

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



TEAM ARMY

Serving the people. Securing the land.

oacpa.army2012@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

17 February 2018

Saturday

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

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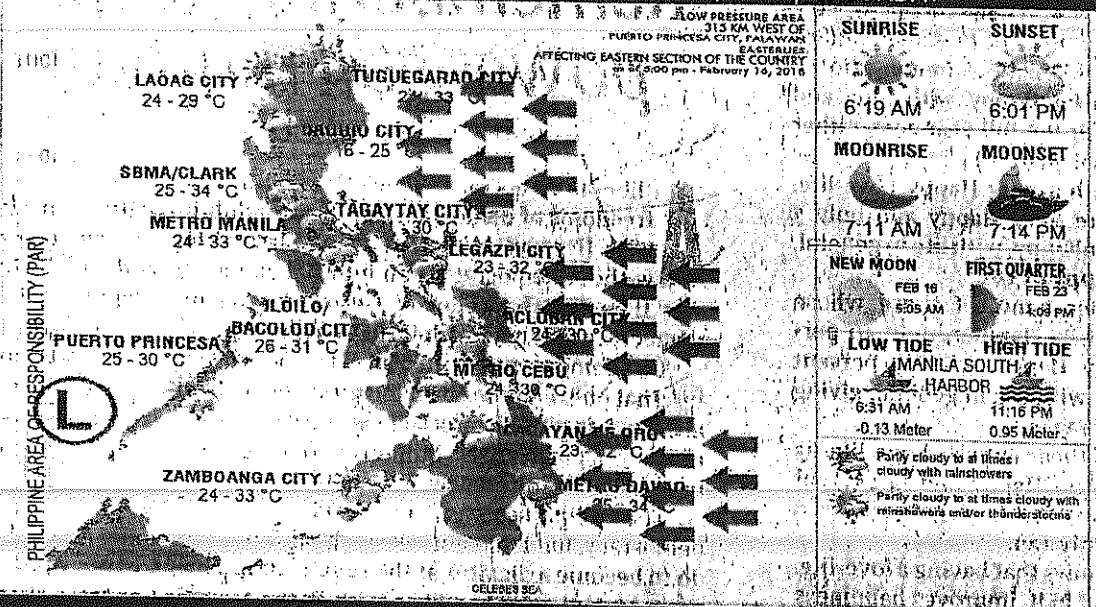
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www.panahon.tv /PanahonTV



TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | FEBRUARY 17, 2018 | SATURDAY



SUNRISE 6:49 AM	SUNSET 6:01 PM
MOONRISE 11 AM	MOONSET 7:14 PM
NEW MOON FEB 16 6:05 AM	FIRST QUARTER FEB 23 11:09 PM
LOW TIDE 6:31 AM -0.13 Meter	HIGH TIDE MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 11:16 PM 0.95 Meter

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

	FEB 15	FEB 16	FEB 17	FEB 18	FEB 19
METRO MANILA	24 - 33 °C	24 - 33 °C	21 - 30 °C	21 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C
TUGUEGARAO	24 - 33 °C	24 - 33 °C	23 - 32 °C	23 - 32 °C	23 - 32 °C
LAOAG	24 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	26 - 30 °C	26 - 30 °C	25 - 34 °C
BAGUIO	16 - 25 °C	15 - 25 °C	26 - 32 °C	26 - 32 °C	24 - 33 °C
SBMA/CLARK	25 - 34 °C	25 - 34 °C	24 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	
TAGAYTAY			21 - 30 °C	21 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C
LEGAZPI			23 - 32 °C	23 - 32 °C	23 - 32 °C
PUERTO PRINCESA			26 - 30 °C	26 - 30 °C	25 - 34 °C
ILOILO/BACOLOD			26 - 32 °C	26 - 32 °C	24 - 33 °C
METRO CEBU			24 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	
TACLOBAN			24 - 30 °C	24 - 30 °C	
CAGAYAN DE ORO			23 - 32 °C	23 - 32 °C	
METRO DAVAO			25 - 34 °C	25 - 34 °C	
ZAMBOANGA			24 - 33 °C	24 - 33 °C	

DZRH NEWS TELEVISION MONDAY - FRIDAY 11 AM & 5 PM

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

AIR 21 **83**
SABOT NO. PARA LA NDI

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NEW 'RALLYING POINT'

OFW'S TOIL IN KUWAIT FOR FAMILY ENDS IN WOODEN BOX

By Jovic Yee @jovicjeeINQ

Joanna Demafelis left for Kuwait four years ago to seek a better life for her family in Iloilo. On Friday morning, she came home to the wails of her siblings as her wooden casket was unloaded from a Gulf Air flight.

It was an emotional reunion for Demafelis' siblings Jessica and Jelit, who learned only last week that their sister—reported missing for a year—had been found dead inside a freezer in an abandoned apartment unit in Kuwait City.

Demafelis' body bore signs of abuse—broken ribs, bruises, and contusions—that Kuwaiti forensics said that the maltreatment didn't happen once, but had continued over a period of time.

Kuwaiti authorities said they had alerted the Interpol to look for Demafelis' employers, Lebanese Nader Assaf and his Syrian wife, who left the apartment shortly after

reporting that their Filipina help had absconded.

Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano, who led the contingent of government officials who met the Demafelis siblings at the airport, assured the family that their counterparts in Kuwait were "exerting all efforts" to locate the suspects.

Demafelis' case would serve as a "rallying point for all government agencies to be more aggressive in [protecting] our overseas Filipino workers (OFW)," the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) official added.

Cayetano said they would launch in the coming months an international hotline system to help government officials communicate better with the more than 10 million OFWs all over the world, and respond more effectively to reports of abuses.

Demafelis' remains were expected to arrive in Iloilo at 5:30 this morning via a Philippine Airlines flight.

Last call

Her parents, Crisanto and Eva Demafelis, said they would be up early today to fetch the daughter they had not seen for four years.

Demafelis, 29, came from the farming village of Ferraris in Sara town, Iloilo, where her parents planted corn and palay in a small plot of land. She left for Kuwait in May 2014, to work as a



Joanna Demafelis

domestic help so she could provide for the family and send their youngest sibling to school.

In 2016, Demafelis extended her contract because "she wanted to save money to have our house repaired," said her father. "But this will never happen now," he added.

No communication

Joanna regularly sent money and communicated with them, until her calls became less frequent. Her last call came in February 2017. By then, she had also stopped sending money, forcing her brother Joyce to quit school at the Northern Iloilo Polytechnic in Estancia town, Iloilo, where he was taking criminology.

Eva said a cousin went to the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) office in Manila to seek its help in locating her daughter, but was told that there was nothing they could do since Joanna's recruitment agency

had long closed down. On Feb. 7 this year, an Owwa staff from Iloilo informed them of the body found in the freezer.

Eva said they just wanted to bring Joanna home and give her a decent wake to honor the sacrifices she had endured for the family. They have yet to decide for Demafelis' interment.

P500,000 from Owwa

The Owwa on Friday turned over P500,000 to the family in financial and livelihood assistance. A P50,000 educational grant was also given to Demafelis' youngest sister.

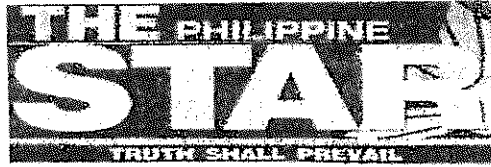
Demafelis' death triggered a diplomatic row between Kuwait and the Philippines, which announced a "total ban" on new deployment of OFWs to the oil-rich country, and flew home hundreds of others, a move condemned in the Middle East.

In Lucena City, House Minority Leader Danilo Suarez urged the Duterte administration to strictly monitor the total ban on Filipino workers bound for Kuwait to prevent illegal recruiters from victimizing workers.

He said a joint task force could be formed to conduct surveillance operations, gather intelligence reports on illegal recruitment activities and file criminal charges against offenders.

—WITH REPORTS FROM DELFIN T. MALLARI JR., JULIE M. AU RELIO, JOEL FRANCO AND AP/INQ

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NPA bomb expert held

TUGUEGARAO, Cagayan – A suspected bomb expert of the New People's Army (NPA) was arrested during a raid on his safehouse in Barangay Jose Ancheta, Maddela, Quirino on Thursday.

Kevin Nilo, 36, alias Glen, is among those who attacked the Maddela police station last year that left one police officer dead, Chief Superintendent Mario Espino, Cagayan Valley police director, said yesterday.

Espino said the raid was based on a search warrant issued by Echague Regional Trial Court Judge Bonifacio Ong.

He said Nilo yielded a caliber .45 pistol, eight anti-tank and 14 antipersonnel mines, a 64-foot detonating cord, blasting devices, a laptop and propaganda materials.

Espino said Nilo is a member of the Venerando Villacillo Command, who was sent to the Mindanao to train on bomb making.

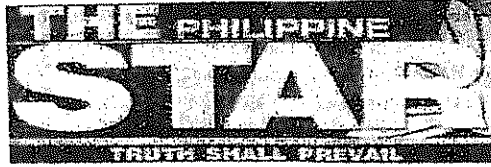
Nilo faces charges for illegal possession of guns and explosives. – Raymund Catindig, Victor Martin



Lt. Col. Remegio Dulatre, chief of the 86th Infantry Battalion, talks to NPA rebel Kevin Nilo (in red shirt) who was arrested in Maddela, Quirino on Thursday.

VICTOR MARTIN

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Lt. Col. Remegio Dulatre, chief of the 86th Infantry Battalion, talks to NPA rebel Kevin Nilo (in red shirt) who was arrested in Maddela, Quirino on Thursday. VICTOR MARTIN

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Nolcom mobilizes troops in Cagayan vs NPA rebels

By Mario J. Mallari

The military's Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) yesterday deployed a battalion-sized of Marine troops in Cagayan province as part of the efforts to degrade the capability of the communist New People's Army (NPA).

Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Salamat, Nolcom commander, led the deployment of the Marine Battalion Landing Team-8 (MBLT-8) in Cagayan to complement the existing Army forces in northern Luzon.

"The deployment of Marines here will complement our existing Army forces, that will decrease some of the gaps that we have identified in Northern Luzon. So they will provide additional force to be able to accomplish our target goals," Salamat said.

"We will exert our best effort to implement the order of the President to degrade the communist NPA terrorists' capability here," he also said.

President Duterte has declared the NPA as a terrorist group after he canceled the peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front (CPP-NDF) due to NPAs' continued atrocities last year.

Salamat maintained that the deployment of Marines in northern Luzon is not new and stressed that Marine troops are "adaptive" wherever they are assigned.

He said the Marines were deployed initially in Luzon areas when the command was created in the 1950s.

"The first baptism of fire of the Marines was in Umiray, Quezon...so I don't think that the Marines will have a hard

time with the NPA," said Salamat, who is a former commandant of the Philippine Marine Corps.

According to Salamat, the Marines were also involved in "secret operations in Nueva Ecija, Aurora, Bataan, Zambales and even in Bulacan.

According to Salamat, he personally requested for the deployment of Marines in Nolcom.

"I see the need just to cover the huge gap with our forces to advance our peace and development efforts and equally securing major infrastructure and vital installations in Northern Luzon," said Salamat.

Meanwhile, Salamat said that Nolcom is ready to protect the country's maritime domain, including the Philippine Rise where China has named undersea features.

"We are privileged to have additional platforms that include air and sea assets to be able to ensure our regular maritime patrol in the Philippine Rise and that is the marching order of the President to secure our interest and maritime interests, the Philippine Rise as well," Salamat said.

He said that while Nolcom has jurisdiction over vast maritime areas in the Philippine Rise and the disputed West Philippine Sea, the command is constantly monitoring the territories.

"We have been doing regular maritime patrol...we are monitoring what is happening in our maritime waters, including the Philippine Rise and the Scarborough Shoal. We will continue to perform our mandated task that is to protect our sovereignty," vowed Salamat.

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The Manila Times

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Cagayan Valley's top NPA bomber arrested

BY LEANDER C. DOMINGO

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya: An alleged high profile member of the communist New People's Army (NPA) also identified as a "blaster man" and medic was arrested in Quirino province for illegal possession of explosives and firearms.

Chief Supt. Jose Mario Espino, Police Regional Office 2 (PRO2) director, said Kevin Bulayo Nilo, alias "Ka Glenn" was arrested on Thursday morning in the far-flung Sitio (sub-village) San Jose of Barangay Ancheta in Maddela town.

He also identified Nilo as among the allegedly 11 NPA active members whose photos PRO2 released last week.

With a search warrant, Espino said, joint elements of the PRO2 and the 5th Infantry (Star) Division (51D) retrieved eight improvised anti-tank explosives, 14 anti-personnel explosives, 12 detonators and assorted electronic

components for explosives, a caliber .45 pistol with two magazines and ammunition, a laptop, five cell phones and voluminous subversive documents.

But Nilo, who was presented during a media conference at Nueva Vizcaya Provincial Police Office, denied having been involved in the NPA movement and said some members of the rebel group only left the confiscated explosives and other devices when they passed by his place.

According to Espino, Nilo is considered a high profile bomber and medic whose initial background gathered by the military intelligence could prove that he

was Mindanao-trained and considered a very dangerous terrorist.

He said there is positive evidence that he was also among the rebel group belonging to the Venerando Villacillo Command responsible for the attack in Maddela town police station in Quirino in April 2017 that resulted in the death of Police Officer 2 Jerome Luwi Cardenas who was then on duty.

Espino said one of the cell phones confiscated from Nilo during his arrest was identified as the same gadget used by the Maddela Police Station's hotline and can be considered the best evidence that he was involved in the said attack.

Nilo is the fourth member of the rebel group that attacked the police station the others being Rey Busania, Raul Merano and Arnold Jamias, who have been charged criminally before the court.

Brigadier General Perfecto Rimando, Philippine Army's 51D commanding general, said that

with the arrest of Kevin Bulayo Nilo, "we were able to thwart the rebels' plan of bombing military and police posts and routes."

"I have always been sending the message to these rebels and terrorists to surrender immediately and benefit from President Rodrigo Duterte's program which is better than being killed," Rimando said. "These communist rebels and terrorists have only two choices and that is to surrender or else they will die if they fight," he added.

He said the arrest of Nilo is the result of the successful operation of a confidential agent in the area and careful gathering of information from the community in coordination with the Philippine Army intelligence and the Philippine National Police.

Police said Nilo will be provided with a lawyer and will be charged for violation of Republic Act (RA) 9516 (Illegal Possession of Explosives) and RA 10591 (Illegal Possession of Firearms).



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Bomb expert ng NPA timbog sa raid!

Mga bomba at armas samsam

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya - Isang high profile bomb expert ng teroristang New People's Army (NPA) ang nahulog sa kamay ng pamahalaan matapos masakote ng pinagsanib na puwersa ng mga pulis at militar sa kanyang tahanan sa Brgy. Jose Ancheta, Maddela, Quirino, kamakalawa ng umaga.

Kinilala ni Sr. Supt. Gregory Bognalbal, police provincial director ng Quirino ang nahuling suspek na si Kevin Bulayo Nilo, alias Glen, residente ng Barangay Jose Ancheta, nasabing lugar.

Sa isinagawang press

conference sa Camp Saturnino Dumlaog, Bayombong sa lalawigan ito, sinabi ni Chief Supt. Jose Mario Espino, police regional director ng Cagayan Valley, na si Nilo ay dating medic officer ng mga komunistang NPA at nagpakadalubhasa sa Mindanao sa paggawa ng bomba bago siya naging high profile "blasterman" sa ilalim ng Venerando Villacillo Command ng rebeldeng NPA.

Positibo rin na tinukoy ni Espino si Nilo bilang isa sa mahigit 100 mga rebelde na sumalakay sa Maddela po-

lice station noong April 29, 2017 na tumangay sa mga armas ng himpilan matapos paulanan ng bala at mapatay ang isang kagawad ng pulisya.

Ipinakita rin sa mga media ang police hotline cellular phone na nakuha kay Nilo na pag-aari ng Maddela police matapos tangayin ng mga rebelde nang sila ay sumalakay.

Sa pahayag ng militar sinabi ni B/Gen. Perfecto Rimando, Jr. Commanding General ng 5th Infantry Division na si Nilo ay nakilala rin sa pamamagitan ng mga larawan na nakuha sa isang USB drive na nabawi ng mga operatiba ng 86th Infantry Battalion sa isang sagupaan laban sa mga rebelde sa Maddela.

Ayon riaman kay B/Gen. Bartolome Bacarro, commanding general ng 502nd Infantry Brigade na may hawak sa 86IB sa ilalim ng 5-ID na makikita sa mga larawan si Nilo at mga kasamahan nito na may mga hawak na malalakas na kalibre ng bari.

Nakuha sa pangangalaga ni Nilo ang malalakas na 12 piraso ng anti-personnel bomb, walong anti-tank bomb na kayang wasakin ang isang military tank, 14

na bomb detonator, 1 cal. 45 na may 2 magazine at mga bala, sari-saring mga subersibong dokumento, 1 laptop na naglalaman ng mga mahalalagang impormasyon at iba-ibang bomb accessories.

Si Nilo ay nadakip ng pinagsanib na puwersa ng Quirino Police, Maddela Police, operatiba ng 86IB at 502nd Brigade ng Philippine Army at ang Quirino Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) batay sa search warrant na ipinalabas ni Judge Bonifacio Ong.

Depensa ng suspek, sinabi nito na iniwan lamang sa kanya ang mga nakuhang bomba na inakala niyang mga gamot.

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Page. 2

NPA bomber nakorner sa Quirino

Nasakoté na ng pulisya ang isang high-profile blasterman/medic ng New People's Army (NPA) matapos salakayin ang lugar nito sa Barangay San Jose, Ancheta sa Maddela, Quirino nitong Hirwebes ng umaga.

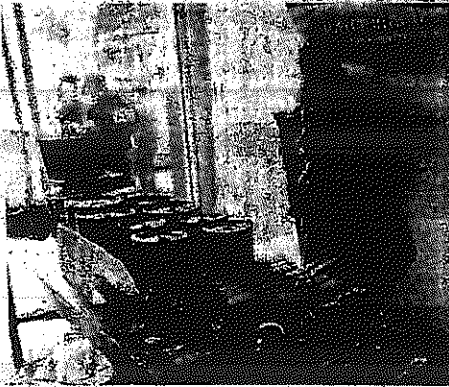
Kinakailangan pang magsarilib-pwersa ng Quirino Police Provincial Office at Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) sa operasyon upang maaresto si Kevin Bulayo Nilo, alyas "Glen". Inihayag ni Police Regional Office (PRO)-2

director Chief Supt. Jose Mario Espino na masyadong mapanganib ang suspek na nagsanay pa umano sa Mindanao.

Ipinapalagay ng mga awtoridad na kabilang si Nilo sa mga rebelde ng amuso sa himpilan ng Maddela Police noong nakaraang taon dahil sa nakober na cell phone nito na dating gamit ng nasabing presinto bilang hotline.

Nakumpiskarin sa pagsalakay ang iba't ibang uri ng pampasabog at mga baril

Lizle Basa Inigo



THE BLASTERMAN

Arestado ang umano'y high-profile blasterman ng New People's Army na si Kevin Bulayo Nilo sa Maddela Quirino at kasamsam mula sa kanya ang bultu-bulto ng mga pampasabog at mga baril



17 February 2018

Pahina. 2

Misencounter: 2 PDEA agents kritikal sa mga pulis, sundalo

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan - Dalawang ahente ng Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) ang nakikipagbuno kay kamatayan matapos mapagkamilang tulak at ratriñ ng mga pulis at sundalo sa nangyaring misencounter sa Brgy. Baybayog, Alcala, Cagayan noong Huwebes.

Sa report kay Cagayan Police Director Sr. Supt Warren Tolito, hinahabol ng magkaangkas sa motor-siklo na sina PDEA agents Judy-mar Molina at Rolando Francisco ang subject nilang tulak na tumakas sa kanilang isinagawang buy bust sa katabing bayan ng Amulung nang maka-engkuwentro ang mga pulis at sundalo ng Philippine Army (PA). Ayon sa re-

port, sumiklab ang shoot-out nang mapadaan ang dalawang PDEA agents sa Brgy. Baybayog nang makasalubong ang mga pulis at sundalo na noon ay natakasan ng kanilang suspek sa isinagawa nilang sariling buy bust. Duguan bumulagta ang dalawang ahente nang humupa ang usok ng mga nagputukang baril dakong alas-11 ng tanghal. Kaagad namang ismugod ng mga sundalo at pulis ang dalawang sugatan na noon lang nilang nalamang ahente pala ng PDEA. Kasalukuyang inoobserbahan sa isang pribadong hospital ang mga biktima habang patuloy ang pagsisiyasat ng awtoridad sa nangyaring kapalpakan.

Raymund Catindig

17 February 2018



Pahina. 3

Teroristang NPA utas sa encounter

Napaslang ang isang miyembro ng mga teroristang New People's Army (NPA) matapos makasagupa ang elite units ng pulisya sa Brgy. Lagaan, Calatrava, Negros Occidental kahapon ng madaling-araw.

Ayon kay Western Visayas Police Supt. Gilbert Gorefo dakong alas-4 ng madaling araw nang mangyari ang bakbakan sa liblib na bahagi ng nasabing lugar.

Kasalukuyang nagsasagawa ng law enforcement operations ang mga elemento ng 61st Special Action Company at 3rd Provincial Mobile Force nang masabat ang grupo ng mga armadong terorista sa lugar.

Sa nasabing pagpa-

panagpo, agad na nagkaroon ng palitan ng putok sa pagitan ng magkalabang puwersa. Sa kasagsagan ng putukan, napurihan ang isang rebelde na inaalam ang pangalan matapos na bumulagta sa insidente.

Ang mga terorista ay mabilis na nagsitakas at inabandona ang nasabing kasamahan matapos ang mahigit dalawang minutong bakbakan.

Nakuha sa lugar ng bakbakan ang baril na gamit ng nasawing NPA terrorist.

Pinaniniwalaan namang marami pa ang nasugatan sa hanay ng teroristang grupo base sa nakitang mga bakas ng dugo sa lugar sa kanilang pagtakas patungo sa kagubatan.

Joy Cantos

17 February 2018

Manila Standard

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Troops deployed to secure PH Rise

Biggest military contingent ever based in Cagayan

By Francisco Tuyay

THE military had deployed hundreds of Marines troopers in the country's northern frontier to secure and maintain the country's sovereign rights over Philippine Rise, after China renamed four seamounts and a hill in the undersea plateau.

Battle-tested soldiers under the Marine Battalion Landing Team-8 landed at Port Irene in Cagayan Friday, with orders to protect Philippine Rise from foreign intruders.

Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Salamat, commander of the Northern Luzon Command, said the deployment of a Marine contingent in Cagayan was a compliance to President Rodrigo Duterte's order to secure Philippine maritime interests, especially in Philippine Rise.

It was believed to be the largest such mobilization of Armed Forces of the Philippines personnel and equipment in the northern province.

"We are privileged to have additional platforms that includes air and sea assets to be able to ensure our regular maritime patrol in the Philippine Rise, and those are the marching orders of the President—to secure our interest and maritime interest," Salamat said.

Philippine Rise, located 135 miles east of Aurora province, is part of the country's 200-kilometer exclusive economic zone that the United Nations declared as part of the country's extended continental shelf. *Next page*

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295



SECURITY REASONS: The Philippine military has deployed hundreds of Marine troops east of Luzon to secure and maintain the country's sovereign rights over Benham Rise (Philippine Rise) after China renamed three seamounts off the undersea plateau. Battle-tested Marines under the Marine Battalion Landing Team-8 landed at Port Irene in Cagayan Friday, a military complement task to safeguard the country's eastern and western seaboard particularly at Philippine Rise from foreign intruders.

While the Navy and Marines regularly conduct maritime patrols off these areas despite the limited assets the country had, the presence of Marine forces in the northern frontier is dedicated to monitor the daily situation in the country's maritime waters.

"The commitment of the national government is to really ensure that we are monitoring what is happening in our maritime waters including the Philippine Rise and the Scarborough Shoal so we will continue to perform our mandated task—that is to protect our sovereignty," Salamat said.

He said the Marines would also be protecting Filipino fishermen in the waters of Northern Luzon.

At present, Salamat said, they are setting up a shelter for Filipino fishermen in Mavulis Island, situated in the northernmost part of the Batanes island chain. It could also be used by the Marines.

The Marines, Salamat said, would protect the public from all threats to national security, including the New People's Army.

Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano said the Philippines would not accept the Chinese names for five Philippine Rise features and said he brought the matter up with his Chinese counterparts during a recent consultation.

Cayetano, however, said China was within its rights to name the features that it discovered.

"In the scientific community, if you discover something, you have the right to name it," he said in a mix of Filipino and English.

He said the Philippines would not file a diplomatic protest in the same way it did not object to the Americans for naming the area Benham Rise.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

He said that under the requirements of the International Hydrographic Organization—Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (IHO-IOC GEBCO) Subcommittee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN), if a country has the resources for research, scientists, and equipment, it can name any water features that it discovers.

“Anyone who follows the requirements can name it,” Cayetano said.

Maritime law expert Jay Batongbacal had said in a Facebook post that the IHO approved the names submitted by China for five features all within 200 nautical miles of the east coast of Luzon.

The Chinese names are: Jinghao Seamount and Tianbao Seamount (both around 70 nautical miles east of Cagayan province), Haidonqing Seamount (190 nautical miles east of Cagayan province) and Cuiqiao Hill and Jujia Seamount.

The names for three of the features were reportedly submitted for consideration in 2014 by the China Navy Hydrographic Office, which discovered the features, Batongbacal said.

The names for the two other features were submitted for approval by the China Ocean Minerals R&D Association in 2016.

Cayetano said as soon as the Philippines is able to officially get the data, the country will apply to the IHO and name the five features in Filipino.

“We will tell IHO that we won’t recognize any Chinese name unless we agree to it,” he said.

The Philippines is not a member of the sub-committee. China’s proposals to name the undersea features were submitted to the body in its October 2015 and September 2017 meetings.

The 13-million hectare Philippine Rise lies in the eastern part of the Philippines in the Pacific Ocean, about 250 kilometers east of Dinapigue, Isabela, and is said to be wider than Luzon, Samar and Leyte combined.

In 2012, the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf approved the country’s undisputed territorial claim over the area, also called Benham Rise.

The Philippine Rise is not within the disputed South China Sea and the Philippines has the sovereign right to explore and exploit all the natural resources found in it as part of the country’s extended continental shelf.

President Duterte renamed the underwater region from Benham Rise to Philippine Rise in May 2017 following sightings of a Chinese survey ship in the territory. **With Sara Susanne D. Fabunan**

February 2018

The Manila Times

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IN WEST PHILIPPINE SEA

Palace: US presence must be 'peaceful'

MALACANANG wants no "untoward" incidents in disputed waters with presence of United States military vessels in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. made the statement after US Navy Rear Admiral John Fuller told reporters on board the *USS Carl Vinson* that "US presence matters" in the disputed waters.

"We hope there will be no untoward incident on the occasion of the visit of *USS Carl Vinson* in our region," Roque said.

Roque said any country was free to navigate the West Philippine Sea.

"All vessels, including aircraft carriers, are entitled to freedom of navigation in the [West Philippine Sea]," he said.

One of the United States Navy's longest-serving active carriers, *USS Carl Vinson* is conducting a "routine mission" in the area, where years of island reclamation and military construction by Beijing has rattled regional nerves.

The aircraft carrier *USS Carl Vinson* and guided-missile destroyer *USS Michael Murphy* arrived at the Manila port on Friday with more than 5,500 sailors from both vessels set to visit local attractions and participate in community service projects while in the Philippine capital.

"We are just very thankful for the support we have from the Philippine government and the Philippine people," said Fuller in a statement on Friday. "We have a longstanding relationship and we want to continue to build on that."

The *USS Carl Vinson* hosted top Philippine government and military officials February 14 before arriving. Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Communications Secretary Martin Andanar and others flew aboard the carrier with US Ambassador Sung Kim.

The delegation ate lunch with strike group leadership, toured the hangar bay, and observed flight operations on the flight deck prior to boarding a C-2A Greyhound for

the return to Manila.

Following criticism that the Trump administration's commitment to the Asian region has been distracted by North Korea, reports were also flown on the *USS Carl Vinson* that top Philippine government and military officials met with it before arriving on Wednesday as it sailed through the sea.

Earlier this month, reports showed that China was nearly done with the construction of military facilities in islands claimed by neighboring countries, including the Philippines.

Fuller, commander of the *USS Carl Vinson* Strike Group, said on Wednesday

the 233-meter-long ship's presence was a way to reassure allies.

"The nations in the Pacific are maritime nations," he said. "They value stability. That's exactly what we are here for. This is a very visible and tangible presence. The United States is here again."

Beijing claims most of the South China Sea - believed to hold vast oil and gas deposits and through which \$5 trillion in trade passes annually - and has rapidly built reefs into artificial islands capable of hosting military planes.

The Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei also have claims in the sea.

RALPH U. VILLANUEVA

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USS CARL VINSON'S SOUTH CHINA SEA PASSAGE

US CARRIER ENTITLED TO FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION, SAYS PALACE

By Leila B. Salaverria
@LeilasINQ

Malacañang on Friday said that like any country, the United States was "entitled to freedom of navigation" in the South China Sea, as it commented on the port call of the US aircraft carrier, USS Carl Vinson, in Manila.

At the same time, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque expressed hopes that the carrier's voyage to the disputed waterway would not lead to any conflict.

"All vessels, including aircraft carriers, are entitled to freedom of navigation in the [West Philippine Sea, the part of the South China Sea within the country's 370-kilometer exclusive economic zone]," Roque

said in a statement.

"We hope there will be no untoward incident on the occasion of the visit of USS Carl Vinson in our region," he added.

Amid concerns that the US warship's visit could cause tension with China, he said the Philippines was seeking closer ties with all countries.

"Everybody is a friend of the Philippines. We have no enemies," he said in a separate interview.

The USS Carl Vinson sailed through the waters extensively claimed by China in what US officials described as a routine mission.

Its visit comes amid Beijing's aggressive island building and construction of military facilities



The Nimitz-class US aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson makes its way to the South China Sea. - CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ties in the waterway, as well as the warming ties between Manila and Beijing, largely due to President Duterte's efforts to cultivate China's friendship. Philippine government and military officials were flown to the ship for a tour. INQ

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DFA: China gives 'no-build' assurance in sea row talks

By Marlon Ramos
and Dona Z. Pazzibugan.
@Team_Inquirer

China has assured the Philippines that it would refrain from conducting any activities on uninhabited areas in the West Philippine Sea, Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano said on Friday.

Cayetano said the country had also made "gains" in its territorial dispute with China despite the latter's transformation of three of seven Philippine-claimed reefs it had seized since 2007 into facilities that could accept fighter aircraft and naval vessels.

Beijing made the "no-build" commitment during a recent "no-holds-barred" Bilateral Consultative Meeting (BCM) in Manila between ranking diplomats from both countries last Feb. 13, he said.

Apart from sandbars and rock outcroppings, uninhabited areas in the West Philippine Sea once included Kagitingan (internationally known as Fiery Cross), Pangániban (Mischief) and Mabini (Johnson South) reefs—which China has transformed into military installations.

"There's a commitment (made) by China and all other parties not to build on uninhabited sea features in accordance with the (proposed) declaration of the conduct in the South China Sea," Cayetano told a press briefing.

Fishermen's access

He said the gains included Filipino fishermen's access to Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal, which China seized in 2012, and the setting up of measures to protect the marine ecosystem in the disputed sea.

"Let me note that our fishermen are back exercising their livelihood in (Panatag Shoal) and, overall, the situation in the greater South China Sea has become stable than in past years," the country's top diplomat said.

Contrary to public perception, Cayetano said Manila had been actively bringing up the issues regarding Beijing's ag-

gressive militarization in the South China Sea and its construction of artificial islands.

"Just because we're not announcing diplomatic actions (on the West Philippine Sea issue)," Cayetano said, "doesn't mean we're not taking it. We're putting on record what has to be put on record."

The Philippines was represented in the meeting by Foreign Undersecretary for Policy Enrique Manalo while its Chinese counterpart was led by Vice Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou.

Cayetano said the meeting was important to the country because it tackled "parts of the arbitration award," referring to Manila's landmark victory against Beijing in the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague in 2016.

The meeting was held a week after the Inquirer and Inquirer.net made public recent photos of China's construction of military facilities in seven Philippine-claimed islands in the West Philippine Sea, a move seen by security experts as part of Beijing's efforts to toughen its military muscle in the sea region.

It also coincided with the routine mission of the American

warship USS Carl Vinson in the South China Sea, the disputed waterway through which some \$5 trillion in trade passes each year.

Cayetano praised the bilateral meeting's mechanism as an "important step toward resolving ongoing disputes between Manila and Beijing."

Common interests

"This (bilateral consultation) mechanism is here to strengthen the momentum of cooperation in matters of common interest, such as marine environmental protection, coordination between Coast Guards, and the protection of our fishermen, as well as the possibility of joint exploration," he said.

President Duterte, who previously promised to ride a Jet Ski and plant a Philippine flag in the Spratlys to emphasize his commitment in protecting the country's territory, has softened the Philippines' stance against China in exchange for over \$24 billion in loans and investment commitments.

China has also resumed importing Philippine bananas.

At the same time, the foreign secretary said the Philip-

pinas has been "pursuing aggressively" possible joint exploration activities with China in areas in the West Philippine Sea which both countries had contrasting ownership claims.

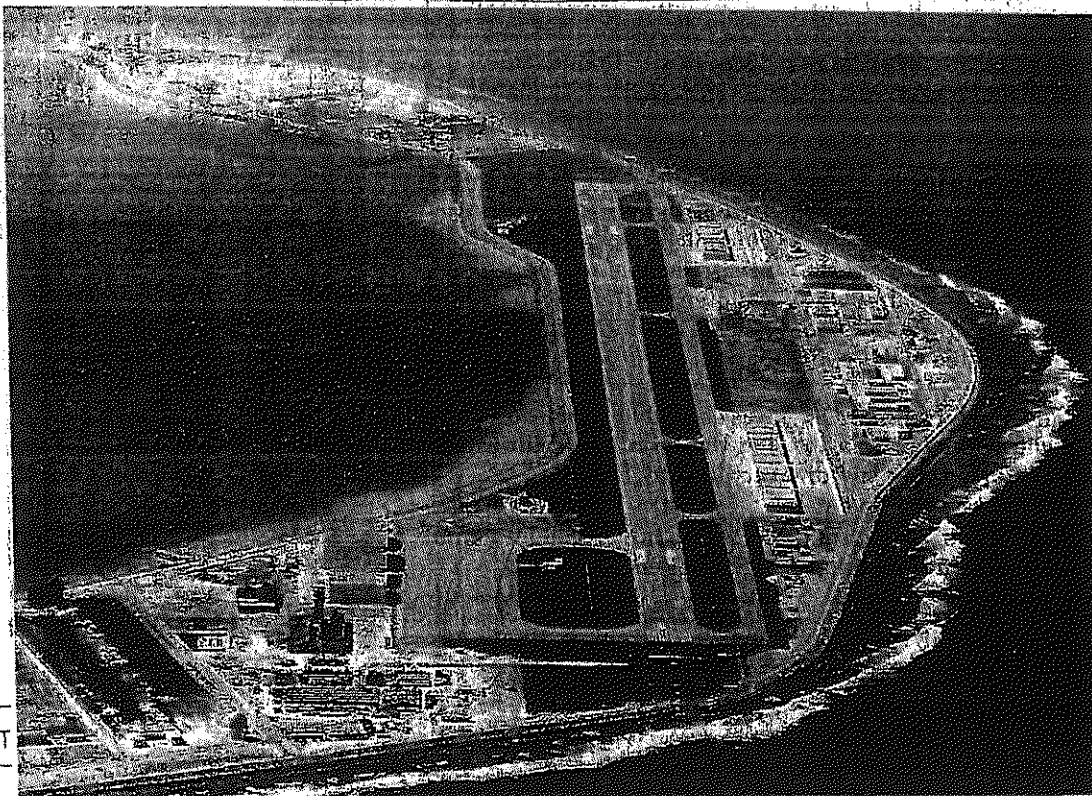
"We are pursuing it aggressively because we need it," Cayetano said. "It will serve no one good if we don't explore and eventually develop (the disputed areas)."

He said it would be useless to discuss possible joint development activities with China if the Philippines had no idea what resources could be harvested in a particular area.

Beijing and Manila would soon form their respective "working group" to discuss the parameters of the possible joint exploration agreement, according to Cayetano.

"We will find a legal framework, if it's possible under the constitution, that will allow joint exploration," he said.

"We are consulting international legal experts. Whatever we do, it's not only in accordance with the Constitution, but also the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea)," he stressed. INQ



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ESPERON NOTES LACK OF CONSULTATION

ROQUE: PH TO SEEK CHANGES IN WAY MARINE SITES ARE NAMED

By Leila B. Salaverria
@LeilasINQ

While saying it's not a big deal, the Palace spokesperson on Friday said the government would seek changes in the process of naming undersea features, like those found in the Philippine (PH) Rise.

Harry Roque said the current process being followed by the UN-linked agency International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) in naming undersea features was controlled only by rich countries capable of conducting undersea exploration.

Roque's statement came amid the controversy over the naming by China of seamounts, or mountains rising from the deep seafloor in PH Rise.

Naming rights

Countries that are not members of the Subcommittee on Undersea Feature Names (SCUFN), which submits proposed names to IHO, are not notified of the names given to undersea features located in their territories because the process does not require it, according to Roque.

The Philippines is not a member of SCUFN, which is composed of Germany (chair), China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Canada, Italy and Russia.

"If naming rights would depend on a country's capability to conduct scientific research and exploration, then only the rich countries would be able to name [the features]," Roque said.

China submitted names for features in the Philippine Rise to SCUFN in October 2015 and September 2017. IHO approved the names in 2017.

'Siopao,' 'ampao'

But Roque, a lawyer with a known expertise in international law, maintained that having Chinese names for undersea features in the Philippine Rise was no big deal.

"China has named many things—'siopao,' 'siomal,' 'ampao,' 'pechay,' 'hototay,'" said

Roque, referring to some Filipino food items. "This does not mean they are getting ownership of these."

But another official of the Duterte administration, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said the Philippines had already served notice to China that giving Chinese names to Philippine Rise features was unacceptable.

In a statement on Thursday, Esperon said China's naming of seamounts in the Philippine Rise was done "without due consultation with the Philippine government."

Chinese names

The Chinese names Jinghao (Siren) and Tianbao (Fill In) had been adopted for two seamounts in the Philippine Rise in September 2016, Esperon said.

The government, he added, raised an objection directly with China on Feb. 13 during a meeting of the Philippines-China Bilateral Consultative Mechanism, a body created to serve as venue for dialogue on territorial disputes in the West Philippine Sea.

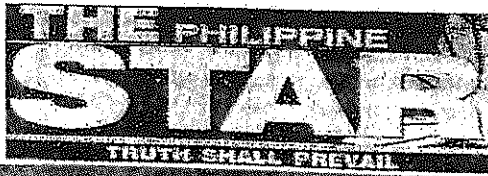
"We do not recognize the Chinese names," Esperon said.

The Chinese names will appear on maps of the Philippine Rise that will be used for navigation or research and give the impression that the undersea features belong to China —WITH

A REPORT FROM NIKKO DIZON INQ

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PHI WON'T RECOGNIZE CHINA'S NAMES FOR UNDERSEA FEATURES

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

The Philippines will not recognize foreign names for undersea features in the Philippine Rise (Bernam Rise) regardless of what the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) would say, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano said yesterday.

He also said the Philippines has already informed China of its position.

"We will not accept it, that's why we used the word object and protest," Cayetano said.

The IHO is the international body that documents and compiles names of underwater features.

He said the Philippines is preparing to give Filipino names to undersea features in the Philippine Rise and will submit its list to IHO.

"We have communicated to China that we understand for them it is purely scientific. But it is not a good time to have Chinese names in the features because we have a live dispute in the South China Sea," Cayetano added.

Jay Batongbacal, director of the University of the Philippines Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of

the sea, said the IHO approved the names proposed by China last year.

He said three of the features were reported to have been "discovered" during a 2004 survey by the Li Shiguang Hao of the China Navy Hydrographic Office, which submitted the names for consideration by the IHO in 2014.

As this developed, a Battalion of Marines was deployed in Cagayan Valley to help secure the country's northern maritime border.

The deployment by the Northern Luzon Command of the Marine Battalion Landing Team-8 (MBLT-8) to Port Irene in Sta. Ana in Cagayan Valley came amid security concerns at Panatag Shoal off Zambales and in the Bashi Channel, a sea lane between Taiwan and the Philippines' northernmost island province of Batanes.

Bashi Channel connects the South China Sea, the East China Sea and the Pacific Ocean, where the 13-million-hectare Philippine Rise – an underwater plateau – is situated.

"We have vast maritime areas in the northern frontier and partner islands not only in Batanes island group. We have to have the Marines

here not only to promote and ensure safety of life at sea but also to manifest our strong claims in the partner islands in the northern frontier," Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Salamat, Nolcom commander said.

The deployment of Marines to Northern Luzon started during the term of now retired Nolcom commander Lt. Gen. Romeo Tanalgo. He had ordered the landing of soldiers and the planting of the Philippine flag on Mavulis, an unoccupied islet under the administrative control of Itbayat island in Batanes.

Salamat said plans are afoot for the building of a fishermen's enclave on Mavulis islet that would be guarded by Marines.

The Marines – mostly from Western Mindanao – arrived yesterday in Port Irene on a Navy landing dock ship.

"Nolcom not only covers the geographic regions of Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) but also the vast maritime areas of eastern and western seabards," Salamat said.

He said Nolcom is also deploying air and naval assets to conduct patrols

in the area.

"We are privileged to have additional platforms that include air and sea assets for the conduct of regular maritime patrol in the Philippine Rise as per marching order of the President for us to secure our maritime interests," Salamat said.

A militant fishers group, meanwhile, wants the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to explain what happened to its P500-million funds for marine biodiversity research in the Philippine Rise.

Fisherfolk group Pamalalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalalakaya) raised the question amid the controversy sparked by the government's issuance of research and surveying permits to China and other countries in the 13-million square kilometer Philippine Rise.

President Duterte later revoked the permits.

The funds supposedly came from the DENR's National Greening Program (NGP). Pamalalakaya quoted experts as saying P300 million would be sufficient to cover research activities in the area.

But the DENR has yet to release to the public a list of the researchers or if the budget was spent properly, Pamalalakaya said.

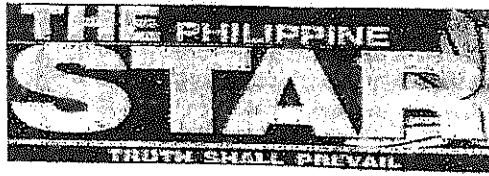
"The DENR has been keeping silent on the issue of Philippine Rise despite the government pronouncement that Filipino scientists could not afford to conduct research due to lack of funding," it said.

"The budget allotted to the agency is enough for research because according to scientists, it will only take at least P300 million to do adequate research on Philippine Rise," the group added.

With that big budget allotted to the agency, whom to say we still need foreign countries like the China, US and Japan to conduct research in our own backyard? Pamalalakaya chairman Fernando Hilcap pointed out.

The DENR owes the public an explanation on what happened to the P500-million research fund. The public deserves to know the truth because the issue of Philippine Rise is a matter of our sovereign rights and utilization of our marine resources, Pamalalakaya said. With Jaime Laude, Ding Cervantes.

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Phl committed to peace with Reds – Rody

By ALEXIS ROMERO
and JOSE RODEL CLAPANO

Days after offering a reward for killing rebels, President Duterte has assured Norway's special envoy for the talks with communists that his administration

remains committed to peace.

Duterte made the commitment during his meeting with Idun Tvedt, Norwegian special envoy to the peace process between the Philippine government and the National Democratic Front (NDF), in Davao City last Thursday.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said Tvedt reiterated the commitment of the Norwegian government to assist the Philippines in its peace process with the communist rebels. Norway served as third party facilitator of the peace talks.

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"The President welcomed Norway's expression of commitment and stressed that the goal of peace must be achieved with due regard for the national interest of the Philippines," Roque said.

"The President stressed that the Philippines is committed to peace," he added.

The meeting, described by Norwegian officials as "productive," came days after Duterte promised to give

P25,000 for every communist rebel killed.

In a speech before newly appointed officials in Malacñang last Tuesday, Duterte said offering bounty for the communist guerrillas is cheaper than launching a campaign against insurgency.

Presidential Communications Secretary Martin Andanar said Duterte was serious about his reward offer to those who would kill rebels.

"If the President says he will give P25,000 to *lumads* (indigenous peoples) who will kill NPA (New People Army) members during encounters, he is not joking. Andanar told radio station *dwFM* yesterday.

"Insurgency has been a huge problem of our country and we saw how (communist leader Jose Maria) Sison announced that a soldier would be killed every day. The President will now allow this," he added.

The meeting between

Duterte and Tvedt was held months after the President scrapped the negotiations with the communist rebels and classified the NPA and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the political arm of the rebels, as "terrorist organizations."

Explaining his decision to terminate the talks, the President had claimed the communists were pushing for a coalition government, a setup that he said is not allowed by the Constitution because it would force him to "share" the

Philippines' sovereignty.

He also cited the NPA attacks that harm civilians and its alleged extortion campaign that targeted businesses.

Duterte also sparked controversy recently after saying that female members of the NPA should be shot in their vaginas to render the body part useless.

Duterte slammed

The Melito Glor Command NPA-Southern Tagalog (MGC-NPA-ST) strongly condemned yesterday Duterte's order to

military troops to shoot female communist rebels in their genitals to render them useless, calling it "vulgar, unethical and immoral."

In a statement posted on the CPP website, MGC-NPA-ST spokesman Jaime Padilla said the President is an "irresponsible sexist."

"His series of statements against women even before his statement regarding our female Red fighters are irresponsible, sexist remarks unbecoming of a leader," Padilla said.

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PH still committed to peace, says Duterte

By Leila B. Salaverria
@LeilasINQ

Norway remains committed to helping in the peace process between the Philippine government and communist insurgents, but Malacañang said negotiations with the rebels were still out of the question at the moment.

President Duterte met with Idun Tvedt, the Norwegian special envoy to the peace process between the government of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, in Davao City on Thursday.

Mr. Duterte told Norway that the Philippines remained committed to peace, said presidential spokesperson Harry Roque.

Norway's help

Tvedt reiterated her government's commitment to help the Philippines in its peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front of the Philippines (CPP-NPA-NDFP), said Roque.

The President welcomed her statement and said the goal of peace must be achieved with

due regard for the country's interests.

"The President stressed that the Philippines is committed to peace," Roque said in a statement.

But in a separate interview with reporters, Roque said the peace talks with the communist insurgents were not about to resume anytime soon and the war against the NPA would continue.

No sincerity

The President explained that there seems to be no future for the peace talks because the NPA has no sincerity when it

comes to talking peace," he said. "We cannot hold talks with people who are not being true to you," the spokesman added.

The ball now, he said, is in the NPA's court if it wants the peace discussions to resume. "The government has to see some sincerity on the part of the NPA," he said.

'Warm and open'

Roque described the President's meeting with Tvedt and other Norwegian officials as "warm and open," while the latter said it was "productive."

Joining Tvedt were Norway's

Ambassador to the Philippines Erik Førner, Deputy Chief of Mission Kristian Netland and Senior Advisor William Hovland.

Mr. Duterte earlier canceled peace talks with the communists after getting incensed over their continued attacks on soldiers and civilians.

Oslo's signal

He subsequently declared the CPP and NPA as terrorist organizations, and vowed to crack down on their legal fronts.

Ryan Amper, spokesperson for Barug Katungod Mindanao, of the groups calling for the re-

sumption of peace talks, said Tvedt's visit could be a signal that Oslo was pressing Manila to return to the negotiating table.

"We laud Norway's special envoy for exerting efforts to revive the peace talks that Duterte has persistently scuttled," Amper told the Inquirer.

He said it was important for the talks to resume so that a comprehensive agreement on social and economic reforms, which were seen to address the root cause of the insurgency,

—WITH REPORTS FROM AILAN NAWAL AND JIGGER JERUSALEM, INQ

February 2018



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Norwegians vow to continue hosting PH-Reds peace talks

By Vito Barcelo

THE Norwegian government on Friday vowed to continue supporting the peace negotiations between the Philippines and the National Democratic Front, even after President Rodrigo Duterte terminated the peace talks with communist groups including the NDF.

Norwegian special envoy Idun Tvedt paid a courtesy call to the President in Davao City and assured that the European country will continue to fully commit in supporting the peace talks between the Philippine government and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-NDF group.

In a statement, Roque described the one-hour meeting between the President and the woman envoy as "warm and open."

"Tvedt expressed Norway is ready to assist the peace negotiations if and when it is revived," he said.

Duterte welcomed Norway's expression of commitment and stressed that the goal of peace "must be achieved with due regard for the national interest of the Philippines."

The President reiterated that his administration is committed to peace.

Duterte had canceled the negotiations with the communists as he declared members of the CPP and NPA as terrorists.

During the meeting, the President reiterated his strong stance against CPP founding chairman Jose Maria "Joma" Sison's demand to form a coalition government.

Duterte stressed that such setup was "un-constitutional" and would only result in chaos throughout the country.

Since 2001, Norway has served as a facilitator of the peace process between the Philippine government and NDF consultants led by Sison.

The NPA, the armed wing of the CPP, has battled the government for more than 50 years.

Meanwhile, the President is contemplating on arming civilians in the countryside in the event the security situation deteriorates due to the threat posed by the Islamic State.

The President made the proposal after expressing concerns that ISIS-linked organizations might simultaneously attack places in Luzon and Visayas.

"My only worry is that they are really out, dispersed in the Visayas and maybe in Luzon. And if I may ask you, what if they do another Marawi attack," he said from Davao.

He said the ISIS terrorists were regrouping, and that is his main concern.

"If the situation deteriorates, then I would allow the ownership of high-powered guns. If they have but a shotgun, it will do to defend themselves," he added.

In a speech last Tuesday, Duterte admitted that the Abu Sayyaf group and other lawless organizations have "been contaminated" and have "pledged allegiance" to the ISIS.

He added that Luzon might even need an "early warning device" amid the latest security threats.



Norwegian Special Envoy Idun Tvedt listens intently to President Rodrigo Duterte (foreground), who received the envoy at the Presidential Guest House in Davao City Thursday. **Presidential Photo**

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The Manila Times

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Norway still supports talks with Reds – Palace

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

THE Norwegian government has reiterated its continued support for the peace negotiations between the Philippines and the communist rebels even after President Rodrigo Duterte terminated the talks, Malacañang said on Friday.

The commitment was made during Duterte's meeting with the Norwegian special envoy to the peace process between the Philippine Government and the National Democratic Front (NDF), Idun Tvedt, in Davao City on

Thursday night.

In a statement, Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said Duterte and Tvedt had a "warm and open" dialogue on issues concerning the government's peace talks with the

communist group.

During the meeting, Roque said Duterte expressed commitment to pursue long-lasting peace that would benefit the Filipino people.

"The Special Envoy reiterated the commitment of the Norwegian government to assist the Philippines in its peace process with the CPP (Communist Party of the Philippines), NPA (New People's Army), and NDF," Roque said.

"The President welcomed Norway's expression of commitment and stressed that the goal of peace must be achieved with due regard for the national interest of the Philippines. The President said the Philippines is

committed to peace," he added.

Tvedt's courtesy call on Duterte came amid the President's decision to scrap the peace talks with the communists and declare members of the CPP and NPA terrorists.

Duterte has offered a nearly \$500 bounty for each communist rebel killed by government forces to save on anti-insurgency costs.

"You kill an NPA today and I'll pay you P25,000," Duterte said in a speech at an air base in central Cebu City, referring to NPA guerrillas.

Since 2001, Norway has served as a facilitator of the peace process between the Philippine government and the NDF.



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MARILIA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Norway still committed to assist in peace talks

B. ARGYL, CYRUS B. GEDUGOS

Malacañang reported that the Norwegian government remains committed to assist the Philippine government (GPH) in stalled peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF).

Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque made the statement following the courtesy

call of Idun Tvedt, Norwegian Special Envoy to the Peace Process between the GPH and the CPP-NPA-NDF, to President Duterte in Davao City Thursday night.

Roque in a statement described the one-hour meeting with the President and the lady envoy as "warm and open" and that Tvedt expressed that Norway is ready to assist the peace negotiations if and when it is revived.

"The Special Envoy reiterated the commitment of the Norwegian Government to assist the Philippines in

its peace process with the CPP-NPA-NDF, Roque said Friday afternoon.

President Duterte welcomed the gesture of the Norwegian government and said that the Philippines also remains committed to peace.

The President welcomed Norway's expression of commitment and stressed that the goal of peace must be achieved with due regard for the national interests of the Philippines, Roque said.

Duterte originally promised to talk peace with the communist rebels during his term but the Reds' supposed insincerity to the talks prompted the President to officially terminate the negotiations when he issued Proclamation No. 360 of November 23, 2017.

February 2018

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Habib: ASG bandit turns away from life of terror to reunite with his family

ZAMBOANGA CITY — The provinces of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi (BaSulTa) including the city of Zamboanga and the peninsula or Region 9, are mired in a long history of terrorism. Civilians and law enforcement authorities have suffered from violence. Fear and anxiety reign in the hearts of the people.

Properties were destroyed and lives of people were disrupted. The atrocities were perpetrated by lawless individuals including teenagers who have joined

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the bandits, or terror groups, some only nine years old. Many of these bandits and terrorists have quietly returned to the fold of the law.

More than 177 members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in BaSulTa have recently surrendered to the government and renounced their previous terroristic activities.

One of them is 18-year-old Habib. Habib was raised in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan and became involved with the ASG at a young age. He was a 14-year-old Grade 4 pupil when some members of the ASG asked him to buy food in the public market. It became his daily routine before going to school and after classes.

"Inutusan ako ng mga Abu sa Baguindan na bumili sa palengke, araw-araw na yun, hanggang sa hindi na ako pinauwi sa amin (The Abus would order me to buy food for them in the market every day. One day, they did not allow me to go back home anymore)," Habib said.

With regular access to the ASG's camp in Barangay Baguindan in Tipo-Tipo, he became a full-fledged member of the group. The ASG's Baguindan camp was recently overrun by government troops.

Monthly pay

Habib said ASG members receive a monthly allowance. "Sa loob ng kampo, pag single bimbigyan ng P5,000 kada buwan, pag pamilyado naman P10,000 hindi na mahirapan maghanap ng pera (Inside the camp, if you are single, you will be given P5,000. If you are married, you will get P10,000. It was an easy way to

earn money," Habib confessed.

Habib is the fifth of eight siblings. His father died when he was six and his mother went overseas to work when he became an ASG member.

"Wala na akong tatay, wala rin dito ang nanay ko, ang mga kapatid ko nag-asawana, kaya mas okay na sa akin sumali sa ASG," Habib said.

Habib recalls many experiences inside the camp during his four years as a member of the ASG. He was generally assigned as an errand boy who helps in the day-to-day needs of the combatants — he buys food, he cooks, and he helps in the preparation of weapons before an operation.

Kidnapping

He was once assigned to abduct a woman from Tipo-Tipo proper.

"Kung may mga kinikidnap, dadaan ng Zamboanga. May tao na mag-aantay sa port, pa lang ng Zamboanga, tapos iba naman may maghahintay sa Isabela. Pagdating ng Isabela ididirekso sa Lamitan, saka pupunta ng Tipo-Tipo. At kami naghahintay sa Baguindan (We conduct our kidnapping by passing through Zamboanga, there will be members waiting at the port of Zamboanga while some will wait in Isabela. From Isabela, the kidnap victim will be brought to Lamitan, then Tipo-Tipo. We will be waiting for them in Baguindan)," he said.

When asked how ASG members treat the victims, Habib said, "Nung ako ang sumundo sa babaeng nakidnap, gusto ko siya patakasin kasalawawa lang, pero sinabihan ako ng mga matatanda kong

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kasama na kapag pinatakas ko, ako daw ang papatayin ng grupo (When I went to pick up the female kidnap victim, I wanted to let her escape because I pitied her but I was told by the elder members of the group that if I would allow her to escape, the group will kill me)," he said.

Beheadings

Habib, along with his young peers, also witnessed ASG leaders beheading hostages inside their camps.

He added that the group's leaders would first ask for volunteers among them to do the beheading.

"Maraming beses na ako nakakita ng pinupugutan na hostage kapag walang mabigay na ransom kasi kapag may pupugutan na kailangan namin mianood lahat, magagalit ang commander kapag hindi namin pinanood (I have witnessed so many beheadings of hostages who failed to come up with the ransom money. We were obliged by our commander to watch the beheadings. He gets angry if we don't watch)," Habib explained.

"Kung magpapakita ka ng awa sa kanila (hostages), o ng takot sa mangyayari, ikaw ang pagdidiskatahan nila (If you by any chance show pity or fear, they will pounce on you)," he narrated.

He said the commanders, especially the senior ones, would usually do the beheading when hostages cannot pay for their ransom money.

Escape after combat

Habib said he was also assigned in combat against government soldiers in 2016 in Baguindan. "Kapag may baril ka, matapang ka (If you have a gun, then you are fearless)."

Habib said he led a violent life full of

uncertainties until he yearned for a decent and peaceful life as a civilian.

"Gusto ko tumakas pero hindi ko alam kung papaano kasi natatakot din ako. I wanted to escape but I didn't know how because I was afraid," he added. He said he saw an opportunity to escape during his last participation in an encounter against government troops in Baguindan last year.

"Pagkatapos ng giyera sa Baguindan, yun na yung pagkakataon na naisip ko na tumakas at sumuko (After the Baguindan gunbattle, I found a way to escape and surrender)," he said.

"Pagod na kasi ako sa buhay sa loob ng kampo, gusto ko ng mag-aral, namimiss ko na ang mga kapatid ko, gusto kong lumabas na hindi natatakot at kailangang magtago (I am tired of living in a camp. I want to go back to school. I miss my siblings. I want to live once and for all without fear and without hiding)," he said teary-eyed.

Homecoming

When he finally reached home, he saw that his mother had just returned from her overseas employment for good. "Ang saya saya ko nung nakita ko nanay ko na nasa bahay na, kasama ang mga kapatid ko (I was so happy to see my mother at home with my brothers and sisters)," he said.

"Kaya sumuko na talaga ako para mas maging maayos ang buhay namin lalo na andyan na ang nanay ko (This is why I surrendered so I can live a normal life, especially now that my mother is home)," he said.

He said he wants to go back to school and become a policeman. "Pag nakapagtapos na ako gusto ko maging pulis para ako

naman ang go protektar sa mga Basilan province laban sa mga Abu Sayyaf. I want to become a policeman so that one day I will be the one to protect the people of Basilan from the Abu Sayyaf," he said smiling.

Today, Habib is one of the returnees who underwent psychosocial interventions, debriefing, dialogue with the military and government officials, and was given a brief course on farming to help them reform and start a new life.

Abu sub-leaders

The Armed Forces of the Philippines Western Mindanao Command (AFP WestMinCom) records showed that ASG sub-leader Sansibar Bensio is operating in Panamao, Omar and Lulu. He is a trusted man of the late ASG sub-leader Ahabsy Misaya and was named sub group leader of the ASG this month.

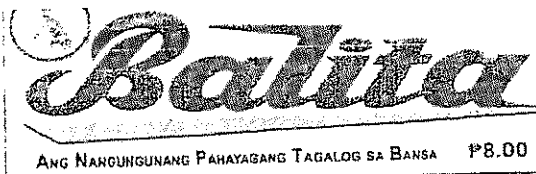
Bensio has eight followers and was involved in the kidnapping and safekeeping of Indonesian kidnap victims who were released last 2016 and is listed No. 1 in the Periodic Status Report of government enemies.

AFP WestMinCom record also shows that Bensio was last monitored being involved in an encounter with soldiers last Jan. 31, 2017 at vicinity Barangay Pagad Manaul and Bulangsin both located in Panamao, Sulu.

Habib Munap Binda son the other hand is another ASG sub-leader based in Talipao, Sulu and is operating in Kalingalang Caluang, same Province.

His group was deleted from the watch list following years of inactivity. His group was also once known to be actively participating and supporting sub-leader Misaya

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BUHAY TERORISTA ASG members obligadong panoorin ang pamumugot

Ni Nonoy E. Lacson

ZAMBOANGA CITY - Aabot na sa mahigit 117 miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) sa Basilan, Sultan Tawir-Tawir ang sumuko sa awtonomikong nakalipas na mga buwan, kasunod ng pinaigting na operasyon ng gobyerno laban sa teroristang grupo.

Ila sa mga sumukong terorista ang 18-anyos na si abas, Habib, tubong Tipo, Tipo, Basilan, na ibininyag kamakailan kung paano ang naging bahay niya habang kasaping ASG sa nakalipas na apat na taon ng kanyang buhay.

Kuwento ni Habib, 14-anos sa edad, at mag-aral sa Grade 4 nang opisyon ayang mga miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf na tumali ng pagkam sa palengke, na kailan nang regular na niyang ginagapara sa pang-bago at pagkagalangang sasakyan.

Inutusan ako ng mga ASG sa (Barangay) Bagumban (Tipo-Tipo), na bumili sa palengke. Araw-araw na yun hanggang sa hindi na ako pinauwisang it-sabi ni Habib.

SUMUSUWELDO

Aniya, tumatangap ng burwarang suweldo ang mga miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf.

"Sa loob ng kampong pang-suweldo binibigyan ng pera ang mga ASG sa pamumugot, namin, ayon sa mga na mahirap-an maghahanap ng kuwento ni Habib, nakalimutan ang magkapatid, hindi na kami nagtatrabaho aron sa abang ang kanyang ina.

"Wala na akong tatay, wala rin dito ang nanay ko. Ang mga kapatid ko nag-asawa na, kaya mas okay na sa akin sumali sa ASG," ani Habib.

Nagsilbing erandito ng mga terorista, angayon sa mga erandito, at tagapagharap ng mga erandito, siabi ni Habib na hindi na siyang tinatawag sa pagdukong pang-bahay ng mga hostage sa Tipo-Lipo.

"Kung may maghinkuhap, dadaan ng Zamboanga. May ina na mag-aanay sa port

palapa ni Zamboanga, tapos iba naman may paghahanap sa Isabela. Pagdating ng Isabela, hindi na kami sumali sa pamumugot ng Tipo-Lipo, hindi na nagahintay sa Bagumban, kawayan niya.

LIVE SHOW SA PAMUMUGOT

"Nung naging sumukodo sa buhay ng na-kidnap, gusto ko siya palakasin kasi kawayan ang erandito, hindi ako ng mga malataha kong kasama, kapag pinatakas ko, ako daw ang papatay ng grupo."

Siabi ni Habib na lang beses na niyang tapangod ang pamumugot ng grupo ng mga binagrad, hindi nakabagad ng ransom - dahil obligado niya ang ina ko.

"Maraming beses na ako nakakita ng binupugutan na hostage kapag walang mahirap na pangon. Kasi kapag may pupugutan na kabang, namin tinanood lahat, magagalit ang commander kapag hindi namin pinanood," paliwanag ni Habib.

"Kung magpapakita ka ng awa sa kanila (hostages), ong takot sa mangyayari, ikaw ang pagdidiskutahan nula (ASG leader), arya pa, hindi magdag na nunsan na rin siyang nakipagbakbakan sa mga sundalong pang-21ke.

"Kung may mga as pero fundado sa mga sundalong pang-21ke, nakakita din ako sa mga sundalong pang-21ke, nakakita din ako sa mga sundalong pang-21ke, nakakita din ako sa mga sundalong pang-21ke, nakakita din ako sa mga sundalong pang-21ke."

GUSTO KUNG MAGIN PANG-15

"Pagod na kasi ako sa buhay sa loob ng kampong, gusto ko na mag-aral ng mga sundalong pang-15, gusto ko na ang mga sundalong pang-15, gusto ko na mag-aral ng mga sundalong pang-15, gusto ko na mag-aral ng mga sundalong pang-15."

Gusto niyang bumalik sa pag-aaral magin pang-15, pag nakapag-aral ng mga sundalong pang-15, para akong mag-15, pag nakapag-aral ng mga sundalong pang-15, para akong mag-15, pag nakapag-aral ng mga sundalong pang-15, para akong mag-15."

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Pahina. 3

Duterte seryoso sa alok na P20K sa Lumad kapalit ng isang NPA

MULING nilinaw ng Malacañang na nadala ng matinding galit sa mga pang-aabusong ginagawa ng mga rebelde si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kaya ito nakapagbitiw ng order na barilin ang mga babaeng NPA sa ari.

Sinabi ni Presidential Communications Secretary Martin Andanar na dapat seryosohin ang mga sinasabi ng Pangulo pero hindi ito dapat tingnan sa literal na aspekto dahil mahilig itong gumamit ng mga fi-

gurative words.

Ayon kay Andanar, nasabi ito ng Pangulo dahil sa galit sa mga pang-aabusong ginagawa ng mga rebelde lalo na sa mga kababaihan kapag mayroong sinasalakay ang mga ito.

Kinumpirma rin ni Andanar na seryoso si Pangulong Duterte sa alok na P20,000 na pabuya sa mga Lumad na makakapatay ng bawat isang rebeldeng NPA bilang pagtugon sa pang-aabuso ng mga rebelde sa mga katutubo.

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Pahina. 2

Melito Glor Command nanggigil kay PDU30

BINATIKOS ng Melito Glor Command – New People's Army Southern Tagalog ang "bulgar", "bastos" at "imoral" na pananalita ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte laban sa mga babaeng miyembro ng kanilang hanay kapag nahuli ng mga militar.

Ayon sa ipinadalang kalatas ni Jaime "Ka Diego" Padilla, spokesperson ng MGC, hindi umano nila nagustuhan ang pahayag ni Pangulong

Duterte na pinababarihan sa pribadong ariang mga mahuhuling babaeng NPA.

"His series of statements against women even before his statement regarding our female red fighters are irresponsible sexist remarks, unbecoming of a leader," ayon kay Padilla.

Una na rin umano ng si nabi ni Pangulong Duterte na papayagan niya ang mga sundalo na paulit-ulit

na gahasain ang mga babaeng sa panahon ng marital law sa Mindanao.

Kaugnay nito, Di-haukos rin ni Comrade Kathryn, isang babaeng red fighter, ang pahayag ni Pangulong Duterte.

"He is a deranged president who is ignorant of women's role in the society, further proving his incompetence in office," ayon kay Comrade Kathryn (Juliet de Loza Cudia).

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Pahina. 1

DND walang pondo sa makakatay ng NPA - Lorenzana

HINDI manggagaling sa Department of National Defense (DND) ang pabuyang ibibigay ng pamahalaan sa mga Lumad na makakatay ng rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA).

Ito ang nilinaw ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana kaugnay sa P20,000 halaga na alok ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kapag nakapatay ng bawat miyembro ng komunistang NPA ang mga Lumad.

Sinabi ni Lorenzana na walang pondo ang DND para ipambayad sa mga Lumad na makakatay ng NPA.

Posibleng manggaling ang pondo sa intelligence fund ng Pangulong Duterte, kasi kung sa amunay wala kami pondo diyari, wika ni Lorenzana.

Ayon kay Lorenzana ang alok ng Pangulo ay pantapat lamang sa banta ni Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding Chairman Jose Maria Sison na papatay ang NPA ng isang sundalo bawat araw.

Matatandaang malok din ng Pangulo na sasanayan ng militar bilang Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU) ang mga Lumad para maprotektahan ang kanilang mga komunidad laban sa NPA. (Betchel Julian)

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Military pension system plan out by year-end

AN actuarial study on the feasibility of a Government Service Insurance System (GSIS)-run pension system for the military, which will have three types, is expected to be completed before end-2018.

Budget and Management Secretary Benjamin Diokno, in a briefing Wednesday, said GSIS officials have finished the preliminary actuarial study on the proposal but its results have yet to be presented to economic managers.

He said that officials of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), for one, had discussed with their counterparts in the GSIS issues such as how much a pension system would cost the government and how much the GSIS needed to assume the responsibility of running the system for the government.

"I can assure you before the end of

the year this will be done," he said.

Diokno said three types of pensioners are being considered for this proposed military pension.

The first type will cover the existing pensioners, who receive pensions that are indexed to the salary of incumbent personnel.

"We will honor our contract. We'll continue paying them," Diokno said.

Thesecond are those who in current service, who will be asked to pay contribution to make the system sustainable but will receive the benefit of the old system.

"They have to understand that they need to contribute especially now that they have a hefty salary increase," he said.

The third type is for new entrants, who will be covered by new set of pension rules that has yet to be developed.

Diokno said the proposed military

pension system would be handled by the GSIS but would be different compared to the system for other state workers.

"(It will) be funded by proceeds from land and other assets of the military," he said, but clarified that the government will not be selling military assets just to fulfill the pension system.

The Budget and Management chief said there is a need to eventually set up a formal pension system for uniformed personnel because it is currently the taxpayers who pay for the military's pension.

He said this issue has been swept under the rug for years that is why "it has not gone to such magnitude that we really need to address it."

"It is our commitment as fiscal advisers of the President to find a permanent, sustainable solution to this problem," he added.

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Helicopters for our modernizing AFP

THE dispute that arose over our planned purchase of helicopters from Canada will not affect our ongoing program of modernizing our Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

The biggest item of this program was the acquisition of a squadron of South Korean FA jet fighters for the Philippine Air Force (PAF) at a cost of P18.9 billion, followed by the purchase of two new frigates, also from South Korea, for our Philippine Navy at a cost of P15 billion.

The 16 Bell 412 helicopters from Canada for P12 billion would have been the third biggest item in this long-delayed modernization program of the AFP, which for so long has been depending on hand-me-downs from the United States.

Last February 8, a day after the signing of a \$233-million (P12-billion) agreement on the helicopters, the Canadian government, through Trade Minister Philippe Champagne, said it had ordered a review of the deal in view of concerns that the helicopters would be used to fight rebels. He said the understanding was that they would be used for search and rescue operations.

Did the Canadians really expect that the helicopters they were selling for the use of the Philippine Air Force were to be used only for non-military operations like transporting officials, rescuing victims of natural calamities, joining surveillance missions along our borders, and flying above Independence Day parades at the Luneta?

The Department of National Defense (DND) said Tuesday that in view of this announcement

from the Canadian government, it has informed the Canadian Commercial Corporation that it is cancelling its order in compliance with an order from President Duterte.

DND spokesman Arsenio Andolong said, "While the combat utility helicopters being purchased are primarily for the purpose of transporting persons and supplies, the department believes that it does not owe the Canadian government any justification for an outright purchase of equipment from a privately owned company." Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the Philippines is now considering deals with at least four countries — South Korea, Russia, China, and Turkey.

The Philippines has just been through a five-month battle with ISIS-inspired Maute rebels who seized Marawi City last May and were ousted only after considerable loss of lives on both sides and destruction and loss of properties. The threat continues as there are other groups of rebel forces in Mindanao — the New People's Army, the Abu Sayyaf, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, the Maute remnants, to name a few.

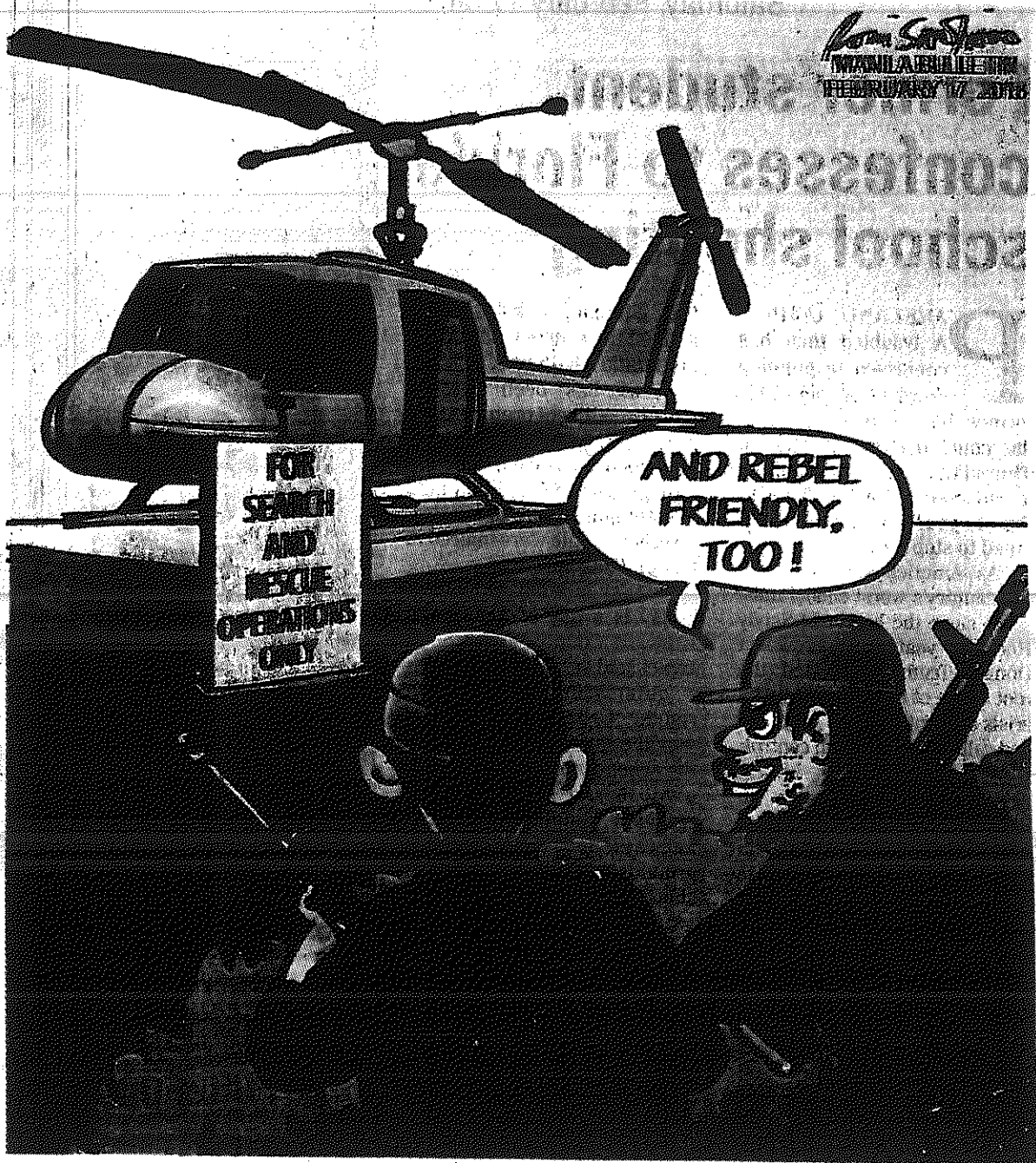
Mostly for internal security, rather than a defense against some invading force, the Armed Forces of the Philippines is now building up its strength and capability. President Duterte has announced that the AFP plans to add 20,000 to its ranks. And it is now acquiring planes and helicopters, frigates, weapons and ammunition. If Canada does not want its helicopters used for the Philippines' security needs, we simply have to look elsewhere.

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

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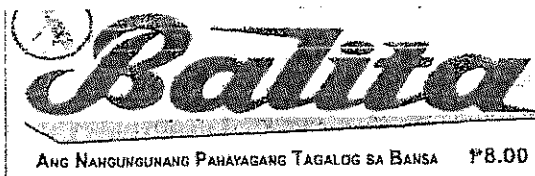


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Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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EDITORIAL

Mga helicopter para sa modernisasyon ng AFP

ANG problemang lumutang kaugnay ng plano ng bansa na bumili ng mga helicopter mula sa Canada ay hundi makaapekto sa programa para sa modernisasyon ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Ang pinakamalaking bahagi ng programang ito ay ang pagbili ng squadron ng mga South Korean FA jet fighter para sa Philippine Air Force (PAF) sa halagang P18.9 bilyon, na sinundan ng pagbili ng dalawang bagong barko mula pa rin sa South Korea para naman sa ating Philippine Navy na nagkakahalaga naman ng P15 bilyon.

Ang 16 Bell 412 helicopter mula sa Canada, na nagkakahalaga ng P12 bilyon, ang sana ay ikatlong pinakamalaking gastusin sa matagal nang naipagpapalibang programa ng modernisasyon ng AFP, na sa loob ng maraming taon ay nakaasal lamang sa mga pinaglumaan ng Amerika.

Nitong Pebrero 8, isang araw makaraang lagdaan ang \$233-million (P12-bilyon) na kasunduan sa mga bibilhing helicopter, muhayag ng pamahalaan ng Canada, sa pamamagitan ni Trade Minister Philippe Champagne, na ipinag-utos nito ang pagbusisi sa nasabing kasunduan sa pangambang ang nasabing mga helicopter ay gagamitin sa pakikipagdigmaan sa mga rebelde. Ayon sa opisyal, ang napagkasunduan ay gagamitin ang nasabing mga helicopter sa mga search at rescue operation.

Inakala ba talaga ng mga Canadian na ang mga helicopter na ibebenta nito sa Philippine Air Force ay gagamitin lamang sa mga operasyong walang kinalaman sa militar, gaya ng pagbibiyaheng mga opisyal, pagsagip sa mga biktima ng kalamidad, paglahok sa mga surveillance mission sa ating mga hangganan, at paglipad kasabay ng parada sa Luneta tuwing Araw ng Kalayaan?

Sinabi nitong Martes ng Department of National Defense (DND) na kaugnay ng pahayag na ito mula sa pamahalaan ng Canada, ipinaalam na ng kagawaran sa Canadian Commercial Corporation na kinakansela na ng Pilipinas ang order nito ahinsunod sa bitos ni Pangulong Duterte.

Sinabi ng tagapagsalita ng DND na si Alsemo Andolong: "While the combat unit helicopters being purchased are primarily for the purpose of transporting persons and supplies, the department believes that it does not owe the Canadian government any justification for an outright purchase of equipment from a privately-owned company." Sinabi ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana na ikinokonsidera na ngayon ng Pilipinas na makipagnegosasyon sa apat na ibang bansa – sa South Korea, Russia, China, at Turkey.

Ilang buwan pa lamang ang nakalipas matapos inatagumpay na natuldukan ng Pilipinas ang limang-buwang digmaan nito laban sa mga teroristang Maute-ISIS, na kumubkob sa Marawi City noong Mayo at tuluyang nagapi matapos ang maraming pagkamatay sa magkabilang panig, at pagkawasak ng maraming ari-arian. Gayunman, nagpapatuloy ang baata dahil mayroong iba pang mga grupo ng puwersang rebelde sa Mindanao – ang New People's Army, ang Abu Sayyaf, ang Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, ang mga natitira pang kasapi ng Maute, at iba pa.

Ang malaking bahagi ay para sa internal security kaysa depensa laban sa mga puwersang panlabas, pinalalakas ngayon ng Armed Forces of the Philippines ang kakayahan nito. Inihayag ni Pangulong Duterte ang plano ng AFP na magdagdag ng 20,000 tauhan sa hanay nito. At bumibih na ang militar ng mga eroplano at helicopter, mga barko, mga armas at mga bala. Kung ayaw ng Canada na gamitin ng Pilipinas ang mga helicopter para sa ating pangangailangang pangsegunidad, kailangang maghanap tayo sa iba.

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EDITORIAL

Call me 'doormat'

PRESIDENTIAL Spokesman Harry Roque should stop mouthing off “good faith” when it comes to China, whose most recent stunt was to name undersea features in the Philippine Rise.

The continental shelf is not even located in waters shared by our two countries. That China has had the gall to set its sights on something beyond the land mass of Luzon would have been unthinkable, until we remember we have seen and heard many unthinkable things in the recent past.

“We are not attributing any bad faith to China,” Roque said. “We are just saying, respect us, too.”

The spokesman added that the Duterte administration is now discussing the possibility of itself naming the features, even joking about using their own names for the purpose.

This is no joking matter, even as our officials’ apparent policy of acquiescence to our giant neighbor must be causing the Chinese to double over in their seats.

For instance, just last month, the Philippines

allowed Chinese scientists to conduct a study in the Philippine Rise. Chinese officials were even gracious enough to say Filipino scientists could come on board if they liked. Eventually President Duterte made the token gesture of revoking licenses given to foreigners to conduct studies in the 13-million-hectare rise, declared by a United Nations Commission in 2012 as being part of our continental shelf.

But when he announced his revocation, the Chinese had already completed their mission and left.

Roque, who was a passionate and combative human rights lawyer in a previous life, finds a way to inflame the people every day. He sounds like a shell of his former self when he talks so meekly about China—even the way he said the Chinese should respect us too only inspires further disrespect.

Naming something implies a claim or a perception of ownership. You can’t name your neighbor’s baby, even his dog. Does China have nothing better to do than ponder names for all countries’ land or water forms?

Nobody is saying we should go to war. But Roque—and the man he is supposed to speak for—must realize we shouldn’t be a doormat, too.



ONLINE NEWS

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Army battalion formed to quell communist insurgency in Eastern Visayas

By: Joey A. Gabieta

TACLOBAN CITY- A new Army battalion was recently created in Eastern Visayas as part of the government's effort to quell its long-running insurgency problem. But the 500 soldiers under the newly created 93rd Infantry Battalion had yet to be deployed since they were still undergoing training, said Captain Francis Ragno, chief of the Division Public Affairs Office (DPAO) of the 8th Infantry Division, based in Catbalogan City, Samar. Of the number, 128 were new graduates while the rest were taken from various units of the 8th ID, he added.

With the creation of the 93rd IB headed by Lt. Col. Hilarion Palma, the 8th ID has now 13 battalions.

Four of these – 19th IB, 46th IB, 34th IB, and 63rd IB – were deployed in Mindanao to help fight terror groups like the Maute group.

Ragno said the new battalion was created and "activated" by Major Gen. Raul Farnacio, commanding officer of the 8th ID on Feb. 5, as part of their campaign to address the Eastern Visayas' insurgency, particularly on Samar Island.

He told the Inquirer in a phone interview that the target of the 93rd IB was to end the communist insurgency in Eastern Visayas.

Ragno said the soldiers would be deployed in any of the three Samar provinces – Samar, Eastern Samar, and Northern Samar where the New People's Army are active.

Ragno said that while they were ready to face the rebels, they continued to appeal to them to return to the fold of the law.

About 18 former NPA members surrendered in 2017 and were given financial assistance for them to live a normal life.

He added there were NPA rebels who surrendered in 2018 but he could not give an exact figure as they were still consolidating the data.

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Authorities nab alleged NPA rebel with cache of explosives in Quirino

'BLOODY ATTACK AGAINST OUR FORCES' FOILED

By: Melvin Gascon



Brig. Gen. Perfecto Rimando (third from left), commanding general of the Army's 5th Infantry Division, explains to the media the destructive force of the anti-personnel mines that were seized from a suspected New People's Army rebel in a remote mountain village in Maddela town, Quirino province on Thursday morning, February 15, 2018. (Inquirer Northern Luzon/ Melvin Gascon)

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—A suspected member of the New People's Army was arrested on Thursday morning when police found a cache of high powered explosives in his house at Maddela town in Quirino province.

Also seized from Kevin Nilo's home in remote Jose Ancheta village were several mobile telephones, including the device used by the Maddela police for a text hotline which was among the items taken by NPA rebels from a police station in April 2017.

Chief Supt. Jose Mario Espino, Cagayan Valley police director, said Nilo's arrest prevented a series of planned roadside bombing activities by the rebels.

"With this successful operation, we have prevented what would have been a bloody attack against our forces. They were really after us," he said.

Armed with a search warrant issued by Isabela Judge Bonifacio Ong of the Regional Trial Court in Echague town, a raiding team found 10 pieces of improvised anti-tank explosive devices and 14 pieces of anti-personnel mines, complete with blasting devices and cords.

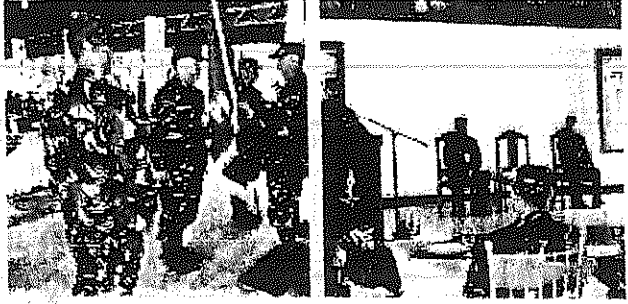
They also seized a laptop and a pile of documents, including copies of "Ang Bayan", the publication of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

A statement issued by human rights group Karapatan in Cagayan Valley described Nilo as a farmer, and criticized his arrest for being "illegal" and as harassment against residents suspected to be supporting the rebel group.

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NEW COMMANDANT | 3ID installs new CO, Division Training School

by Alvin Santiago



CAMP PERALTA, Jamindan, Capiz (DWDD) –The Army's 3rd Infantry (Spearhead) Division installed Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Tanzo as the new commanding officer of its Division Training School (DTS) replacing LTC Eugenio Baquiran in a Change of Command Ceremony presided by BGen Dinoh Dolina, Commander, 3ID held at Headquarters, 3DTS on 14 February 2018. **3DPAO / MCAG**

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | 79IB Conducts Peace Advocacy

by Alvin Santiago

SAGAY CITY, Negros Occidental (DWDD) – Despite of typhoon "Basyang", Peace Advocay Symposium to 230 residents of Barangay Gen. Luna, Sagay City, Negros Occidental was successfully facilitated by the 79th Infantry "Masaligan" Battalion together with the Barangay Council of Gen. Luna headed by Brgy. Capt. Vicente Oghayon, Association of Pastors of Baptist Churches of Northern Negros and 4P's officers of Sagay City. **3DPAO / MCAG**



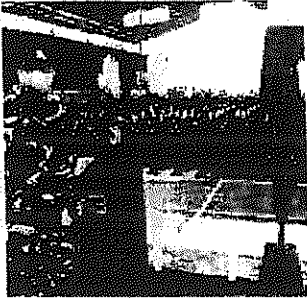
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491, 492

SPEARHEAD TROOPERS | 3ID has 481 New Soldiers

By Alvin Santiago

CAMP PERALTA, Jamindan, Capiz (DWDD) – The 3rd Infantry (Spearhead) Division under the command of Brigadier General Dinoh A Dolina AFP has produced 481 new breed of soldiers during the graduation ceremony and ceremonial entrustment of firearms held at Headquarters, 3ID on February 13, 2018.



The newly enlisted soldiers of the Spearhead Division were members of the Candidate Soldier Classes 491, 492 and 505.

They successfully completed three months of rigid Candidate Soldier Course (CSC) and Jungle Warfare Mountain Operation Course (JWMOC) training held at the 3rd Division Training School (3DTS).

On the other hand, Pvt Mark Cristian James Brillo PA of Jaena Sur, Jamindan, Capiz topped the 142-strong CS Class 491-2017 with a General Point Average of 90.89% while Pvt Jay-ar Suerte PA of Pawa, Dumanjug, Cebu topped the 193-strong CS Class 505-2017 with a General Point Average of 89.93%.



Brigadier General Dinoh A Dolina AFP, 3rd ID Commander, urged the newly enlisted soldiers to focus on the role that they will play in the organization; be a proud part in countering the vices of society; faithfully serve the people whom they ought to protect; and, the republic which they ought to preserve and keep its integrity.

Pvt Jefferson Teves PA from Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat received the Commander, 3rd Infantry Division Award for topping the 146-strong CS Class 492-2017 with a General Point Average (GPA) of 90.90% in all evaluated subjects which include academic and non-academic aspects of the training.

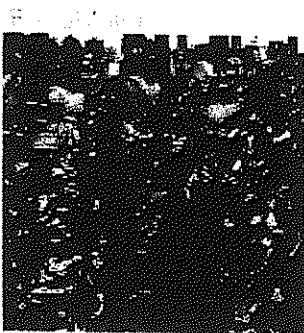


Figure 1.1

"Do not forget the discipline inculcated in you in the first half of your training; that quality will set you apart from an ordinary citizen. I am referring to the kind of discipline not only following your superior's orders and performing your duties with the desired standard but most of all, the kind of discipline to do what is morally right because this is the highest expression of service to our country and people," he emphasized.

Participants

Also present in the ceremony were Jamindan Vice Mayor Idefonso Cusay, representing Mayor Mac Arthur Valdemar, who led the ceremonial entrustment of firearms; together with members of the Sangguniang Bayan of Jamindan, Capiz; media practitioners; dependents; and, friends of our newly enlisted soldiers.



Meanwhile, the Chief of Staff, 3ID Award went to Pvt Jelben Esto PA of Fatima, Inabanga, Bohol; Pvt Jeymark Gantes PA of Capayuran, Pigcawayan, Cotabato; and, Pvt Jeric Alesna PA of Poblacion 1, Carcar City, Cebu for graduating Number 2 in CS Class 491-2017, CS Class 492-2017 and CS Class 505-2017 respectively.

Recipients of the Commandant, 3rd Division Training School Award were Pvt Eduardo Unao Jr PA of Barangay EJC Montinola, Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat; Pvt Brayn Fedochino PA of Barangay Cauayan, Pototan, Iloilo; and, Pvt Rechy Barniego Jr PA of Barangay Lambingi, Banga, South Cotabato for graduating Number 3 in CS Class 491-2017, CS Class 492-2017 and CS Class 505-2017 respectively.

For obtaining the highest rating in Physical Fitness Test throughout the duration of the training, the Commander's Physical Proficiency Award went to Criminologist Pvt Jun Patubo PA of Barangay Tahing, Calinog, Iloilo for CS Class 492-2017; Pvt Daniel Santillan PA of Barangay Tan-awan, Kabankalan, Negros Occidental for CS Class 491- 2017; and, Pvt Reynaldo Bariga PA of Barangay Bucalan, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental for CS Class 505-2017. **3DPAO / MCAG**

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BIDA ANG HANDA | 7ID ready for "The Big One"

Alvin Santiago

FORT RAMON MAGSAYSAY, Nueva Ecija (DWDD) – The 7th Infantry (Kaugnay) Division, Philippine Army, took part in the country's 1st Quarter Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill (NSED).

The official hashtag for this year's NSED is #BidaAngHanda. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) led the conduct of NSED quarterly and requires all government agencies, such as the Philippine Army, and the public to join the drill.

Callup!!!



For this quarter, the 7ID simulated rescue and response on the following earthquake scenarios: 1. Collapsed building rescue; 2. Fire along a gas dump; and 3. Explosion with a unit armory or ammunition dump.

The simulation is done to test, validate and evaluate the 7ID's preparedness, with plans still based on the duck, cover, and hold concept.

"The quarterly NSED is necessary for it prepares us for the worst possible scenario, so that our troops will know how to handle whatever situation comes up. We aim to be ready, fast and effective in our response to help the people when disaster strikes, and be able to mitigate whatever harm it brings," said Major General Felimon T. Santos Jr., Commander of 7ID. 7DPAO / MCAG

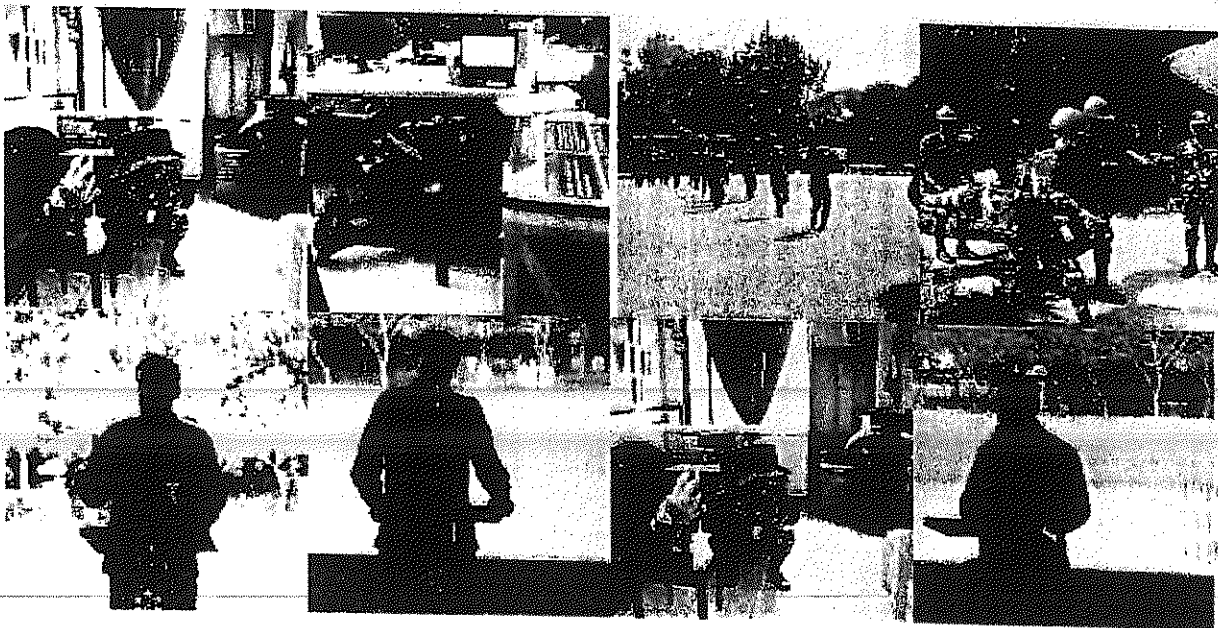
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BIDA ANG HANDA | 8ID participates in Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill

Alvin Santiago

CATBALOGAN, Samar (DWDD) – The 8th Infantry “Stormtroopers” Division, Philippine Army through the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and the Regional DRRM Council joins the nation in holding the 1st Quarter Nationwide Simultaneous Earthquake Drill (NSED 2018) on February 15, 2018 at 2 o’ clock in the afternoon.

This exercise aims to test and validate the emergency preparedness, evacuation plan and the awareness and readiness of 8ID personnel and their dependents to respond in times of disaster. **8DPAO / MCAG**



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NEW LIFE | 14IB facilitates assistance to former rebels

Alvin Santiago



EASTERN SAMAR (DWDD) – Three (3) former rebels who were members of NPA have received the immediate and livelihood assistance amounting to Php 65,000.00 for each of them through the Comprehensive Local Integration Program (CLIP) that was facilitated by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) – Eastern Samar Provincial Office and was supported by the personnel of the 14th Infantry “Avenger” Battalion on February 13, 2018.

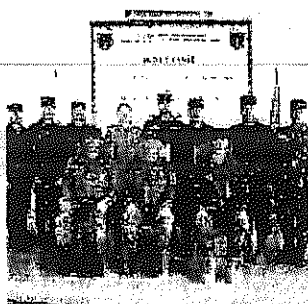
One of them has received an additional amount as remuneration for the firearm he also surrendered.

The financial assistance they received will serve as their capital for a peaceful and better life with the comfort of their families as they join the mainstream of society. **14IB / MCAG**

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NEW LEADERSHIP | New Commander 2nd Field Artillery Battalion

Alvin Santiago



CAMP GEN MANUEL YAN SR., Compostela Valley Province (DWDD) – Lieutenant Colonel Gracioso D Merioles, assumed as the new Commander of 2nd Field Artillery Battalion replacing Ltc Nelson C Aluad during the Change of Command Ceremony held Monday, 12 February 2018 at Headquarters 2nd Field Artillery Battalion, Camp General Manuel T Yan Sr, Brgy Tuboran, Mawab, Compostela Valley Province.

The Change of Command Ceremony was presided by Colonel Agane C Adriatico, Regiment Commander, Army Artillery Regiment, Philippine Army. **10DPAO / MCAG**

Pagpapabari ni Duterte sa ari ng mga babaeng NPA, wag gawing literal – Andanar

Posted By: Bombo Reymund Tinazaon

Muling nilinaw ng Malacañang na nadala ng matinding galit sa mga pang-aabusong ginagawa ng New People's Army (NPA) si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte kaya ito nakapagbitiw ng utos na barilin ang mga babaeng rebelde sa ari.

Sinabi ni Communications-Sec. Martin Andanar, dapat seryosohin ang mga sinasabi ni Pangulong Duterte pero hindi ito dapat gawing literal dahil mahilig itong gumamit ng mga figurative words.

Ayon kay Sec. Andanar, nasabi ito ng pangulo dahil sa galit sa mga pang-aabusong ginagawa ng mga rebelde lalo na sa mga kababaihan kapag mayroong sinasalakay ang mga ito.

Kinumpirma din ni Andanar na seryoso si Pangulong Duterte sa alok sa mga Lumad na P20,000 bilang pabuya sa bawat NPA na mapapatay bilang pagtugon sa pang-aabuso ng mga rebelde sa mga katutubo.