

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



Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

08 September 2016

Thursday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people, Securing the land

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

NEWS HEADLINES 08 SEPTEMBER 2016



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

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | SEPTEMBER 8, 2016 | THURSDAY



PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

LOW PRESSURE AREA
175 KM EAST-SOUTHEAST OF HINATAUN
SURIGAO DEL SUR

SOUTHWEST MONSOON
AFFECTING CTRPM
NORTHERN LUZON
(September 7, 5:00 PM)

SUNRISE: 6:41 AM **SUNSET: 6:03 PM**

MOONRISE: 11:02 AM **MOONSET: 10:49 PM**

NEW MOON **FIRST QUARTER**

LOW TIDE **HIGH TIDE**

MANILA SOUTH


4:30 AM **1:00 PM**

2:00 PM **6:00 PM**

Watch PANAHON TV everyday at 5:00 AM on PTV (Channel 4).

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| CITY | SEP 8 | SEP 9 | SEP 10 | SEP 11 | SEP 12 | SEP 13 |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| METRO MANILA | 25-33 °C | 26-35 °C | 28-31 °C | 28-31 °C | 26-32 °C | 26-32 °C |
| TUGUEGARAO | 25-34 °C | 25-35 °C | 25-34 °C | 25-34 °C | 24-32 °C | 24-32 °C |
| LAOAG | 25-32 °C | 24-32 °C | 25-32 °C | 25-33 °C | 25-31 °C | 25-31 °C |
| BAGUIO | 17-24 °C | 18-24 °C | 25-33 °C | 25-34 °C | 24-32 °C | 25-33 °C |
| SBMA/CLARK | 25-33 °C | 25-34 °C | 25-33 °C | 25-33 °C | | |
| TACLOBAN | | | | | | |
| CAGAYAN DE ORO | | | | | | |
| METRO DAVAO | | | | | | |
| ZAMBOANGA | | | | | | |



SAGOT KO, PAGALA MO!

08 September 2016

INQUIRER

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Photos show China building new islands

Sea row takes center stage at Laos summit

VIENTIANE—Beijing's "illegal" island building in the South China Sea moved center stage at an Asian summit on Wednesday after the Philippines produced evidence it said showed fresh construction activity at a flash point shoal.

An artificial island at Scarborough Shoal, known in the Philippines as Panatag Shoal, could be a game changer in China's quest to control the South China Sea and raises the risk of armed confrontation with the United States, according to security analysts.

Beijing this week insisted it had not started building at the shoal—a move that could lead to a military outpost just 230 kilometers from the main Philippine island, Luzon, where US forces are stationed.

But the Philippines on Wednesday released images it said showed Chinese ships in

the area that were capable of dredging sand and other activities required to build an artificial island.

"We have reason to believe that their presence is a precursor to building activities on the shoal," Arsenio Andolong, spokesperson for the Philippines' Department of National Defense, told Agence France-Presse (AFP).

"We are continuing our surveillance and monitoring of their presence and activities, which are disturbing," Andolong said.

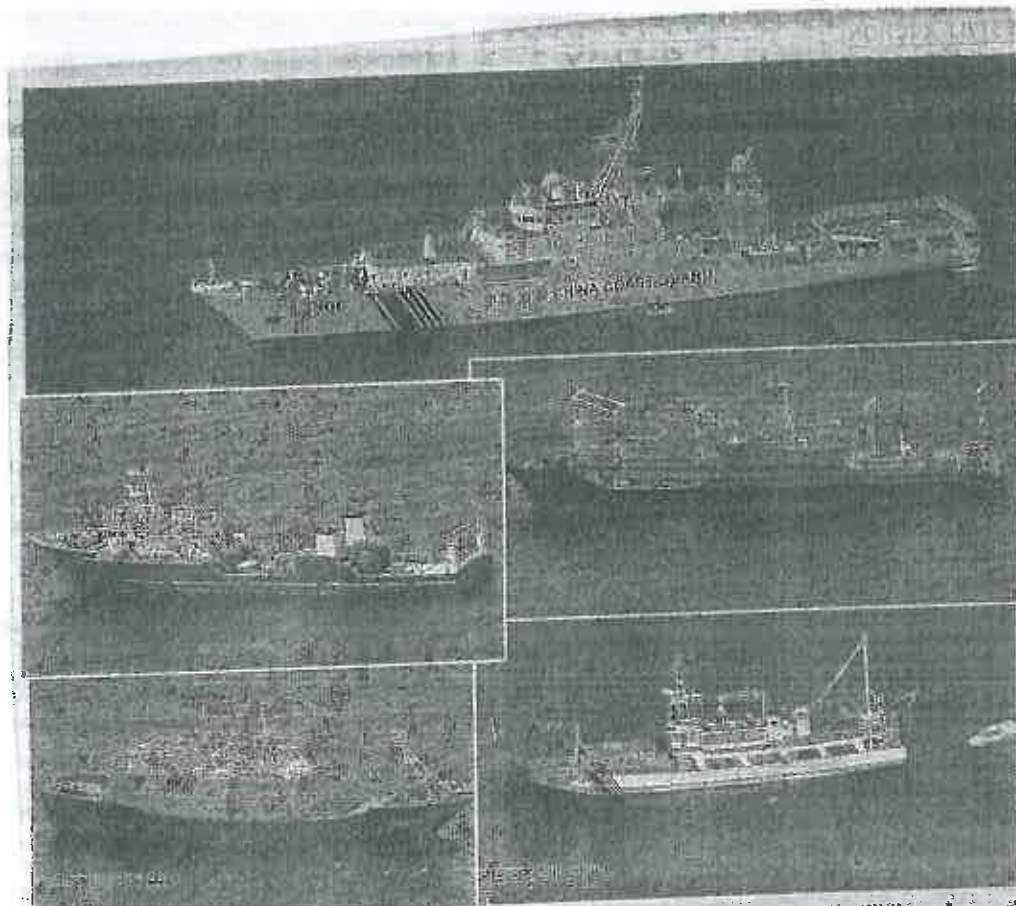
There was no explanation for

PHOTOS/A6

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ALARMING PRESENCE Chinese vessels are gathering at Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal, raising fears that China is building another artificial island just off Luzon.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

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the timing of the release of the photos, but it came two days after Manila expressed "grave concern" about the increasing number of Chinese vessels around the shoal and demanded an explanation from China's ambassador.

Lorenzana ordered release

A Philippine official said the release of the photographs and a map was ordered by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana who is at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit in Vietnam with President Duterte.

Mr. Duterte plans to ask Chinese Premier Li Keqiang at the summit whether the vessels were on another island-building mission on Scarborough Shoal.

Asked how disturbed the Philippines was by the presence of the Chinese ships, Mr. Duterte's spokesperson, Ernesto Abella, told a news conference "Enough to announce it."

Abella said that China and the Philippines were discussing the issue, but he gave no details.

"There are talks at this stage," Abella said. He refused to comment if the Philippine policy was to prevent any country from constructing at or transforming Scarborough Shoal, a coral reef, into an island.

Although Scarborough Shoal is merely a few rocks poking above the sea, it is important to the Philippines because it is within its 370-km exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and because of its tranquil waters and rich stocks of fish.

Manila says Beijing's blockade of the shoal is a violation of international law.

China has built artificial is-

lands on seven reefs in the hotly contested Spratly archipelago in the middle of the South China Sea.

Diplomatic protest

If the Chinese government confirms the suspicion, the Philippines would lodge an official protest, according to Lorenzana.

China has not commented on the accusations.

China claims nearly all of the sea through which \$5 trillion in shipping trade passes annually, even waters approaching the coasts of the Philippines and other Southeast Asian nations.

Besides the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan have competing claims in the South China Sea, dotted by hundreds of islets, reefs and atolls believed to be sitting atop vast energy reserves.

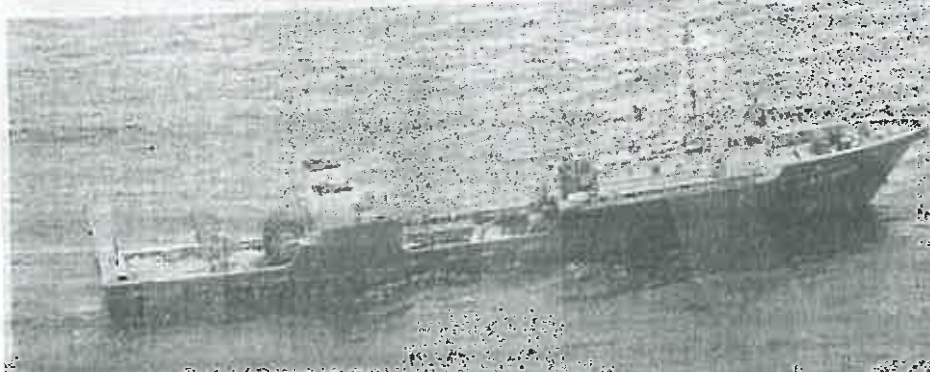
In July, the Philippines won a sweeping victory in the UN-backed Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, which ruled that China had no legal title to almost all of the South China Sea and that it had violated the Philippines' rights to fish and explore for minerals in its own EEZ.

China rejected the ruling as "waste paper."

A draft Asean communiqué seen by Reuters on Monday listed eight points related to the South China Sea, but made no mention of the ruling.

A Philippine security official traveling with Mr. Duterte said it was a challenge for the government to explain why Filipino fishermen could not go back and fish in the area when the Hague tribunal had ruled that Scarborough Shoal was a fishing ground for all.

"We won the arbitral court, but we could not enforce it, how can we explain that to our own



ANOTHER Chinese ship is sighted at Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal in what could be a precursor to land reclamation.
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

fishermen" said the official who declined to be named.

"So we wanted to talk to China and resolve the issue but the situation like this is making it more difficult. The President is asking what is China's intentions in the area," the official said.

The competing territorial claims have long been a major source of tension in the region, with China using deadly force twice to seize control of islands from Vietnam.

Island building

Tensions have escalated sharply in recent years as China has built islands in the Spratlys in anticipation of an adverse ruling from the Hague tribunal.

It has topped at least three of the artificial islands with airstrips capable of receiving large military planes.

In response, Vietnam, which had come to blows with China in the Paracel archipelago in another part of the South China Sea, has deployed mobile missiles to islands it occupies in the Spratlys.

The United States has reacted to that buildup by sailing warships close to China's artificial

islands, and sending warplanes over them.

This has deeply angered China, which has accused the Americans of "militarizing the region" and raised concerns of armed conflict between the two world powers.

'Illegal'

In ruling for the Philippines in July the arbitral tribunal also said China's construction of artificial islands in the disputed waters was illegal.

China seized Scarborough Shoal in 2012 after a two-month standoff with the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Coast Guard and has since deployed large fishing fleets while blocking Filipino fishermen.

Expanding that presence with a military outpost is vital to achieving China's ambitions of controlling the sea, according to security analysts.

US officials fear a Chinese military airfield at the shoal would enable China to enforce a threatened air defense identification zone in the sea.

Another major concern is it allows China a military base close to where US forces regularly operate in Luzon.

US President Barack Obama reportedly directly warned his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, during a meeting in March not to push ahead with any artificial island building there.

The United States, which is a treaty ally of the Philippines, has repeatedly said it does not want to fight a war over the shoal.

But military confrontation cannot be ruled out if China does start to build an island, according to security analysts.

We could witness a physical confrontation between Chinese Coast Guard and Filipino vessels backed up by the US Navy. Carl Thayer, an eminent professor at Australia's University of New South Wales, told AFP.

An Obama aide on Wednesday played down the significance of the Philippine photos, telling reporters the United States had not detected any unusual activity at Scarborough Shoal.

When pressed on initial Philippine accusations on Monday before the photos were released, China insisted there were no dredging boats or others to prepare for island building.

President Duterte had said he

did not want to anger China by highlighting the territorial row at the Asean summit in Laos this week.

But the release of the photos came just a few hours before Mr. Duterte and other leaders from the 10-member regional bloc met in China's Li.

Obama is also in Laos for the regional meetings, which will conclude on Thursday with an East Asia summit.

Lawrence told reporters on Wednesday that the US government had also expressed concern over the increase in the number of Chinese ships at Scarborough Shoal.

"They are also worried. It is very worrisome because that area is ours. If they are able to make an island, we cannot take that from them," he said.

"If they are able to construct an island there, our security will be at risk because it's just [230 km] away from Masinloc in Zambales," he said. "Our EEZ is 370 kilometers."

Abella said Mr. Duterte did not bring up the Scarborough Shoal issue at the meeting with Li.

He said the government was in backdoor talks with China to deal with the controversy.

Presidential Communications Secretary Martin Andanar told reporters that Asean leaders discussed the South China Sea dispute with Li on Wednesday.

Andanar quoted Mr. Duterte as saying during the meeting that "international disputes should inspire us to work together with adherence to the rule of law and international governing bodies."

He said Mr. Duterte also called on the other Asean leaders to "put words into actions and be on the side of peace." Reports from AFP, AP, Reuters and Marlon Ramos

08 September 2015

US, Hillary to Rody: Have some respect

WASHINGTON / IAMP-PA - The US State Department and Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton on Tuesday stressed the need for ties with the Philippines to be based on mutual respect, after President Duterte raised worries about the future of the key alliance by calling President Barack Obama a "son of a whore."

Despite US dismay over Duterte's remarks, current and former US officials played down the impact, saying they did not expect any serious damage to his state or high-levelers' role. China's extensive territorial claims in Asia.

The State Department said a planned first meeting between Duterte and his counterpart, Obama, on the sidelines of a regional summit in Laos on Tuesday was canceled because the tone of Duterte's remarks raised questions about the chances of productive talks.

"Words matter, and we want to see an atmosphere that is cordial and open to strong cooperation," State Department spokesman Mark Toner told a regular news briefing in Washington.

Clinton, who as secretary of state was an architect of Obama's policy of emphasizing the importance of the Asia-Pacific to US interests in the face of a rising China, said Obama was right to cancel the meeting.

"When the president of the Philippines insulted our president, it was appropriate in a very low-key way to say: sorry, no meeting," she told reporters on her campaign plane.

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U.S. Hillary From Page 1

Philippines. And I think it's important that we have a relationship, but there has to be a certain level of respect that is expected on both sides," Clinton said.

Dortch made the remark out Obama while explaining at he would not be lectured over extrajudicial killings in the war against drugs he has launched since taking over six months ago and which is killed about 2,400 people.

He has previously called the pope a "son of a whore" and the US ambassador a "gay son of a whore."

The Philippines voiced regret for Duterte's comments after Obama cancelled a formal bilateral meeting. The White House then said Obama might speak with Duterte informally.

'Feeling his way'

Duterte's volatile nature threatens to complicate Washington's ties with its closest ally in Southeast Asia as it tries to forge a united front in the region in response to China's extensive claims in the straits.

gic South China Sea.

The Philippines has been central in this effort due to an international court case it brought and won against Beijing.

In March, the United States and the Philippines agreed on five locations for US military facilities in the country under a new security deal. The deal grants Washington increased military presence in its former colony through rotation of ships and planes for humanitarian, and maritime security operations.

Asked about Duterte's comments, US Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said the defense relationship with the Philippines was a "strong" and "long-standing" one.

Speaking to reporters, Carer also described the Philippines new defense minister Delfin Lorenzana, as someone who was "very knowledgeable about all the things that we do together."

An official of the US State Department said "government to government" relations with

Mantle remained strong.

"The areas that we believe we have robust, strong cooperation with them, we are not going to just simply drop that aside."

The official noted that Duterte was new to national leadership having served as a city mayor.

"He is maybe feeling his way into the new job," the official said.

Former US officials said China would be pleased by the US-Philippines friction.

"Time will tell whether President Duterte steps back from this episode and realizes he needs to recalibrate his choice of words in engaging U.S. leaders," said Amy Searight, a former senior Pentagon official now at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank.

Evan Medeiros, Obama's former top Asia adviser and now a senior analyst at the Eurasia Group, saw the report as a "speed bump, not a road block" in US-Philippines ties.

"It's unfortunate but doesn't fundamentally derail the relationship," he said.

— Reuters

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September 2016

The Manila Times

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Explosives, bomb parts seized in Cotabato

BY MOH SAADUDDIN AND JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL

KIDAPAWAN CITY: Authorities have seized explosives and various components of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) during a raid on the hideout of a suspected bomb mercenary group operating in Central Mindanao, believed to be apprentices of fallen international terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan.

Senior Supt Emmanuel Peralta, CPPO provincial director, said the raiding team's target were Guamadel Sandigan and his brother Anwar Sandigan with arrest warrants for violation of Republic Act 10591 and RA 9516 for illegal possession of explosives.

The targets, however, escaped but the team arrested Jokrie Andong Buisan, who was found inside the house of Anwar holding a live Model 34 or M34 grenade.

Peralta said the raid was conducted in the presence of Jose Sagadan Sr., chairman of Barangay Dungguan, Milang town.

Seized from the houses of the suspects in the villages of Dungguan and Inas were one M-67 fragmentation grenade, bomb-making materials like blasting caps, detonating cord, mobile phone, batteries, two motorcycles with questionable registrations and a home-made Uzi sub-machinegun.

A manhunt is underway for the Sandigan brothers while law enforcers in Milang Municipal Police Station were preparing charges for the arrested suspect Buisan.

The raid was conducted by com-

bined forces of the Cotabato Police Provincial Office (CPPO) and the Philippine Army's 602nd Infantry Brigade of the 6th Infantry Division on late Tuesday afternoon.

Peralta did not provide other details on the suspects but sources from intelligence authorities said the brothers were among the militants personally trained by international bomber Marwan.

Marwan was killed on January 25, 2015 in an anti-terror operation in Mamasapano, Maguindanao that also resulted in the death of 44 members of the Special Action Force, 18 members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and five civilians.

It was not immediately known whether the fugitives were the same "person of interest" being eyed as behind the December 31, 2015 bombing in Milang.

The New Year's Eve bomb attack left two women dead and 33 others wounded. It was initially blamed on radical groups operating in Central Mindanao such as the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters and Al-Khobar.

Meanwhile, bomb experts

from the Army's Explosives and Ordnance Division (EOD), deployed in Sultan Kudarat town, Maguindanao a powerful improvised explosive device (IED) on Tuesday night.

Colonel Earl Baliao, commander of the 603rd Infantry Brigade, said the traffic between Cotabato City and North Cotabato was interrupted for about two hours while the EOD team deactivated the 66 mm mortar with a two-way hand-held radio as trigger device.

Baliao said a man named Merodim Alba found a suspicious package beside the highway in Barangay Rebuten and quickly informed the soldiers of the 37th Infantry Battalion in a nearby detachment.

Senior Supt Nickson Muisan, Maguindanao police director, said the IED was similar to that used in the September 2 Davao City night market bombing that claimed the lives of 14 civilians and wounded 67 others.

Similarly, earlier on Tuesday, Army Sgt Pizarro Batolon of the 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade was slightly injured when an IED set off along Barangay Lower Salbu, Datu Saudi Ampatuan.

The outlawed Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters was blamed for the blast that happened at about 9:30 a.m.

"So immediately our troops together with the police responded and cordoned off the area while waiting for the Explosive Ordnance Disposal upon arrival of the Army EOD team, the IED [improvised explosive device] was disrupted," Baliao said.

The IED, he added, consists

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5295



RECOVERED Bomb components were found in the houses of suspected bombers in Mlang, North Cotabato [main photo] where Jokrie Andong Buisan [inset] was arrested. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE COTABATO PROVINCIAL POLICE OFFICE

of three 60mm projectiles for Rocket-Propelled Grenade (RPG), an Icom transceiver radio, wires and AAA batteries. "[The rocket-propelled grenade, if you will notice, is not in the inventory of the Army. This is commonly used by the rebels]," Baliao said.

An investigation, he added, is being conducted to determine what groups planted the improvised bomb.

A number of local terrorist groups are operating in the South, notably the Abu Sayyaf Group, the Maute group that recently staged a daring jailbreak in Marawi City freeing 23 detainees and the Ansarul Kh-

lafah in the Philippines (AKP). Although there may be other purposes in the planting of the bomb along the highway of Barangay Rebukin as some families are also involved in the so-called rido or feuds between families or clans, the military, Baliao said, is sure that local terrorists are the culprits.

The military official explained that although the bomb used in the Davao blast and the ones recovered in Sultan Kudarat are both 60mm, they differ on the type. The former was being used in mortar and the latter for RPG.

When asked if the recovery of

the RPG is related to the Davao bombing, Baliao said the investigation is continuing and there are several angles that are being looked into.

Authorities earlier said the ASC most likely carried out the attack on President Rodrigo Duterte's home city in response to a military offensive launched against it last week.

Duterte, who was in Davao at the time of the attack but not near the market, told reporters before dawn on Saturday that it was an act of terrorism, as he announced extra powers for the military under a 'State of Lawlessness.'

08 September 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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10th ID relieves TF Davao commander

BY VASCO OCAMPO

DAVAO CITY — The 10th Infantry Division (10th ID) said it will implement the relief of Col. Henry Robinson Jr. from his current post as commander Task Force Davao (TF Davao) upon the request of Mayor Sara Z. Duterte.

He will be replaced by Col. Erwin Bernard Neri effective 06 September 2016, 10th ID spokesperson Capt. Rhyen Batchar said.

Neri, 52, is a member of Philippine Military Class 1988 and hails from Taguig City, Metro Manila.

He will lead the unit critically involved in ensuring the safety of Davao City. TF Davao is augmented with regular soldiers and Special CAFGU Active Auxiliaries (SCAAs) tasked to conduct security operations in Davao City.

The change of command ceremony is expected to take place today at the TF Davao Headquarters here.

The change in command will be presided by 10th ID Commander Maj. Gen. Rafael Valencia.

"We also look forward to the presence of Mayor Sara Duterte as our guest of honor and speaker," Batchar said.

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Police, military foil bomb attempt in Sultan Kudarat

POLICE and military on Tuesday foiled what could have been a deadly bombing in Maguindanao following the recovery of three bombs planted on the highway of Bgy. Rebukin, Sultan Kudarat.

Philippine Army's 603rd Infantry Brigade commander Col. Earl Baliao said troopers recovered three rocket-propelled grenades on the road in Bgy. Rebukin at 6 p.m. on Tuesday.

A concerned citizen reported to the Bravo Company of the Philippine Army's 37th Infantry Battalion about the presence of IEDs in the area.

Combined members of the police and military immediately proceeded to the area. It took them two hours to detonate the bombs.

"The IEDs consist of three projectiles of RPG, a rocket-propelled grenade, which is not part of the Army's inventory. The RPGs are usually being used by the rebels," Baliao said.

Baliao believed that passing military trucks and police mobile patrol cars were the targets of the planted bombs.

Zaida delos Reyes-Palanca

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<http://retiredanalyst.blogspot.com/>

Courage, valor of PEFTOK members remembered Wednesday

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 7)

The courage and valor of the members of the Philippine Expeditionary Force to Korea (PEFTOK) was remembered Wednesday as the nation joins in the commemoration of the 17th Korean War Veterans of the Philippines Memorial Day at the Korean War Memorial Pylon, Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Army officers and enlisted personnel headed by Brig. Gen. Robert M. Arevalo, Philippine Army (PA) chief-of-staff, joined the Filipino-Korean Veterans and Korean community in remembering the courage and heroism shown by the Filipino-Korean War Veterans who composed the PEFTOK.

His Excellency Kim, Jae Shin, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, was the guest of honor and speaker. Meanwhile, a flag-raising ceremony and the 42nd PEFTOK Veterans Association, Inc. Annual Convention were also conducted at the Korean Memorial Hall along Bayani Road with AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Ricardo R. Visaya as the guest of honor and speaker.

PEFTOK's mission was to defend the Republic of Korea against communist conquest.

The first PEFTOK, the 10th Battalion Combat Team (BCT) reached South Korea in September 1950.

They were deployed to South Korea in fulfillment of the Philippines pledge of assistance to the United Nation's effort to stem North Korea's Communist invasion of South Korea in 1950s.

Massively outnumbered, the 10th BCT with only 900 men withstood the night attack of an entire Chinese Army of 40,000 men during the Battle of Yuldong in North Korea on April 23, 1951.

Considering the strength of the Chinese, all UN forces retreated, except the Filipinos who engaged the Chinese People's Volunteer (CPV) army in a bitter close quarter fighting. UN Command ordered the Filipino forces to disengage but was ignored and instead they engaged the enemy up to the last man.

The 20th BCT relieved the 10th BCT, which returned to the Philippines covered in glory as "The Fighting Tenth" on Sept. 5, 1951.

The 20th BCT again seized Hill Eerie, a strategic observation post that proves invaluable to PEFTOK in the coming battles against CPV.

The 19th BCT replacing the 20th BCT emerged victorious after a fierce four-day battle to defend Hill 191 and Hill Eerie in June 21, 1952.

This gory "Battle for Combat Outpost No. 8" inflicted heavy losses on the Chinese.

Triumphant Filipinos plant the national flag on the summit of Hill 191 to proclaim their victory over the Chinese.

On March 26, 1953, the 14th BCT took over the PEFTOK colors in Korea. It was then followed by the last PEFTOK contingent, the 2nd BCT, that arrived in Korea on April 19, 1954 and returned to the Philippines on June 1955.

Indeed, the PEFTOK soldiers fought on and inspired the whole UN effort to stem the communist attack.

This great Filipino victory helped deny the communists the decisive victory that would have ended the Korean War with their complete conquest of the Republic of Korea and the destruction of the United Nation Command.

It would be an understatement to say that they prevented the UN front from collapsing.

The Philippines and its 20 other UN allies paid in blood and pain for defending the democracy in South Korea.

The war between democracy and communism took the lives of 112 Filipino soldiers, wounding 313 others and 16 missing.

This year's celebration of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Day, the PA as well as people of the Republic of Korea remembered the heroism of the PEFTOK soldiers and their invaluable service not just to the country, but to the attainment of world peace as well.

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<http://retiredanalyst.blogspot.com/>

Army camp placed on heightened alert

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 7)

CAMP MELCHOR DELA CRUZ, GAMU, Isabela — The 5th Infantry Division, Philippine Army based in this town has raised its security alert level in its area of operations particularly Region 2 and Cordillera region.

The heightened alert is in support to President Rodrigo Duterte's declaration of "State of Lawlessness" after the bombing in Davao City last Saturday.

Brigadier General Paul Atal, Commanding General of 5th Infantry Division, Philippine Army based in this town, said the focus of the heightened alert is to intensify information collection and conduct of measure in coordination with the Philippine National Police (PNP) to prevent violent incidents similar to what happened in Davao City.

Atal has called on the public to remain calm, saying the situation in Northern Luzon is far from that of Davao City and other parts of Mindanao.

He assured the public that the soldiers of 5ID are closely working with the PNP to ensure a peaceful and orderly community and to foil any move of lawless elements to sow terror.

<http://retiredanalyst.blogspot.com/>

2 more ASG bandits killed in Patikul clash, bandit death toll now at 32

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 7)

Two more Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) bandits were killed in the ongoing focused military operations in Patikul, Sulu Tuesday, bringing the number of slain brigands in the more than two weeks offensive to 32.

Joint Task Force Sulu spokesperson Col. Rodrigo Gregorio in a statement Wednesday said the latest clash between government forces and the ASG took place 2:35 p.m. Tuesday in the mountainous area of Patikul.

Gregorio said troops from the 35th and 21st Infantry Battalions were able to engage an estimated 30 ASG bandits being pursued by the 45th Infantry Battalion, killing two and wounding many more in the ensuing 30 minute-firefight.

Civilians claimed that the two downed bandits were immediately buried by their companions.

The fleeing ASGs were reportedly headed by Jamiri Jaong Jawhari and Basaran Arok.

Gregorio said no government losses were reported.

"There will be no let up in the effort to rescue the remaining hostages. Our priority is the safe rescue of the victims and protection of local communities in Sulu against terrorists and criminal elements," Joint Task Force Sulu commander Brig. Gen. Arnel Dela Vega said.

"Local folks are gradually helping in protecting their own communities against the ASG scourge and showing defiance against the bandits," he added.

Dela Vega stressed that they are confident that more and more people in Sulu, including local government unit officials, community and religious leaders will cooperate in giving timely and accurate information to stop the un-Islamic and barbaric acts of ASG.

It may be recalled that the latest victim beheaded by the ASG, Patrick Almodovar is a local Muslim resident whose mother is a Tausug.

"We call on the Abu Sayyaf to stop these kidnappings and killings which are all violations of the Koran and against Islam as pointed out by Islamic scholars worldwide" Brig. Dela Vega concluded.

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

<http://retiredanalyst.blogspot.com/>

Another battalion sent off to Sulu

From the Mindanao Times (Sep 7)

THE 10TH Infantry Division yesterday already ordered some personnel movement after sending off more soldiers under the 68th Infantry Battalion to help crush the Abu Sayyaf Group in Sulu.

Maj. Gen. Rafael Valencia, the division commander, told reporters in an interview at Tactical Operations Group (TOG-XI) that since there are already three battalions deployed to the Western Mindanao Command, their manpower is stretched thin.

The 68th IB operates in Talaingod, Davao del Norte and parts of San Fernando, Bukidnon.

The 69th Infantry Battalion and 2nd Scout Ranger Battalion were already deployed earlier.

"I have not heard whether the two battalions earlier already engaged (the ASG), but they are now in Sulu," he said.

The 10th Infantry Division has 12 battalions under its command.

Meanwhile, he said that security in the region won't be hampered because of diminished personnel.

"We have unilateral ceasefire with the CPP-NPA-NDF so the number of military operations has already reduced, so we have enough forces to cover all areas of responsibility of the division," he said.

"Our operations for now are on counter-terrorism like checkpoints, patrols in urban centers and intelligence operation," he added.

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

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SOLDIERS of the Philippine Army's 56th infantry battalion in Baler, Aurora under Lt. Col. Louie Villanueva undergo drug testing to assure a drug free camp. (Ariel P. Avendaño)

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DRUG TEST FOR TROOPS – Enlisted men from the Philippine Army's 56th Infantry Battalion submit urine samples and fill out forms during a voluntary drug test activity in Baler, Aurora yesterday. (Ariel P. Avendaño)

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MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

DND: Photos of Chinese ships at Scarborough

The Department of National Defense (DND) has released photos of the Chinese ships

seen at the Scarborough Shoal over the weekend

The DND said the photos were taken by a Philippine Air Force (PAF) plane which conducted an overnight flight over the area last Saturday

The DND said that based on what they saw on the photos, there were four coast guard ships, one of which appeared standing guard the entrance of the shoal, and six other ships, colored blue, in varying configurations

"Four of the ships look like barges and two look like troop ships," Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, said

Lorenzana had earlier expressed concern over the presence of the Chinese ships in the area

"No dredging work has been seen (to reclaim the area). However, the presence of so many ships, other than the coast guard in the area, is cause for grave concern," the DND chief stressed.

Lorenzana said the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has already called the attention of the Chinese ambassador to the Philippines for an explanation

Lorenzana said they are still not sure if the presence of barges is an indication that China is out to conduct reclamation in the area.

"We don't know yet if those barges are precursors of future dredging operations but let us not forget that early this year, they actually tried to bring dredging barges but were dissuaded by the United States," Lorenzana said.

"If they try to construct anything in Scarborough, it will have far reaching adverse effect on the security situation in the West Philippine Sea," he added.

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The Manila Times

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AFP: No abuses during 'state of emergency'

BY FERNAN MARASIGAN

THE military on Wednesday allayed fears of abuses during implementation of the "State of National Emergency on Account of Lawless Violence" even as soldiers were instructed to undergo Troops Information and Education (TIE) to ensure citizen's entitlements under the Bill of Rights of the Constitution.

"We would like to ensure that as we respond to the [Commander-in-Chief's] call for the AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] to help suppress lawless violence in Mindanao and prevent its spread to other areas of the country, the execution of our tasks will always be proper and with due regard to every citizen's entitlements under the Bill of Rights," said the AFP

Chief of Staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya.

He issued the statement after he directed the conduct of the TIE among soldiers and commanders in the field particularly those assigned to the Western Mindanao Command, Eastern Mindanao Command and the Joint Task Force National Capital Region "through the most expedient means."

Lectures under the Troops Information and Education, according to Visaya, will cover what the proclamation of the state of national emergency entails and how this translates to the AFP.

He said the lectures will also lay down guidelines on how to perform specific tasks related to the proclamation.

These tasks include, but are not limited to, conduct of checkpoints, foot or mobile patrols and enforcement of curfews whenever and wherever necessary in tandem with the Philippine National Police (PNP).

"By this conduct of the TIE, we would like to ensure proper information and knowledge management among our officers and men on the ground," Visaya pointed out.

At the same time, the AFP chief asked for the public's cooperation

in the government's effort to suppress lawless violence and prevent the spread of similar violent incidents to other parts of the country.

Before leaving for Laos for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Proclamation 55 declaring a "State of National Emergency on Account of Lawless Violence in Mindanao."

The proclamation noted that "in recent months there has been a spate of violent and lawless acts across many parts of Mindanao, including abductions, hostage-takings and murders of innocent civilians, bombings of power transmission facilities, robberies and extortion attacks on military outposts, assassinations of media people and mass jailbreaks."

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Malaya
The National Newspaper

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AFP orders info drive on Duterte declaration

ARMED Forces Chief Gen. Ricardo B. Visaya has ordered the conduct of Troops Information and Education for soldiers involved in the enforcement of Proclamation Order No. 55 that placed the entire country under "State of National Emergency on Account of Lawless Violence."

AFP public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said the information drive will be focused in Mindanao and Metro Manila which were placed on heightened alert in the aftermath of last Friday's Davao City bombing that left 14 people dead and 67 others wounded.

"The lectures will cover what the proclamation entails and how this translates to the AFP. The TIE will also lay down the guidelines on how to perform specific tasks related to the Proclamation," said Arevalo.

"These tasks include, but not limited to, the conduct of checkpoints, foot or mobile patrols, enforcement of curfews whenever and wherever necessary in tandem with the PNP," said Arevalo.

He said the TIE will refresh the minds of the soldiers about the dos and don'ts when doing their tasks, under the proclamation - which tapped the military to assist the PNP in suppressing all forms of violence.

Arevalo said the TIE will be conducted by personnel from the AFP's general headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo. -- *Victor Reyes*

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Gov't allays fears on rights abuse

BY CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Malacañang assured the nation yesterday that the government would respect people's rights during the indefinite implementation of a state of emergency to prevent lawless violence throughout the country.

Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea allayed fears of possible

abuse of authority by the uniformed services in light of the issuance of guidelines for the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

"The purpose of this is to ensure respect for the protection of the fundamental rights - of

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civil and political rights of our citizens when we issued that circular," he said.

The Palace has issued Memorandum Order No. 5 providing guidelines for the AFP and the PNP in the implementation of measures to suppress and prevent lawless violence.

He said in a radio interview that the guidelines seek to improve coordination among the Department of National Defense (DND), PNP and Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) in the immediate deployment of additional forces on the ground.

Medialdea has been designated as head of the caretaker committee while the President is on working visits in Laos and Indonesia.

Increased police visibility

The public should be prepared to see increased presence of police and soldiers in major streets and thoroughfares as well as in crowded places, including malls and train stations.

Medialdea reiterated that Presidential Proclamation No. 55, which declared the state of national emergency on account of lawless violence, is open-ended.

Unlike martial law, he said the President does not need to report to Congress about his move.

"It's in our Constitution - martial law for 60 days and lawless violence, no dates indicated. Maybe because this is a lesser measure as there are no civil rights suppressed," he said.

"Time judgment of the President if he thinks it has normalized... the people would return to their various units if needed," Medialdea said.

Presidential communica-

From Page 1

tions assistant secretary for legal affairs Ana Marie Banaag stressed that the memorandum order actually puts limits to what the AFP and the PNP may do under the state of emergency.

Banaag read the copy of Memorandum Order No. 3 guidelines of the AFP and the PNP in the implementation of the state of emergency.

"So, as you can see we put a premium on civil rights and we'd like to emphasize that the proclamation Proclamation 55 is not meant to undermine the Bill of Rights," Banaag said in a press briefing at Malacañang.

Banaag allayed fears of possible abuse of authority from the uniformed services in the light of the issuance of the guidelines.

Before flying to Vientiane on Monday, Duterte signed Proclamation No. 55 placing the entire country under a state of national emergency on account of lawless violence triggered by the Davao City bombing that killed 15 people last Friday.

Section 1 of the guidelines stated: "The Department of National Defense and the Department of the Interior and Local Government shall coordinate the immediate deployment of additional forces of the AFP and PNP to suppress lawless violence and acts of terror in Mindanao and prevent such violence from spreading and escalating in the country."

"The DND and the DILG shall deploy AFP and PNP personnel on major streets and thoroughfares, as well as near crowded places such as malls and train stations, in order to increase troop and military visibility for deterrence and quick-response purposes, without causing undue alarm to the general public," the MO read.

Banaag said the MO was "issued in order to delineate what the AFP and PNP can do. We put a premium on civil rights."

Reading from the MO, Banaag said: "No civil and political rights are suspended during the existence of a state of lawless violence."

To ensure the effective implementation of the memorandum, local government units are enjoined to give their all-out support and utmost cooperation.

AFP training

The AFP has ordered the training of soldiers who will be deployed to help the police enforce the state of emergency to prevent human rights violations.

Col Edgard Arevalo, AFP spokesman, said as directed by AFP chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya the soldiers will have to undertake the mandatory Troop Information and Education (TIE) training prior to deployment.

The training includes lectures on human rights and guidelines for soldiers in Western Mindanao, Eastern Mindanao and National Capital Region.

"The lectures will cover what the proclamation entails and how this translates to the AFP," Arevalo said.

He added that the TIE would also lay down guidelines on how the soldiers will perform their specific tasks related to Proclamation 55.

The soldiers' tasks, he said, include but are not limited to conduct of checkpoints, foot or mobile patrols, enforcement of curfews whenever and where necessary in tandem with the PNP.

In subjecting soldiers to TIE, Arevalo said they would be equipped with proper information and knowledge management when they're on the ground. - With Jose Rodel Clapano, Jaime Laude

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OSG DEFENDS FM LIBINGAN BURIAL

By Hector Lawas

SOLICITOR General Jose Calida yesterday said President Rodrigo Duterte's decision to allow the remains of former president Ferdinand Marcos to be buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City could not be reviewed by the Courts as it is a presidential prerogative allowed by law and the Constitution.

Calida made the argument during Wednesday's resumption of the oral argument at the Supreme Court on the consolidated petitions filed by various groups opposed to the plan to bury Marcos at the Libingan.

Calida who is arguing for the respondents in the petition filed by Defense Secretary Delm Lorenzana and officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines explained that the president derives his authority to allow the remains of the deceased presidents at the Libingan from three sources.

"These are the administrative code which gives him the authority to reserve a public domain for public use, the 1987 Constitution which gives him the control over the Executive department, bureaus, and other offices, specifically in this case, the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office, and the residual powers of the Presidency," Calida told the magistrates.

He further argued that the decision of Duterte like the decision of previous presidents is beyond judicial review as it involves the intrusion into the wisdom behind the decision to allow the burial of Marcos at the Libingan. During her term, then President Corazon Aquino

barred the return of the Marcoses into the country which they fled in 1986.

After Aquino, then President Fidel Ramos, allowed the return of Marcos' body to the Philippines with Ramos' successor, Joseph Estrada, expressing his intention of allowing Marcos' burial at the Libingan.

Calida said that during the term of former President Benigno Aquino, he ignored House Resolution 1135 urging him to allow Marcos' burial at the Libingan.

The resolution of the Lower House stated that Marcos' burial at the Libingan "will be a magnanimous act of reconciliation which will strengthen the bonds of solidarity among Filipino people" adding that the Libingan is the "most fitting burial for a former leader, statesman and former President and Commander in Chief."

"The former Presidents have exercised the same powers as President Duterte when they decided on the weight of Marcos' remains during their respective terms. If the prerogatives of these former Presidents were respected by this Honorable Court, so must it be with President Duterte," Calida explained.

And as a political decision, he stressed the President's decision is non-justiciable.

The Solicitor General also said that contrary to the petitioners, Duterte did not commit grave abuse of discretion in his decision since it has basis in the Administrative Code and the regulations of the AFP on burying former presidents, statesmen and soldiers at the Libingan.

September 2018

No September burial at Libingan for Marcos - SC

The Supreme Court yesterday extended until Oct. 18 its order temporarily stopping the burial of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos at the Libingan ng mga Bayan in Taguig City that was supposedly set on Sept. 18.

SC spokesman Theodore Fe announced at the conclusion of the two-session oral arguments on petitions against the Marcos burial by martial law victims that the status quo ante order, which was supposed to expire on Monday, was extended to allow the justices to resolve the case on merits.

The high tribunal initially issued the order last Aug. 23, effective for 20 days, to Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Ricardo Vissaya as the military had started preparations for the burial.

In oral arguments yesterday, Solicitor General Jose

Caldia defended before the high court President Duterte's decision to allow Marcos' burial at the heroes' cemetery, saying the military would not necessarily rewrite the nation's history and make Marcos a hero.

Caldia asked the SC to dismiss the petitions arguing that Marcos being a former president and duly recognized soldier and war veteran, should be entitled to interment at the heroes' cemetery.

He said the Libingan was not exclusive for heroes as the name suggested because the national pantheon for presidents, national heroes and patriots under Republic Act 289 or the law providing for its construction did not so state.

Caldia explained the decision of Duterte was not meant to pay tribute to Marcos as a hero but rather "accord him simple mortuary rites befit-

ting a former president, commander-in-chief and soldier through the military instead of state honors."

He stressed it was a campaign promise of the President, who won the elections with over 16 million votes.

Caldia also invoked the President's authority under the Constitution and Revised Administrative Code to decide on political questions that would not involve any justiciable issue for the high court to resolve.

He said the controversy was "beyond ambit of judicial review" and warned that granting the petitions would be tantamount to an "intrusion upon executive power."

"President Duterte decides to begin the long overdue healing of our nation and to exorcise the ghosts of enmity and bitterness that prevent us from moving forward. Unfortunately, the wisdom and propriety of President Duterte's well-meaning desire to put a closure in this divisive issue has pinched the nerves of some who cannot forget their travails during the martial law era," he lamented.

Caldia pointed out that the late president Corason Aquino and her successor Fidel Ramos used such residual power on this controversy during their respective terms.

He said Ramos overturned the decision of Aquino and allowed Marcos' remains to return to the country from

By EDU PUNAY

Hawaii where he died in 1988.

The Solicitor General also rebutted the point made by Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio in the first session of oral arguments last week that Marcos lost his privilege to be buried at the Libingan when he was "dishonorably discharged" and ousted by the historic EDSA people power revolution in 1986.

"Marcos was never dishonorably discharged from military service nor convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude. Dishonorable discharge (of a military officer) can only happen through court-martial," Caldia stressed.

Caldia likewise told the SC that the government recognized Marcos both as a soldier and a war veteran, citing the benefits accorded to his widow.

He revealed that former first lady Imelda Marcos had been receiving P5,000 in monthly pension from the Philippine Veterans' Office since April 1994 for being a surviving wife of a war veteran. She is also receiving P20,000 pension from the Armed Forces as widow of a Medal of Valor awardee.

But National Historical Commission head Serena Dionkne also informed the court that the government has received a letter from the United States showing that Marcos did not receive such award.

In the same session, Com-

mission on Human Rights chairman Chito Gaseon argued that the decision to bury Marcos at the heroes' cemetery reopened wounds from the martial law era and "retraumatized" victims of human rights violations during the dictator's rule.

Gaseon argued that reparations of martial law victims should not only involve monetary compensation but also "symbolic" ones which should include a policy banning a hero's burial for Marcos.

But Calida argued that the millions of votes garnered by Marcos' son and former senator Ferdinand Jr in the vice presidential polls last May could prove that there was no more trauma among the Filipino people from the martial law abuses.

Calida said what was traumatizing was when petitioners recounted their ordeals during the martial law era via individual testimonials during the oral arguments last week, which he said were not relevant to the legal issues at hand.

"I was surprised that during the last hearing, the victims were made to recall the horrors they experienced. There is a place for that but not here in the Supreme Court. I am human, your honor. I can feel their pain. But making them recount their horrible experiences is a form of re-traumatizing them," he added.

Calida further said that the interment would have no effect

on claims of human rights victims during martial law as well as pending cases against the Marcoses before the Sandiganbayan as confirmed in previous session by the Human Rights Victims' Claims Board and Office of the Ombudsman.

The SC concluded the oral arguments at 5 p.m. and ordered parties to file their respective memoranda within 10 days before resolving the case.

The petitioners said allowing the burial of Marcos at the heroes' cemetery would violate RA 289 because he was no hero and RA 10368 or the Human Rights Victims Reparation and Recognition Act.

Earlier, parties opposing and favoring the burial of Marcos at the heroes' cemetery expressed hopes the SC would decide on the petitions before the planned interment on Sept. 18.

Renato Reyes Jr., secretary general of leftist group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), reiterated they would like the SC to favor the petitions against Marcos' burial at the heroes' cemetery because "not a single cent from government funds should be spent for" someone "proven to have stolen from the funds for the people."

Meanwhile, the Movement for Filipino Ideology insisted that Marcos deserved to be buried at the Libingan as the Filipino people favored it, as seen in their vote for Duterte.

—With Chio Ong

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AFP, PNP tell people to be wary of false info in text messages

MANILA BULLETIN

BUTUJAN CITY - Officials of the regional command group of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP) here called on rumormongers not to spread false information that will only create panic among the citizenry.

The military and police issued the appeal amid reports that false information about bombings have been spreading through text messages ever since Friday night's deadly bombing at a night market in Davao City.

"We appeal to them (rumormongers) not to spread speculations because this

will also create panic, and unverified information may make things worse," said a police officer who requested anonymity as he was not authorized to issue any statement to media.

Instead, the people should be more vigilant and verify such text messages with the police before passing these on to their contacts.

"Please inform us so we can take appropriate actions and prevent it," another army officer said, in a separate interview with Manila Bulletin yesterday.

Text messages earlier circulated, claiming that the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was now roaming and planning to detonate bombs at malls and some

public places.

The ASG had claimed responsibility for the Davao attack, and had said its action was in retaliation to the ongoing military offensive in Sulu.

The AFP and PNP units in the field in northeastern and northern Mindanao regions have downplayed claims made by the bandit group that the Davao attack had derailed the government's mission to eliminate the ASG.

"Your AFP and PNP remains in focus in its respective missions and mandates, and we will not be distracted (by such an attack)," the military official said.

All field units of the Fourth Intan-

try (Diamond) remained focused on "Bayanihan," an approach that aims assist village communities on peace and development program, especially those in highland and far-flung barangays.

Earlier, the Northeastern Mindanao Police Regional Office 13 (PRO 13) appealed to residents to immediately report to the nearest police station any suspicious individual or any unusual movement in their villages.

"We appeal to our residents to immediately report to us so that our field units will immediately respond," PRO 13 spokesperson Chief Inspector Charity S. Galvez also said, in a separate interview.

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US to give Phl 2 military planes

The United States is giving the Philippines two used military aircraft, the coast guard said yesterday to help Manila expand sea patrols in the face of territorial disputes with China.

The two Sherpa 30-seater aircraft will be delivered in December, Philippine Coast Guard spokesman Commander Armand Balilo told AFP.

"It will help us in the movements of the Philippine Coast Guard like patrol missions," Balilo added.

The announcement came days after President Duterte on Monday

sparked a major diplomatic row with Manila's longtime treaty ally the United States by branding US President Barack Obama a "son of a whore."

Duterte said Tuesday he regretted the tirade, sparked by the US leader, which had raised the issue of extrajudicial killings under Duterte's war on crime.

Manila, which has one of Asia's weakest militaries, has been trying to improve defenses with its former colonial ruler Washington and other allies.

Balilo said the Sherpas would help the coast guard augment its meager air patrol capability, now comprised of two old Briten-Norman Islanders.

The Philippines has expressed concern about Beijing's massive island-building over reefs, some of them claimed by Manila, in the

South China Sea.

Duterte last week said China had sent barges to the contested Scarborough (Panatag) Shoal and had appeared to begin construction there for the first time.

On Wednesday the Philippines released photos to back its claims.

- AFP

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VIENTIANE - The Philippines and China stressed yesterday the need to craft a framework for a code of conduct for claimants in the South China Sea and to settle territorial disputes peacefully.

The overlapping maritime claims in the region were discussed during the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-China meeting held here and attended by heads of state and government including President Duterte.

The Philippines released photographs of 10 Chinese ships around Panatag Shoal ahead of the meeting but presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said the issue was not discussed.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said it was possible that China would push through with its reclamation plan in the area, which the arbitral tribunal declared in July as a common fishing ground.

"China was vigorously asking to begin with the code of conduct as well as Singapore, and our President also expressed his approval of having this framework of code of conduct initiated," Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Martin Andanar said in a press briefing.

By ALEXIS ROMERO

There is an existing Disposition on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea between ASEAN and China, but this is not legally binding, something the Philippines has been pushing.

The Philippines has won a case it filed against China before the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague to clarify its maritime entitlements in the South China Sea and West Philippine Sea.

"The trend is to resolve differences, there is now positive direction in our relations, and the (code of) conduct in the South China Sea should happen next year after the framework of the code of conduct has been decided by the ASEAN region," Andanar said.

Andanar said Duterte also called on his fellow leaders to "be on the side of peace."

"International disputes should inspire us to work together with adherence to the rule of law and international governing bodies, put words into actions and be on the side of peace," he quoted Duterte as saying during the meeting.

Andanar said Chinese Premier Li Keqiang was "stoically listening" when Duterte delivered the

statement.

Asked why the Philippines is taking this position, Andanar said he would not be allowed to speak for Abella, but it is simply to announce that we are aware of the government's position in the area and that the presence of the ships, which were apparently not there for fishing, was being clarified with the Chinese government.

Abella said there were ongoing talks, including through the backchannel, to clarify the presence of the ships.

"At this stage, it is an ongoing conversation so it would be best to leave it there," Abella said, adding "The conversation proceeds towards a certain goal and that is eventually to be able to settle matters, it is an ongoing process, especially for former president Fidel Ramos, whom the President tapped to hold backchannel talks with Chinese representatives."

Asked how concerned the Philippines was about the ships and their movements, Abella said, "Enough to announce it."

As regards the July 12 ruling of the arbitral tribunal, Andanar said there were also no categorical statements made for China to comply with the ruling.

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Asked why the Philippines insisted that the Chinese fishing boats were in the waters of the Philippines, Abella said it was simply to affirm that we are aware of the movement in the area, and that the presence of the ships, which were apparently not there for fishing, was being clarified with the Chinese government. Abella said there were ongoing talks, including through the back-channel, to clarify the presence of the ships.

"At this stage, it is an ongoing conversation so it would be best to leave it there," Abella said adding "The conversation proceeds toward a certain goal and that is eventually to be able to settle matters, it is an ongoing process," especially for former president Fidel Ramos, whom the President tapped to hold backchannel talks with Chinese representatives.

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China accused of secret island building

VIENTIANE – Beijing's "illegal" island building in the South China Sea moved to center stage at an Asian summit yesterday after the Philippines produced evidence it said showed fresh construction activity at a flashpoint shoal.

An artificial island on Panatag or Scarborough Shoal could be a game changer in China's quest to control the sea and raises the risk of armed confrontation with the US, according to security analysts.

Beijing insisted it had not started building at the shoal – a move that could lead to a military outpost just 230 kilometers from the

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main Philippine island, where US forces are stationed.

But the Philippines released images it said showed Chinese ships in the area that were capable of dredging sand and other activities required to build an artificial island.

"We have reason to believe that their presence is a precursor to building activities on the shoal," Defense department spokesman Arsenio Andolong told AFP.

"We are continuing our surveillance and monitoring of their presence and activities, which are disturbing."

sav, Andolong said, referring to President Duterte.

A week ago, China's ambassador denied any construction plan on Scarborough Shoal while maintaining its sovereign rites to over 90 percent of the South China Sea under its uncharted nine-dash-line claim.

The denial is now causing major concerns within the defense and military establishments after they monitored 10 Chinese vessels converging around the Philippine traditional fishing ground.

Located 125 nautical miles off Zamboanga, Panatag Shoal is under the jurisdiction and control of Beijing, following a tense maritime stand-off in 2012 with the Philippine Navy.

"We are gravely concerned about this development given that the shoal is well within our EEZ (exclusive economic zone). The photos that were taken last Sept. 3 make it even more disturbing," Andolong said, referring to Chinese ships monitored in the area.

He said the matter is now being handled by the Department of Foreign Affairs while the defense and military establishments would focus on territorial and maritime surveillance operations.

A senior security official said the increasing number of Chinese ships on Panatag Shoal is a clear indication that Beijing is again resorting to subterfuge or deception to achieve its goal.

"They are employing the same deception when they lied to us when they initially occupied Panganiban Reef in 1995 during the time of former president Fidel Ramos," the official, who asked not be named, said.

Beijing claimed then that it was merely building a fishermen's refuge on Panganiban Reef.

Three years later, the former obscure maritime features in the disputed Spratlys archipelago have metamorphosed from bamboo stilts into highly fortified naval and air installations. — Reuters, Pia Lee Brago, Jaime Laude

China denies accusation

China's Foreign Ministry said there had been no change to the situation around Scarborough Shoal after the Philippines said it was seeking clarification from Beijing about an increase in ships near the disputed South China Sea shoal.

"I can tell you that there has not been any change to the Huangyan Island situation. China has also not taken new actions," ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a daily news briefing in Beijing, using China's name for the shoal.

"Given this situation, some people are hyping the situation by spreading that kind of information. I think it is worth everyone being vigilant of this kind of intent," she said.

The Department of National Defense (DND) described the increasing presence of Chinese vessels on Panatag Shoal off Zamboanga as a precursor to Beijing's possible building of structures over the area.

Andolong said the military is not taking any actions except to continuously enforce its mandated tasks of conducting sustained territorial monitoring and surveillance operations over the area.

"As of the moment, we are still following our mandate, which are monitoring and surveillance, and our future actions will depend on what the commander-in-chief will

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Davao blast blamed on ISIS-linked Maute

Ex-intel chief: Narco-terrorists out to create Asian base

By Francisco Tuyay
and Funny Pearl A.
Gajunera

THE bomb attack in Davao City that killed 15 people and wounded 70 others was pulled off by a local terrorist group with links to the Islamic State, a former top cop said Wednesday.

Former police intelligence director Rodolfo Mendoza said the Daulat-ul Islamiya or the Islamic State of Lanao belonging to the Maute Group engineered the Davao blast to gain international prominence and to establish itself as an Asian terror cell.

"It was the handiwork of the IS purposely to fulfill and maintain their status as a provincial state in Asia," Mendoza said, referring to the Davao City bombing.

Abu Sayyaf spokesman Abu-muhammad Askhali said the bandit group was responsible for the Davao City attack, but Mendoza dismissed the claim, saying the Abu Sayyaf was never affiliated with the Islamic State.

"Askhali mistakely admitted to a media entity that it was the Daulat-ul that is responsible for the bomb attack," he said.

"Based on our information, the Maute group led by Abdullah was the primary perpetrators of the Davao City bombing," Mendoza said.

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VENGEANCE MINE. President Rodrigo Duterte has vowed to personally deal with a group of Islamist militants by publicly—his term—eating them alive. Duterte described in detail how he would carry out his revenge against the group, based on remote jungles in the country's far south.

Davao...

From A1

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The Maute group operates mainly in Lanao, and was responsible in a weeklong standoff with security forces in Bang town that left hundreds of its members killed.

Aside from being an IS unit, the Maute group also has links to a drug syndicate with tie-ups to Al-Qaeda terrorist group responsible for bomb attacks in Mindanao.

The Davao blast is also connected to narco-terrorism, Mendoza said.

Earlier, PNP Chief Ronald dela Rosa believed that the Davao attack was connected to narco-terrorism but did not offer any details.

The Datul-ul-Haqq links to the narco-terrorists in Zamboanga City, which is composed of elements of the Al-Qaeda terrorist group, Mendoza said.

Some of the members of the Al-Qaeda group connected to the Datul-ul-Haqq former lieutenants of then Moro Islamic Liberation (MILF) chieftain Hashim Salamat. However, they bolted from the organization following the leadership of Al-Hajj Murad Ibrahim and joined the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter (BIFF), which has links to the Maute group.

In Vientiane, the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations condemned the deadly explosion that rocked Davao City last week.

"We expressed our deepest concerns over the recent terrorist attacks in the region and beyond. In this regard, we extended our heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims of the attacks," the chairman's statement read.

"We strongly condemned extremism and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen coordination and cooperation in countering terrorism through, among others, the implementation of the Asean Convention on Counter Terrorism and the Asean Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter Terrorism, and addressing the root causes of and conditions conducive for terrorism including violent extremism, including through the promotion of the Global Movement of Moderates."

In Davao City, the special investigation task group released a composite sketch of the prime suspect of the Sept. 2 bombing.

In a case conference Wednesday afternoon, Police Regional Office 11 director, Chief Supt. Manuel Gaerlan said that the composite and computerized sketch of the suspect was based on the description of eight witnesses.

He said the suspect had a 30-minute massage before he left the bag containing the bomb.

Gaerlan described the suspect as fair to dark complexion, small built, about less 30 years old and 5'7 to 5'8 tall.

"Our witnesses can positively identify the suspect even if he is wearing a mask. As a blog now we are publishing the sketch to gather more informants maybe he eat first before he went for a massage," he said.

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County Chief for Operation Chief Supt. Benjamin Magalong said that they also have the composite sketch of the three other persons of interest. These, however, were not shown to the public.

Magalong said they found two kinds of mortar in the blast site at the night market.

PNP spokesperson Chief Inspector Benjamin Magalong said that 60mm and 81mm mortar were linked to the explosion.

The Philippine National Police said Wednesday it will use thousands of private security guards scattered nationwide as frontlines in the campaign against terrorism.

This is in line with the PNP's implementation of target-baiting measures in malls and other high-traffic civilian areas, with the help of private security agencies.

Brig. Gen. Arael dela Vega, commander of the Joint Task Force Sulu, said Wednesday the government campaign to eliminate the Abu Sayyaf needs the full support of the local communities where the terrorists hide.

"Local folks are gradually helping in protecting their own communities against the ASG's scourge and showing defiance against the bandits," Dela Vega said.

"We are confident that more people in Sulu including LGU officials, community and religious leaders will cooperate in giving timely and accurate information to stop the un-Islamic and barbaric acts of ASG," he added.

Cel. Rodrigo Gregorio, spokesman of the Joint Task Force Sulu, said two more terrorists were killed in Tuesday's encounter with government forces in the mountains of Patikul town.

He said the firefight erupted at around 2:35 p.m. after combined troops of the 35th and 21st Infantry Battalions bumped the group of two known ASG sub-leaders identified as Jamu Jaong Jawhar and Basaron Anok.

"Our troops encountered more or less 30 terrorists and two of them slain. This brings to 32 the total number of terrorists killed in series of firefights after the intensified rescue and focused military operation was ordered by President Rodrigo Duterte," Gregorio said.

Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said Wednesday his department is ready to extend the necessary livelihood assistance to victims of the explosion in Davao City last Sept. 2.

During the budget hearing of the Department of Labor and Employment conducted by the House committee on appropriations, Bello said the Labor Department will determine the employment opportunities to be given them based on their capabilities. With John Paolo Bencito, Florante S. Solmerin and Maricel V. Cruz

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**NO THREAT
UNHEEDED**
Combined security forces tightened security at a provincial bus terminal in Cubao, Quezon City amid increased bomb threats against several local government units in Metro Manila. **Manny Palmero**

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AFP to hold info drive on national emergency guidelines

Frances Mangosing

Armed Forces chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya ordered lectures for the soldiers following the proclamation of state of national emergency on account of lawless violence

The conduct of Troops Information and Education (TIE) is intended to serve as guidelines on how to perform specific tasks related to the proclamation, AFP Public Affairs Office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said in a statement on Wednesday.

The tasks include the conduct of checkpoints, foot or mobile patrols, enforcement of curfews, whenever and wherever necessary in tandem with the Philippine National Police.

President Rodrigo Duterte signed the proclamation declaring a state of national emergency on account of lawless violence in the country before he left for Laos on Monday.

The declaration was based on recent terror activities such as kidnappings, beheadings, and the Davao City bombing that killed 14 people and injured 67 others.

The information drive will be conducted in Western Mindanao Command, Eastern Mindanao Command, and the National Capital Region.

"We would like to ensure that as we respond to the Commander-in-Chief's call for the AFP to help suppress lawless violence in Mindanao and prevent its spread in other areas of the country, the execution of our tasks will always be proper and with due regard to every citizen's entitlements under the Bill of Rights," Arevalo said. **JE**

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DND in the market for PHP7.5M worth of 5.56mm finished cases

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 7)

The Department of National Defense-Government Arsenal is set to acquire PHP7,575,770 worth of 5.56mm finished cases.

The latter is used by the M-16 automatic rifle and R-4 carbines in Armed Forces of the Philippines service.

Winning bidders are required to deliver the items within 180 calendar days.

Pre-bid conference is slated for Sept. 15, 11 a.m. at the Government Arsenal Metro Manila Liaison Office, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

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Military personnel tasked to implement measures to suppress, prevent lawless violence to be given 'TIE'

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 7)

To prevent possible human rights violation charges, military personnel tasked to implement measures to suppress and prevent lawless violence, will be provided with "Troop Information and Education" (TIE).

"AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya directed the conduct of TIE to our soldiers in the field, particularly those in the Western Mindanao Command, Eastern Mindanao Command and National Capital Region through the most expedient means," Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said in statement Wednesday.

This follows the signing by President Rodrigo Duterte of Proclamation Number 55 Declaring a State of National Emergency on Account of Lawless Violence over the weekend.

"The lectures will cover what the proclamation entails and how this translates to the AFP," Arevalo said.

The military official said the TIE would also lay down the guidelines on how to perform specific tasks related to the proclamation.

Arevalo said these tasks included, but not limited to, the conduct of checkpoints, foot or mobile patrols, enforcement of curfews whenever and wherever necessary in tandem with the Philippine National Police (PNP).

And by the conduct of TIE, the AFP would like to ensure proper information and knowledge management to its officers and men on the ground, he said.

"We would like to ensure that as we respond to the Commander-in-Chief's call for the AFP to help suppress lawless violence in Mindanao and prevent its spread in other areas of the country, the execution of our tasks will always be proper and with due regard to every citizen's entitlements under the Bill of Rights," Arevalo pointed out.

"We would like to enlist the willing cooperation of our Kababayans in this endeavor to suppress lawless violence and prevent the spread of similar violent incidents in other parts of the country," he said.

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<http://bomboradyo.com/>

AFP sa ASG: 'Stop the kidnappings & killings'

By Bombo Mars deSan

ZAMBOANGA CITY - Sa kasagsagan ng patuloy na intense military operation ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) laban sa Abu Sayyaf group (ASG) sa Sulu, nananawagan pa rin ang militar sa teroristang grupo na itigil na ang mga hindi makataong gawain.

Direktang umapela si Brigadier General Arnel dela Vega, ang commander of Joint Task Force Sulu, sa bandidong ASG na itigil na nila ang serye ng kidnapping at hindi makataong pagpatay lalo na sa mga inosenteng sibilyan.

Ibinase ng opisyal ang mga mensahe ng mga Islamic scholars na sinasabing ang gawain ng bandidong grupo ay hindi nakasaad sa turo ng Quran.

"We call on the Abu Sayyaf to stop these kidnappings and killings which are all violations of the Koran and against Islam as pointed out by Islamic scholars worldwide", ang pahayag ni dela Vega.

Nabatid na pinakahuling biktima ng Abu Sayyaf sa pamumugot ng ulo ay ang 18-anyos na si Patrick James Almodovar matapos hindi naibigay ng kanyang mga magulang ang hinihinging P1 milyon ransom demand ng mga kidnapper.

Una na ring lumabas sa impormasyon na inamin din mismo ng teroristang grupo na sila ang nasa likod ng madugong pagsabog ng bomba sa Davao City na kumitil sa nasa 14 buhay at humigit 70 ang sugatan.

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

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Cops arrest suspected bomber in North Cotabato, seize bomb-making materials

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 7)

Police and military forces in North Cotabato arrested Tuesday dawn a man believed to be a member of a bomb mercenary group operating in Central Mindanao region.

Senior Supt. Emmanuel Peralta, North Cotabato police office, said Wednesday the raid by joint police and 7th Infantry Battalion troopers was conducted at 4 a.m. in Barangay Inas, Mlang, North Cotabato and led to the arrest of Jokrie Andong Buisan.

Peralta said the raiding team was looking for Guimadel Sandigan and his brother Anwar Sandigan based on an arrest warrant for violation of Republic Act 10591 and RA 9516 on illegal possession of explosives.

Both suspects managed to elude arrest as they were already out of their homes in Barangay Dungguan and Barangay Inas, both in Mlang, when government forces arrived.

However, Peralta said Buisan was found in the house of Anwar Sandigan while holding a live fragmentation grenade.

Peralta said the raid was conducted in the presence of Jose Sagadan Sr, chairperson of Barangay Dungguan.

Seized from the houses of the suspects were one M-67 fragmentation grenade, bomb making materials like blasting caps, detonating cord, Nokia mobile phone, batteries, two motorcycles with questionable registration, a home-made Uzi sub-machinegun.

Peralta said manhunt is still on going against the Sandigan siblings while Buisan was brought to Mlang police lock up cell for tactical interrogation.

Police and military authorities could not say if Buisan or the Sandigan siblings were involved in bombing incidents in Mlang and Kabacan, both in North Cotabato, last year.

<http://retiredanalyst.blogspot.com/>

Soldier wounded in new bombing in Mindanao

From the Mindanao Examiner (Sep 7)



Philippine authorities raid a hideout of suspected bomb-makers in Mlang town in North Cotabato province and arrested Jokrie Andong Buisan in this photo provided by the provincial police

A government soldier was wounded following a roadside explosion in the restive province of Maguindanao in the Muslim autonomous region in southern Philippines, officials said on Wednesday.

Officials said 5 more improvised explosives were recovered by soldiers and policemen in the towns of Datu Odin Sinsuat and Sultan Kudarat.

No individual or group claimed responsibility for the foiled attacks, but this coincided with police information that the recent bombing in Davao City was probably the handiwork of the Malaysian militant Jemaah Islamiya and the local Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters and followers of slain Malaysian bomber Zulkifli Abdir alias Marwan.

Several jihadist groups are actively operating in Maguindanao and its neighboring provinces which authorities said were behind numerous bombings in the region.

Authorities were also hunting down two brothers – Guiamadel and Anwar Sandigan – who are known bomb-makers in North Cotabato province, who escaped a recent raid by soldiers and policemen in the town called M'lang.

One of the brothers' henchman, Jokrie Buisan, was arrested and that the raiders seized a fragmentation grenade and materials used in the manufacture of improvised explosives, including cell phones, blasting caps and black powder.

It was not immediately known whether the trio had anything to do with the bombing in Davao City that killed 15 people and injured over 60 civilians at a crowded night market there.