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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

17 January 2018

Wednesday

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

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JANUARY 17, 2018 | WEDNESDAY

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

CELEBES SEA

NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING NORTHERN AND CENTRAL LUZON
TAIL-END OF A COLD FRONT AFFECTING EASTERN SECTION OF SOUTHERN LUZON
pt. of 5:00 pm - January 16, 2018

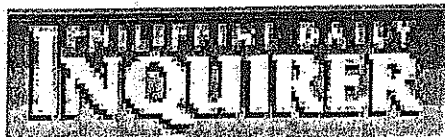
SUNRISE 	SUNSET
6:25 AM	5:47 PM
MOONRISE 	MOONSET
6:18 AM	5:59 PM
NEW MOON JAN 17 10:17 AM	FIRST QUARTER JAN 25 8:20 AM
LOW TIDE MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 5:59 AM -0.20 Meter	HIGH TIDE 10:12 PM 1.08 Meter
 Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers	
 Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms	
 Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms	

	JAN 18	JAN 19	JAN 18	JAN 19	JAN 18	JAN 19		
METRO MANILA	23-31°C	24-31°C	TAGAYTAY	19-27°C	19-28°C	TACLOBAN	24-29°C	24-28°C
TUGUEGARAO	22-30°C	23-31°C	LEGAZPI	24-31°C	24-31°C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	23-31°C	23-31°C
LADAG	21-30°C	22-31°C	PUERTO PRINCESA	24-29°C	25-31°C	METRO DAVAO	25-31°C	24-30°C
BAGUIO	14-24°C	14-24°C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	25-31°C	25-31°C	ZAMBOANGA	24-31°C	24-32°C
SBMA/CLARK	23-31°C	23-32°C	METRO CEBU	24-29°C	24-29°C	 SAGOT NG PADALA BDI!		

MONDAY - FRIDAY
11AM & 5PM

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

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INT'L GROUPS SLAM SEC RULING VS RAPPLER

By the Inquirer Staff
@Team_Inquirer

International human rights groups, media watchdogs and lawmakers have condemned the move to shut down the online news organization Rappler, saying press freedom is under

siege and rallying support to defend it.

"This is a politically motivated decision, pure and simple, and just the latest attempt to go after anyone who dares to criticize the government," James Gomez, Amnesty International's director for Southeast Asia

and the Pacific, said in a statement on Monday night.

In a Jan. 11 ruling made public on Monday, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) revoked Rappler's certificates of incorporation and registration for allegedly violating the constitutional restriction on

100-percent Filipino ownership of mass media entities.

"The order to close Rappler amounts to a direct assault on freedom of the press in the Philippines," said Steven Butler, Asia program coordinator for the US-based Committee to Protect Journalists.

Rappler chief executive officer Maria Ressa told CNN Philippines on Tuesday she would do "everything in my power not to let Rappler go down."

The Center for International Law (CenterLaw), which was cofounded by presidential

spokesperson Harry Roque, said in a statement on Tuesday that the SEC ruling could be considered unconstitutional for denying due process to Rappler and for undermining freedom of expression, which is "at the top-most rungs of constitutional freedoms." **A4**

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CenterLaw said the SEC should have given Rappler the opportunity to correct its ownership structure. "Instead, the SEC got down to business right away with guns blazing," it said.

Phelim Kine, director for Asia of Human Rights Watch, said the foreign ownership allegations only served to "mask the [Duterte administration's] vendetta against a critical website" and was just part of the government's continuing "attacks on media freedom" and any critical institution.

Human rights watchdog Karapatan said the SEC action "attests to the reality that this regime is gradually moving toward a dictatorship."

"History then teaches us that now is the most urgent time to speak up and to resist, lest this government thinks it can get away with underhanded maneuvers," said Karapatan secretary general Cristina Palabay.

Melinda Quintos de Jesus, executive director of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR), on Tuesday said the SEC order had "symbolic force" that showed to everyone "that if you are seen as overly critical or trou-

blesome, then we would find ways to get back at you."

"This assault on press freedom is the worst kind ... It is prior restraint," De Jesus said.

Luis Teodoro, former dean of the University of the Philippines' College of Mass Communication, said the SEC's decision, along with talks of a "no-election" scenario and the extension of terms of office of officials, resonated from the days of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship.

"Everyone should look at this as an issue that concerns us all," Teodoro said. "It is about freedom and the future of Philippine democracy—or what remains of it."

Press organizations

Press organizations in Hong Kong, Thailand and the Philippines released statements urging the government to reverse the SEC ruling.

An assault against journalists is an assault against democracy

Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines

"The order for Rappler to be shut down is part of a broader trend by Duterte to silence his critics," Hong Kong's Foreign Correspondents Club said in a statement.

Lawyer Jocelyn Clemente, acting chair of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), said her group would support Rappler in the legal fight against the closure order.

In a statement on Monday, NUJP rallied "all Filipino journalists to unite and resist every and all attempts to silence us."

The Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (Focap) said the SEC decision was "tantamount to killing the online news site."

Lawmakers

"An assault against journalists is an assault against democracy," Focap said.

At the House of Representa-

tives, ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio on Tuesday said the SEC move was "the biggest threat to press freedom since Marcos."

The SEC ruling showed that the Duterte administration is "hell-bent on eliminating all dissenters," said Kabataan Rep. Sarah Jane Blago.

At the Senate, Sen. Risa Hontiveros slammed the SEC's "Marcosian" decision.

"It's a move straight out of the dictator's playbook," Hontiveros said in a statement. She urged Filipinos "to defend press freedom and the right to speak truth to power."

In a statement, Sen. Richard Gordon commended the SEC for showing "no one is exempt and has special privilege in our justice system."

"However," he added, "the SEC should be ready to present convincing and factual evidence to back its ruling on Rappler because the freedom of the press is sacrosanct in every democracy."

He asked the SEC to explain why it took action against Rappler more than five years after approving its registration and urged Rappler to show "the paper trail of its investors" during those years. —WITH REPORTS FROM JAYMES T. GAMIL, JHESSET O. ENANO, VINCE F. NONATO, CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO AND AFP INQ

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Army overruns NPA camp in Quezon

By **DANNY J. ESTACIO**

CAMP NAKAR, Quezon — Army troopers claimed victory in battling around 30 New People's Army (NPA) terrorists Monday morning after capturing their camp in Barangay Junggo, Lopez town, this province.

A platoon-size force of Charlie Company of the 85th Infantry Battalion (85th IB) was conducting security operations after a tip from a civilian that a group of NPA terrorists was extorting

from residents in the village when the exchange of fire broke out at 10 a.m.

The armed fighters were led by Hilario de Roxas, alias "Ka Mando," platoon leader of NPA's sub-regional military area (SBMA).

After a 15-minute exchange of fire, the communist-terrorists withdrew and traces of blood were spotted along their escape route.

Colonel Elias Escharcha, commander of the army's 201st Infantry Brigade (201 IB), said there were 15

makeshift nipa huts found at the NPA encampment.

NPA firearms composed of an M16 rifle A2 attached with a grenade launcher M203, a generator set, and six sacks of rice were seized in the military's clearing operations.

A second wave of troops under Lieutenant Jovinal Gumilab conducted hot pursuit operations against the fleeing rebels and another section of Charlie Company of the 85th IB. (With a report from Francis T. Wakefield)

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4 more Reds yield to military

By MIKE U. CRSIMUNDO

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City – Two armed New People's Army (NPA) terrorists and two members of the Milisya ng Bayan (MB) surrendered to the Army's 66th Infantry (Kabalik) Battalion (66th IB) in New Bataan, Compostela Valley (ComVal) province last week, 66th IB commander Lt. Col. Palmer M. Parungao said.

In a statement sent to The Manila Bulletin late Monday afternoon, the 66th IB commander said, the two NPA terrorists also gave up loaded caliber-.45 and 38-mm pistols, improvised

explosive devices (IEDs) and other bomb-making materials including blasting caps and electrical wires.

Their identities were temporarily withheld for security reasons, but Parungao said they were regular fighters of guerilla-Front Committee 27, SRC2 of the CPP-NPA Southern Mindanao Regional Committee (SMRC).

The two MB, who also belong to the same guerilla front committee, surrendered to the Alpha Company of the 66th IB after reportedly realizing the futility of what they were fighting for, the 66th IB commander also said.

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Malaya
The National Newspaper

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Troops overrun NPA camp in Quezon

GOVERNMENT forces overran a camp of the New People's Army after a clash in Lopez town, Quezon on Monday morning, the military said yesterday.

Some of the communist rebels were either killed or injured in the fighting as evidenced by bloodstains at the enemy's position, said Capt. Patrick Jay Retumban, spokesman of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division.

In Koronadal City, the military said a

spokesman of an NPA unit and his wife, a member of the NPA's medical team, surrendered on Monday.

Retumban said troops from the Army's 85th Infantry Battalion were deployed to Barangay Jongo after receiving a tip from a civilian that a group of rebels were extorting from the residents.

The soldiers found about 20 rebels, led by one Ka Mando, at their camp. A 15-minute firefight ensued. No one

was reported killed or injured on the military side.

"Our troops discovered the camp during the security operation. We assaulted it, overran it and the enemy withdrew. We saw traces of blood and we are verifying the number of their (rebel) casualties," said Retumban.

During clearing operations, soldiers recovered three high-powered firearms and a generator set from the rebel camp, which

is has 15 makeshift nipa huts.

In Koronadal in South Cotabato, the military identified the returnees only as "Ka Efren," spokesman of the NPA's Far South Mindanao Regional Revolutionary Committee, and his wife, "Ka Wendy."

Lt. Col. Benjamin Leander, commander of the 27th Infantry Battalion based in nearby Tupi town, said the couple told him that they surrendered because they were tired of fighting the

government.

The two have been in the underground movement for almost 26 years.

"The couple wanted normal lives again after fighting the government for more than two decades," Leander said adding the surrender came after a series of negotiations. – *Victor Reyes and Ramil Bajo*

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4 Reds yield to Army

By MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City – Two armed New People's Army (NPA) terrorists and two members of Milisya ng Bayan (MB) voluntarily surrendered last week to the Army's 66th Infantry (Kabalikat) Battalion (66th IB) in New Bataan, Compostela Valley (ComVal) province, 66th IB commander Lt. Col. Palmer M. Parungao said.

In a statement sent to The Manila Bulletin late afternoon yesterday, the 66th IB commander said the two NPA terrorists also gave up their one caliber .45 pistol loaded with

live ammunitions and one 38 mm pistol loaded with live bullets, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and other bomb-making materials including blasting caps and electrical wires to the 66th IB.

Their identities were temporarily withheld for security reason, but Parungao said they (surrenderees) were regular fighters of guerilla-Front Committee 27, SRC2 of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)-NPA Southern Mindanao Regional Committee (SMRC).

The two MB, who also belong to the same guerilla front committee, surrendered to "Alpha" Company of the 66th IB

after also realizing the futility of what they are fighting for, Parungao also said.

On Jan. 9, combat maneuvering troops of the 66th IB seized several war materials from the NPA terrorists after their armed engagements in Sitio Spur Dos, Barangay Ngan, Compostela town, ComVal province.

"The unit's sustained efforts prompted the said NPAs to surrender bringing along with them the war materials," Parungao said.

"The 66th IB continually runs after the NPA terrorists groups and we have been successfully reducing the manpower and equipage of our adversaries.

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Pakialamerong sundalo tinarakan

Habang finitipa ang artikulong ito, nasa bingit ng kamatayan ang isang miyembro ng Philippine Army (PA) matapos saksakin ng kanyang kalugar dahil sa pag-awat sa away sa Caloocan City, kamakalawa ng gabi.

Nakarataw sa Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Hospital si Private First Class Noel Corpuz, residente ng Barangay Lalig, Tiaong, Quezon at pansamantalang nanunuluyan sa Bukid Area, Barrio Santo Cristo, Barangay 187, Tala, Caloocan City.

Siya ay nagtamo ng saksak sa tiyan at malalim na sugat sa kaliwang kamay.

Sa nabanggit na ospital pinosasan ang suspek na si Eddie Rieta, nasa hustong gulang, alyas Bay, matapos ding isugod dahil sa mga pasa sa mukha makaraang gulpihin ng kanilang mga kapitbahay.

Sa imbestigasyon ni PO1 Eddie Lou Alon, nagwala ang suspek at hinamon ng away ang

kanyang tiyuhin, dakong 9:30 ng gabi.

Narinig ni Corpuz ang pag-aaway kaya lumabas ito sa bahay at inawat ang maguyuhin, ngunit sinaksak siya ng suspek.

Papatakas na si Rieta nang harangin ng kanilang mga kapitbahay at ginulpi.

Nahaharap ang suspek sa kasong frustrated homicide.

Orly L. Barcala

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ORAL ARGUMENTS

**ONE-YEAR ML
EXTENSION
QUESTIONED**

The President should not be given too much discretion in imposing martial law, according to petitioners questioning the legality of the Duterte administration's extension of martial rule in Mindanao.

Petitioner Christian Monsod, former elections chief and a member of the commission that drafted the 1987 Constitution, said the provision on martial law was included in the present Charter as an extraordinary or the ultimate means to address actual rebellion and invasion that threatened public safety, and not just imminent danger or mere threat.

The Supreme Court conducted oral arguments on Tuesday on petitions questioning the one-year extension of martial law.

"The government appears to have successfully addressed the rebellion in Marawi and any spillover effects in Mindanao though the use of ordinary powers. And to imply that martial law with its extraordinary powers is a benign solution to our problems is a misrepresentation that has a conditioning effect on people to accept authoritarianism until it's too late to stop and this should not be allowed to happen," Monsod said under questioning by Justice Lucas Bersamin. — JEROME ANING INQ

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P15.7-BILLION WARSHIP PROGRAM

DUTERTE'S TOP AIDE SAYS HE DID NOT INTERVENE IN CHOICE OF NAVY SUPPLIER

By Philip C. Tubeza
@pctubezaINQ

Special Assistant to the President Christopher "Bong" Go on Tuesday denied intervening in the selection of a weapons system supplier for the Philippine Navy's P15.7-billion warship program.

Go said he never intervened in the project, which opposition Rep. Gary Alejano blamed for the relief of Navy Flag Officer in Command Vice Adm. Ronald Joseph Mercado last month.

"I have not intervened in the procurement of DND (Department of National Defense) of its computer system for its ships. I have not participated nor intervened, directly or indirectly, in the transactions of DND," Go said in a statement.

"Further, I even have no information nor knowledge of the said transaction. Clarification on the issues should be addressed to (Defense Secretary Delfin) Lorenzana."

President Duterte said he would ask Go to resign if there was evidence against him.

"If you can find I will ask Bong to resign tomorrow, if he did intervene even for one word," Mr. Duterte said.

But he defended Go, describing his longtime aide as a "billionaire."

Weapons system

Alejano said on Monday that Mercado was relieved last month because he did not approve of the weapons system of a South Korean contractor that allegedly had the Palace's backing.

Documents obtained by the

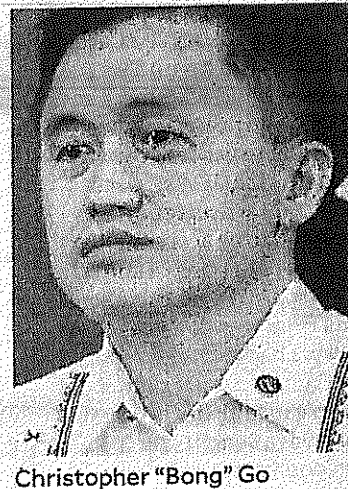
Inquirer showed that Go gave a letter to Lorenzana that assailed the Navy's preference for the Tacicos combat management system made by Thales Nederland while highlighting the advantages of choosing the naval shield integrated combat management system of the South Korean Hanwha Thales Co. for two frigates ordered by the Navy from Hanwha Heavy Industries.

Lorenzana stuck a Post It on the letter with a note, dated Jan. 12, 2017, telling Mercado to rebut it.

"To Admiral Mercado," Lorenzana wrote on a Post It. "Ronald, This was given to me by Bong Go. Go over it and prepare a report/rebuttal to be submitted to the Pres."

"Why should the Navy explain to Secretary Bong Go why Tacicos Thales was chosen despite the lobby for Hanwha systems?" Alejano said.

"Does Secretary Bong Go know the technical specifications and needs of the Navy more than it, which did thorough research on the frigate?" he added. INQ



Christopher "Bong" Go

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Duterte aide denies meddling in Navy procurement

By ALEXIS ROMERO

President Duterte's long-time aide yesterday denied meddling with the procurement of the Philippine Navy's weapons system for its warships.

"I have not intervened in the procurement of (the Department of National Defense) of its computer system for its ships. I have not participated nor intervened, directly or indirectly, in the transactions

of DND," special assistant to the President Christopher Go said in a text message.

"Further, I even have no information nor knowledge of the said transaction," he said.

Go asked the media to seek clarification on the issue from Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana instead.

The presidential aide was accused of endorsing a South Korean company to be the supplier of the combat management system of the Navy's

frigate program.

Go supposedly gave Lorenzana a letter discussing why the Navy should pick the naval shield integrated combat management system (CMS) of South Korean company Hanwha Thales over Tactics CMS of Thales Nederland.

His office allegedly asked the chairman of the Navy frigate project technical working group to attend a meeting at Malacañang to discuss the selection of the weapon system.

The Navy reportedly insisted on choosing Tactics CMS because of its compatibility with the military's equipment.

Meanwhile, Magdalo party-list Rep. Gary Alejano accused President Duterte of being behind the sudden relief of former Navy commander, vice admiral Ronald Joseph Mercado in December last year.

"I remind everyone that it's only the President who can remove major service com-

manders. He cannot not have known about this," Alejano said in his privilege speech in Filipino last Monday.

Lorenzana told reporters last year that he fired Mercado due to "loss of trust and confidence."

Duterte has distanced himself from leadership changes in the Navy.

"I don't know. I don't meddle in their operations. I have to ask. You know, I do not really interfere in the Armed Forces. I let them do their job... reshuffling, whatever transfer," Duterte told Palace reporters.

But Alejano – a former Marine captain – believes there is more to Mercado's relief than meets the eye, noting that it was carried out at a time when the Navy was busy with its P18-billion frigate acquisition project, which he labeled a "controversy."

"The controversy is a case where the contractor won

over the Navy," he told his colleagues in the House, as the contractor won the bid to build two frigates which the Navy as "end-user" will use in protecting the country's maritime territory.

"We can put it this way: the business interest of the contractor won over the national interest of our country," Alejano revealed, as Mercado had been pushing and vouching for the losing bidder that was "disqualified."

"This is not possible without the collusion of some greedy people in the government. Who are these people who favored a foreign contractor over our own Philippine Navy?" the opposition lawmaker pointed out.

A brand-new, modern and armed frigate can be equipped with missiles and is considered at par with modern warships of other countries. This can fill the gap in the country's exter-

nal defense capabilities.

According to Alejano, this frigate is also capable of conducting anti-air warfare, anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare and electronic warfare operations.

Lorenzana had questioned Mercado's "intention behind his fixation with one specific company for the (CMS) of the brigade acquisition project."

"The contract says the one who will purchase the CMS that will satisfy our specification is the builder... Mercado wants to bring in another company, another system which is not part of the contract," Lorenzana explained.

Lorenzana said he informed Duterte last November about the delays caused by Mercado's demand.

Mercado was replaced as head of the Navy and reassigned to the office of the military chief.

– With Delon Porcalla

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Palace: BBL should adhere to the Constitution

**By Philip C. Tubeza,
Christine O. Avendaño
and Vince F. Nonato
@Team_Inquirer**

The proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) should be purged of constitutional infirmities to avoid being declared unconsti-

tutional by the Supreme Court, Malacañang said on Tuesday.

"You need to pass a BBL that's consistent with the Philippine Constitution, simply put," presidential spokesperson Harry Roque told a press briefing.

Roque noted that a similar effort—the memorandum of

agreement on ancestral domain—during the Arroyo administration was struck down by the Supreme Court for violating the Constitution.

In December, President Duterte said he had doubts about the draft BBL passing constitutional muster.

But on Monday, Roque said the President wanted the proposal passed before Congress proceeds with Charter change.

Roque also dismissed as "speculative" suggestions that Malacañang was prioritizing the BBL over Charter change because the House of Representa-

tives-led campaign to revise the Constitution was antagonizing the Senate due to reports that it would be abolished.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III conceded on Tuesday that it was easier to pass the draft BBL than amend the Constitution, which Mr. Duterte now

wants Congress to prioritize amid the division between the Senate and the House over the mode of pursuing the changes.

This developed as Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri said he had assured the President that the Senate would prioritize the proposed BBL. INQ

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The Manila Times

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President to certify BBL as urgent – Zubiri

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has expressed his commitment to certify as urgent the passage of the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri said on Tuesday.

Zubiri said that the President called him up on Monday to inquire about the Senate's support on the passage of the BBL, which will abolish the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and form a new Bangsamoro entity with wider powers.

"We would like to assure the President and the Filipino people especially the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) that the Senate is going to work very hard, tirelessly to pass this law," he said.

Zubiri, chairman of the subpanel under the Committee on Local Government tasked to tackle the BBL, said he welcomed the President's statement that the passage of the BBL was one of the

priorities of his administration.

"I spoke to him yesterday. For the first time after two years he called me up...I talked to him. He told me, 'Hi, senator, I am in front of the MILF. It's because the MILF leadership visited him yesterday,'" Zubiri said in a news briefing.

Pressed whether he asked the President to certify as urgent the passage of the BBL, Zubiri said, "Yes, of course. This is his priority. As a matter of fact, he passed me to [Presidential Peace Adviser] Jess Dureza for the particular details."

The lawmaker said he told the President he had withdrawn his original bill and filed the version drafted by the MILF-led Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC).

Zubiri conducted the first public hearing on BBL on December 20, 2017.

"We will also have a hearing this January 23, which is on Tuesday, wherein all Cabinet

officials as well as the BTC officials and members of the MILF will be here in the Senate."

There will also be hearings on January 25 in Cotabato, on January 26 in Marawi, and later in the Basilan-Sulu-Tawi-Tawi (Basulta) area, he said.

"I would like to finish the (BBL) discussion on second and third reading in the second week of March before the session break. On February 8 to 11 we will be back to Basulta area. We will have the committee report ready by third week of February after which I will bring the committee report in plenary and we will have three weeks to pass the measure," he said.

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said that the opposition bloc would support the enactment of the Bangsamoro law.

"Like the President, we must ensure that it is consistent with our constitution," Drilon said. **BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO**

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Malaya
The National Newspaper

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Martial law has no basis, petitioners tell Supreme Court

BY ASHZEL HACHERO

PETITIONERS questioning the legality of the extension of martial law and the suspension of the privilege of habeas corpus in Mindanao yesterday told the Supreme Court that the extension has no basis and that mere threats of rebellion and invasion cannot be used to justify such proclamation.

Former Commission on Elections chair Christian Monsod, who was one of the drafters of the 1987 Constitution, told the magistrates during oral arguments on the consolidated petitions that martial law “is supposed to be for exceptional cases.”

“We (drafters) made the window smaller for declaration of martial law. We took away imminent danger, insurrection and the like,” Monsod said adding that the framers of the Constitution wanted it to cover an extraordinary situation.

“That is why the provision is specific, extraordinary and ultimate,” he said.

Monsod also said the Supreme Court, in its decision in July last year affirming President Duterte’s martial law declaration, “seems to say that it is a measure of first resort rather than a last resort.”

In response to a question from Associate Justice Lucas Bersamin on why the framers of the Constitution did not include terrorism as reason for the declaration of martial law, Monsod said they believed then as he believed now that there were enough powers that the government can use to deal with the scourge of terrorism without resorting to martial law.

“There is no territorial fight in terrorism. It must be addressed in a different way,” he said adding that the extension must be nullified since there is “no theater of war, and the fighting with the New People’s Army was not a basis for the original martial law proclamation on May 23 last year.”

Duterte declared martial law in the entire Mindanao on May 23 last year, the day the Maute

terror group attacked Marawi City. He asked for an extension in July, and Congress extended martial rule to Dec. 31, 2017. He asked for another extension, last month, citing as reasons recruitment activities of Islamist militants and their regrouping since government forces ended the Marawi conflict in October last year, and attacks by the communist New People’s Army. The second extension was for a year.

Opposition lawmakers said the extension was illegal because Duterte gave security threats as reasons, rather than rebellion or invasion, the conditions under which martial law can be invoked.

Monsod stressed the extension has no basis as there is no rebellion or invasion.

Former Solicitor General Florin Hilbay, who is representing former Human Rights Commissioner Etta Rosales as one of the petitioners, reiterated the Constitution is very clear on the reasons for declaring martial law.

“Constitution requires actual rebellion or invasion, not preven-

tive martial law. By these standards, the President’s declaration of extension of martial law in Mindanao has no factual basis and, therefore, unconstitutional,” he said.

Another petitioner, Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, made the same arguments adding that it was even Duterte who declared that the fight against the Maute terrorist group in Marawi city was over.

“Now, Marawi is not burning. The President has confirmed that Marawi is liberated from ‘terrorist influence,’ not only from the terrorists themselves but also from terrorist influence. What remain are phantom ‘remnants’ of the vanquished terrorist groups, as admitted by the Executive and his advisers,” he said in his opening statement.

The high court will continue the oral arguments today. It has asked Defense Secretary and martial law administrator Delfin Lorenzana, Armed Forces chief Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero, and PNP chief Ronald dela Rosa to attend the hearing.

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FINISHING TOUCHES

SHELTERS FOR MARAWI EVACUEES STILL EMPTY

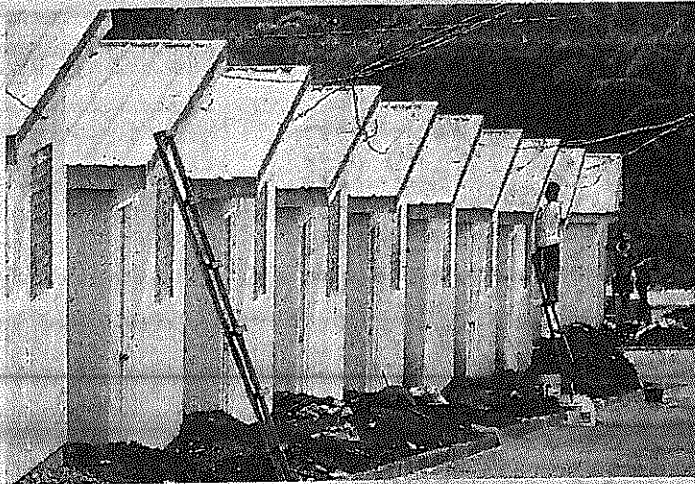
MARAWI CITY—Twenty days after the government turned over the keys to their new houses, residents of this city displaced by the military's five-month battle with terrorists have yet to move in to temporary shelters built for them.

Housing Assistant Secretary Felix Castro said the government had reset for the third time the moving-in dates for 250 families who would occupy the shelters because these were not yet ready for occupancy.

Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM), the body tasked with the rehabilitation of the city and the resettlement of displaced residents, turned over on Dec. 27, 2017, the keys and certificates of occupancy to 250 families, or half of the 500 families initially targeted to be given temporary shelters.

Castro said the transition houses, made of panel boards, still lacked electrical connections. He also said the road network and drainage system on the 13-hectare relocation site had yet to be finished.

Earlier, Castro projected the



Workers rush to finish temporary shelters in the village of Sagonsongan in Marawi City that the government has promised to residents displaced by war. —DIVINA SUSON

units to be ready by December last year but he revised his estimate to Jan. 20 this year. He said the prevailing weather condition, and the need for "minor fixes," such as plumbing, power lines and other finishing jobs, had caused the delay.

Alykhan Ali, officer in charge of the Department of Public Works and Highways in

Lanao del Norte province, said the road network leading to the site was almost complete.

He said the delay in the arrival of materials from Korea and the lack of heavy equipment by the contractor had also delayed the completion of some of the housing units.

Castro said the government intended to relocate 70,000

families still living in 67 evacuation sites in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur.

Aside from Sagonsongan, other transitory areas for residents included one in Matungao in Lanao del Norte.

Farmida Macabando, president of the Association of Barangay Councils in Marawi City, said the technical working group created to screen and verify beneficiaries decided that 70 percent of the more than 1,175 temporary shelters being built on a 13-hectare land in Sagonsongan would be awarded to evacuees living in evacuation centers. The remaining 30 percent would be allotted to home-based evacuees—or those living on private lots and houses of relatives.

Aside from ensuring that the temporary shelters were ready for occupancy, the TFBM was also tasked to ensure the safety of residents and to see to it that the rehabilitation efforts were on track, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said last week. —DIVINA SUSON INQ

ONLINE NEWS

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SAFE TRANSPORT | TOG 5 Facilitates the Evacuation of Albay Residents

By [Alvin Santiago](#)



DARAGA, Albay (DWDD) – Tactical Operations Group 5 of the Philippine Air Force helped evacuating the residents of Barangay Matnog and Banadero in Daraga, Albay on January 15, 2018 due to the unstable and continuing irregularities in the activities of Mount Mayon.

Since its first phreatic explosion on Saturday, January 13, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology raised the said area to alert level 3.

In coordination with the local government units, TOG 5 utilized its KM Troop Carrier and M35 truck during the evacuation that resulted to the safe transport of 25 adults and 10 children. They were immediately brought to the Municipal Hall of Daraga, Albay and will later be transferred to their temporary relocation shelters located in Barangay Anislag, Daraga, Albay. **TOG 5/MCAG**



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REACH OUT | CGPAF “Fun Day” with the Orphans

Reported by Alvin Santiago | The Daily... | 2018-01-13



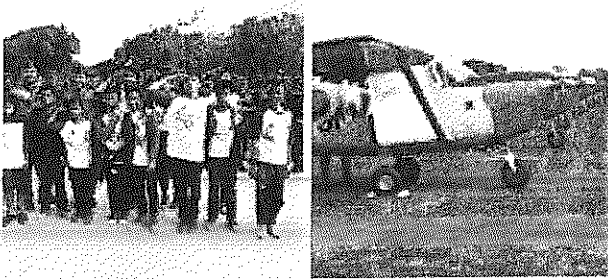
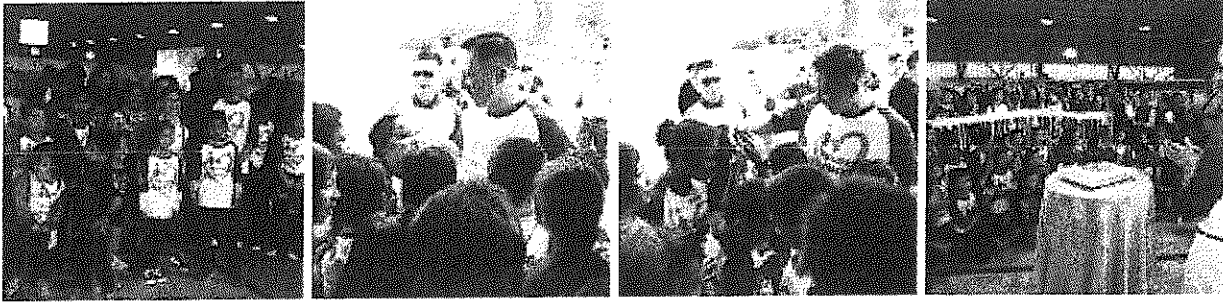
LIPA CITY, Batangas (DWDD) – A fun-filled day was given to the orphans of fallen heroes of Marawi at the gift-giving activity led by the Commanding General of the Philippine Air Force, Lt Gen Galileo Gerard R Kintanar Jr AFP, and his wife, Dr Ma Marlene M Kintanar on January 13, 2018 at the Air Education Training and Doctrine Command, Fernando Air Base, Lipa City.

A total of 46 children together with the PAF officers and Ladies Club members actively participated during the parlor games and photo booth. They were also given the privilege to ride on the T-41 aircraft.

The said activity was part of the CG,PAF's birthday celebration. **PAF PIO/MCAG**



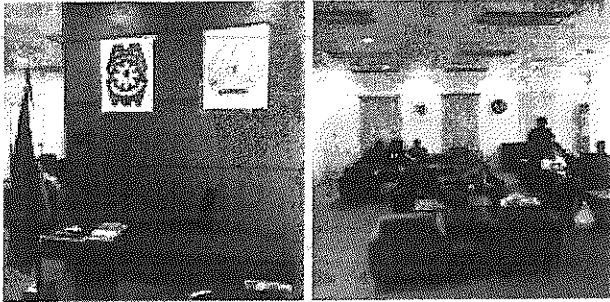
Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.



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NOW OPEN | Heroes Lounge at Davao International Airport

by [Alvin Santiago](#) | [July 10, 2019](#) | [0](#)



The HEROES LOUNGE at Davao International Airport is now open for all personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) personnel and their dependents travelling with them (must present dependents ID).

The lounge opens at 6AM and closes at 9PM daily and serves free coffee and snacks.

Uniformed personnel must just show their ID at the frontdesk upon entry.

The same lounge is also available at NAIA Terminal 3.

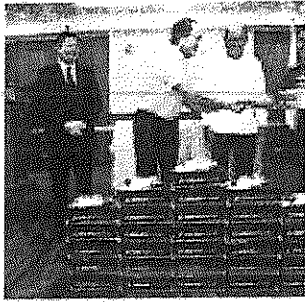
Enjoy mga TROPA!!!



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SUPPORT OUR TROOPS | Soldiers Receive 3000 Protective Eyewear for Combat

Photo by: [Alvin Santiago](#) | [View more photos](#)



Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero (right) through Secretary of National Defense Delfin Lorenzana (third from left), receives the protective eyewear from Mr. Sabin Aboitiz (second from left) who donated a total of 3,000 for soldiers in combat operations in a handover ceremony Monday at the DND Social Hall. (Photo by SN1 Donald Viluan/PAOAFP)

CAMP GEN. EMILIO AGUINALDO, Quezon City (DWDD) — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) through the Department of National Defense (DND) received the second batch of protective eyewear meant for soldiers engaged in combat operations on the ground.

Secretary of National Defense Delfin N. Lorenzana and AFP Chief of Staff General Rey Leonardo Guerrero received the Delta Plus safety glasses from Aboitiz Foundation, Inc. led by Mr. Sabin Aboitiz in a ceremonial handover ceremony held January 15, 2018 at the DND Social Hall.

Some 700 pieces were initially turned over to soldiers in Marawi City at the height of the battle against Deash-Maute terrorists to protect frontline troops from eye injury resulting from IED explosions, debris, and shrapnel. A total of 3,000 safety eyewear were turned over to the Philippine Army for use of soldiers in combat operations.

"We in the Aboitiz Group appreciate very much the sacrifices made by our soldiers. We can never thank them enough for their service and sacrifice that they have done for the country," Mr. Aboitiz said.

"On behalf of our One Defense Team, I thank the Aboitiz Group for giving protective eyewear for our frontline troops... It should be noted that this donation demonstrates the strong cooperation and collaboration that has always existed between the private sector and the government. Aside from being a tangible and visible indicator of our joint efforts, it demonstrates our concern and love for our valiant soldiers who continue to sacrifice their lives for our freedom and who continuously face threats at sea and on land," Lorenzana said.

The DND notes that in modern combat operations, the risk of soldiers incurring damage to their eyes is very high, leading to either partial or total blindness or a lifetime of disability and suffering, not just for the soldiers but for the families as well. This was evident in places like Marawi and in other areas where soldiers operate.

The Aboitiz Group's donation is not only timely but significant as well because it will augment our current efforts to boost the AFP's capability to conduct focused, surgical, and sustained military operations. **AFP PAO / MCAG**