

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



**TEAM ARMY**

**Serving the people. Securing the land.**

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**OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

**NEWS CLIPPINGS**

**02 December 2017**

**Saturday**

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

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# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

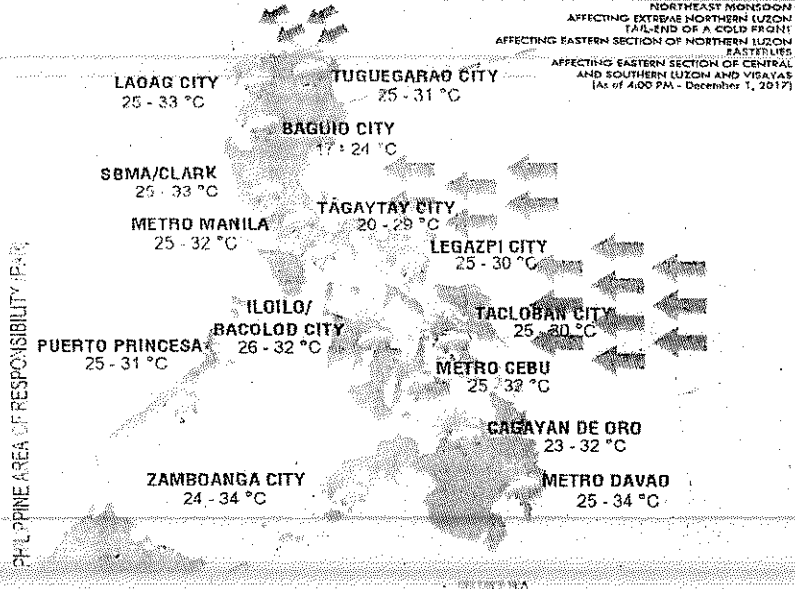
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**PANAHOH TV**

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

**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | DECEMBER 2, 2017 | SATURDAY**



<b>SUNRISE</b> 6:06 AM	<b>SUNSET</b> 5:25 PM
<b>MOONRISE</b> 4:20 PM	<b>MOONSET</b> 4:18 AM
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b> NOV 27 1:03 AM	<b>FULL MOON</b> DEC 3 11:47 PM
<b>LOW TIDE</b> 3:35 AM 0.08 Meter	<b>HIGH TIDE</b> 8:51 PM 1.00 Meter

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

	DEC 3	DEC 4	DEC 3	DEC 4	DEC 3	DEC 4		
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	25 - 32 °C	25 - 31 °C	<b>TAGAYTAY</b>	19 - 29 °C	19 - 28 °C	<b>TACLOBAN</b>	25 - 31 °C	25 - 31 °C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C	<b>LEGAZPI</b>	25 - 31 °C	25 - 30 °C	<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b>	23 - 32 °C	23 - 32 °C
<b>LAOAG</b>	26 - 33 °C	25 - 32 °C	<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b>	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C	<b>METRO DAVAO</b>	25 - 34 °C	25 - 33 °C
<b>BAGUIO</b>	17 - 25 °C	17 - 24 °C	<b>ILOILO/BACOLOD</b>	26 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C	<b>ZAMBOANGA</b>	24 - 34 °C	24 - 33 °C
<b>SBMA/CLARK</b>	25 - 33 °C	25 - 32 °C	<b>METRO CEBU</b>	25 - 33 °C	25 - 32 °C			

**DZRHNEWS TELEVISION**

MONDAY - FRIDAY  
11AM & 5PM

**PILIPINASHO**

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

12 December 2017

INQUIRER

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# Slain students 'full-time' rebs

## Army corrects self, says youngsters not new recruits

By Maricar Cinco  
@maricarcincoINQ

SAN PEDRO CITY—The youngsters slain in what the military said was a clash with soldiers in Batangas province were full-time guerrillas belonging to the New People's Army (NPA), not new recruits as some officials earlier said.

Maj. Gen. Rhoderick Parayno, head of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division, said the killings of 15 supposed members of NPA were results of a "legitimate encounter" between soldiers and guerrillas in the villages of Aga and Kaylaway in Nasugbu, Batangas. Two of the dead rebels were college students Josephine Lapira and Kamil Manangan.

Parayno said the youngsters had been earlier tagged to be NPA recruits on an "immersion" program but corrected that report on Friday.

### UP student

Lapira, a University of the Philippines (UP) Manila student, had already gone through an immersion program and was a regular member of NPA at the time of her death, according to Parayno.

Parayno said Lapira had told

her parents she was in an immersion program to explain her long periods of absences, but was already a full-time guerrilla.

Details of how the rebels found their way into Nasugbu, a resort town, and the clash that followed started trickling in yesterday.

Police said one of two vehicles used by the rebels, a closed delivery van, was believed to have been stolen.

The van, which carried one rebel team including its supposed leader "Maru," was registered to a trucking company based in General Mariano Alvarez town in Cavite province, according to police.

### Stolen van

Senior Supt. Alden Delvo, Batangas police chief, said the provincial police was coordinating with the Highway Patrol Group to get more details about the van, which was reported stolen in Magallanes town, Cavite, on Nov. 28, the same day the rebels clashed with government forces.

Aside from Lapira and Manangan, the other slain rebels were initially identified, through sources, as Glen Mark Aytona, Carl Espinosa Labajata,

Julieto Pellazar Jr., Karla Bahasa, Henry delos Reyes, Joshua Hernandez, Evelyn Pagara Manalo, Roberto Dolendon, Alfred Cadag, Anthony Felix and Graciella Pocaldo.

Five of them, who were aboard a jeep, were killed in the initial clash in Aga village. Nine riding in the van were killed in the second clash in the village of Kaylaway a few minutes after the first volley fire.

### Driver missing

Police chief Delvo said the van driver, who was still unidentified, had fled.

One of the rebels had been wounded and put under hospital arrest in Batangas City. Police on Friday filed a complaint for illegal possession of firearms and explosives and attempted murder against him.

Maj. Gen. Parayno said 12 assault rifles, an M79 grenade launcher, bullets and communist documents were recovered.

One of the assault rifles, an M16, was registered to an agency in charge of security at a high-end resort in Nasugbu and was stolen during a raid in January at the resort's security office by rebels. —WITH A REPORT FROM DELFIN T. MALLARI JR. INQ



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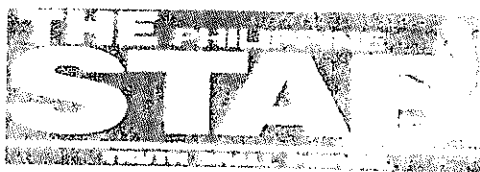


Some of the assault rifles recovered by government forces from communist rebels following a clash in Nasugbu, Batangas.—MARRAH ERIKA RABE

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## Parents urged: Be aware of children's activities

By JAIME LAUDE

A top military official yesterday appealed to parents to be aware of their children's activities.

Brig. Gen. Arnulfo Burgos, commander of the Army's 202nd Brigade based in Laguna, said parents should encourage their children to put a premium on their studies, and if they have misgivings with the government leadership, they should express their sentiments in a peaceful way.

Burgos made the appeal following the killing of 22-year-old University of the Philippines student Josephine Ann Lapera and 13 of her comrades.

Lapera was killed during a firefight between government forces and communist New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Nasugbu, Batangas last Tuesday.

"This is a wake-up call for the parents to guide their children. We too are saddened and we condole with Miss Lapera's family. But her death and that of her 13 comrades was a result of a legitimate encounter," Burgos said.

There were claims that the 14 fatalities in the Nasugbu clash were all civilians, which Burgos refuted, saying the evidence recovered from the encounter site showed otherwise.

"Critics, in coming out with these allegations just want to put the military in bad light. Five of our soldiers to include an officer, were wounded in that fight," Burgos said.

Meanwhile, two suspected NPA rebels were killed yesterday as fighting broke out between government troops and the insurgents in Sarangani province.

Col. Roberto Ancan, commander

of the Army's 102nd Army Brigade, said the identities of the slain rebels were still being established.

Ancan said fighting broke out at Sitio Balatan, Barangay Pag-asa, Alabel town at around 6:30 a.m. as troops were deployed on reports of heavily armed men in the village.

In Albueria, Leyte, two suspected NPA rebels were also wounded in a firefight with government troops in Barangay Talisayan, Albueria, Leyte.

Following the Batangas firefight, the military declared more NPA rebels are expected to be neutralized in the days ahead as a result of renewed military operations against the insurgents on orders of President Duterte.

The President ordered the military on a full offensive against the NPA after officially terminating the peace talks with the communists.

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## Heavy gunfight leaves 2 rebels dead in Sarangani

By Mario J. Mallari

Intense clashes between government troops and the New People's Army (NPA) continued to rage as two more communist rebels were killed in an encounter in Sarangani province yesterday.

Maj. Gen. Noel Clement, commander of the Army's 10th Infantry Division (ID), said that the latest clash erupted at around 6:30 a.m. when elements of the 73rd Infantry Battalion (IB) engaged more or less 15 fully-armed NPA rebels along Sitio Balataan, Barangay Pagasa in Alabel town.

Local residents reportedly tipped off the presence of the armed NPA rebels in the area extorting and intimidating them.

Capt. Roberto Escalona Jr., public affairs chief of the 10th ID, said that the NPA guerrillas immediately fired upon the Army troops upon seeing them.

"Upon reaching the aforementioned place, they were fired upon by the said NPAs which prompted the troops to return fire and defend themselves," Escalona said.

"Two of the NPAs have died whose names are still being verified. Blood stains in the encounter site and withdrawal route also indicate that there are wounded NPA members," he added.

On the other hand, there was

no reported casualty on the government side.

Escalona said that the encounter also led to the recovery of five high powered firearms, personal belongings and several war materials.

Clement urged the NPA rebels to abandon the armed struggle and just join the mainstream society and avail of the government program for rebel-returnees.

"We are saddened of the news that another victims of the wrong propaganda died. Thus we are calling on to the members of the NPAs to lay down their arms, surrender and avail the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP)," said Clement.

"They will be given a chance to live with their families peacefully. Likewise, we are always ready to assist to the wounded terrorists who need immediate medical attention," he added.

Clashes between government troops and the NPAs have intensified during the last few days after President Duterte ordered the cancellation of the peace negotiations between the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front.

The CPP-NDF countered by ordering the NPA, its armed wing, to intensify attacks against government forces.



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The Manila Times

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# 2 NPA members slain in Sarangani encounter

BY DEMPSEY REYES

**T**WO members of the New People's Army (NPA) were killed during an encounter with government security forces in Barangay Pag-asa, Alabel of Sarangani province on Friday.

Col. Robert Ancan, commander of the Philippine Army's 102nd Infantry Brigade, said the encounter with about 15 NPA members happened at about 6:30 a.m. after a report from concerned citizens on the presence of armed men "extorting and intimidating" residents in the area.

Ancan said soldiers from the 73rd Infantry Battalion conducted a security patrol in Sitio Balataan to confirm the report but were fired upon by the communist rebels triggering a firefight that lasted for about an hour.

The identities of the slain rebels, both male, are yet to be confirmed by the military.

Ancan claimed that the blood stains in the encounter site and withdrawal route of the communist fighters indicate that there

were also wounded NPA members. No casualty was reported on the government side.

Capt. Mc Gary Dida, civil-military operations officer of the Army's 1002nd Infantry Brigade, said seized from the encounter site were two AK-47, two M16 rifles, one Garand rifle, seven backpacks, two handheld radios, an NPA flag and subversive documents.

Meanwhile, Maj. Gen. Noel Clement, commander of the Army's 10th Infantry Division, said despite the encounter, they were saddened that the killed NPA members were "another victims of the wrong propaganda."

"Thus we are calling on the members of the NPAs to lay down

their arms, surrender and avail of the Comprehensive Local Integration Program [of the government]," Clement said in a statement.

The encounter happened days after 15 NPA members were killed in an encounter in Nasugbu, Batangas a week after President Rodrigo Duterte terminated the peace negotiations with the communist movement.

The clash in Batangas that killed a University of the Philippines student drew the attention of Communist Party of the Philippines founding chairman Jose Maria Sison who called on independent human rights organizations and the Commission on Human Rights to investigate the incident.

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

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## Mystery surrounds fatal shooting of army soldier

By **MALU CADELINA MANAR**

COTABATO CITY— Police investigators continue to be baffled regarding the case of a soldier, whose body was found inside a military truck parked inside Camp Siongco in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

Police identified the slain soldier as Staff Sergeant Alexander Bulawitan, a native of Nueva Ecija.

Reports from the Datu Odin Sinsuat Police said soldiers heard the sound of two gunshots, and when they responded, found Bulawitan in the truck, his face covered in blood.

Investigators later found out

that Bulawitan succumbed to two gunshot wounds in the head.

They, however, have no idea as to who could be behind the killing of Bulawitan.

There were witnesses who hinted that the soldier could have accidentally shot himself using his issued firearm, an R4 rifle.

Scene of the Crime Operatives (SOCO) recovered from the scene two empty shells coming from an R4 rifle.

Bulawitan was a member of the First Mechanized Infantry Battalion under the Sixth Infantry Division of the Philippine Army whose base is at Barangay Kamasi in Ampatuan, Maguindanao.

2 December 2017

**Balita**

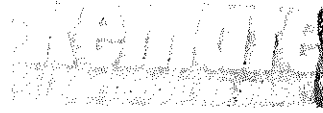
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ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANSA P8.00



**IKINANDADO** Binabantayan ng isa sa mga tauhan ng Philippine Army ang pag-demolish ng mga tauhan ng Metro Manila Development Authority sa mga ilegal na tindahan EDSA-Pasay City kahapon. **CZAR DANCEL**

2 December 2017



Pahina. 4

## 2 pang NPA patay sa encounter

UTAS ang dalawang miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA) sa panibagong engkwentro ng militar sa Alabel, Sarangani kahapon ng umaga.

Ayon kay Col. Roberto Ancan, commander ng 102nd Infantry Brigade, naganap ang bakbakan sa pagitan ng tropa ng 73rd Infantry Battalion sa Sitio Balataan, Barangay Pagasa, pasado alas-6.

Patuloy pang inaalam ng mga awtoridad ang pagkakakilanlan ng dalawang nasawing rebelde.

Nakakuha rin ng limang armas ang mga sundalo mula sa nakaengkwentrong grupo.

Sinasabing nasa mahigit 20 armadong rebelde ang naka-sagupa ng militar. Wala namang naitalang nasugatan sa panig ng pamahalaan.

JEFF GALLOS

## P100K alok ng ISIS kada recruit

TUMATAGINTING na P100,000 ang iniaalok na bayad ng teroristang ISIS sa mga residente sa Mindanao para umanib sa kanilang pwersa.

Sa pulong balitaan kahapon, sinabi ni Task Force Bangon Marawi Chairman Eduardo del Rosario na hindi lang sa Marawi kundi maging sa mga kalapit na bayan ginagawa ang massive recruitment ng teroristang grupo.

"Umuugong na ngayon sa intel reports, ang massive recruitment na ginagawa ng kabila, promising so much money as high as P100,000 pesos just to be recruited and be a member," ani Del Rosario.

Dahil dito, sinabi ni Del Rosario na personal niyang irekomenda kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na palawigin pa ang umiiral na Martial Law sa Mindanao region na mapapaso na sa December 31.

Kapag aniya nagpatuloy ang batas militar, mapabilis ang rehabilitasyon sa Marawi City.

Sinabi naman ni Lanao del Sur Crisis Management Committee Spokesman Zia Alonto Adiong na isang pangangailangan para sa kanila ang Martial Law sa Mindanao. JEFF G

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# INQUIRER

Page: AG

## Duterte surprises Sulu troops with 'good friend' Seagal

By Leifa B. Salaverria  
@LeilasINQ

President Duterte had a surprise for soldiers he came to visit in Sulu yesterday—Hollywood action star Steven Seagal.

Mr. Duterte said Seagal, who is in the country to shoot a television series, "General Commander," had asked to join him in Sulu.

Seeking to boost the troops' morale at a military camp at Barangay Busbus in Jolo, Sulu, the President said he is the only President, save for Ferdinand Marcos, who has given so much attention and care to soldiers.

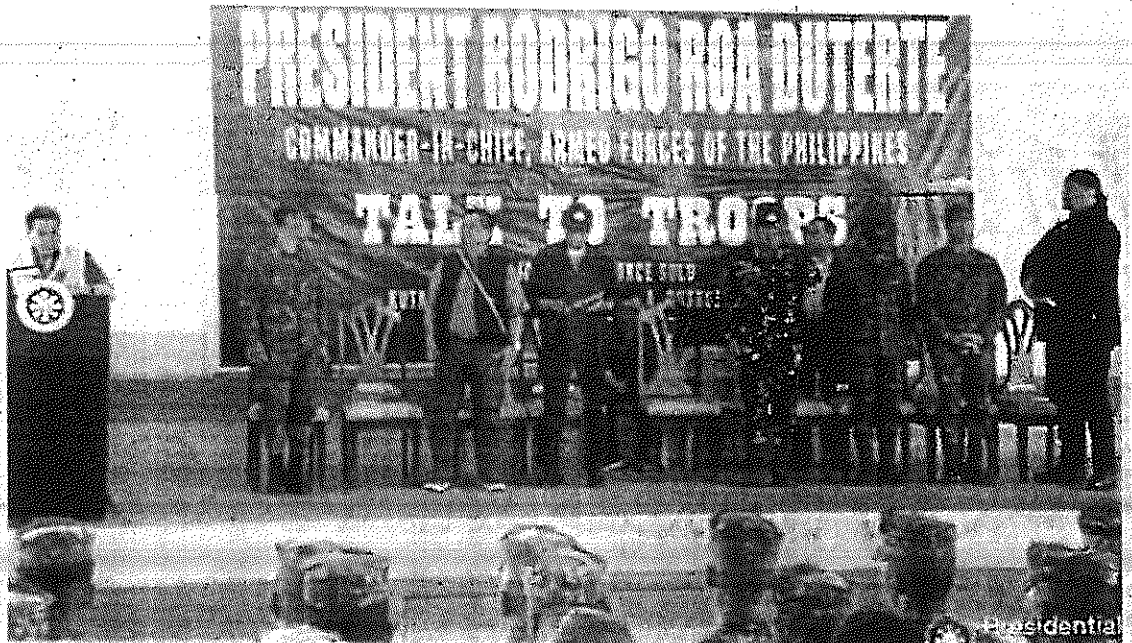
Mr. Duterte said he came to give them sidearms so they could protect themselves, especially from attacks by the New People's Army, even when they were not on duty.

### Promise of salary raise

He again promised to double their salaries and to give them everything they would need to succeed against the rebels and terrorists.

"I told you if you have a problem or if you cannot solve your problem here, just call me. Maybe, just maybe, I can solve it. I will give you all the tools (you need)," the President said.

His visit, he said, was intended to greet them a Merry Christmas in advance as well. Muslim soldiers were welcome to join in the yuletide celebra-



Hollywood action star Steven Seagal (right) listens as President Duterte speaks before soldiers at a military camp in Jolo, Sulu province, on Friday. The President said Seagal, who is shooting a television series in the country, had asked to join him in Sulu and told him, "Just give me an M4 (assault rifle) and I'll be OK." —VIDEO GRAB FROM PCOO

tions, he added.

But before his pep talk, he asked Seagal to give a message to the soldiers.

"I'd like to commend you all for your commitment to your country, your President, and commitment to do the things you have to do to make the Philippines safe," Seagal said.

He said he looked forward to discussing ways to combat the country's problems on insurgency, as well as drug, human and organ trafficking, with the President.

"I know you guys put your lives on the line everyday. I myself have done and will do the same thing, so I understand that this is serious business. And I believe there is a formula that can help the Armed Forces, the police, the intelligence network, to combat these very, very well," he said.

The action film mogul said war was winnable, but the fight would be a long one. "The idea is to annihilate the enemy through attrition," he said.

The President, who regular-

ly visits military camps across the country, told the soldiers that he was really impressed with their service.

### 'Lover of soldiers' like Marcos

He likened his "love for soldiers" to that of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"Never was a time—I'm not being boastful—no other President, just two, gave the attention that a soldier would need. Just me and Marcos. Marcos was also a lover of soldiers," he said.

Marcos had put the Philippines under martial law and ruled for 20 years.

Explaining why he wanted to give soldiers new sidearms, Mr. Duterte said that “unlike the policemen, you do not have sidearms. So when you walk out, you’re sitting ducks.”

#### **‘NPA brazen’**

The President also warned the soldiers that “another strife is coming” because the NPA had “become brazen.”

The rebels, he said, killed soldiers and police officers while the ceasefire was in place. One of the slain soldiers had 73 gunshot wounds, which incensed him and prompted him to call off the talks earlier this year.

“We have been trying to fix this thing for 50 years and [the NPA wants] another 50 years. I cannot do anything anymore. They don’t want peace talks,” he said. “But don’t say one day that I have not tried to reach out. I was the first to do it by releasing political prisoners.”

He also promised to bring to Hong Kong the soldiers who would be left behind at the Jolo camp during the holidays.

They could bring their mistresses so that they would have a better time during the vacation, he joked. If they brought their wives, they might just end up fighting, he said.

—WITH REPORTS FROM JULIE ALIPALA AND ALLAN NAWAL INQ



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## Du30: Soft spot for military men

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte said Friday only he and then President Ferdinand Marcos cared much for the country's soldiers, as he renewed his promise to give a comfortable life for troops who have been on the frontlines of the government's war against terrorists and communist insurgents.

"There were only two presidents, only two,

who paid attention to the needs of soldiers. The two are me and Marcos." Duterte said in a mix of Filipino and English in his speech in Camp Teodulfo Bautista in Jolo, Sulu.

Duterte is a known friend of the Marcoses. Duterte's father Vicente served in the Marcos Cabinet before the declaration of martial law in 1972, which he lifted in January 1981.

Next page

### Du30:...

From A1

Marcos, a former soldier and who fought as a guerrilla during the second world war, had a strong grip on the military until his government was toppled by a Catholic Church-backed revolt in 1986, on the week he was proclaimed by the Commission on Elections and the Batasang Pambansa as the winner in the 1986 snap elections in February.

Duterte has repeatedly promised to improve living conditions of soldiers by increasing their pay and providing proper health care for those maimed while fighting government enemies.

"I have told you, if you have a

problem, I give you my number. If you cannot solve your problem here or you cannot solve it, just call me," he told the troops before him.

In a related development in Manila, Malacañang said Friday soldiers would have no choice but "to shoot" or "be shot" by armed members of the communist New People's Army, as it defended President Rodrigo Duterte's "shoot-kill" orders to security forces.

"No armed NPA will surrender to authorities. The options are to shoot at an armed rebel or for our men in uniform to be shot at by them," Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque said in a text message to reporters.

Some administration critics, including Vice President Leni Robredo, had voiced concern

over the President's order to shoot armed NPAs, saying that was against the law and the constitution.

Robredo stressed there were processes to determine if the charges were true, and to mete out appropriate penalties.

Roque, however, stressed the NPA was an armed fighter who remained to be a "valid military target" engaged in armed rebellion which is a crime.

In a speech in Sual, Pangasinan, on Wednesday, Duterte said government troops should "shoot" and "kill" members of the Communist Party of the Philippines' armed wing, the New People's Army, whom he earlier tagged as "terrorists."

He said he didn't mind if there would be condemnation from human rights groups, say-

ing he would claim responsibility for their actions.

Meanwhile, two more insurgents were killed and dozens believed to have wounded in two separate clashes between New People's Army rebels and government troops in the Visayas and Mindanao Friday as the government increased its hunt for communist terrorist.

Military reports said the renewed fighting with the NPAs occurred at the outskirts of Sarangani and Leyte province as ground troops increased their pressure against lawless elements.

The first clash in Sitio Balataan, Barangay Pag-asa, Alabel, Sarangani occurred when army troops from the 73rd Infantry Battalion responded to the reported presence of the armed group extorting and in-

timidating residents.

Maj. Gen. Noel Clement said soldiers were immediately dispatched to the area to validate the veracity of the report.

While the troops were approaching, they were fired upon by the rebels, prompting them to retaliate, killing two rebels in an ensuing fight, the military said.

Clement said the government suffered no casualties during the clash while the rebels sustained more wounded comrades as evidence of blood stains on their retreat route.

He said the rebels left behind five high-powered firearms, personal belongings and several war materiel at the scene of fighting.

With John Paolo Bencito and Francisco Tuyay

02 December 2017

PHILIPPINE DAILY  
**INQUIRER**

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# 'Troops have no choice but shoot insurgents'

By **Leila B. Salaverria**  
@LeilasINQ

Government troops have no choice but to shoot armed New People's Army (NPA) rebels because their refusal to lay down arms shows their resolve to kill Filipino soldiers, according to presidential spokesperson Harry Roque.

"I assure you, no armed NPA will surrender to authorities. The options are to shoot them or [to allow] our men in uniform to be shot by them," he said.

## Illegal

Roque defended President Duterte's order for state forces to shoot armed NPA members after Vice President Leni Robredo said the order was illegal and violative of legal processes. But Roque said an armed

NPA member was a "valid military target given that they are engaged in a noninternational armed conflict with the government."

"So what's new there? Isn't rebellion a crime? Besides, we have an existing law that covers war and that is the international humanitarian law," Roque said.

"If there's war, all those involved can be fired at. It would be unthinkable to just tell the rebels we love them while they use violence to overthrow the government," he added.

But Anakpawis Rep. Ariel Casilao said Mr. Duterte's order to soldiers to shoot and kill NPA rebels was condemnable.

"Any order that is violative of existing international laws governing armed conflicts should be condemned," Casilao said via

text message to the Inquirer.

He also criticized Roque for glossing over Mr. Duterte's order. "Roque seems to forget or [is suffering] amnesia on this rule," Casilao said.

## Dangerous

Moreover, Casilao said Mr. Duterte's order was dangerous to critics.

"The danger with the order is the existing policy of the state security forces of categorizing legitimate people's organizations as legal fronts of the CPP-NPA-NDF," he said.

Other leftist activists were also concerned that they may be made targets, like drug addicts in the government's war on drugs.

"Activists will be [made] victims," said Windell Bolinget, chair of the Baguio-based

Cordillera Peoples Alliance. "Civilians demanding change will be targets given the crack-down on legitimate and legal organizations tagged as NPA fronts."

"Although Duterte's exact statements were directed at the [NPA], history has shown us that generic and passing statements, such as these, are blown out of proportion" by the military and police, said Bagong Alyansang Makabayan's Eastern Visayas spokesperson Joshua Sagdullas.

Sagdullas fears that Mr. Duterte's order is really "meant to include legal organizations and activists who in recent days have been tagged as conspirators to acts of terrorism."

— WITH REPORTS FROM JOEY A. GABIETA, VINCENT CABREZA AND ALLAN NAWAL INQ

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## For troops fighting NPA, it's kill or die – Palace

Kill or get killed.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque yesterday reiterated President Duterte's order to shoot down armed communist rebels as part of the policy declaring the New People's Army (NPA) a terrorist group.

"An armed NPA is a fighter who is a valid military target given that they are engaged in a non-international armed conflict with government," Roque said.

"They are also engaged in armed rebellion, which is a crime. I assure you, no

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armed NPA will surrender to authorities. The options are to shoot at an armed rebel or for our men in uniform to be shot at by them," he said.

Duterte on Wednesday ordered security forces to shoot down armed rebels even as an executive order was being prepared to declare them as terrorists.

The President also ordered the military and police to re-arrest the top leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army earlier released as consultants of the moribund peace talks.

Duterte said his team is now pre-

paring the executive order declaring the CPP-NPA and the National Democratic Front (NDF) as terrorists. He said the executive order will effectively treat the communist rebels as criminals.

Duterte said he is prepared to defend his men against allegations of human rights violations in killing NPA rebels.

Duterte shelved the peace talks with the CPP-NPA following the deadly attacks against soldiers and police in the countryside while peace negotiations between the NDF and government were

ongoing

Roque said Duterte acted within legal bounds when he directed security forces to kill any armed NPA rebel.

The spokesman made the statement in reaction to Vice President Leni Robredo and critics accusing the President of forgoing legal processes in dealing with the insurgents.

Roque pointed out it is prohibited under the law to take up arms against the government.

Under international law on armed conflict, any armed rebel is a legitimate target, he said.

– Christina Mendez

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# Roque defends President's order to shoot NPAs

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

**M**alacañang defended President Duterte's order to soldiers and police to shoot any armed member of the New People's Army (NPA) upon sight.

Critics of the President slammed his order, saying it goes against the law and the Constitution which have enshrined processes to determine if charges against the rebels are true, as well as penalties commensurate to a crime.

Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque, in a text message Friday, said that it is either the military will shoot or get shot by the armed rebels.

"An armed NPA is a fighter who is a valid military target given that they are engaged in a non-intentional armed conflict with [the] government. They are

also engaged in armed rebellion which is a crime," Roque said.

"I assure you, no armed NPA will surrender to [the] authorities. The options are to shoot at an armed rebel or for our men in uniform to be shot at by them," he added.

Earlier, the President said he intends to issue an Executive Order (EO) to declare the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) as terrorists, after officially terminating the peace talks with the Reds.

He also revealed that he ordered military and the police to shoot armed NPAs upon sight.

"You see it almost every day without fail, NPAs burning the equipment of business interest, foreign nationals. Kapag ganito (If it's like this), and you live of the, not with the fat of the land but the fat of the pockets of

kinukolekta lahat (collecting everything) and extortion. So what will be my order to the [government forces], shoot them, they will kill you anyway," Duterte said.

"So if there is an armed NPA there or terrorist, if he's holding a firearm – shoot," he said.

Roque earlier said that Duterte's order is well within the bounds of combat.

"Because anyone who bears arms is (using) rebellion. The crime of rebellion is a crime of taking up arms against the government. So natural," Roque said in an earlier phone interview with Palace reporters.

"When you are bearing arms against the government you are engaged in crime you are supposed to implement the law and yes, the President has that power to implement the law. It is a domestic, not an armed conflict, and an arms-bearing rebel is a proper military target," he added.

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## Palace defends Duterte order to shoot armed NPA

Malacañang has defended President Duterte's order to the police and military to shoot any armed member of the New People's Army.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said that it's either the military or police will get shot if they don't fire at armed NPA.

"An armed NPA is a fighter who is a valid military target given that they are engaged in a non-intentional armed conflict with [the] government. They are also engaged in armed rebellion which is a crime," he said.

"I assure you, no armed NPA will surrender to [the] authorities. The options are to shoot at an armed rebel or for our men in uniform to be shot at by them,"

he added.

Critics have slammed Duterte's order, saying it is against the law and the Constitution. They also said that there are processes to determine if the charges against the communists are true and impose appropriate penalties.

Duterte issued the order to shoot armed NPA during the send-off ceremony for five Vietnamese fishermen caught poaching in Philippine waters last Wednesday.

"You see it almost every day without fail, NPA's burning the equipment of business interest, foreign nationals. Kapag ganito, and you live of the, not with the fat of the land but the fat of the pockets of... kinukolekta lahat, and extortion. So what will be my

order to the (government forces), shoot them, they will kill you anyway," Duterte said. "So if there is an armed NPA there or terrorist, if he's holding a firearm – shoot," he added.

Duterte also said during the occasion that an executive order declaring the Communist Party of the Philippines-NPA- National Democratic Front as terrorists will be issued after the termination of the peace talks with the Reds.

Roque has said that Duterte's order is well within bounds. "Because anyone who bears arms is (fusing) rebellion. The crime of rebellion is a crime of taking up arms against the government. So natural," Roque said. **(Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)**

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# Aguirre defends rallies backing revolutionary gov't

BY EVELYN MACAIRAN

People have the right to express their support for a revolutionary government, Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II said yesterday.

Aguirre was reacting to the rally staged by over 3,000 supporters of President Duterte at the Don Chino Roces Bridge (Mendiola) near Malacañang during the 154th birth anniversary of Andres Bonifacio last Nov. 30.

Simultaneous rallies in support of a revolutionary government were also held in Iloilo, Cebu and Davao.

Aguirre said that some people supporting Duterte joined the demonstrations pushing for a revolutionary government

because there are people who believe that such government would facilitate change.

"All of us have the right to express our own opinion," he said.

While revolutionary governments at times come after a president or a leader has been ousted, in the case of those supporting this cause they are demanding that the sitting president, Duterte, implement it during his term.

"There is nothing wrong (with that). In other words, we are free to express our own opinion," Aguirre added.

Some believe that a revolutionary government would hasten the shift to federalism.

But while there were those who support a revolutionary government, there are other groups

that oppose the proposal because it is reportedly unconstitutional and undemocratic.

Critics said that the country would also be placed under Duterte's one-man rule.

Ateneo de Manila University president Jose Ramon Villarin has urged the public to reject proposals for a revolutionary government (RevGov), calling it a dangerous idea that could weaken democracy and the country's institutions.

"The RevGov advocates are essentially tapping on growing discontent with the slow pace of much needed reforms in both our political and economic spheres. Perhaps unwittingly, they are in turn fueling an under-appreciation of reform gains and an over-emphasis on

reform barriers," Villarin said in a memorandum.

"However, the RevGov proposition has a key weakness – it has a very simplistic theory of change. It contends that concentrating power in the hands of a few would give them the means to execute the key reforms necessary to move the country forward," he added.

Villarin said centralizing power in the hands of a few undermines democratic institutions, citing experience during the martial law regime.

In a separate letter, former De La Salle University president Jose Mari Jimenez urged the Lasalian community to defend the Constitution amid attempts to undermine its provisions. – **With Janvic Mateo, Gilbert Bayoran**



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## AFP tracking down 21 NDF consultants

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) yesterday said that efforts are underway to locate the 21 National Democratic Front (NDF) consultants temporarily released for the purposes of the peace talks.

AFP Public Affairs Office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo, said that so far, they don't have any information on the whereabouts of the NDF consultants or if they already went into hiding.

"So far we don't have any information on their location but we are awaiting for any specific guidance if there is a need for them to be re-arrested based on the order of, the order of our courts," Arevalo said.

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) Secretary Jesus Dureza earlier said there are 21 NDF consultants released for the purposes of the peace talks.

Among those granted safe conduct passes for the peace talks are Benito and Wilma Tiamzon, Adelberto Silva, Alfredo Mapano, Tirso Alcantara, Pedro Codaste, Porferio Tuna, Concha Araneta Bocala, Ernesto Lorenza, Eduardo Ganelsa, Ariel Arbitrario, Runel Saluta, Jaime Solidad, Keneddy Bangibang and Alan Jazmines.

## 21 NDF consultant pinaghahanap

Inihiyag kahapon ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na sinisimulan na nilang tuntunin ang kinaroroonan ng 21 consultant ng National Democratic Front (NDF) na pansamantalang pinalaya bilang bahagi ng usapang pangkapayapaan.

Sinabi ni AFP Public Affairs Office chief Marine Colonel Edgard Arevalo sa isang interview na sa ngayon ay wala pa silang anumang impormasyon tungkol sa kinaroroonan ng NDF consultants o nagsisipagtago na ba ang mga ito.

Idinagdag niya na naghihintay pa rin sila ng gabay mula sa korte kung kinakailangan bang arestuhin nang muli ang NDF consultants.

Nauna nang sinabi ni Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) Secretary Jesus Dureza na mayroong 21 NDF consultant na pinalaya para sa kapakanan ng peace talks.

"So far we don't have any information on their location but we are awaiting for any specific guidance if there is a need for them to be re-arrested base on the order of, the order of our courts," sabi ni Arevalo.

Nilinaw din ni Arevalo na hindi porke pormal nang tinapos ng pamahalaan ang pakikipag-usap sa Communist Party of the

Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP/NPA/NDF) ay "automatic" na nilang arestuhing muli ang mga NDF consultant.

"When you say automatic it means the cancellation of JASIG or the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees. What's being talk about that is automatic there is that there's no longer the need for a formal notice to the other party that peace negotiations is already terminated. The presidential proclamation 360 is enough as a signal for them to take heed or take cue that formal peace talks has already ended," ani Arevalo.

"We are going to await any further instruction if they will be re-arrested but our monitoring on possibly where they are is there," dagdag niya.

Kabilang sa mga binigyan ng safe conduct passes upang makibahag sa peace talks sina Benito at Wilma Tiamzon, Adelberto Silva, Alfredo Mapano, Tirso Alcantara, Pedro Codaste at Porferio Tuna, Concha Araneta Bocala, Ernesto Lorenza, Eduardo Ganeisa, Ariel Arbitrario, Runel Saluta, Jaime Solidad, Keneddy Bangibang, at Alan Jazmines.

Francis T. Wakefield



**KONTRA KOMUNISTA** Sa pagpapaigting ng pamahalaan sa kampanya laban sa communist movement, nagkalat din ang smear campaign laban sa umano'y mga tagasuporta nito sa mga kalye sa Davao City. Nagpapakita rin ng pagkondena ang mga poster sa sinasabing pagpatay ng mga rebeldeng komunista.

KEITH BACONGCO

09 December 2017

## TRADITIONAL VALUES INQUIRER

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# Joma shrugs off fake news of his 'arrest'

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.  
@dtmallarijrINQ

LUCENA CITY—Exiled Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Maria “Joma” Sison said his latest “arrest” in the Netherlands over alleged murder charges back home was another fake news he attributed to President Duterte’s troll army.

Claiming he had long been a target of Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.’s troll army as well, Sison said the two bogus news websites—which reported that he was arrested by Dutch operatives for his alleged involvement in the assassination of three communist leaders in the Philippines in 2003 and 2006—merely rehashed his arrest by Dutch policemen in 2007.

The 78-year-old icon of communist insurgents shrugged off the false report of his supposed new arrest, saying it was just one of many fake news about him.

The so-called fake news report about Sison quoted witnesses as saying that during the arrest, the Dutch authorities “were accompanied by two Fil-

ipinos who are believed to be members of Philippines Presidential Security Group.”

In an online interview on Thursday from his base in Utrecht, The Netherlands, Sison said the spurious news story was a rehashed version of his 2007 arrest by Dutch policemen based on the same charges. The Dutch court released him after two weeks due to insufficient evidence.

“I have been a target of the Bongbong Marcos troll army for a while. But I do not pay any attention to those (fake news) since obviously the content against me is false, like the allegations that I am very wealthy here abroad or the accusation that said it was Ninoy Aquino and I who masterminded the Plaza Miranda grenade throwing in 1971,” Sison said.

But recently he had become a target of Duterte’s troll army.

Sison said fake news in social media, though effective in the short term, would not last long unmasked.

“If there are truth teams in the central and chapters of patriotic and democratic organizations, they can easily answer and defeat this paid Marcos and Duterte

trolls in e-warfare,” he said.

He noted that the “shady side of the social media is that it allows anyone to curse and make threats.”

“Combination of fake news, adulation of Duterte and abusive language and physical threats are the trade characteristics of Duterte’s troll army,” the rebel leader said.

But the practice “is self-defeating for Duterte and his followers,” Sison said.

He observed that Duterte’s troll army had also been recent targets of online profanities and threats.

“They are beaten not with nastier profanities but by the truth, which exposes them as supporters of negative policies like mass murder of suspects, use of mass intimidation to lay the ground for a fascist dictatorship, puppetry to the US and oligarchs, drug smuggling, corruption, etc.,” Sison said.

Sison went into self-exile in The Netherlands after the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution that ousted strongman Ferdinand Marcos. He now serves as chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. INQ

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President Duterte, shown here inspecting guns seized from the New People's Army rebels in the Caraga region in June, has ended peace talks with communist rebels. —PHOTO FROM PIA CARAGA REGION

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# Extension of martial law in Mindanao pushed

By **Leila B. Salaverria**  
@LeilasINQ

The head of the interagency task force overseeing the rebuilding of war-torn Marawi City wants martial law in Mindanao extended to secure rehabilitation efforts and foil attempts to recruit people into terrorist groups.

Bangon Marawi Task Force chair Eduardo del Rosario said "intelligence reports" suggest "massive" attempts by local Islamic State (IS) supporters to recruit people to their cause.

Del Rosario said some people are being offered amounts as high as P100,000 to entice them to join and this is a threat to the security of the

rehabilitation effort.

"We do not like to have another Marawi incident," Del Rosario said in a Palace press briefing.

"I would like martial law [to] continue during the rehabilitation phase because, as chair of Task Force Bangon Marawi, my main concern is the security of the whole rehabilitation effort," he said.

President Duterte declared martial law over the whole of Mindanao on May 23 after IS-allied extremists attacked the city, but congressional approval of the move expires on Dec. 31 unless extended.

Del Rosario said any new eruption of violence would derail efforts to rebuild Marawi

and could scare off contractors and workers.

"If something will happen in Marawi City during the rehabilitation phase, maybe no contractor or laborer would ever go there. Rehabilitation would be difficult," he said.

Rehabilitation efforts need the support of the entire citizenry, he said "and that's not only in the physical structure but in the security aspect."

"[Local residents] themselves should drive away or neutralize the spread of the recruitment of the IS group in Mindanao, not only in Lanao del Sur or Marawi City," he said.

He also said he would coordinate with the military and the police to properly assess the

situation and make the necessary recommendation to the President on martial law.

Regional Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong agrees there is reason to extend martial law.

"If I [were] asked right now, [martial law] is really needed because there are pockets of recruitment happening surrounding [Lanao Lake]," Adiong said.

But he also said his recommendation to the President would depend on the assessment of the situation on the ground, which has yet to be completed.

Most of Marawi was reduced to rubble in the intense five-month battle for Marawi with 200,000 residents being displaced. INQ

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# Task Force Bangon Marawi backs martial law extension

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

The Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM) prefers to extend martial law in Mindanao to ensure the security and safety in the island during the rehabilitation of the war-torn Marawi City in Lanao del Sur.

The first extension of President Duterte's declaration of martial law will

expire by yearend.

According to Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) chairperson Eduardo del Rosario, it is important to maintain peace and order in Mindanao following intelligence reports of massive recruitment by extremist groups involving huge amounts of money

"Personally, I would like that martial law will continue during the rehabilitation phase because as chairman of Task Force Bangon Marawi, my main concern is the security of the whole rehabilitation effort," he said during the TFBM press briefing in Malacañang Friday.

"Just imagine, if something will happen in Marawi City during the rehabilita-

tion phase, baka wala nang pumuntang mga contractors at laborers. Mahihirapan tayo sa rehabilitation (No contractors or laborers may want to go there. That will be difficult for us)," he added.

Del Rosario, however, said they will still consult the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on peace and order and security matters.



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# Officials seek ML extension to secure Marawi rehab efforts

The head of the inter-agency group tasked to lead the rebuilding efforts in Marawi City and an Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) official yesterday said they will support the extension of martial law in Mindanao amid intelligence reports that Islamic State (IS)-linked terrorists are stepping up recruitment activities in the region.

At a Palace briefing, both Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chairperson Eduardo del Rosario, concurrently head of Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM), and ARMM Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong said they believed that martial law in Mindanao should be extended to secure the rehabilitation efforts and to protect the civilians from the ongoing terrorist threats.

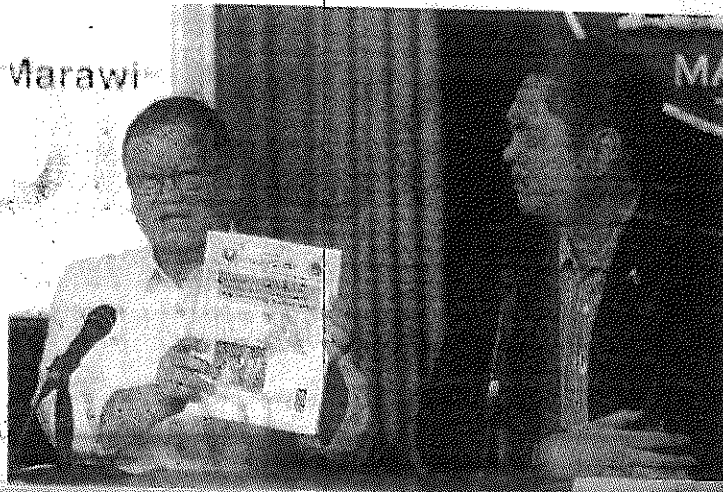
President Duterte declared the entire Mindanao under martial law on May 23, 2017 after IS-inspired terrorists laid siege in Marawi City.

Congress, in a special joint session, granted the extension of martial law until December 31 on President Duterte's request.

Del Rosario said it is really very important that the government continue to ensure that Marawi City and the whole of Mindanao will be secured from any terrorist threat, more especially now given the intel report.

As chair of TFBM, he said he would like martial law to continue during the rehabilitation phase to secure the whole rehabilitation effort.

He said the rehabilitation is not just restricted to physical structures but should also involve the participation and support of the



**Rebuilding Marawi** Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Secretary Eduardo del Rosario (left) and Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Martin Andanar (right) present the master plan for the rehabilitation of Marawi City. Task Force Bangon Marawi, tasked to rebuild the war-torn city, held a press briefing at the New Executive Building, Malacañang Palace, Manila yesterday. PNA

entire citizenry of Mindanao.

"And that's not only in the physical structure but in the security aspect. ...they should drive away or neutralize the spread of recruitment of the ISIS group in Mindanao, not only in Lanao del Sur or Marawi City," del Rosario said.

His sentiments were supported by Adiong who said that the reports they have been receiving showed that the IS recruitment activity is now ongoing in several towns.

"As a local, I would say the end of the war does not necessarily mean the normalcy of the peace and order situation. Actually, we've been saying this all along – the crisis will really start after the war," he said.

"So, we fear that if we'll probably be lenient about imposing security protocols, the terror group might use this as a portal to form and

another town, not necessarily Marawi City or Lanao del Sur but maybe some provinces," Adiong said.

However, both officials said that the final recommendation for the lifting or extension of martial is up for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to make to President Rodrigo Duterte.

"We will be coordinating with the AFP and the PNP so we can properly assess and make the necessary recommendation to the President as to the extension or not of the martial law in affected areas," del Rosario said.

He said that they would also consult with the local government units where the recruitments are reportedly happening.

"We do not like to have another Marawi incident," del Rosario said.

PNA

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## Brazilian firm bags DND's P4.9-B attack aircraft project

The Department of National Defense (DND) has selected Brazilian aircraft manufacturer Embraer Defense and Security as the supplier of its six brand-new close air support aircraft (CASA) which has a contract of P4,968,000,000.

This was confirmed by DND public affairs office chief Arsenio Andolong who said the company will be supplying its turboprop A-29 "Super Tucano" light attack aircraft.

He added that the notice to proceed has been issued sometime this week.

"Yes. A Notice to Proceed for the supply and delivery of six close air support aircraft has been transmitted to and received by Embraer Defense and Security," Andolong said when sought for confirmation on whether the

contract was indeed bagged by Embraer.

"The aircraft that was selected after a rigorous public bidding process that was participated in by several manufacturers from different countries was the Super Tucano A-29, which is compliant with the stringent technical specifications required by the PAF (Philippine Air Force)," he added.

Andolong said the contract is now being crafted for signing by DND Secretary Delfin Lorenzana.

The six brand-new CASA, once delivery commenced on 2019, is expected to augment or even replace the eight to 10 aging Rockwell OV-10 "Bronco" attack planes being used by the PAF in close-air support missions.

Funds will be sourced from the Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization Act Trust Fund. PNA

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**LOSS ASSESSMENT** The Post Conflict Needs Assessment team conducts loss and damage assessment among the debris at the Ground Zero in Marawi City, as well as fishpond damage (right). PHOTO COURTESY OF TASK FORCE BANGON MARAWI / OFFICE OF CIVIL DEFENSE

# Ground Zero debris clearing to cost billions

CLEARING the debris of war in Marawi could take two to three years and the cost of reconstruction and rehabilitation could run into close to a hundred billion pesos, according to officials of Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM).

The Office of Civil Defense, TFBM lead agency, conducted a Post Conflict Needs Assessment (PCNA) of Ground Zero and said the P10 billion the national government is allocating for rebuilding Marawi may not be enough as the effort could cost as much as P90-billion.

Local government officials are also in a quandary where to place all the debris from the clearing operations.

The civil society organizations in Iligan and Marawi also expressed their concern that the debris might just be dumped into Lake Lanao.

Lenie Alegre, officer-in-charge of the Post Disaster Evaluation and Management Division, said the PCNA team visited the cleared barangay (villages) of Marawi to look into the critical needs of the affected sectors, including damage and loss assessment of fishponds in the affected villages.

TFBM Assistant Secretary Felix Castro Jr., said the

conduct of PCNA is also a multi-agency task that involves the Office of the Civil Defense, National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Social Work and Development, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, Department of Education and the Department of Energy and Natural Resources.

Complementing the activity was the assessment made by Mindanao State University technical personnel who assessed the cost of rebuilding the city.

Another difficulty foreseen in rebuilding Marawi is the fact that a large portion of its land belong to "public domain" as a military reservation. The 1953 Presidential Proclamation No. 453 signed by then president Elpidio Quirino reserves "for military purposes a portion of the public domain situated in the City of Dansalan in the island of Mindanao."

The military reservation sits on 66,671,627 square meters or some 6,667 hectares of land.

Meanwhile, Housing and Urban Development Coordi-

nating Council (HUDCC) chairman and TFBM head Eduardo del Rosario on Friday said the P10 billion budget allocation, instead of a P90 billion eyed by the local government, should not misguide the public since the costing would be based on the post-conflict needs assessment.

"Actually, we are waiting for the results of the post-conflict needs assessment. Once it's finished, we will be able to factor the damage [cost], opportunity loss and rehabilitation cost," he said during the Mindanao Hour media conference in Malacañang.

Del Rosario was reacting to the decision of Senate to allot P10 billion for the rehabilitation of Marawi contrary to what Marawi Mayor Majul Usman Gandamra rooted for – at least P90 billion.

He said the exact budget for the Marawi rehabilitation will also be based on the final results of the total comprehensive, rehabilitation and reconstruction plan to be initiated by the NEDA which will be ready on the last week of March.

**DEMPSEY REYES  
AND TED KHAN R. JUANITE**

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CRISIS FEARED AFTER WAR

# Marawi task force wants martial law during rehab

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

**T**ASK Force Bangon Marawi chief Eduardo del Rosario on Friday said he was open to extending martial law in Mindanao to secure rehabilitation efforts in Marawi City from terrorist attacks.

During the "Bangon Marawi" briefing in Malacañang, del Rosario, citing intelligence reports, claimed members of Islamic State (IS)-inspired Maute terrorists continued to operate in Mindanao and were conducting "massive recruitment" of new members.

"It's really very important that we can continue to ensure that the whole area, not only Marawi City but the whole of Mindanao, will be secured from any terrorist threat," del Rosario said when asked about the possible extension of martial law in Mindanao.

"[Recruiters are] promising so much money, as high as P100,000, just to be a member of the ISIS group," he said, using another name for IS.

Del Rosario, who also heads the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, feared that the purported massive recruitment by the terrorist group might impede rehabilitation efforts in the city.

"Personally, I would like martial law to continue during the rehabilitation phase because as chairman of Task Force Bangon Marawi, my main concern is

the security of the whole rehabilitation effort. Just imagine if something will happen in Marawi City during the rehabilitation phase, contractors and laborers might no longer come there. It will be difficult for us during the rehabilitation phase," he said.

Martial law was declared in Mindanao on May 23, when Maute men attacked the Islamic city. Under the 1987 Constitution, the declaration was limited to 60 days. But on the request of President Rodrigo Duterte, Congress extended it until December 31, 2017.

The battle between the security forces and terrorists took nearly five months, and ended with the deaths of IS emir Isnilon Hapilon and Maute leader Omar Maute.

On November 18, Duterte said the lifting of martial law in the entire Mindanao would depend on the recommendation of the military and the police.

## No assurance of total restoration

During the Palace press briefing, Lanao del Sur Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong emphasized that end of Marawi crisis would not ensure the total restoration of the strife-torn city.

Adiong likewise said the Maute group might take advantage of the government's "leniency" to be able to recruit new members.

"Actually, we've been saying this all along. The crisis will really start after the war. And there are several reports that we've been receiving that the recruitment activity is now ongoing in some other towns," Adiong said.

Del Rosario said Task Force Bangon Marawi would coordinate with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to make the necessary recommendation on the extension of the martial law.

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## Swiss challenge, not bidding, for Marawi rehab works

The Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM) announced Friday that there will be no bidding for the reconstruction of the war-torn Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, instead a proposal will be subjected to the Swiss challenge.

The Swiss challenge is a form of public procurement where, in this case, the government publishes an unsolicited bid or proposal and other parties can match or exceed it, a new system which can hasten the rehabilitation of Marawi City.

This announcement was made after the Post-Conflict Needs Assessment (PCNA) was given the green light by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to continue. The PCNA

was suspended due to the presence of some stragglers in the main battle area.

According to Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) chairperson Eduardo del Rosario, the TFBM invited developers to see the area.

"We are not going to conduct bidding. Ang ginawa natin dito (What we did was), we called all probable developers, big-time developers, foreign and national, [and] we allowed them to see the most affected area," he said during the TFBM press briefing in Malacañang yesterday.

Del Rosario said the invited developers will be submitting their unsolicited proposals which he will present to the Cabinet which will decide which is the most applicable to Marawi City and will undergo the Swiss challenge.

"Kasi dapat makita natin dito na

talagang at the end of the day, it's a new city, lalo na yung central business district at talagang mapaganda natin, hundi lang better but much, much better (We have to see that it will be a new city, especially the central business district, and we can really make that not only beautiful, but much better), he said.

According to Del Rosario, the rehabilitation of Marawi City can commence faster through the Swiss challenge.

"So parang mas better ito at mas mabilis na gawing proseso instead of bidding. But instead we will go to the mode of Swiss challenge. Parang bidding din pero faster and better (This seems to be better and much faster than bidding)," he said.

Earlier, Duterte had denounced the lowest-bid type of procurement as he said this promotes corruption.

Meanwhile, Del Rosario said that they would prefer to wait for the assessment

of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) before coming out with the budget for the rehabilitation of Marawi City.

Congress, in its bilateral meeting Thursday, allocated a P10-billion budget for the reconstruction of the city despite Marawi Mayor Majul Usman Gandamra's statement that at least P90 billion is needed.

We are waiting for the result of the

post-conflict needs assessment. After that's finished, then we can factor in the total damages, opportunity loss, and rehabilitation cost, he added.

Del Rosario said they will also subject the rehabilitation plan of the provincial government to NEDA's validation and assessment which will be done by the end of March, 2018.

"The final [cost] will come from NEDA and that will be the official costing that will be required to rehabilitate based on NEDA assessment kasi mga technical experts ang gagawa nito (because technical experts will be the ones doing it)," he said.

"We'll be consulting so many experts to come up with the total package. Kailangan very meticulous 'yung proseso natin, close to reality 'yung sasabihin nilang figure (We need to be very meticulous and the figure should be close to reality)," he added.

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# IS recruiting again; ML extension eyed

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Despite the liberation of Marawi City from terrorists last month, extremists continue to conduct massive recruitment in Mindanao, which might prolong martial law in the region, government officials said yesterday.

Task Force Bangon Marawi chairman Eduardo del Rosario and Lanao del Sur Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong told a press briefing at Malacañang that extremist groups continue to recruit followers in Mindanao in a bid to establish an Islamic State (IS) caliphate in the region.

IS-linked Maute terrorists attacked Marawi on May 23 and laid siege to the Islamic city until they were driven out by government troops after five months of intense fighting that left over 1,000 people dead and thousands more homeless.

The fighting in Marawi forced President Duterte to place the entire Mindanao under martial law until the end of the year to deal with the crisis and prevent other armed groups from reinforcing the militants or launching similar uprisings elsewhere in the region.

Congress approved the extension of martial law up to Dec. 31.

Adiong and Del Rosario cited serious security threats that would justify another extension of martial law.

They also pointed to the aggressive recruitment by extremist groups, as well as the need to secure the teams that will spearhead the rebuilding of Marawi, as reasons to

extend martial law.

A former military general, Del Rosario cited intelligence reports of massive recruitment by extremist groups with as much as P100,000 per recruit for the IS.

Del Rosario is the chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) spearheading the rehabilitation efforts in Marawi.

"So, I guess, it's a matter of necessity and protecting the civilians that would be – we put primacy as far as the national government would decide whether they will lift martial law or they will maintain the imposition of martial law in Mindanao," Del Rosario said.

"It's really very important that we can continue to ensure that the whole area, not only Marawi City but the whole

of Mindanao, will be secured from any terrorist threat," he added.

The Bangon Marawi Task Force will be coordinating with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police "so that we can properly assess and make the necessary recommendation to the President as to the extension or not of the martial law in affected areas," Del Rosario said.

"Personally, I would like martial law to continue during the rehabilitation phase because as chairman of Task Force Bangon Marawi, my main concern is the security of rehabilitation efforts," he added.

If violence breaks out anew in Marawi City during rehabilitation phase, Del Rosario said contractors and laborers



would flee.

Del Rosario added the government is forgoing the regular public bidding process to fast-track the rehabilitation of Marawi.

Instead, the government is calling on all probable big-time developers to submit their "unsolicited" proposal to rebuild the war-torn area – the cost initially pegged between P20 billion to P100 billion by the government.

The proposals coming from private developers will then be subjected to the so-called Swiss Challenge, defined as public procurement process when the government has received unsolicited bid for a project after publishing its details, and then inviting third parties the chance to match it.

### Recommendation

Adiong, for his part, said the extension of martial law would depend on the recommendation of security forces

and situation on the ground.

"Remember, the post needs and assessment team will not only conduct its assessment based on the damaged properties but the impact of the siege – the crisis itself," he said.

Adiong stressed "the end of the war does not necessarily mean normalcy of the peace and order situation."

"Actually, we've been saying this all along – the crisis will really start after the war," he added. "And there are several reports that we've been receiving that the recruitment activity is now ongoing in some other towns."

Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez supported the proposed extension of martial law in Mindanao.

"For me, and maybe for the majority of residents of Mindanao, we would like martial law to continue because of the many terrorist threats there, aside from kidnapping," Alvarez

said in a radio interview.

"Residents feel safer with martial law. We like the checkpoints the military and the police are setting up from time to time," he said.

AFP spokesman Maj. Gen. Restituto Padilla earlier said the military might recommend the extension of martial law in Mindanao if the threats remain prevalent in the region.

Military officials have floated the idea of another extension. The President has said it would depend on the military and the police.

If Duterte decides to extend it again, he would have to send a formal request to Congress within the next two weeks, since lawmakers are going on a month-long Christmas recess on Dec. 16. They will reconvene in mid-January.

However, Duterte could call lawmakers to a special session during their break to tackle an extension request.

Asked about the possibility of a special session, Alvarez said it would be difficult to gather lawmakers since they have already planned their Christmas vacation.

Critics of martial law have balked at another extension, saying it was no longer necessary since Duterte himself has declared that the war in Marawi City was already over.

Besides, they said under the Constitution, martial law could be declared or extended only if there is actual rebellion or invasion.

On the ground, Brig. Gen. Juvymax Uy, commander of the Joint Task Force Basilan, said operations continue to prevent foreign terrorists from touching base with local counterparts in southern Mindanao.

"We have been implementing the security measures to prevent the possibility of the IS in finding their way here," Uy said. – **Jess Diaz, Roel Pareño**

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## ISIS recruiter charged with inciting to rebellion

The widow of a slain Islamist militant leader will be charged for allegedly using social media to recruit Islamic State sympathizers to join a five-month siege of a southern city, a senior state prosecutor yesterday said.

Hundreds of local and foreign gunmen who had pledged allegiance to IS rampaged through Marawi, the principal Islamic city in the mainly Catholic Philippines, starting in May – sparking the nation's longest urban war that claimed more than 1,100 lives.

Karen Hamidon faces charges of inciting to rebellion for allegedly urging IS followers to travel to Marawi to fight troops in the nation's first case of terrorism committed through online networks, senior state prosecutor Peter Ong said.

"(Hamidon) wilfully, unlawfully and feloniously incite(d) others to rise publicly and take arms against the Philippine Government," Ong said in a copy of the charge sheet seen by *Agence France Presse* which he said was set to be filed before a local court this month.

Government investigators conducting undercover work and a forensic examination had accused Hamidon of using messaging apps

Telegram and WhatsApp, where they said she was "prolific in her recruitment and promotion activities for ISIS," another name for IS.

"The Islamic State invites you to join in the Philippines. We note that the door to immigration is open to the cities of Marawi and (the southern region of) Mindanao," state investigators quoted Hamidon as saying in a Telegram post.

Hamidon had denied the allegations, telling reporters last month she was an Islamic missionary who had used social media for religious purposes.

Hamidon was arrested in a Manila suburb in October and has since been detained in the capital.

She was married to Mohammad Jaafar Maguid, founder and leader of Ansarul Khilafa Philippines (AKP), a pro-IS militant group in the restive south which authorities said helped plot a bombing in the city of Davao that killed 15 people last year.

Troops said they had killed Maguid in January this year.

The military said militants loyal to IS, including those allied with AKP, had attacked Marawi in a bid to establish a Southeast Asian caliphate there. **AFP**

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# IS mass hiring bared

## Recruits promised fabulous pay; Lanao solon seeks ML extension

By John Paolo Bencito

**A** LOCAL official on Friday warned that Islamic State-affiliated groups were still recruiting people to their cause of building up a caliphate in Southeast Asia.

"There are several reports we have been receiving that the recruitment activity is now ongoing in some other towns," Lanao del Sur Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong said in a Palace news

briefing Friday. Those who would join were offered as much as P100,000 to lure them in continuing the fight, Housing Secretary Eduardo del Rosario said, as he backed

calls by the military to have the imposition of martial law in Mindanao extended during the rehabilitation phase of Marawi City.

The Marawi siege had prompted President Rodrigo Duterte to place the entire Mindanao under martial law on May 23. The period was extended until the end of the year after the lapse of the 60-day limit imposed by the Constitution.

Del Rosario said the information came from barangays where recruitment is taking place.

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IS...

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Adiong also supported calls to extend martial law in Mindanao, citing persistent threats from terrorists.

This happened as a widow of a slain Islamist militant leader will be charged for allegedly using social media to recruit IS sympathizers to join the five-month siege of Marawi, authorities said.

Hundreds of local and foreign gunmen who had pledged allegiance to IS rampaged through Marawi starting in May, sparking the nation's longest urban war that claimed more than 1,100 lives.

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The military said militants loyal to IS, including those allied with AKP, had attacked Marawi in a bid to establish a Southeast Asian caliphate there.

Hamidon is also accused of recruiting Indians to join IS and the Indian government had asked the Philippines for help in investigating that case, according to a Justice department resolution. **With AFP**

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**In support of BBL**

The approval of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) can be an instrument to prevent a situation similar to the Marawi siege from happening again. Lanao del Sur Assemblyman Zia Aionto Adiong said. This after the House of Representatives nixed the need of a special session to pass the bill and assured its passage by March, 2018. Adiong, during the Task Force Bangen Marawi (TFBM) press briefing in Malacanang Friday, said the BBL, if passed, can curb the spread of violent extremism and radicalization in Mindanao. "Although it will not really solve the transnational crimes, [such as] the spread of global terrorism, it will, in some ways, cover up the issue of social narrative and injustice which has been used by this terrorist group as a means to recruit for their fighters," Adiong said. (Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)

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# MILF backs Rody's Federalism bid

By Mario J. Mallari

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has renewed its commitment to talking peace with the government as it expressed support to President Duterte's push for Federalism.

During the recent Bangsamoro Assembly held at the MILF's Camp Darapanan, MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal stressed that the front is "undoubtedly committed to (achieving) long lasting peace in Mindanao."

"The only visible way ahead is to pave the way for peace, not war," Iqbal said.

Iqbal said that the MILF leadership was very happy with the outcome of the recently concluded Bangsamoro Assembly attended by Duterte.

During the assembly, President Duterte reaffirmed his full support to the law that aims to finally "address the historical injustices against the Bangsamoro."

Iqbal said that the MILF is supportive of the Duterte's initiative to shift to a Federal form of government.

But he said that he wants the

Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) to be approved by Congress first before the transition to Federalism happens.

Iqbal is also the chairman of Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC) composed jointly of MILF and government representatives.

Meanwhile, during the recent Mindanao Peace Week, attended by Iqbal and Sarangani Gov. Steve Chiongbian Solon, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza assured that the government is working for the passage of BBL.

In his keynote address, Dureza underscored the need for convergence in order to push the peace process forward.

"What is the best way to engage (the various peace stakeholders)?" he asked. "We (therefore) need to find convergence."

Dureza noted that Mindanao is a melting pot of cultures, religions and traditions, a reality that must be acknowledged by all.

"Mindanao is very diverse," he said, citing Sarangani as a perfect example of how people can set aside personal differences and reach a "convergence point."

"You deal with the Moros, the Lumads and Christians," Dureza said, as he praised local government leaders for being able to unite the people despite their diversity.

According to the peace adviser, this is the reason why President Duterte is pushing for the immediate passage of the BBL.

Dureza emphasized that the proposed law is anchored on the principle of convergence and inclusivity.

"It is important [for all] to support the BBL," Dureza said, as he called on the people of Sarangani to help lobby for the law's passage.

He likewise stressed the importance of "social healing," specifically in dealing with victims of the Marawi crisis.

"Relationships have been broken. You have to repair these relationships," Dureza said.

He explained that even though physical structures have been rebuilt but the social fabric of the community is not mended, residents will find it difficult to fully recover from the adverse effects of the conflict.

"Rebuilding relationships take (more) attention, (more) effort," Dureza pointed out.

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## Extremist's widow faces raps for recruiting siege fighters

Prosecutors have recommended the indictment of an extremist leader's widow for rebellion for allegedly posting messages online calling for fighters to join a bloody Islamic State group-linked siege in Marawi City, an official said yesterday.

A Department of Justice resolution stated that there was probable cause to charge Karen Aizha Hamidon with nearly 300 counts of inciting rebellion.

While heavily armed militants were staging the uprising in southern Marawi City, Hamidon allegedly posted at least 295 separate messages,

mostly through the Telegram and WhatsApp messaging services, to invite fighters to join the five-month mutiny.

Hamidon has denied the allegations.

If eventually filed in court, the recommended charges would be one of the first cyberterrorism cases in the country and serve as a warning that militants could be criminally liable for online statements that call on people to stage an armed rebellion against the government, Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Peter Ong said.

"We just want to show them that our laws are not just

mere decorations," Ong said. "We mean to enforce them."

Hamidon has acknowledged she is the widow of Mohammad Jaafar Maguid, an IS-linked Filipino militant commander killed in a clash with police in the southern Philippines in January. She was arrested in Taguig City last October by government agents who posed as buyers of a washing machine she was selling online.

Maguid's group has been implicated in a deadly bombing in Davao City, the President's hometown, and a failed bomb attack near the US embassy last year.

In a statement, Hamidon was quoted as saying in the Department of Justice resolution that she was a Muslim convert who was "cajoled and seduced into doing several acts," including her online messages, "against her will" by an online contact posing as a British militant.

Hamidon also claims there was no proof that she was the author of the rebellious social media posts, the resolution said.

National Bureau of Investigation investigators in Manila have said India has also asked the Philippines to help investigate Hamidon due to



Hamidon

allegations that she encouraged several Indian militants last year to join the IS in the Middle East. Hamidon denied the allegation. – AFP, AP

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#### MARAWI SIEGE

## PROSECUTORS SEEK REBELLION CHARGES FOR EXTREMIST'S WIDOW

Prosecutors have recommended an extremist leader's widow to be charged with inciting rebellion for allegedly calling on fighters to join a bloody Islamic State (IS) group-linked siege of Marawi City.

State prosecutors said in a Department of Justice resolution seen by The Associated Press on Friday that there was "probable cause" to charge Karen Aizha Hamidon with nearly 300 counts of inciting rebellion.

Hamidon was arrested by government agents in October for allegedly posting rebellious statements mostly through the Telegram and WhatsApp messaging services.

Prosecutors said she posted

at least 295 separate messages to invite fighters to join the five-month siege in Marawi City that troops crushed on Oct. 23.

Hamidon's militant husband was killed by troops this year. —AP



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# INQUIRER

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## Development, democracy, dictatorship and RevGov

**E**nrique Razon Jr., president-CEO of International Container Terminal Services Inc., may have reason to complain. The headline of the story that covered his comments at the Asean Business Investment Summit ran: "Exec says infra dev't, democracy can't mix." Direct and indirect quotes in the story cannot establish that he made such a categorical and incorrect conclusion.

The print report began with an accurate statement: "[Some] countries with the best infrastructure in the world are dictatorships." This was also the basis for the online version's headline: "Countries with best infrastructure are dictatorships—Razon." But the online version also attributed to him the view that infrastructure development and democracy cannot go hand in hand, "hinting that there might be a benefit in being [run] by a dictator."

The "hint" picked came from Mr. Razon's suggestion that dictatorships did better than democracies in delivering infrastructure development. He offered, as the exception that proves the rule, the example of the United States: the only country "that advocated for democracy and achieved development but only because it was 'so vast and has so much resources.'" But Canada and Australia also achieved development and democracy. Admittedly, both nations are also vast and well-endowed with natural resources. What about Japan?

Or the Netherlands? Mr. Razon conceded that Europe was "well-advanced," asserting that "its infrastructure was built over a hundred years ago and they weren't a democracy yet." But the most advanced European nations, even a hundred years ago, were already working democracies, whose World War I victory in 1917 was prematurely hailed as the

### BUSINESS MATTERS

EDILBERTO C. DE JESUS

triumph of democracy. Europe, however, was not then and is not now one country.

The conceptual problem that confounds sweeping conclusions about democracy, dictatorship, and development often arises from the attempt to reduce these complex terms to a single definition. The democracies of 20th-century Europe differed in their approximation of democracy, as they do today. Democracy will always remain a work-in-progress. In an ever-changing environment, maintaining a consensus among free individuals requires continuing effort.

Ultimately dependent on coercion, a small cabal of ruthless leaders can more easily maintain, for a time, a dictatorial regime. Technology facilitated efforts by despots in Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia and Red China to aim for totalitarian control. But dictatorships also vary in their aspiration, ability and willingness to concentrate and deploy power. Critics may dismiss Cuba and Zimbabwe as infrastructure-deficient dictatorships but acknowledge that they achieved different levels of human development. China and Singapore both have excellent infrastructure, but cannot be described as equally "dictatorial."

Some countries with the worst infrastructure in the world are dictatorships, something Mr. Razon might have acknowledged. That both democracies and dictatorships display good and bad infrastructure suggests that the system of government does not by itself guarantee infrastructure excellence. Not a particularly

stunning insight worthy of headlines, but it would have left Mr. Razon unscathed by doubts as to his political preferences.

Having lived through the martial law years and with his international business experience, Mr. Razon knows more than most the difference between democracies and dictatorships. Retreating from the slippery slope to which his comments on political economy had led, he declared that he was not "endorsing" one form of political system over another."

This disclaimer only distinguished himself from most Filipinos, who continue to believe that they have better chances under a democracy, even when it has yet to deliver a better life to many of them. Unlike Mr. Razon, who has prospered even within the country's flawed democracy. He did not need a dictatorship to expand the family fortunes.

It also fed fuel to the controversy over the proposed revolutionary government. His unqualified profession of indifference to the choice between democracy and dictatorship for the Philippines, at a time when the country may be compelled to choose, is disappointing and sad.

If democracy again dies in the Philippines, critics will likely blame the ignorant masses for failing either to elect leaders of proven competence and unquestioned integrity or to hold them accountable when they betray public trust. But the leadership elite—in politics and the professions, in the church and civil society, in the bureaucracy and business—will bear the heavier burden for its death.

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## LETTERS

Send comments to [opinion@manilatimes.net](mailto:opinion@manilatimes.net) or write to the Opinion Editor,  
The Manila Times, 2/F Sitio Grande,  
409 A. Soriano Avenue, Intramuros, Manila 1002

### NPAS AS SPOILERS OF PROGRESS

DURING the recent Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) meetings in Manila, President Rodrigo Duterte noted the advantages of the hosting of such international events in the country in the many spectrums—regional peace and stability, economic growth, investment, among others. The Bicol region is also expectant to reap the numerous economic benefits from Asean.

I am a Bicolana and one of the local organizers of the planned Asean meetings in Legazpi City. Until now I am still saddened by the bad news that the conduct of Asean meeting in Albay was cancelled for the second time because of the threat posed by the communist New People's Army (NPA). From the reports we obtained from the security sector of the Asean meetings, the NPAs planned to conduct attacks during the meetings with the use improvised explosive devices (IEDS), which could have put the lives of the delegates at risk.

The first meeting which was cancelled, which was supposed to be attended by about 100 participants, including foreign delegates, was for August 21-26, 2017; the other one was slated for November 21-22, 2017 to be participated in by about 90 delegates.

Nestled in the unashamedly boastful island of Cagraray, Bacacay, Albay, is the Misibis Bay Resort, the scheduled venue for these two Asean meetings. It is the favorite location for travel and relaxation of locals and foreigners alike.

In early pre-conference statements, it was said that the Asean meetings in Albay would bring bigger economic opportunities in terms of tourism and investment. These would have the way for the tourism promotion not only of Albay but of the Bicol region. But what happened was the opposite. The cancellation brought hefty losses to Albay for the organizers and stakeholders who meticulously planned for the meetings—the venue, the hoteliers and restaurateurs (food and reservations), the medics/paramedics, security sector, the traffic sector, and the many others involved in the preparations. Plus other expenses for the IDs, the t-shirts and other financial/logistical requirements.

The conduct of the Asean meeting in the Bicol region was not only one to have been economically sabotaged by the NPAs. Based on the report from the security sector presented in one of the preparatory meetings for the Asean, last September 28, 2017, five dump trucks, two mini trucks, one mini mixer and one grader truck owned by E.M. Cuerpo Inc., a contractor of the Bicol International Airport (BIA) were torched by the NPAs. These equipment were being used for the construction of the airport. Damage was placed at P25M million. For days, the construction of the airport was delayed because of the burning of the equipment.

This was not the first case of the NPA's terroristic acts in the airport. In 2012, about 12 heavy equipment owned by the Sunwest Construction Company (contractor), also used for the construction of the BIA was also burned by NPAs. Most of these were trucks, payloaders and road rollers resulting in P76 million worth of damage. The rebels torched the equipment for the alleged non-payment of revolutionary taxes demanded from the contractors.

Located in a 400-hectare land in Bgy Aloba, Daraga, which is 10 kilometers from Legazpi City, the BIA is a P3.44-billion project of the national government. The airport is critical in achieving the 650,000 tourist target for Albay, Sorsogon and Masbate. It will bring improvement in the facilities and better utilization of available seating capacity to about 85 percent and increased cargo capacity of about 2,000 tons.

The construction of the airport started in 2010. However, delays were experienced due to the NPA's intervention as attested to by the torching of the contractors' equipment.

These cases, the cancellations of the Asean meetings and torching of equipment for the construction of the Bicol International Airport are only a few of those reported; there could be more unaccounted for.

President Duterte tagged the NPAs as terrorists which the latter opposed. Well, if they are not, then they should prove their worth. They need to be peace advocates and not spoilers. I am hopeful that there will be more international events in the Bicol region aside from Asean with the non-intervention of the NPAs.

NAME WITHHELD

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

# ONLINE NEWS

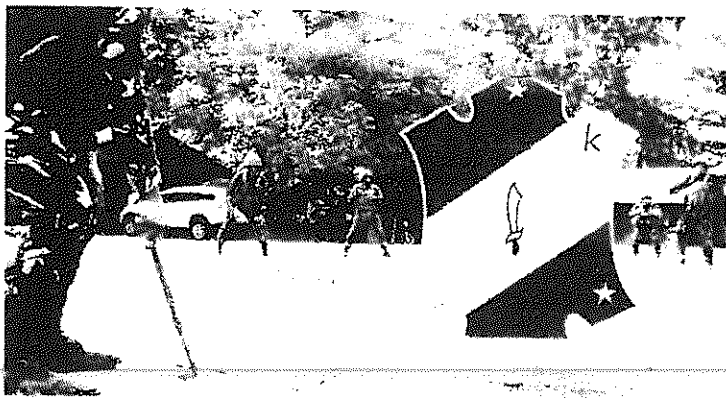
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[www.rappler.com](http://www.rappler.com)

### Scout Rangers play Filipino games for peace

By: Aika Rey

'Through sports diplomacy, we engage with non-state actors like the MILF, MNLF, secessionist groups, and their supporters. We need to give peace a chance. I don't have to kill more people to win against insurgents,' says Lieutenant Colonel Harold Cabunoc.



**SPORTS DIPLOMACY** Scout Rangers play shatong, a traditional Filipino game

**MANILA, Philippines** – It's not every day that you see Scout Rangers of the Philippine Army play games. But when they do, it is to advocate for peace.

At the 67th founding anniversary of the First Scout Ranger Regiment, Scout Rangers played shatong, a traditional Filipino game similar to baseball.

Shatong is a sticks game where a longer stick serves as the bat and a shorter stick serves as the hit. The batter hits the shorter stick and as the latter is in air, the hitter runs to marked areas or bases.

Lieutenant Colonel Harold Cabunoc, 33rd Infantry Makabayan Battalion commanding officer, said he modified the game to incorporate Scout Ranger principles.

Cabunoc said instead of playing in doubles, each team has 7 members.

"I modified it to a team with 7 members each. Scout Rangers believe in teammanship that's why I preserved the same set-up. I want to tell people that Makabayan soldiers love the traditional games played by kids," Cabunoc said in a mix of English and Filipino.

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

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

Cabunoc said he wants to promote peace-building through sports and games. He said they played the games as part of their build up to an event they are hosting in December with the "enemies of the government."

"In December, we're hosting a peace-building activity with the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front) and MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) – the 'enemies' of the government. Similar to this, we will play games," he said.

The government had signed peace agreements with both the MNLF and the MILF.

"Through sports diplomacy, we engage with nonstate actors like the MILF, MNLF, secessionist groups, and their supporters. We need to give peace a chance. I don't have to kill more people to win against insurgents," Cabunoc said.

He said the groups have confirmed their participation. He is also trying to get the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process on board.

This is not the first time that the Makabayan Battalion had engaged in such activities. Cabunoc said they also did mud runs with the MILF in October.

"I always come up with activities to promote peace. It has considerable impact because people see that there are other ways to claim victory," he said.

"I don't define victory with the number of people who died. We are all Filipinos. If you can do it without firing a shot – that is the best way to come forward in winning the insurgency," Cabunoc added.

He added that in Sultan Kudarat, they negotiated for the surrender of 33 prisoners of war.

"I want to sustain the peace efforts in the area through sports diplomacy," he added.

Cabunoc is pursuing peace-building efforts as President Rodrigo Duterte terminated peace talks with communist rebels, and instructed military and police to "shoot" any armed group they see, following his decision. (READ: Duterte's decision to end peace talks with communist rebels) – Rappler.com

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## **Bangon Marawi head backs martial law extension until rehab phase**

**By: Frances Mangosing**

Marawi City rehabilitation czar Eduardo del Rosario on Friday expressed support to extend martial law in Mindanao until the rehabilitation phase.

Reports of "massive recruitment" by Islamic State-inspired terror groups have prompted Del Rosario to support the move.

"I would like martial law to continue during the rehabilitation phase because as chairman of Task Force Bangon Marawi, my main concern is the security of the whole rehabilitation effort," he told reporters in a press briefing.

President Rodrigo Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao on May 23, when Maute-ISIS members attacked Marawi City on the same day.

The 60-day promulgation ended on July 22 but was later extended by Congress until Dec. 31 this year.

Del Rosario said they have received intelligence reports that the local ISIS in Marawi City has been stepping up its efforts to recruit new members, offering money of up to P100,000 to potential members.

"We will be coordinating with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police so that we can properly assess and make the necessary recommendation to the President as to the extension or not of martial law in affected areas," he said.

Lanao del Sur Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong, who also backed the extension of martial law, stressed that the end of war does not mean the normalcy of peace and order.

"So, we fear that if the, you know, if we'll probably be lenient about imposing security protocols, this might—the terror group—might use this as a portal to form and regroup again and then attack another town," he said.

He said the group "will attack another town not necessarily Marawi City or Lanao del Sur."

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## **Officials seek martial law extension to secure Marawi rehab efforts**

By Jose Cielito Reganit

**MANILA** -- The head of the inter-agency group tasked to lead the rebuilding efforts in Marawi City and an Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) official on Friday said they will support the extension of martial law in Mindanao amid intelligence reports that Islamic State (IS)-linked terrorists are stepping up recruitment activities in the region.

In a Palace briefing, both Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chairperson Eduardo del Rosario, concurrently head of Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM), and ARMM Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong said they believed that martial law in Mindanao should be extended to secure the rehabilitation efforts and to protect the civilians from the ongoing terrorist threats.

President Rodrigo Duterte declared the entire Mindanao under martial law on May 23, 2017 after IS-inspired terrorists laid siege in Marawi City.

Congress, in a special joint session, granted the extension of martial law until December 31 on President Duterte's request.

Del Rosario said it is really very important that the government continue to ensure that Marawi City and the whole of Mindanao will be secured from any terrorist threat, more especially now given the intel report.

"Umuugong na ngayon at nakuha natin from intelligence reports 'yung massive recruitment na ginagawa nung kabila, promising so much amount of money as high as PHP100,000 just to be recruited and be a member of the ISIS group," he said.

As chair of TFBM, he said he would like martial law to continue during the rehabilitation phase to secure the whole rehabilitation effort.

"Just imagine, if something will happen in Marawi City during the rehabilitation phase, baka wala nang pumuntang mga contractors at laborers. Mahhirapan tayo sa rehabilitation," Del Rosario said.

He said the rehabilitation is not just restricted to physical structures but should also involve the participation and support of the entire citizenry of Mindanao.

"And that's not only in the physical structure but in the security aspect. Kailangan sila mismo, they should drive away or neutralize 'yung spread ng recruitment ng ISIS group in Mindanao, not only in Lanao del Sur or Marawi City," Del Rosario said.

His sentiments were supported by Adiong who said that the reports they have been receiving showed that the IS recruitment activity is now ongoing in several towns.

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"As a local, I would say the end of the war does not necessarily mean the normalcy of the peace and order situation. Actually, we've been saying this all along --- the crisis will really start after the war," he said.

"So, we fear that if we'll probably be lenient about imposing security protocols, the terror group might use this as a portal to form and regroup again and then attack another town. They will attack another town, not necessarily Marawi City or Lanao del Sur but maybe some provinces." Adiong said.

"If I would be asked right now, I think the necessity of maintaining martial law dictates that kailangan talaga dahil meron pockets of recruitment na nangyayari diyan surrounding the lake," he added.

However, both officials said that the final recommendation for the lifting or extension of martial is up for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to make to President Rodrigo Duterte.

"We will be coordinating with the AFP and the PNP so we can properly assess and make the necessary recommendation to the President as to the extension or not of the martial law in affected areas." Del Rosario said.

He said that they would also consult with the local government units where the recruitments are reportedly happening.

"We do not like to have another Marawi incident," Del Rosario said. (PNA)

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