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ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

13 February 2017

Monday

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

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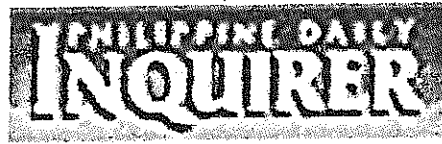
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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | FEBRUARY 13, 2017 | MONDAY

NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING THE COUNTRY
(As of 5:00 AM - Feb. 12, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
☀️ 6:24 AM	🌄 5:45 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
🌙 6:39 PM	🌑 6:47 AM
FULL MOON	LAST QUARTER
🌕 FEB 11 0:33 AM	🌑 FEB 19 3:13 AM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
🌊 6:42 AM -0.16 Meter	🌊 11:42 PM 0.94 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 13	FEB 14	FEB 15	FEB 16	FEB 17	FEB 18
METRO MANILA	☁️ 20 - 29 °C	☁️ 20 - 28 °C	☁️ 18 - 26 °C	☁️ 18 - 26 °C	☁️ 22 - 28 °C	☁️ 22 - 29 °C
TUGUEGARAO	☁️ 17 - 23 °C	☁️ 17 - 23 °C	☁️ 23 - 28 °C	☁️ 23 - 27 °C	☁️ 24 - 30 °C	☁️ 23 - 29 °C
LAOAG	☁️ 17 - 28 °C	☁️ 16 - 27 °C	☁️ 25 - 30 °C	☁️ 24 - 30 °C	☁️ 24 - 31 °C	☁️ 24 - 30 °C
BAGUIO	☁️ 10 - 19 °C	☁️ 09 - 19 °C	☁️ 24 - 29 °C	☁️ 24 - 28 °C	☁️ 24 - 33 °C	☁️ 24 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	☁️ 20 - 28 °C	☁️ 21 - 27 °C	☁️ 24 - 30 °C	☁️ 24 - 30 °C	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: small;">SAGOT KO, PAARAL MO!</p>	

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February 2017

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

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Survivors warned of aftershocks

FROM A1

By the Inquirer staff
@Team Inquirer

SURIGAO CITY—Officials on Sunday warned survivors of a powerful earthquake that left at least seven people dead in northeastern Mindanao to ensure their homes and buildings were sturdy enough before venturing back amid continuing aftershocks.

A strong aftershock alarmed residents, some of whom screamed in fear, while waiting for President Duterte to arrive to console earthquake survivors gathered in a gymnasium in the hard-hit capital of Surigao del Norte province.

The 6.7-magnitude quake struck late Friday, killing at least seven people, injuring more than 200 and damaging the main airport and about 1,000 houses in Surigao.

Some residents said the shaking was so strong they could not stand up to rush out of their houses.

Officials appealed for volun-

teer engineers to help check the stability of damaged schools, hospitals, malls, hotels and other buildings, especially in the provincial capital of Surigao City, which has been placed under a state of calamity to ensure a rapid release of emergency funds and prevent food hoarding.

Power was restored on Sunday in some parts of the city.

Homes must be safe

"Our call is do not return hastily after the strong quake," said Romina Marasigan, spokesperson of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDR-RMC). "We have to ensure that our residences are safe."

"The critical infrastructure—the schools, the hospitals and offices that provide services—should also be checked if they are still safe for use," Marasigan said.

"We are again reiterating our appeal for help from civil and structural engineers to ensure the safety of the people," she added.

Renato Solidum, who heads



WATER WOES Residents of Surigao City draw water from a pump station damaged by Friday's earthquake. —JEFFREY MAITEM

the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, said at least 137 aftershocks had hit following the quake.

"Aftershocks are normal after a strong earthquake. Typically, these may last for days, up to weeks," Solidum said.

Among the structures damaged by the quake were 12 schools, six bridges and some

shopping malls, many of which had visible cracks, shattered glass windows and damaged canopies.

The quake may have busted tap water pipes, limiting supply in Surigao City, which lies about 700 kilometers southeast of Manila, and three outlying towns, officials said.

Mr. Duterte, accompanied

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by Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo, arrived more than three hours late in Surigao City because his entourage had to make a detour following the closure of its airport due to deep cracks in its runway.

He later pledged P2 billion in financial help to quake survivors needing medical treatment.

Relief goods arrive

A government plane loaded with relief supplies and emergency aid landed on Sunday morning in Butuan City for overland transport to Surigao City and nearby towns as authorities moved to restore power and water supply in the quake-stricken areas.

Even so, life appeared to be returning to normal, according to Surigao del Norte Vice Gov. Carlos Egay.

NDRRMC Executive Director Ricardo Jalad said the Philippine Air Force Lockheed C-130 "Hercules" cargo aircraft transported 10 generator sets, 150 solar lamps, 30,000 pieces of disaster relief packs, 4,090 bars of brown rice, 100 rolls of laminat-

ed sacks, 2,000 pieces of mosquito nets, 2,000 plastic mats and 2,000 blankets.

The plane left Villamor Air Base in Pasay City at around 6 a.m. and landed about an hour later in Butuan City's Bancasi Airport loaded with goods for overland transport to Surigao City.

Buildings closed

"We're still being hit by aftershocks, and as of now we do not have tap water supply. The people are suffering," provincial information officer Mary Escalante said in a television interview.

"Buildings that suffered structural damage have been closed," Escalante said, adding some schools and gyms that were meant to serve as evacuation centers were among those damaged by the quake.

Health Secretary Paulyn Ubial advised residents to refrain from drinking water from faucets. —REPORTS FROM CHRIS V. PANGANIBAN, DANILO ADORADOR, JEROME ANING, MARLON RAMOS, TINA G. SANTOS, DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN, AFP, AP AND REUTERS INQ

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Aftershocks terrify Surigao

SURIGAO – Thousands of residents of this city sought refuge in the streets as aftershocks hit the region yesterday, two days after a powerful earthquake killed six.

The 6.7-magnitude quake struck Surigao and nearby areas of Mindanao late Friday, injuring hundreds, with over a thousand homes destroyed or damaged, officials said.

People who had fled their damaged homes wrapped themselves in blankets and sacks for a second night as they slept side-by-side on the pavement since Saturday.

The Philippine Institute of Seismology and Volcanology (Phivolcs) recorded 135 weaker quakes in Surigao, a city of 152,000 people, and in the region around it since the quake struck, though there were no additional reports of

casualties or damage.

"The people are terrified of the aftershocks," said Romina Marasigan, spokesperson for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

The NDRRMC reported the number of dead remained at six though the injured increased to 202. Many of those killed or injured were pinned down or hit by debris during the quake.

Marasigan said classes in Surigao City are suspended today to give way to damage assessment in schools for the safety of teachers and

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students.

She announced that generator sets, solar lamps, high energy biscuits, brown rice, laminated sacks, mosquito nets, plastic mats and blankets are among the items that would be distributed through the local disaster councils.

"We remain on red alert status together with our response cluster, including the regional council in Caraga region which will monitor the situation and gather more information on the extent of damage," Marasigan said.

Because aftershocks are still expected, Marasigan called on residents of Surigao City to remain calm and alert with the safety of their families considered as their primary concern.

"This was the first time Surigao had suffered a quake this strong. The previous one occurred in the 1800s," said Martin Andanar, presidential communications chief and a native of the city.

"This is the strongest (earthquake) for this century," he said. His house in the city was also damaged by the quake.

Andanar thanked private groups that extended assistance to the earthquake survivors. He said among the groups providing help is the MVP Foundation, which has sent cellphone chargers and generators to affected areas.

He said agencies are continuously offloading relief items at the Butuan Airport, some 100 kilometers away from the city.

Andanar stressed the need for the public to donate potable water and other relief items to quake survivors.

"Water is important in Surigao. Potable water is what is important here," Andanar said.

"We ask the NGOs (non-government organizations) to donate water through the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) so it can be sent here in Butuan City through a C-130 plane," he added.

US Ambassador Sung Kim expressed condolences to the families of those killed in the earthquake.

"My thoughts are with the people of Surigao, especially those who lost loved ones," Kim said in a post on Twitter.

Surigao Bishop Antonieto Cabahog issued a prayer for the recovery of the region from the quake.

"We implore the help of Our Lady of Lourdes to whom we turn our gaze, to stay with us and lead us safely to the peace of Jesus, her Son," Cabahog prayed.

'There is always a time'

President Duterte flew to the region yesterday to inspect the response effort, which officials said has shifted to relief and rehabilitation after the last of the dead and injured were pulled from the rubble.

He was accompanied by a military transport plane loaded with generator sets, solar lamps, high-energy biscuits, mosquito nets and blankets for the displaced residents.

Duterte comforted the residents, who were already getting jittery with the aftershocks.

"In everything that happens in the world, there is always a time for them," Duterte told the residents gathered at the Surigao City gymnasium.

"Thank God. *Buotan man gud ang mga Surigaonon* (Surigaonons are good people)," he said.

Duterte quoted a passage in the Bible in sympathy for those who lost their loved ones.

"*Naa ang Ecclesiastes* (3:1) in the Bible, *naay panahon sa kasadya ug kaguol* (there is time for happiness and sadness, for joy and sorrow)," the President said in Cebuano.

He said God was good and merciful that the intensity of the tremor that struck Surigao was not that strong or else the damage and the number of dead and injured would have been greater.

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Duterte vowed at least P2 billion in aid to the survivors and rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged by the quake.

"Take it easy. Don't get frustrated. Is P2 billion enough to buy them a subdivision?" the President then asked Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno nearby.

Duterte promised to come back and share stories with the

in an interview.

"Buildings that suffered structural damage have been closed," she said, adding some schools and gyms meant to serve as evacuation centers were among those damaged by the quake.

The quake also damaged bridges and roads and knocked out power supply, though elec-

days, particularly for kerosene and household LPG," Cusi said.

"In order to effectively ensure the supply of petroleum products, oil companies are obliged to update the DOE of the operational status of their depots and gasoline stations within the areas to stabilize the supply and reduce chances of individuals who are taking advantage of the

were reportedly felt, he said.

"Aftershocks can occur days to weeks but the number in general will decline," Solidum said.

"Literally aftershocks are smaller than the main shock. But if the question is would there be a similar or larger earthquake coming from the same fault of the Feb. 10 earthquake, it is not discounted but the possibility is low," he added.

Yesterday's aftershocks registered magnitudes of 2.2 to 4.1, with intensities ranging from Intensity 1 to 3, Phivolcs said.

Solidum advised residents of Surigao and nearby areas to be cautious of structures visibly weakened or with signs of damage as these may be further damaged by aftershocks.

In case their houses or buildings showed signs of damage, Solidum urged owners to seek the help of municipal or city engineers.

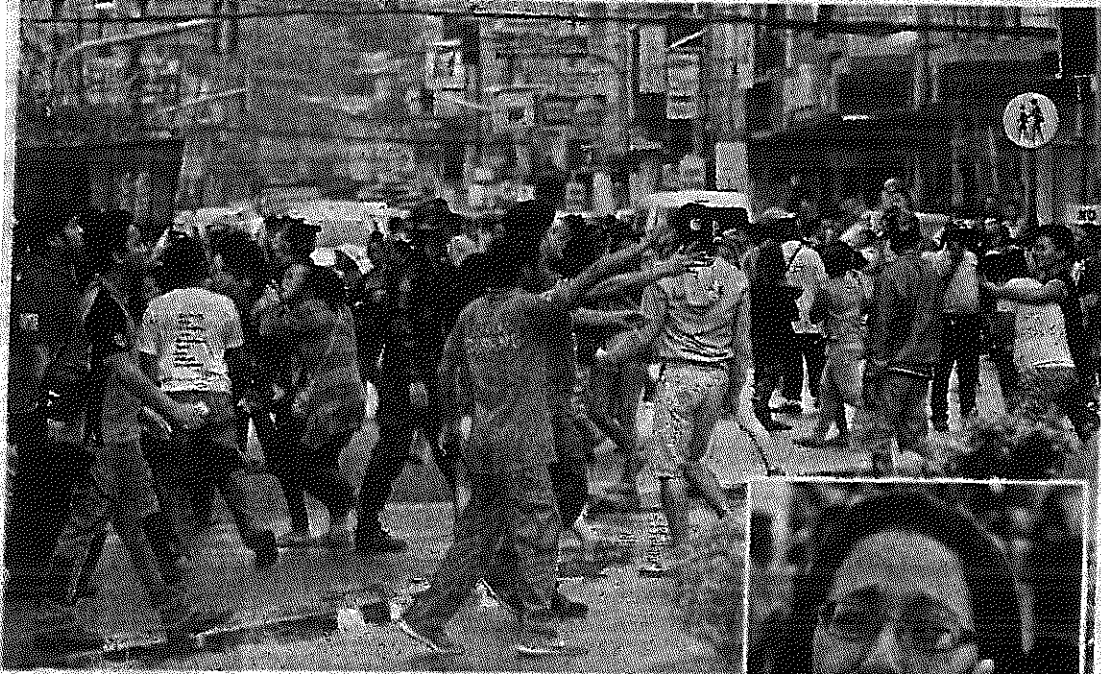
Phivolcs said last Friday's magnitude-6.7 quake was generated by the movement of the Surigao segment of the Philippine fault.

The strongest ground shaking was felt in Surigao City at Intensity 7, which is described by Phivolcs as "destructive."

On July 1, 1879, the Surigao segment of the Philippine fault also generated a magnitude-7.4 quake. This was considered to be the largest quake to hit the area on record, Phivolcs said.

An average of five earthquakes, most of them undetectable except through instruments, hit daily across the Philippines, which lies on the so-called Ring of Fire, a vast Pacific Ocean region where many earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur.

The last lethal quake that hit the country measured 7.1-magnitude. It left over 220 people dead and destroyed historic churches when it struck Bohol in October 2013. — Ben Serano, Edith Regalado, Edu Punay, Helen Flores, Perseus Echeminada, Mayen Jaymalin, Michael Punongbayan, Danessa Rivera, Pia Lee-Brago, AFP



Residents run to a main road while rescuers (in orange) give instructions as strong aftershocks are felt shortly before President Duterte's arrival in Surigao City yesterday. Inset shows a villager in tears.

AFP, EPA



grief-stricken residents.

Duterte, along with Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguwaio and Diokno, led the distribution of drinking water and food packs to the residents before a meeting with local officials.

Earlier yesterday, long lines of people carrying pails and jugs queued for water rations supplied by fire trucks after the quake cut off water supply.

Some residents vented their anger on some local officials who reportedly refused to distribute bottles of water that they said would be given later upon the arrival of the President.

"We're still being hit by aftershocks, and as of now we do not have tap water supply. The people are suffering," provincial information officer Mary Escalante told ABS-CBN

tricity was restored in most of Surigao on Saturday.

Flights at the Surigao City airport were cancelled because of a damaged runway while all port operations at the Lipata Port Station were moved to the Surigao City port due to damaged roads.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) said ten major bridges roads were damaged by the quake.

Most of the damaged roads are still passable to all types of vehicles.

Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi said the department would implement a price freeze on all fuel products in Surigao, which is now under a state of calamity.

"With the declaration of a state of calamity, government will impose a price freeze on basic energy commodities for 15

oil situation," he said.

The DOE is closely monitoring the power restoration efforts being conducted by the Surigao del Norte Electric Cooperative Inc. (SURNECO).

The National Electrification Administration said 95 percent of SURNECO's franchise area has been restored by 11 p.m. Saturday.

More aftershocks

Phivolcs director Renato Solidum warned of more aftershocks that may further damage already damaged structures.

Solidum said aftershocks are normal after a strong earthquake, but the seismic events could last for days or weeks.

A total of 135 aftershocks were recorded as of yesterday noon, of which 55 were plotted and four

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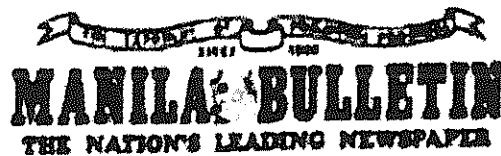


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• **Rebel wanted for murder arrested**

BAAO, Camarines Sur — A suspected communist rebel was arrested in a joint operation by police and soldiers in the remote village of Sta. Teresa in this town last Friday. Captain Joash U. Pramis, Public Affairs Officer of the army's 9th Infantry Division, identified the suspected New People's Army (NPA) member as Jose Cortez, alias "Kintab," an alleged member of the group's liquidation squad known as the Special Partisan Unit (SPARU). Pramis said the operation was carried out based on a standing warrant of arrest against Cortez for the crime of murder which is pending before the Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 36 in Iriga City (Ruel Saldico).

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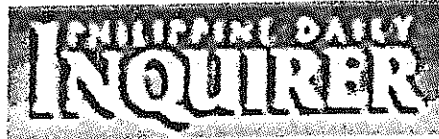


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• **Soldier hurt
in ComVal**

DAVAO CITY (PNA) – A soldier was wounded in series of armed encounters that took place in the provinces of Compostela Valley and Sarangani on Saturday, the army reported. Capt. Rhyon Batchar, chief information officer of 10th Infantry (Agila) Division, said the first armed encounter took place 10:30 a.m. Saturday when troopers of 73rd Infantry Battalion engaged in a two-hour firefight New People's Army rebels in Sitio Tangis, Barangay Little Datal Anggas, Sarangani. The NPAs, Batchar said, belonged to Guerrilla Front 71 operating in the area. The wounded soldier was immediately airlifted to Camp Panacan in Davao City for medical attention. But his name was withheld, pending notification of his family, Batchar added.

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MORE CLASHES IN 3 PROVINCES BETWEEN SOLDIERS, COMMUNIST REBELS

DAVAO CITY—Clashes between government soldiers and communist guerrillas continued in parts of Mindanao following President Duterte's declaration of an end to peace talks with leaders of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), the underground umbrella organization of leftist militant groups.

The clashes took place in

the provinces of Sarangani, Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental on Saturday, according to an Army spokesperson.

Capt. Rhyan Batchar, speaking for the Army's 10th Infantry Division, said a soldier was wounded in a clash with New People's Army (NPA) rebels in the village of Little Datal Anggas in Alabel town, Sarangani, that lasted for at least two hours.

Batchar said the wounded soldier, who has not been identified, was airlifted to the military hospital in Panacan here.

He said three separate gunfights also took place between soldiers under the 60th Infantry Battalion and communist rebels in the village of Bol-lucan in Laak town, Compostela Valley.

Batchar said the first gun-

fight in Laak lasted for about an hour. Soldiers backed by armored personnel carriers pursued the rebels and engaged them in a second clash. The third clash came when soldiers caught up with some of the rebels.

In Davao Oriental, Batchar said a brief clash took place when NPA rebels ambushed three military trucks in the vil-

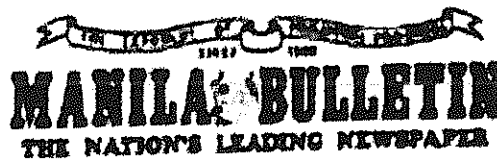
lage of San Jose in Caraga town on Saturday. No casualty has been reported.

Batchar said the military had sent MG520 attack helicopters and fired cannons at the rebels' direction.

He said soldiers are conducting clearing operations to check if the artillery round has been accurate. — ALLAN

NAWAL INQ

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Military touches base with folk in Northern Samar

By **RESTITUTO A. CAYUBIT**

CAMP LUKBAN, Catbalogan City – The Army's 8th Infantry Division (8ID) discussed with local chief executives last week ways to further improve the peace and order situation in Northern Samar.

The discussion took place during the February 8 Provincial Peace and Order Council Meeting and Stakeholders Fellowship at the Governor's Residence in Catarman.

Major General Raul M. Farnacio, 8ID commander, told reporters after the meeting the activity also aimed to unite the local chief executives and stakeholders in addressing poverty alleviation, peace and order and to gather support for the government's drive against illegal drugs and lawless violence.

Farnacio said the meeting was attended by military, police and local government officials, Rep. Raul A. Daza, Northern Samar Governor Jose L. Ong Jr., Vice Governor Gary M. Lavin, Vice Governor of Northern Samar, the 24 mayors of Northern Samar, church leaders and media personalities.

He said that during the open forum, the local chief executives were urged to deliver the basic social services needed especially in remote communities.

Farnacio also assured the people of Eastern Visayas of military protection following the lifting of the ceasefire by communist groups.

Members of the New People's Army (NPA) who will surrender will be given financial aid to help them start anew, he said.

Farnacio also highlighted the Armed Forces of the Philippines' new Development Support and Security Plan (DSSP), "Kapayapaan."

"This is the continuance of Internal Peace and Security Plan "Bayanihan" that was terminated last year. This campaign will focus on sustained military operations to defeat foreign and local terrorist organizations, contribute to the promotion of peace, active support to law enforcement in war against drugs; and contribute to nation-building," he said.

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1908
1945
1988
MANILA BULLETIN
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Military, civilian casualties in brazen NPA attack

By MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

SURIGAO CITY – An Army soldier and two civilians were killed, while two other civilians were wounded in a gun battle that erupted Saturday morning between government security forces and communist insurgents in the hinterland area of Sarog, Barangay San Isidro, Santiago, Agusan del Norte.

The identity of the slain Army soldier was temporarily withheld, pending notification of his next of kin, while the names of the two wounded civilians were not immediately available.

The local residents who were killed in the crossfire were Jerson Saladaga Beto, 19 of Purok 5 and Pepito Qiam-bong, 33 of Purok 7, both of Barangay San Isidro.

Capt. Angelo Gomez, spokesperson of the 29th Infantry battalion (29th IB) said the wounded civilians were immediately brought to the Cabadbaran City District Hospital for medical treatment.

Lt. Col. Glenn Joy Aynera, 29th IB commander said the NPAs violated the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), when they swooped down on the community of Sarog area.

The attackers were believed to belong to the guerilla-Front Committee 16-C of the CPP-NPA Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee (NEMRC), according to Gomez.

"There is a situation in that community that needs to be addressed that is why I have sent my soldiers to secure the people against these NPAs," Aynera said, in his statement.

Upon reaching the community at around 4:30 a.m. last Saturday, troops were able to talk with some villagers to confirm the report about harassment from communist insurgents.

However, as the dialogue was being held, about 10 fully-armed NPA rebels reportedly opened fire indiscriminately on the troops and civilians.

The attack lasted for about 10 minutes before the NPAs withdrew towards the nearby communities, he said.

"This is a clear violation of the CARHRIHL which was duly signed by the GPH and NDFP in 1998 at The Hague, The Netherlands that says that 'civilian population and civilians shall be distinguished from combatants and, together with their property, shall not be the object of attack. They shall likewise be protected against indiscriminate strafing,'" the 29th IB commander said.

"We condemn their atrocious act which claimed the lives of two innocent civilians, and seriously wounded three others. We are also deeply saddened for the lost of one of our comrades. Rest assured we will always continue to conduct peace and security operations to ensure the safety and security of the people in Agusan del Norte," Aynera said.

As of press time, hot pursuit operation was still ongoing towards Mount Ilong-Ilong area of that same town.

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1909
1944
1988

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Rash of rebel kidnappings in Agusan, ComVal

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City – A barangay chairman and his wife, and a father and his son were abducted in separate incidents allegedly by members of New people's Army (NPA) in Agusan del Sur and Compostela Valley (ComVal), Capt. Rhyan B. Batchar, spokesperson of the Army's 10th Infantry (Agila) Division (10th ID) yesterday said.

In a statement, the 10th ID spokesperson said late reports showed that Barangay Pangyan Chairman Rene Carlos and his wife Maribeth were abducted by armed men believed to be communist insurgents along a barangay road in Pangyan, Trento, Agusan del Sur last February 5.

It appeared that the rebels only targeted the Carlos couple as a relative, a barangay councilor and tanod, who were with them at the time of the incident, were later released, according to Batchar.

Elements of the 25th IB, along with the Trento Municipal Police Station (MPS), were still conducting search and rescue operations for the abducted barangay chairman and his wife in the mountain border of Trento town and Monkayo, ComVal province, Batchar said.

Meanwhile, a separate report from the 71st Infantry Battalion said that a certain Jun-jun Custodio and his son Marjun were also kidnapped by the group of a certain "Ka Mokloy," allegedly the team leader of the NPA's Mili-sya ng Bayan in Barangay Malamudao in Maco town, ComVal province last February 8, Batchar disclosed.

The fate of the abducted father and son was still not known as of press time.

Brig. Gen. Macarog Alberto, commanding general of the 1001st Infantry Brigade condemned the abduction of the civilians, saying "the NPA abducts innocent civilians who they intend to use as human shields." (Mike U. Crismundo)

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Malaya
The Nation's Newspaper

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Soldier, 2 civilians dead in NPA attack in Agusan

BY VICTOR REYES

A SOLDIER and two civilians were killed Saturday in an attack staged by New People's Army rebels in Santiago town, Agusan del Norte.

Three other civilians were injured.

The soldiers from the Army's 29th Infantry Battalion were sent to Barangay San Isidro in Santiago town after the military received reports that a group of rebels were conducting extortion activities in the area.

Upon arrival at the barangay at around 5 a.m., the soldiers approached a group of civilians to verify the information. During the conversation, around 10 NPA fully-armed rebels "indiscriminately opened fire against the troops," unmindful of the presence of the civilians, said Capt. Joe Patrick Martinez, public affairs officer of the Army's 4th Infantry Division.

The rebels withdrew after a 10-minute firefight with the soldiers.

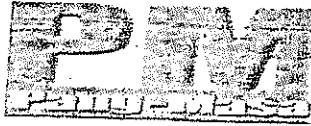
Lt. Col. Glenn Joy Aynera, 26th IB commander, said the attack was a "clear violation" of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) which communist and government peace negotiators signed in 1998, which protects civilians from attacks.

Peace negotiations were suspended early this month by President Duterte because of continuous NPA attacks.

In Davao Oriental yesterday, the military said it recently learned that NPA rebels have recruited a 13-year-old volleyball player, Rhea Liza Davis, of the Davao Regional Athlete Association, in Mati City in Davao Oriental.

The information came from Davis' mother, Leonila, said Lt. Col. Ramon Zagala, commander of the Army's 28th Infantry Battalion operating in Davao Oriental.

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Pahina. 2

6 NPA nadakip

Naaresto ng 73rd Infantry Battalion sa Compostella Valley Province ang anim na rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA).

Ang mga nadakip ay kinilalang sina Simeon Salda, Jun Moda, Claude Palbe, Garzon Palbe, Rene Ompao, at Sabelo Colano na pawang mga miyembro ng Guerilla Front 71 ng NPA.

Nasa pag-aari ni Moda ang isang M-16 automatic rifle habang kina Claude, Garzon at Rene ay armado naman ng Garand rifles at si Sabelo ay nakuhanan ng isang carbine rifle. Sila ay pawang mga miyembro ng Guerilla Front 71 ng NPA.

Maalalang, nagkasagupa ang 73rd Infantry Battalion at NPA sa Barangays Little Baguio ng Malita, Davao Occidental at Brgy. Datal Anggas, Sarangani noong February 8 at 11. -Ricky Tulipat-

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Army man dead, scores of rebels killed as firefight continues

SURIGAO CITY – An Army soldier and two civilians were killed while two others were wounded when a gunbattle erupted between government security forces and communist insurgents Saturday morning in the hinterland area of Sarog, Barangay San Isidro, Santiago, Agusan del Norte.

29th Infantry battalion (29th IB) spokesperson Capt. Angelo Gomez identified the fatalities as Jerson Saladaga Beto, 19 of Purok 5 and Pepito Qiangong, 33 of Purok 7, both of Barangay San Isidro, in Santiago town, Agusan del Norte.

The name of the Army soldier is yet to be released until the relatives of the army man is notified.

29th IB commander Lt. Col. Glenn Joy Aynera said they responded to a report about a supposed peaceful community being badgered by rebels which is a violation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect to Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).

The soldiers reached the community around 4:30 a.m. where they were immediately attacked by the rebels which lasted for about ten minutes.

"This is a clear violation of the CARHRIHL which is duly signed by the GPH and NDFP in 1998 at The Hague, The Netherlands that civilian population and civilians shall be distinguished from combatants and, together with their property, shall not be the object of attack. They shall likewise be protected against indiscriminate strafing," said Aynera.

Gomez meantime said the fleeing rebels are believed members of guerilla-Front Committee 16-C of the CPP-NPA Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee (NEMRC).

In Tugegarao, Cagayan, government forces called on the NPA to prove their sincerity after 15 rebels were killed when it encountered an Army platoon patrolling the vicinity of Sto Niño in Cagayan Wednesday night.

This was the response of the military after NPA spokesman Crispin Apolinario of the Danilo Ben command of the NPA West Cagayan announced on radio proposing for a ceasefire in the Sto. Niño, Cagayan province. **(Mike Crismundo and Lizele Basa Inigo)**

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Balita

Page. 2

ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANSA ₱6.00

NPA nagdeklara ng ceasefire sa Surigao

Nina FER TABOY, FRANCIS WAKEFIELD, MIKE CRISMUNDO at MARY ANN SANTIAGO

Kasabay ng apela ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) sa New People's Army (NPA) na huwag atakehin ang mga sundalong tumutulong sa search at retrieval operations para sa mga naapektuhan ng lindol sa Surigao City, Surigao del Norte, nagdeklara kahapon ang mga rebelde ng ceasefire sa buong lungsod.

Ang tigil-putukan ay idineklara ni Kumander Oto, ang tagapagsalita ng Guerilla Front Committee 16 ng NPA, sa buong Surigao City at naging epektibo ganap na 6:00 ng gabi nitong Sabado.

Inatasan ni Kumander Oto ang lahat ng unit ng NPA na ikansela ang lahat ng pinlanong tactical offensive hanggang sa maihatid ang lahat ng kinakailangang ayuda sa mga naapektuhan ng lindol sa siyudad.

Sa ngayon, aniya, ay nasa active defense mode lang ang NPA upang matiyak na madedepensahan ang kilusan sa anumang posibilidad ng pag-atake ng militar.

Ikinatuwa at malugod namang tinanggap ni Lt. Col. Rico Amaro, commander ng 30th Infantry Battalion ng Philippine Army, ang pagdedeklara ng ceasefire ng NPA, kasunod ng apela ng AFP sa mga rebelde.

"Allow the soldiers every opportunity to help the victims of the earthquake," una nang sinabi

ni AFP Public Affairs Office chief Marine Col. Edgard Arevalo. "We urge you not to attack our soldiers, or in any other ways disrupt the AFP's rescue and rehabilitation activities for our people."

RESCUE AT DISASTER RESPONSE OPERATIONS

Bandang 10:22 ng gabi nitong Biyernes ay ipinalat na ni Major Gen. Benjamin Madrigal, Jr., commander ng 4th Infantry Division, ang kanyang mga tauhan upang magsagawa ng search and rescue operations sa mga residente at magsagawa ng paunang damage assessment sa mga kalsada, istruktura at pasilidad sa lungsod.

Kaagad namang nakipag-ugnayan si Lt. Col. Amaro sa Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRMO) ng Surigao del Norte at CDRRMO ng Surigao City para sa disaster response operations.

Batay sa datos na inilabas kahapon ng National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), may kabuuang 1,034 na pamilya o 5,170 katao mula sa limang munisipalidad sa Surigao del Norte ang naapektuhan ng 6.7 magnitude na yumanig sa siyudad.

Kinilala naman ni NDRRMC Executive Director Ricardo B. Jalad ang apat sa mga nasawi na sina Robert Eludo Jr., 40, ng Barangay Bilabid, JM Ariar, 4, ng Bgy. Ipil,

Lito R. Wilson, 36, ng Bgy. San Juan, at Lorenzo L. Dequino, 86, ng Bgy. Poctoy, Surigao City.

Sinabi rin ni Jalad na batay sa datos dakong 8:00 ng umaga kahapon, may kabuuang 202 katao ang nasugatan sa lindol, habang 1,034 na bahay naman ang nasira, bukod sa iba pang mga istruktura, kalsada at tulay.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL DEBRIEFING

Samantala, hanggang kahapon ay tuluy-tuloy na nakapagtatala ng aftershocks sa Surigao City, ayon sa Philippine Institute Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

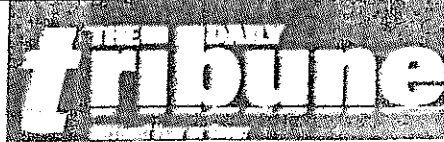
Ayon sa Phivolcs, bandang 10:35 ng umaga nang yumanig ang 3.3 magnitude may 12 kilometro sa timog-kanluran ng Surigao City at may lalim na isang kilometro.

Kasunod ito ng dalawa pang pagyanig na may lakas na 2.5 at 2.4 magnitude sa siyudad, kahapon ng madaling araw.

Sa harap ng matinding trauma ng mga residente ng siyudad, nagpadala kahapon ang Department of Health (DoH) ng mga psychiatrist at psychologist sa lalawigan para magkaloob ng psycho-social debriefing sa mga naapektuhan ng lindol.

Bukod dito, sinabi ni Health Secretary Paulyn Jean Ubial, na nagpadala rin ang kagawaran ng apat na medical team mula sa mga kalapit na rehiyon, gayundin ng mga tent, gamot at iba pang kakailanganin ng mga biktima.

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Military officers buck awards given to 42 SAF commandos

By Mario J. Mallari

Concerned military officers are now up in arms against the conferment of the highest combat award on the 42 Special Action Force (SAF) commandos who died during the launching of the botched Oplan "Exodus" in Maguindanao in 2015.

Last Thursday, the Philippine National Police (PNP) announced President Duterte approved the conferment of the *Medalya ng Kagitingan* – equivalent to the military's Medal of Valor, on the 42 SAF commandos – making all the fallen SAF 44 awardees of the highest combat award.

While the officers, who requested anonymity, said they were not particularly familiar with the criteria in bestowing the PNP's *Medalya ng Kagitingan*, but based on the pronouncements of the PNP and National Police Commission (Napolcom), they may not be different from those in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). They maintained the highest

combat award is an individual award – not to be given to entire unit, recognizing a trooper's extraordinary conduct during operation and acts of gallantry in action over and beyond the call of duty. They, however, stressed they had nothing against the SAF 44 commandos.

With the conferment of medal of valor on all the fallen SAF 44, the PNP now has more awardees than the AFP which only has 40 in its 81 years of existence, some are still living and in the active service.

"Is this a bad joke? Are they aiming for a Guinness record for giving out Medal of Valor to so many troops in a single encounter? Very bad precedent," a senior Army official told the *Tribune*.

"The President must be misinformed in approving this move that only desecrates the coveted MFV (Medal for Valor)," he added.

In the military, there was even an instance when an awardee questioned the conferment of the award on another official due to questionable circumstances that surrounded the incident that

prompted an AFP board to consider and ultimately awarded the Medal for Valor.

"I am not aware of the criteria used by the PNP to recommend the awards to the President but I would believe it would not be far from the criteria of the AFP. To my understanding it is an individual award," a Camp Aguinaldo official said.

"I just hope it was not given just to push a political agenda if any or just to appease the family of the SAF 44. If so they just 'bastardized the meaning of the award. Bad precedence now anybody can demand for the PNP MFV," he added.

During the second anniversary of the Mamasapano incident, Duterte expressed his intent to award Medal of Valor to the 42 SAF commandos.

The Napolcom en banc subsequently recommended to Duterte the conferment of Medal of Valor on the 42 SAF commandos who were previously awarded with *Medalya ng Kabayanihan* or Distinguished Conduct Medal.

Two other SAF commandos, Chief Insp. Gednat Tabdi and PO2 Romeo Cempron were conferred with Medal of Valor on January 25, 2016 – exactly the first anniversary of the day-long clashes in barangays Tukanalipao and Pidsandawan in Mamasapano.

More than 300 SAF troopers were sent to Maguindanao to execute Oplan "Exodus" targeting Malaysian terrorists Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, and Amon Baco and Filipino bomb maker Basit Usman.

Marwan, a subject of \$5-million reward offered by the United States government, was killed during the operation while Baco and Usman escaped.

However, the two companies of SAF troopers, 84th and 55th Special Action Companies, were pinned down by combined Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters – resulting in the killing of 44 SAF commandos, including nine junior officers.

The execution of Oplan "Exodus" was criticized and many described the operation as a failure.

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The Manila Times

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'Basilan not a trash bin for police scalawags'

BY FERNAN MARASIGAN

AN official of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Sunday said the province of Basilan should not be labelled as a "trash bin for scalawags" following the reassignment of rogue personnel of the Philippine National Police (PNP) to the province.

"For soldiers and marines, sailors and airmen, being deployed in Basilan or in Sulu, for that matter, is a source of pride. Because only the 'warriors,' professionals, and those who excel in their fields were sent to Basilan," said Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the AFP Public Affairs Office. Arevalo stressed that young officers and enlisted personnel have volunteered to be assigned

in the cited island provinces for their "baptisms of fire."

"It's a choice assignment. Because such deployments offer them a wealth of experience, innumerable lessons, opportunities to excel, and yes, earn trophy points," he explained.

Meanwhile, a military official, who requested anonymity, recounted that when he was still a young second lieutenant, he volunteered to be assigned to the Marine Battalion Landing Team-6 then deployed in Basilan.

The official, now a full colonel, is holding a sensitive post in the AFP.

Over 200 policemen, mostly accused of minor offenses, were presented to President Rodrigo Duterte in Malacañang last week by PNP chief Director General Ronald de la Rosa.

"Prepare to move out. I'll give you two weeks from now, 15 days. Start to move out. If you do not want to go there, go to your superior officer and tell them that you're going to resign," Duterte told the policemen lined up before him.

The President said those who will be sent to Basilan will stay there for two years.

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The Nation's Newspaper

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AFP: Basilan, Sulu for heroes, not for misfits, rogues, scalawags

BY VICTOR REYES

THE Armed Forces yesterday said it does not treat Basilan and Sulu, bailiwick of the Abu Sayyaf, as a dumping ground for misfit and scalawags, but as "a breeding ground for heroes and military leaders who thrive in adversities." AFP public affairs office chief Col.

Edgard Arevalo said that "for soldiers and Marines, sailors and airmen, being deployed in Basilan - or in Sulu for that matter - is a source of pride. Because only the warriors, professionals, and those who excel in their fields are sent to Basilan."

Arevalo issued the statement "so that our soldiers assigned there and would

be assigned there will not feel they are misfits or errant.

"Some people resent that Basilan would be the destination for some erring members of the security forces, especially the ones who have gone astray or failed to measure up to standards,"

See AFP > Page B7

AFP

said Arevalo.

President Duterte last week ordered hundreds of rogue cops to be deployed to Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-tawi or resign from the force.

Arevalo said many young officers and enlisted personnel are even volunteering to be assigned to the war-torn island provinces of Basilan and Sulu "for their baptism of fire."

"It's a choice assignment. Because such deployments offer them a wealth of experience, innumerable lessons, opportunities to excel, and yes, earn 'trophy points.' For the military, it is a big deal to be deployed in Basilan or Sulu for that translates to a distinction," said Arevalo.

Arevalo cited a Marine junior officer, now

a colonel, who volunteered to be assigned to the Marine Battalion Landing Team 6 in Basilan after graduation from the Philippine Military Academy in early 1990s.

"The Basileños specifically abhor the announcement that 'scalawags and misfits in the service' are bound to that island province," Arevalo said.

Last Thursday, AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año said cops should welcome an assignment to Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-tawi. He said soldiers take the assignment to these areas as an opportunity to earn a Medal of

Valor, the highest military decoration in combat.

A soldier conferred with the medal receives a monthly gratuity of P75,000, free education, hospitalization for his families. The lifetime gratuity is on top of the salary or pension they receive.

"What's wrong (with) being assigned in Basilan and Sulu. If you want to serve the country and the people, that's the best way. Now, if they are complaining, then you can see the quality of these people that you do not need in the organization," said Año.

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16-year jail term vs AFP engineer affirmed

THE Sandiganbayan Third Division has affirmed the 16-year jail sentence meted out against engineer Dante Senen, supply accountable officer of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Military Supply Unit in Cebu City on his conviction for graft and malversation of public property concerning the anomalous sale of four power generators to a private individual in 2002.

Senen failed to convince the

anti-graft court to reverse its decision dated November 29, 2016 that found him guilty of conspiracy with former Philippine Air Force (PAF) Brig. Gen. Vladimir delos Trino, Major Antonio Jason Garcia, and private defendant Antonio Ularde of Eduard Enterprises for the unlawful transaction.

Delos Trino and Garcia were convicted of both charges in May 2011 but their co-accused, Senen and Ularde, remained at large. Senen was arrested only

on November 21, 2011 inside Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

All three were collectively ordered to pay the government the sum of P1.2 million as indemnity for the loss sustained on the sale on top of a P1.2 million fine.

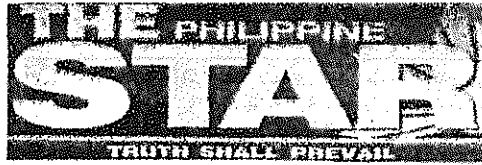
The court found the three AFP officials liable for selling the power generators to Ularde for only P800,000.00 without holding the required public bidding that tended to favor Ularde's firm.

In his appeal, Senen argued that there was no evidence that he colluded with Delos Trino and Garcia.

The court, however, declared otherwise, noting that it was Senen who had official custody of the power generators but the accused failed to inform his commanding officer about their transfer and did not include them in his inventory and inspection report that he submitted to the headquarters.

- Peter Tabingo

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Gov't, MNLF to resume talks

By PERSEUS ECHEMINADA

The government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) are set to resume their talks on the final implementation of the 1996 peace agreement.

Emmanuel Fontanilla, MNLF spokesman and member of the peace panel, said yesterday they were just waiting for the composition of the government panel for the resumption of talks.

He said the MNLF would not be part of the newly formed Bangsamoro Transition Commission that would discuss peace with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front because the MILF would have separate talks with the government.

"The MNLF (members) in the transition commission belong to a breakaway group, they do not represent MNLF," Fontanilla said.

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He said the resumption of talks with the government would be confined to

three remaining unresolved issues for the final implementation of the 1996 peace accord, which was brokered by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

These issues are governance, wealth sharing and territory.

Fontanilla said it would be up to Congress to consolidate a law that would synchronize the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF and peace accord to be forged with the MILF.

The OIC, in a resolution, has urged the government to link up the two peace accords to attain lasting peace in Mindanao.

The 1996 final peace agreement between the government and the MNLF, represented by its founding chairman, Nur Misuari, was signed on Sept. 2, 1996 under the administration of then president Fidel Ramos.

That same year, the MILF,

which had broken away from the MNLF in 1977, began informal talks with the Ramos-led government.

But a final peace accord has yet to be reached with the MILF. The current administration is continuing the peace negotiations with the MILF with the creation of the BTC.

President Duterte has also met with Misuari, who surfaced recently after going into hiding as he was ordered arrested by the court for the 2013 Zamboanga City siege.

The MNLF has been originally demanding the inclusion of 13 provinces in an autonomous region in Mindanao since

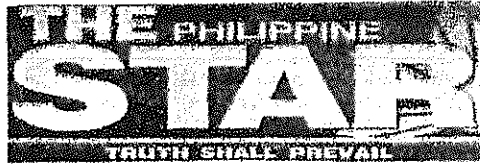
it started peace negotiations with the government since the Marcos administration. Then president Ferdinand Marcos did not agree to it despite the signing of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement.

In 1989, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao was created under then president Corazon Aquino, who also refused to give in to the MNLF's demand.

Misuari eventually became governor of ARMM from 1996 to 2001.

Former president Benigno Aquino III pushed for the creation of a more inclusive autonomous region as he described the ARMM as a failed experiment.

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Peace with Reds still possible

DAVAO CITY – President Duterte may still pursue peace with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) even if peace negotiations with the

group have folded.

"In due time this will be resolved because this is no longer about ideology but about the Filipino people," the President said, referring to conflicts in Mindanao, including

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the one with the communist rebels.

The interest of the people,

he added, should be above anything else even when ideologies remain respected.

In his visit to Surigao City yesterday, Duterte said he remained hopeful that things

would look up for the earthquake victims and for all in Mindanao "once peace will prevail in the island."

"I tried everything, I walked the extra mile, released prisoners, released their leaders so they can go to Oslo (Norway) to talk, and now they want 400 prisoners who fought the government under a rebellion released. This will (be) only given after a successful talk. What is there to talk about if I would release them?" the President added.

Yesterday, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) condemned the New People's Army (NPA), the communists' armed unit, for recruiting children to cope with its dwindling number of combatants.

The Army 28th Infantry Battalion reported that Rhea Liza Davis, a 13-year-old Davao Regional Athletic Association (DAVRAA) athlete, was recruited by the rebel group and eventually separating the girl from her family.

Leonula Davis, the girl's mother, sought military help after efforts to recover her child failed.

The younger Davis was reportedly taken by Evelyn Hermocilla, who goes by the aliases Kara and Riza, on Jan. 30 in Buso, a mountain barangay of Mati town in Davao Oriental.

Hermocilla, who belongs to Section Committee 18, Sub-Regional Committee 2 of the communists' Southern Mindanao Regional Command, allegedly refused to return the girl despite Leonula's pleadings.

Some residents reported seeing the girl crying while traveling with an armed group.

In a statement, the Army said 101 families from Kasunugan, Tapat, Cabucanan and Kawitan, all smaller communities of Barangay Buso, were forced to evacuate last week as people feared a forced NPA recruitment.

Colonel Reuben Basiao, 701st Brigade commander, and Buso chairman Lolito Andan appealed for help in recovering

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF

Peace From Page 4

2) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

the girl as they distributed food packs to the displaced families.

Duterte also went to Butuan City yesterday to posthumously award Sgt. Marlon Balais a bronze anahaw leaf medal for his meritorious services to the nation. Balais, a scout leader of the 29th Infantry Battalion, was killed in a firefight with NPA rebels in Agusan del Norte.

Also killed in the clash was Jerson Beto, a grade 11 student, and small-scale miner Pepito Tiambong.

The encounter happened a week after Duterte terminated the peace talks with the communist rebels and labeled them a terrorist group. The President decided to scrap the peace negotiations after the communists insisted on their demand to free more than 400 rebel leaders whom they claim to be political prisoners.

Duterte rejected the demand, which he described as tantamount to granting amnesty. Communist rebels then called off the unilateral ceasefire and stepped up attacks against government forces in various parts of the country.

Former president and now Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada is backing Duterte's declaration of war against the NPA although he continues to hope that peace negotiations would resume.

He said the communists have all the reasons to fear Duterte's wrath because the President never backs down from a fight.

"They should fear President Duterte. Let us see if the President will still give them a chance," Estrada said when asked about the NPA going head-to-head against Duterte.

The CPP, in a statement, said an all-out war would fail and that defeating the NPA is only a Duterte pipedream.

"Other regimes before him

have tried and failed," the CPP said.

The NPA was tagged as a foreign terrorist organization by the US State Department and as a terrorist group by the European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy. Its estimated strength has since dwindled to less than 3,000.

Estrada said Duterte was right when he suspended the unilateral ceasefire in reaction to the atrocities and ceasefire violations committed by the NPA in the past weeks, but stressed that he supports another round of peace talks.

He recalled his days when, as president, he ordered the Moro Islamic Liberation Front camps and territories wiped out during his war against terrorism, noting that he gave the group enough opportunities to talk with the government.

"I talked to them for about three months then in the fourth month, they burned down Kauswagan (Lanao del Norte). Many innocent civilians, mostly children were killed, and they even beheaded six soldiers," Estrada said.

Estrada said the MILF raid on Kauswagan was the last straw.

Ghadzali Jaafar, MILF vice chair for political affairs, said they are not affected with the collapse of the government's talks with the NPA, adding that the administration's negotiation with the Moro people is distinct.

He welcomed the recent announcement of new members of the expanded Bangsamoro Transition Commission - a body that will draft the new Bangsamoro enabling law as part of the implementation process of the southern peace pact or the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro signed between the Philippine government and the MILF in March 2014. - Edith Regalado, Michael Punongbayan, Jose Rodel Clapano, Cecille Suerte Felipe, Alexis Romero

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF

845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

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Pahina. 6

Apela sa NPA: 'Wag idamay ang tumutulong sa search and rescue

Nananawagan ang AFP sa NPA na wag atakehin ang mga sundalong tumutulong sa mga biktima ng lindol sa Surigao.

Ayon kay AFP Public Affairs Office chief Col Edgard Arevalo, dapat na hayaan muna ng NPA ang mga sundalo na makatulong sa rescue at rehabilitation effort sa Surigao.

Sinabi ni Arevalo na

nagpadala ng mga tauhan sa 4th Infantry Division Commander Maj Gen Benjamin Madrigal Jr. sa mga lugar na naapektuhan ng lindol at naka-antabay na rin ang mga ambulansya ng Philippine Army para magbigay ng ayuda sa mga pamilyang naapektuhan ng lindol.

Kaugnay nito magiging ang PNP ay tumutulong

na rin sa mga ginagawang paghiligtas at pagpapatupad ng peace and order sa mga nasalanta ng lindol.

Ayon kay PNP spokesman Sr Supt Dionardo Carlos, partikular na pinakilos ang mga tauhan ng Police Regional Office 13 mula sa Regional Public Safety Battalion sa mga apektadong komunidad (**Betchai Julian**)

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The
Standard
DEFENDING THE NEWS

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Reds heed AFP call for truce in Surigao

By John Paolo Bencito

THE communist New People's Army operating in Surigao and portions of Agusan del Norte has declared a unilateral interim ceasefire with government troops effective Feb. 11 following a magnitude 6.7 earthquake that struck the region, leaving six people dead and several structures damaged.

In a report in Mindanews, Ka Oto, the NPA's spokesman in the region, said the communists had ceased tactical offensives against government forces effective 6 p.m. on Saturday "until the province will recover from the disaster."

He said the rebels will focus on humanitarian efforts to help the quake victims.

"Rest assured we will not do any harm to the military as long as they will not come to our areas," Oto said.

The military had earlier urged the communist rebels not to attack its soldiers conducting rescue and rehabilitation operations in the areas affected by the earthquake.

"Allow the soldiers every opportunity to help the victims of

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Reds...

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the earthquake," Marine Colonel Edgard Arevalo, head of the military's Public Affairs Office, said Saturday.

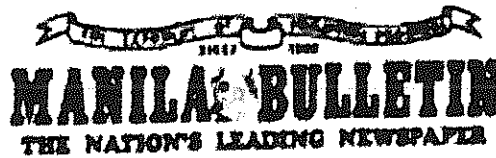
"We urge you not to attack our soldiers or in any other ways [that will] disrupt the AFP's rescue and rehabilitation activities for our people," he said.

The military's appeal came as the NPA announced a "heightened armed resistance" against the government's all-out war declaration on Saturday.

On Friday, Communist Party of the Philippines founding chairman Jose Maria Sison urged his former student, President Rodrigo Duterte, to continue with the peace negotiations with the communists to clarify "misunderstandings" that he said were instigated by the peace "spoilers."

But Malacañang told the communist rebels to show their sincerity before any peace talks could continue.

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• Revive peace talks

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY (PNA) – Church leaders in Northern Mindanao on Friday called on the national government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) to revive talks to achieve lasting peace in the country, particularly in Mindanao. In a statement, the Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform (PEPP) said that "negotiations should not be scuttled by accusations and counter-accusations. It suggested that the outstanding issues be threshed out in a principled dialogue over the negotiation table.

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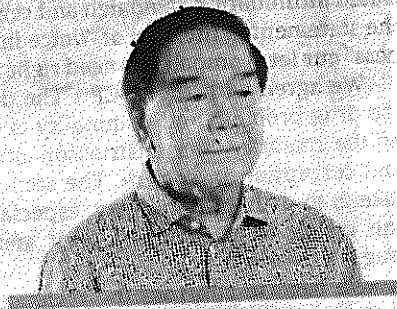


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Medal of Valor

More than 25 years ago, a young captain assigned with the Army's Special Forces carried out a stunning nighttime operation against a numerically superior group of some 200 rebels located at Sitio Manipulon, Murcia, in Negros Occidental Province. The results of the raid set a new standard in the Armed Forces of the Philippines' counterinsurgency efforts that, to this date, has not been duplicated in terms of enemy killed and firearms recovered.

On April 6, 1990, Capt. Arturo B. Ortiz led five teams of the 606th Special Forces Company, Philippine Army along with a number of Cafgu troops in a raid against a large NPA training camp in Negros Occidental. Under cover of darkness, Ortiz led his troops on a grueling 11-hour cross-country march, scaling a 1,000-



REVELLE
RAMON J. FAROLAN

foot high cliff, enabling his units to infiltrate the enemy position while avoiding booby traps and claymore mines. Aware that air support and artillery fire would be futile due to the dense forest cover, Ortiz instructed his men to move as close as 10 meters from the enemy periphery before launching the surprise attack. Moving from one team to the other, he directed their line of fire that spared the women and children in the encampment.

For this outstanding performance of duty, Captain Ortiz was awarded the nation's highest military honor, the Medal of Valor (MOV). His citation reads: "The two-hour gun battle resulted in 84 terrorists killed with 22 dead bodies counted, including 17 recovered on site, 8 captured, and several others wounded and missing as reported by the Negros Regional Party Committee. Recovered from the enemy were 33 assorted firearms, 21 rifle grenades, several hand grenades, five ICOM radios, and other enemy equipment. By this display of exceptional courage and high degree of leadership, Capt. Ortiz distinguished himself in the field of combat in keeping with the highest tradition of Filipino soldiery."

The Medal of Valor is the highest military honor that can be bestowed on members of the AFP for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty. It is not an award that is easily granted. To date, there have been only 40 MOV awardees: 27 from the Philippine Army, 8 from the Philippine Marines, 3 from the defunct Philippine Constabulary, and 2 from the Philippine Air Force.

Each award is thoroughly screened and is vetted through several layers of command before it reaches the major service commander. From here, the papers go to the AFP chief of staff, the secretary of national defense, and finally, the Office of the President, for approval. Only the president can authorize the award and the whole process usually takes anywhere from nine months to a year, even longer. In the case of Captain Ortiz, his MOV was awarded nine months after his successful mission. The award is so prestigious that even the president as commander in chief may choose to salute the MOV holder, the only individual given this rare honor.

Lt. Gen. Arturo Ortiz, who retired from military service as the 53rd commanding general of the Philippine Army, graduated with PMA Class 1979. He is presently the president of the Association of AFP MOV awardees.

Incidentally, one of the most attractive sites at the Philippine Military Academy is the view of a pine-covered mountainside stretching all the way to distant Mount Santo Tomas from the back of Lim Hall. The hall, named in honor of Brig. Gen. Vicente Lim, the first Filipino to graduate from West Point, houses the offices of the PMA superintendent, the dean, corps of professors, and the commandant of cadets.

The centerpiece of the building is the Hall of Valor, featuring the framed photos of PMA MOV awardees, with their respective citations. It is a sanctuary for those in search of heroism and inspiration, and each time I visit the Academy, I make it a point to stop even for a few brief moments at the Hall of Valor. I always leave the place with a feeling of deep pride and respect for the achievements of this select group of PMayers, some of whom paid the supreme sacrifice in the performance of duty. Let me add that there are other military personnel, some officers with different sources of commission, as well as enlisted men, who have been honored with the MOV in recognition of their bravery and heroism under enemy fire.

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Last week, Malacañang approved the award of the MOV to 42 members of the PNP's Special Action Force (SAF) who were killed in the Mamasapano action two years ago. Two from the same group were earlier awarded the medal posthumously. The grant to the other 42 SAF troopers was one of the requests of family members during a meeting with the President last month.

The sudden mass conferment, in response to family pleas, has drawn widespread criticism from both AFP and PNP elements. General Ortiz has forwarded to me a few of the comments that he received:

- The MOV must not be given wholesale. It is a singular act of exceptional and uncommon heroism by a soldier that sets him apart from the rest. It must not be trivialized, abused, demeaned, or devalued. Otherwise, the medal loses its honor and prestige.
 - This action sets a bad precedent and would open a floodgate for indiscriminate awarding of the MOV. This cheapens the award and might weaken the institution and system of AFP awards.
 - In the entire AFP history, there have only been 40 awardees. Then in one fell swoop, 42 SAF members get the same medal. It would surely land us in the Guinness Book of World Records.
 - The MOV should not be trivialized and all soldiers and men in uniform should stand against this.
 - The AFP leadership and concerned authorities should do something to restore, protect, and preserve the honor and prestige and integrity of the MOV, revered and considered sacred by the AFP. Wholesale award of the MOV to the SAF 44 is too much.
- Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and AFP Chief of Staff Eduardo Año have expressed similar concerns about the grant of the award. We can honor the memory and sacrifices of the SAF troopers in ways that do not diminish the value and prestige of the Medal of Valor.

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13 February 2017

NGAYON
Diyaryo ng mga kabataan ng unang makababait

Pahina. 6



Editorial

ROTC buhay na naman!

PLANTSADO na ang pagbabalik ng Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC). Tinupad ni Pres. Rodrigo Duterte ang sinabi na susuportahan niya ang pagbuhay sa ROTC. Sabi ni Duterte, ang pagbabalik sa ROTC ay paraan din para madisiplina ang mga kabataan at huwag mahikayat na gumamit ng illegal na droga. Kailangan daw maibalik ang ROTC sapagkat nawawala ang pagmamahal ng kabataan sa bayan.

Noong nakaraang Martes, isang batas ang inindorso ni Duterte sa pagbuhay sa ROTC. Sa panukalang batas, isasailalim sa ROTC ang mga estudyanteng nasa Grade 11 at 12. Pero sabi ng Presidente, ang bubuhaying ROTC ay kakaiba sa dating ROTC noon na batbat ng corruption. Ngayon, aniya, ang bagong ROTC ay hindi mamamantsahan ng corruption, walang hazing at sexual harassment. Nangako rin umano ang Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na magkakaroon ng paghihigpit para maiwasan ang hindi magandang pangyayari sa ROTC.

Madali lamang magsalita na hindi madudungisan ang ROTC. Paano sila nakasisiguro na walang mangyayaring corruption dito? Kung sa PNP na grabeng higit ay nakakalusot pa rin ang scalawags, sa ROTC pa. Maaaring sa simula ay walang katiwalian pero paano kapag nagtagal na? Sa pagsasailalim ba sa ROTC lamang maipakikita ang pagmamahal sa bayan? Marami pa namang maaaring gawin para maging makabayan.

Inalis sa kurikulum ang ROTC noong 2001 makaraang mabulgar ang corruption sa UST Corps of Cadet na ibinulgar mismo ng kadeteng si Mark Welson Chua. Isinangkot ni Chua sa katiwalian ang mga kapwa cadet officers. Subalit makaraang ibulgar, brutal na pinatay si Chua. Sinakal siya at saka nilagyan ng masking tape ang kanyang katawan, tinalian ang mga kamay at saka binalot sa carpet at itinapon sa Pasig River. Narekober ang kanyang bangkay makalipas ang ilang araw. Nahuli ang isa sa mga killer at nahatulan ng bitay subalit may mga nakakalaya pa hanggang sa kasalukuyan. Ang pagkakapatay kay Chua ang naging daan para mabuwag ang ROTC.

Huwag nang pahirapan ang senior high school sa pagsasailalim sa ROTC. Hindi lang naman ito ang maaaring humubog sa kanila para maging tunay na kapaki-pakinabang na mamamayan. Marami pang paraan.

13 February 2017

The Manila Times

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NPA undertook military operations at height of peace talks

Including raid on Henry Sy's Pico de Loro resort in Nasugbu

BY RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO
Columnist

THE communist New People's Army (NPA) undertook 18 armed attacks against government forces in February alone, or at the height of the peace talks, according to information in the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) publication *Ang Bayan*.

I don't know if President Duterte was even aware of this, as he had not pointed to these attacks as the reason why he terminated the

peace talks. Rather, it was the cold-blooded killing of three Army soldiers February 28 in Malaybalay, Bukidnon, and the communists' demand to free 400 of their comrades, captured and presently in jail, which he said convinced him to end the peace talks.

Top communist negotiator Luis Jalandoni, scion of a Negros landlord clan who has been living in the Netherlands for the past 30 years, said the soldiers were killed by government assassins in order to derail the peace talks.

► TiglaoA4



'BRING IT ON': NPA's Ho Chi Minh look-alike spokesman ordering Red fighters to attack the military, and even 'warlord private armies'.

NPA undertook military operations at height of peace talks

The CPP, however did boast of the 18 attacks against government forces, euphemistically calling these "active defense" in its February 7 edition of *Ang Bayan*.

"Various units of the NPA launched more than 18 armed actions all over the country in compliance with the directive of its National Operations Command to undertake active defense to defend the welfare of the citizens and of the revolutionary forces," the party publication said in Filipino (my translation).

Only a fool, though, would call the following attacks as made only in "active defense" which I quote verbatim, translated from the Pilipino:

- "The NPA Eduardo Dagli Command in Batangas harassed a detachment of the Philippine Air Force February 1 at Sitio Buntog, Barangay Bulihan, Nasugbu."
 - "The NPA Celso Miguez Command in Quezon ambushed a patrol of the 31st Infantry Battalion in Trece Martires, Casiguran, February 6. Two soldiers were wounded."
 - "The NPA's Napoleon Tumagtang Command in Southern Panay attacked troops of the 82nd Infantry Battalion and the 3rd Infantry Battalion that were conducting operations in Bagnay Boloc, Tubungan, Ilioilo and Barangay Osorio III in San Remigio, Antique."
 - "Red fighters harassed troops of the 8th Infantry Battalion camped at Barangay Concepcion, Valencia City, Bukidnon."
 - "Red fighters February 2 captured and declared prisoners-of-war two soldiers of the 39th Infantry Battalion at Telefas, Columbio, Sultan Kudarat."
- Quite obviously, the NPA acted as if there were no peace talks at all. There could be only two



RIGOBERTO TIGLAO

explanations for this.

First, the "peace talks" are merely a tactic for the communists to keep the Republic's military cooped up in their camps, unable to undertake operations against the NPA, while the latter expands its recruitment and areas of operations. In past peace talks, the NPA recovered areas they had lost when there were no peace talks, and executed barangay officials who had cooperated with the government.

Second, the peace negotiators, mainly Jose Sison, Fidel Agcaoili, and Jalandoni who have lived in the Netherlands for over 30 years have no influence or control at all over the NPA, or the party leadership in the Philippines, which continue their programs for expanding their territory while their comrades abroad make fools of government negotiators. Without any role in the revolution, Sison et al's existence and lives in that social-welfare advanced country, are justified only if they pretend to be undertaking the noble pursuit of peace.

Pico de Loro attack

The biggest incident that not only exposes the peace talks as a huge deception by the Communist Party, but the NPA as a threat to the country's image as a safe place for tourists and investors was the NPA's attack January 29 at the tycoon Henry Sy's Pico de Loro resort, which is just two

hours from Makati and a favorite weekend escape for the rich from the polluted metropolis. Strangely, the broadsheets did not report it.

Following is the communist newspaper *Ang Bayan's* account (translated from Filipino) of this attack in its February 7 edition, which it described as intended to "punish Henry Sy".

"The NPA confiscated forty-one arms, including 14 M-16s and 20 shotguns, thousands of bullets, magazines, and communications equipment in two raids to punish the Selective Security Agency and 3-1 Security Agency on January 29, 6:30 to 7:45 in the evening at Barangay Papaya, Nasugbu (location of Pico de Loro, with these agencies those guarding the resort--RDT)

"The Red fighters of the NPA's Eduardo Dagli Command of Batangas disarmed the guards and armed goons of Henry Sy at Hacienda Looc. The NPA, however, made sure that guards and employees of the security agencies were not harmed.

"The attack was part of the NPA's step to punish Henry Sy and his guards for the violent grabbing of lands at Hacienda Looc. These guards have several times aimed their guns at farmers living in this land. The guards have also prevented fishermen from fishing in the waters of Hamilo Cove and driving farmers away from Henry Sy's lands at Barangay Calayo and Barangay Papaya."

The number of NPA attacks appears to be more than the 18 claimed in the *Ang Bayan* article. NPA spokesman "Ka Oris" says it is 30, in the following statement issued February 11 with which he announced—in a tone of intrepidity, I would say—the CPP's decla-

ration of all-out war on President Duterte's administration.

"Starting today, the Unilateral Declaration of Interim Ceasefire is now completely terminated. All NPA commands and territorial units, as well as people's militia and self-defense units, can now take the full initiative to defend the people and advance their interests, especially in the face of the declaration of all-out war of the Duterte regime.

"Since February 1, we eagerly waited for the GRP's positive response to widespread clamor for it to implement its CAR-HRIHL obligations (primarily the release of all political prisoners) which could have preempted the termination of the CPP and NPA's unilateral ceasefire. Contrary to the hopes of the people, however, GRP Pres. Duterte displayed intransigence and arbitrarily cancelled all peace negotiations, playing to the AFP line of an 'all-out war' against the CPP and NPA.

"Over the past ten days, responding to orders to carry out active defense, NPA units carried out almost 30 military actions to defend the rights and welfare of the people, primarily, against AFP troops occupying barangays and conducting strike operations. In its active defense posture, NPA operations were launched exclusively against paramilitary groups and uniformed personnel conducting combat, intelligence and psywar operations within the territories of the revolutionary government. A case in point is the February 1 encounter between the NPA and troops of the 8th IB, which had been occupying Barangays Kibalabag and Manalog, 36 kilometers from the center of Malaybalay City, Bukidnon.

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Aktibong depensa, inilunsad ng BHB mula Enero

Mahigit labing-walong armadong aksyon ang inilunsad ng iba't ibang yunit ng Bagong Hukbong Bayan (BHB) sa buong bansa bilang pagtalima sa atas ng Pam-bansang Kumand sa Operasyon na magsagawa ng aktibong depensa upang ipagtanggol ang kapakanan ng mamamayan at mga rebolusyonaryong pwersa.

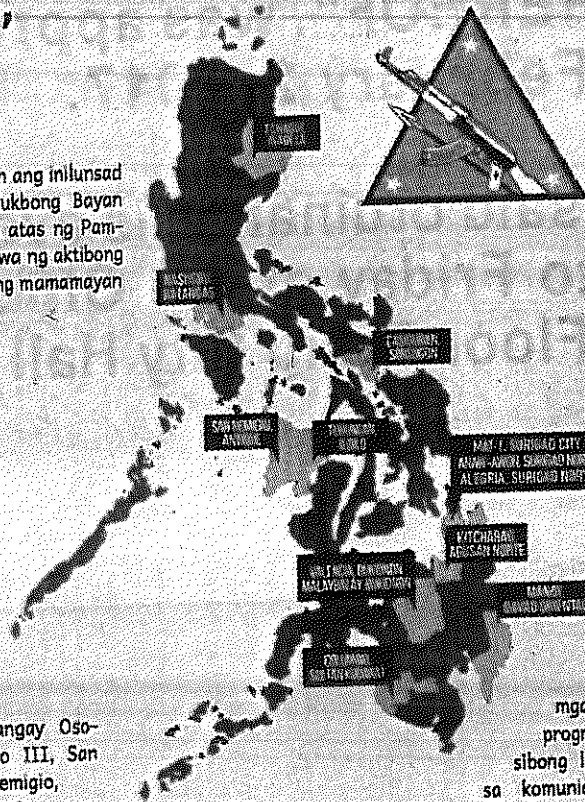
Isabela. Matagumpay na inambus ng yunit ng BHB-South Isabela (Benito Tesorio Command) ang dalawang elemento ng 86th IB sa bayan ng Echague.

Sa pahayag ni Victor Servidores ng BHB-Cagayan Valley, ang dalawa ay kabilang sa tropa ng AFP na walang patid na naglulunsad ng operasyong paniktik sa lalawigan ng Cagayan at Isabela.

Tahasang sinasamantala ng mga yunit militar ang gawaing relief, rehabilitation at kontra-drogang kampanya para makapasok ang mga operatibang paniktik at tropang pangkombat ng AFP sa mga teritoryo ng demokratikong gubyernong

rangay Oso-rio III, San Remigio, Antique.

mga progresibong lider sa komunidad. Gabi-aahi ay inilimbetida ang



"No longer restricted by the active defense policy, the NPA, from hereon, must frustrate the all-out war of suppression of the AFP by launching tactical offensives against any legitimate military target, including active troops of the AFP and PNP, paramilitary or AFP-supported armed vigilante groups, intelligence operatives, and warlord private armies in detachments, camps, or operations within and beyond the NPA guerrilla zones.

"The NPA remains open to peace talks while fighting rages in the countryside. At the same time, the revolutionary masses welcome the call for tactical offensives that will strengthen the people's army and advance the people's war towards genuine and just peace."

"Bring it on," Ka Oris is defiantly telling Duterte.

E-mail: tiglao.manilatimes@gmail.com

FB: Bobi Tiglao

AND Rigoberto Tiglao

Archives: rigobertotiglao.com

Ang Bayan news article boasting of attacks during peace talks.

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