

Army Vision: By 2031, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride



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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

02 January 2018

Tuesday

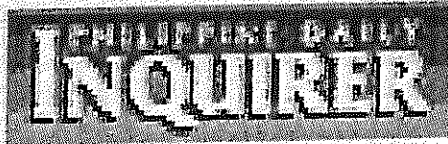
Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS + FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JANUARY 2, 2018 | TUESDAY

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "AGATON"
175 KM EAST-NORTHEAST OF HINATUAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR
NORTHEAST MONSOON
AFFECTING NORTHERN AND CENTRAL LUZON
AS OF 5:00 PM - JANUARY 1, 2018)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:21 AM	5:39 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
5:57 PM	6:09 AM
FULL MOON	LAST QUARTER
JAN 2 10:24 AM	JAN 9 6:25 AM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
3:46 AM	10:23 AM
0.08 Meter	0.27 Meter

- Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers
- Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
- Cloudy after with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
- Light rain

METRO MANILA			TAGAYTAY			TACLOBAN		
25 - 30 °C	25 - 31 °C		20 - 27 °C	21 - 27 °C		24 - 28 °C	25 - 28 °C	
TUGUEGARAO			LEGAZPI			CAGAYAN DE ORO		
25 - 27 °C	25 - 27 °C		25 - 27 °C	25 - 28 °C		23 - 27 °C	23 - 28 °C	
LAOAG			PUERTO PRINCESA			METRO DAVAO		
26 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C		23 - 29 °C	24 - 30 °C		25 - 30 °C	25 - 31 °C	
BAGUID			ILOILO/BACOLOD			ZAMBOANGA		
17 - 23 °C	17 - 23 °C		24 - 29 °C	25 - 29 °C		23 - 29 °C	24 - 30 °C	
SBMA/CLARK			METRO CEBU					
25 - 31 °C	25 - 31 °C		24 - 29 °C	25 - 29 °C				

DZRH NEWS TELEVISION

MONDAY - FRIDAY
11AM & 5PM

PILIPINAS TV

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

02 January 2018



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OIL FIRMS TOLD: NO PRICE HIKE YET BASED ON TAX

Government warns against prematurely raising prices by imposing the new excise tax on oil products from 2017 stocks.

**By Ben O. de Vera,
Philip Tubeza
and Ronnel V. Domingo**
@bendeveraINQ

The government on Monday warned oil companies against

raising their prices by imposing the new excise tax on oil products they still have in stock from 2017, saying they could be held legally liable if they did that.

"This is because the excise is paid at the port of importation

or refinery," the Department of Finance said in a statement. "Oil [price] increase done by the companies [purportedly due to the excise tax] on Jan. 1 might be considered profiteering."

In a separate statement, the

Department of Energy (DOE) said the new excise tax rates "do NOT apply to the old stocks of petroleum products."

Assistant Energy Secretary Leonido Pulido III said "the OIMB [Oil Industry Manage-

ment Bureau] has issued an advisory to petroleum products stakeholders NOT to levy new excise tax rates on old stocks."

The excise tax on petroleum products were included in the Tax Reform for Acceleration

and Inclusion (TRAIN) measure passed by Congress last month.

Quoting Finance Secretary Sonny Dominguez, Communications Secretary Martin Andanar said in a radio interview that the increase in **A4**

il taxes was "not expected to take effect immediately on Jan. 1 because it takes a few days before the old stocks from 2017 are used up."

"So therefore, we should be wary of people who will take advantage of this situation," he said.

Under the TRAIN, an excise tax of P2.50 per liter would be imposed on diesel and bunker fuel starting this year. This would go up to P4.50 in 2019 and P6 in 2020.

Int'l oil prices

The excise tax on gasoline would be increased from P4.35 per liter to P7 this year and then to P9 in 2019, and P10 in 2020.

Still, two oil companies announced on Monday that they would raise pump prices on a few of their petroleum products but they cited movements in international oil prices as justification.

Starting at 6 a.m. today, diesel prices would go up by 65 centavos per liter on top of the

15-centavo increase last week. Gasoline prices would be raised by 20 centavos per liter, canceling the same amount that it had gone down last week.

Only PTT Philippines Corp. and Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc. have announced price hikes, although other companies are expected to follow.

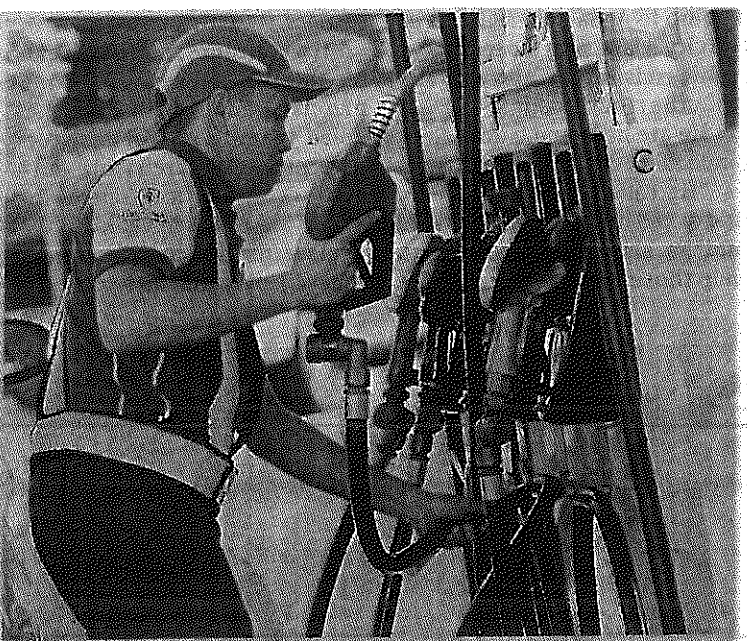
Income tax

DOE data show that diesel prices in Metro Manila were in the range of P33.00 to P38.10 per liter.

Prices of gasoline with an octane rating of 95 ranged from P43.05 to P52.91 per liter.

President Duterte on Dec. 19 signed into law package 1A of the TRAIN, or Republic Act (RA) No. 10963. The law would slash and restructure personal income tax rates, which remained unchanged for the past two decades, starting on Jan. 1. The TRAIN, however, would jack up or slap new taxes on oil, cigarettes, sugary drinks and automobiles.

Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) chief Caesar Dulay told the



A gas station attendant prepares to load fuel on a car in this file photo. New excise taxes on oil products intended to raise government revenues are going to increase pump prices for gasoline and other fuels starting this year. -INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

Inquirer five teams at the revenue agency were working on the regulations that would serve as the implementing guidelines of the TRAIN.

In a statement late on Friday, the BIR said it was set to issue various revenue regulations on income tax, withholding tax, value-added tax (VAT) and ex-

cise taxes on petroleum, automobiles, mineral products, tobacco, sweetened beverage, cosmetic procedures as well as estate and donor's tax, percentage tax and documentary stamp tax.

Critics

It said public consultations would be held on Jan. 11 and Jan. 12 to help guide the drafters in coming up with various issuances on the TRAIN, as well as internal briefings, which would be conducted from Jan. 24 to Jan. 26.

Andanar defended the new tax measure against government critics who had warned that it would harm the poor with the expected price increases resulting from these tax hikes.

He said the TRAIN's "pros outweighed its cons" as it would generate more revenues for the government while providing tax breaks to ordinary employees.

"Our revenues will increase and these will go to various government projects and investments that will create

jobs," Andanar said.

He said the TRAIN also would lower the estate tax rate and cut taxes on medicines.

"Now, 99 percent of income tax payers will see that they'll be paying less taxes. More than 70 percent of our countrymen will no longer be paying income tax because they earn less than P250,000 a year," Andanar said.

More savings

He said those who earn P15,000 monthly will save P1,541 and those who receive P20,000 a month will see their paycheck go up by P2,683. Those with a monthly earning of P35,000 will gain P4,197 in savings, he added.

Andanar said the new revenues raised under the TRAIN would help the 10 million families who would benefit from the conditional cash transfer program this year.

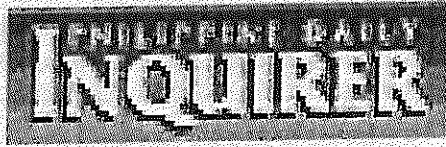
"Our small and small and micro entrepreneurs will also now have a simplified tax rate of eight percent on their gross sales. This will be implemented in lieu of income and percentage taxes," he said. INQ

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02 January 2018



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Congress 2017 and the resurgence of martial law

By **DELON PORCALLA**
and **JESS DIAZ**

The year 2017 saw Congress approving the first post-Marcos martial law proclamation in a historic vote, although limited to strife-torn Mindanao, and extending it twice – first for five months until Dec. 31

and then for the entire 2018. This unprecedented move by a joint session of the Senate and the House of Representatives resulted from the Marawi siege, where soldiers took five months to flush out Islamic State (IS)-linked Maute terrorists.

Legislators voted 240-27

to allow President Duterte to extend martial law in Mindanao by a year after it lapsed on Dec. 31, 2017.

Fourteen of the 20 senators present voted in the affirmative. The yes votes of Senators Francis Escudero and Cynthia Villar were not counted as they left the

Turn to Page 4

session early

A total of 226 House lawmakers approved the martial law extension joint resolution as well, while 23 representatives and four senators opposed it.

Executive and defense officials led by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the extension is needed since "remnants of (terror) groups continue to rebuild through recruitment, training and fund-raising."

"They are consolidating their forces," Medialdea said, noting that the IS-inspired Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters "continues to commit acts of violence, while the Abu Sayyaf remains a serious security concern."

They also revealed that while the Mautes and other terrorist groups have been "substantially neutralized and the main battle area in Marawi has been liberated, terrorist threats remain."

"In sum, the factual basis for martial law as affirmed by Congress and the Supreme Court continues to exist. There is still a state of rebellion ready to explode anew at any time," Medialdea said.

Impeachment complaints

This year also saw the filing of two impeachment complaints in the House committee on justice - first against Commission on Elections chairman Andres Bautista who eventually resigned and second against Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno.

A third one, supposedly against Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales, has yet to be filed.

Bautista, a former chairman of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, was accused by his estranged wife Patricia of amassing ill-gotten wealth amounting to P1.2 billion, which the former law professor didn't deny, and proudly declared he could explain everything.

More than P300 million of the amount was

deposited in a virtually unknown bank, the Luzon Development Bank. The complaint against Bautista was initially thrown out by the justice committee but was overwhelmingly reversed in the plenary after he refused to resign.

Eight of the 15 incumbent Supreme Court justices, and one retired (Arturo Brion), have manifested their desire to testify in the impeachment hearings of the committee on justice headed by Oriental Mindoro Rep. Reynaldo Umali.

So far four have personally appeared in the House, including Court Administrator Midas Marquez.

The SC chief has been accused by lawyer Lorenzo Cadon of culpable violation of the 1987 Constitution by making unilateral decisions in a collegial body, graft and corruption and betrayal of public trust, among other misdemeanors.

Pieces of legislation

The House leadership under Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez in the current 17th Congress also revived the death penalty bill, one of the campaign promises of President Duterte, who has been vocal in his peace and order campaign even as mayor of Davao City.

However, the measure was stalled in the Senate.

The bill also cost the committee chairmanship posts of many House leaders who voted against its passage, among them former president and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Arroyo and Batangas Rep. Vilma Recto.

Before the year ended, Congress lowered the personal taxes of fixed-income earners and passed the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) bill for the Duterte administration's massive infrastructure projects.

President Duterte signed the bill lowering the personal income tax into law, which the previous administration had rejected, and TRAIN for his "Build, Build, Build" program.

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02 January 2018



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30 percent of Marawi City cleared of explosives – AFP

By FRANCIS WAKEFIELD

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said that it has already cleared 30 percent of Marawi's most affected areas of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices as the Joint Engineer Task Group (JETG) continues its rehabilitation efforts in the city.

"The JETG continues its main mission of clearing explosives completing around 30 percent of the whole most affected area," said AFP chief engineer Major General Arnold Rafael Depakakibo.

As of December 15, 2017, a total of 2,853 assorted unexploded ordnance and 415 improvised explosive devices were recovered by the JETG.

This was done through the support of Explosives and Ordnance Disposal Company and K-9 Teams from the Philippine

Army and Philippines Air Force

The JETG also completed the clearing of more or less 20 kilometers of primary and secondary roads, three major bridges, a school, and three places of worship immediately after the liberation of Marawi.

This resulted in the timely conduct of post-conflict needs assessment by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

"We also continue our limited construction support to government agencies involved in supporting the maintenance of evacuation centers," Depakakibo said.

Aside from construction support, the JETG also assisted the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) in the construction of 500 temporary shelters for the evacuees.

2 January 2018



Pahina. 2

Habang ipinamimigay sa mga ka-barangay nagputukan

NAVY, NADALE SA PAPUTOK

SUGATAN ang miyembro ng Philippine Navy matapos magputukan ang mga hawak nitong paputok habang namimigay sa kanyang mga ka-barangay sa Cavite City, kahapon nang madaling-araw.

Ginagamot sa ospital si Lt. Kenneth Campos Villanueva, 38-anyos, nakatalaga sa HPN Fort Bonifacio.

Ala-1:00 ng madaling-araw kahapon, sakay ang biktima ng kanyang Toyota Altis at panandaliang huminto sa kanyang mga ka-barangay upang mamigay ng mga dala nitong paputok.

Habang umaabot dito ang mga hawak na paputok ay nagputukan ang mga ito dahilang upang masabugan siya sa kanyang mukha, mga kamay at katawan.

Agad itong naitakbo sa Bautista Hospital at kasalukuyang ginagamot. *(Janice Baricuatro)*

02 January 2018



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3 slain in Maguindanao roadside bombings

By JOHN UNSON

TACURONG – Three persons, including a police officer, were killed while 22 others were wounded in roadside bombings in Maguindanao on Sunday.

Senior Police Officer 4 Max Kaibat and several other personnel of the Shariff Aguak police were checking the reported sighting of members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) at the border of Datu Hoffer and Shariff Aguak towns when an improvised explosive device went off.

PO3 Jalison Abdullah and PO1s Archie Ansari Amelista, Ricardo Almonia, Alimodin Nuphay and Zainodin Abdullah were wounded.

Senior Superintendent Agustin Tello, Maguindanao police director, said the wounded policemen are now in stable condition in a hospital.

Dominador Datahan and Alladin Laguiab were walking on their way to the Villa Garden karaoke bar in Barangay Buenaflor in this city when a bomb left in a tricycle exploded.

Senior Superintendent Raul Supiter, Sultan Kudarat police director, said the bar could be

the target of the attack.

"The roof of the tricycle was blown out. Investigators are still trying to determine who brought the tricycle near the bar," Supiter told *The STAR* yesterday.

Datahan was declared dead on arrival at the Sultan Kudarat Provincial Hospital. Laguiab died while being treated in the same hospital yesterday.

Sixteen other persons, among them motorists passing by the area, were wounded and taken to various hospitals.

Supiter said they received reports that the BIFF were involved in the bombing.

BIFF bandits also reported-

ly burned 12 houses of ethnic Teduray villagers in Sitio Macon, Barangay Limpongo also on Sunday.

Lt. Col. Gerry Besana, Joint Task Force Central spokesman, said the bandits escaped when they sensed that personnel of the 57th Infantry Battalion were closing in.

Police are securing the evacuation centers where around 200 Teduray families are staying after their houses were burned on Monday last week also by suspected BIFF men.

The bandits shot dead one of the ethnic group's tribal leaders, Diego Dagadas, last Tuesday.

02 January 2018



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Truce broken; 2 soldiers hurt in clash with NPA

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

Two soldiers were wounded in an encounter with communist rebels in Tarragona, Davao Oriental on Saturday.

The soldiers were responding to reports that New People's Army (NPA) rebels were harassing residents of Barangay Tubaon when the clash occurred.

Around 50 NPA rebels allegedly fired at the soldiers,

triggering a 30-minute gunfight.

The Philippine Army said the incident violated the holiday ceasefire declared by the rebels.

The NPA declared a unilateral ceasefire from 6 p.m. of Dec. 23 to 6 p.m. of Dec. 26 and 6 p.m. of Dec. 30 to 6 p.m. of Jan. 2 after Malacañang declared a truce from 6 p.m. of Dec. 23 to 11:59 p.m. of Dec. 26 and from 6 p.m. of Dec. 30 until

11:59 p.m. of Jan. 2.

"They continue to intimidate and threaten some of the residents. Report also disclosed that NPAs celebrated the anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines in the area with some residents and children who are just afraid not to go with them," the Army said in a statement.

The rebels also reportedly detonated a landmine.

"The NPAs have grossly, again and again violated the ceasefire they have declared. They even bring along with them innocent civilians and children," Maj. Gen. Noel Clement, 10th Infantry Division (ID) commander, said.

"The 10th ID is calling on the people not to be deceived by this terrorist group. Our units are pursuing them to prevent further atrocities," Clement said.

02 January 2018

Manila Standard

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PSG man, 4 others nabbed for misusing firearms

By Joel E. Zurbano

POLICE arrested a member of the Presidential Security Group and a retired Army sergeant after they were accused of firing their guns indiscriminately on New Year's Eve.

Taguig City police arrested

Cpl. Richard John Quijan, assigned to the Light Reaction Regiment, Special Operations Command-PSG, and a retired sergeant, Jamael Mindalano.

They were charged with indiscriminate firing, alarm and scandal, illegal possession of firearms

Next page

and ammunition, physical injury, direct assault, resisting arrest and serious disobedience before the Department of Justice.

Police took two .45-cal pistols, a .9mm pistol, a .38-cal revolver and assorted ammunition.

National Capital Region Police Office spokesperson Kimberly Molitas said the two were arrested following a complaint filed against them by their neighbor, Jolly Moreno.

"Mindalano and Quijan were reported to have committed the above

crimes by victim, Jolly Moreno, who was slightly hit in [his] right midsection by ricochet bullet shrapnel while welcoming the New Year," she said.

In Las Piñas City, Police Officer I Alexander Roy Rafer assigned at Police Community Precinct 6, was also arrested for indiscriminate firing. Confiscated from him was .9mm pistol. He is now detained and will be charged criminally before the city prosecutors office.

NCRPO director Oscar Albayalde assured the public that the

suspects would be thoroughly and speedily investigated.

"They must be liable to the law and to the victim. They must face the consequences and corresponding sanctions," he said.

In Caloocan City, authorities also arrested Isagani Ancheta, 38, a resident of Block 11 Barangay 35 Sawata, Maypajo.

Ancheta was involved in a shooting incident at the height of the New Year revelry along Sawata Road between Block 2 and Block 3. The victims were

identified as Gil Calupaz, 27; Joven Earl Gaces, 10; and Princess Denise Cruzat, 10. They were taken to Dr. Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center and Tondo General Hospital.

Police took a Glock 17 caliber 9mm pistol with a defaced serial number used in the shooting.

Company driver Federico Alcala, 54, was also arrested for firing his gun, a .45-cal pistol, in Barangay Cembo in Makati City.

Police said there were no fires caused by firecrackers this year.

2 January 2018



Pahina. 2

Nagpaputok ng baril sa pagsalubong ng Bagong Taon

PULIS AT 2 SUNDALO, KULONG

APAT katao kabilang ang aktibong pulis at sundalo ang hinuli dahil sa pagpapaputok ng baril sa magkakahiwalay na insidente ng pagsalubong sa Bagong Taon sa Southern Metro Manila.

Ayon kay SPD Police Chief Supt. Tomas Apolinario, Jr., kililala ang mga suspek na sina PO3 Alexander Roy Rafer, nakatalaga sa PCP-6 Las Piñas City Police kung saan na-recover

mula sa kanya ang isang 9mm, Federico Alcala, 54, company driver sa Makati City, na nakunan ng kalibre 45; retired Philippine Army Ssgt. Jamael Mindalano at Corporal Richard John Quijano, nakatalaga sa Light Reaction Coy, Light Reaction Regiment, Special Operations Command.

Nakuha kina Mindalano at Quijano ang dalawang kalibre 45 pistols, 1 9mm pistol, 1 .38 revolver at assorted na mga bala.

Alas-11:00 ng gabi nang mangyari ang insidente sa kasagsagan ng pagsalubong

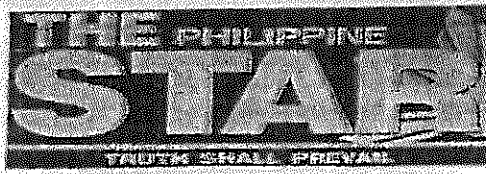
sa Bagong Taon. Sinasabing nahuli si PO3 Rafer sa Las Piñas City; hinuli naman si Alcala sa Lungsod ng Makati, habang sina Mindalano at Quijano ay kapwa inaresto sa Taguig City.

Nadapusan naman ng ligaw na bala matapos tamaan ng shrapnel ang biktimang si Jolly Moreno nang magpaputok umano ng baril sa Mindalano.

Nasa custody ngayon ng pulisya ang mga hinuli at nakatakdang sampahan ng mga kaukulang kaso.

(Gina Pleñago)

02 January 2018



Page: 1

2 children, woman hit by stray bullets

By MARC JAYSON CAYABYAB

Two 10-year-old children were injured after they were hit by stray bullets during the New Year's Eve revelry in Caloocan City, while a woman was hit by a bullet while sleeping at home in Bunianga, Aklan.

The Caloocan police identified the victims as Joven Earl Gaces and his neighbor Princess Denise.

Investigators said Gaces was hit in the liver and brought to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center, while Denise was hit in the stomach and is now confined at Tondo General Hospital.

A tricycle driver who was not immediately identified said

Turn to Page 4

the two victims were shot while standing near his tricycle.

Responding policemen later arrested Isagani Ancheta, who witnesses said shot Gil Galapuz along Sawata Road in Barangay 35, Maypajo, Caloocan shortly after midnight yesterday.

Ancheta denied firing the bullets that hit the two minors, who were standing near the area where the shooting happened.

City police chief Jemar Modequillo said the police would treat the incident as a stray bullet case arising from a shooting incident.

He said the case appeared to be solved with the arrest of Ancheta, who was beaten up by residents after the incident.

According to the police, Galapuz was having a drinking session with friends when Ancheta arrived and engaged in a heated argument with him that resulted in a fistfight.

Galapuz allegedly strangled Ancheta, who pulled out his gun and chased the former down the road.

Probers said Galapuz also sustained gunshot and stab wounds on the body and was taken to hospital for treatment.

A witness said the two exchanged gunshots before he saw the two minors fall to the ground.

Lorna Alimbon, mother of Denise, said she told her daughter not to go outside during the New Year revelry, but the youngster insisted on going out to watch the fireworks display with her friends.

When she returned home after watching the display, the girl asked permission again to go out to invite her friends for the New Year midnight feast or *media noche*.

Alimbon said she later heard people shouting and found that her daughter had been shot.

Malou Gaces, mother of Joven Earl, said she was taking care of her two-year-old baby when her son followed his brother out to play and watch neighbors lighting fireworks.

The victim was standing at a corner and watching the fireworks display when the stray bullet hit him.

Joven is in critical condition as the bullet pierced his liver.

Investigator Police Officer I Deojoe Dador said they recovered from Ancheta a Glock

9mm pistol with a defaced serial number, a bladed weapon, 10 live bullets, a satchel of suspected shabu and a cellphone containing messages of his supposed drug transaction with a certain Isagani.

Ancheta said he only borrowed the gun from a certain Joel but denied using the gun in robberies.

Dador said charges for frustrated homicide and illegal possession of deadly weapons and illegal drugs would be filed against Ancheta.

Meanwhile in Aklan, police reported yesterday that a 45-year-old woman was hit by a stray bullet while sleeping inside her house in Sitio Langka, Barangay Bel-is, Buruanga town at around 2 a.m. on New Year's Day.

Buruanga police chief Senior Insp. William Aguirre said Nolie Ursua was hit by the bullet in the right thigh and was brought to Malay Municipal Hospital in Aidan.

Aguirre said the victim went to sleep at around midnight but was awakened after a hard object hit her right thigh.

Investigators said the X-ray done on the victim confirmed that the object that penetrated her thigh was a bullet.

Aguirre said Ursula will undergo surgery to extract the slug.

"We will then conduct a ballistic examination," he added.

The local police have three persons of interest regarding the case of Ursua, but they have not yet been questioned.

Shooting incident

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa said the suspect involved in the shooting incident in Caloocan City has been arrested and charges were filed in court.

He clarified that the Caloocan case is a shooting incident and not an indiscriminate firing with no target.

The PNP chief said statistics indicated a record low in terms of firecracker-related injuries and indiscriminate firing.

Dela Rosa said the police focused more on celebratory indiscriminate firing or those who fired their guns in the air to welcome the New Year.

The PNP will dismiss from the service any policeman found guilty of indiscriminate

ning. He also noted the cooperation between the police and the community to ensure a peaceful and orderly celebration of the holidays.

Dela Rosa said he is personally in favor of imposing a total ban on firecrackers, a measure proven effective in Davao City.

Suspects nabbed

Police nabbed two soldiers for indiscriminately firing their firearms at the height of the revelry in Taguig City.

Staff Sgt. Jamael Mandalano and Cpl. Richard John Quijano would be charged with illegal discharge of firearms and alarm and scandal before the Taguig City prosecutor's office, said Director Oscar Albayalde, head of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO).

Seized from Mandalano and Quijano were two 45 caliber pistols, a caliber 9mm pistol, a caliber 38 revolver and assorted bullets, Albayalde added.

He said neighbors reported to the police that the two drunk soldiers were indiscriminately firing their guns at about 12:36 a.m. yesterday at Sto. Niño Extension, Barangay New Lower Bicutan. The two did not resist arrest.

"The public is now cooperating with the police in reporting crimes and other wrongdoings and we really appreciated that," said Albayalde in an interview. "The soldiers appeared to be drunk."

The arrest of Mandalano and Quijano brought to 13 persons, including two policemen, who were collared in Metro Manila for indiscriminate firing from the period of Dec. 16 to Jan. 1.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo assured the public that if it is proven that the two soldiers indiscriminately fired guns during New Year's Eve, they will face disciplinary action.

"If proven guilty, they will be punished accordingly," he declared, noting that the AFP has strict regulations against illegal discharge of firearms and other infractions of the Articles of War.

Lt. Col. Ray Tiongson, Army spokesman, said Quijano is an active member of the Philippine Army while Mandalano has retired from the service since Dec. 31, 2016.

The NCRPO recorded no stray bullet victims but at least 220 firecracker blast injuries for the same period, he added.

The Manila Police District recorded the highest firecracker victims with 69 cases, followed by the Southern Police District with 47 incidents and Northern Police District with 44 cases.

The Eastern Police District registered 31 injuries while the Quezon City Police District has 29.

From Dec. 16, 2016 to Jan. 5, 2017, the NCRPO recorded six indiscriminate firing incidents with four wounded victims; six stray bullet incidents with one victim killed and two others wounded; five fire incidents and 172 victims of firecracker blasts.

In Las Piñas City, Police Officer 3 Alexander Roy Rafer was nabbed for allegedly firing his 9mm pistol during the revelry.

Makati policemen also arrested driver Federico Aleala, 54, who allegedly fired a 45 caliber pistol before midnight.

In La Union, Supt. Ferdinand de Asis, spokesman for the provincial police, said a barangay councilor was arrested for firing a gun in Tayug town.

The suspect was not immediately identified.

A manhunt was launched yesterday for a former police chief of Tuguegarao City who was allegedly involved in a shooting incident during an altercation with his wife in their house in Barangay Pengue-Ruyu in Tuguegarao on New Year's Eve.

Chief Supt. Robert Quenery, Region 2 police director, identified the suspect as retired Chief Insp. Juancho Alloba, 57, who served as police chief in the 1990s.

Alloba was said to be drunk when he beat up his wife and fired shots from a .45 caliber pistol during the couple's quarrel at around 10:30 in the evening.

Quenery said Alloba took his pistol and an M16 rifle before he left their house.

Alloba's last assignment before retiring was as police chief of Ramon, Isabela.

Chief Supt. Amador Corpus, Region 3 police director, said as of yesterday afternoon there were no reports of stray bullet victim but there were 77 persons who suffered minor injuries in firecracker-related incidents.

He said all police offices in the region have not reported any policeman involved in indiscriminate firing - With Non Alquitran, Ghio Ong, Cecille Suerte felipe, Jennifer Rendon, Raymund Catindig, Eva Visperas, Ric Sapnu

2 January 2018

The Manila Times

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Army's 3ID new chief bats for local peace talks

BACOLOD CITY: The new commanding general of the Philippine Army's 3rd Infantry Division (3ID) based in Jamindan, Capiz said he is open to facilitate localized peace talks with the communist rebels.

Brigadier General Dinoh Dolina, who took over the post of Major General Jon Aying on Friday, December 29, said the local government unit should pursue the peace talks with the New People's Army (NPA), as the Army is willing to help in the negotiation process.

He called on the communist rebels to surrender because soldiers will always be ready to fight if the NPA choose to continue the armed struggle.

"We are here to protect the people and secure the state. There is no need to shed blood in order to attain peace," he said.

The mountainous town of Jamindan is home to NPA rebels in Western Visayas operating in the provinces of Capiz and Iloilo.

Earlier, President Rodrigo Duterte cancelled the peace negotiations with the Commu-

nist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front and Dolina said he will focus on his marching order to neutralize the rebels in his area of responsibility.

He added that a battalion from Mindanao is expected to return to the region this year and an additional battalion will also be organized as part of the force multipliers that greatly helps troops in maintaining peace in the island.

He also urged the cooperation of the civilians and valuable support of all stakeholders to achieve their goal.

Dolina was previously assigned at the Armed Forces of the Philippines headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City and took over the command from Aying in a ceremony held at Camp Macario Peralta in Jamindan.

Aying, who retired on Monday, served as commander of the 3ID for 13 months. He was also commander of both the 61st Infantry Battalion and 303rd Infantry Brigade in Negros Occidental. **EUGENEY ADIONG**

2 January 2018

BusinessMirror

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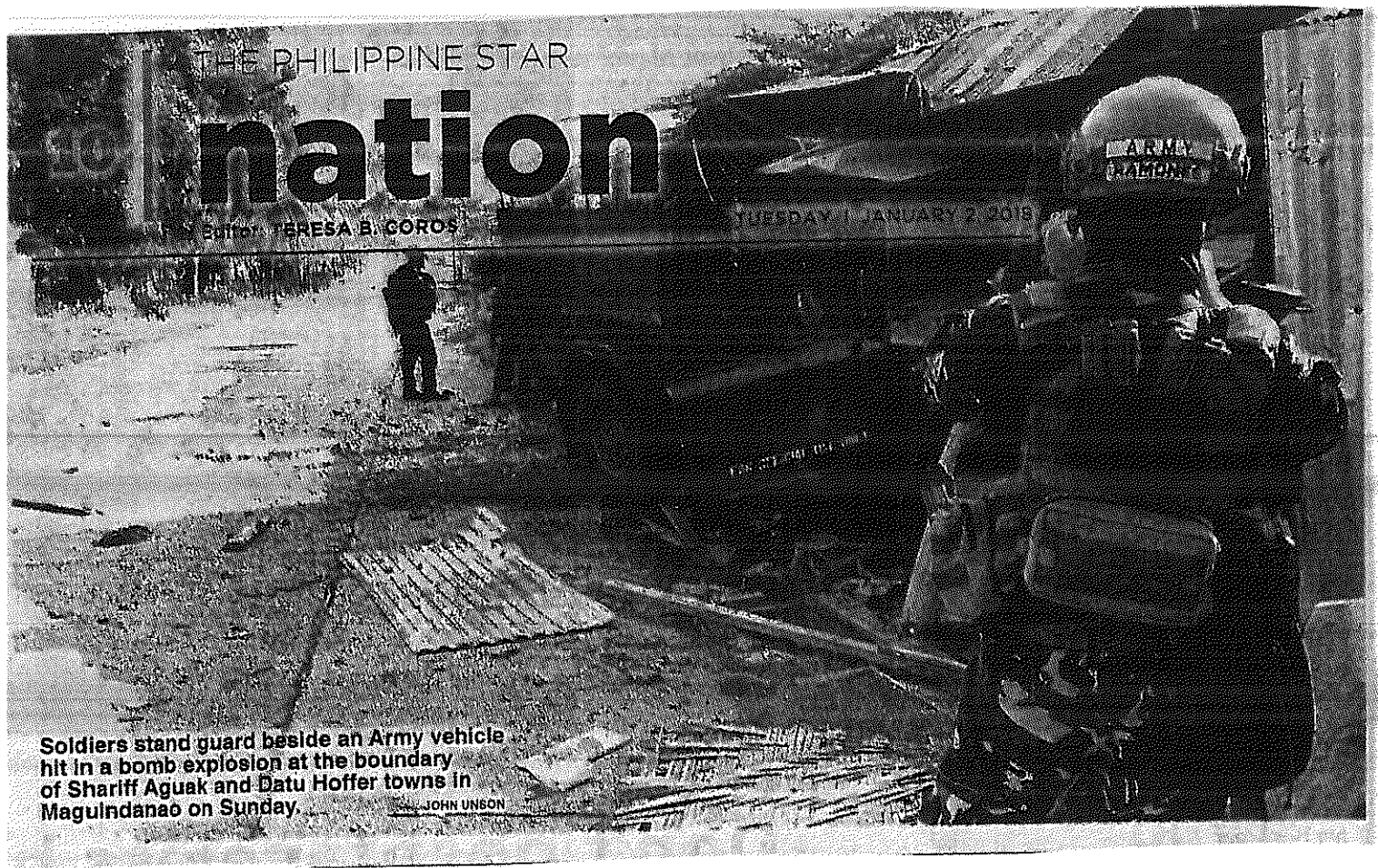


AIRLINE PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR MARAWI RELIEF EFFORTS Leading Philippine carrier Cebu Pacific (PSE: CEB) supports the #Ogop Marawi program of the Philippine Army, enabling the delivery of Pureit water purifying devices. The water purifiers, donated by Unilever, are to be used in relief operations for displaced residents of Marawi City. *Ogop*, the local word in Marawi for "help," aims to help internally displaced residents and give moral support to soldiers deployed in Marawi. Photo shows a soldier arranging the boxes carried via Cebu Pacific Flight 5J379 from Manila to Cagayan de Oro. Since the conflict in Marawi broke out last May, Cebu Pacific has been providing airlift support for cargo of relief goods for affected Marawi residents, notably for the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Philippine Business for Social Progress. Cebu Air Inc. is the largest carrier in the Philippine air-transportation industry, offering its low-cost services to more destinations and routes with higher flight frequency within the Philippines than any other airline. CEB currently offers flights to a total of 37 domestic and 25 international destinations, operating an extensive network across Asia, Australia, the Middle East and the United States. Its 62-strong fleet is comprised of two Airbus A319, 36 Airbus A320, eight Airbus A330, eight ATR 72-500 and eight ATR 72-600. Between 2017 and 2022, CEB expects delivery of seven brand-new Airbus A321neo, 32 Airbus A321XLR and eight ATR 72-600 aircraft.

02 January 2018



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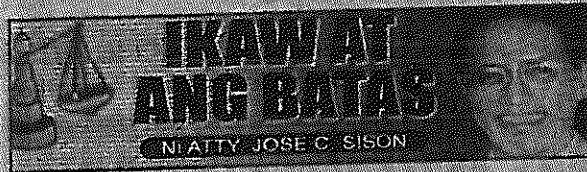
Soldiers stand guard beside an Army vehicle hit in a bomb explosion at the boundary of Shariff Aguak and Datu Hoffer towns in Maguindanao on Sunday.

JOHN UNSON

2 January 2018

INGAYON

Pahina. 5



Militar ang kalaban (Huling Bahagi)

ISANG taon at anim na buwan na kinulong sina Manny at Raffy. Inilapat sila sa iba't ibang safehouse at patuley na binubugbog, pinapaniya, at tinatakot. Maging ang pinuno ng batalyon na isang Major General ay alam at kinukunsinti pa ang ginagawa sa kanila katulad ng ibang sibilyan na hinuli at hindi dumaan sa proseso ng batas.

Hanggang nagkaroon ng pagkakataon sina Manny at Raffy na makatakas. Nalasing ang kanilang bantay kaya nagawa nilang umeskapo pagkatapos ng 18 buwan na pagkakabilanggo. Nagsampa sila ng petisyon na writ of amparo laban sa mismong Secretary ng Department of National Defense (DND) at sa Chief ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Inatasan ng Supreme Court ang Court of Appeals na dinggin ng kaso.

Pagkatapos ng paglilitis, nagdesisyon ang Court of Appeals pabor kina Manny at Raffy. Binigay ng CA ang pribilehiyo ng writ of amparo at inutos sa DND Secretary at sa AFP chief na isumite sa korte ang anumang ulat maging opisyal ito o hindi tungkol sa ginawang imbestigasyon sa kaso ng dalawa, upang kumpirmahin kung saan nakadestino sina Sgt. Roland at Diego. Ilabas sa korte ang anumang medical report o record tungkol sa ginawang paggamot o rekomendasyong gamot pati ang listahan ng mga miyembro ng army na tumingin sa dalawa.

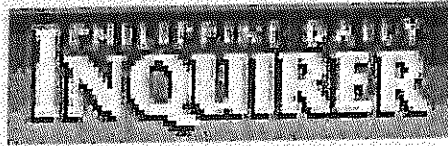
Umapela ang DND Secretary at AFP chief sa Supreme Court. Binase lang daw ang desisyon sa testimonya ni Manny na hindi kapani-paniwala o imposible, paiba-iba at pabor lang sa sarili. Hindi raw ito sapat na ebidensiya. Isa pa, nakatakas naman daw sina Manny at Raffy kaya lumpas na ang pangangailangan sa writ na hinihingi nila.

Kinatigan pa rin ng Supreme Court ang desisyon ng CA. Ayon sa Supreme Court, ang writ of amparo ay isang mabisang lunas sa extralegal killings at sapilitang pagkawala ng mga tao base narin sa naging karanasan natin sa human rights abuses dito sa Pilipinas. Sapat na ang ebidensiya para ito ay paniwalaan at matanggap ang magiging konklusyon.

Sa kasong ito, ang kuwento nina Manny at Raffy sa ginawang pagdukot, pag-torture at pagtakas nila ay malinaw at kapani-paniwala. Tadtad ng makatotohanang detalye ang nakakatakot nilang karanasan at makikita rito ang masidhing pagnanais nilang makatakas. Nakatatak sa memorya ni Manny kung paano siya ginising, pinirangan, kinaladkad pasakay ng van at walang-awang binubog sa iba't ibang safehouse sa loob ng 18 buwan hanggang sila ay makatakas. Ang salaysay ni Manny ay katugma ng naging salaysay ni Raffy pati na rin ng mga testimonya, medical report ng forensic specialist at mga litrato ng mga peklat o marka ng mga sugat ng ginawa sa kanila.

Panghuli, kahit pa pisikal na silang malaya, libre ring kumilos ang mga taong dumukot at nagkulong sa kanila. Nasa posisyon pa rin ang mga ito para saklawan ang karapatang-pantao nina Manny at Raffy na maging malaya at mabuhay na walang takot sa torture at bigyan ng proteksyon ng gobyerno. (*The Secretary of the DND and Chief of Staff, AFP vs. Manalo and Manalo, G. R. No. 180906, October 7, 2008*)

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS + FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JANUARY 2, 2018 | TUESDAY

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "AGATON"
175 KM EAST-NORTHEAST OF HINATUAN, SURIGAO DEL SUR
NORTHEAST MONSOON
AFFECTING NORTHERN AND CENTRAL LUZON
AS OF 6:00 PM - JANUARY 1, 2018)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:21 AM	5:39 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
5:57 PM	6:09 AM
FULL MOON	EAST QUARTER
JAN 2 10:24 AM	JAN 3 9:25 AM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
3:46 AM	10:23 AM
0.08 Meter	6.27 Meter

☁ Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers
 ☁☁ Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
 ☁☁☁ Cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
 ☁ Light rains

METRO MANILA	☁ 25-30 °C	☁ 25-31 °C	TAGAYTAY	☁ 20-27 °C	☁ 21-27 °C	TACLOBAN	☁ 24-28 °C	☁ 25-28 °C
TUGUEGARAO	☁ 25-27 °C	☁ 25-27 °C	LEGAZPI	☁ 25-27 °C	☁ 25-28 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	☁ 23-27 °C	☁ 23-28 °C
LAOAG	☁ 26-32 °C	☁ 25-32 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	☁ 23-29 °C	☁ 24-30 °C	METRO DAVAO	☁ 25-30 °C	☁ 25-31 °C
BAGUID	☁ 17-23 °C	☁ 17-23 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	☁ 24-29 °C	☁ 25-29 °C	ZAMBOANGA	☁ 23-29 °C	☁ 24-30 °C
SBMA/CLARK	☁ 25-31 °C	☁ 25-31 °C	METRO CEBU	☁ 24-29 °C	☁ 25-29 °C			

DZRH NEWS TELEVISION

MONDAY - FRIDAY
11AM & 5PM

PILIPINAS HD

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

02 January 2018



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OIL FIRMS TOLD: NO PRICE HIKE YET BASED ON TAX

Government warns against prematurely raising prices by imposing the new excise tax on oil products from 2017 stocks.

**By Ben O. de Vera,
Philip Tubeza
and Ronnel V. Domingo**
@bendeveraINQ

The government on Monday warned oil companies against

raising their prices by imposing the new excise tax on oil products they still have in stock from 2017, saying they could be held legally liable if they did that.

"This is because the excise is paid at the port of importation

or refinery," the Department of Finance said in a statement. "Oil [price] increase done by the companies [purportedly due to the excise tax] on Jan. 1 might be considered profiteering."

In a separate statement, the

Department of Energy (DOE) said the new excise tax rates "do NOT apply to the old stocks of petroleum products."

Assistant Energy Secretary Leonido Pulido III said "the OIMB [Oil Industry Manage-

ment Bureau] has issued an advisory to petroleum products stakeholders NOT to levy new excise tax rates on old stocks."

The excise tax on petroleum products were included in the Tax Reform for Acceleration

and Inclusion (TRAIN) measure passed by Congress last month.

Quoting Finance Secretary Sonny Dominguez, Communications Secretary Martin Andanar said in a radio interview that the increase in **A4**

oil taxes was "not expected to take effect immediately on Jan. 1 because it takes a few days before the old stocks from 2017 are used up."

"So therefore, we should be wary of people who will take advantage of this situation," he said.

Under the TRAIN, an excise tax of P2.50 per liter would be imposed on diesel and bunker fuel starting this year. This would go up to P4.50 in 2019 and P6 in 2020.

Int'l oil prices

The excise tax on gasoline would be increased from P4.35 per liter to P7 this year and then to P9 in 2019, and P10 in 2020.

Still, two oil companies announced on Monday that they would raise pump prices on a few of their petroleum products but they cited movements in international oil prices as justification.

Starting at 6 a.m. today, diesel prices would go up by 65 centavos per liter on top of the

15-centavo increase last week. Gasoline prices would be raised by 20 centavos per liter, canceling the same amount that it had gone down last week.

Only PTT Philippines Corp. and Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc. have announced price hikes, although other companies are expected to follow.

Income tax

DOE data show that diesel prices in Metro Manila were in the range of P33.00 to P38.10 per liter.

Prices of gasoline with an octane rating of 95 ranged from P43.05 to P52.91 per liter.

President Duterte on Dec. 19 signed into law package 1A of the TRAIN, or Republic Act (RA) No. 10963. The law would slash and restructure personal income tax rates, which remained unchanged for the past two decades, starting on Jan. 1. The TRAIN, however, would jack up or slap new taxes on oil, cigarettes, sugary drinks and automobiles.

Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) chief Caesar Dulay told the



A gas station attendant prepares to load fuel on a car in this file photo. New excise taxes on oil products intended to raise government revenues are going to increase pump prices for gasoline and other fuels starting this year. —INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

Inquirer five teams at the revenue agency were working on the regulations that would serve as the implementing guidelines of the TRAIN.

In a statement late on Friday, the BIR said it was set to issue various revenue regulations on income tax, withholding tax, value-added tax (VAT) and ex-

cise taxes on petroleum, automobiles, mineral products, tobacco, sweetened beverage, cosmetic procedures as well as estate and donor's tax, percentage tax and documentary stamp tax.

Critics

It said public consultations would be held on Jan. 11 and Jan. 12 to help guide the drafters in coming up with various issuances on the TRAIN, as well as internal briefings, which would be conducted from Jan. 24 to Jan. 26.

Andanar defended the new tax measure against government critics who had warned that it would harm the poor with the expected price increases resulting from these tax hikes.

He said the TRAIN's "pros outweighed its cons" as it would generate more revenues for the government while providing tax breaks to ordinary employees.

"Our revenues will increase and these will go to various government projects and investments that will create

jobs," Andanar said.

He said the TRAIN also would lower the estate tax rate and cut taxes on medicines.

"Now, 99 percent of income tax payers will see that they'll be paying less taxes. More than 70 percent of our countrymen will no longer be paying income tax because they earn less than P250,000 a year," Andanar said.

More savings

He said those who earn P15,000 monthly will save P1,541 and those who receive P20,000 a month will see their paycheck go up by P2,683. Those with a monthly earning of P35,000 will gain P4,197 in savings, he added.

Andanar said the new revenues raised under the TRAIN would help the 10 million families who would benefit from the conditional cash transfer program this year.

"Our small and small and micro entrepreneurs will also now have a simplified tax rate of eight percent on their gross sales. This will be implemented in lieu of income and percentage taxes," he said. INQ

02 January 2018



Page: J

Congress 2017 and the resurgence of martial law

By **DELON PORCALLA**
and **JESS DIAZ**

The year 2017 saw Congress approving the first post-Marcos martial law proclamation in a historic vote, although limited to strife-torn Mindanao, and extending it twice – first for five months until Dec. 31

and then for the entire 2018. This unprecedented move by a joint session of the Senate and the House of Representatives resulted from the Marawi siege, where soldiers took five months to flush out Islamic State (IS)-linked Maute terrorists.

Legislators voted 240-27

to allow President Duterte to extend martial law in Mindanao by a year after it lapsed on Dec. 31, 2017.

Fourteen of the 20 senators present voted in the affirmative. The yes votes of Senators Francis Escudero and Cynthia Villar were not counted as they left the

Turn to Page 4

session early.

A total of 226 House lawmakers approved the martial law extension joint resolution as well, while 23 representatives and four senators opposed it.

Executive and defense officials led by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the extension is needed since "remnants of (terror) groups continue to rebuild through recruitment, training and fund-raising."

"They are consolidating their forces," Medialdea said, noting that the IS-inspired Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters "continues to commit acts of violence, while the Abu Sayyaf remains a serious security concern."

They also revealed that while the Mautes and other terrorist groups have been "substantially neutralized and the main battle area in Marawi has been liberated, terrorist threats remain."

"In sum, the factual basis for martial law as affirmed by Congress and the Supreme Court continues to exist. There is still a state of rebellion ready to explode anew at any time," Medialdea said.

Impeachment complaints

This year also saw the filing of two impeachment complaints in the House committee on justice - first against Commission on Elections chairman Andres Bautista who eventually resigned and second against Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno.

A third one, supposedly against Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales, has yet to be filed.

Bautista, a former chairman of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, was accused by his estranged wife Patricia of amassing ill-gotten wealth amounting to P1.2 billion, which the former law professor didn't deny, and proudly declared he could explain everything.

More than P300 million of the amount was

deposited in a virtually unknown bank, the Luzon Development Bank. The complaint against Bautista was initially thrown out by the justice committee but was overwhelmingly reversed in the plenary after he refused to resign.

Eight of the 15 incumbent Supreme Court justices, and one retired (Arturo Brion), have manifested their desire to testify in the impeachment hearings at the committee on justice headed by Oriental Mindoro Rep. Reynaldo Umali.

So far, four have personally appeared in the House, including Court Administrator Midas Marquez.

The SC chief has been accused by lawyer Lorenzo Gadon of culpable violation of the 1987 Constitution by making unilateral decisions in a collegial body, graft and corruption and betrayal of public trust, among other misdemeanors.

Pieces of legislation

The House leadership under Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez in the current 17th Congress also revived the death penalty bill, one of the campaign promises of President Duterte, who has been vocal in his peace and order campaign even as mayor of Davao City.

However, the measure was stalled in the Senate.

The bill also cost the committee chairmanship posts of many House leaders who voted against its passage, among them former president and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Arroyo and Batangas Rep. Vilma Recto.

Before the year ended, Congress lowered the personal taxes of fixed-income earners and passed the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) bill for the Duterte administration's massive infrastructure projects.

President Duterte signed the bill lowering the personal income tax into law, which the previous administration had rejected, and TRAIN for his "Build, Build, Build" program.

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onal pride

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02 January 2018

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 3

30 percent of Marawi City cleared of explosives – AFP

By FRANCIS WAKEFIELD

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said that it has already cleared 30 percent of Marawi's most affected areas of unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices as the Joint Engineer Task Group (JETG) continues its rehabilitation efforts in the city.

"The JETG continues its main mission of clearing explosives completing around 30 percent of the whole most affected area," said AFP chief engineer Major General Arnold Rafael Depakakibo.

As of December 15, 2017, a total of 2,853 assorted unexploded ordnance and 415 improvised explosive devices were recovered by the JETG.

This was done through the support of Explosives and Ordnance Disposal Company and K-9 Teams from the Philippine

Army and Philippines Air Force.

The JETG also completed the clearing of more or less 20 kilometers of primary and secondary roads, three major bridges, a school, and three places of worship immediately after the liberation of Marawi.

This resulted in the timely conduct of post-conflict needs assessment by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

"We also continue our limited construction support to government agencies involved in supporting the maintenance of evacuation centers," Depakakibo said.

Aside from construction support, the JETG also assisted the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) in the construction of 500 temporary shelters for the evacuees.

2 January 2018



Pahina. 2

Habang ipinamimigay sa mga ka-barangay, nagputukan

NAVY, NADALE SA PAPUTOK

SUGATAN ang miyembro ng Philippine Navy matapos magputukan ang mga hawak nitong paputok habang namimigay sa kanyang mga ka-barangay sa Cavite City, kahapon nang madaling-araw.

Ginagamot sa ospital si Lt. Kenneth Campos Villanueva, 38-anyos, nakataga sa HPN Fort Bonifacio.

Ala-1:00 ng madaling-araw kahapon, sakay ang biktima ng kanyang Toyota Altis at panandaliang huminto sa kanyang mga ka-barangay upang mamigay ng mga dala nitong paputok.

Habang maabot nito ang mga hawak na paputok ay nagputukan ang mga ito dahil upang masabugan siya sa kanyang miikha, mga kamay at katawan.

Agad itong naitakbo sa Bautista Hospital at kasalukuyang ginagamot. *(Janice Baricuatro)*

02 January 2018



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3 slain in Maguindanao roadside bombings

By JOHN UNSON

TACURONG – Three persons, including a police officer, were killed while 22 others were wounded in roadside bombings in Maguindanao on Sunday.

Senior Police Officer 4 Max Kaibat and several other personnel of the Shariff Aguak police were checking the reported sighting of members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) at the border of Datu Hoffer and Shariff Aguak towns when an improvised explosive device went off.

PO3 Jalison Abdullah and PO1s Archie Ansari Amelista, Ricardo Almorin, Alimodin Nuphay and Zainodin Abdullah were wounded.

Senior Superintendent Agustin Tello, Maguindanao police director, said the wounded policemen are now in stable condition in a hospital.

Dominador Datahan and Alladin Laguab were walking on their way to the Villa Garden karaoke bar in Barangay Buenaflor in this city when a bomb left in a tricycle exploded.

Senior Superintendent Raul Supiter, Sultan Kudarat police director, said the bar could be

the target of the attack.

"The roof of the tricycle was blown out. Investigators are still trying to determine who brought the tricycle near the bar," Supiter told **The STAR** yesterday.

Datahan was declared dead on arrival at the Sultan Kudarat Provincial Hospital. Laguab died while being treated in the same hospital yesterday.

Sixteen other persons, among them motorists passing by the area, were wounded and taken to various hospitals.

Supiter said they received reports that the BIFF were involved in the bombing.

BIFF bandits also reported-

ly burned 12 houses of ethnic Teduray villagers in Sitio Macon, Barangay Limpongo also on Sunday.

Lt. Col. Gerry Besana, Joint Task Force Central spokesman, said the bandits escaped when they sensed that personnel of the 57th Infantry Battalion were closing in.

Police are securing the evacuation centers where around 200 Teduray families are staying after their houses were burned on Monday last week also by suspected BIFF men.

The bandits shot dead one of the ethnic group's tribal leaders, Diego Dagadas, last Tuesday.

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Truce broken; 2 soldiers hurt in clash with NPA

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

Two soldiers were wounded in an encounter with communist rebels in Farragona, Davao Oriental on Saturday.

The soldiers were responding to reports that New People's Army (NPA) rebels were harassing residents of Barangay Tubaon when the clash occurred.

Around 50 NPA rebels allegedly fired at the soldiers,

triggering a 30-minute gunfight.

The Philippine Army said the incident violated the holiday ceasefire declared by the rebels.

The NPA declared a unilateral ceasefire from 6 p.m. of Dec. 23 to 6 p.m. of Dec. 26 and 6 p.m. of Dec. 30 to 6 p.m. of Jan. 2 after Malacañang declared a truce from 6 p.m. of Dec. 23 to 11:59 p.m. of Dec. 26 and from 6 p.m. of Dec. 30 until

11:59 p.m. of Jan. 2.

"They continue to intimidate and threaten some of the residents. Report also disclosed that NPAs celebrated the anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines in the area with some residents and children who are just afraid not to go with them," the Army said in a statement.

The rebels also reportedly detonated a landmine.

"The NPAs have grossly, again and again violated the ceasefire they have declared. They even bring along with them innocent civilians and children," Maj. Gen. Noel Clement, 10th Infantry Division (ID) commander, said.

"The 10th ID is calling on the people not to be deceived by this terrorist group. Our units are pursuing them to prevent further atrocities," Clement said.