

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



Serving the people. Securing the land.

oacpa.army2012@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

05 February 2017

Sunday

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

05 FEBRUARY 2017

PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER
1	Weather Forecast		PDI p.A15
HEADLINES			
2-3	Rody scraps talks with communists	Leila Salaverria	PDI p.A1
4-5	AFP to launch rescue operation for NPA captives	Michael Punongbayan	Phil Star p.14
6-7	Rody scuttles peace talks	Christina Mndez	Phil Star p.1
8-10	Peace talks to continue –Palace	Argyll Geducos	Manila Bulletin p.1
ARMY NEWS			
11	3 soldiers shot 76 times by NPA rebels	Mike Crismundo	Manila Bulletin p.16
12	Search on for troops in NPA 'atrocities'	-	The Standard o.p.A1
13	Basilan mayor survives bomb attack	Roel PAreño	The Phil Star p.14
14	Basilan town mayor survives bombing	PNA	The Manila Times p.A7
15	Basilan mayor unscathed in roadside blast; 2 hurt	PNA	The Daily Tribune p.3
16	Rescue operation ng military sa tatlong sundalong kinidnap ng NPA	Mark Obleada	Police Files p.2
17	Holdaper na ex Army niratrat ng tandem	Lordeth Bonilla	PM p.2
18	3 bihag na sundalo, iligtas ang buhay	-	PM.p2
19	Dating sundalo dedo sa tandem	ARico	Abante p.2
20	Photo: Scant comfort	Malacañang	PDI p.A4
21	Photo: Norman and Nelia Alejo	-	The Phil Star p.1
22	Photo: Shoulder to cry on	-	Manila Bulletin p.1
AFP RELATED NEWS			
23	Talk while fighting? Red still hopeful	Jose Clapano	The Phil Star p1
24	Duterte failed to deliver on promise – NPA	Jerry Adlaw	The Manila Times p.A1
25	'Disconnect' seen between NDF, NPA amid truce end	Ted Tuvera	The Daily Tribune p.1
26	AFP gets to rescue 3 soldiers by rebels	Zaida Palanca	Peoples Journal p.3
27	AFP, PNP resume offensive vs NPA	Alfred Dalizon	Peoples Journal p.3
28	Gov't, reds still pursuing peace	Efren Montano	Peoples Journal p.3
29	Palace: No to closure yet to peace	Efren Montano	Peoples Tonight p.7
COMMENTARY/EDITORIAL			
30	The unvarnished truth	Ninez Olivarez	The Daily Tribune p.6
31	Paanong pumalya ang NDF peace talks ?	Rocky Nazareno	Balita p.3
32	Scout Rangers perform non-traditional roles in Basilan	Josephine Codilla	Remate p.4

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

ONLINE NEWS

34	Basilan blast: Mayor, soldier survive, but driver in critical condition	Julie Alipala	www.inquirer.net
35-36	Palace notes 'disconnect' between NDF, NPA amid end of ceasefire	Nestor Corrales	www.inquirer.net
37-38	AFP has enough troops to address NPA ceasefire withdrawal		www.philstar.com
39	Briton plotted to join Abu Sayyaf bandits		www.inquirer.net
40-41	2 civilians killed in Manay town as ceasefire with NPA ends	Frinston Lim	www.inquirer.net
42-45	AFP: We will hit them hard	Edith Regalado	www.philstar.com
46-47	DND: NPA's 'lawless' activities caused lifting of ceasefire	Audrey Morallo	www.philstar.com
48	CPP-NPA still on US gov't terror list	Pia Lee-Brago	www.philstar.com
49-50	NDF not giving up on peace talks	Jose Rodel Clapano	www.philstar.com
51-52	Army: Three soldiers' death at hands of NPA overkill	Erwin M. Mascariñas,	www.interaksyon.com
53	US Military delivers counterterrorism gear to Philippine Army and Marine Corps		www.interaksyon.com

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

05 February 2017



Page: 15

www.panahon.tv /PanahonTV

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST FEBRUARY 5, 2017 SUNDAY

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "BISING"
ESTIMATED AT 500 KMS. EAST OF
HINATUAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR
NORTHEAST MONSOON
AFFECTING LUZON
(As of 5:00 AM - Feb. 4, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:24 AM	5:57 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
12:34 AM	12:37 PM
FIRST QUARTER	FULL MOON
FEB 4 12:18 PM	FEB 11 3:23 AM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 9:07 AM 0.18 Meter	4:53 PM 0.76 Meter

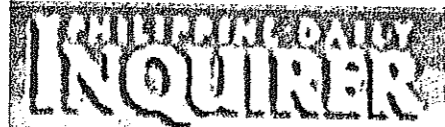
- Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers
- Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
- Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
- Light rains

	FEB 4	FEB 5	FEB 6	FEB 7	FEB 8	FEB 9
METRO MANILA	22 - 30 °C	22 - 29 °C	24 - 27 °C	21 - 27 °C	23 - 29 °C	23 - 29 °C
TUGUEGARAO	20 - 26 °C	21 - 25 °C	24 - 28 °C	25 - 29 °C	23 - 29 °C	24 - 30 °C
LAOAG	22 - 30 °C	23 - 31 °C	24 - 31 °C	24 - 31 °C	24 - 30 °C	25 - 31 °C
BAGUIO	14 - 21 °C	14 - 22 °C	25 - 29 °C	25 - 29 °C	24 - 32 °C	24 - 33 °C
SBMA/CLARK	21 - 30 °C	22 - 29 °C	24 - 29 °C	25 - 30 °C		
TAGAYTAY						
TACLOBAN						
LEGAZPI						
CAGAYAN DE ORO						
METRO DAVAO						
ILOILO/BACOLOD						
ZAMBOANGA						
METRO CEBU						

SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

Watch PanahonTV daily on Pilipinas HD at 9AM, 12NN, 3PM, 6PM & 9PM.

05 February 2017



Page: A1

Rody scraps talks with communists

Mr. Duterte explained that he was not willing to give in to the communists' demand to release all political prisoners.

FROM A1

By Leila B. Salaverria and Nestor Corrales @Team_Inquirer

Peace talks with communist rebels will no longer continue, unless there's a compelling reason to do so, President Duterte told reporters on Sunday during his visit to his parents' graves in Davao City.

"Peace talks will remain canceled unless there is a compelling reason that will benefit the interest of the nation," Mr. Duterte said, a day after he lifted the government's unilateral ceasefire with the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

"If I feel that there is a joke somewhere. I will not waste my time," he said.

He said he would also direct government negotiators, who had been engaged in talks with communists in Rome, to come home.

"I will request maybe tomorrow the Philippine contingent to fold their tents and come home," he said. "I am not ready to resume peace talks. As I have said, I would like to tell the Filipino people: Peace with the communists might not come in this generation."

On several occasions, the President had insisted that he would not give in to the demand of the communist rebels to free all political prisoners.

"I will not compromise integrity of government by releasing all political prisoners," he said.

"I would not honor any agreement that would violate the Constitution. I never promised to release all political prisoners. You don't release them because they committed a crime," he added.


'My soldiers have died'

He said he lifted the ceasefire ahead of the Feb. 10 scheduled lifting of the ceasefire on the part of the rebels because many soldiers had died.

"*Namamatay na mga sundalo ko maghihintay pa ako ng Feb. 10? (My soldiers have died. Why should I wait for Feb. 10?)*," he said.

To political prisoners already out of prison, he directed this statement: "Those released by the government should return to prison in their own volition. Those released to participate in the talks should return and face jurisdiction of the government because they are still criminals."

The government peace


I would like to tell the Filipino people: Peace with the communists might not come in this generation

Rodrigo Duterte
President

panel and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) negotiators were supposed to meet for the fourth rounds of talks in The Netherlands from Feb. 22 to 25.

'Prepare for a long war'

Mr. Duterte chided the communists rebels for apparently wanting hostilities to continue.

"If you want to extend it for another 50 years, so be it. I'd be happy to accommodate you," he said.

He stressed that he had "walked the extra mile" for peace.

Mr. Duterte said he was "not ready to talk about anything."

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

"I told soldiers to prepare for a long war. I said it will not come during our generation. I know them already," he said.

Earlier Saturday, the government peace panel said the talks were scheduled to continue despite the lifting of the unilateral ceasefire.

The government lifted its ceasefire on Friday night, two days after the NPA said it was canceling its own truce by Feb. 10.

The NPA had accused the government of reneging on a promise to free more jailed comrades and of advancing its troops into rebel-held territories.

Presidential peace adviser Jesus Dureza and government chief negotiator Silvestre Bello III had both stressed that President Duterte only ended the ceasefire, but not the whole peace process.

Bello said that both sides were due to meet in the Netherlands later this month as well as in Norway in April. The government panel had submitted to the NDFP a proposal for a bilateral ceasefire.

On Friday, the military said that at least six soldiers were killed in fresh hostilities this week, including three who were kidnapped and

found dead, their bodies bearing multiple gunshot wounds.

In lifting the government ceasefire, Mr. Duterte said the rebels had insisted on impossible demands, including the release of about 400 jailed political prisoners.

He lamented that his administration would have been the "golden opportunity" to end about 50 years of fighting that, according to estimates, has left at least 40,000 dead.

"I am asking the soldiers, go back to your camps, clean your rifles and be ready to fight," Mr. Duterte had said.

"Sorry. So I really would like to express my sadness. We cannot have a peaceful generation," he added.

Earlier hopes dashed

Before the President's announcement, Dureza was still hopeful that talks would continue.

"On the peace talks, he has not mentioned anything specific about it so we consider it, as far as peace adviser, we assume that the peace talks will still continue as scheduled, unless otherwise ordered by the President," Dureza had said.

The NDFP, the political wing of the communist movement, said that despite the end of the truce, both sides could carry on with their work.

"The NDFP remains hopeful that the peace talks will proceed on track and that the comprehensive agreements on socioeconomic, political and constitutional reforms currently being negotiated will be deemed ready for approval by both panels by end-2017, and soon after by the principals," NDFP chief negotiator Fidel Agcaoili had said.

But the military appears to be preparing for war against NPA.

Maj. Gen. Rafael Valencia, commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command—the area where skirmishes and abduction of soldiers had recently taken place—said the military could now pursue the NPA. He said he would wait for an official word before deployments to rebel-held areas would be made.

"There will be no additional troops. I believe our force on the ground [is] sufficient," he told reporters.

Over 3,000 families have also been displaced in the fresh hostilities this week, particularly in Manay, Davao Oriental, where NPA rebels killed a junior army officer in an ambush, the Army's 10th Infantry Division said. —WITH REPORTS FROM KARLOS MANLUPIG, ALLAN NAWAL, CYNTHIA D. BALANA, JAYMEE T. GAMIL, DJ YAP, FRINSTON LIM AND REUTERS INQ

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

February 2017



Page: _____

AFP to launch rescue operation for NPA captives

By **MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN**

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is gearing up for renewed fighting with the New People's Army (NPA) following President Duterte's decision

ing the soldiers seized by the NPA in northern Mindanao.

Among those to be rescued is Private First Class Erwin Salan of the Army's 30th Infantry Battalion who was kidnapped in Surigao del Norte

to scuttle the government's truce declaration with the communist rebels.

AFP Public Affairs Office (PAO) chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said the troops are under orders to start the offensive against the rebels by rescu-

ing the soldiers seized by the NPA in northern Mindanao.

Days later, two more soldiers from the Army's 39th Infantry Battalion were also forcibly taken in Barangay Telafas, Columbio, Sultan Kudarat.

Turn to Page 8

AFP From Page 1

"We refuse to call them prisoners of war because the NPA is not a belligerent force. The soldiers were simply victims of kidnapping," Arevalo said.

"That is the subject of our combat rescue operations. We are going to rescue them," he added.

Arevalo said full-scale rescue operations could not be made possible while the unilateral ceasefire was still in effect.

"We can now do that now, unlike before when there was the unilateral ceasefire declaration of the government and the suspension of military operations of the AFP. We can now conduct combat operations against them," Arevalo said.

"And the first combat operation that we can do against them is to launch a rescue operation for the kidnapped soldiers," he said.

On Friday, President Duterte announced the gov-

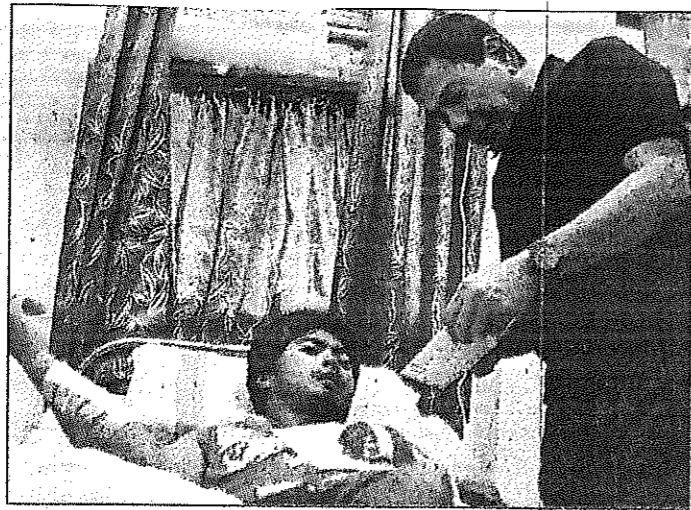
ernment was lifting its unilateral ceasefire and directed the military to prepare to fight.

In response, AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año said the troops are ready to abide by the orders of the Commander-in-

Chief and will hit the NPA hard.

Duterte ended the government's six-month ceasefire with communist rebels, who had just lifted their own truce

Turn to Page 9



President Duterte hands over an incentive to PO1 Angelito Edep, who was wounded in an operation in North Cotabato on Feb 1. Duterte visited Edep at Kidapawan Medical Specialists Inc. in Kidapawan City last Friday.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS - Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

and killed troops in fresh attacks.
Duterte said he was forced to break off the ceasefire after receiving reports of "systematic attacks" by the NPA against government forces even before their declaration to scuttle their own ceasefire next Friday.

Suspected NPA rebels snatched two soldiers in a remote village in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat last Feb. 2.

Last week, two off-duty soldiers in civilian clothes and riding a motorcycle were taken by NPA rebels in Makilala, North Cotabato.

Separately, three soldiers were taken by NPA rebels in Malaybalay City in Bukidnon. The three soldiers were also unarmed and in their civilian attire when they were snatched.

Their lifeless bodies were later found along the road in a remote village in the city.

The regional police said the bodies of the three soldiers were riddled by gunfire of different calibers with a minimum of 24 gunshot wounds on each of them.

Colonel Eric Vinoya, commander of the Army's 403rd Infantry Brigade, described the killing as inhuman and overkill.

"We condemn the recent act of violence perpetrated by alleged NPA members against three personnel of the 8th Infantry Battalion who were conducting community support program in Barangay Manalog, Malaybalay City. They left the barangay because they needed to secure some documentary requirements for a livelihood project that they were facilitating in the community and to get their subsistence allowances. Unfortunately, they were flagged down and murdered by armed men as they were about to go back to the community. They were in civilian attire and unarmed when they were slain," Vinoya said.

"This act perpetrated by the NPA only shows that they are not fighting for an ideology anymore. They have resorted to criminal acts and banditry the moment that they murdered our troops and took their money and personal belongings," he added.

The military leadership in the region vowed justice for the three slain soldiers.

"To the perpetrators, the full force of the law will be implemented until justice is served to our soldiers," said Major Gen. Benjamin Madrigal Jr., commander of the Army's 4th Infantry Division covering the Caraga and Northern Mindanao areas.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

- With Ben Serrano

el no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

05 February 2017



Page: 1

Rody scuttles peace talks

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

A day after lifting the unilateral ceasefire, President Duterte announced last night that he was terminating formal peace negotiations with communist rebels.

In an interview, Duterte said he was ordering the government peace panel to "fold up the tents and come home."

He issued the statement hours after his spokesman expressed hope for substantial progress in the peace talks despite the lifting of the unilateral ceasefire.

"Peace talks will remain canceled unless there is a compelling reason that will benefit the interest of the nation," Duterte told journalists during his visit to his parents' tombs in Davao City.

He had lifted the ceasefire effective yesterday after the

New People's Army killed three soldiers and kidnapped three more in separate incidents in recent days while the NPA's own truce was supposed to be in place.

Duterte noted that the government had been trying to discuss peace with the rebels since the administration of Fidel Ramos.

"This time is should end here," he said, reiterating he would not give in to the rebels' demand for the release of 400 political prisoners.

He denied promising to release the 400, saying doing

Turn to Page 8

Rody From Page 1

so would be tantamount to surrender: "We started with 18 and we came up with 23 leaders and now it's 400. *Eh kung ganun mag-surrender na lang kami.*"

"I am not interested in arguing with them," he said, referring to the rebels.

Earlier yesterday, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said, "Despite the untenable circumstances on the ground, the peace talks have not yet been scuttled. The road to peace is not an easy journey."

Duterte had ordered soldiers the other day to "go back to your camp, clean your rifles and be ready to fight."

He said he had done his best

and "walked the extra mile" for peace, but the rebels had acted in bad faith and imposed unreasonable demands.

Abella, however, cited "some progress" during the peace talks between the government and the communist leadership in Rome last week.

He stressed the need to address some concerns, particularly the kidnapping and killing of soldiers in Mindanao.

"Some progress had already been made during the third round of peace talks in Rome, but apparently there is some disconnect between dissident leaders negotiating at the table and their forces on the ground. It would be deeply regrettable

that the otherwise positive developments now might have to be set aside," he said.

On Wednesday, the NPA's parent organization, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) announced it was ending a five-month-old unilateral ceasefire and accused Duterte of treachery and human rights abuses.

The CPP-NPA also criticized Duterte's failure to grant amnesty and freedom to nearly 400 so-called political prisoners, after the President released 18 jailed rebel leaders at the start of the talks last year.

The rebels also accused the government of violating the interim ceasefire by allowing the military and paramilitary forces to encroach into their rural strongholds.

Two days later, Duterte an-

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

nounced he would scuttle the government's unilateral ceasefire with the rebels and ordered the military to resume fighting.

Implications

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza said Duterte made the judgment call in lifting the interim ceasefire with the rebels.

Dureza also said it would be prudent not to jump to conclusions regarding Duterte's decision.

"The President has spoken. He cancelled the government unilateral ceasefire. He gave his reasons. He makes the judgment call," Dureza said.

"It's too early yet to speculate its implications on the peace process. Let's watch how it rolls out," he added.

An adviser to the govern-

ment peace panel, however, said the withdrawal of the unilateral ceasefire would create uncertainty and fear in areas affected by the decades-long conflict.

Commission on Higher Education commissioner Prospero de Vera, who is among the government advisers in the negotiations with the National Democratic Front (NDF), said the latest development would also make it difficult to convince the public that the peace negotiation is the way forward.

The NDF is the umbrella organization representing the CPP-NPA in the peace talks with the government.

"It is unfortunate that the NPA and the Philippine government have decided to withdraw their unilateral declaration of ceasefire right after the conclu-

sion of the third round of talks in Rome, Italy," De Vera said.

"This latest development will create uncertainty and fear in many conflict affected communities and make it difficult to convince the public that peace negotiations are the way to go," he added.

De Vera, who provides the government panel with technical inputs on the forging of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Rights, said they would wait for the instructions of President Duterte on how to move forward with the negotiations.

"The lifting of the ceasefire, however, should not detract us from recognizing the gains achieved in the peace negotiations," De Vera said. – **With Janvic Mateo, Jose Rodel Clapano, Cet Dematera**

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

February 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

Peace talks to continue - Palace

Año: AFP has more than enough forces to meet NPA challenge

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

The peace talks between the government and the local communist group will continue despite both parties'

announcement of the termination of their respective unilateral ceasefire declarations, Malacañang said Friday night.

With this development, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) assured

yesterday that it has more than sufficient forces to meet the rebel group's challenge.

Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said there was an apparent disconnect between the rebel lead- ▶8

Duterte pursuing...

◀1

unilateral ceasefire Friday after three soldiers were killed in an ambush last Wednesday.

Duterte also responded to the vow of some members of the 1986 Constitutional Commission (Con-Com) to block any attempt to change the Charter.

"Kaya kayo ayaw niyong baliktarin, ayaw niyong palitan ang Constitution (You don't want to end the Constitution), fine!" he said, adding that there won't be peace until amendments in the Constitution are made.

He also hit former constitutional commissioners for seemingly mak-

ing their work "more than its weight of gold."

"Trabaho nila 'yon, eh. Iyon 'yung commission na inilagay ni [former President] Cory [Aquino] after the EDSA revolution, 'yang Constitution na trabaho nila (The Constitution they created was their job). They think it is more than its weight of gold," he said.

Three former constitutional commissioners had earlier said the Constitution is not the problem, but rather the failure of the government to fully implement it. (Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)

February 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A1

Govt, Reds agree to 'talk and fight'

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

THE government's peace negotiator with communist rebels on Saturday said he saw no problem with a "talk-and-fight" approach to peace talks, as long the Duterte administration would be able to secure a final peace agreement.

"Talk-and-fight mode, that's okay with us because that's the situation before. We are talking because there's a dispute between the government and their group," Bello told government-run radio station dzRB.

"So what's important is, we try to talk, hopefully to stop the fighting and permanently," he added.

This came after National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) senior political adviser Luis Jalandoni expressed willingness to proceed with peace talks with the Duterte administration, even if both sides have lifted their respective ceasefire declarations.

Jalandoni, in a statement, said "communist rebels can fight government forces while

➤ GovtA2

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS - Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

GOVT FROM A1

Govt, Reds

“talking peace at the same time”

Bello shared the view and stressed that peace in Mindanao could be achieved with “mutual trust and confidence” between the two parties.

He said the peace talks would resume on February 22 in the Netherlands, and both sides would work to come up with a bilateral ceasefire agreement that would clearly spell out parameters and definitions of terms.

Both sides have claimed ceasefire violations but it wasn't clear what constituted a violation, Bello noted.

its unilateral ceasefire effective February 10, citing President Rodrigo Duterte's failure to release some 400 detained rebels.

Duterte on Friday refused to give in to the rebels' demand and lifted the ceasefire on the part of the government, calling on the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to “be ready to fight.”

Bello said: “We will abide by the President's decision. And I think, there is still the mutual trust and confidence of our part because if you do not trust them, there will be no reason to talk at all.”

'Viciously killed'

Citing the President's statements, Abella said many of the govern-

NDFP, NPA 'disconnect'

Malacañang on Saturday said it was confident peace talks between the government and communist rebels would continue despite the lifting of the unilateral ceasefire by both sides.

In a statement, however, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella pointed to an apparent disconnect between the leaders of the NDFP, the Communist Party of the Philippines' (CPP) political wing, and its armed group, the New People's Army (NPA).

“Some progress had already been made during the third round of peace talks in Rome, but apparently there is some disconnect between dissident leaders

ment's soldiers have died because of attacks by NPA rebels.

“The NPA had broken peace, ambushing soldiers at ease some of whom had just received wages when rebels shot and killed them viciously,” Abella said.

In Cotabato on Friday, Duterte said: “I have lost so many soldiers in the past 48 hours, I think to continue with the ceasefire will not produce anything.”

Duterte, citing an army officer, said the series of attacks by the NPA showed “complete disregard for their earlier announcement that they would recall its ceasefire only by 10 February.”

The President has ordered the AFP to “go back to your camps, clean your rifles and be ready to

negotiating at the table and their forces on the ground. It would be deeply regrettable that the otherwise positive developments now might have to be set aside,” Abella said.

“Despite the untenable circumstances on the ground, the peace talks have not yet been scuttled. The road to peace is not an easy journey,” he added.

In January, NDFP peace negotiators and the government peace panel ended their third round of peace talks in Rome without a bilateral ceasefire agreement, but both sides said their separate unilateral ceasefire declarations would remain.

The NPA, however, announced on Wednesday the termination of

fight.”

In a statement on Friday, AFP Chief of Staff General Eduardo Año vowed to retaliate against the NPA rebels behind the attacks.

“We shall abide by the President's order of ending the unilateral ceasefire. It is unfortunate that the gains of the last six months would come to a halt because the CPP-NPA again resorted to the use of violence and chose arms to advance their interests,” Año said, describing the events over the past four days as “disdainful and disturbing.”

“We will go after the NPA to prevent them from conducting atrocities and criminal activities against the public. And we will hit them hard,” the AFP chief added.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS - Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

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

5 February 2017



Page: 16

3 soldiers shot 76 times by NPA rebels

By MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City – “Barbaric, overkill.”

This was how Maj. Gen Benjamin R. Madrigal, Jr., commanding general of the Army’s Northeastern and Northern Mindanao 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division (4th ID), described the killing of three Army soldiers allegedly by New People’s Army (NPA) rebels in Malaybalay, Bukidnon last February 1.

So brutal was the slay that Corporal Owen Yee, Private First Class (PFC) Pat Non, and PFC. Niño Christopher Talabor, all of the 8th Infantry Battalion and who were only in civilian clothes, sustained 76 gunshot wounds from high-powered firearms, based on a report of Scene of the Crime Operatives (SOCO) of the Malaybalay police.

“Is this what they (NPA) call achievement of just peace?” Madrigal lamented.

“How can these NPA say that they also want peace if they still continue to kill with impunity, continue to burn construction and production equipment, and kill innocent people?” he added.

According to the initial investigation conducted by the Malaybalay City Police Station (MPS), a copy of the report was furnished Madrigal, showed that the soldiers were killed in Sitio Kaleb, Brgy Kibalabag, an outskirt community of Malaybalay City, with each of them sustaining a minimum of 24 gunshots.

The investigation also showed that the rebels were firing from high-ground and later went near the three soldiers to “finish them off,” Madrigal said.

Based on the cartridge cases recovered at the scene of the ambush, the rebels used M16, M14, AK47, Garand and Carbine rifles in mowing down the three soldiers. A total of 21 spent cartridges were recovered.

Col. Eric C. Vinoya, commanding officer of the 403rd Infantry Brigade, also described the act as “inhuman.” He added that the soldiers are on board two motorcycles when the NPAs flagged them down and eventually killed them.

“There were NPAs firing from the high-ground, and that they even went near the three unarmed soldiers to finish them off, considering that the bulk of the spent rounds that were found near

their bodies,” Vinoya said.

Madrigal challenged the NPA that “they really want peace, then they must lay down their arms and start working with the whole nation on the solutions of these socio-economic problems.”

“They must show sincerity and finally end their violence for the benefit of every Filipino,” he underscored.

He said the abduction of an Army soldier in Surigao del Norte and the barbaric killing of the three Army soldier in Bukidnon will not keep the military from accomplishing their mandate “that is to protect our people and secure their communities against any threat”.

“To the perpetrators, the full force of the law will be implemented until justice is served to our soldiers,” the 4th ID chief added.

Meanwhile, the parents of kidnapped Private First Class Erwin Salan, 28, of the 30th Infantry Battalion (30th IB) in Surigao del Norte appealed to his abductors to release their son safely.

“Paliho buhi-i na ninyo ang among anak” (Please release our son),” Ernesto and Judith Salan said as they wept in an interview over a local radio station here yesterday.

5 February 2017

The Standard

Page: A1

SEARCH ON FOR TROOPS IN NPA 'ATROCITIES'

SECURITY forces in Mindanao launched operations to locate five soldiers who were reported missing amid what they described as "atrocities" committed by the communist New People's Army even before they called off the ceasefire on Feb. 1.

The military and police launched the operations as the families of

husband), something worse will happen to him because he killed a good man], said Almalou Yee, wife of Sgt. Owen Yee.

Sgt. Yee left their base in Malaybalay, Bukidnon with Cpl. Pat Non and Cpl. Niño Christopher Talabor to get their subsistence allowance but were ambushed by NPA rebels.

The bullet-riddled bodies of the

the three soldiers who were killed in an NPA ambush in Bukidnon demanded justice for their slain loved ones, who were ambushed although they were unarmed and in civilian clothing.

"Ang nagpatay kung kinsa man siya mas labaw ang mahitabo sa iya sa iyang gibuhay sa ako bana nga buotan kaayo [Whoever killed (my

three were found later that day, with one cadaver bearing 27 gunshot wounds, another with 26 and the other one with 24.

"These acts are not only violations of their own ceasefire declaration, that is still in effect; it is an utter disregard to international humanitarian law when they used

Turn to A2

excessive force on the bodies of three soldiers they earlier abducted," said Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla.

"The NPA perpetrated acts that are completely unnecessary to the already fallen soldiers," Padilla said.

"Even before they announced the withdrawal of their ceasefire, they already conducted a series of atrocities against government forces beginning last Sunday," he added.

Based from reports on the ground, the NPAs have conducted 18 attacks since Jan. 15 this year.

These include three abduction cases involving three soldiers in separate incidents in Surigao del Norte and Sultan Kudarat.

But the Cotabato regional police said they have intensified intelligence operations to locate two of the three soldiers abducted by communist rebels on Wednesday.

"We maintain our support for the Philippine Army in Columbio and in Sultan Kudarat," said Supt. Romeo Galgo Jr.

An Army intelligence officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the two soldiers—Sgt. Solaiman Calocop and Private 1st Class Samuel Garay of the Army's 39th Infantry Battalion—are believed to be kept at the border of Sultan Kudarat and Davao del Sur, particularly in the mountains of Kiblawan, Davao del Sur where the New People's Army have a strong presence.

The soldiers were on board a motorbike when they were flagged down on Wednesday by some 15 NPA rebels in Barangay Telefas, Columbio.

Initial information showed the two infantrymen were from the battalion headquarters in Makilala, North Cotabato and were heading to their base in Barangay Telefas, hours after the communists canceled the ceasefire.

Meanwhile, AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año has said the military has more than sufficient forces to meet rebel groups in Eastern Mindanao.

"We have enough forces. We will assess everything before we make any troop movement or any adjustment," he said when asked whether there is a need for more forces after President Rodrigo Duterte canceled the government ceasefire in the wake of unprovoked NPA attacks.

12

OS February 2017



Page: 14

Basilan mayor survives bomb attack

ZAMBOANGA CITY – The mayor of a town in Basilan suffered minor injuries while his driver and a soldier were wounded in a roadside bombing in Tuburan town yesterday.

Tuburan Mayor Dorie Kalahal had just alighted from his service vehicle when the explosion occurred in Barangay Dugaa at around 2:30 p.m.

Kalahal's driver Misuari Jamiri and Cpl. Christian Ibaretta were brought to a hospital in Lamitan for treatment.

"The mayor and the troops were responding to an earlier explosion when the second explosion occurred," said Col. Cirilo Donato, chief of the Joint Task Force Basilan and 104th Army Brigade.

The explosion damaged the passenger side of Kalahal's vehicle.

Abu Sayyaf bandits are believed to be behind recent explosions in the province. On Thursday, a grenade exploded on the roof of an abandoned building at the Lamitan District Emergency Hospital.

– Roel Pareño, John Unson

05 February 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A7

Basilan town mayor survives bombing

ZAMBOANGA CITY: Two people, including a soldier, were wounded while a town mayor was unharmed in a roadside bombing at Sitio Sawiti, Barangay Duga-a in Tuburan, Basilan on Saturday.

Senior Insp. Said Omar Ismael, Tuburan police chief, identified the wounded soldier as Cpl. Christian Ibarreta of the Army's 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion and Misuari Jamiri, driver of Tuburan Mayor Durie Kallahal.

Jamiri was transported by speed boat from Basilan to this city for medical treatment.

Col. Cirilo Donato, Army's 104th Infantry Brigade commander, said Kallahal was unscathed since he disembarked before his vehicle tripped on an improvised explosive device fashioned out as a landmine.

The pick-up type vehicle of the mayor

was riddled with shrapnel holes and its left rear tire was blown off as a result of the roadside bomb explosion.

Ismael said that Kallahal accompanied by 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion troops went to Sitio Sawiti, Barangay Calut to inspect the blast site where a bomb exploded around 10:15 a.m. Saturday.

No one was reported killed or wounded in the 10:15 a.m. incident since the bomb exploded in a vacant lot.

At that time, Kallahal and the troops of the Army's 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion were conducting medical outreach mission in downtown Tuburan.

Both the military and police authorities said the roadside bombing was the handiwork of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) since Kallahal is known to be fighting against the bandit group in his town. **PNA**

5 February 2017



Page: 3

Basilan mayor unscathed in roadside blast; 2 hurt

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Two people, including a soldier, were wounded while a town mayor was unscathed in a roadside bombing yesterday in the municipality of Tuburan, Basilan province.

Senior Insp. Said Omar Ismael, Tuburan police chief, disclosed the incident occurred around 2:45 p.m. yesterday, in Sitio Sawiti, Barangay Calut (not Barnagay Duga-a as earlier reported), Tuburan, Basilan.

Ismael identified the wounded soldier as Cpl. Christian Ibarreta of the Army's 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion and Misuari Jamiri, the driver of Tuburan Mayor Durie Kallahal.

Jamiri was transported by speed boat from Basilan to this city for medical treatment.

Col. Cirilo Donato, Army's 104th Infantry Brigade commander, said Kallahal was unscathed since he disembarked before his vehicle tripped on an improvised explosive device

fashioned out as a landmine.

The pick-up type vehicle of Kallahal was riddled with shrapnel holes and its left rear tire was blown off as a result of the roadside bomb explosion.

Ismael said that Kallahal accompanied by 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion troops went to Sitio Sawiti, Barangay Calut to inspect the blast site where a bomb exploded around 10:15 a.m. Saturday.

Ismael said no one was either killed or wounded in the 10:15 a.m. incident since the bomb exploded in a vacant lot.

At that time, Kallahal and the troops of the Army's 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion were conducting medical outreach mission in downtown Tuburan.

Both the military and police authorities said the roadside bombing was the handiwork of the Abu Sayyaf Group since Kallahal is known to be fighting against the bandit group in his town. **PNA**

5 February 2017

POLICE FILES

Page. 2

Rescue operation ng militar sa tatlong sundalong kinidnap ng NPA

NAGLUNSAD ng malawakan operation ang Armed Forces of the Philippine (AFP) laban sa New People Army (NPA) upang masagip o maligtas ang tatlong sundalo kinidnap ng mga rebelled sa Rehiyo ng Mindanao.



Ito'y matapos na bawiin ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang idineklaang unilateral ceasefire laban sanhi ng mga sunod-sunod na panghaharass o salakay sa mga kampao ng Militar, pag-extortion sa mga sibilyan ng mga rebelled.

Ayon kay Col Edgard Arevalo Chief ng AFP Public Affair Office, mari na umano silang maglunsad ng mga combat operation at mayroon na silang plano para i-rescue ang 3 kinidnap na mga sundalo ng mga rebelde

Aniya, di tulad ng mga nakaraan mga araw na mistulang tali ang kanilang mga kamay at hindi nila ma-

habol o makapaglunsad ng combat operation dahil sa ipinaa-iiral na ceasefire at pagdeklara ng "Suspension of Military Operation" (SOMO) upang bigyan daan ang isinusulong na usaping pagkapayapaan.

Mariin tinutulan ni Arevalo ang pahayag ng mga rebelde na idinedeclaran mga "prisoner of war" ang tatlong kinidnap na mga sundalo.

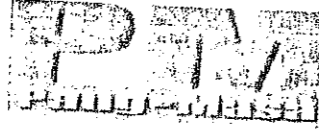
Binigyaan diin ni Arevalo na mayroon umiiral na unilateral ceasefire sa pagitan ng Pamahalaan at Rebelde ang tatlo sundalo ay pawang nakasuot ng

sibilyan at walang dalang armas ng kidnap-pin ng mga rebelde.

Kaugnay nito, nakikipag-ugnayan rin ang Militar sa ilang Ahensiya ng Pamahalaan, Local Government Unit at non government organization para sa ligtas na pagpapalaya sa 3 sundalo:

Magugunita na dinukot ng mga rebelde ang tatlong sundalo kinilala sina Sgt Solaima Calocop, PFC Samuel Garay na pawang miyembrong 391B at PFC Salan sa magkakahiwalay na insidente sa Columbio, Sultan Kudarat. - Mark Obledo

5 February 2017



Pahina. 2

Holdaper na ex Army niratrat ng tandem

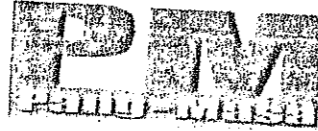
Patay ang isang dating opisyal ng Philippine Army na sangkot sa serye ng robbery/holdap at pagbebenta ng droga matapos itong pagbabarilin ng riding in tandem sa Taguig City kahapon ng madaling araw.

Dead-on-the-spot ang biktimang si ex-Captain Noel Laceda, 40, dating nakatalaga sa Headquarters Battalion ng Philippine Army at naninirahan sa Building 3 #106 MRB Condominium, Brgy. Ususan nang nasabing lungsod, nagtamo ito ng ilang tama ng bala sa ibat-ibang bahagi ng katawan buhat sa hindi pa batid na kalibre ng baril.

Nagsasagawa pa ng follow-up ang pulisya para sa pagkakakilanlan ng mga suspect. Sa inisyal na ulat na natanggap ni Police Chief Supt. Tomas Apolinario Jr., Director ng Southern Police District (SPD), naganap ang insidente ala-1:40 kahapon ng madaling araw sa Pumping Station ng Brgy. Wawa, Taguig City. Kasalukuyang nakatayo ang biktima sa naturang lugar nang biglang dumating ang isang motorsiklong walang plaka na magkaangkas ang dalawang kalalakhian.

Ayon sa Taguig City Police, sangkot umano ang nasawing biktima sa holdapan at pagbebenta ng ipinagbabawal na gamot. Patuloy pa ring iniimbestigahan ang naturang insidente.
Lordeth Bonilla-

5 February 2017



Pahina. 2

3 Binag na sundalo, iigtas ng buhay

Iigtas sila ng buhay!
Ito ang maring direktiba ni Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año sa tropang militar upang agarang magsagawa ng search and rescue operations sa tatlo pang bihag na sundalo ng mga rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) sa lalawigan ng Surigao del Norte at Sultan Kudarat.

Sinabi ni Año na ngayong ipinatigil na ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang unilateral ceasefire sa hanay ng CPP-NPA-NDF ay maari na silang

magsagawa ng rescue operations upang buhay na ma-rescue ang mga bihag nilang tauhan.

Kabilang sa mga target ng rescue mission ay sina Pfc Erwin Salan, miyembro ng Army's 30th Infantry Battalion (IB) na kinidnap ng mga rebelde sa Brgy. Budlingan, Alegria, Surigao del Norte noong Enero 29 ng taong ito.

Ang dalawa pa na binihag naman nitong Pebrero 2 ay sina Sgt. Solaiman Calocop at Pfc Samuel Garay, pawang ng 39th Infantry Battalion ng Phil. Army na binihag naman sa Brgy. dela

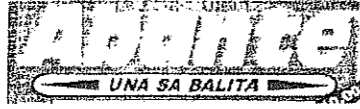
Paz, Columbio, Sultan Kudarat.

Sa panig naman ni AFP-Public Affairs Office (PAO) Chief Col. Edgard Arevalo ang nasa-bing mga sundalo ay hindi mga 'prisoners of war' tulad ng ipinangangalandakan ng NPA rebels dahil kinidnap ang inga ito.

"We are going to rescue them. We can now do that unlike dati nung mayroong ongoing na unilateral ceasefire declaration, ang gobyerno ay may suspension of military operations, we can now conduct combat operations against them," ayon pa sa opisyal.

18

5 February 2017



Pahina. 2

Dating sundalo dedo sa tandem

Patay ang isang dating miyembro ng Philippine Army (PA) na sinasabing sangkot umano sa hold-apan at pagbebenta ng ipinagbabawal na gamot nang pagbabarilin ng mga hindi pa nakikilalang riding in tandem kahapon ng madaling-araw sa Taguig City.

Saunhi ng mga tinamong tama ng hindi pa mabatid na kalibre ng baril sa iba't ibang bahagi ng katawan ay namatay noon din sa pinangyarihan ng insidente ang biktima si Capt. Noel Laceda, 40-anyos at dating nakatalaga sa HHSBN ng Philippine Army at naninirahan

sa Building 3 No. 106 MRB Condominium, Barangay Ususan nang nasabing lungsod.

Base sa isinumiteng report ni Southern Police District (SPD) Director Chief Supt. Tomas Apolinario, dakong ala-1:40 ng madaling-araw nang maganap ang insidente sa Pumping Station Barangay Wawa Taguig City.

Lumalabas sa isinagawang imbestigasyon ng Taguig City Police na kasalukuyan nakatayo ang biktima sa nasabing lugar nang biglang sumulpot ang apat na armadong kalalakihan na lulan ng dalawang motorsiklo na

walang plaka at sabay na pinagbabaril ang dating opisyal ng Army.

Nang duguang bumagsak sa kalsada ang biktima ay mabilis na tumakas ang mga salarin sa hindi mabatid na direksyon palayo sa pinangyarihan ng insidente.

Sa panayam kay Chief Supt. Apolinario, base sa kanyang natanggap na report, na si Capt. Laceda ay sangkot umano sa panghoholdap sa lungsod ng Taguig at bukod pa dito ay isang drug pusher.

Nabatid pa din ni Apolinario na nasa drug watch list ng pulisya ang nasawing si Laceda. (ARico)

February 2017

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

Page: A4



SCANT COMFORT Not even the presence of President Duterte at the wake of slain soldier 2nd Lt. Miguel Victor Alejo in Panacan, Davao City, can stem the grief of his parents Nelia and Norman Alejo. —MALACAÑANG PHOTO

20

February 2017



Page: 1

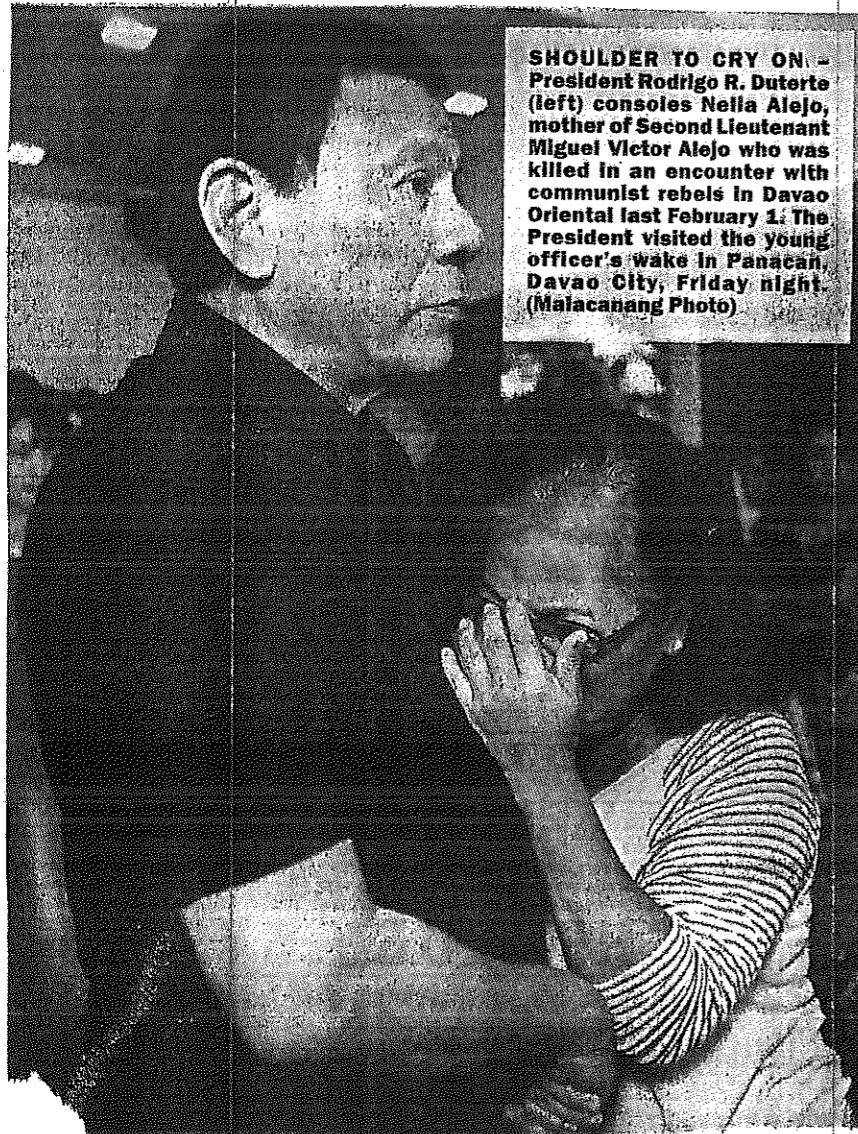


Norman and Nelia Alejo grieve at the wake of their son 2nd Lt. Miguel Victor Alejo, who was killed in an encounter with communist rebels in Davao Oriental on Feb.1. President Duterte visited the wake at the St. Peter's Chapel in Panacan, Davao City the other night.

February 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1



SHOULDER TO CRY ON – President Rodrigo R. Duterte (left) consoles Nella Alejo, mother of Second Lieutenant Miguel Victor Alejo who was killed in an encounter with communist rebels in Davao Oriental last February 1. The President visited the young officer's wake in Panacan, Davao City, Friday night. (Malacanang Photo)

22

February 2017



Page: 1

Talk while fighting? Reds still hopeful

By JOSE RODEL CLAPANO

The National Democratic Front (NDF) remains hopeful that peace negotiations will continue despite President Duterte's decision to scuttle the government's unilateral ceasefire with communist rebels.

NDF chief peace negotiator Fidel Agcaoili said they are also looking forward to the approval of the "comprehensive agreements on socio-economic, political and constitutional reforms" by both peace panels before the end of the year.

Agcaoili stressed the two parties could "talk while fighting," citing their experience during the time of former

Turn to Page 8

Talk From Page 1

president Fidel Ramos.

He said the government has the prerogative to lift its unilaterally issued ceasefire.

Agcaoili added they are also hoping that the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) will jointly create a federal system of government to achieve a just and lasting peace.

The NDF is the umbrella organization representing the CPP-NPA in the peace talks with the government.

The CPP-NPA-NDF and the government had separately declared a ceasefire as they resumed peace talks.

Duterte earlier terminated the government's unilateral ceasefire in response to the NPA's lifting of its own ceasefire it declared in August last year.

Agcaoili maintained the NPA's scuttling of its interim ceasefire had basis.

Even while the police and military operations against the rebels were suspended, the government still allowed security forces to encroach on areas occupied by the NPA.

"The extrajudicial killings of leaders and members of peasant groups and indigenous peoples have also gone unabated with four being killed in January alone and another one just today," Agcaoili said in a statement to GMA-7 News.

Agcaoili said the NPA has strictly maintained its own unilateral ceasefire and took extraordinary measures to avoid encounters with the military while remaining on active defense mode.

Agcaoili also pointed out the government has the obligation under the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law to release

all political prisoners.

It was one of the main reasons the CPP-NPA-NDF dropped its unilateral ceasefire, citing the government's failure to abide by the agreement, he said.

"Some of these political prisoners have languished in jail for more than 10 years without conviction, in violation of the right to speedy trial as provided for in the Constitution," Agcaoili said.

He said 14 of the political prisoners have died in prison, 13 of them during the Aquino administration and another under Duterte.

Agcaoili claimed some "well-meaning military and police officers" have admitted knowing that many political prisoners are innocent civilians who happened to be in the vicinity of armed encounters, or ordinary activists used as scapegoats to compensate for failed military and police missions.

Turn to Page 12

Talk From Page 8

Agcaoili said.

"It behooves the GRP to require its prosecutors not to allow the (military) and (police) to dictate the charges to be filed with their planted evidence and false witnesses against alleged or suspected political offenders," Agcaoili added.

A militant group said Duterte's lifting of the ceasefire made no difference since the military had always been operating in the countryside.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) also accused Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Eduardo Año and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana of sabotaging the peace talks with the communist rebels.

The militant group accused Año and Lorenzana of allowing the military to continue its operations in rural areas during the government's ceasefire.

Pamalakaya said the troops in the field ignored Duterte and took orders only from Año and Lorenzana in their continuing operations affecting farmers and fisherfolk in rural areas.

"We are always in support of the peace negotiations, not only to end the decades-old civil war, but also to attain a genuine development for the benefit of the Filipino people," Pamalakaya chairman Fernando Hicap said. - Ding Cervantes, Ghio Ong

February 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A1

Duterte failed to deliver on promise – NPA

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte's failure to keep his promise to free detained rebels was the reason for the communist New Peoples Army's (NPA) decision to lift its ceasefire with the Philippine government, a rebel spokesman said.

"Ka Ferdie" of the rebels' Front 73 Main Regional Guerilla Unit based in South Cotabato denied that the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the NPA lacked sincerity in the peace negotiations.

"The CPP-NPA withdrew our stand to go on with the unilateral ceasefire because we assumed that President Duterte is uncertain over his commitment to release the political prisoners while holding the peace negotiations," Ka Ferdie said in a phone interview, speaking in Filipino.

Duterte lifted the government's own ceasefire declaration on Friday and vowed not to give in to the rebels' demand without a bilateral ceasefire deal.

Representative Carlos Zarate of the militant Bayan Muna partylist said Saturday both parties should expedite talks and address the roots of armed conflict.

In a statement, Zarate, vice chairman of the House Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity, called on both parties to craft an agreement on socioeconomic reforms, which he described as "the most crucial part" of the peace process.

"The agreed acceleration of the

► NPA A2

process, by also tackling the other substantive agenda on political and constitutional reforms and the end of hostilities and disposition of forces, can continue even in the absence of a ceasefire," Zarate said.

The lawmaker recalled the 12 major agreements forged by both parties during the term of former president Fidel Ramos, which includes the Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

Zarate also called on the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), the CPP's armed wing, to proceed with scheduled talks on February 22 in the Netherlands.

"[This is] to discuss the issue of ceasefire and the release of political detainees, particularly the sickly and the elderly," the lawmaker said.

"The absence of a ceasefire should not be taken as signal the agents of the state for a renewed violation of human rights," he added.

Siquijor Rep. Ramon Rocamora

also called for the continuation of peace talks between the two parties.

Rocamora said the absence of peace "has been a deterrent to getting long-term investments and creating gainful employment which further feeds into great poverty."

"Let's give peace a chance, put in place confidence re-building measures and think deeply about acceptable negotiating points that can be brought to the table," Rocamora said in a statement.

On Friday, Duterte lifted the government's unilateral ceasefire with rebels, two days after the announcement of the NPA that it would terminate its own truce on February 10.

Duterte ordered the Armed Forces of the Philippines to prepare for a fight with rebels.

Duterte first declared the unilateral ceasefire with the communist rebels on July 25, 2016, during his first State of the Nation Address.

JERRY ADLAW AND
LLANESCA T. PANTI

5 February 2017



Page: 1

'Disconnect' seen between NDF, NPA amid truce end

By Ted Tuvera

There is an apparent "disconnect" between the leaders of the National Democratic Front (NDF) talking peace with the government and the New People Army (NPA), the communist's armed group that is operating on the ground, a Palace official yesterday said.

Describing the simultaneous revocation of unilateral ceasefire between the Communist Party of the Philippines and the government as somewhat pitiful, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella noted that the Europe-based rebel movement's leadership has apparently failed to control its guerrilla forces in various barrios and hinterlands in the country.

"Some progress had already been made during the third round of peace talks in Rome, but apparently there is some disconnect between dissident

leaders negotiating at the table and their forces on the ground," he said in a text message to reporters.

"It would be deeply regrettable that the otherwise positive developments now might have to be set aside," he lamented.

While Abella said it may be difficult to attain peace, it could still be achieved as it has "not yet been scuttled."

"Despite the untenable circumstances on the ground, the peace talks have not yet been scuttled. The road to peace is not an easy journey," Abella said.

The Palace official also lashed out at the NPA for launching a series of offensives against government forces days before its unilateral ceasefire declaration ultimatum on February 10.

"The NPA had broken peace, ambushing soldiers at ease some of whom had just received wages when rebels shot and killed them viciously," he stressed.

Turn to page 2

From page 1

Abella noted that the rebels displayed "complete disregard for their earlier announcement that they would recall ceasefire only by February 10."

President Rodrigo Duterte declared the lifting of the unilateral ceasefire with the CPP-NPA last Friday, even as he called on the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to "be ready to fight."

"Peace with the communists cannot be achieved in our generation," the Commander-in-Chief lamented.

"But I'm sad to report to you that there will be no peace with the communists... Let's finish each other off," he stressed.

Enough forces

AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año, for his part, said the military has sufficient forces to meet rebel groups in Eastern Mindanao.

"We have enough forces. We will assess everything before we make any troop movement or any adjustment," he said when asked whether there is a need for more

forces after Mr. Duterte ordered the lifting of the government ceasefire amid the unprovoked NPA attacks which left six troops dead and three others abducted this week.

Año noted he has been in contact with all military commanders in Eastern Mindanao and that all of them are now aware of what they need to do.

"They know already what to do because when we (had) our command conference early last month, (part of the) contingency planning is what the military would do in case peace negotiations fail or should the NPA decide to withdraw their ceasefire," he said.

Año placed the number of NPA combatants in the entire country at 3,700, half of whom are operating in Eastern Mindanao.

He said this is the reason the AFP is focusing on community development programs in the countryside, especially those with indigenous peoples, so that the rebels would be denied additional recruits.

February 2017



Page. 3

AFP gets set to rescue 3 soldiers abducted by rebels

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines is girding for the rescue of three soldiers abducted by the New People's Army (NPA) the day after they threatened to terminate the unilateral ceasefire.

According to AFP Chief of Staff General Eduardo Ano, with the lifting of the government ceasefire, the military can now begin the rescue of three

soldiers abducted in Surigao del Norte and Sultan Kudarat.

Ano explained that as long as the unilateral ceasefire called by the government was in place the AFP could not conduct rescue operations.

"Before, (the unilateral ceasefire) prevented us from conducting rescue operations. Now we plan to conduct operations,"

Ano said.

For his part, AFP Public Affairs Office (PAO) chief Colonel Edgard Arevalo clarified that the three soldiers were not prisoners of war contrary to the claim of the rebels because they are simply victims of kidnapping.

"We refuse to call them prisoners of war kasi hindi namansila belligerent. Sila ay mga victims of kidnap-

ping," Arevalo said.

"We are going to rescue them. We can now do that unlike dati nung may-roong ongoing na unilateral ceasefire declaration, ang gobyerno ay may suspension of military operations. We can now conduct combat operations against them," Arevalo said.

Zaida delos Reyes-Palanca

5 February 2017



Page. 3

AFP, PNP resume offensive vs NPA

By Alfred Dalizon

SECURITY troops are back on the offensive against the leftist insurgents who have been on a rampage over the past few days and in the wake of President Duterte's order ending the unilateral ceasefire the government declared last year.

"We shall abide by the President's order of ending the unilateral ceasefire. It is unfortunate that the gains of the last 6 months would come to a halt because the CPP/NPA again resorted to the use of violence and chose arms to advance their interests," said AFP chief General Eduardo Año.

"The last 4 days were disdainful and disturbing. While Fidel Agcaoili was assuring the public through media that NDF/ CPP/NPA will continue the unilateral ceasefire, the CPP/NPA were attacking our soldiers who were doing community support and development works that resulted in the death of 2Lt. Miguel Victor Alejo and 5 soldiers (mostly unarmed) and the abduction of Pfc Salar and 2 other soldiers.

"And long before that, the NPA had killed CAFGLUs and innocent civilians and burned equipment and vehicles. We welcome the pronouncement of the President because the AFP has to do its mandate of protecting the people, securing the community and taking care of our own soldiers too. We will go after the NPA to prevent them from conducting atrocities and criminal activities against the public," the AFP chief said.

"And we will hit them hard! Be that as it may, rest assured that the AFP will continue to support the peace talks with the NDF to find a permanent peaceful solution to this 4 decades-long conflict. We hear the people's clamor for peace and are willing to work hard to attain it but it is unfortunate that the CPP/NPA/NDF chooses to play deaf," he said.

Hoping that the peace talks can still be saved, the PNP headed by Director General Ronald 'Bato' M. de la Rosa said police across the country were ordered to remain on alert 24/7 and be on guard against possible NPA attacks. The PNP and the AFP earlier this week said they will remain on a defensive stance and won't initiate offensive against the NPA in the wake of the move of the CPP/ND to terminate the unilateral ceasefire it declared last year.

The PNP chief said that with the government having ended its unilateral ceasefire, all PNP units have been alerted to remain vigilant and to maintain a high state of operational readiness to respond to hostile actions by domestic threat groups.

PNP spokesman Senior Superintendent Dionardo B. Carlos said PNP units will be on alert for possible movement of armed CPP/NPA members who will take advantage of the situation to regroup and to engage in unlawful activities.

Carlos said that the PNP's normal law enforcement operation will also continue and shall be implemented without prejudice to actions aimed at protecting the people and the communities, as well as PNP troops and installations against insurgent or terrorist attacks.

Gen. de la Rosa said that as such, normal police function such as service of warrants of arrest, checkpoint operations and other routine security operations will continue without let-up.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenza maintained that the military will continue to "maintain peace and order and run after lawless elements whoever they are."

"We do not recognize any areas under NPA control nor are they allowed to roam around with their firearms intimidating people," he said while accusing the NPA of violating its own truce by staging attacks and committing extortion in the countryside despite their declared ceasefire.

27

5 February 2017



Page. 3

GOV'T, REDS STILL PURSUING PEACE

By Efren Montano

BOTH the government and the communists have not given up on the quest for peace.

“Despite the untenable circumstances on the ground, the peace talks have not yet been scuttled,” Presidential Spokesperson Ernesto Abella said in a statement. “The road to peace is not an easy journey.”

The statement added that though some progress had been made during the third round of peace talks in Rome, there apparently was “some

disconnect between dissident leaders negotiating at the table and their forces on the ground.”

Malacañang warned: “It would be deeply regrettable that the otherwise positive developments now might have to be set aside.”

President Rodrigo Duterte announced the end of the ceasefire Friday, two days after the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People’s Army announced its decision to end its unilateral ceasefire beginning February 10, and after several attacks by communist rebels against

security forces which resulted in the deaths of at least nine soldiers.

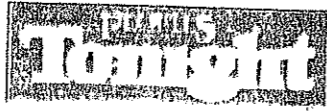
National Democratic Front (NDF) senior adviser Luis Jalandoni had also said that negotiations between the communist insurgents and the Philippine government would continue, with panels set to meet for another round of negotiations in April.

Fidel Agcaoili, NDFP peace panel chair, voiced the same optimism. “The NDFP remains hopeful that the peace talks will proceed on track and that the comprehensive agree-

ments on socio-economic, political and constitutional reforms currently being negotiated will be deemed ready for approval by both Panels by end-2017, and soon after by the principals,” Agcaoili said in a statement.

“We continue to hope that efforts on both sides will lead to the co-founding by the NDFP and the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) of the Philippines and the achievement of just and lasting peace for our people,” he added.

28



Palace: No closure yet to peace talks

By EFREN MONTANO

"THE road to peace is not an easy journey."

Malacañang said this yesterday pointing out it is not yet closing altogether its doors to the peace talks with the Reds despite the government's lifting of its unilateral ceasefire with communist insurgents.

"Despite the untenable circumstances on the ground, the peace talks have not yet been scuttled," Presidential Spokesperson Ernesto Abella said in a statement.

The statement added that though some progress had been made during the third round of peace talks in Rome, there apparently was "some disconnect between dissident leaders negotiating at the table and their forces on the ground."

Malacañang warned: "It would be deeply regrettable that the otherwise positive developments now might have to be set aside."

It will be recalled that President Rodrigo Duterte announced the end of the ceasefire Friday (Feb. 3) two days after the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army announced its decision to end its unilateral ceasefire beginning Feb 10, and after several attacks by communist rebels against security forces which resulted in the deaths of at least nine soldiers.

National Democratic

Front (NDF) senior adviser Luis Jalandoni had also said that negotiations between the communist insurgents and the Philippine government would continue, with panels set to meet for another round of negotiations in April.

Meanwhile, the NDFP is still hopeful that peace negotiations will continue despite President Rodrigo Duterte's decision to lift the government's unilateral ceasefire with communist insurgents.

"The NDFP remains hopeful that the peace talks will proceed on track and that the comprehensive agreements on socio-economic, political and constitutional reforms currently being negotiated will be deemed ready for approval by both Panels by end-2017, and soon after by the principals," Fidel Agcaoili, NDFP peace panel chair, said in a statement.

"We continue to hope that efforts on both sides will lead to the co-founding by the NDFP and the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) of the Federal Republic of the Philippines and the achievement of just and lasting peace for our people," he added.

Agcaoili's statement came after Duterte announced his decision in response to the CPP-NPA-NDFP termination of interim unilateral ceasefire it declared August last year.

Agcaoili earlier said that the two parties could "talk while fighting," citing their experience during the time



Pres. Duterte

of former President Fidel Ramos.

The NDFP chair said the government has the prerogative to lift its unilaterally issued Suspension of Offensive Military Operations (SOMO) and Suspension of Offensive Police Operations (SOPO).

Agcaoili said that while the SOMO and SOPO were supposedly effective, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), and paramilitary forces "encroached on communities and occupied schools, day-care centers and other public places" and even "conducted harassment and random interrogation of residents suspected of having relatives in the NPA or suspected of supporting the revolutionary movement, imposed food blockades, and generally sowed fear and terror among the people."

"The extrajudicial killings of leaders and mem-



Agcaoili

bers of peasant groups and indigenous peoples have also gone on unabated with four being killed in January alone and another one just today," he said.

Despite all of the alleged actions of the military forces, Agcaoili said that the NPA has strictly maintained its own unilateral ceasefire and took extraordinary measures to avoid encounters with AFP troops, while remaining on active defense. "On the release and amnesty of political prisoners, the NDFP maintains that this is a matter of justice and obligation under the CARHRIHL (Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law)," Agcaoili said.

The CPP-NPA-NDFP has terminated the unilateral ceasefire it declared in August 2016 because of the Duterte administration's failure to fulfill its promise to release all political prisoners.

5 February 2017



Pahina. 2

AFP, PNP nasa heightened alert vs NPA attacks

Matapos ang pagpapatigil ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa unilateral ceasefire, isinailalim na sa heightened alert status ang puwersa ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at Philippine National Police (PNP) kaugnay ng possible pang pagpapatindi ng mga pag-atake ng mga bayo-lenteng aktibidades ng mga rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) sa mga baluarte nitong teritoryo sa bansa.

"We have alerted our troops on the ground, we are in contact with our field commanders specially our unified commanders in Eastern Mindanao Region, it's part of our contingency plan", ani AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año dahilan naririto

ang halos 50 % ng puwersa ng NPA rebels.

Sa tala ng AFP, ayon sa Chief of Staff ay nasa 3, 700 pa ang kabuuang puwersa ng NPA rebels kung saan kalahati nito ay nasa Eastern Mindanao.

Ayon kay AFP Spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, nasa heightened alert na ang kanilang tropa at kasunod ng pagbawi ng unilateral ceasefire ay muling umarangkada ang opensiba laban sa NPA rebels. Sa kabila nito, iginiit ni Padilla na nanatiling bukas sila sa usapang pangkapayapaan.

Kaugnay nito, inalerto na rin ni PNP Chief P/Director General Ronald 'Bato' dela Rosa ang mga himpilan ng pulisya lalo na sa mga kana-

yunan o malalayong lalawigan laban sa posibleng pagsalakay ng NPA rebels.

Sa panig naman ni National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) Chief P/Director Oscar Albayalde, sinabi nito na isinailalim na rin niya sa "high security threat" ang Metro Manila matapos namang matuldukan ang unilateral ceasefire sa komunistang grupo.

"We are in full alert status. The threat alert in Metro Manila is still high, we have maintain the high security threat level within Metro Manila is still high, so we maintain high security level within Metro Manila", pahayag pa ni Albayalde. -Joy Cantos -

31

February 2017



Page: 6

The unvarnished truth

Finally, Rody has finally awakened to the fact that it is of no use dealing with the communists, no matter how hard he tried all this time, freeing some imprisoned communist leaders, and giving in to some demands of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), its political arm, the National Democratic Front (NDF) and the New People's Army (NPA), to the point of even giving known above ground communists Cabinet positions in his government.

The cynics were proven right again, and the optimists wrong.

And the cynics knew better because the CPP -NDF-NPA leaderships, going by past history, were never sincere and were only playing the government to get more concessions from the administrations, past and present.

These commies always claim that they want a peace pact, but all they want is to get government to give in to their demands, the latest of which was for Rody to free all 430 communist prisoners from jail, through an amnesty and even before a peace pact is inked between the two negotiating parties. The CCP-NDF also demanded that they be stricken off the US list of terrorists, which has been denied by the US.

The President Friday announced that he has lifted the government's unilateral ceasefire with communist rebels.

"I decided to order the lifting of the ceasefire. I called General Año and said, 'I have already ordered the lifting of the ceasefire. Tonight (Friday) there is no more ceasefire,'" Duterte said in a speech in North Cotabato.

The announcement came after the CCP-NPA announced their decision to terminate their unilateral ceasefire beginning February



10, a deadline it gave Mr. Duterte.

The way cynics see it, the commies never were sincere in forging anything with the government, whether a ceasefire or a peace pact. All they wanted was to get the President to release the 430 communist prisoners even before a peace pact or a permanent ceasefire is agreed between the parties. They demanded this because their plan was to get these commies back and strengthen their army to continue with their useless armed struggle.

Already the President, to show goodwill and sincerity, sought the release of leaders of the communist movement led by the Tiamzon couple, who, before their capture, led the NPA. They were released on bail on condition that they are to return to the Philippines from Europe in six months time.

With the ceasefire agreement between the two negotiating partners now no longer in effect with their lifting their respective ceasefires, and with the peace talks called off, anyone can bet his bottom peso that those commie leaders who were released by the courts on bail, will definitely go into hiding and won't ever come back voluntarily to prison.

The good times for these commies abroad

are over, with the peace talks as dead as a doo. No more free trips to Rome and free lunches, dinners and hotels for these commie leaders anymore.

Sure they may have a sanctuary country in the Netherlands, but they can no longer expect any of their demands met by the Duterte government. And it may not be too long before the military and even the police go all out to rid the towns of Reds where the NPA rebels operate and are present, with their extortion activities, plus murders of soldiers and civilians.

As Mr. Duterte said, peace with the Reds is not possible in this generation, and one can add, in the next generation, since a full out offensive against these red insurgents by the military will succeed.

Duterte said in a speech delivered in North Cotabato that he wanted achieve peace with the CCP, stressing that "It (the Red Insurgency) has been going on for almost 50 years in the making. What is it that they want? Another 50 years? That there is no end to this? Well, if there is no end to this, go ahead with another 50 years. But let it not be said that I did not try," Duterte said.

So I guess peace with the communists cannot be realized during our generation. Maybe years from now. I don't want killings to occur," he said, adding

"But if such occurs, and our soldiers are being killed by the communists, let's resume the fighting. Anytime."

It's time to stop believing that these commies are ever going to embrace peace because all they want is to hold the reins of government power forever, which they can never have through democratic elections.

And that is the unvarnished truth.

3)



ANG NANGUNBUHANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANSA P8.00

Paamong pumalya ang NDF peace talks?

NI ROCKY NAZARENO

Gaya ng isang nanliligaw na inilingan, hiniram ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang lyrics ng awitin ni James Ingram noong 80s upang ipahayag ang kanyang pagkadismaya sa kanyang pagbawi sa unilateral ceasefire nitong Biyernes ng hapon sa North Cotabato.

"I did my best, but my best just wasn't good enough," sambit ng Pangulo.

Sa katunayan, ginawa niya ang kanyang makakaya upang mahikayat ang Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) na may handog na pagkakasundo na kailanma'y hindi pa nangyari sa loob ng 40 taon ng pag-uusap sa loob ng limang nakalipas na presidente, kaugnay ng pagnanais na matuldukan ang 48 taong bakbakan.

Sinalubong ni Duterte ang mga nangungunang leader ng CPP-NPA-NDF sa Malacañang Palace, isang bagay na hindi nagawa ng mga nagdaang administrasyon.

Kaya, para sa isang Pangulo, ang pagtanggap na alisin ang unilateral ceasefire na inihayag ni NPA Spokesperson Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos, dalawang araw na ang nakalilipas, ay patunay na huling baraha.

Ganito rin marahil ang nararamdaman ng Philippine Government (GRP) Peace Panel negotiators sa pagkukumbinse sa NDF sa pamamagitan ng tatlong round ng formal peace talks sa Oslo, Norway at nitong Enero sa Rome, Italy.

Mismong si Duterte ang nanligaw nang ipag-utos niya na palayain ang 21 senior officer para sa unang round ng peace talks noong Agosto.

Isinagawa ang unang round ng pag-uusap sa isang napakainit

na pagsalubong na kung saan naibulalas ni Special Envoy for the Philippine Peace Process Elisabeth Slattum ng Royal Norwegian Government (RNG) na, "Are you really fighting?"

Gayunman, sa mga sumunod na round, nang mapunta ang usapan sa isang kumplikadong paksa, gaya ng pagpapalaya sa mga political prisoner, naging masalimuot na ang mga pangyayari.

Sa pag-uusap noong Oktubre ng nakaraang taon, sinimulan na pag-usapan ang ideya ng jointly-declared ceasefire, ngunit ipinagpilitan ng NDF na nais muna nilang mapalaya ang 392 political prisoner.

Sa unang bahaging Disyembre ng tiakaraang taon, nagkaroon ng usap-usapan na papayag ng NDF na magkaroon ng ceasefire na isang magandang pamasko ni Pangulong Duterte sa mga Pilipino, habang papayagang makauwi ang mga bilangong rebelde at makapiling ang kani-kanilang pamilya.

Bago magtapos ang taong 2016, sinabi ni Pangulong

Duterte ang kanyang kondisyon sa grupong komunista: "Show me a copy of the agreement for a bilateral ceasefire, and I will release political prisoners within 48 hours."

Naging maayos naman ang simula ng peace talks at maging ang NDF Peace Panel member ay nagsabing nagsisimula na nilang "feel like the fiancée and not merely the suitor this time."

"Parang nasa pamanhikan na 'to. Pero siyempre, gaya ng mga pamanhikan, meron pa ring kakulangan ng tiwala sa panunuyo namin. Mapapa-oo rin namin sila," ayon sa panel member.

At lumabas ang balita kaugnay ng engkuwentro sa pagitan ng government forces at NPA rebels sa Makilala, North Cotabato nitong Enero 21 at napatay ang isang rebelde at walong sundalo. Ito ang unang bakbakan na nangyari sa pagitan ng magkabilang kampo simula nang magkaroon ng ceasefire noong Agosto 2016.

At dito na nagtapos ang lahat.

72

5 February 2017



Pahina. 4



SCOUT RANGERS PERFORM NON-TRADITIONAL ROLES IN BASILAN

THE "Kapusa" medical missions I've been to in the Municipality of Akbar on January 26 and Hadji Mohammad Ajul on January 28 and 29 in Basilan were among the most memorable in my recent past.

Aside from the fact that I was going to these once war-torn areas for the first time, I was going there with the 3rd Scout Ranger "Excelsior" Battalion, a unit of the Philippine Army which is traditionally a warrior battalion out to quash armed lawless groups in Basilan and in other

parts of the country

The 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion, in fact, was recently hailed as the Best Ranger Battalion of the First Scout Ranger Regiment and of the entire Special Operations Command of the Philippine Army, aside from it having the FSRR's best battalion commander, best junior officer and best company for 2016.

Basilan constituents were once wary of the rangers who they consider as aloof and detached. Unlike regular battalions which utilize

the AFP's three major military staff functions of intelligence, operations, and Civil Military Operations, the mission of the SOCOM, to which the Army's Scout Rangers belong, is "to plan, conduct and support special operations in all operational environments," with the core capabilities of unconventional warfare, direct action, special reconnaissance, counter-terrorist operations, target interdiction and special light infantry operations.

The engagements of the 104th "Sultan" Brigade in Basilan especially by its former commander, Maj. Gen. Carli-

to Galvez, a scout ranger and at the same time a peace advocate who is now commander of the Western Mindanao Command, have slowly exposed the latter's fellow rangers to the Basilan communities. I had joined medical missions in the past with General Galvez organized by the masons and by various local government units and have personally witnessed how the rangers have also slowly become warrior diplomats.

As far as I can remember, the rangers started actively collaborating in CMO activities with the Lamitan City

Government under Mayor Rose Furigay and Vice Mayor Roderick Furigay. Col. Fernando Reyeg, the once reticent commander of the 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion, would be seen during CMO activities standing on one corner just looking by and not truly mingling with people, until the LGU officials and staff were introduced to him and, as they say, the rest is history. General Galvez and Colonel Reyeg have since become adopted sons of Lamitan City, and I'm certain, pretty soon, it would be incumbent battalion commander Lt. Elmer Suderio's turn to be adopted.

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

ONLINE NEWS
05 FEBRUARY 2017

www.inquirer.net

Basilan blast: Mayor, soldier survive, but driver in critical condition

By: Julie Alipala - @inquirerdotnet

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 09:07 PM February 04, 2017

The province of Basilan is off the tip of Zamboanga Peninsula. (Image from Google Maps)

ZAMBOANGA CITY — A bomb explosion on Saturday afternoon injured Mayor Doree Kalahal of Tuburan in Basilan shortly after getting off his car in Sitio Sawiti in Barangay Calut in his own town.

"I just incurred minor bruises. Split seconds. I just alighted from the vehicle, walked a few steps, then something went off underneath my car," Tuburan, a former commander of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), said.

The mayor's escort, Cpl. Christian Ibaretta of the 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion, was also slightly injured by shrapnel from what could have been an improvised explosive device, according to Senior Supt. Nickson Muksan, chief of the Basilan Provincial Police Office.

But his driver, Misuari Jamiri, wasn't as lucky, as he was pronounced in critical condition.

In an interview, Kalahal said he, along with several soldiers, had gone earlier to Sawiti to do humanitarian work.

Shortly after leaving the area, they heard gunshots, prompting them to return.

Shortly after getting off his car, intending to talk to villagers, the explosion took place.

"The case is under investigation, no suspect yet and Mayor Kalahal's service vehicle is also damaged," Muksan said.

Kalahal said, however, that he suspected that Abu Sayyaf bandits under Abdullah Indanan Jobel were responsible for the incident.

"We are pursuing them now," Kalahal said. /atm

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

34

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

www.inquirer.net

Palace notes 'disconnect' between NDF, NPA amid end of ceasefire

By: Nestor Corrales - Reporter / @NCorralesINQ

INQUIRER.net / 09:45 AM February 04, 2017

Leaders of the National Democratic Front (NDF) seem, to have some disconnection with its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), amid the rebels' termination of the unilateral ceasefire with the government, Malacañang has said.

"Apparently there is some disconnect between dissident leaders negotiating at the table and their forces on the ground," Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said in a statement.

In January, the NDF peace negotiators and the government peace panel ended their third round of peace talks in Rome without a bilateral ceasefire agreement. but both sides assured their separate unilateral ceasefire would remain.

The NPA, however, announced on February 1 the termination of their unilateral ceasefire effective February 10, citing President Rodrigo Duterte's failure to release all political prisoners.

Duterte refused to give in to the rebels' demand and lifted the ceasefire on the part of the government on Friday, calling on the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to "be ready to fight."

"It would be deeply regrettable that the otherwise positive developments now might have to be set aside," Abella said.

The Palace official, however, assured the peace talks would continue despite the lifting of the unilateral ceasefire by both sides.

"Despite the untenable circumstances on the ground, the peace talks have not yet been scuttled. The road to peace is not an easy journey," he said.

In a speech in North Cotabato on Friday, Duterte said many of the government's soldiers have died due to alleged attacks by NPA rebels.

"I have lost so many soldiers in the past 48 hours, I think to continue with the ceasefire will not produce anything," he said.

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

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

Abella said "The NPA had broken peace, ambushing soldiers at ease some of whom had just received wages when rebels shot and killed them viciously."

He quoted an army officer, saying the series of attacks by the NPA showed "complete disregard for their earlier announcement that they would recall its ceasefire only by 10 February."

The President has ordered the AFP to "go back to your camps, clean your rifles and be ready to fight." *CDG*

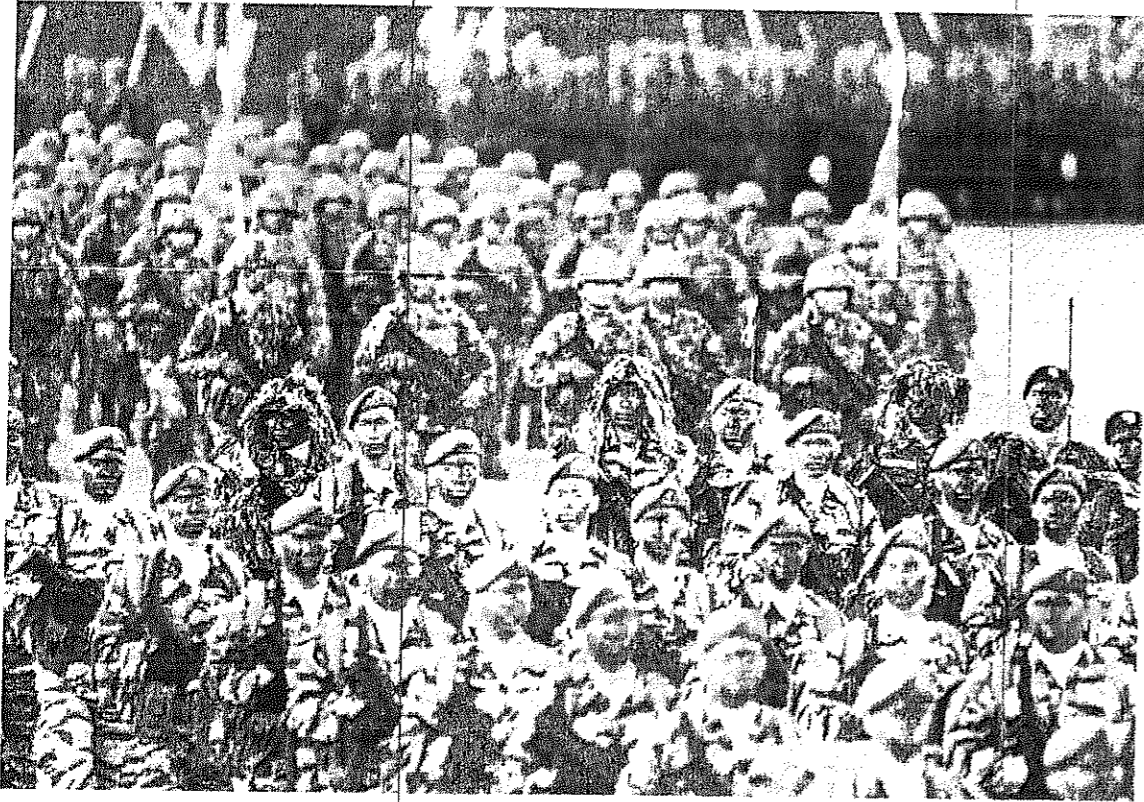
Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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

www.philstar.com

AFP has enough troops to address NPA ceasefire withdrawal

(philstar.com) | Updated February 4, 2017 - 5:13pm



Gen. Eduardo Año said Armed Forces commanders in Mindanao had considered the possibility of the ceasefire with the NPA ending. File photo

MANILA, Philippines (Philippine News Agency) -- Don't call in the reserves yet.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has more than enough troops to meet rebel groups in Eastern Mindanao, its chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año has said.

"We have enough forces. We will assess everything before we make any troop movement or any adjustment," he said when asked whether there is a need for more forces after President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the lifting of the government ceasefire in the wake of New People's Army attacks that left six soldiers dead. Three others were abducted this week.

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

27

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

Año noted he has been in contact with all military commanders in Eastern Mindanao and that all of them are now aware of what they need to do.

"They know already what to do because when we (had) our command conference early last month, (part of the) contingency planning is what the military would do in case peace negotiations fail or should the NPA decide to withdraw their ceasefire," he said.

Año placed the number of NPA combatants in the entire country at 3,700, half of whom are operating in Eastern Mindanao.

He said this is the reason the AFP is focusing on community development programs in the countryside, especially those with indigenous peoples, so that the rebels would be denied additional recruits.

With the lifting of the government ceasefire, the AFP chief said they can now plan the rescue of the three soldiers abducted in Surigao del Norte and Sultan Kudarat early this week.

"Before, (the unilateral ceasefire) prevented us from conducting rescue operations. Now we plan to conduct operations," Año said.

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

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

www.inquirer.net

Briton plotted to join Abu Sayyaf bandits

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 02:52 AM February 04, 2017

LONDON—A British supermarket worker was convicted on Thursday of preparing to fight with the Abu Sayyaf bandit group.

Ryan Counsell, 28, was found guilty of preparing for acts of terrorism.

Counsell had booked to fly on July 13 last year to Zamboanga City, the closest city to Basilan island, a stronghold of Abu Sayyaf, which has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group.

Abu Sayyaf is listed as a banned terrorist group in Britain, the jury at Woolwich Crown Court in southeast London heard.

He had bought military equipment to "engage in combat or support an extremist group," the court was told.

Jurors heard how Counsell had spent almost £900 (\$1,130) on "heavy-duty, military-style boots, combat trousers, camouflage clothing, knee and elbow pads, a monocular scope, rifle magazine pouches and a cheek pad to be attached to the stock of a rifle."

He had a bomb-making manual and documents providing "practical advice for someone wanting to travel to Syria to join Islamic State."—AFP

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

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

www.inquirer.net

2 civilians killed in Manay town as ceasefire with NPA ends

By: [Friston Lim](#) - @inquirerdotnet

Inquirer Mindanao 08:07 PM February 03, 2017



Two civilian have been killed since the collapse of the ceasefire between the government and the NPA ended, according to Capt. Rhyan Batchar, spokesperson of the 10th Infantry Division. (Photo from the Facebook page of Rhyan Batchar)

TAGUM CITY — Two civilians have died as violence flared up again in Mindanao since Wednesday following the collapse of the ceasefire that had been declared separately by the government and communist rebels, the Philippine Army's 10th Infantry Division said on Friday.

Over 3, 000 families have also been displaced in the renewed hostilities, particularly in Manay, Davao Oriental, where New People's Army (NPA) rebels killed a junior Army officer in an ambush.

Capt. Rhyan Batchar, 10th ID spokesperson, identified the dead as Ruben Inidio-an and Boy Sumambot, who were shot by suspected NPA fighters as the victims were fleeing to Barangay Lambog on the afternoon of Wednesday.

That was after rebels waylaid a joint team of soldiers and police officers sent out to investigate the reported presence of armed men there.

Among those killed in the ambush was 2nd Lt. Victor Alejo.

The Manay municipal government had created a crisis management committee to address the plight of at least 3,286 families from six barangays who evacuated out of fear, according to Batchar.

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

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

The families came from the Lambog, Del Pilar, Capasnan, Taocanga, Cawayan, and Rizal.

"Two residents identified as Cerio Lumakang and Nonoy Maumpi, all of Lambog, were also reported missing," Batchar added.

Also on Wednesday, three unarmed soldiers assigned with the 8th Infantry Battalion were captured and killed by suspected NPA rebels in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, according to Major. Ezra Balagtey, spokesperson of the military's Eastern Mindanao Command.

The troopers were heading back to their post in Manalog village on motorcycles after getting their subsistence allowance from the battalion headquarters when they flagged down and abducted at gunpoint by NPA gunmen in Kibalabag village, Balagtey said.

The bodies of the slain soldiers were found by villagers by Wednesday afternoon, with dozens of gunshot wounds each. /atm

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

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

www.philstar.com

AFP: We will hit them hard

By Edith Regalado (The Philippine Star) | Updated February 4, 2017 - 12:00am



File photo shows members of the New People's Army in the townships of Davao during the massive rally celebration of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

Duterte ends truce with Reds; peace process in shambles

DAVAO CITY, Philippines – The military is preparing to let loose the dogs of war after President Duterte ended the government's six-month ceasefire with communist rebels following attacks that left three soldiers dead this week.

Duterte disclosed his decision in a speech yesterday, two days after New People's Army rebels announced they would end their ceasefire effective Feb. 10, citing the government's refusal to release 400 political prisoners and accusing the military of encroaching into rural NPA strongholds.

A frustrated Duterte lamented that he had done his best to forge an enduring agreement and the communists had wasted a "golden opportunity" for peace.

"Last (Thursday) night, I decided to lift the ceasefire," he told the crowd at the launching of a solar-powered irrigation system in North Cotabato.

Duterte said the government's unilateral ceasefire would end last night as he ordered soldiers to "clean your rifles and be ready to fight."

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said it is ready to resume offensives against the NPA following the President's announcement

"We will go after the NPA to prevent them from conducting atrocities and criminal activities against the public. And we will hit them hard," AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año declared.

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

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

"We shall abide by the President's order of ending the unilateral ceasefire. It is unfortunate that the gains of the last six months would come to a halt because the CPP-NPA again resorted to the use of violence and chose arms to advance their interests," he said.

Duterte cited the "unreasonable demands" of the communists regarding the release of more political detainees that apparently caused the breakdown in peace talks.

"To continue with the ceasefire will not produce anything. I guess peace cannot be realized within our generation," Duterte said.

The NPA on Wednesday declared they are terminating their unilateral ceasefire after accusing the government of failing to release all political prisoners and encroaching on rebel-held areas.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its military arm, the NPA, said the ceasefire that began Aug. 28 would expire Feb. 10.

The rebels and the government had separately declared a ceasefire as they resumed peace talks.

Duterte stressed he freed rebel leaders as a concession aimed at fostering the peace talks but added the CPP-NPA and the National Democratic Front (NDF), the umbrella group representing the rebels in negotiating peace with the government, raised excessive demands that may upset the military.

"I went out of my way to release as many of their leaders to allow them to participate in the talks in Oslo. Now there is this demand to release some 400 political prisoners, I could not do that because it is already tantamount to the granting of amnesty," Duterte said.

He explained the granting of amnesty is usually allowed following the success of peace negotiations.

Duterte said he had to weigh the expert opinion of his advisers to arrive at the decision.

"I do not own the Republic of the Philippines. I do not decide alone. I consult people, particularly the military," he said.

Duterte, a self-styled socialist who was swept to power in elections last year, restarted peace talks with the CPP-NPA-NDF that had been on and off for 30 years.

The two sides separately declared ceasefires in August, and the informal arrangement largely held as they continued discussions in Rome last week.

But the CPP-NPA-NDF rejected government overtures to sign a formal ceasefire and peace settlement this year, warning such a pact was unlikely to be achieved before 2019.

Duterte on Thursday criticized the rebels for rejecting his government's formal ceasefire offer and for insisting that he free hundreds of jailed rebel leaders.

While the military has publicly endorsed the peace talks, Duterte suggested the support was qualified.

"Don't push me against the wall because the military might not like it, and if the military ousts me or kills me you'll have nobody to talk to," Duterte said.

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

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

In bad faith

Duterte lamented the rebels are talking peace with the government in bad faith.

"They said they are breaking off, so we'll follow. I lost six soldiers and one officer. That was why last night (Thursday) I decided to break off too. I told General Año that there will be no more ceasefire. I lifted the ceasefire effective tonight (last night)," Duterte said.

Earlier in the day, government chief peace negotiator Silvestre Bello III declared they are expected to sign a bilateral ceasefire agreement and come up with the final peace agreement before yearend.

"That is why on April 2-7 we will be back in Oslo to talk about the most important issue on social and economic reforms to address the causes of our problems," Bello told a forum in Bulacan yesterday.

But Duterte said he was forced to break off the ceasefire after receiving reports of "systematic attacks" by the NPA against government forces even before their declaration to scuttle their own ceasefire next Friday.

"I realized that peace with the communists cannot be realized within our generation. They said Feb. 10, but they have been ambushing our troops then and there, even before their deadline," he said.

Duterte said that he really tried his best to forge a peace agreement with the communist rebels. "I went out of my way, walked the extra mile just to look for the opening to find peace for my country. I may not be the most decent person but I entered into this in good faith, in looking for peace. But with the way things are now, we cannot have a peaceful generation," he said.

Duterte stressed his administration would have been the golden opportunity for the rebels to make peace.

"I come from the Left and that they should have taken advantage of my being president. But they didn't," he added.

"And now they want another 50 years in war, to keep on fighting. What do you want? Another 50 years? Let it not be said that I did not try hard," the President said.

"I don't want us to kill each other but under the circumstances, with my troops getting killed, we have to resume (offensives) anytime," he said.

Lock and load

The AFP said they are ready to resume offensives against the NPA following the President's announcement.

"We will comply with the commander-in-chief's order and guidance," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said.

"We are saddened by the series of violent activities and the loss of the peace investments and dividends from the momentary duration of peace we had since August," Padilla said.

Padilla said the violence committed by the NPA in the past few days was "very disturbing," considering the government was still pushing for a joint ceasefire declaration.

Año, for his part, noted the last four days since Sunday were "disdainful and disturbing," considering NDF chief peace negotiator Fidel Agcaoili was assuring the public through the media that the CPP-NPA-NDF will continue the unilateral ceasefire.

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

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

Año said CPP-NPA was doing the opposite by attacking soldiers who were doing community support and development works.

Despite the lifting of the ceasefire on the part of the government, Año assured the public that the AFP would continue to support the peace talks and find a permanent peaceful solution to the four decades-long conflict.

"We hear the people's clamor for peace and are willing to work hard to attain it, but it is unfortunate that the CPP-NPA-NDF chooses to play deaf," he said.

Down the line, Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) chief Lt. Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero issued a directive to the troops to be on alert for possible attacks from the NPA.

"Alert troops for possible attacks. Protect the communities from criminal acts of extortion, burning of equipment, abductions, liquidations and other forms of atrocities," Guerrero said.

He said all units under Eastmincom are now on active defense posture.

The NPA has been active in the region under the Eastmincom.

Suspected NPA rebels snatched two soldiers in a remote village in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat last Feb. 2.

Last week, two off-duty soldiers in civilian clothes and riding a motorcycle were taken by NPA rebels in Makilala, North Cotabato.

Separately, three soldiers were taken by NPA rebels in Malaybalay City in Bukidnon. The three soldiers were also unarmed and in their civilian attire when they were snatched.

Their lifeless bodies were later found along the road in a remote village in the city.

"While we grieve for the untimely demise of our soldiers, we condemn this inhuman act in its highest form. These attacks on unarmed soldiers is a manifestation of the NPA's wanton disregard for the ongoing peace talks," Guerrero said.

Major Gen. Benjamin Madrigal Jr., commander of the Army's 4th Infantry Division covering the Caraga and Northern Mindanao areas, said the NPA was insincere in the peace talks with the government.

He cited the killing of three of his soldiers by the NPA in Bukidnon.

"Is this what they call achievement of 'just peace?' How can these NPA say they also want peace if they still continue to kill with impunity, continue to burn construction and production equipment and kill innocent people?" he said.

Madrigal said the incident "will not hinder us to continue our mandate, that is to protect our people and secure their communities against any threat." – **With Christina Mendez, Michael Punongbayan, Gerry Lee Gorit, John Unson, Ramon Efren Lazaro, AP**

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

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

www.philstar.com

DND: NPA's 'lawless' activities caused lifting of ceasefire

By Audrey Morallo (philstar.com) | Updated February 4, 2017 - 12:00am

4 11 googleplus0 0



Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana condemned communist rebels for their "lawless" activities. AP/FILE

MANILA, Philippines—The Department of National Defense on Friday blamed communist rebels for a hitch in peace talks, which were resumed last year after breaking down during the Aquino administration.

In a statement, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana criticized the New People's Army for extortion, abduction and attacks on government forces that he said caused the deaths of civilians and soldiers.

Lorenzana blamed the violence instigated by the rebels as the reason the "promising start to achieving peace has ended."

The secretary of defense also said that he had already instructed the military to be on high alert and to continue protecting the communities under their respective jurisdictions.

"I have instructed the chief of staff to place our troops on high alert and to continue their protection of the communities under their care, wherever they are," Lorenzana said.

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

AP

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

President Rodrigo Duterte announced earlier Friday that the government was lifting its unilateral ceasefire with the NPA. He said that rebels were asking for too much by demanding the release of some 400 political prisoners even before parties sign a more permanent bilateral ceasefire agreement.

The president ordered government troops on Friday afternoon: "Go back to your camps, clean your rifles, and be ready to fight"

The NPA, which is on the US State Department's list of terrorist organizations, recently declared that it was ending its unilateral ceasefire effective Feb 11. The group blamed the failure of the government to release political prisoners and the intrusion of security forces into areas "within the authority of the revolutionary government."

The government and communist rebels are currently engaged in peace talks in Europe in a bid to end the 48-year insurgency, the longest in Asia.

Rounds of negotiations failed in the past due to unmet rebel demands and to distrust on both sides.

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

47

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

www.philstar.com

CPP-NPA still on US gov't terror list

By Pia Lee-Brago (The Philippine Star) | Updated February 4, 2017 - 12:00am

0 4 googleplus0 0

WASHINGTON – The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing the New People's Army (NPA) are still in the US list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO), the US State Department said Thursday.

State Department deputy spokesman Mark Toner said in an interview that removing the CPP/NPA from its FTO list would go through a process, as he stressed the rebel group continues to meet the criteria for its being designated a terror organization.

The CPP-NPA was put on the FTO list on Aug. 9, 2002.

Philippine government chief peace negotiator Silvestre Bello III, also secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), said last month they would ask the US to remove the rebel group from the list, including its founding chairman Jose Maria Sison.

Bello said the removal of CPP-NPA from the US designated FTO would enable Sison to fulfill his commitment to President Duterte to return to the Philippines as part of the ongoing peace negotiations.

"The US government must realize that the NPAs and Joma Sison are not terrorists as far as the Philippine government is concerned. Otherwise we would not be talking to them," Bello said.

Peace advocacy group Yes for Peace's clamor to have the peace talks held in Manila hinges on the CPP-NPA's removal from the FTO.

FTO designations play a critical role in the fight against terrorism and are an effective means of curtailing support for terrorist activities and pressuring groups to get out of the terrorism business.

The Bureau of Counterterrorism in the State Department continually monitors the activities of terrorist groups active around the world to identify potential targets for designation.

When reviewing potential targets, the bureau looks not only at the actual terrorist attacks that a group has carried out, but also at whether the group has engaged in planning and preparations for possible future acts of terrorism or retains the capability and intent to carry out such acts.

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

68

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

www.philstar.com

NDF not giving up on peace talks

By Jose Rodel Clapano (The Philippine Star) | Updated February 4, 2017 - 12:00am

2 92 googleplus0 0

MANILA, Philippines - Communist rebels can fight government forces while talking peace at the same time, their leaders said yesterday.

The National Democratic Front called on the people and the government not to give up on the peace talks despite the decision of the NDF followed by President Duterte to end the ceasefire observed by the military and New People's Army (NPA).

In an interview with *GMA News TV* yesterday, NDF senior political adviser Luis Jalandoni said the peace panels of the government and the NDF would continue to hold talks.

He also explained why the NPA, the armed wing of the NDF, decided to lift its ceasefire.

"The NPA decided to lift its unilateral ceasefire because there are some violations committed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines. These include the occupation of schools and barangay halls by the military," Jalandoni said.

"The Armed Forces of the Philippines are entering 500 barangays. We are also calling for the release of all political prisoners.

We will not lose the peace talks. The lifting of the unilateral ceasefire by the President was just a reaction to the NPA's lifting of its unilateral ceasefire due to many violations of the military. We cannot say that the peace talks are no longer there," he added.

The rebels announced the withdrawal of their ceasefire declaration as the government refused to grant their demand for the release of 400 of their comrades from various prisons.

Duterte ended the government's ceasefire and ordered the military to "be ready to fight" after the NPA killed three soldiers last Wednesday in Bukidnon and captured two others in Sultan Kudarat. The rebels had announced that the end of their unilateral ceasefire would take effect on Feb. 10.

Jalandoni said "the next move is to talk about the proposed bilateral ceasefire this month" and NDF peace panel chairman Fidel Agcaoili is already preparing for the fourth round of talks.

He also admitted that the NDF needs the peace talks to enable them to come up with an agreement on land reform, national industrialization and socioeconomic and political reforms.

"During the Ramos government, we were able to sign 12 agreements while we continued fighting and continued talking," Jalandoni said.

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

49

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

'AFP blocking release of political prisoners'

Meanwhile, human rights group Karapatan said the AFP has played a major role in the Duterte administration's non-release of political prisoners.

Karapatan also said the AFP has been sabotaging the peace talks.

"The AFP is blocking the release of the unjustly detained political prisoners and it has never ceased to deploy its forces to kill, threaten and harass civilian communities, even during the so-called unilateral ceasefire of the government," said Karapatan secretary-general Cristina Palabay.

"Political prisoners were illegally arrested and detained for their beliefs and work in defense of people's rights... The plight of political prisoners is a matter of human rights obligation and an issue of justice. What is coercive is the state security forces' gross violation of rights to due process, criminalization of political beliefs and torture of those who are working for the defense of people's rights.

"The release of political prisoners is a litmus test for Duterte, on his political will to uphold justice against threats and efforts by the AFP to sow unpeace," she added.

Last Thursday, political prisoner Reynante Malcampo was finally released by the court.

Malcampo's release was long overdue as he is one of the 200 sick political prisoners supposed to be released for humanitarian reasons before Christmas as promised by Duterte.

According to Karapatan, Malcampo was wrongly charged with illegal possession of explosives. His case was tried at Branch 3 of the Regional Trial Court XI and the court dismissed his case last Jan. 26.

Karapatan said that while Malcampo was being detained at the Compostela Valley Provincial Rehabilitation Center in Tagum City, he suffered tuberculosis and recurring bouts of pneumonia. – **With Rhodina Villanueva, Edith Regalado**

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

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

www.interaksyon.com

Army: Three soldiers' death at hands of NPA overkill

By: Erwin M. Mascariñas, InterAksyon
February 3, 2017 7:07 PM



Soldiers on maneuver exercise at training ground of 4th Infantry Division headquarters in Camp Evangelista, Patag, Cagayan de Oro City
Photographed by Erwin Mascariñas, InterAksyon

InterAksyon.com
The online news portal of TV5

Butuan City - The Philippine Army's 4th Infantry Division in Cagayan de Oro City on Friday released findings that characterized the death of three soldiers at the hands of the New People's Army (NPA) as inhumane and overkill.

The assessment was conducted by the Scene of the Crime Operatives (SOCO) of the Philippine National Police (PNP).

According to the police report, the three soldiers who died on February 1, 2017 at Sitio Kaleb, Barangay Kibalabag in Malaybalay City sustained 76 gunshot hits, or an average of around 25 penetrating wounds each.

Col. Eric Vinoya, commander of the 403rd Infantry Brigade, condemned the killing of the soldiers: "The act was inhuman and overkill in nature. We condemn the recent act of violence perpetrated by the NPA against three personnel of the 8th Infantry Battalion, who were conducting a Community Support Program in Barangay Manalog, Malaybalay City.

"They left the barangay because they needed to obtain some documentary requirements for a livelihood project that they were facilitating in the community, and to get their subsistence allowances. Unfortunately, they were flagged down and murdered by the armed men, as they were on the way back to the community. Our soldiers were in civilian attire and unarmed when they were killed," said Vinoya.

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

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

Vinoya added: "This act perpetrated by the NPA only shows that they are not fighting for ideology anymore. They committed criminal acts and banditry the moment they murdered our troops and also took their money and personal belongings."

Recovered at the scene near the killed soldiers were 21 fired cartridge cases (FCC) of caliber 5.56 mm used in M16 assault rifles; seven 7.62 x 51mm FCC, probably from M14; 10 7.62 x 39mm FCC for AK47 rifles; five 7.62 x 63mm FCC from M1 Garand rifle; and cal. 30 FCC from an old M4 carbine.

Empty ammunition cartridges from both M-16 and Ak-47 assault rifles were also found in the scene.

Captain Patrick Joe Martinez, spokesperson of the 4th Infantry Division pointed out that, "the investigation revealed that the soldiers are on board two motorcycles traversing the route of the said outskirts community when the NPAs flagged them down and eventually killed them. There were NPAs firing from the high ground and that they went near the three unarmed soldiers to finish them off, considering that the bulk of the rounds were found near their dead bodies."

Martinez said: "What the NPA did is unacceptable, their barbaric act has no place in our civilized peaceful society."

Major General Benjamin Madrigal Jr, commander of the 4ID asked, "is this what they call achievement of just peace? How can these NPA say that they also want peace if they still continue to kill with impunity, burn construction and production equipment, and kill innocent people?"

"If they really want peace, then they must lay down their arms and start working with the whole nation on solutions to socioeconomic problems. They must show sincerity and finally end their violence for the benefit of every Filipino."

Ka Allan Juanito, spokesman of the NPA-North Central Mindanao Regional Command, disputed the claim that the soldiers were unarmed: "Three elements of the 8th Infantry Battalion of the Community Organizing for Peace and Development (COPD) unit, who were riding a motorcycle, were flagged by our unit in Sitio Kalib, Barangay Kibalabag at around 5:00 in the afternoon.

"When they were requested to stop, they showed intention to fight back when they tried to draw their small firearms. In self defense, the NPA fired at them, which resulted in their deaths. Recovered from the casualties were three cal .45 pistols."

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

57

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

www.interaksyon.com

US Military delivers counterterrorism gear to Philippine Army and Marine Corps

By: InterAksyon.com
February 3, 2017 5:47 PM



Philippine service members receive new counterterrorism equipment from the Joint US Military Assistance Group Philippines, as part of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' defense modernization efforts and a US government grant program aimed at assisting security forces conducting counterterrorism. US EMBASSY WEBSITE

InterAksyon.com
The online news portal of TV5

CLARK AIR BASE — Representatives from the US Embassy in the Philippines' Joint US Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG) delivered new military equipment to the Philippine Army and Marine Corps January 27.

The transfer included over 400 M203 grenade launchers, 85 M40A5 sniper rifles, and a RQ-11B Raven unmanned aerial vehicle system consisting of three drones for exclusive use and ownership by the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The AFP procured the small-arms weapons through the US government's Foreign Military Sales program. This equipment will help enhance the AFP's counterterrorism capabilities, and protect Philippine security forces actively engaged in counterterrorism operations in the southern Philippines.

In addition to the small-arms transfer, the US government provided a Raven unmanned aerial vehicle system through the grant counterterrorism program. As part of the grant, and in addition to the three unmanned aerial vehicles included in the Raven system, Philippine service members received training in the United States on its operations and maintenance. The Raven is a hand-launched unmanned aerial vehicle that will increase the AFP's capabilities to conduct intelligence collection, mission planning, and reconnaissance operations.

The equipment transfer and continued bilateral training efforts demonstrate the commitment between the Philippines and U.S. to work towards safer communities and the eradication of global terror networks.

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