

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

30 April 2017

Sunday

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | APRIL 30, 2017 | SUNDAY





























TAIL-END OF A COLD FRONT AFFECTING NORTHERN LUZON
(As of 5:00 AM - Apr. 29, 2017)




PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)




SUNRISE  5:34 AM	SUNSET  6:13 PM
MOONRISE  9:02 AM	MOONSET  10:13 PM
NEW MOON APR 26 8:16 AM	FIRST QUARTER MAY 3 10:47 AM
LOW TIDE 8:26 PM 0.20 Meter	HIGH TIDE MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 12:03 PM 1.17 Meter

☁ Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
☁ Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

	MAY 1	MAY 2	MAY 3	MAY 4	MAY 5	MAY 6
METRO MANILA	 26 - 34 °C	 25 - 34 °C	 22 - 32 °C	 22 - 33 °C	 25 - 32 °C	 25 - 32 °C
TUGUEGARAO	 25 - 34 °C	 25 - 35 °C	 25 - 33 °C	 26 - 32 °C	 25 - 32 °C	 25 - 32 °C
LAOAG	 25 - 33 °C	 24 - 33 °C	 26 - 34 °C	 26 - 34 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 25 - 33 °C
BAGUIO	 17 - 25 °C	 17 - 25 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 32 °C	 24 - 33 °C	 24 - 34 °C
SBMA/CLARK	 26 - 35 °C	 26 - 36 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 25 - 32 °C		
TAGAYTAY						
LEGAZPI						
PUERTO PRINCESA						
ILOILO/BACDLOD						
METRO CEBU						
TACLOBAN						
CAGAYAN DE ORO						
METRO DAVAO						
ZAMBOANGA						



SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

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Asean extremely worried over N. Korea-US tensions

Rody urges US restraint to prevent war

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

President Duterte said yesterday the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was extremely worried about tensions between the United States and North Korea, pointing out that one misstep would be a "catastrophe" and Asia would be the first victim of a nuclear war.

"The countries of the ASEAN are extremely worried. There seems to be two countries playing with toys. Those toys are not really to entertain," the President said at a press conference at the conclusion of the 30th ASEAN summit at the PICC in Pasay City last night.

Duterte urged the US to show restraint after North Korea's latest missile test and to avoid playing into the hands of leader Kim Jong Un, who "wants to end the world."

The US, Japan, South Korea and China, he said, were sparring with a man who was excited about the prospect of firing missiles.

Duterte said he was due to speak by telephone to US President Donald Trump last night. He said he would urge Trump not to get into a confrontation with Kim.

"You know that they are playing with somebody who relishes letting go of missiles and everything. I would not want to go into his (Kim's) mind because I really do not know what's inside but he's putting Mother Earth, the planet to an edge."

North Korea test-fired a ballistic missile yesterday shortly after US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson warned that failure to curb Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic

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Asean

From Page 1

missile programs could lead to "catastrophic consequences."

The US and South Korean officials said the test appeared to have failed, in what would be the North's fourth straight unsuccessful missile test since March.

Duterte said it was incumbent upon the US as the responsible country to not rise to Kim's provocations. He said he was sure Trump had cautioned his military not to allow the situation to spiral out of control.

"Who am I to say that you should stop? But I would say 'Mr. President, please see to it that there is no war because my region will suffer immensely,'" Duterte said.

"I will just communicate to (Trump), 'just let him play... do not play into his hands'."

He added: "The guy (Kim) simply wants to end the world, that is why he is very happy. He is always smiling. But he really wants to finish everything and he wants to drag us all down."

– With Reuters

30 April 2017



Pahina. 2

Sundalo inutas ng tandem

Patay ang isang sundalo matapos na pagbabarilin ng riding in tandem na mga armadong salarin sa Brgy. Manaulanan, Pikit, North Cotabato kamakalawa ng umaga.

Kinilala ni Chief Inspector Donald Cabigas, hepe ng Pikit Police ang nasawing sundalo na si Sgt. Salilin Guiapal, kasapi ng Philippine Army na naka-destino bilang intelligence member ng 7th Infantry Battalion na nakabase sa Ladingan ng nasabing bayan at residente ng Katilacan ng nabanggit na lugar.

Batay sa ulat, sakay ang biktima sa isang motorsiklo na minamaneho ng kanyang anak ng dikitan ng riding in tandem gunmen at pinagbabaril ito.

Malaki ang paniwala ni Cabigas na posible umanong may kinalaman sa trabaho nito na intel officer ng sundalo ang paglikida sa kanya. - *Rhoderick Beñez*

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NPAs free soldier

BUTUAN CITY – New People’s Army rebels released yesterday a soldier they kidnapped in Surigao del Norte.

Pvt. First Class Erwin Salan of the Army’s 30th Infantry Battalion was freed at around 3 p.m. in Purok 1, Barangay Caman-an, Gigaquit.

Bishop Rey Timbang and provincial government officials negotiated for the release of Salan, who was seized in Alegria town on Jan. 29.

Joaquin Jacinto, spokesman for the National Democratic Front in Mindanao, said Salan’s release was in support of the resumption of peace negotiations.

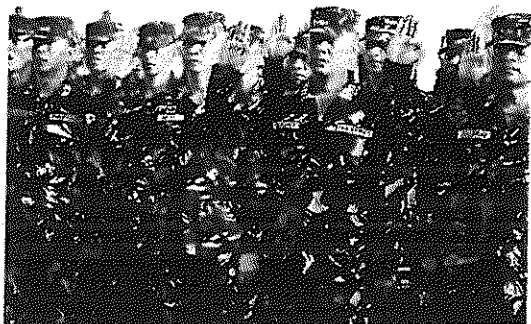
Jacinto said they would also release Police Officer 2 Jerome Anthony Natividad, who was taken in Talakag, Bukidnon on Feb. 9, as well as Sgt. Solaiman Calucop and Pvt. First Class Samuel Garay, who were seized in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat on Feb. 2.

– Ben Serrano

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9 Army execs charged over unreturned cash advances

By [Elizabeth Marcelo](#) (philstar.com) | Updated April 29, 2017 - 3:43pm



MANILA, Philippines - Retired and incumbent officials of the Philippine Army are facing graft charges over their alleged failure to return the cash advances they received in 2002 for a cancelled mission to the United States.

In separate case information sheets filed by the Office of the Ombudsman before the Sandigan bayan, retired Army Colonels Arnolfo Palma and Rommel Cordova were charged with seven counts each of violation of Section 3 (a) of Republic Act 3019 or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Palma and Cordova were accused of "inducing or influencing" seven other Army members not to return the cash advances they each received for a cancelled official mission to Anniston, Alabama in America but instead deposit the amounts to their private bank accounts with the Armed Forces of the Philippines Savings and Loans Association Inc. (AFPSLAI).

Facing one count each of violation of Section 3 (a) of RA 3019 were Army members Master Sergeant Godofredo Juguilon Jr., Staff Sergeants Marcelino Cuevas, Lorenzo Bassig and Joseph Balazo, Technical Sergeant Simplicio Tagara Jr., Sergeant Ely Amar and Seaman First Class Alain Polancos.

Palma, meanwhile, is solely facing one count of malversation of public funds under Article 217 of the Revised Penal Code.

Based on the information of the cases, Palma and the seven Army members each received P563,406 cash advances from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Finance Center for an "official mission" to Alabama.

The mission, however, was cancelled on March 27, 2002.

Palma was the leader of the eight-man team for the supposed mission, while Cordova was at that time assigned at the Philippine Army's Strategic Management Brigade.

The ombudsman said records revealed that the seven Army members deposited their cash advances to their AFPSLAI accounts in November 2002. The ombudsman said this was in violation of Commission on Audit (COA) Circular No. 97-002, which mandates that a cash advance which has not been used for a period of two months must be returned to a collecting officer or the office that released the amount.

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Meanwhile, though there was no allegation that Palmea deposited his cash advances to his AFPSLAI account, the ombudsman said he nonetheless took the amount "for his personal use" as the same was not returned to the AFP Finance Center.

The ombudsman recommended P250,000 and P210,000 bail bond for Palmea and Cordova, respectively.

Meanwhile, P30,000 bail bond was recommended for each of the seven Army members.

<http://www.philstar.com/>

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Top Abu leader killed in Sulu

Misaya was involved in the kidnappings for ransom of foreign tourists and crewmen of foreign vessels

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The Abu Sayyaf suffered yet another loss with the killing of notorious Sulu-based bandit leader Alhabsy Misaya.

On Saturday, Armed Forces Chief Gen. Eduardo Año confirmed that Misaya, who was involved in the attacks on foreign vessels and kidnappings of foreign crewmen in the sea borders of Mindanao and Malaysia, was killed in Indanan town late Friday.

Año credited the Philippine Marines and the military's focused operation against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu for the death of Misaya.

Malacañang yesterday said the death of Misaya was a "big blow" to the bandit group.

But while the Abu Sayyaf member has been neutralized, presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella nevertheless called on the public to remain on alert and work with state

forces in addressing the threat posed by the group.

"We call on all citizens to remain vigilant, alert and watchful in cooperating with security forces to end the menace of this bandit group as government holds them accountable for their brutal and senseless crimes," Abella said.

"Let us cooperate to have safer and more secure communities. This is our shared responsibility," he added.

The military confirmed Misaya's death on Saturday, saying he was killed in a clash with Marines.

But a former Abu Sayyaf captive, who has been closely monitoring events involving the bandits, claimed that Misaya was killed by members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in Indanan town.

Octavio Dinampo, a university professor, said MNLF members then turned over the slain

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ALHABSY MISAYA

bandit leader's body to the Marines so government forces could take credit for the killing.

"He was shot to death by his former comrades in the MNLF, but was turned over to the Marines for credit," Dinampo said.

But in a statement, Año maintained that soldiers killed Misaya during an operation in Indanan town.

"Troops from assigned Philippine Marine units killed the Abu Sayyaf extremist commander, who is considered to be

one of the most notorious kidnapers in southern Philippines," he said.

Misaya, native of Barangay Bunot in Indanan, was a former MNLF fighter.

Considered a bomb expert, he was tagged behind the October 2002 bombing in Barangay Malagutay here, which killed US serviceman Sergeant Mark Jackson Mark and wounded another US serviceman and 22 others.

He was also linked to the January 2009 bombing of a bridge in Indanan and the March 2011 explosion that killed four people and wounded 11 others in Jolo town.

Misaya was also involved in several kidnapping incidents the Abu Sayyaf has pulled off, including the abduction of seven Indonesian seamen off Simisa Island in Sulu on June 22, 2016.

In fact, Padilla said that Misaya faced several warrants for

kidnapping and serious illegal detention.

Dinampo said Misaya used to be a bum that frequented the port area and eventually became a civilian asset for authorities.

"He was recruited as a civilian asset to penetrate the Abu Sayyaf Group. He eventually was able to join the group of the late Albader Parad," Dinampo said.

One of the biggest kidnapping incidents that Misaya was involved in was that of the three International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) workers—Andreas Notter, Italian Eugenio Vagni and a Filipina Mary Jean Lacaba in January 2009.

"When Parad died, Alhabsi took an oath and later became a subleader, sowing further terror," Dinampo said. Parad was killed in February 2010. —JULIE S.

ALIPALA AND LEILA B. SALAVERRI-A INQ

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Marines kill top Sayyaf kidnapper

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Government troops killed a notorious leader of the Abu Sayyaf group during a raid in Parang, Sulu on Friday night, security officials confirmed.

Killed was Alhabsy Misaya, an Abu Sayyaf sub-leader notorious for kidnapping operations in the area bordering Malaysia, Indonesia and southern Philippines.

Armed Forces chief Gen. Eduardo Año confirmed the killing of Misaya.

Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of the Joint Task Force Sulu (JTFS), said joint elements of the Marines Force Recon and 61st and 65th Marine Special Operations Groups (MARSOG) raided the hideout of Misaya at about 9:35 p.m. in Barangay Silangkan Proper, Parang.

Sobejana said a brief fire-fight between the soldiers and the bandits resulted in the

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Marines From Page 1

death of Misaya. No one was killed or injured on the government side.

The remains of Misaya was brought to Camp Gen. Bautista Hospital in Barangay Bus-bus, Jolo where former Abu Sayyaf members confirmed that the dead bandit was their sub-leader.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said the death of Misaya is a big blow to the Abu Sayyaf.

He urged citizens to remain vigilant and cooperate with authorities to address the threat posed by the bandits.

“Let us cooperate to have safer and more secure communities. This is our shared responsibility,” Abella added.

He assured the public that the government would hold the Abu Sayyaf accountable for their brutal and senseless crimes.

Misaya was reportedly about to assume the group’s leadership following the death of fellow sub-leader Muamar Askali, alias Abu Rami, who was among the six bandits killed in the encounter two weeks ago in Inabanga, Bohol.

Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) commander Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. said the military would continue to target Abu Sayyaf sub-leaders.

Aside from spearheading in the series of kidnapping for ransom activities in Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, Misaya and his group were linked to the kidnapping of crew of foreign vessels in the Sulu Sea and in Sabah.

– With Alexis Romero, Jaime Laude

30 April 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Notorious Abu Sayyaf leader killed

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD and NONOY LACSON

An Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) leader, considered one of the most notorious kidnapers in Southern Philippines, was killed following an encounter in Indanan, Sulu, Friday night.

The ASG leader was identified as Alhabsy Misaya, AFP spokesman Brig Gen Restituto

Padilla said AFP Chief of Staff General Eduardo Año had confirmed the death of Misaya during a military operation late Friday evening.

Misaya was killed in a clash with troops from the Joint Task Force Sulu who were conducting security operations in Barangay Silangkan, Indanan. ▶8

Notorious Abu Sayyaf...

when they encountered the group of Misaya at about 9:35 p.m., sketchy reports said.

There were no reports of casualties from the government side.

Año would not provide specific details of the operation, saying it is part of the focused military operations targeting ASG commanders and groups.

"We could not give details yet because it may jeopardize the ongoing follow-up operations," said Año.

Warrant of arrest

Misaya is a Sulu-based ASG sub-leader and a native of Barangay Bunot, Indanan. He has a standing warrant of arrest for kidnapping and serious illegal detention with ransom, Padilla said.

Bomb expert

Also known as a bomb expert, Misaya was involved in many kidnapping incidents. One of those was the Malagutay bombing in October, 2002, that killed US serviceman Sgt. Mark Jackaon and injured 23 others. Other incidents were the bombing of Salaam Bridge in January 2009 in Barangay Bato-Bato, Indanan; and bombing of Dennis Coffee Shop in Barangay San Raymundo, Jolo, in March, 2011, which killed four people and wounded 11 others.

Beheading

The notorious Abu Sayyaf leader was also responsible for the beheading of seven factory workers in Jolo in 2007 which he was believed to have recorded and posted in social media, military records indicated. In that 14-minute video clip, Misaya could be heard reciting Quranic verses.

The seven factory workers, all employed at a nearby plywood factory, were abducted by the group of Misaya, then a junior member of the ASG. They were beheaded after the company refused to pay ransom for their freedom.

Kidnapping

Misaya also was involved in the kidnapping of 10 Indonesian sailors who were abducted in the waters off Tawi-Tawi in March, 2016. He had demanded ₱10 million for their ransom, according to military records.

The military file also indicated that Misaya was believed to have financed previous cross-border kidnappings in Sabah by providing money for boats, fuel and firearms.

The body of Misaya was taken to Camp Gen Teodoro Bautista Hospital for proper disposition, the report said. (With a report from Aaron B. Recuenco)

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NPA attacks in Davao City 'acts of terrorism' – Mayor Sarah

DAVAO CITY – Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio has condemned the attacks perpetrated by the New People's Army (NPA) here early yesterday morning, saying these were acts of terrorism.

"I take what happened today as a personal insult, especially because the local government of Davao City has been supportive of the peace negotiations between the national government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, the political umbrella that covers the armed guerrilla movement. And because I have repeatedly offered to talk peace with the members of the NPA within Davao City," Mayor Sara in a press statement said.

The Provincial Police Office in Davao del Norte reported that heavily armed NPA rebels more or less 100 boarded two 10 wheeler-trucks and burned the Macondray Plastics Incorporated (MPI) in Barangay Tagpore, Panabo City around 3:30 a.m.

Tagpore is a boundary area between Panabo and Davao City.

MPI, formerly Agro Plastics Inc., supplies the requirements of the banana companies under the Lapanday Group.

This was followed by the burning of Lapanday box plant and plastic plant buildings along Tigatto road in Buhangin that resulted to the wounding of security guard Reynaldo Talamague on his shoulder and stomach.

Buhangin Police Station commander Sr. Insp. Milgrace Driz reported that at around 5:30 a.m., an improvised explosive device exploded along Mandug road in Purok 8, Tigatto where one civilian identified as Larry Timbal Buenafe, 34, fish vendor and resident of Barangay 76-A, Agdao, this city was wounded. Buenafe sustained head injuries and admitted at the Southern Philippines Medical Center.

At around 6 a.m., the security guard of Lorenzo Farm, Rico Truz Badil Jr., appeared before the Calinan Police Station, this city, with a lone injury in the buttocks. Badil told police that at around 3:30 a.m., an encounter occurred in Lorezo Farm, Barangay Pangyan, Calinan where he and three other security guards were attacked by the NPA rebels.

The rebels took away four shotguns and one M16 rifle.

"We condemned these acts committed by a group that pretends to champion social justice and



DUTERTE-CARPIO

equality," said Mayor Sara, who personally visited one of the wounded victims.

The NPA is an organization unworthy of trust and respect, she stressed in her press statement.

The Davao City mayor also assured Davaoeños that police and security forces were on top of the situation. She ordered that the safety of civilians should be ensured and protected at all times.

"We shall pour all the available resources to achieve this end," she said.

Maj. Ezra Balagtey, spokesman for the Eastern Mindanao Command, said the attack was part of the NPA's extortion activities. He said Lapanday management had been receiving extortion letters from the communist groups.

He said the incident could not be connected to the brewing issue between the Lapanday Foods Inc. (LFI) and the MARBAL farmers over a 145-hectare land previously awarded under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program in 1996.

While the land was successfully turned over by DAR to MARBAI farmers last December 19, according to reports the farmer-beneficiaries were driven out of their own land.

In a press statement released yesterday, NPA Southern Mindanao Regional Operational command spokesperson, Rigoberto Sanchez owned up the attacks. He said the three simultaneous tactical offensives against the Lorenzo-owned companies and ranch started at around 2 a.m. on Saturday.

“The PBB’s (Pulang Bagani Command) coordinated offensives served as punitive action against the Lorenzos for their numerous crimes against agricultural workers, peasants and Lumad,” Sanchez said.

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NPA's launch attacks in Davao

By YAS D. DEAMFO

DAVAO CITY – The New People's Army (NPA) launched a brazen attack, that started at 2 a.m. yesterday, on three properties with links to the Lorenzo family that wounded two persons in three separate areas in Davao.

The series of assaults started with the burning of a box plant and some farming equipment belonging to the Lapanday Group, which is owned by the Lorenzo family, along Tigatto Road in Buhangin District in this city, at 2 a.m.

Then at 5:30 a.m., an improvised explosive device exploded along Mandug road in Purok 8, also on Tigatto Road where fish vendor Larry Timbal Buenafe, 34, was hurt with shrapnel wounds in the head. Buenafe was taken to the Southern Philippines Medical Center (SPMC) for treatment.

The Davao del Norte Provincial Police Office also reported that about

100 heavily-armed men, believed to be NPA rebels, attacked and set fire to the Macondray Plastics Incorporated (MPI) building in Barangay Tagpore in Panabo City at around 3:30 a.m.

MPI supplies the requirements of the banana companies under the Lapanday Group.

Then at around 6 a.m., Rico Truz Badil Jr., a security guard of the Lorenzo farm in Calinan, this city, reported to the Calinan Police Station that he and three other security guards figured in an encounter with NPA rebels at around 3:30 a.m.

According to Badil, the insurgents attacked the Lorenzo Farm in Barangay Pangyan, and was able to take four shotguns and an M16 rifle.

In a statement, NPA Southern Mindanao Region spokesperson Rigoberto Sanchez said the attacks, which were carried out by the Pulang Bagani Command, were the Communist group's "punitive action" against the Lorensos, who it accused of "numerous crimes against agricultural

workers, peasants, and lumad."

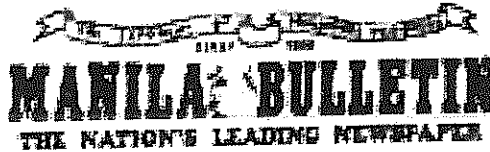
Lapanday Foods Corporation has been locked in a long-drawn land dispute with farmer-beneficiaries involving 574 hectares of land in Tagum.

The attack enraged Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio, who branded the NPA as a "terrorist" organization after a civilian was seriously injured in the early Saturday morning attack.

"Let us support our police and the military by openly condemning the NPA as a terrorist organization," Carpio said, calling the simultaneous attacks "acts of terrorism."

"I take what happened today as a personal insult especially because the local government of Davao City has been supportive of the peace negotiations between the national government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), the political umbrella that covers the armed guerrilla movement. And because I have repeatedly offered to talk peace with the members of the NPA within Davao City," she said.

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**MANILA BULLETIN**
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Buried drum yields firearm; NPA sightings more frequent

CAMP DELA CRUZ, Isabela — Operating troops belonging to the army's 50th Infantry Battalion (50th IB) discovered a drum buried in the ground that contained an armalite and subversive documents of New People's Army (NPA) in Barangay Apatan, Pinukpuk, Kalinga province yesterday morning.

Major General Paul T. Atal, commander of the army's 5th Infantry Division (5ID), said troopers were on security patrol at 6 a.m. when they discovered the drum believed buried by members of the Komiteng Larangan Guerrilla Baggas, a local guerrilla unit of NPA that operates in the area.

Apart from an M16A1 rifle, the drum also contained detonating cord, detonating fuse and subversive documents.

In a related development, the Cagayan Police Provincial Office (PPO) recorded 989 sightings of NPA rebels in the 12 towns of the province.

Chief Inspector Santos Valdovizo said there are two main groups of communist rebels operating in Cagayan — the west committee led by Christina Garcia, and the east committee headed by David Soriano. Together, their members are scattered over 89 barangays in the province. (Freddie G. Lazaro)

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Pahina. 2

3 Kumpanya ni-raid ng NPA rebels

Sinunog ng tinatayang nasa 80 mga armadong rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) ang mga heavy equipments na nasa milyong halaga matapos salakayin ang Lapan-day Foods Corporation at dalawang iba pa sa magkakahwalay na raid sa lungsod ng Davao nitong Sabado ng madaling araw.

Base sa misyal na ulat ng Police Regional Office (PRO) 11, bandang alas-3:30 ng madaling araw ng unang umatake sa Lapan-

day Foods Corporation ang mga rebeldeng miyembro ng Pulang Bagani Command sa Brgy Mandug ng lungsod.

Ayon sa pulisya, agad pinuntirya ng mga rebelde ang guard house at barracks sa fruit company, dinisarmahan ang mga guwardiya saka sinunog ang mga heavy equipments dito.

Base pa sa report isinunod namang salakayin ng NPA rebels ang Macondray Plastic Plant sa Brgy Bunawan kung saan

dinisarmahan rin ang mga security guards dito at isinunod ang Lorenzo Ranch sa Brgy Pangyan, Calinan District ng lungsod.

Samantalang habang nagreresponde naman sa Brgy Mandug ang mga elemento ng Task Force Davao ay sumabog ang landmine na ikinasugat ng isang vendor na kasunod ng convoy ng militar at pulisya sa lugar. Nabatid pa na pangigiki ng revolutionary tax ang motibo ng NPA rebels - *Joy Cantos* -

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The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

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'TEN YEARS ON, JONAS BURGOS STILL MISSING'

By **Maricel V. Cruz**

A MILITANT lawmaker on Saturday said Armed Forces chief of staff Eduardo Año and other military officials should be held accountable for the abduction and disappearance of peasant activist-organizer Jonas Burgos a decade ago.

"Ten years after the abduction of Jonas Burgos, not a single military official—this includes AFP chief Eduardo Año, then an Army Colonel at the time of the abduction of Burgos in 2007—have been charged and punished," Anakpawis Rep. Ariel Casilao of Makabayan Bloc said.

Casilao said aside from being absolved of the abduction of Burgos, Año was made the AFP chief of staff by the Duterte government "while his cohorts, Lt. Col. Melquiades Feliciano

and now Major Harry Ballaga Jr. of the 56th Infantry Battalion, also remains scot-free."

Until now, Casilao said the country's human rights situation has not improved, as various cases of rights violations against ordinary people "are continuously violated by the state forces, especially those who are advocating for the welfare of the marginalized people and critical to government policies and program."

"What happened to Jonas Burgos was a clear example of that," the lawmaker said. "Mr. Burgos was a peasant organizer in Bulacan. Before his abduction, he helped poor and landless peasants on how to improve their yield, as Jonas was an agriculturist by profession. He also educated them on how to assert their rights."

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Solons: Punish Año, others for disappearance of Burgos

By Charlie V. Manalo

The Makabayan bloc yesterday said the abduction and disappearance of peasant activist organizer Jonas Burgos was a clear manifestation of the continuing injustice and impunity that clearly undermines the basic rights of the people.

Ten years after the abduction of Burgos, not a single military official like Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff Eduardo Año, then an Army colonel at the time of the abduction of Burgos in 2007, has been charged and punished.

Aside from being absolved of the abduction of Burgos, Año is now the AFP chief of staff of the Duterte government while his cohorts, Lt. Col. Melquades Feliciano and now Maj. Harry Baliaga Jr. of the 56th Infantry Battalion also remain scot-free.

Makabayan said until now human rights situation has not improved as various cases of rights violation against ordinary people continuously violated by the State forces, especially those who are advocating the welfare of the marginalized people and critical of government policies and programs.

"What happened to Jonas Burgos was a clear example of that. Mr. Burgos was a peasant organizer in



BURGOS

Bulacan. Before his abduction, he helped poor and landless peasants on how to improve their yield as Jonas was an agriculturist by profession," the statement read.

"He also educated them on how to assert their rights against land grabbing," the statement added.

Moreover, despite the enactment of the Anti-Enforced Disappearance Law or Republic Act 10353 in 2012, the government did little help in the search for Jonas as the suspected



AÑO

brains of the abduction, Año *et al* continues to be in active duty to this day.

Under the Aquino government, human rights alliance Karapatan recorded 29 abductions while under the Duterte government, there were two cases of abduction and disappearance.

"We can't expect that the human rights situation will improve as Army officials involved in the abduction of Jonas Burgos remain at the helm

of the government. General Ayo and his ilk in the Army continue to violate the rights of the people and proof of this was the ongoing all-out war of the AFP against the CPP/NDF/NPA. Its position not to halt military operations that affect mostly civilian populace, destruction of livelihood and violation of human rights in the countryside clearly show its contempt against the peace talks between the GRP and the NDFP," Makabayan lawmakers added.

"Makabayan is one with the Burgos family; also with the families of UP students Sherlyn Cadapan, Karen Empeño and all the families whose kin were victims of enforced disappearances on their quest for justice," the solons said.

The progressive partylist, according to the lawmakers, also is one on its call for accountability to all those who committed such heinous crimes in the name of the State's campaign to quell dissent under its various anti-insurgency campaign victimizing ordinary people and activists alike.

"The government should abandon its current anti-insurgency campaign, the Oplan Kapayaan which is clearly a facade to commit numerous human rights violation against the people," the statement stated.

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Phl, US troops to hold drills near Benham

By JAIME LAUDE

Filipino and American troops will launch a naval disaster drill off Casiguran, Aurora near Benham Rise during this year's joint Balikatan military exercises.

Officials said the joint military exercises would now focus on humanitarian response drills.

Dubbed as Civil-Military Activities from the Sea (CMA-S), the joint naval disaster maneuver will be conducted off the coastal areas of the country's eastern seaboard.

This year's Balikatan will involve units of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG).

"Our ships with the US and the PCG will navigate

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from Subic Bay and they will be passing by the waters off Zambales, Cagayan Valley on their way to Casiguran, Aurora for launching of the sea-based disaster response scenario," Balikatan spokesman for the Philippines Maj. Frank Sayson said.

Sayson said the joint disaster naval exercise along the Pacific coastline from Subic is expected to start on May 7 and be completed with a week.

Culminating event for the CMA-S drills is the landing of relief items and supplies in the coastal area of Casiguran on May 15.

"I cannot tell you yet how many assets will be committed by the participants but definitely, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will be fielding many for this activity," Sayson said.

Casiguran is among the remotest towns in the eastern seaboard nearest to Benham Rise in the Pacific Ocean. The town is often in the path of the powerful storms blowing in from the Pacific.

A separate joint quake disaster response drill in an urban setting will also be undertaken by combined Filipino and American troops at the headquarters of the Army's 7th Infantry Division in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija.

Foreign and local observers were invited to the event on May 12.

Sayson said the planners of this year's Balikatan (Shoulder to Shoulder) agreed that both Filipino and US forces must harness not only their fighting skills but also their disaster response capabilities.

Sayson said the joint quake disaster response drill is most important to Filipino troops as the Philippines is prone to earthquakes, being situated in the Pacific Ring of Fire.

The AFP has committed several of its engineering units to join the quake disaster response drill.

President Duterte has ordered this year's Balikatan to focus more on humanitarian and disaster response activities instead of the usual war games.

Balikatan is scheduled for launching on May 8 and will end on May 16.

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DEFINING THE NEWS

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CHINA CALLED OUT FOR MILITARY BUILDUP

**By John Paolo Bencito
and Vito Barcelo**

IN A move likely to frustrate Beijing, President Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday firmed up a strongly-worded statement calling out China's massive militarization and island building activities as chair-

man of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ending speculations he will steer the regional bloc to China's wishes of toning down the content of the communiqué.

Earlier drafts of the chairman's Statement showed Duterte was likely to gloss over China's incur-

sions, a move that echoed the positions of Asean member-states Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam that were seen as being friendlier to China.

Following China's heavy lobbying for Manila to "water down" the communiqué, including "land reclamation and militarization" first seen last year in Laos, but not fea-

ture in an earlier draft of this year's statement seen on Wednesday.

"We took note of the serious concerns expressed by some leaders over recent developments and escalation of activities in the area, which may further raise tensions and erode trust and confidence in

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the region," the communiqué read. It added: "We reaffirmed the importance of enhancing mutual trust and confidence, exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities, avoiding actions, such as land reclamation and militarization that may further complicate the situation, and pursuing the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea [Unclos]."

Meanwhile, Duterte expressed concerns over threats to regional peace and stability, while also stressing the need to tackle pressing issues like drug trafficking and terrorism in the region, the Department of Foreign Affairs said.

The Asean leaders will discuss the proposed code of conduct in the South China Sea between Asean and China, the framework of which is being negotiated by Asean officials in the hope of finalizing it this year, the DFA said.

The DFA said Duterte called for "peaceful resolution of disputes" and respect for rule of law, saying, "In an era where there can be much of uncertainty, we must faithfully adhere to the supremacy of the law and rely on the primacy of rules as responsible members of the international community."

In a related development, the Chinese embassy in Manila said it noted relevant statement of the Philippines with regard to the SCS issue, saying China's position on the South China Sea issue was consistent and clear.

"The Chinese side is ready to continue following the agreement reached between the leaders of our two countries, properly handle sea-related issues with the Philippines, and constantly create a favorable environment for the sound and steady development of the bilateral relationship as well as our practical cooperation in various fields," Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang said.

Asean leaders will confirm their "shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force," the DFA said. **With AFP**

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Securing the land.

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Security at Asean venue intensified

By EMMANUEL TUPAS

Police have beefed up security at the venue of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Pasay City and Manila as authorities gave assurance yesterday the explosion that rocked Quiapo district late Friday was not a terror attack.

Chief Supt. Noel Baraceros, operations officer of the ASEAN Security Task Force (ASTF), said security forces have strengthened their presence at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) complex, particularly at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC), the venue of the 30th ASEAN leaders' summit.

Baraceros clarified the security adjustments are not related to the explosion in Quiapo where at least 14 people were injured.

"We strengthened our security because this is the main event," Baraceros stressed.

Philippine National Police (PNP) spokesman Chief Supt. Dionardo Carlos told a news briefing that based on initial information, the explosion stemmed from a gang war in the Quiapo area.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla also said initial reports indicate the incident was gang-related.

"We are putting it under the law enforcement operations for the time being," Padilla said.

Around 40,000 security officers are securing the ASEAN summit including the venue, routes and hotels where the delegates are billeted.

Policemen from the Civil Disturbance Management (CDM) were also redeployed in anticipation of protest rallies.

Three protest rallies were held in Liwasang Bonifacio, in Vito Cruz, Manila and along Quirino Avenue in Pasay City.

Baraceros said riot policemen managed to contain the protesters in the area to prevent them from getting near the ASEAN summit venue. – **With Jaime Laude, Mayen Jaymalin**

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13 hurt in Quiapo blast; police eye gang war

By AARON B. RECUENCO and JAIMIE ROSE R. ABERIA

The Philippine National Police (PNP) yesterday said the explosion that left 13 people injured in Quiapo, Manila, late Friday night was an offshoot of a gang war and not intended to sabotage the country's hosting of the 30th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit.

Director Oscar Albayalde, head of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), said the blast was caused by a small improvised pipe bomb that was placed under a vendor's stall near the corner of Quezon Boulevard and Soler Street.

"Initially, we gathered that this started with the mauling of a minor by three individuals. The ►8

13 hurt in Quiapo blast... ◀1

pipe bomb came as revenge against the three," said Albayalde.

Senior Police Officer 3 Dennis Inserto of the District Police Intelligence Operations Unit identified the victims as Ramon Carious, 46, and Rolando Gubat, 45, who were taken to the Philippine General Hospital (PGH); Pepi Enriquez, 44, who was taken to Mary Chiles Hospital; Mariano Genabel who was taken to the Manila Doctors Hospital; and Migine Lopez, 24; Mayvelyn Olipas, 19; Alvin Michael Vallila, 20; Clarissa Macaspac, 24; Amado Flores, 37; Patrick Bagnes, 26; Reynaldo Cabanilla, 28; Ruiz Convicto Jr., 32, and Wilfredo Tomagan, 22, who were taken to Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center (JRMMC).

Albayalde said eight of them are still undergoing treatment at the PGH and JRMMC, while the remaining victims were sent home after receiving medical treatment.

The official said he had already tasked his men to investigate the incident and arrest the perpetrators.

"The area of explosion was already declared safe and cleared of any other dangerous materials by our EOD (Explosive and Ordnance Division)," said Albayalde.

The explosion occurred on the eve of the 30th ASEAN Leaders' Summit.

"Walang kinalaman

(Summit) dahil homemade at napakaliit na pipe bomb ang ginamit. Nakita naman natin walang damage to property except 'yung mesa nung vendor (It has nothing to do with ASEAN as it involved a small pipe bomb. We all saw there was no damage, except for the vendor's table)," he said.

PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa said he had no cellphone, something that has always been present in previous terror threats, was involved in the blast. If you go to the scene, all you can smell is gunpowder, Dela Rosa added.

Security forces are on tight watch against extremist groups that might carry out terror attacks at the duration of the ASEAN events. But top police and military officials said they have not monitored any serious terror threat.

Malacañang assured that security measures are in place for the ASEAN.

"We assure our people that security measures are in place in today's event and ask the public for their full understanding and cooperation in this regard," Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said.

Business as usual

Tomagan, one of the blast victims, is now back tending his stall on Soler Street, where he and his mother has been selling goods like socks and cig-

rettes the past year.

"Nung una, akala ko cellphone ko lang ang sumabog kaya ibinaba ko kasi baka masunog. Pero hindi pala dahil masakit na 'yung paa ko (Initially, I thought it was my phone which exploded so I hurriedly put it down as it may catch fire. I realized it was not my phone when I began feeling pain in my foot)," he recounted.

For fear of another blast, he ran away from the scene with his right foot bleeding.

"Hindi ko na nga po naisip 'yung nanay ko na nandun din malapit sa lugar. Sa takot ko kasi, tumakbo na ako palayo kahit sobrang sakit ng paa ko (Due to fear, my mother was lost in my mind and I ran away from the scene despite extreme pain in my foot)," he said.

Doctors told Tomagan that he might lose three of his right toes because his tendon was affected by the blast.

"Sabi naman po ng doctor, hindi naman po makakaapekto sa akin kung mapuputol 'yung mga daliri ko (Doctors said amputating his three toes won't affect him)," he said.

Nico Astorga, 19, who lives near the blast site, said they initially thought the loud bang was just a thunder until he saw about 11 people bloodied and sprawled on the ground.

Astorga took a video and posted it online, which later became viral. (With reports from Francis T. Wakefield and Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)

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Pahina. 2

Chinese warship 3 araw bababad sa Davao

Nakatakda ng dumang ngayong araw sa pantalan ng Davao City ang tatlong barkong pandigma ng Tsina.

Dahilan ng pagbisita ng modernong naval vessels nito ay para sa gaganaping goodwill visit na magsisimula ngayong Abril 30 hanggang Mayo 2.

Kabilang sa barkong pandigma ng Tsina ay ang guided missile destroyer, isang guided missile frigate at isang support/replenishment vessel.

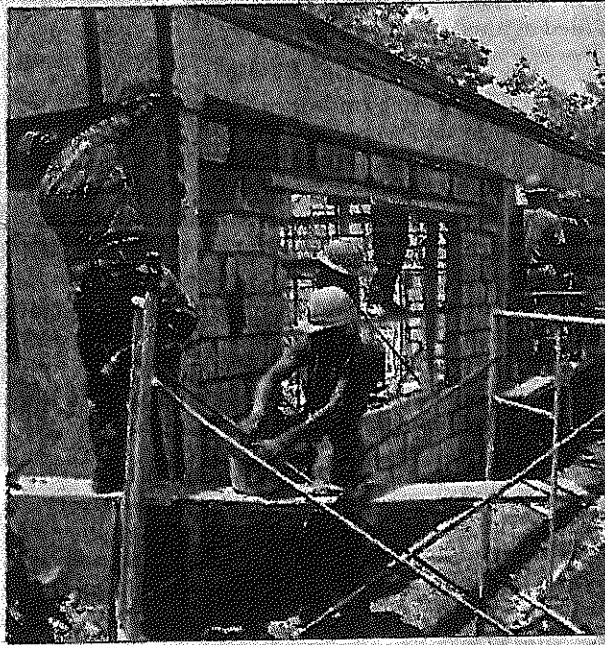
Nakatakda rin umang magsagawa ng pag-sasanay at shipboard tour para sa mga naimbitahang bisita.

Ang goodwill visit ay kasunod ng ginawang pagbisita nina Defense Sec. Delfin Lorenzana at Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief General Eduardo Año sa Pag-Asa Island sa bahaging West Philippine Sea (WPS) noong Abril 27. **(JG Tumbado)**

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Filipino and US soldiers build classrooms in Ormoc, Leyte on Friday as part of the recovery assistance to victims of Super Typhoon Yolanda.

EPA

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Finding Jonas

Ten years is virtual eternity, but Jonas Burgos' family and friends still look for him, and still demand from the military that it produce him or state clearly what has happened to him. They do not think it is an unreasonable request. They try to comfort themselves with prayer and hope.

An agriculturist and peasant organizer, Jonas was 37 when he was abducted on April 28, 2007. He had just conducted training for farmers in San Miguel, Bulacan. According to witnesses at the Ever Gotesco Mall in Quezon City, he was taken by several men and a woman and dragged to a waiting maroon-colored van, a sack pulled over his head.

Since then Jonas' mother Edita Burgos has been waging a tireless campaign to find him. He has not been seen again, and has joined the unfortunate ranks of the *desaparecidos*.

But Jonas' trail is not completely unknown. A security guard had noted down the plate number of the van that took him to parts unknown, and subsequent investigation traced the vehicle to the Armed Forces' 56th Infantry Battalion in Bulacan. Edita Burgos has since pleaded with the military for years for any word on her missing son. In 2011, left with no recourse, she filed criminal charges against military officials including then Army Intelligence head Col. Eduardo Año; Maj. Harry Baliaga Jr., whom witnesses identified as among those who abducted Jonas; Lt. Col. Melquiades Feliciano, then commander of the 56th Infantry Battalion; and several John and Jane Does. Ultimately, only Baliaga would be haled before the court. He remains on trial for arbitrary detention.

The Commission on Human Rights and the Court of Appeals have since held the military responsible for Jonas' disappearance, and named Baliaga as the individual behind it. The Supreme Court has since ordered the military to produce Jonas.

To no avail. "The family has not left any stone unturned ... taking legal steps, pursuing all available avenues, both private and government," Jonas' mother wrote in a 2015 open letter to then President Benigno Aquino III.

The efforts of finding Jonas have taken a toll on his family. The costs of the continuing search have raced into the millions, drying up the family's savings, his mother's retirement benefits, as well as the death and retirement benefits of his father, the press freedom icon Jose Burgos Jr. But the loss of Jonas is greater still. "The impact of the loss of my son is unquantifiable. You cannot put a price on the broken heart, the broken family, the loss of a son," his mother said.

Two administrations have come and gone, another has begun, and Jonas is still missing. "I have appealed to President Aquino and he said he would go by the evidence but he didn't do anything. I was hopeful that when the 2013 Supreme Court order came out that, as commander in chief, he would order the military or at least explain to me the truth of what really happened, but there was no action," Edita Burgos said. She said she had intended to write President Duterte and was guardedly optimistic that he would help uncover the truth.

But in December, Año, who was among those implicated in Jonas' disappearance, was appointed chief of staff of the Armed Forces.

The 10th anniversary of Jonas' disappearance last Friday was marked with 11 ecumenical Masses and protest rallies all over the country. "What kind of justice system do we have?" said his brother Luis. "It's very hard to go against the military institution even if [it's] in the wrong. It's hard not knowing what happened. We want them to produce him in whatever state he's in. We have no choice but to continue to hope."

Another Mother's Day is around the corner, another Mother's Day that Edita Burgos is facing. On that special day in 2013 we wrote in this space: "We recall the mothers who have lost their children too soon, through injustice, disease, or unfortunate circumstance. For the mothers who continue to fight for the return of their lost children, we wish unwavering courage and endurance, as well as truth, justice and closure."

Edita Burgos prays that those involved in Jonas' disappearance would "soften their hearts." May the coldest heart be moved by a mother's continuing lament for her missing child.

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ONLINE NEWS

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Palace lauds 'neutralization' of notorious ASG leader

~~From the Philippine News Agency (Apr 29): Palace lauds 'neutralization' of notorious ASG leader~~

Malacañang on Saturday lauded the killing of notorious Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) sub-leader Alhabsy Misaya in a military operation Friday even as it called on citizens to fully cooperate with the government in its efforts to finally end the threat of the bandit group.

In a statement, Presidential Spokesperson Ernesto Abella said the death of the extremist commander dealt "a big blow to the notorious kidnap-for-ransom terrorist group."

"The military has confirmed the death of Misaya, considered the most notorious kidnapper in the ASG," he said.

"We call on all citizens to remain vigilant, alert and watchful in cooperating with security forces to end the menace of this bandit group. As government holds them accountable for their brutal and senseless crimes, let us cooperate to have safer and more secure communities. This is our shared responsibility," Abella said.

Marine units have shot and killed Misaya, one of the most notorious ASG sub-leaders wanted for several counts of kidnapping and bomb attacks, during operations in Indanan town, Sulu province Friday night.

According to Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, The operation that neutralized Misaya took place at about 9:35 p.m. in Barangay Silangkan.

The AFP official said that no other details could be provided as follow-up operations are ongoing.

Padilla added that focused military operations targeting local terrorist groups in all other areas are continuing as well.

Misaya was a Sulu-based ASG sub-leader and a native of Barangay Bunot, Indanan, Sulu.

He has a standing warrant of arrest for kidnapping and serious illegal detention with ransom.

A bomb expert, Misaya was also tagged in many ASG bombing attacks that included the October 2002 Malagutay bombing that killed US serviceman Sgt. Mark Jackson and the wounding of 23 others, including another US serviceman; the January 2009 bombing of the Salaam Bridge in Barangay Bato-Bato, Indanan, Sulu; and the March 2011 bombing of Dennis Coffee Shop at Barangay San Raymundo, Jolo, Sulu that killed four civilians and injured 11 others.

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