

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



ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

11 February 2017

Saturday

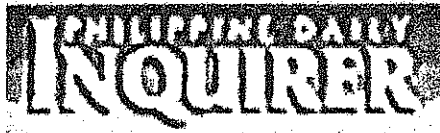
Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | FEBRUARY 11, 2017 | SATURDAY

CPA OFFER 65A

SUNRISE 6:22 AM

SUNSET 5:59 PM

MOONRISE 6:18 PM

MOONSET 6:18 AM

FIRST QUARTER FEB 4 12:10 PM

FULL MOON FEB 11 8:33 AM

LOW TIDE 5:40 AM

HIGH TIDE 10:14 PM

MANILA SOUTH HARBOR

-0.26 Meter 1.10 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 12	FEB 13	FEB 12	FEB 13	FEB 12	FEB 13		
METRO MANILA	21 - 28 °C	20 - 28 °C	TAGAYTAY	19 - 27 °C	18 - 26 °C	TACLOBAN	22 - 28 °C	25 - 27 °C
TUGUEGARAO	18 - 23 °C	18 - 23 °C	LEGAZPI	24 - 29 °C	25 - 28 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	24 - 29 °C	23 - 28 °C
LAOAG	21 - 26 °C	20 - 25 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25 - 30 °C	24 - 29 °C	METRO DAVAO	24 - 31 °C	25 - 30 °C
BAGUIO	10 - 17 °C	10 - 17 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	24 - 29 °C	24 - 28 °C	ZAMBOANGA	23 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	21 - 31 °C	22 - 31 °C	METRO CEBU	24 - 29 °C	23 - 28 °C			

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INQUIRER

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Appeals court rejects Trump travel ban

SAN FRANCISCO—A federal appeals court on Thursday refused to reinstate President Donald Trump's ban on travelers from seven predominantly Muslim nations, unanimously rejecting the administration's claim of presidential authority, questioning its motives and concluding that the order was unlikely to survive legal challenges.

The three judges on the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco said the argument that the ban targets Muslims raised "serious allegations" and presented "significant constitutional questions," and they agreed that courts could consider statements by Trump and his advisers about wishing to enact such a ban.

'We beat you'

Moments after the ruling, Trump tweeted, "SEE YOU IN COURT," adding that "THE SECURITY OF OUR NATION IS AT STAKE!"

In response, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat who leads one of the states that challenged the ban, said: "Mr. President, we just saw you in court, and we beat you."

Trump's decree summarily denied entry to all refugees for 120 days, and travelers from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for 90 days. Refugees from Syria were blocked indefinitely.

Halted by lower court

The new Republican administration argued the ban was needed to prevent Islamic State group and al-Qaida fighters migrating from reaching US soil, but it sparked travel chaos and was roundly rejected by immigration advocacy groups.

Critics say the measure tar-

geted Muslims in violation of US law.

Last week, US District Court Judge James Robart in Seattle issued a temporary restraining order halting the ban after Washington state and Minnesota sued.

Justice department lawyers appealed to the 9th Circuit, arguing that the president had the constitutional power to restrict entry to the United States and that the courts could not second-guess his determination that such a step was needed to prevent terrorism.

Backed by former government officials and the technology industry—including Facebook and Google—the states argued that Trump's travel ban harmed individuals, businesses and universities.

Citing Trump's campaign promise to stop Muslims from entering the United States, they said the ban unconstitutionally blocked entry to people based on religion.

In its ruling on Thursday, the 9th Circuit declined to block the lower-court ruling that suspended the ban and allowed previously barred travelers to enter the United States.

But it did not shy away from the larger constitutional questions raised by the order.

The judges sided with the states on every issue except for one technical matter.

Judicial review

They rejected the administration's argument that courts did not have the authority to review the president's immigration and national security decisions.

They said the administration failed to show that the order met constitutional requirements to provide notice or a hearing before restricting travel.

And they said the adminis-

tration presented no evidence that any foreigner from the seven countries was responsible for a terrorist attack in the United States.

"Despite the district court's and our own repeated invitations to explain the urgent need for the executive order to be placed immediately into effect, the government submitted no evidence to rebut the states' argument that the district court's order merely returned the nation temporarily to the position it has occupied for many previous years," the panel wrote.

Far from over

The court battle is far from over. The lower court still must debate the merits of the ban, and an appeal to the US Supreme Court seems likely.

That could put the decision in the hands of a divided court that has a vacancy.

Trump's nominee, Neil Gorsuch, is unlikely to be confirmed in time to take part in any consideration of the ban, which was set to expire in 90 days unless it is changed.

The appellate judges noted compelling public interests on both sides.

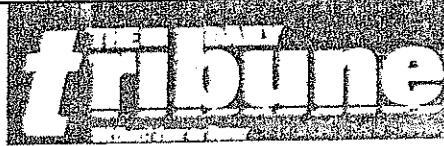
"On the one hand, the public has a powerful interest in national security and in the ability of an elected president to enact policies. And on the other, the public also has an interest in free flow of travel, in avoiding separation of families, and in freedom from discrimination," the panel wrote.

The justice department said it was "reviewing the decision and considering its options."

The appeals court sided with the administration on just one issue.

The states had argued that 9th Circuit precedent prohibits review of temporary restraining orders. —REPORTS FROM AP AND AFP

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Aguirre blasts Leila

De Lima's 'proof' hearsay

By Julius Leonen
and Mario J. Mallari

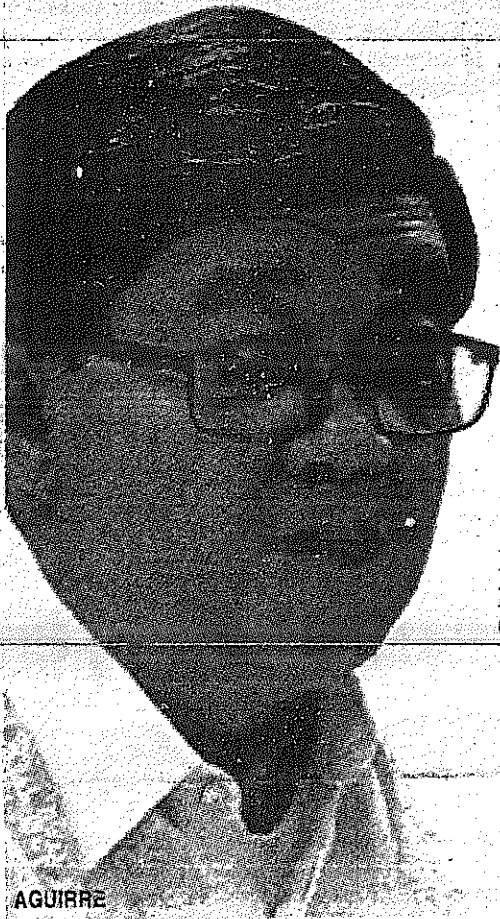
Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II slammed the "hearsay" and "confidential" Bureau of Corrections memorandum written and signed by BuCor legal office chief Alvin Herrera Lim, insisting that Lim may only have an "ax to grind" against him for suspending him having been found guilty of misconduct, with another case still ongoing.

Opposition Sen. Leila de Lima, who has been tagged as drug kingpins' protector at the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) during her term as Justice Secretary, had bared earlier this week that she was in possession of a confidential BuCor memo suggesting that Aguirre had allegedly granted high-profile inmates luxury privileges in exchange for testimonies against the yellow senator.

The incumbent Justice Secretary, however, blasted the senator for her "desperate attempt" in getting back at him and the BuCor official for writing a memorandum based on "pure hearsay" accounts, insisting that the administration's opponents have reached "a new level of desperation."

A report from the BuCor issued yesterday even debunked the senator's allegations that high-profile inmates are

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AGUIRRE

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enjoying lavish lifestyles inside their detention cells, only for BuCor security personnel to find out that none of it is true.

In a press briefing yesterday, Aguirre presented to media a letter written by DoJ Undersecretary Reynante Orceo instructing Lim to rectify his supposedly false memorandum as "insinuations and suggestions" and should immediately be corrected. "Let it be clarified that the Secretary nor any of his representatives from the Department did not authorize nor give instruction related to the above-mentioned matter. Such insinuations and suggestions should be rectified and clarified accordingly," Orceo said.

DoJ Undersecretary Erickson Balmes, however, said that their Department has yet to receive an acknowledgment and a correction from Lim for writing a memorandum "based on hearsay" accounts.

Leila twits Aguirre

De Lima earlier scored Aguirre, calling him the "real protector and coddler" of drug lords for supposedly allowing special privileges of high-profile inmates detained at Camp Aguinaldo.

She also accused Aguirre of having "concealed or suppressed" the claimed confidential memo of the BuCor which states that the Justice secretary authorized the use of electronic gadgets in exchange for the testimony of convicted drug lords during a House probe on the Bilbid drug trade, despite the fact that, from the wordings of the memo, the claim is pure hearsay from Lim, the author of the memo, his record is too spotty to be credible.

But she insisted: "How can we expect Aguirre to investigate himself? As I see it, it is possible that they concealed or suppressed those documents as the facts disclosed therein, especially the December 9 confidential memo, are very sensitive as they are explosive," de Lima said.

"So, who is the real protector and coddler of drug convicts and drug lords?" she stressed.

De Lima used this Lim memo as proof that Aguirre had restored the privileges of high-profile inmates for testifying against her in a House committee investigation.

To quote the hearsay memo written by legal office chief Alvin Herrera Limon the inmates' use of electronic gadgets, among others, inside the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Custodial and Detention Center:

"We were informed that based on AFP's confidential investigation, the high profile inmates detained in AFP Custodial and Detention Center continue to enjoy lavish lifestyles e.g. use of electronic gadgets, smart television sets, air conditioning units, internet, cellular phones..." "When pressed for comment, elements of both the Philippine National Police and BuCor invoked that they are just following the express instruction of the Hon. Vitaliano N. Aguirre II to allow the entry of the above-mentioned gadgets in return for the testimony they gave during the congressional inquiry on the

The first set of photos the Justice chief presented was taken yesterday noon at the AFP Custodial and Detention Center in Camp Aguinaldo, which the senator claimed that inmates in the detention facility are enjoying luxurious privileges.

"These are the conditions of our inmates now. Is this a lavish lifestyle? You are more than free to visit them in Camp Aguinaldo if you have doubts about these pictures," Aguirre said.

When Aguirre showed the next set of photos, which presented a posh set-up to even be considered a detention facility, he then said: "This is the lavish lifestyle (under de Lima). 'Its not just lavish. Its more than lavish.

"Who was the Secretary of Justice when these lavish privileges for inmates flourished? As they say, a picture paints a thousand words," Aguirre said.

"As a former Secretary of Justice and a lawyer who is confident enough to call other lawyers 'mediocre, Senator de Lima should know that the above statement is an absolute hearsay. And we know that hearsay has no evidentiary value," Aguirre said.

Asked by reporters why the senator came out to the press with the leaked confidential memo. Aguirre said: "My confirmator hearing is close."

It will be recalled that opposition senators, particularly de Lima and Antonio Trillanes IV, are attempting to block Aguirre's confirmation as justice secretary at the Commission on Appointments (CA).

proliferation of drugs inside New Bilbid Prison."

De Lima said Aguirre should confirm whether or not his office received a copy of the memo through BuCor chief Director General Benjamin delos Santos.

"Those documents speak for themselves. This is yet again another scandal in this administration and should be seriously and thoroughly investigated. Enough of their deceptions and hypocrisies!" she added, even if, as a lawyer and former DoJ chief, de Lima should know what hearsay evidence is.

Aguirre lashes back

Finally responding to the senator's allegations, Aguirre lashed out at de Lima for reaching a new level of desperation, slamming the senator for using "hearsay evidence" that "has absolutely no legal or factual basis."

"Pure hearsay! Her say is hearsay! It has absolutely no legal or factual basis," Aguirre said.

"Why is the good senator resorting to using hearsay evidence? Has she run out of things to say? Has she reached a new level of desperation? Desperate times call for desperate measures?" Aguirre said.

"Obviously, Senator de Lima is admitting that the lavish lifestyle of inmates existed before during her time," Aguirre said.

In turn, Aguirre even presented two sets of photos comparing the set-up in the country's detention centers during the current justice secretary's tenure and during former justice secretary and current Senator de Lima's leadership.

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Lim has 'an ax to grind'

In an interview over radio dzMM, Aguirre bared that it was Lim, who had written and signed the "hearsay" BuCor memo, who had allegedly leaked the memo to de Lima.

"He has an ax to grind against me," Aguirre said. "I think we will be preparing an order of suspension against Lim."

Aguirre bared that Lim is facing three administrative cases and he has already been suspended twice.

"Atty. Lim has already been suspended two times. He was found guilty of misconduct at the DoJ, and he was suspended for it. He is currently facing a second case that was filed against him at the DoJ, at that (case) is ongoing. A preventive suspension was also ordered," Aguirre said.

"The third case that was filed against him is from me. I gave him a notice to explain why no disciplinary action should be imposed against him for practicing legal profession at Lucena City, which I did not grant permission for him to do so," Aguirre said.

The Justice Secretary also stressed that the person who leaked the BuCor report should be held criminally liable, noting that releasing a confidential memorandum is prohibited because there is a violation of confidentiality.

"This is a violation of confidentiality," Aguirre said. "If there is a premature release, then there is criminal liability on who released it."

"There is no memo that says that I approved (the special privileges). I will not be able to allow myself to approve of such illegal activities. I did not (approve) anything," Aguirre said.

In addition, Aguirre in an interview with television network GMA-7 scored Lim for writing "hearsay" statements in the memorandum, which insinuated that the justice secretary had allowed high-profile inmates to enjoy luxurious privileges.

"If you're going to read that memo again, (you'll know) that is hearsay. Everything he said (in the memo) are the things that was said to him. If that is how it was done, then that is hearsay," Aguirre said.

"(Lim said that) AFP officials, BuCor officials are the ones who told him, but he didn't say who. It is nothing as an evidence," Aguirre said.

Prison guards relieved over 'perks grant'

BuCor chief Benjamin de los Santos ordered the relief of 21 prison security officers at the AFP Custodial and Detention following a leaked, albeit "hearsay," memorandum insinuating that Aguirre had allowed special privileges for high-profile inmates.

The BuCor chief had instructed the transfer of the 20 prison guards led by Prison Guard 3 Marlon Mangubat to the NBP as they are set to be investigated to determine their possible liability in the detention center fiasco.

"BuCor has relieved the entire complement of prison guards headed by PG3 Marlon Mangubat and 20 others at the ISAFP Detention Facility. A new OIC was installed to oversee posting of new guards," delos Santos said.

In addition, delos Santos bared

to the media that clearing operations had been conducted inside the AFP Detention Center after Aguirre had ordered the military prison facility to be probed.

The BuCor chief said that operatives tasked to probe the prison facility had dismantled air conditioning units and searched separate rooms where inmates were found not possessing any personal cellular phones.

Delos Santos, however, said that they have found only one phone installed at the reception area. The phone was made available only for emergency purposes. He said all calls are logged individually showing the inmates' name, time, date and the party contacted.

He added that the operatives have found only one television set installed at the reception area. However, the television set was solely for the purpose of scheduled viewing for inmates.

AFP, PNP wash hands

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) are washing their hands off the alleged luxurious perks now being enjoyed by high-profile inmates detained at a jail facility inside its general headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año, in an interview, maintained that the military only provided the space, which is the Intelligence Service of the AFP (Isafp) Custodial Center, for the detention of nine high-profile inmates, led by drug lord Herbert Colanggo.

Año stressed that the Bureau of Corrections (Bucor) is the "administrator" of the detention facility where the high-profile inmates, who testified against de Lima during a Senate inquiry last year, are being held.

The AFP chief, on the other hand, vouched for the Special Action Force (SAF) troops who are only in-charge of the security.

"The Bucor is the one in charge, running that custodial center for high profile inmates. In fairness to the SAF, their job is to guard and to ensure that they cannot escape...so they have nothing to do to whatever is being sneaked inside," said Año.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP-public affairs office chief, acknowledged that the military indeed has a report pertaining to the "unauthorized fixtures" discovered inside the detention facility.

He said the military observations and recommendations for the detention facility were already forwarded to the Department of Justice which has supervision over Bucor.

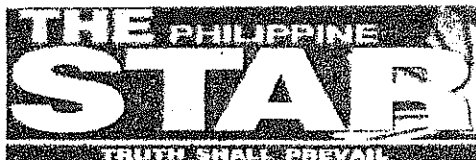
"The content of the report is now already with the DoJ."

For his part, Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Ronald dela Rosa vowed he will order an investigation to determine whether the SAF troopers have liability on the matter.

"We will investigate and we will determine up to what extent is their (SAF) influence over the control of whatever contraband entering the facility," said Dela Rosa.

"But their main mission there is to secure the perimeter...but as to the management of that facility we believe that's Bucor mandate," he added.

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3 nabbed in NPA attack on mining trucks

By ARTEMIO DURLAO

BAGUIO CITY – Pursuit operations by security forces against New People's Army (NPA) rebels who burned two trucks of a mining company

in Benguet led to the arrest of a female activist and two of her companions, officials said yesterday.

Sarah Abellon-Alikes, daughter of the late Anglican Bishop Richard Abellon Sr.,

was brought to the Benguet police office together with Antonio Cabalse and Marciano Sagun.

Police said they were caught at a checkpoint along Ambuklao Road, an hour after the reb-

els set fire to two dump trucks of Philex Mining Corp. in Sitio Tupac in Barangay Ampucao, Itogon.

Witnesses said four male NPA rebels and a female guerrilla flagged down the trucks of Philex at Ampucao, some five kilometers from the main gates of the mining firm, told the drivers to disembark and set the trucks on fire.

The Cordillera police said an Isuzu DMAX pick-up truck with plate number ZRH 321 and a Toyota Innova with conduc-

tion sticker VJ 3573 were seen by witnesses at the site of the attack.

The human rights group Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA) condemned the arrest, saying it was illegal since no charges have been filed against them.

The arrests fueled speculations that the city is under red alert, prompting Mayor Mauricio Domogan to come out with a statement denying reports of numerous police and military checkpoints on all roads leading to the city.

Elsewhere, the military's Southern Luzon Command said they are expecting a slew of accusations of human rights abuses following the resump-

tion of hostilities against the NPA.

"We expect the NPA human rights advocates to take center stage in accusing the military of human rights violations and abuses," Solcom commander Lt. Gen. Ferdinand Quidilla said.

Troops, on the other hand, are under orders to go after the NPA.

Soldiers from the Army's 53rd Infantry Battalion encountered a band of NPA rebels in Tigbao Zamboanga del Sur last Wednesday, triggering a seven-minute firefight.

There were no immediate reports of casualties on both sides. – With Lino de la Cruz

February 2017

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

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Soldier killed in Cagayan encounter

By **FREDDIE G. LAZARO**

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan — A government trooper belonging to the army's 17th Infantry Battalion was killed in an encounter with New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Barangay Balanni, Sto. Niño, Cagayan last Wednesday, a belated report said here.

led by a certain Christina Miguel Garcia, alias "Senyang," and Lolito Raza, also known as "Lanlan."

It was reported that the soldiers were conducting security operations after receiving reports from civilians about the presence of NPA rebels extorting money from the community in Barangay Balanni, Sto. Niño town.

The exchange of gunfire of the

Major General Paul T. Atal, commander of the army's 5th Infantry Division based in Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz, Upi, Gamu, Isabela province, confirmed yesterday the death of Private First Class (PFC) Rowel Tabuada.

A member of the Charlie Company of the army's 17th Infantry Battalion, PFC Tabuada died in combat with at least 10 fully-armed NPA guerrillas

soldiers and the NPA rebels started at 6:20 p.m. Wednesday and lasted for about 30 minutes and resulted also in the wounding of at least five of the guerrillas.

Atal reassured soldiers and their families that their welfare was being prioritized and that his command is committed to continuous operations to protect the community from extortion and other atrocities.

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ASG leader, follower killed in Tawi-Tawi

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

A notorious Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) leader and his follower were killed during joint law enforcement operations by the military and police in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi on Thursday.

Army Captain Jo-Ann D. Petinglay, spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-WesMinCom), identified the slain ASG leader as Ninok Sappari and his follower Mahdi Abdurahman.

Petinglay said Sappari was the leader of the notorious Abu Sayyaf Lucky 9 group of Sulu which perpetrated the assassination of numerous military personnel.

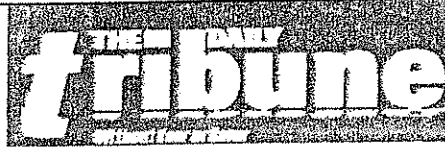
The group was also allegedly engaged in kidnapping of local victims in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Petinglay said that, based on reports they received, Abdurahman was killed at about 2 p.m. during a joint military and police operation in Barangay Pahut, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, while Sappari was neutralized at about 9:30 p.m. Thursday in Barangay Nalil, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, during the conduct of pursuit operations.

Petinglay said follow-up operations were immediately conducted after Sappari was able to escape the earlier engagement.

She said an operation was initially conducted at the Almari Beach Resort in Barangay Pahut, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, where the two were said to be staying and eyeing its clients as possible kidnap victims.

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Leader of ASG Lucky 9 slain in Tawi-Tawi ops

By Mario J. Mallari

An Abu Sayyaf leader and one of his followers were killed during a joint operation launched by police and military troops in Tawi-Tawi on Thursday afternoon.

Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez, Jr., commander of the military's Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom), identified the slain Abu Sayyaf men as Ninok Sappari, a sub-leader of the terrorist group operating in Tawi-Tawi, and Mahdi Abdurahman.

Abdurahman was the first to be killed during a firefight with combined police and military operatives along Barangay Pahut in Bongao town at around 2:30 p.m.

Initially, Sappari was neutralized later at around 9:30 p.m. in Barangay Nailil also in Bongao.

Galvez vowed relentless combat operations against the terrorist Abu Sayyaf Group to secure the safe freedom of more than 20 hostages.

"All available forces are being deployed to pursue and neutralize the Abu Sayyaf Group. These recent operations have caused setbacks, casualties and losses on the terrorist group," Galvez said.

"We will not stop until we get them all or until they decide to return to the folds of the law and

surrender," he added.

Capt. Jo-ann Petinglay, spokesperson for Wesmincom, said that military and police operatives launched the operation against Sappari at the Alinari Beach Resort in Barangay Pahut where the group was believed to have been looking for possible kidnap victims.

"The two are said to be staying while looking and eyeing possible kidnap victims from the said resort but were however reported by a concerned civilian after suspecting their movements," Petinglay said.

Sappari was able to evade apprehending forces and ran to the forested area after noticing the apprehending troops. According to bystanders, Sappari, while evading the troops, appeared to be wounded since blood stains were seen along his tracks.

Later that night, he was neutralized in Barangay Nailil of same municipality by the government forces who conducted pursuit operation to get him.

Sappari is the leader of the notorious ASG Lucky 9 group of Sulu which perpetrated the assassinations of military personnel. The group was also engaged lately on kidnapping of local victims in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. He is wanted for 32 counts of murder.

February 2017

The Manila Times

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ASG leader, member slain in Tawi-Tawi

ZAMBOANGA CITY: Security forces killed an Abu Sayyaf leader and one of his followers in clashes in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi on Thursday.

Officials said Ninok Sappari and Mahdi Abdurahman were slain when security forces swooped down on a beach resort they were staying in the village of Pahut before noon, triggering a gunbattle.

Abdurahman was killed on site while Sappari managed to escape but was tracked down by pursuing soldiers and police commandos in the nearby village of Nalil later in the night resulting in his death, according to Army Capt. Jo-ann Petinglay, spokesman for the Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom).

"The operation was initially conducted at the Al-mari Beach Resort in Barangay Pahut, Bongao where the two are said to be staying while eyeing possible kidnap victims from the resort but were reported by a concerned civilian who noticed their suspicious movements," she said.

Major General Carlito Galvez, Wesmincom chief, said the killing of Sappari was a big setback for the Abu Sayyaf.

"We will not stop until we get them all or until they decide to return to the folds of the law and surrender," Galvez added.

Sappari was also tagged in the March 2012 kidnaping of Indian Viju Kolara Veetil and other Filipinos in Sulu province.

AL JACINTO

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Stormtroopers Lifts Unilateral Ceasefire in Eastern Visayas

[Luz Claudio](#)



CAMP LUKBAN, CATBALOGAN CITY –To end-up the violence and unrightfully gaining the livelihood of our fellowmen, your Army in Eastern Visayas will abide the President's order in lifting the unilateral ceasefire with the CPP-NPA-NDF. The recent violations made-up by the CPP-NPA-NDF in other regions reflect their insincerity to pursue the peace negotiations. During the start of the unilateral ceasefire in Eastern Visayas on August 21, 2016, their expansion through recruitment especially the minors and continues collection of revolutionary taxes to the businessmen and less fortunes has not yet stopped, fact that during peace process these rebels were strengthening their forces.

Also, threatening to attack the military units of the 8th Infantry Division on conducting civil-military activities together with the Local Government Units and Non-Government Organizations in bringing basic services especially to far flung areas and throwing false issues that these efforts were combat operations and were violations of the on-going ceasefire.

These acts obviously show that the rebels on the ground are not in favor of the peace process and are only interested to gain the income of our brothers who are working hard for their families, just to suffice their illegal trades. The 8th Infantry Division will pursue its combat operations as per guidance by our Commander-in-Chief to stop the violent atrocities being perpetrated by the NPA. In the conduct of offensive operations against this

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terrorist group, rest assured that the militaries will strongly adhere to our sworn duty of serving and securing the people against all threats and instilling among our troops the respect for human rights, rule of law and international humanitarian law.

Further, the support of the people of Eastern Visayas on the efforts of the AFP against this terrorist group is highly encouraged to end this struggle and to pursue the achievement of long-lasting peace in the region. There is nothing impossible if we work together to stop them. Your Army in Eastern Visayas is on the front line in keeping you safe at all times.

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4 people abducted by NPA in Compostela Valley, says Army

By: Allan Nawal - Correspondent / @inmindanao

Inquire: Mindanao / 06:55 PM February 10, 2017



Capt. Rhyan Batchar, spokesman of the 10th Infantry Division (Photo from his Facebook page)

DAVAO CITY— Persons suspected to be New People's Army (NOA) rebels abducted last Sunday, Feb. 5, four civilians, including a barangay chairman and his wife, according to the Army's 10th Infantry Division.

Capt. Rhyan Batchar, spokeman of the unit, which is based in Compostela Valley, said the rebels took at gunpoint Rene Carlos, chairman of Barangay Pangyan in Trento, Agusan del Sur, and his wife Maribeth.

The rebels also abducted a relative of the couple, along with a barangay councilor and some tanods but released them later.

Citing a report reaching his unit, Batchar said the Carlos couple were "hogtied by the NPA."

Last Wednesday, Feb. 8, rebels also abducted Jun-jun Custodio and his son Marjun in Maco, Compostela Valley, Batchar added

He said the second abduction took place in Barangay Malamudao, also in Maco, and was perpetrated by rebels led by an alias Mokloy of the NPA's Milisya ng Bayan.

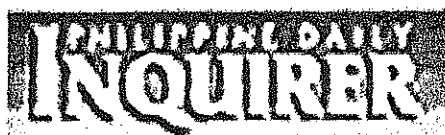
Brig. Gen. Macairog Alberto, the commander of the Army's 1001st Infantry Brigade, condemned the incidents.

"The NPA abducts innocent civilians to use as human shields," he said.

Maj. Gen. Rafael Valencia, the 10th ID chief, appealed to the NPA "to spare the civilians from atrocities." /atm

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

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Bilibid VIPs in AFP custody lose perks

By Gil C. Cabacungan
@gcabacunganINQ

One phone, one television, no air-conditioner.

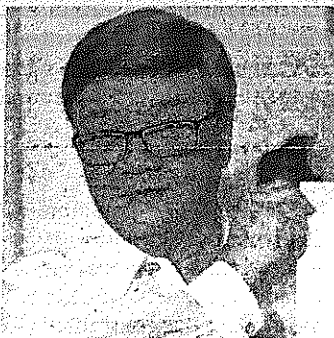
This was all that was left after a joint team from the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) and Special Action Force conducted clearing operations at the Camp Aguinaldo detention facility where eight high-profile inmates, who earlier testified against Sen. Leila de Lima in congressional hearings on the illegal drug trade inside New Bilibid Prison (NBP), reportedly enjoyed perks.

BuCor director Benjamin de los Santos also ordered the relief of 20 personnel pending a review of the regulations on how the inmates, including convicted drug lords, should be treated outside the national penitentiary. The inmates are being held at the custodial center of Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP).

"(The) entire BuCor guard complement has been reassigned to NBP pending investigation to determine culpability," De los Santos said.

De los Santos said air-conditioning units were dismantled at the center and only one phone was left installed in the reception area, where only one TV set was allowed. The phone calls are to be monitored and TV viewing time will be restricted.

The rooms used by the inmates were searched "but



Vitaliano Aguirre

(they) were not in possession of personal cell-phone units," he added.

Meanwhile, Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II also suspended BuCor legal chief Alvin Lim.

It was Lim who wrote a Dec. 9, 2016, memo to De los Santos to report that an AFP investigation had found that "the high-profile inmates detained in the AFP Custodial and Detention Center continue to enjoy lavish lifestyles, e.g. use of electronic gadgets, smart television sets, air-conditioning units, internet, cellular phones."

In the memo, Lim said police and BuCor personnel claimed that they allowed the inmates to have phones, Wi-fi access, TV and air-conditioners based on instructions from Aguirre.

But Aguirre denied that he approved such perks for the inmates and accused Lim of leaking the memo because he supposedly had an axe to grind against the justice secretary.

Aguirre said Lim was earlier found guilty in an administrative case and was facing another for grave misconduct. Lim would also face sanctions for illegal law practice in Luceña City, he added.

Lim could face additional charges for releasing the confidential memo to De los Santos. "(T)he memo is still under process and if that is released prematurely, there will be criminal liability," said Aguirre.

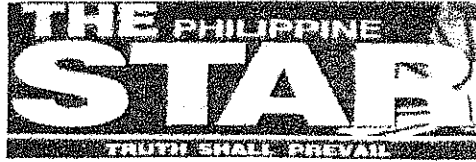
On Feb. 8, De Lima, a former justice secretary, accused Aguirre of granting perks to the NBP inmates as part of a deal for them to testify against her.

In a press conference, Aguirre dismissed as "hearsay" the proof being cited by De Lima and Lim that he had approved the perks. "As a former secretary of justice and a lawyer who is confident enough to call other lawyers mediocre, Senator De Lima should know that the above statement is an absolute hearsay."

"You can say what you want about me but be sure you are backed by concrete and solid evidence and not her-say or hearsay."

Aguirre said that while he did not expressly order the installation of air-conditioners, he could not blame BuCor guards for installing them to improve conditions at the detention center. He noted that at least two of the inmates nearly died as their blood pressure shot up due to the heat. INQ

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AFP anti-terror unit to get P53.5-M vests

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

The Joint Special Operations Group (JSOG) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the military's lead anti-terrorism unit, will soon be equipped with specialized vests that will further protect them during operations against lawless elements.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana announced yesterday the upcoming delivery of 1,190 sets of force protection equipment worth P53.5 million to boost the operational capability of the anti-terrorism squad.

The specialized vests are expected to be delivered by the second quarter of this year from Israel by MAROM Dolphin Ltd., the company that supplies force protection equipment to the Israel Defense Force.

Lorenzana said the government-to-government procurement was pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding on Logistics and Defense Industry Cooperation and the Implementing Arrangement for Procurement of Defense Materials between the Department of National Defense (DND) and the Israel Ministry of Defense.

JSOG is at the forefront of the intensi-

fied counter-terrorism campaign and is composed of specialized units from the various major services of the AFP, including the Philippine Army's Light Reaction Regiment, the Philippine Navy's Naval Special Operations Group and a Special Operations Wing from the Philippine Air Force.

The initial delivery is part of various equipment acquisitions that the DND is pursuing in order to upgrade the capability of the AFP in combating terrorist groups and terrorist cells.

"We have prioritized the procurement of these specialized vests for our defenders to enhance their survivability in encounters and battles against terrorists and lawless elements. Wherever they may hide, our troops will hunt them down," Lorenzana said.

The AFP Modernization Program is part of the Philippine Defense Transformation Roadmap 2028, DND's blueprint to attain more credible defense posture for security and stability, national peace and economic development.

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Joma wants peace talks to proceed

By JOSE RODEL CLAPANO

The peace negotiations between the government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) must continue to fulfill the people's demand for a just and lasting peace, Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chairman Jose Ma. Sison said yesterday.

Sison said that despite the resumption of hostilities between the government and the communist rebels, "peace negotiations can and must continue, precisely to continue" the forging of several agreements.

He mentioned the Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER), the Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms (CAPCR) and the bilateral ceasefire agreement effecting the amnesty and release of all political prisoners within the year.

Sison said the recent third round of formal talks achieved significant gains towards just and lasting peace.

"There was a fair exchange of views and agreements on efforts to comply with the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) concerning the release of all political prisoners, justice for and indemnification of victims of human right,

violations under the Marcos regime, allegations of human rights violations under Oplans Bayanihan, Tokhang and Kapayapaan, and approval of the supplementary guidelines of the Joint Monitoring Committee," he said.

"There was also an initial discussion of the bilateral ceasefire agreement to replace the unilateral ceasefire declarations," Sison said.

He said the biggest achievements in moving forward the peace process are the exchange of full drafts of the CASER by the reciprocal working committees of both panels, and the complete drafts of the CAPCR by the reciprocal working groups.

"I estimate that it is possible to unify these drafts within 2017. The NDF has formally offered to (the government) to co-found the Federal Republic of the Philippines on the basis of the CAPCR," Sison said.

Sison said in his view, it is possible to implement the CASER and CAPCR through the government's executive actions, legislation and constitutional amendments before the signing of the agreement to end hostilities and disposition of forces in 2020.

"Before then, a bilateral ceasefire agreement is possible, especially after the signing of the CASER and the CAPCR by the negotiating panels in 2017," he said.

Sison lamented the significant success of the third round of the formal talks in Rome has been overshadowed by the reaction of President Duterte to the announcement of the New People's Army (NPA) to terminate its unilateral ceasefire.

"I can understand the role of President Duterte in reacting as president and commander-in-chief. It is his duty to speak and act in the interest of the government and express concern for his troops. But there should have been a measure of restraint in his reaction in order to preserve the peace process," he said.

Sison said Duterte's announcements to consider the CPP-NPA and NDF as terrorist organizations and to terminate the Joint Agreement on Security and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) had the effect of terminating the entire peace negotiations.

"I believe that President Duterte's reaction should not have gone this far," Sison said.

"I propose to him to consult thoroughly with his negotiating panel and the peace advocates in his own Cabinet and others outside of his government, and encourage and allow back-channeling efforts to clarify misunderstandings and solve immediately the current problems."

Sison said the third party facilitator on the peace talks should be briefed by each

negotiating party to allow inputs or suggestions on how to continue the peace process.

Sison stressed the peace talks could proceed even as fighting continues.

He said more than 10 major agreements were made during the tenure of former president Fidel Ramos even while fighting was ongoing.

He said the CPP-NPA-NDF remains committed to the peace process in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration and further agreements.

"They wish to pursue with the government the bright prospects that started with the first round of formal talks in

August 2016 and overcome the peace spoilers that run counter to the progress that has been achieved in the third round of formal talks.

"We must respond to and strive to fulfill the Filipino people's demand for a just and lasting peace," Sison said.

Founded in 1968, the rural-based CPP-NPA has unsuccessfully tried to negotiate an end to their rebellion and their inclusion in government with six presidents, including Duterte.

Several sectors also pressed for the continuance of the peace talks.

Lawmakers led by Panga-

sinan Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil said there is still hope in reviving the peace talks.

Bataoil, who was part of the government's peace negotiating team that went to Rome, said, "Both sides should hope and work for that compelling reason to realize our achievements for long and lasting peace."

"One of our demands is the declaration of bilateral ceasefire, it cannot be unilateral because if there is violation, it cannot be investigated carefully by a joint team," he said.

– With Gilbert Bayoran, Eva Visperas

February 2017

The Standard

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AFP puts forward terms of peace gab

THE New People's Army must first prove their sincerity and show that they are united with their political wing in the quest for peace before any new negotiations can take place, the military said Friday.

"First they must be united in the goal of seeking peace and they must show sincerity by complying with all peace negotiation agreements, especially on the part calling for the cessation of attacks against government troops," said Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the Armed Forces public affairs office.

Arevalo was responding to a question about what the military would seek if President Rodrigo Duterte decides to resume talks that he broke off with the communist rebels last week.

Earlier, he noted, the National Democratic Front negotiating panel headed by Fidel Agcaoili said that the NPA unilateral ceasefire would continue while Jorge Madlos, the top communist leader in

Next page

AFP...

From A1

Mindanao, said the ceasefire would end on Feb. 10.

"Before seeking any new peace negotiations with the government, the NPA must show that its leadership and units on the ground are united in the goal of seeking a just and lasting peace," Arevalo said.

On Friday, Armed Forces chief Eduardo Año said he saw no reason for the President to declare Martial Law, even though peace talks with the communists have collapsed and Abu Sayyaf and other terrorist groups continue to pose a threat.

"Well right now the PNP [Philippine National Police] and the AFP can still operate within the prevailing situation with full control so right now I don't see a reason why the President will declare Martial Law, although he has the discretion

[and] authority based on the Constitution," Año said.

He added that even if the President does declare Martial Law, there are checks and balances available through the Constitution.

And should the Chief Executive ever decides to do so, he said there are checks and balances available to ensure that its declaration are in accordance with Constitutional provisions.

"But right now, we don't see the reason [for Martial Law]," he added.

Año earlier said that close military and police cooperation is one of the strategies which will be employed by the Duterte administration in defeating the NPA insurgency threat.

He made this statement during the sidelights of the Joint Peace and Security Coordinating Council (JPSCC) meeting in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City on Thursday.

"In our meeting this morning,

we strengthened the mechanism of the JPSCC particularly the creation of joint cells at the different levels, so in our planning and actions, the Philippine National Police and the AFP, will be always together, down to the provincial level," he said in Filipino.

The AFP and PNP also said they would intensify operations against the NPA.

"In view of the lifting of the unilateral ceasefire and the cancellation of the talks, we will intensify our operations together—the PNP and the AFP—to fight the NPA to defeat the armed group and put back into jail all those high-ranking personalities [earlier released to help in the peace negotiations]," he added.

At the moment, the AFP chief said there is no need to deploy additional troops in NPA hot spots in Northern and Eastern Mindanao as the military has enough forces in these areas. PNA

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INQUIRER

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BACK-CHANNEL MEETING EYED

JOMA SISON URGES DU30 TO REVIVE PEACE TALKS

By Karlos Manlupig
@kmanlupigINQ

DAVAO CITY—Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chair Jose Maria Sison on Friday urged President Duterte to allow back-channel meetings between negotiators of the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to clear obstacles to the resumption of the peace talks.

Sison, who serves as NDFP's chief political consultant in the talks, said he understood the President's decision to terminate the talks, but Mr. Duterte should have reacted with "a measure of restraint" to avoid a deterioration of the situation that stalled the peace process.

"I propose [that he] consult thoroughly with his negotiating panel and the peace advocates in his own Cabinet and



Jose Maria Sison

others outside of his government, and encourage and allow back-channeling efforts to clarify misunderstandings and solve immediately the current problems," Sison said.

The communist rebels last week announced they would end their unilateral ceasefire on Friday, accusing the government of reneging on a promise to release hundreds of political prisoners and violating its own truce.

Mr. Duterte reacted angrily, terminating the government ceasefire and ending the talks, saying there could be no peace

with the communist rebels, whom he called terrorists, "in this generation."

The government then canceled the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees, which gives safe conduct to rebel negotiators and their staff.

The military also declared an all-out war on the New People's Army, and, with the police, began to hunt down rebel leaders who had been freed to participate in the talks.

Sison said Norway, which brokered the talks, deserved to be informed about what happened to the negotiations so that it could help revive the peace process.

Sison said the two sides could resume the talks even if there was no truce, so that they could continue forging substantial agreements on social, economic, political and constitutional reforms, a bilateral cease-

fire, and amnesty for all political prisoners "within 2017."

He noted that at least 10 major agreements had been sealed during the administration of former President Fidel Ramos despite continued fighting between soldiers and guerrillas.

The communists "wish to pursue with the government the bright prospects that started with the first round of formal talks in August 2016 and overcome the peace spoilers that run counter to the progress that has been achieved in the third round of formal talks," he said.

The latest round of talks held in Rome ended with some major gains, including an agreement in principle to distribute free land to farmers and farm workers and rebel support for a federal system of government being pushed by Mr. Duterte.

—WITH REPORTS FROM MELVIN GASCON AND DELFIN MALLARI INQ

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A stronger defense structure will help

SECRETARY of Defense Delfin Lorenzana has been giving a lot of thought to the South China Sea (SCS) lately. In a recent interview with an American news agency, he said he does not see the United States starting a war with China over the SCS as President Trump, he said, is a businessman and he knows that if war breaks out, business will suffer.

In another interview – with a French news agency – Lorenzana expressed fear that China is likely to build military facilities on Scarborough Shoal, which is only 150 miles from the Zambales coast and therefore within the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone of the Philippines under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Lorenzana said China is likely to build facilities on Scarborough – which we call Panatag or Bajo de Masinloc – as it would give China a military outpost at the easternmost part of the South China Sea which it claims to be part of China. With a base on Scarborough, he said, China would have effective control of the maritime area it claims with its Nine-Dash Line.

In 2012, then President Benigno S Aquino III issued Administrative Order No. 29 renaming South China Sea waters within the country's Exclusive Economic Zone as "West Philippine Sea." The area claimed includes, aside from Scarborough, the Spratly islands, the Reed Bank, and Mischief Reef west of Palawan. We call these the Kalayaan islands.

While the Philippine government claims all these areas in the "West Philippine Sea," the name does not appear in any international map. China certainly does not recognize it, as it conflicts with its own Nine-Dash-Line map. In any open conflict, we could not defend our claim against those of other countries.

Over the years, the Philippines has had to rely on the US for help, but under our Mutual Defense Treaty, the US is committed to come to the Philippines' defense in case of an attack only on a "metropolitan territory" or "island territories... in the Pacific." Thus far, the US has limited its interest in the South China Sea to ensuring that it remains open to international navigation.

The Arbitral Court in the Hague ruled last year that China's claims to most of the South China Sea have no legal basis and ordered that Scarborough Shoal, as a traditional fishing area, remain accessible to fishermen of all nations. But the Arbitral Court has no capacity to enforce its decisions, so if China – as Secretary Lorenzana fears – starts building a military outpost on the shoal, the Philippines could do nothing about it.

Under President Duterte, the Philippines has adopted a policy of closer, friendlier relations with China. We may have won in the Hague court, but we are not asserting our claim, not at this time anyway. We have no means to do this, not with our present defense capability, and not with our present uncertainties with the US.

Secretary Lorenzana can only speculate on possibilities in the South China Sea under present conditions which are constantly changing. He mentioned in his interview with the US news agency that he would ask for an increase in the Philippine defense budget – from the present 1.5 percent of the GNP to 2.5 percent. The present Philippine defense budget, he said, is only half of what most of our neighbors currently spend.

In the face of the challenges in the South China Sea, even doubling the defense budget would hardly make a difference. But a stronger Philippine defense structure would be an improvement on the present situation and deserves the full consideration of our government.

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The Manila Times

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Let's see Duterte pulverize the CPP/NPA

WILL President Rodrigo Duterte do an Erap?

The question arises in the heat of the renewed hostilities between the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA). President Duterte had announced an "all-out war" against the communist rebels, and the last time such a policy of war against a Philippine insurgency was made was in 2000, in the government's war against the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

President Joseph Ejercito Estrada announced that "all-out war" policy in 2000 and determinedly pushed it through the MILF strongholds in Mindanao, crushing its military camps quickly one after the other, culminating in the utter pulverization of the Muslim rebels' mother stronghold, Camp Abubakar.

The MILF would be unheard from since, and although in the succeeding administration of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo the MILF, thanks to the patronage of US Ambassador Kristie Kinney, surfaced again and got recognized for peace negotiations with the government, that would form an entirely different story, not figuring in this present consideration.

What is of moment now is that President Estrada did it once upon a time, announcing and immediately thereafter actually pursuing the "all-out war" policy. Will President Duterte actually pursue, too, this time his own announced policy of "all-out war" against the CPP/NPA? And if Duterte would, will he succeed, as Erap succeeded with the MILF in pulverizing the CPP/NPA?

Doing the MILF in was no easy job for President Estrada. He had two powerful forces falling in the way of his implementing that war policy. One was the Catholic Church, or at least its head at the time, Jaime Cardinal Sin, who telephoned the President, imploring him not to proceed with his plan to attack the MILF camp.

"Cardinal," Erap is said to have invited the archbishop to Malacañang, "please come and see this video I am viewing. Fourteen Marines beheaded by the MILF and then tell me again what you are telling me now."

The Cardinal did not come, but just to illustrate where Sin's loyalties lay, next to make exactly the same entreaty with Erap was a dignitary from the US State Department speaking in behalf of then US President Bill Clinton. And with the same conviction that he had with Cardinal Sin, Erap rejected the importuning of the US official.

Erap was impeached and thrown out of office within two months of his rejection of the US-expressed wish for

*Again, if the campaign is protracted, the resources of the State will not be equal to the strain.

*Now, when your weapons are dulled, your ardor damped, your strength exhausted and your treasure spent, other chieftains will spring up to take advantage of your extremity. Then no man, however wise, will be able to avert the consequences that must ensue.

*Thus, though we have heard of stupid haste in war, cleverness has never been seen associated with long delays.

*There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare.

*In war, then, let your great object be victory, not lengthy campaigns.

As of this writing, Duterte hasn't yet done anything indicating that he would do a repeat of Erap, doing it against the CPP/NPA. But from the rebels' camp, we can glean that they are thrown into panic, indicating they fear Duterte means what he says about



MY SAY

MAURO GIA SAMONTE

him not to crush Camp Abubakar, but this does not seem to bear upon this present discussion. What world power would Duterte be contending against if he in turn pulverized the CPP/NPA now? No other foreign power has been known to intervene with such wanton barefacedness in Philippine affairs except the United States. What reason would the US have this time to do to Duterte if he pulverized the CPP/NPA what it did to Erap for his pulverizing the MILF in his time? If Duterte gets ousted like Erap, that would give us an inkling of what strategic agenda the CPP/NPA is actually serving by its continuing pursuit of a never-ending protracted people's war. In a war where you do not program the downfall of your enemy, you actually serve to prop up the rule of your enemy endlessly.

We have had this Sisonite "protracted people's war" for five decades now, and the future of thousands of young men had been sacrificed and wasted on that war so that it behooves those who, though now in the twilight of their years, continue to pin hope on that future being still attainable in the here-and-now, to cite the following mandates by Sun Tzu in his Art of War:

*When you engage in actual fighting, if victory is long in coming, then men's weapons will grow dull and their ardor will be damped. If you lay siege to a town, you will exhaust your strength.

"all-out war".

In what can be deduced as a couched move of appeasement of the enemy, the National Democratic Front, indeed the front of the CPP/NPA in the ongoing peace negotiations with the government, has released a press statement stating their reasons for not agreeing to the unilateral termination by Duterte of those negotiations.

A headline news report in the *Manila Times* goes: "The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) has refused to acknowledge the written notice sent by the government on the termination of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG), a deal that keeps peace consultants from being arrested.

"In a statement, NDFP negotiating peace panel chairman Fidel Agcaoili said that the government had 'no fair and just reason' to terminate the peace negotiations two weeks after the conclusion of the third round of formal talks in Rome, Italy.

"Agcaoili cited the advances made during the negotiations, including discussions on human rights and reforms and an agreement to meet in the Netherlands on February 22 to 27 to hammer out a bilateral ceasefire.

"With the above progress in the talks, it is unreasonable for any party to unilaterally terminate the peace negotiations without just cause and squander the gains so far achieved," Agcaoili said, as he pointed out a technical error in the notice of termination.

He said the letter of termination of the JASIG sent by Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza was "improperly addressed".

The statement of Agcaoili betrays a position of weakness. In war negotiations between rebels and government, the former are deemed to hold the high ground, for which reason in fact the latter wants the conflict done in talks. But the way Agcaoili sounds, the rebels are veritably imploring the government not to stop the talks, please.

Citing a technicality and "advances" made in the negotiations, Agcaoili finds reason to sound strong, saying "The NDFP cannot be a party to an unjust, unreasonable and improper termination of the JASIG. The GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) bears full responsibility for its unilateral decision."

But the statement amuses. How's that to be done? By not being a party to "an unjust, unreasonable and improper termination of the JASIG," doesn't Agcaoili imply that the talks continue. But the government is backing out of those talks; who do the rebels talk to, themselves?

If at all, what the Agcaoili statement

amounts to is a propaganda ploy for justifying the non-surrender, or return to government fold if you may, of those who had been released on bail to act as consultants for the rebel side in the negotiations, for instance, the couple Benito and Wilma Tiamzon.

Duterte has put it bluntly to these people, "You go back to jail."

That, in turn for the President, is a laughing matter as well. Does he expect those "consultants" to be gentlemen enough to respect their incarceration and return to jail now that the negotiations have broken down?

The only beneficiaries in these comic episode are the Tiamzon couple and their ilk, who can now direct their middle fingers to Duterte: "Ngekngkek mo." Who is the stupid rebel who, having already been out of the enemy's prison, would want to place himself in that enemy's custody again? Unless this whole zarzuela of war and peace is one whole damn joke only. It is all up to Duterte now to prove it is no joke on his part. If I were to believe former Senator Kit Tatad that during the period when Duterte was still mayor he was elected member of the NDF upon nomination by Jun Evasco, then there is great reason for me to doubt the seriousness of the peace talks which the President appears to have recently terminated.

The only way to erase that doubt is for the President to make good his policy of all-out war against the CPP/NPA. And if, being a revolutionary, and in fact having been already touted by his supporters as versed in Sun Tzu's art war, then Duterte should recognize that now is the perfect time for him to unleash that all-out war.

By Agcaoili's pronouncements, it seems apparent that the CPP/NPA is not ready to engage the government in such a war. Sison himself came out in the media calling for a resumption of the peace talks, quite in contrast to his posturing vis-à-vis Duterte before the start of those talks, i.e. belligerent. Now the Philippine communist sovereign is issuing such unlikely statements as "give peace a chance."

In all likelihood, the CPP/NPA, perhaps sensing Duterte is serious with his policy of all-out war against the communist insurgency, are resorting to ploys to avert such a war. So, from Duterte, the marching orders for his troops should be a Mao Zedong basic tenet in guerilla warfare: "When the enemy attacks, retreat. When the enemy rests, harass him. When the enemy shows no sign of resistance, attack. When the enemy retreats, pursue."

Both from the NDF and from the CPP sovereign, the signs are clear: the NPA does not want to fight. It's high time Duterte attacked and—as Erap did in 2000—won.

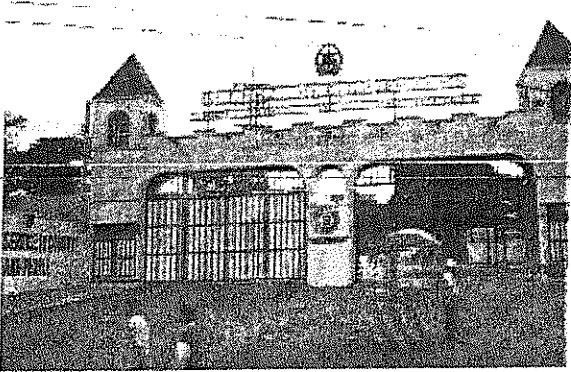
Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

ONLINE NEWS 11 FEBRUARY 2017

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AFP confirms finding contraband in cells of high-profile inmates

By: Jerome Aning - Reporter / @JeromeAningINC
Philippine Daily Inquirer / 07:13 PM February 10, 2017



Camp Aguinaldo, General Headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Photo from Radyo Inquirer)

Prohibited items had indeed been found at the Military Police Battalion Custodial Detention Center in Camp Aguinaldo, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) confirmed on Friday.

The center is where high-profile drug convicts are detained.

In a news briefing, Marine Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP public affairs chief, said it was the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) personnel, who are in charge of the facility, who removed the the items, which included cellphones, television sets, and air-conditioning units from the cells and the common area.

He said AFP's role in the matter was to inspect the premises and reporting their findings to the BuCor and the Department of Justice.

"The activities of removing the items and confiscating rest upon the BuCor and the DOJ," Arevalo said. "The participation of the AFP here is undertaking our own inspection because the facility is inside an AFP camp and the concept here is that is we just lent it the BuCor."

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On Thursday, Gen. Eduardo Año, AFP chief of staff, confirmed the discovery of the prohibited items following a regular inspection done last December to ensure that facilities in the camp were safe from espionage and other security breaches.

"As part of our job, we made some observations and investigations and inspection and the appropriate measure or course of action will be through the proper authority like the BuCor and the DOJ and we believe they have made appropriate actions already," Año said.

At least eight inmates, including convicted armed robber and drug dealer Herbert Colangco, were transferred to detention center last September to ensure their safety after some of them were attacked while the House of Representatives was conducting a hearing on drug activities at the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa.

Last Wednesday, Sen. Leila de Lima, who has been implicated in the Bilibid drug trade, said the prohibited items were authorized by Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II in return for the inmates' testimony against her before the House.

Aguirre denied this, adding he had ordered the BuCor to investigate.

In a statement, Arevalo said that, the military had also advised the strict observance of security protocols and the immediate installation of closed-circuit TV camera at the detention center.

He said it was the DOJ and the BuCor that control, administration, and management of the prisoners; who should be kept in the facility, when and how long; how they are to be transferred; the designation of the guards; and the approval of visits. /atm

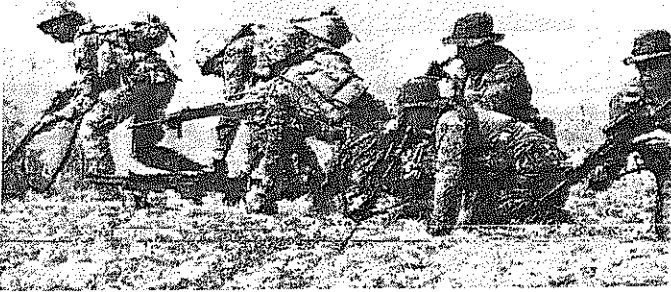
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'Focused military operations' start vs NPA in Central, Northern Luzon

By: Tonette Orejas - @ttorejasINQ

Inquirer Central Luzon / 09:14 AM February 10, 2017



Soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines during Balikatan training exercises (INQUIRER FILE PHOTO)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO — The Philippine Army's 7th Division has announced it will start "focused military operations," after President Duterte lifted the ceasefire with communist New People's Army and terminated peace talks with their political arm, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

The 7th Division operates in the Ilocos and Central Luzon regions, the provinces of Quirino and Abra, seven towns of Nueva Vizcaya and two towns in Mountain Province.

The Army unit based in Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija said on Thursday (Feb. 9) these operations would "actively protect the communities and flagship projects of the government threatened by the [New People's Army], and will be ready for any attacks that they are planning."

~~The NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, which resumed peace negotiations with the Duterte administration six months ago. The NDFP is the CPP's political organization.~~

The Army said warrants against communist leaders would be served in coordination with the police.

The 7th ID warned it "would not allow the NPA to hamper the delivery of basic social services." **SFM**

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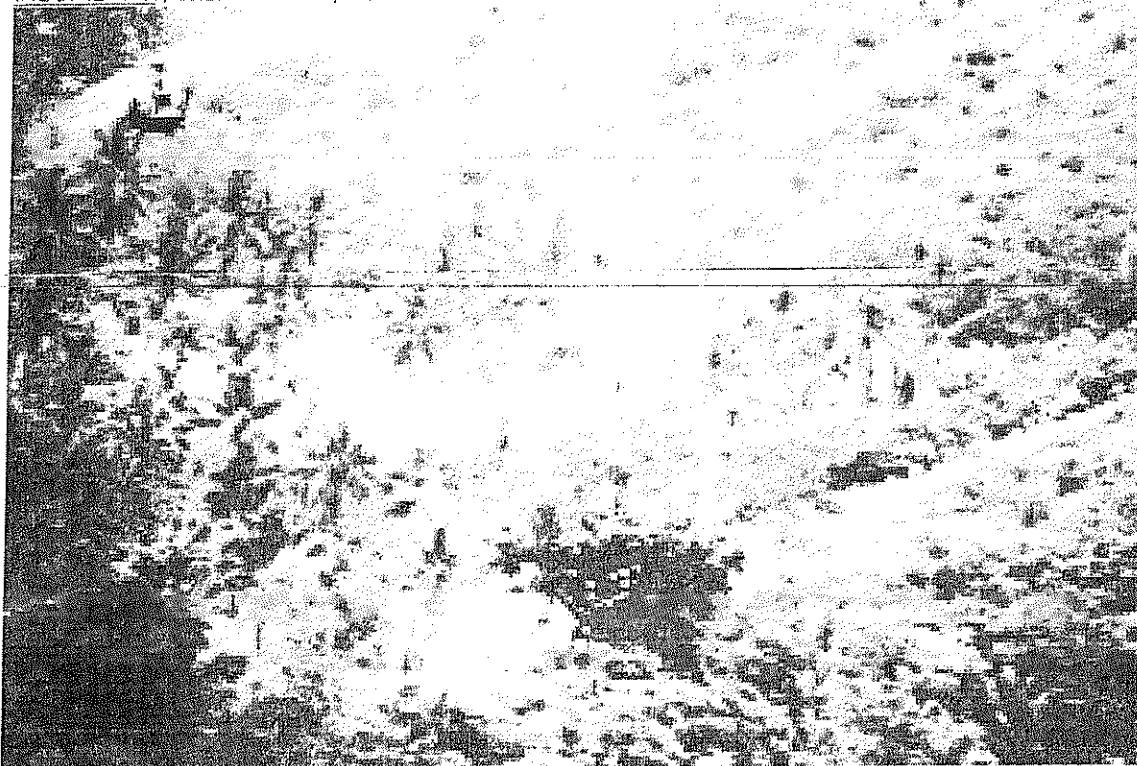
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AFP drops leaflets over Davao Oriental urging rebels to surrender

By: Frances Mangosing - Reporter / @FMangosingINC

INQUIRER.net / 06:26 PM February 10, 2017



An Air Force UH-1 chopper drops leaflets encouraging NPA rebels to surrender. (Photo from the 10th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) dropped a total of 12,500 leaflets on Wednesday and Thursday over Davao Oriental asking members of the New People's Army to surrender as it renewed hostilities against the communist rebels.

The leaflets were dropped by an Air Force UH-1, or Huey, helicopter, Capt. Rhyan Batchar, spokesman of the 10th Infantry Division, told Inquirer in a telephone interview.

He said Davao Oriental was chosen because of recent encounters in the area and because most of latest NPA surrenderees came from the province.

Ground troops also distributed some leaflets to residents in several areas.

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Since Feb. 1, Batchar added, 10 communist rebels have turned themselves to the government.

COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL INTEGRATION PROGRAM (CLIP)

Ang tugbang nga kamidad sa armas ginhihapon isip dugang suporta sa pagtagod ug bag-ong mga kinabati sa usa sa rebeldes nga mobala sa sabakan sa balac nga motahar nan

PUSIL	REWARD
Light Machine Gun	90,000.00
M14 Rifle	60,000.00
M16 Rifle	50,000.00
M203 Grenade Launcher	40,000.00
.45 Pistol	39,000.00
M1 Garand	30,000.00
30 Caliber	30,000.00
Carbine M2	25,000.00
Carbine M1	20,000.00
.45 Thompson SM Gun	12,000.00
Springfield M1903	10,000.00
Homemade Shotgun	2,000.00

Ang kamidad sa armas nga wala magamit, magka sa mabati sa usa sa mga rebeldes

Ang mga gusto nang mobala sa sabakan sa balac-dangor lang kamo sa panahon-nga-kaunlarahan sa Barangay. Opsiyales kay sila andam nga motabang aron kamo mababalik sa normal nga panginabati alang sa masanag nga kaugmaon sa inyong pamilya

MAGTXT O TAWAG SA NUMERO:

09179392937 (KALINAW HOTLINE)

A sample of the leaflet dropped by the AFP over Davao Oriental. (Photo from the 10th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army)

"To those who want to return to the government fold, contact the nearest soldier or village official in your area because they are ready to help you to go back to your normal lives and have a bright future with your families," the leaflet read in Cebuano.

After a validation process from the government, communist rebels who surrender will receive cash assistance, an additional cash for the surrendered firearms, and livelihood assistance.

A list of the cash equivalents of surrendered firearms is also included in the leaflets.

The assistance is part of the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP), a national reintegration program for the communist rebels.

President Rodrigo Duterte terminated the peace talks last week after the communist rebels lifted its unilateral ceasefire and killed six soldiers.

Meanwhile, Jose Maria Sison, founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), has urged the government to continue the peace negotiations. /atm

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