

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**

07 March 2017

Tuesday

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

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BALANCED NEWS + FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | MARCH 7, 2017 | TUESDAY

LOW PRESSURE AREA
165 KM EAST SOUTHEAST OF DAVAO CITY
NORTHEAST MONSOON
AFFECTING NORTHERN LUZON
(As of 5:00 PM - Mar. 6, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:09 AM	6:05 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
1:16 PM	1:29 AM
FIRST QUARTER MAR 5 7:32 PM	FULL MOON MAR 12 10:54 PM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
12:55 AM	4:53 PM
0.06 Meter	0.92 Meter

- Partly cloudy in 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

	MAR 8	MAR 9	MAR 8	MAR 9	MAR 8	MAR 9		
METRO MANILA	22-31 °C	22-30 °C	TAGAYTAY	20-28 °C	19-29 °C	TACLOBAN	24-29 °C	25-29 °C
TUGUEGARAO	21-29 °C	21-28 °C	LEGAZPI	24-28 °C	25-30 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	22-29 °C	23-30 °C
LAOAG	21-30 °C	21-29 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	24-28 °C	25-29 °C	METRO DAVAO	25-30 °C	24-31 °C
BAGUIO	13-21 °C	13-22 °C	ILOILO/ BACOLOD	25-30 °C	26-31 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24-30 °C	24-31 °C
SBMA/ CLARK	22-30 °C	26-30 °C	METRO CEBU	24-29 °C	24-30 °C	<p style="font-size: x-small;">SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!</p>		

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Senators doubt credibility of Lascañas

FROM A1

By Philip C. Tubeza
@pctubezaINQ

He saw the light 15 months before he first came to the Senate, not the second time around, making him sin against God, not once, but twice.

"Something does not add up," an exasperated Sen. Panfilo Lacson said, prompting him to cut short the second appearance in the chamber of retired SPO3 Arturo Lascañas on Monday after six hours of questioning.

Some senators had questioned the motive of Lascañas in linking President Duterte to the dreaded Davao Death Squad (DDS), suggesting that the former police officer became unhappy because the administration had turned down deals he attempted to broker, including lottery franchises and other businesses, for his friends.

Lascañas insisted this wasn't the case. According to him, his conscience bothered him, as he had recounted in earlier press conferences the past weeks, particularly the killing of a pregnant woman and a child.

Lacson, chair of the Senate committee on public order, zeroed in on Lascañas' claim that a spiritual renewal had led him to recant his previous testimony in the Senate in October last year in which he cleared Mr. Duterte of any links to the DDS when he was the Davao City mayor.

"Why did your spiritual renewal happen first ... so you again lied and you sinned again against God," Lacson said. "Please explain because we're having difficulty understanding the kind of spiritual renewal you underwent."

Lascañas testified to personally killing nearly 200 people and up to 300 with other assassins as part of Mr. Duterte's DDS.

Promise to God

He said that when he first made his confession to a priest in July 2015, he thought he was



Why did your spiritual renewal happen first ... so you again lied and you sinned again against God

Panfilo Lacson
Senator

going to be killed.

"I won't fight my conscience anymore. My personal promise to God was I won't take this to my grave after I was given another chance in life," said Lascañas, the second confessed DDS hit man to implicate Mr. Duterte in hundreds of alleged assassinations in Davao.

Some senators suggested that Lascañas might have felt "bad" after the rejection of his friends' requested projects.

"This is just me but you might have been the one who requested and you were turned down four times or even more. You felt bad because your request was denied," Sen. Manny Pacquiao said.

"What is really your motivation?" Sen. Joel Villanueva asked. "Is it to bring down President Duterte?"

Lacson said it would not have been "normal" if Lascañas did not feel bad, given his claim of being close to the President since 1989. "If you say you did not feel bad, you are not normal," he said.

But Lascañas stood his ground, saying: "No, I didn't because I had a P100,000 allowance from Mayor (Duterte)."

Lottery franchises

Under questioning by Sen. JV Ejercito, Lascañas admitted that he had helped friends, called the "Davao group," to try and get approval for small-time lottery (STL) franchises, the management of a transport ter-

terminal for vans, and the supply of landfill for a road project.

He said he had even accompanied his friends, including a Davao barangay captain and a secretary of the President's son Sebastian to meet with Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office Chair Jorge Corpus to operate STLs in profitable areas like Laguna, Cavite and Batangas provinces.

Lascañas said he had also accompanied two barangay captains and transport leaders from Bulacan province to meet with Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade for a proposed terminal for vans.

Lascañas served as broker of the proposed business deals just after he first testified in the Senate in October last year and before he retired the following month, he told Ejercito.

"Because of my exposure in the Senate investigation and my perceived successful lies, they believed I had some sort of influence," Lascañas said.

"It appears that you got a 'strike 4.' No (project) proceeded. You got nothing in everything you were aspiring for," Ejercito said.

Perjured witness

Still, Lascañas said he bore no grudge despite the rejections and insisted on his fear of God for his reversal.

Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella described the retired police officer as a "politely sourced and perjured witness" and said his testimony was "fabricated and unacceptable."

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo said the President would not order the "killing of a woman, pregnant or not, or for that matter, any person."

"He is outraged by any extrajudicial killing. Neither will he tolerate it. He abhors any violation of the Constitution or any law," Panelo said.

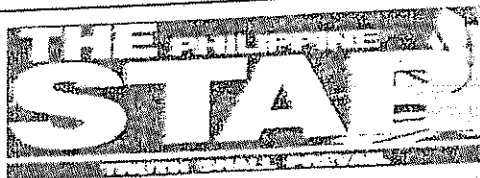
He said Lascañas "admitted he had no personal knowledge of the killings and that he was only assuming," based on questioning by Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano.

—WITH REPORTS FROM MARLON RAMOS AND NIKKO DIZON INQ

nal pride

(02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

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Page: 1

'Double Barrel' reloaded

By CECILLE SUERTE FELIPE

After only a month of being out of the war on drugs, the Philippine National Police (PNP) is back in the battle, with what it promises to be a kinder, gentler campaign.

"Today we are going to re-launch the war on drugs. We relaunched our Project Double Barrel Reloaded," PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa announced during the regular flag-raising ceremony at Camp Crame in Quezon City yesterday.

What's the difference?

"This time we will make sure it will be less bloody if not bloodless," Dela Rosa vowed, promising that "Tokhang Part 2 revisited" would target high-value drug suspects after proper "revalidation."

Catholic clergy and other religious workers have been asked to join the police anti-drug operations, to be led by a new unit that's still being put together, called the Drug Enforcement Group (DEG)

"We can't afford to fail in this campaign. *Ayusin na natin ang bansa* (Let's fix the country) for our children, grandchildren to live without

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Double From Page 1

the problem of illegal drugs," Dela Rosa said.

"We will live and die in this campaign," he told the police. "If we win in this war on drugs, then long live the PNP; if we lose in the war on drugs, then good luck to the PNP"

He named Senior Superintendent Graciano Mijares as the head of the DEG, with hotlines 0917,8950544 for Globe subscribers and 0998 9992286 for Smart.

All other positions in the DEG are vacant. De la Rosa said potential recruits will undergo rigid screening and complete background investigation so that only the best and most qualified are taken in.

Under Oplan Tokhang Part 2 revisited, Dela Rosa said only police commanders, station

commanders or precinct commanders or territorial units are authorized to conduct operations, with operatives required to be in complete police uniform.

The PNP chief said every operation would require the involvement of barangay captains or any barangay official as another safety measure.

"Another new requirement in the relaunched anti-illegal drive is the mandatory coordination with Church or religious officials," he said.

He admitted that corrupt members of the police force had used the previous Oplan Tokhang to engage in illegal activities like extortion or worse.

Dela Rosa said he expected the conduct of the re-launched

anti-drug campaign to be slow as it would require greater coordination among operating units.

"We follow a strict policy under the renewed Tokhang. We don't care if it's slow as long as it is sure," the PNP chief said. He explained the previous Tokhang was poorly supervised and messed up further by corrupt and incompetent policemen.

Dela Rosa also said he is encouraging all policemen to have "personal ownership" of the campaign against illegal drugs.

"*Masyadong mabigat itong tungkulin sa atin* (Our responsibility is enormous), I want everyone to have personal ownership. This is a fight not just of DEG, provincial DEG or regional DEG or municipal DEG alone. This is our fight. Even if we don't have direct participation in the war on drugs, let's put this in our heart, in our own

little way," he said.

He stressed the PNP would continue to pursue its internal cleansing as well as its anti-illegal gambling drive.

"If anyone of you have a burning desire to be part of the anti-illegal drug drive, you can volunteer... not the burning desire to become rich, earn money. Those people have no place in the PNP," he added.

Meanwhile, the chief of PNP-Directorate for Operations said about 90 percent of the 1.2 million illegal drug users who surrendered in the past eight months under Oplan Tokhang are considered mild to moderate users and can be rehabilitated through community-based or outpatient program.

Director Camilo Cascolan said community-based or outpatient rehabilitation model program has been successfully

implemented in PNP Region 6 in Iloilo and PNP Region 10 in Cagayan de Oro.

"In response to clamor of 1.2 million surrenderees in eight months, integral part of the revitalized drive versus illegal drugs of the PNP, the DPCR (Directorate for Police Community Relations) program is there, there is life after tokhang. The PNP initiated recovery and wellness program for Tokhang respondents (surrenderers)," he said.

"This is aimed at saving the users and jailing the pushers if necessary," he added.

Cascolan said the community-based program would be in partnership with the Department of Health, as well as with the private sector and non-government organizations.

"The PNP is also assisting the government by making provincial headquarters and

facilities and services to assist in drug rehab programs," he said. "In Region 6 in Iloilo and Region 10 in Cagayan de Oro we conducted the community rehabilitation program."

The PNP chief, he said, envisions to replicate the projects in Region 6 and Region 10 in other police offices nationwide.

From July 1 last year to Jan. 30 this year, the PNP reported a total of 2,551 drug offenders killed while trying to fight it out with lawmen and 2,928 others killed by suspected vigilante groups. The PNP classified their deaths as "under investigation."

During the same period, 52,962 drug users and pushers were arrested and 1,178,224 individuals, including 79,341 pushers and 1,098,883 users surrendered as the PNP visited a total of 7,031,394 houses under the Oplan Tokhang.

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Peace talks, apela ng 2 sundalong bihag

ISULAN, Sultan Kudarat – Habang patuloy na inaantabayanan ang pagpapalaya sa dalawang sundalo na bihag ng New People's Army (NPA), nanawagan ang dalawa na itigil na ng militar ang operasyona nito laban sa kilusan at ipagpatuloy ang isapang pangkapayapaan ng gobyerno at ng Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front (CPP-NDF).

Batay sa audio message na ibinahagi ni Senior Insp. Bernard Francia, tagapagsalita ng Crisis Management Council ng Columbio, Sultan Kudarat, malinaw na buhay pa ang dalawang kasapi ng 39th Infantry Battalion ng Philippine Army.

Ang panawagan ng dalawang bihag na sundalo ay napakinggan sa audio message na ibinahagi ni Senior Insp. Francia.

Kasabay nito, tiniyak naman ni Columbio Vice Mayor Edwin Bermudez na malaki ang posibilidad na mapalaya na ang dalawang bihag, batay na rin sa negosasyong pinangungunahan ng grupo ni Bishop Collins Bagatoro.

Leo P. Diaz

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Gov't troops reach out to NPA-infested area

From the Philippine Information Agency (Mar 6): Gov't troops reach out to NPA-infested area

STO. NINO, Cagayan - - Despite series of encounters with the communist New People's Army (NPA) here, members of the 17th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army based in Alcala town recently brought medical and dental services to the conflict-affected barangays here.

Lieutenant Colonel Rembert R. Baylosis, commanding officer of the 17th IB, said the medical and civic action mission aimed at bringing the government services nearer to the people especially those who have been affected and displaced by the armed conflict.

Baylosis said aside from free medicines and check-ups, residents also availed of the soldiers' free hair cutting and male circumcision services.

"We are not program implementers, however, we can be instrumental in bringing in government services to the remotest barangays," the commanding officer said, adding that they, too, can refer to the concerned agencies the needed services and interventions of the people in threatened areas.

He assured the public that they can always count on government troops not only in keeping their places safe and secured but also towards the attainment of continuous local development.

Baylosis said the same activities will be conducted in other places here in the coming months.

<http://news.pia.gov.ph/article/view/461488173846/gov-t-troops-reach-out-to-npa-infested-area>

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Army challenges Karapatan: File cases if you have proof

From the Mindanao Times (Mar 6): Army challenges Karapatan: File cases if you have proof

THE 10TH Infantry Division challenged progressive group Karapatan to go beyond mere propaganda and file appropriate charges against the soldiers it believed to have committed crimes against civilians.

Capt. Rhyan Batchar, the spokesperson of 10th ID, said that the PNP in Alabel, Sarangani already filed criminal charges against eight captured communist guerillas, and trust the process of the court to determine guilt or innocence.

The eight rebels are now under the custody of the Alabel police.

“Press statements are not the right venue to correct injustices except for propaganda purposes only to discredit the success of AFP units, thus validating the tactical victories of government forces,” he said.

It can be recalled that the 73rd Infantry Battalion engaged in a series of firefights the NPA Guerrilla Front 71 in Little Baquio, Malita, Davao Occidental and Barangay Datal Anggas, Alabel, Sarangani last February 8 and 11, respectively.

One soldier, identified as Pfc. Ricky Subere, was wounded while eight NPA rebels were captured, seven of them still clutching their high-powered firearms, in the Sarangani encounter.

Subsequent to the clashes, 15 NPA regulars and nine NPA Milisya ng Bayan (MB) members surrendered to the local government and the 73rd IB. They also brought with them five high-powered firearms.

Batchar said they expected Karapatan to cry foul after the NPA sustained some casualties in the recent clashes with government troops.

Meanwhile, Karapatan and the SOS Network blamed the military for the death of couple Leonila and Ramon Pesadilla, members of Compostela Farmers Association, on Thursday last week. They left behind their 5-year-old grandson.

The couple also reportedly donated their land where the Lumad school Salugpongan Community Learning Center was erected.

Rius Valle, SOS Network spokesperson, claimed that in the span of one month three key contributors on the establishment of Lumad schools were killed.

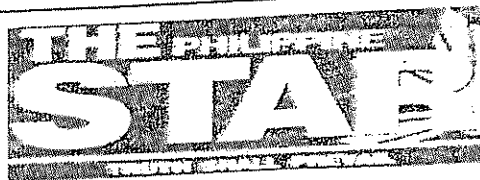
Emelito Rotimas, a purok chairman, was shot by two men riding in tandem last Feb 6, 2017 in front of five Lumad students just outside their campus.

“I could only imagine the trauma it left to the child” Valle said, referring to the grandson of the slain couple.

<http://mindanaotimes.net/army-challenges-karapatan-file-cases-if-you-have-proof/>

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9 Sayyaf bandits killed in Sulu clashes

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Nine members of the Abu Sayyaf including two wives of the group's leaders were killed during clashes between government troops and the bandits since last Sunday in Maimbung, Sulu, the military said.

Some 15 other bandits were wounded in the ongoing operations launched by the Marines Special Operations Group (MSOG) under 64th Marine Company.

Among those killed in the encounter at sitio Tundun, Barangay Ipil, Maimbung town were the wives of Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Jihad Idang Susukan and Aktar Susukan.

The Marines Special Operations Group initially attacked the Abu Sayyaf group about 4:30 a.m Sunday and resulted in four militants killed and seven high-powered rifles recovered.

Government troops launched the offensive last week and had reportedly resulted in the death of 24 Abu Sayyaf members and 21 others wounded.

At least 28 soldiers were also wounded in the latest clashes.

Meanwhile, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) claimed that eliminating the Abu Sayyaf and stopping its kidnap-for-ransom activities is a complicated issue that cannot be solved by military force alone.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla admitted that the government had to address poverty that some people want to end through easy money obtained clandestinely.

"The Armed Forces has repeatedly mentioned that the solution to the systemic problem besetting this part of our country does not lie on military solutions alone," Padilla said at the Kapihan sa Manila Bay forum held at Café Adriatico in Manila last week.

"First we're trying to address the lawlessness. Second, the capacity or capability of these threats that are existing. We are trying to make their worlds smaller now by our continuing, unrelentless operations not only on land but also at sea," he said.

Padilla, however, said the Abu Sayyaf and the kidnapping problem stems from the desire for easy money earned from criminal activities like abducting people and demanding ransom.

"And the money that they get out of all these incidents is no joke. And it can sustain families for many months or years. That's why it is hard for them to let go," he noted.

"How do you change that mindset? We need to have a very comprehensive approach to the problem here that will seep into the fiber of the consciousness of the people," he said.

Padilla expressed belief that one of the solutions could be the establishment of a good education program that will protect children from the "virus" infecting the minds of adults who have resorted to violence to earn money.

He said the government should provide opportunities for the people so that they will have alternatives like jobs that can sustain their families which should be enough to have them turn away from what they are doing and be afraid of the rule of law.

"I think the President is very much aware of this," he added, citing for example how President Duterte met with some business leaders and had dinner with them in Malacañang to discuss the issue of possible public-private partnership in the Sulu archipelago.

Padilla said some corporations wishing to remain anonymous want to help and are already extending assistance in the medical area, power, and potential agricultural sources of livelihood.

He admitted, however, that such solutions cannot be rushed and should be done while the military and the police help ensure a secure environment.

Meanwhile, the Philippine National Police (PNP) urged netizens to stop sharing video clips of the recovery of the body of German kidnap victim Juergen Gustav Kantner who was beheaded by Abu Sayyaf bandits.

"Kantner rightfully deserves human dignity even in such gruesome death while his family and friends deserve respect in this time of grief," read the PNP statement released last Sunday. – With Michael Punongbayan, Lino de la Cruz

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Abu Sayyaf death toll reaches 9

Army exec says gov't now in control of group's stronghold

By Cynthia D. Balana
@cynchdbINQ

At least five more members of the Abu Sayyaf Group, including one of its leaders, were killed by government troops in a clash in Maimbung town in Sulu province on Sunday, bringing to 9 the total number of slain bandits that day, a military official said.

Col. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of Joint Task Force (JTF) Sulu, on Monday said that among those killed was Jaber Susukan, a brother of Kumander Idang and one of the trusted commanders of Abu Sayyaf leader Radulan Sahiron.

Sobejana said soldiers failed

to retrieve Susukan's body although they were able to confirm his death. Military reports also indicated that Idang was wounded in the clash, where government troops engaged at least 70 bandits.

Initial reports on Sunday showed that four Abu Sayyaf bandits were killed in Maimbung as soldiers were patrolling Barangay Ipil.

The latest deaths brought to 23 the number of bandits killed since clashes started last month.

Sobejana said soldiers recovered five firearms from the clash site.

"Firefight is still imminent, on and off, but we have encir-

led their lair," he said.

"Simultaneously, we are occupying spaces to reduce the [bandits'] maneuver space. We are now [in control of] their strongholds. They are outside their comfort zone," Sobejana added.

Sulu-based university professor Octavio Dinampo, citing information he received from the Philippine Army, said 15 bandits were wounded in the firefight.

Dinampo, who was kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf in 2008, said reports reaching him showed the bandits fled toward Barangay Mabahay in Talipao town. —WITH A REPORT FROM JULIE S. ALIPALA INQ

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The Manila Times

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Soldiers surround Abu Sayyaf bandits

BY FERNAN MARASIGAN

THE military believes that the demise of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) is imminent because government troops have driven out the bandits from their lairs and have surrounded the terrorists.

Reports reaching the military headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City said that five more Islamic militants were killed as government forces continue to pound the strongholds of the group in Sulu following the beheading

of a German sailor:

Among those killed, according to Col. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Joint Task Force Sulu, was Jaber Susukan, brother of ASG sub-commander Idang Susukan,

who was seriously wounded. Another sub-commander said to be close to ASG leader Radullan Sahiron was critically wounded, the military said.

This brought to 14 the number of jihadists killed since security forces launched pursuit operations against the terrorist group that executed Jurgen Kantner.

Kantner's body was found in the village of Buanza in Indanan town Sunday.

Sporadic clashes continued on Monday as security forces surrounded the enemies' position.

"Our operations continue. Actu-

ally, we have them surrounded, hopefully the result will be better later on," Sobejana said.

He admitted that soldiers are having a hard time because of the rough terrain.

"Troops are buried up to the waist in mud because it is a mangrove area. It is really challenging. But the troops are there," Sobejana added.

"Right now we are holding their strongholds, they are outside their comfort zones, that's why it's easier for us to defeat them because they've been driven into areas where they do not enjoy the support of the community," he said.

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PMA's top 'mistah' is a miss

By ARTEMIO DURLAO

BAGUIO CITY – For the second time, a woman has emerged as valedictorian of the Philippine Military Academy, topping 167 "mistahs" (classmates) in her batch.

"I did my best," Rovi Mairal Valino Martinez, 23, said when asked how she landed at the top

Now that she has fulfilled her father's dream for her to become a soldier, Martinez is due to join the Philippine Navy.

Eight of the Top 10 in this year's graduating PMA class *Salaknib* are women – a record since the academy began accepting females in 1993.

Salaknib – the Ilocano term for defense – also stands for "Sang-

galang ay Lakas at Buhay para sa Kalayaan ng Inang Bayan."

The only men in the Top 10 are Philip Modestino Viscaya from Ligao City, Albay who is the class salutatorian, and fifth placer Carlo Emmanuel Manalansan Canlas from Lubao, Pampanga.

In 1999, Arlene de la Cruz, a former Mathematics major at the

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PMA's top From Page 1

University of the Philippines-Bagui-
io, topped the graduating class, the
first-ever female PMA valedictorian.
But she died in a mysterious car ac-
cident in 2008 in Bataan.

Eda Glis Buansi Marapao of
Baguio City placed third; Cathleen
Jovi Santiano Baybayan from San
Fernando City in Pampanga, fourth;

Shiela Joy Ramiro Jallorina of
Bagabag in Nueva Vizcaya, sixth;
Shiela Marie Calonge de Guzman
of Manaoag in Pangasinan, sev-
enth; Joyzy Mencias Funchica of
Butuan City, eighth; Resie Jezreel
Arrocena Hucalla of Compostela
Valley, and Catherine Me Emete-
rio Gonzales of Zamboanga City,

tenth.

Martinez and Marapao are joining the Philippine Navy while Baybayan and De Guzman will go with the Philippine Army. Jallorina, Funchica, Hucalla and Gonzales are joining the Air Force.

Women on top

Almost half of the 167 cadets graduating on Sunday are females (63), the highest so far in PMA history.

"They deserve it," said PMA Superintendent Lt. Gen. Donato San Juan, adding, "they were equally treated (with men), and it so happens that this batch has excellent women."

Since 1997, female cadets never failed to land in the Top 10 of the graduating class.

Last year, Christine Mae Naungayan Calima of Bolinao, Pangasinan graduated as class salutatorian.

In 2015, Caroline Jhoy Ramirez Nacional of Marikina, Saranggani graduated fifth in her class.

Liza Jumawid Dango of Bulua in Cagayan de Oro City also landed in 2014's Top 10 graduates.

The year 2013 saw the Igorot (Kankanaey) lass Maryam Dinamling Balais graduating salutatorian. A native of Beckel, La Trinidad in Benguet, she then declared that, "the PMA is no more a man's world."

Balais then called on more young

Filipinas to join the academy, saying "PMA training is never difficult for women."

To rub it in, four of the 19 graduating females in PMA class "Pudang Kalis" 2013 were in the top 10, the others being Joselyn Dimapilis Advincula (No. 5, from Tagaytay City), Vanessa Pascual Factor (No. 8, from Antipolo City) and Marila Agrabio Maniscan (10, South Cotabato).

In 2012, Angeline Osorio Esmeria of Taguig City landed in fourth place while Janice Matbagan of Baguio City made it to the Top 6 in 2011.

Karen Padayao of Ormoc City in Leyte placed 9th in the 2010 graduating class, the same place achieved by Cynthia Forteza of Urbiztondo, Pangasinan in 2009.

In 2008, Me-ann Singson of Ligao City in Albay was Top 3 of the graduating class.

Army Lt. Colonel Lea Lorenzo-Santiago, one of the first seven female graduates of the Academy in 1997, said, "all were treated with equal opportunities." She is now the PMA's first female Senior Tactical Officer.

She described the female cadets of the graduating Salaknib class as strong-willed and competitive, adding that a number of the female cadets held key posts in the corps of cadets.

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8 female cadets make it to top 10 of PMA Class 2017

By LARRY P. FABIAN and ZALDY COMANDA

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City – Eight out of the top 10 cadets graduating in the country's premier military academy are females, dominating their male counterparts during the presentation yesterday in Fort General Gregorio H. Del Pilar, Baguio City. ▶9

8 female cadets...

◀1

Cadet First Class Rovi Mairel Martinez, who hails from Cabanatuan City ranked first among 167 members of Sanggalang ay Lakas at Buhay Para sa Kalayaan Ng Inang Bayan (Salaknib) Class of 2017. Martinez is the fourth female to top a graduating class since the academy graduated the seven female cadets in 1997.

Seven other female cadets are in the top 10: C1C Eda Glis Buansi of Baguio City ranked third, C1C Cathleen Jovi Santiano of San Fernando, Pampanga ranked fourth, C1C Shiela Joy Ramiro of Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya (5th), C1C Sheila Marie Calonge of Manaoag, Pangasinan (7th), C1C Joyzy Funchica of Butuan City (8th), C1C Resie Jezreel Arroccena of Nabunturan, Compostela Valley (9th), and C1C Catherine Mar Emeterio of Zamboanga City (10th).

Only two male cadets made it to the top 10. The second top cadet is Philip Viscaya of Ligao City, Albay. The fifth ranking cadet is C1C Emmanuel Carlas of Lubao, Pampanga.

Out of the 167 graduates of this year's Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Salaknib Class of 2017, 104 are

males while 63 are females.

Out of the 63 female graduates of this class, 32 will be deployed to the Philippine Army, while 13 will be doing their duties with the Philippine Air Force, and 18 will report to the Philippine Navy.

Top one Cdt. Rovi Martinez and top three Cdt. Eda Marapao will both be deployed to the Philippine Navy while top two Cdt. Philip Modesto will join the Philippine Army.

Arlene Dela Cruz was the first female valedictorian, topping her class in 1999 (PMA Class Masikhay) five years after the military institution opened its doors to female cadets in 1994 by virtue of Republic Act 7192 (Women in Development and Nation Building Act). Dela Cruz, who died in a car accident in 2008, joined the Philippine Navy.

Following Dela Cruz's lead is Tara J. Velasco, who was the valedictorian of PMA Class Mandarangan in 2003. Velasco joined the Army.

The third female cadet to top the PMA is Andreee Samson Mojica of PMA Class Maragtas in 2007. She joined the Philippine Navy.

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8 FEMALE CADETS AMONG PMA'S TOP 10 GRADUATES

By Inquirer Northern Luzon
@InqNational

FORT DEL PILAR, BAGUIO CITY—Cadet First Class Rovi Mairiel Valino Martinez, 22, almost quit the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) because of the rigorous training but was persuaded by her family and friends to persevere.

"Don't you know how many women want to become part of PMA? Would you give up now that you are already in PMA? Don't you know how lucky you are?" Martinez said, quoting senior cadets who berated her during her second year as a cadet.

She heeded their advice. Now she ranks first among the 167 members of Salaknib Class of 2017 who will receive their military commission from President Duterte on Sunday.

Martinez leads seven other female cadets who are in the Top 10, the first such case since the first seven women graduated from the academy in 1997.

They rose through the ranks on their own merit. Lt. Gen. Donato San Juan II, PMA superintendent, said when asked if a female-dominated Top 10 was timed with the 2017 celebration of International Women's Day on Wednesday.

Lt. Col. Leah Lorenzo-Santiago, one of the first PMA female graduates, was the senior tactical officer who trained the Class of 2017.

Santiago said she was proud of Martinez and other top-notchers—Cadets First Class Eda Glis Buansi Marapao of Baguio City, who ranked third; Cathleen Jovi Santiano Baybayan of the City of San Fernando in Pampanga, fourth; Shiela Joy Ramiro Jallorina of Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya, sixth; Sheila Marie Calonge de Guzman of Manaoag, Pangasinan, seventh; Joyzy Mencias Funchica of Butuan City, eighth; Resie Jezreel Arroccena Hucalla of Nabunturan, Compostela Valley, ninth; and Catherine Mae Gonzales of Zamboanga City, 10th.

Only two male cadets made it to the Top 10 this year: Cadets First Class Philip Modestino Viscaya of Ligao City in Albay, who ranked second, and Carlo Emmanuel Manalansan Canlas of Lubao, Pampanga, fifth.

Martinez, who was born in Cabanatuan City, is the fourth female cadet to top her class. The late Navy Lt. Senior Grade Arlene de la Cruz of Class of 1999 was the first, followed by Tara Velasco of Class of 2003,

and Andrelee Mojica of Class of 2007.

Aside from graduating cum laude, Martinez will receive 11 awards, including the Presidential Saber and the Philippine Navy Saber.

Special awards

Three other female cadets will get special awards. They are Cadets First Class Michelle Serdino Calusar, who will receive the journalism award; Karen Joy Benitez Gamboa, computing and information sciences plaque; and Ma. Isaia Pearl Paracale, mathematics plaque.

Cadet First Class Franklin Esperanzate Delloinos will receive the Athletic Saber.

Viscaya said he and Canlas paid no attention to insinuations they were beaten by women, saying, "Everyone did his best."

It also helped that Class of 2017 has the most number of female cadets compared with previous classes, Viscaya said, adding that all 63 of his female classmates are good friends with their male counterparts.

The youngest of two siblings, Martinez was a third year accountancy student at Araullo University in Cabanatuan City when she decided to join the PMA.

She had not shown any interest in the military growing up, unlike her elder sister, Rubylyn, who went through Citizens' Army Training and Reserve Officers' Training Corps, said her father, Mariel, a village councilor of Bangad in Cabanatuan.

Martinez was a consistent

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dean's lister at Araullo University who enjoyed full scholarship with an allowance, her father said.

"Back in high school, if a task needed completing, she never got tired accomplishing her work," her mother, Ruby, said.

The father said he was happy that his daughter joined the military. "My aspirations to be a soldier had been frustrated. I went to all military camps to apply as a soldier and no camp took me in," he said.

Marapao grew up at Camp Henry Allen in Baguio and was a civil engineering student at Saint Louis University when she passed the PMA entrance examination.

Like Martinez, Marapao is joining the Philippine Navy. "I look for adventure. I will be joining the Navy because the Navy needs people who will man the ships and command the naval forces," she said.

Her mother, Helen, is from Buguias town in Benguet province while her father, retired M/Sgt. Edgar Marapao, is from Misamis Occidental.

"We were surprised she made it [to the Top 10]. We heard over the radio that she landed among Top 3," the father said.

Ready for combat

All top cadets said they were ready for combat duty and aspired to do great things as military officers.

"I want to be the commanding officer of a [Navy ship] in the future, and if God allows, I want to be the flag officer in command [of the Navy]," Marapao said.

Baybayan, who will join the Philippine Army, said she intended to work hard to lead the armored company.

Funchica wants to fly and is joining the Philippine Air Force.

"The PMA taught us to be leaders so we will be leaders wherever we are assigned," they said during a press briefing on Monday.

Marapao's father said the family planned to hold a Thanksgiving Mass and gather relatives for a small celebration at their home in Baguio City.

UP dropout

Lubao town is celebrating the success of Canlas, who dropped out in his third year as geodetic engineering student at the University of the Philippines to pursue his dream of becoming a military pilot.

Rosemarie, Canlas' mother, said her son "dropped out of UP and prepared for the physical tests at PMA by taking boxing and taekwondo classes."

Canlas, who is turning 23 on April 14, topped the PAF qualifying exam.

The eldest among five children, Canlas also finished at the top of his class at Regional Science High School in Subic Bay Freeport.

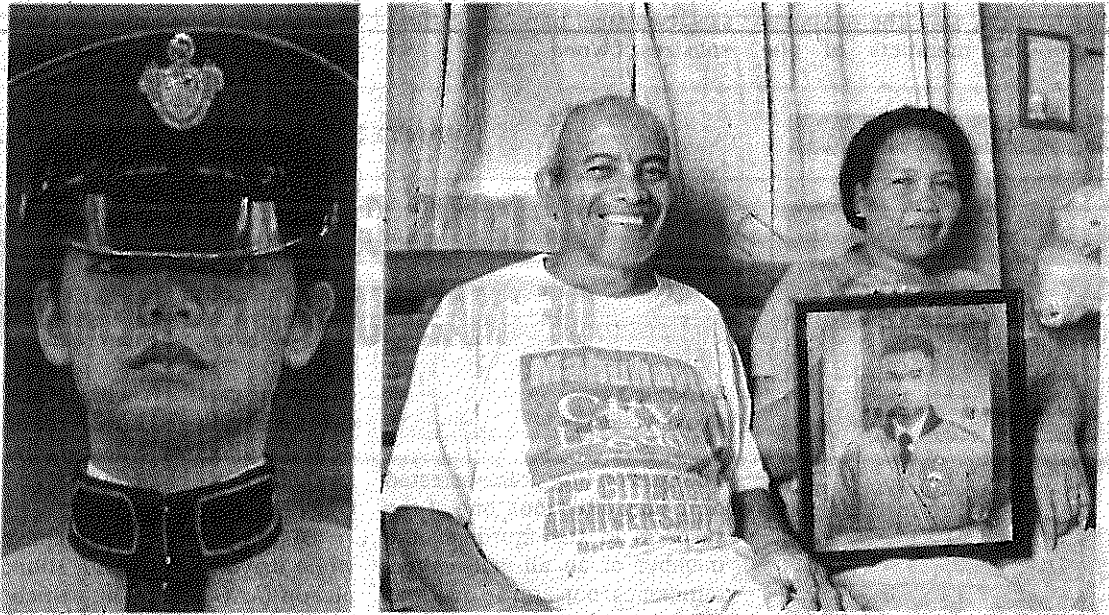
"He is a quiet and obedient young man. He puts the concerns of others before his own," Rosemarie said.

Canlas' father, Tiburcio, is assistant director at the Department of Public Works and Highways in the National Capital Region. —REPORTS FROM VINCENT CABREZA, EV ESPIRITU, ARMAND GALANG, KIMBERLIE QUITASOL AND TONETTE OREJAS INQ

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TOP TWO IN CLASS Cadet First Class Rovi Mairel Valino Martinez (left), valedictorian, and Cadet First Class Philip Modestano Viscaya, salutatorian, whose picture is held by his parents, Nestor and Ma. Elena (right). –EV ESPIRITU AND MICHAEL B. JAUCIAN

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PMA valedictorian dreamt of becoming military officer

By ARTEMIO DUMLAO

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City – To be a soldier – her father's dream – has become a reality for Rovi Mairiel Valino Martinez, who will march on Sunday as top cadet of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) for this year.

It was not an easy feat as Martinez admitted reaching a point when she wanted to quit, if not for an upper-classman who prodded her to move on and take a step closer toward realizing that dream.

Now 23, she tearfully recalls how her father, a barangay kagawad (councilman) and frustrated soldier, dreamt of seeing her become a sol-

dier one day.

Martinez did not just work on fulfilling that promise, she will also graduate as valedictorian – topping 166 of her *mistahs* (classmate) in the PMA class *Salaknib*, the Ilocano term for defense.

The younger of two siblings, Martinez was already in junior year taking accountancy at Araullo University in Cabanatuan City when opportunity knocked.

"I've always dreamt of becoming a military officer since I was a child. As a daughter, I wanted to fulfill my father's dream," she said.

"My being a soldier is already an accomplishment for (my parents).

Topping the class is only a bonus," Martinez added as she thanked her parents for supporting her.

Her mother is a self-employed wife who takes care of the family at their home in Fortaleza Bangad, Cabanatuan City in Nueva Ecija.

They were given equal opportunities with their male *mistahs*, said Army Lt. Colonel Lea Lorenzo-Santiago, one of the first female PMA graduates and now the academy's senior tactical officer.

She described the female cadets of the 2017 *Salaknib* class as tough and competitive, with many of them holding key corps positions. She said this only proves that women in the PMA and in the military are

coming to terms with their male counterparts.

Class *Salaknib* also has seven other females in the top 10.

Three others – Michelle Calusor of Naga City, Karen Joy Benitez of Cabanatuan City and Ma Isaia Pearl Paracale of Pototan town in Iloilo – are to receive special awards for Journalism, Computing and Information Sciences, and Mathematics, respectively.

Vice President Leni Robredo will also attend the commencement rites and will be awarding the vice presidential saber to her fellow Bicolano, male cadet Philip Modestano Viscaya of Ligao City in Albay who is the class salutatorian.

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Cabanatuan lass tops 2017 PMA class

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—As if to underline this year's celebration of the Women's Month in March, eight of the top 10 graduating cadets of the Philippine Military Academy this year are females, including the class topnotcher, as they provide inspiration to other females who wish to enter the Academy and prove that they too can shine in the male-dominated institution.

The top graduating student is Cadet First Class Rovi Mairel Valino Martinez, a 23-year-old who traces her roots in Flordeliza, Bangad, Cabanatuan City.

Martinez, who leads this year's female-dominated 167-member

Sanggalang ay Lakas at Buhay na Alay para sa Kalayaan ng Inang Bayan (Salaknib) Class of 2017, is set to receive the coveted Presidential Saber from President Rodrigo R. Duterte during their graduation rites on Sunday,

March 12, 2017, at the academy's Borromeo grounds.

Her father, Mariel P. Martinez, is a barangay councilman in their place while her mother, Ruby V. Martinez, is a businesswoman who still found time to raise Rovi Mairel and two other siblings.

"I was about to quit when I was a sophomore cadet because I was not used to do strenuous exercises which we were required to do daily but I was made to realize that I am still lucky because of the thousands of youngsters wanting to enter the Academy, I was one of the few who was able to enter the premier military school," Martinez said.

Aside from the Presidential

Saber, Martinez, this year's cum laude, is also set to be awarded the Philippine Navy Saber, the Academic Group Award, Social Sciences Plaque, Navy Professional Courses Plaque, the JUSMAG Award, Association of Generals and Flag officers (AGFO) Award, Spanish and the Australian Defense Force Awards.

As a young girl, Martinez was told that his father had wanted to become a soldier but failed. His father's failure to fulfill his personal dream had instilled in her young mind the thought that given the chance to become a full-pledged military personnel, she will grab the opportunity without any reservation.

She worked as a student assistant while pursuing her accountancy course at the Cabanatuan-based Araulio University when she saw a poster of the Philippine Military Academy announcing the schedule for the entrance examination of those interested to enter the Academy.

Without hesitation, Martinez applied for the examination and handily passed and was accepted in the premier military school in Asia in 2013.

Of this year's 67 graduating cadets, 104 are males while 63 are females. A total of 58 males and 32 females are set to join the Philippine Army, 20 males and 13 females will join the Philip-

pine Air Force while 26 males and 18 females will join the Philippine Navy.

Martinez, who opted to join the Navy, advised the youth who want to enter the country's premier military school to arm themselves with the courage to adjust and persevere to the rigid training for future soldiers and learn to sacrifice to be able to achieve their dream to become military officers.

"I believe my father will be happy with my achievement because I was able to fulfill his dreams. I will treasure this success with him because if not for his prodding, then I will not be a graduate of the Academy," Martinez said.

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Malaya

The National Newspaper

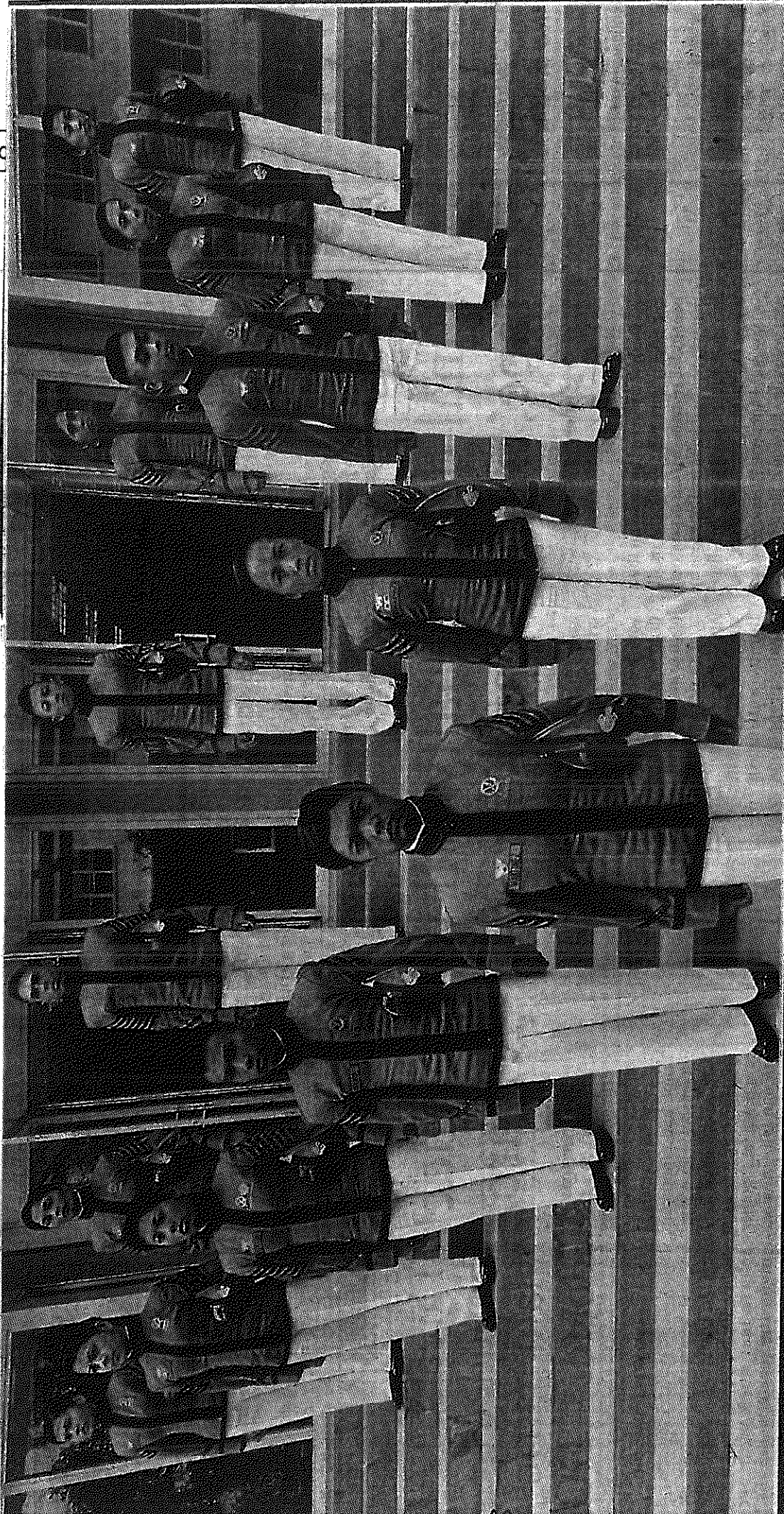
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The best of 'em. The top 10 of the PMA Salaknib Class (Sanggalang ay Lakas at Buhay Para sa Kalayaan Ng Inang Bayan), led by valedictorian Cadet First Class Rovi Mairel Martinez (center, standing), and other awardees.

PHOTO BY REGDIE CAWIS

OFF



WOMEN POWER - Eight of the top 10 graduates belonging to the Philippine Military Academy's (PMA) 'Salaknib (Sa Kalayaan ng Inang Bayan)' Class of 2017 are women, led by valedictorian Rovi Mairiel Valino Martinez (center, foreground) of Cabanatuan City, who will join the Philippine Navy. In second place is Philip Modesto Viscaya of Ligao City, Albay (Army); third - Eda Gils Buansi Marapao of Baguio City (Navy); fourth - Cathleen Jovie Santiano Baybayan of San Fernando, Pampanga (Army); fifth - Carlo Emmanuel Manalasan Canlas of Pampanga (Air Force); sixth - Shiela Joy Ramiro Jalorina of Bagabag, Nueva Viscaya (Air Force); seventh - Sineil Marie Calonge de Guzman of Manaoag, Pangasinan (Army); eighth - Joyzy Mencias Furchica of Butuan City (Air Force); ninth - Resie Jezveel Arrocena Huacalla of Compostela Valley (Air Force); and tenth - Catherine Mae Emeterio Gonzales of Zamboanga City (Air Force). Of the 167 graduates this year, 63 are women, the highest number since the PMA started admitting women in 1993. (JI Landingin)

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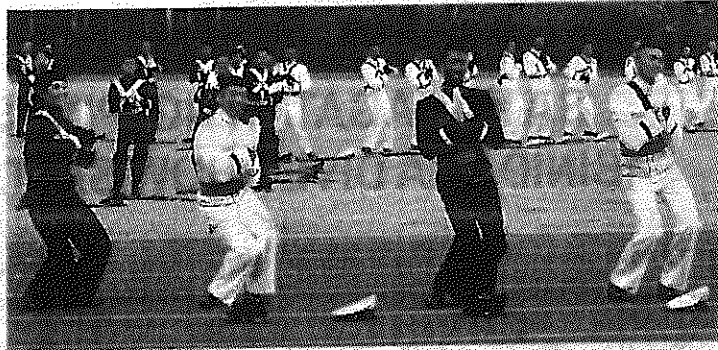
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GANADO! Umindak ang mga miyembro ng Philippine Military Academy Class Alab Tala 2018 sa closing ceremony ng isang-buwang selebrasyon ng 22nd Panagbenga Festival nitong Linggo sa Athletic Bowl sa Baguio City. **RIZALDY COMANDA**

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ONLINE NEWS

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8 women in PMA Class of 2017 Top 10

From ABS-CBN (Mar 6): 8 women in PMA Class of 2017 Top 10



Seven of the top graduates of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 2017. Photo by Micaella Ilaa, ABS-CBN News

Eight women are graduating top of their class at the country's premier military school.

The Philippine Military Academy Class of 2017 is led by a female valedictorian, Rovi Mairel Valino Martinez of Cabanatuan City.

The PMA Salaknib Class of 2017 top 10 are as follows:

1. Rovi Mairel Valino Martinez, Cabanatuan City
2. Philip Modesto Viscata, Ligao City Albay
3. Eda Glis Buansi Marapao, Baguio City
4. Cathleen Jovie Santiano Baybayan, San Fernando Pampanga
5. Carlo Emmanuel Manalasan Canlas, Pampanga
6. Shiela Joy Ramiro Jallorina, Bagabag Nueva Viscaya
7. Sheil Marie Calonge De Guzman, Manaoag Pangasinan
8. Joyzy Mencias Funchica, Butuan City
9. Resie Jezreel Arrocena Hucalla, Compostella Valley
10. Catherine Mae Emeterio Gonzales, Zamboanga City

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Six of the top graduates of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 2017. Photo by Micaella Ila. ABS-CBN News

They are set to graduate along with the rest of their batch on Sunday. Their graduation shall also mark President Rodrigo Duterte's first PMA graduation ceremony as a commander-in-chief.

Republic Act No. 7192 granted women in the Philippines equal access to the service academies, and the first batch of female cadets were accepted into the PMA on April 1993.

According to the official website of the PMA, the number of female cadets accepted has since been limited to not more than 5 percent of the total number of cadets entering the Academy at any one time.

Female cadets have graduated with the classes of 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000.

The first female cadet to graduate top of her class is Arlene A. Dela Cruz of the Class of 1999. She had also received several awards upon her graduation, including the Presidential Saber, Philippine Navy Award, Navy Courses Plaque, Social Sciences Plaque, and the Humanities Plaque.

<http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/03/06/17/8-women-in-pma-class-of-2017-top-10>

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4 ASG slain in continuous military operations in Sulu

Posted by **Lui Claudio** on March 6, 2017 at 1:47 PM

www.dwdd.com

Four Abu Sayyaf Group members were killed by the government troops in an intensified military operation of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in Sulu. This is in relation to the beheading incident of Juergen Kantner, the German hostage of the Abu Sayyaf Group.

The 64th Marine Company, Marine Special Operations Group were immediately deployed after receiving a report about the presence of bandits in the area, said Col. Cirilito Sobejana, head of the Joint Task Force Sulu.

According to Western Mindanao Command (WesMinCom), the Marines were conducting military operations in the town of Maimbung when they encountered the rebel group.

Major General Carlito Galvez Jr. Commander of WestMinCom also praised the success of the operation because of the alertness of the military troops with the help of their informants.

On the other hand, according to the interview of DWDD with Brigadier General Restituto Padilla, spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the successful result of the encounter is a good score for the Philippine Marine troops.

He also added that pursuit operation and clearing of the area were continuous on Sunday and the reports of the outcome of the follow-up operations are still expected. –CAT

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DND in the market for 8M rounds of finished 7.62mm components

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar 6): **DND in the market for 8M rounds of finished 7.62mm components**

The Department of National Defense (DND) is allocating some PHP183.2 million for the acquisition of 8 million finished 7.62mm components.

The money will be sourced from DND/Government Arsenal through General Appropriation Act Fiscal Year 2017, said DND-Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) vice chair Director Marito I. Yoro in a bid bulletin posted at the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System website.

Winning bidders are required to deliver the items within 180 days from the receipt of Contract and Notice to Proceed.

The 7.62mm is the round used to arm the military's sniper rifles and light machine guns.

Bidders should have completed, within the last five years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a single largest similar completed contract equivalent to at least 25 percent of the above-mentioned contract.

Bid opening is scheduled on March 16, 10 a.m. at the DND-BAC Conference Room, Basement, Right Wing, DND Building, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=969400>

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Military coordinating with traditional Mindanao leaders to defeat ASG threat

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar. 6): Military coordinating with traditional Mindanao leaders to defeat ASG threat

To deny the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) bandits their traditional harboring communities, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) announced that it is connecting with the "Indigenous Muslim Traditional Leadership" to seek support for the Duterte administration's ongoing campaign violent extremism.

AFP public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said dialogue with traditional Mindanao leaders is part of their "convergence approach" which includes usage of military force and civil relation actions in defeating the bandit group.

He added talks with these local leaders are vital as it ensures the protection of vulnerable communities against ASG infiltration through violent ideology.

"By involving Indigenous Muslim Leaders in Mindanao, we are a step closer in dissolving the terror group's mass base support and prevent them from recruiting new members." Arevalo pointed out.

Talks with an estimated 450 Muslim leaders, including those from various Mindanao sultanates and royal clans, took place last March 2 to 4 at the Royal Mandaya Hotel in Davao City.

Arevalo said the Muslim leaders were headed by Sultan Abdulaziz Salem Mastura Kudarat V, the 25th Sultan of Maguindanao.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=1&sid=&nid=1&rid=969335>

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