

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



ARMY

Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS NEWS CLIPPINGS

15 May 2016

Sunday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR
TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

PANAHON TV
www.panahontv.com

AIR 21
BAGYONG PANAHON

5:00 AM - 5:30 AM
Mondays to Sundays

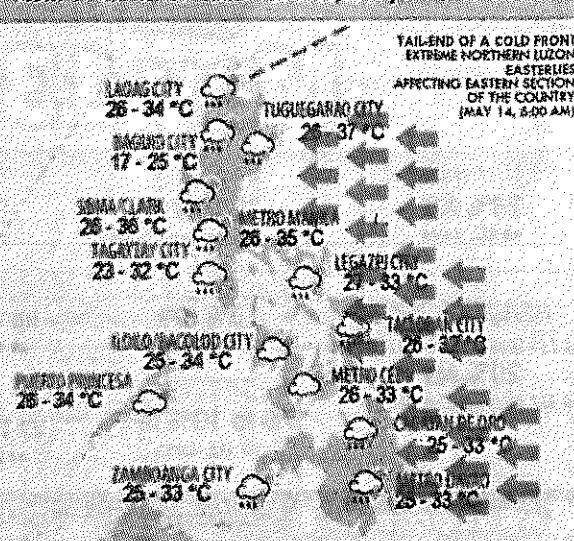
Panahon.TV

SUNRISE 5:28 AM
SUNSET 6:17 PM
MOONRISE 1:08 PM
MOONSET 1:01 AM

LOW TIDE 8:51 PM
HIGH TIDE 8:29 PM

MANILA SOUTH HARBOR

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST MAY 15, 2016 | SUNDAY

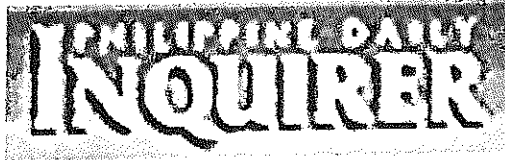


| EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST | MAY 16 MON | MAY 17 TUE | MAY 18 WED | EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST | MAY 16 MON | MAY 17 TUE | MAY 18 WED |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| METRO MANILA | 26 °C 35 °C | 26 °C 36 °C | 26 °C 36 °C | PUERTO PRINCESA | 27 °C 34 °C | 26 °C 33 °C | 27 °C 34 °C |
| TUGUEGARAO | 26 °C 38 °C | 26 °C 38 °C | 25 °C 38 °C | ILOILO/ BACOLOD | 26 °C 33 °C | 26 °C 33 °C | 25 °C 34 °C |
| LAOAG | 26 °C 34 °C | 25 °C 34 °C | 25 °C 33 °C | METRO CEBU | 26 °C 33 °C | 26 °C 34 °C | 26 °C 34 °C |
| BAGUIO | 17 °C 25 °C | 17 °C 26 °C | 17 °C 26 °C | TACLOBAN | 26 °C 33 °C | 26 °C 32 °C | 26 °C 33 °C |
| SBMA/ CLARK | 26 °C 36 °C | 26 °C 36 °C | 26 °C 35 °C | CAGAYAN DE ORO | 24 °C 32 °C | 25 °C 33 °C | 24 °C 33 °C |
| TAGAYTAY | 23 °C 31 °C | 23 °C 32 °C | 23 °C 32 °C | METRO DAVAO | 24 °C 32 °C | 24 °C 32 °C | 25 °C 34 °C |
| LEGAZPI | 26 °C 33 °C | 27 °C 33 °C | 26 °C 32 °C | ZAMBOANGA | 25 °C 34 °C | 24 °C 32 °C | 25 °C 33 °C |



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No cheating,

PPCRV insists

Audit tests show no anomalies in results, says poll watchdog

By Lella B. Salaverria

THE POLL watchdog Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) yesterday said its audit tests had detected no irregularities so far in the election results transmitted to it, although critics continued to question the results of the tight race for the vice presidency.

"We ran several tests, and I am happy to report that there is not a single anomaly found in the tests that we've had so far," Ana de Villa Singson, PPCRV media and communications director, said at a press briefing.

The transparency server that receives the results transmitted from the vote-counting machines is housed at the PPCRV

command center at Pope Pius XII Catholic Center on United Nations Avenue in Manila and the group has access to the data.

The PPCRV has been conducting irregularity tests on the server data since the Philippines began holding automated elections in 2010, but it usually

NO CHEATING/A19

From page A1

releases the results a month or so after the polls, Singson said.

This time, however, the PPCRV decided to release the results of its initial irregularity tests early because of the controversy generated by an alteration made to the transparency server script, which resulted in changes in the hash code.

Officials said the alteration resulted only in a "cosmetic" change—the correction of the spelling of a candidate's name—but critics continue to raise concerns about the integrity of the results, with the camp of Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, who is trailing Camarines Sur Rep. Leni Robredo in the vice presidential race, demanding a public audit of the computer systems of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and its technology partner Smartmatic.

"We hope truly that the hash code issue is not used or overblown to undermine the credibility of an election [that] otherwise seems to be credible as of the date of our study," Singson said.

The PPCRV started the irregularity tests on data received as of Thursday, after 95.85 percent of clustered precincts had transmitted results.

The PPCRV tested for precincts with multiple transmissions of results, Singson said.

She said there were four clustered precincts—one in Parañaque and three in Basilan—where the election returns were placed under observation or investigation. This was likely due to the same machine sending two sets of mismatched data, she said.

Singson said, however, that there was no irregularity.

She explained that the election returns in the four precincts could have been placed under observation because the system did

not know which of the two sets of data to read for the precincts.

Singson said this could happen if the election inspectors mistakenly sent the results of the vote testing conducted on the machines before the elections, as well as the election results.

She also said that there were no precincts that transmitted results before the close of the polls at 5 p.m. on Election Day.

There were also no precincts that reflected exactly 10 votes for Vice President, which would have indicated that the results of the final testing and sealing of the machines were the ones transmitted instead of the results of the actual voting, she said.

The PPCRV also did not find return precincts where the undervote or overvote is greater than the number of voters using a particular position, she said.

There were also no return precincts where the undervote or overvote is greater than 95 percent of voters using a particular position, she said.

Singson also said the 2016 elections had the fastest transmission of results since the country began holding automated elections in 2010.

In that year, the transmission reached 70 percent eight and a half hours after the polls closed, and in 2013 70 percent transmission was reached 22 hours after the elections ended, Singson said.

But this year, 70 percent transmission was achieved four hours after the polls closed, she said.

In 2010, she said, 90 percent transmission was reached after 30 hours. But this year, there was 90 percent transmission 14 hours after the balloting.

The voter turnout was also unprecedented, Singson said. The Comelec recorded an 81 percent voter turnout in the country, and 37 percent for overseas absentee voting.

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Troops deployed for special polls

An Army battalion has been deployed to Lanao del Sur to ensure the smooth conduct of special elections.

Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesman, said yesterday special elections were held in Barangays Picalilangan, Magonaya, Kaililidan, Siete Aisha and Mainidig in Binidayan town.

"Special polling precincts opened as early as 6:30 a.m. So far, it's peaceful and orderly," Padilla said, citing reports received by the 103rd Infantry Brigade.

The military and police in Lanao del Sur are on red alert amid threats from supporters of rival candidates.

Army troops were deployed to Barangay Katuli in Sultan Kudarat where polling precincts opened around 7:10 a.m.

A failure of elections was also declared in the island town of Pata in Sulu after a five-hour encounter between supporters of rival candidates on May 9.

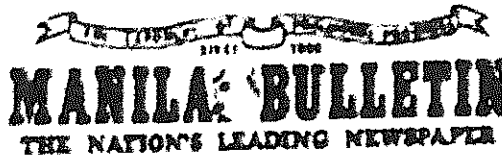
Padilla said polling precincts on Pata Island opened without a hitch.

Troops from the Joint Task Group Sulu were deployed to the island.

– Jaime Laude

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NPA clash kills 3 soldiers in Negros

By TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY — Three government soldiers are dead while two others were injured after a clash with the New People's Army (NPA) in Toboso town, Negros Occidental province.

Lieutenant Colonel Ray Tiongson, spokesman for the Philippine Army's 3rd Infantry Division (3ID), said the dead and injured soldiers were the results of an encounter between the NPA and the 62nd Infantry Battalion (62 IB)'s Alpha Company which happened at around 6:45 a.m. of May 14, 2016.

Tiongson identified the casualties as Private First Class (PFCs) Teddie Alcallaga, Ramel Perasol and Reggie Taleon.

Wounded were Corporal Rosevil Villacampa and PFC Jethro Niervo.

Tiongson said the troops were in Sitio Carbon, in Barangay (village) San Isidro responding to reports relayed by civilians regarding alleged extortion by the NPA. The responding troops, however, encountered an estimated 10 NPA rebels. A firefight ensued for 15 minutes.

Colonel Francisco Delfin, Commander of the 303rd Infantry Brigade (303 IB), has ordered all Philippine Army chiefs on Negros Island to be on alert and extra vigilant after last Saturday's incident.

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The Manila Times

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ARMY TO DISPLAY FLAG IN ALL CAMPS

THE Philippine Army directed its major units to display the national flag in all military camps, bases and offices, to include major thoroughfares nationwide beginning May 15 up to June 30. Army spokesman, Col. Benjamin Hao, said the flying of national colors is part of their support activity to the celebration of 118th Philippine Independence on June 12. A National Flag Day will also be celebrated on May 28 at Imus, Cavite as a take-off ceremony for this year's commemoration, Hao added. The theme of this year's commemoration is "Kalayaan 2016: Pagkakaisa, Pag-aambagan, Pagsulong."

ANTHONY VARGAS

2 troopers slain in Negros clash with Reds

TWO army troopers were killed and two others were wounded in a clash between government soldiers and suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels on Saturday in a remote village in Toboso town, Negros Occidental.

Philippine Army's 303rd Infantry Brigade (IB) information officer, 2nd Lieutenant Ma. Reve-

kka Knothess Roperos, said that troops from the Alpha Company of the 62ndIB were conducting combat patrol operation in Sitio Carbon, Barangay San Isidro in Toboso town when they encountered at least 10 NPA rebels.

The encounter resulted in the death of two soldiers and the wounding of two others. The

names of the slain soldiers were withheld pending notification of their families. The identities of the two wounded soldiers were not included in the report.

Roperos, in a report to Camp Aguinaldo, said that the troops responded to reports by the locals about the presence of armed men in the area who were allegedly

extorting money from residents.

While the troops were approaching the area, they were greeted by a volley of gunfire from the suspects at about 6:45 a.m. on Saturday.

Meanwhile the 62IB is conducting hot pursuit against the perpetrators, Roperos added.

ANTHONY VARGAS

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Military to continue rescue effort for kidnap victims

By Roel Pareño



A still image captured from video footage of the kidnappers and their victims is shown in this SITE Intelligence Group video made available to Reuters. File photo

ZAMBOANGA CITY, Philippines - The military said ground forces will refocus its attention on the recovery of the remaining hostages held separately by the Abu Sayyaf group in Sulu after the 2016 elections.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said troops deployed to ensure security during the May 9 polls have realigned to its prime security mission against the Abu Sayyaf group.

But Tan clarified that other troops continued with the rescue efforts while elections were ongoing.

"It's just that we have also dedicated some of our soldiers to help also secure the elections," the military official said.

Tan said search and pursuit operation continued relentlessly to prevent the Abu Sayyaf group from harming the captives.

In April, the Abu Sayyaf released a video footage, giving warning to the families of hostages taken on Sept. 21, 2015 from Samal Island resort off Davao del Norte.

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3 soldiers killed, 2 hurt in Negros clash

BACOLOD CITY – Three Army troopers were killed and two others were wounded in an encounter with suspected New People's Army guerrillas in Negros Occidental yesterday.

The fatalities were identified as Pfc. Teddie Alcallaga, Reggie Talleon and Ramel Perasol. Wounded were Cpl. Rosevil Villacampa and Pfc. Jethro Niervo.

The soldiers responded to reports that armed men were asking for food from residents of Sitio Carbon, Barangay San Isidro in Toboso town before 7 a.m., said Col. Francisco Del-fin, commanding officer of the 303rd Infantry Brigade.

Pursuit operations have been launched for the rebels.

– Danny Dangcalan

Raps filed vs suspects in Isabela vice mayor's killing

TUGUEGARAO CITY – Murder and robbery charges were filed on Friday against the suspects in the killing of Jones, Isabela Vice Mayor Ronaldo Lucas last month.

Among those charged were Willy Baltazar a resident of Barangay Rizal, San Guillermo, Isabela; Antonino Cortez, alias ka Intoy, of Aparri, Cagayan; a certain Freddie Ruiz, and "Bakla" Eniva from Sitio Dibilisawan in Barangay Sta. Isabel in Jones.

Senior Superintendent Leon Rafael, Isabela police director, said the suspects were identified by Lucas' companions when New People's Army (NPA) rebels seized him during a campaign sortie.

Lucas' body was found along the road a few hours after he was taken hostage.

NPA rebels owned up to the killing, saying Lucas, whom they accused of vote buying, was also involved in the killing of Vice Mayor Florante Raspado during a session of the municipal council last year.

– Raymund Catindig

15 May 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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• **'Oplan Baklas'**

COTABATO CITY (PNA) – Local government officials and employees have conducted Oplan Baklas to rid the city of campaign posters and materials. Members of the Cotabato City police office and Army's Fifth Special Forces Battalion also joined on Friday the clean up drive along major city streets, public market, bus terminals and the Cotabato City plaza. Pedro Tato, city general services officer, said some political parties and local candidates voluntarily removed the tarpaulin and campaign posters. Aside from city government employees, village officials also joined the clean up drive which lasted from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

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Pahina. 2

Bandila idisplay sa mga lansangan, et al

Bilang pagbibigay respeto sa national flag day, bukod sa mga military camps, base at mga tanggapan ay idisplay rin ng Philippine Army sa mga pangunahing lansangan ang bandila ng Pilipinas sa buong bansa.

Ayon kay Army Spokesman Col. Benjamin Hao, ang pagwawagaygay ng bandila ng bansa sa mga major units ng militar at maging sa mga pangunahing lansangan ay magsisimula ngayong araw (Mayo 15) at tatagal hanggang Hunyo 30.

"The display of the national flag is part of the Army's support activity to the 118th Philippine Independence anniversary celebration on June 12", pahayag ni Hao.

Ang National Flag Day ay gugunitain sa Mayo 28 sa makasaysayang lugar sa Imus, Cavite sa pagsisimula ng selebrasyon sa bandila ng bansa.

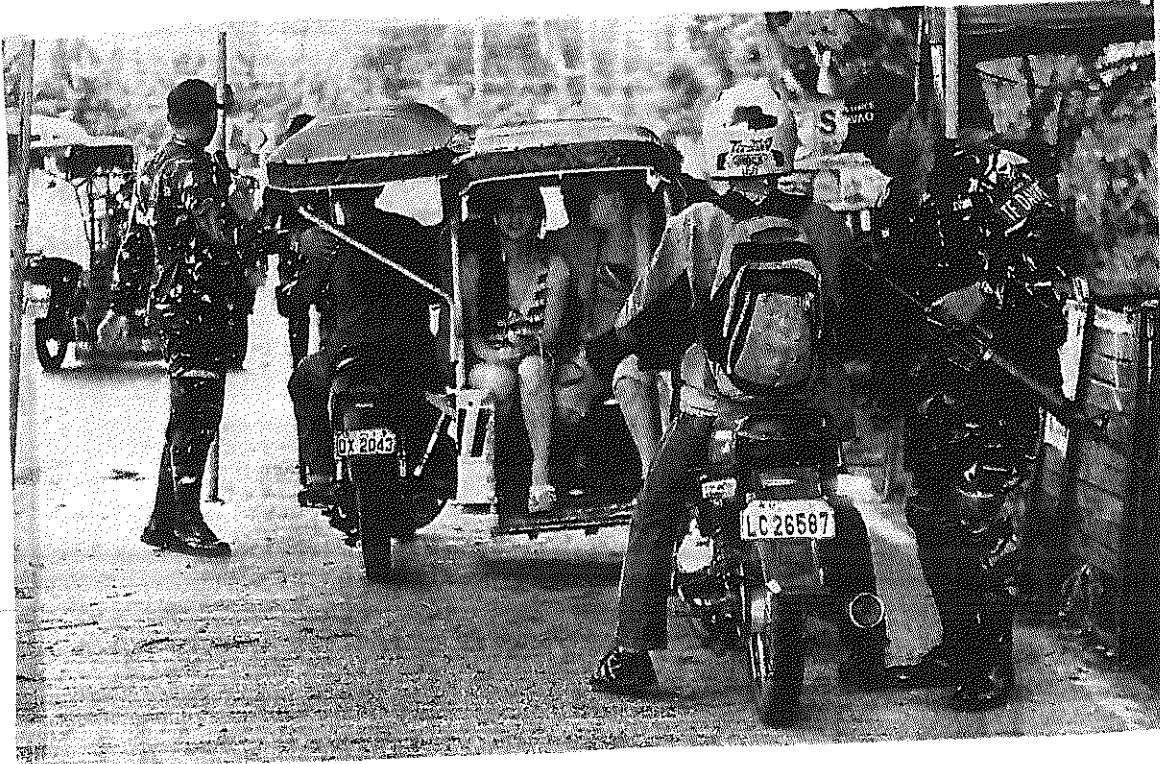
"The theme of this year's commemoration of Independence Day is, "Kalayaan 2016: Pagkakaisa, Pag-aambagan, Pagsulong", ayon pa kay Hao.

Binigyang diin pa ng opisyal ang bandila ng Pilipinas ay binibigyang pugay ng kasundaluan dahil sumisimbolo ito sa dangal at integridad ng mamamang Pinoy. (Joy Cantos)

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1941 1986
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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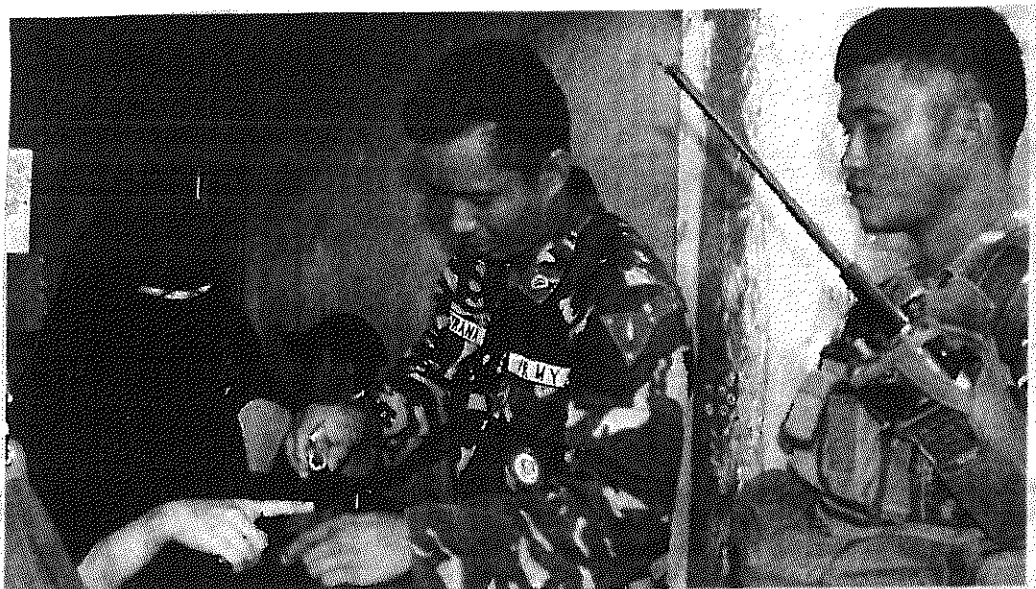


**CONSISTENT
LEVEL OF
SECURITY**
– Members
of Task
Force Davao
conduct
check on
every vehicle
coming
into Davao
City, a daily
security
routine that
is expected
to get
even more
stringent
with the
election
of Mayor
Rodrigo
Duterte as
the next
president of
the country.
(Keith
Bacongco)

15 May 2016

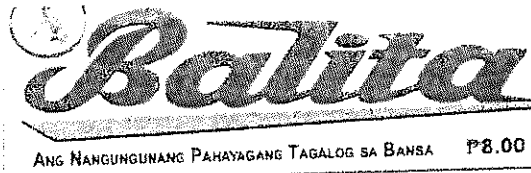
1941 1988
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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VOTE SECURED — An army trooper drops indelible ink on the forefinger of a Muslim woman who exercised her right to vote in yesterday's special elections in Binidayan, Lanao del Sur, a perennial flashpoint for election-related violence. (AFP)

5 May 2016



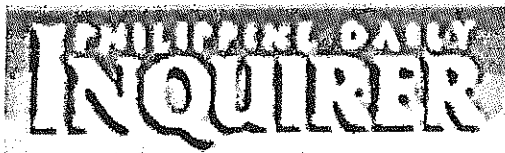
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SECURITY CHECK Iniinspeksiyon ng mga miyembro ng Task Force Davao ang bag ng mga pasahero bago pumasok ang mga ito sa Davao City, bilang bahagi ng pinaigting na pagpapatupad ng seguridad sa siyudad. Isa-isang pinabababa ang mga pasahero sa mga pampasaherong bus para sa security check. **KEITH BACONGCO**

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Special polls peaceful, orderly, says military

By Jaymee T. Gamil

THE SPECIAL elections held on Saturday in several barangays in the Visayas and Mindanao were generally "peaceful and orderly," the military said.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines Public Affairs Office (AFP-PAO) under Col. Noel Detoyato reported that as of press time, the special elections, particularly in Mindanao, proved to be without incident.

Elections in these areas were declared a failure on May 9 due mostly to "security concerns."

The AFP-PAO reported that precincts in Pata Island, Sulu, "opened peacefully" as early as 7:30 a.m.; in Barangay Katuli, Sultan Kudarat, in Maguindanao at 7:10 a.m. and in Binidayan, Lanao del Sur, as early as 6:15 a.m.

The Philippine National Police deployed its forces to 52 barangays in eight provinces where the special polls were to be conducted.

On Friday, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) reported an increase in the number of precincts that suffered a failure of elections, and raised the number of voters affected by the special polls to 18,504.

The PNP identified the 52 clustered precincts as those located in 11 towns in Cebu, Marinduque, Sarangani, Antique, Northern Samar, Western Samar, Lanao del Sur and Sulu.

According to the PNP, of the 52 barangays, 47 held special polls yesterday due to "security concerns" on May 9, namely, Barangays Roxas in Lope de Vega, Northern Samar; Barangay Nagpapacao in Matuguinao, Western Samar; all 26 barangays of Binidayan, Lanao del Sur; Barangays Daungdong, Kamawi Island, Likud, Niog-niog, Timuddas and Kayawan

in Pata, Sulu; Barangays Gagguil, Gata-gata, Jingga, Kamih, Pungud, Lihbug, Kabaw, Lubuk-lubuk, Pandakan, Tiptipon in Panglima Estino, also in Sulu; and Barangays Dilausan, Bangun and Dasmalon in Tamparan, Lanao del Sur.

Due to misdelivered or insufficient number of ballots on May 9, special polls were also held Saturday in Barangay Gabi in Cordova, Cebu; Barangay Alobo in Sta. Cruz, Marinduque; Barangay Malalag in Maitum, Sarangani; Barangay Mabuyong in Anini-y, Antique, and Barangay Insubuan in San Remigio, also in Antique.

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The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

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NAVY ACQUIRES 2 NEW SHIPS

By Florante S. Solmerin

THE Philippine Navy will be having its first brand-new Strategic Sealift Vessel (SSV) that will arrive from Indonesia on Monday to the Manila harbor, Flag-Officer-in-Command Vice Admiral Caesar Taccad said Saturday.

Taccad said the ship will be christened Barko Republika ng Pilipinas Tarlac. The vessel will be manned by 17 officers and 98 enlisted personnel during its voyage from Indonesia.

The vessel is first of the two ordered by the Navy from Indonesian shipbuilder PT PAL (Persero) de-

clared as lone eligible bidder in August 2013 by the Bids and Awards Committee of the Department of National Defense.

Another bidder, Daewoo/Daesun Shipbuilding of South Korea, was declared ineligible.

The government allotted P4 billion for the two vessels but

PT PAL (Persero) got it only for P3,863,999,529. The first completed vessel was launched at the shipyard in Surabaya, Indonesia in January 2016.

Defense and military insiders said the project was almost shelved then by some defense officials allegedly in favor of other equipment such as helmets, rifles and individual force protection.

"The SSVs are programmed to be the PN's floating Command and Control especially in the conduct of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response [HADR] 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," Taccad said.

The vessels are a derivative of Indonesian Navy's Banjarmasin-LPD (Landing Platform Dock), which is reportedly was derivative from the Makassar-class LPD built by Daewoo/Daesun.

The vessel has a displacement of approximately 7,300 tons full load and having a length of 120 meters minimum. Its beam is 21 meters minimum and propulsion of at least 2 diesel engines coupled to 2 controllable pitch propellers. Its speed is at least 13 knots cru-

ing, at least 16 knots maximum (Range: 7,500nmi @ 13 knots).

The vessel can carry 2 Landing Craft Mechanized/Utility at floodable well decks, 2 RHIB or LCVP on Boat Davits, 500 troops, tanks, trucks and with a total payload of 2,800 tons minimum.

It is also equipped with navigation, surface search radar, air search radar, EW suite, electro-optical fire control system and combat management system. It has weapons such as 1 x gun (possibly between 40mm to 127mm) as primary and secondary weapon of 2 x 30mm automated cannons port and starboard sides (EO FCS controlled), and machine guns.

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SUNDAY, MAY 15, 2016

Tempo

4 Indonesians seized by ASG return home

The four Indonesians released by the Abu Sayyaf Group in Sulu last Wednesday have returned home on Friday.

The four sailors were taken hostage at sea on April 15. They arrived in the Indonesian capital Jakarta on a military aircraft and were greeted by Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi.

At a news conference, Marsudi expressed her gratitude on behalf of Indonesia to the Philippine authorities.

"I have already spoken to the Philippine Foreign Secretary, but once again I would like to convey our gratitude for

the cooperation given by the government of the Philippines during this time. I have told them that all four hostages have arrived safely," Marsudi said.

The hostages, who also faced the media, said they were glad their ordeal was over.

"The release process was long and tough but we faithfully believe it was our God who showed the way to our Indonesian government, and the army who bravely helped us in the process of releasing us," said one hostage, Loren Petrus Romawi.

This month, 10 other

Indonesian hostages held by groups with suspected links to militant network Abu Sayyaf were released, following a month-long ordeal during which a kidnapped Canadian was beheaded after a ransom deadline passed.

The Abu Sayyaf is a formidable and brutal militia known for amassing millions of dollars from the ransom business.

It is still holding four Malaysian seamen as well as citizens from Japan, the Netherlands, Canada, Norway, and the Philippines.

(Reuters)

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Pinoys in Iraq warned vs IS bombings

Filipinos in Iraq should remain vigilant following a wave of terrorist bombings in Baghdad, for which the terror group Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility, the Philippine embassy said Friday.

In an advisory, the embassy urged close to 300 Filipinos working in Baghdad to exercise caution and limit their movement following the explosions.

The terrorists carried out attacks on Wednesday in at least four locations in Baghdad, the deadliest of which was in the Shia enclave of Sadr City, where a powerful

car bomb took out more than 60 civilians and wounded 87 others.

On Thursday, two suicide bombers detonated themselves at a police station in Abu Ghraib, killing five officers and wounding 12 others.

The bombings left almost 100 people dead and many more wounded in just a span of 48 hours.

"Fortunately there were no Filipinos among the dead or wounded in the latest attacks but just the same we would like to underscore the need for our *kababayan* in Iraq to remain vigilant," chargé d'affaires

Elmer Cato said.

The embassy also called on Filipinos to avoid demonstrations and other public gatherings as these could also be targeted by extremists.

According to the embassy, there are around 2,000 Filipino workers in Iraq.

Cato also urged those among the 2,000 Filipinos working in Iraq who still have not registered to provide their contact details to the embassy so that they could easily be reached during emergencies.

The embassy said it is ready to repatriate Filipinos in Bagh-

dad and other parts of Iraq who want to return home due to security concerns.

More than 50 Filipinos have been repatriated since the Philippine government placed Iraq under Alert Level 4 in 2014 after the IS captured large parts of the country.

The embassy also said that the temporary freeze in the processing and deployment of new workers to Iraq remains in place and that only Filipinos with existing job contracts in the Kurdistan region can be allowed to travel to the Philippines and return to their jobs in Iraq.

– Pia Lee-Brago

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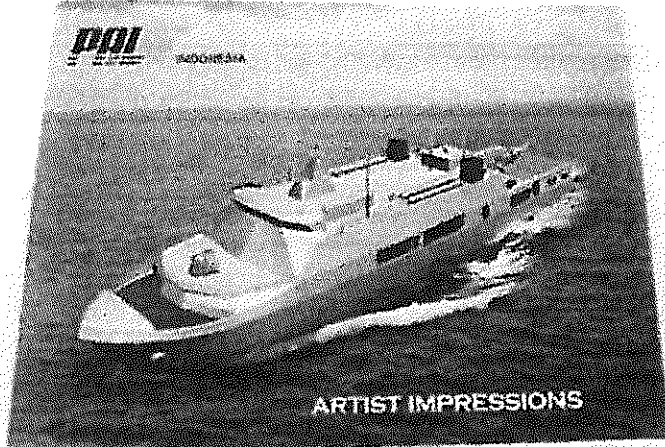
ONLINE NEWS

15 MAY 2016

www.philstar.com

Navy's first strategic sealift vessel arrives in Manila

By Patricia Lourdes Viray



STRATEGIC SEA LIFT VESSEL / SSV

A sketch of a strategic sealift vessel for the Philippine Navy. Philstar.com/File photo

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Navy's first strategic sealift vessel (SSV) has arrived at the Manila South Harbor breakwater on Saturday midnight.

Navy spokesperson Capt. Lued Lincuna confirmed that the country's first SSV, BRP Tarlac, docked at Pier 13. It has entered Philippine territory through the Sibutu passage in Tawi-Tawi on Thursday,

The ship and crew will undergo Customs Immigration and Quarantine, Lincuna said.

BRP Tarlac concluded its sea trials prior to its arrival in Manila. The testing phase sought to check the performance of all the vessel's machineries and equipment.

"It is also conducted to check and measure the ship's general performance and seaworthiness," Lincuna said.

The Philippines ordered two SSVs from PT PAL for P3.87 billion which was sourced from the Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization fund.

The Navy initiated the acquisition of the ships upon the approval of Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin in 2013.

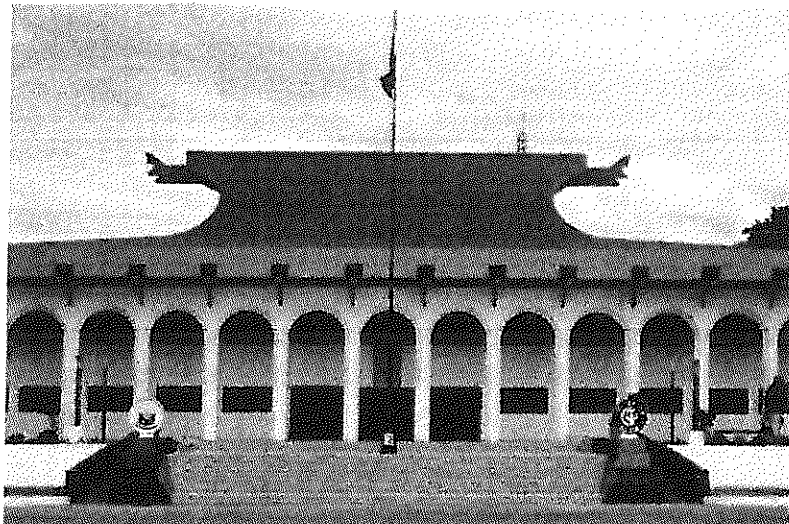
The SSVs will serve as the Navy's command center by carrying out their main purpose as military sealift and transport vessels, as well as for humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

Each ship is estimated to weigh around 7,300 gross register tons. The vessels have the capability to transport large numbers of soldiers, logistics and supplies.

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The peculiarity of ARMM's bloody politics

By John Unson



The Office of the Regional Governor in Cotabato City, touted as the "Little Malacañang" of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. [Philstar.com/John Unson](http://Philstar.com/JohnUnson)

COTABATO CITY, Philippines - For local folks, among the priorities of incoming president Rodrigo Duterte must be how to fix feudal Moro politics, where losers rarely concede and can even readily escalate rivalries into bloody clan wars that are so destructive.

So extreme is politics in the country's southernmost areas that even relatives of politicians in the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) usually get dragged into deadly political competitions, where feuding camps each have "maratabat" they often wrongly stand up to at all cost.

Maratabat is a generic Moro term for clan pride and honor.

In the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) for instance, Sulu Vice Gov. Sakur Tan has not conceded yet to reelectionist ARMM Gov. Mujiv Hataman, despite a difference of more than 300,000 votes in the tally of election results for the regional gubernatorial race as of Friday night.

ARMM's Lanao del Sur and Sulu provinces account for most number of unsettled clan wars involving political clans.

Hataman was the official bet of the Liberal Party (LP) for ARMM governor while Tan aspired for the same post as an independent candidate.

Hataman told reporters, during a dialogue in Cotabato City on Wednesday, he can ambiguously pursue development efforts for Sulu alongside Tan, touted as ARMM's wealthiest politician and most powerful leader in the island province.

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"We must rebuild friendships and mend fences immediately after each political exercise. We need to tear down the partisan walls that separated us during the campaign period right after the election day for people outside of ARMM to realize that just like them, we love peace and unity too," Hataman then said.

The reelected governor of Maguindanao, Esmael Mangudadatu, immediately extended his hand to voters and local executives allied with defeated rival, Ali Midtimbang, after his proclamation Wednesday, but none responded positively yet so far.

Partisans even continued bashing the staunch political allies Hataman and Mangudadatu on social media even as the elections are over.

In other ARMM provinces, the bloodshed between rival camps even escalated after May 9, with innocent civilians getting caught in the crossfire.

As if taunting the police and the military, masked men armed with M-16 and M-14 assault rifles killed a newly-elected councilor, Hadie Malaguial, in Shariff Aguak town in the second district of Maguindanao just two days after the elections.

The police had said the murder of Malaguial was "politically-motivated," but could not give any hint on who the culprits were.

Cases of post-election violence have also been recorded by the ARMM police in the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Tawi-Tawi in the past three days.

Many defeated candidates for local elective posts in ARMM took to Facebook their satirical attacks on victorious rivals, even accusing the Commission on Elections (Comelec) of inaction on alleged fraud and vote-buying during the May 9 polling day.

Loose firearms, such as military-type assault rifles and grenade launchers, in the hands of partisans in the region, is one of the reasons why they are so recalcitrantly unforgiving.

ARMM residents do not deny knowing that each of the 116 mayors in the autonomous region has no fewer than 50 assault rifles and shoulder-fire grenade launchers, being kept both as status symbol and as tools for perpetuating political power.

Since provincial governors in the region are touted as wealthier, it is always assumed that they keep more firearms than their constituent-mayors.

There is also a strong culture of "zero tolerance" to political opposition by ruling clans in the autonomous region.

The now infamous Nov. 23, 2009 "Maguindanao massacre" was, in fact, for local peace activists, a true epitome of a maratabat gone awry.

The bloody incident resulted to the political demise of the Ampatuan clan who ruled the province then with an iron fist.

At least 58 people, among them 32 journalists, perished in the incident, which shook the nation to its core.

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4 dead in Maguindanao clan war

By John Unson



The two clans are locked in a deep-seated political rivalry since the campaign period that preceded the May 2013 elections. Philstar.com/File photo

MAGUINDANAO, Philippines - Four people have reportedly been killed in a series of firefights that started on Friday between two political clans in Talitay town in Maguindanao.

Police and Army sources said the hostilities between the Sabal and the Buisan families are related to the May 9 elections, where both camps pitted candidates for local elective positions in Talitay.

The family of the mayor of Talitay, Muntasir Sabal, was reportedly irked by the show of force by the Buisans in certain areas in the impoverished town, located along the 220,000-hectare Liguasan Delta, during the May 9 polls.

The Sabal and the Buisan clans are locked in a deep-seated political rivalry since the campaign period that preceded the May 13, 2013 elections.

The animosity between them continued until the recent election period, escalated by each other's having pitted candidates for elective slots in their municipality.