) orders disqualifying her from the tight race just two months before Election Day.

In an en banc session yesterday, nine justices voted in favor of Poe's contention that the Comelec had committed grave abuse of discretion in canceling her certificate of candidacy (COC) for President, while six justices affirmed the poll body's action.

"That's the only detail I have: 9-6. Nothing else has been au-Court thorized." Supreme spokesperson Theodore Te said in a hastily called briefing at 3 p.m. yesterday, the second held on updates from the en ply say, the SC grants Senator banc session.

There was no word yet how the court decided the matter of Poe's citizenship and residency.

The Comelec, acting on four petitions against Poe's candidacy, had ruled that the senator had committed material misrepresentation in declaring that she was both a natural-born Filipino and a 10-year resident of the Philippines.

In a supplemental statement issued later, Te said: "It may not be safe to report which ground the court ruled upon and used as basis for the vote, i.e., between citizenship and residence."

"Thus, it may be best to sim-

SC: POE/A10

From page A!

Poe's petitions, 9-6, allowing her to run for the presidency,' he added.

Foundlings

A high court insider privy to the deliberations said the majority held that foundlings, or abandoned babies with unknown parentage, were "presumptively or disputably presumed natural-born" despite the silence of the Constitution on their citizenship status.

The justices held two hours of deliberations starting at noon yesterday, taking an hour off for lunch and resuming at 2 p.m. The voting was concluded just before 3 p.m., according to a source privy to the deliberations.

The justices who voted in favor of Poe included those who strongly argued for the rights of foundlings during oral arguments on the case: Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno and Associate Justice Marvic Leonen.

Joining the majority vote were Associate Justices Presbitero Velasco Jr., Diosdado Peralta, Lucas Bersamin, Jose Perez, Jose Mendoza, Francis Jardeleza, and recently appointed Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa.

### Dissenters

The justices who voted to disqualify Poe included three magistrates who served as members of the Senate Electoral Tribunal (SET) and decided to disqualify Poe because she was not a natural-born Filipino. The three were Associate Justices Antonio Carpio, Teresita Leonardo-De Castro and Arturo Brion.

The three justices had voted against the majority SET decision that upheld Poe's status as a natural-born citizen in a separate challenge to her 2013 senatorial victory.

### No ponente yet

The rest who voted to bar Poe's presidential bid were Associate Justices Bienvenido Reyes, Estela Perlas-Bernabe, was originally the assigned writer of the court's opinion.

Of President Aquino's six appointees in the high court, four — can only respect the ruling but Leonen, Perez, Jardeleza and -Caguioa-while the two others-Reyes and Bernabe-upheld her disqualification.

"The court will release the text of the decision and separate opinions in the next few days. As you may understand, upon a voting, the court will then finalize who will write for the court," Te told reporters.

"That matter has not yet been decided, and once the ponente has been decided, the text will then follow," he said.

Poe's lawyer George Garcia said: "This is a miraculous day! Grace Poe is truly a woman of destiny. Thanks to the Supreme Court."

Florin General Solicitor Hilbay, who had argued for the rights of foundlings and recognition for Filipino migrants during oral arguments, said: "The result is both legally correct and just. The decision will be a legacy of the court's solicitous re-

gard for marginalized groups and overseas Filipino workers."

### Recipe for chaos

The four private petitioners who opposed Poe's candidacy vowed to fight the ruling through a motion for reconsideration.

"It's a dangerous result. It's a recipe for chaos. The Constitution was bastardized. We will file a MR (motion for reconsideration) as soon as it (decision) becomes official," said lawyer Manuelito Luna, who represents former Sen. Francisco "Kit" Tatad.

Former University of the East law dean Amado Valdez saw a "possible betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution" in the court ruling.

"We will file an MR on the ground of culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of public trust," Valdez said in a statement sent to reporters yesterday.

Said De La Salle University professor Antonio Contreras: "I

3L voted in favor of Poe—Sereno, 20' will not accept it. We did not ;Local: 5285, 5295 lose today. It is the rule of law that lost.'

Contreras blasted the nine justices who voted for Poe, saying they had "reversed well-established jurisprudence on residence," while expressed gratitude to the six who voted to uphold Poe's disqualification.

"I feel sorry for those who came before her (Poe) who were similarly situated but were prevented from running," he said in a statement.

### Still in shock

Former Government Service Insurance System chief legal counsel Estrella Elamparo said: "Although I've been hearing about this scenario, I am still shocked because the law is so clear. I cannot comment beyond that because I have not read the decision."

In rulings upheld by the Comelec en banc, the poll body's First and Second Divisions had found that Poe was not qualified to run for President as she

was not a natural-born Filipino and would only be a Philippine resident for nine years and six months by Election Day in May.

The Comelec held that Poe may not be regarded as a natural-born Filipino as provisions of the 1935 Constitution, which covers her birth year 1968, is silent on the citizenship status of foundlings.

It also bound Poe to her 2012 COC for senator, where she had declared that she would be a Philippine resident for six years and six months come the 2013 Election Day.

Poe's camp asserted that international law gave foundlings natural-born status, and that her period of residency in the Philippines should be reckoned from 2005, when she and her family returned after decades of staying in the United States.

A baby abandoned at a church in Jaro, Iloilo province, in 1968, Poe was raised by the late actor Fernando Poe Jr. and actress Susan Roces. She had spent most of her adult life in the United

and Mariano del Castillo, who C AFFAIRS - Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

## OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIF

## Supreme Court Justices

iail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

1. CJ Maria Lourdes Sereno

August 2010 (as SC justice) August 2012 (as SC Chief Justice) President Aquino

2. Presbitero Velasco Jr.

March 2006

President Arroyo

3. Teresita Leonardo de Castro

December 2007

President Arroyo

4. Arturo Brion

March 2008 President Arroyo

5. Diosdado Peralta

January 2009

President Arroyo

6. Lucas Bersamin

April 2009

President Arroyo

7. Mariano Del Castillo

July 2009

President Arroyo

8. Jose Perez

December 2009

President Arroyo

9. Jose Mendoza

January 2010

President Arroyo

10. Antonio Carpio

October 2001

President Arroyo

11. Estela Perlas-Bernabe

September 2011

President Aquino

12. Marvic Leonen

November 2012

President Aquino

13. Bienvenido Reyes

August 2011

President Aquino

14. Francis Jardeleza

August 2014

President Aquino

15. Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa

January 2016

President Aquino

States, spurned her Filipino citizenship and became a US citizen in 2001, after marrying Filipino-American Neil Llamanzares.

A school teacher in the United States, she returned to Manila on May 24, 2005, reacquired her Filipino citizenship in 2006. But she renounced her American citizenship only four years later, in 2010, when she was appointed chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board.

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Army Core

() March 2016



Page:

## Soldiers in Lanao Sur offensive get medals

Government troops who were involved in the operations against militants in Butig, Lanao del Sur were honored on Monday.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Hernando Iriberri pinned a Gold Cross medal on Capt. Baltazar Marcos, 1st Lt. Ariel Bulagao, 2nd Lt. Jesus Reyes, Sgt. Rogelio Abuan and Cpl. Efren Manicad, all members of the 103rd Infantry Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division.

The other soldiers who took part in the offensive were awarded with Silver and Bronze Cross as well as Military Merit medals.

The offensive, which started after the militants attacked an Army detachment in Barangay Bayabao on Feb. 20, neutralized the group of militants led by brothers Omar, Abdulah and Maide Maute, who are reportedly affiliated with the regional terror group Jemaah Islamiyah.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said villagers displaced by the encounters have started returning to their homes.

Iriberri ordered the rotation of troops to allow the soldiers involved in the operations to rest and spend time with their family.

— Jaime Laude

( March 2016



Page: \_\_\_\_

## Abu man nabbed in Sulu

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Government troops captured a suspected Abu Sayyaf bandit after an encounter in Patikul, Sulu on Monday.

Hatib Ullai Usman Namla was arrested as the bandits retreated after a 10-minute gunfight in Barangay Latih, said Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, commander of Joint Task Group Sulu.

Arrojado said no one was reported killed or wounded among government troops.

Namla is being held at the headquarters of the 35th Infantry Battalion.

Arrojado said the troops have been alerted to intensify their checkpoints to block retaliatory attacks by the Abu Sayyaf.

- Roel Pareño

(A March 2016



Page: 12

### School aid

DAVAO CITY - The Philippine Army's 71st Infantry Battalion, in cooperation with the Kiwanis Club Golden of Tagum City and Pag-asa of Davao City, distributed school supplies to four elementary schools in the remote areas of Maco and Mawab municipalities 🐃 in Compostela Valley province on Monday Lt. Col. Davice Christopher Mercado, commander of 71st IB, told reporters here the activity was part of the command's commitment to support the education of the school children in their areas. "We are grateful for the opportunity to be able to help the community in a simple way by providing school bags and supplies to our pupils as a source of encouragement to study well," Mercado said. A total of 200 bags, 681 school kits that include notebooks, pencils, and papers; and 314 shoes were distributed to 681 pupils in Panibasan Elementary School in Maco town, Concepcion Elementary Schools; Concepcion Elementary School; and Tan-awan Elementary School in Mawab. (Alexander D. Lopez)

€ March 2016

## The Manila Times

Page: A7

# NPAs raid police station in Samar

ABOUT 25 suspected members of the New People's Army (NPA) raided the police station of Balangkayan in Eastern Samar and carted away a number of firearms and laptops on Monday night.

The Balangkayan PNP Chief, Senior Insp. Gilberto Colima, said the suspected rebels were on board a rented van and fired shots barging into the station, which caught the police officers taking dinner at the time by surprise.

Colima said the station was manned by six personnel led by his deputy officer, Senior Police Officer (SPO) 4 Honorato Montero Jr., who failed to move when the suspects poked their firearms at them, while the others took the firearms of the personnel on duty.

The armed men took nine M16 rifles, a shotgun and two 9mm pistols from the station.

Colima added that there were 10 personnel on duty on the night

of the attack, but the four others who are residents of the town went home for dinner.

The rebels reportedly hired the van from the nearby town of Maydolong where a pursuit was staged by elements of the 14th Infantry Battalion (IB) of the Philippine Army. The armed men were wearing military pants, boots and sweatshirts.

Meanwhile, the acting Regional Director of Police Regional Office (PRO) 8, Chief Supt. Jose Erwin Villacorte, condemned in the strongest terms the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army/National Democratic Front's (CNN) Monday night attack.

"The CNN has evolved from an ideological revolutionary group to one conducting acts of banditry out of desperation since the people are hesitant to give in to their demands," Villacorte said.

**ROBERT DEJON** 

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# Army, civic groups extend assistance to remote schools in Compostela Valley

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar 8): Army, civic groups extend assistance to remote schools in Compostela Valley

Around 681 schoolchildren from four remote villages in Mawab and Maco towns inCompostela Valley province on Monday received various school assistance from the Army's 71st Infantry Battalion and the civil groups Kiwanis Club Golden from TagumCity and Pag-asa of Davao City.

The combined efforts handed around 200 school bags; 681 school kits with notebooks, pencils and papers; and 314 pairs of shoes to elementary pupils of Panibasan Elementary School in Maco town; and to Concepcion Elementary School; Salvacion Elementary School; and Tan-awan Elementary School in Mawab.

in a statement to the media, Lt. Col. Davice Christopher Mercado, commander of 71st IB, said the activity was an expression of the command's commitment to support the education of the school children in their areas.

He also extended his gratitude to the support groups that made the activity a successful one.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to be able to help the community in a simple way by providing school bags and supplies to our pupils as a source of encouragement to study well," Mercado said.

In time with the distribution of school supplies, the 71st IB and the support groups also signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to ensure the sustainability of the activity to benefit more far-flung schools in Maco and Mawab.

The signing of agreement was witnessed by the local officials and school officials of the beneficiary schools.

"The 71st IB in collaboration with various stakeholder remains committed to help these communities through investments in education and development of the local people. Through our involvements in a number of community care initiatives, our unit seeks to ensure that indelible volunteer efforts will contribute towards peace and development in these communities," Mercado said.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=864365

# 6th Infantry Division hosts Army combat skills enhancement trainers' training

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar 8): 6th Infantry Division hosts Army combat skills enhancement trainers' training

To improve the combat skills of officers and men of the 6th Infantry "Kampilan" Division, Maj. Gen. Emundo Pangilinan, 6th ID chief, on Tuesday opened the Army Soldiers' Combat Skills Enhancement Training (ASCSETT).

Eleven officers and 22 enlisted men from nine Infantry Division, the Mechanized Infantry Division Army Reserved Command (Arescom) participated in the course which includes Warfighting Competency Training, a compilation of innovations conceptualized by 6th ID for the Kampilan troops.

Capt. Joann Petinglay, 6th Infantry Division spokesperson, said the ASCSETT is intended to produce trainers who will also soon re-echo what they have learned to their own soldiers in their respective units come 3rd quarter of the year where the implementation of the Combat Skills Enhancement Training (WCT) of higher headquarters is expected to be in full throttle.

Leading the opening program was Col. Bernie Langub, commander of the 6thDivision Training School. He is known as the division's "father of Warfighting Competency Training."

He welcomed the participants and said in his speech that 6th ID was lucky to be chosen by the Philippine Army to host and lead the ASCSETT.

He also gave a brief background how WCT started in 6th ID and how it had been changing the way soldiers react and address the battlefield.

Maj. Gen. Pangilinan, in his speech, said that 6th ID gives full priority to training that is why soldiers are ensured to undergo quality time with the Division Training School in order to equip them not only with the traditional military skills and knowledge but also with innovations that will keep the alive and well when they are sent to battle field.

"In 6th ID, we do not only train our soldiers in order for them to fight in war, but we train them in order to ensure that they go home safe and unscathed," Pangilinan said.

Also present during the opening is the assistant division commander, Brigadier Arnel B Dela Vega, and the members of the General, Technical and Personnal Staff of the division.

Petinglay said the training is set to finish after ten days and will start with the first activity the following day. The group is just the first batch of trainers and another batch is set to be trained by mid-April this year.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=864342

## Army division commander honors soldiers hurt in fight with BIFF

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar 8): Army division commander honors soldiers hurt in fight with BIFF

Maj. Gen. Edmundo Pangilinan, commander of the 6th Infantry Division based here lauded Tuesday the gallantry showed by elements of the 2nd Mechanized Infantry Battalion wounded in the battle against lawless Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF).

Speaking in a radio interview, Pangilinan said the soldiers are more dedicated now to finish the job after about 30 of them were wounded in the month-long skirmishes against the BIFF in Datu Salibo, Maguindanao.

"They offered their lives for the sake of peace, they may have lost lives and limbs but the soldiers' determination remain," Pangilinan told reporters after awarding the wounded soldiers with "Wounded Personal Medal."

The Army general said the foot soldiers are working harder to achieve the mission despite some of them perished in line of duty.

Four soldiers were killed and 30 others were hurt in the armed hostilities. More than 20 of the injured were hit by BIFF improvised bombs in Barangays Tee and Butalo.

Pangilinan sympathized with the wounded soldiers, many of whom were determined to return to combat once they have fully recovered.

Pangilinan talked to the wounded soldiers one by one inside the "Battle Casualty Ward" of Camp Siongco Hospital inside the 6th ID headquarters.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=864214

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# Army, PNP hunt down suspects in ambush of passenger bus in N. Cotabato

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar 8): Army, PNP hunt down suspects in ambush of passenger bus in N. Cotabato

PIKIT, North Cotabato -- Police and military authorities here have launched manhunt against three men believed to be extortion gang members who shot dead a bus driver and a passenger Monday afternoon.

Supt. Bernard Tayong, North Cotabato police director, said follow-up operations are still ongoing against three suspects who shot the bus driver of Mindanao Star bus company at 3 p.m. along a busy national highway here.

"Our police have the identities of the suspects, the long arm of the law will soon catch up with them," Tayong told the Philippine News Agency.

## A retired soldier, sitting behind the bus driver, and a male passenger, were also injured by stray bullets.

The Pikit Police office said killed were Mindanao Start (MWB-935) driver Ticson Tigas, 33, resident of Sitio Daniel, Barangay Galakit, Pagalungan, Maguindanao and passenger Magdalena Chavez Cabaya, 43, of Midsayap, North Cotabato.

Injured was Mohammad Piling, an ex-Army, and an unidentified passenger who sustained minor injury, as listed by the police. Several other passengers were also hurt after the bus slammed on a dump truck in front of it following the shooting.

## Tigas died on the spot while Cabaya was declared dead on arrival at the CruzadoHospital.

Tayong said the bus was heading to Cotabato City from Davao City with about 40 passengers on board.

## "Our initial investigation showed the suspects had acts to grind against the bus driver," he said.

Tayong said the suspects shot the bus driver using cal. 45 pistol. Several empty shells were recovered at the crime scene, particularly <u>in front of National Irrigation Administration (NIA) provincial office in Barangay Batulawan.</u>

## The crime scene was about 800 meters away from two Army and para-military detachments.

Following the incident, the suspects sped away toward the interior portion of Batulawan. Witnesses described them as about 20 to 25 years old, who wore face masks and bull caps on board a motorbike without license plate.

Tayong said police visibility and Oplan Lambat Sibat has been intensified.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=864090

(A) March 2016



Page: 7

# No IS threat in Phl – Palace

Malacañang reiterated yesterday that there is no link between a local Muslim rebel group in Mindanao and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria despite the claim of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) that ISIS is recruiting members.

Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Herminio Coloma Jr. said the Palace is standing by the statement of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that there is no ISIS presence in Mindanao despite recent incidents of violence in the region.

The AFP also reported last week that it had taken control of the camp of the Maute group in Butig, Lanao del Sur after days of intense operations. Government troops overran the main camp of the armed group in Barangay Poktan, where the houses of Maute leaders, brothers Omar and Abdullah Maute, were located.

5) The palace issued the statement after MILF chairman Murad Ebrahim said in a press conference in Kuala Lumpur on Monday that ISIS was trying to establish a stronghold in Mindanao to capitalize on the growing frustration on the breakdown of efforts to end the Muslim separatist rebellion.

Congress failed to pass the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), which would be the legal basis for the creation of an autonomous Bangsamoro region in Mindanao in accordance with the peace agreement between the government and the MILE.

the government and the MILE.

"Now, after the non-passage of BBL, we are quite concerned that they (ISIS) can capitalize on this because the sentiment of the people in the area is now very strong. The frustrations after the non-passage of the law, they can capitalize on that," Ebrahim said.

But Coloma said that based on Ebrahim's statement, the MILF leader merely wants the passage of the BBL to continue in the next Congress.

Sen. Gregorio Honasan, a former soldier, also dismissed as "psychological warfare" Ebrahim's claim that the ISIS is trying to gain a foothold in Mindanao.

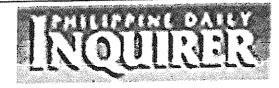
"What they are doing to us is a psywar. Let's just ignore them until we can analyze, confirm, validate and say that the MILF was right, but we are ready," said Honasan, vice presidential bet of United Nationalist Alliance.

Honasan said the MILF's statement cannot be taken as a valid warning as the rebel group needs to show it is still a force to reckon with. "Otherwise, they lose their leverage," he said. The vice-presidential can-

The vice-presidential candidate said the MILF believes it also needs to flex its muscle to gain the respect of the next administration.

- Delon Porcalla, Helen Flores

10 March 2016



Page: A 13

## MILF warning on 18 just a bluff, says Gringo

By Christine O. Avendaño

CLARKFIELD, Pampanga-Sen. Gregorio Honasan yesterday dismissed warnings by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) of the presence of the terrorist Islamic State (IS) in Mindanao as "just psy-war."

Honasan, who is running for Vice President under the United Nationalist Alliance, said MILF chief Murad Ebrahim "had to make such a warning because the MILF has been pushing for the passage of the Bangsamaro Basic Law (BBL)," which Congress failed to pass.

"You don't expect them to be happy because the BBL was (not passed)," he said.

Honasan, a former military officer, said the MILF had a political objective in making the statement that IS was setting up base in Mindanao.

"They have to up the ante and rattle their sabers a little," he said, adding that the MILF has to "play that game otherwise they lose their leverage," the senator said.

### Don't engage until validated

The MILF was engaging in a psy-war with the government and "unfortunately to my mind... is we are playing their game,' according to Honasan.

He said the armed forces and law enforcement agencies should not engage the MILF on this "until we can analyze, confirm, validate and say the MILF was right and we are ready for it."

He said IS was "an idea" that was in the country now and if there would be any recruitment, there may be a few who will be enticed to join if the government was unable to deliver basic services in the South.

It has been the stand of the government and military forces to deny or refuse to confirm persistent reports of the presence in Mindanao of the jihadist IS, an extremely violent Islamist group, a development that could complicate peace efforts in Mindanao.

"We maintain that there is no IS [pres-OFFICE OF THE, ence here], and we await the pronounce- narmy2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

ment of the Anti-Terrorism Council regarding that matter," PNP Director General Ricardo Marquez had said earlier.

Brig. Gen. Allan Arrojado, commander of Mindanao-based 501st Infantry Brigade, when asked about the IS presence had said: "I don't see one and I will not confirm any because it will only enhance their propaganda."

March 2016

### By Christine F. Herrera

CLARK FREEPORT, Pampanga—Opposition United Nationalist Alliance vice presidential bet Senator Gregorio Honasan II on Tuesday dismissed as "mere psychological warfare" the claim of Moro Islamic Liberation Front Chairman Murad Ebrahim that the Islamic State aims to establish a stronghold in Mindanao.

Honasan, running mate of Vice President Jejomar Binay, said the Palace, and not the Armed Forces, should take the lead in reassuring the public

"What the MILF is doing to us is a psywar. Let's just ignore them until we can analyze, confirm, validate and say that the MILF was right, but we are ready," Honasan told reporters.

The Palace should step in and check out on this report and reassure the public that the MILF claim was nothing but psywar," Honasan said.

He said by keeping quiet, the Palace was giving credence to the MILF claim.

Honasan, a former rebel-soldier, said the MILF's statement could not be taken as a valid warning.

He said the MILF was doing it to make it appear that the rebel group was still a force to reckon with.

"Otherwise, they [MILF] lose their leverage,"

He said the MILF believes it also needs to flex its muscles to gain the respect of the next administration.

In their minds, if we are not hardline now we might be marginalized again by the next administration," Honasan said.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines [AFP] earlier played down Murad's statement.

"We believe up to now that there is no direct verifiable and credible presence of any international groups within the area," Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, AFP spokesman, said

Padilla also said the military was not inclined to believe that the frustration over the non-passage of the controversial Palace-drafted Bangsamoro Basic Law will trigger violence

Honasan said he expected Murad to issue such a statement because the MILF was aggressively pushing for the passage of the BBL.

Of course, he has to say that because they were pushing for the BBL. You don't expect them to be happy because the BBL is being dribbled in Congress," he said.

"But then again if you look at it, it's the duty of Congress to run this through exhaustive debate because it might violate the Constitution, it might disenfranchise the other communities, not only the Christians, but the lumad, who are located in the same area," Honasan said.

10

March 2016



## ASG man arrested in Patikul encounter

A SUSPECTED member A SUSPECTED member of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was arrested during an encounter with government forces the other day in Patikul, Sulu. Armed Forces of the Philippines Joint Task Group Sulu commander Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado identified the suspect as Hat in Ullai Usman Namla.

Arrojado said the suspect

was arrested at 3:45 p.m. in Bgy Latih, Patikul Prior to the arrest, elements of the Army's 35th Infantry Battalion encountered and clashed with members of the ASG group

for about 10 minutes until the bandits withdrew. At the height of the en-counter, one of the bandits was arrested.

Recovered from him was one cal. 45 pistol.

The suspect underwent a custodial debriefing at the headquarters of the 35th IB before he will be turned over to the custody of the Philippine National Police for proper disposition. Zaida delos Reyes-Palanca



Page: 12

## Driver, passenger shot dead in Cotabato bus attack

PIKIT, North Cotabato (PNA) – Police and military authorities here have launched a massive manhunt for three men believed to be extortion gang members, who shot dead a bus driver and a passenger Monday afternoon.

Supt. Bernard Tayong, North Cotabato police director, said follow-up operations are still ongoing against three suspects who shot the bus driver of Mindanao Star bus company at 3 p.m. along a busy national highway here.

"Our police have the identities of the suspects, the long arm of the law will soon catch up with them," Tayong told the Philippine News Agency.

A retired soldier, sitting behind the bus driver, and a male passenger, were also injured by stray bullets. The Pikit Police office said Mindanao Star Bus driver Ticson Tigas, 33, and resident of Sitio Daniel, Barangay Galakit, Pagalungan, Maguindanao; and passenger Magdalena Chavez Cabaya, 43, of Midsayap, North Cotabato were shot dead by the suspects.

Wounded were Mohammad Piling, an ex-Army, and a still unidentified passenger. Several other passengers were also hurt after the bus rammed into a dump truck after Tigas was shot.

Tigas died on the spot while Cabaya was declared dead on arrival at the Cruzado Hospital.

Tayong said the bus was heading to Cotabato City from Davao City with about 40 passengers on board.

"Our initial investigation showed

the suspects had an ax to grind against the bus driver," he said.

Tayong said the suspects shot the bus driver using cal. 45 pistols. Several empty shells were recovered at the crime scene. The incident happened in front of National Irrigation Administration (NIA) provincial office in Barangay Batulawan.

The crime scene was located about 800 meters from two Army and paramilitary detachments.

Following the incident, the suspects sped away toward the interior portion of Batulawan. Witnesses described them as about 20 to 25 years old, who wore face masks and bull caps on board a motorbike without license plate.

(A March 2016



Page: A

## Asia's defense, security top agenda in PH-US-Japan meet

### By Francisco Tuyay

A SENIOR US military official on Tuesday underscored the need for the Philippines, the United States and Japan to closely work together, particularly on defense and security aspects to ensure that peace and stability in region is preserved.

US 7th Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Joseph Aucoin made the statement in a "trilateral cooperation" meeting among Philippine Navy and Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force held aboard USS Blue Ridge in Manila.

"The peace and stability in this region really depends on the unified efforts of our countries," Aucoin said. Leaders from each country voiced out their respective concerns relating to the tensions in the South China Sea and the impact on collective efforts to promote peace and stability in the region.

Aucoin commended participants in the meeting saying "This really is a tangible example of the unified commitment of our countries to the stability and security of this region."

The USS Blue Ridge arrived in Manila on March 4 for a scheduled port call while the US John Stennis Strike Group composed of three destroyers and a cruiser were on patrol in the disputed West Philippine Sea.

On March 2, Japan's Minesweeper Division 51 also berthed in Manila for a three-day visit followed by the signing of a defense cooperation between Japan and the Philippines.

Japan's Navy delegation is headed by Capt. Toshiro Takaiwa, is composed of two the Japanese Ship (JS) Uraga (Minesweeper Tender 463) and JS Takashima (Minesweeper Tender 603).

The USS Blue-Ridge who is expected to depart Manila on Wednesday, the Stennis strike group winded-up its six-day freedom patrol in the South China Sea and transited into the Philippine Sea through the Luzon Strait.

The strike group monitored the presence of China's People's Liberation Army (Navy) ships in the vicinity of Stennis while on patrol in the South China Sea, but both navies interacted in "bridge-to-bridge" between sailors were professional

"Based on the bridge-tobridge communications USS Chung-Hoon had with the PLA[N] ships, it is clear that the Chinese Navy prides itself on professional communications and interactions," said Commander Tom Ogden, commanding officer of USS Chung-Hoon (DDG 93).

Chung Hoon was one of the two destroyers in the service of the Stennis strike group.

Rear Admiral Ronald Boxall, the strike group's commander said he was not surprised by the interests of other countries in the strike group.

March 2016



Page:\_ 7

## Phl, Japan, US hold talks to enhance defense cooperation

US have conducted talks aboard the USS Blue Ridge, the US 7th Fleet docked at the Manila South Harbor three days ago.

In a statement released on Monday night, the 7th Fleet Public Ai- Padilla said fairs Office said the meeting was aimed at hastening cooperation among the three countries to ensure peace and stability in the West Philippine Sea.

"The peace and stability in this region depends on the unified efforts of our countries," 7th Fleet commander Vice Admiral Joseph Aucoin was quoted as saying to his Filipino and Japanese counterparts during the talks.

"This is a tangible example of the unified commitment of our countries to the stability and security of this region," Aucoin said during a reception following the trilateral conference.

Military leaders from each country expressed concerns about the tension in the South China Sea as well as the impact of natural and man-made disasters on operations.

They discussed ways to collectively promote peace and stability in the Indo-Asia Pacific.

"Discussions focused on lessons learned from past cooperative training efforts with an eye toward maximizing future opportunities, which included expanding the scope and complexity of multilateral engagements, exercises, and humanitarian and disaster response efforts

The Philippines, Japan and the that will allow countries to rapidly respond to a crisis."

The Armed Forces of the Philipcommand and control ship, which pines downplayed the trilateral meeting, describing it as routine.

"They are constantly talking," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto

The Blue Ridge (LCC-19), flagship of the US 7th Fleet and one of only two such ships in the inventory of the US Navy, docked at Manila Bay on March 4 for a port call

The visit came as the US John C. Stennis Strike Group (JCSSG), was patrolling in the South China Sea.

The JČSSG armada that included three destroyers and a cruiser ended its South China Sea freedom of navigation operations two days ago.

On March 2, Japanese minesweeper Division 51 also docked at South Harbor for a three-day goodwill visit. It was followed by the signing of the defense cooperation between Japan

and the Philippines. The minesweeper, led by Capt. Toshiro Takaiwa, is composed of two ships -Uraga (Minesweeper Tender 463) and JS Takashima (Minesweeper Tender 603)

Meanwhile, the Stennis strike group has wrapped up its six-day operations in the South China Sea and transited into the Philippine Sea through the Luzon strait.

The strike group said the People's Liberation Army (Navy) ships remained

around Stennis, but all "bridgeto-bridge interactions between the sailors of both navies remained professional."

"Based on the communications of USS Chung-Hoon had with the PLA(N) ships, the Chinese Navy prides itself with professional communications and interactions," Chung-Hoon commanding officer Tom Ögden said.

Chung-Hoon was one of two destroyers in the service of the Stennis strike group.

Rear Admiral Ronald Boxall, the strike group's commander, said he was not surprised by the interest of other countries in the strike group.

"We're exercising our right to operate in international waters. Our presence here promotes peace and stability in the region," Boxall said.

Jaime Laude

( March 2016



Page: 12

## P-Noy names Fallorina new Air Force chief

By Nikko Dizon

PRESIDENT Aquino has appointed Lt. Gen. Edgar Fallorina commanding general of the Philippine Air Force (PAF), taking over from Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Delgado who is retiring today.

Mr. Aquino, as the Commander in Chief, will preside over the turnover ceremonies at Fernando Air Base in Lipa City Batangas.

Delgado is turning 56, the mandatory military retirement age, on March 20 but opted to step down early due to the election ban on government appointments that starts today.

Delgado will be honored with a fly-by by the PAF's two new FA-50 jet fighters, the first time in 10 years the Air Force commander will be accorded such honor, after the PAF in 2005 decommissioned the last of its I-5 jets that relegated the service back to the subsonic age.

Under the Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization program, 12 FA-50 lead-in jet fighters were purchased from Korean Aerospace Inc. for P18.9 billion. bringing the PAF back into the supersonic age.

Fallorina, a proficient helicopter pilot, is a member of Philippine Military Academy "Matikas" Class of 1983.

In May last year, he was appointed AFP deputy chief of staff by President Aquino.

According to the PAF website, Fallorina served as flight commander, instructor pilot and test pilot of the 205th Tactica! Helicopter Wing; group commander of the Tactical Operations Group Sanga-Sanga: Air Force internal auditor; chief, Air Force Resource Management Office; wing commander, 520th Air Base wing, deputy commander, 3rd Air Division; commander, 1st Air Division; chief of Air Staff and vice commander. Philippine Air Force.

In his last press briefing at Villamor Air Base yesterday. Delgado announced the PAF was acquiring two Lockheed C-130 Hercules aircraft from the United States to boost its troop transport, humanitarian assistance and disaster response capabilities.

The first of the second-hand refurbished aircraft will arrive in the country or March 15, Delgade said, adding that the Air Force bought the aircraft at the discounted price of P1.6 billion.

"Our technical working group is in the United States right now to inspect the aircraft prior to delivery," he said.

The second C-130 is scheduled to arrive in September. Both came from an Arizona air base in the United States. With the latest acquisitions, the PAF will have five operational C-130 aircraft. With a report from Julie M. Aurelio



Page:

## PAF acquires 2 new cargo planes from US

The Philippine Air Force (PAF) has acquired two more C-130 Hercules planes from the United States for P1.6 billion, outgoing Air Force commander Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Delgado said yesterday.

One of the newly refurbished cargo and transport aircraft will be arriving this month while the second is due in September, he added

The acquisition of the two cargo planes will fully meet the lift requirements of the military, which is currently using one C-130 and three medium-lift C-295 to transport troops and cargo.

Delgado bows out of the military service today, a few days ahead of his mandatory retirement age of 56 years on March 20.

"In the last two years, we have achieved more. When I started two years ago, the operational aircraft was just 40, though we have many (air assets) in our inventory. But now, we are almost reaching 90. We achieved more than double and are looking forward to have 100 operational planes including our new acquisition," Delgado said.

It was during his term that PAF acquired 34 aircraft, the biggest haul in recent times, to comply with the government's military modernization program, he added.

By JAIME LAUDE

A veteran fighter pilot who survived two crashes of T28 (Tora-Tora) planes, Delgado saíd he is leaving the service happy and contented because he could now spend most of his time with family and play golf.

In 1989, while piloting a 128, Delgado ditched at the Manila Bay after the plane developed engine failure. That same year, he also crash-landed a 128 at a grassy portion of Sangley Airfield in Cavite after the landing gear malfunctioned.

Delgado said he would never forget the joy he felt when two FA50 supersonic trainer jets touched down at Clark Airbase in Pampanga last November.

"That's the happiest moment and the best ever in my life as an Air Force officer. I've waited 20 years for that... I could only say in excitement: 'na andyan na. Nakarating na, nakatouch down na' (There it is. It finally arrived. It touched down)," he said, recounting his joy that an F50 arrived to replace the old F5 units.

To celebrate his retirement and as a PAF tradition, Delgado made a champagne flight by flying a T41 Cessna three weeks ago. He explained that he opted to fly that unit because it was the first aircraft he

flew when he joined the Air Force

### New commander

Meanwhile, Air Force men will have a new commander today after Malacañang designated Lt. Gen. Edgar Fallorina as the new PAF commanding general.

Delgado will hand over the command to Fallorina at the Basa Air Base in Lipa City, Batangas today.

The most senior among four candidates, Fallorina is described as a seasoned PAF officer. He is a native of Jaro in Leyte and a member of the Philippine Military Academy "Matikas Class" of 1983.

Prior to this, he was comptroller and resource manager of the former Office of Deputy Chief of Staff for Comptrollership; chief of the AFP Educational Benefit Systems Office; PAF internal auditor; chief of PAF Resource Management Office and chief of Air Staff.

He was also former commander of the 206th Tactical Helicopter Squadron and of the 450th Maintenance and Supply Group; commander of the Tactical Operations Group based in Sanga-Sanga, Tawi-Tawi, and of the 520th Air Wing.

Fallorina also served as PAF deputy commander of 3rd Air Division; commander of the 1st Air Division, and PAF vice commander.

March 2016



Page: \_/

PASKETBALL

## AFP trips PNP, forces KO match

Games Monday (Smart Araneta Coliseum) 6 p.m. – PNP vs AFP

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) got the numbers it wanted from former PBA player Boyet Bautista and foiled Philippine National Police, 71-66, to force a knockout match in their 4th UNTV Cup finals on Sunday at the Smart Araneta Coliseum.

A disappointment in the opening game of their best-of-three title series, the 5-foot-7-Bautista knocked in eight of his game-high 21 points in the sec-

ond period that saw the Cavaliers outscore the Responders, 19-7, to pull away for good.

Bautista, who was named in the Mythical Selection along with MVP Antonio Lustestica of National Housing Authority (NHA), highlighted his gamelong brilliance with four triples, seven assists, six rebounds and three steals.

He was ably supported by Rolando Pascual and Jeffrey Quiambao who each fired 12 markers – most of them in the third that gave the Cavaliers a 57-41 lead going into the final 10 minutes.

AFP coach Alfredo Cayco credited the team's defense for the win, saying his players succeeded in throwing PNP's top gun Ollan Omiping out of his comfort zone.

() March 2016

## The Manila Times

Page: A)

# Mindanaoans fear a bogus election more than the rebels

BUTUAN CITY: I write from Butuan, where the moral leaders of the National Transformation Council are meeting to assess the prospects of holding a clean, honest and credible presidential election on May 9, amid growing fears of war following the failed political process between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Little has prepared me for what I am hearing here.

Continuing skirmishes between the military and the rebels in Lanao and



Maguindanao, the reported deployment of 10 military battalions against the Abu Sayyaf in Jolo, the reemergence of Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) founding chairman

>=TatadA5

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Nur Misuari as the "revitalized leader" of previously contending anti-government factions, and the reported incursion of ISIS-influenced elements into some critical areas crowd into the background of these consultations. ISIS-influenced elements into some critical areas crowd into the background of these consultations.

But qualified observers are quick to point out that President B. S. Aquino 3rd's failure, if not downright refusal, to assure the nation of clean, honest and credible elections, coupled by his reported intervention in the disqualification case of Grace Poe Llamanzares as a presidential candidate, could spawn a civil war faster than anything now troubling southern Philippines.

## A counter-offensive

They saw yesterday's Manila Times story, alleging an attempt by two unnamed individuals to buy off some Justices in order to "disqualify" Mrs. Llamanzares, whom the Commission on Elections has already disqualified, as a desperate bid to confuse the issues and turn the tables on those who had earlier exposed Aquino's effort to compel Justices to qualify her as a candidate. The allegation contradicts the dominant perception that an SC ruling affirming the Comelec decision cannot be avoided, so Aquino is trying very hard to work on the Justices. It cannot therefore be believed.

Even here, observers see Aquino's distasteful meddling in the Court's business as the surest indication that the election would be rigged in favor of his "Manchurian Candidate," should the majority of the Justices bend to his impious wishes. They see him as more interested in cooking the results of the election to make sure that the next President would later protect him from criminal prosecution for any of the unpunished crimes he has committed in the last six years. He also wants to keep his political enemies on the defensive even after he leaves office.

## The PNoy-Poe courtship

Although Aquino had much earlier publicly anointed former DILG Secretary Mar Roxas as his official candidate, the latter's failure to take off in the paid propaganda surveys has prompted him to furtively court Llamanzares, who has also been courting him on the sly, precisely to help her survive her disqualification as a candidate. Thus, she went out of her way to protect him during the last Senate inquiry from any accountability in the Mamasapano massacre in which 44 Special Action Force police commandos were killed.

She has also dropped broad hints that she would not go after Aquino, in the same manner that he had gone after his immediate

predecessor and most important detainee, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, should she ever become president. No one else has made Aquino that promise, even though not one of them has ever attacked him for anything.

## Facts of the case

Upon the petitions of Estrella Elamparo, Antonio Contreras, Amado Valdez and this writer, the Comelec has disqualified Mrs. Llamanzares and cancelled her Certificate of Candidacy for President for misrepresenting herself as a natural-born citizen and a resident of the country for ten years and 11 months up to the day of the election.

The Constitution provides that no person may be elected President unless he is a natural-born citizen, a registered voter, able to read and write, at least 40 years of age on election day, and a resident of the country for at least ten years immediately preceding the election. By natural-born, the Constitution means a person who is a citizen from birth without having to perform any act to acquire or perfect his citizenship.

Mrs. Llamanzares is not naturalborn. Neither is she a citizen under the 1935 Constitution, which was in force when she was born. She was born a foundling of no known parentage; found at the premises of the parish church in Jaro, Iloilo on Sept. 3, 1968; was adopted by the spouses Ronald Allan Kelley Poe,

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aka Fernando Poe Jr., and Jesusa Sonora Poe, aka Susan Roces, in 1974 in the municipality of San Juan, Rizal; moved to the United States for her college education in 1988; got married to an American citizen of Filipino origin; became an American citizen in 2001; sought to reacquire a Philippine citizenship she never had in 2006 and was granted the same, after misrepresenting herself under oath as a "former natural-born citizen."

The Comelec's First and Second Divisions ruled in favor of our four petitions, and the Comelec en banc affirmed these rulings. The en banc ruling is final and non-reviewable, but Mrs. Llamanzares filed a petition for certiorari against the Comelec, alleging grave abuse of discretion amounting to excess or lack of jurisdiction. She also asked the Supreme Court for a Temporary Restraining Order. The TRO was granted, so her name was allowed to stay on the ballot pending the Supreme Court verdict.

### Spurious campaign

She has been campaigning ever since, as though she were a bona fide candidate, without any constitutional impediment. Her financiers have also been burning money on TV ads and propaganda surveys to create the impression that she is popular. Without explaining that she could still be excluded with finality from the race, the commercial media, which have already made

hundreds of millions of pesos on her propaganda, have not hesitated to describe her as a "front runner."

On Monday, our paths crossed in Butuan. I arrived at 6:15 am on the PAL flight from Manila, but had to wait at the terminal for the rest of my party who had taken Cebu Pacific from Manila and arrived at 7 am. Mrs. Llamanzares flew in on board an unmarked old jet before the Cebu Pac flight got in, so there was a clear prospect of a chance meeting if I simply stayed where I was. But I wasn't ready to ask for her autograph, nor I believe was she ready to ask for mine, so I walked to my car outside to spare us both of any embarrassment

A small crowd of young welcomers stood outside the terminal, but some of them did not mind cheering me when I passed by and said lightly that they should try supporting a natural-born Filipino candidate. There was no sign they were aware of the fact that she had serious citizenship and residency problems. Our paths nearly crossed again when we called separately on Bishop Juan De Dios Pueblos, on the eve of his 73rd birthday, at his residence.

## What Aquino can expect

As I was writing this yesterday, no reports had yet come in on whether the Court was finally able to vote as scheduled, and whether Aquino's intervention had prevailed. [Opinion Section Editor's note: At press time the SC decided in favor of Ms. Poe. It is the banner of today's issue.] However, qualified sources warned that an Aquino "victory" would certainly

not be taken lightly by the camps of Vice President Jejomar C. Binay, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, and even Roxas, who would all be adversely affected. The sources did not discount the possibility of trouble instantly erupting if what had been deemed unlikely happened. The aggrieved parties could band together and work to prevent the elections from pushing through.

If elections are held at all, there seems very little prospect that the participants would accept the results if the vote counting machine is not fixed to satisfy those who have asked the high Court to compel the Comelec to restore the security and safety features that had been illegally removed during the last two elections. We could have a real revolt if the voters decide that it is the entire electorate, not just some particular candidates, that has been cheated.

### The Batangas 'revolt'

The last time we were threatened with an election-related popular revolt was in 1949 when the late former President Jose P. Laurel, who had presided over the Japanese puppet republic, lost to President Elpidio Quirino in an election marred by allegations of rampant cheating, particularly in the South. Laurel claimed that even the birds and the bees voted for the llocano president. He threatened to lead the Batangueños in revolt, but ultimately reconsidered and accepted defeat. It seems too early to tell, but there is every chance that if, at any stage, the May elections provoke an uprising, it may not be easily contained.

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## ONLINE news

### 09 MARCH 2016

## Military holds Sayyaf man in Philippines

From the Mindanao Examiner (Mar 8): Military holds Sayyaf man in Philippines

The Philippines military is holding an Abu Sayyaf rebel after troops captured him following a firefight in the southern province of Sulu.

The fighting erupted in Latih village in Patikul town on Monday after patrolling troops ran into a small group of rebels. The military did not release the name of the rebel, saying, it is still interrogating the man.

It said a .45-caliber pistol was recovered from the rebel. It was unknown if any of the soldiers were injured or killed in the clash. Town officials also did not give release any statement about the fighting, but military operations were going on against the Abu Sayvaf.

Authorities have tagged the Abu Sayyaf in the spate of terrorism and many kidnappings in the southern region. The group, which pledged allegiance with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, is still holding about a dozen foreigners and Filipinos kidnapped on Mindanao and brought to Sulu, one of five provinces under the volatile Muslim autonomous region.

http://mindanaoexaminer.com/military-holds-sayyaf-man-in-philippines/

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

## Suspected Abu Sayyaf member captured in Sulu clash

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar 8): Suspected Abu Sayyaf member captured in Sulu clash

A suspected Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) brigand was captured by troopers of the 35th Infantry Battalion during an encounter in Patikul town, Sulu Monday afternoon.

Joint Task Group Sulu commander Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado identified the bandit asHatib Ullai Usman.

He said Usman was captured as patrolling troops engaged suspected ASG bandits in a 10-minute firefight around 3:45 p.m. in Barangay Latih.

Usman was arrested after he lagged behind his companions while they retreated towards the southern direction. Seized from Usman was a .45 caliber pistol.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=864105