

Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

31 March 2016

Thursday

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

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

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


	<p>9 ex-rebels get PHP.405M for surrendering weapons in Davao Del Sur</p> <p>Detachment ng militar, sinalakay uli ng NPA matapos ang kanilang anibersaryo</p> <p>Rebelde patay sa engkwentro ng militar sa Agusan del Norte</p> <p>Suspected rebel killed, another captured in Nueva Ecija firefight</p> <p>FAREWELL VISIT II CSAFP Visits Joint Task Group Sulu</p> <p>Japan seeks to join Balikatan exercises regularly: Pentagon</p> <p>AFP reiterates 'no ransom policy' on abducted Indon sailors</p>	<p>FFC/PFN</p> <p>Armand Galang</p> <p>Arvin Santiago</p> <p>Priam F. Nepomuceno</p>	<p>www.pna.gov.ph</p> <p>www.bomboradyo.com</p> <p>www.bomboradyo.com</p> <p>www.inquirer.net</p> <p>www.dwdd.com.ph</p> <p>www.news.abs-cbn.com</p> <p>www.pna.gov.ph</p>
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER


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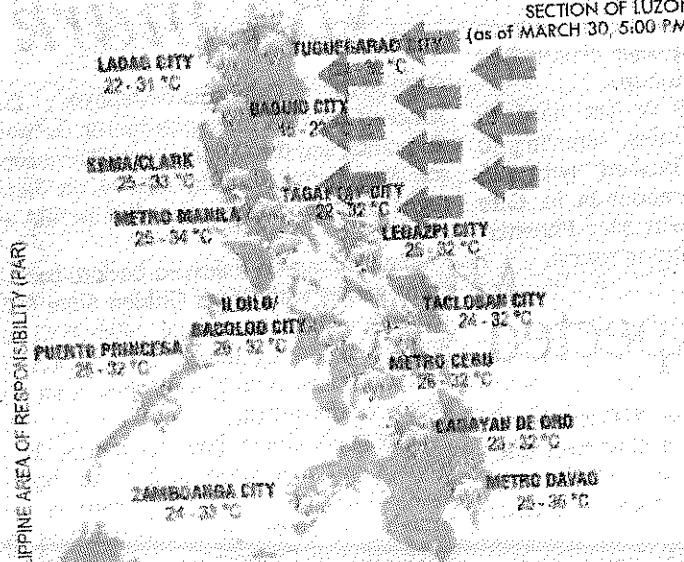
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | MARCH 31, 2016 | THURSDAY

EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF LUZON (as of MARCH 30, 5:00 PM)



PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)



SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:52 AM	6:08 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
11:38 PM	11:21 AM
LAST QUARTER	NEW MOON
MAR 31 11:57 PM	APR 7 7:24 PM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
11:37 PM	2:25 PM
0.02 Meter	0.81 Meter


Partly cloudy skies

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rain showers and/or thunderstorms

MARCH 31		APRIL 1		APRIL 2		APRIL 3		APRIL 4	
METRO MANILA	25-34 °C	25-35 °C	TAGAYTAY	25-32 °C	25-33 °C	TACLOBAN	25-32 °C	25-33 °C	
TUGUEGARAO	24-33 °C	25-33 °C	LEGAZPI	25-32 °C	25-33 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	23-32 °C	24-34 °C	
LACAO	23-32 °C	23-33 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25-30 °C	25-33 °C	METRO DAVAO	25-35 °C	25-35 °C	
BAQUID	16-29 °C	16-24 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	25-33 °C	25-33 °C	ZAMBOANGA	25-34 °C	25-34 °C	
SBMA/CLARK	25-34 °C	25-34 °C	METRO CEBU	25-32 °C	25-32 °C				

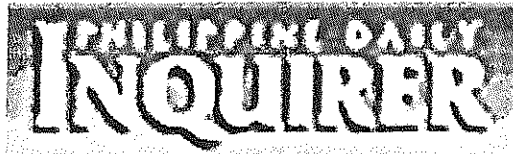
Watch PANAHON TV everyday at 5:00 AM on PTV (Channel 4).



SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

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Sugarcane farming is 2nd hottest job in PH

By Jocelyn R. Uy

HERE'S a sweet surprise for the Philippines' agriculture industry: For the first time in recent history, sugarcane farming has become the second hottest job in the country.

According to Bureau of Local Employment (BLE) data posted

in January on the government's official job portal, www.phil-job.net, there are 12,400 vacancies for sugarcane farmers and 100 job openings for sugarcane grinders.

Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz yesterday said this was the first time sugarcane work landed in the top 20 in-demand

jobs on the government's job portal.

"We were surprised and at the same time we are happy because [agricultural workers do not usually] figure as in demand," Baldoz said in an interview.

The unexpected demand for sugarcane farmers can be cred-

ited to the stable sugar prices in the global market, she said.

"The price of sugar is unaffected by whatever developments in the world, so supply for sugar is still in demand and that means good investment for our sugar industry, whether for planters, millers and distribu-

SUGARCANE/A18

Sugarcane farming is 2nd . . .

From page A1

tors," she added.

A quick check of the website showed that 7,400 sugarcane farmers were still needed as of yesterday.

The vacancies are in Matalam, North Cotabato province, one of the sugar-producing provinces in the country.

The openings are all at one company listed as High Yield Sugar Farms Corp.

When asked if there were problems in filling the demand, Baldoz said that since it is a novelty, the Department of Labor and Employment will closely monitor applications and re-

errals made online.

"Phil-job.net will be able to monitor how many are applying online and it can also monitor the referral to the companies that are in need of workers and then they will be able to give us feedback on how many were hired. We have to monitor because this is a first," Baldoz said.

As expected, the most sought-after job in the country is call center agent, with 28,996 vacancies posted since the start of the year.

For years, the demand for call center agents has not been met by the current supply even though the Philippines is one of the world's leading

providers of contact services.

Other vacancies

The other vacancies are for customer service assistants, production or factory workers, service crew, sewers, credit and collection specialists, staff nurses, cashiers, electronic equipment assemblers, cooks, domestic helpers, technical service advisers, merchandisers and production machine operators.

Among the top 20 hot jobs are metal arc welder, salesclerk, waiter, security guard and technical and commercial sales representative, with 1,200 to 1,600 vacancies.

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NPA marks 47th year, but military claims victory

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The communist New People's Army (NPA) claimed it was expanding its troop capabilities and base areas as it celebrated on Tuesday its 47th founding anniversary, making it one of the longest running Maoist insurgencies in the world.

In a statement, a spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF), the Communist Party of the Philippines' political arm, said the rebel movement has persisted for almost half a century and continues to expand its reach despite the concentration of military troops in rebel hot spots.

Jorge Madlos, speaking for NDF-Mindanao, claimed the NPA was now operating in 2,500

communities covering 200 towns in 20 provinces in Southern Philippines, which also hosts Islamic secessionist rebels.

"The population influenced by the (communist) revolution increased to several millions, wherein 200,000 are directly organized, while tens of thousands are covered by the people's revolutionary governments in numerous communities and barangays and some at the municipal level," Madlos said.

The communist leader added that there was also a growth in the recruitment of "people's militias," intelligence work and logistical support.

Madlos also claimed the rebel movement had enhanced capabilities to launch attacks against

government forces. He claimed "at least 500 tactical offensives (TOs) were launched in Mindanao in 2015, which doubled the 250 attacks reported in 2010."

"Over the last two months of 2016 alone, the NPA in Mindanao launched more than a hundred TOs, most of which were directed against detachments and regular troops of the AFP," Madlos said.

The Communist Party in North Central Mindanao Region (CP-NCMR) said the country's Armed Forces have "failed in their counterrevolutionary campaigns and operations to crush our guerrilla army."

"We have correctly grasped the basic guerrilla tactics of con-

centration, dispersal and shifting. For several years now, our Red army learned warfare through warfare, earned the overwhelming support of the people and thus, grew from being small and weak to becoming large and strong," said a separate statement signed by Norsen Mangubat, spokesperson of the CP-NCMR.

Reacting to the rebel anniversary, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Madrigal, commander of the Philippine Army's 4th Infantry Division, said the NPA "had nothing to celebrate as it has been losing in its fight for the establishment of a Maoist government in the country."

"[March 29] is the supposed anniversary of the NPA, but we

are celebrating the triumph of our soldiers," Madrigal said in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER.

Last month, the military declared several provinces in Caraga as "conflict manageable and ready for further development" following a series of combat operations there, including a clash in Jabonga, Agusan del Norte, that led to the seizure of what it said was a major NPA camp.

"Many have now helped us by providing timely and relevant information about the NPA's location and activities... and we are now reaping the fruits of our collaboration," Madrigal said.

He said the NPA has been los-

ing men in combat.

"We cannot allow lawless groups to sow fear among our people, Madrigal said.

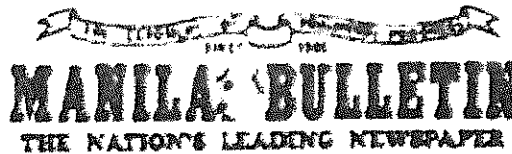
In Southern Mindanao, Maj. Gen. Rafael Valencia, commander of the Army's 10th Infantry Division, cited the surrender of NPA rebels as evidence of successes against the insurgency.

Valencia said the surrenders were brought about not only by combat operations, but also by civilian-military operations.

He believed the rebels "were also realizing that it was futile to continue with their struggle."

Valencia said the government was assisting returnees. *Jigger Jerusalem and Karlos Manlupig, with a report from Eldie Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao*

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2 soldiers killed, 4 others wounded in clashes with NPA

By MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

BUTUAN CITY – Two Army soldiers were killed while four others were wounded in two separate skirmishes with New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas in Bukidnon and Agusan del Sur Tuesday, a sketchy report reaching this city yesterday said.

An initial report received here also stated that an undetermined number of communist insurgents were either killed or wounded during the two encounters.

The encounters happened a day after the NPA celebrated its 47th founding anniversary last March 29.

The identity of the slain soldiers was not immediately available, but it was confirmed that they were killed in a gun

battle with the NPAs in Upper Gabunan, Barangay Kasisang, in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon. In the same encounter, another soldier was wounded while scores of rebels were believed to have been shot but were evacuated by their comrades.

In the clash at the outskirts of Veruela, Agusan del Sur, three soldiers were reportedly wounded in action.

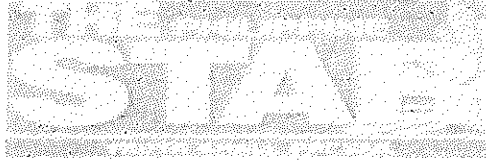
Elements of 403rd Infantry (Peacemaker) Brigade were conducting village security, peace and development operations in Upper Gabunan when they encountered an undetermined number of armed rebels under a certain "Commander Bagwis" of guerilla-Front Committee 68 of the CPP-NPA North central Mindanao Regional Committee at around 5 p.m.

In Veruela, elements of the 26th Infantry Battalion were conducting a routine security patrol when they were engaged by the armed rebels reportedly from the NPA Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee.

Despite the setbacks, a senior Army commander said Tuesday that the government was winning its battle against the insurgents.

In a press statement sent to Manila Bulletin, Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Madrigal, Jr., commanding general of the Fourth 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division (4th ID) cited the series of successful combat operations these last two months which prompted the military to declare the provinces in the Caraga Region as "conflict manageable and ready for further development."

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NPA rebels harass tourists in Surigao

BUTUAN CITY – Suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels have reportedly harassed tourists at the Hinatuan Enchanted River in Surigao del Sur.

First Lt. Karl Jan Devaras, commander of the 41st Civil Military Operations, said members of the NPA guerrilla front committee 14 pulled over vehicles entering and leaving the eco-tourism site and inspected their belongings at gunpoint.

Devaras said pursuit operations against the rebels have been launched.

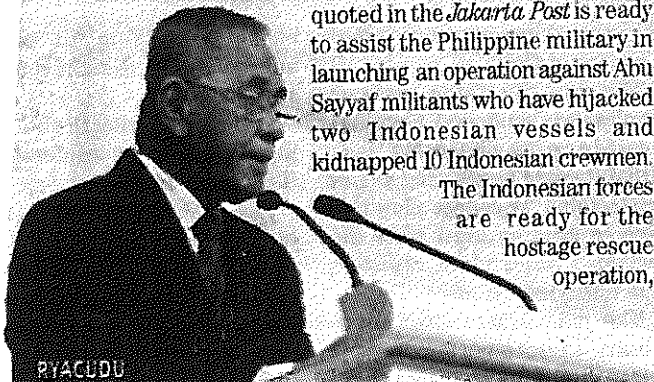
– Ben Serrano

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Indonesian army ready to aid RP vs Abu kidnappers



The Indonesian Military as quoted in the *Jakarta Post* is ready to assist the Philippine military in launching an operation against Abu Sayyaf militants who have hijacked two Indonesian vessels and kidnapped 10 Indonesian crewmen.

The Indonesian forces are ready for the hostage rescue operation,

the newspaper quoted Defense Minister Ryamizard Ryaucudu, who added that Jakarta would have to first wait for Manila's request as the incident occurred in Philippine territory.

The army has prepared vessels to conduct the operation in case the Philippine authorities allow Indonesian forces to join the operation, he said. He also has coordinated with the Philippine

Turn to page 2

Indonesian army ready to aid RP vs Abu kidnappers

From page 1

defense minister to address the incident.

"It's a foreign country. If we are not allowed to enter then we cannot force it. If Manila is ready to settle it themselves, then we'll wait, but if they need help, then we should enter," Ryamizard said on Tuesday.

Insp. Gen. Anton Charliyan said the National Police are ready to deploy the elite Densus 88 counterterrorism squad and the Mobile Brigade to take part in the operation. The police had coordinated with Interpol in an attempt to save the crewmen.

But the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said Indonesian military and police can't help in search efforts for abducted seafarers.

Indonesian security forces cannot help in the ongoing search-and-rescue operations for its 10 nationals who were reportedly kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) bandits while passing off Tawi-Tawi over the weekend, the AFP stressed.

"Per our Constitution, we do not allow military forces here without a treaty," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said.

He was referring to Article XVIII, Section 25 of the 1987 Constitution which explicitly prohibits foreign military bases in the Philippines.

It also states that "foreign military bases, troops, or facilities shall not be allowed in the Philippines

except under a treaty duly concurred in by the Senate and, when the Congress so requires, ratified by a majority of the votes cast by the people in a national referendum held for that purpose, and recognized as a treaty by the other contracting State."

Padilla made this statement after Indonesia offered the use of its military and police units in tracking down the bandits and its captive nationals.

He also said the AFP is quite capable of locating and rescuing the victims.

The victims were aboard the *Brahma-12*, also an Indonesian-owned tugboat, along with a sister vessel, was towing a barge laden with 7,000 tons of coal, when allegedly attacked by the bandits over the weekend.

It was en route from Puting river in Banjarmasin in Indonesia's South Kalimantan province to the Batangas in the Philippines.

Local authorities found *Brahma-12* abandoned off Languyan Island, Tawi-Tawi on Monday afternoon.

The Indonesian army has prepared vessels to conduct the operation in case the Philippine authorities allow Indonesian forces to join the operation, Ryamizard said. He also has coordinated with the Philippine defense minister to address the incident.

In a statement, Abu Sayyaf has demanded 50 million pesos in ransom, equal to P 14.2 billion (US\$1.07 million). Responding to this, Ryamizard said that Indonesia should not meet the demand.

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Abduction a diversion, says AFP

THE PHILIPPINE military has described the abduction of 10 Indonesians in Sulu waters, reportedly by the Abu Sayyaf group (ASG), as a possible "diversion" to ongoing security operations in Mindanao.

This was the "initial assessment" of the Armed Forces of

the Philippines, AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said in a statement.

"Following the continuous tactical successes of the security sector against lawless elements and extremists in the islands of Basilan and Jolo, we see that the mounting pressure

on the targeted groups in these areas may have compelled some of their sympathetic allies to initiate diversionary tactics to ease the pressure on their besieged forces," Padilla said in an SMS to the media.

The AFP vowed that "there will be no let up in focused mili-

tary operations in these areas."

Despite reports that the abduction was carried out by the ASG, the AFP maintained that the identity of the perpetrators "could not yet be established with certainty."

"The AFP and all other government agencies in the

province must first work to check, authenticate and validate these information to ascertain credibility before any confirmation can be done," Padilla said.

The AFP also maintained that they would continue to comply with the government's no-ransom policy. *Jaymee T. Gamil*

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Kidnapped Indonesian boat crewmembers brought to Sulu?

ZAMBOANGA CITY – The 10 crewmembers of an Indonesian tugboat kidnapped by suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits over the weekend are reportedly being held in Sulu.

"We received reports they were brought to Sulu, but we are still waiting for the confirmation," Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Mujiv Hataman said, quoting ARMM police director Chief Superintendent Ronald Estilles.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman for the Western Mindanao Command, said the military is ready to assist the police in verifying where the victims were brought.

However, Tan said intelligence units could not confirm reports that the hostages are in Sulu. He said reports that the supposed kidnappers demanded ransom money have also not

been verified.

Sources said military operations are underway in islets in Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

On the reported offer of the Indonesian police and military to help in the rescue operations, Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the AFP can handle the matter.

"We do not allow foreign military forces here without a treaty. The AFP has the capability to perform its mandate," Padilla said.

Indonesian Defense Minister Ryamizard Ryacudu reportedly offered to assist the AFP in its operations.

Indonesia is ready to deploy its elite Denus 88 counterterrorism squad and mobile brigade, Indonesian police Inspector Gen. Anton Charliyan said. – **Roel Pareño, Jaime Laude**

31 March 2016

Balita

ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANGSA ₱8.00

Page. 2

Sintensiyadong Army general, pinagkalooban ng 3-hour furlough

Inaprubahan ng Sandiganbayan Second Division ang hiling ni retired Army Major General Carlos Garcia na pansamantalang makalabas ng New Bilibid Prison (NBP) sa Muntinlupa City upang makadalo sa burol ng kanyang kapatid sa Quezon City.

Sa isang resolusyon, pinaboran ng anti-graft court ang mosyon na inihain ni Garcia na humihiling na makadalo sa burol ng kanyang kapatid na si Philip Garcia sa Immaculate Concepcion Cathedral sa Quezon City. Ngunit imbes na apat na oras, na unang humiling ng sintensiyadong heneral, binigyan lamang siya ng korte ng tatlong oras - simula 5:00 ng hapon hanggang 8:00 ng gabi kahapon - upang masilip ang kapatid.

Tiniyak din ng korte sa NBP na babalikatin ni Garcia ang lahat ng gastusin sa kanyang pagpunta sa burol.

Pinagbawalan din si Garcia na magkaloob

ng interview sa media at paggamit ng cell phone habang nasa labas ng NBP.

Napag-alaman na pumanaw ang kapatid ni Garcia, na isang overseas Filipino worker (OFW) sa Riyadh, Saudi Arabia noong Pebrero 15 at dumating lang sa Pilipinas ang labi nito noong Marso 27.

Matatandaan na sinintensiyahan ng Sandiganbayan si Garcia ng pagkakakulong dahil sa pagsisinungaling sa kanyang mga asset at pagiging permanent US resident habang aktibo pa rin sa serbisyo.

Kasalukuyan ding nililitis ng Second Division ang plunder case na kinahaharap ni Garcia dahil sa pagkamal ng yaman na aabot sa P303 milyon mula sa umano'y ilegal na transaksyon habang siya ay nanunungkulan bilang comptroller ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Jeffrey G. Damicog

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'Education, jobs can nip terrorism in the bud'

By DELON PORCALLA

Providing education and ultimately jobs to citizens can be an effective way of nipping terrorism in the bud, which should have been done in the case of the Islamic State (IS), President Aquino said yesterday.

"If jobs are readily available, good jobs that can lead to dignified lives... in the country, then there is less motivation or less opportunities or temptations for them to fall victim to syndicates that engage in trafficking," he said.

What countries should focus more on is how to uplift the lives of their citizens so as not to expose or make them vulnerable to recruitment by any bandit or terror group, more than enforcing laws against human trafficking.

"We believe that the solution is not really just in the enforcement of the laws but rather perhaps eliminating the conditions that leave them vulnerable to such," Aquino said.

Just like addressing a local unemployment problem, generating jobs and ensuring a good

and decent future for everybody will lessen the chances of people taking up arms against the state, Aquino told the editors of *Publish Asia 2016* at the Manila Hotel yesterday.

"Same with the threat of ISIS, you have this disillusioned youth who other people have studied as to how to motivate, how to exploit, how to take advantage of," Aquino said, using another name of the IS.

This should be especially so for suicide bombers who single-mindedly "do that ultimate act," Aquino said.

As for the refugee problem in the Middle East and Europe, Aquino said it is about time people "divorce ourselves from the idea that these problems are not ours and, therefore, they do not merit our attention."

"The mindset now should be in an increasingly shrinking global

milieu, all of these problems eventually will become our problems, so best to address them when they are at their nascent stages rather than when they are so fully blown and intractable already," he said.

No threat

Early this month, Aquino allayed fears of Filipinos about the IS recruiting Muslim rebels

in Mindanao, saying they are just "mercenary" groups trying to make themselves look like terrorists.

"They should prove themselves. Is it ideological or religious? They will say it is, but primarily, we believe it is mercenary reasons that are prompting them to do this. At the end of the day, our (Armed Forces) dealt with them," he said at the change of command of the Philippine Air Force.

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Noy mulls submarine force for PH defense

As the Chinese military continues to tighten its hold on vast areas in disputed waters, the Philippine government is considering building a "submarine force" as a deterrent to Beijing.

President Aquino made the pronouncement yesterday at the Publish Asia 2016 opening ceremonies, even as

he stressed that nothing is concrete yet.

He said the realization that the Philippines is a "natural transit point into the Pacific" has led him to "study whether or not we do need a submarine force."

In recent years, China has been expanding its control over large areas in

the West Philippine Sea – by deploying warships and coast guard vessels as well as by building artificial islands, in the process destroying coral reefs and other marine resources.

Last year it was reported the Philippines would buy electric and diesel-run submarines as well as an advanced

missile system as part of the modernization of the armed forces.

"I probably should stop talking about what we are doing to enhance (defense capabilities), but the bottom line is, this situation does call upon us to devote a lot more resources than

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Noy From Page 1

previously," he told a global gathering of newspaper and news publishing industry players.

"Also, it has necessitated us to have this as one of the priority issues that has to be tackled as far as foreign policy is concerned because it does significantly impact on our own developmental efforts," the President said when asked about the increasing military cooperation between the Philippines and Japan.

"It does impact currently the lives of our fisherfolk who have been fishing in these waters for eons," he said, apparently referring to China's barring Filipino fishermen

from waters it now controls.

"It does impact the economies to which these fisherfolk of ours are engaged in. Hence, there is that need to finally resolve this matter or, at least, accelerate the process of resolving this matter to the benefit of all parties concerned," he said.

He stressed the Philippines could lose its west coast if it allows China's maritime claims to remain uncontested.

But despite the government's resolve to contest Beijing's expansive maritime claims, it entertains "no illusion" about engaging China or any nation in an arms race, much less in waging war.

Aquino emphasized nonetheless the need for an accelerated modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"If you look at representations of the so-called nine-dash line, you will note that, as far as the Philippines is concerned, we practically lose the west coast... we're left with the east coast," the President said, noting the islands and facilities being built by China in the disputed areas were also causing too much environmental impact.

"It does matter to us. We are supposed to have a 36,000-kilometer coastline. We are supposed to have an EEZ (exclusive economic zone) of 200 (nautical miles) stretching from those baselines. And suddenly, we are (going to) lose about half if we agree to this position (nine-dash line)," Aquino said.

UNCLOS not war

But despite the challenges,

the President said the country's peaceful efforts have been well received and documented, especially when he raised the issue before members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in 2012.

Aquino noted it was already the 10th anniversary of the region's attempt to come up with a code of conduct in the South China Sea. What the ASEAN came up with in 2002 was a non-binding declaration, he said.

"I think all countries...realize that war is a futile exercise... nobody stands to gain and, in fact, the whole world stands to lose if it does amount to war," the President pointed out.

"The Philippines, for in-

stance, renounces war as an instrument of foreign policy, that is embedded in our Constitution," he said.

"We have no illusions of ever trying to match or trying to engage anybody in an arms race or in a military buildup," Aquino said, adding his administration would rather devote its resources to the "butter side" or the needs of the people rather than to weapons.

"Stability has to come about when there is clarity as to each one's entitlements rather than what one wants to assert out of national interest," he said, pointing out the Philippines and China were both signatories to UNCLOS.

The President said even those far from the South

China Sea must realize the importance of stability to ensure smooth trade and greater chances for prosperity.

"And that it's no longer a question of whether one possesses more economic might or more military might, but rather what is it that is embodied in the laws that govern all of us that we should be religiously adhering to? So if that situation is wrought then we manage the crisis, we bring down the tensions and we avert any potential for any conflict," he said.

The President said he is grateful to countries that have expressed support for the Philippine position on the West Philippine Sea issue.

– With Jaime Laude, AFP

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The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

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PH eyes 2 anti-sub choppers, 2 frigates

By Florante S. Solmerin

THE Philippines has contracted Anglo-Italian defense contractor Augusta Westland to deliver two anti-submarine helicopters, worth P5.4 billion, to be used with the two brand-new frigates the government is planning to buy from India.

Defense Undersecretary Fernando Manalo announced the placement of the order as President Benigno Aquino III said the country is studying the possibility of operating a submarine fleet to help protect its territory in the disputed South China Sea.

Manalo said the order for the two AW159 Wildcat helicopters was signed Wednesday by Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin

and Stefano Bortoli of AugustaWestland.

Manalo said the first of the two AW159 Wildcat helicopters is expected to be delivered in a little more than a year, in time for the expected delivery of the new frigates, worth about P18 billion, to be built by Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers of India.

"This is very timely," Manalo

said. "Many people have been saying we should have done it a long time ago. The anti-sub choppers will be onboard the frigates that we are acquiring."

"This will definitely enhance the capability of the Philippine Navy. For the first time, we will have anti-submarine helicopters for our new frigates. For the first time too, we will have brand-new frigates," Manalo added.

He did not specify what type of frigates are to be acquired because the bidding process was still at the post-qualification stage and the contract has yet to be drafted.

"[But] the frigates [will] be built at the government-owned shipyard in India. They have not won [the contract] yet, but they are the lowest bid-

der so far," Manalo said.

He said the process includes an inspection of the contractor's construction facility as well as its legal and financial capability.

The acquisition of the new frigates has been in the pipeline since 2014 when India started exporting defense equipment to friendly nations.

Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers will make 10-12 fast patrol boats for Vietnam, which, like the Philippines, is also protesting China's provocations in international waters.

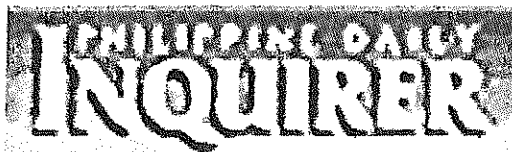
The Indian company said they have cost advantages over other defense suppliers because of cheap labour and sourcing of materials from within India.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF

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War is a futile exercise,

In armed conflict over China Sea, no one wins, says P-Noy

By Nikko Dizon

WAR IS not an option in the tense South China Sea.

"All claimant countries in the South China Sea [and others adjacent to it but are not claimants] recognize that war is a futile exercise," President Aquino said yesterday.

"Nobody stands to gain and, in fact, the whole world stands to lose if it does amount to war."

China claims almost all of the South China Sea, home to some of the world's most important shipping routes, despite conflicting claims from the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei.

The tension in the South China Sea, with China's military buildup on the artificial islands in the disputed Spratlys, was the central question posed by Vietnamese journalists to Mr. Aquino at Publish Asia 2016, an annual gathering of the Asian newspaper and news publishing industry.

Nguyen Hoang Nhat of the Vietnam News Agency wanted to know what Mr. Aquino, in the final year of his presidency, would do to push the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and China to "act re-

WAR/A15

From page A1

sponsibly to maintain peace and stability in the region."

Philippine 'master plan'

Vietnamese journalist Phan Thai Cong asked the President what Asean should do in response to China's "rising muscle in the area" and what role Japan was playing "in the Philippine master plan" on the South China Sea dispute.

Mr. Aquino emphasized that the Philippine Constitution renounced war as an instrument of foreign policy and that the Philippines was not engaged in any arms race.

"We have no illusions of ever trying to match—trying to engage anybody in an arms race or

in a military buildup," Mr. Aquino said, adding that the government will prioritize "butter rather than guns."

Submarine force

But he said the country "might have to undergo various aspects of our own military capabilities that have never been part of our needs."

"For instance, we are a natural transit point into the Pacific and we are now studying whether or not we do need a submarine force," the President said.

The country, which has never before operated submarines and until now relied on US surplus ships, has been ramping up its defense spending in response to China's military ex-

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ansion in the region.

"But the bottom line is: This situation does call upon us to devote a lot more resources than previously. Also, it has necessitated us to have this as one of the priority issues that have to be tackled as far as foreign policy is concerned because it does significantly impact our own developmental efforts," he said.

Fishermen

Mr. Aquino emphasized that, for one, the row was adversely affecting Filipino fisherfolk, who have been barred by Chinese boats from fishing in the disputed reefs.

"Hence, there is that need to finally resolve this matter or, at least, accelerate the process of resolving this matter to the ben-

efit of all parties concerned," the President said.

He was satisfied that the Philippines' firm stand on resolving the maritime row through a rules-based approach had gained ground, with more claimant countries "joining" the Philippine position.

"We are glad that our voice has been heard and the voice of others who are similarly situated has been noted and there has been positive movements toward resolving this particular crisis," the President said.

Mr. Aquino said the South China Sea issue was one that "concerns every country even those who are very far from this particular body of water."

He noted that South China Sea was an important part of in-

ternational trade, which is "essential to fostering prosperity for all, which is the main reason for being of every government, which is to improve its people's lot."

"The uncertainty breeds instability, instability does not promote prosperity. Therefore, let us resolve with certainty the issues that are before us: Who is entitled to what? And what is each one's obligations relative to this entitlements?" Mr. Aquino said.

UN tribunal

He said this was the reason the Philippines filed an arbitration case against China in the United Nations Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague.

The tribunal is expected to hand down a decision in May,

shortly before Mr. Aquino steps down from office. But China following a decision favorable to the Philippines is remote.

The President, however, expressed confidence that a resolution of the dispute would "improve all of our relations because there is certainty in how we are supposed to deal with each other."

"And that it's no longer a question of whether one possesses more economic might or more military might. But rather, what is it that is embodied in the laws that govern all of us that we should be religiously adhering to? So if that situation is wrought then we manage the crisis. We bring down the tensions and we avert any potential for any conflict," he said.

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Pentagon appeals for peace in South China Sea

By JOSE KATIGBAK
STAR Washington bureau

China Sea

WASHINGTON – The Pentagon on Tuesday reaffirmed its call to all countries with conflicting claims to parts of the South China Sea to refrain from reclaiming or militarizing any islands in dispute.

Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said he could not confirm recent reports that China has deployed anti-cruise missiles on Paracel islands or increased its maritime survey activities around Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal but said all countries involved in maritime disputes should pursue diplomatic and legal solutions to these issues.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter, in a speech at a World Affairs Council gala in Washington, said five evolving challenges now driving the Pentagon's planning and budgeting were Russia, China, North Korea, Iran and international terrorism.

Two of the challenges – Russia and China – reflected a recognition of a return to great power competition.

"China is rising which is fine, but behaving aggressively, which is not," he said.

In a think-tank event also in Washington, a senior defense official said Japan is in talks with the Philippines about participating in joint drills with the US on a regular basis.

Amy Searight, deputy assistant secretary of defense for South and Southeast Asia, was referring to the Balikatan joint exercises the US and Philippine militaries conduct near the South China Sea, where the latter is involved in territorial disputes with China.

"Japan is talking to the Philippines about a Status of Forces Agreement, so that Japan can regularly participate in those kinds of exercises," Searight said.

The envisioned agreement would govern the operations of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces in the Philippines.

"Japan is participating (in the Balikatan drill) as an observer. Japan very much wants to participate more," she said.

Japan, under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, has sought closer defense cooperation with the Philippines, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries in an apparent bid to increase pressure on China, which claims sovereignty over most of the South China Sea as well as the Japanese-administered Senkaku group of islets in the East China Sea.

In February, Japan signed a deal with the Philippines to transfer defense equipment and technology as part of efforts to build closer security ties, following similar accords with countries such as Australia, Britain and India.

Ready for drill

In Subic Bay Freeport in the Philippines,

US military equipment and vehicles have started to arrive for the Balikatan 2016

An undetermined number of vehicles and equipment could be seen at the former site of FedEx hub at the Subic airport.

"This military cargo will be used in the coming Balikatan joint military exercise between the United States and the Philippines scheduled from March 18 to April 22 this year," Robert Chester, director of Liberty Call Logix Corp., told **The STAR**.

Liberty is a Subic-based one-stop-shop for land, sea and air services coordinating the arrival of the US military cargo.

Chester said some of the delivered military equipment would be for humanitarian,

disaster relief assistance and community projects.

– With Bebot Sison Jr., Kyodo News

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A shipyard worker walks past three Australian military Landing Craft Heavy vessels docked at a port in Cebu City yesterday. The three vessels, acquired by the Philippine government from Australia, are expected to boost the Philippine Navy's sealift capabilities in moving large amounts of cargo, personnel and equipment as well as bolster the military's humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.

EPA

ONLINE NEWS

31 MARCH 2016

www.dwdd.com.ph

NEW LIFE II 9 Fmr NPAs Receive Assistance Under CLIP Program in Davao Del Sur

News Summary: March 30, 2016 | Davao Del Sur | Headlines



DIGOS CITY, Davao del Sur (DWDD) – While the NPA is celebrating its 47th Founding Anniversary, another celebration for the nine former NPAs who returned to the folds of the law bringing along their firearms to the Provincial Local Government of Davao del Sur was held after they received checks under Firearm Remuneration of the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP) at Arnaldo's Hotel, Digos City on Tuesday, March 29, 2016.

In an interview by DWDD with Major Gen. Rafael Valencia, Commander of 10th Infantry "Agila" Division (10ID), the ceremonial giving of firearm and receiving of check was headed by Hon. Claude Bautista, Governor of Davao del Sur and chairman of CLIP committee represented by Hon. Nonito A Llanos III, Sangguniang Panlalawigan member; PSSupt Dario L Gunabe, Provincial Director of Davao Del Sur Police Provincial Office; and Provincial Director Abito Bernasor, DILG and handed-in the check worth fifty-eight thousand pesos (P58,000.00) to Rodanny ANSUDO alias DANDAN, who surrendered to 73rd Infantry NEUTRALIZER Battalion (73IB), as remuneration to the AK47 assault rifle he surrendered. Other three former NPAs who surrendered to 73IB namely, Banases MARIANO alias BOBBY of Malita, Davao del Sur received two thousand pesos (P2,000.00) for the caliber .357; Odoy MALBINO alias RENAN of Malita, Davao del Sur received forty-five pesos (P45,000.00) for M16A1 assault rifle; and Bening MENTAL alias BENBEN of Malita, Davao del Sur received thirty thousand pesos (P30,000.00) for a Garand Rifle.

Meanwhile, five other former NPAs who also surrendered to 39th Infantry SMASH'EM Battalion (39IB) namely, Roger PARASA alias AMAR of Magsaysay, Davao del Sur, Charlie PASCO alias LONGHAIR of Magpet, North Cotabato, who both brought along their M14 rifle received sixty thousand pesos (P60,000.00) each while three other former NPAs from Davao del Sur namely, Roy PARASA alias NIÑO of Magsaysay; Cornelio MAMPO alias GAMAY of Magsaysay and Guillier OMBAOY alias RITCHEN of Magpet, North Cotabato received fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00) each for the M16 rifles they surrendered.

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



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Small caption text below the second image, mostly illegible due to low resolution.

Under the said program, firearm remuneration given to former NPAs depends on the type and serviceability of the firearms surrendered. The recently conducted ceremony for firearms remuneration of the CLIP for former NPAs was held the first time after a series of validation conferences were done by the 1002nd Infantry Brigade, Provincial Interior and Local Government, Digos City Police and the Davao del Sur Police Provincial Office.

"This year, the nine former NPA's celebrated their anniversary by receiving the checks of the firearm remuneration under the Comprehensive Local Integration Program of the DILG, DSWD and the Provincial Government of Davao del Sur," said Col Ronald Villanueva, 1002nd Infantry Brigade Commander. "The nine other former NPAs with 110 others who surrendered last year till to date, were given a better life by the government away from hardship and starvation. This program will not be around forever, it is high time for the members of the armed group to return to the folds of the law before it will be terminated soon." Col Villanueva furthered.

In his message, MGen Rafael Valencia said that "While the NPAs celebrate their anniversary today we are celebrating the return to the folds of the law of our fellow Filipinos. He further shared that "We are celebrating this as our "Victory of Peace" while we would like to entice other government officials to help us facilitate those who still want to return to the folds of the law." AES / MCAG / Photos by 10DPAO

www.pna.gov.ph

9 ex-rebels get PHP.405M for surrendering weapons in Davao Del Sur

MANILA, March 30 (PNA) -- Nine former New People's Army (NPA) fighters in Davao Del Sur received Tuesday PHP405,000 in checks under the government's firearm remuneration program or the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP).

Capt. Rhyen Batchar, 10th Infantry Division public affairs office chief, said the handover of the checks and weapons was held at Arnaldo's Hotel in Digos City.

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The rebel beneficiaries were Rodanny Ansudo, who was got PHP58,000 for turning over a serviceable AK-47 automatic rifle; Banases Mariano, PHP2,000 for surrendering a .357 revolver; Odoy Malbino, PHP45,000 for an M-16 automatic rifle and Bening Mental, PHP30,000 for one M-1 Garand carbine.

All of these men surrendered to troops of the 73rd Infantry Battalion.

While the five other ex-rebel beneficiaries who surrendered to the 39th Infantry Battalion were Roger Parasa, got PHP60,000 after he surrendered an M-14 rifle; Charlie Pasco, PHP60,000 for another M-14, while Roy Parasa, Cornelio Mampo and Guillier Ombaoy, got PHP50,000 for turning over their M-16 automatic rifles.

The amount given depends on the type and serviceability of the weapons, Batchar said. (PNA) FFC/PFN

www.bomboradyo.com

Detachment ng militar, sinalakay uli ng NPA matapos ang kanilang anibersaryo

By Bombo KoronadalPosted in [Latest News](#)Wednesday, 30 March 2016 17:00

KORONADAL CITY - Muli na namang nang-harass ang New People's Army (NPA)- Guerilla Front 72 sa detachment ng 27th IB, Philippine Army sa Barangay Tablo, Tampakan, South Cotabato.

Inihayag ni Lt. Col. Benjamin Leander, commanding officer ng 27th IB, halos 15 armado ang nagpaulan ng bala sa kanilang detachment kaninang alas-7:45 ng umaga subalit agad din namang umatras ang mga ito.

Naniniwala ang opisyal na ang ginawang opensiba ng NPA ay paghihiganti sa mga militar.

Ito'y matapos na may apat na nasugatan sa mga rebelde nang gumanti ang mga CAFGU sa pangha-harass ng mga ito bago ang araw ng kanilang anibersayo kahapon, Marso 29, sa Barangay Danlag sa nasabi ring bayan.

www.bomboradyo.com

Rebelde patay sa engkwentro ng militar sa Agusan del Norte

By Bombo ButuanPosted in [Latest News](#)Wednesday, 30 March 2016 00:20

BUTUAN CITY - Nai-turn over na sa mga local officials at pulisya sa bayan ng Jabonga, Agusan del Norte ang isang New People's Army (NPA) member na napatay sa engkwentro sa pagitan ng militar sa bukirang bahagi ng Brgy. Bangonay sa nasabing bayan.

Ayon kay Capt. Joe Patrick Martinez, regional spokesman ng 4th Infantry 'Diamond' Division, Philippine Army, ang bangkay ng hindi pa kilalang rebelde ay narekober matapos ang 15 minutong engkwentro na nagsimula pasado alas-3:30 kahapon ng hapon.

Narekober din ng mga sundalo ang isang fully loaded na AK47 rifle.

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Ayon kay Capt. Martinez, hinabol ng operating troops ng 29th Infantry Battallion sa ilalim ni Lt. Col. Ariel Orio ang nasabing grupo ng mga rebelde na kanila nang naka-engkwentro nitong nakalipas na mga araw sa bukirin ng mga bayan ng Jabonga at Kitcharao.

Pinuri naman ni Maj. General Benjamin Madrigal Jr., commanding general ng Northeastern at Northern Mindanao, 4th ID ang matagumpay na paghabol ng mga sundalo sa natitirang miyembro ng mga rebelde.

Tumakas ang mga rebelde sa kalapit na Mount Ilong-Ilong kungsaan walang naitalang namatay o kaya'y nasugatan sa tropa ng gobyerno

www.inquirer.net

Suspected rebel killed, another captured in Nueva Ecija firefight

By: [Armand Galang](#)

[@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Central Luzon](#)

03:34 PM March 30th, 2016

CABANATUAN CITY, Nueva Ecija — Government troops killed a suspected rebel, and captured another following a Wednesday morning (March 30) firefight in Nueva Ecija's Carranglan town.

Army soldiers battled an undetermined number of armed men at 5 a.m. in Sitio Kabisalan, Barangay (village) Digidig. The Army launched the operation after receiving intelligence reports about a New People's Army presence there.

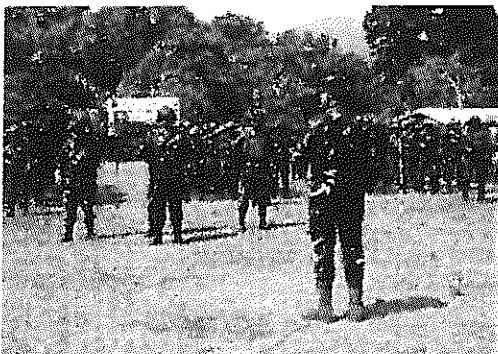
Authorities have yet to identify the fatality and the detained suspect.

Senior Supt. Manuel Cornel, Nueva Ecija police director, said the Philippine Army's 3rd Infantry Battalion and 702nd Brigade, and police officers deployed by the Police Provincial Public Safety were conducting follow up operation as of this posting. **SFM**

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FAREWELL VISIT II CSAFP Visits Joint Task Group Sulu

Armed Forces of the Philippines March 30, 2016



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Camp Bud Datu, Indanan, Sulu (DWDD) – GEN HERNANDO DCA IRIBERRI AFP, Chief of Staff, Armed Forces of the Philippines and his Party were received by Officers and men of the Joint Task Group Sulu (JTGS) during the former's visit at Headquarters JTGS/501st Infantry Brigade on Tuesday, March 29, 2016.

GEN IRRIBERRI's visit was part of the traditional troop visit in order to uplift the morale and spirit of all soldiers in the field.

The Chief of Staff commended the troops of the 10th Infantry Battalion for their feat in their recent encounter against the Abu Sayyaf Group. He also lauded General Alan Arrojado, Commander of the Joint Task Group Sulu, for his sterling leadership and likewise recognized the invaluable services and sacrifices of the soldiers in Sulu for contributing immensely to the overall accomplishment of the AFP's mission.

"The government has been monitoring the activities of JTGS and its efforts in accomplishing its mandated mission, and I am very proud of you," he said.

On his farewell visit, the AFP Chief gave his inspirational message to the officers and enlisted men of the Command as he reiterated his deepest gratitude to them for the support and contributions extended to the AFP and to the country as a whole especially during his stint.

In closing, GEN IRRIBERRI challenged everyone to sustain the gains and continue fight against ASG but at the same time reminded the troops to remain apolitical in the coming elections and to support the COMELEC in ensuring honest, orderly, and peaceful elections. **Josephine Jaron Codilla / MCAG**

www.news.abs-cbn.com

Japan seeks to join Balikatan exercises regularly: Pentagon

Kyodo News

Posted at 10:36:16 12 04 PM

WASHINGTON - A senior official of the U.S. Defense Department said Tuesday that Japan is in talks with the Philippines about participating in joint drills with the United States on a regular basis.

Amy Searight, deputy assistant secretary of defense for South and Southeast Asia, was referring to the Balikatan joint exercises the U.S. and Philippine militaries conduct near the South China Sea, where the latter is involved in territorial disputes with China.

"Japan is talking to the Philippines about a Status of Forces Agreement, so that Japan can regularly participate in those kinds of exercises," Searight told a think tank event in Washington.

The envisioned agreement would govern the operations of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces in the Philippines.

"Japan is participating (in the Balikatan drill) as an observer. Japan very much wants to participate more," she said.

Japan, under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, has sought closer defense cooperation with the Philippines, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries in an apparent bid to increase pressure on China, which

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claims sovereignty over most of the South China Sea as well as the Japanese-administered Senkaku group of islets in the East China Sea.

In February, Japan signed a deal with the Philippines to transfer defense equipment and technology as part of efforts to build closer security ties, following similar accords with countries such as Australia, Britain and India.

www.pna.gov.ph

AFP reiterates 'no ransom policy' on abducted Indon sailors

By Priam F. Nepomuceno

MANILA, March 30 (PNA) -- The Armed Forces of the Philippines on Wednesday reiterated its strict compliance with the government's 'no ransom policy' while assuring the mobilization of all resources to resolve the kidnapping incident which involved 10 Indonesian sailors off the coast of Tawi-Tawi.

This was stressed by AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla.

"The CSAFP (Chief-of-Staff AFP, Gen. Hernando DCA Iriberry) during his visit to the WMC (Western Mindanao Command in Zamboanga City) yesterday reiterated AFP's strict compliance to the government's 'no ransom policy'," he added.

Padilla pointed out the rationale behind the measure, noting that activities of kidnapping groups will persist if they continue to acquire ransom money from their victims.

"If we are to end kidnapping-for-ransom (KFR) activities, we must deny these groups from achieving or getting their primary motive. The AFP will take strong action to discourage and will report monitored incidents of negotiations," the military official stressed.

Regarding the identity of the kidnappers of the Indonesian sailors, Padilla said they are still to establish this with certainty.

"Although certain information received indicated that this is again a handiwork of the ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) the AFP and all other government agencies in the province must first work to check, authenticate & validate these information to ascertain credibility before any confirmation can be done," he added.

However, Padilla said that the kidnapping of the Indonesians over the weekend could have been conducted by groups sympathetic to the ASG bandits as the latter have been hard hit by government security forces in Basilan and Jolo for the past weeks.

"We see that the mounting pressure on the targeted groups in these areas may have compelled some of their sympathetic allies to initiate diversionary tactics to ease the pressure on their besieged forces. This may indicate that our forces are correctly pursuing core groups holding key hostages held by these KFR (kidnap-for-ransom) groups," he added.

Despite this, focused military operations will continue against the bandit group. (PNA)
BNB/PFN

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www.inquirer.net

AFP: Rescue of Indonesian hostages an internal matter

By: Frances Mangosing

@FMangosingINQ

INQUIRER.net

03:44 PM March 30th, 2016

Thanks, but no thanks.

Amid offers of the Indonesian military and police to help in the rescue of their 10 nationals abducted by the Abu Sayyaf, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Wednesday said it was capable of doing the job by themselves.

"Per our Constitution, we do not allow military forces here without a treaty," said AFP spokesperson Col. Restituto Padilla.

Based on news reports, Indonesian Defense Minister Ryamizard Ryacudu said they were ready to help in the rescue of the hostages should the Philippines ask for it.

"It's a foreign country. If we are not allowed to enter then we cannot force it. If Manila is ready to settle it themselves, then we'll wait, but if they need help, then we should enter," Ryamizard was quoted as saying.

But Padilla said that "the AFP has the capability to do its mandate."

The Abu Sayyaf is demanding a P50-million ransom for the release of the Indonesian hostages abducted in Sulu waters last Saturday.

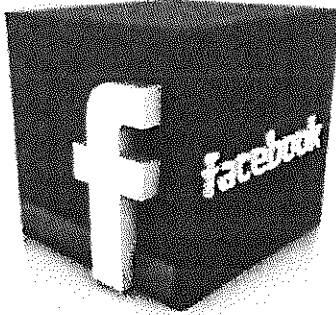
The victims are onboard a tugboat Brahman 12 when the gunmen boarded the vessel, according to military reports.

A smaller vessel was used to tow the tugboat and was later recovered in the waters of Tawi-Tawi. **RC**

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UNDER SCRUTINY II PN Investigates Derogatory FB post

By: Dennis, March 30, 2016 06:00pm (News, Medium)



MANILA (DWDD) – The Philippine Navy is currently investigating the derogatory Facebook post of a certain member of the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC), Staff Sergeant Nelson V. dela Noche, accusing Zamboanga women as “malandi (flirt), pokpok (prostitute) and social climber” which incited the ire of netizens especially the women of Zamboanga City. Brigadier General Jose Johriel Cenabre, PMC Deputy Commandant, said that an investigation is under way, saying that it is difficult to “jump the gun” on dela Noche as the latter is in Adelaide, Australia to compete with other members of the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation at the Australian Dragon Boat Championships and 10th International Dragon Boat Festival from March 28 to April 7, 2016.

“We will take action against the alleged misdemeanour of subject Marine personnel,” he assured. “We have also reminded and cautioned all the Marines from posting unsavoury comments on social, political and security issues in social media. Rest assured that the Marine headquarters will take necessary and immediate action on the matter,” he added.

Dela Noche, married, of Sampinit, Bago City, Negros Occidental, could be seen in his alleged facebook posts (Nelson dela Noche from Bacolod City) to be initially conversing with a woman named “Chareety” until their subsequent conversations turned sour. The woman threatened that she would get back at dela Noche for insulting her with derogatory remarks.

Writing on his Facebook account “Nelson dela Noche from Manila, Philippines) Tuesday night, dela Noche denied that he owned the other Facebook account.

Brigadier General Cenabre said that dela Noche would be recalled to the Philippine Marine headquarters to give his side on the matter as soon as he arrives from Australia.

In separate statement sent to this writer, the Philippine Navy said it is saddened by the issue pertaining to the derogatory Facebook posts of a certain Sgt Nelson Dela Noche.

Capt. Lued L. Lincuna, Director of the Naval Public Affairs Office said that per their verification, Sgt Dela Noche “is indeed a member of the Philippine Navy Marines, assigned with The Naval Special Service Office and a member of the Dragon Boat Team competing in Australia right now.”

“The Philippine Navy assures the public that we do not condone such statement that degrades our fellow people hence the immediate conduct of investigation as per directive coming from Philippine Navy leadership, to ascertain the culpability of Sgt Dela Noche.

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We will strongly abide by and fully implement our standing policies on the responsible use of social media, and the strict sense of respect and professionalism within our rank and file," he said.

In a letter to Armed forces Chief of Staff General Hernando DCA Iriberrri, Zamboanga City Mayor Beng Climaco requested for an investigation to clarify the issue.

"As the principal author of the Magna Carta of women, during my stint at the House of Representatives, it is our desire to be able to uplift conditions of women by not subjecting them to verbal, physical, emotional and other forms of abuse," Climaco said.

"May I then seek that under your leadership an investigation be conducted to clarify this issue... As a Zamboangena I feel that there should be prudence in using social networking sites, especially if we are part of an organization that should highlight integrity and honor," she added.

In a telephone interview, Mayor Climaco said she is saddened by the issue as she expressed hope that during the investigation it would be proven that the account was a fake and that the postings did not come from a member of the Philippine Marine Corps whom she highly respects.

She said she holds the Philippine Marines in highest esteem and that they have been an invaluable partner of the City Government of Zamboanga in upholding law and order and in uplifting the lives of the Zamboangenos.

However, she said that in case it is proven that dela Noche is guilty of the offense, there is need to address what could be Post Traumatic Stress Disease (PTSD) prevalent among soldiers. **Josephine Jaron Codilla / MCAG**

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