

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



ARMY

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NEWS CLIPPINGS

15 January 2017

Sunday

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

15 January 2017

PHILIPPINE SUNDAY INQUIRER

FILIPINOS OF THE YEAR

42 JAPAN TO INVEST \$5.7B IN PH OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

FROM THE SLOPES TO THE CITY ON A BIKE

48

WHILE YOU SLEEP

DUTERTE'S NEXT TARGET: 'JUETENG'

INQUIRE WITHIN

NISSAN JUKE N-STYLE

DOUBLE THE STRENGTH

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Abus free Korean, Filipino hostages

PCG seeks new boats vs pirates

Rody gov't open to better ties with US under Trump

House eyes P3 diesel tax

MISS UNIFFSE

EVERYBODY WINS THIS 2017!

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The Sunday Times

US free to block China - Yasay

Abu Sayyaf frees kidnapped Korean, Filipino sailors

'Duterte gov't on right track in fight vs crime'

Government's grapple with globalization backlash

'I Am the Ever-Virgin Mary, Mother of the True God'

Sunday trad

SUNDAY

SAYYAF RELEASE KOREAN, FILIPINO

FROM CORP. EMPLOYEES TO SGO MEMB

EVERYONE GETS A DISCOUNT COUPON FOR 2017

SEE CALYPSO HOLLYWOOD BILLED TRUMP

TRUMP LIKE A WARRIOR, FIGHT LIKE A WARRIOR

TRUMP LIKE SINGAPORE! ESCORTER!

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

15 JANUARY 2017

PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER
1	Weather Forecast	-	PDI p.A2
NATIONAL NEWS			
2-3	Du30's next target : Illegal gambling	Gil Cabacungan	PDI p.A1
4-5	Sayyaf release Korean, Filipino	Francisco Tuyay	The Standard p.1
ARMY NEWS			
6-7	(Update) Military honors soldier killed by Sayyaf	-	www.philistar.com
8	Army reservist sa 'murder for insurance', timbog	Lordeth Bonilla	Police Files p.2
AFP RELATED NEWS			
9	Ransom talks persists as Korean freed	Jeofrey Maitem	PDI p.A4
10	AFP, civilian workers get raised pledge by Aquino	Jaime Laude	The Phil Star p.8
11	Defense Chief to visit Pag-Asa	Jaime Laude	The Phil Star p.2
12	AFP hopeful for signing of ceasefire accord	Jaime Laude	The Phil Star p.2
13	AFP modernization to continue- Lorenzana	PNA	The Daily Tribune p.4
EDITORIAL/COMMENTARY			
14	Kabataang Koreano, nagpugay sa mga sundalong Pilipino na lumaban sa Korean War	PNA	Balita p.6
15	Abu Sayyaf, kaya bang pulbusin?	Ely Saludar	Police Files p.3
ONLINE NEWS			
16	Galvez eyed for top Wesmincom post		www.dailytribune.com
17	Pirates Attacking Bigger Ships Off Philippines for Ransom Money		www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

15 January 2017



Page: A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JANUARY 15, 2017 | SUNDAY

LOW PRESSURE AREA ESTIMATED AT 132 KMS EAST OF NORTHEAST OF CATARMAN, NORTHERN SAMAR

NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING NORTHERN AND CENTRAL LUZON (As of 8:00 AM - Jan. 14, 2017)

SUNRISE 6:25 AM	SUNSET 5:46 PM
MOONRISE 8:33 PM	MOONSET 8:30 AM
FULL MOON JAN 12 7:34 PM	LAST QUARTER JAN 20 6:13 AM
LOW TIDE 7:20 AM -0.28 Meter	HIGH TIDE 11:46 PM 1.11 Meter

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

	JAN 16	JAN 17	JAN 16	JAN 17	JAN 16	JAN 17		
METRO MANILA	23 - 31 °C	23 - 30 °C	TAGAYTAY	20 - 28 °C	19 - 27 °C	TACLOBAN	24 - 28 °C	26 - 29 °C
TUGUEGARAO	21 - 28 °C	21 - 27 °C	LEGAZPI	24 - 28 °C	24 - 27 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	23 - 30 °C	24 - 31 °C
LADAG	23 - 29 °C	22 - 29 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	24 - 31 °C	24 - 30 °C	METRO DAVAO	24 - 31 °C	25 - 32 °C
BAGUID	14 - 23 °C	13 - 22 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	24 - 29 °C	25 - 28 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24 - 33 °C	23 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	23 - 31 °C	22 - 30 °C	METRO CEBU	24 - 29 °C	24 - 28 °C	<p>SAGOT KO, PADALA MOY</p>		

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1

15 January 2017



Page: A1

Du30's next target: Illegal gambling

FROM A1

By Gil C. Cabacungan
@gcabacunganINQ

President Duterte's task force on illegal gambling is taking center stage in his war on crime this month, with sweeping changes in the state-run small town lottery (STL), which he hopes will finally slay "jueteng," "masiao," two-ball and other illegal numbers games in the country.

Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II is head of the task force along with Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez, whose main goal is to shake down the gaming industry of illegal operators and generate massive funds for the President's social projects.

Aguirre said illegal gambling would be the third front in the

President's all-out war against crime after starting with illegal drugs and moving on to corruption.

"After drugs and corruption, I was instructed by the President to investigate illegal gambling, small town lottery and online gambling. I'm just waiting for the BO (executive order)," Aguirre said.

Illegal gambling was one of the main topics in last Monday's Cabinet meeting, where the President expressed his plan to provide free medicine to indigent Filipinos by generating billions of pesos in tax revenues by coming down hard on proprietors of illegal numbers games, he said.

Aguirre said that the task force was almost finished with its reforms in STL, while the executive order would lay down the powers and areas to be covered by the task force in going after illegal online gaming operators.

Aguirre said the President's main concern was how jueteng and masiao operators were able to coopt the STL operations of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), which was launched in the Arroyo administration specifically to legalize these numbers games.

"It was supposed to kill jueteng but it has only been remitting 10 to 15 percent of what the President believes should go to the government," Aguirre said.

"What the President wants is for the PCSO to collect everything that it should be earning. That is where he will get the money to give free medicine to Filipinos," he said.

Aguirre said the President's main targets were jueteng lords and masiao operators who continued to thrive despite efforts to stop their illegal operations in the last few administrations.

2

A National Bureau of Investigation report released in 2015 revealed that STL operators have defrauded PCSO of at least P50 billion a year by under-declaring their sales reports that served as the basis for the government's share.

The PCSO reported only P4.7 billion in revenues from STL in 2015.

The new PCSO board, led by former police Director Jose Jorge Corpuz as chair and former Marine Major Gen. Alexander Balutan as general manager, questioned why the previous management had limited the number of STL operators to only 18 since it was launched in 2006.

As part of reforms to make STL live up to its original purpose as a "jueteng killer," PCSO has expanded the list of STL operators to bring in more competition. It has also toughened up on the collection of the government's share and cracked down

on the bribery of police and local government protectors.

Aguirre said over 200 made a bid for the STL franchises and he expected the PCSO to announce the new and expanded list of operators by the end of January. He did not say how many franchises would be allowed to operate nationwide.

He said even alleged jueteng lord Charlie "Atong" Ang was forced to bid for the STL franchises as he has been operating jai alai inside the Cagayan Freeport and its subsidiary game, Virtual 2 Ball, Meridien Vista Gaming Corp.

"He (Ang) has to stop Meridien because he has to apply for an STL franchise. He doesn't pay taxes unlike STL which, although they cheat, at least pay to PCSO," said Aguirre, who was not sure if Ang won any STL franchise.

Aguirre said the crackdown on STL and illegal numbers games began months before the

Department of Justice and NBI busted gaming tycoon Jack Lam's illegal gambling operations at Fontana Casino in Pangasinan and Fort Ilocandia in Ilocos Norte. The President has issued an arrest warrant against Lam for bribery and economic sabotage and has ordered the Bureau of Internal Revenue to seize his assets if he refused to settle his back taxes.

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III meanwhile said stringent enforcement against illegal gambling would work.

"I think tenacious implementation will be effective," Sotto said. "We just have to have an alternative development program for small-time bookies so that they will accept the displacement."

Sen. Francis Escudero said he wanted to see the order first, while other senators sought for comment yesterday did not respond. —WITH A REPORT FROM TARRA QUISMUNDO INQ

15 January 2017

The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

Page: A1

SAYYAF RELEASE KOREAN, FILIPINO

By Francisco Tuyay

THE Abu Sayyaf set free a South Korean ship captain and his Filipino crewman who were abducted from their vessel off the coast of Tawi-Tawi last October, officials said Saturday.

Sources said Capt. Park Chul-tong and Filipino crewman Glenn Alindajao were released after the payment of a P25-million ransom with the mediation of former Sulu governor Abdusakur Tan but Peace secretary Jesus Dureza maintained the government stuck to its no-ransom policy.

The Abu Sayyaf released Park

and Alindajao to Moro National Liberation Front members Abraham Joel and Adon Adak in Indanan town and they were later turned over to Dureza at the residence of the former Sulu governor.

The abduction on board the 11,400-ton heavy load carrier Dong Bang Giant 2 occurred Oct.

20 just off the southern entry of the Sibutu Passage, a 29-kilometer wide channel used by merchant shipping in transit between the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea. The cargo ship was heading for South Korea from Australia.

The gunmen boarded the vessel and hurriedly took Park and Alindajao at gunpoint. The rest of the crew members, mostly Filipinos, managed to escape by hiding and locking themselves inside their cabins. The two captives were then taken somewhere in Sulu.

"They were released from captivity this morning. The Moro National Liberation Front [MNLF] based in Barangay Kagay facilitated the release of the kidnapped

victims," said Maj. Filemon Tarapacan, spokesman of the Western Mindanao Command.

The two captives were presented to the media in Davao City and subsequently airlifted to Manila where Park was handed over to South Korean embassy officials.

In a press briefing, Dureza could not give details on who was behind the abduction but sources said the kidnapers were bandits under the leadership of Abu Sayyaf sub-commander Aiden Bagade, a notorious gunman operating in Sulu.

The two seafarers were beaten by their captors and forced to sleep in the jungle while eating dried fish and drinking unclean water, Dureza said. *Turn to A*



"We were almost hopeless but I am thankful we were able to come home safely," Filipino crewman Glenn Alindajao, 31, said in a news briefing.

The 38-year-old Park did not speak with reporters but like Alindajao, appeared weak and grew a beard while in captivity.

"They were physically maltreated without any provocation," Dureza told AFP. "They have been very stressed out. They were moved from one place to another, sometimes sleeping in forests, different houses, eating just dried fish and drinking water from brooks."

Dureza said the Muslim rebel group the MNLF, which is in peace talks with the government, helped in facilitating the hostages' release.

The ship's owners also negotiated for their freedom, according to Dureza, adding that he was not aware if a ransom was paid to Abu Sayyaf, which does not normally free hostages without huge sums of money.

The spike in abductions sparked Indonesian warnings that the region could become the "next Somalia" and pushed the three neighbors to pledge coordinated patrols.

Dureza said he would recommend that ships have armed security.

Duterte, who took office last year, vowed to destroy the Abu Sayyaf and deployed thousands of extra troops to defeat them.

But the militants have defied more than a decade of similar US-backed offensives, surviving in their mountainous and jungle-clad strongholds in the poverty-plagued southern Philippines.

"The two hostages even planned to escape but they could not. They discovered that the community around is very supportive," Dureza said. "They are able to benefit from [the kidnappings]." **With AFP**

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www.philstar.com

(Update) Military honors soldier killed by Sayyaf

From the Philippine Star (Jan 14): (Update) Military honors soldier killed by Sayyaf



The military yesterday accorded funeral honors to an elite Army Special Forces officer, the first casualty of the year in the military's fight against the Abu Sayyaf in the jungles of Basilan.

Capt. Clinton Capio was shot during a nine-hour firefight between the military and the bandit group in Barangay Cabcaban, Sumisip town on Thursday.

The troops clashed with 60 to 80 Abu Sayyaf members led by Furuji Indama. The military forces launched the attack following intelligence reports of a big formation of bandits in the area.

Capio was commanding officer of the 1st Special Forces Company assigned to augment the 4th Special Forces Battalion to help run after remnants of the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

Western Mindanao Command spokesman Maj. Filemon Tan Jr. said the soldiers led by Capio were closing in for an assault when Capio was hit by enemy fire.

"During the first few minutes of the firefight, there were troops wounded. Captain Capio was not yet hit at the time. Their task was to help the soldiers who were pinned down, so they provided suppressive fire so the wounded could withdraw and then advanced. It was two hours in the gunfight that he was hit," 1Lt. Ron JR Villarosa, civil military officer of the 4th Special Forces Battalion, told The STAR.

Capio was killed by a single enemy bullet that grazed the right side of his temple barely a centimeter from the cover of his Kevlar helmet.

"He was wearing helmet but the angle of the cap might had been in an open position because they were moving in for assault when he was unfortunately hit," Tan said.

6

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

Capio was a member of the Philippine Military Academy class of 2006. His remains would be flown to Baguio, his hometown, via C-130 military plane.

Capio's fellow soldiers said they would always remember him as a fighting leader who never let his troops down.

"He was a very soft-spoken person, a gentleman, an officer and definitely a fighting leader" who "fights from the front," Villarosa said.

"His fellow troops and team leader describe him as a fatherly figure... They can't say anything bad about him. He is really a very capable leader," he added.

Army spokesman Col. Benjamin Hao described Capio as a "silent-type kind of person" who was "very dedicated in his work and the task given him."

"He was also the TARZAN (he topped the physical fitness) during their ranger course.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/01/14/1662533/military-honors-soldier-killed-savvaf>

7
Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

15 January 2017

POLICE FILES

Page. 2

Army reservist sa 'murder for insurance', timbog

Arestado ang isang nagpakilalang Army reservist, na kasabwat umano ng isang Japanese syndicate na may kinalaman sa modus na 'murder for insurance', kahapon ng umaga sa Las Piñas City.

Ayon kay Chief Inspector Romy Lanzarrote, hepe ng Criminal Investigation and Detection Group ng Southern Police District (CIDG-SPD) nakilala ang inarestong suspect na si Kirby Patricio Tan, at naninirahan sa Brgy. Pulang Lupa ng nasabing lungsod.

Alas-10:00 ng umaga nang arestuhin ng mga pulis si Tan sa bahay nito sa naturang lugar kung saan nakumpiska rito ang dalawang baril at isang granada.

Nabatid, na si Tan umano ay kasabwat ng isang Japanese syndicate na ang modus ay 'murder to claim insurance', kung saan dalawang Hapones na ang pinatay.

Modus ng sindikato na magtayo ng kompanya sa bansa, at hihimukin makisosyo sa kanila ang kapwa nila Hapones, pagkatapos ay ipapa-insured at saka nila ipapapatay at ang magiging beneficiary ay ang kompanya.

Nabisto ang modus ng sindikato ng kanilang patayin ang huli nilang biktima na si Tatsuya Nakamura kung saan naaresto ang tatlong Hapones at isang Filipina.

Sa ngayon ay pinaghahanap pa ang isa pang Hapones na miyembro rin ng sindikato.

Nangako naman si Tan na makikipagtulungan siya sa mga awtoridad upang mabigyan ng hustisya ang pagkamatay ng kanilang mga nabiktima. (Lordeth B. Bonilla)

2

15 January 2017

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

Page: 14

Ransom talk persists as Korean freed

JOLO—A South Korean ship captain and his Filipino crewman were freed by their captors on Saturday to Philippine authorities who denied that ransom had been paid but would not rule out what one official said were private efforts that could have led to ransom payment.

Members of the Abu Sayyaf, an al-Qaeda linked crime group behind dozens of kidnapping cases in Mindanao, handed Park Chul-hong, the South Korean skipper, and Glenn Alindajao, his Filipino crewman, over to Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) members.

MNLF members turned over the freed captives to Philippine officials in this town, the capital of Sulu province, a known bastion of the Abu Sayyaf.

The freed hostages appeared well but were not immediately allowed to speak to reporters.

Park is captain of MV Dong-bang Giant II, a cargo ship where Alindajao worked as a crew member.

The ship was sailing off Bongao in Tawi-Tawi on its way from Australia to its mother port in Jeju in South Korea when 10 armed men forcibly boarded it.

President Duterte's peace adviser, Jesus Dureza, flew with the two on board a jet from Jolo to Davao City, the

President's hometown.

"As far as I know there was no ransom money involved," said Dureza.

"You know the policy of the government. We don't pay ransom," he said in a press conference in Davao City after fetching the two freed captives.

He said, though, that there could have been private efforts to free Park and Alindajao.

"If there are efforts taken by the private sector, that is their concern and not ours," said Dureza.

He said the two captives were turned over to him by Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan on Saturday morning.

At least 27 hostages, many of them foreign crewmen, remain in the hands of different Abu Sayyaf factions, he said.

There have been persistent speculations, however, that most of the freed hostages have been ransomed off.

Without a known foreign source of funds, the Abu Sayyaf has survived mostly on ransom kidnappings.

A confidential Philippine government threat assessment report seen by The Associated Press last year said the militants pocketed at least P353 million from ransom. —JEFFREY MAITEM, JULIE ALIPALA AND AP INQ

9

15 January 2017



Page: 8

AFP, civilian workers get raise pledged by Aquino

By JAIME LAUDE

The uniformed services and civilian employees of the military received the raise promised to them by the Aquino administration, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) announced yesterday.

The raise was not reflected in their base pay, but in their monthly provisional allowance.

It was former president Benigno Aquino III who devised a compensation package for active soldiers and policemen by issuing Executive Order 201, which increased their monthly allowance and hazard pay.

President Duterte promised to double the salaries of soldiers and policemen, but this failed to materialize due to lack of funds to bankroll the increase.

As mandated by law, raising the base pay of soldiers and policemen will require the

government to also raise the monthly pensions of military and police retirees.

When Aquino was president, he went around the law by issuing EO 201.

Under EO 201, the monthly allowance comes in four tranches. The first tranche took effect late last year and the second tranche this month.

A soldier with the rank of Technical Sergeant got P1,196 in the first tranche and P1,275 in the second tranche.

Aside from raise in provisional allowance, soldiers also stand to receive an increase in hazard pay this year amounting to P540 as compared to last year's P390.

In 2018, the soldiers' hazard pay is programmed to be raised to P690 and to P840 in 2019.

10

January 2017



Page: 2

Defense chief to visit Pag-Asa

With the improving relations between the Philippines and China, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana is planning to visit Pag-Asa Island in the disputed Spratlys archipelago in the South China Sea.

While no specific date has been set for the trip, Camp Aguinaldo insiders revealed the visit is now being arranged.

Lorenzana himself confirmed his planned trip to the island town, saying Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Eduardo Ano will accompany him.

"We are planning to go there with the chief of staff," Lorenzana said, adding that some members of media can join the trip.

Formerly a military garrison, Pag-Asa Island is now home to around 300 civilian residents and is the seat of Kalayaan town, a fifth class municipality of Palawan province.

Lorenzana has yet to specify the purpose of his

planned visit to Pag-Asa Island, which is central to the maritime dispute among six Spratlys-claimant states – the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan, Brunei and China.

China lays claim to the entire archipelago while the remaining five claimant-states have overlapping maritime claims in the disputed region.

Camp Aguinaldo insiders said Lorenzana, aside from visiting the soldiers in the island town, also wanted to get a feel of the real situation there following improved relations with China.

Aside from Pag-Asa Island, the AFP through Palawan-based Western Command also maintains eight other military detachments on seven islets and two reefs in the region.

– Jaime Laude

January 2017



Page: 2

AFP hopeful for signing of ceasefire accord

With a rebellion that is now nearly half a century old, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) hopes that the third round of peace negotiations between the government and the Communist rebels will finally result in the signing of an indefinite ceasefire agreement.

The government panel and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-

By **JAIME LAUDE**

National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) will meet in Rome on Jan. 18 to 25 to thresh out issues like social and economic reforms, rebel taxation, extortion and militarization, among others.

"We hope everything will be finalized to ensure the success of the peace talks," said Col.

Edgard Arevalo, AFP Public Affairs Office chief.

While the AFP is not a party to the peace negotiations, he said the government panel is also asking for inputs from the military.

Some observers see the Rome round of talks as a make or break stage that could determine if the

peace efforts are still to be pursued.

"In the third round of peace talks, we are hoping that we will already have a joint ceasefire declaration," Arevalo said.

Among the concerns the AFP wants tackled and resolved are the accusations by some in the business sector that the New People's (NPA) is still continuing in its extortion activities through threat and intimidation.

It cited the burning of several passenger buses, which run the South Cotabato, Sarangani and General Santos City routes, as an example of these activities.

"While these extortion activities and burning (of buses) could not be considered violations in the peace talks, it's very clear that they violate the existing laws of the land," Arevalo said.

15 January 2017



Page: 4

AFP modernization to continue – Lorenzana

The modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will continue under President Duterte, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana yesterday said.

The AFP Modernization Program, now on its Second Horizon, will continue as planned, he added.

The Second Horizon runs from 2018 to 2022 and will see the acquisition of equipment more attuned to external defense missions.

Lorenzana earlier had said the AFP Modernization Program remains a priority of the new defense leadership as the program jibes with the Duterte administration's plan to have a credible deterrence to secure Philippine territory, especially its maritime areas.

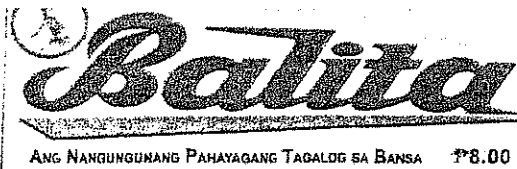
He said while some projects may be fast-tracked

to address criminality, terrorism and insurgency in the southern Philippines, the defense department will follow the plans laid for the AFP Modernization Program.

Some of the equipment acquired under the program are three Hamilton-class cutters, the latest of which is the BRP Andres Bonifacio (PF-17) that arrived last December 9; six multi-purpose assault craft; 114 armored personnel carriers; three brand-new C-295 medium lift aircraft; three C-130 heavy transport; four FA-50PH light-interim fighter aircraft, the last two jets arriving last December 1; five utility versions of the AgustaWestland AW-109 helicopters and eight of its attack versions; five landing craft heavies; three multi-purpose attack craft, and two strategic sealift vessels.

PNA

15 January 2017



Page. 6

KABATAANG KOREANO, NAGPUGAY SA MGA SUNDALONG PILIPINO NA LUMABAN SA KOREAN WAR

ANIMNAPU'T anim na taon ang nakalilipas nang maganap ang Korean War noong 1950-1953 na kumitil sa 2.5 milyon katao at naging dahilan ng permanenteng alitan na humati sa bansa.

Bilang paggunita sa mga beteranong sundalo at mga bansang tumulong, nagtayo ang pamahalaan ng Korea ng mga bantayog at monumento na kumikilala sa kanilang mga sakripisyo at kabayanihan.

Ang isa sa mga monumentong itinayo ay para sa mga sundalong Pilipino na lumaban para ipagtanggol ang kalayaan at kapayapaan at nagbuwis ng buhay noong Korean War.

Nag-alay si Namu Kim ng mga bulaklak sa Monument for the Philippine Soldiers. Siya ay kasapi ng International Peace Youth Group (IPYG), at ang kanyang lolo ay isa sa mga sundalo noong Korean War na iniligtas ng isang sundalong Pilipino.

Aniya'y ito ang kanyang paraan upang maibalik ang kabutihan ng mga Pilipino sa kanyang lolo noong panahon ng giyera.

"The story described very horrible and awful moment which we could hardly believe today. No water to drink, no clothes to change, it was such a miserable situation. He even got a gunshot and was waiting for death. But he could survive miraculously because of the help of the Filipino comrade, he was always grateful for that," aniya.

Kirikilala niya ang sakripisyo ng mga sundalong Pilipino para maipagtanggol ang kanilang pamilya, at nagpahayag ng kanyang malaking pasasalamat.

"Now it's our turn to make a return for your family and the Philippines by achieving peace," ari Kim.

Ang karanasan ng kanyang lolo sa giyera ang nagmulat sa kanyang mga mata para sumailalim sa kinakailangang military training sa layuning gawing adbokasiya ang kapayapaan sa kabataan.

"A Korean youth who must serve in the military for 2 years experiences the tragedy in which he has to be trained to point a gun and fight the same Korean race every day," aniya.

Ayon sa kanya, upang matamo ang kapayapaan, kailangang yakapin ng kabataan ang diwa ng kapayapaan.

"I think it's important that we constantly strive to pass down the peace to the next generation, not the war," aniya.

Naniniwala siya na ang pagtataguyod ng kabataan sa kapayapaan ay magkakaroon ng 'butterfly effect' na magsisimula sa maliliit na gawa na ang ibubunga ay mahahalagang bagay. Kung sama-samang kikilos ang kabataan, ayon sa kanya, ay hindi na magiging imposible ang kapayapaan sa mundo.

"I think we can make a world of peace if the youths take a lead and work together to create the atmosphere of peace," sabi niya.

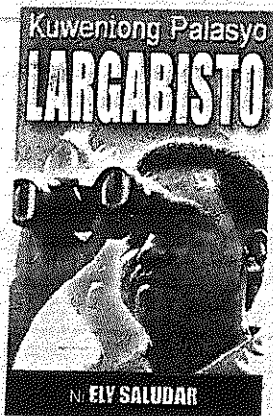
Ang IPYG, na sangay ng Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light, ay organisasyon na nagsusulong ng kapayapaan sa mundo at ng pagtigil ng mga digmaan kasama ang 797 samahan sa 110 bansa.

PNA

15 January 2017

POLICE FILES

Page. 3



Abu Sayyaf, kaya bang pulbusin?

ANIM na buwan ang ibinigay na palugit ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) para pulbusin ang bandidong Abu Sayyaf.

Ito ang pangako ni AFP chief of Staff General Eduardo Año na nagnanais nang matapos na ang problema sa kidnapping lalo na sa Mindanao na kagagawan ng Abu Sayyaf.

Pero palagay ko, malabong matapos sa loob ng anim na buwan ang problema sa Abu Sayyaf. Hindi maaring baril at bala lang ang gawing solusyon ng militar sa problema ng Abu Sayyaf dahil alam naman ng lahat ang ugat ng problema.

Ang matinding kahirapan at kawalan ng hanapbuhay sa mga lugar sa Mindanao ang isa sa pangunahing dahilan kaya may umaanib sa Abu Sayyaf. Ito ay sa kabila na alam naman nila na magiging kriminal at maaring mapatay sila ng mga otoridad.

Kaya malabong matupad ang pangako ng AFP na masugpo ang bandido sa loob ng anim na buwan.

Baka naman nagpapasiklab lang si General Año upang patuloy na magtiwala sa kanya si President Duterte.

Ang unang gawin ng AFP ay maglunsad din ng mga proyekto sa mga lugar na mahihirap sa Mindanao lalo na ang madalas pagkunan ng mga miyembro ng bandido.

Magkaroon din ng dayalogo ang gobyerno sa pangunguna ng ilang ahensiya tulad ng DILG, DSWD at lokal na pamahalaan upang kumbinsihin ang mga mamamayan na huwag umanib sa Abu Sayyaf at tiyakin na sila ay mabibigyan ng sapat na serbisyo ng gobyerno.

Dahil dito, kapag wala nang gustong umanib sa Abu Sayyaf, hihina na ang puwersa nito at matatalo ng military. Mawawakasan na ang problema sa Mindanao na naglalagay sa kahihyan sa international community.

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Galvez eyed for top Wesmincom post

From the Daily Tribune (Jan 14): **Galvez eyed for top Wesmincom post**

A well-rounded Army officer would be taking over the Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom) and lead the government's all-out fight against various terrorist groups, particularly the Abu Sayyaf group.

Reliable military sources said that incumbent Army 6th Infantry Division (ID) commander Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez would be taking over Wesmincom from Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo de la Cruz.

A turn-over ceremony is scheduled at Wesmincom next week.

On the other hand, de la Cruz, the same sources said, would be assuming as inspector general of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

A member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) "Sandiwa" Class of 1985, Galvez spent only four months as 6th ID commander before his promotion to the three-star position.

Prior to his assumption as 6th ID chief, Galvez served as AFP deputy chief of staff for operations (J3).

Galvez was the head of the government ceasefire committee when the Mamasapano "massacre" of 44 Special Action Force commandos happened in January 2015 when combined Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) overwhelmed the SAF.

"Passionate, hardworking, focused. If I am a commander, I would like him to be my chief of staff, operations officer. My do-it-all officer. He can do any task you give him," a senior Army official said of Galvez.

Another officer described Galvez as "silent worker that produces results."

"He is a peace-oriented Army field officer," another source said.

As Wesmincom commander, Galvez will have about 20,000 troops at his disposal to defeat the Abu Sayyaf within six months as directed by AFP chief of staff Gen. Eduardo Año — reiterating President Duterte's order to destroy the terrorists.

Earlier, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said that the AFP leadership will be putting new people in Mindanao to pursue President Duterte's instruction to defeat the Abu Sayyaf.

"We will be putting new people so that we can have fresh approach in addressing lawless elements," Lorenzana said.

Relatedly, Rear Adm. Narciso Vingson last Thursday assumed as AFP's No. 3 man as the deputy chief of staff.

Vingson succeeded Lt. Gen. Salvador Melchor Mison Jr. who was promoted as AFP vice chief of staff.

Also of PMA "Sandiwa" Class of 1985, Vingson is the concurrent AFP inspector general.

Vingson previously served as commander of the Naval Education and Training Command and deputy commander of the Philippine Fleet.

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Pirates Attacking Bigger Ships Off Philippines for Ransom Money

From GCaptain (Jan 13): Pirates Attacking Bigger Ships Off Philippines for Ransom Money

Asian pirates are focusing more of their attacks on larger merchant ships near the Philippines, hoping for bigger ransom payments from kidnapping their crew, the head of a regional anti-piracy body said on Friday.

The region's pirates have changed tactics since October, to target some of the biggest ships travelling through the Sulu and Celebes Seas, and paying less attention to small tugs and fishing boats.

The growing problem has prompted Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines to step up air and sea patrols in the waters, through which about \$40 billion worth of cargo passes each year.

"Big ships belong to bigger owners, so maybe they think bigger owners can pay more money as a ransom," said Masafumi Kuroki, executive director of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).

The group, which has 20 member states, helps co-ordinate information about maritime piracy incidents.

Maritime experts recommend that vessels in the area adopt measures similar to those taken against pirates off Somalia and the Indian Ocean, including evasive action such as zig-zagging, speeding up and shining powerful lights on the attackers.

"Our advice is that the area should be avoided if at all possible," said Gerry Northwood, chief operating officer at armed guard company, Maritime Asset Security and Training (MAST).

Some 48 crew have been abducted in 16 attacks in the Sulu-Celebes Seas since March, of which 15 remain captive, according to ReCAAP.

In November, four large merchant vessels, including the 179,191-deadweight-tonne (DWT) capesize iron ore carrier Kumiai Shagang, were chased by armed pirates in speed boats during separate attempted attacks in the Sulu and Celebes Seas.

Abu Sayyaf militants have claimed responsibility for many of the attacks in the area. Land-based operations by the Philippine military against the group have led militants to focus more on soft targets at sea, Kuroki said.

Despite this rise in abductions, the number of overall pirate attacks in Asia dropped to its lowest level since ReCAAP was launched in 2006 to 86 incidents in 2016, down from 203 in 2015, partly due to better co-ordination by littoral states and adoption of anti-piracy measures by shippers.

<http://gcaptain.com/pirates-attacking-bigger-ships-off-philippines-for-ransom-money/>

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