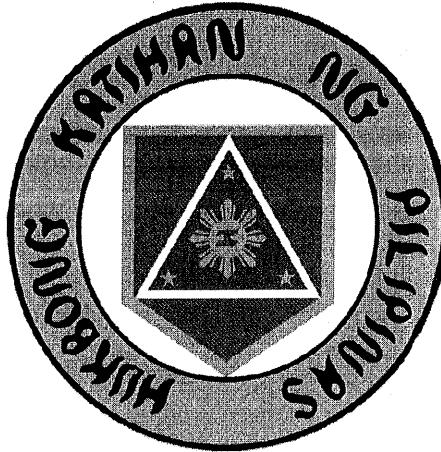


By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.



TEAM ARMY

Serving the people. Securing the land.

oacpa.army2012@gmail.com
OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

18 March 2019

Monday



Honor. Patriotism. Duty

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

18 MARCH 2019

| Weather Forecast- http://pagasa.dost.gov.ph/weather/daily-weather-forecast | | |
|---|--|--|
| Page Nr. | Title | Source |
| NATIONAL NEWS | | |
| 1-2 | PH exit won't stop ICC probe-complainant | PDI-A1 |
| 3-5 | 'Water supply 80% restored' | P Star-1 |
| AFP/ SECURITY RELATED NEWS | | |
| 6 | Locsin weighs in on PH-US treaty | M Standard-A1 |
| 7 | PH deploys patrol aircraft from Japan | PDI-A9 |
| 8 | Army welcomes first female brigade commander | P Star-1 |
| 9 | Marines intercept boat with 37 sacks of ammonium nitrate | M Bulletin-18 |
| 10 | Successful Davao Day celebration | D Tribune-7 |
| 11 | Soldiers display weapons in PA's 122 nd caravan | P Journal-7 |
| 12 | Face-painted soldiers in full battle gear instant hit in Cabanatuan military caravan | P Tonight-13 |
| 13 | Peace office to give P500-M aid to ex-rebels | M Times-A7 |
| 14 | Tribesmen finger terrorists 'secret' lair | D Tribune-7 |
| 15 | US gov't helping confirm Abu Dar's death | PDI-A10 |
| 16 | 2 Marine troopers hurt in Abu clash | P Star-14 |
| 17 | Suspected AKP member nabbed in South Cotabato | M Bulletin-18 |
| 18 | Dar slain in Lanao Sur clash? | D Tribune-7 |
| 19 | 'BIFF behind grenade throwing at Cafgu post' | M Times-A7 |
| 20 | Duterte to attend BARMM inauguration | M Bulletin-18 |
| 21 | Syrian preacher shot dead in new BARMM territory | M Bulletin-18 |
| EDITORIAL/ COMMENTARY | | |
| 22-23 | Why development should guide any US-PH MDT review | M Times-A4 |
| 24 | Paalala vs. terrorist recruitment sa social media | Balita-6 |
| ONLINE NEWS | | |
| 25-26 | Army discovers CPP-NPA 'hideout' in Bukidnon | www.pna.gov.ph |

118

March 2019

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

Page: 11

PH EXIT WON'T STOP ICC PROBE-COMPLAINANT

STORY BY DJ YAP

The Philippines' pullout from the only court that tries crimes against humanity takes effect, but lawyer Jude Josue Sabio says that will not stop the tribunal from trying President Duterte for the killings in his war on drugs.

A4

FROM A1

By DJ Yap
@deejayapINQ

The Philippines' withdrawal from the International Criminal Court (ICC) cannot prevent the tribunal from ordering the arrest and trying President Duterte for the thousands of killings in his brutal war on drugs, according to lawyer Jude Josue Sabio.

By the same token, all hope is not lost for the families of the victims of state crimes, as the next administration can reverse the country's pullout from the Rome Statute, Sabio said, referring to the founding document of The Hague-based tribunal that tries state leaders for war crimes and genocide.

"Even after effectivity, the withdrawal has no effect on any pending cases," said Sabio, who brought charges against Mr. Duterte in the ICC for crimes against humanity.

Reversible

The withdrawal itself "can be reversed once the leadership changes," Sabio told the Inquirer in a phone interview on Sunday.

Mr. Duterte withdrew the Philippines from the Rome Statute last year after ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda opened a "preliminary examination" of

the information that Sabio had brought to determine whether there were grounds to launch a preliminary investigation.

The withdrawal took effect on Sunday, making the Philippines the second nation to quit the world's only permanent war crimes tribunal.

The first was Burundi, which withdrew from the court in October 2017 but the pullout did not stop the tribunal from investigating Burundi state agents responsible for crimes against humanity committed against the country's citizens during the nation's membership in the ICC.

Under ICC rules, any matter under consideration before a nation leaves the court is still under its jurisdiction.

Mr. Duterte has made it clear his government will not cooperate with the ICC in any way.

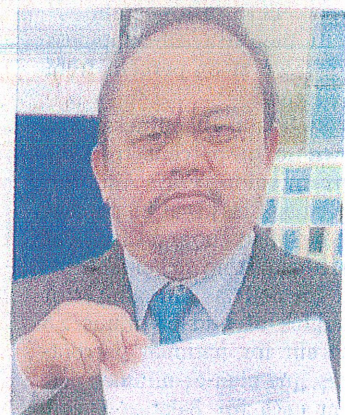
The "court can never acquire jurisdiction over my person. Not in a million years," he said in a speech on Wednesday.

Illegal killings

The preliminary examination zeroes in on allegations the government has been involved in illegal killings as part of Mr. Duterte's war on drugs.

Police say they have killed 5,176 users or pushers who resisted arrest, but rights groups say the actual number of dead is at least triple that number.

Critics have alleged the



Jude Josue Sabio

crackdown amounts to a war on the poor that feeds the undercurrent of impunity and lawlessness in the country.

The human rights group Karapatan said on Sunday that it had documented rights violations committed even before the country's withdrawal from the ICC took effect.

Karapatan secretary general Roneo Clamor said abuses could worsen after the withdrawal and that rights defenders had begun to fear for their lives.

In a statement released on Saturday night, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) said the Philippines' pullout from the ICC was a loss for the Filipino people and a win for impunity.

"It is the Filipino people who [are] bound to lose when they no longer have the recourse in

times when [the] local justice system fail[s to protect] them. It is then impunity that wins as a consequence of withdrawal," CHR spokesperson Jacqueline de Guia said.

Arrest order

Sabio is still waiting for the office of the ICC prosecutor to formally investigate Mr. Duterte and his lieutenants, assuming it finds cause to do so after an examination of documentary evidence.

Earlier, he suggested in interviews that the ICC appeared inclined to investigate the Philippine leader after an official contacted him to inquire about his witnesses.

If the investigation began, he said, it would mean "we're a step closer to the confirmation of charges, we're a step closer to a warrant" of arrest against Mr. Duterte.

The tribunal has the power to issue either a warrant of arrest or a summons to appear to respondents in cases under investigation even before the official filing of charges, he said.

As the Philippines' withdrawal from the ICC took effect on Sunday, Sabio remained optimistic that the ICC prosecutor would upgrade the status of his complaint from initial examination to a formal investigation.

The opposition in the Senate asked the Supreme Court to nul-

lify Mr. Duterte's order to withdraw, but the tribunal failed to resolve the petition before Sunday.

Administration ally Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on justice and human rights, on Sunday also said the withdrawal would not save Mr. Duterte from prosecution in the ICC.

"You cannot be discharged, by reason of withdrawal, from your obligations arising from the statute while [the country] was a party to the statute," Gordon said in a radio interview.

"That means if you committed crimes, you may still be prosecuted," he said. "For me, I think if you really committed crimes, then you're still under the jurisdiction of [the ICC]."

Gordon said Mr. Duterte's claim that he was merely joking when he threatened certain individuals regarding his war on drugs would not protect him from indictment for violating domestic laws after his six-year term ended.

"I told the President several times, 'Do not fall on your sword because anything you say, even if you were just joking, may be used against you later on when you're no longer in power,'" Gordon said.

"Murder is murder in our country. Remember, whoever you may be, once you have relinquished your position [in the government], you're just an ordinary citizen," he said.

Gordon, however, said he

agreed with Mr. Duterte's decision to withdraw the Philippines from the ICC.

"Why will I join [the ICC] when I have nothing to gain from it?" Gordon said, pointing out that even the United States and other big countries did not ratify the Rome Statute.

Face the charges

Detained Sen. Leila de Lima said Mr. Duterte's decision to pull out of the ICC was proof of his complicity in the drug war killings.

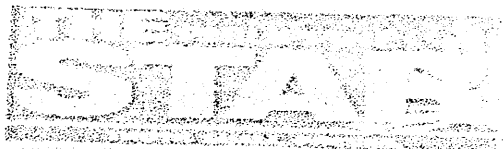
Mr. Duterte, she said, should stop "hiding [behind] his men" by answering the allegations brought against him in the ICC.

The Philippines' exit follows a string of setbacks for the ICC, including the January acquittal of former Ivory Coast leader Laurent Gbagbo and the June 2018 not guilty verdict for former DR Congo Vice President Jean-Pierre Bemba.

In a wave of unprecedented defections, other African nations—Zambia, South Africa, Kenya and Gambia—have all made moves to quit or expressed interest in withdrawing as they accused the court of being biased against Africans.

But earlier in March, the court got a boost when Malaysia officially joined, making it one of just a handful of Asian members.

—WITH REPORTS FROM MARLON RAMOS, PATRICIA DENISE M. CHIU AND AFP INQ



'Water supply 80% restored'

Palace finalizing water executive order

By CATHERINE TALAVERA

The water shortage situation in Metro Manila is seen to improve in the next weeks as concessionaire Manila Water reported that it has restored supply to about 80 percent of its customers as of Friday.

This improvement came after it started imposing a rotational water supply scheme on Thursday.

"They already have water in their taps. This translates to over one million households.

"challenges in some pocket areas of Quezon City and portions of Mandaluyong."

"But most of those that had no water in the past days in Mandaluyong already have water in their taps," Galang

Congress joint panel starts probe today. Story on Page 12.

This can only get better in the coming weeks, in the coming months as we have observed. We implemented this new scheme beginning Thursday afternoon and we've been seeing marked improvements," said Dittie Galang, Manila Water's communications planning and tactical development manager.

Although the service has been restored in most of Manila Water's area of coverage, she admitted that the firm has

said, although she qualified that the water pressure customers are receiving may not be as strong as in previous months.

On Friday, Manila Water assured customers that its 20-hour water interruptions would not last throughout summer as it cited the initial positive effects of the rotational water supply scheme.

"Levels of various reservoirs have started to increase

Turn to Page 12

and water supply, though still at low pressure in some areas, is slowly being distributed to severely affected barangays. These operational adjustments are a temporary measure that Manila Water is undertaking to balance the water supply distribution in its concession area... Manila Water continues to make calibrations in these adjustments to ensure that extended service interruptions will not last for the entire summer," the company said in a statement.

The water firm earlier announced it would implement a water interruption scheme with a more definitive schedule as it aims to stabilize the distribution of available supply and help slow down the rapid decline of the water level at La Mesa Dam, which is its reserve resource.

After maximizing its allocation from Angat Dam at 1,600 million liters per day, Manila Water turns to La Mesa Dam for additional supply.

Aside from this, it is also prioritizing the energization of the water treatment plant in Cardona, Rizal, which is part of the Rizal Province Water Supply Improvement Project, as among its immediate solutions to cope with the surging demand.

"The project is now delivering an initial 22 million liters per day and is expected to produce up to 50 million liters per day by mid-April," it said.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) also said tapping deep wells could be part of the short-term solutions to address the current water crisis.

Meanwhile, the MWSS is calling an inter-agency meeting today to discuss the execution of San Miguel Corp. (SMC)'s offer to help and use its untapped water allocation from Angat Dam.

"To operationalize SMC's offer to help deliver 140 million liters of clean, treated water to areas affected by the shortage, MWSS administrator Reynaldo Velasco is calling for a special meeting among top officials of Manila Water, Maynilad, Bulacan Bulk Water, concerned LGUs, the Bureau of Fire, Association of Volunteer Fire Chiefs and Firefighters of the Philippines on Monday to map out saturation operations over the next two weeks," MWSS said in a statement.

On Friday, SMC announced that, through its Bulacan Bulk Water Treatment Plant, it hopes to be able to deliver 140 million liters of clean, treated water to areas affected by the shortage upon coordination with, and approval by the MWSS.

Velasco lauded SMC for its "willingness to help find a long-term solution to the water problem and contributing to government's efforts to develop new water sources to prevent a similar crisis from happening again."

He added that the agency's "ABC" Projects which aims to

generate alternative sources of water with a combined capacity to 1,950 MLD is now in the pipeline. These involve the optimization of the untapped 800 MLD from Angat-Norzagaray river, 350 MLD from Bayabas Dam and 800 MLD from the Candaba impounding dam—SMC projects that will secure water security in Metro Manila.

"This situation is unfortunate and dire for many of our countrymen who do not have access to basic water. Many are affected: households, hospitals, schools, businesses. Right now, the best thing we can do is to pull together and help each other," Ang earlier said.

He added that the undertaking, will not be easy since an estimated 14,000 truck trips per day using 10-kiloliter tankers or 7,000 trips per day using 20 kl tankers are needed to deliver clean water.

In January, SMC operationalized Stage 1 of its Bulacan Bulk Water Project, which can supply water to 24 Bulacan water districts. Ang explained that currently, the project has a production capacity of 200 million liters per day. However, as many water districts have yet to upgrade and prepare their facilities to receive water from the BBWSP, only about 60 million liters per day are currently being utilized.

"This leaves an excess capacity of about 140 million liters per day, which is enough to serve the average daily requirements of two million people or about 455,000 households. As a quick response to the situation of customers of Manila Water, we will coordinate with MWSS and local government units to secure permits to place water refilling stations in affected areas," Ang said.

Among the affected areas are: Mandaluyong (all barangays), San Juan (five barangays), Pasig (seven barangays), Angono (three barangays), Antipolo (10 barangays), Taytay (three barangays) and Binangonan (12 barangays).

Integrated water resource management

Officials are finalizing an executive order that seeks to address the water crisis and proposes to turn the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) into a body that will craft policies on water-related issues, Malacañang said yesterday.

Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles said the proposed EO, which will cover the components of integrated water resource management, was discussed during a Cabinet Assistance System meeting in Leyte last Friday.

"I believe the different agencies agree on the problems that need to be resolved to prevent the sort of water supply management issues now being experienced in Metro Manila. At this point we have built a consensus on how we can address these issues, but the

recommendations as outlined in the EO will still be subject to the approval of the President," Nograles said in a statement.

The proposed EO aims to reconstitute the NWRB into a body that will craft policies, set directions and integrate all state efforts on water-related concerns. Nograles said the body might be placed under the Office of the President. The NWRB was placed under the supervision of the environment department in 2002 by Executive Order No. 123.

"Given the scope and breadth of water-related concerns, the supervision of OP could help ensure that all 30-plus agencies involved in water resource management are on the same page," Nograles said.

The body would also be tasked to come up with a national water management master plan that would integrate all relevant and existing plans and roadmaps of different agencies involved in water resource management.

Nograles said representatives

of the agencies discussing the water issues were "focused on finding solutions to the problem instead of dwelling on its roots."

"They know that to address the problems of our countrymen, it is better to help each other rather than point fingers. I believe that this is the approach to take with any challenge facing our country," he added.

There are at least 32 agencies involved in the water sector. Nograles previously said the Cabinet Assistance System is working on issues like the limited implementation of integrated water resources management in many of the country's river basins and watersheds, which results in wastage and uncoordinated plans and programs, quantifying the extent of water sector issues, and access to safe water supplies.

Earlier, President Duterte ordered the MWSS to demand from water utilities Manila Water and Maynilad and the offices involved in water management to release water from Angat Dam to supply Metro Manila areas that are experiencing water shortage. Agencies were also directed to deliver sufficient water to the affected residents.

-- With Alexis Romero

Locsin weighs in on PH-US treaty

"IN vagueness lies the best deterrence," Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin said as he commented on the almost seven-decade-old Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States during his joint press conference with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo after their meeting last week.

Locsin said he was confident about the assurances given by Pompeo, and that there was no need to review or modify the treaty, according to a Manila-based think tank.

Locsin's remarks implied that the long-standing US-Philippines alliance

Next page

Locsin...

From A1

remained strong despite the apparent growing influence of China in the Philippines, said Dindo Manhit, president of Stratbase Albert del Rosario Institute.

Since President Rodrigo Duterte assumed office in 2016, he had put aside the landmark Hague ruling in exchange for economic grants from Beijing, investments and expanded trade, which had been described as a "policy of appeasement," Manhit said.

In his recent visit to Manila, Pompeo offered fresh assurances to the Filipinos that the US was ready to defend the Philippines "in case of armed attack on Philippine forces, aircraft or public vessels in the South China Sea."

That was the first open affirmation of American military commitment of support to Philippine sovereignty over the South China Sea.

The treaty provides that the Philippines and the United States will come to each other's aid in case of armed attacks.

Pompeo said China's island-building and military activities in the South China Sea threatened Philippine sovereignty, security and economic livelihood, as well as that of the United States.

There were concerns and apprehensions in the past on the commitment of the US to defend the Philippines amid the tensions in the South China Sea as a result of the belligerent stance of China.

However, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana was not convinced that the ambiguity and vagueness of the treaty with the US would serve as a deterrent. He said it would cause confusion and chaos during a crisis.

Lorenzana directed lawyers from his department several weeks ago to review the Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States, with the objective of either "maintain[ing] it, strengthen[ing] it or scrap[ping] it."

Contrary to the pro-China stance of the Duterte administration, a Social Weather Station survey last year showed that six in 10 Filipinos believed the US would defend the Philippines in case of an invasion by another country.

Among those aware of the treaty even before the survey, 80 percent believed that the US would defend the Philippines in case of an invasion. Of the 80 percent, 48 percent strongly believed and 32 percent somewhat believed, SWS said.

"As our only treaty ally, the US remains invaluable to us, and we need to recognize the significance and importance of this alliance. That said, we also need to recognize that we are required to

strengthen our own defense and security capabilities, former Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario said in a statement.

Manhit said in Southeast Asia, the US had a unique opportunity to enhance its cooperation. As countries in the region had intense interest in curbing the spread of terror and the challenge of radicalization above and beyond maritime security, there would be a continuing demand for international cooperation, he said.

Moreover, there is no real substitute for the support of the US or its allies in this domain, making it an especially important window of opportunity for the US to showcase what it can offer, according to Manhit.

"Nevertheless, as different countries have different assessments of their internal threats, the US defense approach may need to be more multifaceted if it wants to use defense engagement as a way to get more states to support its continued presence, Manhit said.

Stratbase ADR Institute has consistently said that for the Philippines to promote a rules-based order, the country must reach out to its allies and Asean partners to create political and economic structures that best secure the region's future.

"It behooves the Filipinos to finally be provided this specific assurance which we rightly deserve, Del Rosario said

PH deploys patrol aircraft from Japan

By Jeannette I. Andrade
@jiandradeINQ

The Philippine Navy will start deploying this week one of five patrol aircraft donated last year by the Japanese government.

Tools, spare parts

On Tuesday, the Philippine Air Force (PAF) will formally receive Bell UH-1 helicopter spare parts and maintenance equipment from Japan.

On Monday, the Philippine

Navy will activate one of the five Beechcraft King Air C-90 aircraft donated by the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF).

Philippine Navy spokesperson Lt. Sahirul Taib said the activation of the C-90 aircraft would be held on Monday at the Naval Air Group headquarters in Sangley Point, Cavite City.

Taib said the C-90 was donated by the JMSDF to the Philippines and included the equipment, tools and spare

parts necessary to service the aircraft.

Initially leased

Japan would also provide training for the pilots and maintenance crew of the aircraft.

The five C-90 aircraft were initially leased to the Philippines for \$28,000 annually under a five-year agreement between Japan and the Philippines for use in maritime patrols.

But when the delivery of the aircraft was completed in

March 2018, the Japanese government opted to donate them instead under a grant agreement between the two countries' defense ministers.

Turboprop plane

The C-90 is a medium turboprop plane with a seating capacity for five persons and has a maximum range of 1,623.83 kilometers and speed of 391.07 kilometers per hour.

On Tuesday, UH-1 helicopter spare parts and maintenance

equipment will be formally turned over by the Japanese Ministry of Defense to the PAF in ceremonies at Air Force City in Clark Air Base, Pampanga province.

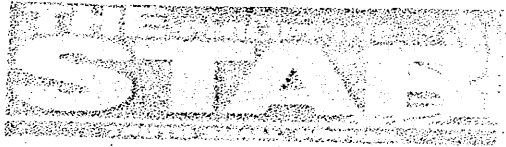
"The items will be very much useful to PAF units with UH-1 helicopters such as the 505th Search and Rescue Group and the 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing that conduct humanitarian assistance, disaster response and airlift operations," according to PAF

spokesperson Maj. Aristides Galang.

Spare parts for Huey

The assorted spare parts are for Bell UH-1 Iroquois, or Huey helicopters, which were offered by the Japanese government in 2017 to help keep the Philippine choppers flying.

The Japan Ground Self-Defense Force is replacing its fleet of UH-1 helicopters and will no longer need the spare parts. INQ 19



Army welcomes first female brigade commander

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

In time for this year's celebration of Women's Month, the Philippine Army has announced the appointment of its first-ever female brigade commander, Col. Joselyn Bandarlipi.

Lt. Col. Ramon Zagala, Army spokesman and public affairs office chief, said President Duterte had approved Bandarlipi's designation as commander of the 53rd Engineering

Turn to Page 8



Bandarlipi

Army From Page 1

Brigade in Lapu-Lapu, Cebu City.

"Our very first," he announced during the Kapihan sa Manila Bay weekly forum, noting that women are now playing important roles in the military.

Zagala said Bandarlipi is an engineer and one of 819 women officers and almost 3,400 enlisted women personnel of the 97,000-strong Philippine Army.

"They (women) are an integral part of the Philippine Army, they have a role to play. Colonel Bandarlipi will now command the engineers, she has a role to play - to dig wells, to build communities," he added as he encouraged more women to join the Philippine Army.

Zagala recalled that in the distant past, women were initially granted the right to serve in the Philippine Army only in the reserve ranks and the technical services as part of the Women's Auxiliary Corps.

In 1993, women were granted the right to be trained as combat soldiers in the Philippine military when Republic Act 7192 or the Women in Development and Nation Building Act was passed, thus granting women in the Philippines the right to become cadets in the Philippine Military Academy (PMA).

Zagala also cited that, in 2011, Brig. Gen. Ramona Go became the first female general in the Army who served as the assistant deputy chief of staff for personnel before retiring from the military service.

Marines intercept boat with 37 sacks of ammonium nitrate

By NONOY E. LACSON

ZAMBOANGA CITY -- Government authorities intercepted a motor boat carrying 37 sacks of ammonium nitrate, an ingredient component used in making bombs and other explosives, and arrested four people on board.

Naval Forces Western Mindanao (NavForWeM) Commander Rear Admiral Erick A. Kagaoan reported yesterday that Marines intercepted a motorized boat at Simisa island in Banguingui, Sulu that was found to be loaded with 37 sacks of ammonium nitrate bound for Isabela City last Thursday, March 14.

Kagaoan also said four persons were arrested on the boat. They were Mam-bahu Buhali 48, and his wife Norma, 35, Jailani Jalali 57, and Larry Jalali 25, all

residents of Tampakan, Laminusa in Siasi, Sulu.

He said the chemical was concealed in 37 sacks of 25 kilos per sacks.

While farmers use ammonium nitrate as fertilizers, people in areas like Basilan and Sulu province are using it for making improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The marines towed and brought the sea craft to the Marine Battalion Landing Team 1 Tactical Command Post, located at Simisa Island, Banguingui, Sulu for custodial, while the apprehended persons were turned over to Sulu PNP for proper disposition.

According to Kagaoan the Philippine Navy and the AFP as a whole will continue its effort to deny the presence of illegal activities in its area of operation.

18

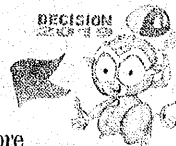
March 2019



Page: 7

Successful Davao Day celebration

By Maya M. Padillo



The recent celebration of the 82nd Araw ng Davao was hailed a smashing success after droves of people including more than 400 contingents from various areas and organizations, politicians and celebrities participated in the traditional Parada Dabawenyo.

One of the most awaited portions of the celebration was the Kumbira sa Davao, during which packed lunches and 100 whole roasted beef, were prepared and served for all the parade participants.

Mayor Sara Duterte thanked local and foreign guests especially the military and police for keeping the event peaceful despite the huge number of people who attended the activity.

She was especially grateful that no untoward incident happened and that the public cooperated and complied with all the security measures that were implemented by local authorities.

Among the personalities that joined in the celebration were senatorial aspirants Christopher "Bong" Go, Sonny Angara, Ramon "Bong" Revilla, Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa and Zajid Mangungudatu.

Mayor Sara Duterte thanked local and foreign guests especially the military and police for keeping the event peaceful.

They were joined by fellow Hugpong ng Pagbabago bets Jiggy Manicad, Francis Tolentino, JV Ejercito, Pia Cayetano and former senator Bongbong Marcos.



Soldiers display weapons in PA's 122nd info caravan

By STEVE A. GOSUICO

CABANATUAN CITY -- Camouflage face-painted soldiers carrying assorted assault weapons to show off the Philippine Army's firepower capability was an instant hit among onlookers for snapping their own selfies during an information caravan held to celebrate its 122nd founding anniversary here last Saturday.

Being showcased were the various types of assault weapons currently being used by the Army's 7th Infantry Division such as the K3 SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon) light machine gun, the R4 assault

rifle with M203 grenade launcher, the M60E3 machine gun, the M21 sniper rifle, the AK-47 rifle, and the 60mm mortar.

During the event held at the 4th floor of the SM-City Cabanatuan supermall, several onlookers, mostly students, and children accompanied by their parents were seen taking selfies or groupies while brandishing these weapons alongside soldiers, whose faces were concealed with camouflage paints.

7th ID commanding-general Major Gen. Lenard T. Agustin said the information caravan was held to showcase anew the lasting heroism and commitment to service of the Army soldiers and that the Army continu-

ously exists as a service and security institution because of the unwavering support of our internal and external stakeholders.

"And all of you, who are here right this very moment, consider yourselves as one of our partner stakeholders," said Agustin in his message, which centered on the theme: "122 Years of Heroism: Serving the People, Securing the Land."

The one-day caravan here was highlighted by a live band show by the CMO Gwapo Band of the 7th ID, a military static/photo display, puppetry show, film-showing, audio-visual presentation, the launching of infomercials about the Army and pictorials.



A boy ducks as he tries the scope of the M21 sniper rifle during a selfie shot.

Photo by STEVE GOSUICO

An information booth was also put up for the recruitment of new Army soldier-applicants and new Philippine Military Academy cadet-hopefuls.

Capt. Catherine Hapin, 7th ID spokesperson, said at least 300 new soldier-applicants are currently being processed at the Kaugnay Division for their 200 candidate-soldier quota.

Face-painted soldiers in full battle gear instant hit in Cabanatuan military caravan

CABANATUAN CITY — Being showcased were the various types of assault weapons currently being used by the Army's 7th Infantry Division, such as the K3 SAW, the K2 Automatic Weapon, the K2 assault rifle, the M203 grenade launcher, the M16OE3 assault rifle, the M21 sniper rifle, the AC-47 gunship, and the M249 SAW.

The event held at the 4th floor of the SM-City Cabanatuan supermall drew several onlookers, mostly students, and children accompanied by their parents. Most of them took selfies or groupies while brandishing the weapons alongside the soldiers, whose faces were concealed with camouflage paints.

According to 7th ID commanding general Major Gen. Lenard T. Agustin, the information caravan was held to showcase anew the lasting heroism and commitment to service of the Army soldiers and that the Army continuously exists as a service and security institution because of the unwavering support of our internal and external stakeholders.

"And all of you, who are here right this very moment, consider yourselves as one of our partner stakeholders," said Agustin.

The one-day caravan here was highlighted by a live band show by the CMO Gwapo Band of the 7th ID, a military static photo display, puppetry

show, fun-showing, audio-visual presentation, the launching of commercials about the Army and pictorials.

An information booth was also put up for the recruitment of new Army soldier-applicants and new Philippine Military Academy cadet-hopefuls.

Capt. Catherine Hap, 7th ID spokesperson, said at least 300 new soldier-applicants are currently being processed at the Kaugnay Division for their 200 candidate-soldier quota.

It was learned that a candidate soldier receives a monthly gross pay and allowances worth P23,777 while a private-ranked soldier gets P37,038.

Steve A. Gosuico

18

March 2019

The Manila Times

Page:

A7

Peace office to give P500-M aid to ex-rebels

BACOLOD CITY: The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) will give about P500 million worth of livelihood and social protection assistance to former members of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) and their families.

Presidential Peace Adviser Carlito Galvez Jr. said in a recent visit to Bacolod City that the assistance is part of the government's efforts to achieve inclusive and sustainable peace in the region.

The assistance includes social protection programs, capacity development, livelihood and employment assistance, housing assistance and financial aid to former combatants and their families.

"We are committed to help former combatants in their transformation to productive and normal civilian lives. We want them to feel the dividends of peace," Galvez said.

The assistance is part of the implementation of the Clarificatory Implementing Document (CID) to the 2000 Peace Agreement, formulated in consultation with the (RPA-ABB) Tabara-Paduan Group and Kapatiran para sa Progresibong Lipunan and concurred in by various national government agencies.

The CID had five components

— disposition of arms and forces (DAF) and security arrangements; social and economic reintegration of the RPMP/RPA/ABB-TPG/Kapatiran; release of the remaining alleged political offenders; transformation of the members into civilian organizations engaging in socio-economic and political activities; and community peace dividends.

While the document is expected to be signed this year, the government has begun undertaking socio-economic interventions to boost development in the communities.

As part of its Community Peace Dividends (CPD) program, 100 barangay (villages) jointly identified by TPG and the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police received grants to support livelihood and enterprise development and community-based impact projects.

Some 91 of these areas are from Region 6 (Western Visayas) while six are in Davao City, two in Bukidnon and one in Ilocos Sur.

These 100 associations organized under Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan-Department of Social Welfare and Development (Pamana-DSWD) Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) received P500,000 in seed capital

for their own projects.

Under its Socio-Economic Reintegration Program, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) entered into an agreement with the Kapatiran for the establishment of Peace Development Community (PDC) sites in 2017 and 2018 to provide support to the social and economic reintegration of their members.

These PDC sites will be provided with housing, tenurial security, access roads, electricity and water, potable water, health services, educational facilities, livelihood assistance and common service facilities.

The DENR also engaged with the Kapatiran in seedling production and other agro-forestry activities and employed 128 RPA-TPG members as forest guards under the National Greening Program.

In the Social Protection Program, 439 members of RPA-TPG and 8,963 individuals from CPD areas are now beneficiaries of Pamana-Philhealth Program for 2018 while 60 family members of the group and CPD members are grantees under the Pamana-Commission on Higher Education (Pamana-CHED) Study Grant Program.

Meanwhile, Galvez assured members of the New People's

Army (NPA), who opted to return to the mainstream, that the OPAPP will design an exclusive benefit package aside from the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) benefits they would be receiving.

"We're hoping that this will attract more rebels to go back to the folds of law," he said.

Galvez added that his office will continue to support localized peace engagements as national government-led peace talks were used by the communist insurgents to "regain lost ground and reconstitute their NPA forces."

"For more than 30 years of negotiations with the NDF (National Democratic Front), the government has given so much concessions just to build confidence, and for them to abandon their armed struggle. But the government did not gain anything from the peace talks" he said.

President Rodrigo Duterte issued Executive Order 70 on December 4, 2018 that institutionalizes a whole-of-nation approach in attaining peace and creates a National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict.

The OPAPP is a member of the task force along with 18 other government agencies.

EUGENE Y. ADIONG

Tribesmen finger terrorists 'secret' lair

The government's fight against terrorism received a huge boost after local tribesmen in Cabanglasan, Bukidnon pointed to the anarchists' secret hideout in one of the remotest areas of the province.

Members of the Army's 60th Infantry Battalion (60IB) said the Ata Manabo tribe complained to them that members of Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA), have been using their place in Sitio Tapayanon as their hideout.

This prompted the soldiers to act on the complaints and discovered the hideaway following a recent run of military operations in the hinterland tri-boundary of Bukidnon, Agusan del

Sur and Davao del Norte provinces.

The soldiers said the rebels' hideaway could have accommodated around 30 to 80 persons at any one time.

The village, being geographically isolated, has little or no access to mainstream society, thus it became a very convenient target for the terrorists' exploitation.

The tribal leaders revealed that their village is being used by the different units of the CPP-NPA as hiding place for several years now, but they were too afraid to report their situation for fear of reprisals

from the rebels.

The soldiers said the rebels' hideaway could have accommodated around 30 to 80 persons at any one time.

Some of the items found in the area include improvised tables and beds, rice husks and fresh food wastes.

The tribesmen narrated that they were forced by the terrorists to work for them such as assigning the young men to guard the place while the women were ordered to plant and produce food for their consumption.

The suspects also order the young men to carry their supplies and backpacks whenever they move from one place to another.

FORENSICS

US GOV'T HELPING CONFIRM ABU DAR'S DEATH

By Jeffrey Maitem
@inqmindanao

COTABATO CITY—The US government is helping the Philippine military confirm whether one of two terrorists slain by Philippine soldiers in Lanao del Sur was Abu Sayyaf leader Abu Dar, one of the Islamic State (IS) followers who led the siege on Marawi City that left more than 1,000 people dead.

Col. Romeo Brawner, head of the Philippine Army's 103rd Brigade, said on Saturday that American experts were helping Philippine forensic teams confirm the identity of one of the bodies.

Brawner said DNA samples had already been taken from one of the terrorists slain on Friday in Tubaran town, Lanao del Sur.

Dar was believed to be a cousin of the Maute brothers who helped plot the IS occupation of Marawi along with Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon.

Marawi dead

The Mautes and Hapilon had been killed in Marawi, while Dar escaped.

Philippine military intelligence reports said Dar and his group could be hiding in the jungles in the remote towns of Pa-



Abu Dar

the January clash.

Dar's belongings

Brawner said soldiers also retrieved a backpack containing money, a .45-caliber pistol, mobile phones and cameras, which Dar's followers said belonged to him.

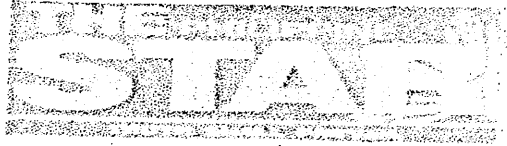
Since March 11, four government soldiers and four terrorists have been killed since the Philippine military stepped up offensives against Abu Sayyaf in Pagawayan and Tuburan.

In Maguindanao, at least 22 members of a faction of Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and a soldier were killed in clashes with one of the slain terror suspects believed to be an Arab. **AP**

The Maguindanao military operations were targeting the group of Abu Toraiife, head of a pro-IS BIFF faction.

Toraiife split from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which was also formed by Moro rebels who split from the Moro National Liberation Front of Nur Misuari.

Toraiife's group rejected MILF's peace deal with the government because it did not call for a separate Islamic republic in Mindanao. —WITH A REPORT FROM DIVINA M. SUSON INQ



2 Marine troopers hurt in Abu clash

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY — Two Marine soldiers were wounded in an encounter with Abu Sayyaf bandits in the island town of Banguin-gui in Sulu on Friday night.

Cpl. Syruus Valenzuela and Pvt. Jude Louis Nabalán suffered gunshot wounds in their bodies.

Reports said that troopers of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 3 under Lt. Col. Ramil Holgado were patrolling in Sitio Kabahayan, Barangay Bakkan when they encountered the followers of Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Salip Mura at past 6 p.m.

The firefight reportedly forced residents of the nearby village of Simusah to evacuate to safer grounds for fear of a spillover of the fighting.

Medan Abduraman, chairman of Barangay Bakkan, and Jaifa Abduraman, chief of the relief operation, said food packs were distributed to the evacuees.

The firefight was part of the military's intensified operations in Sulu against the bandit group.

A day before, Marine troopers arrested four men in a motorized banca loaded with 38 sacks of ammonium nitrate and other bomb paraphernalia.

18

March 2019

22 March 2019
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 18

Suspected AKP member nabbed in South Cotabato

By JOSEPH JURELAG

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – Security forces arrested over the weekend a suspected member of the Islamic State (IS)-inspired local terror group Ansar Al-khilafah Philippines in Polomolok, South Cotabato.

Supt. Samuel Cadungon, Polomolok police chief, identified the suspect as Aladin Mamo, who was nabbed during a raid conducted by police and military operatives in sitio Bio, Barangay Lapu, Polomolok.

However, he said the raiding team failed to arrest the suspect's brother, Russel Mamo who managed to elude arrest during the raid.

Police said the arrested suspect yielded an improvised explosive device and a frag-

mentation grenade when frisked.

Police tagged the Mamos as remnants of the AKP local terror group under Jeffrey Nilong who is based in Barangay Lapu, Polomolok.

Nilong's group was blamed for the spate of bomb attacks in the region including the bomb explosion in front of a birthing clinic in Barangay Apopong here last September 2018 which injured at least eight people.

The group was also tagged for a series of criminal activities including, robbery, carnapping and gun-for-hire in Polomolok town and nearby areas.

Nilong assumed the post of the late AKP leader Mohammad Jaafar Maguid who was killed in an encounter with security forces in Kiamba, Sarangani in January 2017.

17

Dar slain in Lanao Sur clash?

By Bobby Ricohermoso

Peace remains elusive in Mindanao as clashes between government forces and terrorist groups continue to erupt in various areas of the strife-torn region.

In Lanao del Sur, reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo said four soldiers and four terrorists belonging to the Islamic State-linked Dawlah Islamiya (DI)

group were killed during recent clashes in the town of Tubaran.

Dar is believed to be the new leader of ISIS-Southeast Asia following the death of the self-declared emir Isnlon Hapilon in 2017 during the Marawi siege.

This as Col. Romeo Brawner, Jr., commander of the Army's

103rd Infantry Brigade, said they are trying to determine if one of those recovered remains on Friday could be Owayda Benito Marohomsar, also known as Abu Dar.

Dar is believed to be the new leader of ISIS-Southeast Asia following the death of then self-declared emir Isnlon Hapilon in 2017 during the Marawi siege.

He added the dead man's

face is a little bit deformed from a gunshot wound so they could not directly confirm if he was indeed Dar, although the scar on his face indicates he could be the militant leader.

Recovered from him were caliber .45 pistol, cameras and several cellphones.

The military official said they have already submitted DNA samples of the deceased to the

Scene of the Crime Operatives to validate its identity.

It would take at least a month of waiting for them to know the results.

Should the remains prove to be, those of Abu Dar, Brawner said he sees the downfall of ISIS in Lanao provinces.

"It could mean the end of Dawlah Islamiya in Lanao because they are leader-centric," he said.

18

March 2019

The Manila Times

Page:

A7

'BIFF behind grenade throwing at Cafgu post'

COTABATO CITY: Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) bandits are the prime suspects in a grenade-throwing at a detachment of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu) in Pikit, North Cotabato, on Friday night.

Senior Insp. Mautin Pangandigan, Pikit town police chief, on Sunday said an unidentified man on board a motorbike passed by the Cafgu detachment in Barangay Inug-og, Pikit, at 6:45 p.m. on Friday and threw the grenade.

"The two paramilitary troops stationed in the conflict village of Pikit were lucky to have survived the attack because the grenade did not explode," Pan-

gandigan added.

He said the man tossed something hard inside the detachment manned by Cafgus who were on duty at the time.

"They thought that stones were thrown at them but they discovered a live grenade right inside the detachment," Pangandigan said.

Army bomb experts from the explosive ordnance division defused the grenade. *KY*

Although no one has claimed responsibility for the grenade attack, the militiamen suspect that the BIFF had a hand in it.

The BIFF has been known to have regularly harassed the Cafgu detachment in the last few months. **JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL**

Duterte to attend BARMM inauguration

COTABATO CITY – The inauguration of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and the first session of its parliament have been reset anew from March 21 to March 25, with officials confirming President Duterte's attendance to grace the rescheduled events.

The original schedule was March 11 as mentioned by members of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) and interim Chief Minister (ICM) Murad Ebrahim during their first caucus here last February 27.

It was moved to March 21, a date coinciding with the Estrada government's declaration of "all-out war" against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) 19 years ago.

But at the sidelines of the national peace and order council meeting in Davao City last Thursday, Ebrahim reportedly received words from President Duterte that he would only be available for the events here on March 25.

Sources involved in the preparation for the inaugural events said the venue for the ceremonies would be the 145-seater Shariff Kabunsuan Center (SKCC) at the 22-hectared compound here of the defunct Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) where the BARMM parliament will be holding its sessions.

The President on February 22 swore in the BTA members in Malacañang, naming Ebrahim as ICM. Appointment papers of 76 BTA members were released on February 27, during which

Ebrahim officially took over from ARMM Governor Mujiv Hataman.

Of the 76 appointed, one passed away on March 13 – MILF's 1st Vice Chair, Ghazlai Jaafar, whom Ebrahim earlier named as speaker of the Bangsamoro Parliament, with Lanao del Sur former Congressman Pangalian Balindong as deputy speaker.

Jaafar's death left only 75 members out of the supposed 80 BTA members prescribed under the BARMM charter.

The four vacant BTA seats are reserved for nominees from the government side. The MILF central committee will decide on who it will endorse to the President to replace Jaafar, a report attributed to Ebrahim said.

The BTA, consisting of 41 MILF-nominated members and 39 government representatives, will govern BARMM until the election of regular officials in 2022.

Ebrahim has initially named 10 ministers of the 15-member regional cabinet.

The cabinet includes ministries on finance and budget management; social services; trade, investments, and tourism; labor and employment; basic, higher and technical Education; transportation and communications; public works; indigenous peoples' affairs; health; local government; environment, natural resources, and energy; public order and safety; human settlements development; science and technology; and agriculture, fisheries and agrarian reform. (Ali G. Macabalang)

Syrian preacher shot dead in new BARMM territory

By ALI G. MACABALANG

KIDAPAWAN CITY - In what could be the first serious challenge to officials of the newly-installed Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), a Syrian Islamic teacher was shot dead, while his wife was wounded, in a daring attack at their residence in Carmen town, North Cotabato Friday night.

Carmen police identified the fatality as Sheik Wasif, a Muslim missionary from Syria who was teach-

ing in a Madrasah (Arabic school) in Barangay Manarapan, while his wife Tayaan Ambag, an ethnic Maguin-danaoan Muslim, was wounded in the attack at their home in Barangay Nasapian.

Manarapan and Nasapian, both of Carmen town, are among the 63 villages of North Cotabato that now form part of the infant Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The Region 12 police office on Saturday said initial reports indicated that gunmen barged into Wasif's house Friday night and opened fire,

killing him on the spot.

The wounded wife was rushed to the hospital by responding Carmen policemen and barangay officials.

Bereaved kin demanded help from the BARMM governance by way of an "in-depth probe" of the incident. 18

"The incident must not become part of many unsolved killings in Carmen. BARMM officials can perhaps make the difference. We voted for inclusion in BARMM in the February 6 plebiscite because we want to be safer," a relative of the wounded wife said in vernacular Saturday night.

Why development should guide any US-PH MDT review

In times of great uncertainty, strategic ambiguity offers little clarity. The review of the US-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty should be guided by the quest for sovereignty and economic development.

DURING his recent visit to the Philippines, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad met Murad Ebrahim, the Filipino Muslim rebel leader who became a regional governor under the Malaysian-brokered peace deal. In the course of the meeting, Mahathir told Murad that "it's easy to shoot and kill, but it's difficult to develop. If there is peace, then everything will come."

Mahathir's words offer guidance in intra-country divides, but also in inter-country friction, including the review of the decades-old Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) with the United States.

In early March, Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the government should review the MDT to avoid provoking a potential armed conflict with China in the South China Sea. Lorenzana pointed out that the security environment in the region today is "much more complex" than in the early Cold War era, when it was drawn up. "The Philippines is not in a conflict with anyone and will not be at war with anyone in the future."

Obviously, there are different views about the preferred future of the MDT in Manila, Washington and elsewhere. Typically, most are predicated on geopolitical arguments, treaty texts and interpretations of various statements.



DAN STEINBOCK

Yet, Mahathir's wisdom matters. Development is not viable without peace. In the long run, it is the quest for economic development that should drive the MDT debate.

Sovereignty and 'zero-problems' foreign policy

Since the early 2000s, the rapid growth of the so-called BRIC economies has greatly inspired debates on economic development. As a large emerging economy with solid structural potential for the future, the Philippines could draw from the lessons of these countries.

As I have stressed since my 2014 Mabini lecture at the Foreign Service Institute, there is nothing automatic about strong growth potential. Vital economic, political and security shifts can support or penalize growth.

In light of Mahathir's views, the most important lesson may well be the "zero problems policy," which was developed a decade ago by former Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu who lectured in Malaysia

in the Mahathir era.

Historically, this approach has been typical to successful industrializers in the emerging world. From the 1980s to 2000s, China was largely focused on inward development, though gradually building international relations. The same goes for India's industrialization in the past two decades. In Brazil, the most intensive phase of modernization occurred earlier but could only be completed in the Lula era.

In Southeast Asia, the rise of Singapore only took off after Lee Kuan Yew's leadership overcame race riots and began a decisive focus on development. In Vietnam, reunification and reforms could only move ahead after colonialism and triumphs against the French and US neocolonial wars. In Indonesia, both Sukarno and Suharto sought rapid industrialization, but it was only completed with peace and stability in the era of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY).

Of course, none of the large emerging economies have been able to avoid all conflicts, many of which stem from colonial legacies following artificial partitions (India), invasions and wars (China), and structural dependency (Brazil). Yet, the effort to reduce friction in foreign relations, in order to focus on economic development has been

typical of successful modernization.

What these large emerging economies also share is their insistence on sovereignty. After decades, even centuries of colonial "divide and rule," they want to control their own future. While all of them seek to cooperate and partner with other nations in different ways, they do not easily tolerate the military presence of other countries within their territories.

As evidenced by the Middle East, such presence is not just a reminder of colonial legacies but can violate their sovereignty and result in destructive proxy conflicts in the region.

Economic development first

Following the recalibration of the Philippine foreign policy, there is nothing so challenging in the country's bilateral relations with China that could not be negotiated in a mutually satisfactory way over time.

But just as Manila would not easily tolerate an anti-Philippine stance by foreign troops in China, it is hardly surprising that Beijing has concerns about any military presence by third-party countries in the Philippines – especially in light of historical track record.

The Philippines became a US colony after the Spanish-American

Ay > Steinbock A5

■ STEINBOCK FROM A4

Why development

war and the subsequent Philippine-American War. The promised independence materialized only after the Japanese invasion and the end of World War 2 in 1946. Yet, a strong US military presence remained in the country until 1991.

Following President Obama's "pivot to Asia" in 2011, President Aquino and his foreign secretary Albert del Rosario achieved the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), as a sort of a prelude to more intimate collaboration with the anticipated presidency of Sen. Mar Roxas in 2016.

The scenario was foiled by Duterte's electoral triumph, which, reportedly, led to a regime change plan by former US ambassador Philip Goldberg in fall 2017.

In all these scenarios – from the late 1890s up to present – the Philippines has been seen as a geopolitical platform to project US hard power in the region, particularly vis-à-vis China, as most historians acknowledge.

Toward peace, development and prosperity

When Defense Secretary Lorenzana said last December that the objective of the MDT treaty review would be to "maintain it, strengthen it, or scrap it," he presented three clear future scenarios to the country.

Any scenario that would maintain

or strengthen the MDT runs the risk of undermining Philippine sovereignty, exposing the country to costly entanglements and potentially fatal conflicts in the region, which, in turn, would undermine the quest for economic development. Instead, what Manila needs is strengthened sovereignty, strong Asean cooperation, and development.

Successful economic modernization is not viable without sovereignty and focus on development, as evidenced by the history of the BRIC economies (and that of the United States).

When the MDT was signed in 1951, the US and advanced countries still dominated world growth, whereas emerging Asia was struggling amid poverty. Today, China and emerging countries fuel global growth prospects, while emerging Asia is catching up with higher living standards – but only as long as peaceful conditions prevail in the region.

So, if economic development is to remain the national priority, these are the facts that should guide the review of the MDT in the new and far more complex security environment.

Dr. Dan Steinbock is the founder of Difference Group and has served at the India, China and America Institute (US), Shanghai Institute for International Studies (China) and the EU Center (Singapore). For more, see <http://www.differencegroup.net/>

Paalala vs. terrorist recruitment sa social media

NAGBIGAY ng paalala ang isang propesor ng psychology at socio-anthropology ng Philippine Military Academy (PMA) kamakailan sa mga magulang na bantayan ang akibidad ng kanilang mga anak sa social media, dahil ginagamit din ito ng grupo ng mga terorista bilang paraan ng pangungumbinsi o recruitment.

Ayon kay Capt. Sherhannah Paiso, military science professor at hepe ng education branch ng PMA, kinakailangang alam ng mga magulang kung sino ang mga nakaka-usap ng kanilang mga anak.

Ang naging paalala ni Paiso ay bahagi ng two-day Youth General Assembly and Interfaith Dialogue on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism na ginanap kamakailan sa Waterfront Hotel, Cebu City.

Ayon sa kanya, dapat ding alam ng mga magulang ang mga "signs", na tutukoy kung ang kanilang mga anak ay nalalantad sa "radicalization" sa pamamagitan ng uri ng mga grupo na sinasamahan o kinabibilangan ng mga ito, gayundin ang karakter o ugali ng kanilang mga anak sa social media.

"If you are in a group that promotes violence, there is a tendency for you also to become a violent individual. Remember, prevention is always better than cure," ani Paiso.

Kapag ang isang bata ay nagpalit ng kanyang Facebook account sa pamamagitan ng paglalagay ng maskara ng ISIS o ang bandila nito, nagpapakita ito na namamali ang landas nito sa radikalisasyon, pagdiditin niya.

Naging magkatuwang naman ang National Commission on Muslim Filipinos, na pinangungunahan ni Secretary Saidamen Pangarungan, kasama ang United Nations Development Programme at ang People of Japan sa pagtataguyod ng asembleya, na layong mabigyan ng aral ang mga Muslim na kabataan laban sa "evils of violent extremism".

Inilarawan din ni Paiso, isang Tausug na lumaki sa Metro Manila, ang kabataan bilang sektor na madaling mapasok o mahikayat dahil sa kanilang "weaknesses", sa kanilang edad.

"You are vulnerable to radicalization because they target your weakness," paalala ni Paiso sa mahigit 500 Muslim kabataan sa Central Visayas. tinatawag ang mga ito na "youth for that reason. They do not have yet the critical thinking skills".

Dagdag pa niya ang mga kabataan na may problema sa pamilya ang malapit sa pag-anib sa mga rebeldeng grupo na nagsusulong ng karahasan sa lipunan.

Ang personal na suliranin ng mga kabataan, tulad ng problema sa relasyon, kapaligiran at peer pressure sa paaralan ay maaari rin magdulot ng pagtaas ng tiyansa na mahikayat sila.

Naikuwento rin ni Paiso ang isang sitwasyon kung saan napigilan ng isang ina ang kanyang anak na makaanib sa grupo ng Maute sa kasagsagan ng digmaan sa Marawi noong 2017, dahil ang kanyang ama ay dating miyembro ng Moro National Liberation Front.

Paalala pa niya, ang Islamophobia at pagtingin sa mga Muslim bilang "terrorists and bombers" ay dapat na maiwasan sa lahat ng lebel ng lipunan upang maiwasan ang mga kabataang muslim na lumahok sa mga samahang nagdudulot ng mga karahasan.

4 PNA

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

ONLINE NEWS

18 MARCH 2019

www.pna.gov.ph

Army discovers CPP-NPA 'hideout' in Bukidnon

By Mel Madera

MALAYBALAY CITY -- The Army's 60th Infantry Battalion (60IB) discovered the Ata Manobo tribal village of Sitio Tapayanon which has been used by the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) as their run-to 'hideout' in Cabanglasan town, Bukidnon, the army said.

In a statement Friday, the Army said they discovered this following a recent run of military operations in the hinterland tri-boundary of Bukidnon, Agusan del Sur, and Davao del Norte provinces.

Upon conducting civil-military operations in the area, the tribal leaders of Sitio Tapayanon revealed that their village has been used by the different units of the CPP-NPA as its harboring site for several years.

The terrorist hideouts discovered around the area, the Army said, may have been abandoned for as recent as a week ago.

The Army said it could have accommodated around 30 to 80 persons at any one time. Other items found in the area include improvised tables and beds, rice husks, and fresh food wastes. "At first, we thought they are the government. Whenever they are here, they would order us (leaders) and our sons to man security posts while they order our wives to plant and collect food for their consumption," the village's tribal chieftain, Datu Banging, said in the vernacular during a community dialogue initiated by 60IB.

"When they decide to move to the next village (sitio), they bring with them our children to carry their supplies, backpacks, and magazines/ammunition. For a long time, our tribe hasn't had the slightest idea that we were being run by communist terrorists," he added.

The 60IB assessed that the village, being geographically isolated, has little or no access to mainstream society, thus became a very easy and convenient target for the CPP-NPA terrorists' exploitation.

Exploitation

Datu Banging himself has once joined the Manilakbayan, a series of protest rallies organized by the CPP-NPA's legal fronts supposedly to raise awareness on the indigenous peoples' plight in Mindanao.

During the initial run of focused military operations in the area, the 60IB recovered five firearms and discovered four CPP-NPA lairs in the vicinity of the village, confirming the tribal leaders' claim. Members of the NPA's Guerilla Front 6 (GF 6) surrendered to the troops, further affirming the CPP-NPA's influence in the village. Three of the surrenderers are minors.

A certain "Lyn," 15, a resident of Sitio Tapayanon, and medic on-training of GF 6, claimed that she has been under the "care" of the CPP-NPA since she was a child.

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

A certain alias Toto, her team leader in the NPA, took her in when she was only three years old. Lyn, however, also claims that she has only joined as a regular member and been issued her own firearm in 2018.

Meanwhile, alias Weng, 14 years old; alias MJ (Lyn's older sister), 16 years old; and her husband, alias Bran, 23 years old, were all forced to join the CPP-NPA in February this year after Lyn's father asked Bran to fetch Lyn from Toto.

Bran, who asked MJ and Weng to accompany him, never returned to his father-in-law and were forced to join GF 6 after Toto threatened their lives if they insist to leave.

On March 11, after another round of dialogue with the tribal leaders, the villagers voluntarily revealed the identities of their Militia ng Bayan (MB) and surrendered 11 more NPA-issued firearms to 60IB.

Datu Bansing said this is their way of expressing that they are 100 percent ready to cooperate with the government especially if this means real peace and development for their village and the end of the CPP-NPA's exploitation of their tribe.

Whole-of-nation approach

Lt. Col. Gilbert Ombos, 60IB commander, said that this 'discovery' is both a challenge and an opportunity considering the on-going implementation of Executive Order 70 or the 'whole-of-nation' approach to end the insurgency.

With the help of the various local government units within 60IB's Area of Operations, 60IB was able to bring an initial PHP200,000 worth of aid to Sitio Tapayanon such as medicine, rice, canned goods, noodles, coffee, corn seeds, and assorted vegetable seeds.

On March 13, the 10th Infantry Division Medical Team conducted a medical civic action program in Tapayanon benefitting around 300 residents.

Datu Bansing Balanban says this is the first time a real medical doctor has ever reached their village.

The 60IB is currently liaising with the concerned LGUs, other government agencies, and non-government organizations to also send aid and initiate other interventions for Sitio Tapayanon. Meanwhile, under the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program, 60IB is also facilitating the proper disposition and turnover of the surrendered minor rebels.

"What we wish to show the enemy is [that] we don't have mercy for those who insist to fight. But [that] we are gentle and forgiving to those who yield and choose peace. Our government is here and ready to serve full-time whether they [CPP-NPA] like it or not," Ombos added.

Around 40 of the former rebels who surrendered to 60IB in 2018 are from the boundary villages of Bukidnon, Agusan del Sur, Davao del Norte, and Compostela Valley Province.

Most of them are indigenous peoples and a considerable number were either minors upon surrendering or were minors when recruited by the NPA. **(PNA)**