

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



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NEWS CLIPPINGS

21 February 2017

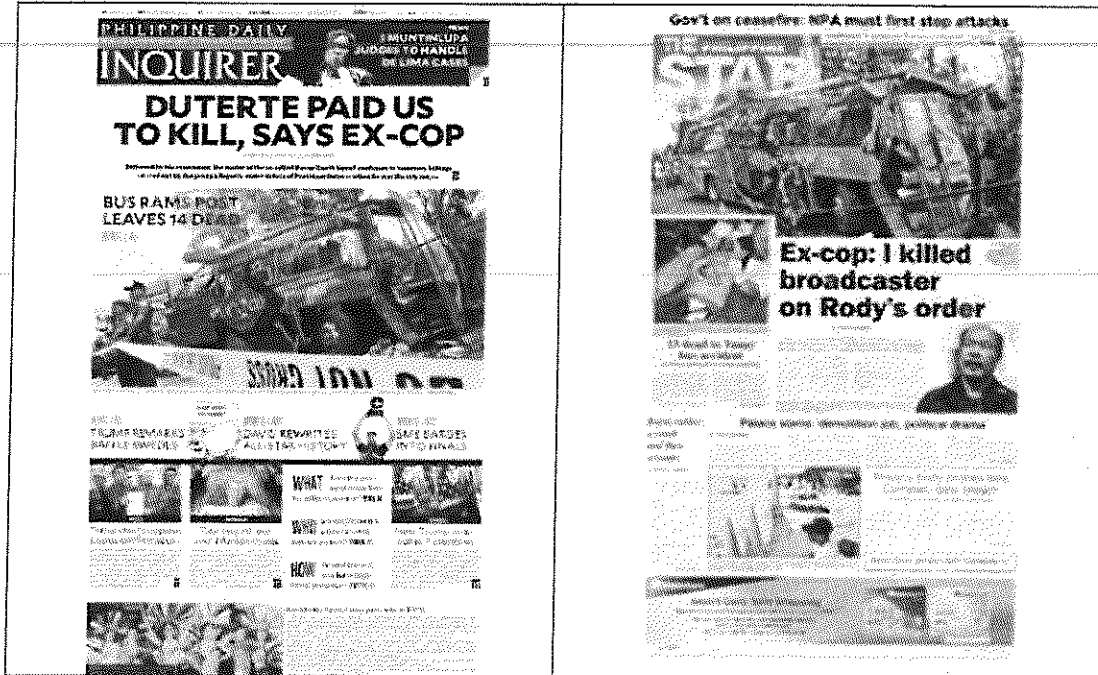
Tuesday

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

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

NEWS HEADLINES

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

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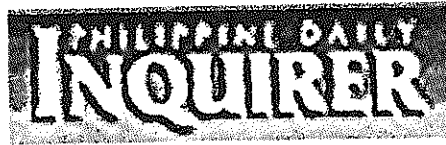
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | FEBRUARY 21, 2017 | TUESDAY

EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY
(As of 5:00 PM, Feb. 20, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:17 AM	6:02 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
1:45 AM	1:27 PM
LAST QUARTER	NEW MOON
FEB 19 2:35 AM	FEB 26 10:56 PM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
2:01 AM 0.05 Meter	6:01 PM 0.77 Meter

Partly cloudy skies

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

	FEB 20	FEB 21	FEB 22	FEB 23	FEB 24	FEB 25
METRO MANILA	22-32°C	23-31°C	19-29°C	20-29°C	24-28°C	25-27°C
TUGUEGARAO	21-30°C	22-29°C	25-30°C	25-29°C	23-30°C	24-30°C
LADAG	23-31°C	23-30°C	25-31°C	25-30°C	24-29°C	25-30°C
BAGUID	13-22°C	13-22°C	25-30°C	25-29°C	24-32°C	24-32°C
SBMA/CLARK	23-32°C	23-32°C	24-30°C	25-29°C		
TAGAYTAY	19-29°C	20-29°C	25-30°C	25-29°C		
LEGAZPI	25-30°C	25-29°C				
PUERTO PRINCESA	25-31°C	25-30°C				
ILOILO/BACOLOD	25-30°C	25-29°C				
TACLOBAN	24-28°C	25-27°C				
CAGAYAN DE ORO	23-30°C	24-30°C				
METRO DAVAO	24-29°C	25-30°C				
ZAMBOANGA	24-32°C	24-32°C				

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SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

February 2017

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

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Du30 paid us to kill, says ex-cop

FROM A1

By Christine O. Avendaño
@10avendanoINQ

A retired police officer on Monday disclosed that President Duterte, when he was the mayor of Davao City, ordered and paid him and other members of a death squad to kill criminals and opponents.

Human rights lawyers who presented retired SPO₃ Arthur Lascañas to reporters during a news conference in the Senate said his disclosures could be grounds for impeaching Mr. Duterte.

Saying he was ending his "blind obedience and loyalty" to Mr. Duterte, Lascañas said it was the then mayor of Davao City who ordered the murder of radio host Juan Pala Jr. on Sept. 6, 2003.

P3M to kill Pala

He said then Mayor Duterte paid him and his group P3 million to kill Pala.

"This is the whole truth about the Pala murder case. Now this is considered solved. I

am one of those who killed Jun Pala," he said.

Lascañas' comments differed from those he made last October at a Senate hearing into extrajudicial killings. At the time, he denied the existence of the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS).

His account on Monday was similar to that of confessed hit man Edgar Matobato, who testified in the same Senate inquiry to personally watching Mr. Duterte shoot a man dead with an Uzi machine pistol and give orders for police to kill suspected criminals.

Matobato testified that Lascañas was the leader of the DDS, which was composed of policemen, militiamen and former communist rebels.

War on drugs

Human rights groups have documented some 1,400 suspicious killings in Davao City since the early 1990s and critics say the bloody war on drugs that Mr. Duterte has unleashed since taking office seven months ago bears the hallmarks of DDS attacks.

More than 7,700 people have been killed in the nationwide



Arthur Lascañas
—GRIG MONTEGRANDE

crackdown on illegal drugs, some 2,500 in what police say are shootouts during raids and sting operations.

Many of the killings are under investigation and attributed by the authorities to vigilantes and drug gangs covering their tracks.

Activists, however, say many have been extrajudicial killings.

"Of all the killings we did in Davao City, either we bury them or throw them into the sea, it is paid [for] by Mayor Rody

Duterte," Lascañas, 56, told the news conference in the Senate on Monday.

"Most of the time P20,000, sometimes P50,000 and depending on the status of the target, sometimes P100,000," he said.

Breaking into tears at one point, Lascañas said he was speaking up because he was bothered by his conscience, including his role in the deaths of his two brothers, whom he ordered killed because they were drug users.

"I had my own two brothers killed. Even if I end up dead, I'm content because I've fulfilled my promise to the Lord to make a public confession," he said.

Senate inquiry

Senators Leila de Lima and Antonio Trillanes IV called for a Senate inquiry into the public confession of Lascañas, whose lawyers from the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) gave assurance that the former policeman was ready to face a Senate inquiry and the proper government body.

It was Trillanes who presented Lascañas at Monday's

news conference.

Lascañas narrated several killings that he said Mr. Duterte had ordered, permitted or financed as mayor of Davao City, including the 1993 bombing of mosques as retaliation after Moro rebels were blamed for the bombing of a Roman Catholic cathedral.

Lascañas said he and his group shot dead a kidnapping suspect along with the man's pregnant wife, young son, father-in-law and two others with the consent of Mr. Duterte.

After his group informed Mr. Duterte about the capture of the suspected mastermind of a kidnapping in Davao, Lascañas quoted the mayor as saying: "All right, make it clean."

Another target was radio commentator Pala, who was critical of Mr. Duterte. He was killed in an ambush on Sept. 6, 2003, by the liquidation squad's members, who then got financial rewards from the mayor, Lascañas said.

Lascañas said the mayor wanted Pala killed because the broadcaster attacked him on his radio program every day.

He said Mr. Duterte hired

him through the mayor's driver, SPO4 Sonny Buenaventura, for P3 million to kill Pala.

Bodyguard's tip

Lascañas said Pala survived two attacks, but the third one succeeded with the help of the radio host's part-time bodyguard, rebel returnee Jerry Trosio.

He said it was Trosio who tipped off the squad to Pala's whereabouts one night and the hit men were able to kill the broadcaster.

Two days after the murder, Lascañas said Mr. Duterte paid the group P3 million through Buenaventura.

He said he and Buenaventura split P1 million and gave P2 million to hit man Jim Tan, who got P1 million and gave the rest to the other gunmen. —WITH RE-

PORTS FROM AP AND REUTERS INQ



WATCH VIDEO Davao cop says Duterte ordered killings, DDS real
<http://Inq.news/LascañasOnDDS>

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Ex-cop: I killed broadcaster on Rody's order

By PAOLO ROMERO

Tired of incessant criticism when he was mayor of Davao City, Rodrigo Duterte took out a P3-million contract to kill broadcaster Jun Pala, and then gave a P1-million bonus when the deed was done.

This was the claim made yesterday by one of three policemen who allegedly carried out the still unsolved assassination in 2003, as he came out in public to insist that President Duterte set up death squads in his home city that were responsible for the summary execution of about 1,000 crime suspects.

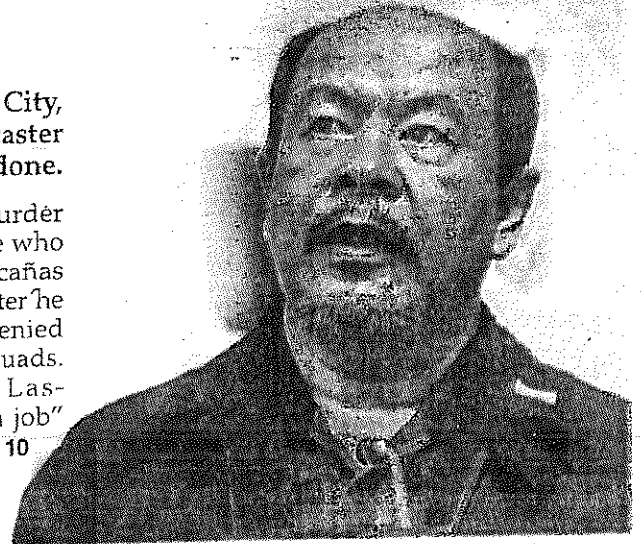
"Consider the Jun Pala murder case solved. I was one of those who killed Jun Pala," Arthur Lascañas said yesterday, four months after he faced a Senate inquiry and denied the existence of Davao death squads.

Malacañang dismissed Lascañas' story as a "demolition job"

Turn to Page 10

Retired police officer Arthur Lascañas speaks during a press conference at the Senate yesterday, confessing to a litany of brutal crimes allegedly ordered by President Duterte.

GEREMY PINTOLO



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Ex-cop From Page 1

orchestrated by staunch Duterte critic Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, who arranged yesterday's press conference.

Flanked by members of the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), Lascañas narrated: "The first time mayor Duterte sat as mayor of Davao City, we started what we call salvaging of people, criminal and drug suspects in Davao."

"We implement the personal orders of Duterte... in all the killings we do in Davao City – whether burying them or throwing them at sea – we're being paid by mayor Rodrigo Duterte," Lascañas said.

In changing his version of events, Lascañas explained that he was bothered by his conscience.

Duterte in previous interviews had denied having Pala killed, but said the broadcaster deserved his fate and that some journalists invited assassination. The statement drew condemnation from media groups at the start of Duterte's presidency.

Brothers, pregnant woman

In tears, Lascañas claimed he even had his two brothers killed for involvement in drugs.

Allegedly on Duterte's order, Lascañas' death squad also executed the suspected mastermind in the kidnapping of a certain Mrs. Abaca, who was freed after ransom was paid.

The kidnapping suspect, a certain Mr. Patasaja, was intercepted in his Ford Fiera in General Santos City. But he was with his wife, who was seven months pregnant; their son who was about five years

old, the target's 70-year-old father-in-law and two helpers, a man and a woman.

Lascañas said the five were brought to the Laud quarry in Davao City where Patasaja was taken to a separate structure for interrogation.

A certain Major Macasaet reportedly briefed Duterte about the case and returned later to the quarry with instructions to "erase all" Lascañas said Duterte wanted the killing to be, "clean."

Lascañas claimed that he pleaded with his cohorts to spare the boy and take him to a bus station so he could get out of Davao. But Lascañas claimed his cohorts warned that the boy would remember their faces and would get back at them when he grew up and could no longer be recognized by the death squad members.

"Here, evil prevailed," Lascañas said. A silenced .22-caliber pistol was used on the family and their helpers.

Blind obedience

Facing the media at the Senate in what he described as a "public confession," Lascañas said he carried out the "salvaging" out of "blind obedience and loyalty" to Duterte.

Death squad members were also paid from P20,000 to P100,000 "depending on the status of the target," he said.

He claimed he also received an allowance from Duterte's office amounting to P100,000. It was not clear if this was a regular monthly payment.

Lascañas has just retired from the Philippine National Police with the rank of senior-police officer 4. He declined to take questions from reporters.

During the hearing conducted by the Senate committee on justice last year, he was described by self-confessed hitman Edgar Matobato as part of Duterte's inner circle. Matobato claimed he received assassination instructions from Lascañas.

FLAG lawyers Arno Sanidad and Jose Ma. Diokno said Lascañas would tell all under oath in a proper government investigation. In the meantime, Lascañas will be given protection as his life may be in danger.

Take your time

Lascañas alleged that an "angry" Duterte put out the P3-million contract to kill Pala. Lascañas said he took the contract together with a certain SPO4 Sonny Buenaventura and SPO1 Jim Tan, who had many "players" or hitmen who are former communist rebels in his stable.

Pala survived two assassination attempts by the group. Lascañas said he apologized for the failed hits when he ran into Duterte at a shopping mall. But the mayor allegedly told him in the Visayan dialect, "Take your time. Don't hurry."

They were able to assassinate Pala outside his house with the help of the victim's bodyguard, who they were able to turn into an informant for P350,000.

Lascañas sought forgiveness from the children of his two brothers whom he had ordered killed, saying it was the first time he had divulged his deeply held secret.

"I call on the PNP... killing is not the solution. This is against the law and against the law of God. We will be haunted by our conscience," Lascañas said. "I may be killed but I'm now contented in fulfilling my

promise to God in making this public confession."

New EJK probe sought

During the afternoon session at the Senate, Trillanes sought a reinvestigation into extrajudicial killings.

Sens. Paolo Benigno Aquino IV, Leila de Lima and Risa Hontiveros in separate statements backed the reopening of the inquiry.

Hontiveros described the revelations as a direct stab at the credibility of Duterte, undermining his "moral capacity to lead."

"They strengthen suspicions that the death squads responsible for thousands of unsolved extrajudicial killings are state sanctioned," she said.

De Lima described Lascañas' allegations as "hair-raising."

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III said while any senator may file a resolution for an investigation based on Lascañas' claims, there is no assurance that it will push through.

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III said Trillanes' manifestation would be referred to the Senate committee on public order and dangerous drugs, chaired by Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Sotto said the Senate justice committee, chaired by Sen. Richard Gordon, would also have to be informed of Trillanes' manifestation.

Sanidad and Diokno said it would be up to members of the House of Representatives to decide whether or not to push for Duterte's impeachment.

They said Lascañas' statements and the affidavits he would issue in the coming weeks could be used by concerned government bodies to investigate Duterte.

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The Manila Times

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TEEN REBEL SLAIN IN ZAMBOANGA CLASH

ZAMBOANGA CITY: A young communist fighter – Jaboy Pruto, 16, – was killed in a clash with government troops in the town of Lakewood, in Zamboanga del Sur on Sunday. Senior Supt. Avelmar Renan Garambas, the town's police chief, said soldiers from the 53rd Infantry Battalion tracked down a band of New People's Army (NPA) in the village of Gasa that triggered a clash. He said the body of Pruto was recovered after the firefight. There was no immediate statement from the NPA, but police said it has ordered a tight security in the town to protect civilians from possible retaliation of the rebels.

AL JACINTO

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Army facilitates Feeding Program in Bukidnon

Posted by Lui Claudio on February 20, 2017 at 9:41 AM

Malaybalay City – Soldiers under 403rd Infantry (Peacemaker) Brigade, in collaboration with Malaybalay City LGU, CSWDO of Malaybalay City, DepEd, and the teachers, faculty, and staff of the beneficiary school, conducted a Feeding Program at BCT Elementary School in Brgy. Impalambong, Malaybalay City around 9:00 am, February 17, 2017. A total of 456 children of said school composed of Kindergarten to Grade 6 pupils benefitted from the program, which is aimed at assisting the Department of Education in combatting malnourishment among its pupils. As of this date, there is a total of 16 pupils of said school who are undernourished.

The 403rd Infantry Brigade of the Army's 4th Infantry Division together with the different local government units and agencies regularly conduct the Feeding Program in different schools in support to the Department of Education's "Adopt a School" Program. The program is also part of the Community Support Program "Kalayaan" of the AFP, which is aimed at facilitating the resolution of local issues in the community. It is regularly conducted in far-flung barangays where the Community Support Teams of the brigade through its line units are deployed.

Among which are Barangays Manalog and Kibalabag of Malaybalay City, where only recently, three (3) soldiers of the Army's 8th Infantry Battalion facilitating the program were brutally murdered by the NPA terrorists. It can be recalled that among those soldiers who were brutally murdered last February 1, 2017, around 3:00 pm, was Sgt Owen B. Yee. He was an advocate of the Feeding Program of the 8th Infantry Battalion and was able to serve hundreds of Lumad children in the municipality of Impasugong and Malaybalay City in Bukidnon.

The Feeding Program is a testament to the Philippine Army's commitment to contribute to addressing the concerns of the people through collaboration with other government agencies. In a statement, COL ERIC C VINOYA INF (GSC) PA, Commander, 403rd Infantry Brigade, 4ID, PA, commended the troops for their service and urged the people to work together in finding peaceful solutions to local issues instead of using terroristic and violent acts.

"I congratulate our troops who, despite NPA attacks, still continue to fulfill the Army's commitment to serving the people through our Community Support Program. BCT Elementary School is only one of our beneficiary schools under this program. Our line units, particularly the 1st Special Forces Battalion, the 8th Infantry Battalion and the 58th Infantry Battalion, are also conducting the same program in various IP dominated areas in Bukidnon and Misamis Oriental Provinces in collaboration with local government units and government agencies.

Contrary to the false accusations of the NPA leaders that our troops are doing psywar and intimidation, we do this program and many other activities that are beneficial to the community. We now challenge the NPA, especially their leaders, that if they are truly for the people, then they should join us in this undertaking. Otherwise, their intentions would be very clear – they would just victimize our people by capitalizing on local issues and using these things in order to agitate the people, arm them, and let them fight the government for their ill causes of extortion and intimidation." – says COL VINOYA.

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21 February 2017



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Gov't on ceasefire: NPA must first stop attacks

By ALEXIS ROMERO

The government will resume peace talks with communist rebels if they stop their attacks on soldiers, extortion activities and the burning of properties, Malacañang said yesterday.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said there should be "compelling reasons" to continue the negotiations, which were terminated by President Duterte this month after the rebels staged a series of attacks against government forces.

"While it is understandable that suspicions linger about the motives of the parties on opposite sides of the ideological spectrum, some 'compelling reasons' need to be provided for talks to resume," Abella said in a statement.

"Considering the unprecedented goodwill the President has shown, these actions from NDF (National Democratic Front) may provide compelling reason and could put at ease, to some extent, the apprehension of the military and the administration. After all, when guns are silent we can better listen to each other," he added.

The NDF represents the communist rebels in the peace negotiations with the government.

Abella said the communists should agree to a bilateral ceasefire and stop the collection of the so-called revolutionary tax, the ambushes on military personnel, the burning of properties and other provocative and hostile actions.

"We need to take in good faith the President's vision for a peaceful, just and inclusively prosperous Philippines. He has already taken the first steps forward. We wait for the NDF to respond," he said.

The peace negotiations between the government and the NDF were scrapped after the communists insisted on their demand to free 400 rebels whom they claim to be political prisoners. Duterte rejected the demand, saying it is similar to the grant of amnesty.

The disagreement prompted the communists and subsequently the government to call off their respective unilateral ceasefire orders.

On Feb. 4, Duterte announced that he is terminating the peace talks and ordered the security forces to arrest the NDF consultants who joined the negotiations.

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He has also described the NDF, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and their armed wing the New People's Army (NPA) as "terrorists."

On Sunday, the CPP ordered the NPA to free the six soldiers and policemen they are holding captive as a "positive gesture" for the resumption of the peace talks. The group also reiterated its support for a bilateral ceasefire agreement.

"The revolutionary forces are encouraged by the previous statements of President Duterte that all political prisoners will be released within 48 hours once the bilateral ceasefire agreement is signed," the CPP said in a statement.

"We anticipate that negotiations concerning the terms of reference of a bilateral ceasefire agreement will be most difficult. The revolutionary forces are bound by principle to assert the withdrawal of the AFP's operating troops from areas under the sway of the revolutionary government," it added.

The disagreement over jailed communist rebels was also the contentious issue that led to the collapse of the peace talks during the previous administration.

Release troops

The military called on the NPA yesterday to release the soldiers and policemen without conditions to show the sincerity of the CPP to resume the peace talks.

"The NPA should prove and substantiate their announcements with clear and sincere actions, not propaganda," said Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla.

Among those to be freed are Pfc. Edwin Salan who was captured in Alegria, Surigao del Norte on Jan. 29; Sgt. Solaiman Calucop and Pfc. Samuel Garay who were captured in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat on Feb. 2; Police Officer 2 Jerome Natividad captured in Talakag, Bukidnon on Feb. 9; and militiamen Rene Doller and Carl Mark who were captured in Lupon, Davao Oriental on Feb. 14.

In its statement issued Sunday, the CPP said the release of the six "prisoners of war" is their positive gesture to continue peace negotiations with the government.

Padilla welcomed the move by the communist rebels, whom the military earlier said had been suffering tactical defeat

since the government lifted its unilateral ceasefire declaration on Feb. 4.

"Doing so (freeing the soldiers without condition) would lessen the seriousness of their continuing crimes and add to any goodwill they wish to convey," he said.

Presidential adviser on the peace process Jesus Dureza said the government would take the necessary steps for the resumption of peace talks if the CPP/NPA/NDF rebels are willing to proceed with the negotiation for a bilateral ceasefire agreement.

"We welcome and respect the positive position coming from the leadership of the CPP/NPA/NDF," Dureza said in a statement yesterday.

"On the part of the Philippine government, we share the same commitment to work for just and lasting peace in the land. When compelling reasons, as President Duterte earlier announced, are present, then we in government shall take the next necessary steps," Dureza added.

The NDF also directed the NPA to work closely with third party facilitators for the release of the six captives before the scheduled peace negotiations in the Netherlands next week.

Hand of peace

Presidential daughter Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio yesterday offered a hand of peace to the NPA to stop the spate of encounters, particularly in Davao City.

"In light of the recent events in the third district of Davao City that resulted in the deaths of our fellow Filipinos, I am offering my hand in peace to the NPA," Duterte-Carpio said in a statement yesterday.

"In the event that you will decline my offer, I can only pray that there will be no more deaths and leave everything to the AFP and to God," she added.

The mayor

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stressed that she is willing to listen to whatever the NPA rebels have to say provided they would come in group and not just as individuals.

NDF consultant Satur Ocampo said rebel consultants should not be arrested during the one-month grace period after the government notified them about the cancellation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG).

Ocampo stressed that the NDF asked that its consultants be freed because they are covered by JASIG "that tells that their participation in the peace talks would guarantee them against harassment, arrest and filing of cases."

Meanwhile, the military said NPA rebels allegedly forced hundreds of villagers out of Barangays Cabua-an and St. Niño in Madella, Quirino province last Saturday.

1/Lt. Rhea May Reyes, spokesperson of the Army's 5th Infantry Division, said residents of the two barangays were terrorized by the presence of the armed men.

More than 100 rebels had occupied a school in nearby Barangay San Martin.

Reyes said Army troopers were ordered to secure the area to allow residents to return to their homes – **With Michael Punongbayan, Ghio Ong, Edith Regalado, Artemio Dumlaog**

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The Manila Times

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Stop extortion, then we talk peace – Palace

BY LLANESCA T. PANTI

MALACAÑANG on Monday called on the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the New People's Army (NPA) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to stop extortion and other hostile activities if it wants to resume peace talks.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella announced four conditions on the communists calling for a stop to the following: collection of "revolutionary taxes" or extortion activities, ambushes on military personnel, burning of property and provocative and hostile actions.

"While it is understandable that suspicions linger about the motives of the parties on opposite sides of the ideological spectrum, some compelling reasons

need to be provided for talks to resume. Considering the unprecedented goodwill the President has shown, these [conditions] may provide compelling reason and could put at ease, to some extent, the apprehension of the military and the administration," Abella said in a statement. "When guns are silent, we can better listen to each other. We need the President's vision for a peaceful, just and inclusively

➤ ExtortionA2

■ EXTORTION FROM A1

Stop extortion, then we talk peace – Palace

prosperous Philippines. He has already taken the first steps forward in good faith. We wait for [the NDFP] to respond," he added.

Abella however called out the communists for demanding the immediate release of their 400 detained comrades, which the rebels claimed were already old and sickly.

"It may be pertinent to take note that the [NDFP] probably pushed the envelope too fast and too soon in demanding the full release of political prisoners prior to any signed agreement and for lifting the ceasefire ahead of their dead-

line," Abella added.

In a separate statement, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza said President Rodrigo Duterte was willing to negotiate a bilateral ceasefire pact with the Reds.

Dureza issued the statement after the communists expressed willingness to negotiate a bilateral ceasefire agreement and announced on Sunday the release of six government men held as "prisoners of war."

Talks were initially scheduled on February 22 to 25 in the Netherlands, but Duterte cancelled all negotiations and a

unilateral ceasefire on February 4 after a series of NPA attacks on military men.

The cancellation of the talks came after the communists junked their own unilateral ceasefire declaration because of the President's refusal to free the 400 detained rebels.

"We welcome and respect the positive position coming from the leadership of the CPP/NPA/NDF. On the part of the Philippine government, we share the same commitment to work for just and lasting peace in the land," Dureza said.

"When compelling reasons,

as President Duterte earlier announced, are present, then we in government will take the next necessary steps," Dureza added.

As this developed, child rights watchdog Children's Rehabilitation Center accused state forces of escalating human rights violations in the government's all-out war campaign versus the NPA.

Jacquiline Ruiz, executive director, said children in the countryside continue to live under siege. "We are very much alarmed that children continue to carry the heaviest brunt of military abuses in the countryside," she said in a statement.

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AFP: NPA should release captives without conditions

BY VICTOR REYES

THE Armed Forces yesterday said the New People's Army should release three soldiers, two militiamen and a policeman without precondition amid demands by the communists for the withdrawal of soldiers in certain areas in exchange for the release of their captives.

"The NPA should prove and substantiate their announcements with clear and sincere actions, not propaganda," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said.

"Hence, they should release the soldiers they have abducted immediately without any condition. Doing so would lessen the seriousness of their continuing crimes and add to any goodwill they wish to convey," Padilla added.

Padilla's statement was in contrast with the statement issued by AFP public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo who said the AFP is open to relocating its forces in certain areas in Mindanao to pave the way for the release of the six who were

abducted by the NPA rebels over the past three weeks.

"We will afford every opportunity to ensure the safe release of these abducted soldiers and other members of security forces," Arevalo said.

Arevalo said the military welcomes the decision of the communists to release the six – PFCs Edwin Salan and Samuel Garay, Sgt. Solaiman Calucop, militiamen Rene Doller and Carl Mark Nucos, and PO2 Jerome Natividad.

The six were abducted between January 29 to February 14 in Agusan del Norte, Sultan Kudarat, Bukidnon, and Davao Oriental.

In a statement last Saturday, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) said negotiations for bilateral or joint ceasefire may resume if President Duterte sends government negotiators to Netherlands for the earlier scheduled meeting on February 22 to 27.

Duterte terminated the peace negotiations and lifted the government truce last February 4 after a series of NPA attacks

on civilian and military targets.

The CPP said it has called NPA units to "expedite the release" of the six, so-called "Prisoners of War," as a "positive gesture." He said the NPA can work closely with third party facilitators to free the six.

The CPP said the AFP can cooperate by withdrawing all troops in and around the areas where the POWs will be released to pave the way for their safe and orderly release." It said the six can return to their families before or during the scheduled negotiations in Netherlands if the military cooperates.

Arevalo said the release of the six captives "as an act of goodwill and not as leverage to constrain the government to go back to the negotiating table."

He said the government terminated the peace negotiations not because of the abduction of the six security forces but due to the NPA's "atrocious criminal activities," including the killing of three soldiers in Bukidnon earlier this month, burning of public conveyances and farm implements and extortion. – *With Jocelyn Montemayor*

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Mayor Sara open to talk peace with local rebels

TARA D. YAP

DAVAO CITY – Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio has extended a local offer of peace to the New People's Army within the territorial jurisdiction of Davao City in a statement Monday morning.

This, amid President Rodrigo Duterte's withdrawal of talks between the government peace panel and the National Democratic Front.

"In light of the recent events in the third district of Davao City that resulted in the deaths of our fellow Filipinos, I am offering my hand in peace to the New People's Army," Mayor Duterte said.

"I am willing to listen, if the NPA is willing to talk."

However, Mayor Duterte said that she would not talk to individual surrenderees and anyone short of the group.

"I want to talk to them as a group. I will not accept individuals who want to voluntarily surrender," added Duterte.

Duterte said she already had something in mind that would benefit the group, as well as the community.

"I have a plan but I want to listen first to what you have to say," Duterte said. "I suggest you think about this offer seriously since this will benefit you, our fellow Dabawenyos, and our beloved city."

Mayor Duterte said she would leave "everything to the Armed

Forces of the Philippines and to God" in case the rebel group declines her offer.

Over the weekend, the Communist Party of the Philippines said it was willing to push through with the scheduled talks in The Netherlands if President Rodrigo Duterte decides to send his team of peace panelists back after an ordered pull out from the talks.

Last week, at least two members of the AFP were killed while 18 were wounded in a series of encounters with the NPA in barangays Lamanan and Calinan.

President Duterte visited the wake of those slain at the AFP camp in Panacan and handed assistance to the families of the wounded.

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Mayor Duterte offers NPA peace, but only in Davao City

YAS D. OCAMPO

DAVAO CITY – Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio has extended an offer of peace to the New People's Army (NPA) within the territorial jurisdiction of this city.

In a statement released Monday morning, Duterte-Carpio said she was "offering (her) hand in peace to the NPA" in the aftermath of recent clashes between the government and the communist rebels in different parts of the city, which left at least two soldiers dead and scores of others wounded.

"I am willing to listen, if the NPA is willing to talk," said said.

However, Duterte-Carpio maintained that she will only talk to the NPA "as a group."

She said she will not talk to "individual surrenderees and anyone short of the group."

"I want to talk to them as a group. I will not accept individuals who want to voluntarily surrender," Duterte-Carpio said.

The lady mayor disclosed that she already had something in mind that would benefit the group, as well as the community.

"I have a plan but I want to listen first to what you have to say," Duterte-Carpio said. "I suggest you think about this offer seriously since this will benefit you, our fellow Dabawenyos, and our beloved city."

She likewise averred that she would leave "everything to the Armed Forces of the Philippines and to God" in case the rebel group declines her offer.

Her offer of peace to the NPA comes even as her father President Rodrigo R. Duterte had cancelled the peace talks with the communist group.

But last Sunday, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) said it was willing to push through with the negotiations and had even asked its military arm, the NPA, to release six prisoners of war (POWs) under its custody in various parts of Mindanao as a "positive gesture."

Corporal Michael Yadao and PFC Vilmel Damondon were the latest casualties of the renewed conflict between the government and the NPA. They died last February 9 in an NPA attack in Calinan District in Davao City.

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Palace pushes continuation of talks with communists

By Sandy Araneta

PRESIDENTIAL Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza on Monday welcomed the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army/National Democratic Front's call to proceed with the bilateral ceasefire negotiations.

In a statement released by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Dureza said: "We welcome and respect the positive position coming from the leadership of the CPP/NPA/NDF."

"On the part of the Philippine government, we share the same commitment to work for just and lasting peace in the land," said

Dureza.

"When 'compelling reasons,' as President Duterte earlier announced, are present, then we in government shall take the next necessary steps," Dureza said.

Last Sunday, the CPP ordered its armed wing, the NPA to release six prisoners of war as a "positive gesture."

The communist leadership

said if the military cooperated, the POWs would be able to "return to their families before or during the scheduled negotiations in The Netherlands."

The negotiating panels of both the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the government were scheduled to meet in Utrecht, The Netherlands from Feb. 22 to 27 to discuss the bilateral ceasefire agreement.

The meeting was scheduled ahead of President Rodrigo Duterte's announcement he was terminating the government's peace talks with the Reds earlier this month.

Duterte said on Feb. 4 the peace talks would remain canceled unless he saw a compelling reason to resume the negotiations.

In Malacañang, Presidential

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

Spokesman Ernesto Abella said: "Following the abrupt lifting by the NPA of their unilateral ceasefire and attack on government troops, President Rodrigo Duterte in response lifted the GRP [government of the republic of the Philippines] unilateral ceasefire."

"GRP has in fact moved closer to the NDF position, much closer than previous administrations have," Abella said.

Abella said Duterte had instituted socio-economic reforms, moved towards political and constitutional reforms; charted an independent foreign policy, opened up to national industrialization and land reform.

Duterte also opened his Cabinet to the participation of political "progressives."

"In so doing, Jose Maria Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines responded by saying, at the start of the Third Peace Talks, that the GRP-NDF are no longer in an 'adversarial mode' but in a 'problem solving mode'," said Abella.

Abella said it might be pertinent to note the NDF probably pushed the envelope too fast and too soon in demanding the full release of political prisoners prior to any signed agreement and for lifting the ceasefire ahead of their deadline.

"While it is understandable that suspicions linger about the motives of the parties on opposite sides of the ideological spectrum, some 'compelling reasons' need to be provided for talks to resume..." said Abella.

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

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A broader look at today's business

NGO claims violations of children's rights escalated after 'all-out war' vs NPA declared

By MARVYN N. BENANING
Correspondent

THE Children's Rehabilitation Center (CRC) said an upsurge in violations of children's rights has followed the declaration by the military of an all-out war campaign against the New People's Army (NPA).

CRC, which had been counseling children traumatized by military operations for years, challenged President Duterte to order his troops to leave the children alone and stop making their schools and day-care centers as their bivouac areas.

Cristina Palabay, secretary-general of the human-rights watchdog Karapatan, also urged the Duterte government to respect the provisions of the International Covenant of

Children's Rights (ICCPR), which bans the recruitment of child soldiers and the use of educational institutions as staging areas for military operations.

NPA Spokesman Jorge Ka Oris Madios said "the NPA stands by its prohibition on the use of children as combatants, and this has been spelled out in the documents released by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines [NDF]."

"Even while the peace negotiation between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the NDF is ongoing, we have been witness to the continuing human-rights violations by the Armed Forces of the Philippines [AFP]. Especially after Duterte's declaration of an all-out war, the military has continued, and even gained more confidence, in violating human

rights of progressives, activists, and even civilians," CRC executive director Sr. Jacqueline Ruiz said.

Ruiz said children in the countryside continue to live under siege as elements of the AFP target civilians. Palabay earlier condemned the killing of 17-year-old Jobert Bito, a Grade 11 student, who was gunned down in a mining tunnel in Tagmamaray, Agusan del Norte, on February 11, by soldiers of the 17th Infantry Battalion who claimed that NPA guerrillas were holed up in the tunnel being worked on by small miners.

Miner Pepito Tiambong, 40, was killed along with Bito, with the soldiers claiming they died in a clash with the NPA.

"We are very much alarmed that children continue to carry the heaviest brunt of military abuses in

the countryside. Between February 10 and February 11, elements of the AFP have committed cases of extrajudicial killing of a Grade 11 student, military attacks on schools and indiscriminate aerial bombings resulting to forcible evacuations of indigenous communities," Ruiz said.

In Magallanes, Sorsogon, soldiers also used the Tula-Tula Elementary School as a shield during a clash with the NPA on February 10, forcing school officials to suspend classes.

On February 11 about 100 families of the Tagakaolo minority group in Barangay Datal Anggas, Alabel, Sarangani, forcibly evacuated their homes and fled to Sitio Kindag when six bombs were dropped on Sitio Tangis, following an encounter between NPA guerrillas and soldiers.

Three Lumad community schools, operated by the Center for Lumad Advocacy and Services Inc., were also affected by ongoing combat operations.

Ruiz lamented the Duterte government's all-out war "is leaving hundreds of children as orphans, with many of them separated from their parents, who were either arrested and detained and slapped with trumped-up charges or disappeared altogether."

"Where is the change Duterte promised to millions of people who have supported and voted for him? Children of peasants and indigenous peoples continue to experience state violence on a daily basis. Indeed, the future remains bleak for Filipino children, whom we consider as our nation's hope!" Ruiz said.

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Vietnamese killed, 6 seized in Tawi-Tawi pirate attack

By ROEL PAREÑO and EVELYN MACAIRAN

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Gunmen attacked a Vietnamese cargo vessel in the waters off Tawi-Tawi, killing a crewmember and seizing six others on Sunday night.

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the military said the *M/V Giang Hai* was sailing near Pearl Bank and Taganak Island when gunmen on a speedboat blocked its way.

The vessel reportedly came from Indonesia and was headed for Iloilo.

PCG spokesman Commo-

dore Armand Balilo said the gunmen shot and killed one of the crewmembers and escaped, taking with them six hostages.

Capt. Jo-Ann Petinglay, spokesperson for the Western Mindanao Command, confirmed the incident, saying fishermen spotted the *Giang*

Hai drifting near Turtle Island at around 8 a.m. yesterday.

Petinglay said members of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 8 responded to the scene and rescued 10 Vietnamese sailors.

The body of the fatality was recovered from the vessel.

Fishing vessels towed the *Giang Hai* to Taganak.

Petinglay said government security forces in Tawi-Tawi and Sulu were ordered to be on the lookout for the kidnappers.

PCG officer-in-charge Com-

modore Joel Garcia said a notice to mariners would be issued to ships passing in the area.

The PCG launched a pursuit operation against the pirates.

Petinglay said they could not yet ascertain whether the Abu Sayyaf was behind the attack.

The incident brings to 12 the number of Vietnamese kidnapped in Philippine waters.

In November, the bandit group seized six Vietnamese sailors near Basilan.

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Vietnamese sailor killed, 7 abducted in pirate attack

BY VICTOR REYES

A VIETNAMESE crew member of a foreign cargo vessel was killed while six others were abducted by still unidentified armed men off Tawi-tawi on Sunday night, according to military and coast guard officials.

The Coast Guard also said that 10 Vietnamese, members of the 25-man crew of MV Giang Hai that was attacked near Baguan Island in Tawi-Tawi, an area close to the stronghold of the notorious Abu Sayyaf militant group, were rescued.

Armed Forces public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said there was still no indication if the Abu Sayyaf, linked to similar attacks in Tawi-tawi and nearby areas in the past, was involved.

Arevalo said the Vietnamese vessel was attacked by pirates at around 8:25 p.m., about 17 nautical miles off Pearl Bank

and killed one of the crewmen, Vu Duchan, who sustained 12 bullet wounds.

Arevalo said Marine soldiers, policemen and Coast Guard personnel responded to the scene after learning of the incident early yesterday. "They conducted board and search on the same vessel," he said.

"They learned that 17 crew members were on board (prior to the attack) and they were able to account only 10 (survivors) and one dead. The six others were abducted by the armed men," Arevalo said.

Arevalo identified the abducted crewmembers as ship captain Buy Xuan Vien; chiefmate Do Huu Nghia; 3rd mate Bui Trung Duc; 2nd engineer Nguyin Huu Trong; sailor Tran Viet Van; and oiler Nguyen Quang Huy.

Coast Guard spokesman Cmdr. Armand Balilo said the Philippine Coast Guard was informed by the Vietnamese

Coast Guard on Sunday night.

Balilo said the PCG deployed two speedboats, carrying Coast Guard and Marine personnel, to the area. The ill-fated vessel was later towed by fishing vessels to Taganak anchorage.

Balilo said the MV Giang Hai was coming from Indonesia bound for Iloilo when it was attacked. The official said investigations are underway to determine the other details of the incident.

As to the possible involvement of the Abu Sayyaf, Arevalo said: "We don't have information if this (group of suspects) the group of the Abu Sayyaf. That is part of the thorough investigation that we are conducting."

The Abu Sayyaf have conducted similar attacks in the Tawi-tawi, Sulu and Basilan areas and in the waters of Indonesia and Malaysia over the past months, and abducted a number of crew members of vessels.

The Abu Sayyaf is still hold-

ing 27, mostly foreign, kidnap victims in Sulu. The 27 victims include six Vietnamese crew members of bulk carrier MV Royal 16 which was intercepted last November off Basilan.

An Abu Sayyaf spotter was killed in a firefight in Turtle island in Tawi-tawi at around 2 p.m. last Sunday.

Arevalo said soldiers initially invited for questioning Al Abdullah after he was seen in the presence of armed men. Abdullah admitted that he was earlier in the company of three armed men – one Absar, Musub Baudin and Man Baudi – who came to his house.

Arevalo said Abdullah later asked permission and was allowed to go to his house. Abdullah later returned with an M16 rifle and fired towards the troops.

Arevalo said they have information that Abdullah has been serving as Abu Sayyaf spotter for potential kidnap victims.

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AFP pursues kidnappers of 7 Vietnamese

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Monday said that pursuit operations are currently being conducted to track down a group of still unidentified armed men who reportedly abducted seven crew members of a Vietnamese vessel near Baguan Island, Taganak, Tawi-Tawi, Sunday night.

Captain Jo-Ann D. Petinglay, Armed Forces of the Philippines-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-WestMinCom) spokesperson said a team from the Philippine Marines is currently assisting the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) in finding seven crew members of the Vietnamese flag vessel MV Giang Hai.

Reports disclosed that the piracy attack happened at about 7:10 p.m. Sunday at vicinity 17 nautical miles North of Pearl Bank which then drifted near Baguan Island, Taganak.

Petinglay said the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) assigned in Turtle Island received informa-

tion from local fishermen that the cargo vessel MV Giang Hai was seajacked by unidentified armed men and was sighted within the vicinity of Baguan, Turtle Island, Tawi-Tawi.

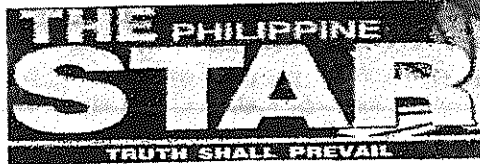
The vessel reportedly has a total of 25 crew members, seven of which were abducted by the armed group and one was reported killed.

Petinglay said Philippine Marines stationed in the area together with the PCG and Philippine National Police (PNP) Taganak immediately organized and conducted Joint Law Enforcement Operations to rescue/recover said vessel.

"We confirmed receiving a report about the reported seajacking incident and efforts are being made to locate the whereabouts of the victims," Petinglay said during an interview.

Petinglay said they are still gathering more information if suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits or other local terrorist groups were behind the incident.

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AFP steps up efforts to save German hostage

ZAMBOANGA CITY – The military has doubled its efforts in tracking down the bandit group Abu Sayyaf after it threatened to behead a 70-year-old German hostage.

In a video released last week, Juergen Kantner – surrounded by Abu Sayyaf fighters – appealed to the German government that his captors would kill him unless \$600,000 (P30 million) in ransom is paid by 3 p.m. on Feb. 26.

Captain Jo-Ann Petinglay, spokesman for the Western Mindanao Command, said government forces have been mobilized to hunt down the Abu Sayyaf group holding Kantner.

“Our forces in Sulu have doubled their efforts to pre-

vent the Abu Sayyaf from executing their captive,” Petinglay said.

She said at least 14 battalions of soldiers backed by the Philippine Air Force, Philippine Navy and police were running after the Abu Sayyaf militants.

Kantner was kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf gunmen near Tawi-Tawi in Tanjong Luuk Pisuk, Sabah in November last year.

The body of Kantner’s partner, Sabine Merz, 50, was found on his yacht, *Rockall*, adrift off Mindanao.

The Abu Sayyaf has been holding hostage a Dutch man, a Korean, seven Indonesians, five Malaysians, six Vietnamese and six Filipinos.

– Roel Pareño

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FVR: Battalion of soldiers not needed in drug war

By GHIO ONG

Helping the government in its war against illegal drugs does not necessarily need a battalion of soldiers, former president Fidel Ramos said yesterday.

"It does not have to be a battalion... they can instead form small units in several places," Ramos, who also served as Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) vice chief-of-staff, told reporters in a news forum.

While he agrees with the need to help the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) in the war against illegal drugs, a large number of military men is not needed for this, he said in reaction to the plan of AFP chief General Eduardo Año to form a task force with 500 to 5,000 soldiers.

Ramos also said the military should not run after drug users and pushers, like what the police did in Oplan Tokhang, and

focus instead on drug lords and other high-value targets.

Drug stings, he added, should not be as bloody. More than 7,000 people have been killed in the government's war against drugs, with more than half committed by unidentified men often referred to as vigilantes.

Authorities claimed that the drug syndicates might have been purging their own ranks, resulting in the high number

of people killed by unknown assailants.

To win this war, Ramos said the military, police and local government units should work as a team in running after criminals and potential insurgents.

He suggested a method to make this set-up work well: the military would clear communities of insurgents, dissidents and criminals and the police could come later to prevent them from re-entering.

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The Manila Times

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Salamat is new Marines commander

BRIGADIER General Emmanuel Salamat was designated as the new commander of the Philippine Marines, the Philippine Navy announced on Monday.

Salamat will formally assume his new post on Tuesday during a change of command ceremony at the Marines headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City to be presided by Philippine Navy commander Vice Admiral Joseph Mercado.

He will replace Maj. Gen. Andre Costales.

Described as a "veteran" of

the all-out war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in March 2000, Costales was the deputy of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 2 when former President Joseph Estrada, now mayor of Manila, declared a total war against the MILF.

Costales and his men were deployed in Matanog, Maguindanao and was among those who pounded the separatists' main camp, which was seized by the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

It was for this feat that Costales

got his Gold Cross medal that recognizes gallantry in action.

Salamat, a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1985, was the former commander of the 1st Marine Brigade in Sultan Kudarat from February 2014 to June 16. Prior to this, he served as chief of the Unified Command Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Western Command from May 2013 to December 2013.

His was also the Assistant Superintendent of PMA, deputy brigade

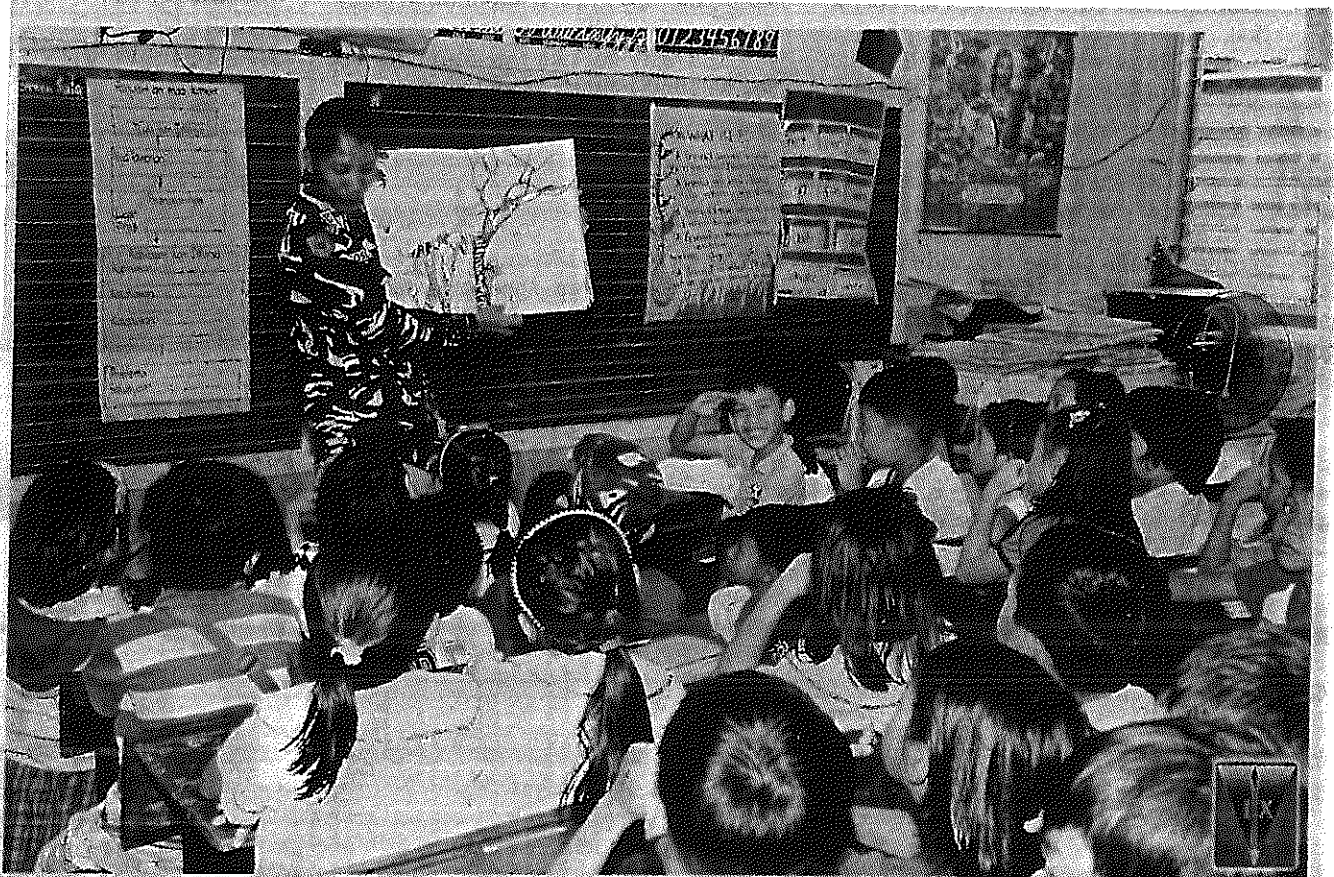
commander of the 1st Marine Brigade, Superintendent of the Command and Staff College, Naval Education and Training Command of the Philippine Navy, Director of the Navy Personnel Management Center, Chief of Staff, Combat and Service Support Brigade of the Philippine Marine Corps, commander of the 8th Marine Battalion, Operations and Training Officer at PMA and Team Leader, Adjutant and Operations Officer United Nations Guards Contingent in Iraq.

FERNAN MARASIGAN

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MY SOLDIER, MY TEACHER — An army officer devotes part of her time to discuss the lessons learned from a storybook with pupils at the Naga Central School I (NCS-I) in Naga City last Friday as part of the 'Read to Lead Program' of the Department of Education which is aimed at promoting reading among students. (Ruel Saldico)

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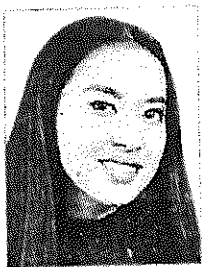
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Hotspot

By MOCHA USON

Trillanes, the soldier who cried wolf

Senator Trillanes was a Navy officer who only became relevant for his part in the Oakwood mutiny and the Manila Peninsula siege. He, together with his group, claimed to be fighting against corruption and for the rights of soldiers. These events provided the opportunity for him to become part of the Senate.



However, as a senator, what has he really accomplished for the Filipino people? What tangible achievements has he done to stop corruption in the government? What has he achieved to support his fellow soldiers?

His heart may have been on the right track when he was just starting but when he became a politician, it seems that he adopted the characteristics of traditional politicians as well: out of touch with the true needs of the people, full of empty promises during elections, ambitions, and prioritizes personal political needs or political allies' needs instead of serving the Filipino people.

Last April 2016, nearly two weeks before the elections, Senator Trillanes raised the issue of President Duterte's BPI account and alleged that it contains millions of pesos. One can only surmise the Senator's purpose for "exposing" the accounts: Is it to prove that then presidential candidate Rodrigo Duterte was just fooling the people with his "simple" image? Just because a man lives a simple life – as people who have seen the President's lifestyle can vouch for – doesn't mean that he should also be poor.

People admire him for his simple lifestyle. The way he interacts with the ordinary folk makes them really feel that he is one of them compared to other politicians who only claim to represent them. The timing of the "exposé" also made it suspect. It was clearly a politically motivated attack to prevent Duterte from winning the presidency especially with insinuations that the money in the bank accounts may have come from illegal activities or from corruption.

It is worth noting that after the election when Duterte had clearly won by a wide margin, Senator Trillanes acknowledged the will of the people and left the issue for the media to pursue, saying that he had already done his part. If you ask me, if the senator is confident about the evidence that he holds or if he is sure about the allegations, why stop pursuing it? Could it be because the "part" he says he has accomplished is to try to prevent Duterte from winning the election by throwing unfounded accusations?

Now, the senator is reviving the issue of the bank accounts, and just as he did the first time, dares the President to prove him wrong. He disregards the simple fact that the burden of proof is on him, he being the one throwing accusations. With the renewed attack, is there more confidence on the truth behind the allegations, or is this just another politically motivated noise just like the first time? The senator seems to have forgotten that he was the one who abandoned the issue before. He is now reviving it without anything new. With his brave talk, his allegations remain just that; baseless accusations coated by strong words and appearance. The question we should be asking is this: If he used this issue before in an attempt to influence the result of the election, what reason could he have to revive the issue that he once abandoned? Is it to boost support for rallies against the President?

Aside from the issue of the bank accounts, Senator Trillanes has also involved the President in the Bureau of Immigration bribery scandal. But just like all his accusations against the President, there is no tangible proof to back up his claims. He also said that based on "information," President Duterte wants him dead, but Mr. Senator, why would he want you dead when they can just simply watch you destroy your credibility and make a fool out of yourself in front of the cameras with all your unfounded allegations? At least present some credible proof to support your case so that it won't look like you are simply being bitter that you were not chosen to be the President's running mate.

Right now, you have already destroyed your reputation, if there was any to begin with. If you are contemplating another mutiny, Filipinos will see that you are not doing it for the sake of the people but just for your own agenda and those of your political allies. Do your job as a senator who should be serving the Filipino people and stop wasting public funds.

★

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Pahina. 4

Diskarte ng mga sundalo kontra droga, abangan!

KAHIT sinuspinde na ang Oplan Tokhang ng PNP, tuloy pa rin ang kampanya kontra ilegal na droga. At 'di tulad sa PNP, pramis ng AFP, ang kanilang drug war ay hindi magiging madugo.

Tingnan na lang natin kung wala na nga bang basta na lamang tutumba sa mga kalsada o sa mga eskinita at kung mababawasan na rin ang kaso ng mga nanlabang drug suspect.

Dahil sa ngayon, nasa proseso na ang AFP at PDEA na buuin ang task force na tututok sa giyera kontra droga. At ang AFP, magtatalaga raw ng isang task force na binubuo ng isang batalyong puwersa na aalalay sa PDEA.

Kabibilangan din ang nasabing task force ng anti-drug unit na Task Force Moses ng Philippine Army na may kasama na raw Strike Force Component.

At ang nasabing task force ng PDEA ay kabibilangan ng 500 sundalo na maaari pa raw umabot sa 5,000, depende sa magiging sitwasyon.

Kumbaga, siguro kapag sobrang lala ay mas palalakasin pa ang puwersa.

Ngayong PDEA at AFP na ang hahawak sa kampanya kontra droga habang nagki-cleansing pa ang PNP, abangan na lang natin ang kanilang magiging aksiyon.

Lalo pa ngayon na hinihintay na lamang ng AFP na ilabas ang Executive Order ng Palasyo para maumpisahan na nila ang pagsugpo sa ilegal na droga.

At tingnan na rin natin kung tulad ng sa PNP ay may lumitaw ding mga general ng sundalo na sabit din sa droga.

Hangad natin ang tagumpay ng kampanyang ito para sa pagbabago gayunman, hangad din natin na matapos ang nasabing kampanya sa droga nang malinis at walang napagtatak pang malaking tao dahil hangga't may drug lord, patuloy na lalaganap ang ilegal na droga sa bansa.

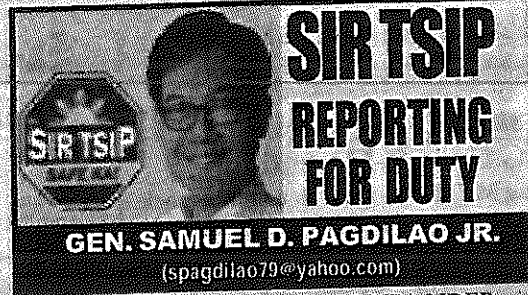
21 February 2017

Pag-aralang Mabuti ang Alok ng CPP/NPA/NDFP na Bumalik sa Peace Talks

PAGKATAPOS balewalain ng CPP/NPA/NDFP ang kanilang sariling unilateral ceasefire sa pamamagitan ng pagatake ng ilang military targets na nagsasagawa lamang ng mga gawaing pang sibi-ko tulad ng relief operations ngayon ay payag na silang maki pag bilateral ceasefire sa pamahalaan. Matatandaan na ipinatigil ni Pangulong Digong ang usaping pagkapayapaan sa pagitan ng pamahalaan at NDFP at ipinag-utos agad ang "all out war" laban sa mga rebelde dahil sa nangyaring-pataksil na pag atake ng NPA sa mga sundalo. Pinagtawanan pa ng mga rebelde ang all out war ni Digong at buong pagmamataas na sinabing sanay na sila sa ganitong deklarasyon ng pamahalaan sapagkat wala namang nangyayari. Dahil dito naglunsad agad ng malawakang operasyon ang AFP na nagresulta sa pagka aresto ng ilang mga rebelde at pagkasawi naman ng iba pa.

Nagsagawa rin ng opensibang legal ang pamahalaan upang madakip muli ang mga matataas na pinuno ng CPP na pansamantalang pinakawalan ng korte sa pakiusap narin ng pamahalaan upang makilahok bilang konsultants sa usaping pangkapayapaan. Malakas rin ang panawagan na tanggalin sa pwesto ang mga kilalang pulahan na nasa iba't ibang kagawaran ng pamahalaan tulad ng DSWD, DAR, at National Anti-Poverty Commission. Malaki ang mawawalang suporta sa CPP/NPA/NDFP kapag nagtuloy tuloy ang ganitong sitwasyon. Mapuputol ang kanilang suporta na pinaghihinalaang nanggagaling sa kaban ng bayan. Mas lalo na kung tuluyang mawala ang mining operations sa iba't ibang lugar sa Mindanao na isa ring pangunahing pinagkukuhanan ng pondo ng mga rebelde. Ito ang malaking pangamba ng mga rebelde.

Dahil sa malaking posibilidad na mangyayari ang



mga pinangangambahan ng CPP/NPA/NDFP minanais nilang bumalik sa usaping pangkapayapaan. Pumapayag narin silang lumagda sa isang kasunduan na tigil putukan sa pagitan ng pamahalaan at NDFP. Sila na ang nagpapakita ng interes at agresibong pagsulong sa muling pagbabalik ng *peace talks*. Upang ipakita ang kagandahang loob imutos ng CPP sa NPA na pakawalan agad ang 6 na sundalong bihag nila. Dito masusubukan kung kinikilala pa ng NPA angpamunuan ng CPP. Marahil napagtanto ng mga rebelde na mali ang kanilang ginawang pag atras at pagbasura ng sariling ceasefire bilang pagprotesta sa hindi pagpapalaya ni Digong sa humigit kumulang na 400 pang mga rebeldeng nakakulong sa iba't ibang piitan sa Pilipinas.

Hindi nila sukat akalain na mabilis ang naging tugon ni Digong. Imbes na makiusap at pagbigyan ang kahilingan ng mga rebelde mabilis at disidido ang naging tugon ng pangulo sa hamon ng NPA. Tinawag pa niyang mga laki sa layaw ang mga ito at pinatigil agad ang usaping pangkapayapaan. Ang ginawang ito ng CPP/NPA/NDFP ay nagbunga ng hindi maganda para sa kanilang organisasyon. Imbes na pasulong naging paurong ang kanilang tinahak. Ang bansag ng Komunista Vladimir Lenin dito ay, "One step forward, two steps backward". Tila nga dalawang hakbang paurong ang naging dulot ng aksyon na inaakalang magsusulong sa layunin at interes ng mga rebeldeng Komunista.

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NPA puwede na rin sa militar!

THE DEFENSE WATCH



Paul's Alarm

By Paul Gutierrez

KAPANSIN-PANSIN, mga kabayan, na pagkatapos ng mga "pagkilos" o "protest action" ng mga "progresibong grupo" malimit nating mabasa sa mga "pader", at kahit sa mga "center island" ng mga kalasada ang "recruitment slogan" ng mga 'Nice People Around' (NPA), na: 'Kabataan, tumungo sa kanayunan, sumapi sa NPA!'

At marahil mayroong 'urgency' ang panghihimok na ito ng mga "pogi" mga kabayan, lalo pa nga at natigil (na naman) ang 'peace talk' sa pagitan ng gobyerno at ng CPP-NPA-NDFP, at kailangan na naman nilang "magpalakas" ng kanilang "puwersa."

Hindi na natin "aataduhin" dito ang masabing mga "dahilan" kung bakit balik na naman sa digmaan ang magkabilang pang dahil sa totoo lang, wala nang bago sa mga palusot, agh, sa mga dahilan na ito.

Bagaman, sa "usap-away, usap-away" na estilo ng peace talk sapul pa noong 1987, ang palaging bumabalik sa aking isipan ay ang "obserbasyon" ni noon ay 2nd ID commander, MGen Fernando Mesa (na ngayon ay mayor ng Alabat, Quezon) nang tanungin ko siya noon kung ano ang "palagay" niya sa peace talk.

"Sinserridad, kung walang sinserridad sa magkabilang pang hindi magtatagumpay ang ano mang peace talk." At malaki ang tama mo talaga dito, 'di ba, General-Mayor Mesa? Kailan mo ba ako kukumbidihin sa "matulang isla" ng Alabat, hehehe!

Sa maniwala naman at sa hindi ang ating mga 'comrade' partikular pa ang aking "bosing" na si Tirso Ka Bart Alcantara, isa sa mga opisyal ng Sandatahang Lakas na alam nating "totoo", katulad ni Pang. Rody Duterte na magkaroon ng 'genuine and lasting

peace' sa pagitan ng CPP-NPA-NDFP at pamahalaan ay si Gen. Ed Año, ang ating kasalukuyang AFP chief of staff.

Oops! Hindi natin "tinatawaran" ang sinserridad ng kanyang mga pinalitan sa posisyon (na mga kaibigan din natin) katulad ni Gen. Bong Visaya at Gen. Dodo Irberri, kung pagkakaroon ng final peace agreement sa mga komunista ang pag-uusapan.

Sa ganang atin lang, 2nd ID chief, MGen Rhoderick Parayno (wala ka pang reply sa text ko ha, mahina pa rin ba ang 'signal' dyan sa Tanay), mas "angat" kahit konti lang, si Gen. Ed dahil siya ang opisyal ng militar that the CPP-NPA love to hate, wika nga, kahit noong koronel pa lang siya, hehehe!

Dangan kasi, kung may 'common denominator' ang mga nahuling lider-komunista mga kabayan, ito ay ang katotohanan na si Gen. Año ang nasa likod ng mga 'intel operation' na nagbigay daan sa pagkahuli sa kanila.

Kumbaga, may "pinaghuhugutan" ang grupo nina CPP Chairman Benito Tiamzon at Ka Bart sa kanilang "tamang hinala" dito kay Gen. Ed, hehehe!

Bilang "patunay" naman ng kanyang sinserridad at kahandaan na "yakapin" ang kanyang mga "kaaway" lung saan "naubos" ang kanyang panahon sa paghahanap at paghuli sa kanila, sinabi sa atin ni Gen. Ed na "payag" siya na 'ma-accommodate' sa Philippine Army ang mga rebeldeng NPA. Ang "kondisyon" nga lang, "kailangan" siyempre, magkaroon ng final peace agreement."

At ang ranggo sa loob ng militar, depende umano sa abilidad at naging posisyon sa loob ng "kilusan."

But quite personally knowing Gen. Ed, mga kabayan, may "hinala" ako na kahit wala pang final peace agreement, yung mga "magbabalik-loob" na rebelde na gusto pa ring magsundalo, papayagan niyang maging sundalo naman ng ating Republika!

Hmmn. Sa puntong ito, naalala ko rin bigla ang panayam ko noong araw (dakong 2003 pa yata) kay Ka Bart sa kabundukan ng Quezon province kung saan "ikinumpisal" niya sa atin na kahit noong bata pa siya, talagang ang kanyang "pangarap" sa buhay ay maging isang "sundalo."

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NPA...

From Page 4

Ang "kantyaw" ko naman noon kay Ka Bart na "bosing" ng mga NPA sa buong Southern Tagalog, "nagkatotoo" ang kanyang pangarap!

Siya ay naging "sundalo" hindi nga lang ng 'Philippine Army' bagkus, ng 'New People's Army' – at "kumander" pa, hahaha!

Aber, "sakali" nga kaya, mga kabayan, na "totohanin" ni Gen. Ed ang kanyang sinabi at sakali rin naman na "magbalik-loob" si Ka Bart, abay kailangan na sigurong "bakante-hin" ni MGen. Parayno ang kanyang puwesto na ang AOR ay ang buong Southern Tagalog dahil "dumating" na ang kanyang "kapalit, ganu'n kaya 'yun? Just wishing, err, just asking, hehehe!

At sakali pa rin na maraming miyembro ng NPA ang "maniwala" sa binitiwang salita ni Gen. Ed, eh, ano na ang mangyayari sa 'slogan' ng CPP-NPA, kasamang Ding Ladayo ng 'Kilusang Pagbabago'?

Puwede kayang ganito na ang mabasa natin sa mga pader -- 'Kabataan, tumungo sa kanayunan, sumama sa New People's Army -- para maging miyembro ng Philippine Army, ahahay!!!

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ONLINE NEWS

21 FEBRUARY 2017

AFP still open to peace talks with rebels

From the Philippine News Agency (Feb 20): AFP still open to peace talks with rebels

Despite the all-out war campaign against the rebels, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is still open for the government to renew peace negotiations with the New People's Army (NPA).

However, this does not mean that the military will tolerate NPA attacks and atrocities on civilian and other targets, AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año said in an interview over the weekend.

"We are not against the path to peace but we will not allow the NPAs to conduct atrocities and similar activities that will imperil the lives of ordinary people in the communities," he added in Filipino.

With this, Año said they are exerting pressure on the NPA to force the latter to go back to the negotiating table.

This is in line with the no-military pressure being exerted by other agencies and bodies.

"You need military and non-military pressure so that they will be forced to go back to the negotiating table," he added.

On Feb. 4, President Rodrigo Duterte terminated the peace talks after a series of unprovoked rebel attacks against military targets, killing six soldiers and abducting another three people.

In the ongoing campaign against the NPAs, the AFP chief said that they already have 30 encounters with the rebels resulting in the neutralization of 44 insurgents.

This can be broken down into 15 captured, 12 killed and 17 surrendered, Año said.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=965552>

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Troops engaged in curbing terror groups in high spirits -- AFP

From the Philippine News Agency (Feb 20): Troops engaged in curbing terror groups in high spirits -- AFP

Troops tasked to eliminate the Abu Sayyaf Group and other terror threats are in high spirits due to the support given by higher headquarters and President Rodrigo Duterte.

This was disclosed by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año in an interview over the weekend.

"The campaign is going quite well and the attitude (and morale) of our soldiers engaged in the fighting are good, they are motivated and they are really doing their job even beyond the call of duty," he added.

Año attributes this the support being extended by AFP headquarters, major service commanders, and President Duterte, who have provided additional funding for these servicemen engaged against the terrorists.

"Momentum is on our side, and (the ASG) is now losing their will to fight, eventually some of them will lie low, some of them will surrender," he added in Filipino.

The AFP chief added that the bandits will further disintegrate once the military gets further support from the community.

Año earlier set a six-month deadline to eliminate terrorists and bandit groups in Mindanao upon his assumption of the AFP's top post last December.

The campaign is now on its second month.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=965519>

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AFP will assist PDEA vs. Illegal drugs

Posted by Lui Claudio on February 20, 2017 at 2:42 PM

Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City -Armed Forces of the Philippines affirmed that they will not join the forces of the Philippine National Police with regards to the campaign for illegal drugs called Oplan Tokhang.

In accordance to that, AFP is planning to set up their own operation to support the campaign for illegal drugs.

In an interview by DWDD to the spokesperson of Armed Forces of the Philippines, Brigadier General Restituto Padilla on the preparedness of the AFP to "Laban sa ilegal na droga": he stated that before instructions were made is that they're ready to collaborate with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

He also said that The Philippine National Police should also avoid getting in touch with the operation of the said advocacy due to the misconduct of fight against illegal drugs.

The Philippine Army, Navy and Air Force are also willing to work with PDEA but they're just a support role and they will not lead the said operation as what General Eduardo Año ordered.

The task force also said that there are chosen number of police to participate in the said operation. He also added that the mass should worry less for the AFP will be continuing to do their job especially for the safety of the youth.

They will also deploy an estimated number of 500 to 5000 personnel depending on the situation of a certain place.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año stated that they are in the process of creating a special task force with the help of Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency or PDEA.

Año also confirmed that they will not adhere with the ongoing operations of Oplan Tokhang because they do not just plan to arrest a low profile pusher instead, they will prioritize a high profile drug lords that are the cause of the ongoing battle for illegal drugs here in the Philippines.

AFP elucidate that it will not be a bloody war, and they will do the best they can to avoid such. – KE/ KJB

www.dwdd.com

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NPA Terrorists sow fear in Madella

Posted by **Lui Claudio** on February 20, 2017 at 6:04 AM

Camp Melchor F Dela Cruz, Upi, Gamu, Isabela – Around 2:10 PM, February 18, 2017, residents of Brgy Cabua-An and Brgy Sto Nino, both of Madella, Quirino were terrorized by the presence of armed men believed to be members of the NPA. They forced the people to leave their respective homes and be moved temporarily to the barangay proper where they can be safe.

It can recalled that last Monday, February 13, 2017, fifty-four (54) families from Brgy San Martin, Madella, Quirino were also forced to evacuate their homes due to more or less one hundred fully armed NPA who occupied a school in the area, causing trauma, fear and panic to the residents, particularly the children.

Meanwhile, the troops of 861B assigned in the area had already addressed the problem and are currently conducting security patrols to secure the area occupied by the NPA so that the residents who fled can now return to their homes and live normal lives.

"The 51D troops will continue to provide security to the people of Madella who are being harassed and intimidated by this armed group, As for the NPA, I encourage you to lay down your firearms and live peaceful lives," said MGen Atal, Commander, 51D, PA.

www.dwdd.com

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