

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



TEAM ARMY

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oacpa.army2012@gmail.com
OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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22 May 2017

Monday

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

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CBCP, groups block death penalty bill

Duterte to ask for missiles from Russia


Chinese tourists Beijing's new weapon



Palace urged to bare details of Chinese aid, loans

Rody wants Russian precision bombs

C.A. Security to improve Tagaytay, Alibon, Gilboa areas



Manila Standard

Duterte slams West: Treat us with dignity

55 Asian nations hands vs temp

PH seeks UN and informal EU aid



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

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | MAY 22, 2017 | MONDAY































LOW PRESSURE AREA
300 KM EAST OF BASCO, BATANES
FRONTAL SYSTEM
AFFECTING NORTHERN LUZON
(As of 5:00 AM - May 21, 2017)


PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
 5:27 AM	 6:19 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
 2:21 AM	 2:46 PM
LAST QUARTER MAY 13 8:33 AM	NEW MOON MAY 26 3:44 AM
LOW TIDE MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 1:03 AM 0.16 Meter	HIGH TIDE MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 6:12 AM 0.67 Meter




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

Cloudy areas with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

	MAY 21	MAY 22	MAY 23	MAY 24	MAY 25	MAY 26
METRO MANILA	 25 - 35 °C	 25 - 35 °C	 23 - 31 °C	 23 - 31 °C	 26 - 31 °C	 26 - 31 °C
TUGUEGARAO	 25 - 37 °C	 25 - 37 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 25 - 32 °C	 25 - 32 °C
LAOAG	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 32 °C	 26 - 33 °C
BAGUIO	 17 - 25 °C	 17 - 25 °C	 26 - 32 °C	 26 - 33 °C	 25 - 32 °C	 25 - 33 °C
SBMA/CLARK	 26 - 36 °C	 26 - 36 °C	 26 - 32 °C	 26 - 32 °C		



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22 May 2017

INQUIRER

Page: A1

FILE PROTEST VS CHINA IN UN, SENATORS URGE

STORY BY CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO

But did President Duterte give an accurate account of his conversation with Chinese President Xi Jinping? If he did, then, Sen. Richard Gordon said, it's China against the world

A20

FROM A1

By Christine O. Avendaño
@10avendanoINQ

Several senators on Sunday urged the government to take action against China such as filing a diplomatic protest over its threat of war against the Philippines if Manila tried to enforce an arbitration ruling and drill for oil at a reef within its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the South China Sea.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan urged Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano to file the diplomatic protest against China two days after President Duterte disclosed the threat.

"Did China really threaten the Philippines with war after President Duterte asserted the Southeast Asian nation's sovereignty over disputed territory in the West Philippine Sea? If so, then Foreign Secretary Cayetano should issue a diplomatic protest for this threat," Pangilinan said in a statement.

Arbitral ruling

In remarks that could infuriate China, Mr. Duterte hit back on Friday at domestic critics who said he had gone soft on Beijing by refusing to pressure it to comply with an award last year by the UN-backed Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague,

which ruled largely in favor of the Philippines in a challenge brought by Manila against Beijing's claim to almost all of the South China Sea.

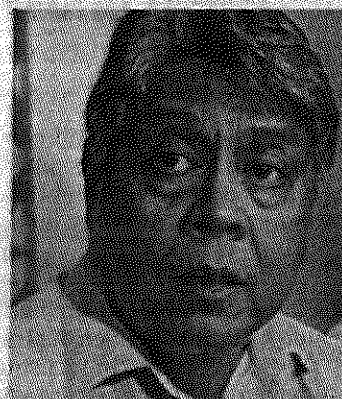
Mr. Duterte said he discussed the ruling with Chinese President Xi Jinping when they met in Beijing on Monday, and got a firm but friendly warning.

"We intend to drill oil there. If it's yours, well, that's your view. But my view is, I can drill the oil, if there is some inside the bowels of the earth because it is ours," Mr. Duterte said in a speech, recalling his conversation with Xi.

"His response to me, 'We're friends, we don't want to quarrel with you. We want to maintain the presence of warm relationships, but if you force the issue, we'll go to war,'" Mr. Duterte said.

The President had long expressed his admiration for Xi and said he would raise the arbitration ruling with him eventually, but needed first to strengthen relations between the two countries, which the Philippines was hoping would yield to billions of dollars in Chinese loans and infrastructure investments.

The Hague award clarifies Philippine sovereignty rights in the West Philippine Sea—waters within its 370-kilometer EEZ in the South China Sea—to access offshore oil and gas fields, including Recto Bank (internationally known as Reed



Sen. Francis Pangilinan

Bank), 153 km off its coast.

It also invalidated China's claim to almost all of the South China Sea.

Senate inquiry

Pangilinan sought an inquiry into China's threat by the Senate committees on foreign relations and economic affairs and into the foreign policy direction of the Duterte administration, which he said Sen. Bam Aquino had been calling for since October.

"The hearing should tackle not only this issue, but also details of the \$24-billion loans and investments recently sealed with China, as well as the administration's decision to reject aid from the European Union," he said.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson agreed with the call of Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio on Saturday to take China's threat to the United Nations.

"There is an arbitral ruling favoring us and which cannot be changed anymore. While it may not be enforceable now, there is no denying the fact that UN member nations must respect the decision. If we go back in time and review previous rulings, concerned countries had initially resisted compliance but eventually, they gave up and complied," Lacson said in a text message.

"Following that argument, it may only be a question of time before China will realize that her position in the [West-Philippine Sea] is untenable. We therefore need to marshal the support of the community of nations to put pressure on China, and hope that compliance is accelerated in our favor," he said.

Take it to UN

Carpio, part of the legal team that argued the Philippines' case against China in the Hague court, suggested that the Philippines bring China's threat of war to the United Nations General Assembly by sponsoring a resolution condemning the threat and demanding that China comply with the tribunal's ruling.

China has no veto in the UN general assembly, Carpio said.

Manila could also claim damages from China for the period of delay that the Philippines is prevented from exploiting resources within its EEZ, Carpio said.

Also agreeing with Carpio, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV said the government should go to the United Nations, as this is one of the diplomatic and legal options available to the Philippines.

In a phone interview, however, Trillanes said he did not believe the Chinese president had threatened the Philippines with war.

Blatant lies

"Duterte has been known to make blatant lies to justify his action. In this case, he justifies his cowardice by surrendering our territorial or sovereign rights on the area," Trillanes said.

Sen. Richard Gordon said that if indeed Xi threatened war, Mr. Duterte should have told him that he was violating "all international laws."

"We should use the UN here," Gordon said in a radio interview.

But he also doubted that Xi had made such a threat, pointing out that Mr. Duterte has a habit of saying something and then taking it back later.

He said he doubted that Mr. Duterte gave an accurate account of his conversation with Xi.

"If he really said that, we go to the UN, we go to the international community... make that manifestation and it's China against the world," Gordon said.

—WITH A REPORT FROM REUTERS INQ

22 May 2017



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NPA slain in Mindoro clash

By ED AMOROSO

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna – A suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebel was killed in an encounter with Army troopers in Bulalacao, Oriental Mindoro, while 11 others surrendered to authorities in Sultan Kudarat yesterday morning.

The military has yet to identify the guerrilla who was killed in a brief firefight that occurred in Barangay Cambunang at around 5:30 a.m.

The rebels fled, leaving their dead comrade behind, according to 1/Lt. Xyon Meneses,

spokesperson for the Army's 2nd Infantry Division.

In Laguna, police and the military tightened security in the towns of Luisiana, Cavinti, and Majayjay after a series of clashes between government troops and communist rebels

killed a soldier and wounded 12 others, including two civilians, last week.

Meanwhile, 11 rebels surrendered eight firearms during a ceremony held in Barangay Midtungok, Senator Ninoy Aquino town.

The event was witnessed by Mayor Randy Ecija Jr., Army officers and elders of the *lumad* community in the municipality.

Officials identified the surrenderees as Samuel Badak, Benjamin Kalay, Nonoy Lapi,

Sebio Masandag, Long Oding, Mel Pandi, and Ayob, Gabriel Kang, Tiin and Usad, all surnamed Mopac.

The surrender was reportedly due to the dwindling support of the *lumad* community to the revolutionary activities, Ecija said.

The mayor said rebels based in the adjoining Sultan Kudarat and South Cotabato provinces are reeling from military operations and lack of food and ammunition.

Col. Bismarck Soliba, chief of

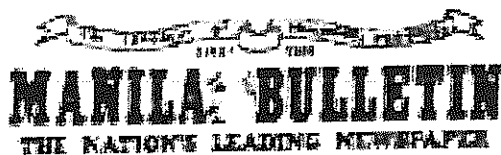
the 1st Mechanized Brigade, said the *lumads* are dismayed over the unfulfilled promises of the NPA leaders to the community.

Maj. Gen. Arnel dela Vega, chief of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, thanked local officials for helping work out the surrender of the group.

Three Army units – the 33rd and 57th Infantry Battalions and 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade – are helping secure villages from NPA infiltration.

– With John Unson, Michael Punongbayan

22 May 2017



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4 NPAs killed in weekend clashes in Oriental Mindoro and Kalinga

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD
and FREDDIE G. LAZARO

A New People's Army (NPA) guerrilla was killed in an encounter with government troops in Oriental Mindoro yesterday, while a day earlier, three NPA rebels were believed killed in an encounter up north in Kalinga.

First Lieutenant Xy-Zon Meneses, spokesman of the Philippine Army's 2nd Infantry Division (2ID), said the encounter in Oriental Mindoro took place in Sitio If-If, Barangay Cambunang, Bulalacao

about 5:30 a.m.

Meneses said after receiving a tip from concerned residents, troops of the 2nd Division's 4th Infantry Battalion (4IB) conducted combat operation and encountered around 10 rebels from the Platoon Olip, Kilusang Larangang Guerilya (KLG) Roque.

The gun battle ended in five minutes with the rebels scampering off in different directions, leaving behind their slain comrade, whose identity is still being verified.

Last Saturday, three NPA reb-

els were killed when they battled troopers from the 50th Infantry Battalion (50 IB) in around 1:30 p.m. in Sitio Ibong, Barangay Balbalasang, Balbalan, Kalinga.

Colonel Leopoldo Imbang Jr, 503rd Infantry Brigade (503IB) commander, said that hours later the body of one of the slain rebels was intercepted inside a van at a military checkpoint in Sitio Gue-sang, Barangay Salegseg in the same town.

Major General Paul T. Atal, the commander of the army's 5th Infantry Division, commended the

troops of the army's 50th IB and the police as he reminded them to remain vigilant and to sustain their Peace and Development Support efforts in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).

"We are saddened that lives have been spared in the pursuit of peace and security in the region of Cordillera, as we extend our condolences to the families of the rebels, we also encourage the remaining rebels to avail of the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP) of the government," said Atal.

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Malaya
The National Newspaper

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11 NPA rebs surrender in Sultan Kudarat

ELEVEN communist New People's Army insurgents yesterday surrendered to the military in Senator Ninoy Aquino town in Sultan Kudarat.

Lt. Col. Harold Cabunoc, commander of the Army's 33rd Infantry Battalion, said the 11 rebels – all from the Manobo tribe – yielded to the battalion at around 10 a.m. in Barangay Midtungok.

Cabunoc said the rebels brought with them five M16 rifles, two M1 Garand rifles, and an AK-47 rifle during their surrender to the battalion's Alpha Company, under Lt. John Austin Jamora.

Col. Bismarck Soliba, commander of the 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade, said the NPAs rebels surrendered because the communist leaders reneged on their promise during recruitment.

"The Lumads are disgruntled over the unfulfilled promises of the NPA leaders. The members are dying in the encounters but the 'Supramil' (family support) for their followers was not provided," said Soliba.

Maj. Gen. Arnel Dela Vega, commander of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said he is happy that the rebels decided to return

to the government fold and live a normal life.

"I am glad that these rebels have realized the futility of the armed struggle," said Dela Vega, adding that town mayor Randy Ecija Jr. has given the assurance to address social issues in the municipality.

An NPA rebel was killed following a firefight with forces of the Army's 45th Infantry Battalion in Oriental Mindoro yesterday morning, said Lt. Xy-zon Meneses, public affairs officer of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division.

Meneses said the soldiers were on a combat operation at around

5:30 a.m. when they clashed with about 10 rebels belonging to the NPA's Platoon Olip in Barangay Cambunang, Bulalacao town.

Meneses said the rebels fled after a five-minute firefight, leaving behind their slain comrade. Also recovered at the scene were a 9 mm pistol, a hand grenade, two magazines for a 9 mm gun, and assorted ammunition.

No one was reported killed or injured on the side of the 45th IB which, Meneses said, was continuing to pursue the fleeing rebels as of yesterday afternoon. – *Victor Reyes*

22 May 2017

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

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11 Reds turn themselves in

By FRANCIS Y. WAKEFIELD

The military said 11 New People's Army (NPA) rebels surrendered to the Philippine Army in Sultan Kudarat on Sunday.

Lt. Col. Harold Cabunoc, the commander of the Army's 33rd Infantry Battalion, also said the rebels turned over eight high-powered firearms when they surrendered to government forces in Midtungok village, Senator Ninoy Aquino town, Sultan Kudarat, at 10 a.m.

First Lt. John Austin Jamora, commanding officer of Alpha Company of the 33rd Infantry Battalion, said that the surrenderers handed over five M16, two M1 Garand, and one AK 47 rifles.

He said that the insurgents belonged to the Manobo tribe from the hinterland village of Midtungok.

They were identified as Ayob Mopac, Benjamin Kalay, Samuel Badak, Mel Pandi, Kang Mopac, Tiin Mooac, Usad Mopac, Long Oding, Sebio Masandag, Gabriel Mopac, and Nonoy Lapi.

Col. Bismarck Soliba, commander of the First Mechanized Infantry Brigade, said that the NPA in Sultan Kudarat was losing members due to demoralization in the ranks.

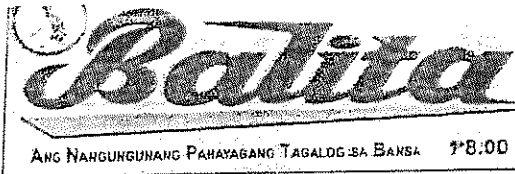
"The lumads are disgruntled over the unfulfilled promises of the NPA leaders. The members are dying in the encounters but the 'Supamil' (family support) for their followers was not provided," he said.

Maj. Gen. Arnel Dela Vega, the Commander of the 6th Infantry Division, commended the units which were involved in the surrender negotiations.

"This is a combined effort of the 33rd Infantry Battalion and the 57th Infantry Battalion under Ltc Enrique Clemente. The surrender of NPA members reflect the waning influence of the communist movement in the countryside," Dela Vega said.

"I am glad that these rebels have realized the futility of the armed struggle. Mayor Randy Ecija Jr. of Sen Ninoy Aquino town has shown to them that the LGU is ready to address the social issues in their town," he added.

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Rebelde todas sa sagupaan

Napatay ang isang miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA) sa pakikipagbakkakan sa militar sa Oriental Mindoro kahapon.

Sinabi ni 1st Lt. Xy-Zon Meneses, tagapagsalita ng 2nd Infantry Division ng Philippine Army, na nangyari ang engkuwentro sa Sitio If-If sa Barangay Cambunang, Bulalacao,

Oriental Mindoro bandang 5:30 ng umaga kahapon.

Ayon kay Meneses, matapos itimbre ng mga residente ay nakaengkuwentro ng tropa ng 4th Infantry Battalion ang nasa 10 rebelde na pinaniniwalaang kasapi ng Platoon Olip, KLG Roque.

Matapos ang limang minuto

ng bakkakan, tumakas ang mga rebelde at iniwan ang napaslang nilang kasamahan, na hindi pa nakikilala.

Narekober din ng militar sa lugar ng labanan ang isang 9mm pistol, siyam na bala at dalawang magazine nito, isang granada, at sari-saring bala.

Francis T. Wakefield

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Hunt for bandits continues in SK

ISULAN, Sultan Kudarat (PNA) – Police and military forces are closing in on a group of bandits, former members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), in the village of Bual here as the hunt for Sultan Dimas, alias “Commander Dragon,” is intensified.

The pursuit operation entered its third day in Sifio Mantisao, Barangay Bual, Sr Supt. Raul Supiter, Sultan Kudarat police provincial director said on Saturday

Supiter said 11 bandits have been killed in the operation conducted jointly by Sultan Kudarat police provincial public safety battalion and 33rd Infantry Battalion against “Commander Dragon”, who is leader of a 30-man strong group of bandits responsible for the series of atrocities in Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao.

“The group’s location has been pinpointed and the operation is focused in one community,” Supiter said.

Lt. Colonel Harold Cabunoc, 33rd IB chief, told reporters Dimas’ forces were getting reinforcements from other armed groups operating in the hinterlands of Isulan.

Cabunoc said police and the military were to serve warrants against Commander Dragon for murder and multiple murder charges on Thursday when his group opened fire on approaching lawmen, triggering a fierce firefight at 6:00 a.m. The fighting left 11 bandits dead, while the rest fled deep into the forest.

Commander Dragon was a former member of MILF who turned into banditry.

Due to the strength of the armed group, the Army had to fire artillery against the suspects backed by two Air Force helicopter gunships.

One soldier, identified as Sgt. Davides Enario, was wounded in the clash.

Both Supiter and Cabunoc said the bandit group suffered more than 11 fatalities, which were still subject for validation and verification.

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AFP chief calls for enhanced Asean ties to tackle security threats

By Mario J. Mallari

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff Gen. Eduardo Año has called for an enhanced collaboration among security officials of all member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) amid the growing economy in the region and the spread of extremism inspired by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

As chairman of the 14th Asean Chiefs of Defense Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM), Año highlighted the need to have a secure and stable Southeast Asia amid the rising economy in the region.

"Asean has become a rising global economic force due to its strategic location and economic activity. It has abundant resources, a more integrated market, and a large combined GDP from its members," Año said during the plenary session of the meeting.

"By providing security to our respective nations, we create a better environment for growth and prosperity. And through purposive security cooperation, we actually help to secure and sustain our region's economic gains. We all know that a secure Asean is a progressive Asean," he added.

The two-day meeting resulted in the signing of a joint statement by all the attending military chiefs of Asean which calls for enhancing joint military exercises and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capacities.

The participants also agreed to formalize the ACDFIM to become a mechanism to counter the spread of violent ideologies and to create

a coordinated response to non-traditional threat like disasters which was agreed upon during the 12th iteration of the meeting in Kuala Lumpur in 2015.

As pushed for the formalization of the ACDFIM, which was echoed by military chiefs in attendance to ensure integrated and coordinated effort.

The AFP chief cited the partnership inked by the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia to jointly secure their tri-boundaries as a good example of collaboration.

"This partnership with neighbors will negate the threats and shows that strong military cooperation is important in aligning our security requirements and initiatives," Año said.

The existing trilateral agreement was aimed at combating trans-border crimes, terrorism, piracy and other militant activities in the Sulu-Sulawesi-Celebes Sea.

The AFP chief also introduced the Development Support and Security Plan "Kapayapaan" to the participants, as the AFP's approach to attain national well-being through interplay of good governance, security and development.

"With this intensified holistic approach we have made a lot of headway in our fight against terrorism. Efforts with the help of local leaders and the populace have significantly crippled the operations of ISIS-like terrorist groups," Año said.

Col. Edard Arevalo, AFP-Public Affairs Office chief, said that the meeting focused on the security challenge besetting the region,

including the threat coming from ISIS-inspired groups.

"The threats of terrorism, particularly the spread of ISIS-inspired extremism; maritime security concerns, and onslaught of disasters and calamities became the focus of the meeting and these

inspired the mutual agreement to forge stronger partnerships," Arevalo said.

The ACDFIM was attended by the 10 military chiefs from the Asean member states and is slated to be held next year in Singapore as host country.

22 May 2017

The Manila Times

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ASEAN MEMBERS CLOSE RANKS VS TERROR

TOP military officials of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) vowed to work together to fight terrorism that threatens the region's peace and security, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said on Sunday.

The Asean has 10 members -- Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the AFP public affairs office, said the military chiefs from the regional bloc signed the joint statement aimed at enhancing joint military exercises, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capacities.

The move also seeks to beef up efforts to formalize the Asean Chiefs of Defense Forces Informal Meeting which was first agreed upon during the 12th ACDFIM held in Malaysia in 2015 to become a mechanism to combat the prevalence of

► **TerrorA2**

violent ideologies and create a coordinated response to non-traditional threats like disasters.

AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año, who also sits as the 2017 ACDFIM chairman, spearheaded the call for the enhancement of cooperation and collaboration among the Asean Armed Forces for a more secure and stable region.

"The threats of terrorism, particularly the spread of ISIS-inspired extremism; maritime security concerns and onslaught of disasters and calamities became the focus of the meeting and these inspired the mutual agreement to forge stronger partnerships," Arevalo said.

During the meeting's plenary session, Año emphasized the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the regional bloc in order to strengthen its economic leverage and potential.

"Asean has become a rising global economic force due to its strategic location and economic activity. It has abundant resources, a more integrated market, and a large combined GDP from its members," Año said.

"By providing security to our respective nations, we create a better environment for growth and

prosperity. And through purposive security cooperation, we actually help to secure and sustain our region's economic gains. We all know that a secure Asean is a progressive Asean," he added.

The Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia have an existing trilateral agreement to fight trans-border crimes, terrorism, piracy and other terror activities in the Sulu-Sulawesi-Celebes Sea.

Año said such pacts "negate the threats and show that strong military cooperation is important in aligning our security requirements and initiatives".

The AFP chief also introduced the Development Support and Security Plan "Kapayapaan" as the Philippine military's approach to achieve national well-being through an interplay of good governance, security, and development.

"With this intensified holistic approach, we have made a lot of headway in our fight against terrorism. Efforts with the help of local leaders and the populace have significantly crippled the operations of ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria)-linked terrorist groups," Año said.

PNA

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Top Asean military brass boost unity vs terrorism

By Philip C. Tubeza
@pctubezaINQ

The top military officials of member-countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) agreed to strengthen cooperation against terrorism, a military spokesperson said on Sunday.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the public affairs office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said that was the consensus during the 14th Asean Chiefs of Defense Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) last week.

"The threats of terrorism, particularly the spread of IS (Islamic State)-inspired extremism; maritime security and the

onslaught of disasters and calamities became the focus of the meeting and these inspired an agreement to forge stronger partnerships," Arevalo said.

The military officials also agreed to enhance joint military exercises and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capacities.

AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año, the chair of this year's ACDFIM, called for enhanced cooperation among the Asean militaries for a more secure and stable region.

Aside from the meeting of defense forces chiefs, Año also hosted the 14th Asean Military Intelligence Informal Meeting and the 7th Asean Military Op-

erations Informal Meeting.

During the plenary session on May 18, Año stressed the importance of securing the entire Asean given its economic leverage and potential.

"Asean has become a rising global economic force due to its strategic location and economic activity. It has abundant resources, a more integrated market and a large combined GDP from its members," Año said.

The Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia have an existing trilateral agreement to combat transborder crimes, terrorism, piracy and similar activities in the Sulu-Sulawesi-Celebes Sea.

"This partnership with neighbors will negate the threats

and shows that strong military cooperation is important in aligning our security requirements and initiatives," Año said.

The AFP chief also introduced the Development Support and Security Plan Kapayapaan as the AFP's approach to attain national wellbeing through good governance, security and development.

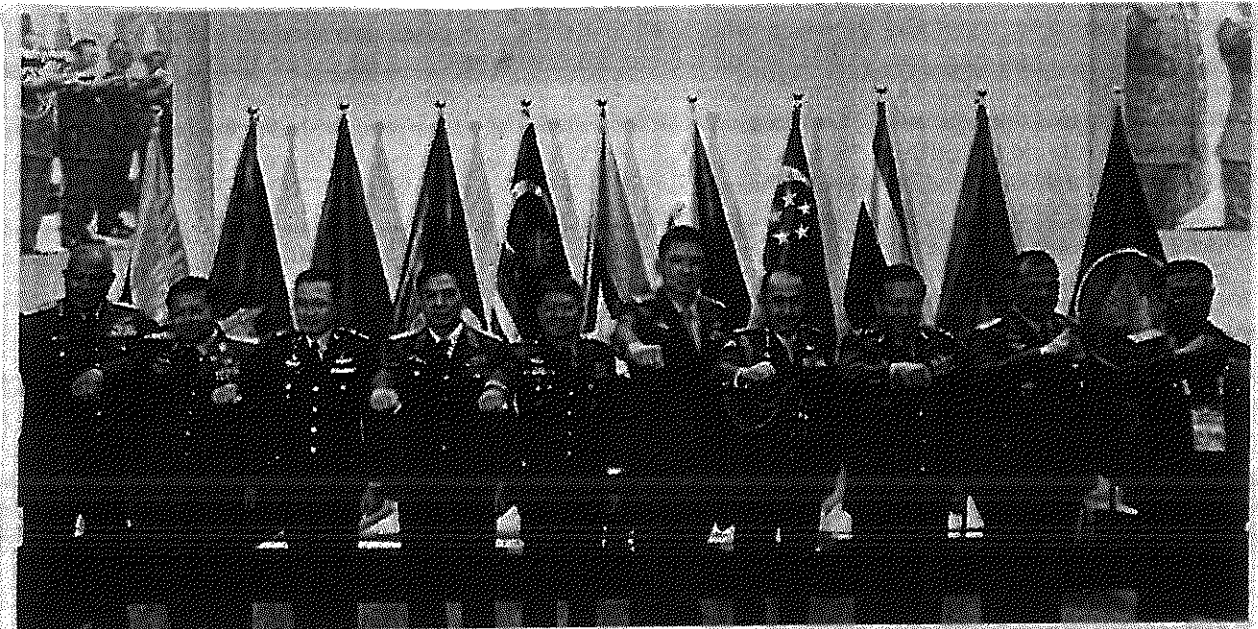
"With this intensified holistic approach, we have made a lot of headway in our fight against terrorism," Año said.

The meeting was attended by top military officials from Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia and Laos. INQ

22 May 2017

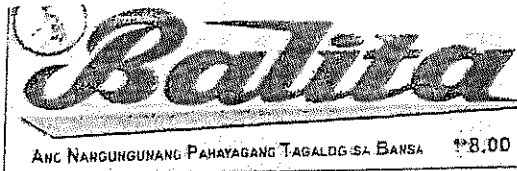
The Manila Times

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FIGHT FOR PEACE The military chiefs of member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations seal the agreement to enhance military exercises to maintain peace and security in the region. PNA PHOTO

22 May 2017



Page. 2

Ret. Gen. Danilo Lim bagong MMDA chief

Lim



May bagong pinuno na ang Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) sa katauhan ni retired Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, ayon sa Malacañang.

Kinumpirma ni Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea na itinalaga ni Pangulong Duterte bilang bagong chairman ng MMDA ang dating Scout Ranger commander ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), at napaulat na posibleng pirmahan na ni Pangulong Duterte ang appointment nito ngayong

Lunes

Mananatili naman sa kanyang posisyon bilang general manager ng MMDA si Tim Orbos, na kasalukuyang officer-in-charge ng ahensiya.

Matatandaan na naging Bureau of Customs (BoC) Deputy Commissioner for Intelligence si Lim sa administrasyong Aquino noong Setyembre 2011 ngunit nagbitiw din sa puwesto noong Hulyo 2013.

Taong 2010 nang kumandidato siyang senador bilang independent candidate sa ilalim ng Liberal Party, subalit hindi pinalad.

Taong 2006 naman nang makulong si Lim sa pagkakasangkot sa pag-aalsa ng militar laban kay dating Pangulo at ngayo'y Pampanga 2nd District Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo sa standoff sa Manila Peninsula Hotel sa Makati City, kasama ang ilang junior officers na konektado sa Oakwood mutiny noong 2003.

Ngunit nakalaya si Lim nang pagkalooban siya ng amnestiya ni dating Pangulong Benigno S.

Aquino III

Si Lim ang ika-12 dating opisyal ng militar o pulisya na itinalaga ni Pangulong Duterte sa pamahalaan.

Una nang itinalaga sina National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon, Office of the President Undersecretary Emmanuel Bautista, National Irrigation Administration Chief Ricardo Visaya, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office General Manager Alexander Balutan, National Food Authority Administrator Jason Aquino.

Itinalaga rin ni Duterte sina National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council Executive Director Ricardo Jalad, Bureau of Customs Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Land Transportation Office Chief Edgar Galvante, at incoming Interior Secretary at AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año.

**Bella Gamotea
at Beth Camia**

22 May 2017



Pahina. 2

Lim itatalaga nang chairman ng MMDA

INAASAHANG pipirmahan sa araw na ito ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte ang appointment papers ni retired Brigadier General Danilo "Danny" Lim bilang bagong chairman ng Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

Sinabi ni Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea na pipirmahan ni Pangulong Duterte ang appointment papers ni Lim bago tumalik ang Chief Executive patungong Russia para sa kanyang state visit doon.

Kapag naupo na si Lim bilang MMDA chief, mananatili namang general manager ng ahensya si Thomas Orbos.

Matatendaang, naupo na si Lim bilang Bureau of Customs deputy commissioner noong Aquino administration.

Pinangunahan din nito ang ikinasang kudeta noong 1989 laban sa administrasyon ni dating Pangulong Corason Aquino at dalawang taong nakulong.

Napalaya siya sa ilalim ng Ramos administration at naging miyembro ng Reform the Armed Forces Movement-Soldiers of the Filipino People-Young Officers Union peace panel.

Tinanggal naman ito sa kanyang pwesto bilang commander ng First Scout Rangers Regiment dahil umano sa planong coup d'etat laban kay dating Pangulong Gloria Macapagal Arroyo noong 2006.

Nadetine ito mula 2006 hanggang 2010 dahil sa mga kasong rebellion at attempted coup d'etat o sa 2007 Manila Peninsula siege na pinangunahan ni Senador Antonio Trillanes IV.

Si Lim ay tumakbo bilang senador noong 2010 subalit natalo.

Samantala, si Brigadier General Lim ay ipinanganak noong June 2, 1955 sa Solano, Nueva Vizcaya.

Sinasabing si Lim na ang ika-12 dating military o police official na itinalaga sa pwesto ng Punong Ehekutibo.

Kasunod ito ng appointments nina National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon, Office of the President Undersecretary Emmanuel Bautista, National Irrigation chief Ricardo Visaya, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office General Manager Alexander Balutan, National Food Authority Administrator Jason Aquino, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council Executive Director Ricardo Jalad, Bureau of Customs Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon, Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu, Land Transportation Office Chief Edgar Galvante at incoming Interior Secretary at kasalukuyang Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief Eduardo Año. KJ

22 May 2017



Page. 4

ASG has lost will to fight

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff General Eduardo Año expressed belief that the military has already broken the Abu Sayyaf Group's will to fight as a result of their non-stop military operations in Basilan, Sulu and other parts of Mindanao.

Año gave this assessment prior to his early retirement from the service after he was tapped by President Duterte to head the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

"We already saw that the current trend now, for the first time they (Abu Sayyaf) have been surrendering en masse," Año said.

Earlier, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said Año is set to assume the DILG post on June 2 or just five months before his actual retirement on October 26 of this year.

Despite his retirement, Año believes his successor will continue their relentless effort in crushing the bandit group.

"The campaign (against the Abu Sayyaf) is the duty of the military organization. All of that is in the operational orders like "Kapayapaan".

My successor will just continue the current programs and plans," Año said. Whoever replaces me will no longer have difficulty because it is already written (in paper). The ground commanders in the field know what to do."

Año also clarified that the timeline given to him by President Duterte to crush the Abu Sayyaf by July 30 of this year, doesn't necessarily mean total obliteration of the ASG.

"The timeline given to me, it does not mean there will be zero Abu Sayyaf. What it means is strategic victory wherein whatever they do they are already defeated," Año said. "And with all the positive developments and successful decisive encounters, the strength of the Abu Sayyaf has greatly decreased including the leaders and their capability to conduct terror or atrocities."

The AFP said that more than 50 Abu Sayyaf bandits have surrendered in Basilan, Jolo and Tawi-Tawi due to their relentless military operations since this year.

Some 149 Abu Sayyaf bandits were also killed in Western Mindanao based on the tally provided by AFP's Western Mindanao Command.

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The Manila Times

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3 ASG men fall in Sulu

SHARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao: A joint task force pounded harder remaining Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) terrorists, resulting in what the Armed Forces of the Philippines called as the neutralization of three more bandits as combat operations heat up in Western Mindanao, according to a Philippine Army official.

Capt. Jo-ann Petinglay, spokesman for the Western Mindanao Command, on Sunday said elements of the 61st/65th Marine Company, Marine Special Operation Group and the 2nd Special Forces Battalion, engaged the ASG terrorists, who previously were under the command of sub-leader Alhabsy Misaya, on Bangalaw Island, Banguingui, Sulu province.

Misaya was killed recently in a clash with government troops.

Neutralized was Abu Sayyaf member Imbo, Petinglay said.

Recovered from him were an M16 rifle, magazines for M16 and ammunition.

Upon checking Imbo's pockets, a sachet of shabu was found with five other empty sachets, as well as a cellphone containing information on his fellow bandits.

"Imbo is an ASG/KFRG [kidnap-for-ransom gang] member and trusted contact on Bangalaw Island of the late Misaya," according to Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of the Joint Task Force Sulu.

"He is a KFR contact and facilitator on the island and a keeper of Misaya's firearms and pump boats used in kidnapping ventures," Sobejana said.

No casualty was reported on the government side while it is believed that the bandits suffered heavy casualties.

Meanwhile, two ASG members under sub-leader Nurhassan Jamiri surrendered recently to Joint Task Force Basilan under Col. Juvymax Uy.

Janatin Mudjaral Madjakin, aka Atin, 44, and Aldasid Madjakin, aka Alda, 19, surrendered to the troops of the 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion in Camp Cordero, Campo Uno in Lamitan City, Basilan.

The two yielded two high-powered firearms, an M16A1 rifle and an M79.

In his report to the WestMinCom commander, Uy said the duo (father and son) decided to surrender because of relentless military operations against the ASG.

The two said more ASG members are contemplating to also surrender.

"More than anything else, we also want to work for peace without the use of arms and prevent bloodshed, and, in this light, we are encouraging other Abu Sayyaf bandits, as Filipinos, to lay down their arms and join the government in working for a peaceful and progressive Mindanao," Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. commander, Western Mindanao Command, said.

"But if they prefer to fight, then we will make sure that our troops will get them hard the soonest," Galvez added.

A total of 27 ASG terrorists have surrendered in Basilan.

JULMUNIR JANNARAL

22 May 2017

Malaya
The National Newspaper

Page: B2

Graft conviction of 4 PH Navy officers affirmed

THE Sandiganbayan has affirmed the conviction of four former ranking officers of the Philippine Navy on corruption charges in relation to procurement of drugs and medical supplies 26 years ago.

In a 12-page resolution, the anti-graft court's First Division junked separate appeals filed by PN Commander Rosendo C. Roque, Commander Ramon C. Renales, Commodore Francisco I. Tolin,

and Commander Manuel Ruason aka Manuel Tuason.

Roque, former procurement officer, was convicted on four counts of graft and sentenced to 24-years imprisonment. Renales, price monitoring officer, was meted 18 years in jail on three counts of graft.

Tolin, former deputy commandant of the Philippine Coast Guard, and Ruason, former PN assistant chief of staff for logis-

tics, both face six years behind bars for one count of graft.

All 25 charges against Vice Admiral (ret.) Mariano J. Dumanacas Jr., former flag officer of the Philippine Navy, were dropped because of his death on April 2, 2016.

The cases filed in 2011, stemmed from a special audit of selected transactions of the Philippine Navy in 1991 and 1992. Auditors found violations of pro-

curement rules when the military command resorted to emergency procurement, setting aside the requirement for public bidding in five separate transactions totaling P2.31 million.

The court also swept aside as mere conjecture defendant Renales' claim of rumors of an impending coup d'état at the time as the basis for waiving the requirement for public bidding – *Peter J. G. Tabingo*

22 May 2017

THE PHILIPPINE
DAILY
BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Navy responds to distress call from tanker

By **NONOY E. LACSON**

ZAMBOANGA CITY – A Philippine Navy vessel of the Naval Forces Western Mindanao (NFWM) responded to a distress call from one of the tankers of Chelsea Shipping Corporation after it suffered an engine failure four nautical miles off Colorado Point, in Zamboanga City around 8 a.m. Tuesday

PC 395 (BRP Felix Apolinario) was patrolling the vicinity of Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte when they were given orders to assist MT Denise 2 which reportedly suffered from an engine failure.

Capt. Enrico Peralta, chief securi-

ty officer of Chelsea Shipping, immediately contacted the Philippine Navy for assistance while the MT Denise 2 was marooned at Colorado Point and its crew fixing the engine.

NFWM immediately responded by sending PC 395 to the area to render security and assistance

The engine of MT Denise 2 was fixed and she resumed her voyage a few hours later

The shipping corporation extended its deepest gratitude and appreciation to the Navy for responding to their distressed tanker.

NFWM said it was always ready to provide security and assistance to distressed vessels

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Friends in good times and in bad: Australian and Filipino soldiers worked side by side to respond to humanitarian crisis in 2013. The armed forces of both countries continue to train together. About 90 Australian Defence Force personnel are participating in Exercise Balikatan 2017.

22 May 2017

INQUIRER

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Was it a joke or the reality?

Just before leaving for Cambodia last May 10, President Duterte announced the appointments of Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano as secretary of foreign affairs and Gen. Eduardo Año as secretary of the interior and local government. Earlier, the President named Gen. Roy Cimatu, a former AFP chief of staff, as environment and natural resources secretary.

Año is scheduled to assume his new post on June 2. Although up for compulsory retirement in October yet, Año will take early leave from the service to allow for his move to the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

That makes four former military officers in President Duterte's Cabinet which already has retired generals Delfin Lorenzana and Hermogenes Esperon Jr.

All four are graduates of the Philippine Military Academy and served continuously in the military organization throughout their professional careers. None of them are lawyers. But what they bring to the table are the old-fashioned values of discipline, a capacity for hard work, a willingness to place community interests above self, and most of all, a love of country. They also have their share of critics. Upon leaving the service, they automatically became civilians bringing with them their military background and experience.

In the Duterte Cabinet, there are two key groups that oversee and control government operations. One is the triad of economic managers made up of Finance Secretary Sonny Dominguez, Socioeconomic Secretary Ernesto Pernia, and Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno. The other group is the other triad of former military officers that include Lorenzana, Esperon, and incoming Interior Secretary Año.



REVELLE

RAMON J. FAROLAN

When the President jokingly announced that Año's appointment completes his "junta," perhaps he was not joking. With Año taking over the DILG, a key Cabinet position will be in the hands

of a professional soldier with no political attachments and a reputation for getting the job done while instilling discipline in the organization. You will note that in Año's short stint as AFP chief of staff, a more effective offensive was waged against the Abu Sayyaf and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, resulting in greater casualties inflicted on those terror groups.

General Año's unusually early appointment also closes the door to interested parties who would have used the office for political advantage.

This move of the President reveals an aspect of his character that has escaped earlier notice. When we speak of a "junta," the image it conjures is that of a military group controlling government operations,

especially after a revolutionary seizure of power. The best example of such a group would be the Egyptian military led by Gen. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. After overthrowing the civilian government of President Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood, the junta called for elections with El-Sisi running for president. He won with 96 percent of the vote in an election international observers described as rigged.

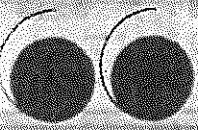
Closer to home is the Thai military junta known as the National Council for Peace and Order that overthrew Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra in 2014. After a few years, elections were held with the junta leader Gen. Prayut Chan-o-cha being appointed prime minister by a military-dominated legislature with the blessings of the Royal Palace.

A junta can also be civilian in composition and can come about in a peaceful setting. The word "junta" is derived from the Latin "jungere" meaning "to join."

In theory the three branches of our government serve as a system of checks and balances to make sure no one branch becomes too powerful. But the reality in the Philippines is that the legislative branch is practically an adjunct of the executive. After every presidential election, most elected representatives, regardless of original party affiliation, move over to the administration party or the party in power, citing all kinds of reasons. This provides the administration party with a supermajority to ensure that what the president wants the president gets. Even the official House minority bloc is often referred to as a company union. This supermajority also provides insurance against any impeachment complaints filed against the president.

Army that is a source of national pride

ca.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295



THIS MOVE OF THE PRESIDENT REVEALS AN ASPECT OF HIS CHARACTER THAT HAS ESCAPED EARLIER NOTICE

The other branch, the judiciary, has often been described as "dysfunctional" with all pillars of the criminal justice system in disarray. Justice moves in painfully slow steps with cases often requiring many years before decisions are made. It is a system that favors the moneyed and the influential. And so our detention facilities are overcrowded with mostly the poor and marginalized; and often they are not even facing charges, but unfortunately they have no access to legal help for the paperwork that would get them released.

It is a system where the word "temporary" as in "temporary restraining order" (TRO) can sometimes mean eternity. Even the President has expressed alarm and displeasure with the issuance of TROs that delay the speedy implementation of infrastructure projects. It is a system crying out for reforms.

In truth, we do not have a working system of checks and balances. Whether we like it or not, what we do have is a powerful junta within the executive branch composed of six civilians under the President. This is the body that will make and implement the most important decisions affecting the nation and the lives of our people.

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ASELSAN MET ALL REQUIREMENTS

This refers to Conrado R. Banal III's column ("Turkish daylight," Business, 5/4/17).

The Armed Forces of the Philippines would like to express its appreciation for Banal's interest in the modernization of the AFP—in this particular case, the procurement of a night fighting system for our soldiers, airmen, sailors and marines.

We are pleased to inform Banal that the specification of "not more than 0.85-millimeter diameter of image intensifier tube" (IIT) set by the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) is the requirement demanded by our units operating in the field. The specification, therefore, was not made to suit a particular supplier but is based on a measurement exacted by our end-users in the frontline.

There were actually eight companies that participated in the Submission and Opening of Bid Envelopes, but only five were eligible. The others were disqualified following the open bidding competitive procedures, using a nondiscretionary "pass/fail" criterion set forth under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Government Procurement Reform Act (Republic Act No. 9184).

Among the five qualified bidders that included US-based manufacturers Nightline Inc. and American Technologies Network Corp., Aselsan Company of Turkey (Aselsan) was determined to have the lowest calculated responsive bid. More importantly, Aselsan met the required "not more than 0.85-millimeter diameter of image intensifier tube." Hence, the award of the contract to Aselsan.

The fact that Aselsan sourced the equipment from an American company (Harris Corp., which did not participate in the bidding) is

solely that of Aselsan. The AFP was after Aselsan's faithful compliance to the specifications by the BAC.

What concerns us was that Banal, seemingly given inaccurate information, was made to believe that, first, Aselsan cannot obtain certification as to the 0.85-mm diameter of IIT; second, that the BAC waived the certification requirement to cater to Aselsan's failure; and third, failing to secure a certification from Harris Corp., Aselsan obtained the same from Transvaro which is another Turkish company.

For the record and Banal's kind appreciation, no certification requirement for Aselsan was waived, and Aselsan was able to obtain a certification from US-based Harris Corp. with regard to the "maximum 0.85-millimeter" diameter. What Transvaro actually did was to assist in the testing, as a third party test is a requirement for postqualification and to validate the certificate from Harris Corp. as submitted by Aselsan.

We are grateful to Banal though for his manifest concern and vigilance over modernization contracts that the AFP goes into. Much as those contracts observe processes that conform to the requirements of the law, we need such display of concern from concerned Filipinos like him. We assure Banal, and the rest of our fellow Filipinos, of the AFP's unrelenting commitment to transparency and integrity—for the best interest of every Filipino, soldier, airman, sailor and marine.

LTC RAY C. TIONGSON,
army chief public affairs,
Armed Forces of the Philippines,
oacpa.army2012@gmail.com

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ONLINE NEWS

22 MAY 2017

www.pna.gov.ph

(Feature) 70-year-old villager nearly captures Abu Sayyaf terrorist in Bohol

TAGBILARAN CITY -- Not many knew it, but a terrorist out to sow chaos in Bohol province last week was almost single-handedly captured by a septuagenarian, dead or alive.

In a rare display of raw courage never heard nor seen anywhere in the war on terror, the 70-year-old man engaged the Abu Sayyaf terrorist intruding in his backyard in a hand-to-hand combat in the town of Calape at the height of a massive military operation against the militant Islamic group.

In an exclusive interview with this writer, Capt. Jojo Mascariñas, intelligence officer of the Central Command (CEMCOM) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), related in detail the bravery of a man known as Lolo (grandpa) Peryong, who confronted Abu Ubayda, the last member of an 11-man Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) who clandestinely slipped into Bohol last month to create chaos, particularly kidnapping.

Lolo Peryong was cleaning his backyard in the afternoon of May 15 when Ubayda, armed with an M16 assault rifle, intruded the perimeter of his house in Barangay Lawis in the town of Calape some 45 kilometers north of this city.

While all his neighbors fled for their lives upon seeing Ubayda, Lolo Peryong, armed with a bolo, bravely attacked the bandit.

Not sensing he was facing a fearless old man, Ubayda was apparently caught by surprise, with Lolo Peryong already swinging his bolo at the terrorist.

For one reason or another, Ubayda did not use his M-16 rifle to shoot Lolo Peryong but was able to parry the old man's non-stop bolo thrusts and hacking.

In one instance, Peryong saw an opening and tried to slash Ubayda, but the terrorist managed to parry and seize the bladed weapon from the old man. But the game old man still engaged the terrorist in a hand-to-hand combat.

Eventually, Ubayda stabbed Peryong, then butt stroke him with his rifle before pursuing army soldiers arrived and shot the terrorist dead.

Fortunately for Lolo Peryong, the wound was not fatal. He was brought to the hospital where he is recovering.

The bravery and gallantry of Lolo Peryong against a heavily armed terrorist despite his age was likely the first in the country or even the whole world.

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Boholanos compared the heroic deeds of Lolo Peryong to the great Boholano hero, Francisco Dagohoy, who staged the longest revolt in the Philippines against the well-armed Spaniards for 85 years from 1744 to 1826.

During the military operation against the Abu Sayyaf in Bohol, another villager identified as Crisanto Bancore engaged Abu Asis, Ubayda's companion, in a brief fistfight while Asis was trying to flee from pursuing government forces.

Asis was later gunned down before he could escape.

Mascariñas said Ubayda and Asis were the last of the 11-man terrorist group, who slipped into the town of Inabanga, Bohol last month apparently to destabilize the peaceful island province in Central Visayas.

The military mounted a massive operation upon learning the landing of a terrorist group in Bohol.

Aside from the military operation, the AFP Central Command (CEMCOM), hosted a seminar on anti-terrorism and anti-drug campaign with Bohol officials in this city last May 9.

The seminar was conducted by Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, CEMCOM deputy commander, who has a solid background in fighting terrorism as the former commander of Joint Task Force Sulu that neutralized many Abu Sayyaf terrorists.

Meanwhile, Brig. Gen. Arnulfo Matanguihan, commander of the 302nd Infantry of the Philippine Army, has declared Bohol cleared of the Abu Sayyaf. (PNA)

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ASEAN military heads vow to beef up cooperation vs terrorism

Top military officials of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) vowed to work together to fight terrorism which poses threat to peace and security in the region.

In a statement Sunday, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said the military chiefs from the regional bloc signed the joint statement aimed at enhancing joint military exercises, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capacities



The move also seeks to beef up efforts to formalize the ASEAN Chiefs of Defense Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) which was first agreed upon by all defense chiefs during the 12th ACDFIM held in Malaysia in 2015, to become a mechanism to combat the prevalence of violent ideologies and create a coordinated response to non-traditional threats like disasters.

AFP Chief General Eduardo Año, who also sits as the 2017 ACDFIM Chair, spearheaded the call for the enhancement of cooperation and collaboration among the ASEAN Armed Forces

for a more secure and stable region.

"The threats of terrorism, particularly the spread of ISIS-inspired extremism; maritime security concerns, and onslaught of disasters and calamities became the focus of the meeting and these inspired the mutual agreement to forge stronger partnerships," Arevalo said.

During the meeting's plenary session, Año emphasized the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the regional bloc as a whole in order to strengthen its economic leverage and potential.

"ASEAN has become a rising global economic force due to its strategic location and economic activity. It has abundant resources, a more integrated market, and a large combined GDP from its members," Año said.

"By providing security to our respective nations, we create a better environment for growth and prosperity. And through purposive security cooperation, we actually help to secure and sustain our region's economic gains. We all know that a secure ASEAN is a progressive ASEAN," he added.

The Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia have an existing trilateral agreement to fight trans-border crimes, terrorism, piracy, and other terror activities in the Sulu-Sulawesi-Celebes Sea.

Año described such move as a way to "negate the threats and show that strong military cooperation is important in aligning our security requirements and initiatives".

The AFP Chief also introduced the Development Support and Security Plan "Kapayapaan", as the Philippine military's approach to achieve national well-being through interplay of good governance, security, and development.

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"With this intensified holistic approach, we have made a lot of headway in our fight against terrorism. Efforts with the help of local leaders and the populace have significantly crippled the operations of ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria)-linked terrorist groups," Año said.

All 10 military chiefs of the ASEAN member countries attended the event, which is scheduled to be held in Singapore next year. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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ASG hurting from ongoing focused military ops — AFP chief

The decision of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) bandits to surrender en masse shows that the ongoing military focused operations in Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and Sulu are now eroding their will to fight.

This was stressed by AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año during an interview during the sidelights of the "Balikatan" closing ceremonies last May 19.



"We are seeing this trend right now. For the first time, (we are seeing) them surrendering en masse. It means that we have already broken their will to fight," the military official said in Filipino.

Coupled with the positive developments which resulted in the neutralization of key ASG leaders and members in the past few weeks, this is a strategic victory, Año added.

"It means that what ever the ASG decides to do, they are beaten and with all the positive developments and succesful decisive encounters, a large part of their force was whittled away, (reducing) their capability to conduct terror or atrocities," Año stressed.

AFP public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo earlier said that from Jan. 1 up to May 17, a total of 81 ASG bandits were killed, with another 50 surrendering, 18 apprehended and 70 high and low powered weapons seized from the brigands.

Arevalo said the number of surrendered ASG terrorists is unheard of as this is the first time the terrorists have opted to surrender en masse.

The AFP public affairs office chief said that the surrendered bandits are also claiming that their finances are going low due to their inability to kidnap new victims and ransom them, crippling their ability to acquire weapons, food and other supplies.

This lack has caused the morale of the ASG members to plummet making them prone to surrenders. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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PN's second SSV, BRP Davao Del Sur, to be commissioned May 31

The ship was launched last Sept. 29. She is the sister ship of the BRP Tarlac (LD-601), currently the largest Filipino warship in commissioned.

BRP Tarlac was commissioned during short ceremonies at Pier 13, Manila South Harbor last June 1. The Philippine Navy's second strategic sealift vessel, the BRP Davao Del Sur (LD-602), will be formally commissioned on May 31 at Davao City's Sasa Wharf in line with the celebration of PN's 119th founding anniversary.

This was revealed by PN spokesperson Capt. Lued Lincuna in an interview with the PNA Saturday. He added that President Rodrigo Duterte is expected to attend the ceremony as guest-of-honor and speaker along with other ranking defense and military officials.

The BRP Davao Del Sur arrived off South Harbor, Manila last May 8 after departing from the PT PAL (Persero) shipyard in Surabaya, Indonesia last May 4.

She was named after the province of Davao Del Sur, the home of the country's highest peak Mount Apo and other rare species of flora and fauna.

"It gives due recognition to the province as sanctuary of natural wonders and rarities like the country's highest peak Mt. Apo, the most prized Philippine orchid Vanda Sanderiana, and the endangered Philippine Eagle," Lincuna said,

Also, the namesake takes inspiration from a former PN vessel of the same name notable for its accomplishments during during the 1980s.

"Naming the vessel after Davao Del Sur is consistent with its predecessor, BRP Tarlac (LD-601), which was also named after a province," Lincuna added.

She arrived in the Philippines last May 14 after a five-day journey from PT PAL shipyard in Surabaya which started on May 9.

BRP Davao Del Sur is also a Makassar-class landing platform dock like her sister ship BRP Tarlac. Its delivery completed the two-unit SSV procurement project with an approved budget contract of PHP4 billion sourced from the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

Just like the BRP Tarlac, the PN's latest SSV will serve as a floating command-and-control ship especially in the conduct of humanitarian assistance and disaster response and will also serve as a military sealift and transport vessel.

The ship has an overall length of 120 meters, breadth of 21 meters, draft of five meters and can carry a payload of 2,800 tons.

She has a cruising speed of 13 knots and maximum speed of 16 knots and a minimum operating range of 7,500 nautical miles.

BRP Davao Del Sur can carry 500 troops, two rigid-hull inflatable boats, two landing craft units and three helicopters. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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