

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



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NEWS CLIPPINGS

14 January 2018

Sunday

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

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'Travel more than 12 times, face dismissal'

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

President Duterte, who says he is on a purging spree, warned government officials of dismissal from service if they go on foreign trips more than 12 times.

He did not specify if the frequency is on a per-year basis or reckoned from the time they were appointed to their posts.

"They go out on every convocation, convention, powwow, seminar... it is that often. And for those who have traveled more than 12, you have to go," the President declared.

Amid calls for him to look at his own backyard in the campaign against jet-setting government officials, Duterte said he is not impressed with those who go abroad, even if the trips are done in their official capacities.

"I just don't have the respect for officers who often go on foreign trips," Duterte said in Filipino, adding that many of these officials are using the climate change forums as an excuse to travel.

But he is giving some leeway for military and police officers who are on scholarships abroad, who travel to be trained.

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Travel From Page 1

Duterte criticized government officials who have been using their posts to travel abroad, equating these with corrupt activities.

"Corruption is really prevalent, and I'm starting it with

those guys who have been wasting money, going in and out of the country as if they owned the money and for nothing," the President said.

Earlier, he fired several officials for lavish travels abroad,

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including former anti-poverty commissioner Terry Ridon and Maritime Industry Authority administrator Marcial Amaro III. He also dismissed former Dangerous Drugs Board chief Dionisio Santiago for alleged corruption and excessive travels abroad.

Former Development Academy of the Philippines

president Elba Cruz was also asked to leave her post due to excessive travels.

“There will be no stopping in the campaign against drugs and corruption,” Duterte stressed, saying over the weekend that the anti-corruption drive of his administration and against those who use taxpayers’ money would

not stop.

“I am now the President. I will insist on corruption. It has to stop. I will fight the drug problem to the last day of my term. It will not stop,” Duterte said during the birthday celebration of House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez in Tagum City last Friday.

He admitted that he might

have miscalculated the drug problem when he said he would solve it within six months upon his assumption of office.

“I was wrong when I said that I could stop it but at that time, I was uttering the words when I was only mayor of Davao City,” Duterte added.

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NO BBL LAW? RODRIGO SAYS 'EO 10' READY

STORY BY FRINSTON LIM AND ALLAN NAWAL

President Duterte on Friday said that he may use Executive Order No. 10 to address the demand for autonomy by the Bangsamoro people if Congress failed to put together a proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) that grants territory to a new political entity in Muslim Mindanao. He reiterated that the BBL should pass every constitutional challenge in the Supreme Court. EO 10 provides for a 25-member committee that would study, review and conduct consultations on the 1987 Constitution, which bars the grant of the Bangsamoro's identity-based demands under the present unitary government. Echoing former Chief Justice Reynato Puno, Mr. Duterte said this would be resolved if Congress amended the Constitution to pave the way for a federal form of government.

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Duzo ready if Congress fails to pass BBL

FROM A1

By Frinston Lim
and Allan Nawal
@Team_Inquirer

TAGUM CITY—Should Congress fail to put together a proposed law that grants territory to a new autonomous political entity for the Bangsamoro region—one that passes Supreme Court scrutiny—President Duterte would turn to an executive order to break the impasse.

The President made this statement on Friday night as he urged Congress to craft a Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) that could overcome every constitutional challenge.

“About the Muslim insurgency, I am really waiting for the product of Congress. But I have my own, it is Executive Order No. 10,” Mr. Duterte said in a speech before some 1,200 politicians and other prominent individuals who attended Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez’s birthday celebration here.

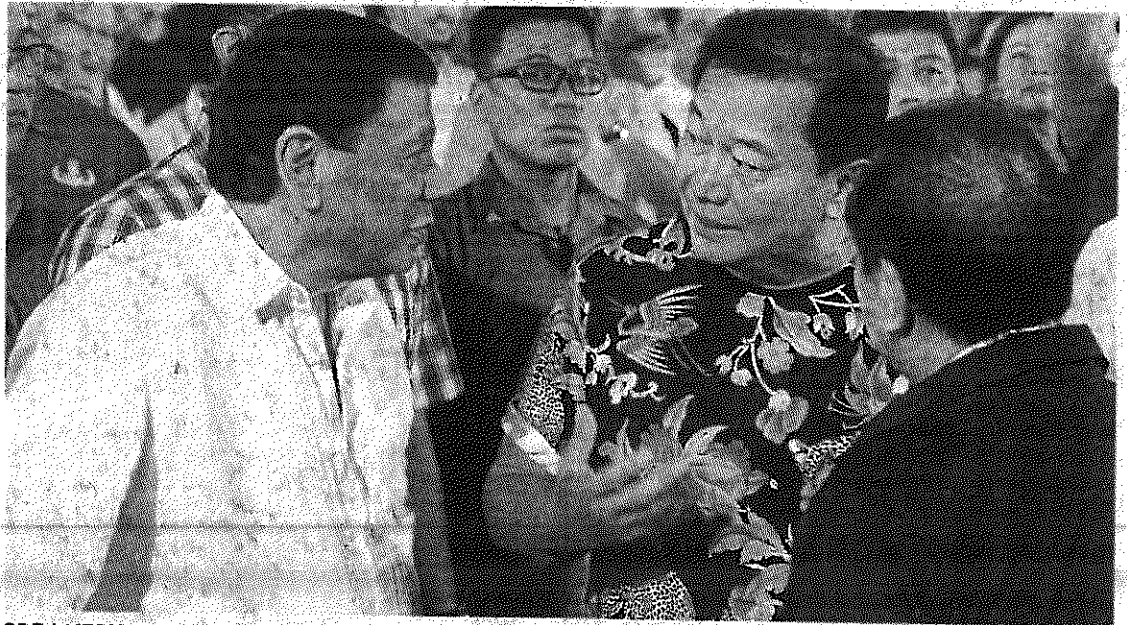
Consultative committee

The President issued EO 10 in December 2016 creating a consultative committee to review and conduct consultations on the 1987 Constitution. He has refrained, though, from appointing anyone to the 25-member body pending the results of Congress deliberations.

“I would not want to unleash it yet out of respect to Congress,” he said.

Mr. Duterte had earlier said that he did not think the proposed BBL, in its present form, could hurdle constitutional barriers.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) did not reply to the Inquirer’s request for comment.



SPEAKER’S DAY President Duterte chats with House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez who celebrated his birthday at the New Tagum City Hall on Friday. —MALACAÑANG PHOTO

But earlier, the Bangsamoro Transition Committee (BTC), the body that crafted the original BBL, passed a resolution urging lawmakers to approve the proposed BBL in its original form.

In his speech, Mr. Duterte said that Congress could proceed on a clearer course by inviting resource persons such as retired Chief Justice Reynato Puno.

Federal form of gov’t

Puno had earlier said that for the BBL to have a bigger chance of success, the Constitution should be amended to pave the way for a federal form of government.

Only a federal form of government, according to the former chief magistrate, could satisfy the identity-based demands of the Bangsamoro for the establishment of an autonomous government.

“If you want some resource persons, we start with Justice

Puno. If you want to hear them, I’d be glad to transmit the message,” the President said.

‘Concede something’

Mr. Duterte told reporters in Malacañang in November last year that he saw rough sailing for BBL under the present form of government.

“I’m saying that it will be very difficult for this bill to overcome a constitutional challenge before the Supreme Court because precisely, we have a unitary government that is not empowered to grant these identity-based demands of our Muslim brothers,” he said.

It is important that the Moro people have their own government so that war could be prevented in the region, he said, adding he was ready “to concede something” to make this a reality.

“I’ve already said this and I am saying it again, without really batting an eyelash: If we cannot

concede something that would require a correction of a wrong ... it is important that they be given [Bangsamoro autonomy] because if not, I am afraid there will be war,” Mr. Duterte said.

‘Dangerous’

“It is that dangerous,” he stressed.

Tens of thousands have been killed in the course of the Moro rebellion that started in the late 1960s. The conflict simmers to this day with the emergence of various Moro armed groups, some of which have adopted radicalism and allied themselves with Islamic State.

The President had earlier said that the only way to stem radicalism among the Moro youth was for the government to grant self-governance to Muslim Filipinos.

On Dec. 19 last year, however, he admitted that the framers of the proposed BBL should go

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back to the drawing board as it could not overcome constitutional scrutiny.

"I do not think that it will hurdle the constitutional barriers," he said then.

Self-autonomy

If Congress could not give self-autonomy to the Bangsamoro, lawmakers should help him "think of ways how to do it," Mr. Duterte said.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III has said that one of the questions that could be thrown at the original BBL, drafted by the MILF's BTC, was the provision on the creation of a parliamentary government.

He said it gave the impression that the Bangsamoro wanted a state entirely different from the Philippine republic.

Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri on Friday said the subcommittee discussing the proposed law would hold hearings on Monday until Jan. 18 and that they would invite Cabinet members.

At least three other BBL versions have been crafted since the BTC submitted its version, and South Cotabato Rep. Pedro Acharon said Congress would harmonize these four versions.

Acharon, chair of House local government committee, said all four proposed bills sought to grant the envisioned Bangsamoro autonomous region increased flexibility and a wider range of authority in politics, economy and finance.

During its sixth plenary session on Jan. 8 and 9, the BTC asked Pimentel to "have someone file and sponsor the BTC-drafted BBL and to use the latter as its working document in its deliberation" at the Senate.

Ghazali Jaafar, the BTC chair, said the separate ver-

sions that lawmakers had crafted was not acceptable as "they are not the bills crafted by the Bangsamoro Transition Commission pursuant to Executive Order No. 8 series of 2016 signed by the President on Nov. 7, 2016."

"What did the MILF and the government tried to solve when they agreed to negotiate in January 1997? We agreed to solve the Bangsamoro problem," MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal said in a recent forum in Cotabato City.

Social justice

He said the BTC-crafted BBL aimed to "not only promote social justice but is all about social justice, and it addresses the legitimate grievances of the Bangsamoro people committed against them by the changing regimes in Manila starting from the Americans down to the Filipino administrations."

Iqbal described their BBL version as "a menu to correct historical injustices against the Bangsamoro that have led to the "loss of sovereignty, their homeland and development as people."

He said the opportunity to pass the BBL was "now present" because "unity is strong" between the MILF and the Moro National Liberation Front, the other big Moro group that has reached a peace agreement with the government.

"The passage of BBL is a key to arrest the frustration of the Bangsamoro people, and likewise empowers them. They can effectively check the spread of violent radicalization in Mindanao. Bangsamoro Basic Law is an antidote to secession," Iqbal added. —WITH A REPORT FROM LEILA SALAVERRIA INQ

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The Manila Times

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Surrender or face death, NPA rebels warned

GAMU, Isabela: The new chief of the Philippine Army's Fifth Infantry Division (5ID) warned members of the New People's Army (NPA) that they face a bloody year if they do not surrender to government forces.

Brig. Gen. Perfecto Rimando Jr., newly-installed commanding general of the Army's 5ID based in Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz here, said: "It is best that they come out in the open, surrender and benefit from the programs and projects the government has offered them and their families."

He said the 5ID will double its offensives against the atrocities and intensified attacks staged by the NPA rebels and any element that is trying to overthrow the government and causing disturbances in peaceful communities in the Cordillera and Cagayan Valley regions.

He also warned the NPA rebels to stop sabotaging government projects and properties particularly those in far-flung areas that hampers development and improvement of the lives of the residents.

President Rodrigo Duterte has tagged the NPA a terrorist group saying he was fed up with its recent actions, including the alleged killing of an infant.

According to Rimando, the NPA rebels would better to embrace government programs and be of help in solving once and for all the problem of insurgency in the country.

Formerly assigned as deputy commanding general of the Eastern Mindanao Command in Davao City, the new 5ID chief replaced Lt. Gen. Paul Atal, now the commanding general of the Central Command in the Visayas.

Under the AFP's Northern Luzon Command, the 5ID or Star Division, is the Army's primary infantry unit in Northern Luzon specializing in counter-insurgency with controlled infantry battalions in the provinces of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Kalinga, Apayao, Ifugao, Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino and northern part of Nueva Vizcaya.

LEANDER C. DOMINGO

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23 NPA rebels surrender in Sultan Kudarat

PRES. QUIRINO, Sultan Kudarat — A total of 23 members of the New People's Army's (NPA) Guerilla Front 73 yielded to the military in nearby Sen. Ninoy Aquino town Friday. Lt. Col. Harold M. Cabunoc of the Army's 33rd Infantry Battalion (IB) based here, said the rebels, belonging to the Manobo-Dulangan tribe, surrendered in two batches to the 33rd IB Alpha Company under 1st Lt. Cesar Ballado and Capt. Rogelio Agustin of the 33rd IB Charlie Company. "They brought with them assorted firearms and explosives, including one M14 rifle, four M1 Garand rifles, one home-made Tomgram, and two pistols," Cabunoc said. The 33rd IB chief said members of a village-level political wing of the communist movement, the Kilusang Rebolusyonaryong Barangay, have also surrendered together with the armed group members. "This is a big blow to the communist movement because the Army has dismantled the political structure that is responsible for the resourcing and sustaining of the New People's Army members who roam in the hinterlands," Cabunoc said. **PNA**

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Pahina. 2

23 NPA terrorists sumuko

Umaabot sa 23 teroristang New People's Army (NPA) mula sa kabundukan ng Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat ang sumuko sa batas sa bayan ng Senador Ninoy Aquino, Sultan Kudarat kahapon ng umaga.

Sa ulat ni Army's 33rd Infantry Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Harold Cabunoc, ang nasabing bilang ng NPA terrorists ay sumuko kina Senator Ninoy Aquino, Mayor Randy Ecija Jr., P/Chief Inspector Lemuel Clarete, officer in charge ng pulisya at mga opisyal ng barangay sa nasabing munisipalidad sa ginanap na tum-over ceremony sa nasabing bayan kahapon ng umaga.

Ayon kay Cabunoc, ang mga nagsisuko ay bitbit ang kanilang mga armas na garand rifles, M14 rifle, homemade rifle, homemade pistol, cal. 45 pistol, dalawang MK2 fragmentation grenade at smoke grenade.

Sa inisyal na interogasyon, inamin naman ng mga nagsisukong NPA terrorist na pagod na sila sa armadong pakikibaka kaya nagdesisyong magbalik-loob sa pamahalaan.

Patuloy namang sumasailalim sa masusing tactical interrogation ang mga nagsisukong NPA terrorists.

Inaasahan naman, ayon pa sa opisyal na marami pang susukong mga terorista upang landasin na ang pagbabagumbuhay. (*Joy Cantos*)

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POLICE FILES

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Peace not war: Bagong kumander ng 9th ID sa CamSur makikipag-usap sa NPA

LEGAZPICITY - Pagsusulong ng kapayapaan at hindi ganyan sa New People's Army (NPA) ang hangad ng bagong pinuno ng 9th Infantry "Spear" Division sa Camp Elias Angeles.

Sa pahayag ni Maj. Gen. Jesus Manangquil Jr. bagong

commanding officer ng 9th ID, nakatakda umano itong makikipagpulong at makipag-usap sa local chief executives at iba pang stakeholders sa rehiyon upang paigtingin ang panawagan sa mga rebelde sa buong rehiyon na magpatik-loob na sa pamahalaan.

Gut niyang kailangan pa ring mangibabaw ang kapayapaan sa komunidad upang matulungan ang mga Bicolano gayundin ang mga nalihis ng landas sa pag-unlad.

Si Manangquil ang pumalit kay Lt. Gen. Rolando Josecito Bautista (*Bombo Kaayo*)

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The Manila Times

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AFP tells public: Report 'new faces' in your areas

BY DEMPSEY REYES

THE public should report "new faces in the neighborhood" as part of keeping a close eye on foreign terrorists who might enter the southern back door of the country, according to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP spokesman, came up with the reminder a few days after Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the military has been verifying reports that foreign terrorists have entered the Philippines through Tawi-Tawi and Sulu provinces in Mindanao.

According to Arevalo, the AFP cannot "discount the possibility" that terrorists from outside the country have "surreptitiously [been] able to enter the country given our vast and porous borders."

"That is why we are also keeping

a tight watch over the country's crevices. We have enhanced our own monitoring and security posture to keep our sea and air ports in check," he said in a statement on Friday.

"We do this with the help of other relevant domestic and international agencies, as well as our own local government units," Arevalo added.

On Monday, Lorenzana told reporters that they are keeping track of the presence of foreign fighters even if the Marawi City

siege ended in October last year.

Soldiers fought for nearly five months in the capital city of Lanao del Sur province in southern Mindanao the Islamic State-linked Maute Group terrorists, whose ranks supposedly boasted of foreign members coming from several countries in Southeast Asia.

Arevalo assured that they have certain agreements with other regional and global partners such as the trilateral joint patrol with Malaysia and Indonesia, which the Philippines entered into in October 2017.

"But at the end of the day, we need the vigilance, cooperation and active participation of our people in the communities who can monitor and report the arrival of new faces in the neighborhood," he said.

At a news conference also on Friday, Arevalo reported that most of the foreign terrorists who participated in the Marawi siege along

with the Maute Group have been "neutralized."

"Our focus now here is what will be the security procedure and security posture that we will enforce as to how we will prevent the entry of additional foreign fighters in the Philippines," he told reporters at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

"There were foreign terrorists [who] entered the country but most of them were already neutralized while fighting for the liberation of Marawi City [from the Maute Group]," Arevalo said.

According to him, threat within the country "is always there," whether coming from syndicates, terrorists and petty criminals.

He said recruitment of terrorists in the Philippines will not stop for them to be able to "continue the fight against our government."

"But let me assure that the government... has been exerting all efforts to foil the recruitment," Arevalo added.

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PAF names new communications head

By **MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN**

The Philippine Air Force (PAF) announced yesterday the designation of its new communications chief, Col. Samuel Angot.

Major Gen. Antonio Ramon Lim, PAF chief of air staff, led the welcome and change of command ceremony Monday to formally desig-

nate Angot as assistant chief of air staff for Communication Electronics and Information System (CEIS) or OA-6.

Prior to his designation as CEIS head, Angot spent years in the realm of communication and electronics holding several positions at the CEIS unit of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

He earlier worked as

commandant, acting deputy commander, Technical Working Group assistant chairman of the Air Defense Surveillance Radar Project and commander for the Cyberspace Security Group, among others.

Lt. Colonel John Resner Jayme will serve as Angot's deputy and commander of 950th CEIS Group at the same time.

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Enrile: Martial law extension to deter terrorism in Mindanao

BY CHARINA NICOLE D. ONG

Former senator Juan Ponce Enrile supported the extension of martial law in Mindanao, and pointed out that President Duterte made the right call, even if the government successfully thwarted the Maute Group terrorists in Marawi City.

"Marawi was just a battle," Enrile said at the Sandiganbayan.

The former Senate President was at the anti-graft court's Third Division on Friday for the pre-trial hearing of his plunder case over the supposed misuse of his Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF).

"The fact that the government ► 6

Enrile: Martial law... ◀ 1

has succeeded in controlling the situation in that battle has not solved the problem. The problem is still there," he stressed.

Enrile said terrorism would return if the government loses its grip on Mindanao.

"Don't kid yourselves, if you do not have a system to control the situation it will explode again. The president was correct," he said.

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Pahina. 1

Banta sa seguridad 'di mawawala – AFP

Nanatili ang banta ng seguridad mula sa mga kalaban ng estado.

Sinabi ito ni Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman, Marine Col. Edgard Arevalo, kasunod ng mas pinaigting nilang operasyon sa buong bansa.

Paliwanag ni Arevalo, nakahanda ang Hukbong Sandatahang Lakas ng Pilipinas na mapanatili ang seguridad sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa.

Panawagan naman ni Arevalo sa lahat ng mamamayan na rumulong sa pamahalaan sa pagbabantay ng mga kahina-hinalang indibidwal o grupo (**Red Fortaleza**)

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Pahina. 1

CPP-NPA terrorists mabibigong maghari sa Pinas - Lorenzana

Mabibigo umano ang Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) terrorists sa ilusyon nitong maghari sa Pilipinas.

"Contrary to what the terrorist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) said in their recent statement, it is they who are delusional, living in a dream thinking that they could win and establish a communist government in the Philippines," pahayag kahapon ni Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana.

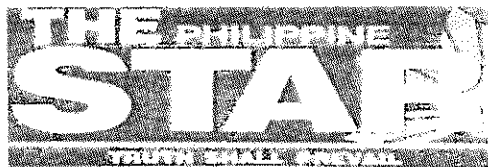
Ayon sa kalihim, alinsunod sa direktiba ni Pangulong Duterte ay gagawin nilang miserable ang CPP-NPA sa loob ng taong 2018 na mapahina ang puwersa ng mga ito sa kalahati mula sa 3,700 fighters.

Sinabi ni Lorenzana na halos araw-araw ay maraming nagbabalik-loob sa pamahalaan na mga NPA terrorists mula sa iba't ibang lalawigan at kabayanan dahil hindi na masikmura ang bulok na sistema sa pangongotong ng kilusan.

"Pero hindi na nila malilinlang kailanman ang taumbayan dahil lantad na ang kanilang totoong motibo at layunin. Hindi na nila maitatago ang ginagawa nilang pangangikil, paninira ng mga ari-arian at kabuhayan, pamimilit, pananakot at pagpatay, maging ng mga inosenteng sibilyan," ayon sa opisyal.

Handa na rin ang AFP troops na arestuhin ang mga lider ng CPP-NPA na mag-asawang sina Benito at Wilma Tiamzon alinsunod sa ipag-uutos ng korte. (*Joy Cantos*)

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OPAPP bucks backchannel talks with Reds

By JOSE RODEL CLAPANO

The government is not conducting backchannel talks with communists, presidential adviser on the peace process Jesus Dureza said last Friday.

In a television interview, Dureza added that since there is no clear directive from President Duterte to hold such discussion with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF), the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) is pursuing peace through other means.

However, he expressed optimism that the peace process will move forward this year despite setbacks in talks with the CPP-NPA-NDF.

"The work of OPAPP is to look for ways and means to move the peace process forward," Dureza said. "You have to deal with a culture of peace in the communities. You have to work for social healing of broken relationships because of conflict. You have to take care of victims of conflict. There are many ways."

OPAPP follows "Six Paths to Peace" toward a comprehensive peace process: 1) pur-

suit of social, economic and political reforms; 2) consensus-building and empowerment for peace; 3) peaceful negotiated settlement with different rebel groups; 4) programs for reconciliation, reintegration into mainstream society and rehabilitation; 5) addressing concerns arising from continuing armed hostilities and 6) building and nurturing a climate conducive to peace.

If the public believes that the omission of the NDF from the list of terrorist groups is an indication that there is still hope for the resumption of

talks, "then we can affirm that the doors have not been totally shut," Dureza said.

Within the past couple of years, there have been four rounds of talks between the government and the CPP-NPA-NDF, resulting in agreements such as the unilateral ceasefire from August to December 2016 and the supplemental guidelines for the Joint Monitoring Committee for the observance of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

While foreign terrorists may be entering the country,

the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) assured the public yesterday that they are doing everything to ensure public security and safety.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP spokesman, said it is also possible that terror groups, including the NPA, are recruiting members even in Metro Manila.

In a press briefing at Camp Aguinaldo, Arevalo said the groups may be trying to recruit members to continue their fight against the government.

He also noted that the possibility of foreign terrorists entering the country cannot be

discounted because of the many entry points of the archipelago.

"However, we assure you that the government, particularly the Armed Forces of the Philippines, will frustrate their efforts to increase their membership," he said in Filipino.

Arevalo said the public should remain vigilant and report suspicious characters to the authorities so that proper action can be taken.

He added that part of the foreign terrorist problem was addressed in the Marawi siege, where most of the threats were neutralized. – **With Michael Punongbayan**

14 January 2018



Page. 1

DND downplays CPP-NPA 'dream'

By ZAIDA DELOS REYES-PALANCA

DEPARTMENT of National Defense (DND) Secretary Delfin Lorenzana yesterday called the Communist Party of the Philippines-New Peoples' Army (CPP-NPA) delusional, living in a dream thinking that they could win and establish a communist government in the Philippines.

Lorenzana said while the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) never stated that it can end the miserable existence of the CPP-NPA within the year, the AFP is confident that they can degrade the CPP-NPA's capability to conduct large-scale depredation and extortion this year.

He said the AFP belief is based on a forward assessment backed by careful study, evidence-based evaluation and massive support from the local government

units and communities.

'Halos araw-araw ay nababalitaan natin ang pagbabalik-loob sa pamahalaan ng kanilang mga miyembro mula sa iba't ibang lalawigan at kabayanan dahil hindi na masikmura ng mga ito ang kabulukan ng kanilang sistema, at dahil na rin sa pagnanais nila ng kapayapaan at makabuluhang pagbabago,' Lorenzana said.

The DND secretary said that the massive support of AFP from communities has compelled the communist terrorists to double their deceptive recruitment efforts, using social issues and twisting facts to gain support, targeting the vulnerable sectors of the society to include students, women, children, urban poor and cultural minorities.

Pero hindi na nila malililang kailanman ang taumbayan dahil lantad na ang kanilang totoong motibo at layunin. Hindi na nila



Lorenzana

maitatago ang ginagawa nilang pangigkil, paninirang mga ari-arian at kabuhayan, pamimilit, pananakit at pagpatay, maging ng mga inosenteng sibilyan, he explained.

Lorenzana added that the empty talk of the CPP-NPA will not diminish their defenders' resolve to finally put a stop to the communist-terrorists' decades-long exploitation of indigenous peoples and rural communities.

"For far too long, they have impeded progress, denying the Philippines a chance to fully develop and depriving the Filipino people the opportunity to improve their quality of life," he said.

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Abducted police official held by NPA

By MALU CADELINA MANAR

KIDAPAWAN CITY – After more than two weeks, the New People's Army (NPA) in Southern Mindanao admitted holding captive a North Cotabato police official abducted in December last year.

NPA Southern Mindanao spokesman Rigoberto Sanchez issued an official statement through an email regarding the capture of Insp. Menardo Nisperos Cui, deputy chief of police of

President Roxas, North Cotabato.

Cui was abducted by at least five armed men in Barangay Tuel, President Roxas, on December 28.

Sanchez said it was their 'Red fighters' from the Mount Apo Sub-Regional Command NPA Front 53 that arrested Cui and declared him 'POW'.

Bishop Colin Bagaforo of the Diocese of Kidapawan has organized a group of priests and religious leaders to negotiate for Cui's safe release.

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Page. 1

NPA owns to holding deputy chief hostage

By **MALU CADELINA MANAR**

KIDAPAWAN CITY – The New Peoples' Army (NPA) in Southern Mindanao region (NPA-SMR) has admitted to keeping as prisoner a police officer who went missing in North Cotabato last December.

In an e-mail sent to media on Jan. 12, NPA-SMR spokesman Rigoberto Sanchez, said Inspec-

tor Menardo Nisperos Cui, deputy chief of police of President Roxas, North Cotabato, is being "investigated" for counter-insurgency activities including possible crimes against the rebel movement.

Cui was abducted by armed men inside a KTV Bar on Dec. 28.

Sanchez said it was guerilla members from the Mount Apo Sub-Regional Command NPA Front 53 that nabbed Cui.

Sanchez maintained they are taking good care of Cui in accordance with the NPA's Rules of Discipline; the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and the International Humanitarian Law (CARHIDL); and international war protocols.

Cui's wife, Florelie, has died while he was being held by the NPA.

His mother, Felomina, maintained the health condition of her daughter-in-law worsened when she learned of her husband's abduction.

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The Manila Times

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Maguindanao seeks MILF help for Teduray tribes

SHARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao: Gov. Esmael Mangudadatu urged the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to help the military protect the non-Muslim Teduray tribe in the province from the atrocities of the outlawed Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF)

Mangudadatu, who is also chairman of the Maguindanao Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC), convened the council in Buluan town and discussed the plight of thousands of indigenous Teduray dislodged from Mount Firis by a series of deadly attacks BIFF gunmen have been staging in the past three weeks.

Mount Firis, surrounded by Maguindanao's Datu Hofer, Datu Unsay and Datu Saudi towns, is a centuries-old sacred tribal domain of the ethnic Teduray. It is where the BIFF wants to establish a camp on the pretext of preventing encroachment of Christian settlers from nearby provinces.

"The trouble there is not about land ownership. There are no Christian outsiders grabbing land there as alleged. All the people affected by the trouble are ethnic Tedurays, no one else," Mangudadatu said.

He said the joint ceasefire committee of the government and the MILF can cooperate in helping secure the Teduray around the areas of Mt. Firis based on the Agreement on General Cessation of Hostilities that both sides signed in July 1997.

The security agreement enjoins both parties to cooperate in addressing security problems in conflict-affected areas in the southern provinces.

"The ongoing peace process between the government and the MILF is an inclusive kind of peace initiative, one that will benefit Mindanao's Muslim, Christian and Lumad communities. There is reason for both sides to work together in protecting these Teduray communities from the BIFF," Mangudadatu said.

The BIFF, which uses the black Islamic State flag as revolutionary banner, does not support the peace process between the gov-

ernment and the MILF which is intended to put a negotiated peaceful agreement to the Moro issue hounding Southern Philippines since the late 1960s.

The 1997 interim truce between the government and the MILF also does not cover the BIFF which espouses public animosity to government and persecution of non-Muslims.

Mangudadatu recalled that last year, the military and the MILF were successful in driving away from the province Abu Toraiife, the leader of a BIFF faction, through bilateral tactical efforts that can also be applied for the protection of ethnic Teduray.

The two other BIFF factions instigating hostilities around Mount Firis – the Bongos and Karialan groups – lost more than a dozen members in a series of encounters with pursuing soldiers between December 25 to January 6.

Local officials and *barangay* (village) leaders said two of the BIFF fatalities were bomb makers Salah and Maguie, both trained by slain Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, alias Marwan, in the fabrication and handling of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Two soldiers and a policeman were killed in a series of roadside bombings near Mount Firis while Army units and BIFF forces were locked in a three-week gunfight in upland areas around the indigenous people's enclave.

Mangudadatu said the ethnic Tedurays are most vulnerable to roadside bombs and booby traps the BIFF gunmen laid along farm trails crisscrossing Mount Firis.

He said he will meet with Al-Mansour Gambar, MILF's Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces chief of staff, to discuss with him possible solutions to the security problems hounding the native Tedurays.

Meanwhile, Lt. Col. Gerry Besana, a member of the Army-led anti-terror Joint Task Force Central, said more explosive ordnance device experts will be deployed at Mount Firis to collect IEDs that BIFF bomb makers left.

JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL

14 January 2018



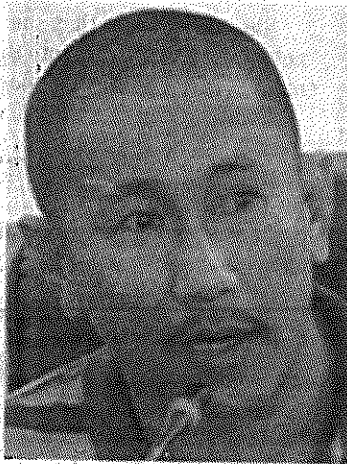
Page: 3

BIFF links with drug syndicates to raise funds

BULUAN, Maguindanao – Running out of funds, the Islamic State-inspired Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in Maguindanao has connected with drug syndicates and is forcing civilians to shell out money in the form of "zakat" (religious tax) to fund its armed operation, Gov. Esmel Mangudadatu said Friday.

In an interview, Mangudadatu said the collection of "zakat" is supposedly voluntary and no specific amount a Moro may share for the operation of a local Mosque or place of worship.

"But the BIFF has been doing it under duress," he said. "This is happening in remote villages where poor farmers could not refuse forced taxation, otherwise, they will be harassed."



MANGUDADATU

Mangudadatu earlier told the Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC), which he chairs, that BIFF members also turned to peddling

illegal drugs, selling stuff in and out of Maguindanao.

The BIFF turned to illegal drug syndicates for funds while the drug lords ally with the armed group for protection in the wake of the intensified campaign against illegal drugs and drug personalities.

"It is a case of one group benefiting from the other in illegal activities," the governor said.

To contain this problem, Mangudadatu urged the local populace not to give in to BIFF-imposed "zakat." He urged the local officials down to the barangays to help military and police authorities contain the BIFF so their villages would improve.

"This is for the benefit of people on the ground. The government cannot do it alone. We need the

support of grassroots," he added.

During the PPOC meeting, officials from the affected towns of Shariff Aguak, Datu Unsay, Datu Saudi, Datu Hofer and Datu Salibo complained of forced taxation by the BIFF, informing the governor that many who resisted taxation were executed.

The military has repeatedly pounded BIFF positions in Maguindanao in the tri-boundaries of Datu Unsay, Datu Saudi, and Datu Hofer where the BIFF had harassed hundreds of families from Teduray communities since December 25.

An estimated 800 Teduray families are currently staying in evacuation centers in the province due to the series of BIFF harassments. **PNA**

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Manila
Standard

Page: A3

ABU SAYYAF MEN LINKED TO BASILAN KIDNAP FALL

By Francisco Tuyay

AFTER 16 years in hiding, two Abu Sayyaf members who kidnapped 20 workers of a banana plantation in Basilan in 2001 were arrested Friday night.

Chief Supt. Billy Beltran, regional director of provincial regional office-9 in Zamboanga City, identified the two ASG members as Emran Sanduyugan Ismael, alias Bantong Basinti and Bryan Ismail Mahomad, alias Pojong.

The two ASG bandits were facing kidnapping and serious illegal detention for their complicity in numerous criminal acts when subdued by police intelligence operatives inside the Mindpro City Mall in Zamboanga City at about 9:15 p.m.

Reports said the bandits were arrested on the strength of a warrant of arrest issued by Judge Leo Jay Principe of the Isabela City Regional Trial Court with

no bail recommended.

The arrest of Sanduyugan and Ismail brought to nearly dozens of ASG members who participated in the attack and kidnapping of at least 30 workers of Golden Harvest Plantation in Lantawan, Basilan in June 2001.

In the said attack, nine civilians were beheaded by the ASG at the height of the kidnapping.

The attack also resulted in the death of a worker who was shot by the bandits minutes before fleeing the scene to evade arrest from responding army and police personnel.

The arrested ASG militants were positively identified by witnesses whom identities the authorities withheld for security reasons.

The ASG operatives are now in the custody of the Zamboanga City Police Station-11 pending their turnover to the appropriate court.

Among those already arrested in the Golden Harvest attack by the ASG were Abu Usman who was nabbed at the Port Area of Isabela City in Basilan.

In July 2014, another ASG member, Ali Salih, also a culprit in the same incident, was arrested by joint police and military teams in Panigayan village in

Malamawi Island, Isabela City.

At present, the ASG has been held at bay, not figuring in any terrorist acts following their defeat and the death of their supreme leader and ISIS emir in Southeast Asia, Isnilon Hapilon in the Marawi City bloody siege.

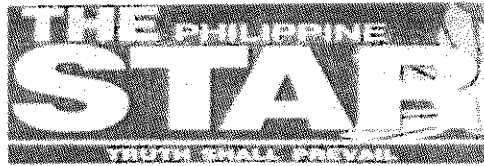
Meanwhile, the Islamic State-inspired Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters were reported to be running out of funds and have linked with drug syndicates and is forcing civilians to shell out money in the form of "zakat" (religious tax) to fund its armed operations, Gov. Esmel Mangudadatu said.

In an interview, Mangudadatu said the collection of "zakat" is supposedly voluntary and no specific amount a Moro may share for the operation of a local Mosque or place of worship.

"But the BIFF has been doing it under duress," he said. "This is happening in remote villages where poor farmers could not refuse forced taxation, otherwise, they will be harassed."

Mangudadatu earlier told the Provincial Peace and Order Council, which he chairs, that BIFF members also turned to peddling illegal drugs, selling stuff in and out of Maguindanao. **With PNA**

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2 Sayyaf men nabbed in Basilan

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Two Abu Sayyaf bandits were arrested in this city on Friday night.

Emran Sanduyugan Ismael, with aliases of Bantong Basinti and Bantong Basiri, and Bryan Ismail Mohammad, alias Pojong Attiun, were collared by operatives of the police and regional intelligence unit at a mall along La Purisima street at about 9:15 p.m.

Chief Superintendent Billy Beltran, Zamboanga peninsula police director, said the suspects could be looking for possible targets

in the city.

Ismael and Mohammad were charged with two counts of kidnapping and serious illegal detention for taking Golden Harvest plantation workers in Barangay Tairan, Lantawan town on June 11, 2001.

Five of the kidnap victims were decapitated and their heads were dumped in a rubber plantation in Barangay Cabunbata, Isabela City.

The suspects are undergoing tactical interrogation at the regional intelligence unit to determine their purpose for coming to this city.

– Roel Pareño

14 January 2018



Pahina. 1

2 ABU SAYYAF TIMBOG SA MALL

KALABOSO ang dalawang hinihinalang miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), matapos matryempuhan ng mga awtoridad sa isang mall sa Zamboanga City, kamakalawa.

Kinilala ang mga suspek na sina Emran Ismael alyas Bantong Basinti at Bryan Mohammad alyas Pojong Attiun.

Dinakip ang dalawa sa bisa ng warrant of arrest sa kasing kidnapping with serious illegal detention na ipinalabas ng RTC

Branch 1 sa Isabela City, Basilan.

Ayon sa pulisya, sangkot umano ang dalawa sa pagdukot sa 15 katao sa Golden Harvest Plantation, Bgy. Tairan, Lantawan sa Basilan noong Hunyo 11, 2001.

Positibong itinuro ng dalawang testigo sina Ismael at Mohammad na nasa ilalim umano ng grupo ni ASG Leader Isnilon Hapilon.

Kapwa itinanggi ng mga suspek ang alegasyon laban sa kanila.

(Vyne Reyes)

14 January 2018



Pahina. 2

Editorial EDITORIAL Editorial

Pagsuko ng mga NPA, magandang sign para sa kapayapaan

GOOD news para sa isyung pangkapayapaan sa ating bansa!

Umabot sa 23 miyembro ng Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army ang sumuko sa mga awtoridad sa bayan ng Senator Ninoy Aquino sa Sultan Kudarat.

Kabilang ang nasabing mga rebelde sa Kilusang Rebolusyonaryong Barangay na isa sa mga armed wing ng komunistang rebelde sa lalawigan.

Isinuko rin ng mga ito ang kanilang iba't ibang armas at pampasabog.

Ayon sa kanilang kuwento, mahirap ang kanilang dinaranas sa kabundukan dahil pinabayaan na umano sila ng kanilang mga lider sa kilusan.

Matindi ang gutom, marami na ang nagkakasakit at pagod na rin umano ng makipagbakkakan sa mga awtoridad.

Sabay hirit na posible umano sa mga front organization lang ng CPP-NPA napupunta ang malaking pondo ng kanilang grupo.

At bilang tugon sa pagsuko ng mga NPA, nagpramis naman ng mabilis na livelihood support ang mga lokal na opisyal sa Sultan Kudarat para matulungan ang mga rebeldeng gustong magbalik-loob sa pamahalaan.

Masasabi nating isa itong magandang pangitain para tuluyan nang magkaroon ng wagas na kapayapaan sa ating bansa.

Itigil na ang patayan, 'wag nating ubusin ang ating lahi.

ONLINE NEWS

14 JANUARY 2018

Long trial expected in declaring CPP-NPA as terror group

From the Philippine Star (Jan 11):



In this photo taken Nov. 23, 2016, members of the New People's Army communist rebels with face painted to conceal their identities, stand in formation during ceremonies before a news conference held at their guerrilla encampment tucked in the harsh wilderness. AP/File

Judicial proceedings to declare the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army as terrorist groups will take time, the Department of Justice, which will seek the formal declaration, said.

Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II said that the petition to declare the CPP and its armed wing NPA as terrorists would be filed in the coming week, a filing previously promised in past weeks.

"It is a full-blown trial, I believe... Hindi puwedeng madaliin (It cannot be rushed). They have to gather all the instances where terroristic activities could be attributed to the NPAs," Aguirre said in a press briefing at Malacañang.

Aguirre added that the filing was delayed due to the last minute consultation with the Office of the Executive Secretary and with intelligence agencies.

RELATED: [DOJ to seek declaration of CPP-NPA as terrorist group](#)

The Justice secretary said that they are expecting the communist group to resist the move as they would not want to be tagged as terrorists.

Some of the arrest warrants for the consultants of the National Democratic Front, which represents the CPP-NPA in peace talks, have also been lifted, according to Aguirre.

"If these consultants have been released because of the peace process, their bail has already been canceled. If sighted they will be arrested," Aguirre said.

In 2002, the United States had declared the CPP-NPA as a foreign terrorist organization. The CPP-NPA and the Abu Sayyaf Group are the only organizations from the Philippines that are included in the list.

In the Philippines, the Abu Sayyaf was the first group to be officially listed as a terrorist organization following the approval of the Basilan provincial court in 2015.

The declaration came five years after the DOJ filed a request.

<http://beta.philstar.com>

Rightist [sic] groups renew calls for Palparan's conviction

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 12):

Rightist groups **Pamilya ng Desaparecidos Para sa Katarungan (Desaparecidos)** and **Pagkakaisa ng mga Biktima Para sa Hustisya (Hustisya)** staged a picket rally in front of the Bulacan Regional Trial Court (RTC) Thursday to reiterate their call for the conviction of retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr.

Palparan, with his three co-accused Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado Jr. (ret.); M/Sgt. Rizal Hilario (at large) and S/Sgt. Edgardo Osorio, were all charged with kidnapping and serious illegal detention filed by the victims' mothers, Linda Cadapan and Conie Empeno from Hagonoy, Bulacan.

The former military officer and his co-accused were with their legal counsel Atty. Arturo Cabides while the victims' relatives were with their counsel Atty. Jun Oliva at the hearing of the case at the sala of RTC Branch 15 Judge Alexander Tamayo.

Palparan and the mothers of the victims Sherilyn Cadapan, 29, and Karen Empeno, 26, faced-off during the initial presentation of accused's evidence.

During the hearing, Anotado was presented as the witness of Palparan where he stressed that they have not met nor had a talk regarding any plan to abduct Cadapan and Empeno.

The two victims, both University of the Philippines (UP) students, were abducted while doing their thesis in Hagonoy town in 2006.

They have not surfaced since then and are both believed to have been victims of extrajudicial killing.

Palparan and his three co-accused were tagged by brothers Raymond and Reynaldo Manalo as the culprits in the abduction of Cadapan and Empeno.

Evangeline Hernandez, 58, chair of the Hustisya said the Manalo brothers were also allegedly abducted by the same Palparan-led group and were hid in different detachments and safe houses before they managed to escape somewhere in Pangasinan, also in 2006.

The Manalo brothers also filed a case against Palparan and stood as witnesses during the hearing on the case of Cadapan and Empeno.

The Manalos revealed that they saw Cadapan and Empeno in a safe house where they were also kept and there were times they also saw Palparan and his men.

The victims' counsel Oliva said that the next and last hearing is scheduled on February 15 this year.

The victims' mothers said if the court will base its decision on the pieces of evidence presented by witnesses, the accused will be convicted.

"This year, we hope that the case will be finally resolved soon. It has been a long ordeal for us and all of Palparan's victims. We want to see him in jail this year," Cadapan said.

Conie, the mother of victim Karen, together with other victims of human rights violations, reiterated their demand for Palparan to be transferred from Fort Bonifacio to the Bulacan Provincial Jail in Malolos.

"Murderer Palparan should be in a regular jail with other common criminals. His conviction on the disappearance of our daughters should make him accountable for many cases of killings, abduction, torture and other rights violations. He has been enjoying special treatment from the state for too long," Empeno said.

The entire provincial capitol grounds were secured with some 50 personnel from the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police during the hearing.

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

Army receives more NPA members, supporters in DavOr

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 12):

The Philippine Army (PA) has continued to receive members of the New People's Army (NPA) and their mass supporters who decided to abandon the communist struggle.

A new group of NPA supporters known to locals as "masa" has pledged allegiance to the government after surrendering to the soldiers of 28th Infantry battalion under 701st Infantry brigade after a grand pulong-pulong in Barangay Tubaon, Tarragona, Davao Oriental.

Capt. Andrew Linao, civil-military operations (CMO) officer of Army's 701st Infantry Brigade based in Mati city, said the grand pulong pulong in Barangay Tubaon had opened the surrenderers minds and decided to surrender.

Linao said 59 mass supporters abandoned the communist struggle.

Last year, there were about 700 NPA members who surrendered to the government, were presented to President Rodrigo Duterte at the Eastern Mindanao Command in Panacan last December. High-powered firearms were also surrendered to the military.

Linao said the new group of surrenderers will undergo briefing and psychological interventions. But the military is expecting more because there were names mentioned during the pulong-pulong who wanted to surrendered.

"We advise them to proceed to the municipality of Tarragona and surrender to clear their names," he added.

The mass surrender was a joint effort of the soldiers of 28th IB and the local government in the area to help those NPA regular members and supporters to lead normal and peaceful life.

"So basically the people see that the local government unit and us (the soldiers) help each other to convince them," he added. But Linao clarified that supporters cannot avail of the government's Comprehensive Local Integrated Program (CLIP) but they will undergo peace building seminar for as another government intervention.

Last year, the 28th IB scored with the arrest of the regular members of the NPA as an outcome of the military's good relations with the community.

The strength of the community through the AFP community support program in Davao Oriental prevented the NPA to conduct atrocities and endanger the lives of the people in the communities.

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

More Lumad rebels yield to Army in Sultan Kudarat

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 12):

Nine more members of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) recruited by communist New Peoples' Army (NPA) have surrendered to military authorities as the Army continue winning the battle against the left here, an Army official said.

Lt. Colonel Harold Cabunoc, Army's 33rd Infantry Battalion (IB) commander, said the NPA's Guerilla Front 73 has been weakened with its depleting human resources and firepower.

The Lumads in the mountain villages of Sen. Ninoy Aquino, according to Cabunoc, are tired of harassment and extortion activities of the communist movement.

"They now realized fighting the government is a lost cause," Cabunoc told reporters.

1st Lt. Cesar Ballado of the 33rd IB welcomed the remnants of Guerilla Front 73 who have long desired to return to the mainstream but were hiding in the border communities of Palimbang and Sen. Ninoy Aquino towns for fear their comrades would execute them.

A week-long negotiation jointly conducted by the 33rd IB, Marine Battalion Landing Team 6 and local government of Sen. Ninoy Aquino; led to the surrender of the latest batch of NPA rebels.

On Thursday, the rebels found the opportunity to hike for five hours to reach the nearest village to the town center where they were welcomed by Ballado and other 33rd IB troopers.

Without naming the surrenderees, Ballado said they turned over two US-made Garand rifles, ammunition, three hand grenades, a cal. 45 pistol, and bandolier to authorities.

As of Thursday, a total of 103 Lumad members of the Guerilla Front 73, FSMRC have laid down their arms through the initiative of the 33rd IB.

Major Gen. Arnel dela Vega, 6th Infantry Division commander, lauded the 33rd IB for reaching out to Lumads duped by communist rebels into fighting a lost cause against the government.

He vowed to intensify efforts against rebels but open its arms for those who would like to reform and avail of the government amnesty program.

Cabunoc said Sultan Kudarat Governor Pax Mangudadatu has been supportive in the campaign of the military to bring back the IPs back to the mainstream and providing them with livelihood opportunities through the Comprehensive Local Integration Program.

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

BIFF bid to overrun Cotabato villages thwarted

From the Philippine News Agency (Jan 13):

Military authorities foiled attempts by IS-inspired Moro gunmen to overrun communities in North Cotabato in what the Army believed was a diversionary tactic to ease the heat of military offensives in the nearby Maguindanao province.

In a report Friday, Major General Arnel dela Vega, Army's 6th Infantry Division (6ID) commander, said about 30 members of Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) tried to attack the village of Malagakit here at around 10 p.m. on Wednesday night.

"We expect them to harass civilian communities to divert military offensives in Datu Unsay and Datu Saudi Ampatuan," Dela Vega said, adding that Army intelligence community monitored the BIFF plot to attack the village of Malagakit, a farming village at the borders of North Cotabato and Maguindanao.

Capt. Arvin John Encinas, 6ID spokesman, said dela Vega immediately ordered the deployment of 34th Infantry Battalion personnel in Barangay Malagakit.

At past 10 p.m., about 30 BIFF, under a certain Commander Aguila, arrived in the village using motorized boat through the Rio Grande de Mindanao.

The Army, backed by artillery, fired at the approaching BIFF rebels, triggering an hour-long firefight, until the gunmen fled deep into the marshland of Maguindanao.

Before leaving, the armed men harassed adjacent village of Bulacaon, also in Pigcawayan, sending residents fleeing.

Barangay Bulucaon Chair Mark John Montales said all his constituents were accounted for and nobody was hurt when the gunmen strafed the sub-village of Marquez.

Overnight, the Army rained the fleeing rebels with mortars and howitzers.

"Four houses abandoned by residents were ransacked by the armed men," Montales said.

Also, two residents were abducted and used as "guides" by the gunmen and later released.

Pigcawayan Municipal Administrator Jezler Garcesa said classes were suspended Thursday in Pigcawayan West District composed of three elementary and three secondary schools. Classes resumed Friday.

He said at least 34 families or 85 individuals from Barangays Malagakit and Bulacaon have evacuated to safer grounds. They have been provided with relief assistance.

On June 17 last year, the BIFF attacked Barangay Malagakit and Bulacaon, destroyed elementary school and a chapel, killed a farmer and a militiaman and torched several homes.

CAFGU Abraham Kutay was killed in the firefights that left two other militiamen, Angelo Verona and Resty Segundara, wounded. A civilian was killed in front of his horrified wife and children in Barangay Malagakit.

During military operations, at least eight BIFF were killed and the two villages have been liberated. The attack in two villages came amid military operations against IS inspired group in Marawi City.

Government forces have killed 10 BIFF members, including a bomber trained by slain Malaysian terrorist Zulkifli bin Hir, in Datu Unsay, Maguindanao.

The military launched air strikes and ground assaults against the BIFF after they attacked military installations in Mt. Firis, Barangay Maytumaig, Datu Unsay, Maguindanao on December 25. The conflict led the evacuation off some 800 Tedyaray families to safer grounds.

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

Former army chief named BCDA director Friday

From the Sun Star-Manila (Jan 12):

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has appointed retired Philippine Army chief Lieutenant General Glorioso Miranda as member of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority's (BCDA) Board of Directors.

Malacañang on Friday, January 12, released Miranda's appointment papers, which were signed by Duterte on January 9.

In October 2016, Duterte said he wanted to appoint Miranda as BCDA board member to help him in his bid to eradicate corruption within the agency.

Duterte, in a speech delivered on October 5, 2017, said: **"I really salute General Miranda. That's why automatic, he will be a member of the board of this (BCDA). There is no military man running that agency. I need somebody there from your sector to see how it is being run. Now, there is corruption. You can flog (those involved in corruption)."**

Under Bases Conversion and Development Act, BCDA is a government instrumentality vested with corporate powers. It enters into public-private partnerships for the implementation of public infrastructure projects.

Miranda, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1983, was appointed acting chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in April 2016.

He also served as Philippine Army chief and former commander of AFP's Northern Luzon Command.

Apart from Miranda, Duterte on January 9 also appointed Pelagio Paguican and Nestor Jardin as board members of the Philippine Postal Corporation and Cultural Center of the Philippines, respectively.

Read more: <http://www.sunstar.com.ph>

3 suspected NPA rebels nabbed in North Cotabato

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Jan 11):

Authorities on Thursday said they had arrested three suspected New People's Army (NPA) members, who might have been involved in the 2012 murder of a Swiss-Filipino trader and the January 6 killing of a former Presidential Security Group (PSG) in North Cotabato.

Lt. Col. Harold Argamosa, commander of the Army's 39th Infantry Battalion, said soldiers and policemen made the arrests in Barangay Balite in Magpet, North Cotabato on Tuesday.

He said the suspects, Harold Adiaton and Ian Solis alias "Iyan," were both active members of the NPA's Special Partisan Unit (Sparu); while Dandan Mailan Andas, alias "Dodong," was a recruiter under the Guerrilla Front 53 of the NPA's Southern Mindanao Regional Committee.

"Dandan is a known recruiter of the communist movement and a member of a kangaroo court (an irregular unauthorized court) of the underground mass base of the NPA as revealed by former NPA surrenderees," Argamosa said.

He said Adiaton and Solis had a hand in the January 6 killing of Technical Sergeant Ronel Galupo in Magpet town.

He said as operatives of the NPA's Merardo Arce Command, the duo were also behind the March 2012 murder of Swiss-Filipino Patrick Weinneger in Kidapawan City.

The Merardo Arce Command had earlier owned up to Weinneger's killing, saying he "was punished for his involvement in the killing of Italian missionary priest Fausto Tentorio in Arakan, North Cotabato" in October 2011.

Argamosa said Solis and Adiaton were also probably behind the killing of Bernabe "Bantito" Abanilla, the chief of North Cotabato's civil security unit, who was shot dead in February 2016 in Arakan.

The duo's other victims, he said, included another Army sergeant, a village councilor of Mahongcog, Magpet and a vendor.

The three suspected rebels were detained at the Magpet police lockup cell.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net>

Troops seize 9 high-powered firearms from NPA in Davao del Sur

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Jan 12):



Photo from the 73rd Infantry Battalion

Members of the Philippines Army's 73rd and 72nd Infantry Battalions confiscated nine high-powered firearms from communist rebels after a brief encounter in Magsaysay, Davao del Sur.

In a statement on Friday, Lt. China Castro, civil military operations officer of the 73rd Infantry Battalion (73IB), said the soldiers were conducting a checkpoint in Brgy. Tacul when four members of the New People's Army (NPA) aboard two motorcycles approached the station and fired at the government troops, which led to a 10-minute firefight past 11 p.m. on Thursday.

The rebels left behind the high-powered firearms and other munitions as they tried to escape.

The confiscated high-powered firearms included six M16 rifles, two AK47 rifles, and one M14 rifle. Soldiers likewise seized one IED, assorted ammunition and magazines, and 2 Honda TMX motorcycles after the skirmish.

"We have been gaining grounds and materiel against the NPA due to our relentless combat operations," said Lt. Col. Marion Angcao, commanding officer of 73IB.

"This is also a manifestation that NPA-planned terroristic activities against military, police, and civilians were pre-empted due to pro-active measures we have been conducting with the help of the communities who despise conflict, terrorism and extortion," Angcao added.

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