

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



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

20 March 2017

Monday

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

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

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Duterte vows brutal drug war

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'Impeach-Leni' gaining

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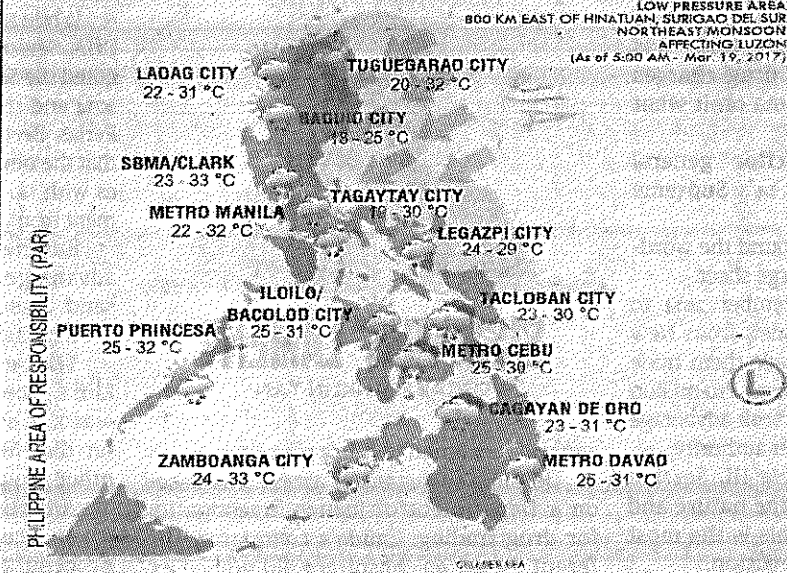
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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | MARCH 20, 2017 | MONDAY




PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)




LOW PRESSURE AREA
800 KM EAST OF HINATUAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR
NORTHEAST MONSOON
AFFECTING LUZON
(As of 5:00 AM - Mar. 19, 2017)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:00 AM	6:07 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
11:37 PM	11:19 AM
LAST QUARTER	NEW MOON
MAR 20 11:58 PM	MAR 26 10:57 PM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
11:30 PM	2:40 PM
0.07 Meter	0.75 Meter

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

	MAR 21	MAR 22	MAR 21	MAR 22	MAR 21	MAR 22		
METRO MANILA	22 - 33 °C	23 - 33 °C	TAGAYTAY	18 - 29 °C	18 - 30 °C	TACLOBAN	24 - 29 °C	24 - 30 °C
TUGUEGARAO	21 - 3 °C	21 - 33 °C	LEGAZPI	25 - 29 °C	25 - 30 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	24 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C
LAOAG	22 - 32 °C	22 - 32 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	26 - 32 °C	26 - 34 °C	METRO DAVAO	24 - 31 °C	24 - 32 °C
BAGUIO	14 - 25 °C	14 - 26 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	24 - 30 °C	25 - 31 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	23 - 34 °C	23 - 34 °C	METRO CEBU	24 - 29 °C	24 - 30 °C	 SAGUT KO, PADALA MO!		

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20 March 2017



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DUTERTE: I CAN'T STOP CHINA IN PANATAG

STORY BY AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

■ 'We cannot stop China from doing those things. Even the Americans can't stop them'

■ The President also says: 'Why will you be so shameless just because they are passing by'

■ But analysts warn China's building on Panatag would change the situation in the South China Sea

A2

FROM A1

DAVAO CITY—President Duterte on Sunday said he would not stop China from building on a disputed shoal near the Philippine west coast because it was too powerful.

Mr. Duterte made the statement in reaction to reports that China would set up an environmental monitoring station on Panatag Shoal (international name: Scarborough Shoal) off the coast of Zambales province.

"We cannot stop China from doing those things. Even the Americans could not stop them," he said during a press conference here shortly before flying for his state visit to Burma (Myanmar).

"What do you want me to do? Declare war against China? I can't. We will lose all our military and policemen tomorrow

and we [will be] a destroyed nation," he told a press conference before departing for a visit to Burma.


Mr. Duterte said he would tell the Chinese: "Just keep it (the waters) open and do not interfere with our Coast Guard."

Benham Rise

He also brushed aside concerns over Chinese survey ships that had been seen near Benham Rise—waters east of the main island of Luzon that have been recognized by the United Nations as indisputably Philippine territory.

Earlier this month, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said he was very concerned that the Chinese ships had been seen at that location, sometimes for as long as a month.

But Mr. Duterte said: "So what if they stop there? They admit it is within the territory



What do you want me to do? Declare war against China? I can't

Rodrigo Duterte
President

of the Philippines. That does not satisfy you?"

He described the complaints against China as "nit-picking."

Mr. Duterte's predecessor, Benigno Aquino III, had actively challenged China's claim to control most of the South China Sea, despite counterclaims by several other nations.

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But Mr. Duterte, who took office last year, has reversed that policy and was seeking billions of dollars worth of investments and grants from Beijing.

"We are now improving the economy because of the help of China. Why will you be so shameless just because they are passing by?" he told reporters on Sunday.

Beijing has already reclaimed large areas around several islets and reefs in the Spratly archipelago and elsewhere in the South China Sea, and installed military facilities on some of them.

Warning by analysts

However, analysts warned that China's building on Panatag Shoal would radically change the situation since it is just 230 kilometers (143 miles) from Luzon.

Outposts on the shoal would put Chinese jet fighters and

missiles within easy striking distance of military bases in the Philippines, some of which could host US troops.

The shoal also commands the northeast exit of the sea, so a Chinese military outpost there could stop other countries' navies from using the waters.

China seized the strategic shoal, which is also claimed by the Philippines, in 2012, and Washington has warned Beijing against carrying out the same land reclamation work there that it has done in other parts of the South China Sea.

Monitoring stations

Xiao Jie, the mayor of what Beijing calls Sansha City, an administrative base for disputed South China Sea islands and reefs it controls, said China planned preparatory work this year to build environmental monitoring stations on a num-

ber of islands, including Scarborough Shoal.

The monitoring stations, along with docks and other infrastructure, form part of island restoration and erosion prevention efforts planned for 2017, Xiao told the official Hainan Daily.

The report comes ahead of a visit to Beijing at the weekend by US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, where he was expected to reiterate US concern about Chinese island building.

Tillerson has called the activity "illegal" and last June, then US Defense Secretary Ash Carter warned that any move by China to reclaim land at Scarborough Shoal would "result in actions being taken by the both United States and by others in the region which would have the effect of not only increasing tensions, but isolating China."

—REPORTS FROM AFP AND REUTERS

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20 March 2017



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Duterte vows brutal drug war

34 killed in 11 days – PNP

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Despite facing an impeachment complaint and efforts to bring him before the International Criminal Court (ICC) for summary killings, President Duterte vows that his war on drugs will be sustained, and it will be "brutal."

In a press conference at the Davao International Airport yesterday, Duterte said he could not be stopped from pursuing his drug war despite the impeachment complaint filed against him by the Magdalo party-list and efforts to hale him before the ICC.

"Listen to me: I will deliver my promises even if it will cost me my life, my honor and the presidency. I can let these go, but I will comply with my promise," he said.

"The drive against corruption, the drive against criminality and drugs will resume and it will continue and it will

be brutal if they do not understand the role of government. Suppression includes all," he added.

He shrugged off the impeachment complaint and the move to bring him to the ICC.

"I welcome both developments. They can do their worst; I can do better in my performance as a worker in government. This is a democracy," Duterte said before leaving for Myanmar and Thailand for official visits.

"But I will not be intimidated or I shall not be stopped by just, what – an International

Turn to Page 16

Duterte From Page 1

Criminal Court? Impeachment?

"If it is part of my destiny, it is my destiny to go... that's all about it, fate. Maybe, God gave me just two years, or six months, or one year and a half to be president of this country, fine. But let it not be said that I did not fulfill my challenges. That is what life is all about, honoring your commitment to your fellowmen," he added.

Duterte reiterated his stand against illegal drugs, saying he does not care about drug criminals losing their lives during legitimate operations as long as no member of the police or the military is killed.

He again warned all drug lords, operators, suspects and users to stop their operations or face the consequences.

"So drop shabu if you want to be alive. If you do not want trouble with government, stop trafficking. I will not be for a moment, be out of focus on that. Whatever I promised,

I will rise and I will fall on this," he said.

"We just follow the rules under the Revised Penal Code... If you are a criminal, and you are caught in the act, do not fight because if you place the guy's life in jeopardy, my order is to shoot you.

"I do not want to see military men and dead men on my side, getting killed. I'd rather that the criminals, however thousands or millions they are, they should be the first to go... Drop the shabu and nobody will die tomorrow," he added.

As of 6 a.m. yesterday, 34 were already killed 11 days after the Philippine National Police launched the renewed drug war "Oplan Double Barrel Reloaded," which PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa has promised to be less bloody and more humane.

The PNP said 17 of the fatalities were from Central Luzon, five from Central Visayas; three from Southern Tagalog;

two each from the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and Central Mindanao; and one each from the National Capital Region, Ilocos, Western Mindanao, Northern Mindanao and Caraga.

'Stop meddling in Phl affairs'

The President told the European Parliament last night to stop meddling in Philippine affairs.

He said he couldn't accept that the European Parliament is imposing its ways into the country when there are differences in cultures.

"You know guys, do not impose your culture or your belief on other countries," he said before the Filipino community in Myanmar where he arrived for a two-day visit.

Duterte also slammed European Union special rapporteurs appealing to the government to prevent the return of death penalty in the country.

"Itong mga buwang na ito (these crazy people), why are you trying to impose on us? Why don't you mind your business?" Duterte said. "Why

don't you have to fuck with us. God damn it!"

Duterte, who had called the EU "fools" in the past, again spewed expletives for issuing a resolution against his drug war.

The President questioned the EU for recommending that those hooked on shabu be given shabu in a center, the same way, for those addicted to marijuana and cocaine.

PDP-Laban to block impeachment

Duterte also denied having a hand in the moves of his allies in the House of Representatives to impeach Vice President Leni Robredo after she sent a video message before the United Nations, criticizing the summary killings in Duterte's drug war.

As to Duterte's impeachment, his party, Partido Demokratiko-Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban), and its allies will counter the impeachment case against Duterte by securing at least 100 signatures for the impeachment of Robredo.

Benito Ranque, PDP-Laban deputy secretary gen-

eral, said Magdalo's move to file an impeachment complaint when Congress is on Lenten break is meant to give lawmakers more than one month to study the complaint – a "creeping impeachment" to gather support from the House of Representatives.

"We will give the Magdalo party-list group a dose of their own medicine. We will also devote our time in rallying support from party members and allies for the impeachment of Robredo. It will be a choice between the Vice President and President," he said.

A group of volunteer lawyers is now preparing articles of impeachment against Robredo when Congress resumes session on May 2.

"By that time, PDP-Laban and its allies may have already the signature of congressmen needed for direct filing of articles of impeachment to the Senate impeachment court," Ranque warned.

Ranque also claimed that the impeachment initiated by Magdalo group could be a prelude to a bigger scenario being hatched like their past

attempts to destabilize the Arroyo administration.

Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez also expressed confidence, ruling out the need for a loyalty check among the 293 House members.

"We don't need a loyalty check anymore. We don't have to do that. I even doubt it if it can reach the plenary. Although I haven't read it yet, but as a lawyer, I know that it's very hard to prove. It's all based on hearsay and without personal knowledge," he said.

Malacañang is leaving it up to the House leadership to determine the credibility of the impeachment against the President.

"Speaker Alvarez's call to impeach the Vice President is within his purview," presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said.

"The evaluation of the possible grounds for impeachment and the decision to file the complaint are the prerogative of the House of Representatives," he added.

– With Perseus Echeminada, Edith Regalado, Cecille Suerte Felipe, Delon Porcalla

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AGUSAN CLASH

NPA AMAZON DEAD IN FIREFIGHT

A female member of the New People's Army (NPA) was killed in an armed encounter in Agusan del Norte on Saturday, a military official said on Sunday.

Col. Benjamin Hao, Army spokesperson, said the unidentified NPA member was killed in a short firefight between soldiers and rebels in Kitcharo town.

An AK-47 rifle was recovered from the NPA member while her remains were turned over to the Kitcharo Municipal Police Station for proper disposition.

The firefight happened at around 3:45 p.m. in Barangay Hinimbagan when government troops on patrol encountered the rebels.

Residents of the barangay evacuated to the town center after the rebels arrived, according to the Army.

When the rebels saw the female NPA member fall dead, they quickly withdrew and scattered to different directions. —PHILIP C. TUBEZA INQ

20 March 2017

**MANILA BULLETIN**
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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NPA amazon killed in Agusan del Norte

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**
and **FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD**

BUTUAN CITY – An New People's Army (NPA) amazon was killed, while four other rebels were

wounded when a gun battle erupted between government security forces and communist insurgents in a far-flung community of Hinimbangan, Kitcharao town, Agusan del Norte province, Second Lt. Ashley

Mae Del Rosario, Civil-Military Operations (CMO) Officer of the 29th Infantry (Matatag) Battalion (29th IB) yesterday said.

"The identity of the slain amazon was not immediately known while troops of the 29th IB are still pursuing the fleeing rebels in an effort to rescue their wounded insurgents and bring them to a hospital for medical treatment," the 29th IB-CMO officer said, in an interview with The Manila Bulletin yesterday.

The body of the amazon was turned over to the Kitcharao Municipal Police Station for proper

disposition.

She said operating troops also seized from the slain rebel an AK 47 rifle and a bandolier of live ammunitions.

She said the 15-minute gun battle started at 4 p.m. Saturday.

Del Rosario said the clash between the undetermined number of NPA, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), took place when elements of the 29th IB were conducting peace and development effort and clearing operations in Hinimbangan area.

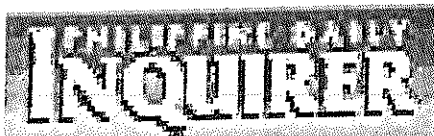
"Our troops engaged the members of Front-Committee 16-A under Commander Ofo of the CPP-NPA Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee in a fierce fire fight but

the rebels disengaged after sensing they were out-numbered and out-positioned. They retreated in a southerly direction towards Hinimbangan, dragging along with them their three wounded comrades-in-arms," claimed the 29th IB CMO officer.

She said a hot pursuit operation was still ongoing in the mountain and forested areas of Hinimbangan of that same town.

Del Rosario said Hinimbangan was the site where the NPA rebels allegedly attacked the community only four days before where 89 families, or 357 individuals, had to flee to the Municipal Gymnasium of Barangay Crossing, Kitcharao town of that same province.

26 March 2017



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21 Moro rebels killed in clash

By Edwin Fernandez, Jeffrey Maitem and Philip C. Tubeza
@Team_Inquirer

COTABATO CITY—The military said air and ground assaults on hideouts of renegade Moro rebels suspected of providing shelter to terrorists had killed at least 21 rebels and wounded 26 others, but renegade leaders said bombs dropped by military planes "only hit trees and the marshland."

The offensives were launched from March 13 to 16, according to the military.

Col Diosdado Carreon, 601st Infantry Brigade commander, said FA-50 jets and MG 520 attack helicopters were used in the bombardment.

Abu Misry Mama, spokesperson of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), said the air strikes and ground assaults only led to displacement of villagers.

"The bombs only hit trees and the marshland," Mama said. "We were not there when the bombings occurred. We are not affected, only the civilians were displaced."

"We are still here," he said, denying that the BIFF, composed of former members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, opposed to peace talks with the government, was providing shelter to terrorists.

Capt Jo-Ann Petinglay, the military's Western Mindanao Command spokesperson, said the military had been validating

reports that alleged foreign terrorist Muhammad Ali bin Abdulrahman, alias Muawiyah, and Singaporean bomb expert Salahuddin Hassan were among those killed in the military assaults in the outskirts of Datu Salibo town.

Petinglay said Esmael Abdulmalik, alias Abu Toraype, founder of new terror group Dawlah Islamiyah Maguindanao, was also killed. Abdulmalik is also a member of the BIFF, Petinglay said.

Capt Arvin John Encinas, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division (ID), said five improvised explosive devices and bomb components were recovered during the three-day operation.

The assaults were launched

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after foreign terrorists were sighted with local BIFF forces in the villages of Andavit and Tee in Datu Salibo

Brig. Gen. Arnel dela Vega, 6th ID chief and head of Joint Task Force Central, said no casualty was reported on the government side.

At 3 a.m. on Saturday, five firearms were recovered following a brief gunfight between soldiers and the BIFF in Barangay Pidsandawan, Raja Buayan, Maguindanao. It was not clear if renegades suffered casualties.

Encinas said soldiers also found manuals for bomb-making that indicated the presence of terrorists in the area.

The rebels and their trainees were allegedly targeting the power lines of the National Grid

Corp of the Philippines and other civilian installations in Mindanao.

Encinas said the group that the soldiers encountered in Raja Buayan was among those trained by slain international terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, who was killed in Mamasapano town, Maguindanao, in January 2015.

That operation led to the deaths of 44 members of the Philippine National Police-Special Action Force.

The group with links to Marwan has been training local renegades, including members of the Lanao del Sur-based Maute Group, to make bombs. Test missions include bombing power pylons and public places. INQ

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BusinessMirror

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Troops kill, wound 47 BIFF gunmen in 3 days

BY PRIAM F. NEPOMUCENO
Philippines News Agency

AT least 47 members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and their allies were reported killed and wounded, while five homemade guns and numerous components were seized during a three-day operation in Datu Salibo, Maguindanao.

The offensive against the BIFF started on March 13 and ended on the 16th, Capt. Jo-ann Petinglay, Armed Forces Western Mindanao Command spokesman, said in a statement on Sunday.

The series of military operations, which included artillery and air strikes, was conducted by troopers from Joint Task Force-Central (JTF-C).

Brig. Gen. Arnel dela Vega, JTF-C commander, said an initial 21 BIFF bandits were killed and another 26 were wounded in the operations.

No casualties were reported on the government side.

In addition, the troops recovered five homemade bombs, four pressure-type and one command detonated, and numerous bomb components in Barangay Tee of the same town.

Dela Vega said the three-day offensive was designed to dislocate forces under Muhammad Ali Bin Abdulrahman, alias Muawiyah, allegedly a foreign terrorist, Salahuddin Hassan, a bomber trained by the latter; and Esmael Abdulmalik, alias Abu Toraype, the Dawlah Islamiyah Maguindanao founder and a BIFF brigade commander. Persistent reports that these terrorists were killed in the attack are still being validated.

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The Manila Times

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21 jihadists killed in Maguindanao

BY FERNAN MARASIGAN

THE military launched over the weekend air and ground operations in Maguindanao, killing 21 members of the terrorist group Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and wounding 26 others, belated reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City said on Sunday.

Last week, 10 BIFF members and a foreign terrorist believed to be a leader of the Asian terror group Jema'ah Islamiyah were killed in Datu Salibo in Maguindanao.

Over the weekend, Joint Task Forces of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Western Mindanao Command under Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez, Jr. pounded the BIFF position in Barangay Tee also in Datu Salibo where the terrorists were reportedly conducting

a training on bomb-making.

A military personnel was slightly wounded during the operations.

The BIFF members tried to escape but were met by blocking forces, according to Brig. Gen. Arnel de la Vega, commander of the Philippine Army's 6th Infantry Division and concurrent chief of the Joint Task Force Central.

During clearing operations, government troops found five improvised explosives devices, sev-

eral IED components, half a kilo of flash powder, one-inch concrete nails, batteries, a radio frequency receiver and bomb components.

Also recovered in the area were manuals for IED-making.

De la Vega said targets of the security forces were the groups of Muhammad Ali Bin Abdulrahman, alias Muawiyah, a foreign terrorist; Salahuddin Hassan, a local terrorist and bomber trained by Muawiyah; and Esmael Abdulmalik, alias Abu Toraype, the Dawlah Islamiyah Maguindanao founder and a BIFF brigade commander.

"Validations are being made on the ground on the persistent reports that these terrorists were killed in the well-planned, -coordinated and -executed massive air and ground operations," he added.

De la Vega said the jihadists were cohorts of Zulkifli Bin Hir alias Marwan who was slain dur-

ing the infamous Mamasapano massacre in January 2015.

Anti-terrorist operations launched by the Philippine National Police resulted in the massacre of 44 police commandos of the elite Special Action Force.

Based on intelligence reports, the BIFF was also conducting training on IED among recruits from different provinces in southern Mindanao including those from the Maute group, with test missions that target National Grid Corporation of the Philippines towers, public areas and conveyances.

"With the recent successful operations, the AFP has dealt a severe blow to the reported ISIS [Islamic State in Iraq and Syria] cell in Central Mindanao. We are also confident that their bomb-making capability was seriously degraded if not negated," Galvez said.

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Pahina. 4

SUNDALO DEDO SA KAGAWAD

ILOILO — Isang sundalo ang napatay, kamakalawa, ng pinsan niyang kagawad ng barangay sa bayan ng Calinog sa lalawigan ito.

Ang biktima ay nakilalang si Sgt. Rustom Caballero ng Philippine Army (PA), samantalang, ang suspek ay si Kagawad Gerardo Caballero, kapwa nakatira sa Bgy. Garangan sa nasabing bayan.

Ayon sa ulat, mawat ni Rustom si Gerardo na nagwawala dahil sa kalasingan, pero imbes paawat ay binaril ng suspek ang biktima na agad nitong ikinamatay.

Kusa namang sumuko sa mga awtoridad ang suspek.

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AFP told: Spare civilians when pursuing Sayyaf

President Duterte has ordered the military to avoid civilian casualties in the operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan and Sulu.

Duterte stressed the military should be wary of collateral damage during operations.

"I will not allow civilians to be killed in the process," he said.

Duterte said the offensive operations are strong but the military is prevented from applying the full force of their might once the enemy takes cover in communities.

"We have to go into selective targets. For example, if they are in the midst of populated areas or they are near where the habitation is quite high, we just cannot do it," Duterte said.

In a briefing in Davao City before he left for Myanmar and Thailand for the final leg of his familiarization tour of the ASEAN region, Duterte stressed he wanted to avoid civilian casualties during military operations.

"That is why it is important to do it because we try to avoid hitting civilians. If there were no civilians, the mission could have been ended," he said.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has deployed thousands of troops in the Abu Sayyaf strongholds of Basilan and Sulu, yet despite air and ground offensives, the bandit group's piracy and kidnappings continue unabated.

The bandits are entrenched in

local communities, complicating operations by a military wary of incurring civilian casualties.

Duterte likened the communist New People's Army rebels to the Abu Sayyaf.

"But just like the communists, even if they are cornered, they will not surrender," Duterte said.

"The people are their water. So is the saying 'they are the fish in the water' because once they merge with the civilian population... we'll just have to stop operation," he added.

"That is also one of the things pounded on the military and the police: do not go into an action where you kill civilians."

– Christina Mendez

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Pag-asa Island airstrip to be upgraded – DND

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said yesterday that it is looking to improve the runway in Pag-asa Island, Palawan to make it all weather.

In an interview, Lorenzana also said that it is also eyeing to improve the facilities in the island for the benefit of

troops and residents living there.

He also did not discount the possibility of allowing tourists visit the place as part of government's long-term goal.

Pag-asa Island, it was recalled, has a dilapidated airstrip, a five-bed lying-in clinic, and a small elementary school built for soldiers and residents.

Once a strictly military installation, Pag-asa Island was opened to civilian

settlement in 2002.

"We already requested for a budget. Once it is approved we will start the repair and improvement, including the paving off the runway to make-it all weather," Lorenzana said.

"I am not at liberty to announce the costing yet. But it will cover the cementing of the runway and improvement of facilities for the troops and residents there," he added.

Lorenzana explained that the improvement of the runway and other facilities in the island has the "blessing" of President Duterte, who personally gave the go signal to push through with the project.

Lorenzana said the project to improve the runway and other facilities on Pag-asa Island will start in the coming months.

"It's part of his (President Du-

terte's) priority project so that anytime our planes can land there and bring in supplies to troops and residents living there," he said.

Aside from improving the living condition of people on the island, Lorenzana also said that they are also open to the possibility of letting foreign and local tourists visit the place to help boost the tourism industry in Palawan.

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Military questions NPA's sincerity on peace talks

If they are really sincere in resuming peace negotiations, then the New People's Army (NPA) rebels should stop making unprovoked attacks against civilian and military targets.

"If the NPAs are really sincere and one with the National Democratic Front (NDF) in their intent to resume the talks with government, they should start manifesting their intention by putting a stop to their terroristic activities which continue to harm our citizens and halt development in the communities," Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo yesterday said.

He made this statement as insurgents continue to conduct arson and harassment attacks against legitimate business

operators and government troops despite the announcement of the government of the Philippines and NDF pronouncement on restarting peace talks in The Netherlands.

Several NPA arson attacks were recorded by the AFP last week, including the torching of a commercial transport bus in Makilala, North Cotabato last March 13 and gutting of delivery van owned by Fighter Wine Company in San Fernando, Bukidnon, also in the same day.

Other incidents of harassment include the series of NPA attacks in Barangay Hinimbangan, Kitcharao in Agusan del Norte which displaced 89 families last March 15.

"While the AFP sees that the NDF continues to push the resumption of the peace

negotiations, it is clear that they are also losing hold of their men on the ground. The NPA, with their twisted ideals are attacking innocent civilians, extorting money or burning private properties," Arevalo stressed.

As of this posting, the NPAs have already conducted 62 terroristic activities since the start of the year.

These include abduction, burning or arson, extortion, ambush and harassment against both civilians and military members.

"On our part, we will continue to conduct combat operations against the terrorist NPAs until we receive an official communication from the Office of the President suspending the all-out war. Our surgical deliberate and intelligence-driven operations have so far

resulted to the neutralization of 129 NPAs; of which, 23 were killed, 19 were arrested and 87 surrendered," the AFP public affairs office chief stressed.

"At present, the operations against the NPA already yielded 83 firearms from the NPA; 22 were surrendered while 61 were recovered during operations. The casualties on our side are now at 53, of which 14 were killed in action, 36 were wounded, and three were abducted," he added.

In Agusan del Norte, a female fighter of NPA was killed during a clash with 29th Infantry Battalion troopers in Kitcharao town last Saturday.

Col. Benjamin Hao, Army spokesman, said the encounter took place 3:45 p.m. in Barangay Hinimbangan, Kitcharao town. **PNA**

20 March 2017

The Manila Times

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No destab plot – military

BY FERNAN MARASIGAN
AND JEFFERSON ANTIPORDA

THE military does not consider the filing of an impeachment complaint against President Rodrigo Duterte and the video message of Vice President Maria Leonor “Leni” Robredo before a United Nations panel as destabilization moves against the government.

Armed Forces chief Gen. Eduardo Año said on Sunday that the military has not monitored destabilization efforts related to the filing of the complaint against the president.

Año said recent developments in the political arena “are within the democratic space as provided by the Constitution and do not pose a serious concern.”

“The situation nowadays is a far cry from previous times and the AFP resolve to stand by the Re-

public and its institutions should not be doubted,” he pointed out.

Rep. Gary Alejano of the Magdalo party-list group filed the impeachment complaint against Duterte at the House of Representatives on Thursday last week over thousands of supposedly drug-related killings, summary executions in Davao City when he was city mayor, and graft and corruption.

On the same day, the vice president, through a video message that

was played during the 60th annual meeting of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, criticized the Duterte administration’s war on drugs, saying it has triggered human rights abuses and left more than 7,000 people dead.

Alejano and Sen. Antonio Trillanes 4th, a staunch critic of Duterte, were the leaders of the rightist Magdalo group that launched a mutiny in 2003 against the administration of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Año said morale in the military is high.

The AFP chief added that the President has told top military officials that their loyalty must not be based on personalities but it should be to the people and the flag.

“He further reiterated that the AFP must always focus on its Constitutionally mandated duties and work for the interest of the people and the nation. Soldiers will not allow themselves to be distracted from this,” Año said.

Bound to fail

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel 3rd believes that the impeachment complaint against the President will fail because it is unlikely to get the support of at least 100 congressmen.

Pimentel believes that those behind the impeachment complaint know that the case will not prosper but that they have something else in mind.

Pimentel said the complaint was filed for propaganda purposes and possibly as basis for the filing of a complaint against Duterte at the International Criminal Court.

“So we will see. Maybe they are not really after impeaching the President. They could be after something else,” Pimentel said in a radio interview.

Division

Professor Ramon Casiple, executive director of the Institute for Po-

litical and Electoral Reform (IPER), said that the Magdalo group could be trying to divide the House and get the support of those who have been affected by the moves of the House leadership.

Casiple was referring to the removal from their posts of several lawmakers who voted against the death penalty bill.

"They (Magdalo) are fishing on troubled waters. As for the seriousness of the complaint in the sense that they have already the numbers, I think they don't have it yet," Casiple said in an interview.

Even if the complaint will not prosper, the analyst said it could be considered as an "investment" which the Magdalo group can later tap.

"They are making an investment in preparation for what would eventually become a real challenge for the administration. Let's see because the events are still unfolding and it is difficult to say what would happen," Casiple said.

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POLICE FILES

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Pilipinas palalakasin ang military facilities sa West Phl Sea

TINIYAK ng pamahalaan na palalakasin ruto ang mga military facilities sa mga isla at shoals sa tinaguriang disputed islands sa West Philippine Sea.

Ito ay sa pamamagitan ng pagkumpuni sa mga pier at airstrip.

Nakatakda sanang magsagawa ng inspection si Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana sa Pagasa Island at sa isang outpost sa Thitu pero kinansela ito dahil sa masama ang panahon.

Pero ayon sa isang opisyal ng AFP, ang pag-

kansela sa biyahe ng kalihim noong Biyernes sa West Philippine Sea ay dahil sa security reason.

Sinabi ng kalihim na balak nilang magtayo ng port, pier para sa mga barko ng Philippine Navy, sa may Thitu na malapit sa Subi Reef na isa sa mga lugar na sinakop ng China.

Kinumpirma naman ng Kalihim na may go signal na mula kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte para i-upgrade ang facilities sa Thitu, kasama dito ang walo pang ibang lugar sa West Philippine Sea.

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Who authored law creating the PNP?

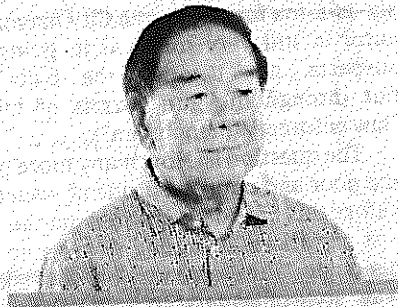
For several decades prior to 1991, the primary peace and order arm of the national government was an organization known as the Philippine Constabulary.

On Aug. 8, 1901, American colonial authorities established a constabulary force for the purpose of maintaining peace, law and order in the country, replacing the Spanish Guardia Civil. Actually, the main role and mission of the force was to assist the US military in their pacification drive against Filipino revolutionaries who continued the fight for independence even after the surrender of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo.

Under the guise of eliminating supposedly lawless elements described as bandits or "tulisanes," but who were actually freedom fighters, they organized constabulary units led by American officers in the hunt for rebel leaders like Macario Sakay, Miguel Malvar, Vicente Lukban and others. They used "hamletting" techniques that were later replicated in the Vietnam war. It was the standard colonial practice of pitting natives against each other.

The first Filipino to be appointed chief of the Philippine Constabulary (PC) was Brig. Gen. Rafael Crame, after whom Camp Crame is named.

When the Commonwealth government was established in 1935, the Philippine Constabulary became the backbone of the newly-created Army of the Philippines. After World War II, four major services—Philippine Army, Constabulary, Navy, and Air Force—were activated under an AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) command. The main function of the PC was to maintain peace and order as the country's national police force. All four services were placed under the Department of National Defense.



REVELLE

RAMON J. FAROLAN

In 1974 during the martial law years, the nation's municipal and city police forces were united as an integrated national police (INP) organization and, together with the Philippine Constabulary, became what was known as the PC/INP joint service. Command rested with the chief of the PC while holding the title of "Chief, PC and Director General INP (C, PC/INP)."

In December 1990, four years after the 1986 EDSA revolution, Republic Act No. 6975 was passed, establishing the Philippine National Police under a reorganized Department of Interior and Local Government. It is commonly known as the "DILG Act of 1990."

Who authored the new law?

A retired military officer and first-term congressman, representing the first district of North Cotabato, was the principal author of the law creating the Philippine National Police, in effect, abolishing the Philippine Constabulary.

Retired Constabulary general Rodrigo B. Gutang, PMA Class 1956, was the first captain or "baron" of the corps during his cadet days at the academy. Throughout his military career, he exhibited the same leadership qualities and skills that won for him the AFP chief of staff saber as the cadet corps commander. (Incidentally, as baron, his battalion staff consisted of Jose C. Bello, Levi Malto and Ben Nicolas, who all became generals. Joe Bello, the corps adjutant, received the Presidential Saber as the class valedictorian.)

In February 1986, while serving as head of the PC/INP Regional Command 12, General Gutang went on radio to publicly declare support for the Enrile-Ramos forces holding out in Camp Crame. This was followed by the dispatch of some 105 PC/INP officers and men of the Regional Command to Manila in support of rebel elements.

After retiring from the military service, Gutang won election to the House of Representatives and served as chair of the public order and security committee. It was as chair of this committee that he sponsored and ushered in legislation creating the Philippine National Police. (He later became a member of the Commission on Appointments.)

In May 1992, he ran for senator under the ticket of Speaker Ramon Mitra, but failed to make it to the winning circle of 24 senators that year.

A NUMBER OF RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL HAVE ALSO RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF AMENDING THE PNP LAW TO BRING ABOUT GREATER ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

One important provision of the new law had to do with the relationship between the DILG and the DND. After a period of 24 months, the DILG would automatically take over from the AFP the primary role of preserving internal security, leaving external security to the AFP. However, even after the DILG had taken over primary responsibility over matters affecting internal security the president may, upon recommendation of the Peace and Order Council, still call upon the AFP to assume the primary role (with the PNP playing supporting role) in areas where insurgents have established considerable foothold in the community.

This is the situation existing in various parts of the country. As a result, President Duterte has raised the possibility of bringing back a reconstituted constabulary force under AFP command, primarily to address urban, terrorism concerns. A number of retired military personnel have also raised the possibility of amending the PNP law to bring about greater organizational effectiveness.

With the creation of the PNP in 1991, the practice of sending Philippine Military Academy graduates to serve in the national police force came to an end. In the coming years, the PNP will be headed solely by products of the Philippine National Police Academy based in Silang, Cavite. The phaseout of PMAyers from leadership positions continues as they retire from the service.

Last Thursday, Gutang passed away after a series of debilitating illnesses. The country has lost a dedicated public servant. We, the Class of 1956, have lost our baron.

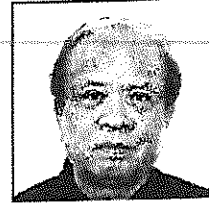
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MERRY-GO-ROUND

Why China needs Benham Rise (2)



By **FLORO MERCENE**

“A COASTAL state’s rights over the continental shelf do not affect the legal status of the superjacent waters or of the air space above those waters, nor do they affect foreign ships’ navigation freedom in the coastal state’s EEZ and on the high seas, or their innocent passage through the coastal state’s territorial sea as supported by international law.”

Even when the International Tribunal at the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague ruled its SCS historic claim as illegal, China refused to acknowledge the ruling.

Party-List Congressman Francisco Ashley Acedillo told a forum the reason behind China’s real intent in forging ahead with their claims, which started with the First Island Chain and on to the Second Island Chain.

The First Island Chain and the Second Island Chain sandwich the entire Philippine archipelago and here lies China’s eventual aim, which is to secure the South China Sea and eventually Benham Rise.

The First Island Chain forms one of

three island chain doctrines within the Island Chain Strategy.

The First Island Chain has its purpose in Chinese military doctrine. China views the First Island Chain as the area it must secure and disable from American bases, aircraft and aircraft-carrier groups, if in defending itself it must tactically unleash a pre-emptive attack against an enemy.

The aim of the doctrine is to seal off the Yellow Sea, South China Sea, and East China Sea inside an arc running from the Aleutians in the north to Borneo in the south, Wikipedia said.

According to reports by American think tanks CSBA and RAND, by 2020, China will be well on its way to having the means to achieve its First Island Chain policy.

The Second Island Chain is formed by the Ogasawara Islands and Volcano Islands of Japan, in addition to Mariana Islands which is United States territory.

Acedillo said China, once it has secured the area bounded by the two island chains, could prevent the US Navy from proceeding from their bases in Guam and Hawaii to assist Taiwan in an invasion by the People’s Liberation Army.

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ONLINE NEWS

20 MARCH 2017

Gov't troops score big win as 21 BIFF killed in anti-terror fight

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar 19): Gov't troops score big win as 21 BIFF killed in anti-terror fight

Government troops scored a big victory in the fight against terrorism with the killing of 21 members of the outlawed Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in the past few days in Central Mindanao, military officials said on Sunday.

Brig. Gen. Arnel de la Vega, commanding officer of the 6th Infantry Division and chief of Joint Task Force Central (JTF-C), said that 26 other BIFF members were also wounded following air strikes and ground combat operations conducted from March 13-16 in Datu Salibo, Maguindanao.

"The deployment of blocking forces proved effective in preventing the terrorists from escaping the mass offensives," he said in a statement.

The BIFF, which broke away from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, has pledged allegiance to international terrorist organization Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in 2014.

No casualties from government troops were recorded, de la Vega said.

De la Vega said that government troops also recovered five improvised explosive devices (IED) and numerous bomb-making components during the offensive operation.

The recovery from the area of manuals for IED-making indicate that the slain terrorists are giving instructions on how to assemble explosive devices and launch bomb attacks, he said.

The official said the military offensives were directed against the group of Muhammad Ali Bin Abdulrahman, alias Muawiyah, a foreign terrorist; Salahuddin Hassan, a local terrorist and bomber trained by the latter; and Esmael Abdulmalik, alias Abu Toraype, the Dawlah Islamiyah Maguindanao founder and a BIFF brigade commander.

"Validations are being made on the ground on persistent reports that these terrorist (leaders) were killed in the well-planned, well-coordinated and well-executed massive air and ground operations," de la Vega said.

He said those killed in the military operations were also "cohorts" of slain Malaysian terror suspect Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, who was killed by members of the elite Special Action Forces of the Philippine National Police in January 2016 in Maguindanao.

Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez, Jr., Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) commander, said the deliberate military operations delivered a "crippling blow" against foreign and local terrorists holed-up in some parts of

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Central Mindanao.

"With the recent successful operations, the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) has dealt a severe blow on the reported ISIS cell in Central Mindanao. We are also confident that their bomb making capability was seriously degraded if not negated," Galvez said.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php?idn=2&sid=&nid=2&rid=972933>

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