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NEWS CLIPPINGS

24 November 2016

Thursday

NEWS HEADLINES

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

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "MARCE"
LOCATED AT 420 KMS. EAST OF
HINAJUAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR
(As of 3:00 PM - Nov. 23, 2016)

LAOAG CITY 23 - 31 °C		TUGUEGARAO CITY 22 - 32 °C		SUNRISE 6:01 AM		SUNSET 5:24 PM	
BAGUIO CITY 14 - 24 °C <td colspan="2">TAGAYTAY CITY 21 - 29 °C <td colspan="2">MOONRISE 1:41 AM <td colspan="2">MOONSET 2:04 PM </td></td></td>		TAGAYTAY CITY 21 - 29 °C <td colspan="2">MOONRISE 1:41 AM <td colspan="2">MOONSET 2:04 PM </td></td>		MOONRISE 1:41 AM <td colspan="2">MOONSET 2:04 PM </td>		MOONSET 2:04 PM	
SBMA/CLARK 23 - 32 °C <td colspan="2">LEGAZPI CITY 26 - 31 °C <td colspan="2">LAST QUARTER NOV 23 6:33 PM <td colspan="2">NEW MOON NOV 28 1:11 PM </td></td></td>		LEGAZPI CITY 26 - 31 °C <td colspan="2">LAST QUARTER NOV 23 6:33 PM <td colspan="2">NEW MOON NOV 28 1:11 PM </td></td>		LAST QUARTER NOV 23 6:33 PM <td colspan="2">NEW MOON NOV 28 1:11 PM </td>		NEW MOON NOV 28 1:11 PM	
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ZAMBOANGA CITY 24 - 31 °C <td colspan="2">METRO DAVAO 24 - 28 °C </td>		METRO DAVAO 24 - 28 °C					

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INQUIRY

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KERWIN: POLICE DEEP INTO ILLEGAL DRUGS

STORY BY CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO, TARRA QUISMUNDO AND JEANNETTE I. ANDRADE

■ Confessed drug lord Kerwin Espinosa testifies top police officials were on his payroll

■ May God forgive you, De Lima tells Espinosa as she denies receiving money from him

■ My father-mayor had nothing to do with my drug racket, Espinosa tells Senate inquiry

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FROM A1

By Christine O. Avendaño
@10avendanoINQ

In a testimony that made Philippine National Police Director General Ronald dela Rosa cry, confessed drug lord Kerwin Espinosa on Wednesday disclosed the full extent of police involvement in his illegal drug trade.

Espinosa said he did business with policemen manning checkpoints to regional officials themselves supplying "shabu" crystal meth.

Sen. Leila de Lima and top police officials whom Espinosa said were on his payroll all denied wrongdoing.

The high police officials included those who participated in the Nov. 5 raid on the Leyte subprovincial jail where Kerwin's father was killed.

"I do not know now whom to believe," said Dela Rosa, nicknamed "Bato," who unabashedly cried during the nine-hour nationally televised hearing in the Senate.

"I place in God the PNP. I love the organization ... there are still many policemen who can be trusted," he said.

Espinosa said that in exchange for protection, he paid off De Lima, retired Chief Supt. Vicente Loot, one of the top officials President Duterte had accused of involvement in the illegal drug trade, as well as three police officers who were implicated in the killing of his father, Albuera Mayor Rolando Espinosa Sr.

Espinosa, who fled the country in June fearing for his life after Mr. Duterte promised a relentless war on narcotics, finally faced the Senate committee investigating the death of his father during a police raid on the Leyte subprovincial jail on Nov. 5.

He detailed the network of protectors that he had built, to

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ON DRUG PAYROLL? Chief Insp. Leo Laraga (left) and Supt. Marvin Marcos, both of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, have denied being on the payroll of confessed drug lord Kerwin Espinosa during their second appearance before senators investigating extrajudicial killings in connection with the Duterte administration's campaign against illegal drugs. —LYN RILLON

shield his business, which earned him P40 million to P50 million yearly.

The 36-year-old, who said he went by the code name "Batman" in his drug transactions, also outlined how drug convicts were able to continue their activities while in jail.

Before Espinosa testified before the Senate committee on public order and dangerous drugs, his lawyer had sought immunity for him. Espinosa was captured in Abu Dhabi and was returned to the country last week.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, the committee chair, said he would seek the approval of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III for the immunity request on a motion of Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, which was unopposed.

On payroll

Among the people whom Espinosa said were on his payroll were:

- De Lima—a total of P8 million through her former

bodyguard and boyfriend Ronnie Dayan. He said he met her personally at Burnham Park in Baguio City in November last year after Dayan arranged it.

- Supt. Marvin Marcos, director of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Eastern Visayas—P3 million to fund the election campaign of his wife in May.

- Chief Insp. Leo Laraga, who shot Espinosa's father dead during the Nov. 5 raid—P20,000 weekly.

- Supt. Santi Noel Matira, raiding team supervisor in the Leyte jail assault—P15,000 weekly, increased to P20,000 weekly after his operations widened through Eastern Visayas.

- The biggest police official he named on his payroll was Loot, now mayor of Daanbantayan, Cebu province, who allegedly received P120,000 per month.

He said Laraga had recommended the payoff to Loot, then deputy of Provincial Region Office 8. "I gave General Loot

money until his transfer to the Training Center in Camp Crame," Espinosa said.

Espinosa said in August last year, Albueria police chief, Senior Insp. Jovie Espenido, told him that Dayan wanted to speak to him about De Lima's need to raise funds for her senatorial campaign. He said it was Peter Co, an inmate at New Bilibid Prison (NBP), who confirmed that De Lima was seeking funds.

He said Dayan asked for P2 million but he could only shell out P700,000 monthly. Dayan called him to say that De Lima had agreed to the monthly P700,000 but wanted goodwill money of P2 million, which he delivered at the parking lot of SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City in August last year.

He said he was not able to give the P700,000 monthly because this time Dayan was asking for P8 million.

The second time he gave Dayan P1.7 million was at a restaurant in Dampa along Maca-

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pagal Avenue in October last year.

Espinosa said he asked Dayan if he could meet De Lima. Between Nov. 19 and 22 last year, Dayan arranged a meeting in Baguio City where Espinosa was to bring P2 million.

They met at Burnham Park and Espinosa said he brought his family along. De Lima was there, and Dayan introduced him as Batman.

He and his family had a photo taken with De Lima. "We shook hands after the picture taking and I whispered to her that Dayan has the money. Ma'am Lella just nodded," Espinosa said.

Espinosa next gave Dayan P2.3 million in February this year at SM Mall of Asia.

Dealers in jail

Espinosa read most of the time from his 27-page affidavit. He said he began selling drugs in 2004 in Cebu City. He was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in 2005.

At the Lahug jail in Cebu City, he met four inmates dealing shabu, including Jeffrey Diaz, alias Jaguar, who was supplied by Lovely Adam Impal, who now lives in Makati City.

"I was able to save P1.5 million while I was in jail," Espinosa said.

He was transferred to NBP, where he continued his business with another inmate, Co, who supplied him from 4 to 10 kilos of shabu. They distributed shabu in Leyte cities, such as Tacloban, Ormoc and Baybay, and Hilongos town.

He got out of NBP in 2010 and resumed his activities in 2011 in Leyte. He said he was shot and wounded by a rival, Tatang, who worked for a now retired policeman, Socrates Datahan.

Espinosa was jailed again in Ormoc City after he was charged with illegal possession of firearms at the behest of

Jaguar, who asked a policeman, Ramon Bolongaita, to file the case. "Jaguar and I were quarreling because he had an affair with my wife," he said.

In jail, he said he met Wengweng Rosal and went into drug dealing again with the help of Senior Insp. Rio Tan. He said he gave Tan P15,000 weekly and the same amount to now Supt. Jose Estopin. He named two other Ormoc policemen who got P5,000 weekly each.

Police suppliers

Espinosa said Chief Insp. Wilfredo Abordo and Dennis Torrefiel supplied him with shabu. He said he gave Abordo P12,000 weekly, later increased to P80,000 monthly in 2014. Espinosa said he gave the money to Abordo through Sean Bean Quintana.

He mentioned giving P6 million to Senior Supt. Hasher Dolina, then police regional director, through a Victor Espina.

Other police officers who received payoffs from 2013 to 2014 were Senior Insp. Chuva (P15,000 weekly); Senior Insp. Jabinez, then Albuera police chief (P15,000 weekly); Senior Insp. Camacho, who was also Albuera police chief (P15,000 weekly); SPO3 Bituin, team leader of check point in Barangay Makabug (P8,000 weekly); Magamay, chief of the checkpoints (P10,000 weekly); Sir Arafol, also assigned at checkpoints (P5,000 weekly); Capt. Angay-Angay and Sir Ludo of Ormoc police force (P15,000 weekly) Torrefiel (P10,000 weekly) and Macanas city director of Ormoc, (P25,000 every Saturday). INQ



WATCH: KERWIN ESPINOSA DENIES OWNING A 'BLUE BOOK'

Ing.news/KerwinDeniesBlueBook

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24 November 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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I gave ₱8 M to De Lima - Kerwin

'May God forgive you... And I forgive you,' lady senator tells drug suspect

By **HANNAH L. TORREGOZA**

the May, 2016 elections.

At the joint hearing of the Senate Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs and on Justice and Human Rights, Espinosa confirmed he gave the money in tranches through her former bodyguard-driver and lover, Ronnie Dayan.

De Lima, in a televised interview, had earlier admitted her relationship with Dayan, a love affair confirmed by

the latter in a press conference after authorities arrested him in La Union the other day.

Espinosa said it was Dayan who contacted him, asking for his help as De Lima needed funds to finance her senatorial campaign. When he sought the opinion of Peter Co and Jeffrey "Jaguar" Diaz - two major traders of illegal drugs whom he had earlier known - both said it was safe to make

transactions with De Lima.

"When I called Jaguar to confirm if it was really true that De Lima was transacting with businessmen who are into illegal trade, and if they would protect us, he said it's true," Espinosa told senators during the proceedings.

"I also asked Peter Co because he was already my boss, and he told me they have no problem with that as long as we keep the transaction hid- ►6

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I gave ₱8 M to De Lima – Kerwin

◀1

den," he added.

Espinosa said Dayan originally asked for ₱2-million "goodwill money" but he haggled for a lower amount as he cannot afford it. They eventually settled for ₱700,000 monthly but still Dayan insisted on the ₱2 million goodwill money.

After raising the amount, Espinosa said he handed the first batch of the money – ₱2 million in goodwill money – over to Dayan at a parking lot in a mall in Pasay City in August, 2015. The second batch of the money – ₱1.7 million – was given to Dayan at a restaurant in Dampas near Macapagal Boulevard in October, 2015, before he went up to Baguio City to meet the senator.

Espinosa said it was Dayan who arranged the meeting between him and De Lima, and was introduced as "Batman" – a name he suggested to Dayan to conceal his identity.

Espinosa said his meeting with De Lima took place at Burnham Park in Baguio City sometime on November 19 to 22, 2015.

After handing over to Dayan another batch of the money at a parking lot in Burnham Park, Espinosa said he posed for a picture with the senator, together with his family. But he said there was no conversation between him and De Lima as Dayan had warned him that the senator won't be able to talk to him as there were many people around.

Espinosa said he gave the last tranche of the money – ₱2.3 million – on February, 2016, inside the parking lot of the Pasay City mall. Afterwards, he returned to Leyte. In all, Espinosa said he gave ₱8 million to De Lima, through Dayan.

Prior to his transaction with De Lima, Espinosa said he received a call from Chief Inspector Juvie Espenido, Albuera police chief, tipping him off about Dayan's offer while vacationing at the Anilao Beach Resort in Batangas.

De Lima's response:

I forgive you

De Lima, who attended the Senate proceedings to hear Espinosa's testimony, said she feels it is already pointless to refute the drug suspect's accounts and his allegations against her.

She, however, reiterated she did not receive any money either for protection or fund-raising campaign expenses from Espinosa.

"...Let me say to my colleagues here, and everyone in this hall, and to everyone listening and watching these proceedings, I say this to you: I categorically, firmly, and absolutely deny having known Mr. Kerwin Espinosa. I do not remember any instance or occasion of having met him. I categorically, firmly, and absolutely deny having received any money, any cash from Mr. Kerwin Espinosa, either directly or indirectly through anyone else, in any occasion at any time, whether that money is supposedly for either protection or fund-raising for campaign expenses," she said.

"Alam po naman ni Mr. Kerwin Espinosa na sa puntong kanyang testimonya ngayon about me having received money, having talked to him, having met him anywhere, whether it's Burnham, anywhere, ay total fabrication. She also said it would not be appropriate for her to do so because there would be questions on her objectivity since she is also being implicated in the illegal drug trade.

"Kaya hindi po ako magtatanong sa kanya. I would want to give my colleagues free hand, full liberty in questioning Mr. Kerwin Espinosa about any part of his testimony," she said.

"Final message ko po kay Mr. Kerwin Espinosa. I cannot talk to him directly, but may I just say this: May God forgive you for all your sins, and may God forgive you for all your lies about me. And I forgive you," she stressed.

Officials cleared

At the same hearing, Espinosa sought to clear his father, Mayor Espinosa, of any involvement in the illegal drug trade.

During his testimony, Kerwin also

cleared personalities his deceased father allegedly included in his affidavit as part of the illegal drug trade. Among those he declared innocent were former actor Richard Gomez, who is now mayor of Ormoc City, Leyte Rep. Vicente Veloso, Governor Leopoldo Petilla, Vice Governor Carlo Loreto, and Baybay Vice Mayor Mike Carl.

In the first place, Kerwin said his father is not in a position to provide information about those involved in illegal drugs, saying he was the only one who was into the illicit trade.

The mayor was killed inside the Leyte sub-provincial jail in Baybay City on Nov. 5 in an alleged shootout with policemen out to serve a search warrant.

Kerwin also denied owning a "blue book" that purportedly contains the list of personalities receiving protection money.

"Ang papa ko ay walang kinalaman, inosente siya. Ako ang may alam sa lahat dahil dito sa sinalaysay ko," the younger Espinosa said.

The signature on the affidavit of his father were also forged. "Itong pirmang isang ito, hindi ito pirma ng papa ko. (This signature is not my father's)," he said.

Asked why his father would be tagged in the issue, Espinosa pointed to Espenido, saying the police official has a grudge against him because they worked for rival political families in Leyte.

"Hanggang ngayon nagtatanim siya ng galit sa akin at sa pamilya ko kaya ginagawa niya itong mga di niya dapat gawin dahil isa siyang pulis... inaapaikan niya kami, kinokontrol niya kami (Until now he can't get over his anger against me and my family that's why he is doing the things he's not supposed to do as a policeman. He's maligning and controlling us)," the younger Espinosa said.

Under intense questioning by Sen. Gordon, Kerwin blamed himself for the death of his father. "Nakokonsensya ako. Nadamay siya dahil sa akin (I'm conscience-stricken. He was killed because of me)," Espinosa said. Gordon

also made Kerwin realize the extent of damage he caused on drug pushers and users by distributing shabu to support a habit and the greed for money.

Kerwin also revealed that when his father ran for mayor in 2016, the elder Espinosa's first venture into politics, he didn't to earn a decent living and convince his son to turn away from the illegal drug trade. That was the purpose why he ran for office, Kerwin said. Before joining politics, the slain mayor was into buy-and-sell business and owns rice fields.

Another Marcos on the spot

In the same testimony, the younger Espinosa confirmed that Supt. Marvin Marcos, head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Region 8 which led the raid inside the sub-provincial jail that eventually killed his father, received ₱3 million from him.

Marcos, he said, sought for financial help for his wife, who was then running for vice mayor of Pastrana, Leyte. But he haggled for ₱2.5 million because his money is allotted for the candidacy of his father.

Marcos, however, refuted this, saying it is impossible that he would even ask for financial help for his wife, whom separated with since 2013.

"We are formally separated since January, 2013. Bakit ako tutulong dun (Why will I help her?)," he said, adding that he even cut off his extension credit card so he can still receive his salary.

When confronted with allegations that the killing of Mayor Espinosa was premeditated, Marcos turned emotional as he told Senate probers that he was just doing his job. The Espinosa family, he said, were notorious in Albueria.

"Nagta-trabaho lang din kami, sir," said Marcos, his voice wavering, before allowing Supt. Leo Laraga, another co-accused in the Espinosa killing to talk.

Espinosa also implicated Chief Supt. Asher Dolina, former Eastern Visayas police chief, as protector of illegal drug trade, an accusation vehemently denied by the police official.

How drug trade started
Espinosa said he has been in the drug

trade since 2004, with only 3.8 grams of shabu to begin with. His business eventually grew, saying 50 grams of shabu, his biggest transaction, earning millions in each transaction.

But when President Duterte won in the May presidential elections, he took it as a sign of the coming cleansing process.

"Nasa isip ko na talaga na iba talaga ang mangvayari sa mga ilegalista. May cleansing namagaganap. Kasi totoo, may tao din ako sa Davao, may parokyan, nagsasabi na totoong tao si Duterte. Talagang may paninindigan si President Duterte," Espinosa told senators.

He even noted that even before Duterte took his oath of office, a lot of high-profile drug suspects were killed one by one.

One of those he mentioned was Jeffrey "Jaguar" Diaz, his former boss; and Rowen Secretaria, also known as "Yawa."

During the proceedings, Espinosa admitted being an underling of Diaz, and he gets his supply from Lovely Adam Impal, a mestiza girl whom he only knows to be living in Makati City.

Diaz, one of the alleged big-time drug dealers in Cebu City, was killed in an operation in Las Piñas City last June 19, barely a week after planning to surrender to police. Espinosa's ex-wife, Annalou Llaguno, was also shot and killed in Cebu City last October.

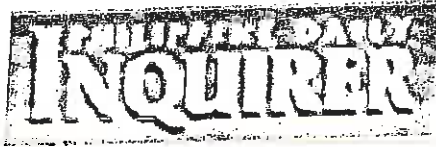
Emotional 'Bato'

Meanwhile, PNP chief Director General Ronald "Bato" Dela Rosa became emotional after admitting to senators that he's facing difficulty as head of the institution.

Dela Rosa broke down and appealed for the public's understanding of the police work and not to lose trust in the organization.

"I, myself, no longer know whom to trust. Like Chief Inspector Espenido, I named him as chief of police of Albueria because I placed my full trust in him even though I don't know him personally," Dela Rosa said. (With a report from Nestor L. Abrematea)

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PLANTED EVIDENCE, OFFICIAL SAYS

ARMORY 'ENOUGH TO ARM PLATOON' FOUND AS GOV'T TROOPS PURSUE MAYOR

TACURONG CITY—Government troops pursuing a fugitive mayor of Maguindanao province stumbled on an armory which contained firearms and explosives that a military official described as more than enough to arm a platoon of soldiers.

Col. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of the 601st Infantry Brigade based here, said the guns, bullets and explosives were found in a two-story building in Talitay town supposedly owned by Talitay Mayor Montasir Sabal.

"This is a huge armory enough to arm more than two dozen persons. It also has manufacturing facilities," Sobejana told the Inquirer by telephone.

He said the armory was found near Sabal's house, which was raided by soldiers and policemen on Nov. 18.

Sobejana said after the raid that yielded seven large sachets of "shabu" (methamphetamine hydrochloride) and two firearms, authorities conducted another raid on Tuesday on Sabal's property and found the firearms and explosives.

He said among the items recovered were two .50 cal.

machine guns, two .30 cal. machine guns, four 81-millimeter mortar shells, two 60-mm mortar shells, four Browning automatic rifles, nine M-1 Garand rifles, two 81-mm mortar launchers, dozens of rocket-propelled grenades, bullets and other war materiel.

But in an interview aired by a local television network, Sabal denied owning any of the contraband that the military reportedly seized from his property.

"Those were planted," said Sabal.

He and his brother, Vice Mayor Abdulwahab Sabal, were earlier named by President Duterte as among Maguindanao's "narcopoliticians." Abdulwahab was earlier arrested on charges of illegal possession of firearms.

Mayor Sabal, who eluded several attempts to arrest him, said he was not involved in the drug trade.

Sabal, however, rejected suggestions he surrender so he can face charges in court.

"I will not surrender. I am innocent. I denounce the military rule in my town," he said.

—EDWIN C. FERNANDEZ INQ

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Anti-criminality task force mulled in Maguindanao

By ALING. MACABALANG

BULUAN, Maguindanao – Civilian and military authorities announced here Tuesday a plan to form a task force to go after insurgents, criminals and suspects involved in the illegal drugs trade.

Maguindanao Gov. Esmail "Toto" Mangudadatu and Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., Army's 6th Infantry Division chief, made the announcement at a press conference here where the latter also revealed the recent seizure by combined government troops of an arsenal of war materials from the house of an elected town mayor suspected to be involved in illegal drugs trade.

Hataman said he and Mangudadatu have agreed on the mechanics of the "wide-ranging" security body in Maguindanao that will be patterned to that of Task Force Davao, which was created more than a decade ago under then Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, and has since neutralized major criminalities and security threats in that premier southern city.

Mangudadatu said the Task Force Maguindanao (TFM) will start operations in January next year to rid his province of crime-prone people or group and other undesirable residents and visitors.

He added that the TFM will enforce

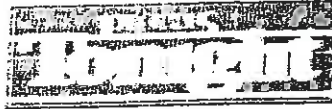
the existing "state of emergency" declared by the Arroyo administration in the wake of the gruesome massacre of 58 people, including Mangudadatu's wife, his two sisters and 32 media workers, in Ampatuan town on Nov. 23, 2009.

Galvez, alongside Col. Cirilito Sobejana, head of the Army's 601st Brigade, said that two 50-caliber machineguns, two 81-millimeter mortars, two 60-millimeter mortars, four 30-caliber sub-machineguns, rifle grenades, explosive devices and an ammunition-reloading gadget were seized during a raid at the house of Mayor Muniassir Sabal of Taitay, Maguindanao last Friday.

During Friday's "law enforcement operations," combined police, military and Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) operatives also captured some of Sabal's armed followers who tried to initially resist, but fled to different directions when attack helicopters reinforced the raiding forces, Sobejana said.

Sabal, who had eluded arrest in past raids on his alleged hideout in nearby Sultan Kudarat province, was nowhere to be found in that Friday operation. He has reportedly gone into hiding since President Duterte announced in August a list naming him among the suspected "narco-politicians" in the country.

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Soldier, civilian die in resto rumble

A BRAWL inside a restaurant in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, shortly before midnight Tuesday left an Army soldier and a civilian dead, the Police Regional Office 4-B said yesterday.

The fatalities were identified as Corporal Abundio Aljas, a 44-year old member of the Army's 76th Infantry Battalion residing in Bagong Silang, Barangay San Roque in San Jose town and security guard Ruel Ildan, 26, a resident of Bgy. La

Curva, also in San Jose, Occ. Mindoro.

The PRO4-B investigation showed that at around 11:30 p.m., Cpl. Aljas was having dinner inside the restaurant owned by his friend in Bgy. San Isidro when he had a misunderstanding with Ildan and his companions John Rey Manahan, Rinmar Paz and Rogelio Gonzales.

As the soldier was about to leave the place, the suspects, who were armed with knives, suddenly stabbed him several times in the body.

However, the trooper was able to draw his pistol and shot Ildan in the left chest.

Both Aljas and Ildan were taken to a nearby hospital where they were declared dead upon arrival by an attending physician.

The three suspects were arrested by responding policemen and are now being held at the San Jose Municipal Police Station jail, facing criminal charges, said PRO4-B officer-in-charge Senior Supt. Renato C. Angara.

Alfred Dalizon

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

Soldier, 4 others dead in Maguindanao clash

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 12:53 AM November 23, 2016

COTABATO CITY—Four armed men, said to be part of a group coddling fugitive Mayor Montasir Sabal of Talitay town in Maguindanao province, and a soldier were killed in a clash near Liguasan Marsh on Monday, military reports said.

The clash came as authorities continued to pursue Sa-bal, who had eluded a joint police and military operation on Friday.

Two helicopter gunships and 10 armored personnel carriers were used to support some 300 soldiers and policemen sent to arrest the mayor.

President Duterte had named Sabal and his brother, Abdulwahab, as among Maguindanao's "narcopoliticians." Abdulwahab was earlier arrested on charges of illegal possession of firearms.

Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., commander of the Army's 6th Infantry Division (6th ID), said S/Sgt. Giovanni Olimpo was manning a machine gun mounted on a hovercraft in the marshland of Maguindanao when he was hit by a bullet.

"He died serving his country, helping the government carry on its antinarcotics campaign," Galvez said of Olimpo.

Officials of Talitay town confirmed a military report that four gunmen were also killed in the clash.

Abu Misri Mama, speaking for the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, said it was his group that clashed with the soldiers in the boundary of Talitay and Datu Anggai Midtimbang towns on Monday.

Mama said one of their members was killed in the clash.

Col. Markton Abo, 6th ID spokesperson, said the military and the police continue to pursue Sabal and his armed followers.

In an earlier interview, Abo said the firing of rockets during the operation to arrest Sabal was part of a clearing maneuver and was meant to ensure the safety of government troops.

Mayor Sabal was not in his house when government troops came. He has been in hiding since authorities first tried to arrest him in Isulan town in Sultan Kudarat province in August. —EDWIN FERNANDEZ INQ



<http://www.goweb.com.ph/>

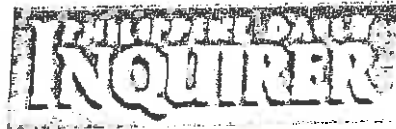
5ID Commander attends OPAPP meeting at NOLCOM

Posted by Lui Claudio on November 23, 2016 at 3:31 PM

Camp Melchor F Dela Cruz, Upi, Gamu, Isabela – Brigadier General Paul Talay Atai, D.F.A. AFP, Commander, 5th Infantry (STAR) Division, Philippine Army together with his two (2) Brigade Commanders, Colonel Bartolome Vicente C Bacarro, Commander of the 502nd Infantry (LIBERATOR) Brigade and Colonel Roy T Devesa, Commander of the 503rd Infantry (JUSTICE and PEACE) Brigade, attended the Consultation Meeting and Dialogue initiated by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace Process (OPAPP) held at Headquarters, Northern Luzon Command, Camp Aquino, San Miguel, Tarlac City on November 22, 2016. Secretary Hernani Braganza of DAR and Government Panel Member presided the meeting which aimed to provide updates to the ongoing peace talks between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CNN). Some of the topics discussed are the ceasefire issues and its challenges. Brigadier General Atai stressed that this meeting is very important for the commanders on the ground to seek guidance and direction at the same time present their concerns to finally end the four (4) decades insurgency war with the CPP-NPA-NDF and to achieve the aspirations of the people to have a just and lasting peace in the whole area of Northern Luzon. The meeting was attended by the different AFP and PNF Commanders in Northern Luzon and other Local Chief Executives.

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Another AFP camp opens to ease traffic

Motorists going to and from the cities of Makati and Taguig can expect a reduction of at least 10 minutes in their travel time, as the Armed Forces of the Philippines agreed to temporarily open the Naval Station in Fort Bonifacio to general traffic.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) officer in charge and general manager Tim Orbos on

Wednesday said the opening of the Naval Station's roads was in addition to the military's earlier commitment to open the three gates of Camp Aguinaldo, the AFP's general headquarters in Quezon City.

According to Orbos, the opening of the Philippine Navy facility to motorists would help ease traffic and cut travel time by at least 10 minutes, as it would allow them to bypass the

junction of Lawton Avenue in Taguig and Chino Roces Avenue Extension in Makati.

The MMDA, one of the member agencies of the Interagency Council on Traffic (I-ACT), said it is now accepting applications for access cards, which should be displayed on the vehicle's windshield. The card will be honored both in Camp Aguinaldo and in the Naval Station.

Applicants should bring their

driver's license, two-by-two photo, their vehicle's official receipt and certificate of registration, and a P500 processing fee.

Manny Gonzales, the MMDA coordinator in I-ACT, said motorists can already use the roads in the military camps once they have obtained the card.

Processing will take five working days at the most, and the pass will be valid for a year, he said. —JOVIC YEE INQ

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MARCOS BURIAL

COLLABORATION, NOT COLLUSION-AFP

By Cynthia D. Balana
@cynchdbINO

The chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines on Wednesday insisted there was no collusion between the military and the Marcos family in the burial of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos at Libingan ng mga Bayani last week.

"There was no collusion, only collaboration and cooperation," Gen. Ricardo Visaya told a news conference at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

Visaya said he did not know

the burial date, as he was in Israel on Friday when the remains of Marcos were transferred to Libingan from a mausoleum in his hometown, Batangas, in Ilocos Norte province, and entombed with military honors.

He said, however, that the military agreed to the request of the Marcos family to keep the burial secret and private.

Visaya denied that the Philippine Army had to seek clearance from the Marcoses for visitors' requests to visit the tomb at Libingan.

But he stressed that visitors must first seek Army clearance and comply with military regulations when visiting the tomb, as the cemetery is guarded by Army personnel.

Visaya also said the decision on how the tomb was to be built was left entirely to the Marcos family, as long as it was within the 10-meter-by-10-meter plot allotted by the AFP.

He said it was up to the Philippine National Police to deal with the "Black Friday" protest against the burial. INQ

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Soldiers, cops air complaints on gov't housing

By **RAYMUND E. ANTONIO**

After the "Yolanda" victims, it is now the soldiers and policemen who are complaining about the houses built for them and their families.

Vice President Leni Robredo found herself at the receiving end of these complaints, from the design, quality and location of these houses.

Robredo, who is the chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), met with Armed Forces of the Philippines - Philippine National Police (AFP-PNP) Housing Board members on Tuesday to discuss their housing concerns. Joining them were other officials of HUDCC and the National Housing Authority (NHA).

During their meeting, Commander Rodolfo Jr., chair of the AFP Housing Board, said that many sol-

diers expressed dissatisfaction on their 22-square meter houses built on 40 square meters of land.

Police Senior Superintendent Wilfredo Cayat also complained about the location of the housing sites that do not cater to the needs of the police. Apparently, he was referring to the sites that lack applicants while others do not have enough houses to meet the number of applications.

The construction of the housing units for soldiers and policemen earning lower salaries started during the time of then President Benigno Aquino III.

The government spent P20.78 billion to build those houses.

Amortization for one house is only P200 per month for the first five years, increasing to P1,330 per month by the 25th year.

Robredo, however, found a low oc-

cupancy in the houses for police and military personnel.

A report from the NHA showed that only 8,397 were so far occupied of the 60,738 housing units that were built as of Sept. 30. Those are located in Cavite, Bulacan, Quezon, Batangas, Camarines Sur, Laguna, Iloilo, Samar, Bohol, Cebu, Bukidnon, Zamboanga del Sur, Sulu, Surigao del Norte, Davao del Sur, and Maguindanao, among others.

Last August, Robredo visited the NHA housing project for police and military in Bocaue, Bulacan. The Vice President said she did not like what she saw, finding structural defects and cracks in the houses.

"While a few housing projects have been successful, the conditions of most of the houses in the sites I visited simply weren't acceptable for the families of our soldiers and



ROBREDO

police," she said.

Robredo underscored the need to "fill the gaps and fulfill the original objective of providing our soldiers and police with decent and affordable homes for their families."

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Navy rescues fishers in Davao del Norte

NAVY personnel rescued on Tuesday three fishermen off Samal Island in Davao del Norte, more than eight hours after their boat capsized due to rough seas.

Lt. James Reyes, Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao public affairs officer, named the rescued victims as Soy-an Osani, 47, Jamir

Osani, 20, and Henry Everre, 17, all residents of Barangay Island Verde in Davao City.

Reyes said the fishermen just finished loading their catch at around 10 p.m. Monday when a huge wave hit their boat which subsequently capsized.

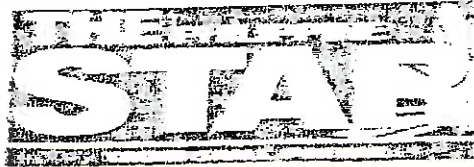
Reyes said Navy patrol boat 119 or BRP Nicolas Mahusay, skippered by Lt. Cdr. Ignacio Umali, was on a routine maritime patrol in the area when it sighted the fishermen at around 5:30 a.m. Wednesday.

"They were seen floating. They used their ice chest as their floating device," said Reyes of the fishermen, who were sent home after undergoing medical check-up at a military hospital in Davao City.

Reyes said the Navy vessel also towed the fishermen's boat to the Naval Station, Felix Apolinario in Panacan, Davao City. — Victor Reyes

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Phil-US military exercises to focus on disaster response

By JAIME LAUDE

The military alliance between the Philippines and the United States is taking a new turn as next year's joint activities between the allies will focus more on humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HADR) and combined anti-terror training.

In a press briefing yesterday, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya confirmed the downscaling of the Philippine-US bilateral training exercises.

Visaya said the yearly Cooperation Afloat Readiness (CARAT) and the Amphibious Landing Exercises (PHIBLEX) have been scrapped in future military drills between the two countries.

He said in lieu of CARAT and PHIBLEX,

the Philippines and US would hold HADR and would bolster joint anti-terrorism training in line with the global fight against terror.

In the past years, the Philippines had been hosting 263 yearly bilateral trainings with the US only.

"This has been reduced to 258," Visaya said, referring to the joint military interactions.

Visaya and Admiral Harry Harris Jr., commander of the Hawaii-based United States Pacific Command, discussed the refocusing of the yearly bilateral training exercises in last Tuesday's annual Mutual Defense Board-Security Engagement Board meeting held at Camp Aguinaldo.

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The Nationalist's Voice

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5 military exercises with US scrapped

BY VICTOR REYES

ARMED Forces chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya yesterday said there will be 258 military exercises between Philippine and American forces next year, down by five compared to this year.

"There will only be about 258 (exercises) I think. Previously, there are about 260 plus so there is reduction of around five," said Visaya.

Visaya said scrapped were the Amphibious Landing Exercise (PHIBLEX) and Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT), both naval exercises that include territorial defense trainings, and three others he could not remember.

The Balikatan exercises will be retained. "Balikatan will not be scrapped, it will continue but the focus of the Balikatan will be HADR (humanitarian assistance and disaster relief) or response to disasters," said

Armed Forces spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla.

Padilla said the 258 exercises that Visaya referred to included the small ones, like those that involve a few soldiers on both sides.

"They may be referring to the big exercises," said Padilla, referring to the 13 exercises mentioned by the DND.

"You must understand that even if two or three Americans are coming over to talk with 15 of us, to teach them, that is still part of the list. Remember, everything that we do with our counterparts are monitored and are listed," said Padilla.

Earlier this month, the defense department said it wants the exercises reduced to six or seven from 13. The military said the 13 are actually the major exercises that the two countries hold.

The US and Philippine militaries just concluded the annual

meeting of the Mutual Defense Board and the Security Engagement Board in Camp Aguinaldo. The MDB-SEB meeting was led by Visaya and US Pacific Command chief Adm. Harry Harris, as co-chairmen of the two boards. It was in the meeting where next year's exercises were planned and approved.

Asked for the reaction of the Americans to the proposal to reduce the exercises, Visaya said: "They respected it. As I told you, we can always change some exercises based on the guidance of our President."

President Duterte has said he wants the military exercises with the US stopped.

"The (remaining) exercises will be more focused on counter-terrorism, HADR, engineering civic actions. So that will be in line with the pronouncement and the guidance of our President to the AFP," said Visaya.

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Juergen Kantner

NO TALKS WITH ABU FOR GERMAN HOSTAGE

SUMISIP, BASILAN—Various factions of the Abu Sayyaf group have demanded ransom money for German captive Juergen Kantner, who has been held captive since early this month, making it difficult for the military to pinpoint his exact location, a ranking military official said on Wednesday.

Kantner and his wife, Sabine Merz, were sailing in Malaysian waters when kidnapped on Nov. 5. Merz was killed after she allegedly tried to shoot the attackers.

Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo de la Cruz, the commander of the military's Western Mindanao Command, said the military has not pinpointed which Abu Sayyaf faction was really holding the German captive.

"There's a lot of them asking for ransom. There was Al-habshi Misaya (who is under Radulan Sahiron) and there is Muammar Askali, who is also asking for ransom," De la Cruz said.

Askali, a self-proclaimed Abu Sayyaf spokesperson, was the latest Abu Sayyaf figure who had asked for ransom for Kantner. Askali said they wanted P500 million—not P5 million as earlier reported—for the foreigner's freedom.

"We are demanding P500 million in ransom, not P5 million, and we will issue an ultimatum soon," Askali said, without directly saying what the bandit group planned to do with Kantner if no ransom was received.

It was also Askali who announced the beheading of Canadian captives Robert Hall and John Ridsdel earlier this year after Canada refused to fork over ransom for the two victims.

Unwanted

But De la Cruz said the Abu Sayyaf might not get what it wanted for Kantner, describing the German captive as some sort of an "unwanted" person by the German government.

"I think the Abu Sayyaf erred in kidnapping the victim," he said, adding that Kantner still reportedly owes the German government serious money when it paid Somali pirates so he and Merz could be released from captivity.

The two were snatched by Somali pirates as they sailed the Gulf of Aden in 2008. A German newspaper later reported the German government paid the Somalis some \$600,000 for the release of the couple.

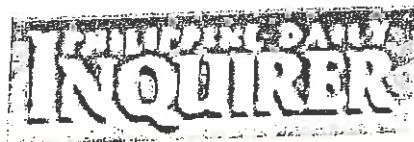
"They borrowed money from the German government. Soon after they were secured, the German government sought to be paid," De la Cruz said.

Apart from the German, the Abu Sayyaf is currently holding hostage a Dutch national, several Malaysians, two Indonesians and four Filipinos.

The military recently lost four soldiers, while 17 others were wounded during an operation in Sulu, where it had sent thousands of troops this year to crush the group.

—JULIE ALIPALA INQ

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BOUNTY FOR TERROR

ABU SAYYAF SNITCHES GET CASH REWARDS

By Cynthia D. Balana
@cynchdbINQ

The Armed Forces of the Philippines on Wednesday awarded a total of P5.9-million cash reward to two informants who provided intelligence information to the military that led to the "neutralization" of two top Abu Sayyaf members involved in large-scale kidnap-for-ransom activities in Mindanao.

In the awarding ceremony held in Camp Aguinaldo, AFP chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya turned over P5.9 million to Informant X, whose face was covered with a hood to hide his identity. He led joint elements of the military and police to the killing of Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Sihatra Mualim Asmad, alias Latip, in Sulu province in November 2014.

Asmad was involved in the kidnapping of foreign guests and workers of the Sipadan Beach Resort in Sabah, Malaysia, in April 2006, as well as members of the Jehovah's Witnesses in Patikul, Sulu in August 2006.

Asmad, who was wanted for six counts of kidnapping and illegal detention, had a bounty of P5.3 million.

On the other hand, Informant Y received P600,000 for providing the information that led to the arrest of Yakan, who was wanted for the kidnappings and serious illegal detention of 15 and killings of two residents of Golden Harvest Plantation on June 11, 2007 in Barangay Tairan in Lantawan town, Basilan province.

Yakan was captured by the military on May 23, 2014. He carried a reward of P600,000.

Cooperation

Visaya said he was pleased with the cooperation shown by the people in the military campaign to neutralize the terrorist group.

"The information provided by the informants was vital in the identification and eventual arrest and neutralization of wanted personalities who have committed crimes against the people and our peace and security," Visaya said.

"Beyond the reward money that they will receive, we hope that this endeavor will compel other people to step up in the fight against terrorism," he added.

The reward system was established on June 12, 2007 to encourage civilians to provide vital information needed to neutralize personalities in the rewards list and thwart threats to peace and security. **END**

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Ramos weighs in on burial, martial law

BY EVAN ORIAS

FORMER President Fidel Ramos has said Ilocos Norte Rep. Imelda Marcos and daughter Gov. Imee Marcos knew about martial law including the "beginning of martial law... the good years before martial law... and (the event that happened) in August 1983," he said.

Marcos imposed martial law from 1972 to 1981 to suppress increasing civil strife and the threat of a communist takeover following a series of bombings in Manila.

Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. was killed on Aug. 21, 1983

after his plane landed at the airport.

Ramos also belied claims of Imee that she was "too young" during her father's regime.

"That is a funny story. When she said they were still young, in fact she said, 'Maliliit pa kami na mga bata' in Tagalog... I know how old she is because she is one year older than my eldest daughter," he said.

Ramos said his eldest daughter, Angelita Ramos-Jones, was 18 when Marcos imposed martial law.

Imee was born on Nov. 12, 1955. She was 17 when her father declared martial law. Ramos

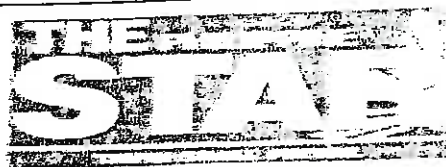
said Imee was elected "president" of the Kabataang Barangay a few years after martial law.

Ramos also slammed the Marcos family for the unannounced burial of Marcos Sr. at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig last Friday.

He said the Metro Manila police and the AFP should be investigated since there was an "advanced planning" allegedly led by the Marcos family.

A protest rally is scheduled tomorrow at the Rizal Park in Manila and on November 30 at the People Power Monument on EDSA.

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Another Marine battalion deployed to Mindanao

The Philippine Marines yesterday deployed another battalion of soldiers to Mindanao as part of the government's sustained fight against terrorism and illegal drugs.

Marine spokesman Capt. Victor Donque said the 2nd Marine Battalion Landing Team sailed for Central Mindanao after a sendoff ceremony at Sangley Point in Cavite City.

"The troops will strengthen the Armed Forces of the Philippines' efforts to crush lawless elements and other secessionist groups in Sultan Kudarat," Donque said.

He said the troops would replace the 7th Marine Battalion

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SECOND SALVO. Members of the 2nd Marine Battalion, with rifles at the ready, prepare Wednesday to board a vessel that will take them to Central Mindanao to fight terrorists during a send-off ceremony at the Capt. Salvo Pier, Sangley Point, Cavite City. **Norman Cruz**

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EDITORIAL

Libingan ng mga Makasaysayang Pilipino

In 1947, a Memorial Cemetery for Filipino military personnel who had served in World War II was set up within Fort Bonifacio in Bicutan, Taguig City. The war had ended in 1945 and a new Philippine republic established in 1946. The many Filipino soldiers who had died in the war, from privates to generals, would have a fitting resting place.

In 1948, Congress enacted Republic Act 289, "An Act Providing for the Construction of a National Pantheon for Presidents of the Philippines, National Heroes, and Patriots of the Country." President Elpidio Quirino signed it into.

In 1954, President Ramon Magsaysay, in Proclamation No. 86, renamed the Memorial Cemetery to Libingan ng mga Bayani.

In 1967, President Ferdinand Marcos issued Presidential Proclamation No. 208, setting aside 142 hectares of land in Fort Bonifacio for the cemetery. It would not only be a cemetery for soldiers but also a shrine for fallen heroes.

In 1993, President Fidel V. Ramos issued Executive Order No. 131, including national artists and national scientists among those eligible for burial at the Libingan.

This, briefly, is the story of the Libingan, how it started as a cemetery for soldiers, how it was expanded to include presidents of the country, then fallen heroes, and then national artists and scientists.

President Marcos was buried at the Libingan last Friday, after the Supreme Court rejected petitions opposing President Duterte's decision allowing Marcos' burial there after so many years. It was a legal decision, citing the law, RA 289, listing former presidents of the country as among those eligible for burial there. The other eligible groups are "national heroes and patriots of the country," under RA 289; and "national artists and national scientists" under Ramos Executive Order No. 131. And, of course, soldiers, the original group for which the Memorial Cemetery was intended.

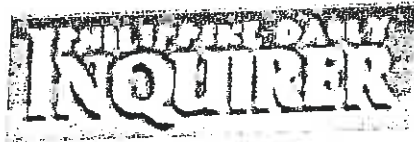
Not all these groups are "bayani" or heroes, but they are eligible for burial here by virtue of laws and presidential orders and proclamations issued over the years.

Senate President Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III has now filed a bill to set aside land within the Libingan ng mga Bayani for a Libingan ng mga Makasaysayang Pilipino, to distinguish them from the fallen soldiers, the heroes. The Libingan ng mga Bayani would remain as a cemetery for soldiers, as was the intention when it was established in 1947. All others – presidents, national artists and scientists, other distinguished national figures – would be interred at the Libingan ng mga Makasaysayang Pilipino.

It is a proposal worth considering. It should clear all misunderstanding on who may – or should not be – be interred at the Libingan. It should answer the protestations of anti-Marcos groups now threatening to demonstrate at the cemetery, some even calling for the exhumation of President Marcos' remains.

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STOP 'OPLAN BAYANIHAN'

Assert Socio-Economic Initiatives Network in the Philippines vehemently condemns the continued harassment of humanitarian aid workers. The attacks on the Alay Bayan-Luson, Inc. (ABI), a disaster response organization based in Central Luzon in the Philippines, by suspected military personnel have been consistent. In 2012, gunmen believed to be military personnel shot to death ABI's executive director, Wilhelm Geertman.

The most recent incidents of harassment include interrogation of members of community disaster response organizations set up by ABI in Nueva Vizcaya, as well as the gathering by military personnel of information regarding ABI from the Department of Social Work and Development (DSWD) office in Aurora province.

Last Nov. 4, someone claiming to be Lieutenant Cruz of the 7th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army called the office of ABI 4 to ask for information regarding the organization. ABI's workers are now feeling the pressure of these actions and have suspended several missions to distribute relief goods to communities that were affected by Super typhoon "Lawin" for fear of a repeat of the Wilhelm Geertman incident in 2012.

We challenge the government to rein in its military personnel in its overzealous attempts to intimidate and sow fear among development organizations such as ABI. Humanitarian aid workers have provided much-needed relief and rehabilitation services to far-flung areas in Central Luzon.

We call on the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to immediately cease its Oplan Bayanihan, which has claimed the lives of many individuals including development workers, working for change in Philippine society.

RENMIN CRISANTA VIZCONDE,

spokesperson,

Assert Socio-Economic Initiatives Network in the Philippines
(Ascent)

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UNTV CUP

Army fights for life vs Ombudsman

Group A: Malacañang (5-0), BFP (3-2), AFP (2-2), Ombudsman (2-2), MMDA (2-3), Senate (0-5).

Group B: Customs (6-0), Judiciary (4-1), PNP (3-2), NHA (3-3), HoR (2-3), GSIS (1-4), DoJ (0-6).

Defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) tries to salvage its season when it goes for a second round berth against the dangerous Ombudsman side today in the 5th UNTV Cup at the Pasig Sports Center.

Since both teams are carrying similar 2-2 cards, the winner in their 3:30 p.m. showdown will clinch the No. 3 seeding in Group A. The remaining spot will be determined through quotient since the loser will drop to a share for fourth to fifth places with MMDA.

Only the top four teams in each group will advance to the second round where their win-loss records

Games Today (Pasig Sports Center)

2 p.m. — HoR vs Judiciary

3:30 p.m. — AFP vs Ombudsman

5 p.m. — PNP vs GSIS

will be carried over.

The Group B cast is already complete with newcomer Bureau of Customs, Judiciary, PNP and National Housing Authority.

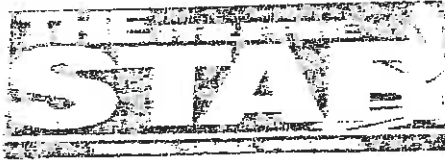
The Judiciary Magis are already assured of the No. 2 seeding even if they lose to the House of Representatives Solons today.

Malacañang completed a five-game sweep of Group A following a 72-55 drubbing of MMDA.

The winner of the tournament organized by UNTV president and CEO Daniel Razon gets the ₱4 million prize which it will donate to its chosen charity. Last season, AFP donated its prize to AFP-EBSO (Education Benefit Systems Office).

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AFP, Ombudsman clash for No. 3

Games today (Pasig Sports Center)
2 p.m. - HOR vs Judiciary
3:30 p.m. - AFP vs Ombudsman
5 p.m. - PNP vs GSIS

Defending champion Armed Forces of the Philippines takes on Ombudsman today, seeking a crucial win and a berth in the second round of the fifth UNTV Cup at the Pasig Sports Center.

AFP and Ombudsman actually tote similar 2-2 cards with the winner in their 3:30 p.m. showdown gaining the No. 3 seeding in Group A. The remaining spot will be determined through quotient since the loser will drop to a share for fourth with MMDA.

Only the top four teams in each

group will advance to the carryover second round.

The Group B cast is already complete made up of newcomer Bureau of Customs, Judiciary, PNP and National Housing Authority.

The Judiciary Magis are already assured of the No. 2 seeding even if they lose to the House of Representatives Solons today.

Malacañang completed a five-game sweep of Group A following a 72-55 drubbing of MMDA.

The winner of the tournament organized by UNTV president and CEO Daniel Razon will receive P4 million which it will donate to its chosen charity.

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24 NOVEMBER 2016

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

AFP Joins Araw ng Kabataan with Medical, Dental Mission

Posted by Lui Claudio on November 23, 2016 at 12:37 PM



CAMP AGUINALDO, Quezon City – In celebration of the National Children's Month, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) together with the Council for Welfare of Children (CWC), spearheaded this year's National Children's Congress (NCC), November 18 until November 22.

Marine Colonel Edgard Arevalo, Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Public Affairs Office disclosed that the closing ceremony of the NCC was held at the AFP Theater here, November 22. The program includes an awarding ceremony and remarks from the resource speakers of DSWD, CWC, and UNICEF.

The five-day event culminated in an "Araw ng Kabataan" which gathered 900 children beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program of DSWD across the 87 provinces of the Philippines and also 200 participants from partner organizations, and sponsors.

During the "Araw ng Kabataan", the DSWD held the awarding of the National Search for Exemplary 2016.

"We take pride of the children leaders that we have produced in the past four years. These children really deserve to be called as exemplary. Despite life's difficulties, they continue to pursue their dreams. They inspire us to work harder to give them better future" said DSWD Secretary Judy Taguiwalo.

The organizers provided a series of light and fun workshops and activities, output-building, and fellowship for the children to encourage them to be active citizens.

For its part, the AFP conducted a medical and dental mission at the AFP Theater here, through the Surgeon General and the Office of the Chief Dental Service.

With the theme "*Isulong: Kalidad na edukasyon para sa lahat ng bata*," this annual activity aims to engage the youth with different activities to pool exemplary Pantawid Pamilya children beneficiaries and equip them with the essential knowledge on the program and to support children's rights as well.

"The Armed Forces of the Philippines supports these kinds of activities for the youth. It is important that we give recognition to our children and encourage quality education and learning to all our Filipino youth," General Ricardo Visaya, AFP Chief of Staff said.

"We hope that through the medical and dental mission, the AFP will be able to show its unwavering support to other government organizations such as the DSWD in advancing the welfare of the youth and in making them ready to lead the country in the future," Gen Visaya added.

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

AFP, PNP signed moa to intensify anti-illegal drug campaign in CARAGA

Posted by Lui Claudio on November 23, 2016 at 3:10 PM

BUTUAN CITY – During the regular Regional Joint Peace and Security Coordinating Committee (JPSCC) - Region 13 meeting held at the Police Regional Office-13 here, the 4th Infantry (DIAMOND) Division of Philippine Army (PA) and Philippine National Police (PNP) Regional Office 13 signed on Monday, November 21, 2016 the memorandum of agreement (MOA) for collaboration procedures on anti-illegal drug operations in Caraga region.

The said MOA is aimed to attain the following objectives: carry out President Rodrigo Duterte's order to stop and eliminate drugs within three to six months; enhance coordination/cooperation between the PNP and AFP in case build-up and investigation of suspected persons involved in illegal drugs; minimize the ingress and egress of high value targets and illegal drug paraphernalia; and synchronize effort of government and strengthen its position in bringing target drug personalities and offenders to justice among others.

Based on the MOA, the PNP takes the lead role in any operation on the implementation of Pulis at Sundalo: Magkabalikat Laban Sa Droga Project known as "Double Barrel", and takes the lead role in the investigation/processing of scene of the crime; and other law enforcement operations against illegal drugs.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Army shall provide support to law enforcement operations; assist the PNP in the implementation of Project Double Barrel which include the execution of the five stages of Project TokHang – collection and validation of information stage, coordination stage, house to house visitation stage, processing and documentation stage, and monitoring and evaluation stage.

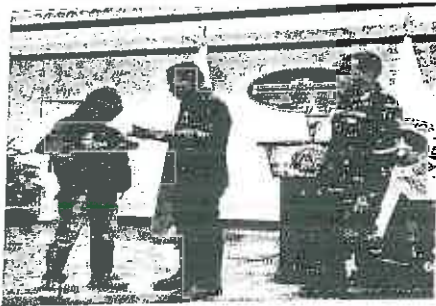
"The 4ID Philippine Army shall maximize its efforts and extend full cooperation and support to the PNP in all phases of operations of the project to ensure that Caraga region will be able to sustain peace and order and soon become a drug-free region." MGen Benjamin R. Madrigal Jr., 4ID Commander.

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

AFP rewards a total of P5.9-M to tipsters vs Abu Sayyaf

By: Frances Mangosing - Reporter



AFP chief General Ricardo Visaya on Wednesday hands out reward money worth P5.9 million to tipsters that led to the neutralization of Abu Sayyaf members. The rewards system was established in 2001 to encourage civilians to help out in providing information that will help track down wanted personalities. FRANCES MANGOSING

The Armed Forces of the Philippines on Wednesday handed over a total of P5.9-million reward money to two tipsters that gave information leading to the neutralization of Abu Sayyaf members. AFP chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya personally handed the reward money to two men wearing hooded jackets and whose faces were covered with masks.

The first tipster received P5.3 million for the neutralization of Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Sihatra Muallam Asmad also known as Latip. He was involved in the kidnapping of foreign guests and workers of Sipadan Beach Resort in Sabah, Malaysia, in April 2000 and members of the Jehova's Witnesses in Patikul, Sulu, in August 2000.

Asmad, who was wanted for six counts of kidnapping and illegal detention, was killed in a law enforcement operation in November 2014, at Sitio Patong-Patong, Brgy. Duyan Kaha in Parang, Sulu.

The other tipster, meanwhile, received P600,000 for providing information to military forces that led to the arrest of Abu Sayyaf member and cohort Suhud Yakan in May 2014 in Isabela, Basilan.

Yakan was wanted for kidnapping and serious illegal detention; kidnapping 15 and killing of two residents of Golden Harvest Plantation in Brgy. Lantawan, Basilan, in June 2011.

Visaya said they hope the reward system will compel other people to step up in the fight against terrorism. The reward system was established in 2001 to encourage civilians to help out in providing information to arrest wanted personalities who are threats to national security and public safety. TVJ

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

BLESSING | Inauguration of Del Pilar Media Briefing Lounge

Posted by Alvin Santiago on November 23, 2016 at 4:31 PM

CAMP GEN EMILIO AGUINALDO, Quezon City (DWDD) – The Armed Forces of the Philippines – Public Affairs Office conducted the Blessing and Inauguration of the Del Pilar Media Briefing Lounge today, November 23, 2016 at Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

The Blessing and Ribbon-Cutting was led by the Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Ricardo R Visaya as Guest of Honor. He was assisted by Chief, Public Affairs Office Marine Colonel Edgard Arevalo. ALS / AES / MCAG



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

Navy Patrol Boat 119 Rescues Three Fishermen in Samal

Posted by Lui Claudio on November 23, 2016 at 3:54 PM



Camp Panacan Station Hospital (CPSH) – Lt. Cdr. Ignacio M. Umali Jr. Philippine Navy and the crew of Patrol Boat (PB) 119 brought to shore three fishermen they rescued from a banca that capsized in Samal waters last night.

The rescued fishermen namely Soy-an T. Osani, 47 years old; Jamir P. Osani, 20 years old; and Henry L. Everre, 17 years old, residents of Barangay Isla Verde, reportedly finished loading their catch at 10 p.m. when a huge wave hit the broadside of their banca, causing it to capsize.

Lt. Cdr. Umali PN and his men onboard Navy vessel BRP Nicolas Mahusay (PB 119) were on routine maritime patrol along the waters of Samal when they sighted the fishermen at 5:35 a.m. today. They immediately responded to aid the three and at 6:10 a.m., successfully loaded the rescued fishermen onto PB 119 and towed the banca towards Naval Station Felix Apolinario, Panacan, Davao City. Cpt. Victor Salvador C. Dato, the physician on duty at CPSH certified the wellbeing of the fishermen and gave them clearance to go home.

Soy-an Osani, the oldest of the three, says "Nagpapasalamat talaga kami at dumating ang Navy at nakita kami." PB 119 eventually assisted the fishermen and their banca to Sta. Ana Wharf, Davao City.

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www.interaksyon.com.ph

Bonifacio Naval Station to be opened to motorists to ease traffic

By: Clara Masinag, InterAksyon.com
November 23, 2016 5:31 PM



MANILA - Another military facility is being opened to motorists to improve the flow of traffic, in expectation of the usual congestion in the run-up to the holidays.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will open the Bonifacio Naval Station (BNS) in Taguig City as an alternate route for public vehicles with the appropriate decals.

Last week, officials said parts of Camp Aguinaldo will be opened to motorists who secure pass cards or decals beforehand.

Such decals or pass cards to be issued to motorists in Camp Aguinaldo will also be honored for those seeking to enter the BNS facility, MMDA General Manager Tim Orbos said.

Motorists coming from Villamor Airbase in Pasay City going to Bonifacio Global City area and vice-versa can use the BNS to bypass the traffic snarl along Lawton Avenue.

At present, only vehicles of military personnel and those with decals or pass cards are allowed to pass through BNS going to Pasong Tamo Extension from Lawton Avenue.

Orbos said motorists wishing to use the route may apply for the decal or pass card starting Thursday November 24, 2016.

The application forms are available at the MMDA main office in Makati City.

Earlier, the MMDA, along with the I-ACT, announced that Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City will be opened to motorists to decongest the area on EDSA northbound, accommodating vehicles going to and coming from Katipunan Avenue and nearby roads.

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

BRP Andres Bonifacio feted at Pearl Harbor

(philstar.com) Updated November 23, 2016 - 4:48pm



The Philippine Consulate General, the Filipino-American community and the US Pacific Command welcomed the BRP Bonifacio to Pearl Harbor. DFA release

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Consulate General in Honolulu welcomed the officers and crew of the BRP Andres Bonifacio, the Philippine Navy's newest ship when it docked in Hawaii last week, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Wednesday.

In a press release, the DFA said PN Captain Brendo Casaciang and his officers and crew were given a welcome reception when the ship docked at Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam on November 15.

The reception was arranged by the consulate general, members of the Filipino-American community there and by the US Pacific Command.

The Bonifacio is the Navy's third former US Coast Guard cutter and will join sister ships BRP Gregorio Del Pilar and BRP Ramon Alcaraz in the Philippine Fleet.

The Bonifacio, which is armed with a 76mm Oto Melara auto-cannon and has a cruising speed of 29 knots, will be used for sea patrols, humanitarian and disaster response operations and will be a laboratory for maritime security training, rescue operations training and maritime law enforcement for the Philippine Navy, the DFA said.

The ship was commissioned into the Philippine Fleet in July and left the US Coast Guard base in Alameda, California on November 1 for the journey to the Philippines.

www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

Joint military and civic exercises with US forces pegged at 258 for 2017

Philippine News Agency

Joint military and civic exercises with US military forces in 2017 will only hit the 258 mark or five lower than the 263 proposed.

These figures include even small units and civic military operations.

This was stressed by outgoing Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief-of-staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya Wednesday.

"(These) exercises will be more focused on counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, engineering civic actions, so that will be in line with the pronouncements and the guidance of our President to the AFP," he said.

Earlier, the Department of National Defense (DND) recommended to President Rodrigo Duterte a re-focusing of bilateral activities on command post exercises, tabletop exercises, staff exercises and simulation exercises and training; maintenance of bilateral humanitarian and disaster response and counter-terrorism exercises; and giving focus on non-traditional security concerns such as counter-narcotics and transnational crimes.

www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

AFP getting upper hand in ongoing campaign against ASGs

Philippine News Agency

Outgoing Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief-of-staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya said efforts to neutralize the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Basilan and Jolo (Sulu) is getting better as more and more bandits are being eliminated in the ongoing focused military operations.

"I would like to tell you that the situation in Mindanao, particularly in Basilan and Jolo is getting better and this only the first time in the history of (the) Armed Forces that a mass surrender of ASG (around 20 brigands) took place," he noted.

Visaya was referring to the surrender of 20 ASG bandits, along with their weapons, last Sept. 23 in Basilan.

He also dismissed claims that kidnapping attacks perpetrated by the bandits are on the rise, adding that it was greatly reduced with the Navy's ongoing sea denial operations and deployment of the BRP Tarlac (LD-601) between the maritime boundaries of the Philippines and Malaysia.

"There were two kidnapping incidents happened in Malaysia but the perpetrators were unable to enter our territory because of the strategic location of our naval assets there," Visaya stressed.

Since the AFP conducted its offensive against the ASG in July, bandits killed in Sulu during the July-October period has reached 60, with another 19 wounded, and 30 captured.

While in Basilan, military units have killed 10, wounded three, and captured two while 34 voluntarily surrendered to the AFP.

Visaya said these operations have made a sizeable dent against the ASG terrorists whose active strength is estimated to around 400 armed men.

These figure includes the death of key terror personalities Mohammad Said, Jamiri Jawhari, Musanna Jamiri, and Nelson and Braun Muktadil.

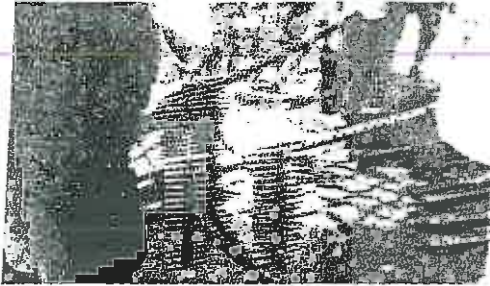
Visaya, a member of Philippine Military Academy Class of 1983, is scheduled to step down on Dec. 7.

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Search uncovers high-powered arms in Talitay, Maguindanao

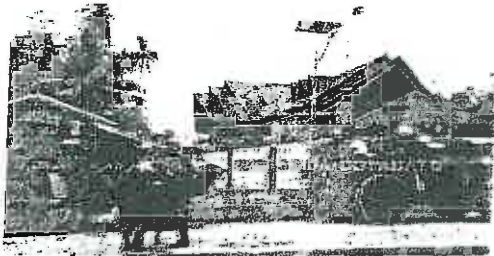
InterAksyon



A portion of the cache of high-powered arms recovered in Talitay, Maguindanao. Photographed by Jay Alcantara, InterAksyon

Combined security forces based in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) on a massive search mission brought to light on Wednesday an assorted cache of high-powered weapons and associated ammunition from an apparent private armory in Talitay, Maguindanao.

The continuing law enforcement operation, which was carried out based on 25 search warrants and complemented with armored and aerial action Friday last week by some 300 government troops, raided the residence of Mayor Montasir Sabal, who has not reported for work for weeks, seizing a small quantity of suspected drugs and three firearms.



Photograph from Brigada Maguindanao Facebook Post

The homes of the vice mayor, Regional Assemblyman Sidik Ameril and the town's Association of Barangay Chairmen president were also raided.

Recovered on Wednesday morning were various weapons that included two caliber .50 machine guns, four caliber .30 machine guns, assorted ammunition and 81 and 60 mm mortar rounds, ammunition reloaders abandoned at a marshy spot of Barangay Pagada, according to Police Inspector Razul Pandulo, spokesman of the Maguindanao police and incumbent office-in-charge of the police station in Talitay.

The security and law enforcement establishment have begun an investigation into the development that carries serious implications for safety, security and law and order.

Tension is high, and numerous residents of Talitay have voluntarily evacuated for fear of possibly getting caught in untoward armed confrontations.

The mayor of Talitay was tagged as a "narco-politician" by President Rodrigo Duterte. According to ARMM Governor Mujiv Hataman, he will be declared absent without leave and indefinitely suspended.

Hataman said Talitay has been "headless" since Sabal went into hiding.

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