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

**25 February 2017**

**Saturday**

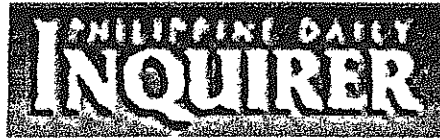
*Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.*

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

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**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | FEBRUARY 25, 2017 | SATURDAY**

**EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY**  
**NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING THE NORTHERN LUZON**  
 (As of 6:00 PM - Feb. 24, 2017)

<b>SUNRISE</b> 6:15 AM	<b>SUNSET</b> 6:03 PM
<b>MOONRISE</b> 5:00 AM	<b>MOONSET</b> 4:53 PM
<b>LAST QUARTER</b> FEB 19 3:33 AM	<b>NEW MOON</b> FEB 26 10:58 PM
<b>LOW TIDE</b> 4:20 AM -0.14 Meter	<b>HIGH TIDE</b> 9:26 PM 0.67 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers  
 Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms  
 Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms  
 Light rime

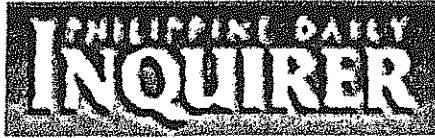
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FEB 26		FEB 27		FEB 26		FEB 27	
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	22 - 30 °C	25 - 29 °C	<b>TAGAYTAY</b>	20 - 30 °C	19 - 30 °C	<b>TACLOBAN</b>	24 - 29 °C / 26 - 28 °C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	22 - 29 °C	25 - 30 °C	<b>LEGAZPI</b>	24 - 30 °C	26 - 29 °C	<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b>	23 - 30 °C / 24 - 38 °C
<b>LAOAG</b>	23 - 30 °C	23 - 30 °C	<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b>	25 - 31 °C	26 - 30 °C	<b>METRO DAVAO</b>	24 - 31 °C / 26 - 32 °C
<b>BAGUIO</b>	14 - 23 °C	15 - 22 °C	<b>ILOILO/BACOLOD</b>	25 - 29 °C	26 - 30 °C	<b>ZAMBOANGA</b>	24 - 32 °C / 24 - 32 °C
<b>SBMA/CLARK</b>	23 - 31 °C	27 - 30 °C	<b>METRO CEBU</b>	24 - 30 °C	25 - 29 °C	<p>SIGOT KO, PADALA MOY</p>	

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# De Lima: I won't be silenced

**By Christine O. Avendaño**  
@10avendanoINQ

Sen. Leila de Lima did not go quietly.

"If they think they can silence me, if they think I will no longer fight the fight I've been waging, especially for the truth, and the persecution of the Duterte regime, it is my honor to be jailed for what I am fighting for. Please just pray for me," she told reporters as she was about to be handed over by Senate security to policemen who had waited all night with a warrant to arrest her on drug charges.

"These are all lies. The truth will come out and I will achieve justice. I am innocent," she said.

"Fight, Leila!" relatives, friends and supporters shouted as De Lima made her way down from her fifth-floor office in the Senate building, and was put aboard a police coaster that would take her to Philippine National

Police headquarters in Camp Crame, Quezon City, for booking.

It was just past 8 a.m. on Friday, two hours earlier than the handover time agreed between the Senate security and officers from the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, mother unit of the policemen who shot and killed execution-style a mayor detained on drug charges in a Leyte jail last Nov. 5.

## Drug charges

De Lima, 57, was arrested Friday on drug trafficking charges she insisted were manufactured to silence her opposition to President Duterte's brutal war on drugs, which has claimed the lives of more than 7,600 people in eight months.

Judge Juanita Guerrero of Muntilupa City Regional Trial Court Branch 204, with whom De Lima, as justice secretary, tussled over a drug case in 2011, ordered the senator's arrest on Thursday.

Also ordered arrested on the same warrant were De Lima's former driver, bodyguard and

alleged bagman, Ronnie Dayan, and former Bureau of Corrections chief Rafael Ragos.

Dayan was arrested in his home in Urbiztondo, Pangasinan province, late Thursday. Ragos had asked for deferment of his arrest.

An hour after De Lima's voluntary surrender, her office released a video message to her supporters and the nation, which her staff said was filmed on Wednesday in anticipation of her arrest.

## Video message

In the video, the senator insists she is innocent of the drug charges.

"I have never betrayed and I will never betray the trust of my country and the Filipino people," De Lima says, accusing the Duterte administration of making "an example of me to intimidate, silence and destroy anyone who dares challenge them, to draw public attention away from the government's abuses and failures, and to cover up their most murderous war on drugs."

"If they think [that] by jailing me, I will turn my back on my principles, they are mistaken. Instead, they have encouraged me more to pursue truth and justice," she says.

The message contains scathing remarks about Mr. Duterte, whom she calls "the mastermind of the filing of cases against me."

"The filing of criminal cases against me is only the fulfillment of Mr. Duterte's fixation for revenge against me, because of my investigation of the Davao Death Squad when I was the chairwoman of the Commission on Human Rights," she says, referring to the 2009 probe of extrajudicial killings in Davao during Mr. Duterte's term as mayor of the city.

She says Mr. Duterte acts on a whim, which she calls "impunity," and traces to his time as mayor of Davao, when he discovered that "he could kill without accountability."

"Truth is, even though he has killed over 1,000 in Davao and

over 7,000 throughout the Philippines with his death squads and rogue police, he has yet to pay for it under the law," she says.

#### He will 'pay soon'

But Mr. Duterte may soon pay for his "horrible crime against humanity," she says, pointing to the emergence earlier this week of retired police officer Arturo Lascañas, a confessed hit man for the Davao liquidation team, who confirmed the existence of the hit squad and claimed the killings in the city were ordered by Mr. Duterte.

Lascañas disclosed his dealings with Mr. Duterte in a news conference in the Senate on Monday, confirming the testimony in a Senate inquiry last year by another confessed death squad hit man, Edgar Matobato, who said Mr. Duterte ordered the killings and shot dead a Department of Justice employee himself.

"With the revelation of Lascañas, there is no more doubt that our President is a murderer and a sociopathic serial killer.

This is also the reason why we are experiencing all the madness in the government under this regime that is being led by the No. 1 criminal in the entire Philippines, if not in the whole world, none other than President Rodrigo Roa Duterte," she says.

De Lima calls on Mr. Duterte to "stop the killings" and stop harassing her.

"Stop this madness," she says.

De Lima will be detained in the PNP Custodial Center, where two former senators—Jinggoy Estrada and Bong Revilla Jr.—are detained while fighting plunder charges over the pork barrel scam.

Malacañang gave assurance that De Lima would be safe in detention.

"Sen. Leila de Lima has nothing to fear," presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said.

He said De Lima would be "treated with fairness and accorded due process." —WITH REPORTS FROM DJ YAP AND LEILA B. SALAVERRIA INQ



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# 'It's an honor to be jailed'

By **PAOLO ROMERO**

Sen. Leila de Lima yesterday maintained her innocence and declared it an honor to be jailed, saying it was for speaking out against extrajudicial killings and other alleged human rights violations committed by the Duterte administration.

"If they think they can silence me, if they think I'll no longer fight for my cause, especially for the truth, for justice, the daily extrajudicial killings and other oppressive acts of the Duterte regime, it's an honor that I be jailed for what I'm fighting for," De Lima told reporters before leaving her Senate office to join the police convoy waiting outside the Senate building to bring her to detention at Camp Crame in Quezon City.

The 57-year-old senator reiterated her innocence of the illegal drug charges filed against her by the Department of Justice (DOJ) before the Muntinlupa Regional Trial Court last week.

DOJ prosecutors have linked De Lima to the illegal drug trade at the national penitentiary when she was justice secretary.

"There's no truth, they're all lies, the allegations against me, that I allegedly received drug money, allegedly coddled or protected drug suspects – these are all lies and the truth will come out at the right time," she said.

She believes that with

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## It's an honor From Page 1

the love of God, she would survive her ordeal and that truth and justice will prevail in the end.

De Lima rushed back to her office and spent the night there on Thursday after receiving reports on Thursday night that a team from the police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) would arrest her at her residence in Paranaque City.

She was only at her residence for less than an hour waiting for her son before she rushed back to the Senate. She did not want to be arrested in her house.

There was supposed to be an agreement between Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III and Interior Secretary Ismael Sueno that De Lima be allowed to go home to be with her family overnight before returning to her office yesterday morning and surrendering to the police.

brain, for him to have the gall to boast of the testimonies of their witnesses who are convicted drug lords and whose statements contradict each other," De Lima said.

"From the very beginning, I knew that this regime would not seek true justice. The filing of criminal cases against me is only the fulfillment of Mr. Duterte's fixation for revenge against me," she said.

She was referring to her investigation of the Davao death squad when she was chair of the Commission on Human Rights in 2009.

In a phone interview with ANC from her detention cell at Camp Crame, De Lima said while she has been psychologically preparing herself for the arrest, her being in jail "all feels surreal."

She said it also pained her as a mother, feeling "the hurt of my family. They know that I'm innocent."

De Lima's lawyers are planning to question before the Supreme Court (SC) alleged

She lamented she was not able to see her family, particularly her two sons, even as she appealed to the CIDG to move the arrest for a few more hours because she did not feel safe being arrested at night.

"It's dangerous at night," she said on Thursday. "I'm not going to hide or evade arrest. Just a little respect is all I'm asking for."

Her appeal was heeded but the arresting officers stayed at the Senate garage five floors below and waited overnight for her.

The senator was able to sleep for a few hours in her office and woke up at around 5 a.m. and had a light breakfast of coffee and pan de sal.

She later received visitors, including Fr. Robert Reyes, Dinagat Island Rep. Arlene Bag-ao, former social welfare secretary Corazon Soliman and Sen. Francis Pangilinan.

grave abuse of authority by Judge Juanita Guerrero of the Muntinlupa regional trial court (RTC) for issuing the arrest warrant.

Alex Padilla, spokesman for De Lima's legal team, said they would try to come up with a final decision to file their petition before the SC.

De Lima earlier this week filed motions to quash before the three court branches where her three separate drug cases were raffled off, citing lack of jurisdiction.

The motions were supposed to be heard yesterday, with the prosecution asking that the hearings be moved till next month, but Judge Guerrero of RTC branch 204 on Thursday ordered De Lima's arrest.

"Let it be said that she (Guerrero) stated that her (order) was purely on the criminal information filed by the (Department of Justice). Her motion to quash was not considered at all," Padilla said.

He also said De Lima will also try to insist again that the

De Lima also spoke over the phone with former president Benigno Aquino III who gave her words of encouragement.

At around 8 a.m., she emerged from her office surrounded by Senate security personnel and her staff as reporters and camera crews rushed to get a few words from her.

As the senator was being processed at the CIDG headquarters in Camp Crame, her video message was posted on her Facebook page that was apparently recorded on Thursday night.

De Lima described her arrest as "an appalling sign of the return of a power-hungry, morally bankrupt and abusive government."

She pointed to President Duterte as the mastermind of her persecution based on "manufactured stories" from drug convicts at the New Bilibid Prison. She called him and his officials "liars" and "hypocrites."

"There must be so much Fentanyl in Mr. Duterte's

Office of Ombudsman and the Sandiganbayan – not the Muntinlupa RTC – have jurisdiction over her cases.

"We were asking that these charges be dismissed because there's no evidence, no drugs, there was no order to protect drug lords. So the complaint was fatal and defective," he said.

The senator, he said, is also allowed to file a motion to have her moved to a suitable detention place if her cell in Camp Crame is not to her liking.

Padilla also said De Lima will not ask that she be placed under house or hospital arrest.

"She's not the type to ask for special favors or privileges. She'll stand up and answer these allegations and charges," he said.

De Lima in a phone interview from Camp Crame with ANC said it was unfortunate the Court of Appeals denied her petitions to stop the DOJ from filing the charges before the regular courts.

"We have a very prejudicial issue of jurisdiction," she said.

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MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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# 5 NPA rebels surrender in Masbate

By NINO N. LUCES, DANNY J. ESTACIO,  
and RUEL SALDICO

**C**AMP ELIAS ANGELES, Camarines Sur/CAMP NAKAR, Lucena City — The military confirmed yesterday the surrender of five New People's Army (NPA) rebels to government troops in Barangay Bacolod in Milagros, Masbate the other day.

Lt. Gen. Ferdinand Quidilla, the military's Southern Luzon Command (SOLCOM) chief, said the rebels surrendered to elements of the 2nd Infan-

try Battalion (2IB) of the Philippine Army's 9th Infantry Division (9ID) at 1:30 p.m. Thursday.

"This is a good indicator that our efforts to reach out and encourage these NPA rebels to abandon the senseless killing and disrupting the peace in the countryside is effective and we expect more members to return back to society," said Quidilla.

For security reasons, Captain Joash Pramis, 9ID public affairs officer, identified the rebels who surrendered only by their aliases — "Jason," 35; "Aris," 33; "Bunso," 29; "Pogs," 30 and an 18-year-

old amazon named "Gina."

They also surrendered their rebel firearms listed as an M14 rifle; an M16 rifle; an M1 carbine; a .45-caliber pistol; and a .38-cal. revolver, said Pramis.

One of the rebels shared his sentiments upon his surrender in Filipino, saying: "We can no longer take the extortion activities we are ordered to force upon our impoverished countrymen as well as the broken promises within the revolutionary movement."

Pramis said the government is now preparing the financial assistance and

livelihood package the surrenderers are entitled to under the government's Comprehensive Local Integration Program. "We look forward to their rejoining their families as that is what they long for the most," he said.

For his part, Major General Manolito Orense, 9ID commander, assured that the CLIP will be made available to all surrendering NPA guerrillas. "We call on our Bicolano brothers who are victims of the deception scheme of the CPP-NPA-NDF to lay down your arms and go back to the fold of the law," said Orense.

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## ACROSS THE COUNTRY

### 5 NPA rebels surrender in Masbate

LEGAZPI CITY– Five New People's Army (NPA) rebels surrendered in Masbate on Thursday afternoon.

Maj. Gil Perez, Southern Luzon Command information officer, said the rebels surrendered to Lt. Col. Redentor Cabanizas, 2nd Infantry Battalion commanding officer, in Barangay Bacolod in Milagros town and turned over M16 and M14 rifles, an M1 Carbine, a caliber .45 pistol and a caliber .38 revolver.

Perez did not identify the rebels, who belonged to the Komiteng Partido 4 of the Bicol Regional Party Committee.

Cabanizas said the rebels could avail themselves of financial aid for turning over their firearms as well as livelihood assistance under the Comprehensive Local Integration Program.

– Celso Amo

### 5 hurt in road mishap

NORTH COTABATO – Three militiamen and two soldiers were injured when their vehicle rolled over along the highway in President Roxas town.

Ric Gomez, Ronnie Librando and Delio Dandin of the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units and Pvts. First Class Lord John Singson and Rocky Villamore of the Army's 39th Infantry Battalion were taken to a hospital for treatment.

Probers said the driver of the KM450 light truck lost control of the wheel when one of the tires exploded.

– John Unson

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## **IN NIR: ,New Army chief**

From the Visayan Daily Star (Feb 24): IN NIR: ,New Army chief

Negros Island Region will have a new Army chief next week.

Army Col. Eliezer Losañes will take over command of the 303rd Infantry Brigade, that supervises two Army battalions stationed in Negros island, on March 1, Capt. Eduardo Precioso, 303IB Civil Military Operations officer, said yesterday.

Losañes will replace Brig. Gen. Francisco Delfin, who is reportedly slated to be as the incoming Assistant Division Commander of 3rd Infantry Division.

Delfin served as commander of the 303rd Infantry Brigade for almost one year and eight months.

Before his new assignment, Losañes served as deputy commander of the 301st Infantry Brigade in Iloilo.

Maj. Gen. Jon Aying, 3ID commanding general, will officiate at the change of command between Delfin and Losañes to be held at Camp Major Nelson Gerona in Brgy. Minoyan, Murcia.

Aying also served as 303rd Infantry Brigade commander.

Precioso said that the inauguration of the new gym inside the military camp will also be held before the change of command ceremony.

<http://www.visayandailystar.com/2017/February/24/topstory4.htm>

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## **Gov't troops on high alert vs rebels' attacks**

From the Philippine Information Agency (Feb 24): Gov't troops on high alert vs rebels' attacks

Members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the region have been placed on high alert following reports that the New People's Army (NPA) has intensified its insurgency operations against government forces.

Colonel Bartolome Vicente Bacarro, commander of the 502nd brigade based in Echague town, said the rebels have recruited and retrained new recruits even during the declarations of unilateral ceasefire between the government troops and the communist rebels.

Bacarro said the armed group has also intensified its re-organization activities and collection of its revolutionary taxes against businesses, projects, private companies and other vulnerable individuals.

Bacarro advised the members of the Philippine National Police (PNP) to be alert, too, as the armed group may also attack their stations and seize their weapons.

He likewise warned the public that the rebels are wearing uniforms, combat boots and backpacks similar to that of the government soldiers.

"This is one of their tactics to deceive the public," Bacarro added.

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## **Army, local govt keep kids in school, promote peace**

From the Philippine Information Agency (Feb 24): Army, local govt keep kids in school, promote peace

A total of 456 schoolchildren, composed of preschoolers up to grade six pupils, recently benefitted from the feeding project as soldiers of the 403rd Infantry 'Peacemaker' Brigade (403Bde) and Malaybalay City local government worked hand in hand in promoting peace and fighting childhood malnutrition.

Col Eric C Vinoya, 403Bde commander of the Philippine Army's 4th Infantry Division (4ID PA), said this feeding program—which aims to facilitate resolution of local issues, improve school attendance, and nutritional status of children especially in remote communities—is a testament to the Philippine Army's commitment in supporting the government to promote good health among schoolchildren.

In a statement, he said "contrary to the false accusations of the NPA leaders that our troops are doing psychological warfare (PsyWar) and intimidation, the real fact is that we are doing this and many other activities because these are beneficial to communities. We now challenge the NPAs, especially their leaders, that if they are truly for people, then they should join us in this undertaking. Otherwise, their intentions would be very clear—they would just persecute our troops by capitalizing on local issues and using these things to agitate people, arm them, and let them fight against government with extortion-motivated attacks."

"I congratulate our troops who, despite New People's Army (NPA) rebels' attacks, still they continue risking lives to fulfill the Army's commitment of serving people through our Community Support Program. I commend the troops for their service and I urge people to work together in finding peaceful solutions to local issues instead of using terroristic and violent acts," he stressed.

As part of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' "Kalayaan" project, it supports the Department of Education's "Adopt a School" program. It is regularly conducted in far-flung barangays where the brigade's Community Support Teams are deployed.

In Malaybalay City, BCT Elementary School which has 16 undernourished pupils is just one of the many beneficiary schools of the army's feeding program. Among which are Barangays Manalog and Kibalabag of Malaybalay City, where, just recently, three soldiers facilitating the program were brutally murdered by NPA terrorists.

It can be recalled that among those soldiers who were brutally murdered earlier this February, was Sgt Owen B. Yee of the 8th Infantry Battalion. He was an advocate of this Feeding Program and was able to serve hundreds of Lumad children in Impasugong town and Malaybalay City, all in Bukidnon.

Other line units specifically the 1st Special Forces Battalion, 8th Infantry Battalion and the 58th Infantry Battalion, are also conducting same program in various IP-dominated areas in Bukidnon and Misamis Oriental provinces in collaboration with local government units and other government agencies.

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## Sayyaf hijacking foiled in Sulu Sea

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Navy troops foiled an attempt by Abu Sayyaf bandits to hijack a foreign vessel in the Sulu Sea on Wednesday, an official said yesterday.

*M/V Dong Hae Star*, a Panamanian-flagged ship, was on its way to Indonesia from China when two speedboats pursued them near Pearl Bank in the waters off Taganak Island in Tawi-Tawi, said Capt. Jo-Ann Petinglay, spokesperson for the Western Mindanao Command.

Petinglay said the crew of *M/V Dong Hae Star* sent a distress call to a monitoring station of the Navy in Bongao, which dispatched patrol boats to the area.

She said the speedboats stopped chasing the vessel when they sighted the re-

sponding Navy ships.

Petinglay said the Navy ships also monitored and provided security to passing foreign vessels in the area.

The hijacking attempt came barely four days after gunmen attacked a Vietnamese cargo vessel in the waters off Tawi-Tawi, killing a crewmember and seizing six others.

*M/V Giang Hai* was sailing near Pearl Bank and Taganak island when gunmen on a speedboat blocked its way.

Rear Admiral Rene Medina, Naval Forces Western Mindanao chief, said they deployed additional naval ships to augment members of Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi in their law enforcement operations amid recent cross-border kidnappings by Abu Sayyaf bandits.

– Ruel Pareño

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## AFP scores anew against Abu Sayyaf

By **NONOYE LACSON**

**ZAMBOANGA CITY** - A sea-jacking was foiled, while a cache of high-powered firearms was seized as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) continued to deal major blows against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)

in Tawi-Tawi and Sulu.

Rear Admiral Rene V. Medina, Commander of the Naval Forces in Western Mindanao disclosed yesterday that patrolling navy ships thwarted an attempt by armed men, believed to be ASG members, to attack and board the MV Dong Hae Star, which is of Panamanian registry and was navigating the Sulu Seas last Wednesday morning.

Meanwhile, elements of the Joint Task Force Sulu recovered a high-powered firearm and other war materiel belonging to the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in a clearing operation conducted at the village of Paligi, Indanan, Sulu yesterday morning.

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THE DAILY  
**tribune**  
Without fear or favor

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# Navy foils Abu piracy attempt off Tawi-Tawi

By Mario J. Mallari

Elements of the Naval Forces Western Mindanao (NFWM) thwarted an attempt by Abu Sayyaf bandits to intercept another commercial vessel off Tawi Tawi province on Wednesday, the military said yesterday.

Rear Adm. Rene Medina, commander of NFWM, said that the quick response of patrolling elements of the NFWM to the report of *MV Dong Hae Star* drove away the speedboats with five suspected ASG bandits aboard each.

A Panamanian flag ship, *MV Dong Hae Star* was transiting the Sulu Sea from China to Indonesia at around 10 a.m. when suspicious black speedboats started pursuing them in sea

waters off Pearl Bank.

The crew reported the incident to the Littoral Monitoring Station (LMS) Bongao.

"According to said *MV*, the suspicious speedboats desist from chasing them and maneuvered to open sea upon sighting responding navy ships," Medina said.

Medina subsequently deployed additional vessels to Joint Task Forces Tawi Tawi and Sulu for maritime interdiction and to support the law enforcement operations in the area.

The LMS Bongao continued to monitor *MV Dong Hae Star* while transiting in Tawi Tawi.

The foiled attack against a commercial vessel less than a week after a Vietnamese ship was intercepted by armed men, believed to be Abu Sayyaf bandits,

off Taganak also in Tawi Tawi.

One of the crew members was killed while six others were abducted by the armed men and are yet to be located.

"The AFP condemns the abduction perpetrated by these criminal groups who continuously compromise the peace and order in Western Mindanao," Medina said.

Kidnapping incidents continued in southern Philippines despite the all-out offensives being conducted by the military to destroy the Abu Sayyaf group as ordered by President Duterte.

Meanwhile, elements of the JTF-Sulu recovered a high-powered firearm and various war materiel during continuing operations on the outskirts of Indanan town.

Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., commander of Western Mindanao Command, said that the recovery clearly showed that the Abu Sayyaf terrorists are now trying to evade pursuing troops by hiding their guns.

Recovered were an M16 Armalite rifle with eight magazines and 123 rounds of ammunition; two hammocks, a pair of boots and a bandoleer during clearing operations in Barangay Paligi.

"The recent seizure only proves that the Abu Sayyaf members are hiding their armaments because their corridors have already been narrowed," Galvez said.

"They are guising as civilians to evade government forces and civilians who report their whereabouts," he added.

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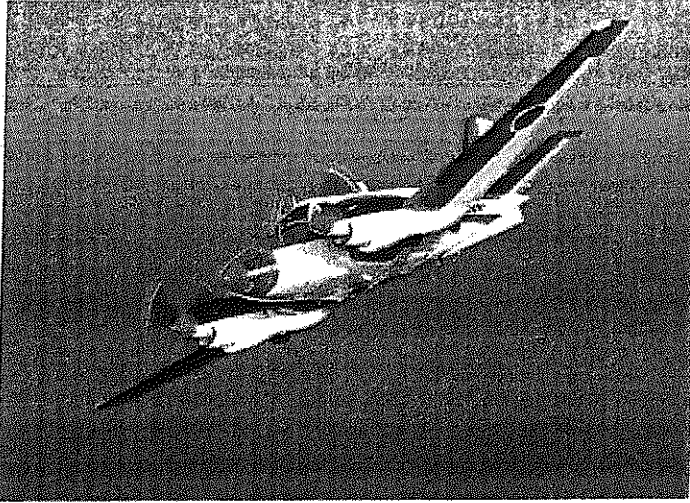
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## ONLINE NEWS 25 FEBRUARY 2017

[www.dwdd.com.ph](http://www.dwdd.com.ph)

# Two Japanese aircrafts to arrive in March

Posted by **Lui Claudio** on February 24, 2017 at 11:01 AM



The modernization of military equipment continues as two of the five TC-90 air crafts from Japan are expected to arrive on March 27.

Philippine Navy Spokesperson Capt. Lued Lincuna said that the additional gears will boost the military capability in aerial and maritime aerial reconnaissance or locating the enemy in certain regions.

Lincuna explained that the aircrafts will be useful for humanitarian assistance and disaster response by carrying reliefs to areas affected by calamities.

TC-90 air crafts were also capable to tighten maritime security as it can be used as a surveillance, Lincuna added.

On the day of arrival, the two aircrafts will be controlled by Japanese since it is not yet transferred to the Philippines.

Last November, two Philippine Navy pilots and six aircrews left the country to undergo trainings on how to use the TC-90 aircraft. **-MF**

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## Duterte says China misunderstood Yasay's remarks on South China Sea

From InterAksyon (Feb 24): Duterte says China misunderstood Yasay's remarks on South China Sea



President Rodrigo Duterte. (REUTERS/File photo)

**President Rodrigo Duterte said on Friday he was not sure why China's commerce minister had canceled a trip to his country, and that Beijing misunderstood his foreign minister's comments about its militarization in the South China Sea.**

**Duterte said he wanted solid ties with China and there was no urgency in pressing it to abide by last year's arbitration ruling on the Philippines' maritime boundaries and sovereign rights, which went in favor of Manila and infuriated Beijing.**

On Tuesday, Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay, the chairman of a meeting of foreign ministers of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), said the region had "grave concerns" about China putting weapons installations on its manmade islands in the Spratlys.

[Read related story: [ASEAN unsettled by China weapon systems, tension in South China Sea](#)]

**"The problem is I think Secretary Yasay was misunderstood by the Chinese government,"** Duterte said in a speech.

**"I would like to assure China, and this is what I had committed to do when I was there, that we will talk as friends,"** he said, referring to a trip he made to China in October last year.

China's Commerce Minister Gao Hucheng decided at the last minute to postpone an official trip on Thursday to the Philippines to sign about 40 joint projects worth billions of dollars. No reason was given by either side.

[Read related story: [Chinese commerce minister abruptly postpones PH trip: sources](#)]

However, on Friday, the Chinese government announced the appointment of a new trade minister to replace Gao, as part of a reshuffle ahead of a crucial Communist Party meeting later this year.

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Establishing better relations with China has been a key plank of Duterte's sometimes perplexing foreign policy, which has seen him lash out at major donors and investors such as the United States and European Union.

He is keen to tap China for loans, tourists and infrastructure.

On Friday, Duterte said the Philippines' longstanding alliance with the United States did not make it "duty bound to follow" Washington's foreign policy, and conflict with Beijing was not an option.

"We cannot go to war because we cannot afford it," he said. "And as much as possible, the bilateral relations between the two countries would be enhanced and improved and trade and commerce between the two countries greatly improved."

**But that could be affected by Yasay's comments that ASEAN members were "unanimous in their expression of concern" about "very unsettling" developments. He mentioned China by name, something the 10-nation grouping is often reluctant to do.**

**China's foreign ministry spokesman, Geng Shuang, on Thursday told a regular briefing that Yasay's remarks were "baffling and regrettable", and he hoped Yasay would "speak and act cautiously".**

<http://www.interaksyon.com/article/137286/duterte-says-china-misunderstood-yasays-remarks-on-south-china-sea>

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## **2 rebels killed, assorted weapons seized in Capiz**

From the Philippine News Agency (Feb 24): 2 rebels killed, assorted weapons seized in Capiz

Two New People's Army (NPA) rebels were killed while two shotguns and two hand grenades recovered following an encounter with the 61st Infantry Battalion troops in Maayon town, Capiz province Friday afternoon.

The 30-minute clash took place around 3:40 p.m. at Sitio Maknoy, Barangay Jebaca, according to 3rd Infantry Division spokesperson Lt. Col. Ericson Rosana.

Government troops were conducting combat operations when they encountered around seven rebels under a certain Romulo Gangoso alias "Rigan."

In the ensuing firefight, two rebels were immediately killed, prompting the remaining rebels to immediately flee, leaving behind their dead comrades and weapons.

There were no reported casualty on the government side as pursuit operations by the 61st Infantry Battalion continue.

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