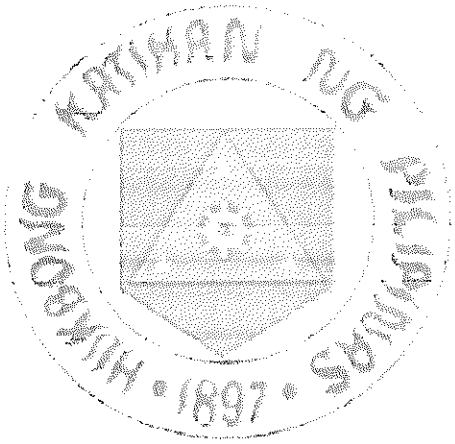

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NEWS CLIPPINGS

16 September 2016

Friday

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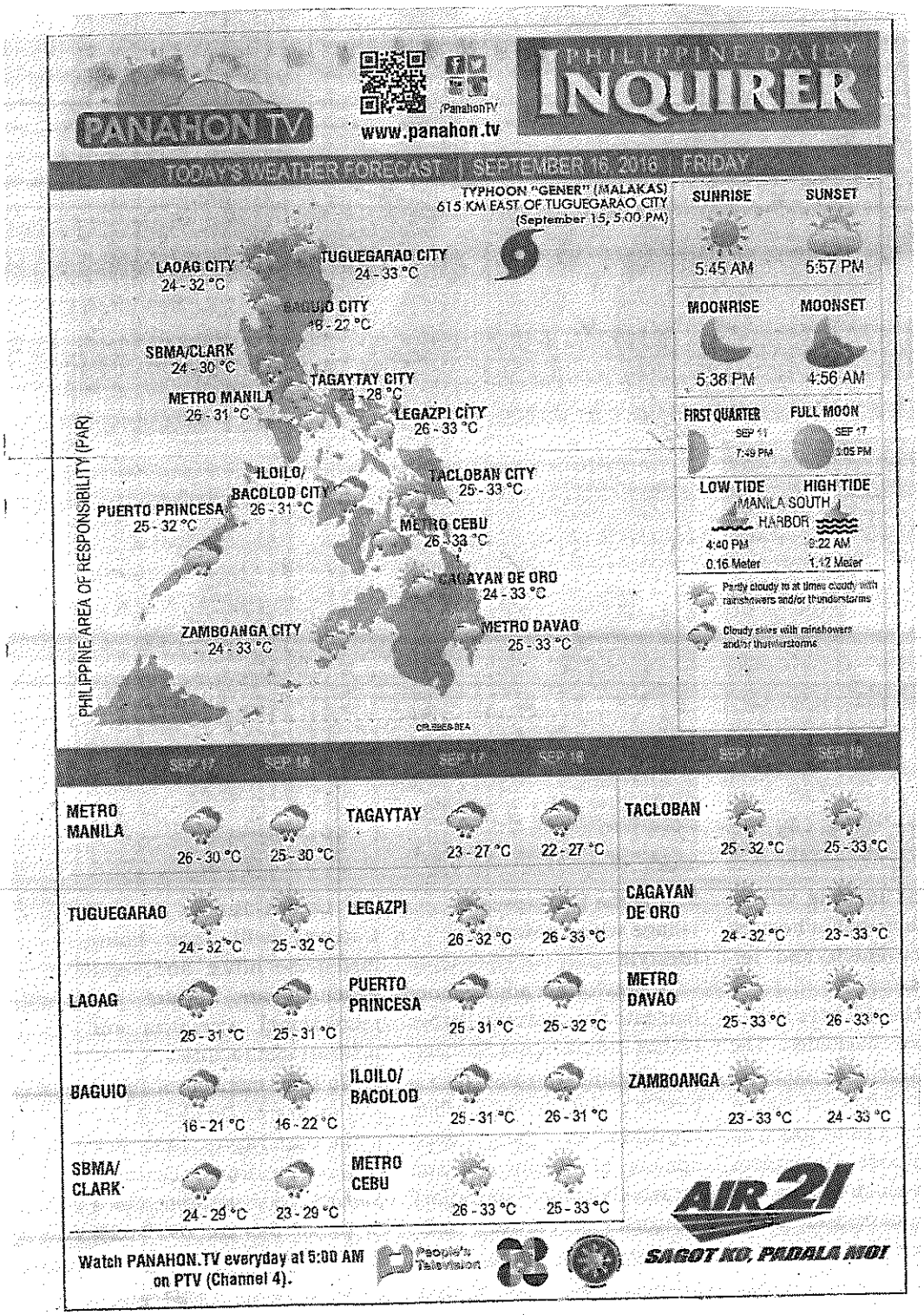

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16 September 2016

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

'Executioner' emerges

By MARVIN SY and PAOLO ROMERO

A victim was fed to crocodiles but his life was spared. About a thousand others lost their lives, with several chopped to pieces and some having their stomachs slashed before being tossed into the sea so they would not float to the surface.

These were among the gruesome crimes attributed by a former militiaman to death squads allegedly unleashed in Davao City against crime suspects and political opponents of the ruling clan when President Duterte was its mayor.

Edgar Matobato faced the Senate yesterday and openly accused Duterte and his son Paolo, now Davao vice mayor, of ordering or sanctioning the execution of over 1,000 people from 1998 to 2014 in the city.

Testifying before the Senate committee on justice and human rights chaired by Sen. Leila de Lima, the 57-year-old Matobato said Duterte himself had carried out at least two of the killings, hitting a victim repeatedly with a golf club in the face until his teeth fell off, and finishing off another with a submachine gun.

De Lima's committee was investigating alleged extrajudicial killings in the conduct of the Duterte administration's war on illegal drugs.

Matobato said he and his colleagues in the Davao death squads or DDS took orders from the Dutertes to execute suspected criminals or just

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Executioner

From Page 1

about anyone who crossed the two.

Describing himself as a CAFGU (Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit) member attached to the Scout Ranger regiment of the Philippine Army, Matobato said Duterte recruited him in 1988 when he was still city mayor.

As a contractual employee of the Davao City government, Matobato said he became part of the seven-member team called the Lambada Boys, whose job was to murder criminals in the city.

One of the earliest assignments recalled by Matobato was an attack on a mosque in Davao City, ordered by Duterte supposedly in retaliation for the bombing of the San Pedro Cathedral in the 1990s.

A few days after the attack on the mosque, Matobato said they were ordered to pick up a number of Muslim suspects in the cathedral bombing and executed them. After the attack on the mosque, Matobato said he felt like they were terrorists.

By that time, Matobato said his team had recruited new members including members of the Philippine National Police.

The Lambada Boys was to become the DDS and according to Matobato, it was headed by SPO4 Arthur Lascañas.

Still in active service, Lascañas is considered the most powerful policeman in Davao City, Matobato said.

In 2003, Matobato said the DDS killed broadcast journalist Jun Pala upon instructions from Duterte. He said Pala was murdered for being very critical of Duterte and for debunking Davao's claim to fame as a safe place.

He also recalled that in 2010 they killed four people, including a female barangay captain, belonging to the camp of former Speaker Prospero Nograles, who was then running against Duterte for mayor of the city.

Matobato said that the bodies were sliced open, weighed with hollow blocks, then dumped in waters off Samal City.

A suspected Islamic terrorist, whom he identified as Salim Makdum, was also kidnapped in Samal in 2002 by Matobato's team.

He said Makdum was brought to their office, which was attached to the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), then headed by the current PNP chief Ronald Dela Rosa.

Matobato said that they stabbed Makdum then cut his body to pieces.

In the same hearing, Dela Rosa said that he had never seen Matobato before and that all the names being mentioned were not with the PAOCTF, but with the heinous crimes division of the Davao police.

However, he said that he heard of Matobato's name before and knew him as a *"tirador"* or hit man.

Matobato admitted it was only Lascañas who spoke with Dela Rosa, but he was also in the room during those meetings.

Fed to crocs

In 2007, Matobato recalled an operation with Dante Gierran of the National Bureau of Investigation for the abduction of an individual in Sarangani province.

He said the victim was brought to Digos where he was cut to bleed and fed to crocodiles while still alive in an area owned by an asset of Gierran. At the time, Matobato said that he had known Gierran for 15 years.

In 2013, the DDS took three women suspected of drug pushing, killed them and dumped them on a road.

It was at this time that the President's son, Paolo also started ordering hits on some people, Matobato said. Unlike the orders coming from the elder Duterte, many of which involved suspected criminals, the targets of Paolo were very personal.

Matobato said Paolo ordered them to kill someone at a subdivision in Davao City because he was at odds with the person. In the process, two other persons were killed as collateral damage.

He said Paolo also ordered the DDS to kill someone involved in a traffic altercation with him.

In the same year, Matobato said Duterte ordered the killing of a fixer at the Land Transportation Office. He said that Duterte personally went to their office at the "heinous crimes division" to order the hit.

A certain Jun Barsabal, described as a member of a religious group, was also ordered killed by Duterte supposedly because he was involved in a squatting syndicate, Matobato said.

Matobato said the bodies of the victims were usually dumped at the Laud quarry in barangay Maa and later on, at an adjacent property of the Gaisanos who were never aware of the gruesome happenings. He said over a hundred bodies were buried in the area.

Sometimes, his crew – composed of policemen –were so tired, they'd ask the caretaker of the property called *"kumander* toothpick" to do the burying. He said they've dumped at least 100 bodies in the property.

"We pour used oil so they (bodies) won't stink," he said.

Other times, the bodies – as many as 10 in one night – were piled up in a banca and dumped into the sea near a closed Malaysian resort.

Among those dumped in the sea, Matobato claimed, were four staff members of Nograles. He said two of the bodies later surfaced.

He said he could not recall the exact dates of the murder of Nograles' aides and of the others.

When asked why the victims had to be burned or chopped, he said at first it was what Duterte wanted. Later, he said it was upon orders of Lascañas.

Slay try on De Lima

In 2009 when De Lima was chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, she and her team went to the Laud property after receiving a tip that there were mass graves in the area.

Matobato said he and his team were at the top of the hill waiting to ambush De Lima upon Duterte's instructions.

However, De Lima and her team were not able to reach the top of the hill and thus escaped death.

Also in 2013, Matobato said the DDS was ordered to kill a dance instructor-lover of the sister of Duterte, whom he called "ma'am Jocelyn."

Matobato also narrated an incident in 1993 when an NBI agent identified only as Amisola figured in an altercation with the anti-crime unit of the Davao police and ended up dead.

Matobato said Amisola was scolded by a certain Major Pabo for improperly parking his vehicle and obstructing a police operation in the area.

On seeing Amisola armed, Pabo drew his weapon but was beaten to the draw. Matobato and his companions – numbering about 30 – shot it out with Amisola who ran out of bullets and got wounded.

Duterte later arrived and emptied two magazines of Uzi submachine gun on the wounded Amisola. "It was overkill," Matobato said of the incident.

In 2014, Matobato said businessman Richard King was ordered killed by Paolo, all because of a rivalry over a woman. Matobato said the woman was the owner of a McDonald's branch in Davao City.

Matobato alleged that Paolo was taking shabu and was also involved in the smuggling of rice and crude oil through the Sasa Wharf in Davao.

According to Matobato, it was rebel returnees, who were part of the DDS, who killed King. He said Lascañas later killed the rebel returnees and made it appear that Matobato was responsible for killing King.

The Senate witness said he could not have been involved in the killing of King because there was no order from "Charlie Mike," the code name they gave to Duterte.

Apparently, the decision to blame the killing of King on Matobato was in response to his decision to quit the DDS because he felt he was already too old for the job. He said his conscience was also bothering him.

Matobato said that he had personally killed around 50 individuals, but as a part of the operations of the DDS, the death count was over 1,000.

He claimed his colleagues tortured him for one week. When he was released, Matobato went to the CHR, which advised him to ask for protection from the Department of Justice.

Matobato was eventually placed under the DOJ's Witness Protection Program (WPP).

Army commander to work with MILF in fight vs. illegal drugs in Maguindanao

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 15): Army commander to work with MILF in fight vs. illegal drugs in Maguindanao

BULUAN, Maguindanao -- The new Army division commander in Maguindanao vowed to work closely with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to help address the illegal drug problem in the province.

Major General Carlito Galvez, newly installed commander of the 6th Infantry "Kampilan" Division, said the Army will work with the leadership of MILF "for proper coordination" in law enforcement against illegal drug personalities.

"There is a need for complete cooperation between the government forces and the MILF in running after drug personalities because many of them are in areas where the MILF also operates," Galvez told the Maguindanao Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC) meeting here Wednesday.

Maguindanao Gov. Esmael Toto Mangudadatu as PPOC chair discussed with the council the implementation of state of lawless as declared by President Duterte.

Galvez, who served as chair of the government coordinating committee on the cessation of hostilities before he became 6th ID chief, said coordination is the key in successful police or military operation against lawless elements. The same applies in neutralizing persons in illegal drugs, he added.

As CCCH chair, Galvez has been regularly coordinating with his counterpart in the MILF in the hunt against kidnappers, carnappers and armed lawless elements in areas near MILF camps.

The 6th ID chief cited the vast Liguasan marshland where illegal drug personalities allegedly sought refuge.

He said joint operations against drug personalities will be effective in the marshland since the MILF knows the terrain better.

The Moro rebel group which signed a peace deal with the government in 2014, has publicly declared it was against illegal drugs, calling it "haram" (forbidden) for Muslims. It formed anti-drug teams to eradicate the drug menace in Muslim communities.

Von Al Haq, MILF military spokesperson, has said more than 40 Moro residents who were suspected of having been involved in peddling, using and producing prohibited drugs are now undergoing religious reorientation inside MILF's Camp Darapanan in Maguindanao.

"Illegal drug is the common enemy of both the MILF and the government forces," AlHaq said in a radio interview.

Mangudadatu earlier ordered all local government executives of 36 municipalities to require all government employees in their locality to undergo compulsory drug test.

At the Maguindanao provincial capitol, Mangudadatu ordered surprised drug test in July. The result, 18 employees, mostly job orders and contractual, were found positive of illegal drug use.

Mangudadatu also vowed to work closely with the 6th ID commander in helping the government contain armed groups that made the province haven for terrorists.

The outlawed Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) operates in Maguindanao as well as local terrorist organizations that expressed sympathy to international terrorist organization Islamic State of Iran and Iraq (ISIS)

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=923201

CACGO, 83rd achievers spearhead "Peace Caravan for Change"

From the Philippine Information Agency (Sep 15): CACGO, 83rd achievers spearhead "Peace Caravan for Change"

The Catanduanes Association of Chiefs of Government Offices (CACGO) and Philippine Army unit based in Catanduanes spearheaded an outreach activity dubbed as "Peace Caravan for Change" at Barangay Sabloyon, Caramoran on August 31.

According to CACGO president Joaquin Ed A. Guerrero, the peace caravan brought service package from the different government agencies to the residents of far flung barangays, like Sabloyon.

Thirty-one heads and representatives of national and local agencies joined the caravan wherein 287 school children benefited. Among those who were distributed were slippers, hygiene kit and feeding was also provided by the association.

School supplies from the Army were also distributed and TESDA provided sandwiches and "Libreng Gupit" for 70 school children. In her message during the short program, Mayor Agnes B. Popa of Caramoran thanked members of CACGO and the Army trooper for choosing Sabloyon as the beneficiary of the activity saying that she is looking forward to working with the team in other barangays of Caramoran.

Guerrero, as President of CACGO thanked the Army headed by Battalion Commander Lt. Col Eduardo A. Monjardin for the efforts in identifying the beneficiaries, coordinations with the local and barangay officials, venue preparations and site preparations for the tree planting activity and the preparation of food for the "Boodle fight" activity.

He added that the Army troopers was indeed a great partner in such kind of activity.

Guerrero also thanked the heads of national and local agencies present.

https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/841473773621/cacgo-83rd-achievers-spearhead-peace-caravan-for-change-

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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THE IMPACT of the Sept. 2 bombing in Davao City is being felt far beyond Mindanao as security forces, like this soldier in Cebu City, were put on alert for terror threats. More soldiers guard crowded areas, like bus terminals, airports and seaports, and key installations.

JUNJIE MENDOZA /CEBU DAILY NEWS

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16 September 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

RANGER CAMP VISIT – President Rodrigo Duterte talks to Scout Rangers during his visit to the headquarters of the Army 1st Scout Ranger Regiment in Camp Tecson, San Miguel, Bulacan, on Thursday. The President has been making rounds of military and police camps in the country. (Richard Viñas)

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Palace defends Duterte plan to buy arms from China

By Leila B. Salaverria

A MALACAÑANG official yesterday defended the President's plan to look to China as a source of military equipment despite the Chief Executive's earlier pronouncement questioning its quality of firearms.

Presidential Communications Office Secretary Martin Andanar argued that not everything produced by China is defective.

He said many items Filipinos use are made in China and they have had no problems with them.

"For me, it depends on the product. Maybe the China-made products that the President mentioned were the ones that were defective," he said in a press briefing.

In a speech at the AFP Medical Center last month, President Duterte said firearms sourced from China were substandard or could have been sabotaged.

He made the statement as he promised to procure the best equipment for the soldiers in a government-to-government procurement.

The President's spokesperson, Ernesto Abella, yesterday said that while Mr Duterte had directed defense officials to study the option of sourcing equipment from China or Russia, "they're not closing the options to these two alone."

Abella, noting China's Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin's statement that ties between the two countries were at a "new turning point," said the conversation between the two countries was "friendly."

"You could almost say getting to know you. The whole purpose is to be able to establish warmer relationships," Abella said.

He said he was unaware if there were any preconditions to the two countries' conversation, but said there was an "openness" between them.

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

AFP may be shopping from Russia, China

By **GENALYN D. KABILING**
and **FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD**

The government is still open to shopping for new military weapons in other countries apart from Russia and China, Malacañang said yesterday.

"The President has tasked the defense and military establishment to study the options to source military equipment from either China and/or Russia. But they're not closing the options to these two alone," Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said in a Palace press conference.

Earlier, the President said the government is considering buying military weapons from the two countries since they have offered to provide the country 25-year soft loans. In the past, the Philippines has relied on the United States for most of its weapon acquisition.

Duterte said he has asked Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and the "technical people" from the Armed Forces of the Philippines to visit Russia and China "and see what's best."

Speaking during the 250th Presidential Airlift Wing (PAW) anniversary at Villamor Air Base on Tuesday, Duterte said possible deals with the two countries are in the pipeline.

He said the country needs propeller-driven planes to fight terrorists and insurgents in Mindanao. "I don't need jets, F-16. That's of no use to us," he said. "We don't intend to fight any country."

The President earlier announced a shift to an independent foreign policy even as he assured the government was not cutting alliances with allies.

For his part, Department of National Defense (DND) Public Affairs Service Director Arsenio Andolong said that any plans to buy any equipment from China or Russia would have to undergo the Defense System of Management (DSOM) process.

Meanwhile, Operations against the terrorist group Abu Sayyaf is expected to be boosted with the expected arrival later this month of another C-130 plane from the United States.

Air Force Spokesman Col. Araus Robert Musico, said although he has no information about the exact date on when the plane will arrive, they expect this to be late September.

"Yes, it is expected to arrive but we still don't know the exact date of its arrival. I still have to check it has already flown out of the United States. But the arrival could be the end of the month," Musico said.

He added that the C-130 will also boost the PAF's capability for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) during times of disaster.

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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US troop withdrawal to facilitate Mindanao peace talks – Rody

SAN MIGUEL, Bulacan – The withdrawal of US troops in Mindanao "one day" would help facilitate the peace talks with Muslim rebels, President Duterte said yesterday.

The President explained that Muslims are aware of the atrocities committed by "imperialists and view the rest of the country as an extension of colonial powers."

"They think it's Americans maneuvering. With regard to Mindanao, I never said go out. One day, I might decide that you should leave for now to give us space to talk," he said.

Duterte's clarification came three days after he said that US presence in Mindanao could worsen the security situation in the south.

He said Americans are at risk of being abducted or killed by local terrorist group Abu Sayyaf.

"The special forces, they have to go. There are many whites there," the President said.

"If they see an American, they would kill him. They would demand ransom then kill him. Even if you're a black or white American as long as you are an American, (they will kill you)," he added.

Duterte later on clarified that the Philippines is not cutting its ties with the US and its other allies.

"We are not going to cut our umbilical cord with the countries we are allied with," Duterte said on Tuesday.

"But certainly, we will follow an independent posture and independent foreign policy," he added.

In a budget hearing on Wednesday, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana told House members that US troops would remain in Mindanao to assist Filipino soldiers.

"We still need them there because they have the surveillance capability that our Armed Forces don't have," Lorenzana said.

There are 107 American soldiers in Zamboanga City conducting surveillance operations. The Constitution prohibits foreign troops from engaging in combat operations.

Duterte's delivered his statement on American troops after US officials expressed concerns over his brutal drug war, which has resulted in the deaths of close to 3,000 suspected drug offenders.

– Alexis Romero

16 September 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Militants protest vs American forces, EDCA

By CAMCER ORDONEZ IMAM

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY – Progressive groups are asking President Rodrigo Duterte to order the total withdrawal of the remaining American troops in the country and for the scrapping of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) in time for the 25th anniversary of the abolition of the Military Bases Agreement in 1991.

Wildon Barros, spokesman of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Northern Mindanao Region (Bayan-NMR), said a multi-sectoral protest action takes place today at the Magsaysay Park to oppose the presence and intervention of the US forces in the country.

The protesters will come from the ranks of workers, farmers, women, students, professional, urban poor, and the religious coming from Misamis Oriental, Bukidnon and this city.

Bayan-NMR, in a statement, said Duterte's recent pronouncement gives high hope to all patriotic Kagayanons who have been opposing the installation of military base in Lumbia airport for the EDCA.

The group said the presence of the American soldiers "only brought atrocities, abuses, and death to the Filipinos" and considered it an affront to national sovereignty.

Bayan-NMR noted the US troops were stationed in Mindanao under the Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines even without a legislative approval from the Senate.

"This blatantly violated the Philippines' constitutional ban on foreign military bases lacking any Senate concurrence," it said.

"Hence, we are hopeful that the President would take immediate actions to abrogate EDCA and stop all the installation of new US military bases, not only in Lumbia airport, but all over the country," it added.

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MANILA BULLETIN
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Ormoc eyed as Balikatan venue

ORMOC CITY, Leyte — A group of American and Filipino soldiers visited this city on Wednesday to talk about bringing the Balikatan military exercises in the city next year.

Ormoc Mayor Richard Gomez is supporting the proposal.

The Balikatan is designed to the relationship between the Philippines and the US armed forces through crisis-action planning, humanitarian assistance, enhanced training to counter terrorism and promote inter-operability of the forces.

Capt. Louis Kalmar, humanitarian and civic assistance planner of the Balikatan program, said aside from the enhanced military training, the exercises will have a medical mission and humanitarian assistance as a civic component.

The participants will build or repair new school buildings and toilets in classrooms, provide books and learning materials to the students.

Asked if the move of President Rodrigo Duterte to pull out the US Armed Forces in Mindanao will affect the planned Balikatan, Gomez said that "since the move to pull them out is not yet final, it is best to push through with the initial talks to do Balikatan here."

"What will benefit most the people of Ormoc, will always be my priority," he said.

Kalmar said they will return to Ormoc in December to finalize the Balikatan 2017 plans.

Balikatan is a Tagalog word meaning "shoulder-to-shoulder." The exercises have been the cornerstone of Philippines–US military relations since the US bases in the Philippines closed. (PNA)

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16 September 2016

Balita
Ang Nangungunang Pahayagang Tagalog sa Bansa ₱6.00

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CHINESE MILITARY BASE SA ZAMBALES SINISIYASAT

Ni MARIO B. CASAYURAN

Inatasan kahapon ng Senate Blue Ribbon committee ang Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) na humarap sa Senado upang magpaliwanag sa mga akusasyon na ginamit ng China ang mga bato at lupa mula sa dalawang bundok sa Sta. Cruz, Zambales para makapagtayo ng sekretong 3,500-ektaryang military base na may operational missiles sa Scarborough Shoal.

Ito ang inihayag ni Sen. Richard Gordon, committee chairman, kaugnay ng isang "very serious" na alegasyon ni Zambales Gov. Amor D. Deloso na idinulog sa komite ng senador tungkol sa paggamit umanong palusot ng maiimpluwensiyang tao sa mga small scale mining permit "to gather the soil of Zambales and level the mountains and put in Scarborough.""

Iginiit ni Deloso na ang Scarborough ay "converted into 3,500 hectares of reclaimed area and China built an airport and a missile station."

"Which explains why two US warships are guarding the area," anang gobernador.

Sinabing inakala ng mga taga-Zambales na ang mga permit ay para lamang sa pagmimina ng nickel, iginiit ni Deloso na batay sa mga record ng lalawigan, nasa 999 truck ang naghakot ng mga lupa at batong panambak mula sa Sta. Cruz "night and day for almost two years."

Hulyo 1 nang naluklok si Deloso bilang gobernador ng Zambales, kapalit ni dating Gov. Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr. na bigong makadalo sa pagdinig ng komite ni Gordon bagamat kinatawan ng abogado nito.

Sinabi ni Gordon na handa siyang magsagawa ng isang closed door session sa AFP at DFA kaugnay ng usapin, dahil ang sinasabing konstruksiyon at pagpapalawak ng China sa Scarborough Shoal ay malinaw na paglabag sa desisyon ng United Nations arbitral court na nagpapawalang-bisa sa nine-dash line claim ng Beijing.

Sa nasabing desisyon ng arbitral tribunal, iginawad nito sa Pilipinas ang pagmamay-ari sa Scarborough Shoal at sa iba pang pinag-aagawang teritoryo sa South China Sea na nasa exclusive economic zone (EZZ) ng bansa.

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16 September 2016

The Manila Times

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Japan tries to decode Duterte on US stand

TOKYO: A day after the Philippine President said he plans to halt joint maritime patrols with foreign navies, Japan's government was trying to make sense of developments, with one senior official saying Tokyo will persevere with a nuanced approach to ties.

The assertion by President Rodrigo Duterte was the latest in a string of comments suggesting that he will rewire his nation's security relationships, despite

▶DecodeA2

■DECODE FROM A1

Japan tries to decode Duterte

assertions by other government officials that no fuses have blown.

On Tuesday, Duterte told Filipino troops that they will no longer conduct joint patrols with the United States or other countries, citing the risk of triggering conflict in disputed waters. The US initiated such maneuvers this year, before Duterte's election to office.

The President also said Manila may look at buying military equipment from China and Russia after being offered soft loans payable years from now. He instructed his defense secretary to visit both nations and see what is available.

Despite the heated rhetoric, he told the military audience he does not plan to sever ties with Washington. But the comments came on the heels of a pledge to kick out US special forces from the southern island of Mindanao, where they have spent more than a decade supporting offensives against Islamist separatists.

The State Department on Monday characterized some of Duterte's recent comments as "unhelpful," but added that the US commitment remains unchanged.

"We still believe in the importance of this bilateral relationship," spokesman John Kirby said.

On Wednesday, a senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official said Tokyo and Washington "share the same goal" in the Philippines but take different approaches, as there are some things that Manila can only accept when Japan provides them.

"The US and Japan continue to share information and continue to work together," the official said. "Because we have the same goal, we can divide our roles."

Washington and Tokyo have pushed adherence to the "rule of law" for settling maritime disputes, usually in pointed references to rows in both the South and East China seas.

On September 6, Tokyo agreed to give the Philippines two large patrol vessels and lease its five TC-90 surveillance planes. Japan is also supplying 10 smaller coastal patrol vessels, the first of which was delivered on August 18.

Defense Minister Tomomi Inada hailed the latest agreement, saying it is important to send support to the Philippines to strengthen Japan's own defense capabilities.

She was expected to set off for Washington on Wednesday night.

Meanwhile, one regional affairs analyst in the Philippines said Duterte's cessation of joint maritime patrols could lead to a sharp improvement in ties with Beijing.

"He knows that if we keep on patrolling we cannot get the islands anyway, and we will continue to antagonize the Chinese," Benito Lim of Ateneo de Manila University said. "In the meantime, there are many good things that we can enter into with China, such as trade and economic relations."

Attention is now focusing on how ties between Beijing and Manila will develop. Lim believes Chinese President Xi Jinping will offer a deal that dodges the question of island sovereignty.

"Probably the most we can get is to ask that they allow our fishermen to have fishing rights in those places," he said.

Lim said that since Japan and the US are the Philippines' top two trading partners — determining which is No. 1 depends on the measurement — neither should be worried by Duterte's apparent shake-up of ties with China.

"It involves economics, and it should be a win-win situation," he said. **TNS**

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16 September 2016

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

Rody assumes 'full legal responsibility'

By ALEXIS ROMERO

SAN MIGUEL, Bulacan – Amid allegations that he ordered the killing of several criminals, President Duterte stressed yesterday that he is ready to be jailed "alone" for waging a bloody war against illegal drugs.

Addressing members of the Army's 1st Scout Ranger Regiment, Duterte said security forces should not worry about facing charges when running after drug offenders.

"In accordance with my order, I will assume full legal responsibility and I will go to jail alone. That's the guarantee I can give you," Duterte said.

"For all the things you do that are connected with your work, I will take charge. I am ready to be imprisoned," he added.

Paolo Duterte: All hearsay from a madman. Story on Page 11.

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Rody

From Page 1

Duterte issued the remarks hours after Edgar Matobato accused Duterte of ordering the killing of several criminals when he was mayor of Davao City.

In yesterday's hearing of the Senate committee on justice chaired by Sen. Leila de Lima, Matobato said he was a member of the Davao Death Squad and that President Duterte formed the DDS to kill suspected criminals.

But the President did not make any reference to the Senate hearing during his speech, which lasted for more than 38 minutes.

Duterte said that he was a favorite "whipping boy" in Davao City because of his aggressive campaign against drugs. He said there was even a time when he opposed the relief of police officials who carried out his anti-drug crackdown.

"Twenty-seven generals were recommended for dismissal...I almost waged a revolution. I did not allow it to happen. Son of a whore, don't give me that b**lis**t," the President said.

"Just do your job and we're okay," he added.

Officials said there are about 3.7 million drug addicts in the Philippines, prompting Duterte to elevate the problem into a national security issue.

He has tapped the military to assist in addressing the drug problem, which he said has reached "epidemic" proportions.

Close to 3,000 suspected drug offenders have been slain, about half of them in law enforcement operations, since Duterte assumed office last June 30.

Security officials claimed the more than 1,000 people who were killed by policemen resisted arrest.

Duterte reminded policemen and soldiers anew to shoot drug lords when they feel that their lives are in danger. He is also planning to come up with a reward system for law enforcers who will kill drug lords.

Presidential communications secretary Martin Andanar said he believes Duterte did not order the killings contrary to the allegations of Matobato.

"Do I think, he is capable? No. I don't think he is capable of giving a directive like that," Andanar said.

"That has been investigated before by the Commission on Human Rights, when the President was still mayor (of Davao City). No charges were filed and they did not see any evidence," he added.

In a press briefing, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella cautioned the public to carefully weigh the statements of the witness.

"After all, people do make statements every day and while this person may sound credible, it is imperative that each and everyone of us properly weigh whatever he said and respond right," he said.

He also maintained that the administration's "platform is the desire to have a peaceful, crime-free, corruption-free nation... and this vision is not changed."

"The President continues to exercise political will and I believe we should, we all need to continue rallying around the desire to have a nation that is a nation for everyone, and that there's space for everyone," he added.

Nograles: Witness is a 'liar'

Former speaker Prospero Nograles and his son Davao City Rep. Karlo Nograles also denied the statement of Matobato that the DDS killed four of their bodyguards.

The Dutertes and Nograleses have been political enemies until Duterte aspired for and won the presidency. The elder Nograles lost the mayoral post in Davao City twice to Duterte.

"As far as I know, there's not a single incident that any of my staff or security personnel who were assigned to me while I was still in politics was killed even when I ran for mayor in 2010. They are all alive up to now," the older Nograles said in a statement.

"Furthermore, witness could have asked speaker's protection when I was at the height of power and could have gotten legislative protection program, security safe house etc. But he did not!" he added. – **Jess Diaz, Ghio Ong, Edith Regalado, Delon Porcalla**

16 September 2016

The 2016 Metrobank Foundation Outstanding Filipinos pose with President Duterte during a ceremony at Malacañang last Sept. 12. Joining them are Metrobank Group chairman George S.K. Ty (8th from left, bottom row), Metrobank Foundation president Aniceto Sobrepeña (7th from left, bottom row) and Federal Land president Alfred Ty (7th from right, bottom row). Story on Page 15.

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Dapat palitan ni Duterte ang DND Sec. at si Sec. Andanar

Mr. Venancio, dapat kay Pres. Duterte ay mga maka-komunista lahat ang kunin niya, palitan niya ang Sec. of National Depense ng maka-komunista pati si Martin Andanar ay palitan din niya ng maka-komunista para kung ano ang napapahayag niya ay hindi na nila dinidipensahan pa o binabago pa. Nagmumukha tuloy tanga si Pres. Duterte sa ginagawa nilang pagdidipensa sa mga nasabi na ng Presidente. Alam naman nilang maka-komunista si Duterte kaya dapat lahat ng binibitiwang salita ni Duterte ay aayunan nila. Dahil kakampihan naman ng Russia at China si Duterte pag humiwalay na talaga sa America si Duterte. Dahil mapapakinabangan nila ang Pilipinas laban sa America at mapapaayos na kaagad nila ang ginagawa nilang mga base militar sa sakop ng Pilipinas. - **Concerned citizen**

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ONLINE NEWS
16 SEPTEMBER 2016

Military projects open to all proponents regardless of country of origin, says defense dept.

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 15): Military projects open to all proponents regardless of country of origin, says defense dept.

Military projects must be open to all bidders regardless of their country of origin, the Department of National Defense (DND) public affairs office chief Arsenio Andolong said Wednesday.

This is stipulated under Republic Act (RA) 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act, he said.

"One important point I have to make is under Republic Act 9184, we must open our projects for bidding to all proponents, regardless of their country of origin. We do not and cannot limit it to our traditional allies only," Andolong pointed out.

The Philippines has traditionally sourced its military equipment from the US, Israel, South Korea, and Japan, to name a few.

The DND official made the statement after President Rodrigo Duterte announced that Chinaand Russia have agreed to provide armaments and other weaponry to the Armed Forces of the Philippines for its counter-insurgency campaign.

Andolong earlier said that RA 9184 dictates that "we must not limit possible sources of our materiel to only a few countries as this will rob us of the opportunity to acquire what could be the best equipment".

He said technical working groups of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines have been conducting market research on new hardware and technologies from many countries, includingRussia and China.

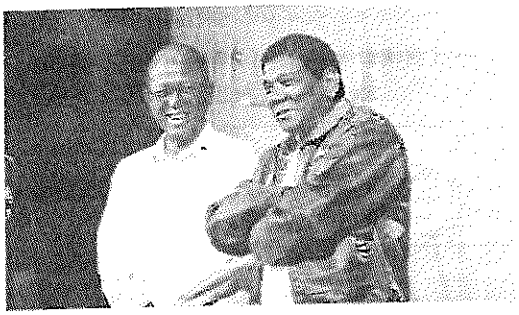
"For the record, we also looked at the offerings from Sweden, Germany and France," Andolong said.

"Of course, there are other considerations, such as cost,inter-operability with our existing equipment and personnel capacity," he pointed out.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=923205

Duterte on US troops: 'I never said go out'

From Rappler (Sep 15): **Duterte on US troops: 'I never said go out'**



ANOTHER CLARIFICATION. President Duterte with Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana. File photo by Franz Lopez/Rappler

President Rodrigo Duterte clarified his earlier statement on wanting United States troops to stay out of Mindanao.

Duterte said he doesn't want them out of the region right away, but that he might want them out once peace talks between the government and Moro separatist groups are underway.

"I never said 'go out.' One day, I might decide, *alis muna kayo* (you leave first) to give us space to talk," said Duterte on Thursday, September 15, during a military camp visit in Bulacan.

Last Monday, Duterte had said, "*Kaya 'yang mga special forces* (Those special forces), they have to go. They have to go," (READ: Duterte: US troops should stay out of Mindanao)

He had then explained that American troops in Mindanao would make the situation there more tense and could endanger the lives of "white" people in the region.

But in his Thursday speech, he said the presence of US troops would make it hard for the Mindanao peace process to proceed.

He said this was the sentiment expressed by Moro separatist groups to his camp. Right after elections, Duterte claimed to have sent one of his sons to "talk peace" with Moro groups in Mindanao.

"Right after elections, I personally sent my son. ***Gusto ko makipag-usap ng peace...Sabi nila, for as long as nandiyan Amerikano sa likod ng government niyo, 'di kami makikipag-usap,***" said Duterte. (I wanted to talk peace...They said, for as long as the Americans are behind your government, we won't engage in talks.)

Duterte said such groups still think the Philippine government's acts are backed up by "Americans' maneuvering."

Duterte has also been speaking with Moro Islamic Liberation Front leader Al Haj Murad Ebrahim and Moro National Liberation Front leader Nur Misuari.

The strong anti-American sentiment of these groups, Duterte said, comes from the abuses and violence perpetrated by American troops to quell Moro insurgents at the start of the 20th century.

Recently, Duterte has been showing images of the bloody aftermath of the Bud Dajo massacre in which around 600 Moros were killed by Americans in Sulu.

He also made headlines worldwide recently for calling US President Barack Obama for not answering for these past atrocities.

Despite this, the President assured the troops, "I'm not against the Americans."

Duterte also criticized "pretend-to-know announcers" who think massacres of Moros in the American colonial period are no longer relevant.

"It is not one century ago. The fighting is now one century old! They fall short of their projection. *Kaya hanggang ngayon, they see us as an extension of the Spaniards, the Americans. Ang tingin nila, we are the extension of a series of imperialism,*" said Duterte. (That's why until now, they see us as an extension of the Spaniards, the Americans. In their view, we are the extension of a series of imperialism.)

Peace in Mindanao was among Duterte's major campaign promises.

The Philippine government resumed talks with the MILF last August in Malaysia. Duterte hopes to meet with MNLF leader Misuari about the peace process.

A new Bangsamoro Basic Law is among the Duterte administration's list of priority legislative measures.

http://www.rappler.com/nation/146361-duterte-clarifies-statement-us-troops

PAF's 5th C-130 cargo aircraft plane to arrive last week of September

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 15): **PAF's 5th C-130 cargo aircraft plane to arrive last week of September**

The Philippine Air Force (PAF)'s fifth Lockheed C-130 "Hercules" cargo aircraft will arrive by the last week of September, according to PAF spokesperson Araus Robert Musico in a message to the PNA Thursday.

"The aircraft will arrive last week of this month. I don't have the exact date yet," he said in Filipino.

The fourth C-130 arrived at the Benito Ebuen Airbase, Mactan, Cebu last April 5.

It was flown by Filipino pilots headed by Col. Alejando Baclayon, Lt. Col. Ian Earth Lamzon, Major Ian Dexter Danes, Major Anthony Amora, and Major Ramil Daet.

The two C-130s are worth USD61 million and were acquired through the US Excess Defense Article Program.

"Remember, if we need to move a big number of troops and supplies (especially) heavy equipment for rapid deployment, it will be much easier as we have additional (C-130) aircraft," Musico earlier said.

Originally, these two C-130Ts were configured for tanker missions and were later converted for transport missions before being acquired by the Philippines.

Aside from the four C-130s, the PAF has three Airbus Military C-295 medium and three Fokker F-27 transports for its logistics and lift missions.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=823804