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NEWS CLIPPINGS

06 January 2018

Saturday

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

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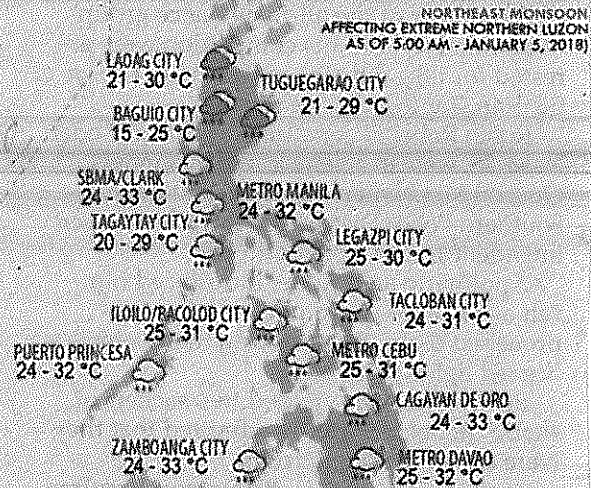
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SUNRISE **SUNSET** **MOONRISE** **MOONSET**
 6:23 AM 5:41 PM 10:03 PM 9:56 AM
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 10:24 AM 6:25 AM
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 MANILA SOUTH HARBOR

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST JANUARY 06, 2018 | SATURDAY



EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	JAN 7 SUN	JAN 8 MON	JAN 9 TUE	EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	JAN 7 SUN	JAN 8 MON	JAN 9 TUE
METRO MANILA	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 30 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C
TUGUEGARAO	20 °C 29 °C	19 °C 28 °C	19 °C 27 °C	ILONO/ BACOLOD	24 °C 31 °C	25 °C 30 °C	24 °C 31 °C
LAOAG	21 °C 30 °C	20 °C 30 °C	20 °C 30 °C	METRO CEBU	25 °C 31 °C	25 °C 31 °C	25 °C 31 °C
BAGUIO	14 °C 25 °C	14 °C 24 °C	13 °C 24 °C	TACLOBAN	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 31 °C
SBMA/ CLARK	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 30 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 33 °C
TAGAYTAY	20 °C 28 °C	19 °C 28 °C	19 °C 27 °C	METRO DAVAO	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C
LEGAZPI	24 °C 30 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 33 °C

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers

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

Light rains

06 January 2018



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Ex-AFP chief gets DILG

Cuy appointed Drugs Board chief

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

President Duterte has pushed through with his plan to appoint retired Armed Forces chief Eduardo Año as head of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) but only as officer-in-charge, replacing Catalino Cuy who was named chairman of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB).

Before Año's retirement in October last year, the President had announced he wanted the then military chief to be DILG secretary.

But this was deferred following Malacañang's review of Republic Act 6975 or the DILG Act of 1990, which states that "no retired or resigned military officer or police official may be appointed as secretary within one year from the date of his retirement or resignation."

Año was appointed undersecretary instead as Duterte wanted him to oversee the military operations in Marawi City as well as the implementation of martial law in Mindanao.

Meanwhile, Cuy replaced Dionisio Santiago, who was fired by Duterte last November

for making comments about the drug war before the media instead of discussing his concerns with the President.

In particular, Santiago criticized the mega drug rehabilitation center that a Chinese donor built in Nueva Ecija, calling it a mistake because of its distant location, when family and community support is needed for drug users to get rehabilitated.

"This is a new challenge," Cuy, a former police general, said in a text message when asked to comment on his appointment.

He refused to answer other questions, including his plans for the board.

Cuy will also serve as permanent member of the DDB until July 4 of this year.

Turn to Page 8

Ex-AFP From Page 1

Cuy became OIC of the trust and confidence. DILG after the President axed then secretary Ismael Sueno in April of last year due to loss of

Senators welcomed Cuy's appointment to the DDB, saying they expect him to

perform well in his new post as he did at the DILG.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he can speak highly of Cuy based on his official dealings with him as chairman of the Senate committee on public

order and dangerous drugs, and former chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP).

"I knew him (Cuy) as a professional and efficient police official," the senator said.

As DILG undersecretary

and later OIC, Cuy "performed very well and I see no reason why he can't handle DDB with the same effectiveness," he said.

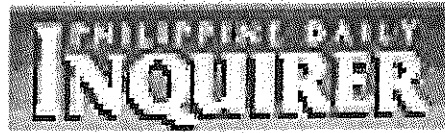
Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, who was

former DDB chairman, said he also hopes Cuy would do his job well given the magnitude of the country's drug problem.

– With Emmanuel Tupas, Paolo Romero



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BISHOPS WARN: 'NO-EL' PRELUDE TO DICTATORSHIP

STORY BY JULIE M. AURELIO

Catholic bishops say a 'no-election' scenario and any plan to extend President Duterte's term of office beyond 2022 would be unconstitutional and signal an imminent dictatorship.

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Bishops: 'No-el' prelude to dictatorship

FROM A1

By Julie M. Aurelio
@JMAurelioINQ

Catholic bishops on Friday joined the growing opposition to a possible cancellation of the 2019 elections and the extension of the terms of office of President Duterte and other officials, warning that these moves could lead to a dictatorship.

"Extension of the term of any elected official must never be allowed," Bishop Arturo Bastes of Sorsogon said on Friday.

"This is a great violation of the Constitution of our republic," he said. "Extension of the (President's) term smacks of an imminent dictatorship, which happened during the presidency of (the late strongman Ferdi-

nand) Marcos."

Bishop Ruperto Santos of Balanga, Bataan, said proposals to amend or revise the Constitution should not be used as an excuse to advance any personal agenda or a political party's interest.

No to preconditioning

"Let us not focus on politics and not to precondition the minds of our people to a 'no-elections' [No-el] scenario," Santos said.

The bishops were reacting to statements by Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III and Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez, who had raised the possibility of extending the terms of Mr. Duterte and lawmakers if Congress succeeded in introducing a shift to federalism in the Constitution this year.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan, president of the opposition Liberal Party, on Thursday said the exten-

sion of the terms of the President and the members of Congress was part of a planned 10-year transition period in the shift to a federal form of government.

He said this was among the "proposals we gathered being presented by the ruling PDP-Laban and members of the House of Representatives aligned with the administration."

Detained Sen. Leila de Lima, an archcritic of the President, on Friday said Mr. Duterte and his allies' "true and dark plans are now made public."

'True agenda'

"That is their true agenda—to extend their stay in power," she said. "Their plans for No-el and the shift to federalism are there because they want to remain in their positions in the years to come."

De Lima, who had been

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slapped with drug charges by the Department of Justice, spoke with reporters at Branch 34 of the Quezon City Metropolitan Trial Court, where she is also facing charges of disobeying a summons by the House of Representatives.

Bastes, the Sorsogon bishop, said the No-el scenario was a "specter of a looming dictatorial government."

"We citizens should be vigilant to avoid political pitfalls," he said.

Claudette Guevarra, secretary general of the civil society group Democracy Watch Philippines, said the 2019 midterm elections should push through so that elected officials could seek "a fresh mandate from their constituents."

Guevarra said, however, that her group at the moment saw "no

indications that it (No-el scenario) is a prelude to a dictatorship."

"Checks and balances are still in place," she said.

Alvarez had said he raised the No-el scenario to deal with the complication of the transition to a new federal system that would result from the election in 2019 of 12 senators with a six-year term.

He was looking at allowing the senators elected in 2013 to keep their seats until 2022 along with those elected in 2016.

"So, [the expiration of all senators' terms] could be done simultaneously in 2022 under the new structure of government," he explained on Thursday.

He said elections could still be held for other officials with a three-year term ending in 2022. "But in my view, there's no need for the senators," he said.

Presidential spokesperson

Harry Roque on Thursday said Mr. Duterte was averse to the idea of continuing to hold power after his term, even if it is extended under a new Constitution.

Roque also allayed fears of the No-el scenario floated by Alvarez, saying the Constitution mandates the holding of elections next year, unless it is amended.

Sen. JV Ejercito on Thursday expressed doubts Filipinos would accept the scrapping of the 2019 elections. "People look forward to elections, which serve as a referendum on all elected officials," he said.

Sen. Bam Aquino said next year's polls would be "an auditing of the first three years of the current administration and currently elected officials, whether campaign promises are fulfilled or not." —WITH A REPORT FROM

JHESSET O. ENANO INQ

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06 January 2018

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

Año takes top DILG post

By GENALYN D. KABILING

President Duterte has appointed retired military chief Eduardo Año as the new officer-in-charge (OIC) of the Department of the Interior and Local

Government (DILG).

Año's appointment came after the President designated DILG OIC and Undersecretary Catalino Cuy as chairman of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB).

The appointment papers, ►6

Año takes top...

◀1

signed by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea last January 4, were released by Malacañang yesterday.

"Upon the instruction of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, and to ensure continuous and effective delivery of public service, please be informed that you are hereby designated as Officer-in-Charge of the Department of Interior and Local Government effectively immediately," read Medialdea's memorandum to Año.

Año, a former Armed Forces chief of staff and martial law implementer in Mindanao, currently serves undersecretary of the DILG.

The President had long wanted to appoint Año as the next DILG secretary, but deferred the plan since no retired military or police official can be appointed as secretary within one year from retirement.

Cuy, on the other hand, takes the place of former DDB chairman Dionisio Santiago who was sacked by Duterte over alleged junkets abroad and acceptance of favors from drug lords.

Santiago also got the boot for criticizing drug rehabilitation center donated by

a Chinese tycoon.

Cuy has also been named permanent member of the DDB with a term expiring July 2, 2018.

Cuy, a retired police general, earlier took the helm of the DILG temporarily after the dismissal of Ismael Sueno over corruption allegations.

More to be axed

Meanwhile, the sacking of Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) administrator Marcial Amaro III is not likely to be the last government official to get the boot over excesses in public service.

Some government officials, including police officers, could be fired over allegations of frequent travels and other anomalies once an inquiry is complete, according to Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque.

Roque admitted that the Palace is looking into these complaints against some officials as part of due process, assuring the President will spare no one in the campaign against corruption.

"Naku madami pa (There's still a lot)," Roque said in a radio interview last

Thursday, when asked if more officials are next on the chopping block following the dismissal of Amaro over excessive foreign travels.

"Ngayon po alam ko mayroon pang dalawang pending na reklamo diyan at pinatitingnan po talaga iyan sa Presidential Management Staff (At present, I know there are two pending complaints being looked into by the Presidential Management Staff)," he added.

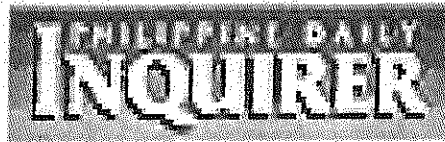
Roque, in another radio interview, said the list of the suspected erring officials may be released before the end of the month.

Roque affirmed that these complaints involved a mix of allegations of excessive travels and other corrupt practices, which he claimed the President considers betrayal of public trust if proven true.

The President recently fired Amaro after a Department of Transportation (DOTr) report showed he made a total of 24 foreign trips in the last two years. A complaint from MARINA employees was also received by the President about the same concern.

Roque said the President does not ignore the complaints sent by citizens to the Palace about the performance or conduct of government officials.

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GOV'T STRIKE VS BIFF IN MAGUINDANAO

AFP: NO TRIBE MEMBERS LEFT IN BATTLE ZONE

CAMP SIONGCO, MAGUINDANAO—The military disputed reports that members of the Teduray tribe were still trapped on Mt. Firis as the government on Thursday launched artillery and air strikes to flush out Islamic State-inspired gunmen there.

"As far as the Army is concerned, no civilians were trapped, they have already evacuated during the early days of conflict," Capt. Arvin John Encinas, spokesperson for the 6th Infantry Division (ID), said on Friday.

But Fatima Kananan, the head of the Office of Southern Cultural Communities in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, maintained on Friday that up to 1,400 individuals remained in Sitio Bagong in Barangay Maitumaig in Datu Unsay town; and Sitio Kiyamko in Barangay Kambingi in Datu Saudi Ampatuan town.

She said the figure was re-



Teduray evacuees receive aid from the government.

—EDWIN FERNANDEZ

lated by those who had earlier fled the areas affected by military offensives against the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF).

Kananan said she had not received updates on the situation of people remaining in Teduray communities.

Maguindanao Gov. Esmael

Mangudadatu also said he was told by the police that no more civilians were left on Mt. Firis, as residents moved to evacuation centers.

Maj. Gen. Arnel dela Vega, the 6th ID commander, said he had ordered the artillery offensives and air attacks by helicopter gunships after 70 BIFF fighters attacked a detachment of the 57th Infantry Battalion in Sitio Perez in Barangay Maitumaig on Thursday.

"We are not letting our guard down; we will use all our resources to finish them off," Dela Vega said.

Soldiers on board military trucks were seen heading toward the adjoining towns of Datu Unsay, Datu Saudi and Datu Hoffer on Friday.

Encinas did not say if the air strikes and artillery fire had resulted in casualties on the side of the BIFF, led by Esmail Abubakar alias Commander Bungos. —EDWIN FERNANDEZ INQ

6 January 2018

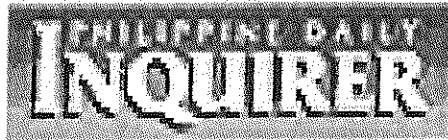


Pahina. 7



Personal na dinala ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana sa Camp Tecson, San Miguel, Bulacan ang may 5,000 mga Kalashnikov AK-47 Rifles para sa mga kawal na kasapi ng First Scout Ranger Regiment ng Philippine Army. Pinanguhanan ni Coronel Rene Glen Paje ang pagtanggap sa nasabing mga armas. (Larawang padala ng DND)

06 January 2018



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FORMER MILITARY MAN SUPERVISES POLICE

DUTERTE APPOINTS AÑO AS NEW OIC AT DILG; CUY HEADS DDB

By Leila B. Salaverria
@leilasINQ

President Duterte has tasked Eduardo Año to head the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) as its officer in charge, replacing Catalino Cuy who was named chair of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB).

Año's rank will remain as undersecretary because the law bars him from being designated its secretary for a year following

his retirement as Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff.

Cuy, who used to be the DILG OIC, takes over the DDB from Dionisio Santiago, who resigned last November upon the directive of the President, who was irked over Santiago's remarks that the government's 10,000-bed drug rehabilitation facility in Nueva Ecija was "a mistake" because of its impracticality.

Cuy was also designated as permanent member of the DDB

board with a term expiring on July 4, 2018.

As DILG OIC, Año will have supervision over the country's police force.

When the President announced his plan to put Año at the DILG in May last year, he said he needed somebody from the military at the department because of problems with the police.

At that time, Mr. Duterte took note of a report about police offi-

cers involved in kidnapping.

After being taken out of the Duterte administration's war on drugs twice, the Philippine National Police remains a player in the campaign, but it has lost the lead role to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency.

Cuy considers his new post as a "new challenge," especially after his two immediate predecessors—Santiago and Benjamin Reyes—did not stay long at DDB.



Catalino Cuy

Eduardo Año

The President removed Reyes in May last year for claiming there were only 1.8 million drug addicts and pushers in the country, much lower than the administration's high-

er estimate.

Cuy took over as DILG OIC after Mr. Duterte fired Secretary Ismael Sueno in April over corruption allegations. —WITH A REPORT FROM JEANETTE I. ANDRADE INQ

6 January 2018



Pahina. 2

Duterte malaki ang tiwala sa mga sundalo

MALAKI talaga ang tiwala ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte sa kakayahan ng mga sundalo sa bansa dahil opisyal na nitong itinalaga si dating Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Eduardo Año bilang bagong officer-in-charge ng Department of Interior and Local Government.

Mananatiling undersecretary at officer-in-charge lang muna si Año sa DILG hangga't wala pang isang taon ang nakalilipas mula nang magretiro ito sa serbisyo.

Nito lamang Enero 4 ay pinirmahan ni Pangulong Duterte ang appointment paper nito.

Sa kabilang dako, itinalaga naman ni Pangulong Duterte si DILG officer-in-charge Catalino Cuy bilang chairman ng Dangerous Drugs Board.

Si Cuy ang pumalit kay dating DDB chairman Dionisio Santiago na sinibak ni Pangulong Duterte dahil sa komento nito laban sa mega-drug rehabilitation facility sa Bulacan.

Nagtalaga naman ang Chief Executive ng bagong chairperson ng Dangerous Drugs Board.

Samantala, dalawang sundalong kabilang sa naganap na bakbakan sa Marawi City ang binigyan ng ikatlong estrelya sa kanilang mga balik at ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Bukod pa ito sa apat na iba pang mga sundalong tu-

maas din ang ranggo.

Kinilala ang promoted soldiers na sina Major General Paul Atal, commander ng Armed Forces of the Philippines– Central Command sa Cebu at Major General Danilo Pamonag, hepe ng AFP Souther Luzon Command sa Lucena.

Sina Atal at Pamonag ay mula sa 5th Infantry Division at Army Special Operations Command na kabilang naman sa mga ipinadalang sundalo sa Marawi City para labanan ang ISIS-inspired Maute terror group.

Major general na rin ang ranggo ngayon nina dating Brigadier General Fernando Trinidad, AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Brigadier General Rewhe Glen Paje, AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil-Military Operations, at Brigadier General Jose Antonio Carlos Motril, hepe ng AFP Human Rights Office.

Hawak naman ngayon ni dating Colonel Joseph Villanueva ng Philippine Military Academy, Headquarters Academic Group Head, ang rang-gong brigadier general.

Inaprubahan ni Pangulong Duterte noong Disyembre 18 ang promotion ng mga nabanggit na sundalo ngunit January 4 lang nang i-release ang kanilang mga bagong ranggo, kasunod ng donning of the ranks na pinangunahan ni AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero sa Hall of Flags sa Camp Aguinaldo. KJ

06 January 2018

The Manila Times

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Mindanao leaders support continuation of martial law

A NON-GOVERNMENT organization based in Mindanao submitted to the Office of the Solicitor General, a manifesto signed by residents from the war-torn and rebel-filled areas of the region, expressing support for the continued implementation of martial law.

The group's leaders Mark Siacon and Joenime Kapina, former provincial board members of Sultan Kudarat, and Michael Abas Kida, president of Aksyon Mamamayan (AKMA) Bantay Demokrasya, said residents of Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao and Davao City signed the manifesto.

The legality of the martial rule extension in Mindanao has been questioned before the Supreme Court.

Together with Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption founding chairman Dante Jimenez, the group said strong-man rule helped bring stability and peace in the region.

"The concern of those coming from Region 12 in Mindanao is to help in the argument that indeed there are still terrorists, not only in Marawi are but also in other areas where war has not been out before," Jimenez told reporters.

Kida, meanwhile, said there is a basis for the declaration of President Duterte due to the extremist Maute group and other Islamic State (IS)-inspired bandits.

"There is really a need [for

martial law] since, you know, the terrorists just regroup that after Marawi they invade Maguindanao with BIFF [Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters]. So if martial law is lifted I think there would be trouble," he said.

Siacon, of Palimbang town, said criminal and terror activities were suppressed after martial law was declared at the height of the Marawi City siege.

He said the declaration also helped curb the activities of private armed groups allegedly linked to Palimbang mayor Abubakar Maulana.

In 2015, authorities killed eight gunmen carrying IS flags during an encounter in Palimbang, reportedly led by Mohammad Jaafar Maguid, alias Tokboy, leader of Ansar Khilafa Philippines (AKP).

Maguid, killed in 2017 in a military operation, was tagged as the brains behind the Davao City night market bombing in 2016.

His wife, Karen Aizha Hamidon, was arrested for allegedly using social media to promote extremist propaganda and recruit IS fighters.

Last December 31, two roadside blasts happened in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat and Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao in which three people were killed, including a police officer, and several others were wounded.

FRANCIS EARL A. CUETO

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Abu Sayyaf beheads 'kafir' couple

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Abu Sayyaf terrorists beheaded Thursday a couple it described as "kafir" (Islam term for traitor) to their cause at a remote village in Sumisip town in Basilan.

Police and military sources confirmed the execution yesterday after the Caggu Active

Auxiliary reported having discovered the lifeless bodies of Abdurahim Kituh and wife Nadzwa Bahitla in Sitio Bacahan, barangay Mahatalang.

Senior Supt. Nixon Muksan, Basilan Provincial Police director, said it was not the first time the terrorist group beheaded former members who decide

to surrender to authorities and live peaceful lives.

He added that the bandit group earlier warned civilians against passing through Mahatalang, one of the group's known stronghold.

Investigators identified the group of Nahim Mustalim, an Abu Sayyaf member and

half-brother of Kituh, as responsible for the crime.

Mustalim is said to be under the group of Usop Sandalan, a sub-leader of Abu Sayyaf commander Rhadzmil Janatil.

A military source said the couple was killed after surrendering to the government last year. – Roel Pareño

06 January 2018

Manila
Standard

Page. A2

Sayyaf men behead two in Basilan

SUSPECTED members of the Abu Sayyaf Group beheaded a couple in the remote village of Sumisip in Basilan late Thursday, local police reported.

Senior Insp. Ian Sanchez said local authorities identified the couple as Abdurahim Kutih and his wife.

Basilan Gov. Jim Salimman then said a reliable source told him the man was the brother of an Abu Sayyaf member. He also claimed the group of Abu Sayyaf sub-commander Radzmi Jannatul was behind the beheading, saying the area was a known stronghold of the terrorist group.

Police, however, said it remains unclear why the bandits would target a relative of their member.

06 January 2018

Manila Standard

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Marawi damage estimate raised to P49.8b

By John Paolo Bencito

AT LEAST P49.81 billion will be needed to fully rehabilitate Marawi City, Malacañang said Friday after an initial post-conflict needs assessment showed the city lost P18.21 billion after terrorists overran and

occupied parts of the city.

"That [P49.81 billion] would represent everything—if you want to rehabilitate Marawi, housing and everything, all the things that are needed for Marawi to get up," Communications Assistant Secretary

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Marawi...

From A1

Ana Maria Banaag said in a briefing in Malacañang.

The estimated P50-billion budget however, might increase once the National Economic and Development Authority completes its comprehensive rehabilitation and reconstruction plan for Marawi, Housing Secretary and Task Force Bangon Marawi chief Eduardo del Rosario said.

"When it comes out, it will now factor in everything that would include the master development plan being envisioned by the city of Marawi and the province of Lanao del Sur," he said, adding that Neda's plan is expected to come out in the second week of March.

Del Rosario said that at least five "big" developers are expected to submit unsolicited proposals to rebuild the most af-

ected parts of war-torn Marawi City by Jan. 15, and one winning bidder will be awarded by mid-April.

All proposals would be subjected to a Swiss Challenge, in which the government will receive an unsolicited bid for a project and after publishing its details, invite third parties to match or even exceed the offer.

"I think it's premature to name the developers but it is safe to say that we have big developers. They will be submitting their unsolicited proposals by Jan. 15," he said.

"And based on the study of our experts... the earliest time that we can start with actual groundwork is April 15. Now, how will it go? We will select from those five. We organized a technical working group to select from the five based on their submission," he added.

The government is planning to develop Marawi's ground zero from scratch, with roads to be widened, buildings

cleared, power lines placed underground, and a new drainage system and waste and water treatment facilities will be built as part of the rehabilitation plan, Del Rosario said.

Clearing efforts by the military were already ongoing and are expected to be finished by first week of April, but at least 14 600-pounder unexploded ordnance from FA-50 jets would have to be recovered first.

Del Rosario said that residents would have to sign waivers before going back to their respective homes and get their belongings.

Marawi, home to 200,000 individuals, was overrun by the Maute Group, which went on a rampage after a military operation failed to arrest terrorist leader Isnilon Hapilon.

Fighting broke out on May 23, 2017, but government troops were able to retake the city on Oct. 23. More than 1,000 people died in the fighting.

So far, the National Housing

Authority has turned over 500 transitional shelters for those displaced by the fighting. The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. also gave out 300 temporary housing units.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority and the Department of Social Welfare and Development, meanwhile, are providing skills training and pre-employment assistance program. They awarded toolkits for 2,615 displaced persons in Iligan City and Lanao del Norte.

The Department of Education distributed 4,500 learner's kits and 1,300 teacher's kits.

In terms of food security, the Department of Agriculture distributed 60 units of fiberglass boats through its "Balik Sigla sa Ilog at Lawa" project; post-harvest equipment, such as tractors, harvesters, and water pumps; and fertilizers and high-value rice and corn seeds worth P3.6 million.

With Alena Mae Flores

06 January 2018

The Manila Times

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The anatomy of terrorist financing

BY DREI TOLEDO AND MIMI FABE

Third of four parts
TERRORIST activities can be classified into both operational and support activities.

Operational activities encompass surveillance and reconnaissance, rehearsal, final preparations and the actual attack.

Support activities entail propaganda, recruitment, fund-raising procurement, trans-

portation and travel, safe havens, multiple identities, communications and training.

All these activities require money; thus terrorist groups have turned to various sources of funding.

**THE MANILA TIMES
INVESTIGATIVE
REPORT**

The financing of terrorism involves several activities, including storing of finances, masking funding sources and developing infrastructure that

are institutional in nature to manage and transfer funds to terrorist organizations.

The Financial Action Task Force, an intergovernment body that set standards to promote the effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system, has highlighted a number of existing threats.

These include the use of multiple funding resources and banking availability, which make financing terrorist

► Financing A2

FINANCING FROM A1

The anatomy of terrorist financing

acts possible.

Terrorist financing can be broken down into two distinct types of activity. Type 1 terrorist financing refers to the early stage of gathering large proportions of funds, while Type 2 terrorist financing refers to the approach that uses the acquired funds to financially support a terrorist.

The Marawi siege falls under the Type 2 terrorist financing, with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) channelling huge amounts of funding to support local fighters.

Oil wells, fields

ISIS revenue comes primarily from the sale of illicit oil, from the deep pockets of a small number of major donors, and from a wide array of criminal enterprises.

In September 2014, US government placed ISIS' daily income at about \$3 million, and assets at between \$1.3 and \$2 billion.

ISIS helped supply and maintain equipment, provide salaries for fighters, manage civilian infrastructure and administration, and expand its propaganda campaign.

It owned 350 oil wells in Iraq and 60 percent of Syria's oil field. ISIS was believed to sell some 30,000 barrels a day in Iraq and 50,000 in Syria, at roughly \$40 per barrel on the black market.

Kidnapping and other crimes

Terrorists engage in crimes such as kidnapping, robbery and extortion because these require force, but limited skills. Terrorists are continuing to diversify into illicit activity as a means to increase the dependability of financial flows.

For example, the Abu Sayyaf Group pocketed at least P353 million (\$7.3 million) from ransom kidnappings in mid-2016, and have turned to abductions of foreign tugboat crewmen as military offensives restricted the militants' mobility.

Of the estimated P353 million in ransom received by the Abu Sayyaf from January to June 2016, the bulk was paid in exchange for the releases of 14 Indonesian and 4 Malaysian crewmen who had been held at Abu Sayyaf jungle bases in Sulu province.

The militants got P20 million (\$413,000) in ransom for freeing Marites Flor, a Filipino woman who was kidnapped in 2016 with two Canadians and a Norwegian from Samal Island.

Narco-politics

About P10 million worth of shabu was recovered in the house of former Marawi mayor Omar Solitario Ali, affirming the link between the crisis in the city and illegal drugs.

Security forces seized two kilos of shabu worth P10 million from

a house of Ali while conducting clearing operations in battle-ravaged Marawi City on June 24, 2017. Authorities were convinced that the house was used by the Maute terrorists as a safe house.

Ali was one of the persons in the arrest order issued by the Defense department after President Rodrigo Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao last May 23. He was also one of the politicians accused by Duterte of having ties with the illegal drugs trade.

Ali's brother, Fajad Salic, also a former mayor of Marawi, was charged with rebellion for allegedly supporting the Maute terrorists that occupied Marawi City. President Duterte has repeatedly claimed that money from illegal drugs funded the terrorist activity in Mindanao.

Also according to President Duterte, Lanao del Sur narco-politicians operated the illegal drug trade in the entire Mindanao.

Anonymous mobile payments

Almost half of the world's population use smartphones. Smartphones have internet connectivity, making half the world at risk of cybercrime. Almost three-fourths of the transaction money to and from bank accounts of smartphone users are processed through smartphones and related banking apps.

According to the International Data Corp., the Philippines is the

fastest-growing market for smartphones in Southeast Asia.

Almost 30 percent of the growing Philippine population are using smartphones, and about 3.5 million smartphone units were sold in 2016. This segment is expected to double in 2018.

Given the lack of an existing financial services infrastructure in the Philippines, the acceptance rates for mobile payment and mobile banking solutions have been high. The use of mobile payments is also significantly affected by the security of the mobile payment process.

Payment processes where the user is anonymous rely less heavily on security and authentication than on the user's account being tied to mobile payment counterparts. This anonymity makes the system vulnerable to exploitation by terrorist financing.

Local telecommunication companies should thus provide information on the location and potentially even the identity of a person using mobile payments to fund individuals linked to terrorism or terrorist groups.

Experts say the threat of mobile payment systems being used by terrorist groups within the Philippines is rooted in the absence of a national ID system. Currently, all telecom companies accept any one valid ID for registration purposes.

Regulatory structures set up by the National Telecommunications Commission and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas are also considered generally weak.

Contact the authors: drei.toledo@manilatimes.net and mimi.fabe@manilatimes.net

06 January 2018



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Good weather seen; Traslacion terror watch on

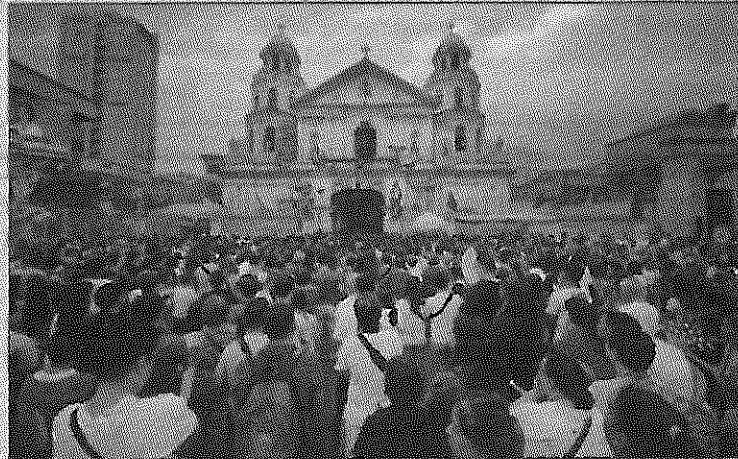
By HELEN FLORES
and EMMANUEL TUPAS

Apart from passing light rains, good weather is expected to prevail in Metro Manila during the annual Traslacion or Black Nazarene procession on Tuesday.

Authorities also have not monitored any terror threat but are not being complacent.

No weather disturbance is

Turn to Page 4



Devotees of the Black Nazarene attend first Friday mass at the Quiapo Church in Manila.

EDD GUMBAN

Good weather From Page 1

expected to affect the country in the next five days, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

"Good weather, cool and windy. If ever, there will only be passing light rains (on Jan. 9)," PAGASA marine meteorological service section chief Rene Paciente said yesterday.

Officials, meanwhile, are choosing to be cautious.

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Oscar Albayalde cited the job of protecting the millions of devotees during the Traslacion.

Albayalde earlier said there are no terror threats to the holding of the annual event.

However, there is still the possibility of a lone wolf attack to disrupt the annual religious event.

"We are not discounting that possibility, that's why we are not relaxing," Albayalde said.

Officials estimated that 18.9 million devotees would join the Black Nazarene activities from Dec. 31 until Jan. 9.

Albayalde said plainclothes policemen and snipers will be deployed to secure the route of the procession.

He said the military and agents of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) will be deployed along with their police counterparts to secure the event.

While security measures have been put in place, Albayalde said they are not letting their guard down.

"We are 100 percent prepared but we can't say it's foolproof," he said.

At least 5,613 uniformed po-

lice officers will be deployed for the procession, augmented by troops from the military under Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines-Joint Task Force National Capital Region.

The Philippine Red Cross, on the other hand, would deploy 2,000 medical personnel and volunteers to provide first aid during the Traslacion.

Another part of security preparations is the use of drones to monitor the movements of people.

Albayalde reminded the public that the Manila City government will impose a gun ban and a liquor ban from Jan. 8 to 10.

This means permits to carry firearms are suspended during the period.

Albayalde also urged the public to do their share.

"We are also encouraging the devotees to be vigilant and aware of suspicious-looking persons," he said.

Quiapo Church parochial vicar Fr. Douglas Badong also urged veteran devotees to serve as guides.

"They have responsibility to usher the new ones to this devotion. They should not just simply watch them. They could be confused as devotees and fanatics are both here. It is therefore the role of the veterans to provide proper guidance," Badong said.

Millions of devotees are expected to join the procession of the Black Nazarene on Jan. 9 as it traverses the route from Quirino Grandstand to the Quiapo Church.

– With Non Alquitran,
Jaime Laude, Jose Rodel Clapano, Evelyn Macairan

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Snipers, drones deployed to secure *Traslación*

By Mario J. Mallari

More than 5,600 uniformed policemen from the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), including snipers and Explosives and Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams, will be deployed to secure this year's Feast of the Black Nazarene.

Director Oscar Albayalde, NCRPO chief, yesterday said a total of 5,613 uniformed police personnel will be deployed starting January 8 up to January 10 as part of the government's security plan for the feast.

Among those to be deployed would be police snipers and drones.

"We will be deploying snipers in high-rise buildings and we will also be deploying drones,"



ALBAYALDE

Albayalde said.

The NCRPO chief added while authorities have not monitored any specific threat against this year's

traslacion, they are not discounting the possibility of a lone wolf attack.

"So far we have not gotten any information but we cannot relax. Our intelligence operatives are continuously monitoring threat groups even outside Metro Manila that can move while the *traslacion* is ongoing," Albayalde said.

"We are not discounting the possibility of a lone wolf attack that's why we cannot really relax," he added.

According to Albayalde, aside from the NCRPO troops, they have asked support units from the military's Joint Task Force-National Capital Region, Special Action Force, Explosive and Ordnance Division, and Special Weapons and Tactics.

Apart from the uniformed

policemen, plainclothes personnel from both the PNP and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and National Intelligence and Coordinating Agency will also be deployed.

He added a no-fly zone will be implemented in the area as well as a liquor ban in Sta. Cruz and Quiapo.

There will also be intensified checkpoint operations.

Albayalde said they have recommended to PNP chief Director General Ronald de la Rosa the suspension of permit to carry firearms outside of residence in Manila starting January 8 up to January 10.

"As of this time, we are all ready for *traslacion*...I think everything was taken care of," Albayalde said.

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Pahina. 5

TERORISTA SA TRASLACION, TUTUTUKAN NG AFP AT PNP

Nakatutok ang puwersa ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at Philippine National Police (PNP) para sa Traslacion ng Poong Nazareno sa Enero 9 na inaasahang dadaluhan ng milyong milyong deboto.

Kailangan itong gawin ng AFP at PNP upang hindi malutasan ng mga taong posibleng maghasik ng kaguluhan at terorismo sa prusisyon.

Ngunit ayon kay National Capital Regional Police Office (NCRPO) Chief Director Oscar Albayalde, wala pa naman silang tinatanggap na report

na may banta ng gulo o terorismo sa tradisyonal na taunang Traslacion.

Sa kabila nito, sinabi ni Albayalde na tuloy lamang ang intelligence gathering ng NCRPO sa tulong ng National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA), Intelligence Service Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP) at National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

“Kahit walang banta, dapat maging alert pa rin ang mga pulis, hindi sila dapat magpa-relax-relax para maging ligtas ang taunang tradisyon,” wika

ni Albayalde.

Sinabi ni Albayalde, mahigit 5,613 pulis ang ikakalat simula sa Enero 8 pa lamang sa Quirino Grandstand, sa ruta ng Traslacion at sa Simbahan ng Quiapo.

Kabilang sa mga ipakakalat na pulis ay ang mga naka-plain clothes policemen at augmentation mula sa Joint Task Force NCR at Special Action Force (SAF) ng Philippine National Police (PNP).

Maglalagay din ng mga sniper at monitoring team sa mga matataas na gusali na dadaanan ng Traslacion. **(Betchai Julian)**

06 January 2018



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AT GROUND LEVEL

SATUR C. OCAMPO



Solons prioritize federalism, but how about the BBL?

As the new year began, the leaders of both chambers of Congress have been talking of prioritizing the shift to a federal system of government by convening the Senate and the House of Representatives into a constituent assembly in January to revise the 1987 Constitution towards that end.

Perhaps reckoning how easily and swiftly, in joint sessions, the “super-majority” had twice extended the implementation of martial law in Mindanao (up to end-2018), the two leaders ambitiously target to complete the constitutional revision by May – yes, within four months. They plan to submit the revised Charter to a plebiscite along with the barangay and youth council elections in that month.

A number of senators, including majority leader Ralph Recto, have raised doubts that revising the Constitution could be done in such a short period. “For starters,” Recto admitted, “I have not read any details on federalism...” Voices of opposition have also been raised against various aspects of federalism as proposed in Congress. There’s strong disapproval, too, of the move for members of Congress to convene as a constituent assembly to revise the Constitution, preferring instead the election of delegates to a constitutional convention to do the job.

Likely to arouse widespread popular opposition is the idea, floated by both Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez Jr. and Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III, of extending the term of President Duterte (during an unspecified transition period from the unitary/presidential to a federal system), with Alvarez suggesting doing away with the mid-term elections in May 2019, which would extend the terms of 12 senators, incumbent House members and elected local government officials.

(All previous attempts to revise the 1987 Constitution, from Fidel V. Ramos’ time, have failed because of strong public opposition to explicit or implicit term extension.)

Moreover, President Duterte himself acknowledged last Dec. 14, based on his observation in his visits across the country, that Filipinos were “not ready for federalism” in places where he had expected strong public support. “It does not ring a bell in the Visayas and Mindanao,” he told Malacanang reporters. If at all, he added, it rang a bell only among those who are “really dedicated and thinking Filipinos.”

So why are the President’s pointmen in Congress rushing the revision of the Constitution for a shift to a federal type of government?

Relevant to ask at this point is: What about the passage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), which Duterte had asked Congress to prioritize and pass in a special session last December?

More than the federalism project – which uses as one rationale the attainment of peace in Muslim Mindanao – the BBL is supposed to embody the comprehensive peace agreement signed in 2014 between the government (under President Benigno Aquino III) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

On Nov. 27, thousands of people supporting the BBL gathered in Sultan Kudarat to push for its early passage by Congress. Passage of the BBL “would mean peace and coexistence in Mind-

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

anao," declared Cardinal Orlando Quevedo, archbishop of Cotabato, because its "inclusivity" would end tribal biases and religious prejudices. Gov. Mujib Hataman of the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which the BBL aims to transform into a larger and more autonomous regional government, claimed he was "a believer" of the latter's embodiment: "true and lasting peace." And Muslimin Sema, chair of one faction of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), expressed hope as he "looks back to the long armed struggle for self-determination, which dream and aspiration we find in the BBL."

Addressing the Sultan Kudarat gathering, Duterte promised to call for a special session of Congress to approve the BBL. "I will work very hard for it," he emphasized, "I said this is sacred... important and valuable. It would involve eventually, if the people wish it, a new structure for the entire country." He was apparently alluding to the federal system.

Should Congress pass the BBL legislation, Duterte would appoint 80 members of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA), which would be constituted in 2019 to prepare for the first election of the officials of the new autonomous region in 2022. If Congress should fail to do so, Duterte said, "then let us work out a way as long as we make sure that we can give our brothers and sisters, especially the Moros, an arrangement that is acceptable."

To the MILF, Duterte pledged cum warning was: "I support you. That is my promise. Do not ever, ever question me." He said he wanted the BBL to be "inclusive" by addressing the concerns not only of the Muslims in Mindanao but also the Christians and Lumad (indigenous people).

While he stressed the need to "correct the injustice committed on the Moros and the Lumad," he equally underscored the preservation of the unity of the Republic. "There must be one nation for all," he said, "one republic for us Moros and Christians. That I cannot bargain away; I am doing everything to avoid breakage."

On Nov. 29, leaders of the House assured Duterte the BBL would be passed by mid-March 2018. Per majority leader Rodolfo Farinas, Speaker Alvarez promised: "We will finish it before we adjourn on March 31, 2018."

On Dec. 6, a schedule of new public hearings across the country on the consolidated BBL bill (collated from four versions filed) was set to be jointly conducted by three House committees: the committee on local governments (as lead panel), and the committees on Muslim affairs, and on peace, unity and reconciliation. The hearings would be held from Jan. 22-Feb. 16, 2018, and a joint committee report would be completed by March 9.

Then on Dec. 21, Duterte disclosed that he himself doubted if the BBL bill could withstand a constitutional challenge. He asked Congress to look for other ways to give the Moro people their own homeland in Mindanao. But isn't it the Executive's responsibility to have ensured the BBL bill can pass constitutional scrutiny?

* * *
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6 January 2018



Pahina. 5

PATIKIMIN NA 'YANG TERORISTANG BIFF

SUNOD-SUNOD ang isinasagawang pagsalakay ng teroristang Bangsa-moro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) partikular na sa Maguindanao, isa sa mga grupo na hadlang sa pagkakamit ng kapayapaan sa Mindanao.

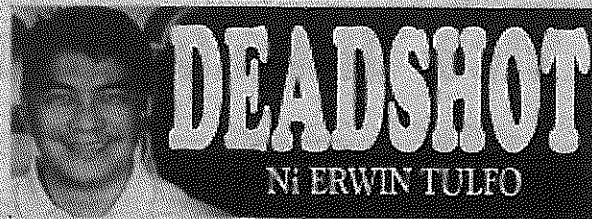
Nitong pagpasok ng bagong taon ay dalawang insidente ng pambobomba ang isinagawa ng BIFF kung saan isang pulis at isang sibilyan ang nasawi at pitong iba pa ang sugatan.

Patunay lang iyan na

talagang kinakailangan pa ang patuloy na pagpapairal ng martial law sa Katimugan bagaman naisaliba na ang Marawi City sa pagkubkob ng Maute Group.

Dapat maging puspusan din ang pagtugis sa mga bandidong BIFF at gayundin sa Abu Sayyaf sa lalawigan ng Sulu.

Hindi na dapat magpatiyope-tiyope ang Armed Forces of the Philippines sa paghabol sa mga grupong iyan na namayagpag sa nagdaang mga taon dahil sa pagpa-



pabaya ng pamahalaan.

Namimihasa na ang mga demonyong iyan.

Kung ayaw ng BIFF na makilahok sa pagsulong ng usapang pangkapayapaan at patuloy nitong sasalakayin ang mga tropa ng pulisya at AFP sa Maguindanao, walang dahilan para patawarin ang mga ito.

Ang BIFF ay sangkot sa maraming insidente ng

terorismo kabilang na ang pagmasaker sa mga miyembro ng media at sa kaso ng Special Action Force (SAF) 44.

Panahon na para tuldukan ang pamamayagpag ng grupong iyan.

Panahon na para ipatikim sa mga iyan ang puwersa ng AFP tulad ng sinapit ng Maute Group at Abu Sayyaf sa Marawi City.

ONLINE NEWS

06 JANUARY 2017

Retirements trigger movements in AFP

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Jan 5):



Army Commanding General Lt. Gen. Rolando Joselito D. Bautista (left) installs new Army Chief of Staff, Brig. Gen. Danilo Chad D. Isleta (middle) in a change of command ceremony on Thursday at the Army headquarters. Isleta replaced Maj. Gen. Gilbert I. Gapay (right) who is now the Commander of the Mechanized Infantry Division. (Philippine Army)

A reshuffle in the military leadership is underway as top generals have been promoted, following the retirement of high-ranking officers that triggered the continuing movements.

Maj. Gen. Rene Glen Paje, commander of the First Scout Ranger Regiment, replaced Maj. Gen. Melquiades Feliciano as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) deputy chief of staff for civil military operations.

A change of command ceremony was held last Wednesday, a few weeks after Feliciano retired from service.

READ: Battle-tested Scout Ranger takes over AFP civil-military ops

Col. William Gonzales, the deputy chief for education and training of the Philippine Army (PA), is set to replace Paje as regiment commander of the Scout Rangers.

Lt. Gen. Danilo Pamonag took the helm of the Southern Luzon Command (Socom) in mid-December. He was previously the commander of the Special Operations Command, and was in charge of the elite forces on the ground during the Marawi City siege.

The replacement of Pamonag as Socom commander has yet to be named.

Meanwhile, the PA also announced the appointment of its new chief of staff.

Brig. Gen. Danilo Chad Isleta replaced Maj. Gen. Gilbert Gapay during a change of command ceremony on Thursday at the PA headquarters in Taguig City.

Gapay has been assigned as the commander of the Mechanized Infantry Division, the unit responsible for ground warfare.

The Joint Task Force-National Capital Region's new commander is Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, who was known for his stint as the island commander of Sulu. He replaced Maj. Gen. Jesus Mananquil, who was designated as the new commander of the PA's 9th Infantry Division in the Bicol region.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net>

Dan Isleta is new Army chief of staff

From Update Philippines (Jan 5):



Brig. Gen. Danilo “Chad” D. Isleta was appointed as Philippine Army (PA) chief of staff during change of command ceremonies in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City Thursday morning.

He replaced Major Gen. Gilbert I. Gapay, who was appointed head of the Tarlac-based Mechanized Infantry Division.

Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Ray Tiongson said the ceremony was presided by PA commander Lt. Gen. Rolando Joselito D. Bautista.

Isleta is a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1985, and holds a Master's degree in Public Administration.

Prior to his appointment, he was the deputy commander and acting commanding general of the Bicol-based 9th Infantry Division, and head of the Office of Gender and Development of the said unit.

Isleta also served as the commanding officer of the 10th Field Artillery Battalion, Army Artillery Regiment in 2006.

Meanwhile, Gapay is a member of PMA Class of 1986, who served as deputy commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command and head of Joint Task Force HARRIBON that secured Davao City and the rest of Davao Region, and spokesperson for the Martial Law implementation in Mindanao.

<https://www.update.ph>

Army lauds Leyte residents for reporting NPA presence

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 5):

The Philippine Army has lauded the local community for reporting sightings of communist rebels in Leyte that led to a clash Thursday resulting in the killing of two suspected NPA members and recovery of firearms.

Brig. Gen. Francisco Mendoza, Jr., commander of the Philippine Army's 802nd Brigade, said on Friday the NPA extortion and recruitment activities were foiled as people share valuable information to government troops.

"Our soldiers patrolled the area because we got reports from the community that a group of armed men have been conducting meetings in upland areas of Baybay City," Mendoza told Philippine News Agency (PNA).

On Thursday morning, two rebels were killed in an hour-long gun battle between soldiers and 20 NPAs at the forested area of Hilapnitan village in Baybay.

As the rebels fled, an M-16 and M-653 rifles were recovered by the military at the encounter site, which can be reached through two hours of hiking from the national road.

The two casualties are still unidentified since authorities did not find any documents showing their identities. No one was hurt from the government side.

"The government soldiers continue doing the mandate of ensuring the safety of the people and properties against any threats. We are glad the people abhor these left-leaning groups and instead they report to the authorities once they notice the rebels' presence in their communities," said Army 78th Infantry Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Danilo Dupiag.

Dupiag confirmed the recruitment activities in Leyte by NPA remnants as part of a massive effort to regain their former strongholds.

On Dec. 8, 2011, the government declared Leyte as manageable conflict-affected and development ready province.

The declaration implies that the internal peace and security operations in Leyte have worked and its responsibility is handed over to the local government with the military supporting peace and order efforts in the province.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph>

Ground commanders ordered: Protect communities from NPA

From the Mindanao Times (Jan 5):

THE EASTERN Mindanao Command has directed all its units to launch proactive measures to protect communities from New People's Army harassment after the suspension of military operations was lifted on Jan. 2.

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has declared a unilateral ceasefire that took effect at 6 p.m. on Dec. 23, 2017, until 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 26, 2017, and resumed at 6 p.m. on Dec. 30, 2017 until 11:59 p.m. on Jan. 2, 2018.

Lt. Gen. Benjamin R. Madrigal Jr., EastMinCom commander, all ground commanders should drive away communist guerrillas from the villages and cut off their mass base support.

Maj. Ezra Balagtey, spokesperson of EastMinCom, said that while the government is implementing the Somo, the NPAs attempted to abduct CAA Arbilito A. Catampao at Sitio Madian, Barangay Tubaon, Tarragona, Davao Oriental on Dec. 25.

On a separate occasion, a Cafgu patrol base in Barangay Melale, Laak, Compostela Valley was also attacked by undetermined number of NPAs during the ceasefire.

On Dec. 23, 2017, around 11 p.m., NPAs ransacked houses and took over the whole Purok of Sitio Mabugnao, Barangay Las Arenas of Pantukan, which prompted the 66th IB to respond.

Also on Jan. 2, 2018 at 2:20 p.m. and 6:40 p.m., NPAs attacked two units of the Philippine Army stationed in Barangay Panansalan, Compostela town and Barangay Cabuyan, Mabini, both in Compostela Valley, prior to the termination of Somo.

In the directive, Madrigal told the troops to "continue protecting vulnerable communities from armed threats and deception of the NPA as they intend to conduct more terroristic acts as pronounced during their anniversary."

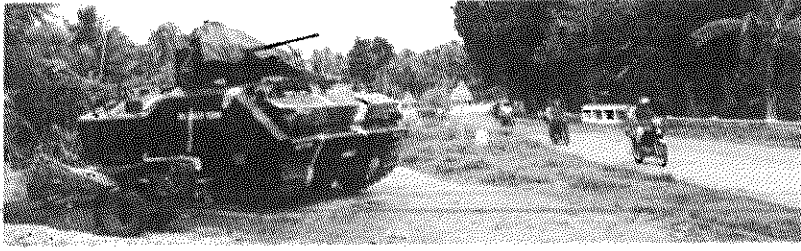
He likewise ensured the public of the sustained conduct of community support program in the different far-flung communities in Eastern Mindanao.

"Our efforts on assisting other line government agencies in facilitating the delivery of government services in the geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas must also continue and be pursued," Madrigal emphasized.

<http://mindanaotimes.net>

BIFF burns 19 Teduray houses in arson attacks

From the Manila Bulletin (Jan 4):



RED ALERT – An armored personnel carrier (APC) is stationed along the highway in Aleosan, North Cotabato as the armed forces remain on red alert to thwart the attacks of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) who are operating in the boundary of the provinces of North Cotabato and Maguindanao. (Keith Bacongco)

Cotabato City — Nineteen houses of Teduray tribesmen were torched by combatants of the outlawed Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in a rampage in Maguindanao purportedly meant to avenge their heavy losses in an ongoing military operation.

At least 285 Teduray families fled their homes after the BIFF combatants led by Daesh-inspired Esmael Abdulmalik killed a Teduray farmer and torched 19 houses in a rampage prompted purportedly by the death of four comrades and five others in military airstrikes in Datu Hofer, Datu Saudi, Shariff Aguak and South Upi towns.

Bulletin sources said BIFF combatants banner the Daesh black flag first razed to the ground three houses on Dec. 26 and 16 more houses on Dec. 29 in Teduray villages of Datu Hofer town in Maguindanao.

The first arson attack happened in barangay Lipongo while the second attack was staged in a village near Mount Firis, known as an ancestral hallowed ground or sacred site for Teduray hill-tribe people, sources said.

Provincial Budget Office chief Lynette Estandarte, focal person of Governor Esmael Mangudadatu's People's Relief and Medical Mission, yesterday provided local media with the names of the owners of the torched houses.

All 19 houses were gutted as they were all made of light materials, investigators said.

Estandarte said she got the identities of the home owners during their attempt last Wednesday to conduct a relief and medical mission.

Abdulmalik's group also reportedly sustained fatalities and scores were wounded in an earlier military airstrike in Carmen, North Cotabato.

The military said five soldiers were wounded in a ground battle with BIFF rebels ensuing from the airstrike in Carmen.

The Army's 6th Infantry Division said it would pursue "no letup" operations against the BIFF, alerting though civilians in affected areas to watch out for possible retaliatory attacks by the Islamic State-espousing combatants.

Estandarte said that several improvised explosive devices (IEDs) had been planted in Datu Hofer town.

Last Sunday, one police element of adjacent Shariff Aguak town was killed and five other cops were wounded when their patrol car was hit by an IED explosion planted on a road leading to a secluded village being infiltrated by BIFF bandits.

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Attacks justify 'terrorist' tag on CPP-NPA – DOJ

By

Christopher Lloyd Caliwan, Philippine News Agency – www.interaksyon.com

| January 4, 2018, 6:54 AM

MANILA, Philippine — The Department of Justice said "numerous" attacks by Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army in various provinces justified their declaration as terrorist groups.

Section 17 of Republic Act No. 9372 (Human Security Act of 2007) requires the DOJ to first seek clearance from the court before an organization, association or group of persons can be declared as terrorist and outlawed group.

Senior assistant state prosecutor Peter Ong, head of the panel tasked by Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II to file the petition, said they are close to finalizing the government resolution.

Ong said the attacks occurred as President Rodrigo Duterte was "extending his hand" and "showing good faith" in peace talks between the government and the rebels.

"The point is, the President was extending his hand, showing his good faith and sincerity for just and lasting peace. And yet *ito pa ang mga offensives ang kapalit ng* (these offensives were the response to) peace negotiations," Ong told reporters.

The senior prosecutor said their investigation showed the CPP-NPA did not honor the good faith and sincerity extended by the Duterte administration and instead continued their offensives.

"They committed terrorist acts that will justify ... designating them as terrorist organization," Ong explained.

The petition is expected to be filed with the court within January, Ong said, adding the DOJ is still waiting for certified copies of incident reports on the attacks.

"We listed about 15 incidents. *Baka i-zero in namin ito sa* (We might zero in on) 10 or 12," he said.

Ong said among the attacks cited was the ambush of two soldiers in a storm-hit village in Catubig, Northern Samar on December 17. The soldiers, who were wounded, were part of a unit reportedly on its way to assist flood-affected residents of Barangay Hinagoyonon in Catubig.

Ong clarified that the petition will target the organizations and not individual officials like CPP founding chairman Jose Mari Sison.

"But there are implications once the petition is granted and they are declared a terrorist group. Under the Human Security Act, you can apply for judicial order for wiretapping against members of a terrorist organization. You could also apply surveillance of bank accounts or freeze their assets," he said.

"The petition will also lay down their history. There were incidents in the past that showed a pattern," he said.