

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



ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
NEWS CLIPPINGS

05 March 2017

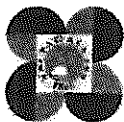
Sunday

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

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Republic of the Philippines
 Department of Science and Technology
**PHILIPPINE ATMOSPHERIC, GEOPHYSICAL AND
 ASTRONOMICAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (PAGASA)**
 Weather Division
 ISO 9001:2008 Certified
 Registry No. 01 100 1534769

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

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

ISSUED AT : 5:00 PM 04 MARCH 2017
 VALID BEGINNING : 5:00 PM TODAY UNTIL 5:00 PM TOMORROW

CITIES	24-Hr Weather, Winds and Sea Condition Forecast from 5PM today until 5PM tomorrow		Extended Weather Outlook Duration: 5PM until 5 PM of the following day			
	04 MAR		5 MAR	6 MAR	7 MAR	8 MAR
	Icon	Temp	Icon	Temp	Icon	Temp
Metro Manila	23 °C 29 °C	Moderate: Northeast Manila Bay: Moderate	23 °C 30 °C	23 °C 30 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C
Tuguegarao City	21 °C 27 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast	22 °C 29 °C	22 °C 29 °C	23 °C 30 °C	23 °C 30 °C
Laoag City	20 °C 31 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	23 °C 31 °C	23 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C
Baguio City	14 °C 23 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast	14 °C 23 °C	14 °C 23 °C	15 °C 24 °C	15 °C 24 °C
SBMA(Olongapo) / Clark Zone (Angeles City)	23 °C 29 °C	Moderate: Northeast Subic Bay: Moderate	23 °C 30 °C	23 °C 31 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C
Tagaytay City	19 °C 27 °C	Moderate: Northeast	19 °C 28 °C	20 °C 29 °C	20 °C 29 °C	20 °C 29 °C
Lipa City	23 °C 29 °C	Moderate: Northeast	23 °C 29 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 31 °C
Legazpi City	24 °C 30 °C	Moderate to Strong: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate to Rough	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 30 °C	25 °C 31 °C	25 °C 31 °C
Puerto Princesa City	24 °C 31 °C	Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	25 °C 31 °C	25 °C 31 °C
Iloilo City / Bacolod City	26 °C 30 °C	Light to Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25 °C 30 °C	26 °C 31 °C	26 °C 31 °C	25 °C 30 °C
Metro Cebu	24 °C 31 °C	Light to Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 30 °C	23 °C 30 °C
Tacloban City	23 °C 31 °C	Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate	24 °C 30 °C	23 °C 30 °C	23 °C 29 °C	23 °C 29 °C
Cagayan de Oro City	21 °C 30 °C	Light to Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	23 °C 30 °C	22 °C 30 °C	22 °C 29 °C	22 °C 29 °C
Valencia City	17 °C 30 °C	Light to Moderate: Northeast	19 °C 30 °C	18 °C 29 °C	18 °C 29 °C	18 °C 28 °C
Metro Davao	24 °C 32 °C	Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Moderate	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	23 °C 30 °C	23 °C 30 °C
Zamboanga City	24 °C 31 °C	Light to Moderate: Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 31 °C

LEGEND:

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

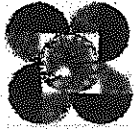
END OF FORECAST

PREPARED BY: GSS

CHECKED BY: MLM

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 Department of Science and Technology
 Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and
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 Weather Division
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WFS-02
 REV. 1/05-06-2016

24-HOUR PUBLIC WEATHER FORECAST

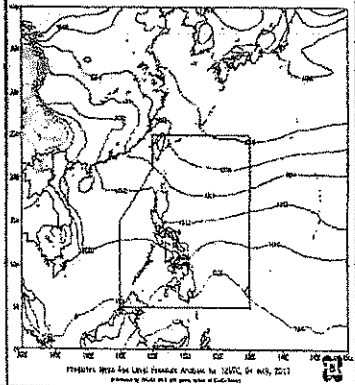
ISSUED AT: 5:00 PM 04 MARCH 2017

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

SYNOPSIS: NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING LUZON. EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF VISAYAS AND OF MINDANAO.

FORECAST: CLOUDY SKIES WITH LIGHT RAINS IS EXPECTED OVER THE REGIONS OF CAGAYAN VALLEY, CORDILLERA AND THE PROVINCE OF AURORA. PARTLY CLOUDY TO CLOUDY SKIES WITH ISOLATED LIGHT RAINS WILL BE EXPERIENCED OVER METRO MANILA AND THE REST OF LUZON. PARTLY CLOUDY TO CLOUDY SKIES WITH ISOLATED RAINSHOWERS OR THUNDERSTORMS WILL PREVAIL OVER THE REST OF THE COUNTRY.

MODERATE TO STRONG WINDS BLOWING FROM THE NORTHEAST WILL PREVAIL OVER LUZON AND ITS COASTAL WATERS WILL BE MODERATE TO ROUGH. ELSEWHERE, WINDS WILL BE LIGHT TO MODERATE COMING FROM THE NORTHEAST WITH SLIGHT TO MODERATE SEAS.



PAGTAYA: MAULAP NA KALANGITAN NA MAY MAHIHINANG PAG-ULAN ANG INAASAHAN SA MGA REHIYON NG CAGAYAN VALLEY, CORDILLERA AT SA LALAWIGAN NG AURORA. BAHAGYANG MAULAP HANGGANG SA MAULAP NA KALANGITAN NA MAY PULU-PULONG MAHIHINANG PAG-ULAN ANG MARARANASAN SA KAMAYNILAAN AT SA NALALABING BAHAGI NG LUZON. BAHAGYANG MAULAP HANGGANG SA MAULAP NA KALANGITAN NA MAY PULU-PULONG MGA PAG-ULAN O PAGKIDLAT-PAGKULOG ANG IIRAL SA NALALABING BAHAGI NG BANSA.

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

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

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE: 3:15 PM TODAY 28.0 °C	MAXIMUM RELATIVE HUMIDITY: 5:00 AM TODAY 84 %	
MINIMUM TEMPERATURE: 5:00 AM TODAY 23.5 °C	MINIMUM RELATIVE HUMIDITY: 3:00 PM TODAY 66 %	
TIDAL PREDICTION ALONG MANILA BAY (COURTESY OF NAMRIA)	ASTRONOMICAL INFORMATION OVER METRO MANILA	
LOW TIDE TODAY: 9:20 PM 0.11 METER	SUNSET/ SUNRISE	MOONRISE/ MOONSET & ILLUMINATION
HIGH TIDE TOMORROW: 3:19 AM 0.41 METER	SUNSET TODAY: 6:05 PM	MOONSET TODAY: 11:31 PM
LOW TIDE TOMORROW: 7:26 AM 0.29 METER	SUNRISE TOMORROW: 6:11 AM	MOONRISE TOMORROW: 11:24 AM
HIGH TIDE TOMORROW: 2:54 PM 0.86 METER	SUNSET TOMORROW: 6:05 PM	ILLUMINATION TOMORROW: 41%

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

PREPARED BY: **GSS**

CHECKED BY: **MLM**

05 March 2017



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PH KILLINGS TOP US RIGHTS REPORT

STORY BY LEILA B. SALAVERRIA AND JAYMEE T. GAMIL

The US Department of State has quietly released its annual report on human rights around the world, with the Philippines cited as a country where instances of extrajudicial killings have risen sharply. As a result, the US government is closely scrutinizing arms purchases for the police and the military by Manila, an official warned.

A2

PH killings top US human rights report

FROM A1

By Leila B. Salaverria and Jaymee T. Gamil @Team_Inquirer

The US Department of State has quietly released its annual report on human rights around the world, with the Philippines cited as a country where instances of extrajudicial killings have risen sharply and

The report, mandated by Congress, documents human rights conditions in nearly 200 countries and territories and is put together by staff in US embassies. But its release was overshadowed by criticism that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson gave the report little attention, breaking from traditional practice.

Tillerson declined to unveil the report in person on Friday, breaking a precedent established during both Democratic and Republican administrations. A senior US official, however, answered

According to the report, Philippine police and vigilantes "killed more than 6,000 suspected drug dealers and users" from July to December last year.

It noted that extrajudicial killings "increased sharply" in the period, even as the government officially does not tolerate human rights violations or state-sponsored killings.

The Inquirer and other news organizations have reported a higher death toll of more than 8,000 since President Duterte took office last year.

The report noted that "killings allegedly undertaken by vigilantes, security forces, and insurgents as the principal

OFFICE

AIRS - Email add: purpose: Servir

no. (02) land.

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“And it also chronicles apparent governmental disregard for human rights and due process, and a very weak and overburdened criminal justice system,” the official added.

The official noted that efforts to promote human rights were crucial to bilateral and defense ties, which were on the mend after President Duterte last year said he would scrap scheduled visits here by American troops as he looked to US rivals China and Russia for military assistance.

He has, however, stopped his verbal tirades against Washington after US President Donald Trump came into power.

The official said Tillerson would “review each arms transfer notification for the Philippine police and armed forces on a case-by-case basis.”

“Because it’s the right thing not to provide arms to units that are undermining the value of human life,” the official said.

The 44-page report on the Philippines noted that while extrajudicial killings here were not new, they “increased sharply over the past year.”

It quoted Philippine National Police figures from July to December last year showing that 2,155 suspects were killed in police operations, and 4,049 others by unknown vigilantes.

It said the killings have raised concerns about “police impunity” following promises by authorities that cops involved would not be prosecuted.

The report also raised questions on the “accuracy and legitimacy” of the supposed drug list that President Duterte always carries and shows the public during his speeches.

The report also noted that President Duterte’s “public attacks on individuals and international bodies who have criticized his policies had a chilling effect on free speech and expression.”

It cited the case of Sen. Leila de Lima who herself has been jailed on drug-related

charges after speaking out against the President.

But presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella denied the state supported vigilante killings, even as he stressed the government was engaged in trying to arrest an “emerging narcostate” by battling drug lords.

“Vigilante or extrajudicial killings are unlawful and are therefore, not sanctioned,” he said. “The government condemns such practice. These are not to be confused with the government’s war on illegal drugs, which is an urgent and critical domestic matter.”

He said President Duterte has ordered law enforcement institutions to take “decisive legal steps” against cops embroiled in summary executions or with the drug trade. The government, he said, would “punish the scalawags in uniform.”

The secretary of state traditionally unveils the report with public comments emphasizing the centrality of human rights in US foreign policy and highlighting specific findings.

The report’s language on Russia for instance remained broadly similar to that of years past, noting the country’s “authoritarian political system dominated by President Vladimir Putin.”

Tillerson’s Democratic predecessors John Kerry and Hillary Clinton gave public comments on the report in 2013 and 2009, their first years in the post, respectively, and continued to present it throughout their tenures.

In 2005, during Republican President George W. Bush’s administration, the undersecretary of state for global affairs, Paula Dobriansky, presented the report on camera on behalf of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Human rights groups criticized the way the report was made public. —WITH A REPORT FROM REUTERS INQ.

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05 March 2017



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Rody on drug killings: I take full responsibility

PNP to employ new strategies under Tokhang 2

By EDITH REGALADO

Saying he never denied giving orders on anti-drug operations, President Duterte on Friday maintained that he would take full responsibility for the killings attributed to the government's brutal drug war.

"I never denied that I ordered the operations. I declared war on drugs. I take full responsibility, legal or otherwise, for that order," Duterte said during a press conference in Cagayan de Oro City.

He issued the statement after the New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) accused him of being criminally liable for the extrajudicial killings that have reached over 7,000 since the administration launched the war on drugs in June

last year.

"Human rights, *pumunta ka nga dito, pinapusagot mo ako* (Come here, Human Rights Watch, if you want me to respond)," Duterte said.

"*Bakit nila sinusabing it's illegitimate? Bakit, masama bang sabihin papatay ako ng tao para sa bayan ko* (Why are they saying it's illegitimate? Why, is it wrong to say that I will kill for my country)? Tell me, is there a crime? It's a warning actually

to stop (the drug traffickers)," he added.

The President reiterated that he ordered the police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to take part in the campaign against illegal drugs.

"*Lahat 'yung namatay sa engkwentro, sagot ko 'yun, ako ang magpakulong doon. Klaro 'yan. Huwag mo akong bintangan na kung sino-sinong pinatay diyan na – akin 'yun* (All those who died in encounters,

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Rody

From Page 1

I am answerable for them. I may be jailed for them. That's clear. Do not accuse me of just killing people. You know, I answer for my deeds or misdeeds if you may," he said.

Duterte vowed to run after the drug syndicates that continue to destroy the country.

He also reiterated his support for the police and military officers who were charged for drug-related killings.

The HRW on Thursday released a report, titled "License to Kill," which detailed specific cases of extrajudicial killings allegedly perpetrated by police.

The group accused Duterte of being accountable for the killings.

He called on the human rights group and the church to go to the police and ask for a list of drug pushers and users and ask them to stop using drugs.

Duterte said around 3,000 municipal mayors, 6,000 policemen and 40 percent of barangay captains in the country are involved in the illegal drug trade.

New Tokhang strategies

The Philippine National Police will employ new strategies when it revives the campaign against illegal drugs, PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa said yesterday.

Last month, President Duterte announced the revival of the government's war on drugs following reports that drug rings have resumed operations after the PNP suspended Oplan Tokhang.

Dela Rosa said local police stations would be authorized

to conduct anti-drug operations in coordination with barangay officials.

"Led by the police chief, members of the local police station will go to the barangays," he said in a radio interview.

According to Dela Rosa, the police commander and barangay chairman will visit the houses of suspected drug personalities to convince them to undergo rehabilitation.

Police officers should be in complete uniforms when implementing Tokhang.

Dela Rosa said the police chief would be held accountable if drug suspects were killed by police under questionable circumstances.

He said police operating units from the PNP headquarters would no longer take part in the anti-drug campaign.

NCRPO to revisit drug surrenderees

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Oscar Albayalde said they would revisit identified barangays with drug surrenderees for assessment.

At least 260,000 drug suspects have surrendered to police since the government started the campaign against drugs, Albayalde said.

Albayalde said the drug surrenderees would be evaluated before they undergo rehabilitation.

With the resumption of the anti-drug campaign, Albayalde said the NCRPO would focus on sending drug dependents to rehabilitation centers.

UN body condemns EJK

An international body tasked to implement United Nations drug conventions has cautioned governments against using extrajudicial means to address the illegal drugs problem.

In a report released on Thursday, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) expressed concern over the drug-related killings allegedly committed by law enforcement personnel.

"In some instances, those acts have been committed with the expressed or tacit approval, or even encouragement, of political forces and, in many cases, have gone unpunished," the report read.

While the board did not cite specific cases, the report appeared to be referring to the bloody drug war of the Duterte administration.

More than 7,000 people have been killed in the anti-drug campaign, including 2,000 during police operations.

Police claimed that the drug suspects were killed because they fought back during legitimate operations.

Various groups, including the Commission on Human Rights, have questioned the "nanlaban" explanation of the police and pushed for a thorough investigation into drug-related deaths.

In its report, the INCB said that extrajudicial targeting of drug suspects was in violation of three international drug control conventions, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The INCB called on the

governments to put an end to extrajudicial killings and conduct investigation of those involved in drug-related deaths.

DepEd seeks drug-free schools

Meanwhile, the Department of Education has created a committee that will formulate a drug testing program for DepEd officials, employees and teachers.

Education Secretary Leonor Briones tapped undersecretary for legal and legislative affairs Alberto Muyot and assistant secretary Nepomuceno Malaluan to co-chair the committee, which is tasked to ensure a drug-free workplace in all DepEd offices and public schools nationwide.

Briones directed members of the committee to formulate a drug testing program in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9165, the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act.

The panel will oversee the implementation of an anti-drug abuse policy in the department, as well as initiate training and awareness programs for DepEd officials and employees.

The committee was also tasked to adopt value formation, family enhancement and other related programs.

"The DepEd is committed to strengthen its programs against illegal drugs by complementing its existing National Drug Education Program with a comprehensive policy against drug abuse in the workplace," Briones said.

Last week, the department announced its plan to conduct random drug testing for high school students.

- With Emmanuel Tupas, Robertzon Ramirez, Janvic Mateo

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05 March 2017

The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

Page: A1

ABU DEATH TOLL INCREASES TO 12

By Francisco Tuyay

SECURITY forces killed 10 Abu Sayyaf members, including two relatives of its leader Radullan Sahiron, and injured an undetermined number of other rebels, during close quarter clashes in Patikul, Sulu, the military reported Saturday.

Col. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of Joint Task Force Sulu, said the slain ASG members, including Sahiron's two close relatives, were pinned down by heavy

gunfire during a two-hour encounter at the outskirts of Barangay Igasan in Patikul town 9 a.m. Friday. Sobejana said the clash actually started at dawn Friday as ground

troops pressed their pursuit of more than a hundred bandits behind the beheading of 70-year-old German hostage Jurgen Kantner in the jungles of Igasan village.

The killing of 10 bandits brings to 12 the number of slain terrorist after three days of sustained military operations against the notorious group while government casualties were placed at 18 wounded of which the military official said were non-life threatening.

"Joint Task Force Sulu troopers are relentlessly pursuing the withdrawing ASG members. Troops are supported with strike helicopters,

artilleries and armor assets," Sobejana stressed.

He added that all killed ASG were confirmed and that their names were in his possession.

Military units in Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi are conducting intensified operations against the bandits in the wake of the beheading of German Juergen Kantner last Feb. 26. Around 31 hostages are believed to be still in the clutches of the terrorist group.

Three days after Kantner was beheaded last Sunday, military forces killed two bandits while three others were wounded. *Turn to A2*

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ABU...
From AT

Sobejana said ASG leader Radullan Sahiron and sub-leaders Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan and Almuher Yadah were in the group of 120 bandits during the fight with elite army scout rangers and troops from the Army's 32nd Infantry Battalion under the 1st Infantry Division.

There were no reports whether Sahiron and his two sub-commanders were also hit during the confrontation, he added.

Sobejana said troops are conducting mapping operations at the battle site possibly to recover the bodies of the slain Abus even as they try to pursue bandits who scamped in different directions after the fight.

Ground troops positions surrounding the encounter site has mobilized interdiction units to trapped the fleeing bandits while attack helicopters conducted air strikes to trapped the terrorists.

Sobejana said artillery fires were also directed at the bandits backed by armored tanks intended to fortify the ranks of ground troops directly engaged in the battle with the rebels.

At least 14 battalions of soldiers are currently deployed in various parts of Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi hunting down the forces of evil.

Meanwhile, Muslim lawmakers have said the fight against ASG must be intensified even as they condemned the beheading of Kantner.

Anak Mindanao party-list Rep. Sitti Djalia Turabin-Hataman, the chairperson of the House committee on Muslim affairs, said even Isnilon Hapilon fled Basilan and migrated to Lanao del Sur because of the heightened coordination and support extended by the locals and their leaders to the military.

Hataman said their people will continue to work together to address the culture of fear and impunity in which the ASG thrives by providing law enforcement agencies with the necessary information to stop the acts of terror.

She said the acts of terrorism perpetrated by the ASG must stop.

House Deputy Speaker Bai Sandra Sema, Tawi-Tawi Rep. Ruby Sahali, Sulu Rep. Munir Arbison, Lanao del Sur Reps. Mauyag Papandayan and Ansaruddin Adiong echoed Turabin-Hataman's condemnation of the ASG's cruel act.

They stressed that ASG should cease from claiming they are Muslims because their barbaric acts are anti-Islam.

"These acts of terrorism are not in accordance with Islamic religion or way of life to which we, as representatives of our people here in the Philippines belong," Sema said.

"We are making this statement lest the rest of the country and the world would perceive our people to consent to, encourage, or support such brutal barbaric acts done not only to a foreigner but to any innocent person," Papandayan said.

"We call on all Muslims to pray to Allah so that the Bangsamoro Homeland will be protected from the effects of these evil acts of terrorism. We are also requesting our non-Muslim brothers and sisters to pray for us as we lead our people in attaining peace in our homeland," the Muslim lawmakers said. **With Maricel Cruz**

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REALITY OF WAR. Wounded soldiers arrive at the Camp General Teodulfo Bautista Station Hospital in Jolo, Sulu after battling Islamist militants around Patikul town who were behind the beheading of German hostage Jurgen Kantner. **AFP**

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05 March 2017



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Abu death toll hits 10 in Sulu offensive

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY – The military confirmed at least 10 militants were killed in the offensive Friday against the Abu Sayyaf in Patikul, Sulu.

The firefight however left 17 soldiers injured, officials said.

Col. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of the Joint Task Force Sulu (JTFS), said the

troops clashed with about 150 militants from the combined groups of Abu Sayyaf leader Radullan Sahiron and Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan.

Sobejana said they have confirmed 10 Abu Sayyaf killed so far and several others wounded.

"The number of killed enemies could be even more but the fleeing Abu Sayyaf

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President Duterte pins a medal on Pvt. Vincent Ninio Lopez, one of the soldiers wounded in a clash with Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sulu earlier this week.

Abu From Page 1

members managed to retrieve their casualties," Sobejana said.

He said some of those killed have already been identified as well six of the wounded bandits.

The fierce fighting initially erupted about 9 a.m. when troops from the 32nd Infantry Battalion encountered the Abu Sayyaf at Barangay Taglibi.

The firefight lasted for over an hour with government troops utilizing crew-served weapons, supported by airstrike and ground artillery.

The heavy fighting left an undetermined number of Abu Sayyaf casualties and at least 14 soldiers wounded, mostly from barrages of grenade launchers from the militants.

Capt. Jo-Ann Pentinglay, spokesperson for Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said MG520 helicopters staged airstrikes to

prevent the militants from retrieving their casualties.

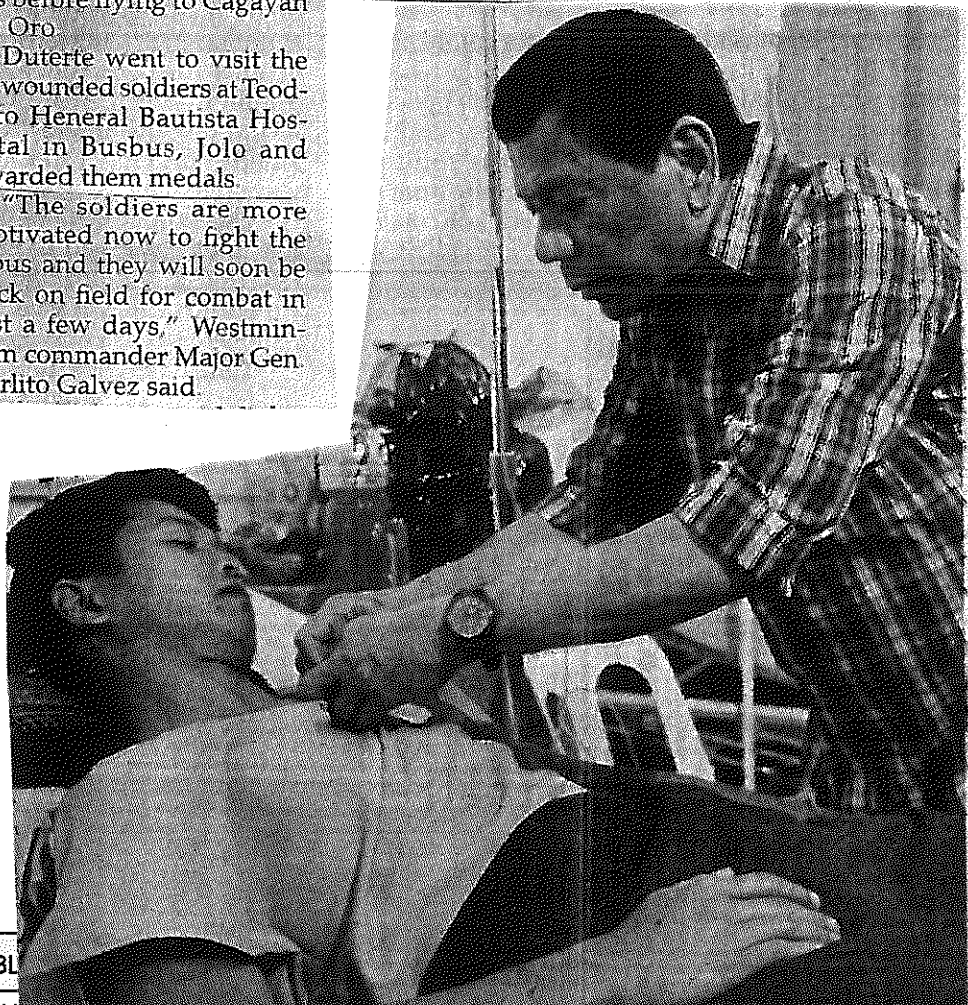
The firefight broke out a few hours before President Duterte arrived in Jolo on Friday where he visited some of the wounded troopers before flying to Cagayan de Oro.

Duterte went to visit the 14 wounded soldiers at Teodulfo Heneral Bautista Hospital in Busbus, Jolo and awarded them medals.

"The soldiers are more motivated now to fight the Abus and they will soon be back on field for combat in just a few days," Westmincom commander Major Gen. Carlito Galvez said.

The military said fighting continued at Barangay Kanagi in Patikul as blocking forces engaged the fleeing militants.

Galvez urged all sectors of Sulu to continuously support the military in defeating the Abu Sayyaf – With Lino de la Cruz, Jaime Laude



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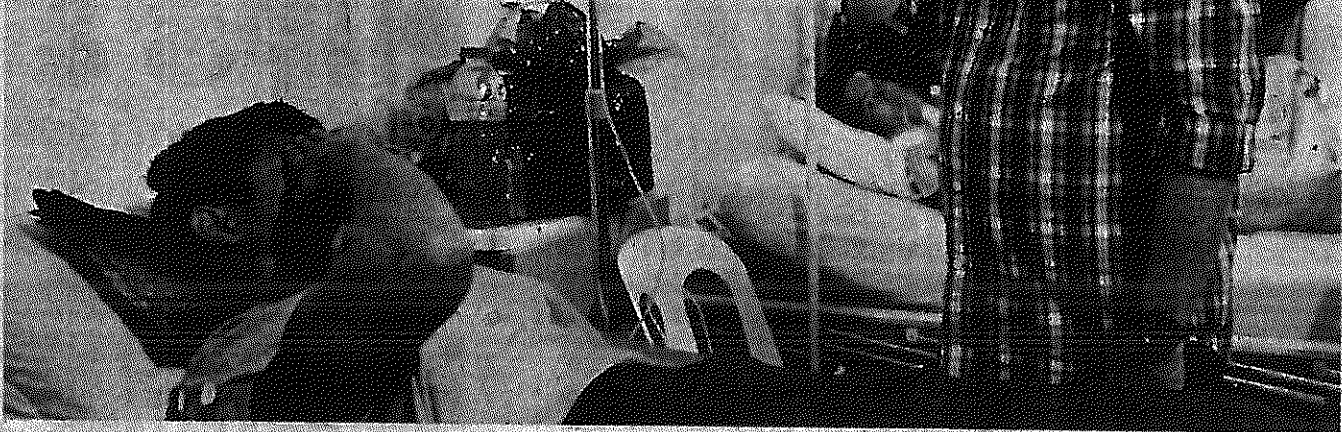
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10 ASG slain, 18 troops wounded in Patikul clash

By FRANCIS WAREFIELD

At least 10 Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) bandits, including two close relatives of ASG leader Radullan Sahiron, were killed while scores were reported wounded in a clash with government troopers in Patikul, Sulu Friday.

▶ 6



SALUTE FOR A HERO – President Rodrigo Roa Duterte (right) salutes Private First Class Vincent Niño Lopez, one of those wounded in an encounter with the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) last March 1 in Sulu. The President awarded the wounded soldiers with Wounded Personnel Medals in his visit at the Camp Evangelista Station Hospital in Cagayan de Oro City last Friday. (Malacañang Photo)

10 ASG slain, 18 troops... ◀ 1

Army Colonel Cirilito Sobejana, the commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Joint Task Force (JTF) Sulu, said 18 soldiers were also wounded in the encounter. The injured troopers were taken to the Army Hospital for treatment.

Sobejana said JTF Sulu was conducting rescue operations in efforts to free 31 kidnap victims when it met about 120 fully armed ASG members under Sahiron at Brgy. Igasan, Patikul, Sulu, that resulted in a two-hour firefight. Repelled by government air assets and artillery power, the bandits withdrew to different directions bringing along their dead members, according to field reports.

Of the 31 hostages being held by the ASG, 12 are Vietnamese nationals, a Dutch national, seven Indonesians, six Filipinos, and five Malaysians.

"The said encounter resulted in the death of at least 10 ASG members including two close relatives of Radullan Sahiron and the wounding of several others," Sobejana said. The Joint Task Force Sulu troopers are relentlessly pursuing the ASG bandits to end their reign of terror and free the hostages.

"This fight against terrorism will be successful as long as every sector of society will help and do their share of the work. We call on the people of Sulu to continually work with the government troops for peace and prosperity in the entire province," said Major General Carlito G. Galvez Jr., the commander of the Western Mindanao Command.

"If we win this and defeat the Abu Sayyaf, this will definitely benefit every child, man, and woman of Mindanao," he added.

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Duterte visits wounded soldiers in Sulu

ZAMBOANGA CITY – President Rodrigo Duterte conferred the Wounded Personnel Medal (WPM) on soldiers of the Second Scout Ranger Battalion who were wounded in government operations against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Tubig Dakula, Indanan, Sulu, which one of the strongholds of the bandit group in the province.

Duterte flew to Jolo Friday afternoon to personally pin the WPM on Sergeants Marvin Oliveros and Renato Geverola, Corporals Robert Esperon, Julius Dupagan, Camilo Vertido, David Mark Anthony Leyno, and Erlic Gal-

lebo, and Private First Class personnel William Reboya, Jr., Joselito Begnalen, Mac Allen Balderama and Antonio Agliam, Jr.

The President visited them at the Kuta Teodulfo Heneral Bautista Hospital in Busbus, Jolo, Sulu.

Armed Forces of the Philippines-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-WestMinCom) Spokesman Capt. Jo-Ann Petinglay said the soldiers belong to the Joint Task Force Sulu and sustained wounds after engaging the ASG in a firefight that killed five ASG members and wounded other bandits of many

others.

Petinglay said some other soldiers incurred minor splinter wounds, and were currently recuperating at the Kuta Teodulfo Heneral Bautista in Jolo, Sulu.

AFP-WestMinCom Commander Maj Gen Carlito G Galvez Jr. said: "The awarding and the personal visit of the President to our wounded soldiers motivated them more to fight these bandits."

"These soldiers will soon be back on the field for combat in just a few days' time," he added.

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AFP troops recover war materials, bombs in gunbattle site in Surigao

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**

BUTUAN CITY – Troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) yesterday found war materials, including bombs, in the site of a recent gun battle with the New People's Army (NPA) Barangay Tinago, Surigao del Norte, a report reaching this city said.

An initial report reaching the advance command post (ACP) of the Army's Northeastern and Northern Mindanao 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division (4th ID) based here said combat troops of the 30th Infantry Battalion (30th IB) were still scouring the encounter site in Tinago area.

Report coming from 30th IB commander Lt. Col. Rico Amaro said his men found in the encounter site four improvised explosives (IEDs), including anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, an M16 Armalite rifle with magazine fully loaded with live ammunitions, AK-47 magazines with live bullets, four rifle grenades, hundreds of meters of electrical wires used in bomb-making, an M14 bipod, dry cell batteries, two UHF radios and other assorted live ammunitions.

Elements of the 30th IB also found an NPA flag, several back packs, other personal belongings and assorted medicines.

As of press time, 30th IB troops area were still scouring the encounter site while pursuit operation was still ongoing on the NPAs.

The initial report of the 30th IB did not indicate if there was any casualty

on the side of the NPA or the government in the encounter that happened Friday.

Only last Monday, another encounter broke out in the same Tinago area between the 30th IB troops and guerilla-

Front Committee 16 of the CPP-NPA Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee where a junior Army officer was wounded when hit by an IED allegedly planted by the fleeing NPA group.

Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Madrigal,

Jr., commanding general of the Army's Northeastern and Northern Mindanao 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division ordered the deployment of more combat troops to beef up the 30th IB pursuing troops in Surigao.

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WOUNDED TROOPS GET FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

JOLO, Sulu—President Rodrigo Duterte arrived in Sulu Friday to extend financial assistance to soldiers who were injured during an encounter with the Abu Sayyaf Group.

The President arrived in Jolo around 3 p.m. and proceeded to Camp Teodulfo Bautista Station Hospital to visit the soldiers and personally hand over financial support.

Duterte pinned the Wounded Personnel medal to each of the 11 wounded-in-action troops confined here in Camp Teodulfo Bautista.

Last Wednesday, soldiers from the Philippine Army clashed with members of the Abu Sayyaf in a firefight at around 4:30 p.m. in Indanan, Sulu, wounding 11 government troops.

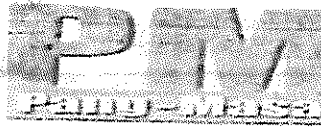
Among the wounded infantrymen during Wednesday's clash were Sgt.

Marvin Oliveros, Pfc. Mac Allen Balderama, Pfc. Antonio Agliam Jr., Cpl. Julios Dupagan, Cpl. Robert Esperon, Cpl. Camilo Vertido, Pfc. William Reboya, Cpl. Erle Gallebo, Sgt. Renato Geverola, Pfc. Joselito Begnalen, and Cpl. David Mark Antony Leyno.

Few hours before the President's arrival in Jolo, another group of soldiers had an encounter with the Abu Sayyaf in Patikul, Sulu, injuring 16 from the government side.

They are 2nd Lt. Rupert Cariaga, Pfc. Jayson Pendon, Cpl. Igzel Mercado, Cpl. Rogelio Bacnat, Pfc. Urselito Villarito, Pvt. Ruben Mutia, Pvt. Jerry Selgas, Pfc. Rolando Gamueta Jr., Cpl. Benjie Albarracin, Cpl. Al-Rashid Tiamwat Jr., Pvt. Christian Leopoldo, Pvt. Morris Perez, Pvt. Julius Castillion, Pfc. Arvin Langi, Cpl. Bernardo Ortiz Jr., and Pvt. Mark April Asistin. **PNA**

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Pahina. 2

10 Abu Sayyaf kidnappers utas sa sagupaan

Umaabot sa sampung miyembro ng ekstremistang mga kidnappers na Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) ang napatay kabilang ang dalawang kamag-anak ng kanilang Commander na si Radulan Sahiron habang 18 namang sundalo ang nasugatan sa pinaigtang na opensiba laban sa mga bandido sa Patikul, Sulu kamakalawa

Ayon kay Joint Task Force (JTF) Sulu Commander Col. Cirilito Sobejana, ang pinalakas na opensiba ay alinsunod sa maigting na direktiba ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana na durugin ang puwersa ng mga bandido at iligtas ang nalalabi pang 31 mga hostages

Ito'y matapos ang pamumugot ng ulo sa hostage na Aleman na si Juergen Gustav Kantner, 70 anyos noong Pebrero 26 ng taong ito matapos namang mabigong magbayad ng P30 M ransom

Bandang alas -9 ng umaga nang mag-umpisa ang bakbakan sa Brgy. Igasan, Patikul sa pagitan ng AFP troopers at ng nasa 120 bandido sa pamumuno ng kanilang lider na si Sahiron

Ang bakbakan ay tumagal ng mahigit dalawang oras na nagresulta sa pagkasawi ng sampu sa mga kalaban

"The government troops suffered 18 wounded who are now undergoing treatment at the Army Hospital", pahayag ng opisyal. Karamihan sa mga ito ay nagtamo ng sugat sa tama ng shrapnels habang puspusan ang pagtugis ng JTF Sulu troopers laban sa mga bandido gamit ang strike helicopters ng Philippine Air Force, artileries at armor assets. -Joy Cantos-

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10 sa Abu Sayyaf tigok, 18 sundalo sugatan

**Nina FER TABOY
at FRANCIS WAKEFIELD**

Inihayag kahapon ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na 10 miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) ang napatay sa pakikipagbarkaban sa militar sa Patikul, Sulu nitong Biyernes.

Sinabi pa ni Army Colonel Cirilito Sobejana, commander ng Joint Task Force Sulu, na kabilang sa mga nasawing terorista ang dalawang malapit na kaanak ng Abu Sayyaf leader na si Radullan Sahuron, habang maraming iba pang bandido ang nasugatan.

Nasa 18 sundalo naman ang nasugatan sa sagupaan, at walang isa man sa mga ito ang malubha.

Ginagamot ngayon ang mga sugatang sundalo sa Camp General Teodulfo Bautista sa Jolo.

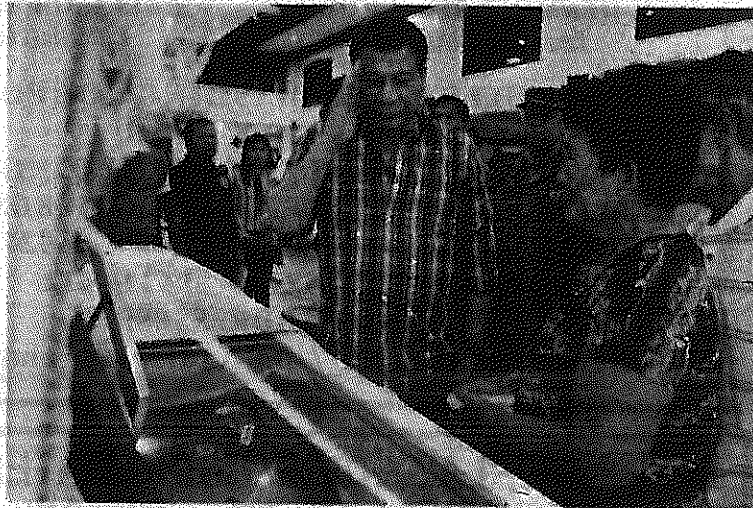
Ayon sa report ng Joint Task Force Sulu, nagsasagawa ng focused military operation ang tropa ng 32nd Infantry Battalion ng Philippine Army nang makasagupa ang nasa 150 bandido, na pinanumunuan nina Sahuron at Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan sa Sitio Kan Udong sa Barangay Taglibi, Patikul.

Umabot ng halos tatlong oras ang labanan, na nagsimula dakong 9:00 ng

umaga nitong Biyernes

Kasabay nito, tiriyak ni Sobejana na hindi tinatantanan ng Joint Task Force

Sulu ang pagtugis sa mga bandido sa tulong ng 'strike helicopters, artilleries and armor assets'.



PAALAM SA ISANG BAYANI Sinaluduhan ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang labi ni PFC Oshin Rosala, na isa sa dalawang sundalong nasawi sa pakikipagbarkaban sa Abu Sayyaf sa Sulu nitong Marso 1. Ginawaran ng Presidente ng posthumous medal si Rosala at binigyan ng ayudang pinansiyal ang pamilya nito nang makiramay siya sa Camp General Edilberto Evangelista sa Cagayan de Oro City nitong Biyernes.

MARCELINO PASCUA

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Tempo

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PRESIDENT Duterte pins a wounded personnel medal to Private First Class Vincent Niño Lopez at the Camp Evangelista Station Hospital in Cagayan de Oro City. Lopez and six other soldiers were wounded in clashes with the New People's Army in Misamis Oriental and Northern Mindanao. (Froilan Gallardo)

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PSG HEAD RETURNS TO MORO WARZONE

By Florante S. Solmerin

THE commander of the Presidential Security Group is set to be seeing action again in war-torn Mindanao as he is strongly being groomed to lead the Army's 1st Infantry Division based in the Zamboanga region, military sources said Saturday.

The sources said current PSG commander Brig. Gen. Rolando Bautista is being readied to replace First Infantry Division commander Maj. Gen. Gerardo Barrientos who reaches the mandatory retirement age of 56 in March.

Bautista is a member of the Philippine Military Academy "Sand-iwa" Class '85 while Barrientos belongs to PMA "Matikas" Class of 1983.

Before he was appointed commander of President Rodrigo Duterte's personal security detail, Bautista was commander of the 104th Infantry Brigade of the 1stID which is responsible for Basilan

Turn to A2

PSG...
From A1

and Sulu, the main lairs of the terrorist Abu Sayyaf Group.

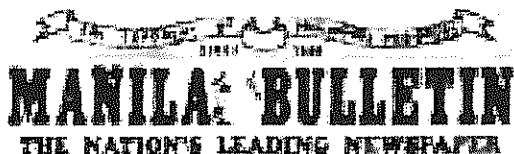
While commander of the brigade, Bautista was also concurrent commander of the Joint Task Group Basilan which is under the Joint Task Force "Zambasulta" (Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi). The same task groups also exist in the other mentioned provinces where handful of terrorist groups operate.

Just like other senior military officers during the Aquino administration, Bautista's rise in the hierarchy was stalled by "militics" (military politics) because of his links to one of the many coup attempts during the administration of the late former President Corazon Aquino, mother of former President Benigno Aquino III.

But Bautista's career recovered quickly after the last Aquino administration and was rewarded with meritorious promotion when Duterte restored the military's Board of Generals (BOG) which vets and recommends promotions to the general staff.

Bautista is set to be replaced in the PSG by Duterte's senior military adviser Col. Lope Dagoy (PMA "Hini-rang" Class '87), who also spent most of his military career in Mindanao, particularly the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) based in Davao City.

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Troopers take over 2 NPA camps in Kalinga

AFP reaches out to Cagayan guerrillas

By **FREDDIE G. LAZARO**
and **LIEZLE BASA INIGO**

LAOAG CITY, Ilocos Norte/STO NIÑO, Cagayan — The Philippine Army (PA) has discovered and taken over two abandoned camps of the New People's Army (NPA) in the hinterlands of Balbalan, Kalinga and pushed efforts to secure peace in Cagayan province by reaching out to hostile guerrillas.

Lieutenant Colonel Gulliver Señires, the commander of the army's 50th Infantry Battalion (50th IB), said his operating troops found the first NPA camp in the outskirts of Barangay Ababa-an, Balbalan town, Kalinga last February 14, while the other camp was discovered last February 23 in Si-

tio Guin-ang, Barangay Dao-angan of the same town.

Señires said the NPA rebels had just left the first camp when the operating troops arrived in the area while the second camp is where the military intelligence believes the rebels celebrated their anniversary last December.

He said the NPA rebels abandoned these camps even before the arrival of military troops, following complaints of growing discontent among residents from whom the guerrillas have been collecting food stuffs.

He said that combat operations against the NPA rebels in Kalinga are continuing to ensure the safety and security of the residents in the province.

Meanwhile, the local government

of Sto. Niño in Cagayan and the army's 17th IB expressed optimism the insurgency problem will soon find a peaceful solution in the province despite recent skirmishes between guerrillas and soldiers.

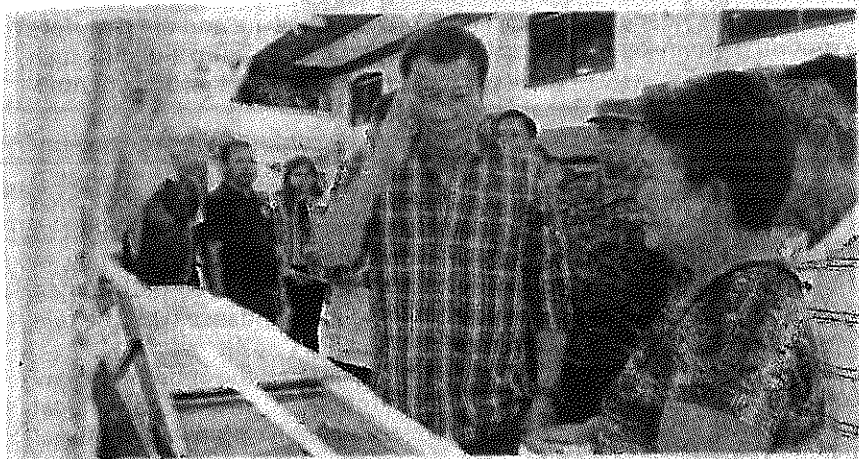
At present, guerrillas are still hiding in the forested areas of Sto. Niño so Mayor Vine Pagurayan has called on them to surrender with the promise of helping them start a new and normal life among society.

Pagurayan made the call to the rebels as he solicited the cooperation of the 17th IB through Lieutenant Colonel Rembert R. Baylosis and the Regional Public Safety Battalion (RPSB) in Region 2, through its commander Senior Superintendent Antonio P. Marallag Jr. in the recent "Pulong-Pulong."

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THE CHIEF HAILS THE FALLEN. President Rodrigo Duterte salutes Private First Class Oshin Rosala who was killed in a fight with communist rebels in Misamis Oriental. Duterte conferred a posthumous medal on Rosala which was accepted by his mother.
Malacañang Photo

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Duterte's wishes for talks revival: Release of captives, end to rebel taxation

By **Leila B. Salaverria**
@LeilasINQ

President Duterte listed what his peace adviser described as the President's "wishes" before the government resumed peace talks and reinstated a truce with communist rebels—for the rebels to release their captives and stop collecting revolutionary taxes.

Jesus Dureza, Mr. Duterte's top peace adviser, said they were not conditions but the President's wishes.

In a speech in Cagayan de Oro City on Friday, Mr. Duterte said the two initiatives that he wanted the rebels to take—releasing captives and stopping tax collection—would be taken as signs of sincerity on their part.

"I'm ready to resume the ceasefire again," said Mr. Duterte. "But this time, I want it to be sincere," he said.

"Back then, there was a ceasefire but my soldiers were killed," the President said.

He was referring to the killing by rebels of three soldiers in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, at the height of a truce between the military and the New People's Army (NPA) which Mr. Duterte cited in his decision to end the ceasefire with the NPA.

"That's so difficult. But I'm

ready for different kinds of talks," he said.

Asked about his plans for peace, Mr. Duterte said something is being done which he could not discuss yet.

The President, however, said unless rebels released all soldiers and civilians they are holding captive and stopped forcing businesses to pay revolutionary tax, "we'll never meet each other halfway."

"It just embarrasses the government. They give us their word but it doesn't bear any fruit. That's very difficult," he added.

Dureza was quick to clarify Mr. Duterte's statements. "The peace negotiations should have no conditionalities," said Dureza over government-owned radio station Radyo ng Bayan.

"There should be no pre-conditions on the negotiating table," he said.

Several factors would determine if peace talks could resume, added Dureza. He did not elaborate.

In his Cagayan de Oro speech, the President waxed poetic when he talked about the peace talks. Rebels, he said, must remove hate from their hearts to bring peace to the land.

The NPA killing of three soldiers in Malaybalay, he said, was proof of hatred in the hearts of rebels. INQ

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Duterte to Reds: Let's talk peace again

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ and EDITH REGALADO

Saying Filipinos killing fellow Filipinos is causing him much pain, President Duterte is reopening the doors to peace with communist rebels barely a month after he ordered peace negotiations suspended.

But before negotiations can resume, the rebel group should release its police and military hostages, stop collecting so-called revolutionary taxes, and refrain from asking favors, Duterte said on Friday.

"They have to release all policemen, army, everyone from the government. They should release them all. Second, they should stop asking for revolutionary tax," he said at Camp Edilberto Evangelista in Cagayan de Oro.

"Third, they should stop

asking for things. They're burning a lot of things now and we'll never meet each other halfway if that's the case," he said.

Duterte made his intentions known at the camp where he paid his respects to two soldiers killed in skirmishes with

New People's Army guerrillas late last month in Misamis, Oriental. The NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front.

"I'm open to talk to the rebels, just not the killers. I'm ready to talk and I'm ready to stop this war. I would

prefer for us to not have war, but we need to talk from the heart," he said.

"I get hurt, I get really hurt if someone from the other side dies. Those are Filipinos," Duterte said. He maintained that as president, he yearns for peace for the whole country.

"Me, I'm in the government and I have a job to do. Please understand that. It pains me to see Filipinos fighting against fellow Filipinos. I just want peace," the President said.

"I'm ready as long as we communicate well. I'm ready to resume the ceasefire again, but this time I want it to be sincere. Back then, there was a ceasefire but my soldiers were killed. That's so difficult," he pointed out.

"For me, no one will win.

If we Filipinos fight against fellow Filipinos, nobody wins. The nation, the Philippines loses," he added.

"But I'm ready for different kinds of talks. I'm ready to resume the ceasefire again as long as it is working towards peace. I do not want war. It's a waste of money. Instead of bullets I can buy machines and give it to help others," he added.

The President said he felt frustrated by the rebels' seeming disregard for the peace process with their incessant attacks on government forces.

"Ceasefire here and there, and my soldiers are getting killed – one shot 73 times, 73 wounds. That's what really made me feel bad," he said. "How can you do that to a Filipino?"

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Dureza: President has no conditions in resuming peace talks with Reds

President Duterte is not setting conditions for the resumption of the peace talks with the local communists, Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Du-

reza said yesterday.

Duterte clarified this in his speech in Cagayan de Oro, saying the President has expressed his desire to ▶ 6

Dureza: President has no... ◀ 1

have a genuine ceasefire with the New People's Army (NPA), have all captives freed, and for the rebels to stop their extortion activities before he reconsiders resuming the peace talks.

But Dureza explained that these are just Duterte's wishes and it does not mean that he was setting preconditions for the resumption of the peace talks.

"Hindi iyan condition dahil 'yung peace negotiations wala dapat conditionalities, eh. Walang preconditions sa negotiating table, 'di ba (Those are not conditions because peace negotiations should not have conditionalities)," he said over Radyo ng Bayan.

"Otherwise, lumalabas na parang dominante 'yung isa, o 'yung kabila, nagre-respond lamang dahil may mga condition (it would just mean that one is dominant over the other and the other is just responding because there are conditions)," he added.

However, Dureza said that their next steps would always come from the President.

"I heard the President say those words in Cagayan de Oro kaya tignan natin (so let's see) what would be the specific instructions to us," he said.

"Alam ng Pangulo na madaming challenges, kaya maraming (The President knows that there are many challenges so there are a lot of factors din that will have to be considered," he added.

Dureza also reiterated that the road to lasting peace is not a paved one.

"Hindi madali itong peace talks. Akala kasi ng lahat napakadali. Hindi, ah. Mahirap (The peace talk is not easy. Everybody thinks that it is simple but it's not. It's a difficult one)," he said.

Duterte decided to cancel the peace talks with the communist rebels over the brutal killing of three soldiers by alleged members of the NPA.

The President also said that he will not resume the peace talks unless there are compelling reasons that would affect the interest of the Filipino people.

Dureza said the President's wishes could well provide the so-called compelling reasons that would trigger the resumption of the peace negotiations.

The Palace had earlier revealed four "compelling reasons" which may result in the resumption of peace talks. These include the cessation of the so-called "revolutionary tax," ambushes on military personnel, burning of property, and provocative and hostile actions.

Last Friday, Duterte said the peace talks will not resume while the hearts of the rebels are "full of hate" since their actions, which include the killings, indicate hatred.

"How can you do that to a Filipino? You know, that indicates hatred. If they are like that, you are full of hate. Then we cannot talk about peace," he said (Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)

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President ready to revive talks with 'Reds'

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Friday night laid out several conditions for the resumption of peace talks with communist rebels.

Speaking to reporters in Cagayan de Oro City where he visited the wake for soldiers slain by the communist New People's Army (NPA), the President said he was willing to talk anew with the rebels if they showed sincerity.

"I'm ready to talk and I'm ready to stop this war. I would prefer for us to not have war, but we need to talk from the heart. I get really hurt if someone from the other side dies. Those are Filipinos," Duterte said in Visayan language.

The President stressed that the communists should agree to a bilateral ceasefire, stop the collection of the so-called revolutionary tax, and release all captured government men.

"They have to release all policemen, army, everyone from the government. They should release them all. Second,

► 'Reds' A2

'REDS' FROM A1

President

they should stop asking for revolutionary tax. They should stop asking for things. They're burning a lot of things now and we'll never meet each other halfway if that's the case. It just embarrasses the government. They give us their word but it doesn't bear any fruit. That's very difficult," Duterte said.

"I just want peace. I'm ready as long as we communicate well. I'm ready to resume the ceasefire again, but this time I want it to be sincere. Back then, there was a ceasefire but my soldiers were killed. That's so difficult. But I'm ready for different kinds of talks. I'm ready to resume the ceasefire again as long as it is working towards peace. I do not want war. It's a waste of money. Instead of bullets I can buy ma-

chines and give it to help others," he added.

Last month, the President withdrew a unilateral ceasefire declaration and scrapped peace talks with communist rebels, dismayed by rebel attacks and demands such as freedom for all detained rebels.

After terminating the peace talks, Duterte called the communists terrorists and ordered the arrest of National Democratic Front (NDF) consultants temporarily freed for the peace talks in Oslo, Norway and Rome, Italy.

Duterte wanted a bilateral ceasefire agreement that would put in place common rules of engagement for the military and the NPA.

But the NDF demanded the release of around 400 detained rebels before agreeing to sign such a deal. In response, Duterte said he would release some rebel prisoners only after the signing of a bilateral ceasefire deal.

Shot 73 times

In a separate media interview on Friday night in Cagayan de Oro City, Duterte brought up anew the communist rebels' killing of several soldiers earlier this year amid a ceasefire.

He advised the rebel group to shun hate before going back to the negotiating table.

"You have a ceasefire yet my soldiers were killed. I have a soldier who was shot by an NPA rebel 73 times. I was really displeased with that. How can you do that to a Filipino? You know, that indicates hatred," Duterte said.

"If you act that way, you're full of hate, then we cannot talk about peace. There is anger in your heart, there is hate. How will it be possible for us to talk if you have hate in your heart?" he added.

'No conditions'

Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Du-

reza clarified on Saturday that Duterte was not setting preconditions for the resumption of the peace talks with the communist rebels.

"He's not citing any conditionality. These are what the President wishes," Dureza told government-run radio station dzRB.


"Please make it very clear that those are not conditions because there should be no conditionality in peace negotiations. There should be no preconditions in the negotiating table," he added.

Dureza said the President's wish "could provide the so-called compelling reason" for the peace talks to resume.

"We had always said that when compelling reasons exist, then we would reconsider. So let's wait for the situation of a compelling reason. The President knows there are many challenges, the peace talks are not easy," he said.

CATHERINE S. VALENTE

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Armed men in police uniform abduct couple in Zambo del Norte

Heavily armed men in police uniforms and ski masks abducted Friday night a couple from their residence in Zamboanga del Norte.

Jose Duterte, 62, and his wife, Jessica Barazon Duterte, 52, both of Sitio Tabuk, Barangay Sta. Maria. ►6

Armed men in police...

◀1

Siocon town, were resting when about seven armed men barged into their home at 8 p.m. Friday and took them at gunpoint, Supt. Rogelio Alabata, PRO-9 spokesman, said.

Witnesses said two other suspects served as lookouts and waited in a distance while the kidnapping was taking place.

Alabata said the suspects fled toward the coastal area with their captives and then boarded a motorized

banca that sped off to an unknown destination.

Investigators are still determining the motive of the kidnapping.

Alabata said hot pursuit operations are currently being conducted by the Siocon Municipal Police Station and the 13th Army Special Forces to rescue the couple.

Alabata said investigators are still finding out if the victims are related to President Duterte. (Francis T. Wakefield)

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Pahina. 2

MAG-ASAWANG DUTERTE BINIHAG

Dinukot ng hindi pa nakilalang pitong mga armadong kalalakihan ang mag-asawang Duterte na ka-apeyido ni Pangulong Rodrigo "Dingong" Duterte matapos na puwersahang pasukin ang tahanan ng mga ito sa

Brgy Sta Maria, Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte nitong Biyernes ng gabi.

Ayon sa mga opisyal ng militar at pulisya, kasalukuyan pa nilang inaalam kung kamaganak ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang mag-asawang biktima na hindi

NI JOYCANTOS

naman umano mayaman at karamiwan lamang ang pamumuhay.

Kinilala ang mga biktima na sina Jose Duterte, 62 anyos at misis nitong si Jessica Barazon Duterte, 52 taong gulang

residente ng nabanggit na lugar na may pag-aaring myugan.

Base sa report, sinabi ni AFP - Public Affairs Office (AFP-PAO) Chief Col Edgard Arevalo, nangyari ang pagdukot sa mag-asawang Duterte sa loob ng tahanan ng mga ito sa nasabing lugar bandang alas-8 ng gabi.

Sa imbestigasyon,

kasalukuyan nang nagpahinga ang mag-asawa sa kanilang tahanan nang bigla na lamang pasukin ng limang mga armadong kalalakihan habang dalawa pa ang nagsilbing lookout sa labas.

Walang nagawa ang mag-asawa matapos na kaladkarin ng mga kidnappers pasakay sa naghihintay ng mga itong

bangka sa may dalampasigan saka tumahak patungo sa hindi pa mabatid ng destinasyon.

Nagsasagawa na ng search and rescue operations ang pinagsanib na elemento ng pulisya at Army's 13th

Special Forces upang buhay na masagip ang mag-asawa at maaresto ang mga suspek. Inimbestigahan na ng mga awtoridad ang kasong ito upang matukoy ang grupong nasa likod ng pagbihag sa mag-asawa.

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Top PH execs tour US carrier in disputed sea

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez and Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II on Saturday visited US aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson patrolling the disputed South China Sea on the invitation of the US Navy, embassy officials said.

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SHOW OF FORCE



FIREPOWER A US Navy F-18 fighter jet takes off from aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson during a freedom of navigation operation patrol in the South China Sea on Friday. —REUTERS

TOP PH OFFICIALS TOUR US CARRIER IN DISPUTED SEA

The Philippine defense chief and two other Cabinet members on Saturday toured a US aircraft carrier patrolling the disputed South China Sea on the invitation of the US Navy, embassy officials said.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez and Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II visited the USS Carl Vinson along with three Philippine security officials, US Embassy spokesperson Molly Koscina said.

The visit shows continuing top-level engagements between Philippine officials and the US military despite President Duterte's threat to scale back engagements with American forces while reaching out to China and Russia.

There was no immediate reaction from China, which had opposed US patrols in waters it has claimed virtually in its entirety.

The US ambassador to Manila, Sung Kim, accompanied the officials to the USS Carl Vinson, where they watched F-18 fighter jets land and take off on catapult on the flight deck and met US Navy commanders in charge of the 95,000-ton carrier

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as it sailed in the disputed waters, Koscina said.

Freedom of navigation

US Navy officials told a small group of journalists who were flown to the Carl Vinson on Friday that the US warship deployment was aimed at ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, a key waterway for global commerce and security.

"We will be here," Rear Adm. James Kilby told the journalists, including those from The Associated Press. "We're going to continue to demonstrate that international waters are waters where everyone can sail, where everyone can conduct commerce and merchant traffic."

Kilby's comments and the presence of the carrier in the South China Sea are aimed at reassuring American allies, who have expressed concerns over China's aggressive actions to assert its claims to virtually all of the South China Sea. The nuclear-powered Carl Vinson, which is manned by about 5,500 military personnel, is part of a strike group comprising 12 warships

and nine aircraft squadrons.

In recent years, China has turned seven mostly submerged disputed reefs into islands where Beijing is now reportedly installing a missile defense system. Chinese officials have stressed that they have a right to carry out those constructions in what they say are their territories and insist they have no hostile intentions in the region.

But worries over China's actions have grown. Governments fear its actions could later restrict movement in a key waterway for world commerce with rich fishing grounds and potential under-sea deposits of oil and gas.

"There is a lot of worry about what China's intentions are," said Ernest Bower, a senior adviser for the Southeast Asia program of Washington-based think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"I think the question everyone has is, '(are) the Chinese trying to shut down access to the South China Sea?'" Boyer told reporters in Manila. "The Americans are saying under no circumstances would that be acceptable to the international community." —AP

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Cabinet men tour US warship in disputed sea

By JAIME LAUDE

ABOARD USS CARL VINSON – Three Philippine officials headed by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana witnessed first hand the operations of an aircraft carrier strike group at sea

US Ambassador Sung Kim accompanied Lorenzana along with Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II and Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III aboard this ship, alighting from a US Navy transport plane that fetched them from Villamor Air

Base in Pasay City

They were welcomed aboard by Strike Group 1 commander Rear Admiral James Kilby and his staff

Briefing his visitors, Kilby described the presence of Strike Group 1 as a routine exercise

in line with the continuing US Navy training as well as to ensure freedom of navigation in international waters.

When asked if they have encountered some challenges from the Chinese naval forces

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in the area, Kilby only said the US Navy is just doing its job in accordance with international laws.

Lorenzana defended the presence of USS Vinson in the South China Sea

He said even before the China asserted its presence in the area, particularly in Panatag Shoal, this has been the training area of joint US-Philippine naval and aerial exercises.

He also described his tour of the carrier "as a very good experience" in witnessing how F18 fighters take off and land on a limited space on the flight deck.

Lorenzana also mused that fighter aircraft on Vinson are far more too many as compared to whole plane inventory of the Philippine Air Force.

Aguirre, for his part, said the presence of the aircraft carrier in the region was a power projection.

Kim, on the other hand, said bringing Filipino officials aboard the aircraft carrier will afford them opportunity to see for themselves carrier operations that he himself described as "truly amazing."

He also said the US presence in the South China Sea is consistent with inter-

national law, adding that everyone in the region understands.

He stressed relations between the Philippines and the US remain strong.

US embassy spokesperson Molly Koscina said it is a tradition on the part of the US government to invite Filipino dignitaries to board any of their visiting ships.

She added AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año and other top military leaders were also invited but they failed to attend due to some other commitments.

Lingering near Scarborough

Sailing at a leisurely speed of eight knots, Vinson's latest position yesterday was 120 nautical miles north of Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal.

Amid the buffeting wind, activities on the flight deck were also busy with F18 fighters as well as surveillance planes taking off and landing alternately.

Aside from several squadrons of F18 fighter jets patrolling the skies, a US Navy helicopter was hovering at a distance.

"We are 120 nautical miles north of Scarborough shoal and also 120 nautical miles from mainland Philippines," Kilby announced to his Filipino guests.

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COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Armed Forces of the Philippines deputy chief of staff Vice Adm. Narciso Vingson (center), Jennifer Santiago Oreta of Security Reform Initiative (4th from left), Bantay Bayanihan sa Kapayapaan (BBK) national convenor Kathlene Anne Tolosa (4th from right) with military officials and BBK local convenors signed a Manifesto of Reaffirmation of Commitment to respect human rights during a ceremony at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City (Metro Manila) on Friday. BBK is a civilian organization that facilitates dialogue between the military and stakeholders and an oversight body to ensure that no human rights is violated as the Development Support and Security Plan – "Kapayapaan" – is being implemented. PHOTO BY JERRY M. HERNANDEZ