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

13 May 2016

Friday

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**The Manila Times**

**PANAHOON TV**

**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST** MAY 13, 2016 | FRIDAY

TAIL END OF A COLD FRONT AFFECTING EXTREME NORTHERN LUZON, EASTERLIER AFFECTING EASTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY (MAY 12, 3:00 PM)

**SUNRISE** 5:29 AM  
**SUNSET** 6:16 PM  
**MOONRISE** 11:28 AM  
**MOONSET** 11:33 PM  
**NEW MOON** MAY 7 1:30 PM  
**FIRST QUARTER** MAY 14 10:21 AM  
**LOW TIDE** 1:02 PM  
**HIGH TIDE** 7:07 PM  
-0.02 Meter  
1.03 Meter

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

**LAOAG CITY** 26 - 33 °C  
**TUGUEGARAO CITY** 26 - 38 °C  
**BACUO CITY** 17 - 25 °C  
**SBMA/CLARK** 26 - 34 °C  
**TAGAYTAY CITY** 23 - 31 °C  
**METRO MANILA** 26 - 35 °C  
**LEGAZPI CITY** 26 - 33 °C  
**ILOILO/BACOLOD CITY** 26 - 33 °C  
**TACLOBAN CITY** 26 - 32 °C  
**PUERTO PRINCESA** 27 - 34 °C  
**METRO CEBU** 26 - 34 °C  
**CAGAYAN DE ORO** 25 - 34 °C  
**ZAMBOANGA CITY** 25 - 34 °C  
**METRO DAVAO** 26 - 36 °C

	MAY 13 SATURDAY	MAY 14 SUNDAY	MAY 15 MONDAY	MAY 16 TUESDAY	MAY 17 WEDNESDAY	MAY 18 THURSDAY
METRO MANILA	26 - 36 °C	26 - 35 °C	26 - 36 °C	17 - 26 °C	17 - 25 °C	17 - 26 °C
METRO CEBU	26 - 33 °C	26 - 34 °C	27 - 36 °C	26 - 34 °C	27 - 34 °C	26 - 34 °C
METRO DAVAO	25 - 36 °C	24 - 35 °C	25 - 36 °C	25 - 35 °C	25 - 34 °C	25 - 34 °C
BAGUIO						
PUERTO PRINCESA						
BORACAY						

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# No poll fraud—Comelec

## 'Minor change in code didn't alter vote count'

By Jocelyn R. Uy  
and Yuji Vincent Gonzales  
*Inquirer.net*

**THE COMMISSION on Elections** (Comelec) yesterday dismissed allegations of fraud in the May 9 elections, saying a change in the data packet for a transparency server was just "cosmetic" and did not affect the counting of votes.

"I can categorically say there is no cheating," Comelec Chair Andres Bautista said at a press briefing yesterday afternoon.

Bautista said the correction was cosmetic. "It does not in any way change the results, the counting and the canvassing of votes and the source code of the automated election system (AESL)." .

The Comelec made a clarification after the camp of vice presidential candidate Sen. Fer-

COMELEC/AIS

From page A1

dinand Marcos Jr. cried fraud in the counting of votes that led to administration candidate Camarines Sur Rep. Leni Robredo grabbing the lead from Marcos.

The Marcos camp, through lawyer Francesca Huang, on Wednesday said a new script was introduced in the transparency server "from which the PPCRV

(Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting) obtains its data for the quick count," altering the hash codes of the packet data.

The son and namesake of the late dictator was leading the early count by as much as a million on Monday evening, but the widow of the late Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo eventually overtook him early Tuesday. As of yesterday afternoon, Robredo was still ahead of Marcos by more than 200,000 votes.

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### Lapse in protocol

The Comelec acknowledged a lapse in protocol as the political parties were informed about the adjustment only after Smartmatic project manager Marlon Garcia had changed the special character "?" that appeared in the names of certain candidates to "ñ." Smartmatic is the technology provider for the elections.

Officials also said the Comelec en banc was not notified before the change, except for the poll body's IT officer Rouie Peñalba, who witnessed the adjustment.

Peñalba was stationed at Pope Pius Center in Manila, where the PPCRV was conducting the quick count using the transparency server.

Election Commissioner Christian Robert Lim said the outcome of the adjustment in the script of the data packet was a changed hash code.

But he said the hash code that changed was merely that of the data packet and was entirely different and separate from the hash code of the AES.

He explained that "?" appeared in the names of certain candidates since the transparency server system, which was written in the English language, could not process or understand the letter "ñ."

"So what they did is they introduced a script that will understand what 'ñ' means in the transparency server," he said.

### Should have been overruled

But if he were informed before the minor change was implemented, he would have overruled it so as not to add fuel to rumors of cheating.

The Marcos camp said its allegation of fraud was based on information from an IT expert monitoring the PPCRV quick count. The senator's camp, however, did not present evidence to back its claims.

### Change uncovered

The IT expert, who asked to be interviewed on the condition of anonymity, told Inquirer.net that hash codes of packet data in the transparency server were changed.

"At 8 p.m., May 10, in the course of our regular verification of the files that we are extracting from the transparency server, we uncovered something that is not correct—the paired hash codes of the file is not the same," the source said in an interview early Thursday morning.

The source, who works as a lead IT consultant in a private company, refused to divulge his identity, saying that they were covered by a nondisclosure agreement with the Comelec.

The PPCRV said it was leaving it to the Comelec to respond to allegations that a new script

was introduced on the transparency server receiving the votes to change the hash code.

In a report submitted to the Comelec on May 12, Smartmatic project director Elie Moreno recounted how the introduction of the script was triggered at around 7 p.m. at the PPCRV Center.

### Observer's observation

An "observer," whom Bautista identified as Robert Locke, an IT technical staff of an online news network, called the attention of Peñalba to the presence of several question marks in some of the candidates' names where the letter "ñ" should have appeared.

The Comelec IT officer then notified the Smartmatic technical

support team led by Garcia about the concern.

"Upon being notified by the Comelec and after validating that changing '?' characters required a minor cosmetic change to appease the observers at the PPCRV transparency center, the Smartmatic technical support team addressed the concern by introducing the correction of the script in the presence of everyone present there," Moreno wrote.

Following the adjustment, the Comelec IT officer and the Smartmatic technical support team announced to all those present at the PPCRV transparency center that the correction was made and all subsequent data packages would re-

with "ñ" instead of "?," he said.

### CCTV

Moreno further said in his report that the change was done openly in the presence of the political parties and was witnessed by the Comelec IT officer.

"Furthermore, such action was done in full view of several people in the PPCRV transparency center with full knowledge that a CCTV system is in place," Moreno said.

In a separate report to the Comelec en banc, Peñalba said William Yu of the PPCRV validated the data package by reverting the "?" and then re-hashed it, confirming that the hash was the same. "This means that only the [special character]

in the names of the candidates was changed," Peñalba said.

### Compare results

Bautista said to quash suspicions of fraud, all results could be compared with the printed election returns of the vote-counting machines (VCMs), the electronic results transmitted from all the VCMs, the results in the Comelec's central server, the PPCRV's transparency server and the results shown on the Comelec's website.

The Comelec also announced yesterday that it would make available "hopefully today" the original script and the amended script with their respective hash codes for publication and scrutiny of anyone. *With reports from Leila B. Salaverria and Marlon Ramos*

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# VP race: Cayetano concedes to Leni

By ROBERTZON RAMIREZ

With about 1.3 million votes still to be tallied in the unofficial quick count as of yesterday afternoon, Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, the runningmate of incoming president Rodrigo Duterte, conceded to administration candidate Leni Robredo.

"I humbly concede my vice presidential bid to Rep. Leni Robredo who, by all accounts and with 96 percent of the votes already tallied, is our country's presumptive vice president-elect," Cayetano said in a statement yesterday.

He expressed belief Robredo "is not only leading the race, she has clearly won it."

The senator is trailing the Camarines Sur congresswoman by a wide margin in the unofficial tally. She is neck-and-neck with Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in the race.

Cayetano also called on other candidates to respect the people's decision and to rally behind Duterte and Robredo.

"While losing an election hurts, nothing is more painful than the sight of a divided country," Cayetano said. "Let us begin the journey toward healing and unification."

He expressed confidence that Robredo would also "respect and value" the people's full support for Duterte as well as his vision for real change.

"I call on the people to rally behind our newly elected leaders. It is in this crucial hour that our voice is needed the most. Let us work together and let the process of real change begin," he said.

## Respect democracy, Bongbong urged

The camp of Robredo called on Marcos to respect the democratic process and refrain from making baseless allegations.

Georgina Hernandez, Robredo's spokesperson, said the Marcos camp should observe the proper process of reporting incidents of cheating instead of making accusations that are not backed by evidence.

"Let us respect the process. The people have spoken. It is clear that Congresswoman Leni Robredo has retained her lead. Let us respect the democratic exercise, and unite so we can move on and serve the nation," Hernandez said.

"We respect the right of everyone to express their views. Why not follow the proper process? Accusations should not be made public without enough evidence. If they see any form of cheating, they should go to the appropriate agencies," she added.

Hernandez said they have confidence in the work being done by the Commission on Elections (Comelec) despite the allegations made by Marcos.

"We continue to believe that we had a clean election and there was no cheating," she said.

The Robredo camp remains optimistic that the LP vice presidential aspirant would maintain her lead in the canvassing.

"We are positive that the counting is about to be finished and we will know the results of this election," Hernandez said.

Hernandez, however, declined to say when Robredo would declare victory.

Hernandez said Robredo has forgiven her bashers even if they do not apologize for their remarks.

"Many comments have been hurled at Congresswoman Leni and she has already forgiven all those who spoke ill of her," Robredo's spokesperson said.

"For her, what is important is we unite and we stop the bashing in social media so there can be healing and unity," she added.

Among those who bashed Robredo, who represents a district in Camarines Sur, was Sofia Romualdez, the 16-year-old daughter of newly proclaimed Tacloban mayor Cristina Gonzales-Romualdez. The teenager swore at the leading vice presidential candidate and called her stupid.

Romualdez is the wife of outgoing Tacloban Mayor Alfred Romualdez who is a cousin of Marcos.

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### Robredo votes

Hernandez said the large number of votes obtained by Robredo was a product of hard work and clean campaigning.

She issued the statement after the Marcos camp said that fraud led to Robredo's surge in the vote tally that put her ahead in the vice presidential race.

Marcos' running mate, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, also alleged that cheating led to Robredo's topping the latest count.

Hernandez said surveys conducted in April by various outfits including Pulse Asia and Social Weather Stations showed Robredo gaining ground.

### 'Genuine defeat can make Bongbong concede'

Only a "genuine defeat" would be acceptable to Marcos, who is neck-and-neck with Robredo in the vice presidential race.

"We are willing to accept genuine defeat, not one that is

the product of manipulation," Rep. Jonathan de la Cruz of party-list group Abakada told the Usaping Balita forum at the Serye Café yesterday.

He said Marcos would not hesitate to concede if his supposed loss to Robredo would be shown in an accurate and honest vote count.

De la Cruz is part of the campaign team of Marcos for whom he worked when the senator was Ilocos Norte governor. He had also served the regime of the senator's father as a labor official and ambassador.

"Leni's camp is saying that we are complaining because we are a sore loser. Let me remind them that no one has won because the tabulation going on is just an unofficial tally, and the official canvass by Congress will start on May 25 yet," he said.

In the unofficial count, Robredo is ahead of Marcos by about 200,000 votes. De la Cruz said his candidate was leading by 900,000 votes in the early hours of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) tabulation on Monday night.

"But at about 7:30 p.m., a Smartmatic technician, who is a Venezuelan national, changed the script of the transparency server without authorization from PPCRV and notice to candidates through their lawyers. If you do that, you can corrupt the entire system," he said.

He said they are seeking an explanation from the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and its automation service provider Smartmatic why "such intervention" was made.

"We started losing after that. There were 31 updates made in the PPCRV count, and each time, we lost by about 40,000 votes," he added.

He said Marcos plans to ask the Comelec and the PPCRV to redo their tabulation or do a manual count of precinct-level results.

Reminded that such move would serve no purpose, as it is the official canvass that would matter, De la Cruz said, "we want the people to be properly informed."

According to the camp of Robredo, she started to overtake Marcos when votes from the Bicol region, Western and Central Visayas, and Negros Island were tabulated.

It said the early lead of Marcos came from votes from the Ilocos region and Cagayan Valley.

De la Cruz said vote transmission irregularities have been uncovered in the official Comelec canvass of senatorial votes.

He said about 200,000 votes for former senator Juan Miguel Zubiri and another 200,000 from Francis Tolentino "migrated" to former justice secretary Leila de Lima.

"That is why the Comelec was forced to suspend the canvass," he added.

De la Cruz also questioned why ballot boxes containing manually accomplished certificates of canvass (COCs) delivered to the Senate were deposited in the office of Senate President Franklin Drilon of the Liberal Party.

"In the past, these were kept in the Senate session hall under guard by security personnel of the chamber," he said.

The COCs will be transferred to the House of Representatives, where the official canvass would take place. They will be compared with the electronic COCs to be generated every time a manually filled out certificate is brought out and tallied.

De la Cruz also said the Comelec must explain the role of Venezuelan Smartmatic project director Marlon Garcia in directing the quick count of votes.

Garcia, according to some media reports, allegedly ordered the introduction of a new computer command that triggered the dramatic increase of votes for Robredo.

- With Alexis Romero, Jess Diaz, Paolo Romero, Perseus Echeminada, Romina Cabrera

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## The Manila Times

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# 67 new officers join Philippine Army

SIXTY-seven officers are expected to beef up the Philippine Army's personnel and operational capabilities with their graduation from the Officer Preparatory Course (OPC) "Kapyanan" Class 65-2015.

The officers, 18 of them female, have successfully completed six months of rigid military training at the Officer Candidate School, Training and Doctrine Command, Philippine Army in Camp O'Donnell, Capas, Tarlac.

Col. Benjamin Hao, Army spokesman, said more or less 40 percent of the graduates are former enlisted personnel of the Army, while the rest are professionals in agriculture and forestry, criminology, business administration, engineering, information technology and education.

One of the graduates is a former Police Officer 1 of the Philippine National Police.

Held at the Philippine Army Officers Clubhouse in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City (Metro Manila) on Thursday, the graduation was

graced by Lt. Gen. Eduardo Ano, Army commander.

Topping the class was 2nd Lt. Allan M. Due, while 2nd Lt. Mark Anthony Pantaleon and 2nd Lt. Romeo Marayad, placed second and third, respectively.

Recipient of the Physical Fitness Award was 2nd Lt. Rhean Jelly Sanchez.

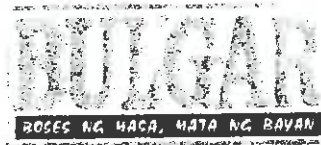
In his speech, Ano encouraged the new lieutenants to harness the knowledge, skills, experience and wisdom that they have acquired in the training.

"Your new responsibility demands your strength, commitment to service and readiness to sacrifice oneself in the fulfillment of your duty. As platoon leaders, in your hands lie the responsibility not only of leading our troops in the accomplishment of your missions but also of taking an active role in bringing the Philippine Army closer to its vision of becoming a world-class Army that is a source of national pride," he said.

**FERNAN MARASIGAN**

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Pahina. 6

### **NPA TODAS SA ENKUWENTRO**

**AGUSAN DEL SUR**—Isang hindi kilalang miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA) ang namatay sa engkuwentro sa pagitan ng tropa ng pamahalaan at mga rebelde sa Bgy. San Jose, Prosperidad sa lalawigan ng ito kamakalawa.

Nabatid na nagkaengkuwentro ang mga sundalo ng Philippine Army (PA) at NPA sa nasabing lugar at dito napatay ang isang rebelde.

Nang matantiya na agrabiyado sila sa engkuwentro ay mabilis na tumakas ang mga NPA.

Sa ngayon ay maalam na ng mga awtoridad ang pagkakakilanlan sa napaslang na rebelde.

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**HIGH SPIRITS** Philippine Army servicemen and non uniformed personnel join in a boodle fight at Camp Aguinaldo to celebrate the peaceful and orderly elections last Monday. PHOTO BY MIKE DE JUAN

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## BusinessMirror

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### Armed Forces lowers alert status to 'normal'

**T**HE military downgraded on Thursday its alert status as it shifted its operations to normal from the election mode, three days after the presidential elections, which the National Police (PNP) earlier declared as relatively peaceful.

Armed Forces (AFP) Acting Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda said the soldiers would resume their internal security operations duties from the previous poll-focused tasks, as the red-alert status was lowered to blue, despite the holding of special elections tomorrow in some areas of the country.

"We are now shifting our focus from election operations to internal security operations. However, the Unified Commands of the AFP remain to have the prerogative to implement security adjustments in their areas of responsibility as they see fit," a statement read. "Also, security efforts will remain intensive in areas where the Comelec [Commission on Elections] has declared the conduct of special elections on Saturday, May 14. Due to this, many of our line units are committed in ensuring that the rest of the country gets to freely and safely cast their votes," the statement added.

Miranda, however, said that, although a blue alert was already in effect, commanders were still tasked to ascertain whether the alert status would need to be readjusted depending upon their assessments of the prevailing security situations in their operational areas.

He also said sufficient forces would remain at the general headquarters in order to ensure the readiness of the military to respond to any eventualities that may occur until the formal takeover of the government by the new administration.

"I am giving that prerogative to my area commanders to determine as to what alert level they could be maintaining. But as far

as GHQ is concerned, of course, we still have some pocket forces so to speak, that is enough based on our best estimate to attend for any other eventualities that may occur from here on, up to the transition of authorities," the chief of staff said.

In the areas where the special elections would be held, Miranda said soldiers should continue performing their election-related security duties in tandem with the PNP.

"The marching order is very clear to them, that until that time that the Comelec so declares that it's already over, it's only then that we will slack our security positioning in those areas," he said.

The PNP said the special elections would be held in 52 clustered precincts with about 17,657 voters.

Military Spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said these precincts where the elections have failed on May 9 are mostly in Western Mindanao, particularly in the Sulu and Lanao provinces.

Miranda said the military has performed its task during the elections and it will continue to do so even after the special elections.

"We had really accomplished our mission by all parameters, by all measurements; that indeed, we had a peaceful and orderly election," he said. "But I would just like to remind [our troops] that it is not over yet. We play by the rules, and until that time there will be a complete transition of power, the AFP will remain to be vigilant and, of course, nonpartisan for this purpose and see to it that the transition of power will be carried on smoothly as, of course, everybody would be expecting." *Rene Acosta*

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The Manila Times

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## AFP DOWNGRADES ALERT STATUS

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has downgraded its alert level in light of the relatively peaceful and orderly elections in most parts of the country last May 9.

But Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda, acting AFP chief of staff, on Thursday said the heightened or red alert status still holds for so-called election hotspots.

"We downgraded the alert already to blue alert except in some other areas, and as far as the area command is concerned, I am giving that prerogative to my area commanders to determine as to what alert level they would be maintaining. But as far as GHQ (General Headquarters) is concerned, of course we still have some pocket forces, so to speak, that is enough based on our best estimate to attend to any eventualities that may occur from here on, up to the transition of authorities," Miranda told reporters at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City (Metro Manila).

Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla Jr., AFP

spokesman, said the red alert status will remain over at least 52 special polling areas in southern Philippines, particularly in Sulu and Lanao provinces and western Mindanao.

Miranda said while the AFP had accomplished its mission, its task is far from over until a transition of power is completed.

"The AFP will remain to be vigilant and, of course, non-partisan for this purpose and see to it that the transition of power will be carried out smoothly as of course everybody would be expecting," he added.

In areas where there will be special elections scheduled by the Commission on Elections, Miranda said security forces will remain until the Comelec declares conclusion of the voting process.

He added that operations against threat groups like the terrorist Abu Sayyaf Group were not affected by the deployment of forces for election duties.

**FERNAN MARASIGAN**

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# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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## Alert level down

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE SECURITY sector is gearing up for the special polls to be held on May 14 in 11 towns in the Visayas and western Mindanao where the Commission on Elections had declared a failure of elections.

Two days after the May 9 national elections, the Armed Forces of the Philippines on Wednesday downgraded its alert status to blue, except for the 11 towns where the heightened alert level remained.

"The marching orders are very clear to them (troops) that until such time that the Comelec so declares that it's over, it's only then we will slacken our security positioning in those areas," Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda, acting AFP chief of staff, said yesterday.

Special elections will be held in 52 clustered precincts in those 11 towns on Saturday, which would allow 17,657 registered citizens to vote.

In Camp Aguinaldo yesterday, Miranda thanked the 125,000-strong AFP for the successful securing of Monday's electoral exercise.



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The Manila Times

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## PNP, AFP to act as BEIs in special polls tomorrow

By AARON B. REQUENCO

Policemen will be deployed both to secure and act as Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) in some areas which will hold special elections on May 14.

Chief Superintendent Wilben Mayor, spokesman of the Philippine National Police (PNP), said they will be implementing the same security template for 52 areas where 17,657 people will vote.

The areas include barangays in Western, Central and Eastern Visayas.

"We will also be coordi-

nating with the Commission on Elections as to the areas where policemen who will serve as BEIs will be deployed," said Mayor.

Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda, chief of the staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said enough soldiers will be tapped to augment the policemen if necessary.

Mayor said they see no problem in securing the 52 areas, explaining that they could focus much on them compared to the May 9 elections when they had to secure more than 92,000 polling precincts across the country.

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The Manila Times

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## AFP retirees' career transition system eyed

by CHARISSA M. LUCI

Lawmakers are seeking to establish a Military Transition System that would open opportunities for retirees as civilian professionals after their service at the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

MAGDALO Party-list Reps. Gary C. Alejano and Francisco Ashley L. Acedillo filed House Bill 5935 or the "Military Transition System Act" to provide high value job opportunities for retired AFP personnel.

"The productivity of the military personnel extends beyond their age of retirement. It would be beneficial if they will be given the chance to render their skills and expertise as civilian profes-

sionals," they said.

Under Presidential Decree 1650, military personnel are required to retire from service at the age of 56.

"Their continued employment would help generate income and tax revenues which the government can use to fund programs for basic services. This would also provide smooth transition between sectors and offer active personnel of the military employment opportunities after their service in the AFP," Acedillo said.

House Bill 5935 mandates the AFP, together with the concerned agencies to establish a Military Transition Board, Higher Education Course and Prior Training Equivalency Program and Employment Assistance.

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BusinessMirror

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# Military vows to support Duterte stance with CPP

By RENE ACOSTA @reneacostaBM

**T**HE military has assured it will support and follow the tack of its incoming commander in chief in his peace efforts with the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA).

A statement by the Armed Forces (AFP) said the institution would implement the peace policy of President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte, especially its end goal to end the country's internal security problems.

"The AFP, as [a] professional military organization, respects the choice of the Filipino people, and will remain solid behind the Constitution and our democratic institutions," the AFP's statement on May 12 read. "We will follow our commander in chief and will implement the new president's peace

and security policies, especially those that will bring the conflicts that ail the country for decades to their just end."

Even before the results of the May 9 elections unearthed Duterte as the president in waiting, the incoming commander in chief has already said he will talk with the CPP-NPA and would even invite Jose Maria Sison, a political exile, to come home.

Duterte, who some said has socialist inclinations, even vowed that there would be peace with the communists under his term.

Armed Forces Acting Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda refused to elaborate on the stand of the military on Duterte's peace track with Sison and his group.

However, he said they would support whatever efforts that could lead to the end of the country's internal conflict with various groups.

"The AFP, from the very start, has been very active *dito sa* peace process," Miranda told reporters. "*Tulad nga 'nung sinabi ko 'nung nag-assume ako na* acting CSAFP, the first best option in conflict resolution is always through peaceful means. *'Yun lang ang masasabi ko.*"

According to Miranda, the stand of the AFP is that the "best first option is a peaceful process."

If indeed Sison will come home, Miranda could not say whether they would arrest the exiled communist leader, whom the military said has standing warrants of arrest.

"We've been fighting for democracy and [this is] a democratic country," Miranda said. "*Lahat ng tao, kung ano man ang karapatan dapat gawin ay gagawin nila.*"



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# Joma prepares to come home

**COMMUNIST** rebel leader Jose Maria Sison has expressed hopes of ending nearly three decades in exile once Mayor Rodrigo Duterte becomes president, a potentially explosive homecoming opposed by senior military figures.

Sison, now 77, fled to Europe soon after peace talks failed in 1987 and has stayed abroad since, while one of Asia's longest-running insurgencies continued to claim thousands of lives.

"I will return to the Philippines if Duterte fulfills his promise to visit me," the Netherlands-based Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder said in comments posted on his Facebook page late Wednesday.

"The prospects [for peace talks] seem to be bright at the moment," Sison added.

Sison, a political science professor, established the CPP in December 1968 and it launched a guerrilla campaign three months later.

According to official account, the rebellion has left at least 30,000 people dead.

The New People's Army (NPA) is believed to have fewer than 4,000 soldiers, down from a peak of 26,000 in the 1980s, according to the military. However the NPA retains support among the deeply

poor in the rural Philippines.

## Political prisoners

President Aquino revived peace talks soon after taking office in 2010 but shelved them in 2013, accusing the rebels of insincerity in efforts to achieve a political settlement.

The talks bogged down after the communists demanded the release of scores of their jailed comrades whom they described as "political prisoners," which the Aquino government rejected.

Duterte, who was Sison's student at a Manila university in the 1960s, is the longtime mayor of Davao City. Some of the communists' strongholds today are near Davao, and Duterte has maintained close relations with them.

Last week, ABS-CBN released footage of Duterte chatting with Sison via Skype on his laptop.

"I'm a socialist," said Duterte, who won Monday's election in a landslide.

The network said the chat took place shortly after communist rebels freed five police hostages last month in Davao.

## 'Arrest and trial of Aquino'

In comments posted on Facebook, Sison congratulated Duterte via an intermediary on his landslide win, and called for the resumption of peace talks, a ceasefire, the release of political prisoners and the "arrest and trial of Aquino."

Duterte was ready to release ailing and elderly rebels on humanitarian grounds, as well as those whom the movement appoints as peace negotiators after vetting by the military, police and state prosecutors, his spokesperson Peter Lavafia said on Thursday.

"Our people are suffering from the internal conflict... [businessmen] doing business in these areas have been suffering for long. Any move to still the guns, declare ceasefire would be very welcome," Lavafia told reporters.

## Meeting in Europe

He said Duterte planned to see Sison during a trip to Europe before the president-elect takes his oath of office on June 30.

Sison's comments were from a transcript of an interview he gave to Dubai's Khaleej Times newspaper.

Sison said he hoped to return home soon, but the communist leader added the new government must first take steps to ensure his personal safety.

AFP

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The Manila Times

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## Joma to end 30-year exile

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Exile A8

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Sison, a political science professor, "reestablished" the CPP in December 1968 and it launched a guerrilla campaign three months later.

The rebellion has left at least 30,000 people dead, by official account.

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The NPA, however, retains support among the deeply poor in rural Philippines.

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settlement.

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Sison's comments were a transcript of an interview he gave to Dubai's *Khaleej Times* newspaper.

Sison said he hoped to return home after Duterte begins his term but the communist leader added that the new government must first take steps to ensure his personal safety.

"I will not dive into any situation in which the Duterte government is still unsettled and there are unwieldy elements... who violently oppose my homecoming," he said.

Lavina said the new government would uphold previous security guarantees for rebel negotiators while the military said it would support Duterte's peace efforts.

"If it's part of the peace efforts, he [Sison] is welcome to come [back] here. But as for his other enemies, that would be another matter," military spokesman Col. Noel Detoyato told *Agence France-Presse* but declined to elaborate.

Senator Antonio Trillanes 4th, a Duterte critic and former military rebel, warned last week that some in the military were "strongly averse" to Duterte's long-standing ties with communists and that the reaction "could be violent."

Lavina said Trillanes' warning was a personal opinion that "remains to be seen."

The spokesman added that Duterte would consider communist figures for his Cabinet, where retired military and police figures would also be represented.

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## Communist chief hopes to end exile under Duterte

By CECIL MORELLA, AFP

**PHILIPPINE communist rebel leader Jose Maria Sison has expressed hopes of ending nearly three decades in exile under the new presidency of Rodrigo Duterte, a potentially explosive homecoming opposed by senior military figures.**

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Incumbent President Benigno Aquino revived peace talks soon after taking office in 2010 but shelved them in 2013, accusing the rebels of insincerity in efforts to achieve a political settlement.

The talks got bogged down after the communists demanded the release of scores of their jailed comrades whom they described as "political prisoners", which the Aquino government rejected.

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## *Joma Sison kay Duterte:*

# IKULONG SI P-NOY!

**AYAW patulan ng Malacañang ang tila pagpapakitang-gilas umano ni Communist Party of the Philippines Founding Chairman Jose Maria Sison na ipaa-aresto sina Pangulong Benigno Aquino III at Budget Secretary Florencio Abad kaugnay sa maling paggamit ng Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF).**

Ito ay sa sandaling magkita sina Sison at ang bagong halal na presidente na si Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte. Tinawag kahapon ni Presidential Communications

Secretary Sonny Coloma ang pahayag ni Sison na prospective action dahil hindi naman ito magagawa ngayon hanggang June 30.

Mas mainam aniya na hintayin na lamang ang susunod na administrasyon sa halip na magkalat ng mga ispekulasyon dahil hindi ito nakatutulong sa minimithing paghilom ng bansa.

Nauna rito, inihayag ng mga militanteng grupo na nakahanda na ang mga kasong plunder at katiwalian na isasampa laban kina P-Noy at Abad pagkababa sa puwesto dahil sa isyu ng PDAF at Disbursement Acceleration Program na ipinamudmod sa mga kaalyadong mambabatas.

*(Aileen Taliping)*

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# 4 freed Indons handed over to Indonesian authorities

**By Mario J. Mallari**

The military yesterday turned over the four Indonesian captives freed by the terrorist Abu Sayyaf group to Indonesian authorities along the sea border in southern Philippines.

Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda, acting chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said that the four freed hostages will immediately return to Jakarta.

“As we speak right now, (the four freed Indonesians are) aboard a Philippine Navy vessel that will transfer them to an Indonesian vessel in our border until their final

journey to their country” said Miranda at noontime yesterday.

The four Indonesians, whose identities were not released, were turned over to the AFP-Joint Task Force Sulu on Wednesday afternoon by Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan Jr.

There were reports stating that the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) faction of Chairman Nur Misuari was instrumental in the release of the four Indonesians.

However, Miranda said the military has no information about MNLF’s role in the release.

The victims were crewmembers of a tugboat intercepted by Abu Sayyaf terrorists along the waters

of Tawi Tawi last April 15.

Earlier, 10 Indonesian captives were also released by the Abu Sayyaf group to Tan. Reports also said that the MNLF-Misuari faction played a key role in the safe release of the 10.

In an interview, Rev. Absalom Cerveza, spokesman of MNLF-Misuari faction, neither confirmed nor denied the report.

“As far as we are concerned, we have maintained a good relation with Indonesia through the years,” Cerveza said.

The Abu Sayyaf group is still holding about seven hostages, including three snatched from Samal Island last September and

four Malaysians abducted last month off Sabah.

Among the captives are Canadian Robert Hall and Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad, who were kidnapped from the posh Oceanview Resort on Samal island, and Filipino Marites Flor.

The fourth victim, Canadian John Ridsdel, was beheaded late last month after his family failed to meet the ransom demand. The Abu Sayyaf initially demanded P1 billion for each of the four Samal hostages in exchange to their freedom.

It was not clear, however, if ransom was paid for the release of the four Indonesians.

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## Indonesian Navy to pick up 4 freed Abu captives

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Jakarta sent yesterday Navy vessel to escort back home four Indonesians who were released from captivity by the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

Habib Mujahab Hashim, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) Islamic Com-

mand Council, said Indonesian President Joko Widodo had instructed their Navy to recover the freed hostages.

He added that an Indonesian naval craft was scheduled to arrive yesterday morning in Maimbung town in Sulu to pick up the four

and bring them home to their country.

A security official said the operation has been coordinated with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

Former Indonesian army general Kivlan Zein accom-

panied victims Mochammad Ariyanto Mijnan, Lorens Peter, Dede Irfan Hilmi and Samsir who are all tugboat sailors.

According to Hashim, the MNLF recovered the victims Wednesday following the negotiations conducted by its

chairman Nur Misuari with the Abu Sayyaf.

He believed the bandit group released the hostages "due to pressure" after the MNLF sent 500 combatants in the area.

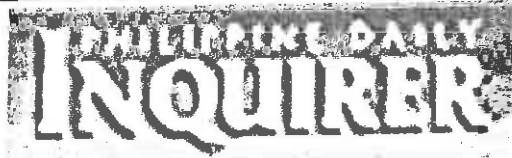
Two weeks ago, Misuari also negotiated for the release of 10

Indonesian captives, he added.

Hashim said Misuari worked for the recovery of the victims as a sign of gratitude to the Indonesian government, which mediated between the MNLF and government in forging a final peace agreement in 1996.

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## *PNP to walk Duterte talk*

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE PHILIPPINE National Police (PNP) is open to enforcing some of the peace and order policies that presumptive president Rodrigo Duterte had implemented as mayor in Davao City.

PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Wilben Mayor said the strict approach that the tough-talking mayor had adopted in his hometown may be used to curb crimes on a national scale.

"If this happened in Davao City and the crime volume or rate went down there, why not all over the country? On the part of the PNP if that will help curb crimes, it will help our campaign against crime," he said.

In a press briefing in Camp Crame yesterday, Mayor cited some of these policies, among them the curfew, no-smoking and liquor ban.

He said the liquor ban from 1 a.m. onwards will help reduce drunken fights that result to cases of physical injuries.

On the other hand, the 10 p.m. curfew for minors will allow them to have adequate sleep and be better prepared for the next school day.

Mayor pointed out that there is no logical reason for youths to stay out late and be at risk of falling prey to criminal elements.

He said the government approach and the cooperation of the community are needed to ensure its smooth implementation.

"Once everybody is conscious of this policy, we will all follow. I think this is high time for us to show that we can follow this kind of policy. The bottom-line policy of our incoming president is discipline, and this can be taught down to our minors," the PNP spokesperson said.

For its part, the Armed Forces of the Philippines said it respects the choice of the majority in electing Duterte, and that it is solid behind the Constitution and democratic institutions.

"We will follow our commander in chief and will implement the new president's peace and security policies," said Col. Noel Detoyato, public affairs office chief.

Acting AFP chief Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda declined to comment if the military will arrest National Democratic Front chief political consultant Jose Maria Sison should he return to the country.

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## PNP ready to secure special elections

By CECILLE SUERTE FELIPE

The Philippine National Police (PNP) is ready to provide security during the special elections on May 14.

The PNP noted the Commission on Elections (Comelec) declared 52 areas in the country will have special elections on Saturday, involving 17,657 voters.

PNP spokesman Chief Supt. Wilben Mayor said the special elections would be held in some areas in Western, Central and Eastern Visayas where the Comelec declared a failure of elections.

Mayor said some police officers will also be deployed as special board of election inspectors (SBEIs) in areas where regular BEIs did not show up for fear of their lives.

Mayor said they would still coordinate with the Comelec on the specific deployment of policemen as SBEIs.

Mayor said there were areas that held no elections last Monday due to security concerns, thus necessitating the deployment of additional police forces.

Among the areas with security concerns are Northern and Western Samar, Lanao del Sur and Sulu.

The Comelec yesterday declared a failure of elections in three more barangays in Maguindanao, Agusan del Sur and Negros Occidental, involving 1,679 voters.

These are barangays Katuli in Sultan Kudarat in Maguindanao; Binucayan in Loreto, Agusan del Sur; and Palayog in Hinigaran, Negros Occidental.

Comelec said no elections were held in five precincts in Binucayan due to lack of 291 official ballots while ballots for four precincts in Palayog were "misdelivered."

In Katuli, the ballot boxes and other election paraphernalia for four precincts were taken by unidentified men during election day.

The Comelec had set special elections in these barangays on Saturday.

The PNP, on the other hand, has started to lower the level of alert as the situation returns to normal after election day.

Policemen were ordered to secure the 92,000 polling precincts to ensure honest, orderly and peaceful elections.

The military also downgraded its alert level with most of the troops returning to internal security operations.

Acting Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda, however, said soldiers will continue to be deployed for poll duties in areas where a failure of elections was declared and special elections are scheduled tomorrow. – **With Jaime Laude, Sheila Crisostomo**

## ONLINE NEWS

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<http://www.pna.gov.ph/>

### AFP downgrades to blue alert status

By Priam F. Nepomuceno

MANILA, May 12 (PNA) – With the May 9 elections successfully concluded in most parts of the country, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has downgraded its red alert status to blue Wednesday afternoon.

This took place 5:00 p.m., said AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla.

By declaring blue alert, only 50 percent of all available troops and assets are required to be inside camp for immediate deployment in case of possible emergencies or contingencies.

In contrast, red alert requires 100 percent availability of all troops and equipment.

The AFP placed all its units in red alert starting midnight of May 7.

"We are now shifting our focus from election operations to internal security operations. However, the Unified Commands of the AFP remain to have the prerogative to implement security adjustments in their areas of responsibility as they see fit," acting AFP chief-of-staff Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda said.

Also, security efforts will remain intensive in areas where the Commission on Elections (Comelec) has declared the conduct of special elections on Saturday.

COMELEC Resolution No. 10129 said there were a total of 52 clustered precincts from 11 towns, mostly in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and Eastern Visayas where no elections were held on Monday due to problems in the ballots and security concerns.

"Due to this, many of our line units are committed in ensuring that the rest of the country gets to freely and safely cast their votes," he added.

Miranda stressed that the AFP, as professional military organization, respects the choice of the Filipino people and will remain solid behind the Constitution and other democratic institutions.

"We will follow our Commander-in-Chief and will implement the new President's peace and security policies, especially those that will bring the conflicts that ail the country for decades to their just end," he added. (PNA)

BNB/PFN



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## **AFP 'no comment' sa report na MNLF ang tumulong sa paglaya ng 4 Indon hostages**

By Analy Soberano

"No comment" ang Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) kaugnay sa report na ang Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) sa Sulu ang gumawa ng paraan para mapalaya ang apat na bihag na Indonesian nationals.

Ayon sa report mismong si MNLF chairman Nur Misuari ang nanguna sa pakikipagnegosasyon para mapalaya ang apat na bihag.

Ayon kay Acting AFP chief of staff Lt Gen. Glorioso Miranda na wala siyang nakuhang report na MNLF ang naging susi para mapalaya ang apat na Indonesian na binihag ng mga bandidong Abu Sayyaf sa Sulu.

Sinabi ng heneral na ang tanging alam niya ay pinalaya na ang apat na banyaga.

Aniya, sa mga oras na ito nakasakay na sa barko ng Philippine Navy ang apat na pinalayang bihag kung saan ililipat sila sa isang Indonesian vessel na naghihintay sa border kung saan sila ibabiyahe pabalik sa kanilang bansa.

"All we know is that four Indonesians has been freed as we speak right now, aboard a Philippine Navy vessel that will transfer them to an Indonesian vessel in our border until their final journey to their country," pahayag ni Miranda.

Sa kabilang dako, ayon kay AFP PAO chief Col. Noel Detoyato na hindi privy ang militar sa ginawang negosasyon ng MNLF.

Aniya, nakipag-ugnayan ang MNLF sa local government unit ng Sulu partikular kay Gov. Toto Tan.

Kay Tan kasi ibinigay ng MNLF ang apat na pinalayang bihag.

Ayon sa report na Martes pa ng gabi nang palayain ang mga bihag sa may Barangay Silangkapan, Indanan kung saan ibinigay ang mga ito sa grupo ng MNLF.

Grupo umano ni ASG sub-leader Alden Bagade alyas Sayning ang may hawak sa apat na Indonesians. Tikom naman ang bibig ng militar kaugnay sa naganap na bayaran ng ransom.

<http://bomboradyo.com/>

## **Joint ops ng AFP,PNP para isecure ang VCM magpapatuloy**

By Bombo Anne Soberano

Magpapatuloy pa rin ang joint operations and duties ng AFP at PNP lalo na sa mga lugar kung saan mayroon pa ring mga vote counting machine at may nagaganap pang mga election related activities partikular sa may bahagi ng Mindanao.

Ayon kay AFP spokesperson Col. Noel Detoyato ginagawa nila ito para masiguro na hindi magkaroon ng oportunidad na bigyan na isabotahe ang resulta ng halalan at ang proseso nito.

Aniya, bagamat tapos na ang halalan naka alerto pa rin ang pwersa ng militar sa mga lugar na kinukunsiderang kritikal.

Mahigpit ding binabantayan ng militar ang mga polling precincts sa Mindanao.

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## DFA: AFP-Indon coordination led to release of 4 Abu captives

By: Estrella Torres



Foreign Affairs Secretary Jose Rene Almendras.  
AP FILE PHOTO

MANILA — Foreign Secretary Jose Almendras said on Wednesday the close coordination between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Indonesia helped facilitate the release of the four remaining Indonesian hostages by the Abu Sayyaf.

“We thank the Indonesian government, particularly Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, for the very close coordination since this morning,” said Secretary Almendras in a statement on Wednesday.

He lauded the cooperation between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Indonesia as key in meeting the objective of getting back the Indonesians alive and safe.

The foreign affairs chief said the Philippines had a trilateral meeting with the foreign ministers of Indonesia and Malaysia to strengthen efforts to combat criminal activities.

Last April 25, Canadian citizen John Ridsdel was beheaded by his Abu Sayyaf captors.

Hostages who remain in the hands of Abu Sayyaf include Canadian Robert Hall, Hall’s Filipino girlfriend, Marites Flor, and a Norwegian, Kjartan Sekkingstad as well as other Filipinos. **SFM/rga**



<http://dwdd.com.ph/>

## **MODERNIZATION || BRP Tarlac will arrive on May 16**

Lui

MANILA — Philippine Navy (PN) flag-officer-in-command Vice Admiral Caesar C. Taccad will lead the welcoming ceremonies for BRP Tarlac (LD-601), the country's first strategic sea lift vessel (SSV), this coming May 16.

The ceremony will be held at Pier 13 of the Manila South Harbor, said PN spokesperson Capt. Lued Lincuna.

Taccad will act as the event's guest-of-honor and speaker. Its highlights are the tribute and recognition to the laudable efforts of the sailors who were instrumental for the ship's safe and successful voyage to the Philippines.

The BRP Tarlac left the Surabaya shipyard of Indonesian builder PT PAL (Persero) last Monday. It is expected to arrive in Manila Bay on Saturday.

The SSVs are programmed to be the PN's floating command-and-control centers especially in the conduct of humanitarian assistance and disaster response and serving other purposes as military sealift and transport vessels.

These vessels are also critical assets for civil-military operations due to their capability of transporting large number of soldiers, logistics, and supplies. Moreover, each SSV has the capacity to house three helicopters.

The ships are estimated to weigh around 7,300 gross register tons.

The Philippines has a two-SSV order with PT PAL (Persero) for PHP3,870,000,000 which is sourced from the AFP Modernization Fund.

The SSV acquisition project for the PN was initiated upon the approval of Acquisition Decision Memorandum Number 2012-060 by Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin last Oct. 30, 2013.

The Department of National Defense declared persero as the Single Calculated Response Bidder with a bidding price of PHP 3, 870, 000, 000 on Nov. 18, 2014.

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## 30 killed, 22 hurt in election violence – CHR

By: Erika Sauler



ELECTION -MAGUINDANAO / MAY 9, 2016: Soldiers are seen outside a public-market turned polling center in Datu Unsay town in Maguindanao, May 9, 2016. The military take over the conduct of election in Datu Unsay due to security reason following confrontation of supporters of candidates running for mayor.PHOTO BY GEOFFREY MAITEM / INQUIRER MINDANAO

MANILA — At least 30 people have been killed and 22 injured in election-related violence, based on reports verified by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

Gemma Parojinog, officer in charge of the CHR policy office, said a total of 72 election-related cases of killings, strafing, gun poking, demolition and harassment have been verified. These cases ranged from as early as March 2015 up to April this year.

In the week leading to Election Day (May 3 to 9), 41 more fatalities were reported to the CHR through its election monitoring initiative with other civil society groups Bantay Karapatan sa Halalan.

CHR Chair Chito Gascon said "it's not right that there are people being killed in a non-election period and it's also not right that people are being killed because of the elections."

"While the conduct of the election has been generally peaceful, we are concerned that there are areas where violence occurred," Gascon said, citing the recent massacre in Rosario, Cavite.

"We've highlighted the killings and injuries but there were other subtle forms of intimidation, such as reverse vote-buying," he said.

In Lipa, Batangas, some voters were given sacks of rice and money and their fingers were inked so they could not vote, according to the Legal Network for Truthful Elections (Lente).

"We anticipate that other violations have not yet been reported and we will double up our efforts in post-election process to validate, verify and collect additional information for filing of charges should evidence warrant," Gascon said. **SFM/rga**

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