

*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

16 April 2018

Monday

PGS



*Honor. Patriotism. Duty*

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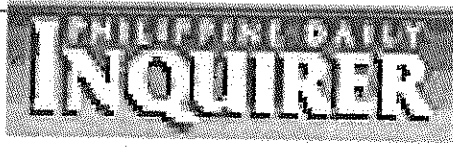
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*Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.*

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**PANAHON TV**  
www.panahon.tv /PanahonTV

BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | APRIL 16, 2018 | MONDAY

**EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE COUNTRY**  
as of 4:00 am - April 15, 2018

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

<b>SUNRISE</b>	<b>SUNSET</b>
5:42 AM	6:10 PM
<b>MOONRISE</b>	<b>MOONSET</b>
5:50 AM	6:27 PM
<b>NEW MOON</b>	<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>
APR 18 9:57 AM	APR 23 5:46 AM
<b>LOW TIDE</b>	<b>HIGH TIDE</b>
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
4:44 PM	11:14 PM
0.08 Meter	0.56 Meter

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

	APR 16	APR 17	APR 18	APR 19	APR 20	APR 21
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	25-34°C	24-33°C	23-32°C	23-32°C	25-33°C	24-33°C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	25-37°C	24-36°C	25-33°C	25-32°C	24-33°C	25-33°C
<b>LAOAG</b>	24-33°C	24-33°C	25-32°C	25-32°C	25-32°C	25-33°C
<b>BAGUIO</b>	15-26°C	15-25°C	26-32°C	26-33°C	25-34°C	24-33°C
<b>SBMA/CLARK</b>	24-33°C	24-34°C	25-33°C	26-33°C		
<b>TAGAYTAY</b>						
<b>LEGAZPI</b>						
<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b>						
<b>METRO DAVAO</b>						
<b>ZAMBOANGA</b>						

MONDAY - FRIDAY  
11AM & 5PM

WEEKDAYS  
6AM, 6:30 PM & 9PM  
WEEKENDS  
6AM



Honor. Patriotism. Duty.



16 April 2018

# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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# US warns Syria of new strikes

## FROM A1

UNITED NATIONS—The United States warned on Saturday that it was “locked and loaded,” ready to launch more military strikes on Syria if President Bashar Assad’s forces carry out a new chemical weapons attack.

US Ambassador Nikki Haley told an emergency Security Council meeting called by Russia that she had spoken to President Donald Trump earlier about the military action in response to an alleged chemical attack a week ago.

“I spoke to the president this morning and he said: If the Syrian regime uses this poisonous gas again, the United States is locked and loaded,” Haley said.

“When our president draws a red line, our president enforces the red line,” she said.

## WESTERN STRIKES IN SYRIA

### United States

Tomahawk cruise missiles and other munitions

B-1 long-range bombers

### Britain

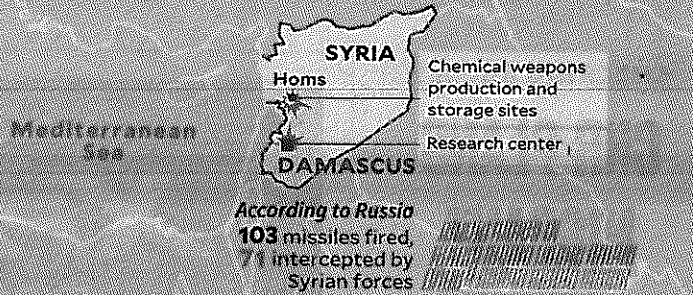
Storm Shadow cruise missiles

Tornado GR-4 ground-attack planes

### France

Scalp and MdCN cruise missiles

Rafale and Frigates Mirage jets (MdCN) (Scalp)



SOURCE: AFP

GRAPHICS

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Donald Trump -AFP

The United States, Britain and France took military action in response to an alleged chemical attack in the rebel-held town of Douma a week ago that killed at least 40 people.

The allies fired 105 missiles overnight, targeting what the Pentagon said were three chemical weapons centers, including a research and development center in Damascus' Barzeh district and two installations near Homs.

The bombing was the biggest intervention by Western countries against Assad and his superpower ally Russia, but the three countries said the strikes were limited to Syria's chemical weapons capabilities and not aimed at toppling Assad or intervening in the civil war.

The air attack, denounced by Damascus and its allies as an illegal act of aggression, was unlikely to alter the course of a multisided war that has killed at least half a million people.

Trump called the operation a success.

**'Mission accomplished'**

He proclaimed on Twitter: "Mission accomplished," echoing former President George W. Bush, whose use of the same phrase in 2003 to describe the US invasion of Iraq was widely ridiculed, as violence there dragged on for years.

"We believe that by hitting Barzeh, in particular, we've attacked the heart of the Syrian chemical weapons program," US Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie said at the Pentagon.

McKenzie, however, acknowledged elements of the program remained and he could not guarantee that Syria would be unable to conduct a chemical attack in the future.

In Washington, a senior administration official said on Saturday that "while the avail-

able information is much greater on the chlorine use, we do have significant information that also points to sarin use" in the attack.

Speaking at a summit in Peru, US Vice President Mike Pence seemed less sure of the use of sarin, saying that Washington may well determine that it was used along with chlorine.

**Assad resilience**

Ten hours after the missiles hit, smoke was still rising from the remains of five destroyed buildings of the Syrian Scientific Research Center in Barzeh, where a Syrian employee said medical components were developed.

There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Syria released video of the wreckage of a bombed-out research lab, but also of Assad arriving at work as usual, with the caption, "Morning of resilience."

Late on Saturday Syria time, a large explosion was heard in a Syrian government-controlled area in a rural region south of Aleppo, according to the British-based war monitor, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The Observatory said the cause of the explosion was unknown, as well as its target.

Russian and Iranian military help over the past three years has allowed Assad to crush the

rebel threat to topple him.

The United States, Britain and France have all participated in the Syrian conflict for years, arming rebels, bombing Islamic State fighters and deploying troops on the ground to fight that group. But they have refrained from targeting Assad's government, apart from a volley of US missiles last year.

Although the Western countries have all said for seven years that Assad must leave power, they held back in the past from striking his government, lacking a wider strategy to defeat him.

Syria and its allies also made clear that they considered the attack a one-off, unlikely to do meaningful harm to Assad.

**Evacuated days ago**

A senior official in a regional alliance that backs Damascus told Reuters the sites that were targeted had been evacuated days ago, thanks to a warning from Russia.

A chorus of voices across the American political spectrum expressed support for Trump's latest strikes, but criticized the lack of a broader US Syria strategy that could end the seven-year war—with or without Assad.

Commentators questioned the message behind the latest strikes—which signaled that Western allies would not let a chemical weapons attack go without punishment—but demurred about deeper involvement when barrel bombs by the Assad government kill far greater numbers of Syrians.

"To succeed in the long run, we need a comprehensive strategy for Syria and the entire region," Republican Sen. John McCain said in a statement after the latest strikes.

"Airstrikes disconnected from a broader strategy may be necessary, but they alone will not achieve US objectives in the Middle East," said McCain, who a year ago called for more aggressive action that would cripple Assad's military. —RE-

PORTS FROM REUTERS AND AFP





16 April 2018

PHILIPPINE DAILY  
**INQUIRER**

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**NPA TAG**

## **UP GRADUATE, 5 OTHERS INDICTED**

**By Ador Vincent S. Mayol**  
@adorCDN

CEBU CITY—Trial awaits the six persons who were tagged as communist rebels and arrested by the military in Mabinay town, Negros Oriental on March 3.

The Negros Oriental Provincial Prosecutor's Office found sufficient basis to indict the respondents on charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

No bail was recommended.

The charges were to be filed at the Regional Trial Court in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, which has jurisdiction over crimes committed in Mabinay town.

Named respondents were Myles Albasin, 21, a native of Cagayan de Oro City; Carlo Ybañez, 18; and a resident of Mandaue City, Cebu; Ajomar Indico, 29, and Randel Hermino, 19—both natives of Himamaylan City in Negros Occidental; Joel Baylosis, 18, of Mabinay town; and Bernard Guillen, 18, of Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental.

**UP graduate**

Albasin is a mass communication graduate of the University of the Philippines (UP) Cebu and secretary general of Anakbayan Cebu.

They were arrested in what the Army's 62nd Infantry Battalion said was a clash in the hinterland of Mabinay town on March 3.

The military said soldiers recovered from the respondents four M16 assault rifles, an M203 grenade launcher and two M4 assault rifles.

But results of paraffin tests by the Negros Oriental Provincial Crime Laboratory negated the claim of the military of a gunfight as the respondents tested negative for gunpowder residue.

The respondents had been given until March 19 to submit counteraffidavits but failed to do so on time.

Grace said the delay was due to the family's failure to secure the services of lawyers. INQ

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1988 1988  
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## Ampatuans surrender 22 loose firearms in Maguindanao

**B. ALI G. MACABALANG**

**COTABATO CITY** – Twenty-two high powered firearms were surrendered by Shariff Sayedona Mustapha Mayor Zandria Sinsuat-Ampatuan, wife of former provincial governor Sajid Ampatuan, to the military during a municipal peace and order council (MPOC) meeting last April 10.

This was disclosed by Lt. Col. Gerry Besana, spokesperson of the Sixth Infantry Division-left Task Force Central.

Besana said the lady mayor was accompanied by her husband, who is out on bail for his alleged involvement in the infamous Maguindanao massacre.

He said the Ampatuans yielded nine M79 grenade launchers, six Barret rifles, an RPG, a mortar, an M16-A1 rifle, a Garand rifle, one UZI, and one (1) carbine.

The turnover rite was witnessed by Brig. Gen. Diosdado C. Carreon, head of the Army's 601st Infantry Brigade, and Lt. Col. Edgar L. Catu, commander the 40th Infantry Battalion.

Carreon and Catu were elated over the

enthusiastic response of Maguindanao local government units towards the reinvigorated Balik Baril program, even as they vowed continuity in collection of loose firearms to reduce armed rifts in the province, Besana said.

Maj. Gen. Arnel Dela Vega, chief of the 6th Infantry Division and head of the Task Force Central, said all the three infantry brigades, one mechanized brigade and a Marine brigade under his operational command have been tasked to closely coordinate with LGUs in Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat, North Cotabato and parts of Lanao del Sur in the collection of loose firearms.

Shariff Sayedona Mustapha town's surrender of 22 guns brought to 439 the number of firearms either recovered or surrender in Maguindanao and Sultan Kudarat in less than four months, Dela Vega said.

Last February, Maguindanao's Iranun Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) yielded 88 loose guns to the military in pursuit of its stride against vendetta-driven crimes and in support of the Balik Baril program.



16 April 2018

MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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# Sculpture honors Filipino soldier

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) and Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation (FBDC) will unveil today the "Alab ng Puso" sculpture as a tribute to the Filipino soldier.

The sculpture, done by artist Daniel dela Cruz, depicts a soldier with his weapon set aside, reading a letter from his family.

"The Alab ng Puso sculpture is a fitting tribute to the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, always putting country first above self," said BCDA President and CEO Vivencio Dizon.

The event kicks off the BGC Historical Markers Project initiated by the BCDA in collaboration with the FBDC and the Bonifacio Art Foundation Inc. (BAFI).

The installation of historical markers at Bonifacio Global City is also meant to highlight the historical value of Fort Bonifacio, a former military camp.

BCDA has contributed P8 billion to the modernization program of the armed forces during the first two years of the Duterte administration. The military has received P40 billion from BCDA since the agency was created in 1992.

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Pahina. 3

### **6 REBELDE SUMUKO SA ARMY**

**CAGAYAN**— Anim na miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA) ang sumuko sa Philippine Army (PA), kamakalawa sa Bgy. Balanni, Sto. Niño sa lalawigan ito.

Hindi na pinangalanan ng mga awtoridad ang mga sumukong rebelde para sa kanilang seguridad.

Ayon sa ulat, isinuko rin ng mga rebelde ang kanilang mga armas at subersibong dokumento sa 17th Infantry Battalion ng PA na nakabase sa lalawigan.

Sinabi ng mga rebelde na nais na umano nilang magbagong-buhay kaya nagpasya silang magbalik-loob sa pamahalaan.

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## NPA rebels abandon pregnant comrade hurt in Bukidnon firefight

**By Zaida delos Reyes-Palanca**

A PREGNANT member of the New Peoples' Army (NPA) was abandoned by her comrades after she was wounded in an encounter the other day in Impasugong, Bukidnon.

The female warrior was identified as Susan Cabusao Guayon, 22, five months pregnant.

She was rescued by elements of 8th Infantry Battalion (8IB) around 2 p.m. in a forest near Sitio Ulayanon, Brgy. Kala-

bugao, Impasugong, Bukidnon.

She was abandoned by her comrades during a 20-minute firefight after suffering a wound in the forehead.

Guayon was given medical treatment and is now in a stable condition.

Troops conducting clearing operation recovered two AK 47 rifles, one AR 18 rifle, one caliber 30 M1 carbine rifle, one M4 rifle, one air gun and 30 backpacks filled with subversive documents and personal belongings from the encounter site.

Lt. Colonel Ronald Illana, commanding officer of 8th IB, said they already informed Susan's family of her capture and will see to it that she receives necessary medical treatment.

"We will inform the direct family of Susan and will see to it that she receives the medical treatment needed in coordination with the local government of Impasugong and the province of Bukidnon. It is to show that the government respects Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law," Illana said.

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# BusinessMirror

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A broad view of today's business



**SUMMER HARVEST** Executive Secretary Salvador C. Medialdea (center) graces the Hardin ng Lunas Harvest Festival at the Philippine Army Headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, last Thursday. Assisting the Palace official is Tarlac Heritage Foundation Cofounder Isabel Cojuangco-Suntay (left) and Philippine Army Chief Lt. Gen. Rolando Joselito Bautista. The project aims to teach interested parties on proper organic gardening techniques and develop idle camp lands for the benefit of military personnel and their dependents. NONIE REYES

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# The Manila Times

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## Outgoing AFP chief to take any govt post

Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero is ready to take any government post that will be offered to him by President Rodrigo Duterte.

Duterte had already announced that Guerrero, outgoing chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), will be replacing Marcial Amaro 3<sup>rd</sup> as chief of the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina).

Amaro was sacked for alleged corruption and for taking "unnecessary junkets."

"I am prepared for any position, as mentioned, our training as military men is not just focused on tactics and operations but more on management as well," Guerrero said in an interview after his retirement honors held recently at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA).

"So, the frameworks, models, formulas, templates [in the military] are most of the time applied to other organizations as well," he added.

For now, Guerrero said, he will wait for the orders of the President if he will officially take over Marina.

According to him, joining the AFP was the most "fulfilling" and "satisfying" career he had, "having been able to serve our country in the highest position of the AFP."

Before entering the PMA, Guerrero was an engineering student at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, where he joined the UP Vanguard Inc., the state university's Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC).

He belonged to the PMA's Maharlika Class of 1984.

Prior to his appointment as AFP chief of staff, Guerrero served as commander of the Davao-based Eastern Mindanao Command.

He is set to retire on Wednesday and will be replaced by Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., outgoing commander of the Western Mindanao Command.

**DEMPSEY REYES**

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# Manila Standard

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## Local elections fund-raising chance for CPP-NPA

THE communist rebels see the elections as an opportunity to raise funds and anoint their chosen local officials, an official said Sunday.

Lt. Gen. Benjamin Madrigal, head of the military's Eastern Mindanao Command, says the New People's Army usually tries to influence the results of the local elections in the far-flung areas.

He says the NPA is again expected to ask the candidates in the coming Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections to pay for a "permit to campaign" in their bailiwicks.

"There are candidates they want to win, and it's a chance for them to make money," Madrigal said.

He says the Armed Forces is closely working with the Philippine National Police to neutralize the communists' threat in the coming elections.

He says the operations against the communist rebels have been intensified due to the coming elections.

President Rodrigo Duterte has announced that his administration is again open to resuming the talks with the communist rebels.

On Friday, he assured leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front that they will be given safe passage for the next round of talks.

The CPP and the NDF have expressed preparedness to return to the negotiating table with the government.



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## Election hotspots sa Mindoro, 31 na

**CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro** - Tinukoy na ng militar ang mga lugar na posibleng election hotspot sa Oriental Mindoro, dahil sa presensiya at impluwensiya ng New People's Army (NPA).

Sa panayam, sinabi ni Lt. Col. Dennis Gutierrez, commander ng 4th Infantry Battalion (IB) ng Philippine Army (PA), na malaki ang posibilidad na mamataan na

naman ang grupo ng mga rebelde sa mga barangay ng Hagan at Lisap sa Bongabong, Panaytayan sa Mansalay, at Birli sa Bulalacao dahil na rin sa election period.

Pinagbatayan ni Gutierrez ang natanggap niyang report sa huling apat na buwan ng nakaraang taon, kung saan tinukoy na madalas nang makita ang mga kaanib ng kilusan sa mga nabanggit na lugar upang

mangolekta ng revolutionary tax at bayad sa pagbibigay nila ng permit upang makapangampanya ang mga kandidato.

Hiningi na rin, aniya, ng militar ang tulong ng pulisya sa nasabing mga lugar upang matiyak ang kapayapaan at kaayusan sa pagsasagawa ng halalan sa lalawigan.

**Jerry J. Alcayde**

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Pahina. 2

### **NPA banta sa BSK elections**

Banta sa darating na Barangay at Sangguniang Kabataan elections ang mga miyembro ng New Peoples Army (NPA) terorista.

Ito ang inihayag ni Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Eastern Mindanao Command Chief Lt. Gen. Benjamin Madrigal lalo na ang mga nasa malalayong lugar.

Paliwanag ni Madrigal, tiyak na tatangkain ng mga NPA na impluwensiyahan ang mga kandidato na posibleng mananalò.

Bukod dito minomonitor na rin umano ng militar kung sino ang mga kandidato na sinusuportahan ng nasabing teroristang grupo.

Sa ngayon ay wala pa umanong namomonitor ang militar dahil mag-uumpisa pa lamang ang kampanyahan.

Ngayon ay aktibo pa rin ang militar sa mga lugar na inaasahang magiging magulo at patuloy pa rin ang kanilang operasyon laban sa mga feroristang grupo.

**Gemma Garcia-**

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Pahina. 2

### ***NPA banta sa Bgy., SK elections - AFP***

Ikinokonsidera ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na banta sa darating na Barangay at Sangguniang Kabataang (SK) election ang mga miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA)

Ayon kay AFP Eastern Mindanao Command Chief Lt. Gen. Benjamin Madrigal, na banta na rin sa darating na eleksyon sa Mayo ang mga mi-

yembro ng NPA lalo na ang mga nasa malalayong lugar.

Paliwanag pa ni Madrigal, tiyak na tatangkain ng mga NPA na impluwensiyahan ang mga kandidato na posibleng mananalo.

Bukod dito, minomonitor na rin umano ng militar kung sino ang mga kandidato na sinusupportahan ng nasabing rebeldeng grupo.

Subalit sa ngayon ay wala pa namang namomonitor ang militar dahil mag-uumpisa pa lamang ang kampanyahan sa mga susunod na araw.

Giit pa ni Madrigal, sa ngayon ay aktibo pa rin ang militar sa mga lugar na inaasahang magiging magulo at patuloy pa rin ang kanilang operasyon laban sa mga rebeldeng grupo. *(Gemma Garcia)*

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ARMY'S DISARMAMENT CAMPAIGN

# MARTIAL LAW DISRUPTS MORO LOVE AFFAIR WITH GUNS

MADALUM, LANA O DEL SUR—The love affair with guns by residents and officials of 10 towns in the province could be nearing its end as dozens of firearms, all unlicensed, had been turned over to an Army team that would pry the weapons forcibly out of their owners' hands if these had not been surrendered.

The impact of martial law was being felt among townsfolk and community leaders who had treated guns as family heirloom, status symbol and security shield.

Among those who gave up their guns was the family of Rakeem (not his real name) who owned at least 20 firearms, some of them high-powered.

Like many Moro families, Rakeem's kept guns because of a rido, or clan war, with another family.

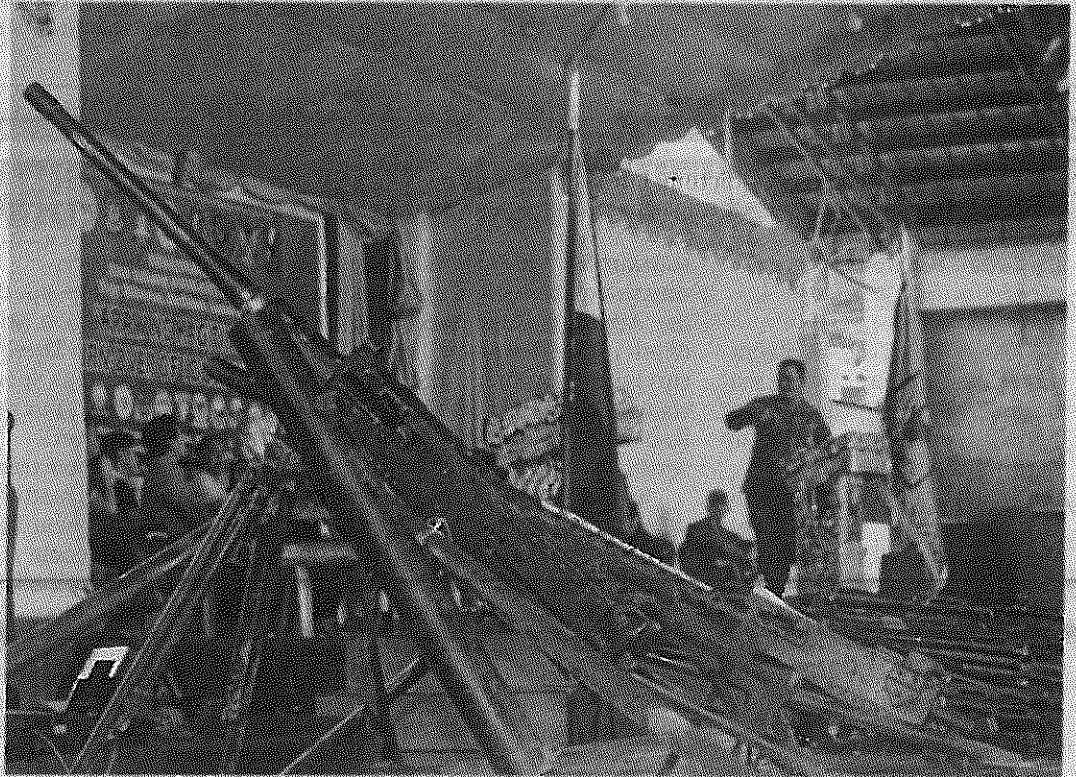
### Heirloom

One mayor, Darogoran Mindalano, of Madamba town, gave up his Thompson submachine gun which he said had been handed down from his uncle.

"This is considered a family heirloom," Mindalano said.

On April 9, Rakeem and Mindalano were among dozens of other individuals from this town, who turned over their firearms to the military.

"They assured us that it would be safe for us to do so," Rakeem said.



Guns turned over by officials and residents of at least 10 towns in Lanao del Sur are presented to the military on April 9 in Madalum town. —DIVINA M. SUSON

"They said we do not need those firearms anymore and soldiers are there to protect us," he added.

Maj. Gen. Roseller Murillo, commander of the Army's First Infantry Division (ID), said the disarmament campaign would help bring peace to this town and nearby areas, where residents also surrendered guns.

### First step

The disarmament campaign, according to Murillo, had removed 163 firearms from the hands of individuals, who did not have licenses to own and carry firearms, from this town and the towns of Madamba, Ganassi, Lumbatan, Binidayan, Calanogas, Balindong, Pagayawan, Tugaya and Bayang.

Residents of Saguiaran turned over 32 guns, Murillo

said. "This is the first step in attaining sustainable peace," Murillo said.

"The presence and ready availability of high powered firearms in the province contributed to the likelihood, intensity and duration of armed conflict in Lanao del Sur," Murillo added.

Saguiaran Mayor Macmod Muti said it was difficult to convince people to give up their guns. "For them, it was meant to be their protection," Muti said.

#### **Status symbols**

Former Madalum mayor Sultan Usman Saranggani said for some, guns are status symbols.

Like residents of Lanao del Sur, residents of Maguindanao province were also gun lovers, according to Genuine Kamaong, mayor of Datu Piang town.

Kamaong admitted that guns were the source of trouble in the province.

To convince his town mates, Kamaong led the surrender of guns to the military. He turned over a prized M16 assault rifle.

"I hope with the peace processes in progress peace will finally reign in my town," said

Kadil (not his real name), a civilian who surrendered his homemade grenade launcher.

"I think it was really better not to have a gun," he said.

"Lawless individuals would target you more if they knew you have one," he added.

#### **Maguindanao guns**

From Datu Piang, the military recovered at least 16 guns surrendered by residents. These included homemade .50 caliber sniper rifles.

Maj. Gen. Arnel Dela Vega, commander of the Army's Sixth ID, said since January the military had already collected 338 loose firearms in Maguindanao alone.

The figure was not even significant, he said, because the estimated number of unlicensed guns in the province was at least 25,000.

But Lt. Col. Gerry Besana, civil military operations chief of the Sixth ID, said government forces were determined to collect as many unlicensed guns as they could by pressuring local government officials.

#### **House-to-house campaign**

Besana said mayors were told by Army commanders to heed Directive No. 1 of martial law, which required the local

officials to act with dispatch on crimes.

The Army also planned to conduct an inspection of all houses in Maguindanao to check for unlicensed firearms, he said.

He added that if mayors failed to enforce the martial law directive, "they can be held liable and possibly removed from office."

Besana said the military knew that "there were still many loose firearms out there."

He said the military would start the house-to-house campaign in Maguindanao in July.

The deadline for surrender of unlicensed guns in Lanao del Norte was set earlier.

Col. Robert Daus, commander of the Army's Second Mechanized Infantry Brigade, said local officials had until the end of April to convince constituents into surrendering illegal guns.

"After the grace period, those who did not surrender their firearms will be subjected to joint focused military operations," he warned.

Murillo said based on estimates, there were at least 18,000 unlicensed guns in Lanao del Norte. —REPORTS FROM DIVINA SUSON, RICHEL UMEL AND EDWIN FERNANDEZ INQ



4 April 2018

# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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## MARAWI REHAB

### MARANAO GROUP DECRIES PLAN TO DEMOLISH ALL STRUCTURES

ILIGAN CITY—A group of Maranao evacuees from Marawi vented its ire on what it said was government insensitivity on the head of a multiagency task force that is supervising rebuilding efforts in the city battered by an attempt by Islamic State (IS) to turn it into a terror base and the government's armed response to it.

Ranao Multi-Stakeholders Movement (RMSM), a group of Maranaos displaced from Marawi and their supporters, called on President Duterte to replace Housing Secretary Eduardo Del Rosario as head of Task Force Bangon Marawi.

Sultan Abdul Hamidula Atar, RMSM spokesperson, said Del Rosario had been "insensitive to the culture and feelings of the Maranao people."

#### Mosque, cathedral

Atar said his group was offended by Del Rosario's recommendation to flatten all structures, which would include the Grand Mosque, inside 24 Marawi villages where the fighting between IS and government forces was heaviest.

Another structure that suffered heavy damage during the war was the St. Mary's Cathedral, the seat of the Catholic faith in

predominantly Musum Marawi.

According to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), whatever was left of the cathedral and the bishop's residence would have to be demolished for new structures.

The CBCP, in its website, said a simpler structure would replace the cathedral.

#### Cultural sensitivity

Atar said the Maranao people were hurt when Del Rosario said they should already move their belongings out of the area to give way to the plan to flatten it.

Del Rosario also refused to consider the Maranao people's proposals, Atar said.

He said Del Rosario and other officials do not realize the "importance of cultural sensitivity" because they were not Maranaos.

Del Rosario, however, said the group's criticism was "not the general sentiment."

RMSM, he said, does not represent "even one percent of the total populace."

#### Bishop's visit

Marawi Bishop Edwin dela Peña visited the 84-year-old cathedral on Saturday.

According to CBCP, the bishop and six other Church officials had wanted to celebrate Mass in the cathedral but were advised by the military not to stay long because of security reasons.

The CBCP said Dela Peña agreed to suggestions to demolish the cathedral and the bishop's residence "because they're no longer structurally sound."

Demolishing the church structures would start in June and could take up to 10 months, the CBCP said. —REPORTS FROM DIVINA SUSON, RICHEL UMEL AND JEROME ANING INQ





14 April 2018

MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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# Bangsamoro group asks for more representation in TF Bangon Marawi

By BONITA L. ERMAC

ILIGAN CITY – The Ranao Multi-Sectoral Movement (RMSM) has asked President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to include a Maranao leader in Task Force Bangon Marawi (TF Bangon Marawi), saying that having Mayor Majul Gandamra as Marawi's lone representative was "not enough because of the problem and magnitude of the impact of the 2017 siege on the city."

In a press conference held Thursday, Sultan Abdul Hamidullah Atar said that having a lone representative from the local government unit (LGU) of Marawi in Gandamra may not be adequate enough to address all issues that would be tackled by

TF Bangon Marawi.

"We are appealing to the President to somehow consider the Maranao leaders that could be part of TF Bangon Marawi," said the RMSM official.

According to Atar, while the Marawi LGU will have a "very important role (in the rehabilitation of the city), we need other key actors that will have decision-making powers in the formulation, planning, coordination, implementation and assessment of all the projects to undertaken in Marawi."

Atar likewise underscored that the Maranao leader should be considered as a co-chairperson of TF Bangon Marawi "in order to bring the real sentiment of the people."

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6 April 2018



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# US allies praise Syria strikes as Moscow seethes

**WASHINGTON (AFP) — US President Donald Trump and his British and French allies on Saturday hailed their joint strikes in Syria in response to its alleged use of chemical weapons, warning Damascus that any repetition would be met with renewed firepower.**

Hours later, the allies signaled their resolve to return to diplomacy, launching a new bid at the United Nations to investigate the chemical weapons attacks.

They circulated a joint draft resolution at the Security Council that also calls for unimpeded deliveries of humanitarian aid and enforcement of a ceasefire and demands that Syria engage in UN-led peace talks, according to the text obtained by AFP.

The narrowly targeted pre-dawn military operation, which took aim at three alleged chemical weapons facilities, earned quick scorn from Russia, but a push by Moscow for condemnation of the strikes at the Security Council fell far short.

Trump and his allies ordered the mis-

sion in response to a suspected chemical weapons attack a week ago on the rebel-held town of Douma that left more than 40 people dead. Washington believes both sarin and chlorine were used in the April 7 attack, a senior US administration official told reporters on Saturday.

Both the regime of Syria's President Bashar Assad and its ally Russia have denied all responsibility.

Moscow slammed the "aggressive actions" of the Western coalition but has not yet responded militarily.

US ambassador Nikki Haley warned her UN counterparts that although the mission was designed as a one-off, that did not preclude further action against Assad.

"I spoke to the president this morning and he said: 'If the Syrian regime uses this poisonous gas again, the United States is locked and loaded,'" Haley said at emergency Security Council talks.

Negotiations on the draft resolution put forward by the US, France and Britain are set to begin on Monday.

Among the contentious proposals, it

would establish an independent investigation into allegations of toxic gas attacks in Syria with the aim of identifying the perpetrators.

On the humanitarian side, the measure demands medical evacuations and safe passage for aid convoys to be allowed to all areas.

Diplomats said it remained unclear when the council would vote on the proposal, and they were ready to allow time for negotiations to bring Russia aboard.

Just before dawn on Saturday, the sounds of massive explosions and the roar of warplanes rang out across Damascus for about 45 minutes.

The targets included a scientific research facility near Damascus, and two chemical weapons facilities outside the city of Homs, the US military said, though reports said the buildings had been evacuated in recent days.

Syrian state media reported only three people injured, while Russia's defense ministry said there were "no victims" among Syrian civilians and military personnel.

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16 April 2018



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# 'Syria strikes hit heart of weapons program'

WASHINGTON — US Defense Department officials said Saturday that US-led strikes against Syria had taken out the "heart" of President Bashar Assad's chemical weapons program, but acknowledged that the Syrian government most likely retained some ability to again attack its own people with chemical agents.

Warplanes and ships from the United States, Britain and France launched more than 100 missiles at three chemical weapons storage and research facilities near Damascus and Homs, the officials told reporters, in an operation that US President

Donald Trump and Pentagon leaders hailed as a success.

The strikes before dawn Saturday in Syria — which came in retaliation for a suspected chemical attack on civilians a week ago — were the second time in just over a year that Trump had sent missiles crashing into Syrian military targets, adding US firepower to a civil war that is one of the most complex and multisided conflicts in a generation.

Beyond the immediate question of whether the new strikes actually accomplished the stated goal of diminishing Syria's capacity to

make and use chemical agents, the attack posed the risk of drawing the United States more deeply into a conflict in which Russia and Iran have more invested than ever in keeping Assad in power.

The United States is "locked and loaded" to strike again if Assad is believed to renew his use of chemical weapons, US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley told the Security Council on Saturday at an emergency meeting called by Russia.

"We are confident that we have crippled Syria's chemical weapons program.

We are prepared to sustain this pressure, if the Syrian regime is foolish enough to test our will," Haley said. She said that Russia had failed to abide by a 2013 promise to ensure that Syria got rid of its chemical weapons stockpiles.

"While Russia was busy protecting the regime, Assad took notice," she said.

"The regime knew that it could act with impunity, and it did."

The Pentagon provided no immediate evidence that the sites that were struck were producing substances covered by the 2013 agreement be-

tween Russia and the United States to eliminate Syria's chemical arms.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Friday that the US government was confident that Syrian forces had used chlorine in the deadly attack on civilians last Saturday in Douma, but did not provide evidence.

The White House has cited photographs and videos from Douma to make the case, and has dismissed alternative explanations from the Syrian and Russian governments. It said that the nerve agent sarin may have been used in addition to chlorine.

— NYT





16 April 2018



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## Trump declares 'mission accomplished' after strike on Syria

WASHINGTON – US President Donald Trump has declared "mission accomplished" in the aftermath of a missile strike launched against Syria by the US and allies France and Britain.

The attack came in retaliation for an alleged poison gas strike against Syrian rebels near Damascus last week.

The Syria assault early Saturday was carefully limited to minimize civilian casualties and avoid direct conflict with Syria's key ally, Russia. Russia has military forces, including air defenses, in several areas of Syria to support President Bashar Assad in his long war against anti-government rebels.

While the Pentagon says the Assad regime still has enough chemical-related facilities to attack its citizens with banned weapons, the American ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, warns that the US remains "locked and loaded."

Meanwhile, Syrian President Bashar Assad told a group of Russian lawmakers on Sunday that Western missile strikes on his country were an act of aggression, Russian news agencies reported.

The Russian lawmakers met with Assad after the United States, France and Britain launched missile strikes on Syria in retaliation for a suspected poison gas attack a week ago.

Russia, which is helping Assad fight rebel forces opposed to his rule, immediately condemned the strikes and called for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council.

"From the point of view of the president, this was aggression and we share this position," Russia's TASS news agency quoted lawmaker Sergei Zheleznyak as saying after the meeting with Assad.

The Syrian president was in a "good mood" and continuing his work in Damascus, agencies cited the lawmakers as saying, and praised the Soviet-era air defense systems used by Syria to help repel the Western attacks.

A senior Russian military official said on Saturday that Syria's air defenses, which mostly consist of systems made in the Soviet Union, had intercepted 71 of the 105 American, British and French missiles.

The Pentagon has said the strikes successfully hit the three chemical weapons facilities which were targeted.

"Yesterday we saw American aggression. And we were able to repel it with Soviet missiles from the '70s," Russian lawmaker Dmitry Sablin quoted Assad as saying, TASS reported.

Sablin also said Assad accepted an invitation to visit the Siberian region of Khanty-Mansi in Russia. It was not clear when the visit would take place.

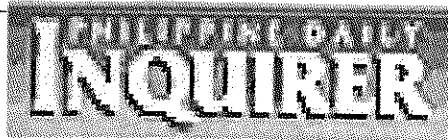
Russia said on Saturday it would consider supplying S-300 surface to-air missile systems to Syria following the Western strikes, but this was not discussed at the meeting with Assad, agencies reported.

Assad also declined to comment on calls by the US State Department to declare alleged Syrian stockpiles of chemical weapons, Zheleznyak said. – AP

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SECURITY COUNCIL

## RUSSIA FAILS IN UN BID TO CONDEMN AIRSTRIKES

UNITED NATIONS—A Russian bid for the United Nations Security Council to condemn US, British and French airstrikes on Syria over a suspected chemical weapons attack failed on Saturday after only China and Bolivia joined Russia to vote in favor of a draft resolution.

The 15-member council met on Saturday, at Russia's request, the fifth time it has met on Syria since a suspected deadly toxic gas attack in the

Syrian town of Douma a week ago.

The United States, France and Britain fired 105 missiles overnight in retaliation, targeting Syria's chemical weapons program.

### International probe

"Why didn't you wait for the outcome of the investigation you called for?" Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said after the vote.

He accused the United

States, France and Britain of "demonstrating a blatant disregard for international law."

"I hope hotheads will cool down and that will be it," he told reporters.

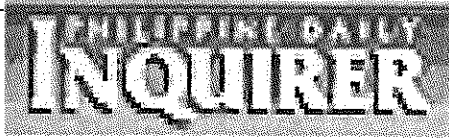
Eight countries voted against the Russian-drafted text on Saturday, while Peru, Kazakhstan, Ethiopia and Equatorial Guinea abstained. A resolution needs nine votes in favor and no vetoes by Russia, China, France, Britain or the United States to pass. —REUTERS

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## 'Revolving door' of the Armed Forces

**T**he founding fathers of the Philippine Revolutionary Army, predecessor of what is now the Armed Forces of the Philippines, were both Ilocanos sharing roots from the same province, Ilocos Norte.

Gen. Artemio Ricarte was elected captain general of the Revolutionary Army in March 1897 at the Tejeros Convention that was aimed at unifying the major factions in the struggle against Spain. Considered as the "father of the Philippine Army," Ricarte is best known for his refusal to pledge allegiance to the United States after the end of the Philippine-American War.

Gen. Antonio Luna succeeded Ricarte and is credited with the establishment of the Academia Militar, now the Philippine Military Academy. He has been described by some American officers who participated in the Philippine-American War as "the only general in the Filipino Army."

In October 2016, the Philippine Army led by its commanding general, Gen. Eduardo Año, marked the 150th birth anniversary of the two founding fathers with commemorative rites at Libingan ng mga Bayani. I pay tribute to General Año for his sense of history in reminding the nation of two of our greatest military leaders.

This Wednesday, April 18, the AFP shall bid farewell to its third chief and welcome its fourth under the current dispensation, all in the span of less than two years.



**REVELLE**

RAMON J. FAROLAN

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<b>AFP chief of staff</b>	<b>Length of stay as AFP chief</b>
Ricardo Visaya	150 days
Eduardo Año	323 days
Leonardo Guerrero	174 days
Carlito Galvez Jr. (retires on Dec. 12, 2018)	238 days

Somehow I am reminded of an observation by an American officer during one of the periodic meetings of the RP-US Mutual Defense Board in Honolulu. He mentioned to his Filipino counterpart that in his tour of duty with the Board, he has dealt with three different AFP chiefs. He inquired if there was any special reason for such a fluid arrangement of leadership.

It is the same question that foreign dignitaries who are invited to the change of command ceremony at Camp Aguinaldo will be asking on Wednesday. There must be some logical explanation that we can offer other than the exercise of prerogative by the commander in chief.

As I have mentioned in the past, many of the officers appointed to the position of AFP chief were competent, hardworking and dedicated public servants. This is true for those under the Duterte administration. In fact, the President appointed General Visaya to head the National Irrigation Administration, while General Año is now officer in charge of the Department of the Interior and Local Government. It is likely that Guerrero is also headed for a civilian post. If their competence is recognized and appreciated, why not allow them more time in office in order to provide the AFP with the benefit of their experience?

The AFP pension fund is burdened by an unusual number of officers who will receive retirement pay of a full general even if they served for a short time in the post of AFP chief. Retired general Joel Hinlo expressed the view that "aside from being disruptive, the present setup is very expensive. Imagine retiring seven four-star generals in a span of four years!" The AFP pension system is now facing serious scrutiny and change in view of the heavy burden it imposes on the military budget.

In September 2016, Surigao del Sur Rep. Johnny Pimentel revived a bill providing for a fixed three-year term for the AFP chief. The same bill was passed by the 15th Congress but was vetoed by President Benigno Aquino III. In explaining his action, Pimentel said, "If we are to reinforce the military as the protector and defender of our national territory, we should give its chief operating officer a stable stint to carry out programs and projects with some degree of constancy."

The "revolving door" policy contributed to one of the worst corruption cases in the history of our Armed Forces. In just one year (2002) during the Arroyo administration, the AFP had three change of command ceremonies at Camp Aguinaldo, installing three new chiefs. Since the commander would not be around long enough, he would not be able to pay close attention to issues that needed monitoring and review. It was a perfect environment for mischief.

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In 2003, US customs authorities confiscated undeclared foreign exchange being brought into the United States by family members of AFP comptroller, Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia. That discovery would have far-reaching consequences for the Armed Forces.

The issue of an AFP "revolving door" has been the subject of several commentaries by various concerned individuals. We continue this advocacy for change as we believe it would be a change for the better.

We respectfully appeal to Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and the Commander in Chief, President Duterte, to please review this situation. The policy being followed today is detrimental to the organization not only in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, but also in terms of promoting and enhancing the professionalism of the officer corps. Unfortunately, it has also become a source of embarrassment and, to some degree, humiliation for our Armed Forces and for the nation as indicated earlier.

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## ONLINE NEWS

16 APRIL 2018

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### 4 PAF attack planes up for repairs

By Priam Nepomuceno April 15, 2018, 1:32 pm

**MANILA** -- The Philippine Air Force (PAF) is looking for suppliers of spare parts needed for the maintenance of four of its Rockwell OV-10 "Bronco" attack planes.

The budget for the project, as stated in the bid bulletin posted at the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System website, is PHP52,753,000.

The spare parts are intended for the maintenance of OV-10 aircraft with tail numbers 136, 139, 145, and 402.

Submission and opening of bids is on April 26, 9 a.m. at the PAF Procurement Center Conference Room, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City, PAF Bids and Awards Committee chair Brig. Gen. Ferynl Buca said in the same bid bulletin.

The OV-10s are the PAF's premier ground attack aircraft. Around six to eight units are still in service as of this posting. **(PNA)**

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## BCDA, FBDC honor troops with 'Alab Ng Puso' sculpture

By Priam Nepomuceno April 15, 2018, 11:48 am

**MANILA** -- In a show of gratitude for their dedication in defending the nation against all forms of threats, the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) and Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation (FBDC) will unveil on Monday a sculpture called "Alab ng Puso" as a tribute to the services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

"Alab ng Puso"(Fire in the Heart), is sculpted by artist Daniel dela Cruz, portrays an ordinary Filipino soldier with his weapon set aside, reading a letter from his family.

"The Alab ng Puso sculpture is a fitting tribute to the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, always putting country first above self," BCDA president and chief executive Vivencio Dizon said in a statement Sunday.

The event officially kicks off the BGC Historical Markers Project initiated by the BCDA, in collaboration with the FBDC and the Bonifacio Art Foundation, Inc. (BAFI).

The installation of historical markers at the Bonifacio Global City is also an initiative to promote the historical value of Fort Bonifacio, a former military camp.

The AFP is a major stakeholder of the BCDA. In line with its commitment to strengthen the Armed Forces while building great cities, BCDA has already contributed PHP8 billion to the modernization program of the AFP during the first two years of the Duterte administration.

In total, the AFP has received PHP40 billion from BCDA since the agency was created in 1992.

During the event, AFP vice chief-of- staff Lt. Gen. Salvador Melchor Mison Jr. will represent President Rodrigo Duterte. **(PNA)**

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## **Guevarra to consult Esperon, Dureza on terror tag petition vs. CPP**

By Christopher Lloyd Caliwan April 15, 2018, 12:37 pm

**MANILA** -- Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra on Saturday said he would consult first with National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon and Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza before deciding on whether to review or withdraw the petition seeking to declare the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), as terrorist groups.

"As this involves national security, I'll have to consult first with our National Security Adviser and the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process. This is not an ordinary criminal prosecution," Guevarra said in a text message sent to reporters.

Guevarra made the statement when sought for comment on the statement of Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate urging him to review the petition filed by his predecessor Vitaliano Aguirre II last February.

Zarate said Guevarra should include in his review the list of some 600 names included in the petition, which the party-list lawmaker said may be used as a "hit list" against such persons.

Among those included in the list submitted by the DOJ are CPP founder Jose Maria Sison, peace negotiator Luis Jalandoni, former lawmaker and leftist leader Satur Ocampo, and Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples.

Prior to Aguirre's resignation, Justice Undersecretary Erickson Balmes said they will push through with the petition despite President Rodrigo R. Duterte's order to give the peace talks with the communist rebels a "last chance."

"We are all for peace. However, the peace talks have not actually resumed. We will comply with any new directive of our President on this matter. For the time being, there being no order to the contrary, we will pursue the petition, as filed," Balmes said.

During the Cabinet meeting, Dureza said the President directed them to work on the resumption of talks with the communist rebels with "clear instructions on the importance of forging a ceasefire agreement to stop mutual attacks and fighting while talks are underway."

Duterte initiated formal peace talks with the National Democratic Front (NDF) shortly after winning the presidency in 2016 but canceled them in November last year amid continued attacks of the NPA on government forces and civilians.

The President signed a proclamation in December 2017 declaring the CPP-NPA as a terror organization using Republic Act (RA) No. 10168 or the Terrorism Financing Prevention and Suppression Act of 2012 as basis.

In a 55-page proscription petition, the DOJ asked the Manila Regional Trial Court to issue an order declaring the CPP and NPA, also known as the Bagong Hukbong Bayan, as terrorist and outlawed organizations, associations or group of persons pursuant to Section 17 of RA 9372 or the Human Security Act of 2007.

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The petition was basically based on two grounds: that the organization, association or group of persons was organized for the purpose of engaging in terrorism; and that even if the organization, association or group of persons was not organized to engage in terrorism, it still commits acts of terrorism, such as murder and arson and other activities, for the purpose of sowing terror.

The petition also said that the CPP-NPA are just buying time by deceiving the government in entering into peace talks while their main purpose is to mobilize their forces in preparation for a "people's war" to overthrow the duly-constituted authorities, seize control of the government, and impose a totalitarian regime.

It added that the CPP-NPA also committed acts of terrorism, such as murder, kidnapping, arson and other activities, to sow terror and panic. **(PNA)**

www.pna.gov.ph

## **Military to ensure peaceful May village polls**

By Priam Nepomuceno April 15, 2018, 10:29 am

**MANILA** -- The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will coordinate with concerned authorities to ensure a peaceful and orderly Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections on May 14.

This was emphasized by AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Bienvenido Datuin in a text message Saturday.

"The AFP in coordination with the Comelec (Commission on Elections) and the PNP (Philippine National Police) will work for an honest, orderly and peaceful Barangay and Sanggunian Kabataan election," he added.

Datuin said AFP personnel can be deputized to set up checkpoints and monitor cities and municipalities to curb security threats and election-related violence.

During the May 2016 national elections, the AFP launched its National Election Monitoring Center (NEMC) which utilized information-related capabilities to monitor the preparations for and the actual conduct of elections and the canvassing process.

It also monitored election-related violence especially in identified election watch areas and provided necessary data for decision-making and execution of the Comelec and its deputized agencies.

Consolidated efforts of the AFP to secure the elections were coursed through its Unified Commands and the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region.

Operations related to the security of the election were also done in coordination with the Joint Security Coordination Centers at the regional, provincial, and independent city levels.

On Saturday, the Comelec started accepting certificates of candidacies of persons vying for elective barangay posts. **(PNA)**