

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



ARMY

Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS NEWS CLIPPINGS

18 February 2017

Saturday

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

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NEWS HEADLINES


18 FEBRUARY 2017

Duterte: 'Tulisan' Trillanes collects retainer




Drug raps filed vs Leila

Leila Ramos, 40, was charged with possession of 1.5 grams of marijuana and 1.5 grams of shabu.




Robredo camp to appeal PET ruling

The camp of President Rodrigo Duterte's vice president, Leni Robredo, is planning to appeal a ruling by the Philippine Election Tribunal (PET) that disqualified her from running for president in the 2016 elections.



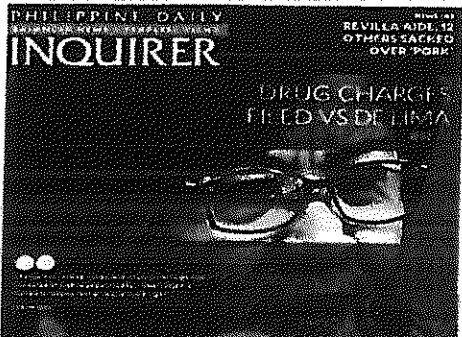
3 people charged with responsibility under law

Three people were charged with responsibility under law for the death of a man who was killed by a police officer.




DU30 TO TRILLANES: SUE ME OR SHUT UP

President Duterte said he would sue anyone who dares to sue him or his family.



DRUG CHARGES FILED VS DE LIMA


Leila Ramos, 40, was charged with possession of 1.5 grams of marijuana and 1.5 grams of shabu.



WHAT is the chance of Duterte's re-election? **50%**

WHY is Duterte's re-election so important? **It is the only way to ensure the country's stability.**

HOW will Duterte's re-election be achieved? **By winning the 2019 elections.**



PETRON XS BETTER ENGINE PROTECTION

COMPLETE COMBUSTION FUEL

Graft case eyed vs Gina

Mina Ramos, 40, was charged with possession of 1.5 grams of marijuana and 1.5 grams of shabu.




Leila slapped with drug raps

Leila Ramos, 40, was charged with possession of 1.5 grams of marijuana and 1.5 grams of shabu.



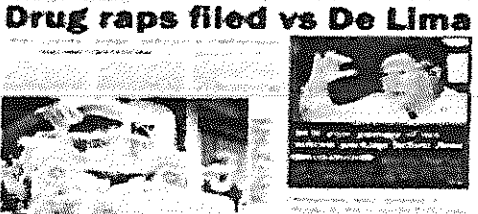
Ex-3: Yano, Lopez, Sago, Trillanes indicted

Three people were indicted for their involvement in the 2016 elections.




Drug raps filed vs De Lima

Leila Ramos, 40, was charged with possession of 1.5 grams of marijuana and 1.5 grams of shabu.



Police (showing 0/100)





24-HOUR PUBLIC WEATHER FORECAST

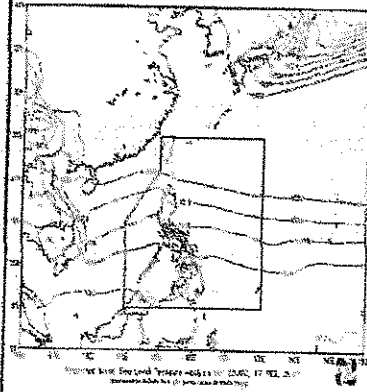
ISSUED AT: 5:00 PM 17 FEBRUARY 2017

VALID BEGINNING: 5:00 PM TODAY UNTIL 5:00 PM TOMORROW

SYNOPSIS: EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY.

FORECAST: CLOUDY SKIES WITH LIGHT TO MODERATE RAINS AND ISOLATED THUNDERSTORMS IS EXPECTED OVER THE REGIONS OF CAGAYAN VALLEY, BICOL, EASTERN VISAYAS, NORTHERN MINDANAO, CARAGA, DAVAO AND THE PROVINCES OF AURORA AND QUEZON. PARTLY CLOUDY TO CLOUDY SKIES WITH ISOLATED RAINS OR THUNDERSTORMS WILL BE EXPERIENCED OVER METRO MANILA AND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY.

MODERATE TO STRONG WINDS BLOWING FROM THE EAST TO NORTHEAST WILL PREVAIL OVER LUZON, VISAYAS AND EASTERN SECTION OF MINDANAO AND THE COASTAL WATERS ALONG THESE AREAS WILL BE MODERATE TO ROUGH. ELSEWHERE, WINDS WILL BE LIGHT TO MODERATE COMING FROM THE NORTHEAST WITH SLIGHT TO MODERATE SEAS.



PAGTAYA: MAULAP NA KALANGITAN NA MAY MAHINA HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMANG MGA PAG-ULAN AT PAGKIDLAT-PAGKULOG ANG INAASAHAN SA MGA REHIYON NG CAGAYAN VALLEY, KABIKULAN, SILANGANG KABISAYAAN, HILAGANG MINDANAO, CARAGA, DAVAO AT MGA LALAWIGAN NG AURORA AT QUEZON. BAHAGYANG MAULAP HANGGANG SA MAULAP NA KALANGITAN NA MAY PULU-PULONG PAG-ULAN O PAGKIDLAT-PAGKULOG ANG IIRAL SA KAMAYNILAAN AT SA NALALABING BAHAGI NG BANSA.

KATAMTAMAN HANGGANG SA MALAKAS NA HANGIN MULA SA SILANGAN HANGGANG SA HILAGANG-SILANGAN ANG IIRAL SA LUZON, KABISAYAAN AT SA SILANGANG BAHAGI NG MINDANAO AT ANG MGA BAYBAYING-DAGAT SA MGA LUGAR NA ITO AY MAGIGING KATAMTAMAN HANGGANG SA MAALON. SA IBANG DAKO, ANG HANGIN AY MAHINA HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMAN MULA SA HILAGANG-SILANGAN NA MAY BANAYAD HANGGANG SA KATAMTAMANG PAG-ALON NG MGA KARAGATAN.

EXTREMES OF TEMPERATURE AND RELATIVE HUMIDITY FOR THE 24-HR PERIOD ENDING AT 4:00 PM TODAY AND RECORDED AT PAGASA WEATHER STATION, SCIENCE GARDEN, DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY:

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE: 1:50 PM TODAY 28.6 °C	MAXIMUM RELATIVE HUMIDITY: 5:00 AM TODAY 84 %
MINIMUM TEMPERATURE: 5:00 AM TODAY 21.1 °C	MINIMUM RELATIVE HUMIDITY: 10:00 AM TODAY 59 %

TIDAL PREDICTION ALONG MANILA BAY (COURTESY OF NAMRIA)

LOW TIDE TODAY: 9:02 PM 0.27 METER
HIGH TIDE TOMORROW: 2:25 AM 0.46 METER
LOW TIDE TOMORROW: 8:00 AM 0.23 METER
HIGH TIDE TOMORROW: 3:03 PM 0.66 METER

ASTRONOMICAL INFORMATION OVER METRO MANILA

SUNSET/ SUNRISE	MOONRISE/ MOONSET & ILLUMINATION
SUNSET TODAY: 6:01 PM	MOONRISE TODAY: 11:19 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW: 6:19 AM	MOONSET TOMORROW: 10:32 AM
SUNSET TOMORROW: 6:01 PM	ILLUMINATION TODAY: 70 %

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND QUERIES, PLEASE CALL AT TELEPHONE NUMBER 927-1335 OR LOG ON TO WWW.PAGASA.DOST.GOV.PH.

PREPARED BY: **GIMQ**
 "reaching the sky... helping the country"
 EFC BIR Road Diliman, Quezon City

CHECKED BY: **GPN**



Republic of the Philippines
 Department of Science and Technology
**PHILIPPINE ATMOSPHERIC, GEOPHYSICAL AND
 ASTRONOMICAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (PAGASA)**

WFS-02
 Rev. 1/05-06-2016

Weather Division
 ISO 9001:2008 Certified
 Registry No. 01 100 1534769

24-Hour Weather Forecast and Extended Weather Outlook for Selected Cities:

ISSUED AT : 5:00 PM 17 FEBRUARY 2017
 VALID BEGINNING : 5:00 PM TODAY UNTIL 5:00 PM TOMORROW

CITIES	24-Hr Weather, Winds and Sea Condition Forecast from 5PM today until 5PM tomorrow		Extended Weather Outlook Duration: 5PM until 5 PM of the following day			
	17 FEB		18 FEB	19 FEB	20 FEB	21 FEB
Metro Manila	22 °C 30 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Manila Bay: Moderate to Rough	22 °C 31 °C	22 °C 31 °C	25 °C 28 °C	25 °C 28 °C
Tuguegarao City	21 °C 28 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast	21 °C 28 °C	20 °C 27 °C	21 °C 28 °C	23 °C 29 °C
Laoag City	20 °C 31 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	20 °C 31 °C	20 °C 31 °C	22 °C 29 °C	21 °C 29 °C
Baguio City	12 °C 21 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast	12 °C 22 °C	12 °C 22 °C	14 °C 20 °C	14 °C 20 °C
SBMA(Olongapo) / Clark Zone (Angeles City)	22 °C 31 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Subic Bay: Moderate to Rough	22 °C 31 °C	22 °C 32 °C	25 °C 29 °C	25 °C 29 °C
Tagaytay City	19 °C 27 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast	20 °C 26 °C	21 °C 27 °C	21 °C 29 °C	21 °C 29 °C
Lipa City	21 °C 30 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast	21 °C 31 °C	21 °C 32 °C	25 °C 30 °C	25 °C 30 °C
Legazpi City	24 °C 29 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	23 °C 29 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 29 °C	25 °C 29 °C
Puerto Princesa City	24 °C 31 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	26 °C 30 °C	26 °C 30 °C
Iloilo City / Bacolod City	24 °C 30 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	25 °C 29 °C	25 °C 29 °C	26 °C 29 °C	26 °C 28 °C
Metro Cebu	24 °C 30 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 30 °C	25 °C 29 °C	25 °C 29 °C
Tacloban City	23 °C 28 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	22 °C 29 °C	23 °C 29 °C	24 °C 29 °C	23 °C 29 °C
Cagayan de Oro City	23 °C 28 °C	Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate	23 °C 29 °C	23 °C 29 °C	24 °C 28 °C	24 °C 28 °C
Valencia City	17 °C 26 °C	Moderate: Northeast	18 °C 30 °C	18 °C 30 °C	22 °C 26 °C	22 °C 26 °C
Metro Davao	23 °C 29 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	23 °C 29 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 30 °C
Zamboanga City	24 °C 31 °C	Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C

LEGEND:

	Clear Skies		Partly Cloudy to at times Cloudy with Rainshower and/ or Thunderstorms		Occasional Rains		Rains with Gusty Winds
	Partly Cloudy Skies		Cloudy Skies with Rainshower and/ or Thunderstorms		Monsoon Rains / Rains		Stormy
	Partly Cloudy to at times Cloudy with Rainshower		Light Rains				

END OF FORECAST

PREPARED BY: GPN

CHECKED BY: GPN

"Tracking the sky... Helping the country"
 WFO: RRD, Davao Division Office, Zamboanga City

Tel/Fax: 0329271541

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2 soldiers slain

LANAO DEL SUR – Two soldiers were killed and another was wounded in a gunfight with suspected members of the Maute terror group in Marawi City on Thursday.

The fatalities were identified as Maj. Jericho Magalos and Cpl. Bryan Libot of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philip-

ines. Cpl. Rolando Cartilla, also a member of ISAFP, was wounded.

The victims were in an Isuzu Crosswind when the terrorists opened fire when they reached Barangay Lilod-Madaya. They were in Marawi City for an intelligence operation.

– John Unson

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2 soldiers, 3 communists killed in land mine attack

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – Two soldiers and three communist New People's Army (NPA) rebels were

killed while 15 other troops were wounded in a land mine attack and clashes here, officials said yesterday.

Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom)

spokesman Maj. Ezra Balagtey said soldiers were pursuing the NPA rebels who on Thursday detonated a land mine along the route of a convoy of troops searching for guerrillas who

had earlier set a pineapple farm harvester of Del Monte on fire in Barangay Tawantawan, Calinan district.

Two soldiers were killed and 15 others were wounded in the blast, while two rebels died in the ensuing firefight, Balagtey said.

Hours earlier, NPA guerrillas harassed an Army detachment in Paquibato district of the city, triggering a clash that left one rebel dead, he said.

The military identified the slain troopers as Cpl. Michael Yadao and Pvt. Virnel Damondon.

Also on Thursday, suspected NPA rebels attacked a convoy in Marawi City, killing a military intelligence officer and his aide.

Maj. Jerico Mangalus and Cpl. Bryan Libot of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP) were killed in a firefight with the NPA rebels in a remote village in Barangay Lilod Madaya.

One trooper identified as Cpl. Rolando Cartilla was wounded during the firefight, the military said.

Elsewhere, some 300 residents of Barangay Namal, a village in Asipulo, Ifugao province, fled their homes when fighting broke out between government troops and NPA rebels, officials said yesterday.

Lt Col. Nicolas Quemado, commander of the Army's 54th Infantry Battalion, said troops are chasing at least 40 heavily armed guerrillas of the NPA's Nona del Rosario Command of the Ilocos-Cordillera Regional Committee.

He said the troops managed to seize the NPA camp in Sitio Imipugo following the firefight in Sitio Timapaya where a doctor, Ana Marie Leung, and nurse Isabelle Arne Ramos were among those wounded during the clash last Monday.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said it has rushed aid and assistance to the families in Ifugao province affected by the fighting.

DSWD Secretary Judy Taguiwalo said five evacuation centers were opened to accommodate the affected civilians.

Taguiwalo said overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who are residents of Ifugao province are also giving donations to help the evacuees. – Jaime Laude, Rainier Allan Ronda, Victor Martin, Ben Serrano, AP

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2 soldiers killed in landmine attack in Davao City

Two soldiers were killed while 15 others were injured in Davao City on Thursday after their convoy hit a landmine of the New People's Army (NPA), the military said yesterday. The slain soldiers were identified as Cpl. Michael D. Yadao and Pvt. Virnel M. Damondon. Two NPA rebels were also killed in the encounter. The military said the soldiers were pursuing armed men who burned down a pineapple harvester owned by Del Monte in Calinan District, Davao City, when their convoy hit a landmine at around 4 p.m. along the boundary of Barangay Lacson and Barangay Lamanan. A firefight ensued. Responding troops recovered a pistol, a garand rifle, two improvised explosive devices and materials needed to make a landmine. —PHILIP C. TUBEZA

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Rody visits slain soldiers

DAVAO CITY – President Duterte yesterday visited the wake of the two soldiers killed during clashes with New People's Army (NPA) rebels in the city on Thursday.

The President dropped by the headquarters of the Eastern Command (Eastmincom) where the wake of the two soldiers, Cpl. Michael Yadao and Pvt. Virnel Damondon, was held at a gymnasium.

Duterte also proceeded to the Eastmincom hospital to visit the 15 soldiers hurt in clashes with the rebels.

Duterte extended cash assistance to the relatives of the slain soldiers and also to the wounded troops.

Duterte called off earlier this month the government's unilateral ceasefire, reciprocating the move of the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front and the NPA in dropping their self-declared truce.

Duterte said the peace talks brokered by Norway will remain suspended unless there is a compelling reason to restart them that benefits the nation.

"The President wants nothing more than to fulfill his goal of bringing peace to all Filipinos, regardless of ideology and ethnicity, but there must be a compelling reason for him to return to the table to talk," presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said yesterday.

"The CPP-NPA-NDF needs to exhibit confidence-building measures to show their sincerity to the peace process," he added.

"There is no assurance except that the Duterte administration will continue efforts to unite our people and work with all sectors in bringing about inclusive development and a just and lasting peace for all," Abella said.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, for his part, issued a statement calling on the public to help the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) defeat the NPA. – Edith Regalado, Christina Mendez, Michael Punongbayan, Rainier Allan Ronda

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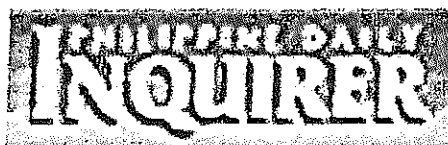
1902 1900
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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**ANOTHER
NPA VICTIM**
– President
Rodrigo Roa
Duterte (left)
condoles
with the
parents of
the late
Private
Virmin
Damondon at
the Eastern
Mindanao
Command
headquarters
in Panacan,
Davao City,
Friday.
Damondon
and Cpl.
Michael
Yadao were
killed in an
encounter
with New
People's
Army (NPA)
rebels in
Barangay
Lacson
in Davao
City last
Thursday.
(Keith
Bacongco)

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Mom of soldier slain by NPA cries for peace at son's wake

Grieving woman asks President Duterte, communist leaders to end 'pointless' bloodbath

DAVAO CITY—The mother of a soldier killed in a land mine blast set off by the New People's Army (NPA) in Barangay Lamanan in Calinan district here on Thursday, joined the growing call for the resumption of talks and ceasefire between the government and communist rebels.

Emy Damondon, mother of Pvt. Virnel Damondon, one of the two soldiers killed in the blast, said the clashes should stop as families of both soldiers and rebels have suffered enough.

"There should be a truce," she told the Inquirer at the wake of her son at Camp Panacan here on Friday. "The killings should stop already. Enough is enough," she added.

Pvt. Damondon, 24, of the 3rd Infantry Battalion, had been a soldier for only two months when he was killed along with Cpl. Michael Yadao, when the land mine explosion in Barangay Lamanan past 4 p.m. on Thursday hit the vehicle they were riding. Eight other soldiers were

wounded in the blast.

NPA rebels continued to defend their use of land mines, saying the types of land mines they used were command-detonated and did not violate the ban on land mines.

Emy said President Duterte should now heed calls to restore a ceasefire with the rebels and continue peace talks with the communists.

Big dreams

"I wish that the President goes back to negotiating with the rebels so that peace will finally be achieved," she said.

"It's pointless to be killing one another," she added.

She said her son, the eldest of three, had so many dreams for the family and had vowed to help his two sisters go to college. "He became a soldier primarily to help the family," she said.

Her statement echoed mounting calls from Mindanao peace groups urging the government and the National

Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to return to the negotiating table to address the root causes of what could be the world's oldest Maoist rebellion.

In a joint statement, the Exodus for Justice and Peace, Sisters' Association of Mindanao and Ateneo de Davao University's Community Engagement and Advocacy Council said they have set a peace forum today to gather insights from people and discuss ways of persuading the government and NDFP to continue the talks.

Peace venue

The dialogue would be held at the Community Center of the Ateneo de Davao University.

The peace process stalled when NPA leaders terminated on Feb. 10 the unilateral ceasefire the Communist Party of the Philippines had declared in August.

Mr. Duterte responded by canceling the government truce, suspending the Joint Agreement

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

on Safety and Immunity Guarantees and ordering the government peace panel to terminate the talks.

He also asked the military and the police to arrest NDFP negotiators who have been released from jail because of the peace negotiations.

Mr. Duterte said he was not keen on talking with the communists anymore.

But peace groups said there are compelling reasons for Mr. Duterte to pursue peace with the communists.

“If there is one compelling reason to stay the course of peace, it should be peace itself,” they said.

The peace groups said abandoning the talks despite the gains would not only “put to waste the gains and goodwill that have been made since the resumption of the talks in August of 2016,” but would also “merely intensify the fighting without addressing the roots of the armed conflict.” —**ALLAN NAWAL INQ**

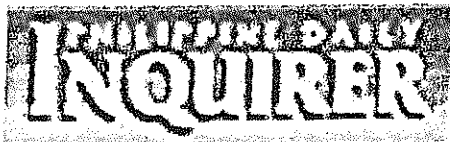


Emy Damondon (in white shirt), mother of Pvt. Virnel Damondon who was killed in a land mine blast set off by NPA, grieves over the coffin bearing the remains of her son in Camp Darapanan.

—**ALLAN NAWAL**

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NPA captures two militiamen in Davao Oriental

DAVAO CITY — The communist New People's Army (NPA) said it captured two more militiamen in Lupon town of Davao Oriental on Tuesday, bringing to seven the number of government troops in their custody since January this year. Rigoberto Sanchez, NPA Southern Mindanao spokesperson, said the NPA captured militiamen Rene Doller, 34, and Carl Mark Nucos, 24, both of the 72nd Infantry Battalion in a checkpoint the rebels set up in Barangay Don Mariano in Lupon, Davao Oriental, on Feb. 14. Sanchez said his group had been treating their captives well. This developed as NPA rebels in Central Mindanao assured that Pvt. 1st Class Samuel Garay and Sergeant Solaiman Calocop, whom the rebels captured in Colombio, Sultan Kudarat on Feb. 1, were alive and well. —ALLAN NAWAL, EDWIN FERNANDEZ AND ELDIE AGUIRRE, INQUIRER MINDANAO

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THE MANILA BULLETIN
1948
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Lorenzana asks Filipinos to help gov't defeat Reds, terrorists

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana has called on Filipinos to rise up and help government defeat communist rebels and terrorists as the NPA called for an intensified action against the government.

"I call on the Filipino people to rise up against these criminals and terrorists. Yes, we must intensify our fight against all forms of oppression and

exploitation but we must open our eyes wide to see who our real enemies are," Lorenzana said.

"We must frustrate them at every turn by denying them foothold in our communities and by reporting all illegal and criminal activities to the proper authorities," he added.

Military operations against rebels and terrorist groups resulted in the death of an Army major, three foot soldiers and the wounding of 16 others

since Thursday.

Army Lt. Col. Benedicto Manquiquis, the chief of the 1st Infantry Division Public Affairs Office said intel operatives of the Military Intelligence Group (MIG) 10 were conducting intelligence operations at Barangay Lilod Madaya, Marawi City on board a private vehicle when they encountered members of the Maute Group before nightfall Thursday.

The terrorist group who were on board another vehicle fired at the intel

operatives resulting in the death of Major Jerico P Mangalus, a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) "Banyuhay" Class of 2002 and Corporal Bryan Libot. Corporal Rolando Cartilla was wounded in the attack.

In Davao City, two soldiers and two NPA rebels were killed while 17 soldiers, including a 2nd lieutenant, were wounded in an encounter with NPA rebels also on Thursday.

Army Major Ezra L. Balagtey, spokes-

man of the Joint Task Force Haribon of the Armed Forces of the Philippines-Eastern Mindanao Command, said troops of 3rd Infantry Battalion were hot on the trail of rebels who burned a pineapple harvester owned by Del Monte in Barangay Tawantawan, Calinan District, Davao City at about 12 noon Thursday when the government convoy drove past an area where the rebels planted a land mine. An encounter with NPA rebels followed.

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Phl, Russia defense accord seen

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – President Duterte may officially get his wish for stronger defense and trade ties with Moscow when he visits Russia in May.

National Security Council chairman Hermogenes Esperon Jr said the Philippines and Russia are in the process of finalizing details of agreements on government-to-government cooperation in the fields of security and intelligence, defense and military, law enforcement, terrorism and transnational crime, anti-illegal drugs work plan and maritime law enforcement.

"We are still in the process of crafting these agreements and these will be signed when the President visits Russia soon," said Esperon, who was among the officials who met with Nikolai Patrushev, a close friend of Russian President Vladimir Putin and secretary of the

National Security Council of Russia. The Russian official arrived here on Thursday for a three-day visit.

Duterte received Patrushev and his party at a dinner last night at the Marco Polo Hotel Davao following their initial meeting at the Malacañang in the South guest house in Barangay Panacan.

Esperon said Russia is also expected to help the country fight the terror group IS, mainly in terms of intelligence sharing.

The country is also considering acquiring weapons, frigates and other equipment from Russia for the police and the armed forces.

But he stressed the Philippines' expanding its ties with Russia won't affect existing military cooperation with the US.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella stressed Duterte's "decision to pivot to Russia forms part of his independent foreign policy."

Turn to Page 11

Phl From Page 4

"We seek new or enhanced partnerships based on equality. This new alliance will not exclude other relationships. The United States will remain an ally," the presidential spokesman added.

"The President sought closer ties with Russia and yesterday's (Thursday's) meeting between President Duterte

and the Security Council of the Russian Federation where government-to-government cooperation in the fields of security, intelligence, terrorism, crime and law enforcement were discussed is a concrete example of the improving ties between the two nations," he added.

– With Christina Mendez

18 February 2017

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

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Russia offers to share intel data with PH

By **Leila B. Salaverria**
@LeilasINQ

Russia's top security official on Thursday offered the Philippines access to an intelligence database to help it fight crime and militancy, and training for the elite forces assigned to protect President Duterte.

Nikolai Patrushev, the secretary of Russia's Security Council and Vladimir Putin's top security adviser, made the offer during a meeting between Russian and Philippine security officials in Davao City, where he was visiting Mr. Duterte.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said Russia had invited the Philippines to join a database-sharing system to help combat transnational crime and terrorism, which he said could help track Islamist militants and their financial transactions.

President Duterte and Patrushev also discussed future government-to-government cooperation in these fields, along with plans to work together to combat illegal drugs, National Security Adviser Herogenes Esperon said.

Agreements to formalize the cooperation are expected to be signed when Mr. Duterte flies to Moscow in May, Esperon said.

"Memorandum of understanding on these fields are being finalized by concerned agencies and are expected to be signed during the planned President's visit to Moscow," he said.

Patrushev's trip underlines Russia's intent to capitalize on

a radical recalibration of foreign policy under Mr. Duterte, who harbors resentment of the Philippines' deep-rooted ties to the United States.

Duterte has made strong overtures towards China and Russia.

Lorenzana said security officials from both sides also discussed law enforcement cooperation, including anti-piracy and anti-narcotics exercises by coastguard and police.

The two countries were working on a military technical cooperation agreement, he said.

"We are keen on signing a defense cooperation agreement," Lorenzana said.

Lorenzana said last week Russia was interested in selling military equipment like drones, helicopters, rifles and submarines.

Present at the meeting were Ambassador to Russia Carlos Sorreta, Interior Secretary Ismael Sueno, AFP Chief of Staff Gen Eduardo Año, and National Intelligence Coordinating Agency Director General Alex Monteagudo.

The Russian delegation included Ambassador Igor Khovaev, First Deputy Justice Minister Sergey Gerasimov, Deputy Interior Minister Igor Zubov, Federal Protection Service Deputy Director Viktor Tulupov, Russian Army Commander Oleg Salyukov, Security Council Assistant Secretary Alexander Venediktov, and Russian Coast Guard Frontier Service head Alexey Volskiy.

—WITH A REPORT FROM REUTERS



Nikolai Patrushev, secretary of Russia's Security Council and Vladimir Putin's top security adviser shakes hands with President Duterte during a meeting between Russian and Philippine security officials in Davao City. —COURTESY OF NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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PH, Russia boost defense, security cooperation

By GENALYN D. KABILING and ANTONIO L. COLINA IV

The Philippines and Russia are planning to boost defense and security cooperation to combat terrorism, illegal drugs, and maritime threats in a latest indication of the strengthening of bilateral relations between the two countries.

President Duterte met with Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev in Davao City on Thursday to enhance the country's friendly relations with Russia ahead of his planned visit to Moscow. ▶8

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Patrushev and his delegation also held bilateral talks with the National Security Council led by National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr on the planned cooperation deals on security matters.

"The bilateral talks discussed future government-to-government cooperation in the fields of security and intelligence, defense and military, law enforcement, terrorism and transnational crime, anti-illegal drugs work plan, and maritime law enforcement," Esperon said in a statement.

Esperon said concerned agencies are finalizing the cooperation agreements between the Philippines and Russia. A memorandum of understanding will be signed during the President's upcoming visit to Moscow, he added.

President Duterte graced the farewell dinner at Marco Polo Hotel where he emphasized that the Philippines can

only offer its sincerest friendship that is based on equality," Esperon said.

Among the government officials present in the meeting were Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Interior and Local Government Secretary Ismael Sueno, Justice Undersecretary Antonio Kho Jr, Philippine Ambassador to Russia Carlos Sorreta, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año, Army chief Glorioso Miranda, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency head Isidro Lapeña, Philippine Coast Guard commandant Joel Garcia, and Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary on European Affairs Cleofe Natividad.

The Russian delegation included Russian Ambassador to the Philippines Igor Khovaev, First Deputy Minister of Justice Sergey Gerasimov, Deputy Minister of Interior Igor Zubov, Deputy Director of the Federal Protection Service Viktor Tulupov, Russian Army chief Oleg Salyukov, Russian Security

Council Assistant Secretary Alexander Venediktov, and Russian Coast Guard head Alexey Volskiy.

President Duterte earlier said he was excited to visit Russia this spring to shop for defense assets, particularly precision-guided weapons, to help combat the threat of Islamic extremists. He is expected to visit Moscow in May.

When he toured one of its warships docked in Manila last month, the President expressed hope that Russia would become the country's ally and protector.

Balikatan

Esperon said there are no talks yet if the Philippines and Russia will hold joint military exercises that are similar to the US-Philippines Balikatan Exercises but added it will be up to Defense Sec. Delfin Lorenzana to negotiate with his Russian counterparts if they will engage the two countries' respective forces in joint activities.

"We have not gone into that. Let's leave it to Sec. Lorenzana. It will come

as a matter of course but I would say that military or military cooperation would be more on schooling technical exchange, information exchange, and intelligence exchange,” he said.

Lorenzana said that the Philippines will benefit from an enhanced defense cooperation by learning from the security expertise of Russia.

“We also want to get the techniques of others. Just like in other fields, it's better to have a practicum,” he said.

He said that this will not affect the Philippines' relationship with its long-time ally US as he described both ties between the two countries as “very balanced.”

He said that that the Philippines will pursue an “interdependent foreign policy” instead of “an independent foreign policy” to be able to continuously cooperate with other allied nations like China, Japan, and South Korea.

“By constitution, we must have an independent foreign policy but, in the current situation, it can no longer be an independent foreign policy but it must

be an interdependent foreign policy. We are maintaining our alliances and we are also pursuing our robust relations with our neighbors,” he said.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said that it would be a big help if the Philippines will be given access to the Russian database, specifically in relation to terrorists.

Meanwhile, another agreement on military-technical cooperation is being worked on by the Department of National Defense (DND) and Russia's Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation.

The discussions also zeroed in countering terrorism and transnational crimes with each side updating each other of their respective efforts to counter narcotic drugs and Russia manifesting that it could provide training for the Presidential Security Group (PSG) in connection with VIP protection and cooperation between the two countries' law enforcement agencies as well as coast guards. (With a report from Francis T. Wakefield)

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A familiar-looking video from the Abu Sayyaf

THE video released Tuesday by the Abu Sayyaf looked familiar. It showed a German hostage surrounded by armed men in a jungle, one of the men brandishing a curved knife close to the hostage's neck. The hostage was Jurgen Kantner of Germany. He had been captured last November while sailing on his yacht off the coast of Sabah when bandits attacked, killed Kantner's companion Sabine Merz, and abandoned the yacht off the coast of Sulu.

Now they were threatening to execute their captive if ransom of P30 million is not paid by February 26, a little over a week from today.

The video looked familiar because several months ago, in September, 2015, two Canadians, a Norwegian, and a Filipina were shown possibly in the same jungle site also pleading for their lives. They had been kidnapped from a Samal Island resort in the Davao Gulf and now they were in Sulu, captives of the same Abu Sayyaf, who were making the same demand for ransom, or they would be beheaded.

The two Canadians – John Ridsdel and Robert Hall -- were killed in April and in June, 2016. Filipina Marites Flor and Norwegian Khartan Sekkingstad were released soon afterwards through efforts by newly elected President Duterte with the help of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). If ransom money was paid, Malacanang said it was not aware of it. Police

intelligence sources said the Abu Sayyaf got P30 million for the Norwegian.

All during the ordeal of the four captives, the Armed Forces pursued the Abu Sayyaf in the jungles of Sulu – evidently to no avail. For here they are again, holding another foreign captive, making the same demand for ransom.

As in all previous kidnappings, the government has declared it is against government policy to pay ransom. "Our position has been consistent," Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the Armed Forces Public Affairs Office, said. "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."

However, it does not look like the policy has succeeded in discouraging the Abu Sayyaf. According to the military's own reports, the Abu Sayyaf currently hold 27 local and foreign hostages in Sulu and Basilan. Perhaps the only way to stop them is an all-out military operation. Or the political solution of federalism where local officials -- probably linked to the MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Force (MILF) -- will assume the responsibility of maintaining security and order in that part of Mindanao.

In the meantime, we can only sympathize with the family of Jurgen Kantner and hope that they and his government will be able to come up with a workable solution like the one that saved Norwegian Khartan Sekkingstad.

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ONLINE NEWS

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Army Troops Scores Against NPA Rebels in Northern Samar

Posted by Lui Claudio on February 17, 2017 at 9:59 AM

CAMP GENERAL VICENTE LUKBAN, CATBALOGAN CITY – Troops of 43rd Infantry Battalion, 8ID, PA led by 1Lt. Edsel Ryan B. Celebre engaged NPA rebels under their leader Salvador Nordan a.k.a “Badok” while conducting combat operations against lawless elements at Sitio Cabaywa, Brgy. Santander, Bobon, Northern Samar on February 14, 2017.

The fire fight lasted for about five minutes that resulted to one (1) NPA killed identified as Bernadette Lutao a.k.a. “Kakan”, the wife of “Badok,” and the recovery of one (1) improvised explosive device (IED) and three (3) cellular phones.

The use of IED is restricted under the United Nations Geneva Convention because of its indiscriminate effects and humanitarian harm it can cause to innocent civilians as well as a violation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the CPP-NPA-NDF.

In a statement by Maj. General Raul M. Farnacio, he said that the NPAs have been using IEDs as of their weapons of choice without consideration on the welfare of the civilian populace. *“The NPA has been deliberately violating the human rights with their production and employment of IEDs and their continuous disruption of the peaceful lives of our fellow Filipinos especially those in the far-flung barangays,”* he stated.

“This accomplishment is a triumph for the collective effort of the local government unit and agencies, 8ID, and our civilian constituents to attain just and lasting peace in Northern Samar. Filipinos want peace and it is high time for our fellow Filipinos who were misled to join the NPA to lay down their arms and lead their lives away from armed struggle,” Farnacio urged.

Since the lifting of the ceasefire by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, 8ID troops have been conducting security operations in the region as part of their mandate. *“Rest assured that your Army in Eastern Visayas are tirelessly committed to serve and secure the people within the bounds of respect of Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law, and Rule of Law,”* Farnacio added.

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Russia defense deal won't affect ties with U.S. – Esperon

Talks about an upcoming defense pact with Russia comes at a time when the Philippine President has made threats to scrap defense deals with the US

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Published 6:30 PM, February 17, 2017

SEEKING MORE ALLIES. National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr holds a press conference at the Marco Polo Hotel in Davao City on February 17, 2017. Photo by Manman Dejetao/Rappler

MANILA, Philippines – National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr says the Philippines' upcoming defense cooperation pact with Russia will not affect ties with the United States.

"Not at all," said Esperon, adding that the country's relations with the US, its traditional ally, remains "very balanced."

"We have our Mutual Defense Treaty, we have our Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement in place," he said on Friday, February 17, during a press conference in Davao City.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana was of the same opinion: "We believe it has no effect."

The Palace said that this new pact with Russia "will not exclude other relationships."

"The United States will remain an ally," said Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella in a statement.

However, terms of PH-US defense agreements may still change given the yearly review by the Mutual Defense Board and Security Exchange Board where both US and Filipino security officials are present.

"But there will be some modifications as we go along because the Mutual Defense Board, which is chaired by the Armed Forces chief of staff and the PACOM (Pacific Area Command) Commander of the United States meet every year to discuss the exercises and the terms of the agreement," said Esperon.

Talks about the defense cooperation agreement to be signed by the Philippines and Russia come weeks after President Rodrigo Duterte threatened to scrap defense deals with the US, threats which were eventually downplayed by his defense officials.

Last January, Duterte warned US to stop "unloading arms" in Palawan, Cagayan de Oro, and Pampanga, referring to provisions of EDCA that allow US to build facilities and store military hardware in select Philippine military bases.

Lorenzana said eventually that Duterte was merely concerned about the "type of structures" to be built but does not want to cancel EDCA altogether.

In December, Duterte threatened to abrogate the Visiting Forces Agreement with the US after a US aid-giving corporation did not renew millions of dollars worth of assistance to the Philippines.

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But the Philippines' relations with the US is still on a "wait-and-see" stage after the election of US President Donald Trump who has not yet revealed any concrete policy about US military presence in the Philippines.

Duterte has said though he would "reassess" his threats about defense pacts with the US "in deference" to Trump.

The volatile Philippine President seems to have taken a liking to the bombastic Trump after the new US leader commended him for his drug war.

Esperon gave assurances that the upcoming deal with Russia, like the inked defense cooperation pact with China, is just the new administration's way of widening the Philippines' circle of allies.

"If we can have good relations with everybody, with Russia, then wouldn't it be a better world?" he said. —

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