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ARMY

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

15 February 2017

Wednesday

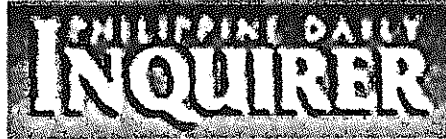
Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

15 FEBRUARY 2017

PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER
1	Weather Forecast		PDI p.A14
NATIONAL NEWS			
2-4	Valentine's Massacre: Gina Kills 75 mine deals	Ronnel Domingo	PDI p.A1
ARMY NEWS			
5-6	Military open to localized peace negotiations with NPA groups	Priam Nepomuceno	Business Mirror p.A3
7	Army presents plan to curb Visayas insurgency	Tara Yap	Mla Bulletin p.11
8-9	Troops capture 8 NPA rebels; 2 yield	-	Mla Bulletin p.11
10	Reds 'use' civilians as shield in clashes	Al Jacinto & Jerry N. Adlaw	Mla Times p.A7
11	Troops capture 8 Reds in Sarangani operations	PNA	Mla Standard Today p.A2
12	8 NPA rebels nadakip, 1 pa sumuko	Joy Cantos	PM p.2
13	'No troop pullout from Sulu'	Roel Pareño, Edith Regalado	Phil Star p.16
14	PMA alumni to make Rody honorary member anew	Cecille Felipe & Alexis Romero	Phil Star p.16
AFP RELATED NEWS			
15-16	Abus demand P30-M for German hostage	Jaime Laude	Phil Star p.1
17	US sub in RP to underscore 'strong' military relations	Joyce Ann Rocamora	Tribune p.3
18	NDF counsel slams Andanar over peace talk comments	Ted Tuvera	Tribune p.3
19	Peace talks to resume if Reds stop hostilities	Catherine Valente	Mla Times p.A8
20	Execute German hostage Abu Sayyaf group threatens to	Al JAcinto	Mla Time sp.A2
21	Aleman nakatakdang pugutan ng Sayyaf	Joy Cantos	PM p.2
22	Stop hostile acts for peace talks to resume	Efren Montano	People's Journal p.7
COMMENTARY/EDITORIAL			
23-24	Peace negotiation and the NPA rebellion	Gerardo Sicat	Phil Star p.B4
25	Kunwari lang daw gusto na rin kapayapaan; NPA, ginagamit lang daw ang peace talks para pabagsakin ang gobyerno!	Bobi Tiglao	Bulgar p.4
26	Selective peace talks dulot ay mas maraming gulo	Atty. Batas Mauricio	Police Files p.4
27	Peace negotiations	-	People's Journal p.4

15 February 2017



Page: A14

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BALANCED NEWS + FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | FEBRUARY 15, 2017 | WEDNESDAY

NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING THE COUNTRY (As of 5:00 PM - Feb. 14, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE **SUNSET**

6:20 AM 6:00 PM

MOONRISE **MOONSET**

9:43 PM 9:12 AM

FULL MOON **LAST QUARTER**

FEB 11 FEB 18

9:33 AM 3:33 AM

LOW TIDE **HIGH TIDE**

MANILA SOUTH HARBOR

7:33 AM 12:23 AM

0.00 Meter 0.82 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 16	FEB 17	FEB 16	FEB 17	FEB 16	FEB 17		
METRO MANILA	21 - 29 °C	22 - 29 °C	TAGAYTAY	17 - 25 °C	18 - 26 °C	TACLOBAN	23 - 28 °C	23 - 28 °C
TUGUEGARAO	18 - 25 °C	19 - 26 °C	LEGAZPI	23 - 29 °C	24 - 28 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	24 - 29 °C	24 - 30 °C
LAOAG	19 - 31 °C	20 - 31 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25 - 31 °C	25 - 30 °C	METRO DAVAO	23 - 29 °C	23 - 31 °C
BAGUID	11 - 21 °C	11 - 22 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	25 - 29 °C	25 - 28 °C	ZAMBOANGA	23 - 31 °C	23 - 33 °C
SBMA/CLARK	22 - 30 °C	23 - 31 °C	METRO CEBU	24 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	<p style="font-size: x-small;">SABOT NG PANALAMOT</p>		

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15 February 2017

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Page: 41

VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE GINA KILLS 75 MINE DEALS

STORY BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO
Environment Secretary Gina Lopez cancels 75 mining contracts as a 'gift of love' to the Filipino people, drawing protests and threats of legal action from the mining industry

Gina scraps 75 mine contracts

FROM A1

By **Ronnel W. Domingo**
@ronwdomingoINQ

For Environment Secretary Gina Lopez, it was a "gift of love" to the Filipino people on Valentine's Day. But for the mining industry, it was a Valentine's Day massacre.

Lopez on Tuesday ordered the cancellation of 75 mining contracts, stepping up her campaign to stop extraction of resources in sensitive areas after earlier shutting more than half of the Philippines' operating mines.

The contracts—known as mineral production sharing agreements, or MPSAs—are all in watershed zones, with many in the exploration stage.

They cover projects not yet in production and the latest action by Lopez suggests she will not allow them to be developed further.

"You kill watersheds, you kill life," Lopez told a news briefing.

"In this country, all open-pit mining operations are being done in a watershed," she said. "This should never be allowed."

Sanctity of contracts

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) said in a statement that with Lopez's unilateral action, the controversy was "no longer a question of whether a handful of companies really violated environmental laws" but "whether we still uphold the sanctity of contracts."

Suggesting the affected miners were preparing to take legal action, COMP said the matter had "now become a question of due process" and "fairness and justice that applies to all."

COMP lawyer Ronald Recidoro said Lopez's latest action was "absurd" and ignored due process given MPSAs were contracts between the government and the mining companies.

"You cannot just unilaterally cancel contracts, especially if there are no specific grounds," Recidoro said.

Mining law allowed operations in watersheds, except those declared protected by the government, he added.

The American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines called the cancellation of the mining contracts "irresponsible."

"We do not understand why these permits—which are only to explore but not to produce—are harming watersheds. Responsible government agencies reviewed the permits, and there are dispute resolution provisions that should be followed," John D. Forbes, senior adviser to the chamber, said in a text message to the Inquirer.

"Cancellation without due process is as irresponsible as operating a mine without following environmental rules and laws," he said.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry agreed "There should be due process for the mining firms," its president, George T. Barcelon, said in a phone interview.

But Lopez said it was within her discretion "to decide on the resources of the country."

Duterte ally

The canceled contracts include the \$2-billion Kingking gold and copper project in Davao del Norte province, the holder of which is the group of former Sen. Manuel Villar, an ally of President Duterte.

Five of the scrapped contracts involve the Philex group led by Manny V. Pangilinan, who figured in a verbal tussle with Lopez when she spoke against mining during an industry forum in 2012.

A longtime environmentalist, Lopez ordered the closure of 23 of the Philippines' 41 mines on Feb. 2 for allegedly damaging watersheds and for siltation of coastal waters and farmlands.

Another five mines were suspended, causing an outcry from the industry.

Protesting Lopez's action, COMP on Monday filed its opposition to her nomination in the Commission on Appointments.

COMP said Lopez's orders would affect 1.2 million people.

Legal action

The industry plans to appeal Lopez's orders to President Duterte, although some miners facing a shutdown of their operations have threatened legal action, with some miners saying on Tuesday they had received a formal closure order from the DENR.

Top Philippine nickel ore producer Nickel Asia Corp. said it would "pursue all legal remedies to overturn [the] order because of due process violations and the absence of any basis" that would warrant a suspension or closure of operations of its unit Hinatuan Mining Corp.

Hinatuan was told that its operation had "impaired the functions of the watershed in the area," according to a copy of the closure order.

Lopez said on Tuesday that courts could not halt her orders.

"There is no TRO (temporary restraining order) that holds function in the case of environment enforcement," she said.

"You can't have a TRO. We are protecting the environment and you can't stop us from protecting the environment," she added.

The contracts she ordered canceled on Tuesday include the \$5.9-billion Tampakan copper-gold project in South Cotabato province, the biggest stalled mining venture in the

IN THE KNOW

A mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) is one of three types of mineral agreements that the government grants to a contractor for the right to mine within, but not title over, a contract area.

Under the MPSA, the government shares in the production of the contractor, whether in kind or in value, as owner of the minerals.

In return, the contractor provides the financing, technology, management and personnel for the mining project.

The other types of contracts are the coproduction agreement, under which the government provides inputs to the mining operations other than the mineral resources, and the joint venture agreement, under which the government and the contractor organize a joint venture company, with both parties having equity shares.

A Filipino citizen of legal age and with capacity to contract is qualified to apply for a contract as an individual.

Corporations, partnerships, associations or cooperatives, organized or authorized for the purpose of engaging in mining, are also qualified provided they are duly registered and 60 percent Filipino-owned. —INQUIRER RESEARCH

Sources: mgb.gov.ph

Philippines

"The contract here covers four provinces—South Cotabato, Sarangani, Sultan Kudarat and Davao del Sur—and six rivers and the food basket of Mindanao," Lopez said.

"We're canceling this as a gift of love to the people of Cotabato," Lopez said.

7 days to comment

The mining companies that would receive cancellation orders would have seven days to comment and "show why we shouldn't cancel their MPSAs," she said.

Four of the five Philex contracts canceled on Tuesday were assigned to Philex Gold Philippines Inc. and involved projects in Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte and Negros Occidental provinces.

The fifth MPSA was assigned to Silangan Mindanao Mining Co. Inc. in Surigao del Norte, where Philex hopes to develop a \$2-billion copper-gold project that would replace the group's biggest revenue source—Philex Mining Corp.'s Padcal mine in Benguet province, whose production life is expected to expire in 2022.

The decision to close or suspend existing mine operations followed a months-long audit of the mines, although a government team that reviewed the audit recommended only suspensions and fines.

—WITH REPORTS FROM JAYMEE T. GAMIL, BEN O. DEVERA, ROYSTEPHEN C. CANIVEL AND REUTERS INQ

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LIST OF MPSAs IN WATERSHEDS

OFFICE

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ABRA WATERSHED

Abra
Jabel Corp.

ZAMBALES WATERSHED

Zambales
Mineral Resources Mining Corp.
Mina Tierra Gracia, Inc.
Westchinamin Corp. (assignment from Ramon G. Perias)
Shangfil Mining and Trading Corp. (assignment from A3 UNA Mining Corp.)
San Juanico Resources Corp.

MINDORO WATERSHED

Occidental Mindoro
Alagag Mining Corp.
Aglubang Mining Corp.

ROMBLON WATERSHED

Romblon
Aitai Philippines Mining Corp.

ORIENTAL MINDORO WATERSHED

Aglubang Mining Corp.

BENGUET WATERSHED

Benguet
Crescent Mining and Development Corp.
Itogon Suyoc Resources, Inc. (assignment from Itogon Suyoc Mines, Inc.)
Macawitwill Gold Mining and Development Company, Inc.

CEBU WATERSHED

Cebu
Pio B. Castillo, Jr.

BATANGAS WATERSHED

Batangas
Egerton Gold Phils., Inc.

AURORA WATERSHED

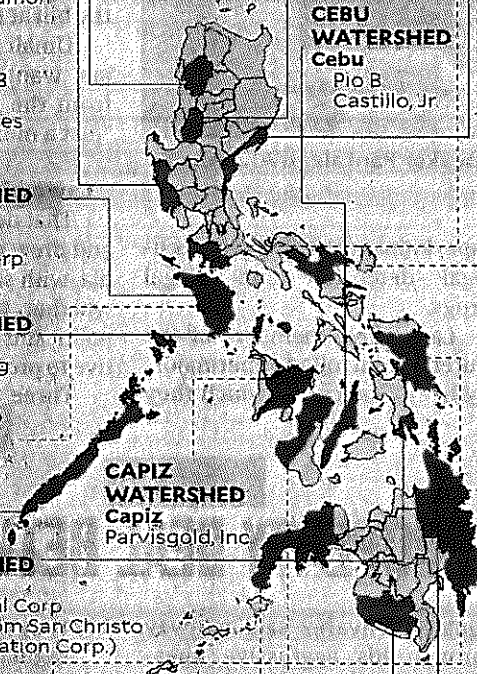
Aurora
Industries Development Corp.

CAMARINES WATERSHED

Camarines Norte
Indophil Resources, Phils. Inc.

DAVAO/COMVAL WATERSHED

Compostela Valley
Alsons Development and Investment Co., Inc.
King Eagle Exploration and Mining Corp.
Napnapan Mineral Resources, Inc.
Davao del Norte
Kingking Mining Corp.
Davao Oriental
Dabawenyo Minerals Corp.
Phil. Youbang Mining International Corp.
Core Mining Corp.
Oro East Mining Company, Inc.
Sinophil Mining and Trading Corp.



CAPIZ WATERSHED

Capiz
Parvisgold, Inc.

AGUSAN WATERSHED

Agusan Del Norte
Asia Aistron Mining and Development Corp. (assignment from Lamberto N. Lim)
Phil. Aistron Mining Corp. (assignment from Crisnorman S. Linconada)

LEYTE WATERSHED

Southern Leyte
Plethora Mineral Corp. (assignment from San Christo Minerals Exploration Corp.)

PALAWAN WATERSHED

Palawan
Central Palawan Mining and Industrial Corp.
Palawan Star Mining Ventures, Inc.
Pyramid Hill Mining and Industrial Corp.
Macroasia Corp.
Lebach Mining Corp.

SAMAR WATERSHED

Eastern Samar
Nickelace, Inc. (assignment from Cambayas Mining Corp.)
United Philippine and China Mining Corp.
Samar
Alumina Mining Philippines, Inc.
Bauxite Resources, Inc.

DINAGAT AND SURIGAO WATERSHED

Dinagat Islands

East Coast Mineral Resources Co., Inc.

Surigao del Norte

Pacific Nickel Phils., Inc.
Philex Gold Philippines, Inc.
Silangan Mindanao Mining Co., Inc. (assignment from Philex Gold Phil.)
Kepha Mining Exploration Company

Surigao del Norte and Surigao del Sur

North Dinagat Mineral Resources Corp.

Surigao del Sur

BrightGreen Resources Corp.
Consolidated Ores Phils. Inc.
Phigold Metallic Ore, Inc.
Das-agan Mining Corp.

Philex Gold Philippines, Inc.
Rosario Mining Development Company, Rosario Consolidated Mining Corp. and Sta. Irene Mining Corp. as represented by Philex Gold Philippines, Inc.

SOCCKSARGEN WATERSHED

Sarangani

Hard Rock Mineral Trading, Inc.

South Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat

South Davao Development Co., Inc.

Sultan Kudarat

GRCO Isulan Mining Corp. (assignment from Fadicasu Mining Corp.)
South Davao Development Co., Inc. (formerly Kalinan Timber Corp.)

NEGROS WATERSHED

Negros Occidental

Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.
Philex Gold Philippines, Inc.
Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.
Selenga Mining Corp. (assignment from Colet Mining and Development Corp.)

ZAMBOANGA WATERSHED

Dapitan City and Zamboanga del Norte

Philex Gold Philippines, Inc.

Zamboanga del Sur

Siennalyn Gold Mining Corp.
TVI Resources Development Phils., Inc. (assignment from Zamboanga Mineral Corp.)
168 Ferrum Pacific Mining Corp.
Geotechniques and Mines, Inc.

Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga del Norte

Czarstone Mining Corp.

Zamboanga City

Atro Minig-Vitali, Inc. (assignment from Hard Rock Mineral Trading, Inc.)

Zamboanga del Norte

Roldan B. Dalman

Peng Cheng Metallic Resources Corp.

Solid North Mineral Corp. (assignment from Kenell Mining Corp.)

Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga Sibugay

Maharlika Dragon Mining Corp.

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*TWO CONTRACTS **THREE CONTRACTS

SOURCE: DENR.gov.ph

INO GRAPHICS

4

15 February 2017

BusinessMirror

Page. A3

Military open to localized peace negotiations with NPA groups

BY PRIAM F. NEPOMUCENO | *Philippines News Agency*

THE Armed Forces is open to pursuing localized peace talks with communist rebels.

This was stressed by the Armed Forces Public Affairs Office chief, Col. Edgard Arevalo, in a press briefing at Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

Request for such negotiations came from New People's Army (NPA) groups operating in the Visayas and Masbate, Arevalo added.

These groups were reportedly surprised at the decision of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)-NPA-National Democratic Front (NDF) national leadership to terminate the unilateral cease-fire with the government effective 11:59 p.m. of February 10.

But, while the military is open to such negotiations, Arevalo said a mechanism must be first crafted so that common ground rules between the two parties can be set up.

The military has long believed that the CPP leaders on self-exile in the Netherlands have only "tenuous control" over the NPA units in

the field

A senior military officer said the NPA units in the field may feel abandoned by their leaders who are abroad.

"Besides, it is the NPA units, through extortion, or so called revolutionary taxes, that are supporting the CPP leaders abroad," the officer said.

Thus, he said the communist guerrillas feel that, aside from being abandoned by their leaders, they are also made to support them.

Troops capture 8 NPA rebs

GOVERNMENT forces captured eight NPA guerrillas, while another has surrendered in a series of operations in the hinterlands of Alabel town in Sarangani province.

Col. Tyne Bañas, commander of the Army's 1002nd Infantry Brigade, said the rebels were separately arrested following clashes

between troops under the 73rd Infantry Battalion (IB) and the NPA's Front 71 on February 6, 8 and 11 in sitios Tangis and Silutan, Barangay Datal Anggas in Alabel.

Six of the captured rebels were formally presented to the media late Monday afternoon in a news conference at the Kasfala Hall in Alabel.

They were identified as Simeon Salda, Jun Moda, Claude Palbe, Garzon Palbe, Rene Ompao and Sabelo Colano. The two others were identified as Nonoy and Moreno Salaman.

Seized from the rebels were five M-1 Garand rifles, two M-16 rifles and a caliber .30 carbine.

Also presented was a surrenderer, identified only as an alias Kaloy, who reportedly served as spokesman in the NPA's recruitment activities among the Tagakaolo tribe in parts of Sarangani.

Bañas said the 73 IB launched the combat operations based on a directive from the Armed Forces following the termination of the unilateral cease-fire with the NPA by President Duterte.

He said the operations were also in response to an attack staged

by NPA rebels on troops securing a government road project in the outskirts of Alabel on January 29, when the cease-fire was still in place.

Lt. Col. Marion Angcao, 73 IB commander, said they don't consider the captured rebels as enemies, but "victims of the NPA"

He said most of them were new recruits of the NPA, and were only duped into joining the group on promise of monetary benefits.

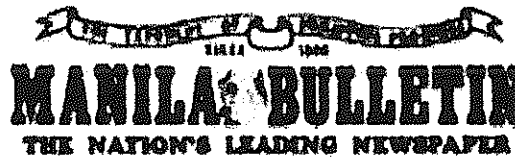
Following the declaration of the government's unilateral cease-fire in July last year and the opening of the peace negotiations with the CPP-NDF, he said they monitored "heavy recruitment activities" of the NPA in the area.

"*Kung tutuusin, sila* [those captured], *wala talagang kasalanan* [In truth, they did not commit any wrongdoing]. They were victims of the deception by the enemy. That's why they are being treated well," Angcao said.

In the three encounters with the NPA, he confirmed one soldier was wounded but is now in stable condition at a hospital in Davao City.

Angcao said they are currently verifying reports of casualties on the side of the rebels.

15 February 2017



Page: 61

Army presents plan to curb Visayas insurgency

By **TARA YAP**

ILOILO CITY – Despite the cancellation of the unilateral ceasefire, the Philippine Army's 3rd Infantry Division (3ID) has formulated a framework to curb communist insurgency in key areas of the Visayas.

Major General Jon Aying, 3ID commander, outlined the approach that will reduce the strength of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (NPA) in the Visayan islands

of Panay, Negros, Cebu, Bohol, and Siquijor.

Aying reiterated that the "Seven Angels of Change" approach is a multi-faceted and multi-sectoral framework that can be easily implemented in Western Visayas, Central Visayas and Negros Island regions beginning this year until the end of 2019.

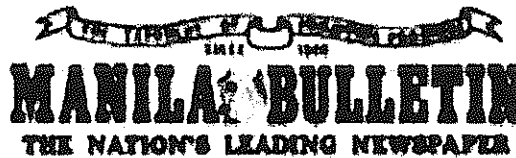
According to Aying, the framework combines security reform initiatives, peace building, legitimate use of force; community public safety system,

grassroots community development; disaster risk reduction, and following the rule of law.

This will be implemented by the 5,000 soldiers, 4,000 members of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAF-GU) and its various partners both from the public and private sectors.

Last week, a soldier of the 61st Infantry Battalion was killed in a skirmish with suspected NPA rebels in the mountains of Tapaz town, Capiz province.

15 February 2017



Page: 11

Troops capture 8 NPA rebels; 2 yield

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – Government troops captured eight alleged members of the New People's Army (NPA) while another has surrendered in a series of operations in the hinterlands of Alabel town in Sarangani Province.

Col. Tyne Bañas, commanding officer of the Army's 1002nd Brigade, said the rebels were separately arrested following clashes between troops under the 73rd Infantry Battalion (73rd IB) and the NPA's Front 71 on February 6, 8 and 11 in Sitios Tangis and Silutan, Barangay

Datal Anggas in Alabel.

Six of the captured rebels were identified as Simeon Salda, Jun Moda, Claude Palbe, Garzon Palbe, Rene Om-pao and Sabelo Colano. The two others were identified as Nonoy and Moreno Salaman.

Seized from the rebels were five Garand rifles, two M-16 Armalite rifles and a Carbine rifle.

Also presented was a surrenderee identified only as an alias Kaloy, who reportedly served as spokesperson in the NPA's recruitment activities among the

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Tagakaolo tribe in parts of Sarangani

Banas said the 73rd IB launched the combat operations based on a directive from the Armed Forces of the Philippines following the termination of the unilateral ceasefire with the NPA by President Rodrigo R. Duterte.

He said they were also in response to an attack staged by NPA rebels last Jan. 29 on troops securing a government road project in the outskirts of Alabel.

Lt. Col. Marion Angcao, 73rd IB commanding officer, said they don't consider the captured rebels as enemies but "victims of the NPA."

He said most of them were new recruits of the NPA and were only duped into joining the group due to promises of monetary benefits.

Manobo rebel

Another heavily armed regular fighter of the New People's Army returned to mainstream society with the help of the 36th Infantry Battalion (36th IB) in Surigao del Sur Sunday night (Feb. 12), a ground Army commander yesterday said.

Lt. Col. Randolph Rojas, 36th IB commander said the 23-year-old Manobo (one of the indig-

enous peoples tribe in Caraga region), whose identity is withheld for security reason, chose to be with his family and live a normal life.

The 36th IB commander said the former rebel who came from San Miguel, Surigao del Sur, also surrendered his M-16 Armalite 1 rifle with one fully-loaded magazine.

Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Madrigal Jr., commanding general of the Army's Northeastern and Northern Mindanao 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division (4th ID) welcomed the new rebel returnee. Army troopers dropped some 4,000 leaflets on Monday over Sarangani Province urging the surrender of NPA rebels operating in the area.

Lt. Col. Marion Angcao, commanding officer of the Army's 73rd IB, said they dropped the leaflets aboard a Philippine Air Force UH-1 or Huey chopper while delivering relief goods to evacuees in a remote village in Alabel town in Sarangani.

"This is aimed to promote peace and encourage the surrender of NPA rebels based in Sarangani," he said in a press conference.

Each leaflet carried the phrase "Manag-uban Kita sa Tul-id nga Dalan (Let's join together in the straight path)" on one side. The other side details pictures of firearms and monetary benefits that may be availed of by the surrenderers. (Mike U. Crismundo and Philippine News Agency)

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15 February 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A7

Reds 'use' civilians as shield in clashes

ZAMBOANGA CITY: New People's Army (NPA) rebels clashed with government troops on Tuesday in Davao Oriental as security forces continued their offensive against the communist group in the restive region.

The military's Eastern Mindanao Command said fighting erupted in Barangay New Visayas in Lupon town.

It accused the rebel group of retreating to a chapel and used civilians, including women and children, as shield against pursuing soldiers.

Rebel forces also blocked a highway, preventing motorists from passing through the village.

"We lament the NPA's conduct of road block disturbing the economic activity of the area and the use of children and women and a chapel as part of their diversionary act against pursuing troops," Army Maj. Ezra Balagtey, spokesman for the Eastern Mindanao Command, said.

"These condemnable acts are manifestation of the gross disregard of the NPAs of human rights, especially those of children and the elderly," he added.

Balagtey did not say whether the civilians had been safely freed but the clashes broke out after patrolling group from the 28th Infantry Battalion (IB) ran into a huge group of rebels and a firefight ensued.

There were no immediate reports of casualties on both sides but soldiers recovered at least 14 backpacks left behind by the insurgents.

Rebel spokesman Rigoberto Sanchez said NPA forces have successfully defended base areas and guerrilla zones around the region.

Meanwhile, in Sarangani province, about 150 families fled their homes in Barangay Datal Angas in Alabel town after soldiers of the 73rd Infantry Battalion (IB) swooped down on an NPA hideout and seized high-powered firearms and ammunition.

Troops from the 73rd IB led by Lt. Col. Daryl Causancio raided the NPA lair in the mountain ranges, triggering a heavy firefight where a soldier and several rebels were wounded.

The insurgents withdrew.

Major General Rafael Valencia, Army's 10th Infantry Division commanding general, disclosed that they had almost 18 encounters against the NPA rebels since last year, killing several of them.

The 150 families have been temporarily housed at a school compound in Alabel town.

**AL JACINTO AND
JERRY N. ADLAW**

15 February 2017

The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

Page: A2

Troops capture 8 Reds in Sarangani operations

GENERAL SANTOS CITY— Government troops captured eight alleged members of the New People's Army while another surrendered in a series of operations in the hinterlands of Alabel town in Sarangani province.

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He said they were also in response to an attack staged by NPA rebels last Jan. 29 on troops securing a government road project in the outskirts of Alabel.

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He said most of them were new recruits of the NPA and were only duped into joining the group due to promises of mon-

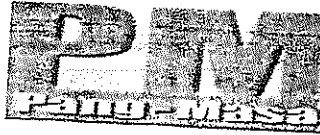
etary benefits.

Following the declaration of the government's unilateral ceasefire in July last year and the opening of the peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front, he said they monitored "heavy recruitment activities" of the NPA in the area.

"Actually, they did not commit any wrongdoing. They were only victims of the deception of the enemy. That's why they are being treated well," Angcao said.

In the three encounters with the NPA, he confirmed that one trooper was wounded but is now in stable condition at a hospital in Davao City. He said they are currently verifying reports of casualties on the side of the rebels. **PNA**

15 February 2017



Pahina. 2

**8 NPA rebels
nadakip.
1 pa sumuko**

Dahil sa pinaigting na all out war ng pamahalaan laban sa CPP-NPA ay naaresto ang walong miyembro nito habang isa naman ang sumuko sa lalawigan ng Sarangani.

Ayon kay 2nd Lt. China Celina Castro, Civil Military Operation Officer, ang mga nadakip na rebelde ay kasalukuyan nang isinasailalim sa masusing tactical interrogation ng Army's 73rd Infantry Battalion (IB) matapos makorner ng tropang gobyerno sa isang bakbakan kamakalawa sa Sitio Tangis, Brgy. Datal Anggas, Alabel, Sarangani.

Ang mga naarestong rebelde ay kinilalang sina Simeon Salda, 28, Jun Moda, 20, Claude Palbe, 21, Garzon Palbe, 31, Rene Ompao, 24, Sabelo Colano, 20, Nonoy Sanama at Morelo Sanama habang isang alyas Kaloy naman ang napilitang sumuko.

Nakumpiska mula sa mga ito ang ilang garand rifles, carbine rifles at M16 rifles -

Joy Cantos

15 February 2017



Page: 16

'No troop pullout from Sulu'

ZAMBOANGA CITY – The military assured the public yesterday that troops would not be pulled out from Sulu following President Duterte's order to intensify the fight against communist insurgents in mainland Mindanao.

Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., chief of the Western Mindanao Command, said they have enough troops to fight the Abu Sayyaf in Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Basilan, and the communist insurgents and other rebel groups in the Zamboanga peninsula.

Galvez said the intensified operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu and the Mautes in the Lanao provinces would not be hampered by the operation against the New People's Army (NPA) rebels.

He said he installed Medal of Valor awardee Col. Cirilito Sobejana as the new commander of the Joint Task Force Sulu last Saturday.

Sobejana will lead the about 7,000 soldiers in the hunt against the Abu Sayyaf and rescue of its hostages.

Meanwhile, in Sarangani, eight suspected NPA rebels were arrested in Alabel town on Monday.

The eight, said to be members of the NPA Guerrilla Front 71, were identified as Simeon Salda, 28; Jun Moda, 20; Claude Palbe, 21; Garzon Palbe, 31; Rene Ompao, 24; Sabelo Colano, 20; Nonoy Sanama and Morelo Sanama. Two of them were reportedly armed during the arrest – **Roel Pareño, Edith Regalado**

15 February 2017



Page: 16

PMA alumni to make Rody honorary member anew

By CECILLE SUERTE FELIPE and ALEXIS ROMERO

For the second time, President Duterte will be adopted by graduates of the Philippine Military Academy after the PMA Alumni Association Inc (PMAAAI) approved a resolution making him an honorary member.

Duterte was first adopted by PMA Class of 1967 in 1994. He will be adopted again by

the PMAAAI, which is composed of at least 10,000 active and retired servicemen, during its homecoming in Baguio City on Saturday.

Duterte will be the guest of honor at the PMA event.

His attendance was confirmed in an official schedule sent by Malacañang to journal-

ists yesterday.

"Our class had adopted him, but he continued supporting PMAers. So the PMAAAI board decided to formalize his relationship with PMAers through a resolution adopting him as an honorary member," PMAAAI chairman Anselmo Avenido Jr told journalists.

In his speeches, Duterte has been praising the PMA gradu-

ates, saying they will not allow him to issue illegal orders.

He said military officials would oust him if he asks them to do something unlawful like extrajudicial killings.

During the event, the PMA will express their full support for the Duterte administration, Avenido said.

"We are behind him in his peace efforts," he said.

15 February 2017



Page: 1



Screen grab from a video released by the Abu Sayyaf shows German captive Jurgen Kantner breaking down as he pleads with his family and government to save him.

Abus demand P30 M for German hostage

By JAIME LAUDE

Abu Sayyaf bandits have threatened to execute their German hostage if the P30-million ransom is not paid by Feb 26.

In a video released yesterday, the armed group presented 70-year-old German captive Jurgen Kantner at an undis-

closed place, believed to be in either Sulu or Basilan.

Kantner and his partner Sabine Merz were sailing on their yacht *Rockall* off the coast of Sabah when the bandits accosted them in early November last year.

The abandoned yacht was later recovered off Pangutaran Island in Sulu. Merz's

naked body was found on the yacht.

"We are still validating this. We must first examine this video because I for one have not seen it," Col Edgard Arevalo, Armed Forces of the Philippines-Public Affairs Office chief said.

In the video, Kantner is seen kneeling,

Turn to Page 8

Abus From Page 1

with several heavily armed men standing behind him. Speaking in German, Kantner appeared to be airing an appeal to his family and his government to save him.

Last year, the bandits executed two Canadian hostages, Robert Hall and John Ridsdel, after the victims' families failed to pay the huge ransom.

The Abu Sayyaf kidnapped Ridsdel and Hall, along with Norwegian Kjartan Sekkingstad and Filipina Marites Flor, at a resort in the Island Garden City of Samal in September 2015. Sekkingstad and Flor were released separately after payment of ransom.

"The government, we do not negotiate with terrorists, we do not pay ransom to terrorists," Arevalo said.

Arevalo added that the military will exert all effort to rescue Kantner, and that rescue operations are continuing against the bandits and yielding positive results.

He also said that as matter of national policy, the military discourages any group from paying ransom for the hostages.

"Our position has been consistent. We discourage payment of ransom because we believe that payment of ransom will only embolden them, will continue to capacitate them and they can even buy the loyalty of the community," Arevalo said.

The military said Abu Sayyaf bandits are currently holding 27 local and foreign hostages in Sulu and Basilan.

15 February 2017



Page: 3

US sub in RP to underscore 'strong' military relations

By Joyce Ann L. Rocamora

The Los Angeles-class submarine *USS Louisville* (SSN 724) yesterday has docked in Subic Bay to underscore the "strong" military connections between the Philippines and America, said the United States Embassy to Manila.

In a statement, the embassy mentioned that the Louisville crew will participate in a series of community service projects and sporting events during this short visit.

The ship will also use the stop to conduct some minor maintenance with the assistance of Filipino companies.

Louisville is forward-deployed to the US 7th Fleet area of operations in support of security and stability in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

The embassy stressed that this brief port call does not only highlight military connections between the two nations but also its strong people-to-people linkages.

In January, US and Philippine service members have trained side by side in a series of Subject Matter Expert Exchanges as part of the most recent US Air Contingent.

The purpose is to further promote increased interoperability between American and Filipino forces.

The training provided the Philippine and US service members an opportunity to practice and refine planning Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief operations.

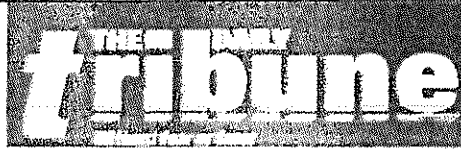
In this recent Air Contingent rotation, US military from the Hawaii Air National Guard's 154th Wing, US Army's 5th Engineer Detachment Geospatial Planning Cell and 500th Military have trained alongside Filipino pilots.

Military planners use the Eagle Vision system to acquire satellite imagery to aid the planning of military operations to include disaster response.

According to the embassy, the first rotation of the Air Contingent was held in Clark, Pampanga April 2016, following a joint announcement by then-Philippine Secretary of National Defense Voltaire Gazmin and former US Secretary of Defense Ash Carter.

The Philippines is a longstanding treaty ally of the United States with a history of partnership of more than 70 years.

15 February 2017



Page: 3

NDF counsel slams Andanar over peace talk comments

By Ted Tuvera

Leftists yesterday said that Communications Secretary Martin Andanar should better shut his mouth when it comes to President Duterte's prospects in the peace process with communist rebels.

National Democratic Front (NDF) legal counsel Edre Olalia, reacting to Andanar's opinion column in another newspaper, said that the Palace mouthpiece made erroneous claims regarding the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army's (CPP-NPA) declaration to cease their ceasefire with government troops and as well as wrong reasons as to why the peace talks were suspended.

Olalia pointed out that the NDF did not essentially "withdraw their unilateral ceasefire just because the political prisoners were not released" and that not all CPP

leaders — that are portrayed to be "peace consultants" — have been convicted by courts as claimed by Andanar.

"Simple fact check would disclose that roughly only 50 detainees have been convicted, with all the rest facing trial at different stages. These wrongly convicted prisoners are all candidates for presidential pardon but only three have been released so far under this mode," the NDF lawyer said.

The NDF also denied that it was their party who asked the President to delist Communist Party founding chairman Jose Maria Sison from the US government's terror list.

"It was the Government's Panel chairman (Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello) that surprisingly but pleasantly unilaterally announced to the international media in Rome that the government will work for

the removal of the NDF's chief political consultant Prof. Jose Ma. Sison from the US so-called terrorist list so that he could purportedly go home," Olalia said.

"(Bello) also announced in advance to the media that such fact will be placed in the Rome Joint Statement. The government never proposed it to be included in the statement though and nothing of that sort appears therein," he added.

Andanar, the other day, also said in a radio interview that there is no compelling reason yet for the government to continue talking with the communists.

"The act of talking on the negotiating table, we simply follow the direction of the President to stop peace negotiations," the Palace official said.

Former NDF chairman and former Bayan Muna partylist Rep. Satur Ocampo, in an interview for

his part, said that the rebels won't buy Andanar's claims regarding the issue.

Ocampo articulated that the only guys whom the NDF will be listening to, when it comes to the peace process, would be Bello, Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza and Duterte himself.

Meanwhile, Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo said that they are still hopeful that another round of peace negotiations between the government and the Reds is still possible.

"I am also confident that eventually they'll go back to the negotiating table," Panelo told reporters in an ambush interview in Malacañang.

"After all, the Left, they're saying what they're doing is for the people then there's no reason for them back out or not to continue with the peace talks," he added.

15 February 2017

The Manila Times

Page: 48

Peace talks to resume if Reds stop hostilities

MALACANANG on Tuesday said peace talks with communist rebels may resume if they stop all hostilities.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Panelo said the Duterte administration is open to resuming the peace negotiations but the group should proceed with utmost goodwill.

"They should cease hostilities. They should stop their illegal activities," Panelo said, adding that the resumption of peace talks will largely depend on the goodwill shown by the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New

People's Army.

"But I am also confident that eventually they'll go back to the negotiating table. After all, the left, they're saying what they're doing is for the people then there's no reason for them to back out or not to continue with the peace talks," he added.

Communist rebels earlier ended a unilateral ceasefire declared in August last year, saying the government failed to release hundreds of detained rebels.

This prompted President Duterte to cancel the peace talks.

The government also revoked the Joint Agreement on Safety

and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) between the government and the communists.

With the termination of JASIG, communist leaders can now be arrested, Panelo said.

The communists had rejected the termination of peace talks and said they are willing to explore ways to reopen the negotiations.

CPP founding chairman Jose Maria Sison has asked Duterte to address the discord between the communist rebels and the government and eventually resume peace talks.

"I propose [that Duterte] consult thoroughly with his ne-

gotiating 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 CPP wishes] 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 added.

CATHERINE S. VALENTE

5 February 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A2

EXECUTE GERMAN HOSTAGE ABU SAYYAF GROUP THREATENS TO

ZAMBOANGA CITY: Abu Sayyaf rebels have threatened to behead a German yachter kidnapped in November last year off Sabah near southern Philippines if their ransom demand is not paid.

The rebels who are holding Jurgen Kantner set their deadline on February 26. The 70-year old Kantner was kidnapped with his wife Sabine Merz, 56, when Abu Sayyaf gunmen intercepted them just several nautical miles from the southern province of Tawi-Tawi.

The woman was killed. Her naked body was found by soldiers in the boat. A shotgun was also recovered near her body, according to the military's Western Mindanao Command. It said an Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Muamar Askali phoned a media organization in Zamboanga City to say that they are holding Kantner and demanding P500 million for his safe release.

The Abu Sayyaf demand was contained in a video released on February 14 on Telegram Mes-

senger where it showed Kantner pleading to his government to save his life. The rebels were demanding a P30 million ransom.

In April 2014, Askali's group also kidnapped two German yachters - Stefan Viktor Okonek, 71, and Henrike Diesen, 55 -- and demanded a P250 million in ransom.

The duo was freed six months later after the German government paid the ransom delivered by Filipino security officials.

The Abu Sayyaf is still holding

about two dozen Malaysian, Indonesian and Vietnamese sailors kidnapped last year in Sabah and Basilan province.

The Philippines is hunting down at least 23 people who were identified and wanted by Malaysian authorities for the string of ransom kidnappings and attacks at sea off Sabah.

Six of the 23 individuals, mostly Abu Sayyaf members, are facing arrest warrants.

They are Apo Mike, alias Majan Sahidjuan, Hatib Hayan, alias Saw-

adjaan, Alden Bagde, alias Sayning, Muamar Askali, alias Abu Rami, Idang Susukan and Alhabsi Misaya.

The Eastern Sabah Security Command recently released the names of 23 people sought for involvement in kidnapping incidents in the coastlines and waters of eastern Sabah.

The Abu Sayyaf group, formed by Ustadz Abdurajak Abubakar Janjalani in 1992, continues to recruit members to fight the government in their attempt to set

up a strict Islamic caliphate in Mindanao. It now has hundreds of members in the Muslim autonomous region and the military had failed to stop the growing influence and violent campaigns of the rebel group because it did not sustain the combat operations needed to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf in the restive region. Much of the military's huge budget goes to combat operations and its modernization program.

AL JACINTO

15 February 2017



Pahina. 2

P30-M ransom hingi... Aleman nakatakdang pugutan ng Sayyaf

Kapag hindi naibigay ang hinihinging P30 milyon ransom hanggang Pebrero 26 ay nagbanta ang mga bandidong Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) na pupugutan ng ulo ang bihag nilang Aleman na tinatago sa Sulu.

Sa kumalat na video sa you tube, makikita ang bihag na Aleman na si Jurgen Kampner, 70 taong gulang habang tinutukan ng patalim ng mga bandido habang ang iba naman ay pawang armado ng malalakas na kalibre ng baril mula sa grupo ni Abu Sayyaf Sub leader Abu Rahmi sa kagubatan ng Sulu.

"My name is Jurgen Kampner. And the pirates (Abu Sayyaf), they are giving me a last chance, that they get the 30 million pesos. And I want to say that the execution shall take place on the 26rd at 3 in the afternoon. If the money is not in the hands of the pirates at this time, they will behead me." apela ng binabalot na matinding sindak at pagmamakaawa sa kaniyang buhay ni Kampner sa wikang Aleman.

"And I want to ask my government to support this and maybe talk to the Philippines again to make sure that they come out with the money because obviously they already have it, the pirates are saying. And if everything goes wrong, I want to say "Goodbye" to my family. Okay Crazy I don't think I have a chance to get out here alive. Because nothing is moving. Everyone is giving the bullet to the other. I am over. I don't have anything more to say. What will be, will be." umiyyak na pagmamakaawa pa ng Aleman.

Si Kampner ay binihag ng mga bandido matapos harangin ang 30 talampakang yate na Rockfall na sinasakyan nito at ng kaniyang misis na si Sabine Merz sa karagatan ng Laparan Island, Pangutaran, Sulu noong gabi ng Nobyembre 5, 2016.

Samantalang ang misis nitong si Sabine Merz ay hubot hubad na natagpuan ng mga otoridad na duguan at hinihinalang ginahasa pa ng mga bandido saka pinagbaril sa ulo bago mabandona sa yate noong Nobyembre 6 ng nakalipas ring taon pero tinangay ng mga kidnaper sa kanilang kuta sa kagubatan ng Sulu si Kampner. -Joy Cantos-

2/

15 February 2017



Page. 7

Panelo to Reds

Stop hostile acts for peace talks to resume

By EFREN MONTANO

CHIEF Presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo said communist insurgents should stop their hostile activities if they want to resume peace talks with the government.

Panelo said the New People's Army (NPA) should stop extorting money and killing innocent civilians to show goodwill to the government.

"They've been assaulting even innocent civilians. That's bad," he said.

Panelo said that the resumption of peace talks between the government and the Reds would depend on the goodwill that they will show to the government, pointing out "they're the ones who violated their own ceasefire."

Panelo is rather confident that the government and the rebels will eventually "go back to the negotiating table."

"After all, the left, they're saying what they're doing is for the people then there's no reason for them to back out or not to continue with the peace talks," he said.

The President has earlier indicated the possibility of reviving the peace talks with communist insurgents. Duterte said, "In due time this [peace talks impasse] will be resolved because this is not really about ideology. This is about the Filipino people."

Meanwhile, Malacañang welcomed yesterday the plan of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) to collaborate with the Duterte administration despite opposing views on the war on drugs.

"At the end of the day, anything is possible. Sabi ko nga last time, 'Wala naman sigurong matigas na tinapay sa mamit na kape.' If they show this from the very beginning, maybe we would have a better working rela-

tionship. Of course, we welcome that. But, of course, at this particular stage, things have to be worked out, okay. But the initiative must come from the CBCP," Presidential Spokesperson Ernesto Abella told Palace reporters yesterday.

CBCP president Archbishop Socrates Villegas earlier said in a forum that they have assigned bishops to keep an open line with the government.

Villegas also said that a former seminarian in the Duterte administration has already gotten in touch with one of the bishops they have designated.

But Abella said he is yet to confirm who among the three Cabinet secretaries have been corresponding with a CBCP representative.

Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco Jr., Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Perma, and Interior Secretary Ismael Sueno are all former seminarians, it was learned.

22

15 February 2017



Page: BA

Peace negotiation and the NPA rebellion

President Duterte, fresh from his election mandate, announced he would seek peace with communist rebels. With peace established, more economic development would be enabled.

Presidential steps to jumpstart the negotiations. Almost immediately after assuming office, Duterte gave concessions to sweeten the prospects of peace. He showed goodwill to the communists by giving them a voice in the running of the government without their asking for it.

He appointed communist-leaning individuals to

Cabinet positions in land reform, labor, social welfare and to anti-poverty agencies.

In addition, the President declared a unilateral ceasefire to the hostilities with government troops. He met with rebel leaders in his office and even broke bread with them. He had direct telephone talks with Jose Ma. Sison, the exiled leader in the Hague, once his professor in college and whom he considered

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GERARDO B. SICAT

a kindred kind.

Thus, direct meetings of the constituted peace panels from the government and the leaders opened auspiciously in August 2016 in Oslo, Norway. Two other meetings were held, one in Oslo and the other in Rome. No hard concessions from the rebels were being consummated.

The rebel panel included its exiled leaders and those who were held in captivity who were given safe passage for the purpose of the meetings.

Through the three meetings, the demands prior to real negotiations hardened. The communists had insisted on the release of 400 prisoners be made first before the conduct of substantial negotiations.

Moreover, certain events that happened in the field that led to the killing of government troops even during a ceasefire was in effect made the President terminate the peace negotiations. It seemed the communists had no control over their men in the field.

Why the government terminated the negotiations. President Duterte explained his action to the nation and to people in Surigao, Mindanao (the site of a deadly earthquake devastation) thus:

"I tried everything," the President explained. "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?"

A more detailed explanation was provided by the government communications director, Martin Andanan, who writes a column in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* ("The path to peace," Feb. 13). I quote from him.

"No previous president yielded so much so quickly just so the peace process could be restarted with an abundance of trust... Having won an arm, the communists wanted to take a leg. They wanted 400 convicts they prefer to define as 'political prisoners' to be unconditionally released.

Each time the negotiating panels met, it seems the list of demands presented by the communists effectively as preconditions to the continuation of the talks lengthened. This is why President Duterte called them 'spoiled brats.'"

Five peace parleys with other Philippine presidents have failed. Five Philippine presidents – Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, and Benigno Aquino III – have tried to win over the communists to end their rebellion. All these efforts have failed.

Paulyn Sicam, a former member of the Philippine government panel under the Macapagal administration, who now writes an opinion column for *The Philippine STAR* (her column, July 2, 2016), reviewed her personal experience thus: "Although the talks (would begin) with a lot of goodwill among friends who had fought against the (Marcos) dictatorship together, it quickly deteriorated into another impasse, on the same issue that the communists have always insisted on – the release of their jailed leaders. As they did with every panel, (they) declared that they would just wait for a more open, friendlier government to resume talks with."

She concluded thus: "I am convinced that to the communists, the peace process is a one-way street that they are on only to get as many concessions as they can from the government without conceding anything in return..."

Yet, in this particular negotiation, the communists appeared to expect that President Duterte would be more pliant. This time, it was Duterte who called the negotiations off. In addition, he referred to the communists as a terror organization.

Soon after the President made this announcement, the communication sought reconsideration his decision. They obviously see in Duterte their best chance of concluding a peace treaty, with some of their objectives achieved.

There are no more Maoists except in the NPA. In the almost half century of fighting against the government, a lot has changed in this world. But the NPA has remained remarkably the same, with its leaders still immersed in their old ideologies. The rhetoric that they espouse on economic policy is out of tune with the times.

The Philippine communist party is essentially behind the times. There are hardly any more Maoists in the world of development policy. Or rather, the Mao doctrines of development have been superseded by those who led China to the great boom years in its economy, following the reforms of Deng Hsiao-peng.

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These policies have much relevance to the changing conditions that we in the Philippines face today. This is most clearly set from the examples of high economic growth of China and Vietnam today, two countries that have been growing at high speed which are still considered communist countries in organization.

But since the late 1970s, the model moved away from the Mao vision of a highly centralized and directed economy. The key elements of successful transformation of today's China is based on embracing the principles of the market, of competition, and of seeking high employment in industry and commerce. These are also the same patterns of reforms that Vietnam has been following.

Where the Philippines requires to move forward are often the policies that many of NPA's ideologues want to thwart: strengthen access to foreign capital, liberalize further the investment areas, and strengthen market forces.

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24
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15 February 2017



Pahina. 4



Kunwari lang daw gusto na rin ng kapayapaan; NPA, ginagamit lang daw ang peace talks para pabagsakin ang gobyerno!

NAGSAGAWA ang komunistang New People's Army (NPA) ng labingwalong (18) armadong pag-atake laban sa mga sundalo ng gobyerno sa gitna ng pag-uusap ng dalawang panig tungkol sa kapayapaan.

Ang mga pagtambang sa militar ay ipinagmalaki ng NPA sa Ang Bayan, ang opisyal na pahayagan ng Communist Party of the Philippines-NPA.

Alam kaya ito ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kaya niya ipinatigil ang peace talks sa Europe?

Ang nanglat lang na dahilan ng pangulo ay ang pagmasaker sa tatlong sundalo noong Pebrero 1 sa Malaybalay, Bukidnon.

Ismama na rin ang itgal na demanda ng mga komunista na palayan ang 400 sa mga mayembro nila na nasa kalungitan dahil sa iba't ibang kasong kriminal.

Imawag ng CPP ang 18 mga pag-atake sa gobyerno na mga "aktibong depensa", para raw ipagtanggol ang kanilang kalusian na matagal nang nakikipag-away sa Republika ng Pilipinas.

Ito ang sinabi ng CPP-NPA sa kanilang diyaryo: *"Mahigat labingwalong armadong aksiyon ang nilunsad ng iba't ibang yunit ng Bagong Hukbong Bayan (BHB) sa buong bansa bilang pagtalima sa atas ng Pambansang Komand sa operasyon na magsagawa ng aktibong depensa upang ipagtanggol ang kapakanan ng mamamayan at mga rebahusyaryong pwersa."*

Hindi nilabas ang balitang ito sa mga malalaking diyaryo sa bansa, lalo na raw ang mga tinaguriang dilawan ang pananaw.

Ayon sa mga ulat, mayroong "tactical alliance" ang mga dilaw at ang CPP-NPA na nagsimula noong panahon ni Ninoy Aquino at umabot sa administrasyon ng kanyang asawang si Cory at anak na si Noy-noy.

Wala raw sa katnuban ang manirwalang pag-depensa ang ginawa ng NPA o ang tinatawag nilang

Para sa inyong katanungan, sulustiyon at reaksiyon sumulat sa BANAT ni Bobi Tiglao, BULGAR Bldg., 538 Quezon Ave., Quezon City o mag-email sa banat@bulgar.com.ph

Bagong Hukbong Bayan (BHB). Ito ang kanilang mga aksiyon, ayon mismo sa kanilang opisyal na diyaryo:

- Hinaras ng BHB Batangas ang isang detachment ng Philippine Air Force noong Pebrero 1 sa Sityo Buntog, Barangay Bulihan, Nasugbu.

- Inambus ng BHB-Sorsogon ang nagpapatril-yang mga elemento ng 31st IB (Infantry Battalion) sa Trese Martires, Casiguran noong Pebrero 6. Dalawang sundalo ang nasugatan.

- Dalawang magkasunod na aksiyong-militar ang nilunsad ng BHB-Southern Panay laban sa mga tropa ng 82nd IB at 3rd IB na nag-ooperasyon sa Barangay Boloc, Tubunga, Iloulo at Barangay Osorio III, San Remigio, Antique.

- Naglunsad ng operasyong haras ang mga pulang mandirigma laban sa tropa ng 8th IB na nagkam-po sa gusali ng SIDAMCO sa Barangay Concepcion, Valencia City, Bukidnon.

- Dinakip at idineklarang prisoner-of-war (POW) ng BHB-NEMR si Pfc. Edwin Salan ng 30th IB sa Barangay Boudlinging, Alegria, Surigao del Norte.

- Dalawang elemento ng 39th IB ang dinakip at idineklarang POW ng mga pulang mandirigma sa Telefas, Columbio, Sultan Kudarat noong Pebrero 2. Kinilala ang dalawang POW na sina Sgt. Solaman Calucop at Pfc. Samuel Garay.

Nabisto na walang isang salita ang CPP-NPA. Habang nakikipag-usap sa gobyerno ay mayroon silang mga operasyon laban sa militar at may kinikidnap pang mga sundalo.

Parang walang naging peace talks! Dalawa lang ang palirwanag sa pangyayaring ito.

Una, ang usapang pangkapayapaan ay taktika lamang ng komunista para mamalagi ang mga sundalo sa kanilang kampo. Dahil sa "ceasefire" ay walang operasyon ang Armed Forces of the Philippines laban sa mga rebeldeng NPA.

Sa mga nakaraang "peace talks", ginagamit ang panahong ito ng CPP-NPA bilang isang oportunidad para mabawi nila ang mga lugar na dati nilang teritoryo bago nakapasok ang militar.

May balita pa na ipinapapatay nila ang mga opisyal ng barangay na ayaw sa NPA at sa halip ay tumutulong sa gobyerno at mga sundalo.

Pangalawa, ang mga negosyador ng CPP at National Democratic Front na sina Jose Maria Sison, Fidel Agcaoili at Luis Jalandoni ay walang "say" sa mga pinaggagawa ng NPA sa Pilipinas.

Dahil lagpas 30 taon na silang nanmirahan ng masarap sa The Netherlands ay wala na raw silang impluwensiya o kontrol sa mga mandirigma ng NPA o kahit sa mga natitirang lider-komunista na nandito sa Pilipinas.

Ang tanging papel daw nina Sison, Agcaoili at Jalandoni ay magpanggap na gusto ng CPP-NPA ang kapayapaan gayung taliwas daw ang balak nila — ang pabagsakin ang gobyerno at itayo ang isang estadong komunista.

25

INSPIRASYON SA BUHAY: *Kung nau-lugod ang Panginoon sa mga gawain ng isang tao, inatasan Niya ang mga kaaway nito na maki-pagkasundo sa kanya at magkaroon sila ng kapayapaan sa kanilang ug-nayan. (Kawikaan 16:7, Bibliya)*

PAKIKIPAG-USAP SA LAHAT SA MINDANAO, SUSI NG KAPAYAPAAN: So, okay, masasabi na ba natin ngayon na makakamtan na ang kapayapaan sa Mindanao, ngayong kasama na si Chairman Nur Misuari ng Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) sa usapang pangkapayapaan?

Ako po ay isa sa mga todo ang suportang Pangulong Duterte mula pa sa unang araw na siya ay naluklok bilang Presidente, at sang-ayon ako sa kanyang pananaw na ang kapayapaan ay siyang mahalagang susi na magbubukas ng tunay na kaginhawaan at kasaganaan para sa buong-bansa. Kaya lang, kailangan nating magbalik-tanaw sa mga nauunang pagkilos ng mga nakaraang administrasyon at pakinabangan natin ang kanilang halimbawa.

At upang madiman ng husto ang puntong ito, nais ko pong ibahagi ang aking isinulat sa kolum na ito noong Setyembre 09, 2013, noong makipag-usap ang gobyernong Aquino sa Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) upang subukang lutasin ang gusot sa Mindanao. Ang punto ko noon, na punto ko ulit ngayon, ay simple lang makakamtan lamang natin ang kapayapaan kung kakausapin ang lahat ng grupo sa Mindanao.

PEACE ELUDED MINDANAO UNDER PNOY'S TERM: Ganito ang sinabi ko noon: "Tunay nga, ang tanong na dapat sagutin sa pagkilos ng gobyernong Aquino sa usaping pangkapayapaan sa Mindanao ay ito: bakit pinili nito na iisang grupo lamang angkakausapin sa isyu ng kapayapaan? Dapat sana ay pinag-aralan ng gobyerno ang naging



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SELECTIVE PEACE TALKS DULOT AY MAS MARAMING GULO

karanasan ng bansa matapos ang pagkakalagda ng isang kasunduang pangkapayapaan noon sa MNLF, upang maintindihan nito ang kabulastugan ng pakikipag-usap sa iisang grupo lamang kung kapayapaan ang isyu.

"Hindi ba't isang malaking bahagi ng MNLF ang umalis noon sa nasabing grupo, matapos lumagda angpamunuan nito ng isang kasunduan sa gobyerno, dahil inisip ng mga umalis na hindi sila nabigyang-pansin sa kasunduang iyon? Hindi ba ang mga umalis na ito sa MNLF ang siya namang naglunsad ng matinding pakikidigma laban sa gobyerno matapos iyon?"

"Tunay nga, kitang-kita ang mga pangyayaring ito, pero, bakit kaya hindi binigyang-pansin ang mga ito ng Pangulong Aquino noong kumilos ang kanyang pamahalaan matapos siyang mahalal noong 2010? Ngayon, isang bagong digmaan ang sumisiklab sa Mindanao, at lumilitaw na di lamang walang agarang solusyon dito, kundi, walang tunay at permanenteng kapayapaan ang makakamit ng gobyernong Aquino."

SELECTIVE PEACE TALKS: DULOT AY MAS MARAMING GULO: Sa kolumn na iyon, binanggit ko din ang Zamboanga City siege. "Ngayong aktibo na naman sa pakikibaka ang Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) sa Mindanao gaya ng ginawa nitong paglusob noong Lunes ng umaga (Setyembre 09, 2013) sa Zamboanga City (kung saan dalawa ang inulit na namatay, isang pulis at isang sibilyan), ano naman kaya ang magiging reaksyon ng gobyernong Aquino ukol dito?"

"Kasi naman, nasabihan na ng todo ang gobyernong Aquino noon pa man na ang istrategya nitong pakikipag-usap sa iisang grupo lamang upang magkaroon ng kapayapaan sa Mindanao, at sa pagbabalewala nito sa ibang mga malalaking grupo doon lalo na sa MNLF na mayroon na ding nalagdaang kasunduang pangkapayapaan noong 1996, ay di magbibigay ng tunay na kapayapaan. Lalo lamang itong magpapagulo sa Katimugang Pilipinas

"Ngayon, ang mga babalang ito ay nagaganap na nga, at mas maraming gulo na ang nangyayari na magdudulot ng mas maraming kamatayan at kapinsalaan sa mga mamamayan. Walang magawa ang mga pagyayabang na magkakaroon na ng kapayapaan sa Mindanao sa ilalim ng ikalawang gobyernong Aquino. Sayang talaga, pero wala namang ibang masisisi ang gobyernong Aquino kundi ang sarili lamang nito."

MAKINIG: "Ang Tanging Daan" isang Bible study at prayer session sa Internet ay mapapakinggan na ng 24 ORAS, sa Pilipinas at sa buong mundo, sa Facebook, sa www.facebook.com/angtangingdaan at www.facebook.com/ANDKNK (sa ANDKNK, hanapin po "Ang Tanging Daan" daily broadcast). Telepono: 0922 833 43 96, 0918 574 0193, 0977 805 9058. Email: batasmauricio@yahoo.com

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Page. 4

EDITORIAL

Peace negotiations

"LET'S give peace a chance. We need to make a united stand for us to attain a just, peaceful and lasting solution to the long running armed conflict."

Thus said Leyte 1st District Rep. Yedda Marie Kittilstvedt-Romualdez as she called on the government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) to set aside their differences.

Without doubt, there's that urgent need for both sides -- the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the communist-led NDF -- to return to the negotiating table.

Like Romualdez, vice chair of the House of Representatives' committee on government enterprises and privatization, we believe that there's no substitute for peace.

What's important is for the warring parties to pursue peace at all costs, according to the wife of Philippine Constitution Association (Philconsa) president Martin G. Romualdez.

When he was a member of Congress, the highly-effective Philconsa president, a lawyer and banker by profession, headed the influential House independent minority bloc.

The lady solon's views are shared by other lawmakers, including Reps. Robert Ace Barbers, Gary Alejano, Alfred Vargas, Sherwin Tugna, Alfredo Garbin Jr. and Anthony Bravo.

Admittedly, the two peace panels -- GRP and NDF -- have huge differences in positions, but that does not mean that the peace negotiations will get to nowhere.

Thus, we urge the government and the NDF to compromise and approach the peace negotiations with an open mind.

And the peace negotiators should come to the negotiating table with clean intentions.

The government and the NDF have their respective positions on certain issues, but at the end of the day, what's important is for both of them to consider the future of the country and the Filipino people.

Oo nga naman!