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**24 March 2017**

**Friday**

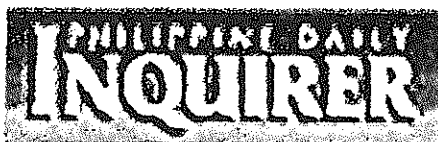
*Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.*

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | MARCH 24, 2017 | FRIDAY**

**EASTERLIES AFFECTING EASTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY (As of 5:00 PM - Mar. 23, 2017)**

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

**SUNRISE** 5:58 AM

**SUNSET** 6:07 PM

**MOONRISE**

**MOONSET** 2:40 PM

**LAST QUARTER** MAR 20 11:58 PM

**NEW MOON** MAR 29 12:57 PM

**LOW TIDE** 2:53 AM

**HIGH TIDE** 7:16 PM

**MANILA SOUTH HARBOR**

0.65 Meter      0.83 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rain/showers

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rain/showers and/or thunderstorms

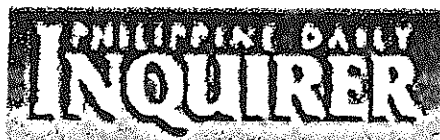
Cloudy skies with rain/showers and/or thunderstorms

	MAR 23	MAR 24	MAR 25	MAR 26	MAR 27	MAR 28
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	25-34°C	24-33°C	21-32°C	21-31°C	24-32°C	24-31°C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	23-32°C	23-31°C	26-32°C	25-32°C	24-31°C	24-31°C
<b>LAOAG</b>	24-32°C	23-31°C	26-32°C	26-31°C	24-33°C	24-34°C
<b>BAGUIO</b>	16-25°C	15-26°C	26-32°C	25-32°C	24-34°C	25-33°C
<b>SBMA/CLARK</b>	25-34°C	25-34°C	24-32°C	25-32°C		

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# US EYES NORTH KOREA IN \$81-M CYBERHEIST

STORY BY REUTERS AND AFP

- US authorities suspect N. Korea was behind the theft of \$81 million from Bangladesh Bank
- Prosecutors believe Chinese middlemen helped in one of the biggest bank robberies
- Most of the stolen money disappeared into Manila's loosely regulated casinos **A2**

## FROM A1

NEW YORK—US authorities believe that North Korea was behind the theft from Bangladesh Bank of \$81 million that was wired in February last year to four fictitious accounts at Rizal Banking Commercial Corp. (RCBC) in the Philippines.

Most of the funds disappeared into the loosely regulated casino industry in the Philippines.

US prosecutors are building potential cases that would accuse North Korea of directing the theft of the \$81 million from Bangladesh Bank's account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and that would charge alleged Chinese middlemen, The Wall Street Journal reported on Wednesday.

The US Federal Bureau of In-

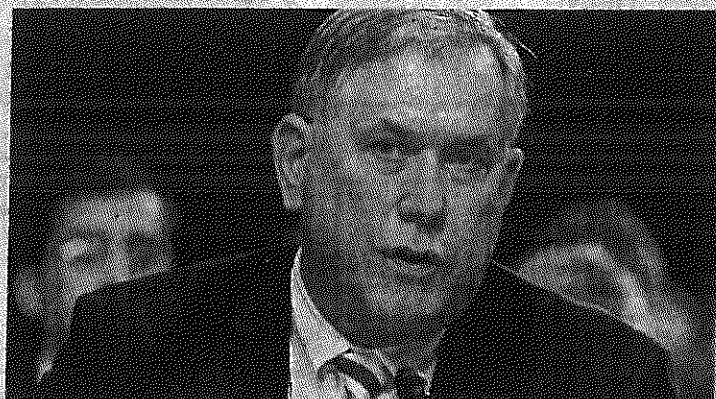
vestigation believes that North Korea is responsible for the heist, an official briefed on the probe told Reuters.

Richard Ledgett, deputy director of the US National Security Agency, publicly suggested on Tuesday that North Korea may be linked to the cyberheist, while private firms have long pointed the finger at the reclusive state.

Researchers at the security firm Symantec previously had linked the theft to a series of cyberattacks on the US financial system and the 2014 hacking of Sony Pictures.

The Journal, citing people familiar with the matter, reported that prosecutors believed Chinese middlemen helped North Korea orchestrate the theft from Bangladesh's central bank, which was among the biggest bank robberies in modern times.

The current cases being pur-



Richard Ledgett –REUTERS

sued may not include charges against North Korean officials, but would likely implicate the country, the newspaper reported, with the United States accusing a foreign government of orchestrating the heist

A US Department of Justice spokesperson declined to comment

FBI offices in Los Angeles and New York have been leading an international investigation of the theft, in which hackers breached Bangladesh Bank's systems and used the SWIFT messaging network to request nearly \$1 billion from its account at the New York Fed.

The branch of the US central

bank rejected most of the requests but filled some of them, resulting in \$81 million disappearing into casinos and other entities in the Philippines.

A top police investigator in Dhaka told Reuters last December that some Bangladesh Bank officials deliberately exposed its computer systems, enabling the hackers to get in.

The cyberheist exposed bungling and miscommunication between central banks, and left the Fed, Bangladesh, SWIFT and RCBC that initially received the funds trading blame for months.

SWIFT—or the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication that serves as the backbone of global finance—has since revealed that its messaging system was targeted in a “meaningful” number of other attacks last year using a similar approach as in the

Bangladesh heist.

Last week, SWIFT said it planned to cut off the remaining North Korean banks still connected to its system as concerns about the country's nuclear program and missile tests grow.

The Journal reported that federal investigators were focusing on Chinese individuals or businesses, who allegedly helped North Korea orchestrate the heist, and that the US Treasury was considering sanctions against these alleged middlemen.

The New York Fed and SWIFT declined to comment.

Only around \$15 million of the loot has been returned to Bangladesh.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas slapped RCBC with a P1-billion penalty—a record for fines imposed by regulators on errant Philippine banks. —REPORTS FROM REUTERS AND AP

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# Rody to Congress allies: Lay off Leni

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

There's no justification for having Vice President Leni Robredo impeached, President Duterte told his congressional allies yesterday as he asked them to stop working for her ouster, citing freedom of speech guaranteed under his democratic leadership.

"Look, you know, we just had an election. Guys, lay off. Let's stop it," Duterte said in a press briefing upon his arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport from his official trips to Myanmar and Thailand.

"Elected *yung tao* (She's elected) so why do you have to? Just because she keeps on harping on me? *Hayaan mo* (Let her be), this is a democracy, freedom of speech," he said.

Duterte allies in Congress led by Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez vowed to work for Robredo's impeachment after she sent a video message to a United Nations body denouncing extrajudicial killings and human rights violations in the conduct of the administration's war on drugs.

Just a few days ago, Duterte told the Filipino community in Thailand that Robredo was itching to become president.

Yesterday, Duterte made clear his Vice President has not done anything to undermine his administration or commit an impeachable offense.

He stressed Robredo's video

## Rody

From Page 1

message to the UN was only an exercise of her right to free expression.

"You can do other things but do not tinker with the structure of government. I will not countenance it," the President said, adding that as an elected official, Robredo's airing her opinion should not be curtailed.

"There is no or there are no overt acts committed," he said, dismissing allegations Robredo was plotting to oust him. "*Kakatapos lang ng election. Bakit mo sisirain ang bayan (Why destroy the country)?*" he said.

Duterte maintained he recognizes Robredo's role as the country's second highest official mandated to replace him in case he dies or becomes incapacitated.

"*Eh ako, malay mo ako baka hindi na ako magising bikas sa bangungot eh okay na (Who knows I might not wake up tomorrow),*" he quipped.

The Chief Executive also earlier observed that Robredo did not believe his denial of any role in the so-called Nagaleaks.

Duterte said he would

never resort to mudslinging at this point in his career, as he no longer was aspiring for any political position after the end of his six-year term as president.

"You know, this is a democracy. Leaders are elected. You don't have to be son of a b\*\*\*\*, it's the people's choice. Remember that," he said.

In Thailand, his tourism chief Wanda Teo had raised concerns over the ill-effects on tourism of recent political developments, including the filing of an impeachment complaint against Duterte and threats of impeachment against Robredo.

She also urged the media to focus on improvements in peace and order rather than on extrajudicial killings.

### 'Marry me'

Earlier in Bangkok, the President said the Vice President should marry him if she wanted to take his place instead of aching to have him removed.

Without mentioning Robredo's name, Duterte told a raucous Filipino audience that the Vice President was in

a hurry to unseat him even if he has only been in office for less than a year.

He said he felt sorry for Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano who was his runningmate but lost to Robredo.

"*Eh si yung babae ang pinili ninyo. Apurado, gusto akong paalisin. Hindi pa nga ako dumating isang taon dito, paalisin mo na ako (You chose the woman. She is in a hurry to oust me. I have not been here for a year and yet you want to unseat me),*" the President told the Filipino community Wednesday night.

"*Sige dalaga man siya. Sige pakasalan mo ako. Dalawa na layo dito. At least hindi ako mawawalaan ng ano. Bulong ng bulong na lang ako sa iyo. Ba't nagmamadali. Maghintay ka. Ano bang ginawa sa bayan? (She is single anyway. Marry me. The two of us can run the country. At least I won't run out of it. I will just whisper. You wait. What have you done for the country?)"* Duterte said.

While accusing Robredo of being in a hurry to be president, Duterte said he believes the Vice President was not behind the alleged destabilization plot against him.

His allies' dislike for the

Vice President intensified after her delivery of a video message to the UN denouncing drug-related killings in the country.

Officials have called out Robredo for her statements, saying only about 2,000 people were killed in law enforcement operations while others were executed by vigilante groups.

After asking Robredo in jest to marry him, Duterte made light of criticisms that he is fond of statements degrading to women.

"I have been criticized by women's (groups). What's wrong in appreciating beauty?" the President said.

"*Alam mo sa buhay na ito, ang regret ko napakaraming magandang Pilipina. Wala lang talagang panahon na. Gusto ko kayo walang panahon eh. Paano (In this life, my regret is there are many beautiful Filipinas. But I do not have time. I want you but I do not have much time. How?)"* he added. "So many beautiful women, so short a time."

Duterte, whose hour and a half long speech was filled with sleazy insinuations and profanities, also joked that he used to be gay.

"*Sino ang ano mga gay dito?*

*Huwag kayong mahiya kasi bakla ako noon, sige na. Palit palit ang panahon eh (Who are the gays here? Do not be ashamed because I was one. Go ahead. Times change),”* he said.

### **Senators elated**

Meanwhile, senators welcomed the call of President Duterte to spare the Vice President from impeachment, saying such move, if it were allowed to progress, would not only be time consuming but divisive as well.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III said the impeachment process distracts Congress from other important work and should only be considered as a last resort against officials who commit grave wrongdoing.

“Impeachment is serious business so you just don’t do it lightly for any reason. You do it for grave reasons when you are convinced that there is really a good reason to subject to impeachment high ranking public officials,” Pimentel said.

Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito said that he is against the impeachment, not only of Robredo, but also of President Duterte.

“This will just cause po-

litical instability. This is destructive for the economy. Impeachment processes are both destructive and divisive. Instead of pulling each other down, why don’t we just work together, for the better?” Ejercito said.

He said that the President has demonstrated that he respects the mandate given by the people to the Vice President. “It shows that he is a statesman,” Ejercito pointed out.

Sen. Joel Villanueva said he was glad the President made that statement. “We must always protect our democratic space and I am happy that the President recognizes this,” Villanueva said.

Sen. Paolo Benigno Aquino IV said he believes the President’s declaration that he was not involved in the moves to have the Vice President impeached.

Based on his observation, Aquino said there are groups that want to create a rift between the President and Vice President.

“Because in the end, the country will be in disarray when they are against each other,” Aquino said.

– **Alexis Romero, Marvin Sy**



24 March 2017



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# Clash in Quezon as NPA leader falls in Ecija

By **DANNY ESTACIO, MAR T. SUPNAD,**  
and **FRANCO G. REGALA**

**G**UMACA, Quezon — A new encounter between soldiers and New People's Army (NPA) rebels broke out in Quezon province, Southern Tagalog region the other day even as military officials in Central Luzon declared a decline in the NPA's strength and influence.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reported the gun battle started at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday when the Patrol Base 1st Squadron, along with eight Civilian Active Auxiliary (CAA) members, crossed paths with 15

guerrillas in Sitios Dilim and Comba in Barangay San Diego Bukid, Gumaca, Quezon.

Sergeant Ramos, who led the CAA unit, said their group was met by gunfire as they were combating the area after receiving reports that armed rebels were staying at the house of a certain Lito Lait.

No casualties were reported as a result of the gunbattle which ended with the retreat of the guerrillas deeper into the forest.

## Weaker in CL

Meanwhile, Major-General Angelito de Leon, commander of the army's 7th Infantry Division (7th ID), disclosed

at the recent Regional Peace and Order Council meeting that the NPA's strength has "significantly dropped" in terms of manpower in the past three years.

Citing how there are only 127 recorded members of the NPA in 2016, De Leon said "the number of affected barangays in the region has likewise been maintained at zero since 2012."

## NPA leader falls

In another development, a high-ranking NPA leader in Nueva Ecija was captured following a combat operation launched by the military and police in Carranglan

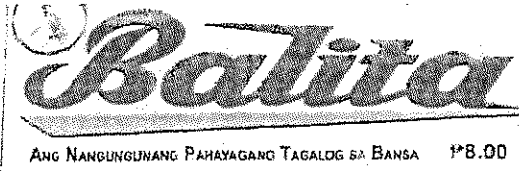
Ramil Tucay, also known as "Ka

Isaac" and "Ka Moses," secretary of the NPA Guerrilla Front Platoon Nueva Ecija-Nueva Vizcaya-Eastern Pangasinan, was nabbed in Barangay Gen. Luna, Carranglan, Nueva Ecija.

His arrest, according to De Leon, was the result of a tip-off from residents "who have grown tired of the NPA's extortion activities."

During his arrest, Tucay yielded a cal. 9mm pistol, two hand grenades, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), a laptop, two cellular phones, 23 flash drives, 23 memory cards, 16 SIM cards, and other personal effects, said Lieutenant Colonel Louie DS. Villanueva, Tatag Battalion commander

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**NPA leader laglag**

FORT MANGSAYSAY, Palayan City: Nalambathang ipagpatuloy ang puwersa ng 703rd Infantry Brigade, 68th Infantry Battalion at Carrangalan Police ang sa pinakamataas na leader ng New People's Army (NPA) sa Nueva Ecija nitong Nobyembre.

Kinilalan: 71D commander Maj. Gen. Angelito Dela Cruz ang naaresto sa mga ayayay ng "Kaisa" at "Mases", kalinang Samahang Pagunipon ng mga NPA sa Nueva Ecija-Nueva Vizcaya Eastern Paraisang NPA, ang natuntong ng mga mata sa Barangay Gen. Luna sa Carrangalan at ang nagkikitumang sa ang residente sa bayan.

Isang samahang pagpatuloy ng mga mata sa isang 9mm caliber pistol, isang bayonet, isang dalawang granada, isang improvised explosive device (IED), dalawang cell phone, at iba pang paraan ng mga paggawa ng bomba at mga subersibong dokumento.

May armet yamtamang rehelasyonang hinihingi ng 0011.

**Light A. Nolasco**

24 March 2017



Pahina. 6

### **SUNDALO TINODAS NG CAFGU**

**NORTH COTABATO** — Isang sundalo ang binaril at napatay ng isang miyembro ng CAFGU (Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit), kamakalawa sa loob ng kanilang detachment sa Bgy. Labuo, Pres. Roxas sa lalawigang ito.

Nakilala ang biktima na si Cpl. Michael Todenio ng Philippine Army (PA), samantalang, ang suspek ay si CAA Noli Calawigan, kapwa nakatalaga sa nasabing bayan.

Ayon sa ulat, nagkaroon ng pagtatalo sina Todenio at Calawigan na humantong sa pamamari ng suspek sa biktima.

Kaagad namang nadakip ng mga awtoridad ang suspek.

24 March 2017

THE TIMES  
BIRAC  
YEAR  
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

## Two Malaysian captives rescued in Sulu

BY FRANCIS WALFIELD

Two Malaysian captives of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) were successfully rescued by a Fleet-Marine team composed of sailors and marines under the Armed Forces of the Philippines

(AFP) Joint Task Force Sulu in the seawaters off Kalilingalang Caluang near Pata Island, Sulu Province.

Rescued on Thursday at about 2 a.m. after eight months in captivity were Tayudin Anjut, 45, and Abdurahim Bin Sumas, 62. ▶ 16



**RESCUED MALAYSIANS** – A photo released by the Philippine military shows the two Malaysians kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf last year on a motorboat after they were rescued by troops in Sulu before dawn Thursday. (Armed Forces of the Philippines photo)

## Two Malaysian captives... ◀1

AFP Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom) spokeswoman Army Captain Jo-Ann D. Petinglay, said the two Malaysians were rescued as a result of focused military operation launched by combined forces of the Philippine Marine Ready Force Sulu led by Major Angcap, Marine Special Operations Group, and Marine Battalion Landing Teams 1 and 3 in Kalingalang Caluang.

Petinglay said prior to the rescue, troops received information from a reliable source that the bandits holding the two Malaysians will transport them on board a small boat to Pata Island, Sulu, as the terrorists are already feeling the effects of the military's all-out assault.

Petinglay said troops immediately acted on the report and launched a

rescue operation.

"As per reports we received, the bandits who were escorting the victims on board another boat immediately fled and abandoned the two Malaysians upon seeing the approaching Marines," Petinglay said.

"The two victims were supposed to be transferred to Pata Island by the bandits but their attempt failed as our Marines intercepted them at sea. They were abandoned and no firefight happened," Petinglay added.

With the rescue of the two Malaysians, the hostages still being held by the Abu Sayyaf had been trimmed down to 29, 23 of which are foreigners and six are Filipinos.

Petinglay said both kidnap victims were immediately brought by the troops to the Sulu military station hospital for

medical check-up and interview.

"The rescued kidnap victims are weak and in a sickly state when they were rescued by our troops. Military doctors are now attending to them as we speak in our hospital in Sulu," said Western Mindanao Command chief Major General Carlito G. Galvez, Jr.

Earlier, the marines received information that Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Al-habsy Misaya with about 30 fully armed followers and two Malaysian hostages were hiding at the mangrove area of Barangay Karungdong in Kalingalang Caluang, Sulu.

Petinglay said this prompted the marines to focus their efforts at the reported area in order to rescue the victims.

"This accomplishment is a product of the combined efforts of our soldiers and the different stakeholders in putting pressure on the kidnapers for the past months," Galvez said.

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## 2 Malaysians freed; 2 more abducted

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Abu Sayyaf gunmen seized new hostages on Thursday hours after the military announced the rescue of two Malaysians who had been captives since July last year. Capt. Aurelio Agacac and Chief Engr. Laurencio Tiro were seized when their Panamanian-flagged MV Super Shuttle Roro 9 was hijacked in Basilan. —STORY BY JULIE ALIPALA

**A2**

## 2 MALAYSIANS RESCUED BUT ABUS ABDUCT 2

By Julie Alipala  
@alipalajulieINQ

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Abu Sayyaf bandits took new hostages on Thursday just hours after the military announced troops had rescued two Malaysian captives the bandits had held since July last year.

Lt Cmdr. Alvin Dagalea, a Philippine Coast Guard station chief, said Capt. Aurelio Agacac and Chief Engr. Laurencio Tiro were seized when pirates hijacked the Panamanian-flagged MV Super Shuttle Roro 9 near Sibago island in Basilan province at noon while it was sailing for General Santos City.

The military later said the pirates were Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Dagalea said the Coast Guard had dispatched a gunboat to pursue the abductors, who were last reported to be heading for Tuburan town in three speedboats.

Earlier in the day, the military said it had rescued two of the Malaysian tugboat crew held by Abu Sayyaf bandits for almost eight months.

### 'Focused' AFP operation

In a statement, Maj. Gen. Carlito Galvez said Tayudin Anjut, 45, and Abdurahim Bin Sumas, 62, were freed after a "focused military operation" in Kalingalang Caluang town in Sulu,

particularly near Pata Island.

"The rescued kidnap victims are weak and in a sickly state when they were rescued by our troops. Military doctors are now attending to them," said Galvez, head of the Western Mindanao Command.

He said the military operation was conducted after the Marines got an information that Abu Sayyaf bandits had brought the two captives to Barangay Kudong.

Galvez did not say if a clash took place or if the bandits were forced to abandon the captives.

Anjut and Sumas were among the five crew of Tugboat Serudung 3 who were abducted off Lahad Datu on Sabah by Abu Sayyaf subleader Sibih Pissih.

### Still captives

Those still in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf were Fandy Bakran, 26; Mohamad Jumadil Rahim, 23; and Mohd Ridzuan Ismail, 32.

Galvez said the "continuous pressure through unrelenting combat operations" also led to the surrender of an Abu Sayyaf member in Sulu on Monday, while another bandit was captured by government troops in Basilan on Sunday.

He said Absara Mursalin Akbara, 41, alias Talin Amsang, turned himself in on Monday

in Talipao town. He also yielded his M16.

"Akbara is a member of the ASG Sub-Group under Jihad Susukan, operating in the municipalities of Talipao, Maimbong and Indanan of Sulu province," Galvez said.

### Next target

He said Akbara feared he would be the next target of the military operations and yielded.

"He said that he no longer feels safe as communities have been tipping off the sanctuaries and homes of Abu Sayyaf members," Galvez claimed.

He said in Basilan, an Abu Sayyaf member under Furudji Indama was arrested in Ungkaya Pukan town on Sunday.

"Nur's location was reported by a concerned citizen from the same area where he was apprehended," Galvez said.

He said the military would "continue the pressure and sustain the strategic alliance with our partners in eradicating the ASG menace and terror threats in Central and Western Mindanao."

"For as long as the community and the local government units are with us in this fight, we will surely accomplish our mission at the soonest possible time. Together we can make things happen," Galvez added.

—WITH A REPORT FROM CYNTHIA D. BALANA IN MANILA INQ

24 March 2017

# BusinessMirror

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## Educators exhort AFP to stay away from IP schools

BY ELIJAH FELICE E. ROSALES

*@alyasjah*

**A** NETWORK of teachers, academics and researchers has warned the military to keep their operations away from indigenous peoples' (IP) alternative schools, roughly two weeks before the government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) head back to the peace table.

In the aftermath of the fourth Mindanao-wide conference of the Save Our Schools (SOS) Network, transformative education group Educators Forum for Development (EfD) demanded on Thursday that the Duterte administration pull out its troops in the countryside. It said the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) continues to conduct operations in IP communities, resulting to numerous cases of human-rights violations, including the right to education.

At present, the SOS Network has recorded a total of 15 cases of military encampment in five lumad schools following President Duterte's declaration in February to cancel the formal peace talks between the government and the NDF. Since then, the AFP has intensified its attacks in rural areas, particularly in IP communities in Compostela Valley, Sarangani and Abra, the EfD said.

The operations, the group said, involved aerial bombings, shelling and strafing. It was also during this period that Ramon and Leonela Pesadilla, a couple who has donated land for the construction of a lumad school, were murdered inside their home in Compostela Valley.

The EfD believes the operations put schools and its supporters in the line of fire and sabotages the gains built by the lumad in establishing educational facilities, which the government has allegedly failed to provide. The group said the continuous attacks on IP communities reduces Duterte's pro-Lumad pronouncements when he was Davao City mayor to mere rhetoric.

A report by the SOS Network claimed there have been 168 incidents of military attacks in 47 lumad schools under the Aquino regime's "Oplan Bayanihan" and the Duterte administration's "Oplan Kapayapaan". The report said more than 1,000 families and 5,000 students have been victims of forced evacuation, threat, harassment, intimidation, red-tagging and surveillance.

"The administration should end these attacks and execute its duty to uphold the lumad and every other Filipinos' right to education," the EfD said. The group vowed to strengthen and widen its advocacy to help and advance IP alternative schools.



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**POLICE FILES**

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## **Kapitan at chief engr. ng cargo vessel dinukot ng Abu Sayyaf sa Basilan**

**ZAMBOANGA CITY** – Isang kapitan ng cargo vessel kasama ang chief engineer ang napaulat na panibagong biktima ng pagdukot ng mga hinihinalang miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf Group sa karagatan ng Sibago Island, Mohammad Ajul, Basilan kahapon ng tanghali.

Nabatid na dakong 12:32 ng tanghali nang makatanggap ng tawag ang mga otoridad mula sa MV Lorcon tungkol sa piracy attack sa MV Super Shuttle RO-RO 9 na isang Panama registered cargo vessel.

Kinilala ang dinukot na boat captain na si Aurelio Agacac habang ang chief engineer ay si Laurencio Tiro.

Napag-alaman na ang mga salarin ay nakasakay sa tatlong speed boat na kulay yellow, asul, at berde na tumakas papunta sa direksyon ng munisipyo ng Tuburan ng lalawigan.

Patuloy ang joint operation ng tropa ng pamahalaan laban sa mga abductor.

Ang naturang pangyayari ay kasunod lamang sa napaulat na matagumpay na pag-rescue kahapon ng madaling-araw ng militar sa dalawang binihag na Malaysian national sa Kalingalang Caluang, Pata island sa Sulu.

Wala pang inilabas na pahayag o detalye ang Western Mindanao Command ukol sa panibagong insidente ng pag-atake ng mga terorista sa karagatan sa kalagitnaan ng sinasabing istriktong seguridad na ipinatutupad ng militar laban sa mga kidnapper.

24 March 2017

MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## Gentleman's agreement over Panatag

By GENALYN D. KABILING

The Philippines and China are putting premium on their newfound friendship rather than disturb the peace over territorial claims.

In a press conference upon his arrival from a two-nation swing yesterday morning, President Duterte said he trusts China to honor its word not to build any structure on Panatag Shoal to avoid jeopardizing the friendship between the two countries.

The President said he recently obtained the assurance from the Chinese government on the matter and believed it has "word of honor."

"I was informed that they are not going to build anything sa Panatag. Out of respect for our ►16

## Gentleman's agreement... ◀1

friendship they will stop it. Hindi nila gagalawin 'yan. Sabing China, 'Huwag kayong mag-alaala, magkaibigan tayo (China has assured me they will not touch Panatag Shoal because we are friends)," Duterte revealed.

"That was the assurance given by the Chinese government. They are not going to build anything sa Panatag because they want our friendship. They [won't] do anything to place it in jeopardy," he said.

Duterte declined to reveal the source of the information but believe

that China will keep its word. "China has a word of honor. . . But know about China kung anong sabihin niya, in good stead, talagang ginagawa niya," he said.

### Secret deal

But despite the assurance, Magdalo party-list Rep. Gary Alejano accused Duterte of entering into a "secret deal" with China which would explain his passive stance on the territorial controversy at the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

Alejano said Duterte has virtually junked Hague ruling that upheld

the Philippine claim over the WPS in exchange for investments and loans from China.

The economic benefits made available by the Chinese government to the Philippines, Alejano claims are meant to tie down Filipinos and tame the country's claim over the contested areas.

The President earlier caused a diplomatic stir when he declared he could not stop China from building on Panatag Shoal due to its military might.

The Hainan Daily of China reported that China was preparing to build a monitoring station on Scarborough (Panatag) Shoal this year. The Chinese foreign ministry denied the report

saying it values its relations with the Philippines

The President, meantime, has allowed China to pass through local waters as part of its right to innocent passage.

But he asked China to inform the Philippines about its passage ahead of time and not to harass the navy ships patrolling the area.

“So what’s the use? You can go there any time I said. I told them since you are claiming it, I am claiming it, do not impede our travel there,” he said.

#### **Business partner**

“If they come here, fine. If they want to pass the territory, just inform the Navy. Just inform the Armed Forces and the Department of Foreign Affairs. Wala tayong problema diyan (We don’t have a problem with that),” he said.

The tough-talking Duterte said he was not looking to pick a fight with China amid improving economic and trade relations between the countries. He cited that the country’s banana industry has recovered after China restored market access to the local products.

He said he was honest with his intention with Chinese President Xi Jinping when he told him about his decision to focus on strengthening Philippine-China economic relations.

“I said I come here in peace. I am not asking for anything para hindi tayo

magmukhang kawawa. I just want to shake your hand, but since you had this and animosity with America, you have identified as unjustly on the American side,” he said.

“We do not share the American ambition or the aspiration to be the police of the world. I said I just want to trade with you and I want business because my country needs the money,” he added.

Duterte, however, said he would raise with China the arbitral judgment that upheld the country’s maritime entitlements in the West Philippine Sea at the proper time.

“Sabi ko, ‘In the meantime, I set aside.’ But I said remember my caveat that I will bring it up at someone. When? When they shall have dig the minerals and the riches of the bowels of the sea,” he said.

#### **Chopper ride**

To show how the two countries have become close, President Duterte revealed that China discouraged him from venturing into the WPS on board a jet ski like he promised during the presidential campaign to go to the Spratlys and plant a flag there to claim the PH territory.

Instead of going on a jet ski, Duterte said China offered to take him to the WPS aboard a helicopter. The matter of visiting the disputed area was apparently among topics tackled by the President in his meeting with Chinese officials (With a report from Ben R. Rosario)

24 March 2017



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## Gov't, NDF to resume peace talks in April

By LINO DE LA CRUZ

TUBOD, Lanao del Norte — The government peace panel is set to meet with communist rebels in the Netherlands on April 2 to 6, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) announced here yesterday.

Peace adviser Jesus Dureza said the government panel is optimistic that the communist rebels will agree to a unilateral ceasefire, noting the military has already agreed to the

proposal.

Dureza, who attended the Lanao Month of Peace celebration kickoff here, revealed some communist leaders are not yet agreeable to a unilateral ceasefire because this will hamper their "revolutionary tax" collection activities.

Dureza said there are still several items and concerns previously discussed by both panels, including the unilateral ceasefire, that will be taken up in the next meeting.

Dureza earlier announced

that the government and Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) have agreed to resume peace talks and restore the truce.

Dureza said the government and rebel negotiators would resume talks early next month and discuss the terms of a broader ceasefire.

Both parties have also agreed to reinstate their respective unilateral ceasefire declarations that will take effect before the scheduled

fourth round of talks in the first week of April.

Military commanders, on the other hand, reported a "significant" decrease in the number of NPA fighters.

The Army's 7th Division commander Maj. Gen. Angelito de Leon said the NPA has only 127 armed fighters in Central Luzon.

He said NPA activities per province have also decreased and are mostly limited to the region's peripheral areas.

— With Ding Cervantes

24 March 2017



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# Gov't, NDF-CPP-NPA will try again next week

**I**N about a week, representatives of the Philippine government and the National Democratic Front-Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (NDF-CPP-NPA) will meet again in Oslo, Norway, to resume the peace talks that were abruptly stopped last February, over a disagreement on the NDF demand for the release of some 400 prisoners.

Since that breakdown on February 10, the Armed Forces of the Philippines public affairs chief, Col. Edgard Arevalo, said 14 soldiers have been killed, 36 have been wounded, and three abducted. The NPA, on the other hand, has suffered 23 men killed, 19 arrested, and 87 surrendered. Civilians have also suffered from the breakdown – a bus and a delivery van were burned down by the NPA and 357 civilians have fled their homes in the renewed fighting.

Sometime after the breakdown of the official negotiations, informal talks were held in Utrecht, Netherlands, to try to salvage the agreements that had already been reached on a number of socio-economic and political-legal issues.

President Duterte said he would allow the resumption of the talks if the NPA would release all the military and police personnel it is now holding, desist from burning down any more assets of extortion victims, stop laying land-

mines, and stop demanding revolutionary tax. Last Monday, the Communist rebels responded they were prepared to release seven prisoners and asked the military to assure the safety of the government's own prisoners.

It has been 49 years since the NPA began its rebellion against the Philippine government and while there were some talks in the past, they all broke down over seemingly irreconcilable positions on many issues. President Duterte was counting on his long association with his former Lyceum professor Jose Ma Sison, founding chairman of the CPP, when he initiated peace talks immediately after his inauguration last June.

There are fears that some NPA rebels in the field may not be ready to give up the fight. The political leaders in the NDF and the CPP will have to ensure that the three organizations are united in their purposes and in their desire for peace and accept the compromise agreements that are being forged in the peace talks.

The two sides will try again in the first week of April and their immediate goal is to forge a bilateral ceasefire. From this initial step in the renewed talks, the two sides should be able to find agreement on the basic issues that divide them. They should realize by now that some concessions must be made if a final agreement and peace are to be achieved.

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## EDITORIAL

### GRP-NDF peace talks

HEARTENING are reports that despite challenges along the way, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front (NDF) continue to show their commitment to peace.

In fact, the GRP and the communist-led NDF are set to hold the fourth round of their peace talks in Noordwijk, the Netherlands from April 2 to 6, according to the Norwegian Embassy in Manila.

"I am pleased that representatives of the Philippine government and the NDF will meet for a new round of talks," said Norwegian Ambassador to the Philippines Erik Førner.

The embassy said the fourth round of talks, chaired by Norwegian special envoy to the peace process Elisabeth Slatum, will focus on social and economic reforms and the bilateral ceasefire agreement.

Last March 12, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza, a former newspaperman, announced the resumption of the stalled peace talks following backchannel talks with the NDF panel.

The decades-old communist insurgency, along with the armed conflict in Mindanao, is acknowledged to be one of the major problems confronting the Duterte administration.

That the resumption of the peace negotiations offers ample proof that there's still that glimmer of hope of ending the communist insurgency problem in this Southeast Asian nation.

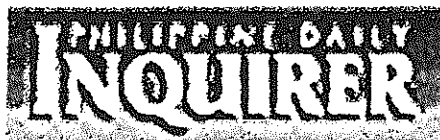
In fact, the Norwegian ambassador said he sees the commitment of both sides to achieve lasting peace in the country, hence the Norwegian resolve to oversee the peace process.

Note that Norway has stood as the third party facilitator of the peace process since 2001.

Now that they are resuming the peace negotiations, they must make sure that the talks will lead to the peaceful settlement of the communist insurgency problem.

It will be good for the nation and the Filipino people.

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# Then and now, problems of government

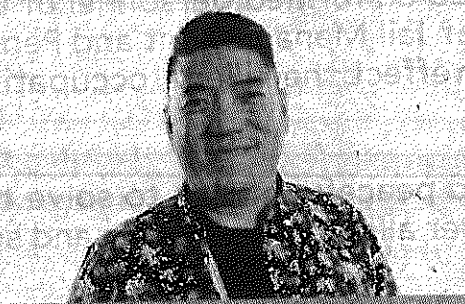
**S**urrender" and "guerrilla" were words that caught my attention as I read about recent New People's Army attacks on government targets and the yielding to authority of all types of people involved in drugs, or influential types seeking to evade, even temporarily, being thrown into a city or police jail with "ordinary" criminals.

These were also words that came to mind as I browsed through the 5-volume compilation of captured documents that Capt. J.R.M. Taylor put together as "The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States," the publication of which was blocked by the US War Department.

Before the publication of a limited number of copies by the Lopez Museum in 1971-73, Filipino scholars researching on the period had to endure perusing the material in microfilm. We have to thank the late Renato Constantino, who proposed the publication when he was director of the Lopez Museum. An army of researchers working from a print of the microfilm supplied by Teodoro Agoncillo took years just to transcribe the text and to weed out most of the typographical or obvious factual errors in the original text.

In the end Constantino threw in the towel and just published the volumes without the promised commentary on the anti-Filipino history as written by the biased Captain Taylor and supplementary notes or annotations on the various documents appended to the work as exhibits.

Despite the bias of the compiler who wanted to present the First Philippine Republic as incapable of self-government, and the problems of translating the captured documents from the original Spanish, Tagalog, and other Philippine



## LOOKING BACK

AMBETH R. OCAMPO

languages, the work is still the first step in trying to understand what we now know and accept, not as the "Philippine Insurrection" which was a mere uprising against an established government, but as the "Philippine American War" which was a conflict between two nations. If we are to trace the birth of the nation to the short-lived First Republic, we accept that Filipinos declared themselves free of Spain on June 12, 1898, that they established a government and Congress in Malolos in 1899, and that our freedom was taken from us when America bought the Philippines from Spain at the close of the Spanish-American War for \$20 million.

"Guerrilla" and "surrender" are words that caught my attention while I read some of the circulars and orders issued by Gen. Vicente Lukban (1860-1916), who was the political-military chief of Samar and Leyte during the Philippine-American War. On Feb. 4, 1900, Lukban issued general orders for guerrillas from his stronghold in Samar that consisted of items covering: obedience from the leaders down through the chain of command;

that officers should look after their men's health; that they be responsible for their men's behavior; and that they prevent any abuse, destruction of property, robbery, or the unlawful collection of war contributions. It is interesting that Lukban issued a revised version of the same orders on April 26, 1900.

*Agaw-arnas* was in place even then. Lukban ordered a promotion for any soldier who captured arms and ammunition: 25 guns led to promotion as 2nd lieutenant, 50 guns to 1st lieutenant, 100 guns to captain, and 300 guns to major. In the February orders, Lukban told officers to "try in every way to make prisoners of our enemies, and in case they make any resistance he is to shoot them." In April this was revised to: "If he should meet and give the enemy battle and be victorious, he shall treat the enemy with greatest courtesy, he shall respect the wounded, giving them hospital facilities and giving them kind treatment if possible until they arrive here, and he who shall abuse them or cause their death shall be executed."

He was more direct about punishing those who "take the guise of guerrillas and are nothing but a gang of bandits who are disturbing the common welfare." He warned against "those who collect taxes in my name without my authority."

These documents can be read in two ways: first, as primary-source documents that tell us how our freedom was won, and second, as painful reminders that, human nature being what it is, there were problems of government that ruin the picture of the past we wish to have, problems that are still around more than a century since Lukban's time.

Comments are welcome at [aocampo@ateneo.edu](mailto:aocampo@ateneo.edu)

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## ONLINE NEWS

24 MARCH 2017

### Two Malaysian hostages found safe in Philippines

By: Agence France-Presse

March 23, 2017 3:03 PM

[InterAksyon.com](http://InterAksyon.com)

The online news portal of TV5

MANILA - Two ailing Malaysian seamen held hostage by Filipino Muslim militants for eight months were found Thursday aboard a boat adrift off the southern Philippines, the local military said.

Tayudin Anjut, 45, and Abdurahim bin Sumas, 62, were abandoned by the Abu Sayyaf gunmen before dawn near their coastal forest hideout on the remote island of Pata, a military statement said.

"The... kidnap victims are weak and in a sickly state," regional military commander Major-General Carlito Galvez said in the statement.

They were receiving treatment at a military hospital in the area for ailments that Galvez did not specify.

He said a Philippine Navy patrol boat found the pair, eight months after they were abducted along with three other crewmen of a tugboat that was boarded by gunmen near the sea border between the two countries.

Their recovery followed a Philippine military operation against the kidnapers on a nearby island early last month that left eight gunmen dead, Galvez said.

The Abu Sayyaf, blamed for the worst terror attacks in Philippine history, have been kidnapping people for ransom for decades.

In recent months they have taken to seizing sailors from vessels plying the waters between the southern Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Maritime security officials have warned that the region is in danger of a "Somalia-type" situation unless action is taken.

The International Maritime Bureau said in January the number of maritime kidnappings hit a 10-year high in 2016, with waters off the southern Philippines becoming increasingly dangerous.

The Abu Sayyaf, established with seed money from Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network in the 1990s, are believed to still be holding 23 foreigners and six Filipinos, military spokesman Brigadier-General Restituto Padilla told AFP.

They include Malaysian, Indonesian and Vietnamese captives as well as a Dutch bird watcher abducted in 2012, he added.

Last month the group, which has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State movement, beheaded an elderly German yachtsman abducted last year after failing to extort ransom for him.

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## Gov't troops in Quezon encounter anew

Report by Lui Claudio | November 22, 2017 | 12:45 PM

Two weeks after the successful operation in Quezon Province wherein seven high-powered firearms were recovered (two AK47, four M16 rifles, and one M203), government troops in the area encountered anew yesterday, March 22, 2017, around 1:00 in the afternoon.

While conducting combat patrol, a squad from the Bantad Patrol Base, under the operational control of 85th Infantry Battalion encountered more or less 10 armed rebels at Sitio Kumba, Brgy San Diego Bukid, Gumaca, Quezon.

After 15 minutes of a firefight, the enemies scampered to different directions. No casualty was reported on the government while the undetermined number of the enemies.

According to MGen Rhoderick Parayno, Commander of 2nd Division, the troops are still conducting pursuit operations in order to track down the fleeing enemies.

Likewise, he stressed that the said encounter is a result of the Division's continuous operations since the ceasefire was terminated.

"The enemies' continuous defeat shows that the NPAs are slowly getting hard up especially that the communities are reporting their presence," he added.

Meanwhile, after the ceasefire was terminated in February, 2ID has already recorded seven killed NPAs, seven apprehended, and two surrendered, while 12 high-powered and two low-powered firearms along with various ammunitions and explosives were recovered.

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

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