

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



TEAM ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

31 March 2017

Friday

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

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | MARCH 31, 2017 | FRIDAY

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE EASTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY (As of 5:00 PM - Mar. 30, 2017)

SUNRISE	5:53 AM	SUNSET	6:08 PM
MOONRISE	8:25 AM	MOONSET	9:22 PM
NEW MOON	MAR 28 10:38 PM	FIRST QUARTER	APR 4 2:39 AM
LOW TIDE	7:08 PM	HIGH TIDE	12:03 PM
	-0.06 Meter		0.82 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

METRO MANILA	24 - 33 °C	23 - 32 °C	TAGAYTAY	20 - 30 °C	19 - 29 °C	TACLOBAN	24 - 29 °C	25 - 29 °C
TUGUEGARAO	23 - 32 °C	23 - 31 °C	LEGAZPI	25 - 31 °C	25 - 29 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	23 - 30 °C	24 - 29 °C
LAOAG	23 - 32 °C	23 - 31 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25 - 32 °C	26 - 32 °C	METRO DAVAO	24 - 32 °C	24 - 31 °C
BAGUID	15 - 25 °C	15 - 25 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	25 - 31 °C	25 - 30 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	25 - 34 °C	25 - 34 °C	METRO CEBU	25 - 31 °C	25 - 30 °C	 SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!		

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Page: A1

Jails full of drug addicts, Ecija rehab center has few

FROM A1

By Philip C. Tubeza
@pctubezaINQ

The country's largest drug rehabilitation center, envisioned to house up to 10,000 addicts, is treating only a few patients even as many city jails are bursting at the seams with the influx of at least 25,000 users amid the administration's war on drugs.

Four months after it opened, the Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Center (DATC) at Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija is treating only a handful of addicts, an official of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) said on Thursday.

"Nobody's volunteering to treat themselves. Nobody's going there anymore," said Rico-judge Janvier M. Echiverri, assistant interior secretary for external and legislative affairs.

Echiverri said the drug rehabilitation center was so big but hardly anyone was using it. "It's not being used and we're spending so much for the maintenance."

He spoke at the launching of a project by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and International Committee of the Red Cross to decongest the country's jails

Congestion rate

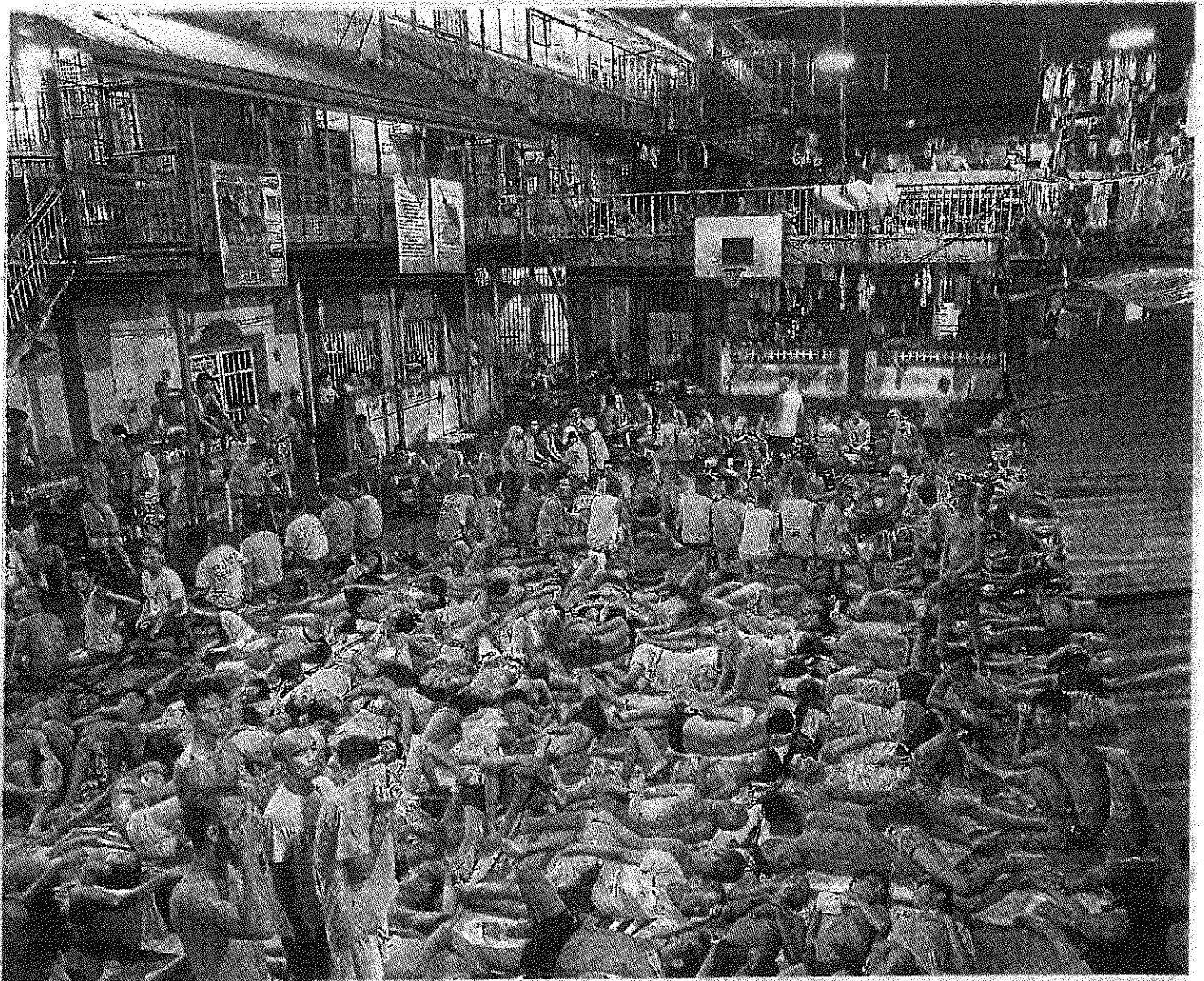
Chief Supt. Allan Iral, BJMP deputy chief for operations, said the congestion rate in some of city jails had risen to 3,000 percent due to the influx of inmates charged with drug cases.

The average congestion rate for BJMP jails across the country is 555 percent, he said.

"In urbanized areas, more than 80 percent (of the jail) population are there due to drugs," Iral said.

He said the BJMP jail population stood at 110,000 last year but this ballooned to "close to" 140,000 after the war on drugs was launched.

He said the BJMP's 466 jails across the country was intended to house only 20,000 to 25,000



PACKED LIKE SARDINES Inmates sleep on the ground of an open basketball court inside Quezon City Jail in this picture taken on July 21, 2016. Authorities say the congestion rate in the jail has already reached 3,000 percent and almost 80 percent of the inmates are facing illegal drug charges. —AFP

inmates, adding that the bureau had around 13,000 personnel.

"This is the second notable increase in our jail population. The first one was in 2002, when the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act was passed," Iral said.

Still under construction

The 10-hectare rehabilitation center in Nueva Ecija has a current capacity of "2,000 to 3,000" patients because its remaining buildings are still being constructed, Echiverri said.

"We are dismayed because the government is spending so much and yet nobody's patron-



**You can't force someone to go there
(Nueva Ecija drug rehabilitation center)
because it's voluntary.
These are not prisoners.**

Ricojudge Janvier M. Echiverri
DILG assistant secretary

izing it," he said.

A Chinese real estate magnate, Huang Rulun, donated the funds for the construction of the center but the Department of Justice (DOJ) is spending money to maintain it.

"There are a lot of DOJ personnel there so what will they do there? They have nothing to do while waiting (for more patients)," he said.

The center was supposed to accommodate a portion of the 1.2 million drug users who have turned themselves in under the Philippine National Police's "Oplan Tokhang."

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il.com - Tel no. (02) 645-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

"But you can't force someone to go there because it's voluntary. These are not prisoners," Echiverri said.

Judges' referrals

He said he would write a letter to the Supreme Court administrator, Justice Midas Marquez, to issue a directive requiring judges to refer drug users to the Nueva Ecija facility if there was no more room at the rehab centers in Parañaque and Tagaytay.

"The [drug users] want [Parañaque] or Tagaytay because it's nearer and it's cold but the facility (in Nueva Ecija) is already there. We might as well use it," he said.

Echiverri said some might balk because the Nueva Ecija center was inside Fort Magsaysay, a military camp.

He said the camp was very nice. "If you will see, it's nature-tripping there, but of course, they don't go there for that."

Besides the Nueva Ecija facility, President Duterte recently led the groundbreaking of a P700-million drug rehab center in Malaybalay, Bukidnon.

Once finished, it can house more than 5,000 drug patients.

Swelling number of inmates

Iral said the regions with the highest increase in the number of inmates were the Ilocos, Central Luzon, Central Visayas, the Zamboanga Peninsula and Davao.

He said that if international standards were to be followed, there should be only one inmate per 4.7 square meters.

"So, if it's 1,000-percent congested, you add 10 inmates. Instead of just one inmate, you have 11 sharing that space," he added.

Iral said that in some city jails, like Quezon City Jail, the congestion rate had reached 3,000-percent.

He said the country's total jail population was more than 200,000, with the BJMP having nearly 140,000 inmates, provincial jails around 40,000, and the Bureau of Corrections about 50,000. INQ

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Speaker: Go ahead, disbar me over girl

By DELON PORCALLA

Everyone does it, so what's the problem?

Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez said he sees no problem with having a girlfriend, for whom he is ready to face a possible case of disbarment.

"Kayo naman! Diyos ko naman, sino ba ang walang girlfriend (Hey, my God, who doesn't have a girlfriend)?" the Davao del Norte congressman told House reporters via phone patch, when sought for comment on the disclosure of the identity of his girlfriend Jennifer Vicencio by the partner of his colleague and former friend, Rep. Antonio Florendo Jr.

"Go ahead, no problem with me," he added, when reminded he could face a disbarment case and get delisted from the roll of attorneys.

Vicencio and Florendo's girlfriend Cathy Binag had a fight last October at the Masskara festival in Bacolod City during President Duterte's visit. Binag reportedly slapped Vicencio during the fight.

It was reportedly the quarrel between the two women that fueled the animosity between Alvarez and Florendo.

Alvarez suspected Florendo of working for his ouster as Speaker and his replacement by former president and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Alvarez, for his part, has filed a case with the Office of the Ombudsman against Florendo for possible irregularity in

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an agreement between the Floirendo family-owned Tagum Agricultural Development Corp. (Tadeco) and the Bureau of Corrections.

Alvarez refused to categorically answer queries from mostly female reporters about his relationship with Vicencio. When asked how long he and Vicencio have been in a relationship, he simply said, "Secret."

Asked about his previous spouse, Alvarez said "*matagal na kaming hindi nag-uusap* (we have not spoken in a long time)." Sources said he was referring to the mother of finance undersecretary Paola Alvarez.

The STAR tried to contact Emily Alvarez, to whom he is married, but she did not answer the call. Emily heads the Congressional Spouses Foundation Inc.

Alvarez also dared Binag to face him. "*Teka muna, sino ba siya? Gusto niya magharap-harap kami* (Wait a minute, who is she? She wants me to face her?)"

Alvarez also defended himself from criticisms that by having a mistress, he has lost his moral high ground and doesn't deserve to lead the House probe on detained Sen. Leila de Lima.

"I castigated her for her involvement in drugs and not for her love life," he said in Filipino.

On concerns that his spat with Floirendo would somehow affect the impeachment complaints against President Duterte and Vice President Leni Robredo, Alvarez stressed such scenario is not likely.

"*Masyadong malayo. Hindi ito aligned, at walang kilalanan itong issue ng Tadeco sa impeachment* (Too farfetched, not aligned, this Tadeco issue has nothing to do with the impeachment)," Alvarez maintained.

In wanting Floirendo and Tadeco investigated, Alvarez said the government stands to lose an estimated P25 billion from the lopsided joint venture agreement between the firm

and BuCor

He said the estimates were provided by real estate and agriculture experts using as basis similar developed banana plantations in the country.

Alvarez said that Tadeco was paying only a guaranteed P5,000 per hectare for the 5,308-hectare penal lands. This amounts to P26.541 million per year or P663.525 million from 2003 to 2028.

Alvarez said plantations with the same development scale would fetch as much as P200,000 per hectare. This means Tadeco should be paying P1.061 billion per year or P26.525 billion for the entire 25-year contract.

'Appalling'

His daughter Paola, for her part, accused Binag of twisting facts to destroy her family's relationship with Floirendo's family.

"It is incredible how personal relationships are exploited by Ms. Binag, to twist an otherwise simple question of facts. It's completely appalling!" she said.

"It deeply hurts my family that the long-standing and cherished friendship with Rep. Floirendo is heading this way," Alvarez lamented.

"My family and I are shocked that the spin on the issues has become so crass and juvenile," Paola maintained.

"We prefer to keep our personal lives private despite my father, Speaker Bebot, and I being in public service and we intend to leave it that way," she pointed out. "We hope Ms. Binag will respect that and stop dragging us into her personal issues."

She expressed hope her father and Floirendo would eventually patch things up.

"Adults that they are, we expect the parties concerned to address the factual issues head on. After all, in public service public interest is paramount and goes beyond the deepest bonds of friendship," Paola, a lawyer, said in a statement.

- Jess Diaz, Edith Regalado

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Soldier hurt in roadside bombing

MAGUINDANAO – A soldier was wounded in a roadside bombing in Datu Hofer, Maguindanao yesterday.

Cpl. Michael Madazza of the Army's 38th Infantry Battalion and his companions were in a military truck when the bomb exploded as they drove along the Cotabato-Isulan Highway in Barangay Labo-Labo at around 7:45 a.m.

Responding bomb experts said the improvised explosive device used in the attack was similar to those used by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom

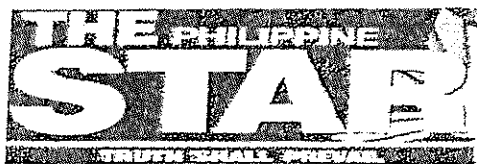
Fighters

The bomb was believed planted by motorcycle thieves who were killed in a shootout with policemen in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat on Wednesday

– John Unson

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NPA torches Dole facility

By JAIME LAUDE

A day after being ordered by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) Central Committee to further advance its war, New People's Army (NPA) rebels attacked and torched a Dole Philippines banana storage facility in General Santos City yesterday morning.

Maj. Gen. Rafael Valencia, 10th Infantry Division commander, said the rebels on board two Elf trucks swooped down on the premises at Sitio Pao-pao in Barangay Sinawal at around 5 a.m.

"A day after celebrating their anniversary, the NPA showed their true anti-people nature by attacking the facilities and equipment of a business firm that give livelihood to thousands of people," Valencia said.

In a statement dated March 25, the CPP announced that a unilateral declaration of interim ceasefire would be issued before March 31, with hopes that the government would proclaim a similar ceasefire after it was mutually agreed upon in backchannel talks early this month.

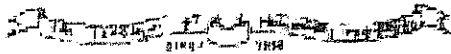
The NPA, which celebrated its 48th founding anniversary

Wednesday, received a 10-point CPP Central Committee order for them to carry out extensive and intensive warfare, accelerate recruitment of armed personnel in all regions and increase the number of people's militia units in all towns and villages, among other instructions.

Valencia said this policy guidance puts in question the sincerity of the communists in agreeing to negotiate a peace deal with the government.

—With Christina Mendez, Rhodina Villanueva, Edith Regalado, Rainier Allan Ronda

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NPA rebels attack banana plantation

By **JOSEPH JUBELAG**

GENERAL SANTOS CITY — Communist rebels swooped down on a banana plantation and torched two cargo trucks and a container van in a remote village in Barangay Sinawal, this city Thursday.

Supt. Romeo Galgo, regional police spokesperson, said some 100 New People's Army (NPA) rebels led by a certain Commander Ray-Ray stormed the banana plantation owned by Phela

Resources Corp. and burned two cargo trucks and container van used to transport bananas shortly before dawn on Thursday.

Colonel Tyne Banas, 1002nd Army Brigade commander, said responding troops pursued the rebels who withdrew towards Barangay Motokling in nearby T'boli, South Cotabato.

He said the attack happened as the NPA, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, celebrated on Thursday its 48th founding

anniversary.

He brushed aside extortion as the motive behind the attack as the banana firm management did not receive any extortion letter prior to the attack.

"The NPA rebels conducted the atrocities to dramatize their founding anniversary," Banas said.

The military has deployed additional troops to secure the area which is inhabited by E'laan and T'boli tribesmen.

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AFP troops launch 'Project Ka-PALAY-apaan'

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has launched an organic farming program called "Project Ka-PALAY-apaan" in Surigao del Sur.

The project was initially piloted in the four barangays in the towns of Tago and San Miguel, both in Surigao del Sur province early this week.

Some 104 farmer-beneficiaries from these four barangays are implementing the program covering a total of 120.35 hectares.

"We will also implement this project in other areas in Surigao del Sur in the coming days," said Lt. Col. Randolph Rojas, commanding officer of the Army's 36th Infantry Battalion (36th IB), yesterday.

Rojas said the project aims to assist farmers on how to increase their harvest, protect the environment, minimize soil

degradation and erosion, decrease pollution, optimize biological productivity, and promote a sound stage of health.

"Aside from the farmers, another objective of this project is also to encourage the youth to engage and promote organic farming," Rojas said.

The program of the 36th IB is currently supported by the local government units (LGUs) of Tago and San Miguel, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, National Irrigation Administration (NIA), Department of Employment and Labor (DOLE), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAg), Philippine National Police, Phil-Rice, Surigao del Sur State University (SDSSU), Cantilan Bank Inc., and Good Harvest Bio-Organic Farming. (Mike U. Crismundo)

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The Manila Times

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ARMY OFFICER WOUNDED IN BOMB ATTACK

COTABATO CITY: A Philippine Army officer was wounded in a fresh bomb attack in Maguindanao, prompting authorities to place the province under heightened alert. Senior Supt. Agustin Tello, provincial police director, identified the wounded officer as Cpl. Michael Madazza of the Army's 38th Infantry Battalion who sustained slight shrapnel wound in the head. Tello and his team were onboard two trucks traversing the national highway in the village of Labu-Labu when unidentified elements set off a powerful bomb at about 7:45 a.m. on Thursday. The authorities suspected members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters could be behind the attack. On Monday, security forces also foiled a bombing attempt at a huge bridge here, while another bomb exploded in front of Talayan town hall in Maguindanao but it caused no casualties and damages.

MOH SAADUDDIN

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Suawan 'training ground' for NPA rebels? Army thinks so

From Mindanao Times (Mar 30): Suawan 'training ground' for NPA rebels? Army thinks so

THE MILITARY yesterday said Barangay Suawan of Marilog District, where a recent clash between troops of the 3rd Infantry Battalion and the New People's Army occurred, might possibly be used as training ground for communist rebels.

Speaking in yesterday's AFP-PNP press conference held at Royal Mandaya hotel, Lt. Col. Raymund Dante Lachica, commander of 3rd IB, said they already cleared the area before of the presence of the rebels, but the group seems bent on taking it back.

"From the recovered items, it is a clear indication that they are conducting training or there was previous training," he said. "It's also indicated in the recovered documents and there were gadgets and paraphernalia found in the area."

Troopers encountered rebels under alias Ka Aldrin of the NPA's Southern Mindanao Regional Committee on Saturday around 5:30 p.m. They were patrolling the area when they chanced upon around 30 fully armed men at Sitio Bia-ong.

While conducting clearing operation at the encounter site, soldiers recovered 15 backpacks, 10 blasting caps, meters electrical wires, a magazine for M16 rifle, two pieces magazines of AK47 rifle, 50 rounds of assorted live ammunitions and subversive documents.

Around 800 families left the area following the encounter, but they have since moved back into their homes.

Lachica said they are still monitoring the whereabouts of the group after they dispersed and "merged with the communities in the area."

He also claimed receiving reports from residents about two rebels killed and eight wounded who were all brought somewhere in Arakan, North Cotabato. "Right now we are trying to get their identification," he said.

He also said that the evacuation in the area is a way to divert their attention to focus on the evacuees instead of the military operations.

Meanwhile, Lachica said the NPA must be taking advantage of the evacuation of residents to confuse the chasing soldiers and make their escape. He said there were evacuees from Barangay Salaysay when there was no recorded skirmish there. People were told to go back but were prevented by the barangay captain who told them there were soldiers in his area.

"He (barangay captain) may be pressured by the other side to shift our focus on evacuation instead of operation," he said.

The Army's 3rd Infantry Battalion recovered on Sunday a body of a man, believed to be a member of the New People's Army (NPA), while conducting clearing operation at the encounter site in Barangay Suawan, Marilog District.

Meanwhile, the 800 families who reportedly evacuated after the encounter already went back to their homes.

<http://mindanaotimes.net/suawan-training-ground-for-npa-rebels-army-thinks-so/>

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PH-wide earthquake drill set today

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) through the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Councils will hold today the Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill (NSED).

NDRRMC Executive Director and Civil Defense Administrator Undersecretary Ricardo B. Jalad, said the earthquake drill will start at 2 p.m.

Jalad said the ceremonial venue will be at the Central Command, Camp Lapu Lapu in Cebu City.

He said in line with this, the OCD will also launch the "Bida and Handa Campaign" which aims to promote disaster preparedness through the public's participation to the NSED.

"The main goal is to gather the maximum number of commitments via social media," Jalad said.

Jalad said the campaign involves the participation of the government, private sector, academe, and media sectors as

well as other stakeholders by generating a photo and/or video of individuals doing a preparedness activity with the fan sign or spoken statement "Mag-du-Duck Cover and Hold kami sa March 31, 2017! Dahil bida ang handa!"

Jalad said #BidaAngHanda is the official hashtag for this year's NSED.

The NSED will also be held in Barangay Victoria and Barangay Salugan, Currimao, Ilocos Norte, Cagayan State University-Andrews Campus, Peninsular State University, Balanga City, Bataan; Cabuyao City, Laguna; San Agustin, Romblon; Camarines Sur, Mega World Mandurriao, SM City, and PNP PRO 6, Iloilo; AFP Command Center and Provincial Capitol, Cebu City; Cawa Cawa Boulevard Port Area, Zamboanga City, Mindanao Oriental General Comprehensive High School, SM Lanang Premier Mall and Abreeza Mall, General Santos City, Mindanao State University-Maguindanao, Dalican Campus, Dalican, Datu

Odin, Sinsuat, Maguindanao; University of Baguio, Bislig City Central Elementary School, Bislig City, Surigao del Sur and Bayawan National High School in the Negros Island Region. (Francis T. Wakefield)

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MILF assures ISIS not yet in Mindanao, but...

By ANTONIO L. COLINA IV

DAVAO CITY — Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) 1st vice chair Ghazali Jaafar said yesterday the global terrorism group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has not penetrated Mindanao yet but said the younger generations of local terrorists are growing impatient over the current status of the Bangsamoro.

During the commemoration of the 2014 Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro (CAB) at the Waterfront Insular Hotel in Davao City ►10

MILF assures ISIS not yet... ◀1

Wednesday, Jaafar said he knows of five or six groups operating in Mindanao, among them the Maute Group, Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), and Abu Sayyaf, but none of them are allied with the ISIS.

Jaafar, who is chair of the 21-member Bangsamoro Transition Commission, said ISIS may penetrate Mindanao, as the local radical groups may need support to back their operations. The BTC is tasked to draft a new enabling law that will implement the CAB.

"I believe this Maute, BIFF, at yung iba pang grupo, hindi mga ISIS ito (and the other groups, these are not ISIS) I guarantee you but papasok yan dito sapagkat yung mga ito naghahanap yan sila ng finance (but they will come because they are looking for finance). This is a reality of the situation, dapat tanggapin natin ito (we need to accept this)," he said.

He said that GPH and MILF troops are not fighting because they have a bilateral ceasefire agreement but added the other groups in Mindanao are continuously fighting.

"But the guns of the ASG and the guns of the BIFF and the Maute are continuously fighting and there is no guarantee to stop these unless there is BBL (Bangsamoro Basic Law) na tanggapin nila sapagkat kung ang Bangsamoro Basic Law, na ipapasa ng Congress

ay hindi nila tanggapin (because if the version of the Congress is not acceptable to them), I doubt," he said.

But ISIS incursion is preventable if Congress will pass an enabling law that is seen to address the issues on self-determination and self-governance of the Bangsamoro people in "accordance to their own way of life."

He said the MILF has created an Ad Hoc committee that studies the causes of Moro radicalism to be able to formulate a plan on how to fix this.

"Peace is also all of us building relationships that are just and equal – in politics, in the economy in our social life. Peace is also peace for all," she said.

She added that implementing panels are working on a program of normalization "which includes decommissioning of combatants, transforming their communities to productive and peace places, and lastly implementing the recommendations of the Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission, primarily the establishment of the National Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission on the Bangsamoro," she said.

She added that the NTJRCB will deal with the issues of historical injustice, human rights violations and land dispossession that are at the core of the armed conflict.

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The Manila Times

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Gang leader with ASG link nabbed in Sulu

BY AL JACINTO AND JULMUNIRI. JANARRAL

A GANG leader wanted for a string of criminal charges was arrested after a bloody clash with members of a joint military task force that left one dead and a civilian wounded on Wednesday in Omar, Sulu.

Army Captain Jo-ann Petinglay, Western Mindanao Command spokesman, said Saudi Hamja was captured in the village of Capual in the town of Omar.

One of Hamja's followers was killed by soldiers while a civilian was wounded in the cross-fire and brought to a hospital in Luuk town.

Petinglay said security forces seized three dozen automatic firearms, including a .50-caliber machinegun, grenade launchers and a Kalashnikov rifle, from Hamja's group, believed to have links to the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), which had pledged al-

legiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria or ISIS.

"Police and military operations against lawless groups are ongoing," according to her.

Hamja is being interrogated in Sulu but it was not immediately known whether his group

was involved in Abu Sayyaf piracy and cross-border raids in Sabah, Malaysia.

Petinglay said combined elements of Task Group Panther and personnel of the Omar Municipal Police Station conducted the operation against Hamja, who has a

standing warrant of arrest for arson and attempted murder.

Several engagements between government troops and the ASG and kidnap-for-ransom groups in the area have taken place as military operations were directed at identified lairs of the lawless groups.

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The
Standard
DEFINING THE NEWS

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Civilian hurt, 1 dies in Sulu crossfire

A CIVILIAN was hurt in a crossfire Wednesday between government troops and armed men that also resulted in the death of one, arrest of the lawless group's leader and confiscation of their arms cache in Omar, Sulu, the military reported Thursday.

Capt. Jo-Ann Petinglay, spokesperson of the Western Mindanao Command, did not identify the wounded civilian who was rushed to the hospital for treatment.

"A civilian was caught in the crossfire and was immediately rushed by the troops to Luuk District Hospital for medical treatment. No casualty was reported on the government side," Petinglay said.

She said the lone casualty from the lawless group had yet to be identified.

The arrested leader of the group was identified as Saudi K. Hamja who has standing warrants for arson and attempted arson.

Operatives from the military's Task Group Panther and personnel of the Omar Municipal Police Station were out to serve the warrants against Hamja at around 5 a.m. last Wednesday when fired upon by the armed men in Barangay Capual.

Petinglay said 20 fully-armed followers including Hamja engaged the government troops for several minutes of gunbattle.

Hamja was cornered and surrendered while his men escaped to different directions.

Florante Solmerin

31 March 2017

The Standard

DEFINING THE NEWS

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Magdalo cites Benham to bolster impeach bid

By Maricel V. Cruz
and John Paolo Bencito

THE Magdalo party-list group on Thursday filed a supplemental impeachment complaint against President Rodrigo Duterte for his alleged failure to assert the country's exclusive sovereign rights to Benham Rise.

The group's representative in Congress, Gary Alejano, said Duterte, through his actions and pronouncements, had continued to ignore the country's national interests and refused to act on urgent security matters brought on by China's activities in the West Philippine Sea and Benham Rise.

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He said that could be grounds for impeachment.

"Apparently it is because he is afraid to offend his Chinese friends," Alejano said.

But Malacañang dismissed Alejano's supplemental impeachment complaint as "nonsense."

"It's nonsense geared for propaganda and publicity for himself," Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo said in a statement.

"It may even be deemed to be a second impeachment complaint, which is a prohibited complaint under the one-year prohibition limiting the filing to only one complaint in a year."

Alejano said Duterte's defense of China continued despite the categorical ruling of the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in 2012 that the Philippines had exclusive sovereign rights over Benham Rise, and the favorable ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 2016 on the contentious West Philippine Sea.

In his complaint, Alejano cited what he described as "disturbing" reports that China was preparing to build either an environmental monitoring station or a radar station at a number of islands including Scarborough Shoal, and Duterte's pronouncement that he could

not and would not stop China from building structures because it was too powerful.

Alejano also included in his complaint Duterte's alleged permission to China's sending of survey ships to Benham Rise without the knowledge of the Defense and Foreign Affairs departments.

"While no one is expecting Duterte to declare war with China over these territorial disputes, as President and Commander-in-Chief and Chief Diplomat of the country he should condemn China's aggressive actions and expansionism," Alejano, a former Marine captain, said.

He earlier filed his first impeachment complaint against Duterte for betrayal of public trust, culpable violation of the Constitution, bribery and other high crimes, denouncing the administration's war on drugs and the Davao Death Squad which had allegedly been tolerated by Duterte during his stint as the city's mayor.

"From local to international affairs, the President has betrayed the public's trust, culpably violated the Constitution and committed other high crimes when he masterminded the killing of political opponents and alleged criminals when he was still a mayor," Alejano said.

"It just shows that he is not fit to lead this country, and through the impeachment process, we hope that we could make him accountable for his acts."

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POLICE FILES

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Mga bagong PMA graduate na babae nais magpatrolya sa Benham Rise

NAIS ng bagong graduate at top 3 ng Philippine Military Academy (PMA) ang pagsali sa Philippine Navy at agad na madestino para magpatrolya sa Benham Rise.

Sinabi ni Cadet First Class Rovi Mairel Martinez, na bilang mas malawak ang karagatan ng

ping at kasamahan nitong si Sonny Custodio matapos aminin ni Matobato sa Senado ang pagkidnap kay Makdum

bansa ay mas magandang tumulong na lamang sila sa Phil Navy.

Ayon naman kay top 3 sa PMA graduate ngayong taon na si Cadet First Class Eda Glis Marapao na nakahanda sila na magsebisyo para sa bayan.

Sasailalim muna ang mga ito sa Naval Officer Basic Course ng apat hanggang anim na buwan sa Naval Education Training Center sa Zambales bago ang pagdestino nila sa barkong pandigma ng bansa.

31 March 2017

Malaya

The National Newspaper

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AFP: More NPA fighters to mean more violence

BY VICTOR REYES

THE Armed Forces yesterday questioned the sincerity of the Communist Party of the Philippines in negotiating a peace agreement with government with its order for its armed wing, the New People's Army, to intensify recruitment efforts.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Resituto Padilla said the CPP-Central Committee directive, which was made on the NPA's celebration of its 48th foundation anniversary last Wednesday, would only mean more violence.

"Why would they do that when we (government and communist group) are talking with the goal of achieving peace? There will be more violence if they would have more armed fighters," Padilla told a press briefing in Camp Aguinaldo.

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AFP

"Our appeal (in the government and military) is for them to lay down their arms and pursue peaceful talks. So that won't happen if there is going to be more armed (NPA fighters)," he added.

The government and communist panels are set to meet in the Netherlands on April 2 to 6 for the fourth round of formal talks.

"It's very ironic. They are engaging us in peace negotiations yet their actions are contrary to what they are saying. This is a question of their sincerity," he said.

Nevertheless, Padilla said the military remains supportive of the peace process.

President Duterte suspended the talks last month because of the NPA's attacks on military and civilian targets despite the ceasefire it declared last August in preparation for the resumption of peace negotiations. The two sides agreed to resume negotiations early this month after back-channel talks.

NPA rebels raided a DOLE banana plantation in General Santos City yesterday morning and burned a storage facility and a container van.

Three days earlier, the NPA also attacked a DOLE plantation in Compostela Valley and burned three container vans.

The motive is "the usual extortion," said Capt. Rhyann Batchar, public affairs officer of the Army's 10th Infantry Division.

In the latest incident, Batchar said the NPA arrived at the plantation in Sitio Pao-pao, Barangay Sinawal at around 5 a.m. aboard two Elf trucks.

"They (DOLE) have security guards but they were overpowered," said Batchar. He said the rebels then proceeded to burn the plantation's storage facility and an unmanned container van.

In Davao Occidental last Sunday, eight members of the NPA Militiang Bayan surrendered to troops of the 73rd Infantry Battalion.

Batchar said one of the eight is a minor -- a 17-year-old he identified only as Richell.

"During the course of interview, they all said that hardships and fear prompted them to return to the folds of the law," said Batchar of the eight.

om – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

ecuring the land.

31 March 2017

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DEFINING THE NEWS

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GRP-rebels peace talks resume Sunday despite ongoing clashes

By Rio N. Araja

AGRARIAN Secretary Rafael Mariano welcomed the resumption of peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front on Sunday against the backdrop of continuing battle between troops and the rebels in the countryside.

The five-day talks, which Mariano said ensured genuine land reform, would be held in Noordwijk in The Netherlands.

"Peace talks would ensure the implementation of genuine land reform as both panels have agreed

on the significance of furthering the discussion on agrarian reform and rural development in crafting the draft of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms," he said.

The farmers' struggle was

at the forefront of the first three rounds of negotiations after both panels recognized free land distribution as the key to address the roots of armed conflict in the countryside.

"Landlessness remains the main cause of farmers' suffering and only pro-people policies on genuine agrarian reform would help us achieve national and agricultural industrialization," he said.

The Department of Agrarian Reform has received 11 reports documenting 16 cases of murder of peasant activists and leaders for the first three months of 2017.

Most victims were indigenous peoples from Mindanao, and had been involved in land disputes

with big landlord-oligarchs and mining firms.

In Calapan City, military troops exchanged fire with NPA guerrillas of the Lucio de Guzman Command in Barangay Binli, in Bulalacao town, 250 kms southeast of the capital city.

The NPAs were reported to have suffered four casualties, either killed or wounded during the firefight while two enlisted Army men were wounded in action, Col. Antonio Parlade, commanding officer of the 203rd Infantry Brigade, of the PA's 2nd Infantry Division, told **Manila Standard**.

The government casualties were evacuated by an Army ambulance to the nearby Bulalacao

hospital. "The operating troops are sustaining pressure on them [NPA], under the group of Virginia Torobias Magadia," Parlade said.

In Cagayan de Oro City, a school official said the fire that gutted a high school building in a village in Valencia City recently might not be the handiwork of the NPA contrary to the allegation of the military.

According to Mary Jean Subayco, 29, academic head and school secretary of Concepcion National High School in Barangay Concepcion, the cause of the fire was due to "electrical short circuit," quoting a Bureau of Fire Protection report.

With Robert Evaroa, Lance Bacongus and Jessica Bacud

3) March 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
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AFP depllores CPP plan to recruit students, workers

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) laments the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) directive ordering its members to step up recruitment of cadres from among the educated youth and the working class.

AFP spokesman Brig Gen Restituto Padilla said such a directive runs counter to the National Democratic Front (NDF) peace panel's earlier pronouncement of wanting peace to succeed through

negotiations with the government.

The Government of the Philippines (GPH) and Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front (CPP-NDF) peace panels are set to open the fourth round of formal peace negotiations in the Netherlands in the first week of April.

On Sunday, suspected NPA rebels launched another attack, this time burning a faculty room, a classroom and a library in Barangay Concepcion, Valencia City, Bukidnon, when their extortion attempts failed.

According to the military, the rebel group asked for their share in the fund which was intended for the feeding program of pupils. When the teachers refused to give in, the NPA resorted to terroristic acts.

"It is an indication of an expansion program that ironically runs counter to the essence of the ongoing peace talks," Padilla said.

"It also belies the real intent of the group... that they really do not desire a long, just and lasting peace for the country," he added.

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The Manila Times

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'Military assails Reds' renewed recruitment

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has taken to task the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) for ordering its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), to step up recruitment, saying the move was in conflict with the next round of peace negotiations in Oslo, Norway.

"This [recruitment] is a sad development, granting this is truly their real intent. Why? Because it is an indication of an expansion program that ironically runs counter to the essence of the ongoing peace talks," Brig Gen Restituto Padilla Jr, AFP spokesman, said.

"It also belies the real intent of the group... that they really do not desire a long, just and lasting peace for the country," he added.

The Philippine government and communist rebels agreed to return to the formal negotiating table about a month after President Rodrigo Duterte scrapped peace talks over bloody clashes between the military and rebel forces.

In a lengthy message to the NPA on its 48th anniversary (March 29), the CPP Central Committee gave the following tasks to its armed wing in fulfillment of the recruitment drive:

- carry out extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare on an ever widening scale and deepening mass base and toward developing full-scale guerrilla warfare;

- accelerate the recruitment of armed personnel in all regions across the entire archipelago.

- Recruit large numbers from the educated youth and working class to become cadres and political officers in the New People's Army;

- resolve the gross imbalance in growth and strength of NPA forces by carrying out a campaign to rectify errors to spur

a dramatic increase in the NPA strength in Luzon and Visayas. Combat military conservatism, militia-ism and civilianization in the people's army;

- increase several times over the number of people's militia units in all barrios where there are Party branches, and build local guerrilla units at the municipal or section levels where there are Party section committees;

- expand and consolidate existing guerrilla fronts and build new ones. Develop guerrilla war theaters by raising the capacity of contiguous NPA guerrilla fronts to coordinate and utilize the interplay of its forces;

- carry out the revolutionary land reform program more intensively and on an ever widening scale. Undertake anti-feudal campaigns at inter-barrio or higher levels;

- help build the Party within the people's army and among the masses. Carry out intensive political education among the Red commanders and fighters to raise their revolutionary consciousness, steel their will to fight and strengthen their absolute devotion to serve the people and the revolutionary cause; and

- persevere in carrying out the policies of the people's democratic government. Enforce policies with regard to the protection of the environment, as well as those covering the operations of business and economic ventures to ensure the well-being of the people.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the NPA has a strength of under 5,000 assisted by a huge support group "that benefit[s] on the extortion that they are doing."

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AFP dismayado sa NPA recruitment

Nagpahayag kahapon ng pagkadismaya ang pamunuan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) sa naging pahayag ng New People's Army (NPA) na palakasin pa ang pangangalap ng mga bagong miyembro para sa kilusan.

Nabatid na ang nasabing direktiba ay inilabas ng NPA sa lahat ng kasapi nito kasabay ng paggunita sa ika-48 anibersaryo ng rebelyon nitong Miyerkules.

Dahil dito, kinuwestiyon ng AFP ang sinseridad ng NPA sa usapang

pangkapayapaan nito sa gobyerno. Sinabi ni AFP Spokesperson Brig Gen. Restituto Padilla na isang malungkot na development ang pahayag ng NPA lalo na sa muling pagbabalik sa negotiating table ng magkabilang kampo, na ang susunod na pag-uusap ay sisimulan sa Linggo, Abril 2.

Una nang nagpahayag ng pagdududa ang militar sa motibo ng NPA sa nakatakdang pagdedeklara ng unilateral ceasefire sa susunod na buwan.

Fer Taboy

31 March 2017



Pahina. 2

Ceasefire ng NPA pinairal na

PINAIRAL na ng New People's Army ang sarili nitong tigil-putukan.

Napag-alaman ito mula kay Luis Jalandoni na isang senior adviser ng National Democratic Front at ipinarating na umano ito kay Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza.

Ginawa ng NPA ang ceasefire alinsunod ng pangako nito, kasama ang Communist Party of the Philippines, na magdedeklara ito ng unilateral ceasefire bago matapos ang buwang ito.

Inasahan naman ang pagtugon ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa deklarasyong ito na preparasyon na rin sa nalalapit na muling paghaharap ng mga rebeldeng komunista at pamahalaan ng Pilipinas para sa usapang pangkapayapaan.

Kasama sa mga tatalakayin umano ang pagdedeklara ng pinag-isang tigil-putukan na magkakaroon ng mga patakaran sa mga paglabag at pagsunod dito.

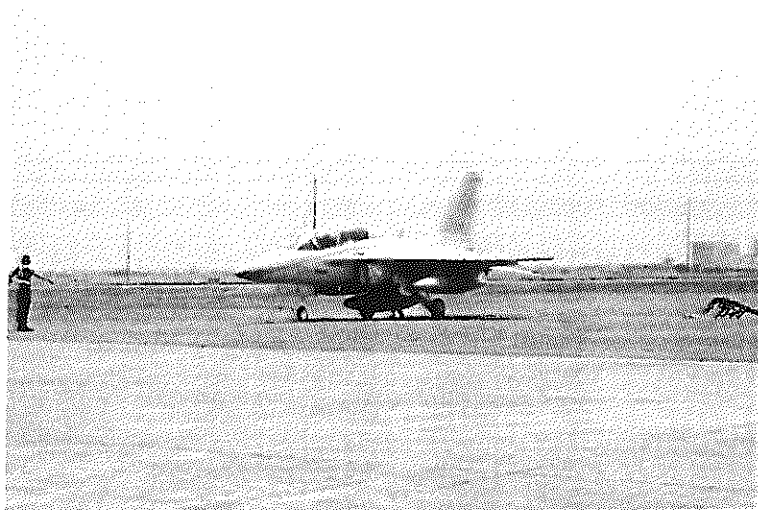
Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

ONLINE NEWS

31 MARCH 2017

PH Air Force receives 2 more fighter jets from South Korea

From ABS-CBN (Mar 29): PH Air Force receives 2 more fighter jets from South Korea



Two more FA-50 jets arrived in the Philippines from South Korea. Photos courtesy of Defense Press Corps.

The Philippine Air Force on Wednesday received another pair of FA-50 lead-in fighter trainer jets from South Korea, bringing the total of FA-50 jets to 8.

The jets with tail numbers 007 and 008 arrived in Clark Air Base, acquired to bolster Philippines' territorial defense. The first pair was delivered in 2013, at the height of the Philippines' maritime dispute with China.

Philippines has so far purchased 12 FA-50s, the next two pairs expected to arrive in the next few months.

The jets are the most sophisticated aircraft in the Philippine Air Force, with their arrival ushering the Philippines' return to the supersonic age.

They were often showcased in events of the Armed Forces through high-speed passes overhead that was meant to impress the crowds.

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

25

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



Two more FA-50 jets arrived in the Philippines from South Korea. Photos courtesy of Defense Press Corps.

However, they were removed from the spotlight during the start of the Duterte administration, after Duterte said he found the jets to be a waste of money, and only good for parades.

They were not flown even during the Air Force's own anniversary in 2016, where it was President Duterte's first time as guest of honor.

The FA-50s, however, soon found its use under the Duterte government, which has chosen to reshift the nation's focus from territorial defense back to insurgency and internal security.

The FA-50s have recently joined other air assets in conducting airstrikes against terror groups like the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu, and the Maute Group in Lanao del Sur.

In recent weeks, the Air Force has announced a return of the high-speed passes. The FA-50s flew over the Visayas and Mindanao.

<http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/03/29/17/ph-air-force-receives-2-more-fighter-jets-from-south-korea>

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