

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



Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

24 May 2016

Tuesday

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

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The Manila Times

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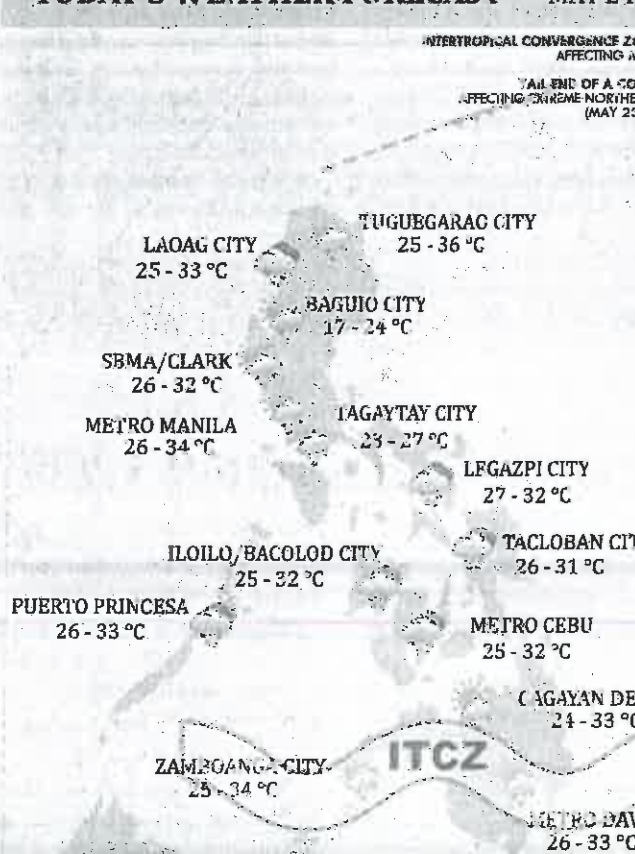


PANAHON TV

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST MAY 24, 2016 | TUESDAY

INTERTROPICAL CONVERGENCE ZONE (ITCZ) AFFECTING MINDANAO

TAIL END OF A COLD FRONT AFFECTING EXTREME NORTHERN LUZON (MAY 23, 5:00 PM)



LAOAG CITY 25 - 33 °C **TUGUEGARAG CITY** 25 - 36 °C

BAGUIO CITY 17 - 24 °C

SBMA/CLARK 26 - 32 °C **IAGAYTAY CITY** 23 - 27 °C

METRO MANILA 26 - 34 °C **LEGAZPI CITY** 27 - 32 °C

ILOILO/BACOLOD CITY 25 - 32 °C **TACLOBAN CITY** 26 - 31 °C

PUERTO PRINCESA 26 - 33 °C **METRO CEBU** 25 - 32 °C

ZAMBOANGA CITY 25 - 34 °C **CAGAYAN DE ORO** 24 - 33 °C


METRO DAVAO 26 - 33 °C

SUNRISE		SUNSET	
5:27 AM		6:19 PM	
MOONRISE		MOONSET	
3:21 PM		7:14 AM	
FULL MOON		LAST QUARTER	
MAY 21 5:11AM		MAY 25 8:11PM	
LOW TIDE		HIGH TIDE	
7:15 PM -0.07 Meter		10:59 AM 1.11 Meter	

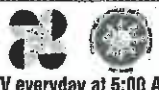
Fairly cloudy to w/ more clouds with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms


	MAY 23 MONDAY	MAY 24 TUESDAY	MAY 25 WEDNESDAY	MAY 26 THURSDAY	MAY 27 FRIDAY
METRO MANILA	25 - 35 °C	25 - 33 °C	24 - 35 °C	16 - 24 °C	17 - 24 °C
METRO CEBU	25 - 33 °C	26 - 33 °C	26 - 33 °C	26 - 33 °C	26 - 32 °C
METRO DAVAO	26 - 34 °C	25 - 33 °C	25 - 33 °C	24 - 35 °C	25 - 35 °C
BAGUIO					17 - 25 °C
PUERTO PRINCESA					25 - 33 °C
BORACAY					25 - 34 °C



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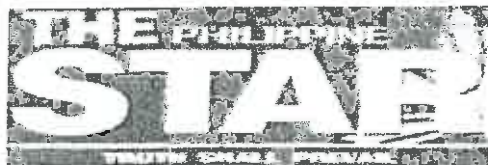


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24 May 2016



Page: 1

'Federalism a tough sell'

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Even with a widely popular incoming president as its main advocate, federalism appears to be a tough sell as it would certainly entail extensive constitutional amendments, Senate leaders said yesterday.

Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senate president pro-tempore Ralph Recto shared the view that the issue would require more than discussions among lawmakers in the Senate and the House of Representatives in the 17th Congress.

They said the proposal needs comprehensive study on its impact on national policies and that any effort to amend the Constitution – a necessary step for a shift to federalism – involves a tortuous process.

Recto noted that economic provisions in the Constitution would not be left untouched if amendments were introduced to pave the way for a federal system of government, as espoused by the incoming administration of Rodrigo Duterte.

"What are the details of federalism, how will it affect taxes? How will it affect the division of natural resources?" Recto asked.

He said lawmakers and policy makers should ponder these questions if federalism would be discussed.

Recto added that in amending the Constitution, the people should be allowed to decide the mode of amendment – through a constituent assembly (con-ass) or a constitutional convention (con-con).

"It's going to be a long discussion. Possibly there will be constitutional amendments, and if the Constitution is opened –

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Federalism From Page 1

economic provisions and political – I'm sure all the others will be open for discussion," he said.

"We are here to listen. The president has an expansive mandate and we should respect that, as well as whatever we can contribute – why not," he said in Filipino.

"As senators, we are nationally elected so we also have mandate. It is designed like this also that there are 24 people in this country elected at large," he added, referring to the number of elected senators.

He also said that if the proposed shift to federal form of government is meant to allow the peace process in Mindanao to push through, then it might be easier if Congress would just pursue the passage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), the approval of which was derailed during the present administration.

Recto said he is in favor of pushing for the BBL since it would only require amendments to the Local Government Code, a procedure that would be easier to undertake than amending the entire Constitution.

"Federalism will require lengthy discussion, but I'm willing to listen," he said.

"What's easier to discuss

would be easier to do – and you will get the same results," Recto pointed out.

For his part, Drilon said it would be Congress' task to decide which tack would be used to amend the Constitution – either Con-ass or Concon.

He stressed that shifting to another form of government would require more than just passing a legislative measure.

"No, it is not a federal bill, if you want federalism, you must amend the Constitution," he said.

"The Congress, both the House and the Senate, would have no say on that, except, either to call a Constitutional Convention, in which case the issue of the form of government will be decided by the Concon, or we have a con-ass, in which it will be decided by both houses of Congress, acting as a Conass, not as members of Congress," Drilon said.

Don't forget BBL

Meanwhile, government peace panel chief Miriam Coronel-Ferrer said the choice does not have to be between BBL and federalism.

Ferrer made the statement in response to incoming Rep. Pantaleon Alvarez's pronouncement that the next Con-

gress would no longer pass the BBL as it would go straight to discussing federalism.

"The next Congress can pass the draft law within 2016 and at the same time undertake the needed legal processes for Charter change," she said.

"Any move to change the Charter requires a lot of study and consultations. It will take several years since such a major change is not a mere amendment to the Constitution and is best done through a constitutional convention," Ferrer added.

She said any further delay in the finalization of the Bangsamoro peace process would seriously affect stability of the next administration.

Ferrer is the Aquino administration's top negotiator for talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

"Set up the Bangsamoro entity and let it exist. If we delay the road map, things might get worse. There are extremist ideologies existing around us recruiting among the Moro youth," Ferrer said.

She said pursuing the current peace roadmap laid out in the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro would have greater advantages for the coming administration.

"Passing the BBL as soon as possible will help stabilize the situation in the Bangsamoro. It will pave the way for the full-

scale decommissioning of the MILF's weapons and combatants, the delivery of the socio-economic programs and greatly enhance security cooperation between the government and the MILF," Ferrer said.

She stressed a partnership between the government and the MILF is essential to fighting crime and terrorism in the region.

Aside from the legislative tack of establishing the Bangsamoro, Ferrer said the CAB also provides a roadmap for the implementation of socio-economic programs for normalization in conflict-affected areas as well as the transition of MILF combatants to civilian status.

Ferrer argued that without the enactment of a CAB-compliant Bangsamoro law, the decommissioning of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) and implementation of the normalization track would remain stalled.

The BBL is the enabling law for the establishment of the Bangsamoro political entity

that seeks to replace the current Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

It provides for political and fiscal reforms aimed at greatly enhancing the fiscal and political autonomy of the region.

However, the proposed law was not passed by the current Congress before it adjourned for the national and local elections last February.

Ferrer expressed belief Duterte understands the importance of passing the BBL, noting that during the last presidential debate held in Pangasinan last April, the incoming president voiced his support for the BBL as a way to correct the historical injustices done to Muslims in Mindanao.

"You have to make the peace there [in Mindanao] before you can move," Duterte had said in a televised debate among the presidential contenders.

"*Kung hindi mo makausap ito* (If you cannot talk it out) in peace talks, everything will fail. And I am telling now, the Republic of the Philippines, nothing will appease the Mus-

lims, the Moro people if we do not give them the BBL," Duterte added.

Ferrer assured the incoming president and his peace lieutenants that the current government panel would turn over a fully functional set of mechanisms charged with overseeing all the different components of the CAB, from the ceasefire to the camps' transformation among others.

"We will be handing over our data base system and assessments of all the different activities as part of our terminal report under this administration and this would be very useful to the next," she said.

Ferrer also called on newly elected officials and the general public to support the peace negotiations.

"I hope that we will finally achieve the much-needed national consensus to continue with the implementation of the peace agreements," Ferrer said. - **With Jose Rodel Clapano**

24 May 2016

INQUIRER

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Juicy posts for LP turncoats

Lawmakers urged to join PDP-Laban

By Gil C. Cabacungan in Manila
and Victor Anthony V. Silva and Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Staff

JUICY posts await certain reelected members of the House of Representatives who switch allegiance from the Liberal Party (LP) to PDP-Laban—the political party of presumptive President-elect Rodrigo Duterte.

Erstwhile LP stalwart Ilocos Norte Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas, for instance, took his oath as a PDP-Laban member in preparation for his assumption as majority leader of the House of Representatives.

Another former LP member

who took his oath as a PDP-Laban member was Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr., who is reportedly being groomed to assume his old post as chair of the powerful House appropriations committee.

JUICY. A6

From page A1

A political butterfly like many of his colleagues, Andaya switched from the LP to the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) in October last year in preparation for the 2016 elections.

80 LP members

A number of LP members are jumping ship as some 80-90 of the 116 members of President Aquino's political party in the House wanted to join the incoming Duterte administration's Coalition for Change to be part of the majority but would like to remain affiliated with the LP.

A smaller number of LP members are expected to become the House minority and stick it out with Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr., who has already conceded the speakership fight to incoming Davao del Norte Rep. Pantaleon Alvarez of PDP-Laban, Duterte's anointed Speaker.

But Alvarez was adamant that all House members joining the Coalition for Change switch to PDP-Laban, like Fariñas and Andaya.

"It will be best if they join PDP-Laban," said Alvarez, who noted that it would be awkward if the LP would lead the House minority while the bulk of its members were allied with the majority.

Belmonte appealed to Alvarez yesterday that LP members who would align with PDP-Laban be allowed to remain as members of the LP, according to outgoing Majority Leader Nepitali Gonzales II.

Belmonte noted that this was the same deal that Alvarez had given to other coalition partners, such as the NPC, according to Gonzales.

"This is not uncharted territory. There have been instances in the past when members belonging to the same party were aligned with the minority and majority at the same time," Gonzales said.

Talk with Alvarez

Gonzales said Belmonte had spoken with Alvarez yesterday morning before at least 71 LP members met at the office of the Speaker to discuss a plan to express support for Duterte's administration and their commitment to back Alvarez as the next Speaker.

Speaking on behalf of Belmonte who declined to talk to the press, Gonzales said the

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LP'S LAST HURRAH Leading vice presidential candidate Leni Robredo addresses Liberal Party lawmakers and officials during a show of force at Club Filipino in San Juan City on April 14, three weeks before the May 9 elections. Just two weeks after the elections, the ruling party is fast losing power as its members abandon it en masse to join the new majority coalition in the House of Representatives. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Speaker spoke about the importance of being an ally of the incoming President.

Based on their plan, between 80-90 LP members are expected to join the Coalition for Change with Belmonte, his loyal allies in Quezon City districts and a handful of other LP members sliding down to the minority in the next Congress.

The LP members signed a manifesto supporting Duterte and Alvarez.

Minority leader

Belmonte has not made a commitment to stand as minority leader for the LP in the next Congress, leading to speculation that returning Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman would play the role.

Lagman said returning to his role as minority leader was indeed an option for him.

"But the situation is still fluid. An option hangs until it becomes a choice," Lagman said in a text message.

Returning Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez said that Lakas-CMD and the United Nationalist Alliance would also vie for the minority leadership post.

By tradition, the loser in the speakership race automatically assumes the mantle of minority leader.

Alvarez's requirement that LP members joining the coalition swear allegiance to PDP-Laban would decimate the LP.

Visayas bloc

Several LP members, including those belonging to the Visayas bloc, earlier declared support for the incoming Duterte administration and the speakership bid of Alvarez.

Earlier, several parties signed coalition agreements with PDP-Laban. These included the Nacionalista Party, National Unity Party (NUP), NPC, Lakas-CMD and several party-list groups.

Representatives Francisco Matugas of Surigao del Norte and Franz Alvarez of Palawan, until recently LP members, joined Farifias and Andaya in the oath-taking as PDP-Laban members.

Farifias said he was honored to be invited to Duterte's party.

"With the resounding victory of Mayor Digong, even in my province and district, we have to respect this mandate to lead our country in the next six years and support his (Duterte's) administration," he said.

Farifias, however, refused to comment on what position he would get in the 17th Congress.

PDP-Laban has only three elected members in the 17th

Congress—Erik Martinez of Valenzuela, Jun Papandayan of Lanao del Sur, and Alvarez—all of whom have little experience in running a committee much less the entire Congress.

Farifias and Andaya would provide the experience and political savvy for Duterte to ensure that his priority bills—shift to federalism and reimposing the death penalty—would be fast-tracked.

The coalition with PDP-Laban is expected to be formalized within the week, said Capiz Rep. Emmanuel Billones, a close political ally of defeated LP standard-bearer Mar Roxas.

Iloilo City Rep. Jerry Treñas and Billones said they were among the LP lawmakers who attended a meeting led by Belmonte at Batasang Pambansa on Monday morning when the move to join the Coalition for Change was agreed upon.

Treñas said that even with the forging of a coalition with PDP-Laban, it would be up to LP members whether they would join Duterte's party.

In Western Visayas, an LP bailiwick for the past six years, all 11 congressional district representatives have voiced support for the new administration and Alvarez.

OFFICE OF THE

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Q4 May 2016

INQUIRER

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2 civilians dead, 2 hurt as rebs attack farmers' bunkhouses

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—Two civilians were killed while two others were hurt on Sunday when communist rebels raided the bunkhouses of agrarian reform beneficiaries in Sitio Aliwanay, Barangay General Luna in Sagay City, about 90 kilometers from here.

Chief Insp. Eduardo Corpuz, Sagay police chief, identified the fatalities as Dionesio Ibanez and Jose Pios, both agrarian re-

form beneficiaries and members of Aliwanay Farmers Association.

Wounded were Sonny Respondo, a militiaman, and Jodito Lutrago, another agrarian reform beneficiary.

Ambush

Corpuz said the rebels also burned three bunkhouses of agrarian reform beneficiaries as they fled and took 10 high-powered firearms, including three M-16 assault rifles, five Carbine rifles, an M-14 assault rifle and

an M-79 grenade launcher.

The attack came a week after a band of New People's Army (NPA) rebels killed three soldiers and wounded two others in an ambush in Toboso town, Negros Occidental province, on May 14.

Corpuz said he believed that the rebels involved in the attack in Sagay were the same ones who ambushed Army soldiers in Barangay San Isidro, Toboso.

At least 30 communist rebels raided the bunkhouses of

agrarian reform beneficiaries around 5:30 a.m. in Sitio Aliwanay, Barangay General Luna.

The sitio is about 2 km away from the General Luna barangay proper, where the Philippine National Police public safety company headquarters is located.

Respondo and another government militiaman, Alexander Garcia, proceeded to the site of the NPA raid and clashed with the rebels.

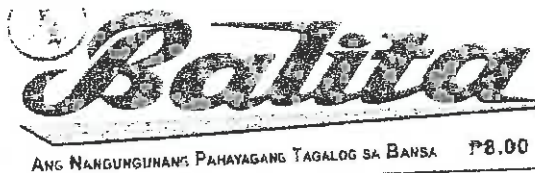
Respondo was wounded

while the rebels took Garcia as they withdrew toward Sitio Biernesan of the barangay, Corpuz said.

Members of the 62nd Infantry Battalion, who established a blocking force, caught up with the rebels and clashed with them in Barangay Paitan, Escalante City.

No one was hurt but the clash could have prompted the fleeing rebels to release Garcia, said Senior Supt. William Senoron, provincial police director of Negros Occidental.

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2 sa CAFGU patay, 2 sugatan sa pag-atake ng NPA

Dalawang miyembro ng Special Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit Active Auxilliary (SCAA) ang namatay habang dalawa ang nasugatan makaraang salakayin ng New People's Army (NPA) ang detachment ng mga ito sa Barangay General Luna, Sagay City, Negros Occidental, sinabi ng pulisya kahapon.

Sa report ng Sagay City Police Office (SCPO), ang pagsalakay ay isinagawa sa Sitio Aliwanay, Hacienda Erlinda sa Barangay

General Luna, Sagay City.

Kinilala ang mga namatay na sina SCAA Jose Pios at SCAA Dionisio Ibañez na nagtamo ng maraming tama ng bala sa pagsalakay ng nasa 40 rebelde.

Hindi pa kinilala ng militar ang dalawang sugatan na SCAA na nagpapagaling na sa ospital.

Sinabi sa ulat na dalawang sundalo ang dinukot at nabawi ng mga kasamahan ng biktima na kinilalang si Sgt. Alexander Garcia

makaraang tumakas ang mga rebelde patungo sa Sitio Byernesan, Bgy. General Luna.

Naging mabilis ang pagkilos ng militar at SCAA at nabawi ang dalawang bihag makaraan ang sagupaan sa Bgy. Paitan, Escalante City.

Natangay ng mga rebelde ang mga armas na kinabilangan ng tatlong M-16, isang M-14, apat na carbine at isang M-79.

Patuloy ang pagtugis ng militar sa mga rebeldeng sangkot sa pag-atake.

Fer Taboy

www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

153 aspiring military officers pass pre-entry exam

From the Philippine News Agency (May 23)

At least 158 applicants passed the recently concluded pre-entry examination conducted by the Philippine Army last February to November 2015 and February to March 2016 in Eastern Visayas.

The pre-entry examination determines those who are qualified to join the officer corps of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and enlisted personnel.

Qualified applicants will take up army qualifying examination and special written examination for officer candidate course and officer preparatory course in two separate venues in Eastern Visayas at Samar State University in Catbalogan City on May 24 and Leyte Normal University in Tacloban City on May 25.

The Army recruitment process is anchored on the Army objectives to incorporate skilled personnel who are willing to serve in the noble profession of arms and willing to respond on the challenges for defense and development in pursuit of peace and progress.

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[www. retiredanalyst.blogspot.com](http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com)

Fort acquires new equipment

From The Standard (May 23)

FORT MAGSAYSAY—This sprawling military camp, the largest Army reservation in the country, is modernizing fast and has recently acquired a fleet of trucks and ambulances worth P98.3 million.

The camp has been identified as one of five bases where US troops and supplies could be stationed under a security deal with the US and Philippine governments.

The trucks and ambulances were blessed and turned over to the Army's 7th Infantry Division in ceremonies here on Wednesday.

Maj. Gen. Angelito De Leon, 7th Infantry Division commanding officer, said the vehicles formed part of the modernization program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

This camp was one of the five military facilities whose use was allowed by the Philippines during the 6th US-Philippines Bilateral Strategic Dialogue in Washington in March under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

The Edca grants Washington increased military presence in its former colony, and it's allowed to park there ships and planes for humanitarian and maritime security operations. It also allows US soldiers, warships and planes to temporarily base in Filipino military locations.

The Edca was signed by both countries in 2014, but its implementation was held up until the Supreme Court upheld its legality in January.

Also covered under Edca are the Antonio Bautista air base in Palawan near the South China Sea, Basa air base in Pampanga, Lumbia airport in Cagayan de Oro, and the Mactan-Benito Ebuen air base in Mactan.

Fort Magsaysay has training facilities for airborne and amphibious operations, jungle survival and guerrilla warfare. US forces already use a small part of the reservation to store weapons and equipment needed for the annual Balikatan exercises with the Philippine military.

In a speech during the turnover, De Leon noted that before the AFP Modernization Program and the Army Transformation Roadmap were implemented, the Army had lagged behind in capabilities.

He said that under these programs, the AFP had been acquiring equipment geared toward making its armed forces world-class.

He said not only the AFP would be modernized but the troops themselves who will be updated on the use of modern equipment and weaponry.

Earlier, the Army received R4 rifles, which are considered more modern than the M-16 rifles.

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

De Leon said the modernization program had also benefited the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Air Force. The Navy, he said, was recently beefed up with the arrival of a strategic vessel, which may be used as alternate command and control vessel and two FA50 lead-in fighter jets for the Air Force.

He said these pieces of equipment were useful during combat operations and in times of calamity.

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www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

NPA Sagay attack: two killed, 2 injured

From the Visayan Daily Star (May 23)

A week after the ambush-slay of three Army soldiers in Toboso, suspected New People's Army rebels struck again, by attacking yesterday the bunk houses of agrarian reform beneficiaries in Sitio Buntod Aliwanay, Brgy. General Luna in Sagay City, Negros Occidental, killing two civilians and inflicting injuries to two others, the military and police said.

Chief Inspector Eduardo Corpuz, Sagay City police chief, yesterday said that the two slain civilians he identified as Dionesio Ebañez, 44, and Jose Pios, 51, are both agrarian reform beneficiaries, and members of the Aliwanay Farm Workers Association Beneficiaries under the Tupaz Foundation.

Special CAFGU members Sonny Respondo and Alex Garcia, who were off-duty, and members of the Regional Public Safety Battalion 18 responded to the incident and engaged the suspected NPA rebels in a brief firefight. As a result, Respondo, 38, was injured, while Garcia was taken by the rebels, as they withdrew towards Sitio Biernesan of the barangay, Corpuz said.

Also injured during the raid was Jodito Lutrago, an agrarian reform beneficiary and a member of ronda patrol, he added.

Corpuz said the fleeing rebels also burned three bunk houses of the agrarian reform beneficiaries.

The sitio is about two kilometers away from the General Luna barangay proper, where the PNP public safety company headquarters is located.

Recovered from the scene of the incident were 300 empty shells of M-16, M-4 and AK-47 automatic rifles, 20 live ammunition and an unexploded M67 fragmentation grenade.

The fleeing rebels reportedly brought with them 10 high-powered firearms, including three M-16 assault rifles, five carbine rifles, an M-14 assault rifle and an M-79 grenade launcher.

Senior Supt. William Señoron, provincial police director of Negros Occidental, however, said they are still validating the reported loss of firearms to the NPA.

Members of the 62nd Infantry Battalion, who established a blocking force, managed to engage the fleeing rebels in a firefight in Brgy. Paltan, Escalante City. However, no casualty has been reported in both sides.

Señoron said the encounter may have prompted the fleeing rebels to release Garcia.

Police investigation showed that agrarian reform beneficiaries in the barangay have formed the Aliwanay Farmers Association to protect themselves, as the property awarded to them by the Department of Agrarian Reform is slowly being encroached on by members of the National Federation of Sugarcane Workers, who are also claiming to be agrarian reform beneficiaries.

Corpuz said he believes that the NPA rebels, estimated by witnesses at between 30 to 50, were also behind the recent ambush of three Army soldiers in Brgy. San Isidro, Toboso.

The Roselyn Pelle Command of the New People Army Northern Negros Guerilla Front, that claimed responsibility for the death of three Army soldiers and the injury of two others on May 14, also recovered three M-16 rifles from the slain government troopers.

On May 1, the same rebel group claimed responsibility for the death of an Army intelligence operative in the same barangay, from whom they also took a .45 caliber pistol.

2Lt. Ma. Revekka Roperos, 303rd Infantry Brigade's Public Information Officer, yesterday clarified reports that what the NPA had raided at about 5:30 a.m. yesterday, was not a CAFGU detachment, and those who died, were also not CAFGU members.

The individuals killed were farmers resting in their bunk house, Roperos.

While she acknowledged initial report on the loss of firearms, Roperos said it still remains an allegation, pending investigations being conducted by the police.

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24 May 2016

INQUIRER

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Labor, PSG chiefs named

By Karlos Manlupig and Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—Presumptive President-elect Rodrigo Duterte has picked former Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello III to be his secretary of labor and employment and Col. Rolando Bautista, commander of a military force fighting the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan, to head the Presidential Security Group (PSG).

Duterte announced the appointments during a late-night news conference in Davao City on Saturday.

Bello, already named head of the government panel in the peace talks with the communist rebels, said he would accept his appointment as labor chief as well.

"I was surprised. Yet I am elated and I would gladly accept the position," Bello told the *INQUIRER* in a phone interview.

He said, however, that Duterte, the outgoing mayor of Davao City, has yet to inform

him about his new appointment.

Bello is a known human rights lawyer in Davao. He was among those who helped defend former priest and rebel Leoncio Evasco, who became Duterte's city administrator.

Evasco, who later became mayor of Maribojoc town in Bohol province, served as manager of Duterte's campaign for the presidency.

Duterte also announced that Evasco would be the Cabinet secretary.

In announcing Bello's ap-

pointment as labor chief, Duterte said the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) on his watch would put an end to contractualization.

"Contractualization must stop. Your worry is to make money. My worry is how I can protect the Filipino people. No compromises," Duterte said, referring to businesses that hire workers for only five months then fire them to avoid hiring them permanently and paying them benefits.

Expecting resistance from them, Duterte said they would be compensated for additional expenditures on worker security with stability and security under his administration.

"They will have my protection. There will be no more corruption," he said.

Duterte said he would form new labor-related agencies after he assumes office.

"I have plans for dividing [the DOLE]. There will be another

department for overseas workers and another department for fisheries and aquatic resources," he said.

"I have to ask Congress for an additional budget because I can't create [those departments] without money," he said.

Military officials yesterday said Bautista was a good choice for PSG chief.

Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, spokesperson for the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said Bautista, commander of Joint Task Group Basilan and of the 104th Infantry Brigade, was a "true military professional with uncompromising values."

"In more than three decades of seeing him work, I can say he is undoubtedly hardworking, self-sacrificing, a dedicated and committed serviceman," Padilla said.

With reports from Julie M. Aurelio in Manila and Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

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The National Newspaper

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Military: Duterte's choice for PSG chief fit for the job

BY VICTOR REYES

THE Armed Forces yesterday spoke highly of Col. Rolando Bautista, the incoming head of the Presidential Security Group which is tasked to secure incoming president Rodrigo Duterte and his family.

"He is a well-rounded officer. He is an operations man and also adept in intelligence. He is a good family man and is service oriented," said Col. Noel Detoyato, chief of the military's public affairs office, of Bautista.

Bautista is currently the commander of the 104th Brigade which is leading the campaign against the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan. He is a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1985.

Sought for comment, Bautista said "it is an honor and pride to serve" Duterte.

On his initial plan on how to handle Duterte's security, Bautista said, "We have existing protocols and procedures on how to secure a president that we observe. These have been tested and institutionalized. But of course, there will be additions and innovations depending on the desire of the president," Bautista also said.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said he has worked with Bautista, his classmate at the PMA, in various capacities in the field. Padilla, a helicopter pilot, is from the Air Force.

"In more than three decades of seeing him work, I can say he is undoubtedly hardworking, self-sacrificing, a dedicated and committed serviceman," he said.

Padilla also said Bautista is a "true military professional with

uncompromising values" and "he will definitely make a good PSG commander."

Detoyato provided media a brief biographical sketch of Bautista, which he said "is an indicator that he is a "very good choice" to command the PSG.

Detoyato said Bautista joined the elite Army's Scout Ranger Regiment after graduation from the PMA. He was later deployed in the fight against the New People's Army.

"As a young lieutenant, he was already exposed to the hardship of being an infantry soldier and a Scout Ranger by running after the NPA in the different parts of the country," said Detoyato.

Bautista also served as a United Nations military observer in East Timor and completed various schooling and training programs in the Philippines and abroad, notable of which are the Infantry Officer's Advance Course in Fort Benning, Georgia, and the Peacekeeping Operations Course in Thailand.

"Locally, he took up VIP Protective Detail Course conducted by the US Embassy in Manila and Intelligence Schooling at the Intelligence School, Nueva Ecija," said Detoyato.

Bautista served as commander of the Army's 73rd Infantry Battalion, covering Davao City and Davao del Norte, from February 2005 to February 2007.

He assumed the post of 104th Brigade commander in August 2014 and "exceptionally reduced the capability of the ASG in Basilan in terms of large number of enemy neutralized, to include two foreign terrorists."

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ESPERON

Reformists up in arms over Esperon appointment

By Mario I. Mallari

An air of discontent loomed over the reformists in the uniformed services following the possible appointment of retired military chief Hermogenes Esperon Jr. as National

Security Adviser (NSA) in the Duterte government.

Retired and active police and military officials warned that President-elect Rodrigo Duterte's giving Esperon a place in the Cabinet may draw disorder within the police and the

military, citing controversies involving Esperon during his stint as chief of Philippine Army and later chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the Arroyo administration.

Former Constabulary chief retired

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From page 1

Maj. Gen. Ramon Montano said, police and military reformists are against Esperon's appointment because of his close links to Arroyo.

"Reformists in the uniformed ranks hate Esperon for his all-out support to GMA (Arroyo's initials). His appointment will definitely spark an uproar from the military reformists," he stressed.

"Esperon is identified closely with Arroyo. He (President-elect Rodrigo Duterte) should reconsider appointing Esperon if he is really for change, otherwise we will not expect true change as promised," a Camp Crame officer, for his part, said.

A retired general also told *The Tribune* that "recycling of retired generals to civilian posts should be avoided, worse, with controversial generals like Esperon. Duterte should not only consider allies in his Cabinet."

Apart from being hated by reformist police and military officers during his stint as Armed Forces chief of staff, Esperon has been embroiled into controversies.

As the top military chief under Arroyo, Esperon was accused by reformists of prostituting the AFP and used it basically to ensure that Arroyo remains in power.

Arroyo and her government endured several destabilization moves from the military and the officers.

They accused Arroyo of buying the loyalty of senior commanders headed by Esperon just to make sure she could finish her term.

The incoming national security adviser was also involved in the "Hello Garci" scandal.

The operations revealed by the tapes were designed to cheat Arroyo's way toward continued hold on power and rob the late movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. of electoral victory in the 2004 elections, they claimed.

Esperon's appointment as NSA was among the latest announcements made by the camp of Duterte.

During the campaign period, Esperon was visible with Duterte in some sorties.

He was previously mentioned as among those considered as secretary of the Department of Defense.

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Abu Sayyaf releases 'final' video of Samal hostages

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY –

The military remains focused on its operations to rescue the remaining hostages of the Abu Sayyaf even as the bandits released a new video showing the supposed "final message" of those taken from a resort on Samal Island, an official said yesterday.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman for the Western Mindanao Command, said they have not seen the video yet, but assured the public that rescue operations are

underway.

"With deadlines or not, we are working to get the kidnap victims," Tan said.

A video posted on Sunday showed Canadian Robert Hall appealing to incoming president Rodrigo Duterte and the Philippine government to coordinate with a certain woman at the Canadian embassy for their release.

Hall said authorities should heed their appeal, "the sooner the better."

Hall and Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad were wearing orange shirts while Filipina Marites Flor was wearing a black dress. They were being guarded by gunmen with an Islamic State flag as backdrop.

There was no mention of a ransom demand in the video, but the group earlier demanded P300 million for each of the foreign hostages.

Canadian John Ridsdel was beheaded on April 25 after the deadline set for the payment of ransom lapsed.

Tan said military operations are ongoing in Sulu, but did not elaborate.

"Our primary concern is the rescue and safety of the kidnap victims," Tan said.

Abu bandit falls

Meanwhile, joint police and military operatives captured an Abu Sayyaf bandit following an encounter in Malangas, Zamboanga Sibugay last week.

Ibno Sanday was a member of a group led by Hapidz

Abdurahman, the target of the joint police and military operation in Barangay Sinu-sayan on Thursday. Abdurrahman managed to escape.

Tan said the group was behind last week's ambush that left Malangas police officer-in-charge Inspector Dexter Gumahob Adrias wounded.

He said Sanday yielded a shotgun, a .45-caliber pistol, an MK2 grenade, ammunition, 12 sachets of suspected shabu, two mobile phones and P1,000 in cash.

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INQUIRER

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Joma says 2014 interim peace agreement only a draft, not formal pact

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—Exiled Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria “Joma” Sison said that while an “interim peace agreement” was signed by representatives of the Aquino administration and exiled rebel leaders in a series of meetings in December 2014, the document should not be treated as a formal pact.

“It is a mere draft and it is not yet a peace agreement. Initialing a draft only means letting it stand for the next meeting,” Sison said in an online interview on Monday, referring to the document he called the “Draft Interim Ceasefire Agreement.”

But he said the 2014 draft, officially called the “Joint Agreement on the Resumption of the Formal Talks on the Peace Negotiations between the GPH (Government of the Philippines) and

the NDFP (National Democratic Front of the Philippines)” would no longer serve its purpose in the proposed reopening of the peace talks under the incoming administration of presumptive President-elect Rodrigo Duterte.

“Invalidated *na yong dating* draft for an interim ceasefire and related matters *dahil ibina-sura ni* President Aquino at Deles. *Mugpanibagong* working draft (The old draft for an interim ceasefire and related matters

would be invalidated because this was junked by President Aquino and Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Deles. We should craft a new working draft),” Sison said.

The draft document was signed by Sison and top NDFP negotiators Fidel Agcaoili, Vicente Ladlad and Danilo Borja, and members of the “secret” government delegation Hernani Braganza, Jaime Aristotle Alip, Efren Muncupa and Francisco Lara Jr.

Sison assailed the claim of an unnamed member of the government delegation during the meeting in The Netherlands that the CPP and NDFP representatives did not even demand the release of all rebel suspects, but only those involved in the peace negotiation.

Sison branded the claim as “ridiculous.”

“The release of all political prisoners was demanded as an obligation of the GPH in compli-

ance with the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (Carhrihl) and the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (Jasig),” he said.

“The Aquino regime did not want to [order their] release. That is exactly why the Draft Interim Ceasefire Agreement never graduated from a draft to a full-fledged official document of the GPH and NDFP,” he said.

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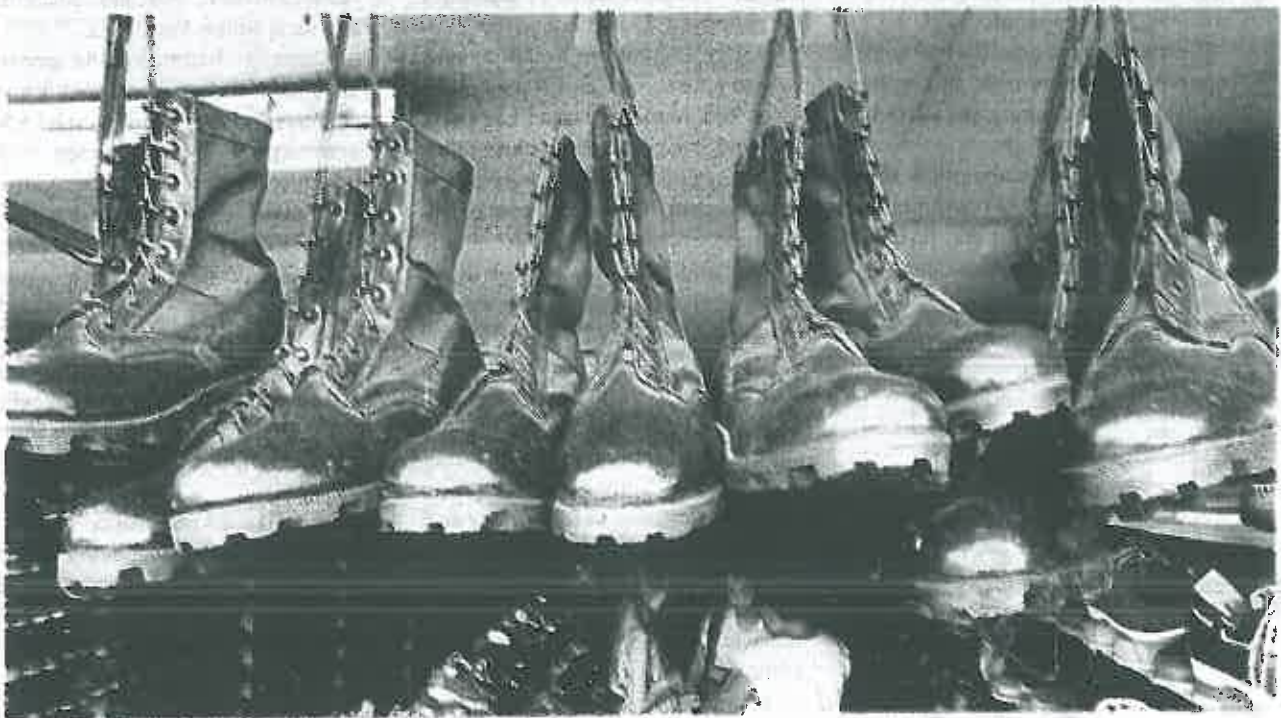
BusinessMirror

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BMReports

Extra

Mandatory military training: Is it time?



DÉJÀ VU Secondhand military boots, similar to those used by college students doing basic military training under the now-defunct Reserved Officers' Training Corps, are displayed in a Guadalupe shoe store in Makati City. NONI REYES

BY FIL V. ELEFANTE [@elefantefil](#)

Second of three parts

DESPITE the enactment of Commonwealth Act 1, otherwise known as the National Defense Act, in 1935, the road to establishing the nucleus for a reserve force composed of a citizen army was bumpy.

Much of the problem arose when Commonwealth President Manuel

₱16M

The annual cost to fund "an army suitable for the Philippines" and which Douglas MacArthur promised to Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon

L. Quezon and Douglas MacArthur, a US Army general and former US Army chief of staff, had a falling out because of the costs of raising and maintaining an army.

Quezon had hired MacArthur as a military adviser.

"Becoming national defense adviser to the Philippines would allow MacArthur to exit gracefully, escaping what, in all other senses,

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OFFICE

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would be a demotion," Ricardo T. Jose wrote in his book *The Philippine Army 1935 to 1942*. "Indeed, he would get the highest position in an army he himself would create."

It turned out that MacArthur was actually interested in being named as the US high commissioner to the Philippines. "He lobbied for it," Jose wrote. Unfortunately for MacArthur, it turned out that under US laws, it was illegal for an officer to hold two appointments at the same time.

This was one way for MacArthur to restore his prestige, which was tainted after he had ordered soldiers to attack and disperse a rally held by World War I veterans in Washington, D.C.

As a sop to his ego, MacArthur was given the rank in the Philippines as "field marshal." Then MacArthur went on with the task of forming the Philippine Army.

Budget

ACCORDING to Jose, MacArthur had promised Quezon that it would take only P16 million annually to finance "an army suitable for the Philippines."

"If you have a small regular force, as a nucleus to be expanded by employing the citizen army in time of peril, no nation will care to attack you, for the cost of conquest will be more than the expected profits," MacArthur told Quezon.

However, it turned out that it would cost P25 million annually to maintain at a bare minimum a regular force of 19,000 soldiers. That would mean a cost of P250 million instead of the P160 million in 10 years, which would extend to the period when the Philippines had gained independence.

Another Filipino also worked on finding a solution to the budget problem. L. Sigujon Reyna, a technical adviser to the secretary of

the Interior, submitted a preliminary study on national defense and related problems to Quezon.

Jose wrote: "The main problem, Reyna concluded, was attaining maximum effectiveness at minimum cost. Despite economic difficulties, the Philippines needed an organized army similar to the Belgian and Swiss models, though the Philippine situation was compounded by a longer exposed coastline."

"A navy was out of the question because of its excessive cost but a coast artillery corps and an air corps could be developed to insure protection from threats at sea," Reyna explained.

"Coming to the same conclusion as others before him, Reyna stressed that the best solution was a small regular army with a large reserve force and militia, with various sectors of the country contributing to the defense effort," Cortes wrote. "In order to further economize, Reyna stressed that the army must be useful both in times of war and peace, otherwise, it would be considered by the already overburdened taxpayers as a real parasite in time of peace."

"Reyna hit the problem on the head when he noted that it was essentially a problem of maximum effectiveness for minimum cost," Cortes wrote.

This was a problem in 1935 and more than 80 years later, the dilemma of adequately funding the Armed Forces of the Philippines still exists.

Choices

THERE were three basic systems that the Philippine Commonwealth could adopt for its fledgling army.

The first was to adopt the voluntary service, which was in use in the United States at that time. However, this was seen as the most expensive in the long run.

"The second system was to adopt the

monarchical system, "which was in use in old Prussia, Imperial Russia and Japan, wherein there was mandatory two- or three-year military service for all males," Cortes wrote.

The third system was to adopt either the Swiss or Austrian models, which contemplated a small regular force with a citizenry that was trained for fixed periods.

Because of budget constraints, the third system was chosen.

This was the opportunity for Quezon to realize his vision for the Philippines.

Quezon, during his acceptance of his nomination for president, had said he wanted a neutral Philippines under the League of Nations. However, "we cannot rely exclusively on these implements of peace for our national defense," Cortes quoted Quezon as saying.

"I favor preparedness for national defense," Quezon said. "We cannot afford to have, nor do I approve of, a large standing army or costly military establishments, but we must have a regular army of sufficient size for our requirements and a trained citizenry ready to be drafted for service in any emergency." As part of adapting to the cut in military budget, the decision was to build up the existing ROTC program.

It was decided to revise its original two-year basic course and four-year optional course into a three-year compulsory course for college students. Training hours were extended from the previous three hours to four hours.

"Under this new program, all graduates would be eligible for direct commission in the reserve force as officers or noncommissioned officers," Cortes wrote. "This would solve the problem of shortage of reserve officers at reduced cost."

Additionally, specialized ROTC units were formed. For example, the University of the Philippines (UP) and the University of Santo

Tomas were to provide one ROTC medical unit and a field artillery unit each, while the Mapua Institute of Technology was to have one ROTC engineering unit.

These units would form the cadre of trained officers and troops for specialized military units if the reserve was mobilized.

These units were also to form the backbone of the reserve force in the event of actual mobilization, because it was realized that it was too expensive to hold annual practice mobilizations and not all military trainees could join because of the disruption it would cause to the civilian economy.

This system was still partially in place when World War II arrived in Philippine shores.

The reserve force was called up and mobilized to firm up the 10 Philippine Commonwealth Army divisions and form the Philippine Coastal Artillery Units.

Unfortunately, the budget cuts resulting in lack of proper equipment took its toll on Philippine Army units.

When the Philippines fell to the Imperial Japanese Army, the bulk of ROTC graduates who did not surrender formed the cadre for different guerrilla units throughout the country. One of the most famous came to be known as the Hunters ROTC Guerrillas. They were citizen soldiers of the country's underground army.

After the war

THE signing of the surrender documents on the deck of the battleship USS *Missouri* in Japan in 1945 marked the official end of World War II.

By 1946, the Philippines regained its independence. Two months after Philippine independence was restored, on September 13, 1946, the 10-division strong prewar Philippine Army organization was revived. This included the reactivation of the ROTC program.

According to the Army Reserve Command

(Arescom), this set up for a citizen army was further strengthened "when the Philippine Army became the Armed Forces of the Philippines on December 23, 1950," with the Philippines divided into four military areas. "ROTC units operating within these areas fell under the supervision of their respective Area Commanders," the Arescom said.

The prewar ROTC program, which emanated from Quezon's Executive Order 207 in 1939, was updated on February 8, 1967. Under the updated order issued by then-President Ferdinand E. Marcos, ROTC was to be taken as a mandatory course at all college and universities with an enrollment of at least 250 male students. Under the old Commonwealth era order, the requirement was only 100 male students.

Rainbow rangers

A YEAR later saw the rise of an experimental reserve unit based in UP.

This was the Rainbow Rangers-Sunday Soldiers. Their officers came from the ROTC program, while the trainees were students who specialized in small-unit tactics and unconventional warfare to be used as the backbone for civil home-defense units.

In November 1971 one battalion of Sunday Soldiers and UP ROTC officers under the command of Lt. Col. Benjamin Vallejo mobilized and sent to guard the elections in the provinces of Lanao.

"During its three-week stint of peacekeeping in Lanao, nine citations for bravery were earned by the cadets of the battalion," according to publicly available records from the UP ROTC.

Among these citations was a posthumous award for Cadet Captain Eustaquio Granadillos for acts of bravery. In honor of the slain cadet officer, the main barracks

of the UP ROTC now bears his name.

This unit was disbanded in 1983 with the retirement of its founder, Gen. Benjamin Vallejo, a member of UP ROTC class 1952.

Rot within ROTC

AFTER Marcos declared martial law in 1972, military training in campuses under the ROTC program was put under a bad light.

The abuses committed under the Marcos administration transformed the image of the military from being "protectors" to "oppressors."

And corruption set in within certain ROTC units. There were kickbacks in ordering supplies for uniforms, food and drinks. Students can avoid mandatory military training by bribing ROTC personnel. Others can opt for "light duty" instead of training for a fee.

Instead of training college students to be part of a citizen army, certain individuals made the ROTC program into a milking cow. Many used it for personal gain while others used the money raised to finance ROTC training activities because most of the designated military funds were now going to regular forces engaged in the counterinsurgency campaign. Whatever the reason, it was still corruption.

Then came 2001 and the discovery of Mark Welson Chua Jr.'s body in the Pasig River. Because of his murder, mandatory military training came to an end.

In the third and final part of this series, the article will focus on the aftermath of Chua's murder, which relegated military training as just one of the three optional courses college students can take under the National Service Training Program. More than a decade after Chua's murder, there have been attempts to reinstate mandatory military training in campuses throughout the country.

To be concluded

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The Manila Times

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Petron XCS books semis match vs RC Cola-Army A

PETRON XCS' Aiza Pontillas and Bang Pineda won 21-17, 21-16, against Aby Maraño and Danika Gendrauli of F2 Logistics in the quarterfinals of the 2016 Philippine Superliga (PSL) Challenge Cup beach volleyball tournament at the SM By the Bay in Mall of Asia on Sunday.

"We challenged the defense of Aby knowing that she's not yet used to play on the sand," said Pontillas, a

veteran of 2011 Southeast Asian Games.

"Both of them are really good. But we had to target Aby because we know that Danika is more experienced being the former champion. We practiced hard and prepare for them because we know that they are a very good team," added Pineda.

The Petron ladies will face the RC Cola-Army A in the semifinals.

In the other match, the

tandem of Jovelyn Gonzaga and Nene Bautista defeated Maica Morada and Frances Molina of Petron Sprint 4T, 21-14, 21-12, to secure a slot in the semifinals.

In the men's division, Philippine Navy B prevailed over UE Manila, 21-13, 21-13, while Philippine Navy A subdued SM By the Bay, 21-9, 21-9, to clinched semis berths.

The semifinals and finals are scheduled on Sunday.

JEAN RUSSEL V. DAVID

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<http://www.inquirer.net/>

Next PSG chief ready to work with Duterte

By: Frances Mangosing, 05:32 PM May 23rd, 2016



Members of the Presidential Security Group pass-in-review during President Benigno Simeon Aquino III attendance to the Presidential Security Group (PSG) 30th founding anniversary at PSG Grandstand, Malacanang Park, Manila. In photo: the Presidents close in Security. INQUIRER FILE PHOTO/JOAN BONDOC

The Armed Forces of the Philippines on Monday welcomed the designation of Colonel Rolando Bautista, head of Joint Task Group Basilan, as the next commander of the Presidential Security Group (PSG) of presumptive President-elect Rodrigo Duterte.

"He will definitely make a good PSG commander," AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla told reporters.

Padilla, an Air Force pilot, was a classmate of Bautista in the Philippine Military Academy "Sandiwa" Class of 1985. He also worked with the incoming PSG chief "at various capacities in the field when we were assigned in the same area commands."

"In more than three decades of seeing him work, I can say he is undoubtedly hardworking, self-sacrificing, a dedicated and committed serviceman. A true military professional with uncompromising values," Padilla said.

Bautista, a Scout Ranger officer, was involved in the anti-insurgency drive against the New People's Army in the late 1980s. He will replace PSG chief Commodore Raul Ubando.

"As a young lieutenant, he was already exposed to the hardship of being an Infantry soldier and a Scout Ranger by running after the NPA in different parts of the country," said public affairs chief Colonel Noel Detoyato.

Bautista said it was "an honor and pride to serve the incoming President."

"Apparently, we have existing protocols and procedures on how to secure a President that we observe. These have been tested and institutionalized. But of course, there will be additions and innovations depending on the desire of the President," he told reporters.

Davao assignments

Bautista previously served as a United Nations Military Observer in East Timor. Before he became the commander of the 104th Brigade in Basilan, he was the commander of the 73rd Infantry Battalion in Davao from 2005 to 2007. He also served in the Davao-based Army's 10th Infantry Division from 2007 to 2010.

His most recent accomplishments were leading the operations that led to the deaths of foreign terrorists Abu Anas in Basilan last December and Moroccan Mohammad Al Khatab last April. **JE/rga**

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<http://www.inquirer.net/>

Duterte appoints 3 more Cabinet officials

By: Ben O. de Vera and Julie M. Aurelio, Karlos Manlupig and Nico Alconaba



Presumptive President-elect Rodrigo Duterte with General Hermogenes Esperon. INQUIRER PHOTO/EDWIN BACASMAS

A former chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), a former rebel priest and a University of the Philippines economics professor are joining the Cabinet of presumptive President-elect Rodrigo Duterte.

At a press conference on Saturday evening, Duterte announced in Davao City that retired Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, the AFP chief of staff of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, would be his national security adviser.

"It's a very challenging job, but I'm honored to become part of his Cabinet," Esperon said on Sunday. "He wants to change many things so we are focusing our concerns on national security."

Duterte announced at dawn on Sunday that he would appoint as Cabinet secretary his campaign manager, Leoncio "Jun" Evasco.

"I might as well take this opportunity to announce that Jun Evasco is Secretary to the Cabinet," Duterte told reporters. "I want him to work with me."

Evasco, a priest who joined the underground movement during martial law and a former political prisoner, was city administrator during Duterte's term as mayor of Davao City. Evasco later became mayor of Maribojoc town in Bohol.

READ: Duterte names more members of his Cabinet

Mass movement-type

When Duterte decided to run for President, he tapped Evasco as his national campaign manager. Evasco is being credited for implementing a "mass movement-type" of campaign organizing supporters down to the barangay level.

Pernia to Neda

Also on Sunday, Ernesto M. Pernia of the UP School of Economics said he had "unofficially" accepted Duterte's offer for him to head the state planning agency, National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

Pernia said the Duterte administration would prioritize poverty reduction, alongside regional and rural development as well as quality education and healthcare.

He said a "much-improved" investment climate, as a result of implementing law and order, improving infrastructure, cutting red tape, easing constitutional restrictions on foreign direct investment and putting in

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

place a competitive tax system, would bring in more investments that would create more jobs and reduce poverty.

Pernia said that in terms of regional and rural development, the Duterte administration would focus on the agriculture, manufacturing and tourism sectors.

RH law implementation

The incoming administration will also push for "rapid and sustained" implementation of the reproductive health or RH law, he added.

Pernia is professor emeritus at the School of Economics in UP Diliman since 2013. He finished his Ph.D. in Economic Demography at University of California, Berkeley in 1976.

Before being named incoming national security adviser, Esperon was considered for the post of defense secretary, along with Gilberto "Gibo" Teodoro Jr., a defense secretary during the Arroyo administration and its presidential candidate in 2010.

At the press conference on Saturday, Duterte said Teodoro had declined to be his defense secretary. "Gibo has begged off. I have in mind a retired military man. I won't divulge his name yet."

But Teodoro on Sunday denied that he had declined Duterte's offer.

"The importance of the position to the national interest requires no less than serious consultation, especially with the President-elect before accepting such, in order to ensure that a prospective Secretary is the right choice," Teodoro said in a statement sent to the Inquirer.

The Inquirer learned that Duterte and Teodoro had a brief meeting on May 16 in Davao City, and had not really discussed what the former expected from a defense secretary.

READ: Teodoro still studying Duterte offer of top defense post **DILG chief**

Duterte said he still had to choose his secretary of interior and local government. "I am having a hard time. There's a problem in the police. Not all, but in the Manila area and some provinces, some police are into drugs," he said.

Esperon worked with Duterte during the election campaign and was visible even in his media engagements.

A member of the Philippine Military Academy "Marangal" Class of 1974, Esperon served as AFP chief of staff from July 2006 to May 2008.

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

www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

PN looking for various types of demolition blocks, materials

From the Philippine News Agency (May 23)

The Philippine Navy (PN) has allocated the sum of PHP34,353,769.37 for the acquisition of various types of demolition blocks and materials.

It is used to breach obstacles or demolish large structures.

Winning bidders are required to deliver the items within 240 calendar days.

Pre-bid conference is slated for Wednesday, 1:00 p.m. at the Philippine Navy Hall of Justice, NJAG, Navy Station Jose Francisco Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

PN's largest surface combatants identified

From the Philippine News Agency (May 23)

With the Philippine Navy (PN) undertaking delivery of its largest warship ever, the 7,300 gross ton BRP Tarlac (LD-601) last May 16, it is also fitting that the other Filipino surface combatants be identified to the public.

This is only fitting as the PN is slated to celebrate its 118th founding anniversary this coming June 1. BRP Tarlac is classed as a strategic sealift vessel and can be use as floating command center and for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions due to her large cargo capacity which is estimated at 2,800 gross tons.

She can carry 500 troops at one time besides, two rigid-hull inflatable boats, two landing craft units and three helicopters.

BRP Tarlac also has minimum operating range of 7,500 nautical miles and a complement of 121 officers and enlisted personnel.

She has overall length of 120 meters, breadth of 21 meters, draft of five meters and a maximum speed of 16 knots.

Her commissioning date is also on June 1 and delivery of her sister ship is expected on May 2017. Previously, the largest vessels ordered by the PN are two Bacolod City class logistic vessels which weighed 4,265 tons and were commissioned in Dec. 1, 1993.

The two ships in the class are named BRP Dagupan City (LCC-551) and BRP BacolodCity (LCC-550). The latter vessels are classified as landing and transport ships.

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Both vessels have a length of 83 meters, beam of 18 meters, draft of 3.7 meters and maximum speed of 12 knots.

The BRP Bacolod City class has a crew of 30 officers and enlisted personnel and has a cruising range of 8,300 nautical miles and has a cargo capacity of 2,280 gross tons.

These vessels are followed by the BRP Gregorio Del Pilar frigates (converted Hamilton-class cutters) which weighs 3,250 gross tons, has a length of 378 feet, beam of 43 feet, and draft of 15 feet.

The first ship of the class, the BRP Gregorio Del Pilar (PF-15) arrived in December 2011 while her sister, the BRP Ramon Alcaraz (PF-16), was commissioned in November 2013.

Its propulsion systems consist of two diesel engines and two gas turbine engines, giving it a top speed of 29 knots.

The ship has cruising range of 14,000 nautical miles and has a sea and loiter time of 45 days. It has a complement of 167 officers and men.

www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

Navy in the market for 1.2M rounds of ball ammunition

From the Philippine News Agency (May 23)

The Philippine Navy (PN) is now looking for suppliers capable of supplying it with 1,296,000 rounds of 5.56mm SS109/M855 ball ammunition.

The latter will be used to arm its M-16 automatic rifles and brand-new M-4 carbines.

Project for this program is placed at PHP29.8 million. Winning bidders are required to deliver the items within 240 calendar days.

Pre-bid conference is scheduled for May 25, 1 p.m. at the Philippine Navy Hall of Justice, NJAG, Naval Station Jose Francisco Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

The 5.56mm is an intermediate cartridge developed in the United States and originally chambered in the M16 rifle.

<http://www.philstar.com/>

Suspected Abu Sayyaf member caught in Zamboanga Sibugay raid

By Roel Pareño (philstar.com) | Updated May 23, 2016 - 2:38pm



Security forces seized guns and drugs in the raid. Google Earth

ZAMBOANGA CITY, Philippines -- Joint police and military forces captured a suspected member of the Abu Sayyaf after a firefight in a village of Malangas town, Zamboanga Sibugay province late last week, a security official here said Monday.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman of the military's Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), identified the captured suspect as Ibno Sanday, a follower of Abu Sayyaf member Hapidz Abdurahman, who was the target of the joint operation last Thursday at Barangay Sinusayan, in Malangas.

Tan said Abdurahman managed to escape during a firefight with the raiding forces of the 102nd Infantry Brigade and of local police.

The security official said they believe the same group was behind an ambush where Police Inspector Dexter Gumahob Adrias, acting town police chief, was wounded.

Adrias and his team were on an operation when they were ambushed by the gunmen.

Tan said security forces recovered a 12-gauge shotgun with six shells, a loaded cal.45 pistol, and a grenade. They also recovered 14 heat-sealed sachets of shabu and several pieces of rolled aluminum foil, cash and two mobile phones.

The suspect and the recovered illegal drugs and firearms are in police custody.

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Abu Sayyaf sends 'final message' from Samal Island captives

By Roel Pareño



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

ZAMBOANGA CITY -- The military stood by its focused operations to rescue the three remaining Samal captives held by the Abu Sayyaf group, who released a "final message" from the hostages on Sunday. Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesman of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said the military has not seen the new video yet. However, he maintained that the deadline does not factor into Wesmincom's operations.

"With deadlines or not, we are working to get the kidnap victims," Tan said.

Tan said the ground forces continued to pursue search and rescue operation in Sulu based on the available information.

"Our primary concern is the rescue and safety of the kidnap victims," Tan added.

The military declined to divulge any information that may affect operations such as sightings of the Abu Sayyaf group and their kidnap victims.

In a fresh video posted on the Intelligence group SITE Sunday, the Abu Sayyaf group sent what it said is the "final message" of the Samal island captives.

Canadian Robert Hall, one of the three remaining Samal Island captives, appealed to incoming president and Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte and the Philippine government to coordinate with a certain woman at the Canadian Embassy for their release.

Hall was asking to work on their appeal "the sooner the better" for their release.

The Abu Sayyaf group has given June 13 as its deadline for the victims' families and governments to comply with its demand. There was no mention of a specific demand in the new video but the group previously demanded P300 million each for the foreign captives.

The Abu Sayyaf beheaded Canadian John Ridsdel on April 25 after the family failed to pay the ransom. Canadians Hall and Ridsdel, Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad, and Filipino woman Marites Flor were abducted on September 21 last year in Samal Island Resort off Davao del Norte and brought to Sulu as captives.

Aside from them, the Abu Sayyaf group is also holding four Malaysians and five local hostages captive in Sulu.

<http://www.inquirer.net/>

Gov't-Red 'interim peace pact' bared

By: Tony S. Bergonia



JOSE Ma. Sison at Schiphol airport in The Netherlands: Ready for peace talks and a life of peace for other communist rebels. ARLYN DE LA CRUZ/CONTRIBUTOR

Communist rebels led by Jose Ma. Sison and representatives of the Aquino administration have signed what was described as an "interim peace agreement" that may serve as a stepping stone to a permanent pact with the incoming Duterte administration.

Members of a government delegation, sent by President Aquino in 2014 to The Netherlands to hold back-channel talks with leaders of the communist-led National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), gave the Inquirer a copy of the document, titled "Joint Agreement on the Resumption of the Formal Talks on the Peace Negotiations between the GPH (Government of the Philippines) and the NDFP."

The document bore the signatures of Sison and top NDFP negotiators Fidel Agcaoili, Vicente Ladlad and Danilo Borja, and members of the "secret" government delegation—Hernani Braganza, Jaime Aristotle Alip, Efren Moncupa and Francisco Lara Jr.

A member of the government delegation said many officials involved in the talks were surprised that Sison signed the document, adding that the acknowledged founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has not signed any document resembling an agreement with the Philippine government following the collapse of peace talks under then President Corazon Aquino.

The delegations said the document, signed on Dec. 8, 2014, was a strong indication that the NDFP was not only willing to enter into a peace agreement but was also ready to embrace a life of peace for communist rebels, both armed and unarmed.

READ: Joma Sison: Duterte victory good for national unity Framework

According to the document, the parties agreed to:

Reaffirm the 1992 agreement, called The Hague Joint Declaration, between the government and the NDFP, which became the framework for the start of formal peace talks, and specified that no conditions must be imposed on either party to start the talks.

Accelerate the pace of formal peace talks by forming smaller "reciprocal working groups" that would hammer out political and constitutional reforms, end to armed hostilities and what to do with members of the CPP armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA).

Draft and sign an agreement on "truce and cooperation" that would immediately lead to a cessation of fighting and would last depending on a timetable to be determined by the government and NDFP negotiators.

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Give priority, during the duration of the truce, to negotiations on a Comprehensive Agreement on Socioeconomic Reforms, which would list down the measures needed to achieve social justice, like a new land reform program and programs to bring about industrialization.

Immediately convene working committees on social, economic, political and constitutional reforms that would give flesh to general agreements on social justice, economic equality and human rights. According to the document, the NDFP and back-channel negotiators set January 2016 as the target completion date for agreements on these issues.

Virtual pact

Copies of the document have been furnished President Aquino and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process. The latest recipient of a copy of the document is Rep. Silvestre Bello III, who has been named by presumptive President-elect Rodrigo Duterte as head of the peace panel that would negotiate with the NDFP.

According to a delegation member in the 2014 talks, the document is virtually a peace pact which needed only official imprimatur.

"This is it," said the member, who requested anonymity for lack of authority to disclose details of the 2014 talks.

Another delegation member, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, said what set the 2014 interim agreement apart from previous agreements is that NDFP "made a lot of concessions."

"They were not even calling for the release of all (rebel suspects), only those involved in the peace process," said the member, who had taken part in talks with the NDFP under previous administrations.

He said that while there was mention about the US government's classification of the NDFP, CPP and NPA as terrorist organizations during the back-channel talks, this was not even discussed in the drafting of the interim agreement.

"They (NDFP leaders) did not demand it (to be removed from the US terror list)," said the delegation member.

READ: Joma Sison welcomes Dureza, Bello as gov't peace adviser, negotiator with CPP-NPA

Another breakthrough in the 2014 negotiations, he said, is an agreement to hold marathon discussions to fast-track the peace process. "Like a conclave," he said, referring to the process of electing a Pope.

He said there would have been a "national, indefinite ceasefire" had the interim agreement been followed quickly by a formal signing.

There was also an agreement to hold discussions by the smaller working groups simultaneously to fast-track the process. "Everything would be tackled in one fell swoop," he said.

The interim agreement has been shown to military officials, according to the source. "They were OK with it," he said. "They did not revise anything."

The 2014 talks were described as a success compared to previous government attempts to restart formal discussions with the communist leaders.

The delegation led by Braganza laid the groundwork for its trip to The Netherlands by talking first with communist leaders in the Philippines, among them NPA leaders based in Mindanao.

Five trips

It took five trips to The Netherlands before the interim peace document was signed, according to the sources.

The back-channel talks took so much time that "so many Marlboros (cigarettes) had been puffed," said one delegation member referring to how the negotiators spent break times.

While the document signed by Sison and other NDFP leaders may be still a step away from a formal pact, it should be used by the incoming government negotiators as a take-off point. "This is already a good deal," said one of the delegation members.

"All that is needed is to make this formal," he said.

READ: CPP-NPA prepares list of nominees to posts in Duterte Cabinet