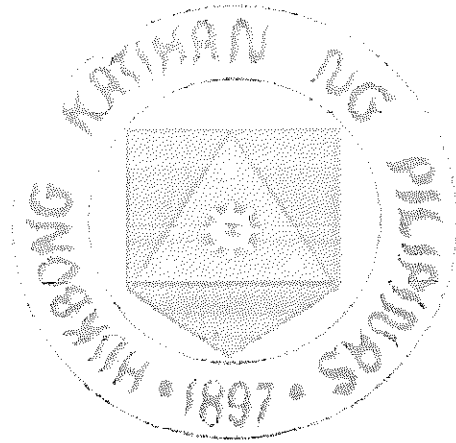


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**NEWS CLIPPINGS**

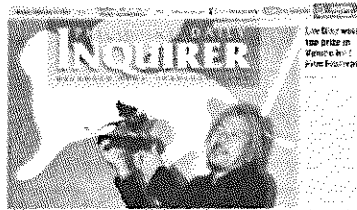
**12 September 2016**

**Monday**

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# NEWS HEADLINES

## 12 SEPTEMBER 2016



### Bullets trump rehab in Asia's war on drugs

Pit drive will only fuel more violence, says expert

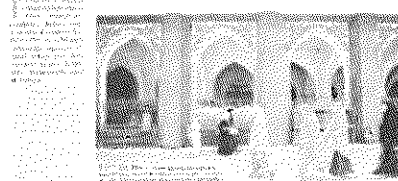


Manila, Sept. 12 (AP) — A Philippine government official said Tuesday that the country's war on drugs is not over, despite the recent arrest of a suspected drug lord. The official said that the government is committed to continuing the fight against drug trafficking and consumption.

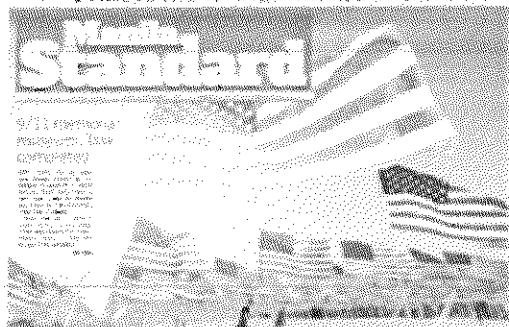
### The Manila Times

Academic 'Oute' to hold up a long tradition looking back to the 19th century

### Andanar declares success in drug war



Manila, Sept. 12 (AP) — President Rodrigo Duterte declared Tuesday that the Philippines has achieved a significant victory in its war on drugs, following the arrest of a suspected drug lord. He said that the government is committed to continuing the fight against drug trafficking and consumption.



### 'Traffic crisis persists'

But Alvarez junks blanket authority for Tagalog

Manila, Sept. 12 (AP) — A Philippine government official said Tuesday that the country's traffic crisis persists, despite the recent arrest of a suspected drug lord. The official said that the government is committed to continuing the fight against drug trafficking and consumption.

### Business Insight

### Del Monte to sell P16.8B shares



### AFP chief to ASG: Surrender or die

Manila, Sept. 12 (AP) — A Philippine government official said Tuesday that the country's traffic crisis persists, despite the recent arrest of a suspected drug lord. The official said that the government is committed to continuing the fight against drug trafficking and consumption.

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	appreciated by Sulu officials		
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# INQUIRER

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## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | SEPTEMBER 12, 2016 | MONDAY



PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

CHINESE SEA

**LOW PRESSURE AREA**  
440 KM NORTH NORTHWEST OF  
PUERTO PRINCESA, PALAWAN

540 KM EAST SOUTHEAST OF  
HINATUAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR  
(September 11, 5:00 AM)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
5:45 AM	6:00 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
2:20 PM	1:13 AM
FIRST QUARTER	FULL MOON
SEP 11 7:49 PM	SEP 17 1:05 PM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 2:23 PM 0.19 Meter	5:29 AM 1.00 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with  
rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

Cloudy skies with rainshowers  
and/or thunderstorms

	SEP 13	SEP 14	SEP 15	SEP 16	SEP 17	SEP 18
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	25-34°C	24-33°C	22-31°C	21-30°C	25-33°C	25-34°C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	23-34°C	22-33°C	25-34°C	25-35°C	24-33°C	25-33°C
<b>LAOAG</b>	23-31°C	22-33°C	23-29°C	22-28°C	26-34°C	25-35°C
<b>BAGUIO</b>	15-24°C	15-23°C	24-32°C	24-33°C	24-32°C	25-33°C
<b>SBMA/CLARK</b>	24-33°C	23-32°C	25-33°C	25-33°C		
<b>TAGAYTAY</b>						
<b>LEGAZPI</b>						
<b>TACLOBAN</b>						
<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b>						
<b>METRO DAVAO</b>						
<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b>						
<b>ILOILO/BACOLOD</b>						
<b>ZAMBOANGA</b>						
<b>METRO CEBU</b>						

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on PTV (Channel 4)

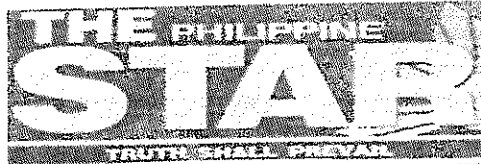
People's Television

**AIR 21**

**SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!**



12 September 2016



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# Drug war a success – Palace

By ALEXIS ROMERO  
and ROEL PAREÑO

Malacañang considers the police operations against illegal drugs a "success" with the drug supply in the country cut by as much as 90 percent in just two months.

While acknowledging that the rising number of killings attributed to vigilantes was a "cause for concern," Malacañang also assured the public that these were being investigated.

Based on a Philippine National Police report last Saturday, 1,466 suspected drug personalities have been killed in PNP operations while 1,490 others were slain by suspected vigilantes since President Duterte assumed power.

Officials claim that most of the drug offenders killed in law enforcement operations fought with the police. More than 16,000 drug suspects have also been arrested while the number of those who surrendered has reached 700,000.

"The police operations have been a success," Presidential Communications Office Secretary Martin Andanar told government radio station dzRB yesterday.

"But the killings that have something to do with gang wars or internecine since they eliminate each other, of course that is a cause for concern. These do not fall under the ambit of the law," he added.

Andanar said authorities were investigating the killings, which have drawn condemnation from human rights advocates both here and abroad.

In Zamboanga City, PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa said the relentless drug war has cut down the supply of illegal drugs in the country by up to 90 percent.

"We have severely cut the head of the supply (chain)

Turn to Page 6

## Drug From Page 1

with the operation in (New) Bilibid (Prison or NBP)," Dela Rosa said in his recent visit in the city.

He said the drug lords detained inside the prison facility used to think NBP was their fortress as nobody from outside could hamper their operations.

Duterte has promised to wage a bloody war against drug traffickers and

to suppress the narcotics trade within six months. He also promised to pardon policemen and soldiers who would face cases for carrying out his brutal campaign against illegal drugs.

Duterte's pronouncements have been criticized by human rights advocates who are worried that his policy could result in summary executions and abusive practices. The United States government has also expressed concern over the killings and has asked Duterte to uphold human rights and the rule of law in his anti-drug operations.

The tough-talking Duterte, however, was unfazed by the comments and even accused his critics of interfering with his drug crackdown. He stressed though that as a lawyer, he knew the limits of his powers and that he would never condone extrajudicial killings.

Duterte is pushing for the revival of death penalty to address the Philippines' drug problem, which he claimed has reached "epidemic proportions." According to the President, there are 3.7 million addicts in the country.

"We do not have a death penalty. So who would impose the death penalty? It would be Duterte," the President told members of the Filipino community in Indonesia last Sept. 9.

The Philippines' drug problem was one of the topics discussed by Duterte during the recently concluded Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) meet in Laos, his first international engagement as president.

"On the illicit drugs trade, I underscored the Philippines' grave concern over social illness that breeds corruption at the highest levels, tears apart the fabric of our society and the basis of human dignity," Duterte said in a speech in Davao City upon his arrival from Indonesia where he had a working visit last Friday after the ASEAN and other

summits in Laos.

"I said our campaign against illegal drugs will be relentless, and it will be comprehensive, encompassing suppression, prosecution and rehabilitation. All these measures are within the bounds of our laws. I called on greater cooperation in the region, particularly in the capacity building and law enforcement efforts," he added.

The problem on drugs was also mentioned during Duterte's bilateral meetings with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Vietnam Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc.

Lee cited the need to implement stringent rules against illegal drugs while observing rule of law and due process. Phuc, meanwhile, said the Philippines and Vietnam should step up cooperation against narcotics.

A Malacañang statement also quoted Indonesia's anti-narcotics chief Budi Waseso as saying that his country would have to implement an anti-drug crackdown similar to that of the Philippines.

"The life of a dealer is meaningless because (he) carries out mass murder. How can we respect that?" Waseso was quoted as saying.

The President and Widodo likewise agreed to cooperate in combating the illicit drug trade, among other transnational crimes.

For his part, Dela Rosa said the supply of illegal drugs started to drop after they clamped down on the NBP with the deployment of the Special Action Force (SAF) commandos and removing all means by the convicted drug lords operating in the prison facility to deal with the outside world.

"They (drug lords) cannot order because they have no cell phones. So there's no supply coming in and they could not distribute," Dela Rosa said.

But he said some drug lords

were still able to operate in areas like Binondo and big hotels in Manila.

5, 5295

## Policing own ranks

The PNP Internal Affairs Service also disclosed yesterday that 141 police personnel who tested positive for illegal drug use would face lifestyle check to further evaluate their integrity.

IAS director general Chief Superintendent Leo Angelo Leuterio said the PNP had filed charges of "grave misconduct due to violation of the anti-drugs law" against the 141 police officers who failed the mandatory drug test conducted in July and August.

"We want to know if their lifestyle falls (within) their income. For instance, how can a rookie policemen drive several cars and send his children to private schools when his income is only coming from his job," Leuterio said.

Leuterio said the lifestyle check would cover the police officers' residence, their business and the source of their money.

Leuterio said of the 141, 57 of them were police officer 1, the lowest rank in the PNP, while three were junior officers – one each with a rank of inspector, senior inspector and chief inspector.

The PNP Crime Laboratory has been supervising the series of drug tests being conducted in almost all police regional, provincial, district and station offices across the country.

The PNP said a total of 99,598 personnel of the PNP had completed drug test since July 1, the day Dela Rosa assumed office.

Dela Rosa vowed to cleanse the PNP of scalawags in uniform and regain the respect of the community.

Aside from internal cleansing, Dela Rosa has been implementing a double-barreled strategy by addressing both street pushers and drug lords.

– With Cecille Suerte Felipe

12

September 2016

INQUIRER

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# Bullets trump rehab in Asia's war on drugs

## PH drive will only fuel more violence, says expert

BANGKOK/RANGOON—The Philippines has launched a bloody “war on drugs” that has killed at least 2,400 people in just two months, while neighboring Indonesia has declared a “narcotics emergency” and resumed executing drug convicts after a long hiatus.

In Thailand and Burma (Myanmar), petty drug users are being sentenced to long jail terms in prisons already bursting at the seams.

The soaring popularity of methamphetamine—a cheap and highly addictive drug also known as meth—is driving countries across Asia to adopt hardline antinarcotics policies.

Experts say such government policies are likely to only make things worse.

Geoff Monaghan has seen it all before. He investigated narcotrafficking gangs during his 30-year career as a detective with London's Metropolitan Police, then witnessed the impact of draconian antidrug policies as an HIV/AIDS expert in Russia.

“We have plenty of data, but often we

BULLETS/A12

From page A1

forget the history,” Monaghan said. “That’s the problem.”

He believes President Duterte’s antidrug campaign in the Philippines will fuel more violence and entrench rather than uproot trafficking networks.

“I’m very fearful about the situation,” he said.

Reflecting the regional explosion in use, the amount of meth seized in East and Southeast Asia almost quadrupled from about 11 tons in 2009 to 42 tons in 2013, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The only region seizing more meth was North America, where the booming trade inspired the popular television series “Breaking Bad.”

### Ineffective responses

The UNODC said meth was the “primary drug of concern” in nine Asian countries, including Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Japan and South Korea.

A rising chorus of experts

blame this surge in production and use of meth in Asia on ineffective and even counterproductive government responses.

They say national drug-control policies are skewed toward harsh measures that criminalize users but have failed to staunch the deluge of drugs or catch the kingpins behind it.

They also want greater emphasis on reducing demand through more and better quality drug rehabilitation.

“There is so much scaremongering and hysteria surrounding the issue of drugs,” said Gloria Lai of the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC), a global network of 154 non-governmental groups.

“That’s a disincentive for challenging old ways of thinking,” she added.

Meth is a transnational business, worth around \$15 billion in mainland Southeast Asia alone in 2013, according to the UNODC.

Much of the production takes place in laboratories in lawless western Burma. Ingredients such as pseudoephedrine and



caffeine are smuggled across porous borders from India, China and Vietnam.

Laos and Thailand are major trafficking routes, with the finished product traveling by road or along the Mekong River for distribution throughout Southeast Asia and China.

### **'Crazy medicine'**

Meth is sold in cheap pills called "ya ba," a Thai name meaning "crazy medicine," or in a more potent, crystalline form known as "crystal meth," "ice" or "shabu."

Contraband is effectively hidden amid rising volumes of regional trade, leaving law enforcement to play catch-up, said Jeremy Douglas, the UNODC's Asia Pacific chief.

"We need to start thinking about big-time regional engagement, up to the highest level. It's impossible to deal with the problem on a country-by-country basis," he said. "I can't recall the last time a major trafficking kingpin was caught."

The meth explosion carries huge social consequences: overburdened health services, over-

crowded prisons, and families and communities torn apart.

Small-time users and dealers bear the brunt of unsparing law enforcement that is popular in crime-weary communities.

In mid-July, as drug war killings escalated in the Philippines, one survey put President Duterte's approval rating at 91 percent.

Thailand launched an equally popular "war on drugs" in 2003 that killed about 2,800 people in three months.

But figures show it had no lasting impact on meth supply or demand in Thailand.

### **'World has lost war'**

"The world has lost the war on drugs, not only Thailand," the country's justice minister, Paiboon Koomchaya, told Reuters in July.

Paiboon hinted at a radical shift in policy, saying he wanted to reclassify meth to reduce sentences for possessing and dealing the drug.

For now though, Thailand continues to jail thousands of petty drug users, with about 70 percent of its 300,000 or so pris-

oners jailed on drug offenses, according to government data.

Meth addiction is tough to treat, ideally requiring costly and time-consuming counseling.

Long-term use can cause changes in brain structure and function.

In March, US President Barack Obama said drug dependency should be seen as "a public health problem and not a criminal problem," part of a bid to roll back a "war on drugs" begun in the 1970s and now widely seen as a failure.

Policy in Asia is largely moving in the opposite direction, with drug rehabilitation underfunded and inadequate.

Less than 1 percent of dependent drug users in Indonesia got treatment in 2014, the UNODC said.

Desperate Indonesians resort to herbal baths, Islamic prayer and other remedies of unproven efficacy.

"Rehab" in many countries often means detention at a state facility.

In Thailand, thousands of users are held at military camps

for four months.

Relapse rates at drug detention centers range from 60 to 90 percent, according to the World Health Organization.

### **Most effective**

Evidence shows that the most effective treatment is voluntary and community-based.

A 2015 study in Malaysia found that half the people at compulsory centers relapsed within 32 days of release, compared with 429 days for those who had volunteered for treatment.

Tackling demand is complicated by meth's broad appeal.

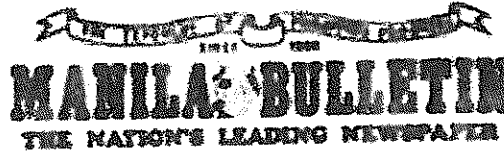
In Burma, manual laborers claim that smoking ya ba boosts their stamina, while students say it boosts their grades.

A student in Rangoon (Yangon), who asked to be identified by the nickname "Nick," said at a grim state-run rehab clinic that he smoked ya ba to help him concentrate on his studies.

When asked how many of his fellow students also used it, Nick replied: "Almost all of them."

**Reuters**

12 September 2016



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### • Hostel in Army camp opened

CAMP SIONGCO (PNA) – Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Governor Mujiv Hataman and outgoing Sixth Infantry Division commander Maj. Gen. Edmundo Pangulanan inaugurated over the weekend a newly-built hostel inside the Army camp, officials said Sunday. The three-storey facility was built by Army engineers at a cost of P7 million from the office of the ARMM governor. Named El Rajah's Place, the hostel is located at the southern side of the 200-hectare military reservation in Barangay Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao and will be open to all transient visitors of the Army division that include military officials or visiting dignitaries.

1 September 2016

**Malaya**  
The National Newspaper

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# Scout Ranger officer is new 6th ID chief

BY VICTOR REYES

A SCOUT Ranger officer who played a key role in preventing an escalation of hostilities between government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front forces during the Mamasapano incident in January 2015 has been named as commander of the 6th Infantry Division based in Maguindanao.

Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez, AFP deputy chief of staff for operations, will assume his new post today in rites to be presided by Army chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año.

Galvez, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1985, will replace Maj. Gen. Edmundo Pangilinan who was named the Army's No. 2 man, or Army vice commander, last Thursday.

Galvez, before assuming the post of AFP deputy chief of staff for operations in October last year, was chairman of the government's Coordinating

Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities, a peace mechanism established in the peace process with the MILF.

Galvez and his MILF counterpart, Rasid Ladiasan, were involved in quelling hostilities between government and MILF forces during the Jan. 25, 2015 Mamasapano incident that left 44 PNP-Special Action Force personnel dead.

The policemen were coming from a successful operation that left Jemaah Islamiah operative Zulkifli bin Hir alias Marwan, killed when they were engaged by joint forces of the MILF, which signed a peace agreement with government in March 2014, and Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the "timely intervention" of Galvez and his MILF counterpart "provided the much-needed relief to prevent an escalation of the incident which could have caused the reversal of the entire peace

process with the MILF."

Army spokesman Col. Benjamin Hao said Galvez "was there in the middle (of the conflict), trying to stop that Mamasapano incident."

Hao described Galvez as a "peace advocate" and a "combat commander" who is well-trained on operations and civil military operations.

Galvez has served as deputy commander of the military's Western Mindanao Command in Zamboanga City and commander of the 104th Brigade which is fighting the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

Galvez is a decorated military officer. He is a recipient of numerous awards and decorations, including two Distinguished Service Stars, two Outstanding Achievement Medals, six Gold Cross Medals, and eight Bronze Cross Medals.

There is still no official word as to who will succeed Galvez as AFP deputy chief of staff for operations.

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## Commander in Mamasapano carnage now no. 2 in PA

<http://thephilippinestar.ph/>

A senior Army commander in Central Mindanao during the Mamasapano incident early last year has been designated to become the second in command of the Philippine Army.

Maj. Gen. Edmundo Pangilinan, commander of the 6th Infantry Division based in Awang, Maguindanao, was installed as vice commander of the 80,000-strong Philippine Army yesterday.

Pangilinan's replacement has yet to be officially announced, though there were reports he will be replaced by Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez, the incumbent Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff for Operations (J3).

Retiring from the service this coming November, Pangilinan, then commander of the 6th Infantry Division, defended his actions in Mamasapano, citing the lack of coordination with the military by the police.

A total of 60 people, including 44 Special Action Force (SAF) policemen, were killed in the firefight with Muslim rebels in Mamasapano on Jan. 25 last year.

The slain policemen were part of a SAF operation to arrest Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, and other terrorists hiding in a remote village in Mamasapano.

The police operation went awry after the SAF commandos figured in a firefight with Muslim rebels on their way out of the area.

At the height of the fighting, the ambushed SAF troopers asked for police and military reinforcements that never came.

Pangilinan said he could not just order the delivery of artillery fire and close-air support to the beleaguered policemen without the policemen's actual location as against the supposed targets.

When finally military reinforcement came in late afternoon, only one of the SAF raiding party survived the carnage.

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## **Bicol troops moved to Lanao for terror war**

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Sep 11): Bicol troops moved to Lanao for terror war  
The military is pouring more soldiers into Lanao del Sur to bring the war on terror to the doorsteps of an armed group of at least 200 men that had sworn allegiance to the terror network Islamic State (IS).

The latest batch of soldiers to arrive here came from Bicol and is about the size of a battalion. They are now part of the Army's 103rd Infantry Brigade, which is on the hunt for the Maute Group, composed of armed men who had pledged loyalty to IS.

Maj. Gen. Gerrado Barrientos, head of the 1st Infantry Division, said some of the soldiers would be stationed at Kampo Ranao here, where three other battalions are currently based.

The main assignment of the soldiers is to hunt down and finish off the Maute Group.

At least 1,000 soldiers, backed by armored personnel carriers and howitzers, are now taking part in the campaign to bring down the Maute Group, also known as Al Ansar Al-Khalifa.

Barrientos said more soldiers were arriving as the war on terror escalates in Mindanao.

"If we can't fix this problem now, it will grow and will affect the next generation," he said.

Addressing himself to his men, Barrientos asked soldiers to "do your best so that when this place becomes free from lawless elements, you can say that you are part of the solution."

With more soldiers coming, Barrientos said "sooner or later, this problem would end."

Lt. Col. Arnel Bautista, 49th IB commander, said his men were ready to do battle with the Maute Group, which was previously unheard of until it went on a kidnapping and killing spree in Lanao del Sur. In one case, the group beheaded two captives.

It also launched bomb attacks on selected targets, like military camps.

In February, soldiers battled the Maute Group for days in Butig town, Lanao del Sur, which led to the killing of several of its leaders.

The group retaliated, however, launching more attacks and, on Aug. 27, freeing eight of its members among 23 inmates in a daring raid on the Lanao del Sur provincial jail.

Despite Maute Group's increasing notoriety and its pledge of allegiance to IS, military and police authorities said there was still no evidence to back speculation that the Maute Group had merged forces with Abu Sayyaf.

Director General Ronald "Bato" Dela Rosa, PNP chief, said he did not have information about the merger of Maute and Abu Sayyaf.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr., spokesperson of the Western Mindanao Command, said on the contrary, both groups are competing for recognition by IS in a bid to get financial support.

"Until now, we haven't monitored any unusual support from IS to the local bandits and we haven't seen any evidence they support each other," Tan said.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/814436/bicol-troops-moved-to-lanao-for-terror-war>

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## **81st IB deploys 60 troops against illegal drugs, other threats**

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 11): 81st IB deploys 60 troops against illegal drugs, other threats

The Ilocos Sur-based 81st Infantry Battalion has deployed 60 troops in strategic locations in Ilocos Sur and La Union to help the Philippine National Police (PNP) in securing communities against illegal drugs, violence and criminalities.

This is in line with the "State of National Emergency on Account of Lawless Violence" declared by President Rodrigo Duterte in wake of the bombing attacks in Davao City which killed 14 and wounded more than 60 persons last Sept. 2.

"This is to complement and support the PNP and other law enforcement agencies in our campaign against illegal drugs to help suppress violence and criminalities in these provinces," said 81st Infantry Battalion commander Lt. Col. Eugenio Julio Oslas.

Prior to the deployment, the unit coordinated with local chief executives, PNP and other law enforcement agencies within the 81st Infantry Battalion area-of-responsibility.

Security operations are conducted in the areas like parks, bus terminals, national highways and other places where people conglomerate.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idh=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=922147>

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12 September 2016



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## Cops, soldiers secure Eid'l Adha celebration

COTABATO CITY – Police and military officers have been deployed in various areas in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in preparation for today's Eid'l Adha outdoor prayer activity.

The deployment came amid threats by Abu Sayyaf bandits to disrupt the event in certain areas in Basilan and Sulu.

Soldiers from the Army's 6th Infantry Division have been guarding the stretches of the Cotabato-General Santos Highway in three Maguindanao towns, where forces of the outlawed Bangsamoro

Islamic Freedom Fighters exist. The Abu Sayyaf and the BIFF may have different revolutionary objectives, but both have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State.

The ARMM regional police has been guarding since Friday potential sites for open-field prayers in five towns in Sulu, where Abu Sayyaf gunmen and government forces figured in clashes in the past two weeks.

This year's Eid'l Adha falls on Sept. 12 in the Gregorian calendar, which Malacañang declared a legal non-working holiday.

– John Unson

12 September 2016



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## Eid'l Adha celebration alerts police, army

**COTABATO CITY (PNA)** - Police and military authorities here were placed on alert on Sunday, ahead of the celebration of Islamic Eid'l Adha (Feast of Sacrifice) among more than three million Muslims across the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Police officers and soldiers were deployed in designated areas in Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, where outdoor congregational prayers are to take place early Monday, a national holiday.

Special concerns among Islamic clerics are the security of civilians in Sulu, where there is an ongoing military offensive against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

Regional government officials have asked the Muslim faithful to peacefully observe the religious festivity with more prayers, charitable activities and offer prayers for the restoration of peace in the troubled provinces of Sulu and Basilan.

Government forces have been hunting down relentlessly the

Abu Sayyaf bandits on orders of President Rodrigo R. Duterte to put a stop to kidnapping and beheading actions of the extremist groups who pledge allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

The 6th Infantry Division which covers Cotabato City, Maguindanao, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and part of Lanao del Sur has put up more checkpoints along major thoroughfares to ensure peaceful and solemn observance of Eid'l Adha.

The Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi have threatened to disrupt the festivities on Monday. But the other extremist group which also sympathizes with the ISIS and based mainly in Maguindanao denied reports of destabilization from them.

The Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) operate in Maguindanao and are blamed for the series of roadside bombings in the province, the latest of which was on Sept. 8 that injured a soldier in Datu Saudi Ampatuan town.



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MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## AFP Chief of Staff visits troops in Sulu; Duterte greets Muslims on Eid'l Adha

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD, GENALYN D. KABILING, and NONOYE LACSON

General Ricardo R. Visaya, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff, visited Jolo, Sulu over the weekend and rallied troops involved in the offensive against the terrorist Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), while President

Duterte greeted Muslims on the occasion of Eid'l Adha – the “Feast of Sacrifice” – today.

The President's greeting to the Muslim community came with an appeal on all Filipinos

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## AFP Chief of Staff ...

◀1

to do their share of personal sacrifices for the greater good as he strives hard to steer the nation towards peace and prosperity.

“Let this celebration stand as a reminder that real change requires the sacrifice of our personal interest in favor of the common good of our citizens. Together, we can achieve progress, prosperity and harmony for all,” the President said.

The President earlier declared September 12 as a nationwide holiday in observance of the Muslim feast of sacrifice. For the Muslim community, Eid'l Adha commemorates the day the willingness of prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son upon the orders of God.

In the same message, the President extended his “heartfelt and warmest greetings” to the Muslim community in celebration of Eid'l Adha. He said the occasion is a reminder of the virtues that strengthen the very foundation of Islam.

“I join you in commemorating the ultimate obedience and trust of Ibrahim when he submits to sacrifice his son, Ishmael, according to the will of Allah. This occasion truly invigorates our common aspirations and rekindles the true significance of our faith,” he said.

Duterte said he also appreciates the support of the Filipino Muslims for the government's peace and development

efforts in Mindanao.

Meanwhile, for Visaya, his fifth visit to troops taking the brunt of the fighting in the effort to destroy the ASG and rescue the remaining hostages came with a warning to the ASG.

Visaya told the armed bandits to take the path of peace “if not, our soldiers will hunt them down and pursue them until all of them are neutralized.”

“Those Abu Sayyaf Group members who want to surrender, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will accept them, provided that they will release their hostages,” he added.

Three of those visits were done after the beheading of Patrick James Almodovar, a local Muslim Jolo resident.

Top brass of the AFP including the Commanding General of the Philippine Army, Lt. Gen. Eduardo Ano, Western Mindanao Command Chief, Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo dela Cruz, the Chief Surgeon, Brig. Gen. Mariano Mejia and other Generals from the General Headquarters accompanied the Chief of Staff in rallying the troops headed by Joint Task Force Sulu Commander, Brig. Gen. Arnel Dela Vega together with 101st Brigade and 501st Brigade Commanders, Col Jesus Manangquil and Col Jose Faustino including Battalion Commanders and other key officers and troops.

Dela Vega led government troops in Sulu in greeting all Muslims and Christians alike a happy Eid'l Adha as Muslims around the world gather and celebrate.

This is the message of solidarity of troops as mass is celebrated yesterday during the blessing of a newly constructed hospital inside Camp Bautista.

The newly constructed station hospital is expected to enhance the survival of wounded troops and widen the medical care that can be given to soldiers and their families while stationed in Sulu.

Dela Vega, commander of Joint Task Force Sulu (JTFS), said soldiers in Sulu and those assigned generally in Mindanao have learned to understand and respect the religion and culture of Moros.

“We extend our sincere desire for a peaceful Eid'l Adha and we again appeal to the people of Sulu for their continued cooperation to ensure the safety of all members of the community,” Dela Vega said.

The visit aims to boost the morale of troops, be abreast of the conduct of operation and hear for himself the needs of the operating units as well as provide guidance and convey the message of President Rodrigo Duterte to ground troops on the war against terror. The AFP chief also inspected the newly constructed camp hospital and status of its facilities.

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## 3 Malaysian fishing crew kidnapped; Abus told to surrender

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Security forces have been alerted yesterday over reports of another kidnapping by the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

Initial reports said three Malaysians were taken from their trawler off Sabah on Saturday.

Malaysia's Eastern Sabah Security Command confirmed unidentified gunmen took the three fishermen off their trawler near Pom Pom Island in Sabah.

There was no information,

however, if the Malaysians were brought to Sulu or other outlying islands in southern Philippines.

The Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) said they were alerted on the latest incident but could not immediately say if this was another case of cross-border kidnapping involving groups linked with the Abu Sayyaf.

The Westmincom, however, gave assurance that troops were placed on alert and on the look-

out for the Malaysians.

The Westmincom is in the thick of the fight against the Abu Sayyaf in the islands of Tawi-Tawi and Sulu.

The military believes the abductors might not consider hiding their latest victims due to the intensified military operations.

The Abu Sayyaf still has 23 hostages – 16 foreigners and seven locals.

Up to 18 Indonesians and Malaysians were kidnapped in three attacks on tugboats earlier this year in Philippine waters by groups suspected of ties to the Abu Sayyaf. All 14 Indonesians were later released last May.

By ROEL PAREÑO

In July, the Malaysian police said five Malaysian tugboat crew were abducted by the Abu Sayyaf off the coast of Sabah.

The Abu Sayyaf, known for amassing tens of millions of dollars from kidnappings, has beheaded two Canadian nationals in recent months after ransom deadlines passed.

The group is still holding Malaysian seamen and Japanese, Dutch and Norwegian hostages as well as locals.

### 'Release all hostages'

Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya

called on the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu to release their hostages, warning they would face the full force of the thousands of government troops pursuing them.

Visaya rallied the troops here on Saturday, urging them to sustain the momentum of the military offensive against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

He said the AFP would accept the surrender of the Abu Sayyaf and take the path of peace but with several conditions.

"Those in the Abu Sayyaf who want to surrender, the AFP will accept them, provided that they release their hostages; if not, our soldiers will hunt them down and pursue them until all

of them are neutralized," Col. Rodrigo Gregorio, spokesman for Joint Task Force Sulu (JTFS), quoted the AFP chief.

Visaya did not give the troops any deadline.

"We will hunt and pursue them as long as needed," he said.

JTFS commander Brig. Gen. Arnel dela Vega reported to Visaya that local officials and villagers are cooperating with the military in pursuit of the bandit group.

President Duterte has ordered security forces to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf following the beheading of a villager whose family was too poor to pay ransom. – With John Unson

2 September 2016



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## Abductions continue in Abu-infested seas off Sulu

By Mario J. Mallari

Three crew members on a Malaysian fishing trawler have been kidnapped in waters where militants from the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) have previously taken hostages, a security official said yesterday.

The incident is believed to have occurred late Saturday off Pom Pom Island, a popular scuba diving location in the eastern state of Sabah.

"The boat is Malaysian registered," Wan Abdul Bari Abdul Khalid, head of Malaysia's Eastern Sabah Security Command, without specifying the nationality of the crew, said.

Authorities did not comment on whether they believed the ASG were involved.

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**From page 1**

Last May, the ASG released 14 Indonesian sailors who had been kidnapped in two high-seas raids, attacks that prompted Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to launch joint patrols.

In July, Malaysian police said five Malaysian tugboat crew were abducted by ASG off the coast of Sabah.

The ASG is a loose network of a few hundred Islamist militants, formed in the 1990s with seed money from Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network, that has earned millions of dollars from kidnappings-for-ransom.

Although its leaders have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group, analysts say they are mainly focused on lucrative kidnappings.

In April and June the group beheaded two Canadian tourists after ransom demands were not met, and a Malaysian man was beheaded last year.

Malaysian security forces in Sabah have been on high alert and on the lookout for militants fleeing the southern parts of Mindanao after President Duterte ordered the military in August to ramp up its offensive against the extremist group.

**ASG surrenders welcome**

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), meanwhile, said it is open for the

The pursuit against the ASG since the order of President Duterte in August resulted in 32 ASG killed in Sulu while 27 in Basilan with a total of 59 ASG killed in Sulu and Basilan combined.

The AFP, on the other hand, suffered 15 killed in action and 27 wounded in action (WIA) in Sulu while three were KIA and one WIA in Basilan with a total of 18 KIA and 28 WIA in Sulu and Basilan combined.

Duterte ordered government troops to destroy the Abu Sayyaf after the beheading of Patrick Almodovar last Aug. 24 in Sulu after his family failed to pay ransom.

For his part, Joint Task Force-Sulu commander Brig. Gen. Arnel dela Vega cited the growing cooperation being extended to the military by local residents.

"The local officials and residents appreciate the effort of our soldiers and are providing much needed help in fighting the ASG and in rescuing the kidnap victims," said Dela Vega.

This cooperation stemmed from the latter's desire for genuine development, progress and peace which is gradually negating the ASG advantage in terrain, blood relations with the communities they are operating in, and forced recruitment.

"More residents (Sulu and Basilan) are now eager to end the bandit threat as they are now seeing the government's massive efforts to eliminate the ASG," the military

all the remaining hostages as it vowed that relentless combat operations in Sulu and Basilan will continue until all terrorists are neutralized.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya, in his fifth visit to Sulu since assuming last July 1 on Saturday, rallied military troops to sustain the offensives against the Abu Sayyaf group in the island province led by Radullan Sahron.

Visaya said the military is open for the surrender of the ASG if they release all the hostages.

"Those in the Abu Sayyaf who want to surrender, the AFP will accept them, provided that they release their hostages; if not, our soldiers will hunt them down and pursue them until all of them are neutralized," Visaya said.

"No deadline is given on how long the focused military operations will last. We will hunt and pursue them as long as needed," he added.

Currently, there are about 20 hostages still being held by the ASG mostly foreigners composed of Indonesians, Malaysians, Dutch Elwold Horn and Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad.

Visaya, at the same time, congratulated the troops for their service and prodded them to remain vigilant against enemies of the state. Saturday's visit was aimed at boosting the morale of the troops amid the ongoing

official stressed.

ASG members killed in the ongoing operation in Sulu are placed at 32 killed with many more wounded.

"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.

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," Dela Vega said.

**Flagship vs Abu**

The newest ship in the Philippine Navy fleet, the BRP Tarlac (LD-601) has been deployed as the command-and-control vessel in the ongoing sea denial mission in Sulu which is part of the efforts to totally eliminate the ASG terrorist threat. Philippine Navy (PN) spokesman Capt. Lued Lincuna said.

"(BRP Tarlac) is now serving in Sulu as command-and-control vessel for (ongoing sea denial) missions," he said.



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## Suspected Abus kidnap 3 fishers off Malaysia

**KUALA LUMPUR --** Three crew members on a Malaysian fishing trawler have been kidnapped in waters where militants from the Abu Sayyaf Group have previously taken hostages, a security official said on Sunday.

The incident is believed to have occurred late Saturday off Pom Pom Island, a popular scuba diving location in the eastern state of Sabah.

"The boat is Malaysian registered," Wan Abdul Bari Abdul Khalid, head of Malaysia's Eastern Sabah Security Command, told AFP, without specifying the nationality of the crew.

Authorities did not

comment on whether they believed Abu Sayyaf were involved.

In May, the Abu Sayyaf released 14 Indonesian sailors who had been kidnapped in two high-seas raids, attacks that prompted Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to launch joint patrols.

In July, Malaysian police said five Malaysian tugboat crew were abducted by Abu Sayyaf off the coast of Sabah.

The Abu Sayyaf is a loose network of a few hundred Islamist militants, formed in the 1990s with seed money from Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network, that has earned millions of dollars from kidnappings-for-

ransom.

Although its leaders have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group, analysts say they are mainly focused on lucrative kidnappings.

In April and June the group beheaded two Canadian tourists after ransom demands were not met, and a Malaysian man was beheaded last year.

Malaysian security forces in Sabah have been on high alert and on the lookout for militants fleeing the southern Philippines after Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the military in August to ramp up its offensive against the extremist group.

AFP

12 September 2016

## INQUIRER

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# Abu suspected in latest abductions

**By Julie S. Alipala**  
*Inquirer Mindanao*

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Malaysian authorities have reported the kidnapping of three fishermen late Saturday off Pom Pom Island, a popular scuba diving spot located in the eastern state of Sabah.

Malaysia's The Star Online quoted Eastern Sabah Community Command (Esscom) Commander Datuk Wan Abdul Bari Abdul Khalid as confirming that he had received the report about the kidnapping from the owner of the vessel himself.

Khalid said the abduction was perpetrated by a "suspected seven-member Filipino armed group and is believed to have taken the victims across the border toward the south-

ern Philippines island chain of Tawi-Tawi province."

The kidnappers fled on a green fast boat towards the southern Philippines. The rest of the crew steered the trawler back to the Semporna jetty.

"The boat is Malaysian registered," Wan Abdul Bari Abdul Khalid, head of Malaysia's Eastern Sabah Security Command, told Armed Forces of the Philippines, without providing details.

Authorities did not directly link the kidnapping to the Abu Sayyaf but Deputy Prime Minister Zahid Hamidi said a "kidnap for ransom" group was responsible.

"The kidnap or ransom group operates near the southern Philippines, near Malaysian islands, and

although the authorities monitor the waters closely, this group moves under the radar," he was quoted as saying by the New Straits Times.

Zahid said the three people kidnapped were not Malaysian citizens but permanent residents.

Filipino military officials at the western Mindanao Command and at Joint Task Group Sulu were silent on the latest kidnapping, which happened during massive military operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

A military intelligence report however said three Filipino Badjaos were abducted in the Semporna Seas at 10:40 p.m. on Sept. 10. The victims were only identified as Masurin, Sami and Lolong. *With an AFP report*

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**Malaya**  
The National Newspaper

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# AFP chief to ASG: Surrender or die

BY VICTOR REYES

ARMED Forces chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya has told the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) members to surrender or be "neutralized," a term that means getting killed, apprehended, or arrested, in military parlance.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the AFP public affairs office, said Visaya issued the call to the Abu Sayyaf during a visit to troops of the Joint Task Force Sulu last Saturday.

Joint Task Group Sulu spokesman Col. Rodrigo Gregorio said the visit "aims to boost the morale of troops, be abreast of the conduct of operations and hear for

himself the needs of the operating units as well as provide guidance and convey the message of President Rodrigo Duterte to ground troops on the war against terror."

It was Visaya's fifth visit to Sulu since assuming the top AFP post last July. Visaya is the first AFP chief of President Duterte who has said he wants the Abu Sayyaf, which is notorious for beheading some kidnap victims whose families could not pay ransom, destroyed during his term.

"Those in the Abu Sayyaf who want to surrender, the AFP will accept them, provided that they will release their hostages. If not, our soldiers will hunt them down and pursue them until all them are neutral-

ized," Visaya said.

Visaya said there is no timetable as to the Abu Sayyaf should be defeated. "No deadline is given on how long the focused military operations will last. We will hunt and pursue them as long as needed," he said.

Government forces intensified operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu and Basilan last month. The operations have so far left 59 Abu Sayyaf men and 18 soldiers dead and scores wounded on both sides.

The bandit group is keeping around 20 foreign and Filipino hostages in Sulu, including eight Malaysian tugboat crew

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## AFP

members.

Arevalo clarified that the military would still welcome Abu Sayyaf members who want to surrender, even without hostages getting released.

"If anyone of them would like to surrender even without KVs (kidnap victims) they will

be received by the AFP. But if surrendering and freeing their victims is not their option, then they will be hunted down and [they will] face annihilation with the full might of the AFP," Arevalo also said.

The military has beefed up its forces in Sulu as part of the renewed campaign against the Abu Sayyaf. There are about

7,000 soldiers now involved in the fight against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu, where bulk of the Abu Sayyaf's 480 members are based, compared to just 2,500 troops in Basilan.

Arevalo said government forces are giving primacy to the safety of the hostages in the ongoing operations against the Abu Sayyaf.

2 September 2016

The Manila Times

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## AFP says no deadline to Sayyaf pursuit

THE MILITARY offensive against the Abu Sayyaf terror and kidnap group in Sulu has no deadline but there will be no letup in the campaign.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya said the government did not ask for a timeframe on the pursuit of the bandits, as he and

➤ **Deadline A8**

### ■ DEADLINE FROM A1

## AFP chief says no deadline to Sayyaf pursuit

other military officials visited soldiers in Sulu late Saturday afternoon to boost their morale.

"[N]o deadline is given on how long the focused military operations will last. We will hunt and pursue them as long as needed," Visaya said.

The visit, the fifth since the government declared an all-out offensive against the Abu Sayyaf two weeks ago, was also to provide guidance and convey the message of President Rodrigo Duterte in fighting terrorism.

Military operations have resulted in the killing of 32 Abu Sayyaf fighters in Sulu and 27 in Basilan, or a total of 59.

The AFP lost 18 soldiers, while 28 government troops were wounded in Sulu and Basilan, the strongholds of the Abu Sayyaf.

The terror and kidnap group has been widely blamed for the September 2 bombing of the Roxas Night Market in Davao City that killed 14 people and wounded 70 others.

### Task Force Sulu

Visaya also said he wanted to personally listen to the needs of operating units.

Three of the previous visits were done after the Abu Sayyaf's beheading of Patrick James Almodovar, a resident of Jolo, the Sulu provincial capital.

Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año, Philippine Army commander, Lt. Gen. Mayor-algo de la Cruz, commander of the AFP Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), the chief surgeon,

Brig. Gen. Mariano Mejia and other generals from the AFP headquarters accompanied Visaya in rallying the troops under Joint Task Force Sulu.

The task force commander is Brig. Gen. Arnel de la Vega, assisted by the 101st Brigade and 501st Brigade commanders Col. Jesus Manangquil and Col. Jose Faustino.

The AFP chief also inspected a newly constructed hospital.

Visaya congratulated troops for their services even as he encouraged them to be more vigilant in the fight against the Abu Sayyaf.

### Surrender conditions

At the same time, Visaya urged Abu Sayyaf members to pursue peace or

suffer the consequences of their terrorist acts, laying down conditions for those who want to surrender.

"Those in the Abu Sayyaf who want to surrender, the AFP will accept them, provided that they release their hostages; if not, our soldiers will hunt them down and pursue them until all of them are neutralized," Visaya said.

During the visit, de la Vega told Visaya local officials and residents in Sulu have been co-operating with the military.

"The local officials and residents appreciate the effort of our soldiers and are providing much-needed help in fighting the [Abu Sayyaf] and in rescuing the kidnap victims," he said. **FERNAN MARASIGAN**



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**Malaya**  
The National Newspaper

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## Soldier, militiamen sacked over drug links

BY VICTOR REYES

AN Army soldier was dishonorably discharged while 13 government militiamen, all assigned in Northern Luzon, were also terminated after testing positive for illegal drugs.

Brig. Gen. Paul Atal, chief of the Army's 5th Infantry Division based in Isabela, said the soldier and the militiamen were found

to be using illegal drugs during initial and confirmatory tests conducted during the time of his predecessor, Maj. Gen. Lysander Suerte, who retired last month.

Atal declined to name the soldier and the militiamen "because we have to consider their families."

Atal said he acted on the

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## SOLDIER

recommendation to discharge the soldier and terminate the militiamen from the service but stressed that ridding the 5th ID of personnel hooked on illegal drugs is a continuing effort.

"All units under the 5th ID will have to undergo drug test. This will be continuing. We are very strict on this matter, in compliance with our commander-in-chief's instruction," Atal said, referring to President Duterte's war on drugs.

The Army's 81st Infantry Division has deployed 60 personnel along the national highway of Ilocos Sur and La Union to assist the PNP in the campaign against crimes, including illegal drugs.

Lt. Col. Eugenio Julio Osias IV, 81st IB commander, said the deployment is in support of President Duterte's declaration of State of Lawlessness in the country after the Sept. 2 bombing in Davao City that left 14 civilians dead and over 60 others wounded.

The PNP yesterday clarified that Vice Mayor Abdul Wahab Sabal, of Talitay town in Maguindanao, was arrested last Thursday for his alleged involvement in illegal drugs and not for the Davao City blast last September 2.

"Sinabi naman ni chief PNP dela Rosa it has nothing to do with the Davao blast," PNP spokesman Sr. Supt. Dionardo Carlos said.

Sabal was arrested upon arrival at the Cotabato Airport in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Cotabato City for an illegal drugs case and illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

He was flown from Maguindanao to Manila on Saturday and was detained at Camp Crame.

The cases against Sabal, his wife Mohanna Sabal, his security escort Nasser Maulana and driver Norodin Abas were referred to the Department of Justice last Saturday.

Sr. Supt. Albert Ferro, PNP Anti-Illegal Drugs Group chief, said: "We are just investigating him (Sabal) sa illegal drugs. Kapag nakakuha kami ng information we will try to dig deeper kung mayroon talaga siyang involvement sa (Davao City) bombing."

## BARANGAY COUNCILOR NABBED

A barangay councilor was arrested in a buy-bust operation in Pasay City last Saturday night.

The Southern Police District said Jordan Garland of Barangay 43 was nabbed around 7:45 p.m. near Tramo St. while allegedly selling shabu to a poseur buyer. Recovered from him was suspected shabu with a street value of P70,000.

Garland denied that he was into the illegal drugs trade, adding he surrendered to police last July to clear his name since he was included in Pasay's drug watch list.

Three suspected drug dealers and a cop who went absent without official leave last month after he tested positive for illegal drugs were shot to death on Saturday.

Sr. Supt. Adriano Enong, Rizal PNP provincial director, identified the alleged drug dealers as Renato Adane and an alias

"Satan," residents of Barangay Dolores, Taytay, Rizal who were killed in a buy-bust operation at 1 p.m.

Recovered at the scene were a .38 revolver, an MK hand grenade, and 21 plastic sachets containing suspected shabu.

The other suspected drug dealer, killed by operatives of the Binan municipal police station during a buy-bust operation, was identified as one alias "Bay."

PO1 Arnel Agadia, 40, of Phase 3 Lynville Subdivision in Barangay Calios, Sta. Cruz, Laguna, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen while driving his tricycle in Sitio 1, Barangay Bagumbayan, Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

SPO1 Manolito Binalay, officer-on-case, said Agadia went AWOL last month after testing positive for illegal drugs and was included in the Laguna PPO's watch list allegedly over his illegal drug activities.

A report from the Laguna PPO said Agadia was driving his motorcycle on the provincial road when two men on a motorcycle tailing him suddenly peppered him with bullets.

Agadia died on the spot while the shooters fled.

Recovered from the scene were a caliber .9 mm Beretta with a loaded magazine, 13 spent bullet casings for .45 caliber pistol, a deformed .45 caliber slug, and a .45 caliber slug.

The PNP yesterday said the number of deaths under investigation or killings attributed to vigilantes are now pegged at 1,490 from July 1 up to September 8. –With Raymond Africa, Evan Orias and Christian Oineza

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

**ONLINE NEWS**  
**12 SEPTEMBER 2016**

## **AFP chief to Abus: Surrender and release all hostages or be crushed**

By Roel Pareño (philstar.com) | Updated September 11, 2016 - 3:25pm



Army Scout Rangers march during ceremonies at the 119th founding anniversary of the Philippine Army in suburban Taguig, south of Manila, Philippines on March 22, 2016. AP/Aaron Favila, File

ZAMBOANGA CITY — Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff Gen. Ricardo Visaya told the Abu Sayyaf to surrender and to release all their hostages or get crushed by thousands of ground forces in Sulu.

Visaya said this in his visit Saturday afternoon in Sulu before government troops pursuing the Abu Sayyaf to rescue the terror group's 23 hostages, 16 foreigners and seven locals.

He said the AFP would accept Abu Sayyaf members who surrender to take the path of peace but with conditions.

"Those in the Abu Sayyaf who want to surrender, the AFP will accept them, provided that they release their hostages. If not, our soldiers will hunt them down and pursue them until all of them are neutralized," Col. Rodrigo Gregorio, spokesman of Joint Task Force Sulu (JTFS), said quoting Visaya.

The relentless pursuit following the order of President Rodrigo Duterte to crush the terror group has already killed 32 Abu Sayyaf members in Sulu. At least 27 militants were also killed in Basilan operations.

Meanwhile, 15 died and 17 were wounded from government forces in Sulu. Three were also killed and one got wounded in Basilan.

Visaya did not give the troops any deadline in its focused military offensive against the Abu Sayyaf.

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

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

"We will hunt and pursue them as long as needed," Visaya said.

Visaya said JTFS commander Brig. Gen. Arnel dela Vega, reported that local government units and civilians were actively cooperating with the troops and providing information in defeating the Abu Sayyaf that splintered into factions to evade the pursuing forces.

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

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

## Efforts to eliminate ASG strongly appreciated by Sulu officials, residents

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 11): Efforts to eliminate ASG strongly appreciated by Sulu officials, residents

Joint Task Force-Sulu commander Brig. Gen. Arnold Dela Vega said ongoing efforts to neutralize the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) threat are strongly appreciated by officials and residents of the province.

"The local officials and residents appreciate the effort of our soldiers and are providing much needed help in fighting the ASG and in rescuing the kidnap victims," he said.

This cooperation stemmed from the latter's desire for genuine development, progress and peace which is gradually negating the ASG advantage in terrain, blood relations with the communities they are operating in, and forced recruitment.

"More and more residents (Sulu and Basilan) are now eager to end the bandit threat as they are now seeing the government's massive efforts to eliminate the ASG," the military official stressed.

As of this posting, brigands killed in the ongoing operation in Sulu are placed at 32 killed with many more wounded.

"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," Dela Vega earlier 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," Dela Vega concluded.

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## **Troops in Sulu join Eid'l Adha commemoration**

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 11): Troops in Sulu join Eid'l Adha commemoration

Troops in Sulu greet all Muslims and Christians alike as the entire world commemorate Eid'l Adha Monday.

This is the message of solidarity of troops as mass is celebrated Sunday during the blessing of a newly constructed hospital in Camp Bautista, Sulu.

The newly-constructed station hospital is expected to enhance the survival of wounded troops and widen the medical care that can be given to soldiers and their families while stationed in Sulu.

Brig. Gen. Arnel Dela Vega, Joint Task Force Sulu commander said, "Soldiers in Sulu and those assigned generally in Mindanao have learned to understand and respect the religion and culture of Moros."

"We extend our sincere desire for a peaceful Eid'l Adha and we again appeal to the people of Sulu for their continued cooperation to ensure the safety of all members of the community," he added.

The ongoing rescue efforts of kidnap victims in Sulu have been intensified since the order of President Rodrigo Duterte last August after a local Muslim Jolo resident, Patrick Almodavar was beheaded by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) after his failed to raise the PHP1,000,000 ransom.

The Chief Executive visited troops a few weeks back while the AFP chief-of-staff Gen Ricardo Visaya visited soldiers in Jolo five times with the latest on Saturday.

The focused military operations to destroy the ASG and rescue the hostages took the lives of 15 soldiers and 27 were wounded in Sulu while three were killed and one wounded in Basilan, for a total of 18 killed and 28 wounded.

At least 32 ASG were killed in Sulu in the ongoing focused military operations while 27 were killed in Basilan totaling 59 ASG dead and scores wounded.

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