

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



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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

# NEWS CLIPPINGS

27 April 2017

Thursday

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

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

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**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | APRIL 27, 2017 | THURSDAY**

**TROPICAL STORM "DANYE"**  
1,105 KM EAST OF VIRAC, CATANDUANES  
(As of 5:00 PM - Apr. 26, 2017)

**PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)**

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| <b>SUNRISE</b>      | <b>SUNSET</b>        |
| 5:36 AM             | 6:12 PM              |
| <b>MOONRISE</b>     | <b>MOONSET</b>       |
| 6:12 AM             | 7:06 PM              |
| <b>NEW MOON</b>     | <b>FIRST QUARTER</b> |
| APR 28<br>0:19 AM   | MAY 3<br>10:47 AM    |
| <b>LOW TIDE</b>     | <b>HIGH TIDE</b>     |
| MANILA SOUTH HARBOR |                      |
| 0:25 PM             | 10:21 AM             |
| -0.06 Meter         | 0.90 Meter           |

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

Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

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|                     | APR 27     | APR 28     | APR 29     | APR 30     | APR 27     | APR 28     | APR 29 | APR 30 |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------|--------|
| <b>METRO MANILA</b> | 26 - 35 °C | 26 - 34 °C | 23 - 32 °C | 22 - 32 °C | 26 - 31 °C | 26 - 32 °C |        |        |
| <b>TUGUEGARAO</b>   | 25 - 34 °C | 24 - 34 °C | 25 - 33 °C | 25 - 32 °C | 25 - 31 °C | 25 - 32 °C |        |        |
| <b>LAOAG</b>        | 25 - 32 °C | 25 - 33 °C | 27 - 33 °C | 26 - 34 °C | 25 - 35 °C | 26 - 34 °C |        |        |
| <b>BAGUIO</b>       | 16 - 24 °C | 16 - 24 °C | 26 - 33 °C | 26 - 33 °C | 24 - 34 °C | 24 - 34 °C |        |        |
| <b>SBMA/CLARK</b>   | 25 - 36 °C | 26 - 35 °C | 25 - 32 °C | 26 - 32 °C |            |            |        |        |

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**SAGOT KO, PADALA HO!**

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# Asean statement to go easy on China

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

While Southeast Asian leaders are expected to express "serious concern" over recent developments in the South China Sea during their summit on Saturday, they are likely to avoid directly criticizing China's "escalation of activities" including its building of island fortresses in disputed waters.

This was evident in the draft of the chairman's statement for the 30th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit, which mentioned nothing about China's island-building activities or the ruling of a UN-backed arbitral court invalidating the Asian power's expansive maritime claims.

The statement would be a watered-down version of the one issued last year and comes amid a charm offensive by President Duterte – who takes the rotating ASEAN chair this year – to court China for its business and avoid rows over sovereignty in the South China Sea and West Philippine Sea.

In the draft statement, the leaders reaffirmed the importance of enhancing mutual trust and confidence, exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities, avoiding actions

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## Asean From Page 1

that may further complicate the situation, and pursuing peaceful resolution of disputes, including through full respect for legal and diplomatic processes without resorting to threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law such as the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

They also reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability, security and freedom of navigation in and over-flight over the South China Sea.

For former foreign affairs chief Albert del Rosario, the draft chairman's statement was a big disappointment. "The draft of the Chairman's Statement is deeply disappointing and, if not revisited,

would manifest an absence of the desired leadership," he said.

"On said statement's treatment of South China Sea developments, our succinct view is that there is a minimum expectation of positive leadership to be attributed to the Philippine chairmanship of ASEAN," Del Rosario said.

The Philippines, he said, should not forgo the opportunity to assert effective leadership as chair of the ASEAN by pursuing open discussion on the July 2016 ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration based in The Hague. The ruling also reaffirmed the Philippines entitlements in the West Philippine Sea.

Del Rosario urged on Tuesday the ASEAN to make the South China Sea ruling an "integral" part of the draft

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framework being finalized and the eventual Code of Conduct.

He stressed that the position that China's South China Sea build-up is a fait accompli should be rejected.

"We should utilize our leadership to be able to uphold the rule of law," Del Rosario said. "The leadership of the Philippines will lose a lot of influence if we pass up that opportunity."

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) declined to comment on a "watered-down" chairman's statement.

"The statement will be issued right after the summit. I would not preempt," said Foreign Affairs spokesman Robespierre Bolivar.

But Bolivar said "we expect the discussions to be more positive because of the developments in the discussion on the framework of the Code of Conduct."

### Not final

A diplomat from the ASEAN secretariat who declined to be named said officials were still working on the draft of the statement and "it may still change" before it is issued at the end of the summit on Saturday.

ASEAN 2017 National Organizing Council director-general for operations Ambassador Marciano Paynor Jr said the chairman's statement is still "a work in progress" and its contents subject to discussions among member-countries.

He admitted though that the arbitral tribunal's decision that invalidated China's maritime claims might not be mentioned in the chairman's statement.

"Most probably, it will not be mentioned... It is being discussed and the inputs of member countries will be

gathered. For now, it is a work in progress so we cannot discuss it in detail," Paynor told *GMA News TV*.

China claims almost the entire South China Sea and West Philippine Sea where about \$5 trillion worth of sea-borne goods pass every year. Aside from the Philippines and China, other countries with conflicting claims on the strategic waterway are Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam.

ASEAN references to the South China Sea issue typically do not name China, which has been expanding its seven manmade islands in the Spratlys, including those with hangars, runways, radars and surface-to-air missiles.

Last year's ASEAN statement in Laos emphasized the importance of "non-militarization and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities, including land reclamation."

A former government official involved in foreign policy likened the Philippines to Cambodia, which has been accused of taking China's side and serving as a de facto veto against consensus ASEAN decisions that would otherwise be unfavorable to Beijing.

"Everyone is now watching the Philippines, we expect China to send its message to Southeast Asian countries

through Duterte," the official said, requesting anonymity. "We are now acting like China's lackey."

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said the Duterte administration should take advantage of the country's hosting of the ASEAN summit as well as the favorable ruling of the arbitral tribunal to continue defending its claim over the Kalayaan Island Group in the West Philippine Sea.

"We must take this opportunity to reassert our sovereignty over the disputed islands. We have a decision in our favor. We must continue to avail of every opportunity to assert that ruling by the arbitral court," Drilon told the Kapihan sa Manila Bay news forum.

He also expressed support for efforts to forge a new code of conduct among ASEAN member-states to help ensure stability in the disputed waters. He said the proposed code should be based on the ruling of the tribunal.

According to the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, China will soon be capable of deploying fighter jets on three of its reefs. China insists its activities are for defense purposes and are taking place in what it considers its sovereign waters. – Alexis Romero, Paolo Romero, Reuters

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27 April 2017

The  
**Standard**  
DEFINING THE NEWS

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# AFP tightens 'terror watch'

*Looks out for terror-linked Arabs, other foreign groups*

**T**HE military is watching Arab and other foreign nationals who might be supporting terrorist groups in Lanao del Sur and other parts of the country, Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen. Eduardo Año said Wednesday.

"There are some sightings... but there are Arabs going there on the pretext of setting up foundations or doing religious teaching, so we are not really sure," Año said in Fili-

pino. "It is part of the intelligence task to see if these foreigners are supporting local terror groups, including those of Abu Sayyaf commander Isnilon Hapilon."

Earlier, Año said that about 37 Maute Group members, including three Indonesians and a Malaysian, were killed in military operations in Lanao Del Sur from April 21 to 24.

The operations were designed to degrade the capability of the Maute Group.

After its major victory over the Maute Group, the military has doubled security measures in all vital government and private installations, particularly as the As-

sociation of Southeast Asian Nations summit unfolds.

Lt. Col. Jo-Ar Herrera, spokesman of the Army's 1st Tabak Division, said security measures were intensified in areas where many people congregate as a safeguard against possible retaliatory attacks.

Under tight watch are the provinces of Zamboanga, Iligan, Marawi City, Lanao del Norte and adjacent areas where the Maute group and Abu Sayyaf had links.

*Next page*

## AFP...

From A1

The death toll in Lanao del Sur fighting has risen to 38 Maute bandits and several others critically wounded during four days of ground and aerial bombardment on their encampment in Brgy. Pagalungan.

In Manila, the police and military have tightened security around the periphery of the Asean Summit venue, the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City and in areas where the delegates and foreign dignitaries are billeted.

Herrera said added checkpoints were in place.

At present, a battalion of ground troops remained on the outskirts of Piagapo and adjacent municipalities pursuing the bandits who fled to forested areas.

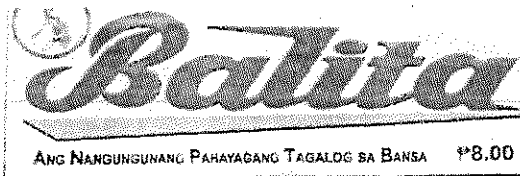
Several improvised bombs and components were seized from the bandit bunkers.

Some 2,000 residents had left their homes and sheltered in government centers to escape being caught in the crossfire between Maute and attacking soldiers.

**Francisco Tuyay and PNA**



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## Hustisya para sa pinugutang sundalo, tiniyak

Tiniyak kahapon ni Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff General Eduardo Año na mabibigyan ng hustisya ang pagkamatay ng sundalo na pinugutan ng Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) ilang araw makaraang bihagin noong nakaraang linggo.

Sa isang panayam, siniguro ni Año na magkakamit ng hustisya ang pamilya ni Staff Sgt. Arni Siraji, ng 32nd Infantry Battalion sa ilalim ng AFP Joint Task Force Sulu.

Sinabi ni Año na ang brutal na pagpatay ng Abu Sayyaf kay Siraji ay higit pang nagpatindi sa kagustuhan ng militar na durugin ang teroristang grupo.

"His death in fact further ignited the burning desire or feeling of our troops to end the ASG," sabi ni Año.

"Actually, Siraji is not involved in actual combat. He is playing a major role in establishing relations with the community, liaisoning with the local government. He is very effecting in doing that," dagdag niya.

"But you know in war you also respect your opponents, you do not really, what do you call that, do barbaric acts against your opponent. You have to respect what he is fighting for. But what they did to Siraji is inhuman, so we make sure that justice will be given to him," paliwanag pa niya.

Isang Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) integree na naging sundalo, bandang 9:30 ng umaga ng Abril 20 nang dukutin si Siraji ng limang armado habang naglalakad patungong Barangay Igasan, Patikul, Sulu.

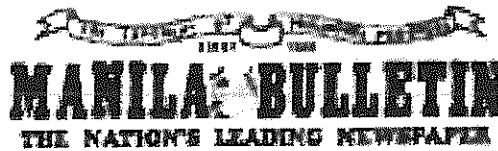
Abril 23 naman nang kumpirmahin ng militar na pinugutan si Siraji ng mga burnihag dito kahit pa isa siyang Tausug.

"The ASG got hurt because they lost support from the community because of this staff sergeant who they abducted and eventually beheaded," sabi ni Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, commander ng AFP Joint Task Force Sulu.

"We condemn this barbaric act committed by the Abu Sayyaf. He was a fellow Tausug but they still did their barbaric act. Aside from this the victim was doing peace efforts, he was not a combatant. He is very effective in his role to the point that the community will not give support to the ASG," sabi pa ni Sobejana.

**Francis T. Wakefield**

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## Cotabato City revives anti-terror task force

COTABATO CITY – Military, police and civilian authorities have revived the Task Force Kutawao (TFK) to secure this city and its environs against terrorism, kidnapping and proliferation of illegal drugs.

City Mayor Cynthia Giani-Sayadi, Maj. Gen. Arnel dela Vega, head of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, and police officials presided at a symbolic convergence here on Tuesday for the revival of the TFK.

Dela Vega named Col. Jose Gongona as head of the task force, which he said will be composed of personnel from Army, Marine and police contin-

gents and augmented by the city's Civilian Armed Force Geographical Units.

"This (TFK revival) is in line with the AFP's development support and security plan suggested by President Duterte," dela Vega said.

The TFK was first established in 1990 to contain the rash of kidnapping for ransom cases by organized crime groups preying on Filipino-Chinese traders.

Sayadi said the TFK revival was "timely (for) the government's no nonsense campaign against terrorism and extremism."

The lady mayor cited some terror attacks in this city, including the 2014 roadside bloody bombing that left several fatalities and casualties, which merited the return of TF Kutawao. Two of the mayor's escorts were killed in such attack.

She said that the city had a fast growing economy, and accompanying it was rising criminality and peace and order issues that would affect the business climate, if left unattended.

From a mere five to seven percent, the city's annual economic growth had increased to 20 percent per year since 2003, she said. (Ali G. Macabalang)

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## Anti-terror task force binuhay sa Cotabato

ZAMBOANGA CITY --- Muling binuhay ng militar ang isang anti-terror task force sa Cotabato City dahil sa matinding banta ng mga terorista.

Matatandaang sa Cotabato rin natakip ang mga miyembro ng Maute group na siyang nasa likod ng madugong pambobomba sa isang night market sa Davao City noong September 2016 na ikinamatay at ikinasugat ng mahigit sa 80.

Ang Task Force Kutawato ay isinailalim sa 603rd Infantry Brigade sa pamumuno ni Colonel Jesus Sarsagat at

sakop naman ng 6th Infantry Division ni Major General Arnel dela Vega sa Maguindanao province na kilalang kuta rin ng mga Jihadist group at iba pang rebeldeng grupo.

“The task force symbolized intensified activities to promote peace and security in the city guided by good governance and commitment of stakeholders for a peaceful and secured progressive city of Cotabato,” ani ni Dela Vega.

Sinabi naman ni Sarsagat na pagsisikapin nilang mapanatili ang seguridad sa Cotabato. (Al Jacinto)

27 April 2017

The Manila Times

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### **NPA REBEL SURRENDERS IN ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR**

**SHARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao:** A 25-year-old member of the New People's Army (NPA) surrendered to Philippine Army troops under the Joint Task Force ZamPelan in Zamboanga del Sur on Tuesday morning. Capt. Jo-ann Petinglay, spokeswoman for the Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom), identified the young NPA rebel as Jonelo Daluyon Balabag, aka Joel, and a resident of Purok 1, Barangay Matalang, Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur. Petinglay said Balabag surrendered to the troops of the 53rd Infantry Battalion led by Lt. Col. Virgilio Hamos Jr. in Camp Major David Sabido in Gulpos, Zamboanga del Sur. Balabag, a member of the NPA's Western Mindanao Regional Party Committee, turned over his M16 rifle with three long and four short magazines loaded with ammunition to Hamos. Balabag said during debriefing by the troops that continuous combat operations forced the NPA to move day and night. With limited food supply and difficulty in evading the government forces, he decided to surrender. "We call on other members of the NPA to [surrender]. This is high time for them to lay down their arms and surrender for the chance of living a peaceful life with their family and loved ones," Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., WestMinCom commanding general, said.

**JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL**

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## Gov't forces intensify ops in key cities

By Mario J. Mallari

Government forces have intensified security operations in key cities in Mindanao to thwart any possible diversionary or retaliatory attacks coming from terrorist groups now being pursued in Lanao del Sur.

Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera, spokesman of the Army's 1st Infantry Division (ID), said that Brig Gen. Rolando Bautista, commander of 1st ID has ordered troops to secure vital installations and avoid collateral damage.

"He issued instruction to secure all vital installations to avoid diversionary attacks by the enemy," said Herrera.

Bautista's order covered vital installations and places of convergence in the cities of Iligan, Marawi and even Zamboanga.

The move, Herrera said, was based on the history of the targeted groups, particularly the Maute group and the Abu Sayyaf, which usually conducts diversionary or retaliatory attacks when pinned down in certain area.

Currently, military operations are still ongoing against the Maute group in Piagapo, Lanao del Sur where 38 terrorists, including foreigners, had been killed since the offensives were launched last week.

"Historically, they conduct actions to mislead the government forces...so we are continuously securing public places and important areas in Iligan, Marawi...and even Zamboanga," said Herrera.

"We have route security, checkpoint operations, civil military operations," he added.

Bautista also ordered for the troops to closely coordinate with other government agencies, particularly local government units, to ensure public safety and security.

Herrera also cited the links between the Maute group, the Abu Sayyaf and other terrorist groups.

"Diversionary, retaliatory... are the dangerous moves of our enemies. We know their tactics, so we are on guard," he said.

Last September, the Maute group exploded an improvised explosive device (IED) at a night market in Davao City -killing 14 people and wounded 70 others, to ease military pressure from the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu and Basilan.

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# BusinessMirror

Page. A3

## Troops start clearing operations, find bodies of 3 Maute fatalities

**A** RMY troops sent to track down Maute Group bandits on Wednesday started clearing operations in Piagapo, Lanao del Sur, where a series of gun battles occurred between the armed men and government forces.

Brig. Gen. Rolando Joselito D. Bautista, commander of the Army's First Infantry "Tabak" Division, earlier ordered a systematic and extensive visual tracking by troops of the entire area to determine if any other cadavers, arms, ammunition, homemade bombs and the like were left behind by fleeing Maute bandits.

Bautista also ordered the troops to turn over any cadaver found to the Piagapo police for forensic examination in order to determine their nationalities and identities.

At least four of the reported 37 dead Maute bandits were reportedly foreigners—three Indonesians and one Malaysian—with ties to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

At 8 p.m. on Monday, three unidentified men believed to be Maute bandits were seen in the vicinity of Tapucan, Piagapo, after an encounter with troops from the 103rd Infantry Brigade in Barangay Gacal also in Piagapo.

A pursuit operation by the troops resulted in a firefight that lasted for five minutes prompted the bandits to withdraw toward the northwest.

There were no casualties on the government side, while no data on the side of the enemy was obtained.

However, an M16 rifle bearing serial RP 250280 was recovered on the scene. The rifle was manufactured by a local company during the Marcos administration and was issued to the government's armed services.

Bautista advised the troops to be alert, remain patient and relentlessly pursue the bandits to prevent them from sowing further mayhem.

On Tuesday afternoon the troops recovered two unidentified cadavers in Sitio Pagalongan, Barangay Gacap, Piagapo, while scouring the encampment abandoned by the Maute bandits.

Meanwhile, efforts are ongoing to detect foreigners or Arab-looking personalities out to support bandit groups in Lanao del Sur and other parts of the country. *Nonie Reyes with PNA*



**BRIG. Gen. Rolando Josecito Bautista, commander of the Army's First Infantry "Tabak" Division, talks with the troops who seized the encampment the Maute Group in Piagapo Complex, Lanao del Sur.**

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Pahina. 3

### **Bangkay ng 2 Maute nadiskubre**

**NADISKUBRE** ng militar ang katawan ng dalawang hinihinalang mga miyembro ng Maute group sa Brgy. Gacap, Piagapo, Lanao del Sur.

Ayon kay Bng. Gen. Nixon Fortes, commander ng Philippine Army 103rd Infantry Brigade, mukhang mga dayuhan ang dalawang bangkay na patuloy pang pinoproceso para matukoy ang pagkakakilanlan ng mga ito.

Nauna nang inihayag ni Armed Forces chief Gen. Eduardo Año na tatlong Indonesian at isang Malaysian ang kabilang sa aabot sa 37 bandidong napatay sa mga inilunsad na opensibang-militar laban sa Maute group sa nasabing barangay. Ang mga naturang dayuhan aniya ay mga miyembro ng Jemaah Islamiyah, isang Southeast Asian extremist group. Inampon na umano ng Maute group ang ilang miyembro ng JI nang magsimulang humina ang puwersa nito.

Samaniala, sinabi ni Fortes na nasa kontrol na ng militar ang malaking bahagi ng buibundukin sa bayan ng Piagapo kung saan maaaring nagtatago ang iba pang miyembro ng Maute group.

**JEFF GALLOS**



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## NPA member yields to Zambo troops

A member of the New People's Army (NPA) surrendered to the troops under the Joint Task Force ZamPelan (Zamboanga Peninsula and Lanao) in Zamboanga del Sur on Tuesday.

Jonelo Daluyon Balabag, alias Joel, 25, a resident of Purok 1, Barangay Matalang, Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur, surrendered to the troops of the 53rd Infantry Battalion, led by Lieutenant Colonel Virgilio Hamos, Jr., in Camp Major David Sabido in Guipos, Zamboanga del Sur, at around 9 a.m. Tuesday.

Balabag, who was a member of the Western Mindanao Regional Party Committee, also turned over his M16 rifle, with three long steel and four short steel magazines loaded with ammunition.

Balabag said that, during the debriefing on Balabag, he said continuous combat operations forced the NPA to move day and night, and that the limited food supply and the difficulty in evading the government forces, left him no choice but to surrender.

"I commend the efforts of the JTF Zampelan for this recent accomplishment," Lt. Gen. Carlito G. Galvez, Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command, said.

"We call on the other members of the NPA to do the same. This is high time for them to lay down their arms and surrender, for the chance of living a peaceful life with their family and loved ones."

"We also recognize the support our troops are getting from the local government units and the community. Truly with our unified efforts, we can achieve milestones and breakthroughs," he added. (Francis T. Wakefield)

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

## **MGEN PARAYNO VISITS WOUNDED TROOPS, INSTALLS TWO NEW BATTALION COMMANDERS IN MINDANAO**

Posted by Lul Claudio on April 26, 2017 at 4:02 PM

Major General Rhoderick Parayno, Commander of 2nd Division visited the wounded troops in Zamboanga and installed two new Battalion Commanders today, April 26, 2017.

Sgt Briant Velarmino and PFC Roland Cuayco both assigned with 68th Infantry Battalion, 2ID who were wounded during an encounter in Basilan, were visited by MGen Parayno and were given financial support.

He also checked the morale and medical condition of other 2ID troops confined at Camp Navarro Station Hospital in Zamboanga City.

Right after his visit, he presided a Joint Turn-Over Ceremony at around 10:30 AM held at the Headquarters of 104th Brigade, 1st Division based in Brgy Tabiawan, Isabela City, Basilan.

MGen Parayno installed LTC Jorry Baclor as the new Commanding Officer of 68th Infantry Battalion and LTC Jonas Templo for 74th Infantry Battalion.

On his message, MGen Parayno expressed his gratitude to the troops especially to the outgoing commanders for their invaluable services rendered which contributed to the successes that the 2ID have achieved.

Likewise, he challenged the newly installed Commanders to give their best in performing their duties and responsibilities, and to closely coordinate with the Local Government Units (LGUs) in order to effectively and efficiently attain its mission of sustaining peace and development.

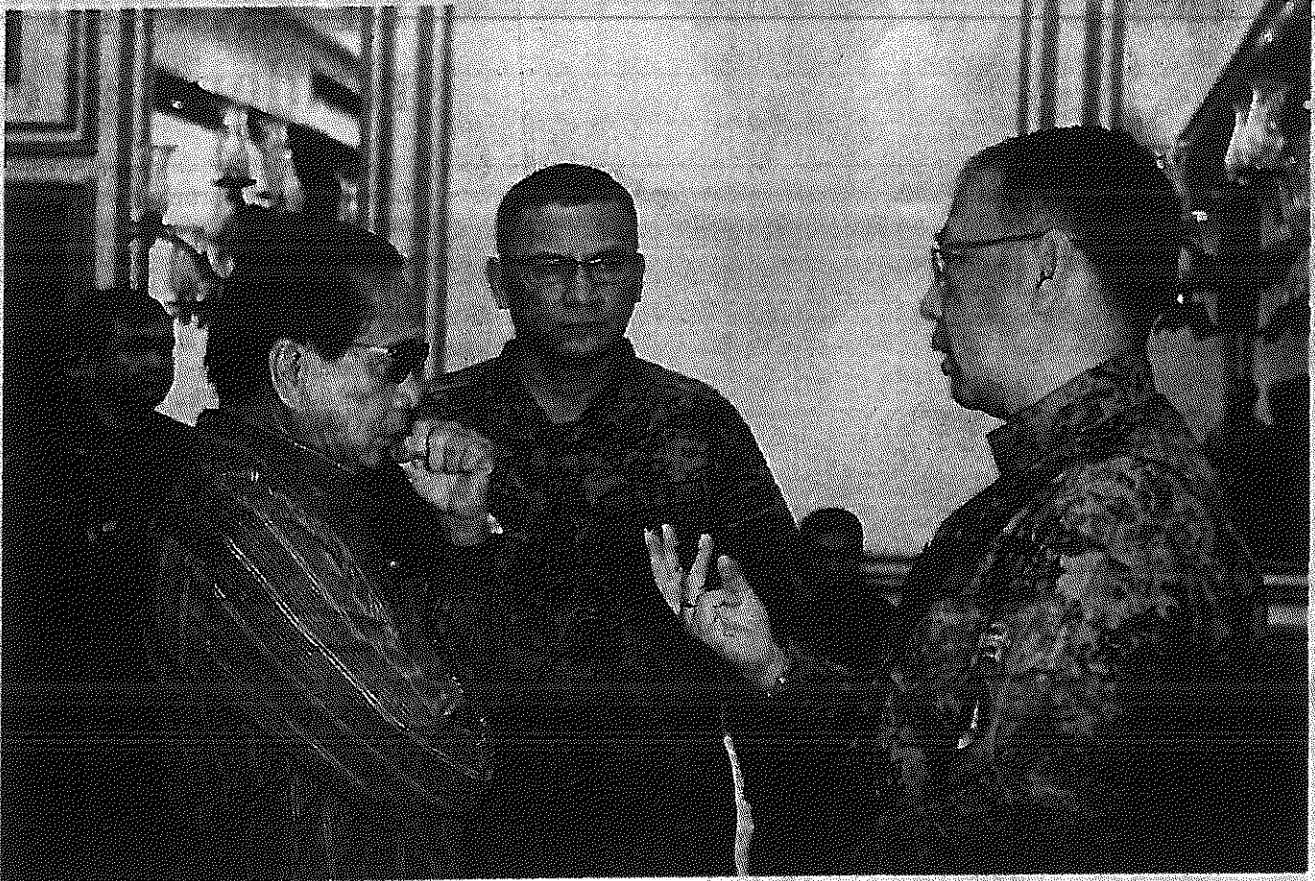
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Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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**CRITICAL UPDATES – Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza (left) listens intently to Western Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez during the forum on the Philippine Government (GPH)-Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) peace process with the Philippine National Police (PNP) in Davao City, yesterday. In the middle is Sixth Infantry Division commander Brig. Gen. Arnel dela Vega. (Keith Bacongco)**

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## Raid on Nobleza safehouse yields Abu terror plans

By **GERRY LEE GORIT**

**CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY** – Superintendent Maria Cristina Nobleza, the police official who was said to have a romantic relationship with an Abu Sayyaf bandit, may find herself in deeper trouble after lawmen found documents in her house detailing plans for another terror attack.

The regional police raided Nobleza's house in Malaybalay City in Bukidnon on Monday and seized several firearms, explosive devices, and a document detailing terror activities of Abu Sayyaf militant Al-Mohammar Bayani.

Bayani was arrested along with two minors who were detained for questioning.

Nobleza was earlier arrested, along with her alleged lover, Reneer Lou Dongon, a suspected Abu Sayyaf militant, 11 days after a group of bandits arrived in Bohol to supposedly carry out kidnapping activities.

Government security forces foiled the bandits' attempt to set up base in the province, killing several of them in sepa-

rate encounters in Inabanga and Clarin towns.

The clashes resulted in the death of over a dozen people including nine bandits, three soldiers and a police officer.

Investigators however cannot say whether there are other police officers aside from Nobleza who have links with the Abu Sayyaf.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa however admitted the possibility that some policemen may have sacrificed their lives performing their job as intelligence operatives.

"There are agents willing to do that (get intimate) to sacrifice their lives to penetrate criminal groups," Dela Rosa said without giving details.

But he said the intimate connection between Nobleza and Dongon is not sanctioned by the PNP.

"Initial (investigation showed) it was not sanctioned by the PNP. I am the PNP chief, I must be informed if her job is sanctioned by the PNP. It is not sanctioned, not covered by any coplan (case operation plan)," Dela Rosa said.

"If there is such coplan, they should have turned it over to us," he added.

Although his initial pronouncement was that Nobleza's link with Dongon had no authorization from the PNP, Dela Rosa said he also ordered investigation to dig deeper into the case.

"That (possibility of Nobleza as deep penetration agent against the Abu Sayyaf) will form part of the investigation," he said.

Chief Superintendent Noli Taliño, director of Central Visayas police, said additional charges will be filed against Nobleza in connection with the bomb paraphernalia found on Monday night in Barangay Loooc, Panglao and Malaybalay, Bukidnon.

Taliño also revealed Nobleza's marriage with Senior Supt. Allan Nobleza has been annulled since 2010, though the former chief of the Davao Crime Laboratory still opted to use the surname of her husband. The Noblezas have two children.

He said Allan will also be invited for questioning as part of the investigation. Nobleza was a member of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission when she

was assigned to interrogate Dongon following his arrest for bombing a hotel in Cagayan de Oro in 2013.

From the interrogation, Dela Rosa remarked, "they let the love begin."

Taliño said Nobleza and Dongon had an Islamic wedding but he could not yet provide the exact date of the supposed marriage.

Taliño admitted Nobleza's links with Dongon were accidentally uncovered after their arrest last April 24.

Nobleza was reportedly in Bohol to provide medicine to an Abu Sayyaf militant who was shot and wounded after the encounter with government troops on April 11.

Taliño said Nobleza arrived in Bohol on April 17 with Dongon, his mother Judith and a 13-year-old son of Akmad Santos, also a known terrorist.

Nobleza, who underwent booking procedures at the PNP headquarters at Camp Crame, insisted she only went to Clarin on an assignment. She has yet to present official memos or documents to support her claim.

– With Cecille Suerte Felipe

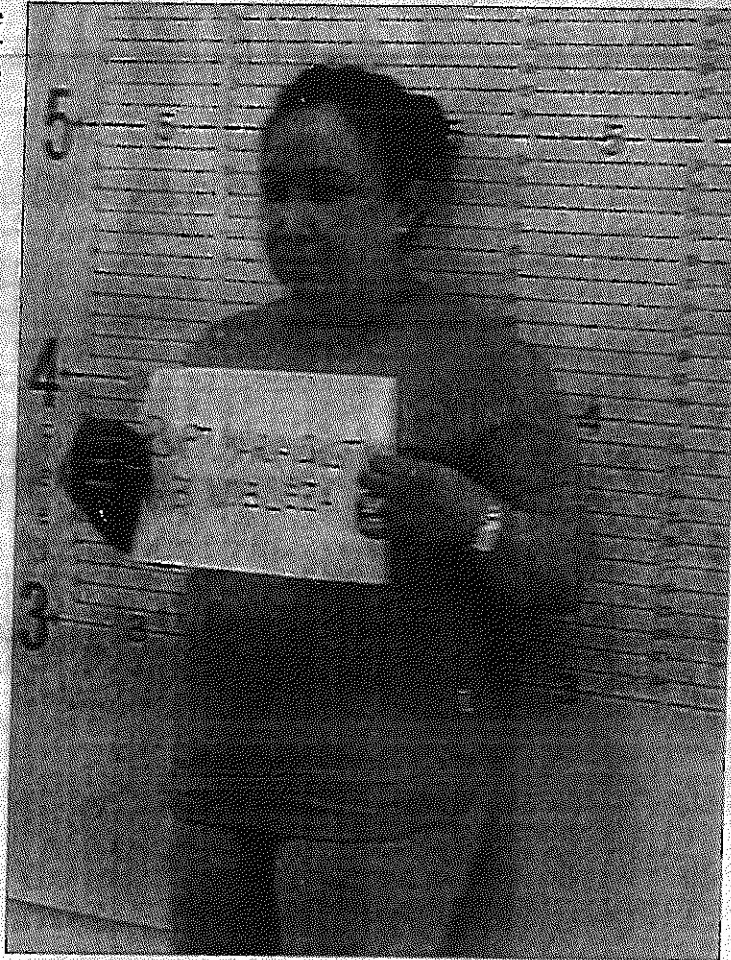


Photo shows police Superintendent Maria Cristina Nobleza undergoing booking at Camp Crame yesterday.

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DEFINING THE NEWS

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# Lab cop dumped cop to marry Sayyaf terrorist

By Francisco Tuyay

THE female police officer romantically linked to an Abu Sayyaf terrorist had married him years ago, police officials said Wednesday.

Central Visayas Police Regional

Office commander Chief Supt. Noli Talino said Supt. Maria Cristina Nobleza had converted to Islam years ago so she could marry Reener Lou Dongon.

In an interview, Dongon said he and Nobleza were married.

Nobleza had been married to Supt. Allan Nobleza, who at the time was an attaché to Pakistan. Their marriage was annulled in 2010.

Nobleza married Dongon sometime between then and 2013 and stayed in Bukidnon and other parts

of Mindanao.

Nobleza was the deputy chief of the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory in the Davao region before her arrest in Bohol. She was arrested with a 60-year-old

*Next page*

## Lab...

From A1

woman, the 13-year-old son of Raja Solaiman Movement founder Akmed Santos at a checkpoint in Clarin town Saturday evening after a gunfight in which four bandits were killed.

Among those killed were ASG sub-leader Askhali Misaya, alias Abu Rami, responsible in the beheading of two Canadian nationals—John Ridsdel and Robert Hall and German Jurgen Kantner.

Nobleza said they were in Inabanga to provide medicine to a

wounded ASG bandit.

A raid on Nobleza's house yielded firearms, ammunition and bomb components.

Reports said Dongon served as a leader of the Khilafa Islamiya and was arrested in Marawi City sometime in 2013. He had in his possession 29 blasting caps and other bomb components.

He was released, however, because the warrant of arrest was for his younger brother.

He was also among the group responsible for the bombing of Mazandria Hotel along JR-Borja Street in October 2012 that killed two people and wounded two police officers.

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## Sayyaf Bohol mission a destabil plot?

By PERSEUS ECHEMINADA

The Abu Sayyaf may have intended to embarrass the Duterte government before the international community when its members attempted to set up base in Bohol recently, a ranking leader of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) said yesterday.

MNLF spokesman Emmanuel Fontanilla cited the bandit group's timing as the country got set to host the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit.

"The Abu Sayyaf would be hitting two birds with one stone,

taking hostages for ransom and at the same time embarrassing President Duterte before the international community," Fontanilla told **The STAR**.

He said the pattern of the aborted Bohol intrusion was a typical "special operation" that the bandits employ when they seized hostages in the Island Garden City of Samal, Palawan, Zamboanga and even in Sipadan, Malaysia.

"There was not a full investigation conducted on the possible links of law enforcers and politicians in the illegal activities. Nobody was arrested for conniving with the Abu Sayyaf," Fontanilla

said.

The bandits engage in illegal activities for financial gain and which remain unchecked to this day, he added.

The MNLF official said the aborted Bohol intrusion was well planned, noting the alleged involvement of Superintendent Maria Cristina Nobleza and her romance with Abu Sayyaf bomb maker Reneer Lou Dongon.

He said the MNLF is willing to help the government unmask the people behind the aborted Bohol intrusion if allowed to work with the intelligence community.

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## Arrested ASG bomber sent to deliver medicine, supplies in Bohol – PNP

By MARS W. MOSQUEDA JR and AARON B. REQUENCO

CEBU CITY – The Police Regional Office (PRO) 7 revealed yesterday that Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) bomb maker Renierio Dongon admitted he was sent to Bohol to provide medicine and supplies to beleaguered bandits who clashed with military troops in

Inabanga and Clarin towns and drop the supplies near the area where the terrorist were hiding

Dongon denied he was in the resort island of Bohol to sow terror but Taliño said evidence seized from the hotel room in Panglao where Dongon ►6

## Arrested ASG bomber...

and police Superintendent Maria Cristina Nobleza were staying showed they were planning bomb attacks in the province.

Nobleza and Dongon who were on board a pick up were arrested Saturday when they tried to evade a military checkpoint laid out by government troops at the height of pursuit operations that led to the death of four ASG bandits in Clarin town.

The bandits were remnants of a group of Sulu-based ASG bandits who sailed to Inabanga town in Bohol to join ASG sympathizers who eventually died in the initial skirmish with government troops who were alerted by civilians about the arrival of armed men on board three motorboats in the coastal town of Inabanga.

Nobleza and Dongon are currently detained in Camp Crame where both are undergoing tactical interrogation.

"Our investigators are looking into all details. It would be a long back-

ground check up to the point when they first met," said Chief Supt. Dionardo Carlos, PNP spokesman.

There are reports that Nobleza had converted to Islam and married Dongon under Muslim rites.

The PNP would like to know the extent of Nobleza's role in the intelligence gathering of the ASG being a seasoned intelligence officer.

### Full red alert

Because of the Bohol incident, the Police Regional Office-8 in Eastern Visayas has placed its troops on full red alert as a precautionary measure to ensure the peace and order and the safety of the people in Eastern Visayas.

Chief Inspector Ma. Bella Rentuaya, PRO-8 regional information officer said the move is to thwart any possible attempt to sow terror in the region like the December 28, 2016 bombing at the public plaza in Hilongos, Leyte where 135 people were injured.

Police findings revealed that the perpetrators were members of the Maute terror group.

Chief Supt. Elmer Beltejar, the police regional director has cancelled all vacation leaves of policemen unless in extreme cases.

They likewise intensified intelligence gathering especially in coastal areas of the region to thwart possible intrusion of armed groups.

Carlos said a case of illegal possession of firearms and explosive were filed against Nobleza in connection with the raid in her house in Malaybalay City in Bukidnon.

The Internal Affairs Service (IAS) of the PNP meanwhile is currently preparing administrative charges against Nobleza which will include Conduct Unbecoming of a PNP officer and grave misconduct which carries a maximum penalty of dismissal from the service.

No less than President Duterte ordered the immediate detention of Nobleza and to make sure the PNP files as many cases against her "for sleeping with the enemy." (With a report from Restituto A. Cayubit)



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## Join fight vs ASG, Sulu officials asked

ZAMBOANGA CITY (PNA) – Local government officials in the island province of Sulu have been challenged to join the fight against the Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) chief, made the challenge on Tuesday following the Abu Sayyaf's beheading of a Moro soldier, who has been working to uplift the living conditions of his tribe in the province of Sulu.

"They have to join the fight. It will be shameful if they will allow the Abu Sayyaf bandits to disrespect them as elected officials," Galvez said.

The Abu Sayyaf bandits abducted and beheaded Sgt. Anni Siraji, a Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) combatant who was integrated into the Armed Forces of the Philippines in line with the final peace agreement between the government and the MNLF.

Government troops recovered on Sunday the remains of Siraji, who was assigned with the Army's 32nd Infantry Battalion, in Barangay Taglibi, Patikul, Sulu.

Siraji was buried on Monday at a Muslim cemetery in this city.

He was described as an MNLF member who traded his rifle to become a peace maker and an agent of development to his fellow Tausugs in Sulu.

Galvez said the elected officials in Sulu should follow what their counterparts in Basilan province have done – join the fight against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

Galvez said mayors and barangay officials in Basilan have joined the military's efforts to crush the Abu Sayyaf there.

He said these officials joined the fight since they "felt insulted as the Basilan-based ASG disrespected them as well as the law of the country."

He said this is the reason why the strength of the ASG is dwindling in Basilan province.

Isnilon Hapilon, the only remaining among the top five Basilan-based ASG leaders, has been reported to have fled to Lanao del Sur and joined the Maute terror group.

The other four Basilan-based top ASG leaders were killed in separate firefights with government troops. They included Khadafy Janjalani, Aldam Tilao alias Abu Sabaya, Hamsiraji Sali and Jainal Antel Sali alias Abu Sulaiman.

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# BusinessMirror

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## More Abu bandits, members of lawless groups interested in surrendering—military

**A**SIDE from Abu Sayyaf leader Radullan Sahiron, there are other lawless personalities in Sulu who have expressed willingness to surface and surrender to authorities.

This was bared on Tuesday by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año, who said surrender feelers were actually sent by the bandit leader.

“According to [Western Mindanao Command Chief] Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez and Joint Task Force Sulu Commander Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, there are some personalities in Sulu who are reaching out and saying Sahiron wants to surrender because of health reasons, but as of now, there are still no talks [on the actual surrender of the bandit chief], only feelers,” he added.

Aside from Sahiron, Año believes there are still a lot

of lawless elements, and Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sulu are interested in giving themselves up to the authorities, adding that government officials involved in the campaign against bandits only need to reach the right people.

“We believe there are also many others who may just want [to surrender], [we only need to reach the right people], As you know, there are lot of Abu Sayyaf members surrendering in Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Basilan. They are seeing now that their fight against the government is useless, the long arm of the law will eventually catch up with them,” he said.

Año called on the bandits that, “now is the proper time for Abu Sayyaf members, tired of the fight, to surrender, as the military will not stop its campaign against them until they are all eradicated” *PNA*

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## ASG accomplice to serve a short 12-year if proven guilty — solon

**By Gerry Baldo**

The policewoman who was found to have as boyfriend a member of the Abu Sayyaf, could face a short ten to 12-year term in prison if found guilty of being an accessory to terrorism.

According to Rep Sherwin Tugna of the Citizens Battle Against Corruption, Police Supt. Maria Cristina Nobleza could face a possible case of harboring a fugitive of the law.

Nobleza was arrested in Bohol recently with her alleged boyfriend, Reener Dongon who is said to be a member of the ASG.

"She is an accessory to terrorism because she concealed the body of the crime, effects or

instruments thereof in order to prevent discovery and harboring, concealing or assisting in the escape of principal or conspirator of the crime," Tugna said.

Tugna noted reports that Nobleza went to Bohol to help members of the ASG who were wounded in an encounter with government troops.

"She shall suffer the penalty of 10 years and 1 day to 12 years of imprisonment," Tugna said adding that there has to be proof that she connived with the ASG in terrorist activities.

Magdalo party-list Rep. Gary Alejano, for his part, said that there is a need to craft a law that would put a heavy penalty for government officials found conspiring with enemies of the state.

"Dapat may matinding parusala lalo na sa government t officials sa pagtulog sa kalaban ng estado. Hindi lamang tulong sa teroristang Abu Sayyaf kundi pati na rin sa Maute, BIFF at NPA (there has to be a heavy penalty, especially for government officials who help enemies of the state which includes helping the terrorist Abu Sayyaf, the Maute, BIFF and NPA)," Alejano said.

Alejano believes that the enemies of the state thrive because of the help coming from people in government.

"These supporters are behind why government wasn't able to defeat these enemies of the state," the Magdalo lawmaker said.

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## Solon calls for in-city, near-city housing program

By **BEN R. ROSARIO**

Congress will have to exercise its oversight powers to redirect government's unsatisfactory housing and urban development program that is further threatened by the effects of the so-called Kadamay takeover of housing projects in Bulacan.

Negros Occidental Rep Alfredo "Albee" Benitez lamented that while a P5-billion annual funding for socialize housing may not be sufficient to address the overall needs of the country, the money appeared to have been directed to implement housing projects that appear to have few takers.

Benitez, chairman of the ►6

## Solon calls for in-city... ◀1

House Committee on Housing and Urban Development, called for the execution of an urban renewal program that would have in-city, near-city housing for the thousands of informal settler families, noting that government can address the huge housing backlog by merely allocating 30 percent of idle lands for the homeless.

Benitez, who led an inspection of the AFP-PNP-BJMP-BuCor housing in Pandi, warned that unless a swift review and redirection of the housing programs is pursued by government, the possibility of the collapse of its human settlement projects could be imminent.

He noted that the National Housing Authority (NHA) has complained that its measly 30 percent collection of amortization of housing units has dwindled further to just 15 percent.

Benitez agreed with the observation of NHA and other housing program leaders that the Kadamay takeover of government housing project in Pandi and San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, may have triggered the weak collection.

"This occupation of Kadamay unraveled a lot of issues about the country's housing sector, which we didn't pay attention to in the past years," the

senior administration lawmaker said.

Together with Senator JV Ejercito, head of the Senate housing panel, Benitez led the inspection of the Pandi housing units now occupied by Kadamay members following a forced takeover last month.

Reacting to what he inspected, Benitez told reporters that a "mismatch" between the NHA housing projects and the other settlements of the beneficiaries was glaring.

"What's very concerning is that we keep on producing housing units that are not really acceptable to the beneficiaries or are lacking in the basic services," Benitez said.

This could be the reason the real beneficiaries of the housing projects, the men in uniform, appeared disinterested in taking advantage of the cheap housing units.

The 21- or 28- square meter row houses still lacked basic necessities like water and electricity connection.

Benitez said the requirements should be addressed immediately by the NHA.

However, the Negros Occidental solon stressed that only occupants or applicants who are qualified under the NHA standards should be allowed to own the units.

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Pahina. 5

## **AFP, WALA RAW NAKIKITANG BANTA NG TERORISMO SA ASEAN, BONGGA!**

WALA raw nakikita o namo-monitor na terror threat ang Armed Forces sa gagawing two-day Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit

Hindi raw dapat mangamba ang pamahalaan, ang taumbayan at maging ang mga delegado ng mga kalahok na bansa para sa gagawing summit, ayon mismo kay AFP Chief of Staff Eduardo Año

Gayunman, hindi dapat makalingat ang AFP at maging ang PNP para mabigyan ng anumang pagkakataon ang nais manabotahé sa summit. We know naman na may mga puwersang nais isabotahé ang summit para maging kahiyahya ang administrasyong Digong sa mga bansang kasapi sa ASEAN at sa mga mata mismo ng international community.

Ito ay sa kabila na rin ng mga sunud-sunod na kaganapan na nangyayari ngayon sa Bohol dala ng bandidong Abu Sayyaf. Pero, sa galing na rin ng mga puwersa ng AFP at PNP ay kahit paano ay na-contain na ang mga bandido na nais maghasik ng lagirn sa Bohol, especially na roon gagawin ang susunod na pagtitipon ng ASEAN sa Nobyembre.

Ang usapin ng safety and security ng mga lider ng ASEAN at kanilang mga delegasyon ang siyang konsentrasyon ngayon ng mga awtoridad. Kailangang bantay- sarado talaga ang gawin para hindi malusutan ng mga saboteur ang summit.

Isa pang dapat bantayan ng militar at pulisya, bukod sa terorismo ay 'yung mga destabilizer ng administrasyong Duterte. Layunin din kasi ng mga ito na mapahiya si Digong, kaya hindi imposibleng may plano rin silang "panggugulo".

'Yun nga lang pagpa-file ng kaso sa International Criminal Court laban kay Manong Digong at sa ilan pang opisyal ng pamahalaan na close sa kanya ay kaduda-duda na, hindi ba? Talagang itinaon pa nila ang filing ng kaso kung kailan nandito

na ang mga lider ng ASEAN sa bansa kung saan si P-Digong ang host at chairman ng summit

Kaya maaaring ang panggugulo ay wala nga sa mga bandidong Abu Sayyaf, pero mayroong mga destabilizer na may kakayahang manggulo, 'yun ang dapat ding bantayan

ng ating PNP at AFP. Hindi rin nila dapat itong palagpasin kung talagang ayaw nilang mapahiya ang administrasyong Duterte sa

ating mga bisita at sa mga mata ng international community!

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Pahina. 3

## AFP sa ASG: Hanggang Hulyo na lang kayo

**BINIGYAN** ng palugit ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) hanggang buwan ng Hulyo ngayong taon ang kanilang pagpulis sa puwersa ng banditong grupong Abu Sayyaf at Maute.

Ayon kay Armed Forces of the Philippines Spokesperson Brig. Gen. Resty Padilla, itinakda nila ang palugit para matiyak na mapahihina nila ang opensiba ng mga nasabing grupo.

Sa kabila nito, nilinaw ni Padilla na hindi lamang ang militar ang solusyon para tuluyan nang mawaksi ang mga

teronstang grupo.

Dito ay hinikayat niya ang publiko na makiusa sa kanilang hangarin na resolbahin ang isyu mula sa grassroots levels.

Samantala, kinumpirma narin ng AFP na wala nang banta ng terorismo sa Bohol.

Bunga raw ito ng mas pinaigting na opensiba ng pinagsamang puwersa ng militar at Pambansang Pulisya.

Dahil dito, hinikayat ni Padilla ang publiko na huwag nang ipakansela ang mga tourist visit na nakatakda sa nasabing isla.

MARY ANNE SAPICO

27 April 2017



Pahina. 7

### Asset ng militar, nilikida

**LEGAZPI CITY, Albay**  
- Bulagta ang 17-anyos na binatilyo na inakusahang as-

set ng militar matapos itong pagbabarilin ng dalawang rebeldeng New People's Army sa Purok 5, Barangay Tugas sa bayan ng Matnog, Sorsogon kamakalawa ng umaga. Napuruhan sa ulo ang biktimgang si Ramel Baraguer ng nasabing barangay. Base sa ulat ng pulisya na nakarating sa Camp Simeon Ola, paalis na sana ang biktimgang nakamotorsiklo nang harangin at komprontahin ng dalawang armadong lalaki. Gayunman ilang minuto ang nakalipas ay pinagbabaril na ang biktimgang hanggang sa mapatay. Ayon sa ulat, inakusahan ng NPA na confidential agent ng militar ang biktimgang dahil nakita ito ng mga rebelde sa loob ng kampo ng Philippine Army sa bayan ng Matnog. Narekober sa crime scene ang mga basyo ng bala ng baril. **Jorge Hallare**

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## 2 new PH fighter jets arrive in Clark

By FRANCIS T WAKEFIELD

Two supersonic jet fighters landed at Clark Airbase in Pampanga yesterday, bringing to 10 the number of aircraft the Philippines has acquired from South Korea.

The FA-50PH training aircraft, with Korean pilots at the controls, touched down around 11 a.m. and brought to Haribon Hangar, according to Air Force spokesman Col. Antonio Francisco.

On hand to welcome the two aircraft were 1st Division Commander Major General Enrique Reyes and Major General Arnold Mancita, commander of the Air Logistics Command.

The jets, which Francisco described as a multi-role aircraft, were built by the Korean Aerospace Industries Ltd.

Two more are expected in the weeks to come to complete a squadron. The jets were acquired for P18.9 billion by the Aquino administration.

The first batch of the FA-50 jets arrived on November 28, 2015, marking PAF's return to the supersonic age a decade after retiring the last of its United States-made F5 fighter jets in 2005.

Francisco said aside from being used for training pilots, the fighter jets have been deployed for surgical airstrikes against local terrorists in Mindanao. "Yes,

some of them have seen action in Mindanao," Francisco confirmed.

The PAF official said even before the first delivery of the fighter jets, Filipino pilots were sent to South Korea to start training. "We intend to train more pilots for our future acquisitions of fighter jets," Francisco said.

Ideally, five pilots are assigned for each jet fighter, according to Francisco.

The acquisition of the FA-50 is seen as the first step to modernize the Air Force which hopes to buy more capable multi-role fighters in the future.

For the meantime, the FA-50s have been useful in ground attacks through their ability to launch precision-guided munitions. The FA-50 can employ deadly GPS-guided JDAM bombs, Maverick anti-tank missiles, and unguided cluster and conventional bombs and rockets, according to Sebastien Roblin whose article came out in The National Interest magazine.

Roblin wrote that the jet's targeting computer and radar allow it to deliver even "dumb" bombs with a high degree of accuracy. "The FA-50 can haul up to 8,500 pounds of external stores on 7 hardpoints. A triple-barreled A-50 20mm cannon rounds out the armament," Roblin wrote.

The Korean Air Force has about a 100 FA-50s with an additional 50 in the works.



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## The cost of terrorism



**OVERSIGHT**

**DANILO SUAREZ**

EARLY April, the US Embassy released a travel advisory warning its citizens against going to Central Visayas, particularly in Cebu and Bohol. Philippine National Police Chief Director General Ronald Dela Rosa confirmed the threats of kidnapping within the area but did not disclose the group being monitored. He played down the threats by assuring that the police are prepared.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines, on the other hand, dismissed the allegations and assured the public that there was no threat of terrorism over the area. Days later, the AFP encountered the suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf group in Bohol where a policeman and three soldiers were killed. Around 700 residents fled the area and sought refuge from nearby barrios due to the clash. After this encounter, more countries issued warnings against traveling to the Philippines such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

The series of abduction and beheadings which started decades ago continue even after we have transitioned to a new administration. Last year, two Canadian hostages were beheaded due to unmet ransom demands. In February, a German who was kidnapped in November 2016 was also killed. This April, a fishing boat captain who was abducted last December and one of the soldiers involved in the peace process were the latest victims of such barbaric killings.

We are alarmed by the continuing acts of terrorism and extreme violence by the Abu Sayyaf group. Although the number of its members has been reportedly reduced to 200-300, the Abu Sayyaf is relentless.

A collateral victim to these terrorist activities is the tourism industry, given the chain of travel warnings issued by many countries against the Philippines. The Department of Tourism announced increasing number of visitors in January 2017 from their report released last March. While we acknowledge this upward trend, I fear that we may not maintain this momentum because of the successive killings by terrorist groups in the various islands of the Phil-

ippines. Just recently, there were reports of possible movement of a small faction of the Abu Sayyaf group to Palawan, one of the Philippines' primary tourist destinations.

In the 2017 GAA, the budget for AFP and the PNP generally increased. Worth mentioning is the 600 to 800 percent increase in the intelligence funds of the AFP General Headquarters, the Philippine Army, and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, compared to 2016's budget. According to a DBM report, the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency received a P285 million allocation for "intelligence gathering, coordination, and integration, including the formulation and implementation of Anti-Terrorism measures." Such increase raises the expectations of better performance of the said agencies. However, it does not appear to be so.

We now ask, where did these funds go? According to news reports, these were being used solely for intelligence on the anti-drug war. Only if such funds, which were approved last year, were allocated genuinely to anti-terrorism measures and investigations, the government could have easily suppressed

the Abu Sayyaf group. These millions could be better allotted to joint investigations and surveillance with the US military, for example, since they have the capacity to obtain such classified information earlier than the local police. The military could have aggressively wiped out this 300-member group, instead of allowing this reduced number to commit more crimes and take more innocent lives. An all-out war, similar to Estrada's campaign against the MNL, may be promptly launched with the increased funding of the military.

We are near the end of the First Session of Congress. Soon, budget deliberations will commence. I am disturbed and, at the same time, dismayed at how the approved budget, particularly for military intelligence and defense, is being used. We have repeatedly called on the administration to put our attention to other pressing issues. I am, once more, urging the administration to look into other problems such as terrorism which gravely affects the safety and well-being of our citizens and tourists, and tarnishes the reputation of our country as a safe place for tourism and foreign investments.

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## **ONLINE NEWS**

**27 APRIL 2017**

### **SAFETY INSIDE THE WEB: HOW THE TERRORISTS USE THE INTERNET AND HOW CAN WE KEEP OURSELVES SAFE FROM THEM**

Posted by Lui Claudio on April 26, 2017 at 6:34 PM

As the use internet and social media spreads throughout the country despite the fact that the Philippines has the worst internet providers in the world, still, 'bad elements' or 'enemies of the state' still find a way to utilize the internet and social media sites as a platform to spread indecent motives against the government.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines conducted a three-day workshop on Counter-Violent Extremism at the Multi-Purpose Hall of Civil Relations Service at Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo on April 26-29, 2017 how the terrorists in the Philippines use the internet to spread violence in the world.

Also read: <http://dwdd.com.ph/2017/04/26/afp-launches-three-day-anti-counter-terrorism-workshop/>

On the said workshop, Police Chief Inspector June Paolo Abrazado of Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group discussed how the terrorists in the Philippines use the internet.

The internet is no longer an unfamiliar channel for the people to disseminate their limitless thoughts. As much as how it is amassive advantage for the ordinary citizens, users with bad intentions benefit from it as well.

#### **KEEPING UP WITH THE CHALLENGES**

Initially, Abrazado tackles on how the terrorists communicate through encrypted online sites or applications. Still, he revealed that just like how a famous foreign terror group uses social media and the internet as a platform for their communication, propaganda, fund, recruitment, training, radicalization, and justification.

Just like every Filipino, they use the internet for as a channel of their communication. And one of the easiest prey out there in the online platform are the children who take their time on the cyberspace.

Abrazado explained that within just a click, the youth can be an easy target for these terrorists groups for their recruitment. One click, and they can reveal their ideologies to young minds that can be easily persuaded to change their perspective.

The cyberspace is an infinite environment which offers both negative and positive effects on the government and its citizens regarding terrorists. In order to help resolve the online issues, cooperation with the international law enforcement and the internet sources are sought.

#### **EXTERNAL HELP**

Despite of these challenges, Abrazado still find the light to avoid such problems. But the said plan will only be attainable if they have the external help that they need.

According to the official, the parents of the youth especially those who live in the suburban areas play a vital role in the success of the protection of these children. As a parent, they should be guiding and guarding their children when it comes to their usage of social media and different websites.

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With their proper guidance, browsing 'dangerous sites' can be avoided and definitely, these children will not be in-touched with different terror groups.

As an individual, we could help them by reporting malicious content that is linked to terrorism and violence. blocking malicious websites and suspicious profiles in lingering in your child's social media accounts could really help. That way, they will be protected from these kinds of people.

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Aside from that, knowing the etiquette of the cyberspace is an additional protection not only to your children, but to yourself as well.

Another external help that is being sought by the PNP-ACG, is the revision of the country's Anti-Cybercrime Law for it still has its lapses. But according to the ACG, they always attend sessions in the congress and the senate for them to suggest the loopholes of the said law.

Lastly, Abrazado wrapped up his talk by reiterating that terror groups may have used the internet to their advantage, but in reality, the government has also used the cyberspace to greater heights to put the country's dilemma in terrorism and crime to an end. – EPJA/MTT

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## **AFP LAUNCHES THREE-DAY ANTI-COUNTER TERRORISM WORKSHOP**

Posted by Lui Claudio on April 26, 2017 at 3:56 PM

Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City – A three-day Counter-Violent Extremism Workshop started today inside the Multi-Purpose Hall of Civil Relations Service today, April 26- 29, 2017.

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The said workshop aims to educate the people on how violent extremism sprouted in the Philippines and how people can help on putting extremism to an end.

Civil Military Operations Officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines participated together with different Non-Government Organizations, and Officers from Philippine National Police Ant-Cybercrime Group attended the said workshop.

The three-day workshop gives light to the status of the Muslim communities in the rural areas especially in Mindanao, and it also gives the people an insight on how the authorities take their steps to neutralize extremists here in the country.

The Counter-Violent Extremism Workshop aims to avoid terror groups' recruitment amongst the youth and to break the stigma among the Muslim community.

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## **AFP, MMC EXPANDED PACT TO IMPROVE MILITARY HOSPITALS**

Posted by Lui Claudio on April 26, 2017 at 10:54 AM

**CAMP AGUINALDO, Quezon City-** The Armed Forces of the Philippines has formally renewed its partnership with the Makati Medical Center Foundation in delivering to the soldiers' health care services at par with the first rate hospitals in the country.

Dignitaries coming from the MMC Foundation headed by its chairman Manuel Pangilinan and officials from the AFP duly headed by the Chief of Staff General Eduardo Año attended the MOA signing on 25 April at the General Headquarters of the AFP.

Through its Health Heroes Program, the MMC Health Services department agreed to help coordinate and facilitate the health management and care of the qualified AFP Officers and enlisted personnel. This means that soldiers can now have access anew to the best health care facilities in all 21 AFP partner hospitals throughout the country.

MMC Foundation Chair Manuel Pangilinan, recognizes that the lives of the soldiers are always on the line in protecting and defending the lives of the people. He said that he felt the need to reach out to the soldiers and for them to feel their significance and importance in the society.

"We cant say thank you enough for all the services you have rendered and it is just a small way of saying thank you from the private sector", Pangilinan said.

This flagship program is a renewal and expansion of the MOA signed by the AFP, AFPMC, and MMC Foundation last 19 June 2013, providing for the organizational Strengthening of the AFP Medical Center. This partnership was also renewed on 10 September 2015, providing for an expansion of the PPP Program for Organizational Strengthening in an additional 19 AFP hospitals and military medical treatment facilities.

The pact will allow MMC to share its technical resources and open their hospital facilities to training, coaching, workshops, conferences, and mentoring sessions free to all AFP and partner military hospital's resident doctors and management staff. This also means that through their partner hospitals, MMC Foundation will give or donate more hospital equipment, beds, supplies, and fixtures to improve all military hospitals throughout the country.

The AFP also designated the MMC Foundation as an official Blood Donation Institutional partner to facilitate the regular conduct of blood donation drives between the AFP and MMC Foundation.

General Eduardo Año said the renewal of partnership is very timely for the military since the armed forces is currently engaged in multi-faceted operations against the forces that seek to destroy the peace and order of our nation. "Simple as it may seem, but it will bring enormous impact on the lives of the soldiers."

"Through our Health Heroes Program, our soldiers can now have access to the exceptional health services in our first-rate hospitals in the country. The men and women of the AFP will be more inspired to fulfill their mandate in protecting the peace and security of the country knowing that a health care program supports them" General Eduardo Año added.

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## **PAF more than ready to secure ASEAN meeting from any threats**

By Priam F. Nepomuceno April 26, 2017

MANILA, April 26 – The Philippine Air Force (PAF) is more than ready to neutralize any threats that would attempt to disrupt the delegates of the ASEAN Summit and Related Meetings which is being held April 26 to 29 at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City.

This was the assurance given by PAF spokesperson Col. Antonio Francisco in response to the PNA's queries on what contribution the Air Force has made in securing the event.

"Our air assets like the (brand-new South Korean made) FA-50PHs (jet fighters), (SiAl-Marchetti) SF-260 (ground attack aircraft), (Lockheed) C-130 and (Airbus Military) C-295 transport aircraft and UH-1H "Huey" search-and-rescue aircraft are all on stand-by for any air operational requirement that may arise," he noted.

Francisco did not give exact figures on the number of aircraft and helicopters on stand-by but said these are sufficient for any eventualities.

Joint Task Force deputy commander Col. Victor Tomas earlier said they are still to detect any security threats for the coming ASEAN event.

"We are very fortunate to say that there are no threats detected for the coming ASEAN meetings (at the PICC in Pasay City)," he said.

The above-mentioned military unit will serving as the Philippine National Police (PNP) back-up in securing the said event along with other government security agencies.

But despite this, Tomas said security for the meetings will still be tight so that they will not be caught flat-footed by any contingency.

"We don't want to be over confident so what we are doing is we are (still conducting) intelligence build-up and (target) hardening," he added. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/>

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## **AFP to neutralize 3 remaining ASG bandits in Bohol**

April 26, 2017

MANILA, April 26 -- Despite neutralizing eight out of the 11 Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) who made an ill-fated landing in Inabanga, Bohol last April 10, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said it will not rest until all three remaining bandit stragglers are captured or killed.

This was the assurance given by AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año who also reiterated that the military is still to detect any security threats for the ongoing ASEAN Summit and Related Meetings which is being held at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City from April 26 to 29.

"We are still to monitor any threats for (the ongoing ASEAN activities) except supposedly Abu Rami (Muamar Askali's) activities in the Visayas. We are to develop any new developments on that. But we will definitely neutralize or arrest the remaining ASG members in Bohol," he added in Filipino.

The three surviving ASG members are the remnants of the 11-man team Askali landed in Inabanga, Bohol last April 10 with the intention of conducting kidnapping attacks against local and foreign tourists frequenting the area.

However, before they can fulfill their plans, they were intercepted by government forces, killing Askali and three others last April 11.

In the ensuing firefight, three soldiers and police officer were killed along with an elderly couple.

Pursuit operations, which culminated in Barangay Bacani, Clarin town last April 22, resulted in the death of ASG contact Joselito Milloria and three more bandits with no losses to the government side. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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