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02 September 2016

Friday

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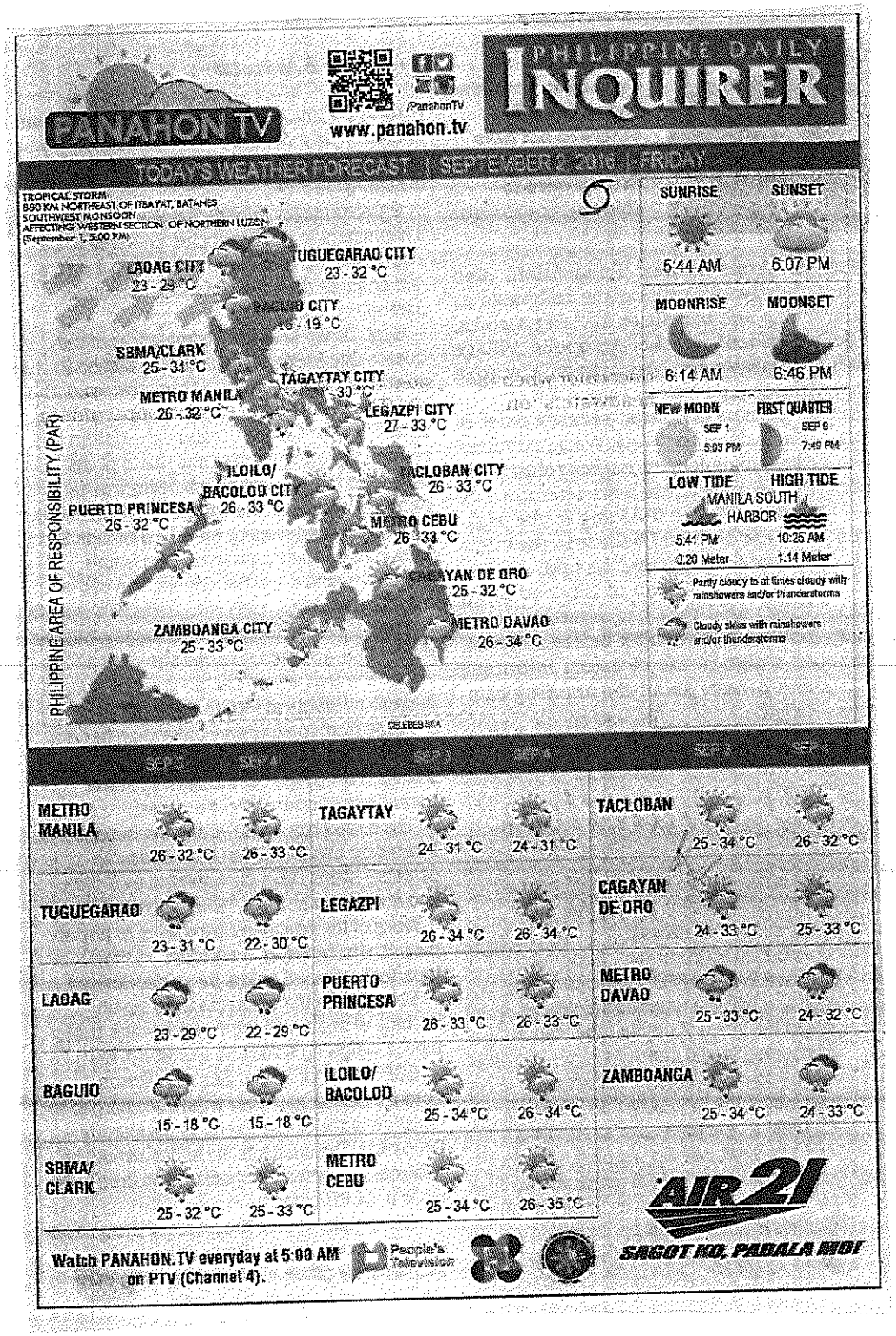

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02 September 2016 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Page: A1

Senators, PNP want wiretap law amended

Move to boost war on illegal drugs

By Tarra Quismundo

PARTICIPANTS in a Senate hearing yesterday agreed to put more teeth to President Duterte's war on illegal drugs by pushing for amendments to the outdated Anti-Wiretapping Law.

Led by the committee on public order and dangerous drugs, several senators, justice officials and the police leadership expressed support for amendments to the law that would allow authorities to intercept communications of those suspected to be involved in the drug trade.

"The coverage of the Anti-Wiretapping Act is only the old crimes like sedition, espionage, rebellion, inciting to sedition," said Sen. Panfilo Lacson. "But technology has modernized. And what was only covered before were landlines," said Lacson, the committee chair.

"Now, [technology] has evolved to include data, transmission of data, electronic communication. So that has to be covered, and we also have to expand the coverage to include illegal drugs, plunder and the other crimes not included [in the exemption]," Lacson told reporters after the three-hour hearing.

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From page A1

The Anti-Wiretapping Law of 1965 was enacted to protect privacy of communication, penalizing the act of secretly intercepting, listening to and recording private conversations.

Section 3 of the law, however, grants an exemption and allows wiretapping of communication "in cases involving the crimes of treason, espionage, provoking war and disloyalty in case of war, piracy, mutiny in the high seas, rebellion, conspiracy and proposal to commit rebellion, inciting to rebellion, sedition, conspiracy to commit sedition, inciting to sedition, kidnapping as defined by the Revised Penal Code, and violations of Commonwealth Act No. 616, punishing espionage and other offenses against national security."

Under the law, such interception shall be covered by a court order.

4 bills

Four separate bills, authored by Senators Gregorio Honasan II, Grace Poe, Juan Edgardo Angara, and Lacson, would amend this section of the law to include violations of the 2002 antidrug law among covered crimes.

Honasan, a former Army colonel, cited how the Duterte administration presented an opportune "political window" to pursue drug suspects, as he recalled challenges that the likes of himself and Lacson, a former Philippine National Police chief, faced in pursuing those involved in the trade within prevailing legal limits.

"I don't know when this political window will happen again. I and Senator Lacson envy you because there is a political leadership telling you to 'do your job and I will assume responsibility,'" Honasan said during the hearing, attended by Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II and PNP Director General Ronald dela Rosa.

He said wiretapping was necessary "to ensure conviction" and remove "bottlenecks" on drug cases in the judiciary.

High time

"Given the magnitude of the country's drug problem, it is time to legalize wiretapping in order to expedite the arrest of those involved in drug syndicates," said Angara, who was unable to attend but issued a statement to support the move.

Through wiretapping, Angara said, the police would be able to pinpoint who are indeed involved in the drug trade, especially those in government and use wiretapped conversations as evidence. But he stressed, "Proper safeguards must be put in place to protect the rights of every Filipino."

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, former chief of the Dangerous Drugs Board, said the amendment was "highly imperative" to allow authorities to pin down big-time drug dealers. "Remember, it's difficult to catch them red-handed," he said.

Sotto pointed out the low conviction rate of drug suspects due to poor evidence. Based on Department of Justice figures, of the 126,016 drug cases filed under the previous administration, the state had scored only 3,482 convictions.

Aguirre said the court should allow wiretapping when police establish the case "above mere suspicion," not necessarily just in cases where there is already probable cause against drug suspects.

Healthy balance

Dela Rosa later told reporters: "If we are granted by

the court permission to wiretap, then you will just be sitting pretty there listening to their conversation ... Then if you get the good part of their conversation then boom! Bingo! That drug lord is dead."

Although Dela Rosa said during the hearing that the PNP did not have a wiretapping capability, Lacson disputed this.

He said the PNP had such equipment even when he headed the force, but that he understood Dela Rosa's reluctance to admit this, saying it was a sensitive issue.

Sen. Leila de Lima said there should be a "healthy balance" between respect for privacy and law enforcement.

"We cannot just look at the one-sided track that, in our zeal to enhance law enforcement capabilities, we forget to respect rights, especially the right to privacy even when there is no legitimate purpose in using wiretapping," said De Lima, who slammed during the hearing police and justice officials who she said were tapping her phones.

De Lima has been accused by President Duterte of protecting drug lords, a charge she has denied.

IN THE KNOW: Anti-Wiretapping Law

REPUBLIC Act No. 4200, or the Anti-Wiretapping Law, was passed on June 19, 1965, to safeguard the constitutional right to privacy of communication.

The law prohibits the tapping of any wire or cable or using other devices to record, intercept, or secretly overhear any private communication or spoken word when it is unauthorized by all parties in the conversation, except when it is done pursuant to a court order and complies with all conditions imposed by the law.

Possession of any tape, wire, disc, or other record, or copies of an illegally obtained recording of a private communication and replaying an illegal recording for another person or furnishing transcripts of the communication, whether complete or partial, are also punishable by law.

According to the explanatory note in the Senate Bill No. 9 introduced by Sen. Lorenzo Tañada in 1962, the law also intends to stop the practice of government officials of spying on each other—a "most obnoxious instrument of oppression or arbitrary power."

Any illegally obtained recordings are inadmissible in any judicial, quasijudicial, administrative, and legislative hearings or investigations.

Direct participants to the wiretapping and anyone who aids, permits, or causes the violation are, upon conviction, punished by imprisonment of not less than six months or more than six years. If the offender is a public official at the time of the offense, he shall be penalized with perpetual absolute disqualification from public office. If the offender is a foreigner, he shall be subject to deportation.

Sources: Republic Act No. 4200, Free Legal Assistance Group FAQ on Anti-Wiretapping Law

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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Phl-wide 'alsa masa' eyed

DILG: No death squads, just volunteers

By DELON PORCALLA

In an effort to involve more citizens in its campaign against illegal drugs, the government is considering taking a page from the playbook of a defunct anti-communist vigilante group based in Davao City – the Alsa Masa.

Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Ismael Sueno said yesterday they hope to revive the concept of the Alsa Masa (masses rising) to make citizens across the country – and not just in Davao – more involved in anti-crime efforts, but in a "non-violent" way.

He stressed it is volunteerism and not vigilantism which the government intends to foster in invoking the concept of Alsa Masa, a group associated with death squads in Davao.

"We will institute volunteerism. Maybe this organization can also come up with what needs to be implemented in the barangay level," Sueno told members of the House of Representatives' appropriations committee during a hearing on the DILG's budget.

"We will launch this concept in the middle of this month," he said, adding they intend to name the group Mamamasid,

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Phl-wide From Page 1

or Mamamayang Ayaw sa Anomalya at Iligal na Droga.

This will in effect be the eyes and ears of the national government in the grassroots level as the administration of President Duterte pursues its sustained and relentless campaign against the proliferation of drugs in the streets.

Intelligence gathered by the group – to comprise concerned citizens who want their communities to be drug-free – will be presented to the Philippine National Police, which in turn will do the investigation and carry out the necessary arrests and seizures.

"We intend to organize this group. This is the mandate of the President in his campaign against illegal drugs," Sueno told the appropriations committee headed by Davao City Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles.

The DILG chief said "no allocation" has yet been made for the project, as he refuted claims by some lawmakers the organization being envisioned may only duplicate the functions of other anti-drug agencies of government, like the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and the Dangerous Drugs Board.

"The DDB and PDEA have no personnel down to the barangay level, while this group will have members practically everywhere," the DILG chief emphasized. "We will make sure that this is fully organized, although this is still in the developing concept stage."

The Alsa Masa, founded by the late Jun Pala, became notorious in the mid-1980s for targeting communists and their sympathizers in Davao City and other parts of Mindanao.

The Duterte administration's war on illegal drugs has claimed more than 2,000 lives since he assumed the presidency on June 30. Police said those killed in police operations were only about 900.

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Army pours troops into pursuit; Abus ready for 'last war'

By Cynthia D. Balana and Julie Alipala, *Inquirer Mindanao*

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The number of Philippine troops running after the Abu Sayyaf in the southern island province of Sulu is expected to swell to about 9,000 by next week, the Armed Forces said on Thursday, amid taunts by the ruthless kidnap-for-ransom group that it was prepared for a "jihad."

The deployment is the largest concentration of troops in a single area in recent memory, Armed Forces of the Philippines chief spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said.

It also comes shortly after 15 soldiers were slain by the Abu Sayyaf in fierce clashes this week in Jolo, where the terrorists are holding a number of foreign hostages, including a Dutch birdwatcher seized in 2012 and a Norwegian abducted last year from a beach resort.

The gunmen earlier this year beheaded two Canadian hostages, while an 18-year-old Filipino captive suffered the same fate recently.

President Duterte called on the public on Wednesday night to be vigilant against retaliatory attacks in the wake of intensified military operations.

"You should be on guard since we're hitting them hard," Mr. Duterte said in a speech in Davao City. "I expect some...retribution also from them. That's their reprisal."

He said the gunmen "do not live by the laws of civilization. They are really evil."

Padilla said the troop deployment was the biggest in recent memory and was "indicative of government's resolve to crush the Abu Sayyaf."

He said the deployment was equivalent to almost two Army divisions, with 8,000 fighting soldiers in place.

Army Chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año said three more infantry battalions consisting of around 1,500 soldiers were on their way to reinforce the troops already in Sulu. They were expected to arrive in the capital Jolo by Saturday.

Blend well

Padilla said the troop buildup was part of President Duterte's vow to crush the Abu Sayyaf, who are believed to number fewer than 250 fighters but are known to blend in well in Jolo's rough jungle terrain.

He said troop realignments were also ongoing on nearby Basilan island, where there was also an Abu Sayyaf presence.

"Artillery support is high. The required artillery support or fire support that our operating troops are requesting are provided. We have adequate air and naval support," Padilla said.

Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Alhabsi Misaya said they were ready for the offensive, as he called on all Tausugs to join in a jihad or holy war.

Misaya, in text messages, said the Abu Sayyaf had anticipated that "by Sept. 1, the Abu Sayyaf and soldiers of Duterte will test each other in a liberation."

'To the finish'

Misaya, who is under the command of overall Abu Sayyaf leader Radulan Sahiron, said this would be "the last war of Patikul to the finish."

"If they are given courage, this war is more fierce than in Zamboanga," Misaya wrote in one of the text messages to the INQUIRER, adding that they would rather "initiate the attack against the soldiers of Duterte."

"The Abu Sayyaf is ready with its more than 1,000 forces to do a jihad," he said.

Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo dela Cruz, chief of the Western Mindanao Command based in Zamboanga City, said he received a similar message but minimized the Abu Sayyaf's real force as being only between 200-250.

Dela Cruz said the military would prefer the Abu Sayyaf staged the attacks as "it's better to be this way, so that we will no longer be hunting them." ***With a report from Marlon Ramos***

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3 more Army battalions to be deployed in Sulu

By JAIME LAUDE

The military will deploy thousands of extra troops to join the fight against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

Army chief Lt. Gen. Eduardo Año said three more battalions will be deployed to add to the six Army and two Marine battalions currently hunting down the bandits in the troubled island province.

"Within a few days," Año said on the additional troop deployment.

The Abu Sayyaf led by Isnilon Hapilon challenged the military, threatening to mount more attacks head on against what they called "Duterte soldiers."

President Duterte has ordered an all out military offensive against the Abu Sayyaf amid the mounting casualties among troops fighting the bandit group since last week.

The bandits have killed 15 government troops in fierce fighting late Monday in Patikul, Sulu.

"Once the three battalions have arrived, we are going to assess if we are going to add more troops in order to hasten the accomplishment of our mission," Año said.

On top of the 5,000 troops already based in Sulu and 2,500 in Basilan, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has pulled out troops from the Visayas, Luzon and other areas of Mindanao and deployed them to the two island provinces with the specific mission to seek and destroy the Abu Sayyaf.

The AFP has also deployed naval assets in Sulu to choke off possible escape routes of the bandits.

This is so far the biggest deployment of the AFP running after some 481 Abu Sayyaf gunmen who were identified by validated reports.

AFP chief Gen. Ricardo Visaya ordered Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) chief Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo de la Cruz to sustain the offensive against the bandit group in Sulu.

De la Cruz, for his part, said the troops are gaining the momentum.

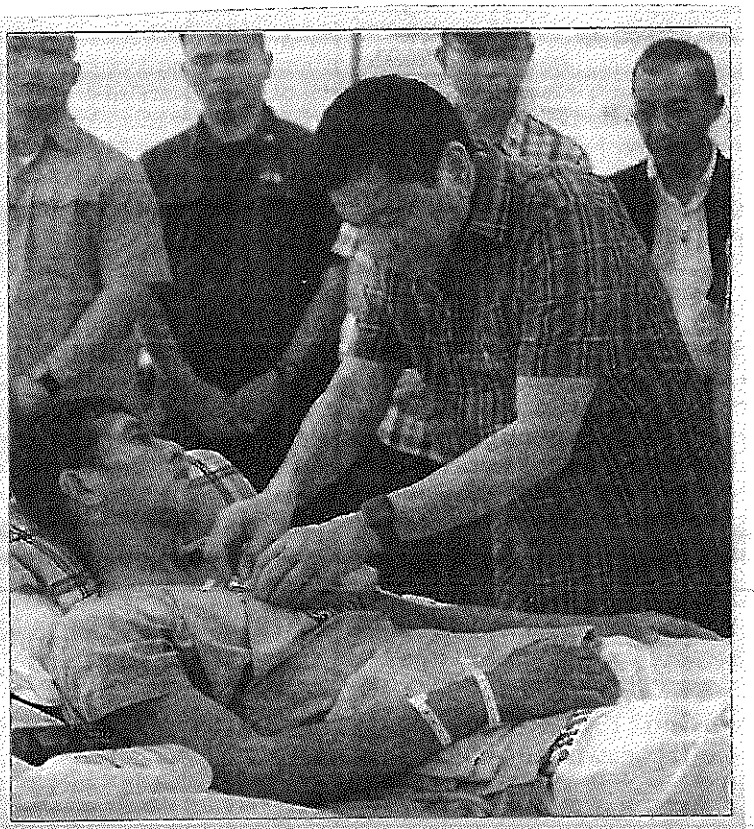

Photo taken on Wednesday shows President Duterte pinning a medal on a soldier confined in a hospital in Zamboanga City. AP

"The operation was gaining momentum since we managed to get closer and pushing the Abu Sayyaf group like ping pong ball to different points of the attacking forces until

that unfortunate day," De la Cruz said, referring to last Monday's clashes that left 15 soldiers dead.

De la Cruz said he did not even consider last Monday's incident as a setback in their operations against the bandits.

He said Monday's encounter also left six more militants killed, adding to 36 the total number of Abu Sayyaf fatalities.

The military suffered 15 killed and 29 wounded, De la Cruz said.

De la Cruz stressed the necessity to pour in more troops in the theater of operations.

He said the Abu Sayyaf splintered into smaller groups to evade pursuing government troops.

"That's why we poured more troops to look for them," he said.

Retaliation

Meanwhile, security had been tightened in Duterte's hometown in Davao City against the possibility of diversionary attacks by the Abu Sayyaf.

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) also placed all its personnel nationwide on alert at the seaports and harbors.

Duterte is bracing for possible retaliation from the Abu Sayyaf following his directive to intensify military offensives against the local terrorist group.

The President, however, is unfazed by the threat, stressing that government forces are capable of destroying the bandits.

"The Abu Sayyaf does not live by the laws of civilization. They are evil," Duterte told the gathering of Jesus Anointed One in Davao City on Wednesday.

"Be on guard because we are hitting them hard. I expect some kind of retribution also from them – reprisal but just keep your cool. What you can dish out, I can do better ten times. I have an army. I have planes. You don't have them," he added.

– With Roel Pareño, Alexis Romero, Edith Regalado, Jose Rodel Clapano, Evelyn Macairan

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300 Army troops in Samar off to Sulu

TACLOBAN CITY — The Philippine Army's 8th Infantry Division has sent more than 300 soldiers from Samar Island to help pursue the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu province.

On Wednesday, the unit held a send-off ceremony for the 63rd Infantry Battalion (IB) based in Lope de Vega, Northern Samar, at the Calbayog City Airport.

The battalion consists of 297 military personnel and 14 officials.

The deployment came after the bloody clash between government troops and Abu Sayyaf that claimed lives of 15 soldiers.

Lt. Col. Carmelito Pangatungan, 63rd IB commander, said his men are well-prepared for the assignment.

"Even before we were informed on this assignment, I already told my troops of the possibility that we will be assigned in Sulu. As soldiers, it is our mandate to run after bad elements, terrorists that are threat for the attainment of lasting peace in the country," Pangatungan told reporters.

More than 5,000 soldiers are in Sulu to fight the extremist group.

Brig. Gen. Cesar Idio, assistant 8th ID commander, reminded the soldiers to be careful, enhance commandership, develop leadership, and continue with the needed training.

"Of course, do not forget to pray as this is our only hope," Idio told the soldiers.

He said the transfer of 63rd IB will not affect the operation of the division particularly in Northern Samar and parts of Calbayog City.

"We assessed the situation. The regional police will also align their forces to cover the gaps created by the pull-out," he said.

The 63rd IB is the fourth unit from Eastern Visayas to be deployed in Mindanao. Earlier this year, the entire 19th IB force based in Kananga, Leyte, was assigned to Cotabato province.

Last year, the division also sent the 34th IB to Maguindanao to support the operation against the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter (BIFF), Justice for Islamic Movement (JIM) and other lawless elements.

Samar Governor Sharee Ann Tan admitted that the deployment of troops from Samar province to Mindanao may have an impact on the peace and order situation in the province, a former hotbed of armed rebels.

"The Army assured us, however, that in the event an insurgency may arise again in the province, they will order the return of military forces to Samar Island," the governor said.

Problem on accessibility connecting towns and villages in Samar provinces is among the reasons why some parts of the island remained a stronghold of communist rebels.

"They were also planning to transfer the 87th IB, but we asked them to retain the military troops and we are happy that they granted our request," Tan added. (PNA)

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Key Army posts set to be vacated

Three key positions in the Philippine Army will soon be vacant as three Army generals are set for mandatory retirement this September and October. Maj. Gen. R-Demosthenes C. Santillian, vice commander of the Philippine Army, leads the list of retirees who will leave the service on September 8. Brig. Gen. Leoncio A Cirunay, commander of the AFP Reserve Command, will retire from the military service upon reaching the mandatory age of 56 on September 15. By October 6, Maj. Gen. Jet B. Velarmino, commander of the 8th Infantry Division, will also retire leaving another key Army position open. The Philippine Army gave testimonial parade for Velarmino and Cirunay yesterday. Another testimonial parade is scheduled for Santillian today. In both speeches of Velarmino and Cirunay, they asked the soldiers to keep serving the people and to do their duty as army troopers as best as they can. (Francis T. Wakefield)

02 September 2016 Malaya The National Newspaper Page: B6

3 Army officers retiring

BY VICTOR REYES

THREE Army officers, including two two-star generals, are due to bow out of military service in the coming weeks, triggering reassignments and promotions.

The three are led by Maj. Gen. Jet Velarmino, commander of the Army's 8th Infantry Division in Samar, who is due to reach the mandatory retirement age of 56 on October 6. He is a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1982.

The two others are Maj. Gen. Demosthenes Santillan (PMA 1983), Army vice commander, who is due for retirement on September 8, and Brig. Gen. Leoncio Cirunay, chief of the AFP Reserve Command, a non-PMAer who is retiring on September 15.

There is yet no official as to who will take the place of the retiring officers.

Sources said Maj. Gen. Edmundo Pangilinan (PMA 1983), commander of the 6th Infantry Division, is among those being groomed as new Army vice commander – the second highest post in the Army. Pangilinan is due for retirement this November.

Pangilinan's post will reportedly go to Maj. Carlito Galvez (PMA 1985), the AFP deputy chief of staff for operations, and Cirunay's post to Col. Bernie Langug, a non-PMAer.

Several Army officers were reassigned last July after Gen. Ricardo Visaya assumed the post of AFP chief.

3 ranking PA officials to retire

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 1): 3 ranking PA officials to retire

Three key positions in the Philippine Army (PA) will soon be vacant as three ranking generals will leave the service after reaching the mandatory retirement age of 56 this September and October.

First to retire is PA vice commander Major Gen. R-Demosthenes C. Santillan on Sept. 8.

He will be followed by AFP Reserve Command head Brig. Gen. Leoncio A. Cirunay who will retire from the military service on Sept. 15.

On Oct. 6, 8th Infantry Division commander Major Gen. Jet B. Velarmino will leave the service.

Col. Benjamin Hao, PA spokesperson, said testimonial parades were already given to Velarmino and Cirunay Thursday.

Meanwhile, another testimonial parade is scheduled for Santillian on Friday.

In both speeches of Velarmino and Cirunay, they urged the soldiers to keep serving the people and to fulfill their duty as army troopers.

Velarmino is a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1982.

He rendered 38 years and four months of service to the PA.

Velarmino also served as PA chief-of-staff while Cirunay served in the Army for 34 years and two months.

The latter also served as 9th Infantry Division spokesperson in 2009 before he became 9th Infantry Division assistant chief-of-staff for operations and training.

Cirunay was also assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division as 202nd Infantry Brigade deputy commander.

He had four other stints in 2nd Infantry Division area before he got assigned in the AFP Reserve Command.

PA commander Lt. Gen. Eduardo M. Año led the retirement ceremonies today and paid respect for Velarmino and Cirunay's faithful and honorable services to the nation.

Santillian, a member of the PMA Class of 1983, rendered 37 and five months years in the military service. He is a recepient of three Distinguished Service Stars.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=919135

42 3rd ID troops graduate from SROC

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 1): 42 3rd ID troops graduate from SROC

Forty two 3rd Infantry Division soldiers have successfully completed the prestigious three-month Scout Ranger Orientation Course (SROC) last Tuesday.

Capt. Gizelle G. Lim, 3rd Infantry Division public affairs office chief, said the successful candidates came from their three Division Reconnaissance Companies (DRC) and new graduates from their Candidate Soldiers' Course.

The SROC was held at the 3rd Infantry Division's at Camp Gen. Macario B. Peralta, Jamindan, Capiz.

Lim said SROC was an initiative of 3rd Infantry Division commander Major Gen. Harold N. Cabreros.

It seeks to enhance the fighting or combat capability of troopers involved.

Out of the 42 students, Corporal Edgardo G. Dela Cruz of the 31st DRC graduated on top of his class with an average grade of 93.65 percent.

A Letter of Commendation and the Scout Ranger Replica was given to Dela Cruz for his feat.

Since the training which is rigidly designed gives high reputes in terms of physical fitness, Pvt. Elizalde S. Nabat bagged the Physical Fitness Proficiency Award who obtained the highest overall rating with an average of 90.98 percent.

Cabreros said SROC training was not only to test the limits of physical fitness but more importantly the mental attitude of soldiers in combat zones, which in the military parlance is referred to as "stability under pressure".

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=919073

Samar Army sends off troops to Sulu in fight vs Abu Sayyaf

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 1): Samar Army sends off troops to Sulu in fight vs Abu Sayyaf

The Philippine Army's 8th Infantry Division has sent more than 300 soldiers fromSamar Island to help pursue the Abu Sayyaf Group in Sulu province.

On Wednesday, the army division held a send-off ceremony for the 63rd Infantry Battalion (IB) based in Lope de Vega, Northern Samar province at the Calbayog CityAirport.

The battalion consists of 297 military personnel and 14 officials who will participate in the ongoing military offensives to neutralize the terrorist group.

The deployment came after the bloody encounter between government troops and Abu Sayyaf that claimed lives of 15 soldiers.

Lt. Col. Carmelito Pangatungan, 63rd IB commander said that they are well-prepared for the assignment.

"Ever before we were informed on this assignment, I already told my troop of the possibility that we will be assigned in Sulu. As soldiers, it is our mandate to run after bad elements, terrorists that are threat for the attainment of lasting peace in the country," he told reporters.

Currently, there are more than 6,000 soldiers deployed to Sulu to fight against the terrorist group.

Brig. Gen. Cesar Idio, assistant 8th ID commander reminded the soldiers to be careful, enhance commandership, develop leadership and continue with the needed training.

"Of course, do not forget to pray as this is our only hope," Idio told the soldiers.

Idio assured that even with the transfer of 63rd IB, it will not affect the operation of the division particularly in previously covered areas in Northern Samar and parts of Calbayog City.

"We assessed the situation. The regional police will also align their forces to cover the gaps created by the pull-out," he added.

The battalion took an active part to the declaration of Northern Samar as peace and development-ready province and Calbayog City as manageable conflict affected and development-ready city.

The troop also contributed to the declaration of 12 towns in Northern Samar as insurgency-free.

The 63rd IB is the fourth military unit from Eastern Visayas assigned to Mindanao. Early this year, the government deployed the entire 19th IB force based in Kananga, Leyte to Cotabato province.

Last year, the division also sent the 34th IB to Maguindanao in support for military operation against the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter (BIFF), Justice for Islamic Movement (JIM) and other lawless elements undermining the peace and development efforts in the South.

Samar Governor Sharee Ann Tan admitted that the deployment of troops from Samar province to Mindanao may have an impact on the peace and order situation in the province, a former hotbed of armed rebels.

"The Army assured us, however, that in the event an insurgency may arise again in the province, they will order the return of military forces to Samar Island," the governor said.

Problem on accessibility connecting towns and villages in Samar provinces is among the reasons why some parts of the island remained a stronghold of communist rebels.

"They were also planning to transfer the 87th IB, but we asked them to retain the military troops and we are happy that they granted our request," Tan added.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=919113

DWDD: BIGAY LIWANAG AT SAYA | Soldiers Initiate Gift-Giving to Agta Tribe in Apayao

From DWDD AFP Civil Relations Service Radio Website (Aug 31): **BIGAY LIWANAG AT SAYA | Soldiers Initiate Gift-Giving to Agta Tribe in Apayao**

BARANGAY TUROD, Apayao (DWDD) – A team from the Bravo Company of the 17th Infantry Battalion, 5th Infantry Division, led by its' Platoon Leader 2Lt Erwin C Lozarita held a gift-giving activity to the Agta Tribe of Sitio Bayugao, Brgy Turod, Apayao last August 30, 2016.

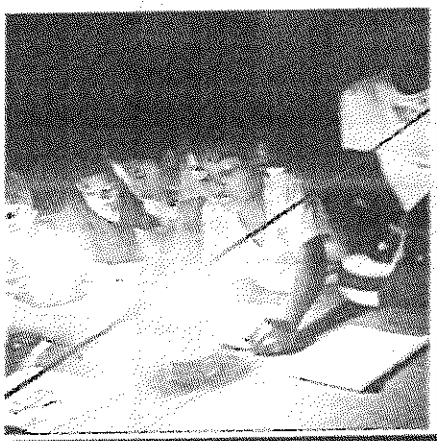
On-board three (3) motorcycles, the team travelled from their unit headquarters to Apayao which was 80kilometers away.

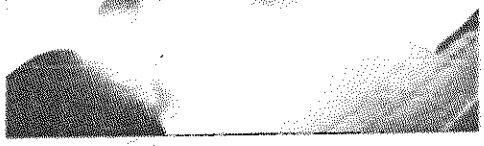
They were welcomed by the whole village led by its Chieftain Mr Alex Flores.

They distributed toys and food packs to about 60 children, and donated 36 solar lamps (the lamps were donation by Lt Lozarita's Facebook friends).

The idea of this gift giving, especially of the solar lamps, came about when they passed by the area during one of their operations. His heart melted when thewy saw agta children studying in the dark using only kerosene lamps.

With the approval of his Company Commander 1Lt Czar M Carsido, they proceeded with the project.





This activity built better relationship with the community, especially the Indigenous People (IP) of Apayao, and has shown that every soldier in your Armed Forces is not only your protector but also somebody who is willing to share their blessing.

Lt Lozarita added that this is project part of their "Give Something to the Poor Challenge. - AES / MCAG / Text and Photos by Lt Lozarita

http://dwdd.com.ph/2015/bigay-ilwanag-at-saya-soldiers-initiate-gift-giving-to-agta-tribe-in-apayao/

Posted by Retired Analyst at 12:42 AM

PA to probe Aug. 29 Patikul clash

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 1): PA to probe Aug. 29 Patikul clash

The Zamboanga Del Sur-based 1st Infantry Division will conduct an investigation into the August 29 clash in Patikul, Sulu to determine why Army troops sustained massive losses and casualties, Philippine Army (PA) commander Lt. Gen. Eduardo Ano said Thursday.

The Zamboanga Del Sur-based 1st Infantry Division has operational control on the troops involved in the seven encounters with the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) since the focused military operations against the bandit group started last August 26.

Ano said composition of the forces used in the government's anti-ASG campaign have remained the same. In fact, the military was winning the fight against the terrorists as proven by the record of the Scout Ranger units early in the campaign.

Prior to the August 29 clash, no government troops were killed and only 17 were reported wounded while an estimated 21 ASG bandits were reported neutralized with 10 terrorist cadavers recovered.

Fifteen troopers were killed and 12 others were wounded after military units clashed heavily with ASG bandits, headed by Radullan Sahiron, in Sitio Kan Jalul, Barangay Maligay, Patikul, Sulu last Monday.

A total of 30 terrorists were reported to have been killed during the ongoing focused military operations against the ASG which started last week.

Another 11 brigands were reported wounded in the series of clashes with government forces.

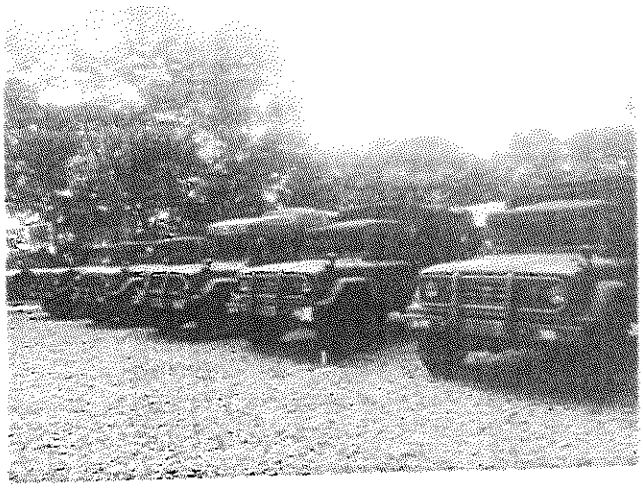
"Objective is to find the reasons (that) led to the (huge number of military casualties) that's automatic," Ano said in Filipino.

The PA chief also said three battalions are on the way to augment military units conducting focused military operations in Sulu.

The offensive was the offshoot of the bandit group's brutal beheading of 18-year-old Patrick Jhames Almodavar last week.

http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=919118

Army's 4ID gets 43 new military trucks, 10 ambulances from Korea



The 4th Infantry "Diamond" Division, Philippine Army based in Camp Evangelista in Cagayan de Oro City has received a total of forty-three (43) KM-450 Troop Carrier Trucks and Ten (10) units of KM-451 Ambulance. The issuance of the vehicles to Army units is part of the modernization program and the continuing mobility enhancement program of the Army and is a product of a Government-to-Government procurement between the Republic of the Philippines and South Korea.

A ceremonial blessing of the vehicles was held at Camp Evangelista last August 30, 2016. The vehicles will address mobility requirements of the subordinate units of 4ID.

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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Military: Abu Sayyaf militants fight while high on shabu

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Some of the Abu Sayyaf militants who figured in close combat with government troops in Patikul, Sulu last Monday were high on drugs, according to a military official.

Western Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo de la Cruz said 10 soldiers who were wounded during the encounter said the militants were brazen to come in so close to attack.

"Based on what the wounded soldiers said, the militants appeared to be high on shabu when they attacked at close quarters," De la Cruz said.

The bandits killed 15 government troops in fierce fighting late Monday that raged for almost two hours in Barangay Maligay in Patikul.

De la Cruz cited the case of Pfc. Jison Falcasantos who was hacked dead by a militant even after wounding his attacker.

De la Cruz said it was not the first time they heard of the Abu Sayyaf being high on drugs, saying that in most of the camps overrun by government troops, they recovered shabu and drug paraphernalia.

He believed the Abu Sayyaf easily lured addicts into its ranks by offering money and drugs.

President Duterte also believed the Abu Sayyaf has resorted to unconventional and brutal methods of dealing with their enemies.

He said the bandit group "has deteriorated into some kind of cannibalism" in beheading their victims.

"For what? You think Allah would be happy to see you do that? In the name of Allah, you kill and then unnecessarily, you mutilate the body of a human being," the President said.

– With Edith Regalado

02 September 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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'No Abu Sayyaf security threats in Duterte country'

By **ANTONIO L. COLINA IV**

DAVAO CITY – The Task Force Davao assured that there are no imminent Abu Sayyaf Group–related security threats in the home turf of President Duterte even after he issued orders to decimate the terrorist group during a recent visit to Jolo, Sulu.

In a press briefing yesterday, TF Davao deputy commander Col. George Lalaquil said his group closely coordinates with other military units detailed in neighboring areas of the city for intelligence reports on security threats.

"All relevant information is always shared to an appropriate unit that needs to act on it. If it concerns Davao City, rest assured na nakakarating as amin," he said.

He added that the TF Davao has increased its random monitoring activities round the clock and set up checkpoints at all entry points of the city to deter the possible attacks, even from the porous coastal areas.

He said that TF Davao has 277 Special Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit Active Auxiliary members and 80 regular troops who are spread across the city providing security and conducting patrols.

He said another platoon composed 30 troops will beef up TF Davao.

He added that close coordination with other military units not only boosts the security setup in Duterte's hometown but the entire Davao region as well.

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Balita

Ang Nangungunang Pahayagang Tagalog sa Bansa P8.00

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Duterte sa militar: 'Wag magsayang ng bala,

'WAG MAGTANIM NG GALIT

Ni YAS D. OCAMPO

DAVAO CITY – Pinaalalahanan ni Pangulong Duterte ang mga sundalo na huwag puputulan ng bahagi ang mga napapatay na kaaway ng estado at "huwag magsayang ng bala" sa mga ito.

Sa kanyang pagbisita sa burol ng 11 sundalong nasawi sa pakikipagbakbakan sa Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) sa Sulu, nakiusap ang Presidente sa militar na huwag puputulan ng bahagi ang bangkay ng mga kaaway, kahit pa kilala ang ASG sa mga ganitong brutal na pamamaslang.

"Kaya ang order ko sa sundalo, isang bala, kapag natumba na, 'wag mong aksayahan ng panahon. Huwag mong sayangin iyang bala," aniya. "Move on to fight another day. Sabi ko sa kanila, 'wag kayong magtanim ng galit."

Sinabi ng Pangulo na alam niya ang epektong sikolohikal ng anumang pagpuputol ng bahagi ng katawan, kahit pa ginawa ito sa kaaway ng estado.

"I am sorry that this has to happen. I do not want it to happen again. Kung mamari lang, at saka may pakiusap ako, kung hindi naman tayo magkaintindihan, eh, huwag mo naman iyang mga ganoon na style na sirain mo ang katawan ng tao," anang Pangulo.

"Pakiusap ko, kung away lang man—fight, but do not add grief to the family by destroying the body. Kailanman hindi talaga ako papayag na gagawin ng gobyerno iyan. Hindi talaga ako papayag, iyong brutality, cruelty nang ganoon. Sabi ko, isang bala lang, iwanan mo na kung nalaman mo patay na."

Libu-libong operatiba ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) ang ipinadala sa Jolo sa layuning pulbusin ang Abu Sayyaf.

Sinabi ni Rhyan Batchar, tagapagsalita ng Eastern Mindanao Command, na sa 10th Infantry Division pa lamang ay aabot na sa 800 tropa mula sa 69th Infantry Battalion at 2nd Scout Rangers Battalion ang ipinadala sa Sulu laban sa teroristang grupo.

02 September 2016

Tempo

Page. 12

'Don't mutilate ASG bodies'

DAVAO CITY – President Rodrigo R. Duterte has reminded his soldiers to take the higher ground and not mutilate the bodies of the enemies of the state.

President Duterte made the statement amid a full on assault against the Abu Sayyaf Group in Jolo.

Mr. Duterte, speaking as he visited the wake of 11 slain soldiers, pleaded with the soldiers not to mutilate the corpses of the enemies, even if the ASG were known to be doing the same to captives.

"Kaya ang order ko sa sundalo, isang bala, kapag natumba na, 'wag mong aksayahan ng panahon, wag mong sayangin iyang bala," he said.

"Move on to fight another day. Sabi ko sa kanila, wag kayong magtanim ng galit." **(Yas Ocampo)**

02 September 2016

Abante UNA SA BALITA

Pahina. 6

Media sa Sulu inilikas sa banta ng Sayyaf

ZAMBOANGA CITY — Inilipat ng militar ang maraming mga mamamahayag sa mas malaking kampo matapos na magsilikas ang mga residente sa kapaligiran ng kampo ng 35th Infantry Battalion sa Sulu province dahil sa posibleng pag-atake ng Abu Sayyaf.

Nasa mas malaking Camp Teodulfo Bautista sa bayan ng Jolo ang mga television reporters and news photographers matapos silang ilipat doon gabi ng Miyerkules. Nabatid na maraming mga sibilyan ang umalis sa kanilang mga bahay at palatandaan umano ito na may malagim na magaganap.

Walang humpay ang opensiba ng militar laban sa Abu Sayyaf at halos araw-araw at gabi-gabi ang pagpapaputok ng kanyon ng militar sa kabundukan ng Patikul na kung saan ay nagtatago doon ang mga rebelde.

Mahigit 7,000 sundalo na ang nasa Sulu ngayon, matapos na utos ni Pangulong Duterte sa militar na durugin ang Abu Sayyaf. Mahigit sa 1,000 pamilya na rin ang nagsilikas sa nasabing bayan dahil sa kaguluhan at abala naman si Gov. Totoh Tan sa kaligtasan ng mga refugees.

Patuloy ang pamamahagi ni Tan ng mga relief aid – pagkain, bigas, kape at kung anu-ano pa upang masigurong may sapat na suplay ang mga apektado ng giyera. Samantala, tiniyak naman kahapon ng pamunuan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na may sapat na firepower capabilities ang tropa ng pamahalaan na naka-deploy sa Sulu bilang panlaban sa ASG.

Ayon kay AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, may kaukulang air at naval support ang kanilang operating troops na tumutugis sa bandidong grupo sa Basilan at Sulu. **(Al Jacinto/Betchai Julian)**

02 September 2016

Tempo

Widows of slain soldiers included in 4Ps

DAVAO CITY – President Duterte has mandated the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to facilitate the automatic membership of widows of slain soldiers to the government's Pantawid program.

Speaking in Zamboanga Sibugay, President Duterte made the promise to the widows of 11 slain soldiers who died in the pursuit of terrorist group Abu Sayyaf.

At least 15 have died in the massive operation to "destroy" the ASG, upon the direct orders of President Duterte.

"Now, itong mga naiwan na pamilya ng mga sundalo. I'd like you to know that ano kayo, automatic member kayo sa 4Ps. So may konting pera diyan buwan-buwan, saka may isang sakong bigas," he said.

Rice subsidies will automatically be given to active duty soldiers, while 4Ps beneficiary widows will also be allocated the same.

"At kayong – as a soldier automatic iyan, ang sundalo may isang sakong bigas ngayon. May bigas ka na, tapos iyong 4Ps may isa pa, tapos konting pera," Duterte said.

Widows need only to report to the nearest regional office of the DSWD, Duterte said. **(Yas Ocampo)**

PRESIDENT Duterte pins a medal to a wounded soldier during his visit at Ciudad Medical in Zamboanga City. (PPD)

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Free pass doesn't mean Nur off hook, says Palace

By Marlon Ramos

CRIMINAL cases against Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) founder Nur Misuari will be pursued despite President Duterte's order to law enforcement agencies not to arrest him, Malacañang said yesterday.

Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said the President's stand-down order to the police and the military was not meant to violate the law or disrespect the court that issued the arrest warrant for Misuari.

Abella said the Commander in Chief's directive was a "strategic move" to broker peace with the Misuari-led faction of the MNLF and end a decades-long secessionist rebellion.

"It's not a question of (violating the law) because the man (Misuari) is not fleeing anyway. . . The man is there and he's willing to talk," Abella said in a press briefing in Malacañang.

Strategy

"It's . . . a strategic move because... (as the President said) if anything happened to the man while he was in our custody, it would really be trouble for us," Abella said.

On Wednesday, Mr. Duterte disclosed that in a phone conversation with Misuari, they agreed to meet in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to resume peace negotiations between the government and the MNLF.

Mr. Duterte told the police and military not to arrest Misuari if they saw him.

Abella, when reminded that only the courts could issue and lift arrest warrants, said: "I don't think the cases (against Misuari) are being dismissed. . . It's just a question of strategic choice... it's the tactical choice (of the President)."

Misuari has been in hiding since he was ordered arrested for allegedly leading more than 200 MNLF fighters in the violent siege on Zamboanga City in September 2013 that left more than 200 people dead and hundreds wounded.

The siege displaced some 100,000 residents of coastal villages, many of whom are still in evacuation centers.

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30 former rebels receive ₱1.9-M livelihood aid

By YAS B. OCAMPO

DAVAO CITY – Thirty rebel returnees from Davao del Norte received a ₱1.9 million financial assistance package from the government.

Governor Anthony del Rosario led the turn over of a check worth ₱65,000 to each returnee recently during the Provincial Peace and Order Council Meeting held at the VIP Club of the Davao del Norte Sports and Tourism Complex in Tagum City.

The cash aid from the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP) is intended for the livelihood of the former rebels who have returned to the folds of the law.

Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) provincial director Alex Roldan, Kapalong Mayor Maria Theresa Timbol and Davao del Norte Provincial Police Director Sr. Supt. Ferdinand Sifuentes assisted the governor during the rites.

Del Rosario expressed hope that the returnees will be able to establish a much better life for themselves and provide for their families with the cash incentive.

"To our returning rebels, you received ₱65,000 each that can be your capital for your livelihood, don't waste the money... use it for gainful enterprise that will help improve your family)," Del Rosario said.

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Page: 6

Ex-Solgen: Marcos deserves hero's burial

By EDU PUNAY

The late strongman Ferdinand Marcos was a hero who fought for the country during the Japanese occupation and therefore worthy of burial at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, his former solicitor general and justice minister Estelito Mendoza claimed yesterday.

"Everybody should remember – and the youth should know – what happened in the Philippines during the Japanese era and who were those people who fought for the country and dedicated their lives. No one can ever deny that Marcos was among the soldiers in the death march to Bataan and was detained there," Mendoza told reporters after attending a hearing of one of his cases at the Court of Appeals.

For this reason alone, Mendoza believes that Marcos is entitled to a hero's interment at the Libingan in Taguig City.

Addressing objections to the decision of President Duterte to allow Marcos' burial, the 86-year-old lawyer cited the forgiveness given by the Filipino people for the atrocities and crimes against humanity committed by the Japanese imperial soldiers during their occupation in the country.

"Japan is back here (in the Philippines) while we are very happy visiting Japan. If that is so, why can't we, as a people, reconcile on this issue? As Christians, we pray 'Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.' If we will truly follow what we pray for, I am sure this country will be truly peaceful," Mendoza pointed out.

Mendoza further recalled that the Supreme Court already tackled the issue of Marcos' burial in the past, particularly in the case of Marcos vs Manglapus where the SC decided by a close 8-7 vote not to allow the return then of the late president over national security reasons.

"The SC said that his remains could not be brought back at that time because there could be widespread conflict due to division of the people on this issue – not because of his alleged crimes," he explained.

Mendoza lamented that the opinion of the public on the burial issue remains divided even up to this time.

He issued the statement following the oral arguments of the high court on six petitions seeking to bar Marcos' burial at the Libingan where petitioners were allowed to narrate their experiences during martial law. – **With Rhodina Villanueva**

ONLINE NEWS
02 **September 2016**

NO TERROR THREAT | AFP dismisses speculation of spill over of ASG attacks

Marycel Necio Batara September 1, 2016 0
Comment #KATROPA, EMC, NoSpillOver, noterrorthreat

DAVAO CITY — The Eastern Mindanao Command (EMC) dismissed speculations of a possible spill over of attacks by the Abu Sayaff Group (ASG) to other regions like Davao but it assured the security forces, including the Philippine Navy, to have stepped up monitoring and intelligence gathering.
EMC spokesperson Maj. Ezra Balagtey said the military exercises they conducted the past weeks were part of pro-active measures against terrorism. He said they are also coordinating closely with the Western Mindanao Command.
Balagtey said they have also strengthened all maritime entry points since the start of the ASG offensive campaign by the military.
"So far we did not monitor any spill over," Balagtey said during the AFP-PNP press forum at the Royal Mandaya Hotel Wednesday.
Since last week, the AFP and all its intelligence agencies have been monitoring possible threats that may arise from the ongoing operations against the ASG in Sulu.
President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered to seek out all possible lairs of the ASG after the beheading of 18-year-old Patrick Jhames Almodavar last week after his family failed to pay the Php 1-million ransom.
"My orders to the police and to the armed forces against all enemies of the State: Seek out. Seek them out in their lairs whatever and destroy them," Duterte declared last week.
Duterte admitted the ASG's kidnapping activities were the reason why he was sending more troops to Jolo, Sulu to destroy all the enemies of the state. Vowing his war against the ASG would be harsh, "Go out and destroy them," he ordered.
The 10th Infantry Division has started pulling out forces from the 69th Infantry Battalion and the 79th Scout Rangers based in Davao Region to beef up counter terrorism operations, particularly on the ASG. About 500 soldiers from Davao left for their new base in Western Mindanao Command for deployment to Jolo, Sulu.

Next week, another battalion will be sent off to the Western Mindanao Command as additional forces to fight ASG.
Last Monday, the intense operation left 15 soldiers dead in an intense firefight against ASG brigands in Barangay Maligay, Patikul, Sulu. Ten others were wounded in the same firefight.
President Duterte on Wednesday the visited wake of the fallen soldiers at the gymnasium of Camp Navarro that houses the headquarters of the Western Mindanao Command.

http://dwdd.com.ph/