

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

11 November 2017

Saturday

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

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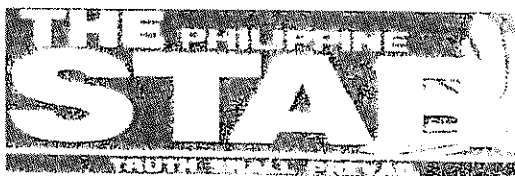
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Trump pushes open shipping lanes in Asia

'Freedom of navigation, overflight needed for economic security'

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ and PIA LEE-BRAGO

DA NANG – US President Donald Trump yesterday called for “respect for the rule of law” and individual rights, freedom of navigation and overflight – including open shipping lanes – as he addressed threats to global security.

“The United States has been reminded time and time again in recent years that economic security is not merely related to national security. Economic security is national security. It is vital... to our national strength,”

Trump said during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation-Chief Executive Officers (APEC-CEO) Summit here.

“We also know that we will not have lasting prosperity if we do not

confront grave threats to security, sovereignty, and stability facing our world today,” Trump said without mentioning the South China Sea or other territorial and maritime disputes involving various countries, including China.

This city itself sits on the shore of the South China Sea, one of the region’s biggest security headaches and where China’s neighbors challenge its sweeping claim to most of the waterway as having no basis in law.

Trump mentioned “territorial expansion” as among evils such as drugs, smuggling and terrorism.

Beijing has been accused of massive reclamation and militarization in the South China Sea that it claims almost in its entirety, which could threaten freedom of navigation and overflight in the region.

The Philippines and other Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states (ASEAN) Brunei, Vietnam,

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Indonesia and Malaysia are among those locked in maritime disputes with China over areas in the South China Sea.

The Philippines has won in an arbitral tribunal when it sought to affirm its exclusive economic zone in the area, but the ruling has been ignored by China.

President Duterte said here that he intended to press his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping to agree to a code of conduct on the South China Sea in their meeting set today.

Trump talked about the dangers posed by North Korea and urged “every responsible nation to stand united in declaring that every single step” that it takes toward more weapons “is a step it takes into greater and greater danger.”

“The future of this region and its beautiful people must not be held hostage to a dictator’s twisted fantasies of violent conquest and nuclear blackmail,” Trump said.

In addition, Trump said countries must uphold prin-

ciples that have benefited everyone, creating stability and building trust, security, and prosperity among like-minded nations.

“We must also deal decisively with other threats to our security and the future of our children, such as criminal cartels, human smuggling, drugs, corruption, cybercrime and territorial expansion,” he said.

“As I have said many times before: all civilized people must come together to drive out terrorists and extremists from our societies, stripping them of funding, territory, and ideological support. We must stop radical Islamic terrorism,” he added.

He urged nations to work together for a peaceful, prosperous and free Indo-Pacific.

Stop construction and militarization

For his part, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said his government emphasized to China that the US position on main maritime security

issues and the South China Sea remains unchanged and Washington insists on a stop in construction and militarization of outposts.

Ahead of the East Asia Summit (EAS) in Manila, Tillerson said the US side had a frank exchange with China in a meeting during Trump's visit to Beijing on Thursday.

"We insist on upholding freedom of navigation that claims to be consistent with international law, and that claimants should stop construction and militarization of outposts in order to maximize prospects for successful diplomacy," Tillerson said.

The US said it has a comprehensive freedom of navigations (FONOPs) program under which the American forces challenge excessive maritime claims around the globe.

Washington said the FONOP is not about any one country and not about making a political statement.

In August, the US acknowledged that the ASEAN was under "tremendous" pressure on the South China Sea issues but the regional bloc still "held on to its principles," defeating

attempt to drop "militarization," self-restraint" and "land reclamation" from the joint communique at the end of the meeting in Manila.

No Trump, Duterte meeting so far

Trump praised the Philippines for the big steps it had taken in terms of gender equality as well as countries in the Indo-Pacific region for the progress they made over the last century.

"The Philippines has emerged as a nation of strong and devout families. For 11 consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked the Philippines first among Asian countries in closing the gender gap and embracing women leaders in business and politics," Trump said.

Duterte has yet to meet Trump as he missed the opportunity during the welcoming ceremonies for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation - Business Advisory Council (ABAC) dialogue with Vietnam President Tran Dai Quang.

The close encounter between the two leaders was

much-awaited since it will be the first time for them.

Trump and Duterte have exchanged pleasantries but only in their past two phone conversations.

From his bilateral meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday afternoon, Duterte attended the ABAC but Trump was not around.

The two may still be able to meet during the APEC gala dinner and cultural presentation late yesterday.

If Duterte misses Trump here, the two leaders will have plenty of time to catch up during the ASEAN and East Asia Summits in Manila from Nov. 12 to 14 where they will be holding a bilateral meeting.

Last Thursday night, Duterte said he was excited to meet Trump here.

"Yes, of course because I feel that we share so many ideas along the same line of problems of governance. I know that I'd have an interesting time with him," Duterte.

At the same time, Duterte said he would want Trump not to meddle in the Philippines' drug war, which had

raised various concerns from human rights activists due to drug-related executions.

"Lay off, sir. That's my business," Duterte said when asked about what he would tell the US leader if they have a chance to talk, and the latter brings up the drugs and human rights issues.

While he is looking forward to meeting Trump, Duterte did not have good words for former US president Barack Obama.

Duterte described Obama as "maitim" (dark) and "maabang" (arrogant) during his talk with over 100 members of the Filipino community in this coastal city and tourism hub.

The remarks were reportedly omitted in the official transcript of the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) and a livestream video posted on social media accounts by Radio-TV Malacañang.

The Chief Executive was asked why many Filipinos admired Obama.

Duterte said the critics should look at the two sides of the story. - With Reuters

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NPA killed, 10 troopers hurt in clash in N. Vizcaya

By **MART SUPNAD**
and **LIEZLE BASA INIGO**

CAMPAQUINO, Tarlac City — A New People's Army (NPA) rebel was killed and 10 government troopers wounded in a clash that erupted in Barangay Sanguit, Dupax del Sur, Nueva Vizcaya last Thursday.

Lieutenant Colonel Isagani Nato, spokesman of the military's Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM), said the encounter at 8:30 a.m. Thursday involved rebels from the NPA's "Venerando Vilacilio Command" and troopers from the army's 84th Infantry Battalion (84th IB).

Lt. Col George M. Bergonia, commander of the 84th IB, sent reinforcements to the battle site, but the rebels fled.

After the encounter at 11:30 a.m., soldiers found the body of the still unidentified rebel, his M-16 rifle, and some subversive documents at the scene of the gun battle.

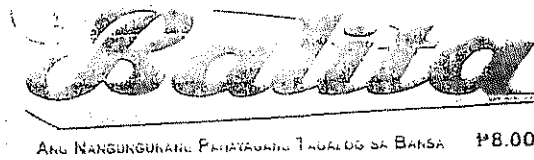
One of the 10 soldiers wounded in the clash was reportedly in critical condition.

It was Mayor Ruben Basconcillo, Jr. of Dupax del Sur who called up Nueva Vizcaya Gov. Carlos Padilla and requested for an ambulance to come to the aid of the wounded soldiers.

However, a report from Camp Aguinaldo said there were only three troopers wounded in the incident. No names of the wounded were released by the NOLCOM or Camp Aguinaldo.

Basconcillo said 40 residents were displaced by the firefight. It was learned that troopers were patrolling the area because of reports that 100 rebels had converged in the area. (With a report from Francis T. Wakefield)

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NPA member todas, 10 sundalo sugatan sa bakbakan

Isang miyembro ng sinasabing communist terrorist (CT) group sa ilalim ng Venerando Villacilio Command ng New People's Army (NPA) ang napatay habang 10 tauhan ng Philippine Army ang nasugatan sa engkuwentro nitong Huwebes sa Barangay Sanguit sa Dupax Del Sur, Nueva Viscaya.

Nabatid mula sa Northern Luzon Command (NoLCom) na nagsasagawa umano ng operasyon sa hangganan ng Nueva Vizcaya at Quirino ang grupo nang mga suspek nang makasagupaan ang militar.

Iniulat ni Lt. Col. Isagani Nato, tagapagsalita ng NoLCom, na nangyari ang engkuwentro sa pagitan ng tropa ng 84th Infantry Battalion, 7th Infantry Division, Philippine Army, at NPA dakong 8:30 umaga nitong Huwebes sa

Bgy. Sanguit, Dupax Del Sur.

Kaagad namang kumilos si Dupax Del Sur Mayor Ruben Basconcello Jr. at itinawag ang pangangailangan ng

ambulansiya kay Gov. Carlos Padilla para mabilis na malapatan ng lunas ang mga sugatang sundalo.

Liezie Basa Inigo

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The Manila Times

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7 wounded soldiers rescued, NPA rebel slain

BAMBANG, Nueva Vizcaya: A member of the New People's Army (NPA), earlier mistakenly identified as a Philippine Army (PA) soldier, was killed in an encounter on Thursday in the village of Sanguit in Dupax Del Sur town.

Lt. Col. Isagani Nato, Northern Luzon Command public information officer, said the firefight ensued on Thursday between PA's 84th Infantry Battalion of the 7th Infantry Division and the NPA rebels.

Nato said the NPA rebel who was killed has yet to be identified. Recovered from him were an M16 armalite rifle, a hand grenade and documents.

He said 10 soldiers were wounded, seven of whom were brought to the Nueva Vizcaya Provincial Hospital (NVPH) and Veterans Regional Hospital (VRH) both in Bayombong town.

"Our troops are still scouring the area while [the three

remaining] wounded personnel are being extricated from the area for evacuation to the nearest hospital," Nato said.

He added that the gun battle ensued when government troops responded to the information the residents provided about an armed group in the remote village of Sanguit where the troops chanced on the rebels.

The group is reportedly operating under the Venerando Villacillo Command in the boundary of Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino provinces.

In Kalinga province, the 50th Infantry Battalion of the 5th Infantry Division on Tuesday also encountered a group of NPA rebels at Sitio Dapoog, Mabaca in Balbalan town.

The military recovered three M16 armalite rifles, one M653 rifle, one M14 rifle, assorted ammunition, magazine and documents. No casualties were reported on both sides.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO

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Engkuwentro sa Nueva Viscaya: 9 sundalo kritikal

NUEVA VIZCAYA – Nasa kritikal na kondisyon ang siyam na sundalo matapos masugatan sa engkuwentro makakaliwang grupo o New Peoples Army (NPA) sa Brgy. Sanguit, Dupax del Sur, Nueva Vizcaya.

Nakasagupa ng 84th Infantry Battalion ng 7th Infantry Division at hindi pa mabatid na bilang ng mga rebeldeng NPA na kabilang sa Venerando Villacillo Command Cagayan Valley Regional Committee.

Dahil dito agad tumugon sa pinangyarihan ng engkuwentro ang ibat ibang rescue team at ilang kasapi ng PNP Station sa lalawigan ng Nueva Vizcaya.

Sa ngayon, nilalapatan na ng lunas ang mga sugatang sundalo dahil sa mga tama ng bala mula sa mga rebelde

Samantala, pinaghahandaan ang pamunuan ng 86th Infantry Battalion Phil. Army na nakahimpil sa Balabal, Jones, Isabela sa muling pagkilos ng mga rebeldeng New Peoples Army (NPA)

Makaraang nagpakita ito ng puwersa sa mga lalawigan ng Quirino at Nueva Vizcaya ang mga rebelde.

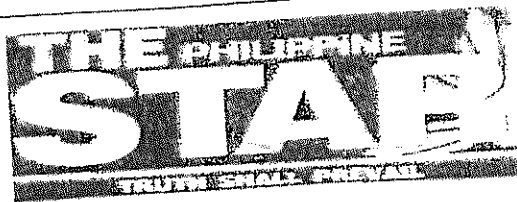
Ayon kay 1st Lt. Daryl Perolino ng 86th Infantry Battalion Phil. Army, kanyang inihayag na puspusan ang kanilang security measures pangunahin na at malapit na naman ang anibersaryo ng mga rebelde sa buwan ng Disyembre.

Umapela ang militar sa mga kasapi ng pambansang pulisya ng Pilipinas maging ng mga contractors sa iba't ibang mga proyekto ng pamahalaan na mag-doble ingat sa kampanya laban sa insurhensiya ay hindi lamang ini-aatang sa militar at pulisya kundi kailangan ding makipagtulungan ang mga stakeholders at iulat sa mga otoridad ang mga napapansing pagkilos ng mga rebelde sa kanilang mga lugar.

Aminado ang militar na nasa paligid lamang ang mga rebelde at kumikilos sila upang magsagawa ng kanilang extortion activities at biglang pag-atake sa mga otoridad ng pamahalaan.

REY VELASCO

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Cop, baby killed in Bukidnon ambush

By GERRY LEE GORIT and JOHN UNSON

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY - A police officer and a four-month-old baby died in an ambush staged by suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Talakag, Bukidnon on Thursday.

Senior Police Officer 3 Arnel Carillo was with a group of policemen who had just attended a conference in Cagayan de Oro when they were waylaid in Barangay Tikalaan.

Inspector Joven Acuesta, police chief of Amal Manabilang town in Lanao del Sur; SPO1 Pacifico Cabudoy and PO1 Nathaniel Ibal were wounded. Earlier reports said the three policemen were snatched by the rebels.

The still unidentified infant, who was in a Toyota Fortuner behind the police car, was hit by a stray bullet. Two of the six other passengers of the sport utility vehicle were hit in the chest and arm, respectively.

One of the victims said the rebels fired at them when the police car overtook their vehicle. "They thought we were

with the police," she said.

Senior Superintendent Benedicto Pintor, Bukidnon police director, said responding policemen recovered an improvised explosive device at the scene.

Army intelligence sources said rebels belonging to the NPA Fronts 53 and 72 perpetrated the ambush.

Rebel slain, 10 soldiers hurt

In Nueva Vizcaya, a rebel was killed and 10 soldiers were wounded in a firefight that lasted for almost nine hours in Barangay Sanguit, Dupax del Sur on Thursday.

Lt. Catherine Japin, 83rd Infantry Battalion spokesperson, said an M16 rifle, a hand grenade and a backpack were recovered from the rebel who has yet to be identified.

The wounded soldiers were airlifted to the Veterans Regional Hospital.

Lt. Col. Isagani Nato of the Northern Luzon Command said the soldiers were patrolling the area when the clash occurred. - With Jaime Laude, Raymund Catindig, Victor Martin

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The Manila Times

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Infant, PNP officer killed in ambush

BY CRIS DIAZ AND JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY: A police officer and an infant were killed while five others, including a town police chief, were wounded when unidentified armed men ambushed a police patrol car and a civilian vehicle in Talakag, Bukidnon on Thursday.

Supt. Lemuel Gonda, spokesman for the regional police command in Cagayan de Oro City, identified the police fatality

as Senior Police Officer (SPC) Arnel Carillo.

Gonda identified the infant, a four-month-old baby girl, as Malysha Machorao who died from a bullet wound in the head.

The baby was reportedly cuddled by Ali Aminsalam, 37, while on board a Toyota Fortuner (UNI 707), driven by Insp. Joven Acuesta, chief of police of Bumbaran, Lanao del Sur, and another civilian, Sitti

Ali, 53, who were all wounded in the attack.

Gonda said the incident took place at about 5:30 p.m. along Kilometer 23, Barangay Tikalaan in Talakag town.

Wounded, too, were Police Officer (PO)1 Nathaniel Ibal and SPO1 Pacifico Cabudoy, both of the Bumbaran police station, and Alexander Maniscan, a civilian who was on board a Mahindra police car. Chief Insp. Jemar delos

Santos, spokesman for the Police Regional Office in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (PRO-ARMM) based in Camp Gen. SK Pendatun in Parang, Maguindanao said Acuesta was driving the SUV with the civilians and the baby traveling from Cagayan de Oro City to Wao, Lanao del Sur, when ambushed by unidentified armed men believed to be members of the New People's Army.

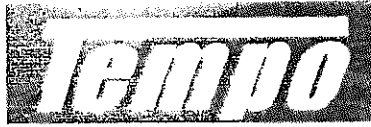
He added that the regional police command has launched a pursuit operation against the perpetrators and that he ordered an investigation of the incident.

The gunmen reportedly left behind an improvised explosive that was disarmed later.

The ambush site was littered with bullet casings fired from AK-47 assault rifles.

Police said the town of Wao is a rebel-infested area.

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Baby, cop dead in daring NPA ambush

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

A four-month old baby including a policeman were reportedly killed by suspected members of the New People's Army (NPA) during a daring ambush Thursday afternoon in Bukidnon.

The incident transpired after more or less 30 suspected NPA rebels ambushed personnel of the Bumbaran Municipal Police Station onboard their patrol vehicle.

The rebels then fired at a Toyota Fortuner who happened to be tailing the PNP patrol car along Kilometer 28 of the Cagayan de Oro-Dominog-Kalilangan road, Brgy. Tikalaan, Talakag, Bukidnon, at about 5:30 p.m.

The attack led to the death of a policeman and a four-month old baby identified as Walysha Machorao who was hit in the head while aboard the Fortuner.

Wounded in the attack were two female companions of the infant and three policemen who were

with the cop killed in the assault.

The civilian together with five other companions were heading home in Brgy. Kili-kili, Wao, Lanao del Sur after attending to some personal errands in Cagayan de Oro City, while the policemen were on their way back to the Bumbaran Municipal Police Station.

Meanwhile, responding troops from the 1st Special Forces Battalion recovered an Improvised Explosive Device (IED/Landmine), 200-meter long wire, detonating cords, empty shells of AK-47 rifle ammunitions, and subversive documents at the area where the incident transpired.

The military said these acts committed by the NPA bandits are clear violations of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law or CARHRIHL between the government and the CPP-NPA-NDF as this agreement prohibits attacks against civilians and non-combatants and bans the use of

landmine.

Brigadier General Eric C Vinoya, the Commander of the 403rd Infantry Brigade, vehemently condemned the barbaric act of the bandit group.

"We condemn in the strongest possible terms this barbaric act committed by the perpetrators of this incident which resulted to the tragic death of a four-month old baby girl and one of our police personnel," Vinoya said.

He also lambasted the perpetrators for their lack of regard to human life, most especially the civilians, as evident by their indiscriminate use of firearms.

"These perpetrators can be compared to savages, infant killers, and murderers of innocent civilians, who thrive on abusing the weak by using coercion and intimidation, without giving any regard to human life and established laws. They do not belong in this civilized society. They will be punished," he added.

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DepEd urged to review accreditation of 'Red' schools

WALU CADELINA MANAR

KIDAPAWAN CITY - Cotabato Governor Lala Mendoza has urged the Department of Education (DepEd) to review its accreditation of three schools allegedly being managed by left-leaning non-government organizations (NGOs).

Mendoza issued the order after Army Col. Harold Argamosa of the 39th Infantry Battalion showed her photos of children allegedly being indoctrinated with the teachings of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

As chair of the provincial peace and order council (PPOC), Mendoza presided over its regular meeting Thursday at the provincial capitol complex here.

The schools, named and purportedly operated by Mindanao Interfaith Services Inc. (MISFI), are located in Barangay, Kisante in Makilala town, and another between the boundary of Arakan and a Bukidnon town.

These schools are located in the second district of North Cotabato where the NPA has a strong presence.

One of the schools was built and managed by the late Father Fausto 'Pops' Tentorio of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Mission (PIME).

Argamosa alleged that there are also left-leaning lumad schools located in Sarangani province and Compostela Valley.

Argamosa said the picture he presented at the PPOC meeting was taken along the boundary of

Makilala in North Cotabato and in Bansalan, Davao del Sur.

"These are students of MISFI. Just recently, the DepEd has accredited MISFI," he said.

Argamosa urged the provincial government and Cotabato DepEd to look into the matter, since the alleged victims were children.

After hearing Argamosa's disclosure, the PPOC passed two resolutions: first, asking DepEd to review its accreditation on MISFI; and another addressed to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), urging it to look into the welfare of the young students.

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5 NPAs charged

GENERAL SANTOS CITY – Police have filed charges against five suspected members of New People's Army (NPA) who were earlier arrested in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato for illegal possession of firearms and explosives. Sr. Supt. Franklin Alvero, South Cotabato police director, identified those charged before the provincial prosecutor's office as Encarnacion Sangco, Ronald Kulaman, Joey Salon, Hannan Adam, and Bryan Muca. Alvero said the suspects were arrested by police and military operatives at their safehouse in Barangay Tasiman, Lake Sebu town last Wednesday. Police also said Sangco is reportedly the wife of NPA leader Commander Billy Sangco, who is the platoon leader of NPA Guerilla Front 73 based in Barangay Lambak, Senator Ninoy Aquino town, Sultan Kudrat. (Joseph Jubelag)

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Ex-PBA star donates to ex-NPA rebels

TACURONG CITY – Former Philippine Basketball Association star Kenneth Duremdes has donated solar panels and food packages for members of indigenous tribes who have bolted the New People's Army (NPA) in San Ninoy Aquino (SNA), Sultan Kudarat. In partnership with the local government of SNA and the Army's 33rd Infantry Battalion, Duremdes trekked last Wednesday to the far-flung village of Kudan in SNA to distribute a mini-solar panel that can light up the former guerillas' homes. Lt. Col. Harold Cabunoc, 33rd Infantry Battalion chief, accompanied Duremdes in the humanitarian mission where they also brought food stuffs and clothes for the surrendered NPA members. The presence of Duremdes, a native of Koronadal in adjacent South Cotabato also boosted the morale of the recipient-former rebels and their indigenous families, and the soldiers who went with the mission, according to Cabunoc. (Ali G. Macabalang)

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Kalita

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ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAGTAGANG TAGALOG SA BANSA ₱8.00

PROBINSIYA

Sundalo pinatay ng carnapper

Pilay ang isang sundalo makaraang pagbabalik ng nding in-ferdem, na tumangay din sa sinasakyan niyang motorsiklo sa North Cotabato, nilulat kabapad.

Balay sa imbestigasyon ng North Cotabato Police Provincial Office (NCPPO), nangyaring insidente dakong 7:40 ng gabi nitong Hiniyehes.

Kinilala ang biktimang si Private First Class Restiben Baguiran, nakatalaga sa Division Training School ng 6th Infantry Division ng Philippine Army (PA) sa bayan ng Carmen.

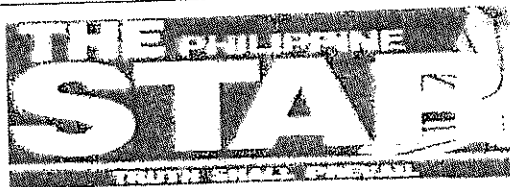
Habang sakay sa kanyang motorsiklo si Baguiran sa Molave Street, Purok 2 sa Barangay Poblacion ay bihala siyang binarang ng dalawang hindi kilalang suspek at pinagbawal gamit ang .45 caliber pistol.

Tinangay din ng dalawang suspek ang motorsiklo at mga gamit ng Sundalo, na hindi na umabot nang buhay sa ospital.

Pagnanakaw ang nakikitang motibong mga awtoridad sa pamamagaling.

Fer Taboy

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2 Sayyaf men arrested in Sulu

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Government troops captured two Abu Sayyaf bandits following an encounter in Sulu before dawn yesterday.

Two high-powered firearms were recovered from

Nadsfar Abdulla and Delson Kansiong, Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, Joint Task Force Sulu commander, said.

Sobejana said soldiers belonging to the 2nd Special Forces Battalion led by Lt. Col.

Jessie Montoya encountered the bandits led by Indang Susukan in Barangay Lagasan Higad, Parang.

Sobejana said pursuit operations for the other bandits are ongoing.

At least 85 bandits have been arrested since January. Twelve were nabbed in Basilan, 50 in Sulu, 16 in Zamboanga and seven in Tawi-Tawi.

– Roel Pareñ

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The Manila Times

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Military captures 2 Abu Sayyaf members

ZAMBOANGA CITY: Special Forces operatives captured two Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) fighters after a clash before dawn Friday in Sulu.

Capt Jo-ann Petinglay, military spokesman, said members of the 2nd Special Forces Battalion (2SFBn) engaged in a skirmish with a band of militants in Barangay Lagasan Higad in Patikul that began shortly before 2 a.m. and lasted for about an hour resulting in the capture of Nadsfar Abdulla and Delson Kansiong.

The two were followers of ASG commander Idang Susukan, but it was unclear whether the notorious leader was with the gunmen. Both Abdulla and Kansiong are now being interrogated.

"Abdulla and Kansiong are currently in the custody of the 2SFBn for

initial debriefing while they are coordinating with the police for proper legal procedures," Petinglay said.

Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of the anti-terror Joint Task Force Sulu, said that there was no report of military casualties and that operations against the Abu Sayyaf were continuing in the area.

"As we speak, troops continue to scour the area to pin down the beleaguered bandits and prevent them from exiting the area," Sobejana said.

At least 50 Abu Sayyaf had been captured so far since early this year in military operations in Sulu.

Aussie ships arrive

The intense fighting coincided with

the arrival of two Australian Navy ships – HMAS Larrakia and Maitland – in Zamboanga City, about 79 nautical miles from Sulu, for anti-terrorism and piracy campaign exercises.

Rear Admiral Rene Medina led local military commanders in welcoming the Australian sailors accompanied by Australian Ambassador Amanda Gorely and Defense Attaché, Capt. Bradley Ian White.

The Combined Philippine Navy-Royal Australian Navy Maritime Security Engagement in the region will run until December 1.

The exercise involves four Philippine Navy ships – BRP Dioscoro Papa, General Mariano Alvarez, Dayao Del Sur and Emilio Liwanag – all under Naval Task Force 61.

"Aside from enhancing the maritime cooperation with other regional navies, the training activity with Royal Australian Navy to secure the vast maritime domain of the Sulu Sea proves that the Philippine Navy particularly the Naval Forces Western Mindanao does not work alone in protecting and maintaining peace and order and stability in its area of responsibility. This upholds the strong relationship of the Philippine and Australian navies when it comes to maritime patrol and security," Medina said.

Australia has supported Manila's anti-terrorism efforts and played a key role in defeating local Islamic State and ASG bandits in the siege of Marawi City.

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Pahina. 5

12 bags ng IED nasabat sa encounter

Umaabot sa 12 bag na naglalaman ng improvised explosive device (IED) ang narekober ng militar pagkatapos ng pakikipag-engkuwentro sa nasa 30 rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) kamakalawa sa Sitio Sarayon, Barangay Araibo, Pan-

tukan, Compostela Valley.

Sa ngayon, ayon kay Capt. Jerry Lamosao, tagapagsalita ng 10th Infantry Division (ID), nasa kustodya na ng 66th Infantry Battalion (IB) ang narekober na mga IED.

Ayon kay Lamosao, nakatanggap ng report

ang militar mula sa concerned citizens tungkol sa presensiya ng mga rebelde sa nasabing barangay na dahilan kung bakit kaagad silang nagsagawa ng operasyon.

Mismong sa Section Committee (Sec Com) 18 ng Southern Mindanao Regional Committee (SMRC) at Pulang Bagani Command (PBC) 6 ang nakasagupa ng 66th IB na tumagal ng halos isang oras.

Matapos ang bakbakan, nakuha ng militar ang 12 bags na may mga IED component at wires. Gayunman, wala namang iniulat na nasaktan o nasawi sa engkuwentro. (Betchai Julian)

2 Sayyaf huli sa Sulu clash

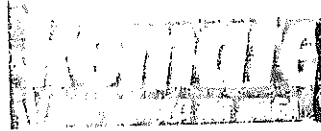
Dalawang Abu Sayyaf ang nadakip ng militar matapos ng halos isang oras na sagupaan sa lalawigan ng Sulu, ayon sa Western Mindanao Command.

Sinabi ni Capt. Jo Ann Petinglay, tagapagsalita ng militar, sumiklab ang labanan dakong alas-dos ng madaling-araw sa Barangay Lagasan Higad sa bayan ng Patikul. Pinasok ng mga sundalo mula sa 2nd Special Forces Battalion

sa ilalim ni Lt. Col. Jessie Montoya ang nasabing lugar matapos na matunagan ang isang grupo ng mga terorista.

Nakilala naman ang mga nadakip na sina Nadsfar Abdulla at Deisson Kansiong. Nabawi sa mga ito ang dalawang automatic rifles at agad isinailalim sa masusing interogasyon ang mga terorista na payang mga tauhan ni Abu Sayyaf leader Idang Susukan. (Al Jacinto)

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Pahina. 3

2 ASG nasukol sa Sulu

DINAKIP ang dalawang hinihinalang miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) kasunod ng pakikipagsagupa sa Sulu kahapon ng umaga.

Tinukoy ni Brigadier General Cirilito Sobejana, Joint Task Force Sulu commander, ang pagkakakilanlan ng mga dinakip na sina Nadstar Abdulla at Delson Kansiong.

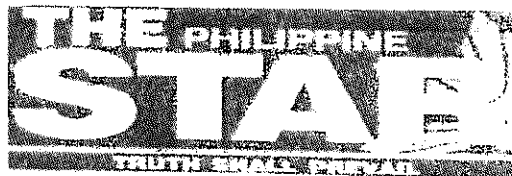
Isinasailalim na sa debriefing ang dalawang bandido na nakumpiskahan din ng isang R4 rifle at isang M14 rifle.

Ayon kay Sobejana, nangyari ang bakbakan dakong ala-1:50 ng madaling araw nang makasagupa ng mga sundalo ang grupong pinamumunuan ni Idang Susukan sa Barangay Lagasan Higad, Parang, Sulu.

Wala namang naiulat na nasaktan o nasawi sa panig ng tropa ng pamahalaan habang nagpapatuloy pa ang pagtugis sa mga tumakas na bandido. Simula lamang noong Enero ng kasalukuyang taon, umaabot na sa 85 miyembro ng ASG ang inaresto sa Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi at Zamboanga.

JEFF GALLOS

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Duterte, Putin cozy up in meet

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

DA NANG – Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his country's intent to improve its economic ties with the Philippines during his bilateral meeting yesterday with President Duterte here on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit.

Apart from improving economic ties, Duterte and Putin also agreed to fight terrorism with the Russian leader describing terrorism as a "common problem and common challenge" between the two countries as well as the rest of the world.

Putin pushed for increased defense and military relations with the Philippines – a known defense ally of the US.

"I would like to say that terrorism is one of our common problems and common challenges and following our agreement, we are ready to keep developing our relations, including tactical and military areas," Putin told Duterte during their talks at the Vinpearl Da Nang Resort and Villas.

Putin pushed for better trade and economic ties between Moscow and Manila.

"I have no doubt special attention should be paid to our economic ties," Putin said. "Unfortunately, these are at the lower level although we can see a certain increase in these relations recently."

Putin said it was a "real pleasure" to meet Duterte again.

Duterte's meeting with Putin is part of his series of bilateral meetings on the sideline of the APEC. Last Thursday, Duterte met separately with Vietnam President Tran Dai Quang and Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Peter O'Neill.

He is scheduled to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping tomorrow before returning to Manila in time for the 31st Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) sum-

mit and related meetings.

Duterte will be holding bilateral talks with US President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the ASEAN meets.

It is the third time that Duterte and Putin met since last year. The first time was during the APEC meeting in Peru, followed by the Duterte's official visit last May to Moscow and now in Vietnam.

Putin recalled his brief meeting with Duterte last May, where the latter cut off his trip to address the terrorist attacks in Marawi.

For his part, Duterte said the Philippines "will remember you for all time" while he thanked Russia for sending firearms at the height of the Marawi crisis in Mindanao.

Duterte slams US

Duterte ranted about how the US Congress had derailed the Philippines' procurement of arms, which was a result of American lawmakers' criticism of the administration's blood drug war marred by extrajudicial killings.

According to Duterte, Russia's arms assistance was timely because it was badly needed to boost the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police's capability.

"Because at that time we were short of arms for the police and we wanted to buy (these) from America but because of the almost equal power of the US Congress and the President, (the procurement) was stymied by the legislators," Duterte said.

"So, the 23,000 that I ordered (were) scrapped. Your timely assistance to my country helped us replenish the old arms and the spent bores that were fired repeatedly. (Now) we have a new stock," he said.

Duterte said he had ordered that Russian firearms be used for the special units of the AFP.

"In a way, you helped us turn the tide and to shorten the war there because of your

assistance," he added, telling the accuracy of the sniper guns that helped quell the siege in Marawi.

"Just like in Syria, there's a new kind of war and the cover is cement, concrete and iron so we had a hard time just like in other places in the Middle East because we had to fight it out building to building," Duterte said.

Duterte also talked about his dream to have a "strong" military when he steps down from office in 2022.

"(My dream is that even) before I finish my presidency, I want to build a strong Armed Forces and a strong police (force). It is very important for you to know that we are eyeing, we are buying arms from Russia," he said.

In a briefing here last Thursday night, Duterte said he would extend his gratitude to Putin for helping the military and the police in boosting their defense capability, especially during the critical time when the AFP was leading the fight against IS-inspired terrorists in Marawi.

"The new guns are a welcome sight so that we can replace (those which) are 'over-fired,' if I may use the term," Duterte said.

Last month, Duterte witnessed the turnover of military equipment from Russia, which includes 20 units of multi-purpose vehicles, 5,000 units of AK-74M Kalashnikov assault rifles, one million units of ammunition and 5,000 steel

helmets.

Duterte toured Russian warship Admiral Pantaleev where the military equipment was turned over.

"(They) should know that we nurture gratitude," he said.

Apart from Russia, Duterte revealed that the US also allowed the Philippines to use modern warfare equipment.

Russian companies upbeat on Phil

Russian companies are upbeat on investing in the Philippines, particularly in the areas of nuclear energy, transportation and infrastructure, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said last night.

Interviewed after the bilateral meeting between Duterte and Putin on the sidelines of the APEC forum here, Roque said both leaders vowed to further improve economic, trade and diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Roque said Putin has regarded relations between the Philippines and Russia as "positive and constructive."

Putin has endorsed Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev to attend the ASEAN meeting in Manila next week, where the two countries "will sign agreements relating to education, transport and energy."

Putin also pushed further improvement in the defense and foreign departments as he pressed the signing of more agreements on the defense portfolio.

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Duterte tells Putin: Russia helped turn tide in Marawi

President Duterte on Friday thanked President Vladimir Putin for Russia's help in turning the tide in the fight against IS-inspired terrorists in Marawi City.

By Philip C. Tubeza
@pctubezaINQ

DA NANG, VIETNAM—President Duterte on Friday thanked Russian President Vladimir Putin for helping “turn the tide” in the fight against Islamic State (IS)-inspired terrorists in Marawi City.

The President said the Philippines was going to buy more arms from Russia and also wanted to increase trade between the two countries, following up on Russia's

promise to buy \$2.5 billion worth of Philippine products.

“I would like to convey to you the gratitude of the Filipino people for your timely assistance, especially the trucks and the arms that you sent because we have to replenish—the supplies were getting low,” Mr. Duterte told Putin at the start of their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit in Da Nang.

“In a way, you helped us turn the tide

and to shorten the war there because of your assistance,” Mr. Duterte said. “So again, I thank you very much, the Russian people, and you, Mr. President. We will remember you for all time.”

Russia donated 20 multipurpose vehicles, 5,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles, one million rounds of ammunition and 5,000 steel helmets last month during a visit to the Philippines by Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, a first-ever visit by a Russian defense minister to

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the Philippines.

However, the weapons shipment, believed to be the first ever from Russia to the US security ally, arrived on Oct. 25, a week after Mr. Duterte declared victory over the pro-IS fighters in Marawi.

"According to my soldiers, the arms that you sent are very accurate and they were able to take care of the snipers that abounded," Mr. Duterte said.

"Just like in Syria, there's a new kind of war and the cover is cement, concrete and iron so we had a hard time just like in the other places in the Middle East because we had to fight it out building for building," he told Putin.

He said he initially intended to buy weapons from the US but "the United States has equal authority of Congress and President, so it was not so simple."

Mr. Duterte last year threatened to sever defense ties with Washington following criticism from the administration of former US President Barack Obama over his crackdown on drugs, which has seen

police kill thousands of people.

"That is my dream that before I finish my presidency, I want to build a strong armed forces and a strong police and the reason is very important for you to know that we are eyeing, we are buying arms from Russia this time," he said.

"So ... the new arms that I got from you, sir, were given to the special units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines," he added.

In a reserved response, Putin said weapons were important "but what is even more important is your desire to (win) and the readiness of your Armed Forces."

Putin added that fighting terrorism was a common concern for Russia and the Philippines.

"You told me while you were leaving Russia, you told me that you had to go back and install law and order to attack terrorists. That's why I'd like to say that you managed to do just that," Putin said.

"I would like to say that terrorism is one of our common problems and common challenge and following our agreement, we are ready to keep developing our relations, including in the military area and the tacti-

cal and military area," he added.

The Russian leader also said "special attention should be paid to our economic ties."

"Unfortunately, our economic ties are at the lower level although we can see a certain increase in these relations recently," he added.

"It's a real pleasure, Mr. President to meet you again," Putin said.

In an interview with reporters on Thursday night, Mr. Duterte said he had planned a very brief trip to Moscow just to thank the Russians for their timely assistance.

"Actually, I was planning to go to Russia for just a few hours and to thank them for their help, the timely help. Just a few hours to say, 'President Putin, thank you,'" he said.

He also said he would like to have "a small window" to export Philippine products.

Mr. Duterte said Manila could buy Russian arms through "a soft loan with enough years to earn the money to pay them."

Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez earlier said Russia had promised to buy \$2.5 billion worth of agricultural products from the Philippines. —WITH A REPORT FROM AFP INQ

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Russia ready to boost military ties with PH

ENRICO S. CALIBING

DA NANG, Vietnam - Russia is ready to intensify military cooperation with the Philippines, President Vladimir Putin told President Duterte amid the lingering common threat of terrorism.

Putin met with the Philippine leader on the sidelines of a regional summit here, promising not only to enhance military ties but also revitalize economic relations with the Philippines.

The two leaders held bilateral talks on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, almost six months since their last meeting in Moscow. Duterte's visit was cut short then due to the terror siege in Marawi City last May.

"I would like to say that terrorism is one of our common problem and common challenge and following our agreement, we are ready to keep developing our relations, including in the military area and the tactical and military area," Putin said in his opening remarks.

Putin said it was "great pleaser" to meet Duterte again as he recalled that

the Philippine leader was forced to cut short his visit to Russia due to terror attack in his country. He also commended the Philippine leader for addressing the problem in Marawi City.

"Now I do remember your final words: You told me while you were leaving Russia, you told me that you had to go back and install law and order to attack terrorists. That's why I'd like to say that you managed to do just that," he said.

In the same meeting, Putin acknowledged that "special attention" should be paid to the economic relations between Russia and the Philippines. "Unfortunately, our economic ties are at the lower level although we can see a certain increase in these relations recently," he said.

President Duterte, for his part, thanked Russia for its assistance in addressing the terror siege staged by an Islamic State-inspired group in Marawi City.

Duterte informed Putin though that Marawi remains a "very dangerous city" amid continued "pockets of resistance" in the government's mopping up operation.

"I would like to convey to you the

gratitude of the Filipino people for your timely assistance, especially the trucks and the arms that you sent because we have to replenish - the supplies were getting low," he said.

Duterte noted that weapons from Russia were "very accurate" and protected soldiers from sniper fire during the Marawi battle.

"In a way, you helped us turn the tide and to shorten the war there because of your assistance. So again, I thank you very much, the Russian people, and you, Mr. President. We will remember you for all time," he said.

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President nixes revolutionary gov't due to lack of military support

GENARVE D. MAGSINO

DA NANG, Vietnam – President Duterte is no longer inclined to declare a revolutionary government to quell destabilization attempts due to lack of

military support.

The President said he asked the military about the matter and got the same reply given to Vice President Leni Robredo that they were not in favor of a revolutionary **▶ 6**

government.

"Tama siya Tinanong ko ang military. Sabi nila, 'Hindi kami susuporta ng revolutionary government [She's right. I asked the military and they said, 'We will not support a revolutionary government']," Duterte said in a press conference after meeting the Filipino community last Thursday night.

"Sabi ko, 'Why?' Sabi nila, 'Dahil sabi ni Vice President Robredo' 'O bakit?' Sabi niya, 'Mas gusto namin siya. Babae at saka hindi nag-mumura [I asked why and they said, 'Because Vice President Robredo said so. Why? They said, 'We like her better. She's a woman and she does not curse'],'" he added.

Upon hearing the military's refusal to support a revolutionary government, Duterte said: "O sige. 'Di hindi tayo mag-revolutionary government. Tama, tama siya [Okay, we won't declare a revolutionary government.

She's right]."

Robredo had earlier obtained the assurance from defense and military officials that they would not support moves to place the country under a revolutionary government. The Vice President thanked the military, saying the people look to them to defend the country's democracy.

The President had earlier threatened to declare a revolutionary government, as opposed to martial law that requires congressional consent, if the destabilization attempts against his administration send the country into chaos.

Under a revolutionary government, Duterte said he would order the arrest of those out to oust him and declare a full-scale war against the communist rebels.

Some groups however expressed concern that Duterte was trying to establish a dictatorship through his planned revolutionary government.

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'SHE'S CORRECT'

DU30: NO REVOLUTIONARY GOV'T BECAUSE LENI SAID SO

By Philip C. Tubeza
@pctubezaINQ

DA NANG, VIETNAM—"She's correct."

President Duterte on Thursday night acknowledged that Vice President Leni Robredo was "correct" in saying that the military would not support a revolutionary government in the Philippines.

"She's correct. I asked the military. They said, 'We won't support a revolutionary government,'" the President said.

"Why?, (I asked), and they said, 'Because Vice President Robredo said it ... We like her more. She's a woman and does not cuss.' I said, 'OK, then we will not have a revolutionary government,'" Mr. Duterte said.

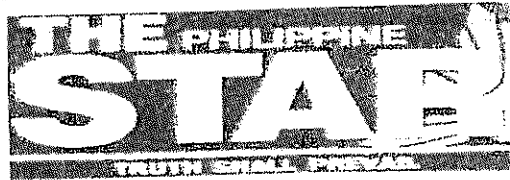
In October, the President threatened to form a "revolutionary government" if opposi-

tion groups, which he accused of trying to destabilize the government, turn violent and sow chaos. He claimed that communist groups as well as allies of the opposition Liberal Party were out to oust him.

Robredo on Wednesday said Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff Lt. Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero had assured her "in no uncertain terms" that the military "would not support a revolutionary government and (other) threats to the Constitution."

She added: "We (were) asking because there are government officials involved in talks about a revolutionary government. But this afternoon, we were assured—and the assurance was strong—that (the military) would not support such a plan." INQ

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Rody not inclined to declare revolutionary gov't

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

DA NANG – President Duterte on Thursday doused reports that he is inclined to declare a revolutionary government to quell destabilization moves against his administration.

Duterte told a media briefing here that Vice President Leni Robredo was correct when she said the military would not support a revolutionary government.

The President said the

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) would not breach the constitutional succession in the presidency.

"She is correct. I asked the military and they said they would not support a revolutionary government," Duterte said during a meeting with the Filipino community in Pulchra Resort.

He said he perceived the military's reluctance to support such move during consultations with AFP officials.

"I asked them why. They

replied, 'Dahil sabi ni Vice President Robredo.' O bakit? Sabi nila. 'Mas gusto namin siya. Babae at saka hindi magmumura,'" the President said.

Duterte said he would not establish a revolutionary government which is being pushed by some of his supporters.

Under a revolutionary government, the President said he would have a direct hand in ridding the bureaucracy of processes that tend to slow down the delivery of services to the public.

Duterte has complained about the tedious bidding processes and red tape in the bureaucracy.

AFP chief Lt. Gen. Roy Leonardo Guerrero assured Robredo during a security briefing that the military would not support moves to establish a revolutionary government.

The Vice President requested the AFP for a briefing about the situation in Marawi to determine how her office would be able to help in the rehabilitation efforts.

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PRRD confirms Chinese military buildup in SCS

DA NANG, Vietnam – China has stepped up its military buildup in the South China Sea while the world was busy worrying about the nuclear tension in the Korean peninsula, President Duterte bared Thursday.

The latest photographs the Presi-

dent saw showed military facilities, including missile batteries, installed by China on “almost all” disputed territories.

“While we were looking intensely on what was evolving in the Korean Peninsula, the next photographs ▶6

obtained by the intelligence showed almost all islands were militarized already,” Duterte said during a media interview after meeting the Filipino community Thursday night.

“There were batteries which mean the arms that are posted to fly. I’ve said this before, which is really true,” he added.

Concerned with China’s growing militarization of the disputed territory, the President said he would ask Chinese President Xi Jinping to agree towards the crafting of a code of conduct to ease the tension in the vital regional waterway.

“Because we are friends, I’m ready to listen to China,” he said. “I will tell him straight. You know Mr. President the whole of the ASEAN is worried about how we should behave in the seas that are now militarized,” he added.

“The best way is to have a written code of conduct so you read it and you would know that you are crossing boundaries because as of now, it is now a contested claim,” he said.

Duterte likewise ruled out going to war with China, saying the country cannot afford to use force or violence to force China to stop its reclamation works. He maintained that he prefers to settle the dispute through peaceful and lawful means.

Worried ASEAN

Duterte said he would also inform Xi about Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ (ASEAN) “wary and worry” about the increased military buildup during their meeting today on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit here.

“It is not wrong for me to tell China. Look, you have – You know, already placed the heavy artillery there. So it puts us in a wary, worried and wary because we are also using the passage,” he said.

“Those arms and they are not there for any other purpose. They are not decorations. They’re there because China would need them. For what purpose, I really do not know,” he added.

Duterte explained ASEAN wants a code of conduct so each nation will

know how to behave. “What are the things that we should avoid so that we can avoid also the missiles that would follow us. So what are the things that would irritate you? The code of conduct is very important,” he said.

“I’m not criticizing China. I’m just telling them that it is high time for us to have that code of conduct of the sea,” he added.

Duterte and Xi are among the 21 world leaders attending the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Da Nang, Vietnam this week.

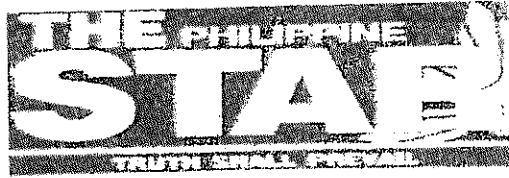
The ASEAN, currently chaired by the Philippines, has initiated negotiations for the framework of the code of conduct of concerned parties in the South China Sea.

The President, meantime, assured that the country is determined to keep its strong friendship with China and not wage war over the territorial conflict.

“But if it is for war against us, then forget it. I’m not interested to go to war with China. I’m interested in the friendship,” he said.

“I do not want to lose the friendship of China. China is a good friend. China was there when we needed most their help,” he added. (Genalyn D. Kabling)

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Australian PM to visit AFP headquarters

By JAIME LAUDE

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, one of the world leaders attending the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit next week, will be making a side trip to the headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at Camp Aguinaldo, officials said yesterday.

Defense Secretary Dellin Lorenzana and top military officials will be joining the Australian leader in his visit to the AFP headquarters on Monday.

Turnbull will visit the Australian Defense Force contingent training their Filipino counterparts in counterterrorism and urban warfare techniques.

Australian Ambassador Amanda Gorely along with key embassy staff was at Camp Aguinaldo yesterday to coordinate the visit of Turnbull on Monday.

Around 20 Australian journalists are expected to cover Turnbull's visit, as he will also be facing the local media

following the holding of the joint urban warfare exercises at the AFP parade ground.

Australia has sent 90 ADF personnel in the country to train Filipino soldiers in urban warfare and counterterrorism skills.

Australia has since September been helping the AFP battle the Islamic State-linked Maute group in Marawi City by deploying two AP-3C Orion aircraft for surveillance while helping in information-gathering and analysis.

Lorenzana said the urban warfare training provided by Australia to local troops would form part of an overall program of the AFP in building up its own capacity and capability in fighting enemies of the state in an urban setting.

The Philippines and Australia signed a Defense Cooperation Program (DCP) that provides the mechanisms for military support, intelligence sharing and people-to-people exchanges.

Defense assistance

In Zamboanga City, Australian Ambassador Gorely

announced increased defense assistance to the Philippines to help address persistent terror threats and other security challenges in the region.

Gorely made the announcement as she welcomed the arrival here of two Australian warships to participate in joint maritime exercise with the Philippine military.

"The additional defense cooperation has been developed in conjunction with the government and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to address the challenges posed by terrorism in the region," Gorely said.

Gorely said the enhanced cooperation would include Australian Army training for the Philippines Army (PA) and Philippines Marines in local military bases.

Canberra provided assistance to the Philippine military during the five-month siege of Marawi City by Abu Sayyaf and Maute militants linked to the Middle East-based Islamic State.

"I'm proud that with our AP3C Orion aircraft, Australia was able to support

the Armed Forces of the Philippines in its victory over the terrorist groups that besieged Marawi City," Gorely said.

She also revealed enhanced cooperation in intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance in Mindanao.

Australia's *HMAS Iaraka* and *HMAS Maitland* arrived yesterday morning from Papua New Guinea to take part in joint exercise with the Philippine military.

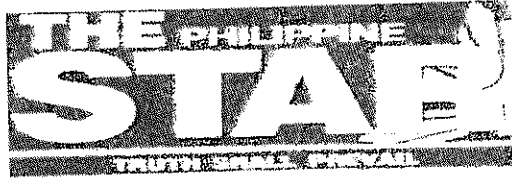
The *Iaraka* and *Maitland* skippered by Commander Mitchell Edwards and Lieutenant Jonathon Little respectively, were Armadale Class patrol boats capable of performing various missions and tasks.

Naval Forces Western Mindanao (NFWM) commander Rear Admiral Rene Medina Australian Defense Attache Capt. Bradley Ian White Mayor Maria Isabelle Chua-co-Salazar, and local council members welcomed the two warships upon their arrival. The two warships have 21 crewmembers each.

– With Roel Pareño

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Roads in Marawi battle zone cleared

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

All roads and bridges in the main battle area in Marawi are passable after being cleared of explosives and debris, the military said yesterday.

“Construction engineers from the Army, Air Force and Navy have been working day in and day out to ensure that 100 percent of primary roads and bridges in the main battle area...are passable and cleared of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices (IEDs),” Col. Edgard Arevalo, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs office chief, said.

More than 500 military engineers were deployed in Marawi as part of the

Joint Engineer Task Group led by Brig. Gen. Arnold Fernandez.

The AFP said the engineering group is supporting the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts of Task Force Bangon Marawi.

Arevalo said the task force also completed the preparation of an area in Barangay Sagon-songan where a temporary resettlement area will be built.

“Aside from engineering manpower, we have utilized

our construction vehicles and equipment to clear...debris as well as demolish destroyed buildings...We have yet to identify possible dumps for the unexploded ordnance and IEDs,” Arevalo said.

He said military engineers are also helping restore basic services such as water and electricity in government centers and places of worships.

Among the establishments that need to be rehabilitated are the St. Mary’s Church, Grand Mosque and Bato Mosque.

“The AFP lauds our combat engineers who since the first weeks of the Marawi crisis have been supporting our operating units. As we transi-

tion to the rehabilitation phase, their services will significantly be needed...to successfully get Marawi back on its feet,” AFP chief Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero said.

Football for peace

Meanwhile, the Philippine Marine Corps will launch today the 5th PMC Football for Peace, a fund-raising activity for children affected by the crisis in Marawi and other conflict areas in Mindanao such as Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi.

The PMC said the tournament is also part of the Marines’ advocacy of teaching children good values and to hope for a better future.

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UNEXPLODED BOMBS, IEDS

AFP SAYS KEY ROADS IN MARAWI CLEARED

By Jeannette I. Andrade
@jiandradeINQ

The Armed Forces said it had cleared all roads in the main battle area of Marawi City.

AFP public affairs chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said on Friday that primary roads in the city's main battle area had been cleared of debris and unexploded ordnance or improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that had made the thoroughfares usable.

The clearing operations were part of recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in Marawi City.

Arevalo said engineers from the Army, Air Force and Navy had been "working day in and day out" to clear the roads and bridges of unexploded bombs and IEDs.

He said more than 500 military engineers were deployed to Marawi City as part of the joint engineer task group (JETG), led by Brig. Gen. Arnold Fernandez. The group supports reconstruction and rehabilitation operations of Task Force Bangon Marawi.

Arevalo said the AFP also deployed military construction

vehicles and equipment to clear rubble and debris that blocked roads in the city that was nearly flattened by war between homegrown terror groups that tried to establish an Islamic State province and government soldiers.

Military engineers, Arevalo said, were also helping in the demolition of buildings that had suffered extensive damage during the war.

He said, however, that the military has yet to "identify possible dump locations for the unexploded ordnance and IEDs."

The AFP public affairs chief said the JETG was also tasked with helping restore utilities, like water and electricity supply, in government centers and places of worship.

AFP chief of staff Lt. Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero lauded the combat engineers for their work and said that they were needed to "successfully get Marawi back on its feet."

"Rest assured that our troops will remain steadfast in its support operations for the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation of Marawi City," Guerrero said. INQ

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AFP: All roads, bridges in Marawi now 'passable'

By Mario J. Mallari

Only a few weeks after Marawi City was declared liberated from Islamic State-inspired terrorists, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) yesterday announced that 100 percent of the roads in the main battle area have already been cleared of explosives and other war debris.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero cited the efforts of the military's Joint Engineer Task Group (JETG), led by Brig. Gen. Arnold Fernandez, for acting swiftly in clearing access roads in the heart of Marawi City.

Guerrero, however, stressed that the military engineers' services will be needed more during the rehabilitation phase.

"The AFP lauds our Combat Engineers who, in the first weeks of the Marawi Crisis have been present in the main battle area to support our operating units," said

Guerrero.

"As we transition to the rehabilitation phase, their services will significantly be needed in order to successfully get Marawi back on its feet," he added.

The AFP chief assured that government troops will remain in Marawi City to support the rebuilding efforts.

"Rest assured that our troops will remain steadfast in its support operations toward the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation of Marawi City," Guerrero said.

More than 500 military engineers are currently deployed in Marawi City as part of the JETG. The task group is supporting the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation operations being led by Task Force Bangon Marawi.

As of this report, the JETG has already completed the ground preparation of portions of temporary resettlement area in Sagon-songan while clearing

operations continue in the MBA.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP-Public Affairs Office chief, said that the military engineers have already cleared 100 percent of roads in the main battle area of Marawi - paving the way for the next phase of the government efforts - the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war-torn Islamic City.

"Our construction engineers from the Army, Air Force and Navy have been working day in and day out to ensure that 100 percent of the primary roads and bridges in the main battle area of Marawi are passable and cleared of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices (IEDs)," Arevalo said.

"Aside from engineer manpower, we have utilized our construction vehicles and equipment to clear-off rubbles and debris as well as in the demolition of buildings in the city's MBA. We are yet to identify possible dump sites locations for the unexploded

ordnance and IEDs," Arevalo added.

Among the vehicles being used in the ground development operations are dozers, pay loaders, backhoe loaders, skid steers, road graders and excavator.

The JETG is also tasked to support the restoration of essential services such as water and electricity to selected government centers and places of worships.

Among the establishments that need repair and rehabilitation are St. Mary's Church, Grand Mosque and Bato Mosque.

The road clearing was completed despite continuing manhunt operations against Maute-ISIS stragglers in the main battle area.

According to captured Indonesian terrorist Muhammad Ilham Syaputra, there are still 39 militants - composed of locals and foreigners, are still holed up in Marawi City.

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Stragglers continue to hold out in Marawi

**SHARON GONZA DEL ROSARIO
FRANCIS WATKINS**

Task Force Bangon Marawi revealed Friday that the post-conflict needs assessment (PCNA) in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur was suspended due to the presence of terrorists in the war-torn city.

This, after it was revealed during the Bangon Marawi press briefing Friday that the Task Force has finished the PCNA in 49 barangays.

Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) Chairman Eduardo del Rosario also noted that they were yet to conduct PCNA in 47 barangays.

"We are now suspended in the

conduct of this activity because of the presence of some stragglers in the main battle area or ground zero," he said.

"But we have completed 49 barangays and there are still 47 barangays remaining," he added.

Del Rosario said the Task Force was hoping to resume the PCNA by the end of the month as there were still around 50 terrorists in the city.

"Yung last estimate natin (Our last estimate) is about 50 [terrorists]. But of the 50, marami na ring mga na-neutralize ng (many of them have been neutralized already by our) government because they're fighting it out," he said.

"So it is suspended and we hope that by the end of the month or early December, we can start with the PCNA

so that we will have a complete data before we can come up with a complete package of the Master Rehabilitation Plan," he added.

"So hopefully, by third week or last week of November, it will be done already so that we can start with the PCNA at the soonest possible time," he continued.

This developed as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that it has already cleared all roads in the main battle area (MBA) of Marawi City as recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts continued in the war-torn city.

AFP Public Affairs Chief Marine Colonel Edgard Arevalo, said construction engineers from the Army, Air Force, and Navy have been working day-in and

day-out to ensure that 100 percent of the primary roads and bridges in the main battle area (MBA) of Marawi would be passable and cleared of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Arevalo said more than 500 military engineers are currently deployed in Marawi City as part of the Joint Engineer Task Group (JETG) led by Brigadier General Arnold Fernandez. The task group is supporting the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation operations being led by Task Force Bangon Marawi.

In its report, the JETG has already completed the ground preparation of portions of temporary resettlement area in Sagon-songan while clearing operations continue in the MBA.

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Some of the mosques and structures that survived the war in Marawi City were barely standing. –RICHEL V. UMEL

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MANILA—Islamic State (IS) followers who battled troops in Marawi City for 154 days sought a way out two months into the fierce conflict, but the government ignored their proposal, a separatist negotiator and a minister said.

The takeover of Marawi was the biggest security crisis in decades in the country, fueling concern that IS and Indonesian and Malaysian extremists might have greater sway among its minority Muslims than previously thought.

Abdullah Maute, one of those leading the Dawla Islamiya rebel alliance in the city, had engaged Muslim leaders to urge President Duterte to let the militants escape in return for the release of scores of captives, one cleric said.

Agakhan Sharief, a Marawi Muslim cleric well known to the militant Maute clan, said that on July 27, Abdullah Maute

asked for help in arranging for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a separatist group at peace with the government, to receive hostages and escort militants out of the city.

"He agreed to negotiate to leave Marawi on the condition the MILF is involved," Sharief told Reuters.

"I told him when he goes out of Marawi, there's no guarantee the military will not kill him. He said, 'No problem.'"

"He was very serious at the time."

'Peace corridor'

The violence in Marawi killed more than 1,100 people, mostly rebels, and the city center has been destroyed by artillery and government airstrikes.

The military believes Abdullah was killed in an air strike in early August, but the body was not found. His brother and

coleader, Omarkhayam, was killed on Oct. 16, along with Isnilon Hapilon, IS' "emir" in Southeast Asia.

The government allowed the MILF to operate a "peace corridor" in Marawi that helped rescue hundreds of civilians.

The MILF's top peace negotiator, Mohagher Iqbal, confirmed Maute made the proposal, but the government had ignored it.

"There was no formal negotiation and our role was only to facilitate. It's up to two sides to agree," he told Reuters.

"We had some reservations about the deal. Although some of the Maute members were former MILF, we doubted their intentions and sincerity. We do not know if they would honor the deal."

Scores of hostages escaped or were rescued in the last few months of the fighting, but it

was unclear how many might have been killed.

Clearing operations

Authorities have yet to retrieve all bodies from a battle zone that the military yesterday said had been cleared of unexploded munitions and home-made bombs. The army said a few militant holdouts were still hiding in what is now ground zero.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana told Reuters that Duterte was aware of Maute's request to flee Marawi in exchange for hostages, but the offer was too little, too late.

"Too many soldiers had been killed," he said. "If they had proposed that in the first week, when there had not been so many casualties, then it would have been OK."

"It was too late, he (Duterte) was no longer inclined to entertain any deals with them."

—REUTERS

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'Hopelessness drives violent extremism'

D. ZEL C. CAPISTRANO

DAVAO CITY - What attracts people to embrace violent extremism and radicalism?

Dr. Saffrullah M. Dipatuan, chairman of Bangsamoro Development Agency, cited many reasons including injustice, poverty, graft and corruption, and the poor delivery of basic services.

But Dipatuan stressed that radicalism and violent extremism in the Philippines were being "driven by hopelessness," adding that the government failure to address these long-standing societal problems

Dipatuan, who spoke at the Planning Workshop on Community-based Prevention of Violent Extremism organized by the BDA here last Tuesday, said the emergence of terrorism

and violent extremism was being promoted by radical groups in the name of Islam.

Dipatuan explained Marawi City was chosen by the Maute group as a place where it could launch the siege because a rural setting would have been ineffective.

"Marawi is the only urban city in Lanao Del Sur that makes it a perfect site for the attack," Dipatuan said.

Even government forces admitted facing a challenge in fighting terrorists in the five-month long urban war.

"Marawi City is home to more than 200,000 people with more than 90 percent of the residents Muslims belonging to the Maranaw or Maranao tribe, the second most populous of the 13 ethnic Muslim tribes in the Philippines," Dipatuan said.

He also said extremists considered

the peace talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) as a "major hindrance" in establishing a caliphate in this part of the region.

"This is because any group creating violence and chaos after the establishment of the Bangsamoro government will face a formidable alliance of the Philippine military and police, on one hand, and the combined forces of the MILF and MNLF, on the other," he said. MNLF is the Moro National Liberation Front which is also negotiating for peace with the government.

The BDA, which was created in 2002 as the development arm of the MILF, said understanding the issue of violent extremism requires understanding the realities of religious, social, political, and economic factors.

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TRIBUTE TO THE HEROES OF MARAWI—A giant Belen called 'Marawi sa Panahon ng Kapayapaan,' handmade jointly by military and police personnel (some of whom fought in Marawi), stands proud on the grounds of the Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) in Camp Servillano Aquino, Tarlac City to launch the annual Belen-making contest 'Belenismo sa Tarlac 2017.' Posing before the Belen are Lt. Gen. Rolando Joselito Bautista of the Philippine Army and Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Salamat of the Northern Luzon Command with Tarlac Heritage Foundation pillars Dr. Isa Suntay and Dona Isabel Cojuangco Suntay, organizers of the yearly event that has catapulted the province to be the Belen-Making Capital of the Philippines. (Courtesy of Shirley Pizarro)

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FIRST PERSON ALEX MAGNO

Revolution

MUNICH — This revolution, it seems, is destined for oblivion.

The Bolshevik Revolution, a hundred years ago, is not being celebrated in Moscow where it happened. The Putin regime would rather draw its legitimacy from the country's costly victory in the "Great Patriotic War" against the Nazis.



Most of the monuments to Lenin that dotted the cities of what was then the Soviet Union have been taken down. The man who murdered his way to power and established a dictatorship tragically mimicked by others is now mentioned only with a little embarrassment.

In Berlin, the other day, I heard faintly familiar music from a distance as we emerged from a church transformed into a fashionable restaurant. Filipinos will find converting a church into a restaurant a scandal. But in this case, doing so seemed practical. What else should one do with a nice old edifice when there is no priest and no parish?

At any rate, as the noisy motorcade moved closer, we realized the "Internationale" — anthem of communist movements everywhere — was being loudly played. Mounted on three small trucks where tableaux of Russian Red Army troops circa 1954.

This was a motorcade apparently by old-line communists commemorating the anniversary of Lenin's revolution. These are people who still mourn the collapse of the Soviet Union and are nostalgic for the German Democratic Republic along with its notorious secret police.

What was interesting, I thought, was that they invoked scenes from the Great Patriotic War instead of the 1917 uprising. They were not celebrating Lenin or, gosh, Stalin. Like the obedient cadres that they are, even their commemoration of their revolution's centennial followed the "tone at the top" in Moscow.

At any rate, people took notice of this motley group of three trucks and about 30 participants only because of the loud music they played. With participants wearing Red Army costumes, this could have been mistaken a motorcade of clowns. Perhaps it is.

Recall that it was German intelligence that smuggled Lenin back to Russia. The Germans thought the rabble-rouser would stir up enough trouble to force Russia to back out of the war. Little did the Germans expect this little devil would actually maneuver his way brutally through the turbulence and actually take power.

Much less did anyone expect that Lenin and his wild bunch would emerge the icon for revolutionaries the world over. They would not only mouth the nonsense Lenin passed off as revolutionary theory. They would also mimic his murderous streak, justifying common crime by some imagined majestic goal.

The *New York Times* in its Nov. 8 issue, published a brilliant essay by Simon Sebag Montefiore titled "Imagine the Russian Revolution never happened." Montefiore authored two noteworthy books, *The Romanovs* and *Stalin: the Court of the Red Tsar*. His third book, the novel *Red Sky at Noon*, is forthcoming.

The essay, part of a series about the history of 100 years of communism, tried to imagine how the world might have evolved had Lenin failed. It is provocative exercise on what might have been.

There were several attempts to assassinate Lenin on his path to power. There was nothing inevitable in his capture of the state. The Russian Revolution was a complex process involving many forces and contestants. They simultaneously negotiated and murdered each other. Lenin emerged at the top because he was the most cynical and certainly the most murderous.

The regime he helped assemble was guised cleverly as the weapon of the working classes. But it was really nothing more than a recycled version of the existing despotic state presided over by the deposed Tsar and his cronies. That characteristic was surely exhibited during the time of Stalin and then now, with Putin in charge.

The fraud about "dictatorship of the proletariat" notwithstanding, Lenin's supposed strategy for consolidating despotism inspired others. It certainly inspired Mao Zedong and a band of murderous radicals in Cambodia called the Khmer Rouge.

If the Russian Revolution did not happen, the Chinese Revolution might probably not have happened as well. Both events produced tyrannies that, in turn, caused the deaths of millions.

If neither happened, the Cold War would not have occurred. The wars in Indochina, by-products of the confrontation between the superpowers, would not have happened. Again, millions of lives might have been spared.

The Iron Curtain would not have divided Europe for decades. The development of this continent might have been very different. Millions of Europeans might have been spared the many torments the Cold War brought.

Certainly, Adolf Hitler would not have happened. The Nazis were propelled to power by fear of the Soviet Union.

If the Cold War did not happen, there would be no such thing as North Korea. The Stalinist tyrant who now threatens all of us with his nuclear toys would not have happened.

Montefiore exercises his imagination to try and picture how the world might have been if Lenin and the Bolsheviks did not take power. Conflicts, to be sure, would have happened – although along different lines of contestation. Certainly, the history of the 20th century would be very different.

The sad fact, however, is that Lenin and the Bolsheviks did happen. The 20th century turned out to be the bloodiest episode in human history. Much of the bloodshed was due to the ideological confrontation forced by Leninism.

Much as everyone might try to play down the Lenin and the curse he wrought on all humanity, the fact remains he happened. He brought all the calamities humanity can never live down.

★

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AT GROUND LEVEL

SATUR C. OCAMPO



Caution raised: Don't depend on US military

Let me state it publicly here and now, *wala akong problema sa America* (I have no problem with America). We remain to be the best of friends with America."

That's what President Duterte said a day before flying to Vietnam Wednesday for his first face-to-face diplomatic engagement with US President Donald Trump at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit. The two heads of state will meet again in Manila next week at the 31st summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean).

He thus merely reaffirmed what he had earlier stated: all the previous vitriolic and vituperative accusations he had hurled at the United States as the country's former colonizer-oppressor since the start of the 20th century were all "water under the bridge."

Brushed aside too were his threats to abrogate the unequal bilateral military treaties and agreements, such as the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and its sequel, the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (Edca), both supposedly within the scope of the 1951 US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty. In fact, he has already allowed, under the Edca, the American military to establish facilities inside six Philippine military bases wherein they will be exercising full control.

Duterte made the statement in an off-the-cuff speech at the 67th anniversary of the Philippine Marine Corps in Fort Bonifacio. He began his talk by expressing gratitude to the United States, as well as to China and Russia, for helping the Philippine security forces win the war against the Maute and Abu Sayyaf groups in what has been billed as the "Marawi siege."

The US, he pointed out, "render[ed] us the equipment" (air assets) while China and Russia provided more modern fire-arms and ammunitions which he said were needed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to overcome their adversaries in a type of warfare entirely new to them.

The five-month war cost over a thousand lives and displaced 400,000 people. Daily aerial bombings (guided by US and Australian spy planes and drones) and ground artillery barrages flattened much of the Islamic city center and residential areas. Till today AFP troops remain in Marawi, doing mopping-up operations.

Meantime, the martial law proclamation and suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, which Duterte issued at the start of the Marawi siege and extended until the end of December in the whole of Mindanao, may possibly be extended further with the military warning that remnants of the Maute-Abu Sayyaf may foment trouble elsewhere in the island.

What may result from the Duterte-Trump talks in Da Nang (Vietnam) and in Manila we'll know shortly. It's not farfetched for Trump to press for larger US military presence in the country, under whatever program he may devise to replace Obama's unimplemented "pivot to Asia" platform.

In this regard, we note a statement reportedly made to Trump by Admiral Harry B. Harris Jr., head of the US Pacific Command, during a briefing at the command's headquarters on Nov. 6, before the US president embarked on his first

official Asian trip. A US official quoted Harris, while showing on a wall map the deployment of US military forces, as having told Trump that the American military presence in South Korea, Japan, and the Philippines was not a matter of charity.

"We are not there for them; we are there for us," Harris reportedly said. The news report didn't say what prompted him to say that, and what Trump said in response. But given the latter's predilection, most likely he fully agreed with his naval commander.

As though to backstop Harris' statement, *The New York Times* published on Nov 8 a front-page opinion piece, titled "South Korea and that iffy US alliance," written by Se-Woong Koo, editor-in-chief of *Korea Exposé*. It exposes the injurious consequences of the military alliance between the two countries, under a mutual defense treaty signed in 1953, which has ensured an American military presence there to this day.

"Washington knows full well that stationing its soldiers in South Korean soil isn't an act of charity," says Koo. "America offers protection, but only in return for influence over its lesser allies' affairs."

"Contrary to how South Korean conservatives and some Americans frame it," he adds, "the protection, while something to be thankful for, has not been free." He narrates the following conditions and incidents prejudicial to South Koreans that parallel our own experiences in the Philippines.

– The South Korean military dictatorship "coerced women into sex work for American soldiers" was the conclusion of an authoritative study by Katherine Moon, titled "Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in US-Korea Relations." The women were forced to undergo testing for sexually transmitted diseases and treatment – "all for the health and happiness" of the "protectors."

– Under a Status of Forces Agreement, signed in 1966 and renewed twice, the US has been granted "nearly exclusive jurisdiction over its personnel, such that even high-profile offenses committed by American soldiers against South Korean citizens go unpunished."

– More recently, the US has refused to take responsibility for its environmental degradation of its military base in central Seoul. (About this, be reminded of Clark Air Base in Pampanga.)

– South Korean soldiers were deployed to support the American wars in Vietnam and Iraq, in Vietnam 5,000 of them died and many others were exposed to Agent Orange and other US-made, toxic chemical weapons.

"But the biggest cost of the alliance has been the erosion of South Korea's sovereign spirit," Se-Woong Koo emphasizes.

"There is enormous support among South Koreans for the [US] military presence, and it isn't simply a reflection of national goodwill toward America. It speaks volumes about just how much South Korea has become psychologically dependent on a foreign army as a potential barrier against North Korea, despite an annual defense budget amounting to about 2.7 percent of its GDP and a nearly 650,000 strong military."

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AFP tries to extend UNTV Cup win streak

Former champion Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) tries to extend their winning streak to four games when it collides with Bureau of Fire Protection while Department of Health takes on GSIS in a vital match in the 6th UNTV Cup at the Pasig City Sports Center.

Having won their first three games with nary a trouble, the AFP Cavaliers are installed heavy favorites in their 5 p.m. Group A showdown with the BFP Firefighters in the tournament presented by UNTV.

Out to lead the Cavaliers are former Letran star Boyet Bautista, Alvin Zuniga, Wilfredo Casulla and Jeffrey Quimbao while ex-PBA players Rob Wainwright and Gilbert Malabanan will spearhead the Firefighters who are coming off an impressive 89-68 win over the DOH Health Achievers.

Wainwright is averaging 18 points per contest while the wily Bautista is likewise doing well with 14.3 points per game in the event offering P4 million to the chosen charity of the champion team.

But all eyes will be on the 2 p.m. encounter between DOH and GSIS who are both in dire need of a victory to keep their flickering second round hopes alive.

The two, along with the Firefighters have similar 1-2 records although the GSIS are likewise fresh off a 105-83 drubbing of the COA Enablers.

In the lone Group B game, Department of Justice tries to keep its own bid alive when it shoots for its second win in four game against the PDEA Drugbusters at 3:30 p.m.

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ONLINE NEWS

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www.dwdd.com.ph

ENCOUNTER | 18IB engages Lawless Elements in Basilan

By: Alvin Santiago

BASILAN (DWDD) – Personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines were engaged by lawless elements reinforcing Abu Sayyaf fighters, following a military strike launched against the beleaguered bandits yesterday, November 9, in Basilan.

Elements of the 18th Infantry Battalion conducted a strike operation targeting the Abu Sayyaf under Siar Alhamsirol and Parong Tedi in Barangay Upper Cabengbeng, Sumisip at 12:41 in the afternoon yesterday (November

The beleaguered bandits were, however, reinforced by lawless elements that engaged the troops near the Basilan Circumferential Road in Sumisip.

"As they edged towards the circumferential road, operating troops were met with heavy fire by lawless elements believed to be relatives and sympathizers of the Abu Sayyaf bandits," said Colonel Juvymax Uy, Commander of the Joint Task Force Basilan.

Said offensives lasted for about four hours with an undetermined number of casualties on the Abu Sayyaf and on said lawless elements.

Close air support was provided by the Air Force troops at 2:11pm yesterday.

Meanwhile, troops of the 64th and 68th Infantry Battalions augmented the beleaguered troops in the engagement area.

Six soldiers were killed, while four were wounded in action as a result.

Their cadavers were subsequently transported by the Joint Task Force Basilan to Zamboanga City. Two remains were claimed by the next of kin.

The wounded were promptly evacuated by the troops to the headquarters of the 64th Infantry Battalion. They were subsequently brought to Camp Navarro General Hospital and a private hospital in this city for further medical attention.

"We are sad to report the death of six of your soldiers during the encounter yesterday in Basilan," said Lieutenant General Carlito G. Galvez, Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command.

"As we mourn, combat operations against the bandits will be intensified with our intelligence operations and sustained campaign to defeat the remaining terrorists," the WestMinCom Chief added. *"Rest assured that this will not stop us from crushing the enemies of the state."* **WESTMINCOM PIO / MCAG**

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www.pna.gov.ph

All roads to Marawi main battle area cleared: AFP

By Priam Nepomuceno

MANILA -- The military has cleared all roads leading to Marawi City's main battle area (MBA) where fighting raged for five months against Maute group.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation efforts are ongoing in the war-torn city.

"Our construction engineers from the Army, Air Force, and Navy have been working day in and day out to ensure that 100 percent of the primary roads and bridges in the MBA of Marawi are passable and cleared of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices (IEDs)," he said.

More than 500 military engineers are currently deployed in Marawi City as part of the Joint Engineer Task Group (JETG) led by Brig. Gen. Arnold Fernandez.

The task group is supporting the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation operations being led by Task Force Bangon Marawi.

As of this report, the JETG has completed the ground preparation of portions of temporary resettlement area in Sagon-songan while clearing operations continue in the MBA.

"Aside from engineer manpower, we have utilized our construction vehicles and equipment to clear-off rubbles and debris as well as in the demolition of buildings in the city's MBA. We are yet to identify possible dump sites locations for the unexploded ordnance and IEDs," Arevalo said.

Equipment used in the ground development operations are dozers, pay loaders, backhoe loaders, skid steers, road graders, and excavator.

The JETG is also tasked to support the restoration of essential services such as water and electricity to selected government centers, and places of worships.

Among the establishments that need repair and rehabilitation are St. Mary's Church, Grand Mosque, and Bato Mosque.

"The AFP lauds our combat engineers who, in the first weeks of the Marawi Crisis have been present in the main battle area to support our operating units. As we transition to the rehabilitation phase, their services will significantly be needed in order to successfully get Marawi back on its feet," AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero said.

"Rest assured that our troops will remain steadfast in its support operations towards the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation of Marawi City," he added. (PNA)

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Putin kinilala “decisiveness” ni Duterte sa Marawi terror attack

By: Bombo-Reymund Tinaza

DA NANG, Vietnam – Kinilala umano ni Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin ang pagiging “decisive” ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa paglaban ng terorismo sa Marawi City.

Ngayong hapon, nagkaharap sa ikatlong pagkakataon sina Pangulong Duterte at Putin sa Vietnam kung saan kapwa dumadalo sa Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit ang dalawang lider.

Sa kanilang bilateral meeting na inabot ng 15 minuto, sinabi ni Pres. Putin na mahalaga ang naging aksyon ni Pangulong Duterte para mawasak ang pamamayagpag ng teroristang grupong ISIS.

Ginawa ni Putin ang pahayag matapos ikuwento ni Pangulong Duterte ang mga naging kaganapan sa Marawi City na siyang dahilan ng napaaga nitong pagbabalik ng bansa noong Mayo nang nagsagawa ito ng official visit sa Moscow, Russia.

Inihayag pa ni Putin na isang “common problem” ang terorismo sa mundo.

Kasabay nito, nagpasalamat si Pangulong Duterte sa naging tulong ng Russia sa Marawi operation partikular sa donasyon ng Kremlin na 5,000 Kalashnikov, 20 multi-purpose military trucks, isang milyong bala at 5,000 steel helmets.

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