

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



**TEAM ARMY**

Serving the people. Securing the land.

[oacpa.army2012@gmail.com](mailto:oacpa.army2012@gmail.com)  
OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

# NEWS CLIPPINGS

09 August 2017

Wednesday

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

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# INQUIRER





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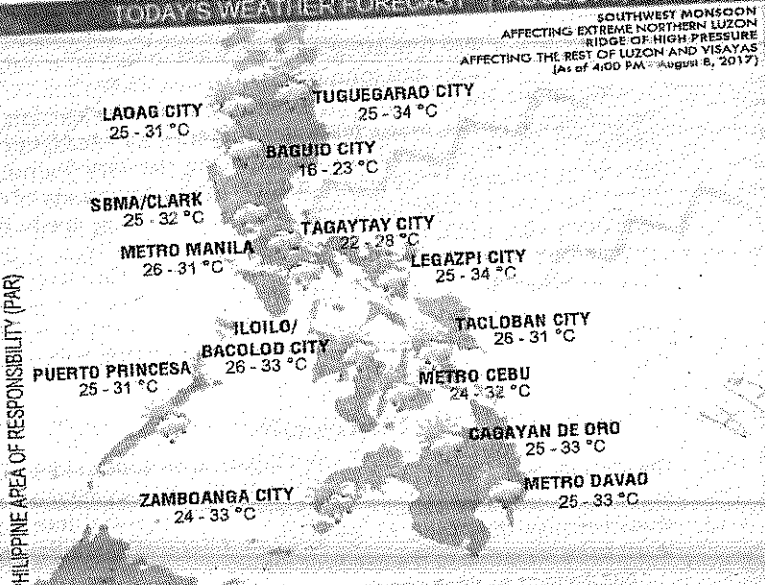
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
**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**  
BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | AUGUST 9, 2017 | WEDNESDAY**































SOUTHWEST MONSOON AFFECTING EXTREME NORTHERN LUZON  
RIDGE OF HIGH PRESSURE AFFECTING THE REST OF LUZON AND VISAYAS  
(As of 4:00 PM - August 8, 2017)




PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>SUNRISE</b>   | <b>SUNSET</b>   |
|  5:41 AM  |  6:22 PM   |
| <b>MOONRISE</b>  | <b>MOONSET</b>  |
|  7:32 PM  |  6:43 AM   |
| <b>FULL MOON</b>   | <b>LAST QUARTER</b>   |
| AUG 8<br>2:11 AM   | AUG 15<br>9:15 AM   |
| <b>LOW TIDE</b>  | <b>HIGH TIDE</b>  |
| MANILA SOUTH HARBOR  |   |
|  6:42 PM |  10:46 AM |
| 0.10 Meter   | 1.24 Meter  |


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

|                     | AUG 8  | AUG 9  | AUG 10   | AUG 11   | AUG 12   | AUG 13   |
|---------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>METRO MANILA</b> |  26 - 31 °C |  26 - 32 °C |  22 - 28 °C |  22 - 29 °C |  25 - 30 °C |  25 - 30 °C |
| <b>TUGUEGARAO</b>   |  25 - 35 °C |  25 - 35 °C |  26 - 33 °C |  25 - 33 °C |  25 - 32 °C |  25 - 32 °C |
| <b>LAOAG</b>        |  25 - 32 °C |  25 - 32 °C |  26 - 32 °C |  26 - 31 °C |  25 - 32 °C |  25 - 32 °C |
| <b>BAGUIO</b>       |  17 - 23 °C |  16 - 24 °C |  26 - 33 °C |  25 - 32 °C |  24 - 33 °C |  25 - 32 °C |
| <b>SBMA/CLARK</b>   |  25 - 32 °C |  25 - 33 °C |  24 - 33 °C |  24 - 33 °C |             |             |




**DZRH NEWS TELEVISION**


**MONDAY - FRIDAY**  
**11AM & 5PM**



**PILIPINAS HD**



**AIR 21**



**SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!**

**WEEKDAYS 6AM, 6:30 PM & 9PM**  
**WEEKENDS 6AM**

7/1 August 2017



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# SENATE BODY TO PROBE POLL CHIEF, SAYS SOTTO

STORY BY CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO, DJYAP AND TINA G. SANTOS

The Senate blue ribbon committee is expected to probe Comelec Chair Andres Bautista whether he truthfully declared his personal wealth in his SALN. His wife accuses him of amassing P1 billion in unexplained wealth. **AG**

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# Senate body to probe poll chief, says Sotto

## FROM A1

By Christine O. Avendaño,  
DJ Yap,  
and Tina G. Santos  
@Team\_Inquirer

Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said he would no longer question whether the blue ribbon committee had jurisdiction over an investigation of Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chair Andres Bautista, who is accused by his estranged wife of amassing P1 billion in unexplained wealth.

Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, who sought the Senate inquiry, said the committee could very well investigate the Comelec chief, as it did in 2014 when it looked into corruption allegations against former Vice President Jejomar Binay.

Drilon had reservations on Monday over whether the blue ribbon committee could investigate Bautista because an impeachment complaint could be filed against him.

Sotto said he was glad that Drilon dropped his objection.

He assured the public that the Senate would discontinue the hearing once an impeachment complaint was filed against Bautista in the House of Representatives.

Sotto insisted that his resolution was in aid of legislation and not to find out whether the Comelec chief was guilty of his wife's allegations.

### SALN law

"The essence of my resolution is to find out what's wrong with the SALN (statement of

assets, liabilities and net worth) law, or Republic Act No. 6713, on why some officials are able to circumvent the law," he said in a phone interview.

He noted that Bautista declared a net worth P176 million in his SALN for 2016, but his wife, Patricia, produced documents showing that the Comelec chief had more than P300 million in cash and real estate properties that he did not declare.

"I don't care if he is guilty or not," Sotto said.

He said the purpose of his resolution was to "fix the law."

Sotto filed a resolution on Monday asking the blue ribbon committee to look into whether Bautista truthfully declared his personal wealth in his SALN.

He said his resolution would be referred on the floor on Wednesday.

### House resolutions

On Tuesday, another resolution in the House seeking a congressional probe of the accusations raised against Bautista was filed by Caloocan Rep. Edgar Erice, who said the charges cast doubt on the integrity of the 2016 elections.

Kabayan Rep. Harry Roque filed Resolution No. 1171 on Monday asking the House suffrage and good government committees to investigate the allegations of Bautista's wife.

Other lawmakers were lukewarm to Roque's proposal.

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman said he did not wish to meddle in what appeared to be a domestic squabble between the Bautista couple.

Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas said the only proper

way for the House to investigate the charges of unexplained wealth leveled against Bautista was through an impeachment proceeding.

Asked to comment on Roque's call for a House probe of the allegations against the Comelec chief, Fariñas on Tuesday said that it might be a pointless exercise.

"The House probes or investigates impeachable officials through the process of impeachment. Any other proceeding would result [in] redundancy, as any finding thereof would only be recommendatory," Fariñas told reporters in a group message.

"If it finds sufficient ground to proceed against such official, it would resort to impeachment proceedings," he said.

"With respect to infractions of the law, let the proper forum resolve that," Lagman told a press briefing.

Bautista denied his wife's claims and countered that she was extorting money from him in the ongoing settlement to end their marriage.

### Open to lifestyle check

The Comelec chief on Tuesday said he was open to a lifestyle check.

"I have no problem with a lifestyle check on me," Bautista said when asked about Sen. Grace Poe's statement that she wanted a lifestyle check of Comelec officials following the "shocking revelations" of Bautista's wife.

The allegation was made by Patricia in an affidavit submitted to the National Bureau of Investigation on Aug. 1.

Bautista, in a press conference on Tuesday, said the primary issue in his marriage with Patricia was how to use money.

"If ever we have a primary issue in our marriage, it's how to use money. Again, I will not deny this, my siblings knew that I'm quite stingy ... And I want to teach my kids that they have to live within their means," he said.

### Wife's credit card debt

"She (Patricia) always had a problem with money. I had to bail her out of a credit card debt in 2012 for P3.2 million," he said, adding that his wife owned a lot of credit cards.

"I don't know [what she bought] ... and to think I gave her an extension card. She had a checkbook from me. It's true I was the one managing the family finances," Bautista said.

Election watchdog group Kontra Daya, meanwhile, urged Bautista to take a leave of absence amid the controversy he was facing.

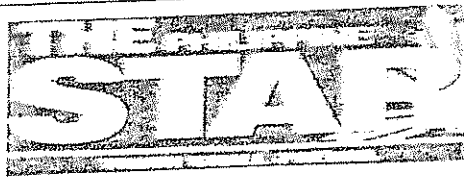
In a statement, Kontra Daya convener Danilo Arao said it would be better if Bautista would go on a leave from the Comelec for the sake of ensuring credibility of any forthcoming probe.

"By taking a leave of absence, Bautista will not be able to use his position at the Comelec to influence the outcome of the probe," Arao said.

"The result of the probe would be put in question [if he does not go on leave] as Bautista will be vulnerable to accusations of interference," he added. INQ

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# Asean vows to fight drug menace, terrorism

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

Fighting the drug menace and terrorism with greater vigor highlighted the declaration of commitment by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at the end of its ministerial meeting yesterday and the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the regional bloc.

"We will comprehensively address cross-sectoral concerns, including nontraditional security issues and transnational challenges, such as illicit drug trafficking, trafficking-in-persons, terrorism and violent extremism," read the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration.

In his message at the closing of the ASEAN ministerial meeting, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano said the Philippines now speaks in a "loud but calming voice" in pursuing its independent foreign policy.

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## Asean From Page 1

The ASEAN leaders also vowed to continue promoting and protecting human rights and affirmed their recognition of human resources as the greatest asset of the region.

"We will continue to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, equitable access to opportunities and poverty eradication," the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration stated.

The regional bloc also

voiced its commitment to support the empowerment of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Other trans-boundary challenges the regional bloc hopes to address more closely in cooperation with the international community are disaster management, emerging infectious diseases and maritime-related issues.

ASEAN has also reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining

and promoting peace, security and stability, including the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes in accordance with international law.

On Monday, Australia, the United States and Japan urged regional leaders to enhance cooperation in countering terrorism and pledged their continued support for relevant efforts.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, Japanese Foreign Affairs Minister of Japan Taro Kono and US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson also expressed their concern over the loss of

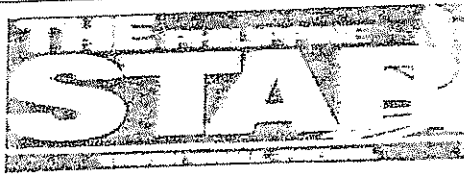
lives and the displacement of thousands in Marawi where government forces are fighting militants linked to the terror group Islamic State.

The three ministers met in Manila on Monday for their seventh Trilateral Strategic Dialogue.

The ministers also resolved to push for and strengthen existing information sharing mechanisms, such as those provided by the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), and to combat the flow of foreign terrorist fighters to and from conflict areas.



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# 200 NPA rebels sighted in Misamis Oriental

By GERRY LEE GORIT

**OPOL, Misamis Oriental – Over a hundred families have fled their homes after around 200 suspected New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas were spotted in their barangays in this town on Monday.**

More than 500 residents of Barangays Nangcaon and Tingalan sought shelter at the municipal evacuation center, Opol Mayor Maximino Seno said yesterday.

Seno said the municipal council declared a state of

calamity in the two barangays to allow the local government to use its calamity funds to provide food and other relief assistance to the evacuees.

He said the NPA guerrillas were trying to recruit

residents to join the group. "Most of those who fled were approached by the rebels," Seno said.

"We have to leave because we feel it is dangerous for us," Gennys Mangcunay, councilman of Barangay Nangcaon and a tribal leader, said.

Citing information provided by village officials, Seno said the rebels were spotted in at least four barangays.

He said the military is

conducting clearing operations in the affected barangays.

Senior Superintendent Roland Destura, Misamis Oriental police chief, said they alerted the police in neighboring towns of the NPA presence.

Capt. Joe Patrick Martinez, 4th Infantry Division spokesman, confirmed that the armed men are NPA rebels who are planning to launch attacks in the area.

## Army officer slain in Sorsogon should be celebrating birthday today

Connie Destura August 8, 2017, 5:15 pm



LEGAZPI CITY, Aug. 8 — Army 2Lt Lee O. Tremedal should be celebrating his 37 birthday today but a landmine blast claimed his life on Monday.

Tremedal died, along with another Army officer, when a landmine planted by suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels exploded in a remote village in Gubat town in Sorsogon.

His wife Jheniefeb, 34, a practicing dentist in her hometown in Surigao del Norte, had planned to arrive today to surprise and join him in celebrating his birthday but instead, she would be mourning the tragic fate that befell her husband, according to Army Maj. Virgilio Perez, Southern Luzon Command (Solcom) spokesperson.

Perez, in a phone interview Tuesday, said Tremedal, before joining the Army, was a BS Agriculture Technology graduate at the Surigao del Norte College of Agriculture and Technology and an advanced ROTC officer during his college years.

He entered the military service as enlisted personnel in September 2005 as a candidate soldier.

Tremedal was first assigned at 78IB of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Samar, then in Bicol, at the 31<sup>st</sup> the Infantry Battalion operating in Sorsogon province.

Tremedal and Army Staff Sergeant Allan Bercasio died in the landmine explosion early morning Monday that also wounded seven other soldiers while on combat patrol in Barangay Casili, a remote village in Gubat, Sorsogon.

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According to Perez, he (Tremedal) led a squad (17) of Army troopers regularly conducting combat patrol in outskirt villages where suspected NPA rebels were reportedly sighted and holding extortion activities victimizing villagers in far-flung communities.

On the other hand, Bercasio was a native of Goa town in Camarines Sur, and a platoon leader under Tremedal.

Perez said the remains of 2Lt Tremedal lie in state at the St. Peter Memorial Chapel here in Legazpi, to be brought later to his hometown in Surigao del Norte.

Tremedal and Bercasio would be given recognition for their dedication and gallantry in their military duty.

Perez said about 50 suspected NPA rebels waylaid the squad of Army troopers that included the two slain soldiers on combat patrol on Monday morning.

The rebel attack coincided with the interment at the Casiguran Public Cemetery of ranking rebel leader Andres "Ka Magno" Hubilla and NPA member Miguel "Ka Billy" Himor.

The military said Hubilla and Himor died in an encounter with soldiers in a remote village in Casiguran town, also in Sorsogon, on July 28 but Karapatan-Bicol's fact-finding mission claimed the two were massacred along with civilians Arnel Borres and Dick Laura.

Hundreds of supporters wearing red shirts joined the burial rites in a call for justice for the slain rebels.  
(PNA)

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

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001 August 2017

**Malaya**  
The National Newspaper

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## Año: No offer from US for air strikes vs Maute

BY VICTOR REYES

ARMED Forces chief Gen. Eduardo Año yesterday said there is no formal offer from the US military to conduct air strikes, using armed drones, on the ISIS-inspired Maute Group in the Philippines.

He said such "direct military actions" by the Americans are not allowed under the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty which mandates the two countries to help each

other in case of an armed attack.

Año made the statement after an NBC News article, quoting two US defense officials, said the "Pentagon is considering a plan that allows the US military to conduct air strikes on ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) in the Philippines."

"The authority to strike ISIS targets as part of collective self-defense could be granted as part of an official military operation that

may be named as early as Tuesday, said the officials. The strikes would likely be conducted by armed drones," the article, dated August 7, also said.

The article said if the plan is approved, the US military "would be able to conduct strikes against ISIS targets in the Philippines that could be a threat to allies in the region, which would include the Philippine

See AÑO > Page B6

### AÑO

forces battling ISIS on the ground in the country's southern islands."

The US has been training and equipping Filipino forces for over a decade now in the fight against terrorists.

In the ongoing operations against the Maute Group in Marawi City, the Americans have deployed P3 Orion surveillance aircraft to help end the armed conflict that has been dragging since May 23.

The conflict has killed 528 Maute members, 122 soldiers and policemen, and 45 civilians. Officials said there are around 50 to 70 Maute members left in Marawi City, confined in an area that is less than a square kilometer.

The defense department said Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana has not discussed with the Americans the possibility of the US conducting air strikes in the country.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said the issue was neither raised nor discussed during the courtesy call of US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on President Duterte in Malacañang on Monday.

Año said the Armed Forces has not received "any formal notice or offer for such air capability deployment."

Año said the MDT, through the Mutual Defense Board and Security Engagement Board, allows only technical assistance and training

"Direct military actions may only be allowed during actual invasion of the Philippines by another state actor," he said.

Año said the military welcomes Pentagon's purported desire to help the Philippines in the fight against the Maute Group, which is seeking recognition from the ISIS, because "terrorism is a global menace that the community of nations must unite to fight against."

AFP public affairs chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said the Americans can take part in actual combat operations, under the MDT, in case of an invasion by a "state actor." He said Maute and ISIS are non-state actors.

### AUSTRALIAN, JAPANESE AID

Australia said it will provide an additional \$20 million in assistance to civilians affected by the Marawi conflict.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said the amount is on top of the \$920,000 in emergency food aid and other supplies delivered by the Australian government last June to the victims.

"Yesterday (Monday) I met with Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte in Manila, our second meeting for 2017. We discussed the conflict in Marawi and the impact it is having on civilians in the region. Australia's support will help meet the urgent needs of these displaced people including through child protection and counsel-

ing services," she said.

Bishop said the amount would also be used to fund the construction of small infrastructure projects to provide water supply and repair roads in the affected communities.

Japan will give the Philippines high-speed vessels and other security equipment to bolster its counter-terrorism efforts, particularly in Mindanao.

In a press briefing Tuesday, Japanese Deputy Press Secretary Toshihide Ando said Foreign Minister Taro Kono conveyed the offer during his meeting with Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano.

He said Kono also told Cayetano Tokyo is ready to provide further assistance on the matter.

Toshihide did not say what specific high-speed vessels and other security related equipment will be provided.

Earlier, Tokyo provided the Navy Air Group with three TC90 aircraft to bolster its surveillance and maritime patrol capabilities as well as for light-lift transport.

Tokyo also committed to provide the Philippine Coast Guard with 10 Parola-class multi-role response vessels, five of which are already in the country.

The PCG has also requested Japan for two 92-meter, offshore patrol ships.

The offer of security-related equipment is on top of the \$2 million in humanitarian assistance provided by Japan to victims of the Marawi conflict. — *With Jocelyn Montemayor and Ashzel Fiachero*

09 August 2017



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AFP SA'S COVENANT NEEDED

# US eyes air strikes vs IS allies in Marawi



By Mario J. Mallari and Joyce Ann L. Rocamora

The United States government's plan to conduct air strikes against Islamic State (IS)-inspired terrorists in Marawi City is appreciated but such a move should go through a process, including a formal agreement, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año said.

Año noted that the US involvement in direct military operations in the country is not covered by the defense treaty with the Americans, unless Manila is attacked by another country.

He added only when the Philippines is actually

invaded by "another state actor" can direct military action involving US forces be allowed.

"Direct military actions may only be allowed during actual invasion of the Philippines by another state actor," he said.

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**From page 1**

A report from American broadcast outfit NBC said the US Department of Defense is considering the plan to start an airstrike operation against Islamic State (IS)-affiliated terror groups holding out in Marawi City.

The report said the airstrikes are likely to be carried out by drones.

In the event the plan is approved, US servicemen will be authorized to attack militants “who threaten US allies in the region” including threats on the allies’ ground forces such as that of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The report cited Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis as saying that Washington and Manila have been sharing intelligence for quite some time and that the Philippines has for 15 years been hosting US servicemen who support the US in its counterterrorism efforts.

Año, in a statement, said a formal covenant is needed before Pentagon’s offer could be considered.

“We appreciate Pentagon’s reported desire to help the Philippines in the fight against IS-inspired Maute Group because terrorism is a global menace that

the community of nations must unite to fight against,” said Año.

“However, such proposition if any, has to undergo a process. And a covenant must be had between the Commanders-in-Chief of both nations before that option may be adopted,” he added.

Año said the air strikes remain a plan until it is officially communicated to the AFP, particularly to the Commander in Chief President Duterte.

“As reported in media, this is ‘a plan’ being considered. We at the AFP are yet to receive any formal notice or offer for such air capability deployment,” he said.

**MDT allows only training**

“The existing Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) provides that only technical assistance and training may be allowed under the Mutual Defense Board-Security Engagement Board (MDB-SEB),” Año said.

“Direct military actions may only be allowed during actual invasion of the Philippines by another state actor,” he reiterated.

Meanwhile, the government is already mulling at resuming classes at the Mindanao State University (MSU) in Marawi, following recommendations by local, school and even military officials.

Military officials, faculty members and other officials of the

MSU met on Monday wherein security arrangements for the school and its date of opening of classes were discussed.

Classes at the MSU had been suspended since May 23 as a result of the rebellion in the city.

Aside from the school, officials were also considering opening establishments around the university which were also shut down, still due to the rebellion.

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., commander of the AFP’s Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom), cited the significance of MSU to the Maranaos and other peoples of Mindanao.

“The Mindanao State University is the symbol and life of Marawi City. This is the bastion of knowledge and we will have to open classes the soonest,” said Galvez.

“The opening of the university is a challenge, but we have to test the waters and come up with means to bring back the life of Marawi through the opening of this revered institution,” he added.

Last May 25, Duterte declared martial law on the southern island of Mindanao, which is often subjected to attacks by IS-linked terror groups. Marawi has remained the primary hotspot ever since the Maute group attempted to storm the city.

Last June, the US embassy in the Philippines announced that American forces started providing assistance to the embattled Filipino troops in the southern regions of the archipelago.

Following the announcement, President Duterte said that he “never approached America” for military assistance and was “not aware of that until they arrived.” Addressing the apparent insubordination of his own military, he remarked that “our soldiers are pro-American, that I cannot deny.”

**US: No conflict on IS fight, HR**

The United States, meanwhile, said it sees no contradiction with its assistance to the Philippine government’s effort to quell terrorism and the country’s existing human rights concerns revolving around the Duterte administration’s war against drugs.

“I see no conflict, no conflict at all in our helping them with that situation and our views of other human rights concerns we have with respect to how they carry out their counternarcotics activities,” State Secretary Rex Tillerson said.

“With respect to the assistance we’re providing the Philippines Government to respond to ISIS, there really is no contradiction at all in the support we’re giving them in the fight down in Marawi and

Mindanao,” he said.

Tillerson noted that which they are providing the country are information and surveillance capabilities.

Recently, the US government transferred two Cessna planes to allow Manila to have better information in which to conduct the fight down there.

“We’re providing them some training and some guidance in terms of how to deal with an enemy that fights in ways that is not like most people have ever had to deal with,” he said.

He sympathized with the “tragic situation” in Marawi City, but believes the government is now beginning to get the situation under control.

“The real challenge is going to come with once they have the fighting brought to an end how to deal with the conditions on the ground and ensure it does not re-emerge,” he said.

“And so I think our – bringing our knowledge of having dealt with this enemy in other parts of the world is useful to them, and I think that is also in our national security interest as well,” he said.

As of latest update on the two states’ cooperation, the US Embassy yesterday noted that US Deputy Chief of Mission Michael Klecheski transferred custody of a brand new

Joint Maritime Law Enforcement Training Center (JMLETTC) valued at over P65.4 million to the Philippines on August 4.

The JMLETTC, funded by the US Defense Threat Reduction Agency, is part of the larger National Coast Watch System and is designed to bolster the Philippines’ maritime domain awareness capabilities and to stop large-scale weapons from transiting through or near Philippine territorial waters.

The facility will be used to conduct maritime law enforcement training for the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Navy (PN), and PNP, to enhance vessel boarding, use of force, evidence preservation, and case package preparation techniques.

In the coming weeks, the embassy said US Coast Guard will send a team of maritime law enforcement experts who will conduct a one-week Maritime Law Enforcement workshop with PCG, PN, and PNP.

This workshop will focus on sharing best practices and enhancing the interoperability among the three participating agencies in support of the National Coast Watch System 2017 Field Training Exercises scheduled to take place in Manila, Palawan, and Cebu in mid-September.

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# AFP's Año cautions US on drone plan

By RENE ACOSTA

@reneacostaBM

**T**HE military on Tuesday welcomed a reported plan by the US to be directly involved in ongoing operations against terrorists in Marawi City, but cautioned the Pentagon such a degree of involvement should first go through a process.

"We appreciate Pentagon's reported desire to help the Philippines in the fight against Daesh-inspired Maute Group because terrorism is a global menace that the community of nations must unite to fight against," Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo M. Año said.

"However, such proposition, if any, has to undergo a process. And a covenant must be had between the commanders in chief of both nations before that option may be adopted," he added.

The top military chief reacted on Tuesday over reports by the US media that the Pentagon is considering conducting drone air strikes against members of the Maute-IS group still holed out in four barangays in Marawi.

Año said the air strikes remains a plan until it is officially communicated to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), especially President Duterte.

"As reported in media, this is [just] a plan being considered. We at the AFP is yet to receive any formal notice or offer for such air capability deployment," he said.

The chief of staff, however, noted that the US involvement in direct military operations in the country is not covered by the defense treaty with the Americans, unless Manila is attacked by another country.

"The existing Mutual Defense Treaty provides that only technical assistance and training may be allowed under the Mutual Defense Board-Security Engagement Board," Año said. "Direct military actions may only be allowed during actual invasion of the Philippines by another state actor," he added.

Meanwhile, the government is already mulling over at resuming classes at the Mindanao State University (MSU) in Marawi, following recommendations by local, school and even military officials.

Military officials, faculty members and other officials of the MSU met on Monday wherein security arrangements for the school and its date of opening of classes were discussed.

Classes at the MSU had been suspended since May 23 as a result of the rebellion in the city.

Aside from the school, officials were also considering opening establishments around the university, which were also shut down, still due to the rebellion.

"The Mindanao State University is the symbol and life of Marawi City. This is the bastion of knowledge



**AÑO: "We appreciate Pentagon's reported desire to help the Philippines in the fight against Daesh-inspired Maute Group because terrorism is a global menace that the community of nations must unite to fight against."**

and we will have to open classes the soonest," Armed Forces Western Mindanao commander Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. said.

"The opening of the university is a challenge, but we have to test the waters and come up with means to bring back the life of Marawi through the opening of this revered institution," he added.

## Legality

PARTY-LIST Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate of Bayan Muna has slammed the reported US plan to conduct supposed "antiterror air strikes" in Philippine territory, saying it constitutes "blatant trampling of our national sovereignty".

The US plan to conduct drone strikes on Philippine soil apparently does not need the consent of Duterte, since what was deemed necessary by the Pentagon was its "legality" under US law.



By undertaking these extraterritorial forays, the US is invoking “collective self-defense” to justify the use of its MQ-9 Reaper drones and other unmanned aircraft to attack the Maute Group in Marawi City and other Moro armed group, as well.

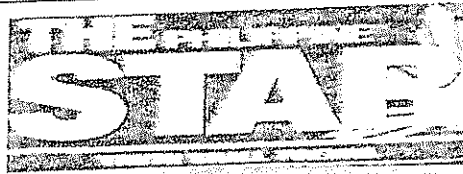
In reaction, Fidel V. Agcaoili, chairman of the negotiating panel of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, said, “We condemn any such agreement to allow US to intervene militarily with air strikes and the use of drones.”

“Obviously, the US would want to turn the Philippines into another Yemen, or worse, Iraq or Syria, to justify outright stationing of bases and troops in its war posturing against China,” Agcaoili alleged.

Last month the vice chairman of the US joint chiefs endorsed the idea of naming the mission in the Philippines, saying it is needed to secure more funding.

“In every case where we see the resurgence of terror networks,” Gen. Paul Selva said in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, “particularly in the fragile areas of the southern Philippines, I think it’s worth considering whether or not we reinstate a named operation, not only to provide for the resources that are required, but to give the Pacific Command commander and the field commanders in the Philippines the kinds of authorities they need to work with indigenous Philippine forces to actually help them be successful in that battle space.” *With Marvyn N. Benaning*

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## Japan vows continued support for Phl terror fight

Japan yesterday vowed to continue supporting the Philippines' anti-terrorism campaign and expressed readiness to assist the country in other areas of cooperation.

The commitment was made during the meeting of Japanese foreign minister Taro Kono with President Duterte on the sidelines of the 50th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Related Meetings hosted by the Philippines.

"The President took opportunity to thank Prime Minister (Shinzo) Abe for his support on anti-terrorism and Marawi (operations) and infrastructure programs Japan and the Philippines are working on," Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Cayetano said in a press briefing.

Mindanao remains under martial law since the May 23 attack of the Islamic State-linked Maute terror group in Marawi City. The siege has brought enormous distress to the population of Marawi with around 360,000 people forced to flee their homes.

Cayetano said the possibility of Duterte returning to Japan was also discussed during the meeting.

"There was a reiteration of President Duterte possibly visiting Japan and welcoming Prime Minister Abe in November. (The meeting was) reflective of the warm and strong relationship between Japan and the Philippines," Cayetano said.

Cayetano also thanked Kono for attending the ASEAN meet.

"We very much welcome the appointment and arrival of minister Kono. I think it's his fifth day today. We're thankful he attended the conference to participate actively and to articulate Japan's position on issues," he said.

"We see eye to eye with Japan on many different issues," he added.

### **Australia, Singapore aid for Marawi**

Meanwhile, the Australian gov-

ernment will provide A\$20 million or nearly P800 million in aid to the Philippines to support the recovery program in Marawi City and peace building in Mindanao.

Singapore also provided relief items worth S\$93,944 on Monday.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop announced yesterday that Australia's financial assistance will be extended to the Philippines over a span of four years. This is in addition to the emergency food and other supplies provided by the Australian government amounting to \$920,000 last June.

Bishop said she discussed the ongoing conflict in Marawi and its impact on civilians in the region with President Duterte during their meeting in Malacañang last Monday. It was their second meeting this year.

She said Australian assistance will also fund small-scale infrastructure projects for communities around Marawi, including provision of clean drinking water and repair of local roads.

Bishop stressed Australia remains committed to supporting the peace process and development in Muslim Mindanao, which she said are critical for a strong and stable Philippines.

Meanwhile, the Singapore Armed Force brought humanitarian relief items for Marawi via Laguindingan airport on Monday.

The donation was made through the Defense Attaché's office at the Singapore embassy in Manila.

The relief items included 30 sets of five-man tent, 3,120 packets of field ration, medical supplies, 200 blankets, 1,080 bottles of water, 64 dynamo lights and three water filtration units.

Lim Chong Tee, a volunteer of the Singapore Red Cross, said a water filtration unit can purify up to 1,000 liters of water in an hour.

- Alexis Romero, Helen Flores, Pia Lee-Brago, Gerry Lee Gorit

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## AFP oks MSU bid to reopen classes

By Florante S. Solmerin and Sara Fabunan

THE military said it has no problem responding to the clamor educators, students, parents and local officials to reopen classes at the Mindanao State University but added that security should be a paramount concern to all to prevent a possible infiltration of Islamic extremist personalities inside the campus.

"Education is the best antidote to terrorism. If we suspend classes and disallow children from going to school, then terrorism has already won," Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom) chief Lieutenant General Carlito Galvez Jr. said in a meeting called by university officials on Monday.

At the same time, Galvez dared the beleaguered terrorists—Maute, Abu Sayyaf and their foreign comrades who are still holed up inside a couple of barangays in Marawi City to surrender.

The military said that more than 500 terrorists, 122 government troops, and 45 civilians were killed with more than a thousand wounded since the terrorists occupied Marawi in the latter part of May.

During the two-hour discussion, military and university officials and faculty members discussed recommendations on the resumption of classes and the reopening of establishments near the university.

Galvez said security arrangement and schedule of class resumption were thoroughly discussed with Joint Task Force Lanao commander Brigadier General Ramiro Rey, MSU President Dr. Habib Macaayong, and other university officials. Also present was Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong.

Adiong has proposed a "holistic approach" since Mindanao is under martial law and especially so that there are still many civilians living within the school compound.

"There is a need to consult and involve the other members of the MSU community so that they too will have ownership over the problem and take part in the solution," Adiong said, referring to the security plan that would be crafted within and outside the campus.

"It was also initially agreed that the school can go on accepting enrollees until such time classes opens in two weeks or on a later date," Galvez said.

He said the university is the symbol and life of Marawi City and a bastion of knowledge as he assured school officials that classes will be opened at the soonest time possible.

Students studying at the university mostly came from marginalized families from Mindanao and Visayas and from as far as Palawan.

"It [MSU] has produced a number of distinct professionals and scholars and even topnotchers, both Muslims and Christians in its 56 years of operation," Galvez said.

Reports said that Omar Maute, one of the leaders of the terrorist group, studied in MSU.

"Continuing talks and assessments will be held to weigh things and ascertain the date of opening. We might have to delay it, but we will definitely have to open the MSU for our students and for our people," Galvez said.

"The opening of the university is a challenge, but we have to test the waters and come up with means to bring back the life of Marawi through the opening of this revered institution," he added.

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# Safety of classes at MSU ensured

BY ALI G. MACAPALANG

**M**ARAWI CITY – Civilian and military authorities met on Monday and agreed on mechanisms to ensure the safe opening of classes at the Mindanao State University (MSU) system main campus here despite the continuing offensives meant to clear this war-torn city of jihadist militants.

The 700-hectare MSU main campus here, which spans four barangays, did not sustain damage in the fighting that started on May 23, but the military expressed concern about a possible attack by remnants of Islamic State-inspired militants, according to Dr. Habib Macaayong, the university system president.

As of Monday afternoon, Macaayong said, a total of 8,139 students have already enrolled in the main MSU campus.

Macaayong said his administration hopes to enroll at least 10,000 old and new students before the scheduled start of classes on August 14, adding though that a weeklong extension was being mulled to iron out perceived hitches in the influx of students and prospect enrollees through security checkpoints along routes leading to the school campus.

Lt. Gen. Carlito G. Galvez, Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command, and Brig. Gen. Ramiro Rey, head of the Joint Task Group Ranao, led military authorities in meeting Monday with MSU top officials led by Macaayong and Dr. Alma Berua

and Dr. Rasid Paca, university vice presidents for academic affairs and operations, respectively.

At the two-hour meeting, Galvez explained to MSU officials and stakeholders "circumstances and possibilities" in the current Marawi strife, and discussed the need for safe resumption of classes and academic operations of the school, Western Mindanao Command spokesperson Capt. Jo-Ann Petinglay said in a statement.

"The Mindanao State University is the symbol and life of Marawi City. This is the bastion of knowledge and we will have to open classes the soonest," Petinglay quoted Galvez as saying.

Lanao del Sur Assemblyman Zia Alnto-Adiong, a member of the MSU Board of Regents, attended the meeting and batted for "holistic approach"

in securing the university campus because there are campus residents who are neither school staff or students, according to Petinglay.

Adiong reportedly suggested the involvement of key MSU residents in the consultation to make them feel they also have responsibility in security arrangements inside the academic campus.

Macaayong also took exception to a media report that 45 enrollees were denied enrollment due to a "military lockdown" in this city.

The new enrollees were subsequently allowed entry when MSU officials interceded and explained to soldiers that the 45 individuals had no university identification cards because they were not yet enrolled, he explained.

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# Ulama Council to craft 'fatwa' vs terror group

BY JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL

**S**OME 30 members of the Ulama Council of Lanao del Sur, traditional leaders and local government officials met last Sunday with the military to discuss the plight of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Marawi City and the crafting of a *fatwa* or religious edict directed against the Maute terror group.

Vice Governor Mamin-tal Adiong and Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong were joined by Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez, Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom), for a dialogue with those considered as the pillars of Marawi.

During the two-hour meeting, the ulama members aired their concerns about the role of the ulama (the learned of Islam) and the sultanate in countering violent extremism and their participation in alleviating the plight of IDPs.

In response, WestMinCom Chief, Lt. Gen. Galvez explained to them the complex situation in Marawi and the military's predicament in the ongoing crisis.

Members of the religious sector, the sultanates and elders sought unity of all Maranaos regardless of their individual

political parties and preferences.

One of the elders recounted his own harrowing experience of having lost his home and his treasures burned but said he did not lament his loss.

Instead, he offered a prayer for healing and understanding among those affected by the fighting in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur.

Despite the continuing threat to their lives, the ulama and traditional leaders reiterated their spiritual obligation to tell the truth and express their abhorrence for the un-Islamic ways of the Maute terror group inspired by the Islamic State.

The entire Ulama Council agreed to declare a *fatwa* that will condemn the barbaric actions of the terrorists and to strongly discourage recruitment because of money.

"Joining an organization in exchange for money is taboo in

Islam, more so supporting a terror group that does not respect life is unacceptable," said one of the attendees.

"Islam is peace, and those who do not want peace, are not in line with Islam," one of the members of the Ulama Council said.

The ulamas believe that the problem of terrorism is not only a Mindanao problem but a national and global issue.

The group is recommending to President Rodrigo Duterte that a National Ulama Council Convention be convened in order to declare the *fatwa* at the soonest possible time.

It is proposing the activity to show their disagreement with and express their condemnation of the terrorists who have been sowing destruction and fear in their city for 76 days now.

"This is a very important event for us in the local government, for the religious and traditional leaders and the military as well," Adiong said.

"We intended to pursue this dialogue in order to bridge the communication gap among groups and organizations, and yes, it was indeed a successful event," she added.

The WestMinCom chief made sure to personally meet the leaders, hear them out and discuss with them specific issues to which only

the military can provide answers.

"We support the ulamas' intent in pushing for the conduct of a National Ulama Council because we believe that it will save our communities from further devastation that violent extremism may yet bring," Galvez said.

"Awareness is very important in countering [this threat], therefore, we need to have all the necessary tools and medium to spread the word in condemning violent extremism at all cost," he added.

The meeting was described as productive and very positive.

The openness of the different ulama organizations to unite by declaring a *fatwa* was seen as a manifestation of their common desire to combat terrorism.

The activity ended with the parties agreeing to compromise on issues that can still be ironed out and discussed further.

Capt. Jo-ann Petinglay, spokesman for Joint Task Force Marawi, said after the meeting that the WestMinCom commander signed a directive for all military units conducting checkpoints to immediately establish special assistance and courtesy lanes in all checkpoints and to put up medical first aid stations in crowded areas for the traveling ulamas, the elderly and sickly commuters.

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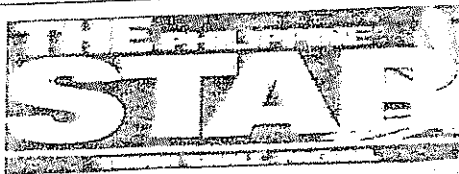
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• **Singapore donates to Marawi evacuees**

Singapore has donated relief goods worth more than P3.4 million for the benefit of Marawi City residents affected by the ongoing crisis in the city. Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the relief goods were brought to the country by the Singaporean Air Force C130 at the Laguindingan Airport in Misamis Oriental, on Monday. Padilla said the plane landed at Laguindingan Airport at about 11:25 a.m. with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) receiving the relief goods. NDRRMC spokesperson Romina Marasigan said Singapore gave tents, blankets, assorted medical supplies & medicines, drinking water, dynamo lights, food ration packs, and water filtration units. The relief goods, according to Marasigan, have already been sent to evacuees currently sheltered in evacuation centers in Iligan City. (Francis T. Wakefield)

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# Joma slay plot mere propaganda — military

By JAIME LAUDE

The military yesterday dismissed as "mere propaganda" the claims of the National Democratic Front (NDF) about a plot to assassinate Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chairman Jose Maria Sison and overthrow President Duterte.

The NDF claimed the US Central Intelligence Agency and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) hatched the two-stage plot to liquidate Sison and remove Duterte from power.

"Not true at all. This is once again a propaganda line of the left to gain sympathy and toe the anti-United States line that they usually take. Again this is such a preposterous statement," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said.

Sison, on the other hand, said he is inclined to believe the claims of the NDF.

Sison described as "very serious" the NDF report detailing the assassination plot against him, considering that it came from their military insiders.

"I take precautions. That is how much I believe it. The sources are reliable and have been reporting for some weeks already. The best antidote by the NDF to the plot is exposing it. Of course, I believe in the (NDF) statement," Sison said on his Facebook account.

In its website, the NDF claimed it received information from several sources in the AFP that military officers who are assets of the CIA and close to military chief Gen. Eduardo

Año will execute the first stage of the plan.

The first stage is for the military to send a hit squad, composed of Alex

Boncayao Brigade hitmen and renegade New People's Army rebels, to the Netherlands to assassinate Sison. The rationale behind the kill plot

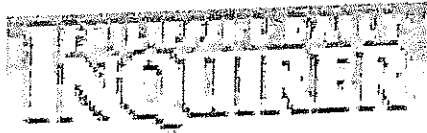
against Sison, the NDF said, is to demoralize the revolutionary forces and sow confusion within the ranks of communists.

The second stage is to launch a coup to overthrow Duterte for a number of reasons.

- With Jose Rodel Clapano



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# NDFP bares 'CIA plots' to kill Joma, oust Digong

DAVAO CITY—The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) has offered to fight with President Duterte after exposing an alleged plot against him and Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Maria Sison by "assets of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)."

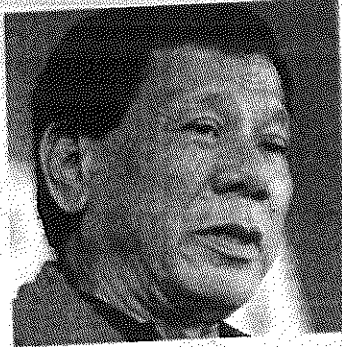
In a statement on Tuesday, the NDFP said it had received reports from "several sources" from the Armed Forces of the Philippines that military officials who are "assets" of the CIA are involved in a two-stage plot to neutralize Sison and overthrow Duterte.

"The first stage of the military plot is to send a hit team to the Netherlands in order to assassinate Sison, with the verbal approvals of Duterte and Año, before or after the proclamation of martial law nationwide," the NDFP said.

The purpose of the operation, the NDFP explained, is to "demoralize the revolutionary forces and possibly sow confusion and pandemonium" among its members.

"The head and members of the hit team are made to appear as entirely renegades or dropouts from the New People's Army even as they are handpicked mainly from the special forces of the AFP and secondarily from the former Alex Boncayao Brigade," the NDFP claimed.

The second stage of the operation is a military coup to remove Duterte from power, it added.



Rodrigo Duterte

The NDFP said the basis of the coup would include Duterte's alleged collaboration with the Left and his betrayal of the alliance with the United States by pivoting towards China and Russia.

The play for the coup would also include alleged complaints of favoritism within the Armed Forces and Philippine National Police, and "corrupting and criminalizing them in the commission of extrajudicial killings."

The revolutionary movement also noted that it recognized the "previous statements of the President that he is in danger of being ousted by a coup and that he is therefore trying to avert this by appointing more military officers in his Cabinet and other high civilian offices."

"The NDFP is of the view that, even while the two-stage military plot, especially the first stage, needs further verification, the plot must be immediately exposed in order to discourage its implementation," the NDFP said.



Jose Maria Sison

It added that there was a possibility that the "hit team for assassinating Sison is already operational."

"Thus, Sison has already started to take security precautions, such as letting volunteers guard him and take photographs of those in his vicinity at home or in public places," the NDFP said.

The peace negotiations between the government and the NDFP has again stalled following accusations from both sides of continuing attacks.

Sources from both parties said the panels would continue to explore ways to overcome the recent snag in the negotiations.

Despite the challenges in the negotiations, both peace panels have worked hard and achieved significant achievements in the talks especially on the aspects of human rights, socioeconomic reforms, and political and constitutional reforms.

Both parties agreed this year to implement the free distribution of land to thousands of poor farmers in the country.

—KARLOS MANLUPIG INQ

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## Reds' claim of CIA plot to kill Du30 'fabricated'

By Francisco Tuyay and John Paolo Bencifo

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines on Tuesday described as preposterous the claim by the communist National Democratic Front that the US Central Intelligence Agency is planning to kill Jose Maria Sison, the founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and to oust President Rodrigo Duterte from office.

AFP spokesman Restituto Padilla said the claim was baseless and fabricated.

"Not true at all," Padilla said.

"This is once again a propaganda line of the left to gain sympathy and toe the anti-US line that they usually take. Again, this is a reposterous statement."

The NDF Executive Committee claimed to have received reports from several sources in the AFP that certain military officers working with the CIA and within the circle of AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año were contemplating to assassinate Sison and subsequently overthrow Duterte.

The first stage of the military plot, the NDF claimed, was to

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### Reds'...

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send a hit squad to The Netherlands to liquidate Sison.

"There is a high probability that the hit team for assassinating Sison is already operational," the NDF said.

The group said the assassination plot against Sison had the verbal approval of Duterte and Gen. Año before or after the proclamation of martial law nationwide.

The rationale of the assassination was to demoralize the revolutionary forces and possibly sow confusion and pandemonium among them, the NDF said.

"The head and members of the hit team are made to appear as entirely renegades or dropouts from the New Peo-

ple's Army even as they are handpicked mainly from the special forces of the AFP and secondarily from the former Alex Boncayao Brigade," the NDF said.

Sison said he was taking precautions.

"That is how much I believe in it," Sison said.

"The sources are reliable and have been reporting for some weeks already. Best antidote by the NDFP to the plot is to expose it. Of course, I believe in the statement," Sison said.

The second stage of the plot, the NDF claimed, was a military coup against Duterte for having collaborated with the communists and the New People's Army for decades, betraying the alliance with the US and veering towards China and Russia.

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## What's wrong being surrounded by retired PNP, AFP generals?

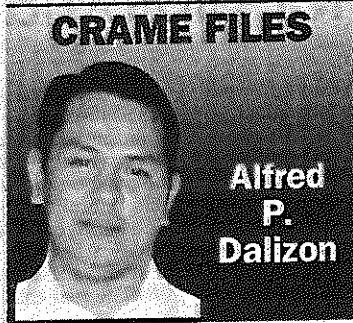
I'M saying this in the wake of criticisms over President Duterte's decision to put former police and military generals, many of them from the elite Philippine Military Academy in key government posts. Many Philippine presidents have done it before and it's the former Davao City mayor's turn to put an impressive cast of retired officers in government.

These retired officers are actually leading the government's transformation program, doing their own little share in helping in particular their active underclassmen in the PNP led by General Ronald 'Bato' de la Rosa, which is marking today the 116<sup>th</sup> Police Service Anniversary.

Have covered or worked with many of these retired officers in the past and I really believe that pound for pound, they have the solid credentials and integrity that could put products of top universities and colleges, both here and abroad to shame. Except for the Fort del Pilar in Baguio City-based PMA, can somebody please tell me which learning institution in this country produces brilliant graduates who have to endure a Spartan-like training at the same time?

Thus, I fully agree with the President when he said, shortly after he assumed the presidency that retired police and military officers from PMA whom he described as 'men of integrity' would form part of his solid team that will lead the crackdown against crime, drugs and corruption. I heard the President recently saying that he has not been putting former members of the armed services in government posts because he's afraid of them but rather, he's putting them there be-

### CRAME FILES



Alfred P. Dalizon

cause he's impressed with them.

The President said that he and former Presidents Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and Benigno Aquino III faced the same criticism about the appointment of military officials. "They ask: Why? Were we afraid of the military? We're not afraid of the military. We are impressed with the military and the police because you can order them to work," he told our troops in Marawi City.

Unlike civilians, the President explained that men in uniform get the job done fast because that's the way they have been trained. "I was Davao mayor a long time. It's difficult with the civilians, those with eligibility. When you give them instructions, they take a long time to do it. When you tell them to finish it in one hour, these people – susmaryosep. After lunch break, they go to the mall, stroll around."

At present, some retired police generals from the PMA are already in Duterte's government. They include friends like Catalino 'Lito'y' Cuy, a former PNP Special Action Force di-

rector who is now the Officer-in-Charge of the DILG; former PNP chief Bobby Lastimoso who is now chair of the Philippine National Railways; Alex Paul Monteagudo, now the NICA Director General; Nestor Quinsay, now a DILG Assistant Secretary supervising the Bureau of Fire Protection; Egay Galvane, the LTO chief;

Kiko Villaroman, now a director of the Clark Development Corporation; Bong Morente, the Bureau of Immigration commissioner; Jorge Corpuz, the PCSO chairman; Rey Berroya, the LRTA administrator; Sid Lapeña, the PDEA Director General; his mistah from PMA Class 1973, Dick Quinto who is the PDEA Deputy Director General; Anselmo Pinili, Special Envoy on Transnational Crime; and Allan Guisihan, Executive Director of Philippine Center on Transnational Crime.

Others from the AFP are retired Generals Miguel Abaya — director, Development Bank of the Philippines; Delfin Lorenzana, DND secretary; Jun Esperon, the National Security Council head; Roy Cimatu, the DENR secretary; Benjamin Defensor, a CDC director; Ricardo David, a DND Undersecretary; Manny Bautista, executive director of the Office of the Executive Director on Security, Justice and Peace Cluster;

Ricardo Visaya — administrator, National Irrigation Administration; Jason Aquino, administrator, National Food Authority; the controversial Customs chief Nicanor Faeldon; MMDA chair Danny Lim; Ambassador to Myanmar Red Kapunan, Arthur Tabaquero — undersecretary, Presi-

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## What's wrong...

### FROM PAGE 4

dential Adviser on Military Affairs; Rufino Lopez — deputy director general, NSC;

Cardozo Luna — undersecretary, DND; Eduardo del Rosario — undersecretary for civil, veterans and retiree affairs, DND; Raymundo Elefante — undersecretary for finance and materiel,

DND; Cesar Yano — undersecretary for defense operations, DND; Ricardo Jalad — administrator, Office of Civil Defense and executive director, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council,

Marciano Paynor Jr. — undersecretary, Office of the President; Ernesto Carolina — administrator, Philippine Veterans

Affairs Office; Raul Caballes — deputy administrator, PVAO; Rodolfo Santillan — deputy administrator for operations, OCD; Jonathan Martir — government arsenal director, DND; Dickson Hermoso — assistant secretary for peace and security affairs, Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process; Jesus Fajardo — deputy director general for administration, PDEA; Eduardo Gongona — na-

tional director, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources;

Alexander Baltutan, PCSO general manager; Rodolfo Garcia — general manager, Metro Rail Transit 3; Reuben Lista, resident and CEO, Philippine National Oil Co.; Oscar Rabena — director, PNOC Exploration Corp.; Bruce Concepcion — director, PNOC; Adolf Borje — director, PNOC, and purported incoming DILG Secretary Ed Año.

09 August 2017



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## Mementos lost in Marawi

A part of me died when my son Maamor showed me pictures of the remains of our house in Marawi. Up until then I was in denial. The house was not bombed, ransacked and torched in the early weeks of the siege, giving my family and me a false sense of hope, but it was probably hit much later. The daily tremors and sounds of bombs and artillery fire are now the new normal in Marawi.

It is not so much the monetary value of the house as the books, mementos, *pusaka* (heirlooms), trophies, etc. The house was even featured in the Sunday TV program "Rated K" because of the rare and priceless *muebles antiguos* collected by the missus from the countries we had stayed in or visited, as well as her oil portrait by Imao and an ancient, 14-foot Chinese jar. I remember that transporting them was a real problem. Those valuables which helped define the life I chose and the path I took are irreplaceable. Each memento had a story to tell. The memories associated with them are rich and abundant.

Among my compendium of books—on law, Islam, history, fiction—I valued very much my textbooks in law school which I used not only during my study but also in my review for the bar exam (I did not use bar reviewers). In fact, I still had a few of the syllabuses that our professors used. I must confess I am not tech-savvy, so I found those textbooks, though worn-out, handy even in my practice of law. I can

### COMMENTARY

MACABANGKIT B. LANTO

vividly recall the underlined important provisions and principles of laws (the colored highlighters had yet to be invented). Some pages were messy, with a lot of "NB" (*nota bene*) tags, caricatures, marginal notes and mnemonics (like MENTAL: for Moral, Exemplary, Nominal, Temperate, Actual and Liquidated damages) which my eidetic memory easily recalls.

Although with advanced information technology one can use the computer for easy research on law and jurisprudence, I still preferred my books. They provided ease and a smooth flow of ideas. Strange? Habits are hard to break. But those books, including my small collection during my postgraduate studies at New York University, are lost now.

Photographs with known leaders and objects given as gifts or souvenirs during my various stints in the government were equally priceless. How can I now regale my children and grandchildren with stories that will make them proud of me without those pictures and objects? How can I tell them that I once walked in the corridors of power and had hobnobbed and rubbed elbows with kings and presidents and the rich and famous, without evidence? They might think

their septuagenarian *lolo* is fantasizing.

The moronic rebels, or whoever were responsible for the destruction of my mementos, must have been curious to find aqua sports equipment for windsurfing, waveboarding and water skiing, sails and rigs in my house. Lake Lanao has periodic mistral winds and moderate waves perfect for leisure windsurfing during the months of January and February. I tried to market the idyllic lake as a destination for aqua sport buffs during my stint as tourism undersecretary, but always the peace problem got in the way. All these are also gone now.

My golf sets, although no longer in vogue, had stories to tell. I remember my old Maruman set which I used when I started playing golf. It's a small comfort that my other sets are in our other family houses in Iligan, Cagayan de Oro and Quezon City. But the rebels, or whoever destroyed them, must have been surprised to see a sackful of range balls which I had used for practice, there being no driving range in Marawi.

These objects may be lost forever, but the memories associated with them cannot be erased even by time.

Macabangkit B. Lanto (amb\_mac\_lanto@yahoo.com), UP Law 1967, was a Fulbright Fellow in New York University for his postgraduate studies. He has served the government as congressman, ambassador, and undersecretary, among other positions.

## **ONLINE NEWS**

**09 AUGUST 2017**

# **DND: No talk with US on drone strike against PH terror targets**

Priam Nepomuceno August 8, 2017, 4:23 pm

MANILA, Aug. 8 -- There are no talks with the US government regarding the use of its armed drones against ISIS-inspired terror groups in the Philippines.

This was confirmed by Department of National Defense (DND) public affairs office chief Arsenio Andolong in a statement Tuesday.

"The DND denies any discussions regarding the use of US drones to strike against Daesh-inspired terrorist groups in the Philippines. The AFP also states that no such discussions have occurred at their level," he noted.

Earlier reports claimed that the US Department of Defense is considering a plan to conduct air strikes against ISIS targets in the country, particularly in Mindanao area.

"The Chief-of-Staff AFP, Gen. Eduardo Año, said that at present such a measure is not within the provisions of the Mutual Defense Treaty. Direct military actions are only allowed during actual foreign invasion by another state actor. Hence, such a proposition has to undergo a process and an agreement must be reached that should have the approval of both the highest officials of our nations," Andolong emphasized.

The AFP is currently locked in fierce combat with Maute Group terrorists following a botched attempt to arrest Abu Sayyaf Isnilon Hapilon and ISIS "emir" in Southeast Asia last May 23.

DND Secretary Delfin Lorenzana reiterated that no discussions regarding air strikes from whatever platforms hitting local targets transpired at his level.

However, both officials expressed their appreciation for the reported desire of the US to help the Philippines fight ISIS-inspired terrorists groups in the country.

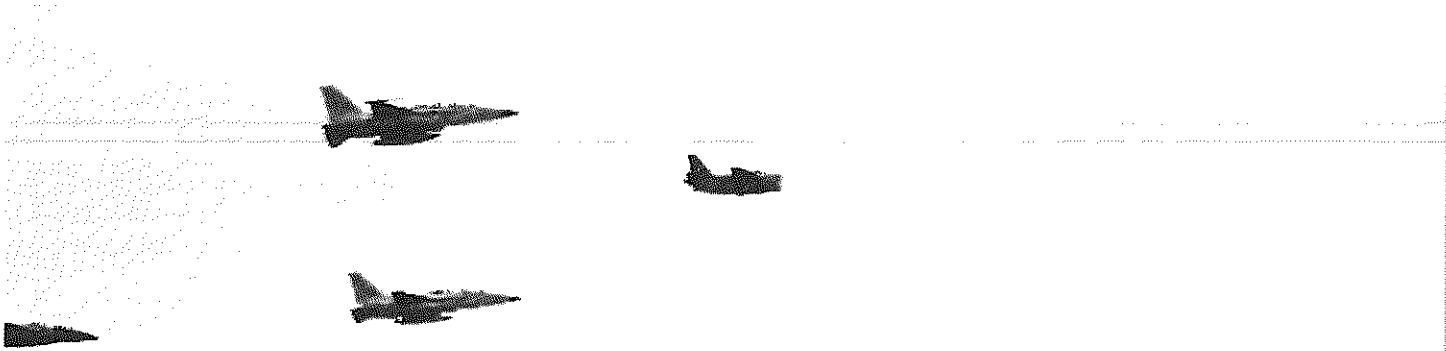
Although Philippine-US security relations and counter terrorism efforts are robust, US assistance has been limited to technical assistance, sharing of information and training.

Terrorism has indeed become a global menace that the community of nations must unite against. ASEAN of late has issued strong statements on the matter. (PNA)

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

# PAF shopping for deployment requirements for FA-50PH jet aircraft

Priam Nepomuceno August 8, 2017, 3:15 pm <http://www.pna.gov.ph>



MANILA, Aug. 8 – The Philippine Air Force (PAF) has allocated the sum of PHP7,792,000 for the acquisition of materials and equipment needed for the deployment of its South Korean-made FA-50PH "Fighting Eagle" jet aircraft which is now seeing action over Marawi City.

Bid opening is slated for Aug. 22, 9 a.m. at the PAF Procurement Center in Villamor Airbase, Pasay City, said PAF bids and awards committee chair Brig. Gen. Nicolas Parilla in a bid bulletin posted at the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System.

No specifics were given on the items to be acquired due to operational security concerns.

The FA-50PHs are currently being used by the military in the ground-support role in the ongoing effort to neutralize the remaining Maute Group terrorists in Marawi City.

Other aircraft helping in the ground-support role are the Rockwell OV-10 "Bronco", SIAI-Marchetti SF-260 light attack planes and AgustaWestland AW-106 attack helicopters, to name a few.

The PAF operates 12 units of the Korea Aerospace Industries-made fighter jet.

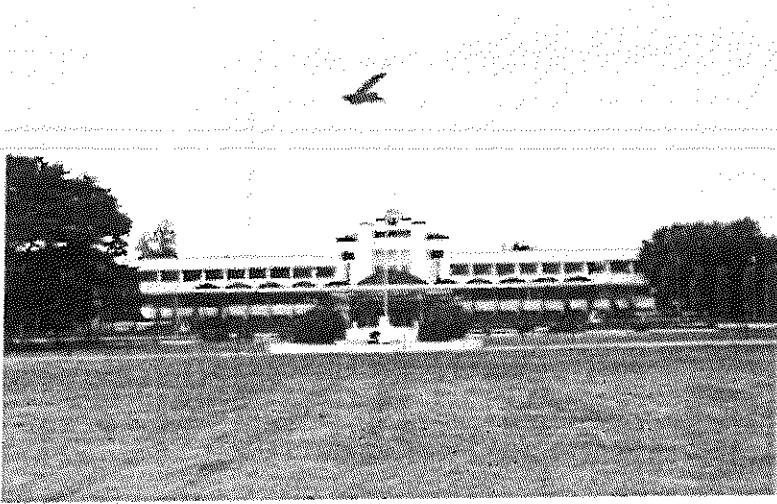
The entire order is worth PHP18.9 billion.

As of 7 p.m. Aug. 6, the number of Maute Group terrorists killed has reached the 528 mark while number of government troops slain in the ongoing operations is now at 122 along with 45 civilians executed.

Recovered firearms are placed at 603 and rescued civilians at 1,728. Fighting in Marawi City started in May 23 when government troops botched an attempt to arrest Abu Sayyaf leader and ISIS "emir" in Southeast Asia Isnilon Hapilon. (PNA)

## AFP: PH yet to receive notice of US airstrike plan in Marawi City

Priam Nepomuceno August 8, 2017, 2:38 pm <http://www.pna.gov.ph>



MANILA, Aug. 8 -- The head of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said the Philippines is yet to receive a formal notice from the United States of its reported plan to conduct airstrikes in the besieged Marawi City and noted that such proposal, if any, has to undergo a process.

AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año said only when the Philippines is actually invaded by "another state actor" can direct military action involving US forces can be allowed.

"Direct military actions may only be allowed during actual invasion of the Philippines by another state actor," he said. "We at the AFP is yet to receive any formal notice or offer for such air capability deployment."

He said the existing Mutual Defense Treaty with the US stipulates that only technical assistance and training may be allowed under the Mutual Defense Board-Security Engagement Board.

Año expressed appreciation over US' desire to help in the ongoing fight against terrorists in the southern Mindanao city but also emphasized that it has to undergo a process. "And a covenant must be had between the Commanders-in-Chief of both nations before that option may be adopted," he said.

"We appreciate Pentagon's reported desire to help the Philippines in the fight against Daesh-inspired Maute Group because terrorism is a global menace that the community of nations must unite to fight against," Año said.

A US news network reported the Pentagon is considering a plan that would allow the US military to conduct air strikes in Marawi City. Fighting in Marawi City started when government forces tried to arrest Abu Sayyaf leader and ISIS "emir" Isnilon Hapilon last May 23. *(With Kathryn Villamayor-OJT/PNA)*



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## **AFP Statement On Reported Plan of US to use Drone Strikes against Daesh Inspired Groups within the Philippines**

**General Romeo B. Manalo**, AFP Chief of Staff

"As reported in Media, this is "a plan" being considered. We at the AFP is yet to receive any formal notice or offer for such air capability deployment.

The existing Mutual Defense Treaty provides that only technical assistance and training may be allowed under the Mutual Defense Board-Security Engagement Board (MDB-SEB).

Direct military actions may only be allowed during actual invasion of the Philippines by another state actor.

We appreciate Pentagon's reported desire to help the Philippines in the fight against Daesh-inspired Maute Group because terrorism is a global menace that the community of nations must unite to fight against.

However, such proposition if any has to undergo a process. And a covenant must be had between the Commanders-in-Chief of both nations before that option is adopted."

[www.dwdd.com](http://www.dwdd.com)

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## PHL defense exec cites need for talks on defense forces

From the Philippine News Agency (Aug 8): PHL defense exec cites need for talks on defense forces

Department of National Defense (DND) Undersecretary Ricardo A. David Jr. on Monday highlighted the need for discussions about reserve forces.

In his speech during the 14th ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Conference (ASPC) at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC). David said this topic "is seldom discussed in multilateral fora."

"Given the unique yet critical role of reserve forces we should also promote cooperation in this area," he said.

The conference gathered defense and security officials from the 10-member regional block Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as their counterparts from several partner countries such as Australia.

It was first held in 2004 to help promote confidence building among defense and security authorities.

David is optimistic that Monday's conference will further help officials "derive new lessons and cooperation activities"

"We believe that we can build trust and confidence with our partners if we know where they are coming from and we can promote a wide array of cooperation if we understand the over-all dynamics of the region," he said.

"This is not only in line with the objectives of the ASPC but also the Philippines thrust to streamline and rationalize initiatives of the region to ensure that our cooperation activities complement one another and do not duplicate our efforts," he added.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1005253>

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