

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



TEAM ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

01 February 2017

Wednesday

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

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

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | FEBRUARY 1, 2017 | WEDNESDAY

NORTHEAST MONSOON
AFFECTING NORTHERN LUZON
(As of 6:00 PM - Jan 31, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:24 AM	6:55 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
9:24 AM	9:47 PM
NEW MOON	FIRST QUARTER
JAN 28 5:17 AM	FEB 4 12:16 PM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
7:56 AM 0.10 Meter	12:14 AM 0.33 Meter

- Partly cloudy to all times; cloudy with rainshowers
- Partly cloudy to all times; cloudy with rainshowers and thunderstorms
- Cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms
- Light rains

	FEB 1	FEB 2	FEB 3	FEB 4	FEB 5
METRO MANILA	23 - 30 °C	24 - 29 °C	21 - 28 °C	20 - 29 °C	24 - 31 °C
TAGAYTAY	21 - 28 °C	20 - 29 °C	25 - 30 °C	25 - 30 °C	29 - 30 °C
TACLOBAN	24 - 31 °C	21 - 30 °C	23 - 30 °C	24 - 29 °C	24 - 29 °C
TUGUEGARAO	20 - 27 °C	23 - 27 °C	24 - 31 °C	25 - 30 °C	25 - 30 °C
LEGAZPI	25 - 30 °C	25 - 30 °C	24 - 31 °C	25 - 30 °C	29 - 30 °C
CAGAYAN DE ORO	23 - 30 °C	24 - 29 °C	24 - 30 °C	25 - 30 °C	25 - 30 °C
LAOAG	21 - 31 °C	22 - 30 °C	25 - 31 °C	26 - 30 °C	24 - 32 °C
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ZAMBOANGA	24 - 32 °C	24 - 31 °C	25 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	24 - 31 °C
SBMA/CLARK	23 - 30 °C	26 - 30 °C	25 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	24 - 31 °C
METRO CEBU	25 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	25 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	24 - 31 °C

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Rody orders AFP: Arrest rogue cops

By ALEXIS ROMERO

With the country's police force plagued by corruption and allegations of abuses, President Duterte is bestowing upon the military the task of arresting rogue policemen and drug offenders as he begins purging the Philippine National Police (PNP) of scalawags and misfits.

"No policeman in this country anywhere is allowed to enforce laws related to the drug campaign. *Kasi magamit nila 'yan, palitan nila 'yang warrant, palitan lang ang pangalan tapos pupunta* (Because they can use and change the names in the warrant and then they proceed)," the President said yesterday as he swore in newly promoted military generals at Malacañang.

"Let me reorganize the enforcement (against) drugs by the police. In the meantime, they would be arrested and I will order you to arrest them," he told the generals and other military officers.

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Rody From Page 1

He admitted some policemen could have taken advantage of his anti-drug campaign to commit wrongdoings.

The PNP has suspended all its anti-drug operations, including Oplan Tokhang, in the wake of outrage over the killing of Korean businessman Jee Ick-joo by members of the Anti-Illegal Drugs Group.

Jee was reportedly kidnapped by policemen in Angeles, Pampanga on Oct. 18, 2016 and strangled to death inside PNP headquarters at Camp Crame.

Witnesses claimed the businessman's body was cremated and his ashes flushed down the toilet.

Jee's kidnappers reportedly made it appear that Jee was still alive a day after his abduction and demanded P5-million ransom from his wife.

Duterte has apologized to the Koreans for the incident and assured Jee's widow Choi Kyung-jin that justice would be "swiftly served."

He has also ordered the abolition of all anti-drug units of the PNP and placed all narcotics-related operations under the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency.

The President claimed about 6,000 policemen are into illegal drugs, prompting him to tap the military to assist in his narcotics crackdown.

"Kung hindi ko kayo ipa-

sok sa laro, pntay ako. Walang magtingin diyan sa abusadong pulis (If I don't put you in the picture, I am doomed. Nobody will look after the abusive policemen)," he said. "The culture of corruption in the police is *mainindi* (serious)."

Duterte said his chief legal adviser Salvador Panelo is going to Seoul to extend the President's apologies to the South Korean government.

"I told him to make a good apology. We can't do anything. It happened. *Ang pinakabastos sa lahat, ang nasakit daw sa kanila is talagang 'yung* (What they found most execrable and painful) is flushing (the ashes) down the drain, the toilet bowl," the President said.

"*Nasaktan sila. Maski naman gawin sa atin 'yan* (They were

hurt. We would have felt the same if it were done to us)."

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella, meanwhile, said Duterte also wants the revival of the Philippine Constabulary to strengthen the fight against crime, especially illegal drugs.

"His main concern is really anti-corruption. The Philippine Constabulary would be composed of gentlemen from the Armed Forces and from the military, which would be different from the PNP," he said. The PC had its heyday during the martial law era.

"So he's basically saying that they would be in a sense a more trustworthy organization. They are not civilian-run like the PNP but run by authority under the Armed Forces," Abella said.

He explained the revived PC would be more national in scope while the PNP would be localized in its operations.

But National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said it would take some time before the PC could be revived as such endeavor would require legislation.

Esperon revealed the President is considering the idea of tapping some units from the military to take the lead in the administration's campaign against illegal drugs.

The President has also directed the PDEA to take the lead role in the drug campaign, which is the actual mandate of the group.

"There's no timeline regarding that, except that we do know that, first and foremost, referring to the

question about the police, it (anti-drug campaign) will be transferred to the PDEA," Abella added.

He clarified that Operation Tokhang will still have the PDEA as lead enforcer, as Duterte has ordered all police units to stop their anti-drug operations.

"I think we need to make a correction. The impression is that it stopped. What happens is the local police, the PNP, has been asked to desist from engaging in anti-drug operations. But the operations will continue under the PDEA," he said.

The PC was abolished in the late 1990s as it was associated with the implementation of martial law under the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

- Christina Mendez

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

GRP 'distressed' by NPA attacks

By **ROCKY G. NAZARENO**
and **FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD**

The Philippine government (GRP) said it is "distressed and extremely disturbed" by the series of attacks and harassments launched by New People's Army (NPA) in various parts of the country, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza said yesterday.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), likewise alarmed by the NPA rebels' offensive, expressed concern that the local communist group might have abandoned its earlier declaration of a unilateral ceasefire.

Expressing concern by the **▶4**

attacks, Dureza stressed that the government does not "wish to unnecessarily squander those gains (in attaining peace with communist insurgents) that even had President Duterte exercising strong political will to move the peace process forward."

The GRP has been in negotiations with the National Democratic Front (NDF), political arm of the NPA, for the past six months in a bid to end 48 years of communist insurgency in the country.

Among the major gains of the talks was the declaration of indefinite unilateral ceasefires by both the GRP and the NDF in August in Oslo, Norway.

"The unilateral ceasefire was precisely set in place to provide an enabling environment for the ongoing peace talks and also to secure the support of the stakeholders and the bigger public understanding and supporting these unprecedented, although small but significant steps, for sustainable peace in the land," said Dureza.

Who's in control of the Left?

But with the recent reports of the escalation of attacks and harassments made by the NPA in various parts of the country, Dureza charged that "either some in the NDF leadership talking to the government are not in full control of their own forces on the ground, or they are themselves undermining these efforts for sustainable peace or pressuring government for certain concessions."

In a press briefing Monday, AFP spokesman Air Force Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla Jr. expressed concern over the NPA atrocities. He issued the statement after Army Private First Class Erwin R. Salan, deployed as a member of the Peace and Development Team (PDT) in Barangay Buddlingin, Alegria, Surigao del Norte, was abducted by more or less 15 armed men identified as members of the NPA.

"We are announcing this because we are already alarmed as this may be an indication that the other group might have

abandoned their unilateral ceasefire," Padilla said.

"If it's confirmed that they have abandoned their own unilateral ceasefire, we in the Armed Forces still need to make the necessary recommendations to our peace panel of the appropriate steps we need to take so that our forces on the ground won't be jeopardized," he added.

Military backs peace process

Padilla said that it has been the desire of the military to attain lasting peace in the country and that they remain very supportive of the ongoing peace process.

"We have been pushing this (peace talks) and you can on the AFP to continue to support the unilateral ceasefire that we have both declared on each side and resume that peaceful environment that has been existing since August," he said.

"But if they so desire that they are backing out of the unilateral ceasefire, we will make appropriate recommendations therein to protect our troops," Padilla said.

"We have a duty to protect our troops, we have a duty to protect our people, we have a duty to keep the sovereignty and terminal integrity of our country and we shall not also hesitate to provide the support needed by our local government and police in the area so that we can deliver the services needed by our people in these areas," he said.

In the recent third round of the talks between the GRP and NDF in Rome, Italy, NDF peace panel chairman Fidel Agcaoili had said that "the leadership of the revolutionary movement on the ground will have to make the decision (on whether to heed the order of a unilateral ceasefire) on the basis of their appreciation of facts and conditions on the ground, as well as conditions on the negotiations."

Agcaoili issued the statement in the aftermath of the first reported clash between the military and NPA in Makilala, North Cotabato, last January 21 – the first

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encounter between the two sides since the unilateral ceasefires were ordered six months earlier.

The NDF had also insisted on the release of 392 political prisoners, as well as the withdrawal of the military from the countryside, as conditions before it agrees to a joint, bilateral ceasefire that the GRP has been proposing since October.

In fact, President Duterte had already made it clear that he would release political prisoners "within 48 hours" after seeing a document which shows that a bilateral ceasefire agreement had been forged with the communist group.

The GRP formally submitted a proposal for a joint ceasefire agreement with the NDF during the talks in Rome, a matter that will be taken up from February 22 to 26 in Utrecht, The Netherlands, when both panels will also meet to submit the official list of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) for safekeeping.

"The President will definitely walk the extra mile for peace. But our counterparts on the peace table must also reciprocate accordingly and do the same," Dureza said. "The road to peace is not smooth and easy. Let us all help to successfully traverse it."

Padilla appealed to their fellow Filipinos who are on the other side of the fence to reconsider and allow peace again to prevail such as that what they had since August of last year.

When asked if the AFP will conduct pursuit operations against NPAs who conduct atrocities, Padilla said they cannot.

"Again, we still have a prevailing cessation of military operations against these groups so the unilateral ceasefire still holds," Padilla said.

"Other than acting in self-defense, we are not going to initiate any aggressive actions until a declaration for the lifting of the SOMO (suspension of military operations) is made," he said.

Other atrocities

Aside from Salan's kidnapping,

suspected NPAs attacked soldiers guarding a road construction project in Sarangani, burned a van, and disarmed guards deployed at a banana plantation in Compostela Valley in separate incidents Monday, the 10th Infantry Division said.

The first incident happened at 2:30 p.m. when undetermined number armed men fired on the Bravo Company, 73rd Infantry Battalion, triggering an almost two-hour firefight in Barangay Banibato, Alabel, Sarangani.

The troops were securing an ongoing road project by Jargon Construction Company at the place.

The second incident happened at 6:15 p.m. when a group of armed passengers of a van ordered the driver to stop and

forced passengers to disembark at Crossing Tablao, Barangay Lebe, Kiamba, Sarangani where several heavily armed men were also waiting.

The perpetrators then burned the van.

Another incident happened at around 7:40 p.m. in Barangay Union, Monkayo, Compostela Valley Province, when around 10 armed men riding on three motorcycles barged inside the Musahamat Plantation, held the guards at gunpoint and carted away a shot gun, a caliber .38 pistol, the keys of a backhoe and a dump truck, and the cellphones of people thereat.

Nobody was reportedly hurt on these incidents. (With reports from Yas D. Ocampo and Mike U. Crismundo)

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2 wounded as groups clash in Basilan

ZAMBOANGA CITY (PNA) – Two persons were wounded in a clash Monday between two warring factions in the province of Basilan, officials disclosed.

Col. Cirilo Donato, Army's 104th Infantry Brigade commander, disclosed the clash broke out around 8 a.m. Monday in Barangay Baungis, Lantawan, Basilan.

Donato said the protagonists were a group of relatives of Hasim Jalil, a militiaman, and that of Poly Hallang.

Sr. Supt. Nickson Muksan, Basilan police director, reported the clash broke out following a shooting incident that injured two persons.

Muksan identified the victims as Ruayda Hallang, 25, and Haira Hallang, 15, who were rushed to the hospital for treatment.

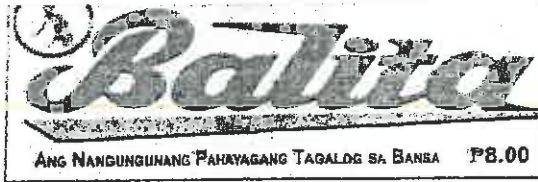
Muksan did not say whether the perpetrators belonged to the Jalil group, but revealed that the victims were shot by unidentified gunmen armed with high-power firearms.

He said the fighting stopped when Lantawan police, in coordination with the Army Special Forces, arrived and intervened.

He said the troops also initiated measures to ensure the protection of the civilians in the area.

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NILABAG ANG SARILING CEASEFIRE Rescue ops ng militar sa Mindanao, inatake ng NPA

NI MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City – Nilabag ng New People's Army (NPA), ang armadong sangay ng Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), ang sarili nitong ceasefire nang atakehin ang tropa ng militar na nagsasagawa ng rescue operations sa Caraga Region at Northern Mindanao, sinabi kahapon ni Capt. Joe Patrick A. Martinez, tagapagsalita ng 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division ng Philippine Army.

Ayon kay Martinez, naglunsad ng biglaang mga pag-atake at pananakot ang NPA sa mga tropa ng gobyerno na nasa kasagsagan ng disaster response operations nitong Lunes.

Tinukoy ni Martinez ang magkahiwalay na pag-atake ng mga rebelde sa isang liblib na barangay sa Surigao City at sa tatlo pang barangay sa Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte, nitong Lunes ng madaling araw.

Hatinggabi ng araw ding iyon ay nasa 10 rebelde naman ang umatake sa tropa ng 30th Infantry Battalion na umaayuda sa "Bayanihan" sa Sitio Brazil, Barangay Mat-i, Surigao City.

"However, field troops managed to

push the rebels to withdraw out of the community while three soldiers were slightly wounded," aru Martinez.

Nangyari ang mga pag-atake isang araw makaraang dukutin ng NPA si Private First Class Erwin Salan, miyembro ng Peace and Development Team (PDT) ng 30th IB, habang nagsasagawa ng clean-up drive sa Bgy. Budlingin, Alegria, Surigao del Norte.

Naglunsad din ng mga pag-atake ang NPA laban sa 29th Infantry Battalion (29th IB) sa mga barangay ng San Isidro, Mahayahay at Hinimbangan sa Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte, ayon kay Martinez.

Hinagisan din ng umano'y NPA ng dalawang granada ang mga sundalong nagsasagawa ng relief operations sa Bgy. Concepcion, Valencia City, Bukidnon.

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POLICE FILES

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2 sundalo patay sa atake ng NPA sa Isabela

NASAWI ang dalawang sundalo sa pag-atake ng New People's Army (NPA) sa Echaque, Isabela kamakalawa.

Kinilala ang mga biktima na sina Cpl Gary Camaneg at Cpl Virgilio Herrera na kapwa nakatalaga sa 86th Infantry Battalion.

Ayon kay Col Bartolome Bacarre, commander 502 Infantry Brigade, dakong 8:30 ng umaga nang tambangan ng mga rebelde ang sundalo sa Brgy. Mabbayad, Exchague, Isabela.

Nabatid na sakay sa tricycle ang mga biktima kasama ang ilang mga barangay official patungo sa opisina ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DERN) kaugnay ng gagawing tree planting.

Ang nasabing mga sundalo ay pawang naka-sibilyan at tanging mga pistol lang ang dalang baril nang tambangan ng mga rebelde.

Agad naman tumakas ang mga rebelde matapos ang pamamail
(Rey Velasco/Mark Obleada)

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Malaya
The National Newspaper

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NPA steps up attacks amid ceasefire

**BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR
AND VICTOR REYES**

AMID attacks by the communist New People's Army, peace adviser Jesus Dureza yesterday asked the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), with which it is negotiating a peace pact, whether it is in control of its forces on the ground.

He also asked if the NDFP leaders "are themselves undermining these efforts for sustainable peace, or pressuring government for certain concessions."

The communist group has asking for the release of some political detainees and a stop to military operations in the provinces.

The military recorded nine more NPA attacks Monday and yesterday in various parts of the country against military and civilian targets. There were three attacks earlier this month when the first two clashes were recorded since the two sides declared unilateral ceasefires in August last year in preparation for the formal resumption of peace negotiations.

The latest of the attacks was an ambush last Monday on soldiers from the Army's 86th Infantry Battalion in Echague town in Isabela, which killed two soldiers.

Dureza said the President

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NPA

will walk the extra mile for peace, but the government expects its counterparts on the peace table to "reciprocate accordingly and do the same."

"We are distressed and extremely disturbed by the recent series of attacks and harassments by alleged NPA elements in various areas nationwide," he said.

"The unilateral ceasefire was precisely set in place to provide an enabling environment for the ongoing peace talks and also to secure the support of the stakeholders and the bigger public in understanding and supporting these unprecedented, although small but significant steps, for sustainable peace in the land. We do not wish to unnecessarily squander those gains that even saw President Duterte exercising strong political will to move the peace process forward," he added.

Col. Bartolome Bacarro, commander of the Army's 502nd Brigade, said the soldiers killed in the Isabela attack - Corporals Gary Camaneg and Virgilio Herrera - were on a peace and development mission when they were waylaid in Barangay Mabbayad at around 8:30 a.m. Monday.

The two, who were in civilian clothes, were with barangay officials on the way to the town proper to request seedlings

from environment officials as part of a tree-planting project.

"This is just to show how untrue they are to the peace process," Bacarro said of the rebels.

In Batangas, NPA rebels attacked the Pico De Loro resort in Nasugbu town around 8:30 p.m. Sunday. The rebels disarmed the security guards and carted a cache of firearms, some of them high-powered, said AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla.

"They also attempted to burn some building being put up by a developer," said Padilla.

In Valencia City, NPA rebels lobbed two grenades near an evacuation center Barangay Concepcion at around 8:30 p.m. Monday, said 4th Infantry Division spokesman Capt. Joe Patrick Martinez.

The grenades were lobbed near the position of soldiers, who are providing security to evacuation centers for residents displaced by recent floods.

"They were lobbed 15 meters away from the evacuation center. Fortunately, the two grenades didn't explode," said Martinez.

Martinez said the rebels launched two simultaneous attacks against troops of the 29th Infantry Battalion in Barangays Mahayahay and San Isidro in Kitcharao town in Agusan del Norte around 1:30 a.m. yesterday. Brief fighting ensued but no one

was reported killed or injured.

An hour later, Martinez said the rebels lobbed a grenade on soldiers of 29th IB in Barangay Hinimbangan, also in Kitcharao town. The grenade exploded but the blast did not cause any death or injury.

In Sarangani, NPA rebels fired at soldiers of the 73rd Infantry Battalion in Barangay Banlibato in Alabel town around 2:30 p.m. Monday, said 10th Infantry Division spokesman Capt. Rhyan Batchar.

Batchar said the soldiers were providing security to a road project.

In Kiamba town, also in Sarangani, NPA rebels burned a passenger van in Barangay Lebe at around 6:15 p.m. Monday. Batchar said the rebels told the driver and two passengers to disembark before setting the van on fire.

In Compostela Valley, NPA rebels raided the Musahamat plantation in Barangay Union in Monkayo town around 7:40 p.m. Monday. Batchar said the rebels took a shotgun, a cal. 30 revolver, keys of a backhoe and a truck, and cell phones of the plantation personnel.

The attacks are in addition to two rebel atrocities earlier reported by the Armed Forces - abduction of a soldier in Alegria town in Surigao del Norte Sunday afternoon; and attack on soldiers in Surigao City that left a soldier dead and three others wounded on Monday morning.

February 2017



Pahina. 1



Ipamamahagi ngayong araw ang relief goods mula sa "People of Davao" na ni-repacked ng mga sundalo ng 6th Infantry Division ng Phil. Army sa Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat sa Maguindanao. Libu-libung residente sa bayan ng Datu Montawal at Pagalungan ang naapektuhan ng patuloy na buhos ng ulan at pagbaha. *Kuha ni Jo Henry ng ARMM-HEART information officer.*

||

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

<http://dwdd.com.ph/>

NPA commits atrocities in Eastern Mindanao during peace talks

Lui Claudio



Despite the mutually declared unilateral ceasefire with the Duterte administration, the Maoist CPP-NPA committed a series of atrocities within the last 48 hours.

According to the reports sent by Anti-Crime Watch Group in Mindanao, the outrages included an abduction, violent attacks, harassment, and arson.

Private First Class Erwin Salan of 30th Infantry Battalion was abducted at the vicinity of Lumondo Falls, about a kilometer from the center of Barangay Budlingin, Alegria town in Surigao del Norte while leading youth volunteers in a forest clean-up drive about 4:00 in the afternoon of January 29, Sunday.

There was also an attack on the resort in Pico de Loro, Batangas which was earlier visited by Miss Universe contestants. There were about 30 fully-armed men of NPA who disarmed the guards, took the weapons, ransacked the building, torched the staff house and several quarters of employees and even attempted to burn other buildings about 7:30 p.m. of the same day.

Past midnight of Monday, three members of a composite Peace and Development Team of 75IB and 30IB led by 2Lt. Clarence Jae C. Patayan were wounded after their encounter against some 15 members of SPP-16B, Guerilla Front 16, NEMRC, KOMMID, CPP-NPA led by Pablo Logatiman alias 'Lucas' at the vicinity of Sitio Brazil, Barangay Mat-i, Surigao City.

The wounded troops are identified as Private First Class Estrabela of 75IB who obtained a splinter on the left eyebrow, Corporal Abalde of 30IB who was grazed on the left thigh and Corporal De la Cruz of 30IB with a gash on the right foot;

About 2:30 p.m. Monday, a team of Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU) under 72IB & 73IB were harassed while securing heavy equipment of Jargon Construction used in a road rehabilitation project as part of its ~~Bayanihan Investors Protection and Security Operations at Sitio Banlibato, Barangay Pag-Asa, Alabel town in eastern Sarangani Province.~~

The rebel group also set a passenger van on fire when it was plying the Gensan-Maitum route at the vicinity of Purok Mirasol, Barangay Lebe, Kiamba, Sarangani past 6 p.m. of the same day.

Bearing the registered plate number MVY-400, and carrying three passengers and a driver identified as Ogie Rosite, the van is reportedly a total wreck. However, there was no one hurt by the incident.

According to the report, as soon as the vehicle halted at Tablao, Brgy Lebe crossing, at least three armed men appeared and asked all who were in the van to disembark from it so they could burn it.

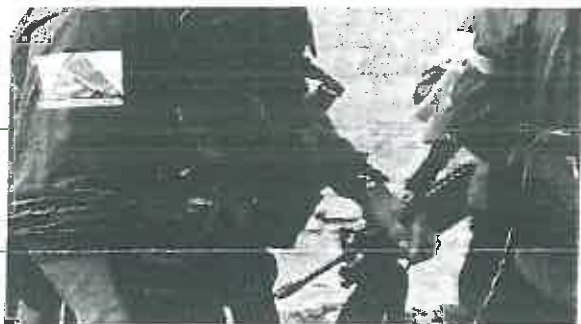
Before the four left, one of the men said to them, "tell the PNP and Army we are NPA." -AGA

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2 soldiers killed in Isabela NPA ambush - Army

Thom Andrade and Jaime Sinapit,



MANILA, Philippines -- Two soldiers were killed in what the Army said was a New People's Army ambush in Echague town, Isabela on Monday.

Colonel Bartolome Bacarro, commander of the army's 502nd Infantry Brigade, told reporters in a phone patch briefing Tuesday that three soldiers from Bravo Company of the 86th Infantry Battalion were accompanying officials of Barangay Mabbayad to the local office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to seek a permit for a tree-planting project when they were attacked around 8:30 a.m. Monday.

Bacarro said the soldiers were in civilian clothes and riding two motorcycles. Only one of them was armed with a pistol. He named the fatalities as Corporal Gary Camaneg and Virgilio Herrera.

The third soldier survived unhurt.

"It's unfortunate they did that and they themselves violated their declaration of unilateral ceasefire. This is just to show their insincerity to talk peace," Bacarro said of the rebels.

The ambush is the latest ceasefire violation the rebels have been accused of.

The Eastern Mindanao Command has also accused communist rebels in the Davao and Caraga regions of violating their unilateral ceasefire by attacking "peace and development teams" of the Army in Surigao City and Agusan del Norte, killing a militia organizer and an alleged drug dealer in Davao City, and abducting a soldier in Surigao del Norte this month.

Despite the ambush, Bacarro said they would continue to "abide" by the government's own unilateral ceasefire, although his troops and police have mounted a joint pursuit operation against the rebels who carried out the ambush as part of law enforcement.

The rebels have also accused government forces of ceasefire violations and human rights violations mostly involving continued combat operations and the occupation of hinterland communities.

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

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Duterte plans to tap military in war on drugs

By GENALYN D. KABILING

President Duterte is planning to tap the military to arrest drug personalities, apparently including rogue cops, amid the massive cleansing of the police ranks.

The President sought the assistance of the military after ordering a halt to police anti-drug operations following the kidnap-slay of a South Korean national.

"Let me reorganize the enforcement diyan sa drugs sa police. In the meantime, they would be ar-

rested and I will order you to arrest them," the President said during the oath-taking of military officers in Malacañang.

"Kung hindi ko kayo ipasok sa laro, patay ako. Walang magtingin diyan sa abusadong pulis. The culture of corruption sa pulis, matindi. In the beginning pati mga generals," he added.

Duterte said he has already ordered the police "to stop all operations" in the fight against illegal drugs. The campaign will now be led by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

"No policemen in this country anywhere is allowed to enforce laws related to the drug campaign," he said.

He expressed concern that some police scalawags have tinkered with arrest warrants to capture victims in the guise of the anti-drug campaign. "Kasi magamit nila yang palitan nila yang warrant, palitan lang ang pangalan," he said.

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said a special military unit could be deputized by the PDEA to help enforce the anti-drug campaign.

"You do not employ the whole Armed Forces in anti-drugs. Gagawa talaga ng unit. Hindi kanya-kanyang operate. Kailangan may designated units," Esperon said in a media interview at the Palace.

Early in the day, Malacañang announced the President is considering the revival of the Philippine Constabulary (PC) to augment forces in keeping peace and order in the country.

The PC, a military force, could also support the operations of PDEA.

"It's not yet official as far as I know, but the Philippine Constabulary may be – may be reactivated," Presidential

spokesman Ernesto Abella said.

Under the proposal, Abella said the PC would be "national in scope" while the Philippine National Police will be localized.

"The Philippine Constabulary would be composed of gentlemen from the Armed Forces and from the military, which would be different from the PNP," he said.

"They would be in a sense a more trustworthy organization being seen that they have not been... They are not civilian run like the PNP but run by authority under the Armed Forces," he added.

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AFP: NPA rebels attack soldiers despite ceasefire, peace talks

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

New People's Army (NPA) rebels have launched "planned and coordinated attacks" against soldiers despite the peace negotiations and the unilateral ceasefire, according to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

In a report to the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), the AFP cited the attacks on soldiers in Isabela and several areas in Mindanao on Monday.

Two soldiers from the Army's 86th Infantry Battalion, who were escorting villagers following up a tree-planting project at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources office, were killed in an

ambush in Barangay Benguet in Echague town.

In Bukidnon, suspected NPA rebels lobbed grenades at soldiers engaged in relief operations for flood victims in Barangay Concepcion in Valencia City.

"Fortunately, the grenades did not explode. This could have caused undue casualties and further misery to flood victims," a report from Camp

Evangelista in Patag, Cagayan de Oro City read.

The AFP said three soldiers were wounded in another attack by NPA rebels in Sitio Brazil in Barangay Mat-1 in Surigao City.

NPA guerrillas also attacked peace and development teams in Barangays San Isidro, Mahayahay and Hinambangan in Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP public affairs office chief, also demanded the release of Pvt. First Class Erwin Salam, who was seized while conducting community service in Algeria town in Isabela on Sunday.

"We urge them to stop attacking the soldiers. These

violate their own ceasefire declaration and are an assault to the communities and the people who seek assistance from the Army to improve their lives," Arevalo said.

Lt. Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero, Eastern Mindanao Command chief, called on the Communist Party of the Philippines leadership to show sincerity in the peace talks by ordering their armed members to stop attacking soldiers.

'Distressed, disturbed'

The government is "distressed and extremely disturbed" by the series of attacks and harassment by NPA rebels, Presidential Adviser on the

Peace Process Jesus Dureza said.

"The unilateral ceasefire was set in place to provide an enabling environment for the ongoing peace talks and secure the support of stakeholders and the public in understanding and supporting these unprecedented although small but significant steps for sustainable peace in the land," Dureza said.

"Either some in the National Democratic Front leadership talking to the government are not in control of their own forces on the ground, or they are undermining efforts for sustainable peace or pressuring

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Duterte taps China vs pirates in Sulu sea

In a bid to stop the expansion of extremism and piracy in the southern seas, President Duterte has requested China to patrol the areas in international waters leading to Malacca Strait and the Sulu Sea.

"I also asked China if they can patrol the international waters without necessarily intruding into the territorial waters of the country. We would be glad if we have their presence," Duterte said in a speech before newly promoted generals led by Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen. Eduardo Año at Malacañang last night.

This developed as a special emissary of the Indonesian government flew in Monday night to seek clarification on a kidnapping incident.

Duterte stressed the Islamic State (IS) problem should be contained.

"I cannot allow (it), they are not only killing...it has nothing to do with Moro and Christians. They are just killing everybody. They are kidnapping Indonesians. There is a report of kidnapping there and a special emissary was sent by the Central Government of Jakarta who flew in last night," he said.

Duterte said he told the

top Indonesian official that the Philippines and Indonesia have agreed to address the security concerns in the high seas bordering the two countries, as well as Malaysia.

"I just remind them about this understanding, put it into practice. Allow more ships (to enter the area)," Duterte said.

He was referring to the trilateral maritime agreement between the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia on joint air patrols in the problem areas.

It was at this juncture that Duterte revealed that he has asked for China's help if Philippine forces, with their meager resources, are unable to address the problem.

Duterte said ships of the Chinese coast guard could come in without treading into the country's territorial zones, keeping in mind the arbitration ruling against China.

He said Beijing could deploy its coast guard cutters, not its "gray ships" or naval assets.

He cited Beijing's assistance to Somalia at the height of piracy in the area.

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said the President could just be expressing his serious concerns on the continuing kidnapping

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By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

activities in Mindanao.

Esperon added there was also an Indonesian who was injured during a military operation in Putig, Lanao del Sur, the known lair of the extremist Maute Group.

"Terrorism is an international concern, that's what he meant. If he may have mentioned one country, all countries are also concerned on terrorism," Esperon said.

Impeding trade

Duterte expressed concern that the piracy and kidnapping incidents in Sulu Sea and Malacca Strait have impeded trade operations in the area.

He made the statement following reports that some international cargo ships have opted to look for other sea routes despite added expense.

Duterte said if the route is closed due to the high incidence of kidnapping cases, the flow of goods would be hampered and become very costly to international traders.

"Either they go up to the north, and if they're headed for Mexico, down south, or here where it would be nearer, which would mean higher costs, higher rate, higher insur-

ance, it adds up to the goods and the services there, governs the world, it's always goods and services," Duterte said.

With Duterte asking for Beijing's help, observers noted he also allowed China to implement its Maritime Silk Road that includes the Malacca Strait as one of its stops.

Chinese President Xi Jinping had announced that his country wanted to revive not just the traditional Silk Road's land route, but also a maritime route.

Reports said most of China's trade and about 80 percent of its energy needs pass through the Malacca Strait.

Before Duterte's pivot to China, there had been so much resistance against Beijing's expansion operations in many areas in the South China Sea.

Alsa Masa style

Duterte has also considered giving firearms to locals to empower them in fighting against militants, a strategy similar to the old Alsa Masa group.

The Alsa Masa was established as a vigilante group in 1984 to combat communist insurgency in Davao City.

Duterte revealed authorities

have gathered reports that Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon had joined forces with the Maute group in the quest to become the head of IS in the Philippines.

"And there is the Maute, and from what we gather, Hapilon was chosen to lead," he added.

Duterte, who has expressed serious concern about the IS propagation in the country even in his meetings with the diplomatic community,

pointed out the need to contain the fighting in Southern Philippines.

"I told (Defense Secretary) Delfin, General Lorenzana, and all, that we have to contain the fighting. We cannot afford to allow it to spread. Or else, I'll be forced to arm everybody," he said.

But he cautioned that the Alsa Masa ended up using the arms given to them "against civilians for depredations, hold-up, all of it."

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US to Duterte: No weapons depot in Phl

The United States is not building any weapons depot in the Philippines.

US Ambassador Sung Kim made the clarification a day after President Duterte accused the US of building permanent arms storage facilities in the country.

"The US is not building any weapons depot anywhere in the Philippines," Kim said in a forum organized by the Makati Business Club.

Kim said Duterte may have been misinformed.

"I think some misinformation was given to the President and that's why he gave that statement expressing concerns about a possible weapons depot," he said.

Duterte, in yet another tirade against the US, said Washington was bringing weapons into three provinces in the country, risking regional stability.

He said this was a dangerous breach of a defense deal between the US and the Philippines.

"They're unloading arms in the Philippines now ... I'm serving notice to the armed forces of the United States. Do not do it, I will not allow it," Duterte said in a televised news conference.

However, Kim stressed that there is nothing planned that "even closely resembles a weapons depot."

Instead, Kim said there is an existing Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) that allows the US to build facilities and structures inside Philippine bases.

He said these are not US bases but Filipino bases.

"I think there's already a very strong protection for Filipino interest in the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. In fact, it was a very carefully negotiated document, agreement," Kim said.

Duterte has said provisions of the Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippines and US bar the establishment of permanent US military facilities in the country.

"A depot is by any other name a depot. It's a permanent structure to house arms," the President said.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), through spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, said it could not find proof of the existence of any US weapons depot in the country.

But Malacañang insisted yesterday there was basis for the President's claim.

"If your question is where he got the information, I cannot tell you that. But he seems to be privy to some sort of informa-

tion," presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella told a press briefing.

– Iris Gonzales, Alexis Romero

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FLIGHT SAFETY

EX-PILOT CREDITS COMMUNITY EFFORT IN FIRST NIGHT LANDING IN DUMAGUETE

By Alex Rey V. Pal
Contributor

DUMAGUETE CITY—The recent installation of runway lights at the Dumaguete-Sibuyan airport here has brought a retired military pilot to recall the first night landing at that airport.

It was an event over four decades ago when Dumagueteños responded to a call for help and lit up the runway with their car lights to help him make an emergency landing.

It was March 29, 1975.

"I was a first lieutenant with the 220th Airlift Wing based at Mactan Air Base in Cebu back then," said Eugene Malahay, now a retired Air Force colonel living in Dumaguete, after checking his flight logbook.

He had just completed a flight to Mactan from Manila when a call for help came from the Philippine Constabulary (PC) in Siquijor province. They sought reinforcement from their regional office to ward off a band of pirates.

"The Air Force knew I was from Dumaguete so they asked



Then 1st Lt. Eugene Malahay (right) is in command of a C-123K aircraft that made the first night landing in Dumaguete City 41 years ago. His children, Yvette (now Yvette M. Kim) and Pamela (now Dr. Pamela M. Mosqueda), are shown with his aircraft in an undated photo. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



me if I was willing to fly one platoon (about 40 personnel) of constables," he said. There was no airport in Siquijor that could accommodate the C-123K Provider aircraft so they would have to fly

to Dumaguete from where the soldiers would take a pumpboat to Siquijor.

Dumaguete's airport had no runway lights. "I agreed to fly because it was a moonlit night,"

Malahay recounted.

The Fairchild C-123K Provider transport aircraft with body number AF 632, was the aircraft of choice for that flight.

After making their flight plan, Malahay and his copilot, Maj. Antonio Paulin, were soon airborne with the platoon of Constabulary troops

36-minute flight

The 36-minute flight to Dumaguete was mainly uneventful until they reached the dark airport.

"We couldn't see the runway but I was familiar with the terrain so we made a few approaches," Malahay said.

The noisy drone of the plane's engines as it made low passes above the city at a time when most Dumagueteños would rather be sleeping, worried many. What could be wrong?

The answer came when they turned on their radio sets to hear an announcement from the provincial PC headquarters over local radio dySR, asking car owners to go to the airport, and light up the runway with their headlights to help the military plane land. Vehicle owners responded to the call.

Billy Yrad, who just graduat-

ed from Grade 6 then, was one of those who showed up with his father, Boni, and brother, Boyd.

Now a businessman based in the United States, Yrad said they were among the first to respond as they were living near the end of the airport runway. "Papa helped organize parking the vehicles lining the airstrip," he said.

Yrad noted the people who came out to help were actually risking their lives.

"Everyone seemed to be thinking more of helping the beleaguered airplane and its passengers than their own safety," he said.

By the time they made their fourth approach, Malahay and Paulin could already see the runway and proceeded to land the plane, earning their place in history as the first pilots to make a night landing at the Dumaguete airport.

Today, nearly 42 years after that first night landing, planes can take off as late as 7 p.m. at the Dumaguete-Sibulan airport, thanks to the newly installed runway lights. INQ

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5 Abus slain, 7 wounded in Sulu clash

ZAMBOANCA CITY—Five Abu Sayyaf bandits were killed and seven others were wounded in an encounter with Army Scout Rangers in Sulu yesterday.

Two soldiers were also wounded in the clash in Barangay Pugad Manual in Panamao town at around 8 a.m,

according to Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., Western Mindanao Command chief.

Galvez said members of Joint Task Force Sulu initially encountered the bandits led by Alhabsy Misaya, but the militants withdrew.

He said the bandits incurred casualties when they encoun-

tered soldiers belonging to the First Infantry Battalion.

Galvez said there is no letup in pursuit operations for the bandits to recover the remaining hostages.

The Abu Sayyaf is still holding seven Indonesians, five Malaysians, six Vietnamese, a Dutch, a German, a Korean

and six Filipinos.

“We will not stop in our rescue operations. Our units are zeroing in on the location of the victims. I cannot discuss the details due to operational security, but definitely we will rescue the victims,” Galvez said.

— Roel Pareño

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Mayors blame Abus for Basilan blasts

Local officials are blaming last week's series of blasts in Basilan, which killed two children and wounded three others, on the Abu Sayyaf, saying the bandits have resorted to planting bombs to divert military and police attention from operations against the Maute group and its allies who are hiding in the hinterlands of Butig, Lanao del Sur. —STORY BY JULIES ALIPALA

Mayors say bombings staged to divert AFP, PNP attention from Lanao del Sur operation

By Julie Alipala
@alipalajulieINQ

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Local officials tagged the Abu Sayyaf behind the series of explosions in Basilan province, which killed two children and wounded three others last week.

Mayor Darus Lajid of Al-Baraka town and Mayor Rose Furigay of Lamitan City believed the Abu Sayyaf staged the bombings to divert the attention of the military and police from operations against the Maute terror group and its allies in Butig town in Lanao del Sur province.

The roadside blast in Al-Baraka town killed two children and wounded three others on Sunday morning. No one was hurt in the twin explosions in Lamitan City, which occurred simultaneously in the villages of Maganda and Malinis on Saturday.

"Bandits are hard up here," Lajid said as the military intensified its pursuit operation against the Maute group in Butig. "They will try their best to sow more terror to get wider attention. Unfortunately, the victims were innocent

children," he added.

Killed in Al-Baraka were Niyadz Pising, 2, and Ombek Akbar, 5, who were playing outdoors when they accidentally

triggered a bomb placed on a trail frequented by locals. The explosion also injured Pahmiya Pising and Salniya Akbar, both 4, and Suraima Akbar, 25.

Furigay said the explosions in Lamitan did not hurt anyone but these damaged several properties in her city.

"[The Abu Sayyaf] was out

to create scenarios. The bandit group wanted to divert the attention of the military and the police from Butig by planting bombs in our place," she added.

Fearing similar attacks in this city, Mayor Maria Isabelle Salazar called on security forces and local officials to work together to protect Zamboanga against such threats.

Salazar, who chairs the Regional Peace and Order Council in Western Mindanao, said intelligence operatives and village officials can help by detecting possible threats, especially from Islamic State-inspired groups.

Chief Supt. Billy Beltran, Western Mindanao police director, said the police have been closely working with the military to detect threats early.

"We have contingencies in case there is spillover [of fighting from Butig]," he said.

Military reports said operations in Butig against the Maute group and its allies killed an Indonesian and 14 sus-

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LIVING WITH CONFLICT A resident of Butig in Lanao del Sur province passes by a military vehicle as soldiers pursue members of the Maute terror group and Abu Sayyaf in the town. —JEFFREY MAITEM

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Diaz to stay love-less until Tokyo Olympics

By WAYLON GALVEZ

Hidilyn Diaz said she is ready to sacrifice everything, including her love life, to win a gold medal in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

At 25, marriage should be ideal for the silver medal winner in weightlifting in last year's Rio Games, but that's hardly in her mind, she said, because preparing for the Tokyo Games has taken precedence.

That the Tokyo Games will be her fourth Olympics and that she will be 29 by then don't matter much for the sports celebrity who bucked odds to break the country's 20-year medal drought in the Olympics.

By winning the silver in the 53-kilo division, Diaz also became the first woman to win an Olympic medal for the Philippines.

She now wants not only to become the first woman to win a gold medal for

the country but the first to win a gold medal, period.

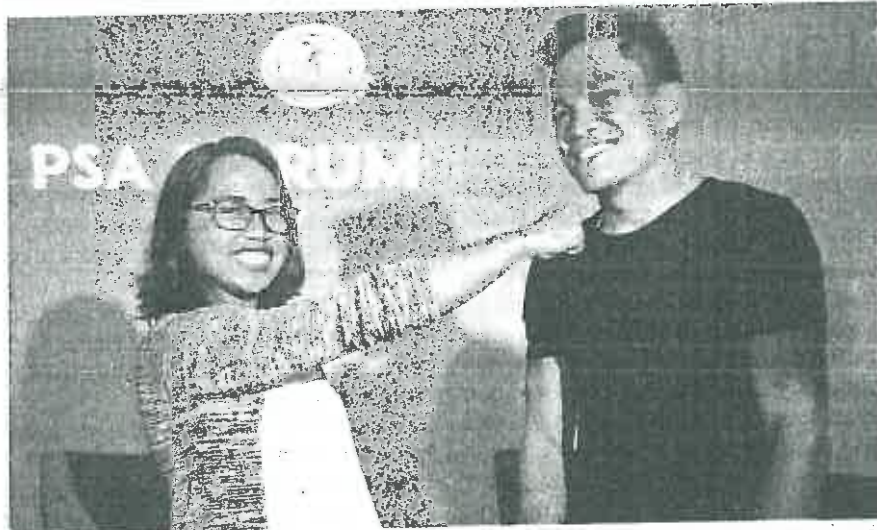
It's been a whirlwind of activity for Diaz since that fateful day in Rio. She trains, she studies and does many other things as a member of the Philippine Air Force.

But Tokyo is never far away from her thoughts.

"Nilalagay ko sa isip ko na pangarap ko 'to... ginusto ko 'to (to still compete in Tokyo)," said Diaz during the Philippine Sportswriters Association Forum at the Golden Phoenix Hotel in Pasay City yesterday.

"So priority ko ang training ko, ang family ko naman naintindihan na gani-to e," added Diaz.

"Kung sa lakas naman kaya ko na, time management na lang ang problema, kung paano ko i-organize schedule ko," said Diaz, who added that her love life will have to take a backseat in her quest for an Olympic gold medal.



Rio Games silver medal winner Hidilyn Diaz jokingly throws a punch at boxing champion Jerwin Ancajas in yesterday's PSA Forum at the Golden Phoenix Hotel in Pasay City. (Rio Deluvio)

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AFP war vs terror groups intensified

DEFENSE Secretary Del-
fin Lorenzana yesterday
called on terrorists to sur-
render before it's too late
as the Armed Forces of
the Philippines (AFP)

war against Abu Sayyaf
Group (ASG), Maute
Group and other terrorist
groups in Mindanao is
now in full swing.

The all-out war against
the terrorists was launched to
get rid of terrorists in the area.

Lorenzana has ordered
the military to use all their
military assets against the
terrorist groups including
ASG, Maute Group, Ansar-
Khilafa Islamiyan and Bang-
samoro Islamic Freedom
Fighters (BIFF) and others.

As of press time, AFP
elements are continuously
conducting air and ground
offensive against the ter-
rorists in Buag, Lanao del
Sur as well as in Basilan
and Sulu, that are known
to be ASG lair

The DND secretary as-
sured that the Armed For-
ces will always prioritize the
safety of residents in the
area as well as those kid-
nap victims.

Lorenzana asked resi-
dents in the area to coop-
erate with the Armed For-
ces to avoid any untoward
incident during the opera-
tion.

Zaida Delos
Reyes-Palanca

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Eastmincom raises alert as NPA heightens attacks

DAVAO CITY—The Armed Forces Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) has alerted all its units, after a series of attacks, abduction and killings in the Caraga and Davao regions perpetrated by the communist New People's Army (NPA), despite a standing unilateral cease-fire and the ongoing peace talks with the National Democratic Front.

The Eastmincom chief, Lt. Gen Rey Leonardo Guerrero, on Tuesday ordered all units under the command to be on alert against possible atrocities in the future, as he reminded troops to remain committed and observe the suspension of offensive military operations as part of the unilateral cease-fire.

"In the meantime, we will continue to abide by our own cease-fire declaration, and observe the suspension of offensive military operations. We will,

however, continue to exercise/perform our mandate of protecting the people and the communities against attacks by armed threat groups," he added.

Gunmen believed to be NPA guerrillas fired at the Peace and Development Teams (PDTs) that were stationed in Mat-i, Surigao City, in the midnight of January 30.

The attack lasted about 15 minutes, and caused the wounding of three Army troops.

Shortly after midnight, three more attacks took place in the villages of San Isidro, Mahayahay and Hinambangan, all in Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte, against the PDTs deployed in these areas.

Guerrero said the atrocities ran contrary to the spirit of the peace process, especially in the delivery of basic services to support far-flung communities.

He said the PDTs are stationed in depressed communities to facilitate the delivery of basic government services in collaboration with different government agencies.

"Let us condemn these atrocities, which target our soldiers who are performing noncombat missions. These tactical offensives by the NPAs are inconsistent with their cease-fire declaration, and could imperil the ongoing peace negotiation. These acts of violence also bring misery and suffering to the affected communities. We call on the Communist Party of the Philippines-NPA-NDF to show sincerity in their peace talks with the government by directing their armed members to immediately desist from committing atrocities," Guerrero said. *PNA*

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NPA attacks disturbing, says peacemaker

By **Sandy Arrieta and Lance Baconguis**

OFFICE of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza

said Tuesday they were disturbed by the recent attacks by the communists in Caraga and Davao despite a standing ceasefire.

“We are distressed and ex-

tremely disturbed by the recent series of attacks and harassments by alleged New People’s Army elements in various areas nationwide,” Dureza said in a statement.

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NPA... From A1

In Cagayan de Oro City, an official said communist guerrillas in Caraga and Northern Mindanao launched coordinated attacks and harassed government troops who were undertaking relief operations to help flood victims.

Captain Joe Patrick Martinez, spokesman of the 4th Infantry Division, said communist guerrillas lobbed two hand grenades at the troops in Concepcion village in Valencia City, Bukidnon.

“The grenades landed a few meters from the evacuation center but did not explode,” Martinez said.

“Those could have caused casualties and added to the misery of the civilian flood victims.”

Dureza said the ceasefire was precisely set in place to provide an enabling environment for the ongoing peace talks.

“We do not wish to unnecessarily squander those gains that even saw President [Rodrigo] Duterte exercising strong political will to move the peace process forward,” Dureza said.

“Either some in the National Democratic Front leadership talking to the government are not in full control of their own forces on the ground or they are themselves undermining these efforts for sustainable peace.

“The President will definitely walk the extra mile for peace, but our counterparts on the other side of the peace table must reciprocate.”

The Armed Forces’ Eastern Mindanao Command has alerted all its units after a series of attacks, abduction and killings in CARAGA and Davao despite the ceasefire.

Lt. General Rey Leonardo Guerrero said he had ordered all units to be on the alert against further communist attacks.

“In the meantime, we will continue to abide by our own ceasefire declaration and observe the suspension of offensive military operations,” Guerrero said.

Armed men believed to be members of the New People’s Army fired at the soldiers in Mat-i, Surigao City, at midnight of Jan. 30 and wounded three of them.

Shortly after, three more attacks took place in San Isidro, Mahayahay and Hinambangan in Agusan del Norte.

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2 SOLDIERS SLAIN IN NPA AMBUSH

By FRANCIS WAKEFIELD

The Armed Forces (AFP) yesterday said two Army soldiers were killed following an ambush staged by suspected New People's Army (NPA) guerillas in Echague, Isabela on Monday.

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By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Tuesday said two Army soldiers were killed following an ambush stage by suspected New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas in Echague, Isabela on Monday.

AFP Public Affairs Office (PAO) chief Marine Colonel Edgard A. Arevalo, identified the fatalities as Corporals Gary Camaneg and Virgilio Herera; both members of the Army's Bravo Company, 86th Infantry Battalion.

The AFP said the families of the slain soldiers have already been notified of their deaths.

Arevalo said one of the soldiers from the 86th Infantry Battalion was killed on the spot following the attack. The other Army personnel earlier reported wounded died Tuesday while undergoing treatment at a local hospital.

The Army's 502nd Brigade commander Colonel Bartolome Bacarro said the duo were on board a motorcycle Monday morning on their way to check on a tree-planting project at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Office in San Isidro when they were waylaid by their attackers.

The victims, who were about to follow-up on a request regarding their tree-planting activity, were not in uniform, unarmed and were wearing civilian clothes when the attack happened.

Bacarro said barangay officials who were on board a multicab escaped the attack as they were moving behind the troops.

"It's unfortunate that they had to do that. They (NPAs) themselves violated their own declaration of a unilateral ceasefire. So this is just to show how untrue they are in the peace talks," Bacarro said. "However, we will still abide with our own declaration of a unilateral declaration and services in the barangays."

On Sunday, an unarmed Private First Class (PFC) Erwin Salan of the 30th Infantry Battalion was abducted at gunpoint by members of the NPA even while he was wearing civilian clothes.

"We have reported these unfortunate incidents to the Office of the Presidential Assistant on the Peace Process," Arevalo said.

Meantime, the AFP is trying to get information if Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) leader Isnilon Hapilon is already dead.

In a press briefing at Camp Aguinaldo AFP spokesman Air Force Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, said latest intelligence reports reveal the 50-year-old Hapilon remains wounded and needs immediate medical attention.

"The latest report we received showed that the death toll remains at 15 terrorist killed, including an Indonesian terrorist, with eight wounded including Isnilon Hapilon who is included in the high-value individuals which we are after," Padilla said.

Padilla said they expect more casualties to come from the the Abu Sayyaf, Maute Group including foreign terrorist said to be with the two groups as the operation in Butig continues.

01 February 2017



Pahina. 2

Military outpost nilusob ng NPA

Inakusahan kahapon ng militar ang rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) na umano'y umatake sa iba't ibang detachment sa Mindanao na itinasugat ng 3 sundalo.

Ayon sa Eastern Mindanao Command, nirat na ng mga rebelde ang tropa na umano'y miyembro ng binansagang peace and development team (PDT) sa Barangay Mat-1 sa Surigao City kamakalawa at 3 iba pang outpost sa barangay ng San Isidro. Mahayahay at Hinamba-

ngan sa bayan naman ng Kitcharao sa Agusan del Norte.

"These atrocities ran contrary to the spirit of the peace process especially in the delivery of basic services to support far flung communities. These PDTs are stationed in depressed communities to facilitate the delivery of basic government services in collaboration with different government agencies," pahayag pa ni army Major Ezra Balagtey, ang spokesman

ng Eastern Mindanao Command

Inginuso rin ni Balagtey ang NPA na siyang nasa likod ng pagpatay kay Albert Sablada, na inakusahang nasa likod ng pagtatatag ng mga anti-NPA militias, nitong January 16 sa Barangay Saloy sa Calinan district sa Davao City; at gayundin kay suspected drug dealer Neptali Alfredo noong January 23 sa Barangay Tabason sa Paquibai district sa naturang lugar. (Al Jacinto)

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Pagkamatay ng Sayyaf leader, kinukumpirma pa

Inihayag ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na patuloy nitong sinisikap na makumpirma ang balitang patay na ang Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) leader na si Isnilon Hapilon.

Sa press briefing sa Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, sinabi ni AFP Spokesman Air Force Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla na batay sa huling intelligence reports na natanggap ng militar, nananatiling malubha ang lagay ng sugatang si Hapilon, 50, at nangangailangan ito ng agarang gamutan.

Sinabi rin ni Padilla na nananatili pa rin sa 15 ang napapatay na terorista

sa matinding opensiba ng militar sa Butig, Lanao del Sur.

"The latest report we received showed that the death toll remains at 15 terrorist killed, including an Indonesian terrorist, with eight wounded including Isnilon Hapilon who is included in the high-value individuals which we are after," sabi ni Padilla.

"The information that we got is that he (Hapilon) is wounded and needs medical attention. But if he is already dead or still alive, that's what we're trying to find out as of this time," dagdag niya.

Sinabi rin ni Padilla na batay sa

mga huling report na natanggap nila ay tatlong kampo na ng mga terorista ang nakubkob ng militar.

"The encampments were in the same areas that were attacked and we believe these terrorists have been harboring," sabi ni Padilla. "When I say camps it doesn't mean they are big ones. It could be just a small one which they use as a hideout. So there were three camps that were reached and scoured by our troops but the result of which we don't have."

Aniya, nasa 100-150 miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf at Maute terror group ang tinutugis ng militar sa Butig.

Francis T. Wakefield

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Pahina. 2

January record: 4 na aktibista patay

Naglabas ng urgent appeal ang grupong KARAPATAN Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights sa gobyerno ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte dahil sa tumitinding pagpaslang sa mga aktibista sa kanayunan.

Avon sa grupo, nitong buwan lamang ng Enero 2017, apat na aktibista kabilang ang dalawang Lumad leaders sa Mindanao ang

pinaslang dahil sa militarisasyon

Kinilala ang mga aktibistang napaslang nitong Enero na sina Vernie Diamante, Veronico Delamente, Alexander Cabellos at Wencislao Pacquiao.

"Four farmers have been killed in a month, two of them indigenous leaders in Mindanao. Please join us in condemning the continuing attacks against farmers

and leaders of indigenous communities who have dedicated their lives in defense of their land and rights," panawagan ng grupo.

Sinisisi ng KARAPATAN ang pagkunsinti ni Duterte sa mapang-abusong counter-insurgency operations ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) sa ilalim ng Oplan Kapayapaan na ipinalit sa Oplan Bayanihan. (Jun Tadios)

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Diaz to stay love-less until Tokyo Olympics

By WAYLON GALVEZ

Hidilyn Diaz said she is ready to sacrifice everything, including her love life, to win a gold medal in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games

At 25, marriage should be ideal for the silver medal winner in weightlifting in last year's Rio Games, but that's hardly in her mind, she said, because preparing for the Tokyo Games has taken precedence.

That the Tokyo Games will be her fourth Olympics and that she will be 29 by then don't matter much for the sports celebrity who bucked odds to break the country's 20-year medal drought in the Olympics.

By winning the silver in the 53-kilo division, Diaz also became the first woman to win an Olympic medal for the Philippines.

She now wants not only to become the first woman to win a gold medal for

the country but the first to win a gold medal period.

It's been a whirlwind of activity for Diaz since that fateful day in Rio. She trains, she studies and does many other things as a member of the Philippine Air Force.

But Tokyo is never far away from her thoughts.

"Nilalagay ko sa isip ko na pangarap ko 'to... ginusto ko 'to (to still compete in Tokyo)," said Diaz during the Philippine Sportswriters Association Forum at the Golden Phoenix Hotel in Pasay City yesterday.

"So priority ko ang training ko, ang family ko naman naintindihan na ganito e," added Diaz.

"Kung sa lakas naman kaya ko na, time management na lang ang problema, kung paano ko i-organize schedule ko," said Diaz, who added that her love life will have to take a backseat in her quest for an Olympic gold medal.



Rio Games silver medal winner Hidilyn Diaz jokingly throws a punch at boxing champion Jerwin Ancajas in yesterday's PSA Forum at the Golden Phoenix Hotel in Pasay City. (Rio Deluvio)

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Lorenzana: AFP's all-out ops in Mindanao in full swing

Frances Mangosing



Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana. FILE PHOTO

The military's all-out operations against the Abu Sayyaf and other local terrorist groups are in full swing, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said on Tuesday.

This was after President Rodrigo Duterte ordered on Sunday a "full-pressure military operation" against the terrorist groups that had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (IS).

Last week, Lorenzana said that Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon had moved from Basilan to Lanao in Central Mindanao to unify local terrorist groups. He is considered as the overall leader of the IS in the Philippines.

"I would like to inform my fellow Mindanaoans and Filipinos that operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines against the Abu Sayyaf and other local terrorist groups are now in full swing," the defense chief said in a statement.

Lorenzana said they would use all available ground, air, and sea assets against their enemies, and "will leave them no room for escape."

The defense secretary also called on residents to refuse terrorists who are seeking refuge.

"Huwag ninyong tulungan ang mga terorista. Kung tatakbo sila sa mga bahay niyo, huwag niyo silang patuluyin, kakanlungin at itatago. Kung mga kamag-anak o kaibigan ninyo sila at gusto niya silang sagipin, kumbinishin niyo silang magbalik-loob sa pamahalaan habang may panahon pa," Lorenzana said.

(Don't help the terrorists. If they run to your home, don't let them come in and hide. If they're your relatives or friends and you want to save them, convince them to surrender to the government while there's still time.)

At least 15 militants, including an Indonesian, have been killed in the military's operations in Lanao del Sur, the AFP said last weekend. *JE/rga*

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Duterte taps AFP in war on bad cops

Nestor Corrales

President Duterte has ordered the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to arrest police scalawags particularly those involved in illegal drugs as part of the cleansing of the Philippine National Police (PNP).

"Let me reorganize the enforcement diyan sa (against) drugs sa (in the) police. In the meantime, they would be arrested and I will order you (AFP) to arrest them," he said in a speech before military generals at Malacanang on Tuesday.

Duterte said if the AFP would not help in his war on drugs and corrupt police officers, no one would go after them.

"Kung hindi ko kayo ipasok sa laro, patay ako. Walang magtingin diyan sa abusadong pulis. The culture of corruption sa pulis, matindi. In the beginning pati mga generals eh," he said.

(If I don't put you into the game, I'm finished. No one will go after the bad cops. The culture of corruption in the police is deep. Even generals are into it.)

In a press briefing on Sunday night, Duterte ordered the PNP to stop the enforcement of its anti-illegal drugs campaign, saying he wanted a cleansing of the police force.

In an ambush interview after the oath-taking, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said only a specific unit of the AFP and not the whole force would be involved in the anti-illegal drug campaign.

"They can arrest if they are part of operations, and if they are deputized by PDEA then why not?" Esperon told reporters./ac

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AFP to NPA: Show sincerity in peace talks

Frances Mangosing

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) condemned the series of attacks and abduction allegedly by the New People's Army (NPA) in parts of Eastern Mindanao despite the peace talks.

"We call on the [Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front-New People's Army] to show sincerity in their peace talks with the government by directing their armed members to immediately desist from committing atrocities," Eastern Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Guerrero said in a statement on Tuesday.

The military alleged that the NPA was behind the following incidents in the past 48 hours:

- Abduction of Private First Class Erwin Salan of 30th Infantry Battalion in Alegria, Surigao del Norte on Jan. 29
- Wounding of three soldiers of the 75th and 30th Infantry Battalion. Members of Guerrilla Front 16 led by Pablo Logatiman fired at the government troops in Mat-i, Surigao City past midnight of Jan. 30
- Harassment of militiamen under 72nd and 73rd Infantry Battalion securing a road rehabilitation project in Sitio Banlibato, Brgy, Pag-asa, Alabel in Sarangani past 2 p.m. on Jan. 30
- Burning of a passenger van plying the Gensan-Maitum route in Purok Mirasol in Brgy, Lebe, Kiamba, Sarangani past 6 p.m. on Jan. 30
- Around 10 armed men believed to be NPA rebels held security guards at gunpoint in Musahamat Plantation and took away a shot gun, caliber 38 pistol, keys of a backhoe and dump truck and mobile phones
- Three more attacks allegedly by the NPA took place in San Isidro, Mahayahay, and Hinambangan all of Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte against the soldiers that are deployed in these areas past midnight of Jan. 30

Guerrero said the soldiers attacked by the NPA were part of non-combat missions.

"Let us condemn these atrocities which target our soldiers who are performing non-combat missions. These tactical offensives by the NPAs are inconsistent with their ceasefire declaration and could imperil ongoing peace negotiation. These acts of violence also bring misery and suffering to the affected communities," he said.

While the peace talks were ongoing in Rome last week, the military and the communists also figured in a firefight in Makilala, North Cotabato, which left one rebel dead. It was the first encounter that broke the unilateral ceasefire declared by both parties last August.

The peace panels were not able to come up with a bilateral ceasefire declaration in the recent negotiations. They aim to complete an agreement in February. *CDG/rga*

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AFP command alerts all units amid NPA attacks

PNA

Armed Forces of the Philippines Eastern Mindanao Command (EastMinCom) has alerted all its units after a series of attacks, abduction and killings in CARAGA and Davao regions perpetrated by the New People's Army (NPA) despite a standing unilateral ceasefire.

EastMinCom commander Lt. General Rey Leonardo Guerrero, in a statement Tuesday, has directed all units to be on alert against possible atrocities in the future as he reminded troops to remain committed and observe the suspension of offensive military operations as part of the unilateral ceasefire.

"In the meantime, we will continue to abide by our own ceasefire declaration and observe the suspension of offensive military operations. We will, however, continue to exercise/perform our mandate of protecting the people and the communities against attacks by armed threat groups," he added.

Elements of an armed lawless group, believed to be members of the New People's Army, fired at the Peace and Development Teams (PDTs) that were stationed in Mat-i, Surigao City in the midnight of January 30. The attack lasted about 15 minutes and caused the wounding of three AFP personnel.

Shortly after midnight, three more attacks took place in San Isidro, Mahayahay, and Hinambangan, all of Kitcharao, Agusan Del Norte against the PDTs deployed in these areas.

Guerrero said the atrocities ran contrary to the spirit of the peace process especially in the delivery of basic services to support far-flung communities.

He said the PDTs are stationed in depressed communities to facilitate the delivery of basic government services in collaboration with different government agencies.

"Let us condemn these atrocities which target our soldiers who are performing non-combat missions. These tactical offensives by the NPAs are inconsistent with their ceasefire declaration and could imperil the ongoing peace negotiation. These acts of violence also bring misery and suffering to the affected communities. We call on the CNN to show sincerity in their peace talks with the government by directing their armed members to immediately desist from committing atrocities," Guerrero said.

On January 16, the NPAs allegedly killed Albert Sablada in Brgy. Saloy, Calinan, Davao City allegedly for being an organizer of Alamara Militia. Then, followed by the killing of Neptali Alfredo on January 23 in Tabaon, Malabog, Paquibato District allegedly for being tagged as a drug supplier.

The Command also lamented the abduction of Pfc Erwin Salan of 301B in Lumondo Falls, Budlingin, Alegria, Surigao del Norte. The said personnel, according to EastMinCom, was unarmed and in the company of other civilians when the abduction happened on January 29.

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No US military depot will be built in Philippines

~~January 31, 2017 PNA~~

The US will not be allowed to build any military depots in bases ear-marked for the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) under the US. This was disclosed Tuesday by Department of National Defense (DND) public affairs office chief Arsenio Andolong in a message to the Philippine News Agency.

"The Secretary of National Defense supports the President's statements not (to) allow construction of military depots by the US," he said.

"We are reviewing the provisions of the EDCA on allowable infrastructures and ensure that the President's wishes are followed," he added.

Earlier, President Rodrigo Duterte claimed that the Americans are unloading weapons and other stores in the EDCA dedicated facilities in the Philippines.

However, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) maintained that only equipment and materials intended for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) missions may be stockpiled in military facilities earmarked for EDCA.

Earlier, the Department of National Defense announced that the United States will start building some facilities that can house troops and their equipment in Basa Air Base, Floridablanca, Pampanga; Antonio Bautista Air Base in Puerto Princesa, Palawan; and Lumbia Airfield in Cagayan De Oro, in relation to EDCA-related activities.

Construction is expected to be done within the year.

"(These claims) were checked by the AFP and it was found out that there was not confirmed incident of this nature and EDCA, like what was announced, is geared for the preparedness (of our forces) to respond to HADR situation faster," said AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla in Filipino.

"And if they are constructing warehouses or storage areas of equipment or items, these should be oriented for HADR (like generator sets, rubber boats, or shelter-type materials, and water purifiers)," he added.

The AFP spokesperson said construction of fuel depots are allowable in EDCA as this will allow aircraft to refuel and do repeated missions transporting relief goods and saving lives in times of calamities.

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<http://dwdd.com.ph/>

Eastern Mindanao Command Condemns NPA Atrocities, Alerts Troops

Posted by Lui Claudio on January 31, 2017 at 9:40 AM



NSFA, Panacan, Davao City – The Eastern Mindanao Command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines condemns the New People's Army following its series of attacks, abduction and killings in CARAGA and Davao Region, despite the earlier declaration of the unilateral ceasefire. Just recently, elements of an armed lawless group, believed to be members of the New People's Army, fired at the Peace and Development Teams (PDTs) that were stationed in Mat-i, Surigao City in the midnight of January 30, 2017. The attack lasted about 15 minutes and caused the wounding of three AFP personnel.

Shortly after midnight, three more attacks took place in San Isidro, Mahayahay, and Hinambangan all of Kitcharao, Agusan Del Norte against the PDTs that are deployed in these areas.

These atrocities ran contrary to the spirit of the peace process especially in the delivery of basic services to support far flung communities. These PDTs are stationed in depressed communities to facilitate the delivery of basic government services in collaboration with different government agencies.

It can be recalled that the NPAs also killed Albert Sablada last January 16, 2017 in Brgy. Saloy, Calinan, Davao City allegedly for being an organizer of Alamara Militia. It was followed by the killing of Neptali Alfredo on January 23, 2017 in Tabaon, Malabog, Paquibato District allegedly for being tagged as a drug supplier. The Command also laments the abduction of Pfc Erwin Saian of 30IB in Lumondo Falls, Budlingin, Alegria, SDN. The said military personnel was unarmed and in the company of other civilians when the abduction happened on January 29, 2017.

Lieutenant General Rey Leonardo B. Guerrero, AFP, Commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command expressed his serious concern and called on the NPAs to desist from committing further atrocities.

"Let us condemn these atrocities which target our soldiers who are performing non-combat missions. These tactical offensives by the NPAs are inconsistent with their ceasefire declaration and could imperil ongoing peace negotiation. These acts of violence also bring misery and suffering to the affected communities. We call on the CNN to show sincerity in their peace talks with the government by directing their armed members to ~~immediately desist from committing atrocities,~~" Lt Gen Guerrero said.

In line with such pronouncement, General Guerrero has directed all units to be on alert against possible atrocities in the future and reminded the troops to remain committed and observe the suspension of offensive military operations as part of the unilateral ceasefire.

"In the meantime we will continue to abide by our own ceasefire declaration and observe the suspension of offensive military operations. We will, however, continue to exercise/perform our mandate of protecting the people and the communities against attacks by armed threat groups," he added.

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JTF Haribon condemns NPA killing

Joint Task Force Haribon Commander Brigadier General Gilbert I. Gapay condemns the killing of Neptali Alfredo Pondoc who was killed on January 23, 2017 in Tabaon, Malabog, Paquibato District for being alleged as illegal drugs supplier.

~~"This is not a dispensation of justice as they claim but purely murder. The NPAs have no right to impose justice as this is within the purview of the judiciary," said Bgen. Gapay.~~

"It is ironic that the group grossly disregarded International Humanitarian Law which they always claim to adhere" he further said.

~~Aside from its counter and anti-terrorism task, JTF Haribon is also responsible in securing the hinterlands of Davao City particularly on efforts against criminal groups and Lawless elements in support to the PNP~~

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5 Abu men killed, 2 soldiers and 7 others wounded in Sulu clashes

Julie Alipala



Soldiers in action against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu. AFP FILE PHOTO / STRINGER

ZAMBOANGA CITY — Five suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits were killed while nine others – including two soldiers – were injured in separate clashes in Sulu on Tuesday.

Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command, said the clashes took place in Barangay Pugad Manual in Panamao, Sulu.

He said the group that the soldiers clashed with was led by Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Alhabsy Misaya.

“First, there was an encounter of 30 minutes and the kidnapers withdrew, and another unit engaged them in a bloody firefight for 45 minutes,” Galvez said. **SFM/rga**

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Contrary to peace pact? Military jolted by recent NPA attacks

Frinston Lim

DAVAO CITY—The military on Tuesday expressed concern over the spate of attacks carried out by suspected New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas in several parts of Mindanao in the last few days.

On Monday night, suspected NPA rebels disarmed guards of a banana plantation in Monkayo, Compostela Valley, while three soldiers were also wounded as communist guerrillas assaulted an army outpost in Surigao City, the military said.

Maj. Ezra Balagtey, spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command (EMC), said the 15-minute attack on the detachment of a peace and development team (PDT) in Barangay (Village) Mat-i, Surigao City on Monday was followed by three more attacks against army outposts in the villages of San Isidro, Mahayahay and Hinambangan in Kitcharao town, Agusan del Norte.

Rebels also attacked an army outpost and burned a passenger van in Sarangani province on Monday, while a soldier, identified as Pfc. Erwin Salan, assigned with the Army's 30th Infantry Battalion, was abducted while in the company of several civilians in Alegria, Surigao del Norte last Sunday, Balagtey said. Balagtey said the incidents "ran contrary to the spirit of the peace process."

"These PDTs are stationed in depressed communities to facilitate the delivery of basic government services in collaboration with different government agencies," Balagtey said.

Lt. General Rey Leonardo Guerrero, Eastmincom, condemned the attacks and called on the rebels to rein in their fighters.

"These tactical offensives by the NPAs are inconsistent with their ceasefire declaration and could imperil peace negotiations. We call on the (Communist Party of the Philippines) to show sincerity in the peace talks with the government by directing their armed members to immediately desist from committing atrocities," Guerrero said, adding the military would remain on alert while observing the suspension of offensive military operations (SOMO) as part of its unilateral ceasefire.

Capt. Rhyan Batchar, spokesperson of the Army's 10th Infantry Division, said 10 gunmen on three motorcycles also arrived at the compound of Musahamat Farms in Barangay Union in Monkayo, Compostela Valley around 7:40 p.m. on Monday, held the guards at gunpoint, and carted away a shotgun and a cal. 38 revolver – as well as cellphones and keys to several heavy equipment. /rga

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<http://www.update.ph/>

PH military on defensive mode despite NPA attacks

January 31, 2017 PNA

Until ordered to go on the offensive, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will continue to be on the defensive despite repeated and unprovoked attacks against civilians and military men in Bukidnon, Surigao Del Norte, Agusan Del Norte, Compostela Valley, Batangas and Isabela in the past 48 hours.

AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla in a briefing in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tuesday said that should the attacks continue, the AFP would be forced to recommend the lifting of the military ceasefire so that lives of soldiers in the field would not be hazarded needlessly.

"We have brought this matter to the attention of our peace panel and to the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process," Padilla said.

In the NPA ambush in Echague, Isabela, two unarmed troopers were killed last Jan. 30 while another three were wounded in a harassment raid in Surigao City in the same day.

Last January 29, a trooper, fresh "Bayanihan" duties, was abducted by the NPA in Alegria, Surigao Del Norte.

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