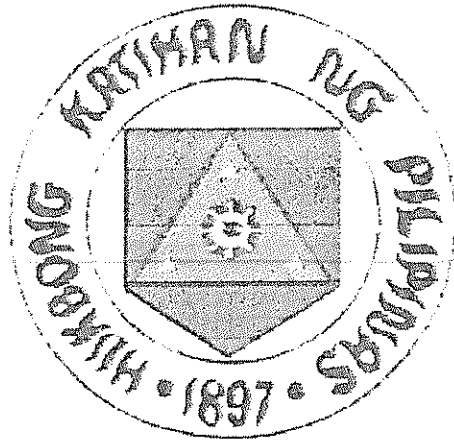


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NEWS CLIPPINGS

16 October 2016

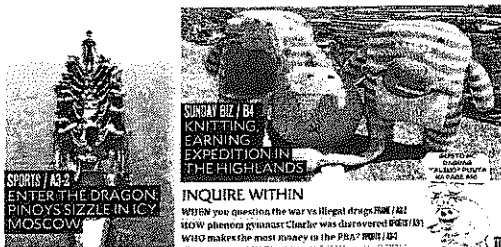
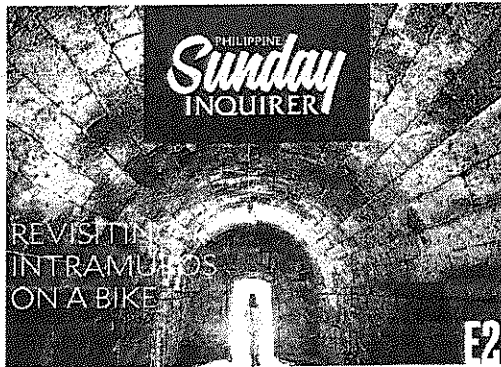
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NEWS HEADLINES

16 OCTOBER 2016



ALARM RAISED VS DESTRUCTIVE TYPHOON 'KAREN'

Typhoon 'Karen', packing sustained winds of up to 120 kilometers per hour and gusts of up to 180 kph, left at least five people dead and four red standards to evacuate in the potentially most destructive storm to hit the country's so far this year toward Luzon late October, disaster officials said.



'Karen very destructive'



Beijing to lift advisory during Rod's state visit



PH braces for 'most damaging typhoon'

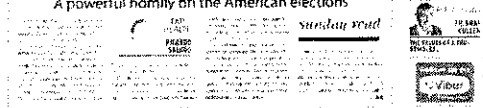
The Philippines is bracing for the most damaging typhoon to hit the country in decades, with the storm expected to bring heavy rain and strong winds.



Nations agree to phase out 'super greenhouse gases'

More women accuse Trump of unwanted sexual advances

A powerful family on the American elections



EJK probe ends in verbal scuffle



No 'Ambassador' FYR in Duterte's China visit

US campaign: Trump faces new wave of sexual assault allegations



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

16 OCTOBER 2016

| PAGE NR. | TITLE | WRITER | NEWSPAPER |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| 1 | Weather Forecast | - | The Phil star p.A27 |
| NATIONAL NEWS | | | |
| 2-5 | Karen barrels towards Luzon | Evelyn Macairan | PDI p.A1 |
| 6-7 | Duterte forms task force to create , supporting drug rehab centers | Christina Mendez | The Phil Star p.1 |
| ARMY RELATED NEWS | | | |
| 8-9 | Drug rehab center in Nueva Ecija rushed | Jeanette Andrade | PDI p.A3 |
| 10 | Abu man nabbed in Z.Sibugay | Roel PAreño | The Phil Star p.A23 |
| 11 | Army denies behind murder of lumad leader | - | www.mindanaotimes.com |
| 12-14 | Joint gov't, MILF anti0drug operation leads to arrest of 13 | - | www.rappler.com |
| AFP RELATED NEWS | | | |
| 15 | AFP: 94 Abus neutralized | Cynthia Balana | PDI p.A7 |
| 16-17 | 94 Sayyaf men neutralized during Rody's first 100 days | Jaime Laude | The Phil Star p.3 |
| 18-19 | US turns over new anti-terrorism equipment to Phi | Ding Cervantes | The Phil Star p.5 |
| 20 | Rody insists on FM burial | John Bencito | The Standard p.A3 |
| 21 | MILF, military turn over members of drug ring | Neil ALcober | The Manila Times p.A3 |
| 22 | Marcos loyalists start 4-day caravan to supreme court | Leilanie Adriano | PDI p.A6 |
| ONLINE NEWS | | | |
| 23 | Duterte forms task force to create, support drug rehab centers | <u>Nestor Corrales</u> | www.inquirer.net |
| 24 | Sayyafs ambush government militias in Basilan | | www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com |
| 25 | U. S. military delivers counterterrorism equipment to the Philippine Marine Special Operations Group | | www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com |
| 26 | No change in US-PHL relations whoever wins in upcoming US presidential polls - Goldberg | | www.pna.gov.ph |
| 27 | DND-GA looking for PHP19.2-M worth of 7.62-mm. M13 links, match bullets | | www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com |

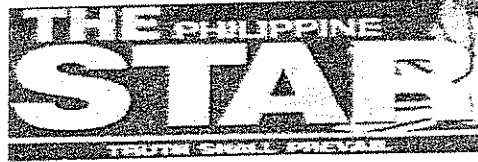
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| | | | |
|-------|---|--|--|
| 28 | Military units alerted for impact of Typhoon Karen | | www.pna.gov.ph |
| 29-30 | SC Justice Carpio fears losing Panatag if Duterte concedes to China | | www.rappler.com |

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16 October 2016



Page: A27

AIR 21
SABOTER, PARALANER

5:30 AM - 6:00 AM
Mondays to Sundays

QR Code and Social Media Links (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)

| SUNRISE | SUNSET | MOONRISE | MOONSET |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 5:48 AM | 5:35 PM | 5:53 PM | 5:35 AM |
| FIRST MOON | LAST QUARTER | LOW TIDE | HIGH TIDE |
| 12:23 PM OCT 16 | 1:41 AM OCT 17 | 9:54 PM 0.35 Meter | 10:11 AM 0.63 Meter |

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST OCTOBER 16, 2016 | SUNDAY

TYPHOON "KAREN"
ESTIMATED AT 125 KM NORTHEAST OF VIAC, CAGAYAN DE ORO
(At 6:00 AM - October 15, 2016)

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| LAOAG CITY 23-30 °C | TUGUEGARAO CITY 23-31 °C |
| BAGUIO CITY 14-20 °C | SEMA/CLARK 23-30 °C |
| METRO MANILA 23-29 °C | LAGAYTAY CITY 21-28 °C |
| LEGAZPI CITY 24-31 °C | ILOILO/BACOLOD CITY 25-31 °C |
| TACLOBAN CITY 24-32 °C | PUERTO PRINCESA 25-31 °C |
| METRO CEBU 25-31 °C | CAGAYAN DE ORO 25-32 °C |
| METRO DAVAO 25-33 °C | ZAMBOANGA CITY 24-32 °C |

| EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST | OCT 17 MON | OCT 18 TUE | OCT 19 WED | EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST | OCT 17 MON | OCT 18 TUE | OCT 19 WED |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| METRO MANILA | 23°C 30°C | 24°C 31°C | 24°C 31°C | PUERTO PRINCESA | 25°C 32°C | 26°C 32°C | 26°C 31°C |
| TUGUEGARAO | 23°C 32°C | 23°C 33°C | 23°C 31°C | ILOILO/BACOLOD | 24°C 32°C | 24°C 33°C | 24°C 31°C |
| LAOAG | 23°C 31°C | 23°C 32°C | 23°C 32°C | METRO CEBU | 24°C 32°C | 24°C 33°C | 24°C 32°C |
| BAGUIO | 15°C 21°C | 15°C 22°C | 15°C 22°C | TACLOBAN | 25°C 32°C | 25°C 33°C | 25°C 32°C |
| SBMA/CLARK | 23°C 32°C | 23°C 31°C | 23°C 30°C | CAGAYAN DE ORO | 25°C 32°C | 25°C 33°C | 25°C 33°C |
| TAGAYTAY | 22°C 28°C | 22°C 29°C | 22°C 29°C | METRO DAVAO | 25°C 33°C | 26°C 33°C | 26°C 33°C |
| LEGAZPI | 24°C 32°C | 24°C 33°C | 24°C 31°C | ZAMBOANGA | 24°C 33°C | 25°C 33°C | 25°C 33°C |

Partly cloudy to all times cloudy with rain showers and/or thunderstorms.

Cloudy skies with rain showers and/or thunderstorms.

Rains with gusty winds.

16 October 2016



Page: 1

Karen barrels toward Luzon

Storm surge warning up; several areas under Signal 3

By JANVIC MATEO

State weather forecasters have warned residents in the path of Typhoon Karen that it may be the most damaging so far this year as the storm is expected to barrel through populous provinces in Central Luzon today.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) has raised storm surge warnings in coastal areas in the path of Typhoon Karen, which is forecast to make landfall in the Quezon-Aurora area this morning.

Over 30 provinces in Luzon were placed under cyclone warning signals yesterday as Karen inched closer to Philippine landmass, based on the 5 p.m. bulletin issued by PAGASA.

Karen (international name Sarika) has knocked down power and telephone lines in Catanduanes, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) said.

While the storm is not the most powerful to hit the country this year, it could cause the most damage as it will cross heavily populated areas north of Metro Manila, PAGASA weather forecaster Benison

Turn to Page 6.

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Karen

From Page 1

Estareja said.

"We can see from the radar that the storm is very destructive. It can destroy wooden houses, it can topple trees. It can possibly rip off roofs,"

Estareja said.

"This one will have an impact because most of the people are in (that part of) Luzon. Even Metropolitan Manila will be affected," he warned.

Although Karen did not directly hit the eastern region of Bicol, that area experienced heavy rains as it passed nearby yesterday, OCD spokesperson Rachel Miranda said.

The typhoon left the more than 246,000 residents of Cat-

anduanes without electricity and telephone service, she said.

More than 400 people were evacuated from their homes and sea and air travel in these areas has been suspended as a safety precaution, officials said.

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Disaster officials made no initial reports of any casualty or injuries.

Malacañang, however, advised the public to stay clear of danger areas.

"We'd just like to encourage our countrymen, especially those in Luzon, to take precautions, and then really look out because the upcoming typhoon will make landfall sometime (this) morning," presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said.

"I repeat, we are urging the public to be prepared for the landfall of Karen, the 11th typhoon to enter the country this year. So let us stay away from danger areas... this Karen is expected to be elevated to severe tropical storm within the next 24 hours. Metro Manila is expected to experience heavy rains," he said.

Abella said President Duterte has ordered the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to be ready and monitor the possible evacuation of residents in the affected areas.

Catanduanes was earlier placed under Signal No. 3 but as Karen moved closer to Luzon, the storm signals were also raised in several other provinces, including Pangasinan, northern Zambales, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Aurora, northern Quezon including Polillo Island, La Union, Benguet, Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino.

Under Signal No. 2 are the provinces of Ilocos Sur, southern Isabela, Mountain Province, Ifugao, the rest of Zambales, Pangasinan, Bulacan, Bataan, Rizal, the rest of Quezon, Camarines Norte, Catanduanes and Metro Manila.

PAGASA placed Ilocos Norte, Abra, Kalinga, the rest of Isabela, Southern Apayao, Southern Cagayan, Oriental Mindoro, Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, Marinduque, Camarines Sur and Albay including Burias Island under Signal

No. 1.

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, Karen was estimated to be at 205 km east of Infanta, Quezon.

It packs maximum sustained winds of up to 130 kilometers per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 180 kph.

The typhoon is forecast to move west-northwest at a speed of 22 kph, with state weather forecasters saying it would make landfall in Aurora province early today.

PAGASA said the typhoon will be at the vicinity of Cabanatuan City in Nueva Ecija before noon and will barrel through central and northern Luzon before exiting the Philippine area of responsibility tomorrow.

"Estimated rainfall amount is from moderate to heavy within the 500-km diameter of the typhoon," said the weather bureau. "Fisherfolk and those with small seacraft are advised not to venture out to the open sea."

Warnings and precautions

PAGASA said storm surges are possible in coastal areas placed under Signal Nos. 2 and 3.

The weather bureau said wave height in the open sea may reach 14 meters.

It also warned of heavy damage to high-risk structures and cautioned residents against possible flashfloods and landslides.

A red rainfall warning level was also issued in Albay, Catanduanes and Camarines Norte yesterday afternoon, with the weather bureau saying flooding and landslides are expected to occur.

Moderate to heavy rainfall was also experienced in Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Masbate, Marinduque, Romblon and Northern Samar.

Light to moderate rainfall was experienced in Mindanao due to the effects of the typhoon.

Airline firms PAL Express

Turn to Page 1

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Karen From Page 6

and Cebu Pacific cancelled their domestic flights to the Bicol region and to the south due to the approaching storm.

Cebu Pacific also cancelled 14 international flights from Clark in Pampanga going to Hong Kong, Guam, Bangkok, Singapore and to Narita in Japan.

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), on the other hand, has prohibited sea vessels from sailing until PAGASA lifts all storm

warning signals in the country.

"Based on regulations, as soon as Signal No. 1 is raised, no sea vessel can sail," PCG spokesman Commander Armand Balilo said.

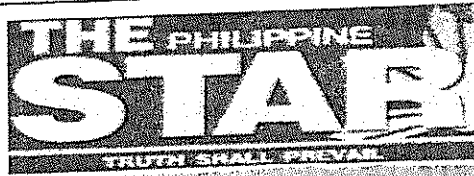
The PCG has also sent notice to mariners to take all their anchored vessels into shelter until the weather improves.

As of noon yesterday, the PCG reported some 6,692 passengers were stranded at ports, mostly in the Bicol region and Batangas. – **With Evelyn Macairan, Rudy Santos, Jaime Laude, Christina Mendez, AFP**

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16 October 2016



Page: 1

Duterte forms task force to create, support drug rehab centers

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

In what could be another approach to deal with the drug problem in the country, President Duterte has formed a super task force to look into the treatment and rehabilitation of more than three million drug dependents all over the country.

Duterte has been criticized for the killings happening in the course of his war against drugs, as various sectors

noted that cutting supply through police operations was not the only solution to the problem.

The drug menace is said to be a health concern as well, and treating people with addiction will reduce demand.

While the administration has emphasized that it was working on a ho-

listic approach to end the menace and was not tolerating or sanctioning extra-judicial killings, the President's rhetoric that he would kill all drug suspects in the country has become the highlight of his campaign against drugs.

Under Executive Order No. 4 signed by the President on Oct. 11, there must be one rehabilitation center built in

every province from only 16 existing nationwide. There are 81 provinces in the Philippines.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said the President specifically asked that new facilities be built in key areas in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Based on the EO, Duterte also agreed to accept donations or any help

Turn to Page 4

Duterte From Page 1

from concerned groups or individuals who would wish to provide support for his anti-drug campaign.

According to authorities, more than 700,000 drug suspects have surrendered.

The EO mandated the creation of an inter-agency task force for the establishment and support of the Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Centers (DATRCs) nationwide.

Among the functions of the DATRCs is to look out for suitable locations for rehabilitation centers, taking into consideration the need of the localities and the accessibility and manageability of facilities.

To help decongest existing rehabilitation centers, Duterte said the task force must establish DATRCs in available military reservations.

Earlier, Duterte showed off a 1,500-room dormitory for drug dependents now being built at Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija.

Based on reports, the facility's construction began in July and went full swing after Health Secretary Paulyn Jean Ubial signed a deed of donation with Chinese billionaire and philanthropist Huang Rulun in a meeting in Beijing, China.

Huang had reportedly met with Duterte and talked about how he could help deal with the illegal drug problem in the Philippines. Huang was said to have met with Duterte thrice, with two of the meetings happening during his presidential campaign.

If necessary, the EO stated the task force could enter into memoranda of agreement for the construction of rehabilitation centers in military facilities.

"Whenever necessary to facilitate the establishment of the DATRCs, including those in military reservations, the task force shall oversee the execution of appropriate MOAs between and among concerned agencies," the EO read.

"These MOAs shall delineate the respective duties and obligations of such agencies in accordance with pertinent laws, rules and regulations," it added.

Duterte issued the EO "in light of the government's unrelenting campaign against illegal drugs, (wherein) the number of drug dependents who have voluntarily surrendered to the authorities continues to grow."

In his previous speeches, Duterte said the high number of drug surrenderees made it hard for his cash-strapped government to handle rehab.

In the EO, the Palace said the increasing number of patients was straining the capacity of the 16 Department of Health-accredited facilities and their personnel.

It also cited the policy of the state to provide effective mechanisms or measures to reintegrate into society individuals who had fallen victim to drug abuse or dangerous drug dependence, through sustainable programs of treatment and rehabilitation.

Apart from the national government, the President also tasked local government units to tap their annual budgets to assist in or enhance the enforcement of the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 to prioritize the preventive or educational programs and the rehabilitation or treatment of drug dependents.

The Sangguniang Bayan, Sangguniang Panlungsod and the Sangguniang Panlalawigan are also mandated to pass ordinances providing for the care of drug dependents, subject to the availability of budget.

Under the EO, the creation of an inter-agency task force will be headed by the secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government for the establishment and support of the DATRCs nationwide.

The health secretary and the chairman of the Dangerous Drugs Board are designated vice-chairmen with the representative of the President, social welfare secretary, budget secretary, director general of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) as members.

6 October 2016

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Page: A3

Drug rehab center in Nueva Ecija rushed

By Jeannette I. Andrade
@jiandradeINQ

The Catholic laity and clergy have called on President Duterte and the country's top cop Director General Ronald Dela Rosa to uphold and respect every Filipino's right to life.

The Social Action Network (SAN) on Drugs and Extrajudicial Violence of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines expressed alarm over the surge in the number of drug-related

killings in the country.

The network, composed of lay ministers and priests from the 86 Arch or Diocesan social action centers nationwide, pointed out in a statement that Mr. Duterte and Dela Rosa's "shoot to kill order" on drug offenders was an "apparent instigation of extrajudicial violence."

Reminding the country's top officials of the commandment, "Thou shall not kill" while expressing support for the President's war on illegal drugs, the

SAN members urged the President to stop the killings.

"The drug problem must be solved. It destroys both human life and family. It also brings harm to the fabric of our society. It is a complex problem, an obstacle to justice, peace, development and common good. We express our full support for President Duterte's goal in eradicating illegal drugs and criminality in the country, and applaud his political will and determination toward the goal," they said.

FORT MAGSAYSAY—Workers constructing one of the biggest drug treatment and rehabilitation centers inside this military reservation are inspired by the thought that they have a role in the recovery of thousands of drug dependents.

The 10,000-bed facility here will rise on a 10-hectare portion of the 35,000-hectare reservation, as directed by President Duterte. The first of three buildings will be completed this month and will take in patients in November.

Mr. Duterte signed last Oct. 11 Executive Order No. 4 creating an interagency task force for the establishment and support of drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation centers in the country.

There were only 16 drug rehabilitation centers accredited by the Department of Health (DOH) in the country and Mr. Duterte said this was not enough to accommodate the 700,000 drug addicts who have surrendered in his first 100 days in office.

The task force has been

mandated to put up at least one rehabilitation center in all provinces and has identified military reservations as targeted locations for the centers.

Task force

The task force would be led by the Department of Interior and Local Government, the DOH, the Dangerous Drugs Board, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Department of Budget and Management, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, and a rep-

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representative from Malacañang.

Dermie Fermin, a resident of General Tinio town, said he and fellow workers were happy to work overtime because "this building would be responsible for making lives better."

The military reservation was originally considered as a relocation site for the New Bilibid Prison and the Correctional Institution for Women, until Mr. Duterte set these plans aside due to budgetary issues.

The construction of the buildings to be used as a reha-

bilitation center has been ongoing since Aug. 28, according to the public affairs office of the Army's 7th Infantry Division (ID), one of the units based in this sprawling camp.

The two other military camps hosting drug rehab centers are Camp Tecson in San Miguel, Bulacan, and Camp Peralta in Jamindan, Capiz.

Fort Magsaysay, established in 1955 and named after the late President Ramon Magsaysay, encompasses the Nueva Ecija towns of Laur, General Tinio,

Sta. Rosa and Gabaldon, and Palayan City.

Aside from the 7th ID, the camp hosts the Armed Forces of the Philippines National Training Center.

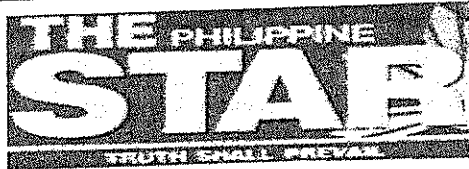
It also houses the Aquino-Diokno Memorial and Museum and the AFP Center for Human Rights Dialogue.

The 7th ID said Fort Magsaysay would secure drug dependents and personnel who will occupy the facility. —ARMAND GALANG, ANSELMO ROQUE AND GIL CABACUNGAN INQ

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16 October 2016



Page: A23

Abu man nabbed in Z. Sibugay

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Government security forces arrested an alleged member of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group during an operation in Imelda, Zamboanga Sibugay on Friday.

Marajol Taulani, alias Joel Gonzaga, was said to be a top drug trafficker and wanted for mass murder, according to Superintendent Rogelio Alabata, spokesman for the Police Regional Office 9.

Taulani was arrested by a joint team of the police intelligence operatives, Zamboanga Sibugay police and troopers of the Army's 44th Infantry Battalion at around 4 p.m. in Barangay Poblacion.

Alabata said Taulani faces seven arrest warrants for kidnapping with serious illegal detention issued by Basilan Judge Leo Jay Principe.

He said Taulani was among the bandits tagged in the kidnapping of 15 farm workers in Barangay Tairan, Lantawan in 2001.

The bandits killed five of the workers.

The raiding team recovered five plastic sachets said to contain shabu from Taulani, who ranked fifth in the list of wanted drug suspects in Zamboanga Sibugay.

– Roel Pareño

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www.mindanaotimes.com

Army denies behind murder of lumad leader

From the Mindanao Times (Oct 15): Army denies behind murder of lumad leader

THE MILITARY has denied the allegations that they are behind the killing of a lumad youth leader in Mabini, Compostela Valley.

The Karapatan in Southern Mindanao Region has accused soldiers of the army's 46th Infantry Battalion under 1001st Infantry Brigade as behind the killing of Joselito "Anoy" Pasaporte, a leader of Panalipdan Youth organization.

Col. Macairog Alberto, the brigade commander, said militant is always making up baseless accusation.

"They are always accusing the military," Alberto said. "We leave it to the police to investigate and determine who did it."

Alberto said they also found out that Pasaporte was in the police drug watch list, making it to the sixth spot in the list of the Mabini Municipal Police Station.

Initial police investigation revealed that Pasaporte was walking on his way home to Barangay Tagnanan in Mabini after watching a cockfight at Mabini Gallera in Barangay Lapinigan when unidentified assailants shot him from behind around 5:20 p.m. on Thursday.

The victim sustained five gunshot wounds on the different parts of his body resulting to his death. The suspects then fled away to unknown direction.

Panalipdan is a progressive environmentalist group.

The Mabini Municipal police station is conducting investigation to pinpoint the perpetrators. Pasaporte death came just three days after the murder of another militant lumad leader.

Jimmy Saypan, 58, the secretary general of the Compostela Valley Farmer Association (CFA), was also shot by unidentified assailants on Monday.

Saypan was declared dead by his attending physician at the Davao Regional Hospital in Tagum City at 2:25 p.m. the next day.

Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas secretary general Antonio Flores also accused soldiers, under the army's 66th Infantry Battalion, in the murder.

But Capt. Rhyen Batchar, spokesperson of the 10th Infantry Division, slammed the accusation.

Instead, Batchar asked Flores to instead cooperate with the ongoing police investigation by providing information and evidence to support his allegations.

The death of Pasaporte and Saypan were raised by militant leaders during the Lakbayan ng Pambansang Minorya held on Thursday.

Kerlan Fanagel, chair of Pasaka Confederation of Lumad Organizations, denounced the attacks as violation of the unilateral ceasefire agreement declared by government.

<http://mindanaotimes.net/army-denies-behind-murder-of-lumad-leader/>

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Joint gov't, MILF anti-drug operation leads to arrest of 13

From Rappler (Oct 15): Joint gov't, MILF anti-drug operation leads to arrest of 13

The men are believed to be followers of Samad Masgal alias Commander Madrox, leader of an armed group involved in the drug trade in North Cotabato



JOINT OPERATION. Authorities present firearms recovered during a joint anti-drug operation by the government and the MILF. All photos from the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process

At least 13 men believed to be members of an armed group involved in the drug trade in North Cotabato were arrested in a joint anti-drug operation conducted by the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) from October 5 to 11.

Those arrested were "henchmen" of Samad Masgal alias Commander Madrox, according to a press statement from the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) released Saturday, October 15.

In August, at least 4 of his followers also died during a similar operation by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the MILF.

Those arrested this October were turned over recently by the AFP 602nd Infantry Brigade as well as elements of the MILF Central Mindanao Front to the Philippine National Police in the provincial police office of Cotabato, as witnessed by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) in Soccsksargen.

The 13 who have outstanding warrants of arrest are as follows:

Ali Masgal Buat
Guimalodin Kalay Palakad
Guama Milikano y Masgal
Mandag Mamalinta y Mamao
Nandi Pagao y Sinangkad
Taokie Habip Lumilis
Kenny Gumbila Dima
Ronnie Ferrer Catulogn

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Morem Masgal Milicano
Omar Masgal Angking
Sari Alim Lumilis
Mantoa Amal Gombila
Tiyabong Mamalinta

Commander Madrox, meanwhile, remains at large.

"[T]he fight against illegal drugs transcends all affiliations and it even unites people with diverse backgrounds," said PDEA Soccsksargen Regional Director Lyndon Aspacio.

"We are very delighted that the coming together of the PNP, the AFP, and the addition of the MILF among our allies against illegal drugs is becoming a reality," he said in Filipino.



ARRESTED. The operation led to the arrest of 13 men believed to be followers of Samad Masgal alias Commander Madrox

The joint operation was conducted in the areas of Nabalawag, Kapinpilan, and Kadingilan in Midsayap, North Cotabato.

The joint Government of the Philippines (GPH)-MILF Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) as well as the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group (AHJAG) coordinated with authorities for the joint operation "since it was conducted in areas with strong MILF presence."

During the operation, authorities recovered the following:

- two grenade launchers
- two M16 rifles
- an M14 rifle
- a homemade shotgun
- a .30-caliber Garan rifle
- a homemade .50-caliber sniper rifle
- one rocket propelled grenade launcher ammunition
- two fragmentation grenades alongside a handful of short firearms
- a number of shabu-containing heat-sealed sachet packs
- other drug paraphernalia

In July, the CCCH and AHJAC signed an agreement of cooperation and coordination concerning the campaign against illegal drugs in MILF-controlled areas.

Among others, the agreement covers:

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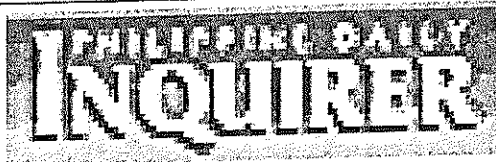
Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

information exchange/sharing which includes, but is not limited to the submission of the MILF of a list of drug personalities identified in its area, subject to validation of the law enforcement agencies allowing the MILF to conduct an information drive on the ill-effects of illegal drugs in the MILF affected areas as part of its demand reduction activities

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/149258-north-cotabato-joint-government-milf-anti-drug-operation>

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16 October 2016



Page: 17

AFP: 94 Abus neutralized

By Cynthia D. Balana
@cynchdbINO

With the full backing of President Duterte, the Armed Forces of the Philippines intensified its all-out war against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), neutralizing 94 ASG members during 54 clashes.

AFP chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya said at least 56 ASG members were killed in the military operations, 21 surrendered, 12 were either captured or arrested and five were wounded.

ASG leaders Nelson Mukdadil, Braun Mukdadil, and sub-leader Mohammad Said were among the terrorists killed and their bodies were recovered in intense combat and ensuing search and retrieval operations.

Three other ASG leaders were also killed but were not

identified because their bodies were dragged by their fleeing comrades. However, military informants reported that the bodies had been buried in known locations in keeping with Muslim customs.

In his recent report to Defense Secretary Defin Lorenzana on the AFP's accomplishments during the first 100 days of the Duterte administration, Visaya said the military conducted 579 massive focused operations, 426 of which were directed against bandits and allied terrorist groups.

A similar crackdown against terrorist groups in Central Mindanao was launched through the conduct of 44 combat operations against the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and other foreign and local terrorists,

particularly the Maute Group.

The crackdown resulted in the neutralization of 50 personalities and the confiscation of a large cache of high-powered firearms, ammunition, and various other materials and equipment for making improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The incessant drive to ferret out and bring to justice the perpetrators of the deadly bombing of the Davao City Night Market on Sept. 2 likewise yielded breakthrough results.

On Oct. 4, or 32 days after the incident, three Maute members were arrested. TJ Tagaya Macabalang, Wendel Apostol Facturan, and Musali Mustafa were collared in a checkpoint in Cotabato City.

At 2 a.m. on the same day, Teng Mustafa, father of Musali,

was arrested by combined military and police operatives who were armed with search warrants. Confiscated from the elder Mustapha were high-powered firearms and IED materials.

The AFP's sustained combat and noncombat military operations backed by police, government officials, and local residents also led to the release or escape of 14 kidnap victims, leaving only 12.

Peace process

During the first 100 days, the AFP supported the President's quest for a just and lasting peace through the observance of a unilateral ceasefire and the institution of incipient conditions conducive to peace talks between the negotiating panels from the government and the

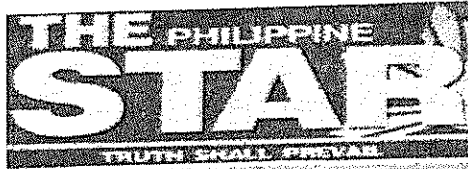
Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF).

Armed confrontation between the AFP and the New People's Army stopped immediately after the President restored the declaration of a ceasefire on Aug. 21 after lifting it due to violations from the rebel group.

A Joint Letter of Instruction signed on Aug. 24 made the AFP an active partner of the Philippine National Police in the war against illegal drugs, along with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, National Bureau of Investigation, and other law enforcement agencies.

The AFP also supported the implementation of the PNP's Oplan Tokhang. INQ

16 October 2016



Page: 3

94 Sayyaf men neutralized during Rody's first 100 days

By JAIME LAUDE

A total of 94 Abu Sayyaf members have been neutralized during the military's massive and focused anti-terror drive in Basilan and Sulu within the first 100 days in office of President Duterte, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reported yesterday.

AFP chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya, in a report to Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, said 56 of the 94 bandits were killed in 579 military operations that also resulted in the capture of 17 others and the surrender of 21. Three of them were Basilan and Sulu-based Abu Sayyaf leaders identified as Nelson Muktaadil, Braun Muktaadil and Mohammad Said.

"Three other leaders (of the bandits) were also killed but were not identified as their bodies were dragged away by their fleeing comrades. They were nonetheless reported by reliable informants to have been buried in known locations under customary Muslim practice and traditions," Visaya said.

The military also launched 44 combat operations against the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and other foreign and local terrorist groups in Central Mindanao as well as the Maute group based in Lanao.

The anti-terror drive, Visaya said, also resulted in the neutralization of 50 personalities of the two homegrown terror groups and seizure of a large cache of high powered firearms, ammunition and bomb-making materials.

Visaya further reported that within the first 100 days of Duterte, government forces were able to solve the Davao City night market bombing with the arrest of the suspects – TJ Magaya Macalabang, Wendel Apostol Facturan and Musali Mustapha – on Oct. 4.

This was 32 days after the carnage that left 15 innocent civilians dead and 70 others wounded.

Musali's father, Teng Mustafa, was also collared in a combined military and police court-sanctioned raid in Cotabato City for illegal possession of firearms and explosive materials.

The three, tagged as members of the Maute group, apparently launched the bombing to divert the attention of the military that had been hitting hard the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sulu and Basilan.

In the same period the AFP also reported that the ceasefire declared by both the government and the communists in line with the resumption of peace negotiations was holding.

"Armed confrontation between the AFP and the NPA (New People's Army) finally ceased after the President restored the declaration of ceasefire on Aug. 21. The unilateral ceasefire declaration effectively reimposed the suspension of military operations (SOMO)," Visaya said.

Visaya said the AFP's anti-illegal drug campaign, through interagency efforts, also enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of the steps taken by the military leadership to end the proliferation of illegal drugs in the country.

Cleaning its own backyard first, the AFP's Task Groups Jacob, Midas, Joshua and Salamander conducted random drug tests on 19,163 uniformed and civilian personnel, 44 of whom tested positive for drug use.

Disciplinary actions were taken against these drug violators in the service.

Visaya also reported that ground troops were in full support of Oplan Tokhang of the Philippine National Police (PNP), an effort that resulted in the arrest of 191 suspected drug users and pushers, the surrender of 689 others and the killing of eight drug offenders in 169 anti-illegal drug operations.

The AFP, however, lost three soldiers in the drug war that also left five enlisted personnel wounded during a joint anti-narcotics operation against the group of Moks Masgal, a drug supplier, based in Barangay Nabalawag, Midsayap, North Cotabato last Aug. 14.

AFP modernization

While the Duterte administration has yet to have a concrete plan to modernize the AFP, the military establishment has received its third Del Pilar class frigate from the United States.

The new high-endurance cutter named *BRP Andres Bonifacio* (PF17) was a decommissioned US Coast Guard vessel. The ship is due to arrive in the country by December 4, 2017.

The AFP is also awaiting the arrival of the second brand-new strategic sealift vessel, christened *BRP Davao del Sur*, following its launch last month in Indonesia. The first SSV is now in the service of the Philippine Navy.

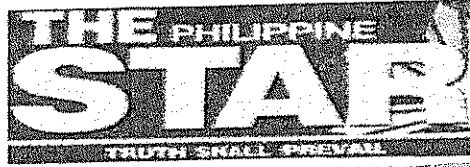
Airmen from the Philippine Air Force (PAF) likewise flew home over the weekend its fifth newly refurbished C-130 Hercules cargo plane that the previous government acquired from the US.

The Army, on the other hand, received additional 32 engineering equipment from various sources last Aug. 30.

All these recent military acquisitions of big-ticket items were still part of the previous government's modernization program to bolster the Philippine military's territorial and external defense amid the South China Sea dispute with China.

Duterte, meanwhile, has no plans to pursue the military's modernization program for territorial and external defense of the previous government, declaring that the military should first focus its efforts on addressing internal security threats.

16 October 2016



Page: 5

US turns over new anti-terrorism equipment to Phl

By DING CERVANTES and JAIME LAUDE

CLARK FREEPORT, Pampanga – The Joint US Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG) based in the US embassy has turned over 24 pallets of new anti-terrorism equipment to the Philippine Marine Special Operations Group (MAR-SOG) here, even as the embassy reported successful joint exercises on disaster and threat responses on top of civic missions.

The US embassy said both Philippine and US service members "are now better prepared to respond to natural disasters and security threats in the region" after participating in the Philippine Amphibious Landing Exercise 33 (PHIBLEX) which concluded at Subic Bay last Oct. 11.

"Through mud and rain, after repairing schools, firing artillery, conducting flight operations and disaster preparedness training, Philippine and US service members are now better prepared to respond to natural disasters and security threats in the region," the embassy said in a statement.

The embassy said the 24 pallets turned over to MAR-SOG here were "for use in counterterrorism and fast boat operations," and among these were tactical Harris radios, ballistic helmets and diving gear.

"The military equipment was transferred under a US grant program aimed at assisting security forces conducting counterterrorism operations," the embassy explained. "The equipment will help enhance the communications, situational awareness and protection of Philippine security forces actively engaged in counterterrorism operations in the southern Philippines."

The Philippine Marines will also receive radio training as a part of the US grant program.

Aside from MAR-SOG, the Philippine Coast Guard and the Philippine National Police-Special Action Force also received six pallets of the new communications equipment from the US government.

The US embassy said, "During PHIBLEX, Philippine and US service members built upon a long and productive history of joint military exercises that enhance interoperability, strengthen partnerships and improve disaster response."

The interoperability of Philippine and US troops guarantees a more rapid response to natural disasters, such as Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) and the Bohol earthquake, saving lives and reducing suffering."

It said PHIBLEX participants used "assault amphibious vehicles to move troops ashore from the USS *Germantown*, a US Navy amphibious ship."

PHIBLEX is an annual US-Philippine military bilateral exercise that combines amphibious capabilities and live-fire training with humanitarian assistance efforts to strengthen interoperability and working relationships.

It is not clear whether more such exercises would be held amid President Duterte's statement that his government would stop joint exercises with the Americans.

Neither the Department of National Defense nor the Armed Forces of the Philippines has received written official instruction from Malacañang on the matter.

"When Philippine and US forces practice an amphibious landing together, our nations are better prepared to bring water, medical supplies and other relief to the people of the Philippines during a natural disaster," the embassy said.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

In addition to the amphibious landing exercise, Philippine and US service members conducted a live-fire combined-arms exercise and training on a wide range of skills, including marksmanship, parachute operations, map reading, and first aid response."

The US embassy also noted that "in the month preceding the exercise, Philippine and US service members in Cagayan Valley spent more than 17,000 hours renovating four elementary school classrooms and two outdoor auditoriums."

"They repaired roofs and installed 500 feet of steel gutters and 2,000 feet of drainage systems to make the schools more resilient to heavy rainfall. US military medical teams also taught students and teachers basic lifesaving skills, disease prevention and physical and dental hygiene – all critical during times of crisis. To help prepare for a natural disaster hitting the region, US troops coordinated with local municipal leadership to identify locations capable of supporting relief operations and helped develop crisis response plans," the embassy reported.

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16 October 2016

The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

Page: A3

Rody insists on FM burial

By John Paolo Bencito

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte maintained that he was only following his duty to enforce the law in deciding to bury the former President Ferdinand Marcos in the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

"That is a law. It is very clear to me that my decision was correct. As a lawyer, I could only stick to what is the law," Duterte was quoted as saying by Ilocos Norte Gov. Imee Marcos,

a daughter of the former president who died in exile in 1989.

"He was a soldier. He was a president. And nobody can deny that," Duterte added.

Duterte met briefly with the governor at Laoag International Airport after visiting calamity-stricken victims in Batanes.

The President made the remark as some 500 Ilocanos began the four-day Kailian March from Ilocos Norte to Metro Manila.

"Using the word kailian im-

plies being part of the same barangay or sitio, growing with and around each other... a much stronger and close-knit relationship," explained June Arvin Gudoy of northern Ilocos.

Two unity masses were held at the San Agustin Church in Paoay and then at the St. John the Baptist Parish Church in Badoc, both in Ilocos Norte.

"This should have been finished in September but for the cases [that were filed before the

Supreme Court]," Marcos said.

Six cases were filed before the high court protesting Marcos' burial at the Libingan, but the temporary restraining order (TRO) the SC issued against any preparation for Marcos' burial at the Libingan is set to expire on October 18.

The Kailian March left the Paoay church past 6 p.m. Friday and arrived at the Badoc church before 8 p.m. An hour later, the group left Ilocos Norte and ar-

rived at Vigan City, Ilocos Sur, at around 10 p.m.

By 2:30 a.m. Saturday, they were already in San Fernando City, La Union and was headed for Pangasinan yesterday afternoon.

"Thank you very much for your support. I am certain that with our continued prayers, we will finally bring peace to my father, to my family, to this province, and to the entire country, the Republic of the Philippines," Marcos said.

October 2016

The Manila Times

Page: 13

MILF, military turn over members of drug ring

MEMBERS of the military's 602nd Infantry Brigade and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Central Mindanao Front turned over more than a dozen henchmen of Samad Masgal alias Commander Madrox, a notorious leader of an armed group involved in the illegal drug trade and operating in North Cotabato province.

The men were arrested during operations conducted from October 5 to 11, 2016 in Nabalawag, Kapinipilan, and Kadingilan in Midsayap, North Cotabato. The joint Government of the Philippines (GPH)-Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) as well as the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group (AHJAG) were tapped to help coordinate the operation since it was conducted in areas with strong MILF presence.

"We've seen in the last six days the determination of the MILF and the government forces to enforce the directive of President Rodrigo Duterte to launch an all-out campaign against illegal drugs and criminality," Director Carlos Sol Jr. of the combined secretariat of the GPH-CCCH and the AHJAG said.

The CCCH and AHJAG are composed of members from the GPH and the MILF with the International Monitoring Team as the third party.

"We can see now people responsible for the criminality and the proliferation of illegal drugs, especially methamphetamine in the areas of operation," Sol said.

The arrested men were turned over the Philippine National Police (PNP).

An operation conducted in August by the military and the MILF against the group of Commander Madrox resulted in the death of four of his followers. Three soldiers also died in the operation.

"[T]he fight against illegal drugs transcends all affiliations and it even unites people with diverse backgrounds. We are very delighted that the coming together of the PNP, the AFP, and the addition of the MILF among our allies against illegal drugs is becoming a reality," PDEA-12 Regional Director Lyndon Aspacio said.

"[W]e all have a personal stake in this fight and I hope that in the coming days we will be seeing more of this operation," he added.

"Everything is clear with mutual trust and cooperation. We are here because of this. We are here to participate in the government's campaign against illegal drugs. Our cooperation has brought about one of our objectives and that is to stop the proliferation of illegal drugs," PNP North Cotabato Provincial Director Supt. Emmanuel Peralta said.

On July 12, 2016, the government and MILF panels signed an agreement to stop the proliferation of illegal drugs in areas controlled by the MILF.

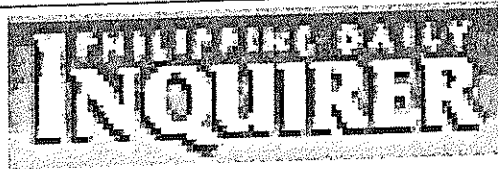
The agreement allows for "information exchange/sharing which includes, but not limited to the submission of the MILF of a list of drug personalities identified in its area subject to validation of the law enforcement agencies" as well as to allow the MILF to "conduct information drive on the ill-effects of illegal drugs in the MILF affected areas as part of its demand reduction activities" among others.

"When President Duterte came into power, the MILF formalized an agreement with the government that will allow it to lead the anti-illegal drug campaign in MILF controlled areas... This pursuit operation has resulted into better and peaceful lives for our stakeholders as well as stronger confidence between GPH and MILF forces," MILF Central Mindanao Front Commander Gordon Sayfulah said.

"I would like to commend this new administration for its strong commitment to end illegal drugs in our country. I would also like to express my gratitude to those who have been part of the operation which includes the operating troops and coordinating body," the MILF leader added.

NEIL A. ALCOBER

16 October 2016



Page: 46

MARCOS BURIAL

MARCOS LOYALISTS START 4-DAY CARAVAN TO SUPREME COURT

By Leilanie Adriano
@leiadrianoINQ

LAOAG CITY—President Duterte on Friday said he was standing by his decision to grant strongman Ferdinand Marcos a hero's burial, when he met with Gov. Imee Marcos shortly before hundreds of Marcos loyalists set out for a four-day caravan from Ilocos Norte to the Supreme Court in Manila.

Mr. Duterte flew here from Batanes province and met with Imee and Ilocos Norte mayors.

The media was not allowed to join the closed-door meeting. But in a video footage of the 10-minute meeting, Mr. Duterte told the officials: "For me, it is a matter of law. As a lawyer, it's very clear to me that my decision is right and I could only speak to what is the law."

"But if something unforeseen takes place... then I will intervene. I will fly to be here immediately should there be an untoward incident," he added.

He flew out of Laoag for Davao City.

Marcos said Mr. Duterte was supposed to visit Tarlac province but had opted to stop

over in Laoag.

The caravan pushed through despite tropical depression "Kafen," which was expected to hit Central Luzon today.

"Regardless of bad weather [due to a tropical depression], we will proceed. We will appeal to the Supreme Court court to allow Marcos' burial at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. Maybe the heavens would take pity on us," said Minda Cristina Jusay, 62, a resident of Sarrat town who joined the caravan.

The caravan was organized after an Ilocano youth group turned over to the Supreme Court on Oct. 6 a petition seeking the Marcos burial at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. The group gathered 1.1 million signatures for the petition.

In a statement, caravan organizer June Arvin Gudoy of Batac City said their trek "echoes our call for national unity and healing [by] finally burying our dead and moving on from a past that has divided the nation for decades."

From Laoag, Marcos supporters went to Vigan City in Ilocos Sur.

—WITH A REPORT FROM
GABRIEL CARDINOZA INQ

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ONLINE NEWS
16 OCTOBER 2016

www.inquirer.net

Duterte forms task force to create, support drug rehab centers

By: Nestor Corrales / @NCorralesINQ

INQUIRER.net / 11:18 AM October 15, 2016

President Rodrigo Duterte has signed an executive order creating an inter-agency task force for the establishment of and to support drug rehabilitation centers in the Philippines.

The Executive Order (EO) No. 4, which was signed on October 11, ordered the establishment of and support for drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation centers (DATRCs) throughout the country.

Other members of the task force include secretaries of social welfare, budget, the director general of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, and a representative of the Office of the President.

With at least 751,933 drug surrenderers as of October 14, the EO was issued "to provide effective mechanism or measures to re-integrate into society individuals, who have fallen victim to drug abuse or dangerous drug dependence, through sustainable programs of treatment and rehabilitation."

The EO ordered the task force to establish drug rehabilitation centers in military camps to accommodate the rise in drug surrenderers.

The Department of Health (DOH), the EO said, would be the one to maintain and operate the drug rehabilitation centers in the country, including those in military camps.

Duterte had earlier said that a China-funded drug rehabilitation center is nearing its completion in Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija.

The EO said funding for the implementation of the EO "shall be sourced from the appropriations of the members of the task force and other applicable funding sources, subject to pertinent laws, rules and regulations."

It added that the budgetary requirements for the succeeding fiscal years shall be incorporated in the budget proposals of concerned agencies. **CDG**

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www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

Sayyafs ambush government militias in Basilan

From the Mindanao Examiner (Oct 15): Sayyafs ambush government militias in Basilan

Abu Sayyaf militants on Saturday ambushed a group of pro-government militiamen in the restive province of Basilan in the Muslim autonomous region and killing one of them, officials said.

Officials said the attack occurred in the village called Limbo Candis in Sumisip town. The militias were travelling on a truck together with armed civilians when militants attacked them and sparking a brief firefight.

No other details were made available by the military and police on the attack, but this occurred just a day after security forces captured an Abu Sayyaf militant tagged in the brutal slaying of 15 coconut farmers in Basilan.

Superintendent Rogelio Alabata, a regional police spokesman, said Marajol Taulani, alias Joel Gonzaga, was tracked down in the town of Imelda in Zamboanga Sibugay province.

He said security forces also seized five packets of suspected meth from Taulani, who is facing a string of criminal charges in Basilan, just several nautical miles south of Zamboanga.

Alabata said the militant is currently being interrogated, but details of the investigation were not made public because of the ongoing operation against the terrorist group tied to the Islamic State.

<http://mindanaoexaminer.com/sayyafs-ambush-government-militias-in-basil>

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U.S. military delivers counterterrorism equipment to the Philippine Marine Special Operations Group

From the Philippine Information Agency (Oct 15): U.S. military delivers counterterrorism equipment to the Philippine Marine Special Operations Group

Representatives from the U.S. Embassy in the Philippines' Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG) delivered 24 pallets of new military equipment to the Philippine Marine Special Operations Group (MARSOG) at Clark Air Base on October 8.

The equipment, for use in counterterrorism and fast boat operations, included tactical Harris radios, ballistic helmets, and diving gear, among other items. The military equipment was transferred under a U.S. grant program aimed at assisting security forces conducting counterterrorism operations. This equipment will help enhance the communications, situational awareness and protection of Philippine security forces actively engaged in counterterrorism operations in the southern Philippines. The Philippine Marines will also receive radio training as a part of the U.S. grant program.

In addition to MARSOG, the Philippine Coast Guard and the Philippine National Police-Special Action Force also received six pallets of the new communications equipment from the U.S. government. (US Embassy Manila)

<http://news.pia.gov.ph/article/view/1141476428381/u-s-military-delivers-counterterrorism-equipment-to-the-philippine-marine-special-operations-group>

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www.pna.gov.ph

No change in US-PHL relations whoever wins in upcoming US presidential polls - Goldberg

From the Philippine News Agency (Oct 15): No change in US-PHL relations whoever wins in upcoming US presidential polls - Goldberg

United States Ambassador to the Philippines Philip Goldberg on Friday assured that whoever emerged as the winner in the coming US presidential elections in November, it will not change US relations with the Philippines.

Goldberg told reporters covering the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) during his farewell lunch that the US-Philippine alliance is strong regardless of whoever between Republican candidate Donald Trump and Democrats' Hillary Clinton will win in the presidential race.

"I think our commitment to the Philippines is clear. We have been good allies, we will remain good allies," he pointed out.

"I think that whatever government is in, the United States will value the Philippines as an ally and friend. We have 3.5 million Filipino-Americans and a rich tradition and history, and as allies and friends I don't think the changes of administration in the US affects that," he added.

The outgoing ambassador clarified that alleged threats against President Rodrigo Duterte from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is not true and has no basis.

"But we are friends of the Philippines, we are allies of the Philippines, and we respect the democracy in the Philippines, so I don't know what that's all about, quite frankly. But I'll leave it at that. There is no foundation," he emphasized.

The Washington's top diplomat to Manila cited the great friendship of his country and the Philippines over the past 70 years that produced remarkable results.

He said that over the last three years in the Philippines as Ambassador, "many of the important features of our alliance, the great friendship between our people and our country and it was a nice moment to review those moments."

He recalled that during typhoon Yolanda, they were able "to carry out with our colleagues, our friends from the AFP my colleagues from the US, the military, it reminds me how close our relationship is."

"We reviewed many of the cooperative programs that we have in the assistance area things that have been increased over the last few years, foreign military funding, maritime security initiatives which provided USD 42 million last year to the Philippines to improve its ability to sea and operate in its maritime space, the USD 66 million for foreign military funding, the millennium challenge cooperation which finished 226 km road in Samar which hopefully will help spur the economic development," he stressed.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=931475>

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www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

DND-GA looking for PHP19.2-M worth of 7.62-mm. M13 links, match bullets
From the Philippine News Agency (Oct 15): DND-GA looking for PHP19.2-M worth of 7.62-mm. M13 links, match bullets

The Department of National Defense-Government Arsenal (DND-GA), located in Limay, Bataan, is allocating PHP19.2 million for the acquisition of 7.62-mm. M13 links and match bullets.

Winning bidders are required to deliver the items within 180 days. A pre-bid conference is scheduled at 11 a.m. on Oct. 19, at the Government Arsenal Metro Manila Liaison Office in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

The 7.62-mm. M13 links are belted ammunition used primarily for light machine guns in the arsenal of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

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Military units alerted for impact of Typhoon Karen

From the Philippine News Agency (Oct 15): Military units alerted for impact of Typhoon Karen

All units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have been put on alert as part of the mitigation efforts for Typhoon Karen.

This was disclosed by National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) executive director Ricardo Jalad in Saturday's update.

He added that all military units in regions that will be affected by 'Karen' have been ordered to pre-position equipment for disaster rescue and recovery operations.

Jalad said NDRRMC Operations Center in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City has been placed on "blue alert" to constantly monitor the tropical storm's progress and impact.

According to the severe weather bulletin issued by PAGASA at 11 a.m. Saturday, 'Karen' has passed north of Catanduanes and is already moving towards the Aurora-Quezon area, with maximum sustained winds of up to 130 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 180 kph.

The state weather bureau forecast 'Karen' to move west-northwest at 17 kph. By Sunday morning, it is expected at the vicinity of Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija and by Monday morning, at 455 km. west-northwest of Iba, Zambales, outside the Philippine Area of Responsibility.

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www.rappler.com

SC Justice Carpio fears losing Panatag if Duterte concedes to China

From Rappler (Oct 15): SC Justice Carpio fears losing Panatag if Duterte concedes to China

(UPDATED) SC Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio says President Rodrigo Duterte can be impeached if he 'concedes sovereignty' over Panatag Shoal



IMPROVING TIES. Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte (left) talks with Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua (right) during the 115th Police Service Anniversary at the PNP headquarters in Manila on August 17, 2016. Photo by Noel Celis/AFP

MANILA, Philippines (UPDATED) – Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio on Saturday, October 15, said the Philippines can lose the disputed Panatag Shoal (Scarborough Shoal) if President Rodrigo Duterte concedes sovereignty over it in exchange for China's incentives.
"If Duterte concedes sovereignty, it is a culpable violation of the Constitution, a ground for impeachment," Carpio said.

"But the more important repercussion is, once Duterte concedes sovereignty, we can never recover it because China will never give it back," he added.

This is because even if the Philippine Supreme Court voids a possible concession by Duterte, "China will not be bound by the ruling of the Philippine Supreme Court."

He said that "only an international court can void the concession," provided that China "voluntarily submits" to the court's jurisdiction. "And China will never submit to the jurisdiction of an international court on sovereignty issues," he added.

Carpio also explained he is "worried" that in exchange for "allowing Filipino fishermen to fish on Scarborough Shoal and for all the infrastructure loans and grants from the Chinese", Duterte might "recognize China's sovereignty over the shoal."

Sovereignty over Panatag

Duterte is making a state visit to China from October 18 to 21.

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The President plans to focus on trade and investments, as both Manila and Beijing will downplay the Philippines' historic legal victory against China over the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

Carpio said Duterte "thinks the Philippines has no sovereignty" over Panatag Shoal because the ruling "is silent on who has sovereignty over the shoal."

What the tribunal said is that both Filipino and Chinese fishermen both have "traditional fishing rights" within the 12-nautical mile territorial sea of Panatag Shoal. This means the disputed area is a traditional fishing ground.

Carpio pointed out that the Philippines "never raised the sovereignty issue" because the tribunal "has no jurisdiction over sovereignty issues, only maritime issues."

"The tribunal could not have ruled on the sovereignty issue," the Supreme Court justice said.

Carpio said that based on Republic Act 9522 (also known as the Baselines Law), the Philippines "exercises sovereignty and jurisdiction" over Panatag Shoal, also known as Bajo de Masinloc.

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/149261-sc-justice-carpio-scarborough-duterte-china>

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