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**TEAM ARMY**

**Serving the people. Securing the land.**

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**OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

**01 March 2018**

**Thursday**

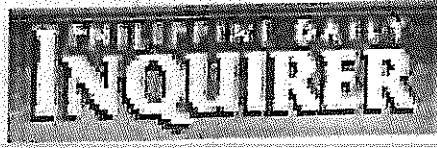
*Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.*

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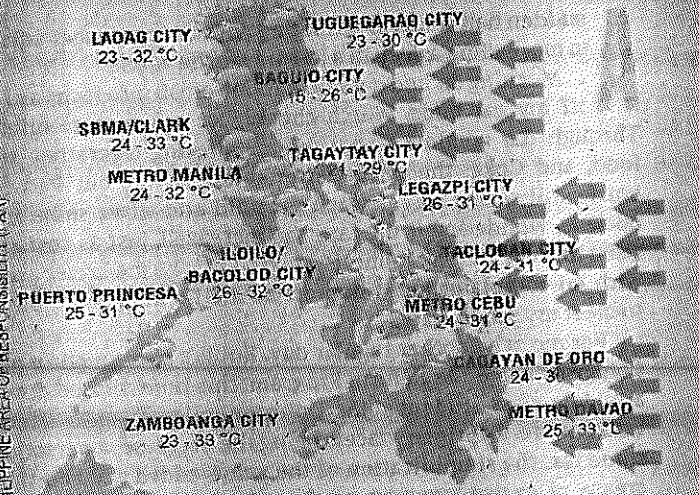
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**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**  
BALANCED NEWS + FEAREST VIEWS

**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | MARCH 1, 2018 | THURSDAY**

AFFECTING EASTERN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY  
as of 3:00 pm - February 26, 2018



PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

**SUNRISE** 6:13 AM

**SUNSET** 6:04 PM

**MOONRISE** 5:26 PM

**MOONSET** 5:26 AM

**FIRST QUARTER** FEB 21 4:09 PM

**FULL MOON** MAR 2 3:51 AM

**LOW TIDE** 4:54 AM

**HIGH TIDE** 9:30 PM

MANILA SOUTH HARBOR

-0.27 Meter      1.10 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times of rain with rain showers and/or thunderstorms

Cloudy skies with rain showers and/or thunderstorms

MARCH 1		MARCH 2	
<b>METRO MANILA</b> 24 - 32 °C	<b>TAGAYTAY</b> 24 - 33 °C	<b>TACLOBAN</b> 24 - 30 °C	<b>TACLOBAN</b> 24 - 31 °C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b> 23 - 30 °C	<b>LEGAZPI</b> 26 - 31 °C	<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b> 24 - 31 °C	<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b> 24 - 30 °C
<b>LAGOAG</b> 23 - 32 °C	<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b> 25 - 31 °C	<b>METRO DAVAO</b> 25 - 33 °C	<b>METRO DAVAO</b> 25 - 34 °C
<b>BAGUIO</b> 15 - 26 °C	<b>ILOILO/BACOLOD</b> 26 - 32 °C	<b>ZAMBOANGA</b> 23 - 31 °C	<b>ZAMBOANGA</b> 23 - 32 °C
<b>SBMA/CLARK</b> 24 - 33 °C	<b>METRO CEBU</b> 24 - 32 °C		

**DZRH NEWS TELEVISION**

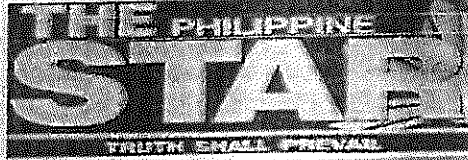
MONDAY - FRIDAY  
11AM & 5PM

**PILIPINAS HD**

WEEKDAYS  
6AM, 6:30 PM & 9PM

WEEKENDS  
6AM

01 March 2018



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# Koko assures CJ of fair trial

By PAOLO ROMERO

Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno is guaranteed a fair trial at the Senate in case the impeachment complaint against her reaches the chamber, Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III said yesterday.

The House committee on justice concluded on Tuesday its deliberations on the impeachment complaint against Sereno and is now poised to transmit the case to the Senate for trial.

Sereno begins her indefinite leave today as she gears up for a tedious impeachment trial.

Asked to comment on the likelihood of a Senate trial for Sereno, Pimentel emphasized that senators, acting as judges, would rely chiefly on evidence presented by the House justice committee.

"This is the attitude of the senators: if there is no evidence, then acquit. But if there is evidence, we also have to consider convicting," he said.

"That's why the burden is on the House. If they will now file the impeachment complaint here in the Senate, they should be prepared to prove their case. There are no friends when it comes to this case," Pimentel stressed.

Pimentel declined to comment on calls for the Chief Justice to resign as well as on her taking an indefinite leave.

House justice committee chairman Rep. Rey Umali had

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## Koko From Page 1

called Sereno's announcement of her taking a leave of absence "full of lies and deceit."

Pimentel said he would brush up on the rules of court as the Senate finalizes its impeachment rules in anticipation of its convening as an impeachment court.

Sen. Grace Poe also vowed to be objective in the impeachment trial, saying she would be focusing mostly on the evidence to be presented by both sides.

"I hope it (impeachment trial) will not only be fair but also quick because there are so many bills that need to be tackled and could be delayed because of the impeachment (trial)," Poe said.

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III said in the event the trial pushes through, the chamber will hold legislative sessions on Mondays and Tuesdays while

Wednesday to Friday – from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. – will be for the trial.

Based on his timetable, the Senate might convene as an impeachment court in May with the actual trial likely in July.

"There is a mandated break (of Congress) by the Constitution and we can't do anything about that. You can call a special session but not during the mandated break of the Constitution, the sine die adjournment," Sotto said.

Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon, for his part, urged the Supreme Court to find ways to help preserve the integrity, dignity and independence of the institution and the judiciary as a whole.

In a statement, Drilon said that he was saddened by the infighting in the Supreme Court, which he said has become a public spectacle.

He said this has "affected

not only the people's confidence in the judiciary but also the administration of justice in the country."

"We hope for this matter to be resolved among themselves, away from the public's eye, as it only aggravates the situation that the institution is currently facing," Drilon said.

"The Supreme Court is one of the pillars of our democracy. We should protect and isolate it from the consequences of the impending impeachment trial of the Chief Justice. The Supreme Court must rise to the crisis whole," he added.

Some of the SC colleagues of Sereno had testified against her.

### Not resigning

As she begins her "indefinite leave" today, Sereno – through her spokespersons – made it clear she is not resigning.

Lawyer Jojo Lacanila said Sereno has yet to disclose the exact date she would

come back from what she had initially announced as a "wellness leave" of 15 days.

"Indefinite in the sense *na hindi alam ang* end point, but this is not forever. There are speculations it will lead to resignation but we want to emphasize that CJ has no intention to resign at all," Lacanilao said, referring to Sereno by the initials of her position.

Her other spokesperson Josalee Deinla said the Chief Justice's taking a leave of absence was a "personal decision" and that she plans to visit local courts to boost the morale of judiciary employees.

Sereno formally filed her leave from the Court, which will be charged against her "wellness leave program," on Wednesday until March 15 from the initial March 12 to 29.

"She found it opportune to advance her leave to March 1 so that she can prepare for the trial," Deinla said.

She emphasized Sereno is in good spirits and "can sleep

well at night," as she remains steadfast in her conviction that she is innocent of the allegations against her.

Lacanilao also debunked insinuations that pressures from the other magistrates forced Sereno to take a leave from her duty.

The spokespersons admitted they do not know what happened during Sereno's meeting with her colleagues. It was after the meeting when Sereno announced her decision to take a leave.

Still, they expressed "concern" over reports that Sereno could have been forced to take an indefinite leave.

"It's alarming to realize if indeed some magistrates – supposedly the best minds in the law – had even thought of forcing her to take a leave because there is no legal or constitutional basis for them to force a chief justice to take an indefinite leave," Deinla said in Filipino.

Lacanilao stressed that Sereno would remain as the Supreme Court's top magis-

trate and only a final decision by the Senate would make her leave her office.

"There are no other institutions aside from the Senate which can force the chief justice to resign. Nobody can declare that other than the Senate. For the efforts to pressure her and force her, that's unconstitutional," he said.

He added that their camp is busy preparing for a Senate impeachment trial.

He cited other "coordinated efforts" to bring down the Chief Justice, including a quo warranto case that the Office of the Solicitor General might file against Sereno before the SC on the basis of her alleged incomplete statements of assets, liabilities and net worth as well as some tax violations.

Lacanilao also maintained that psychological examinations cannot be used as a basis for impeachment, as it is not listed in the impeachable offenses set by the Constitution – With Romina Cabrera, Marvin Sy

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## ACROSS THE COUNTRY

### 3 NPA rebels slain in Agusan

BUTUAN CITY – Three New People's Army (NPA) rebels were killed in an encounter with soldiers in Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte on Monday.

Capt. Al Anthony Pueblos, civil military operations officer, said the clash occurred in Barangay Bangayan. There was no reported casualty among government troopers.

Brig. Gen. Franco Nemesio Gacal, 402nd Infantry Brigade commander, said two NPA rebels were arrested and eight surrendered in recent encounters in the Caraga region. Fifteen guns, 46 improvised bombs and five NPA camps were also seized

– Ben Serrano

March 2018



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## NPA attack sa Quezon, kinondena

Kinondenang Philippine Army (PA) ang serve ng pag-atake ng mga tauhan ng New People's Army (NPA) sa iba't ibang lugar sa Quezon.

Pagdidinani Col. Teody Torbio, tagapagsalita ng Southern Luzon Command (SolCom), lalo pa nilang hinigpitan ang operasyon laban sa mga rebeldeng grupo para na rin sa kapakanan ng mga residente sa lalawigan.

Idinahilan ni Torbio na isang paglabag sa karapatang-pantao ang ginawang pag-atake ng mga rebelde dahil hindi lamang ang mga militar ang nagiging puntirya nito, kundi maging ang mga sibilyan.

Nilinaw naman ni Capt. Patrick Jay Retumban, hepe ng Division of Public Affairs Office (DPAO) ng 2nd Infantry Division (ID) ng PA, na ang sunud-sunod na pag-atake ng NPA ay nagpapatunay lamang na nararapat na tawaging terorista ang mga ito.

Nais lamang, aniya, ng mga ito na ipakita sa pamahalaan na malakas pa ang kanilang kilusan ngunit sa katunayan, maliit at mahina na ang puwersa ng mga ito, ayon kay Capt. Retumban.

Matatandaang sinalakay ng rebelde ang isang pribadong rantso sa bayan ng San Francisco, sinira at tinangay ang ilang kagamutan, at tinangay ang apat na sibilyan at dalawang tauhan ng Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU).

Wala pang isang oras ay kaagad ding pinalaya ng NPA ang anim, na pinaniniwalaang ginamit lang na human shield sa pagtakas ng mga rebelde.

**Fer Taboy**



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### 2 sundalo na aksidente

SAN JOSE, Tarlac. Dalawang indalorang ligatan nang bumangag ang sinasakyan nilang motor sa San Jose, Tarlac nang Martes nang alas. Binanggit ng pagkawala ng motor sa Sgt. Salvador Navarro, 44, na kasalukod ng Pfc. Jerry Dato, 25, dalawang nakatatag sa 7th Infantry Division (ID) sa Fort Magsaysay, Pampanga. Nagsalita ang mga indalorang pangal sa katawan. Ang mga PDSN, na bumangag nang kasama nang nagahapag nang 12:10 nang tinigil sa San Jose Maynila West, Barangay Lungsod, San Jose, Tarlac. Sa imbed pangkat, pabalina nang dalawa sa kanilang kumpanya nang pangmawalan bilang kontrol sa kumpanya nang nakatag.

Leandro Alborate

March 2018



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## **New Army battalion detailed in Aurora**

**By MAMER BANEZ**

**BALER, Aurora** – The Philippine Army (PA) 91st Infantry “Sinagtala” Battalion has been detailed in this province and reporting to the different agencies, local officials and stakeholders.

Sinagtala Battalion commander is Lt. Col. Jose Marie F. Torrenueva, a member of PMA Class 1996. Prior to his assignment as 91st commanding officer, he served as the deputy of the assistant chief of Unified Command Staff for Operations, U3 and as assistant chief of Unified Command Staff for Plans.

The Sinagtala Battalion is a newly-created battalion under the Army’s 7th Infantry “Kanguay” Division, based in Fort Ramon Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, that has been projected to be tasked solely for Community Support Program (CSP) activities in order to sustain peace and security in the province.

The Sinagtala Battalion was activated on December 4, 2017 and underwent a Battalion Organizational Training at the 7ID training facilities, which started on November 27, 2017 and concluded on January 5, 2018.

During the send-off ceremony, Lt. Col. Torrenueva, 91st IB commander, reported the readiness of the troops for deployment and proceeded with the ceremonial activities.

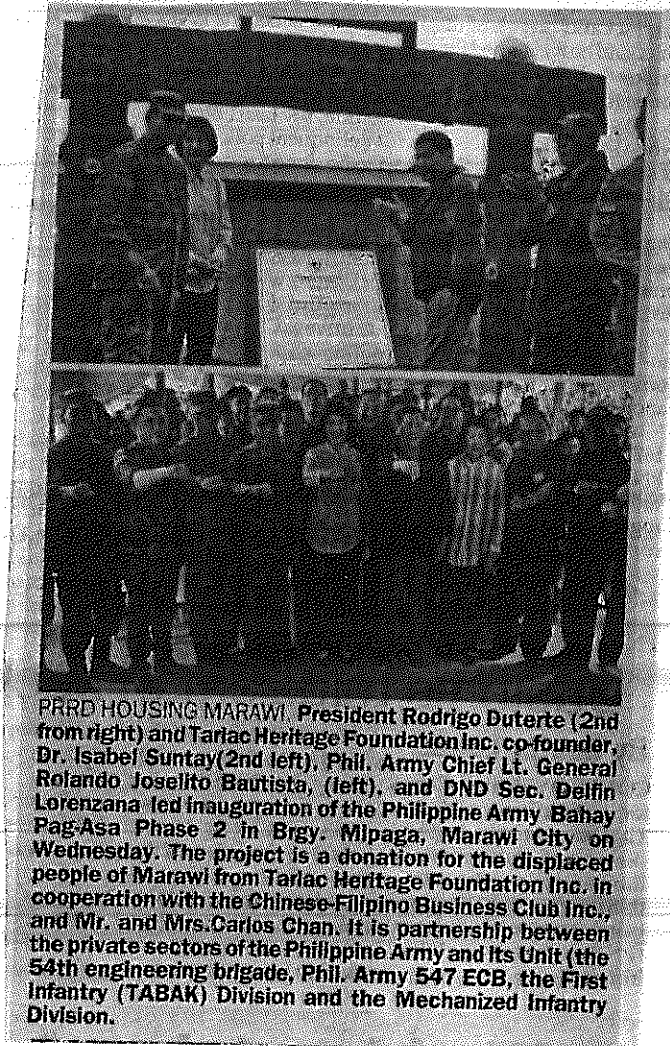
A customary farewell handshake was done by the officer and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) of the 7th ID to the 91st IB troops while Maj. Domingo L. Labrilla, the division chaplain, gave his blessings for the battalion and the vehicles that transported them to their area of deployment, particularly in this province.

Maj. Gen. Felimon T. Santos Jr., commander of the 7ID, encouraged the Sinagtala Battalion not to settle for mediocrity but rather strive to be the best in their field.

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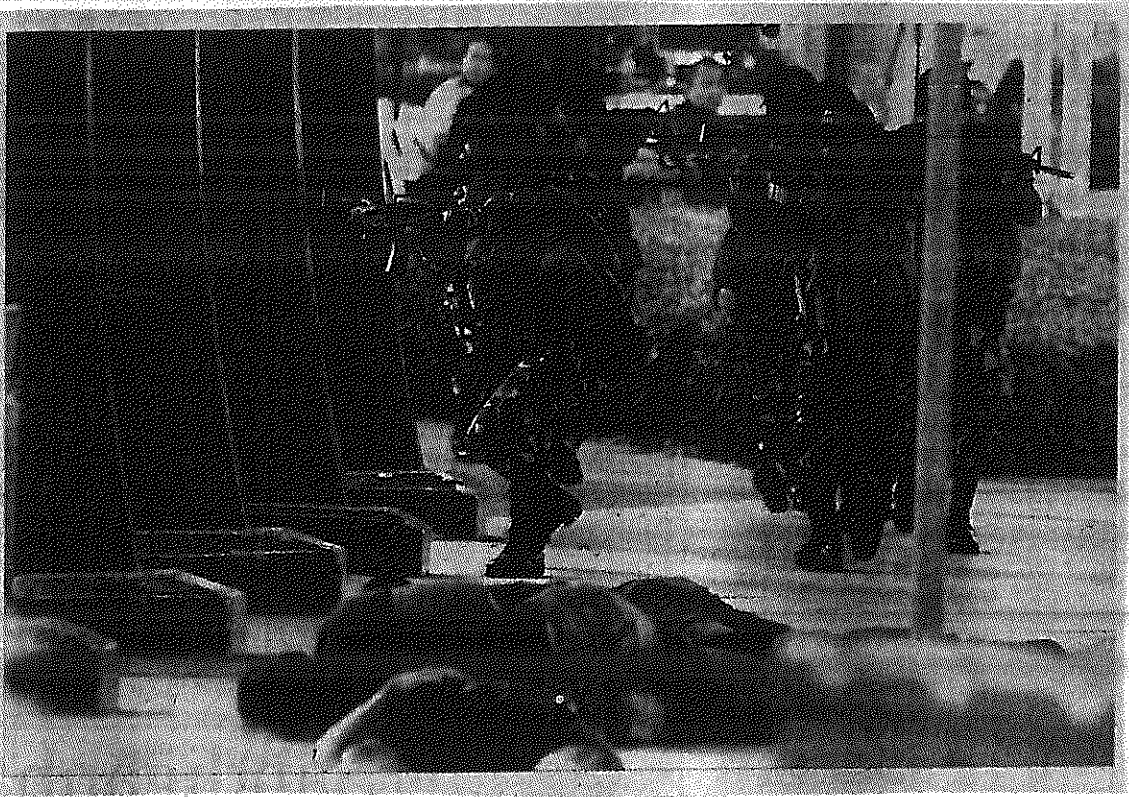
**PRRD HOUSING MARAWI** President Rodrigo Duterte (2nd from right) and Tartac Heritage Foundation Inc. co-founder, Dr. Isabel Suntay (2nd left), Phil. Army Chief Lt. General Rolando Joselito Bautista, (left), and DND Sec. Delfin Lorenzana led inauguration of the Philippine Army Bahay Pag-Asa Phase 2 in Brgy. Milpaga, Marawi City on Wednesday. The project is a donation for the displaced people of Marawi from Tartac Heritage Foundation Inc. in cooperation with the Chinese-Filipino Business Club Inc., and Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Chan. It is partnership between the private sectors of the Philippine Army and its Unit (the 54th engineering brigade, Phil. Army 547 ECB, the First Infantry (TABAK) Division and the Mechanized Infantry Division.

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MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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**SIMULATED EXERCISE - Elements of Task Force Davao launch a counter-assault in a simulated terrorist attack during 'Southern Storm' held at the Abreeza Mall in Davao City yesterday. (Keith Bacongco)**



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## 88 firearms surrendered by Iranuns in Maguindanao

BY HONORABLE LACSON ALIB MAGABALANG

ZAMBOANGA CITY – The Armed Forces of the Philippines-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-WestMinCom) yesterday reported the surrender of 88 high and low powered loose firearms in Maguindanao province.

AFP-WestMinCom Commander Lt Gen Carlito G. Galvez, Jr, yesterday said a total of 88 high and low powered loose firearms were turned over to the military by province's Iranun Inter-Agency Task

Force (IATF) last Tuesday morning during a ceremony held in Barangay Dinganen, Buldon, Maguindanao.

Galvez said the firearms came from the residents of the municipalities of Buldon, Parang, Matanaog and Barira in Maguindanao.

Galvez emphasized that the surrender of the firearms was part of the "Balik Baril" Program of the IATF local government of Buldon, Maguindanao,

the Philippine National Police (PNP) and AFP in support of the government campaign against loose firearms.

The intensified campaign prompted the residents of the four municipalities to voluntarily surrender their firearms, Galvez said.

Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Governor Mujiv Hataman witnessed the turnover of the loose firearms, together with Army Maj Gen. Arnel Dela Vega, who is also Task Force Central head.

Both officials lauded the IATA initiative, even as they urged other communities in the ARMM and Region 12 to follow suit for the "attainment of lasting peace and sustainable growth" in the south.

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• **'No ID, no entry'**

COTABATO CITY – Military authorities have called for intensified security measures here following last week's separate shooting incidents that left two Marine soldiers and one of the suspected gunmen killed. City Mayor Frances Cynthia Gulam-Sayadi has asked Task Force Arawato, which is composed of police, Marine and Army contingents, to "strictly implement the 'no ID, no entry' policy and carefully check all those that are entering the city to make sure that they are not carrying weapons of any kind." City information officer Halima S. Ibram issued on Tuesday a statement about the mayor's request, pointing out that the gunmen involved in the incidents were found to be non-residents of this city. Ibram said the shooting incidents "shocked the people of Cotabato City after enjoying months of zero-crime (rate)." (At G. Macabalang)

• **Abu yields in Sulu**

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Another member of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), chose to return to the fold of the law, and surrendered his firearm amid the intensified conduct of the combat operations by the military in Sulu Armed Forces of the Philippines, Western Mindanao Command (AFP West MindCom) Spokesman Capt Jo Ann Petinglay said. Jupar Ka Usman, 50, and a resident of Barangay Lahing-Lahing, Omar town, yielded to the troops of the Joint Task Force Sulu, at 6 a.m. on Tuesday. Petinglay said Usman was a regular ASG member under the late ASG sub-leader Alhabsy Misaya. He was the 66th Abu Sayyaf to surrender in Sulu since last year. (Nonoy E. Lacson)

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## Mautes classified as ISIS-Phl by US

By PIA LEE-BRAGO

The United States has designated the Islamic State (IS)-linked Maute group as a foreign terrorist organization.

Department of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Ernesto Abella told a press briefing yesterday that the US designated the Maute group as "ISIS-Philippines," belonging to specially designated global terrorists along with ISIS West Africa and ISIS Bangladesh, using the expanded acronym of the terror group.

The Maute group was behind last year's siege of Marawi City which left at least 1,131 people dead, including 919 militants and 165 soldiers and policemen.

The Maute was also held

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## Mautes From Page 1

responsible for the September 2016 Davao market bombing, which killed 15 people and wounded 70 others, and the attempted bomb attack in November 2016 near the US embassy in Manila.

"On the US designation of ISIS affiliates as terrorist organizations, the Philippines welcomes the US designation of ISIS Philippines and the Maute group as foreign terrorist organizations, and specially designated global terrorists," Abella said.

Abella stressed that terrorism is a global and regional challenge, and cooperation with key allies is critical in averting terrorist operations.

While the government concluded a campaign in Marawi against the Maute group, Abella said countering terrorism continues to be a priority of the Duterte administration.

"We are profoundly committed to preventing ISIS from gaining foothold in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia, and we should continue working together on this objective," he said.

The US Department of State designated three IS-affiliated groups - ISIS-West Africa, ISIS-Philippines and ISIS-Bangladesh - as specially designated global terrorists and as foreign terrorist organizations pursuant to Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

As a result of these designations, Americans are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with these groups.

The groups' property and interests in property subject to US jurisdiction are blocked. It is also a crime to knowingly provide, or attempt or conspire to provide, material support or resources to the organizations.

Apart from the Maute group, the US State Department has also designated four other IS-affiliated groups and two IS-affiliated leaders as specially designated global terrorists.

The groups are ISIS-Somalia, Jund al-Khilafah-Tunisia, ISIS-Egypt and individuals Mahad Moalim and Abu Musab al-Barnawi.

In June 2016, IS published a video of militants in the Philippines pledging allegiance to the IS.

Islamic group

In the video, militants encouraged Muslims to join the terrorist group and support IS's efforts in the region under the command of now-deceased specially designated global terrorist Isnilon Hapilon, recognized by IS as the group's leader in the Philippines.

The Department of National Defense (DND) said the inclusion of the Maute group in the foreign terrorist organization list only reinforces government's monitoring and findings on the presence of local and foreign jihadists in the country.

DND spokesman Arsenio Andalung said this development also highlights the need to deal with terrorist groups using the full force of the law.

He added the terror tag will now deny the terrorist groups access to the US financial system and they will face sanctions deemed appropriate, making it more difficult for them to conduct their activities in the Philippines and anywhere in the world.

Brig Gen Bienvenido Datuin Jr., spokesman for the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said the US actions will invariably help Philippine authorities in addressing the presence of IS-inspired local and foreign terrorists in the country.

"The addition of terrorist groups in the US terror lists falls within the right of the US as well as every government in the world to distinguish such groups as may be provided by the law in the particular country," Datuin said.

For the Philippines, the US declaration is an added advantage in the government's fight against terror as this will now deal and identify the money trail, financial sources, logistics lines and conduits of these local and foreign terrorists with other countries, Datuin said.

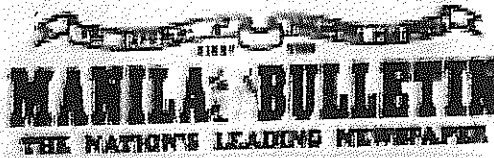
The Philippine National Police (PNP) also welcomed the inclusion of the Maute in the foreign terrorist organization list.

"That is good news for us because we will have more reasons to go after this group," PNP spokesman Chief Supt. John Bulalacao said.

– With Jaime Laude,  
Emmanuel Tupas



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# Palace welcomes Maute, ISIS-PH's inclusion in US list of terrorists

BY ROY D. MABASA  
AND ARGYLL CYRUS B. REDUCOS

The Philippines welcomed the designation on Wednesday by the US State Department of ISIS-Philippines and the

Maute Group as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) and as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO)

The State Department labeled ISIS-Philippines and the Maute Group, along with two other ISIS-affiliated groups –

ISIS-West Africa and ISIS-Bangladesh – as SDGTs pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 13224 and as FTO pursuant to Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

EO 13224 was issued by US ▶4

## Palace welcomes Maute... ◀1

President George W. Bush on September 23, 2001, as a response to the 9/11 attacks and which targets terrorists and those providing support to terrorists or acts of terrorism. It imposes strict sanctions on foreign persons determined to have committed, or pose a significant risk of committing, acts of terrorism that threaten the security of US nationals or the national security, foreign policy or economy of the US.

As a result of these designations, US persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with ISIS-Philippines and the Maute Group. The groups' property and interests in property subject to US jurisdiction are also blocked. In addition, it is a crime to knowingly provide, or attempt or conspire to provide, material support or resources to the said organizations.

The Maute Group is one of seven Islamic State (ISIS)-affiliate groups listed by the State Department as terrorist organizations from the Philippines, Bangladesh, Egypt, Somalia, Tunisia, and West Africa.

### Campaign vs terror

According to Presidential spokesman Harry Roque, the development proves the Philippine government's belief that the Maute Group is being aided by foreign elements.

"The official designation of the Maute Group as an affiliate group of ISIS and its inclusion in the US list of foreign terrorist organizations are positive developments in the campaign against terrorism," Roque said in a statement Wednesday afternoon.

"This reaffirms our long-held belief that the Maute Group is composed of local terrorists aided by foreign extrem-

ists," he added.

The Palace official also said that the official designation recognizes the Philippine government's actions against the Maute Group when they laid a five-month siege in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, from May to October, 2017.

"This likewise recognizes the decisive action we have taken in liberating Marawi from these terrorists, which resulted in the success of the government in thwarting the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the area and the containing of the rebellion from spreading to other parts of the Philippines," Roque said.

"Terrorism, indeed, knows no borders and the inclusion of the Maute Group in the list of Specially Designated Global Terrorists and Foreign Terrorist Organizations as an affiliate group of ISIS shows the solidarity and resolve of the international community to flush out evil forces to make the world safe and secure," he added.

"The Department has also designated four other ISIS-affiliated groups and two ISIS-affiliated leaders as SDGTs under Section 1 (b) of E.O. 13224. The groups are ISIS-Somalia, Jund al-Khilafah-Tunisia, ISIS-Egypt, and the Maute Group, and the individuals are Mahad Moalim and Abu Musab al-Barnawi," the US top diplomatic agency added.

### Sanctions

E.O. 13224 imposes strict sanctions on foreign persons determined to have committed, or pose a significant risk of committing, acts of terrorism that threaten the security of US nationals or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States.

In including ISIS-Philippines and the Maute Group, the State Department noted ISIS's video of militants in the Philippines pledging allegiance to ISIS in June, 2016.

"In the video, militants encouraged other Muslims to join the terrorist group and support ISIS's efforts in the region under the command of now-deceased SDGT Isnilon Hapilon – recognized by ISIS as the leader of ISIS-Philippines," it said.

The State Department also noted the Maute Group's declaration of their allegiance to ISIS in 2014 and for being an integral part of ISIS-Philippines.

"The Maute Group is responsible for the siege of the City of Marawi in the Philippines, which began in May, 2017, the September, 2016 Davao market bombing, which killed 15 people and wounded 70 others, and the attempted bomb attack in November, 2016, near the US embassy in Manila," it added.

The Maute Group, also known as the Islamic State of Lanao, is a radical Islamist group composed of former Moro Islamic Liberation Front guerrillas and foreign fighters led by Abdullah Maute, the alleged founder of a Dawlah Islamiya, or Islamic state based in Lanao del Sur.

In a statement, Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Ernesto Abella said the Philippine government is "profoundly committed to preventing ISIS from gaining foothold in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia."

"Terrorism is a global and regional challenge, and cooperation with key allies is critical in averting terrorist operations," said Abella. "While we have concluded a successful campaign in Marawi against the Maute group, countering terrorism continues to be a priority of this administration."

March 2018



Pahina. 5

### AFP umaray sa Senate probe

HIWALAY ang usapin sa politika at ang propesyon.

Ito ang pinanimidigan kahapon ng pamunuan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) bilang reaksyon sa patuloy na paggisa sa ilan nilang kabaro sa pagding ng Senado kaugnay sa kontrobersyal na frigate project.

Ayon kay AFP Spokesperson Brig. Gen. Bienvenido Datuin, mananatili ang kanilang respeto sa democratic process.

kahit na nababalandra ang pangalan ng kanilang ahensya sa mga usapin.

Iginimit ni Datuin na anuman ang maging resulta ng isinasagawang imbestigasyon ay hindi ito makaaapekto sa kanilang performance bilang sundalo.

"We respect the democratic process and whatever happens is a result of a very good investigation, justified investigation, well-handled investigation so we are still working towards our mandate working on our daily task and duties, separate political issues from our work," wika ni Datuin. **(Betchai Julian)**

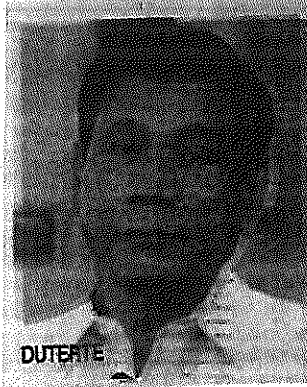
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## Joint exploration better than fighting, says Duterte

By Ted Tavera



DUTERTE

President Duterte is amenable to a joint exploration between the Philippines and China in the disputed areas of South China Sea, which is, he said, "better than the two of us fighting."

Mr. Duterte in a speech in Marawi City yesterday narrated anew the offer of Chinese President Xi Jinping to have a joint oil exploration in the contested waters.

Mr. Duterte said he initially informed Xi that he wanted to "dig oil" near the Spratlys Island.

The Chinese leader, Mr. Duterte narrated further, warned him it would result in a "forceful apprehension" if he insists on taking such a path.

"I will not go into a battle which cannot win and the consequence would be a massacre of my soldiers," Mr. Duterte said.

"Now, China has offered a joint exploration that's similar to co-ownership. Its as if the two of us own

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# Joint exploration better than fighting, says Du30

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it," he added.

Mr. Duterte also explained why he had maintained restraint in dealing with China.

"I told them that I'm fine with doing a joint exploration. See, if I went on twisting them as a son of a bitch, nothing would have happened," Mr. Duterte said.

Mr. Duterte had stated that he will set aside the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling in favor of Manila in the arbitration case on the dispute in 2016.

During the first Cabinet after swearing in as President on June 30, 2016, days before the United Nations (UN)-sanctioned court released its decision, Mr. Duterte said his administration will take a "soft stance" on China.

Beijing had rejected the PCA ruling saying that it does not recognize the proceedings.

After meeting with Xi over bilateral talks in Beijing last 2016, Mr. Duterte proudly said that Filipino fishermen traditionally fishing could go back near the shoals without being harassed by the Chinese coast guard.

Recent reports have shown that China is almost done transforming seven reefs in the Kalayaan Group of Islands, namely, the Kagitingan, Calderon, Burgos, Mabini, Panganiban, Zamora, and McKennan reefs.

Aside from the several reefs in Spratlys region, China has completely taken over and deployed its military ships in Scarborough Shoal, which is 124-nautical miles away off the shoreline of the province of Zambales.

The Spratly region contributes 20 percent of the total fish production in the country, while approximately 5,021 metric tons of fish products are being caught every year in Scarborough Shoal.

## Gov't to contest Sino move

The government plans to contest the move of China to name features in the Philippine Rise (formerly Benham Rise) region, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Undersecretary

Ernesto Abella said yesterday.

In a press conference, the official bared the government raised the issue of unauthorized research conducted by the Institute of Oceanology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences during the second meeting of the bilateral consultation mechanism (BCM) between China and the Philippines in Manila last February 18.

"Both sides agreed that all marine science research henceforth must have the consent of the Philippines," he said.

Asked if the country will register its objection before the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), the international body that approved the names, Abella said they would have "to proceed from henceforth."

During the BCM, Abella said China was "quite willing" to proceed upon agreed terms when the issue was raised but if they are willing to withdraw the names that they registered, he deferred to answer.

Dr. Jay Batongbacal, maritime law expert, meanwhile is apprehensive on IHO recalling its decision to approve the names. "I am not confident that they will, but it's worth a shot," he said in a text message.

At a Senate probe on the naming of Philippine Rise features, it was revealed that China has illegally entered in 2004 that led to the naming of five features.

Asked if the country would file a diplomatic protest against China, Abella said a mechanism for bilateral dialogue is already in place to discuss such subject with China.

"That's where next steps are going to be developed but basically, an agreement has been made that no further researches must be done without the permission of the Philippines side," he said.

The reported "discovery" was made during a 2004 survey by the Li Shiguang Hao of the China Navy Hydrographic Office, which submitted the proposed names for three features before the IHO in 2014.

The remaining two, "discovered" during the same survey, were

proposed in 2016 by the China Ocean Minerals R&D Association.

## Esperon wants to be friend to all

The Duterte government is adopting an independent foreign policy and a diplomatic stance on national security issues amid current global policy settings, where the Philippines is "a friend to everyone and an enemy to no one".

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. pointed this out, as he outlined the security challenges the country is facing in a keynote speech at the Third Katipunan Conference held at the University of the Philippine Law Center on Tuesday.

Esperon said the administration was taking on creative and innovative approaches to addressing long-standing and emerging security issues and concerns, particularly, the West Philippine Sea, the Philippine Rise, cyber-security, climate change, and the peace and order situation in Mindanao.

Esperon said amid accelerating strategic competition and shifting power dynamics among great powers, such as China, Russia, Japan, Australia, the United States, and India, the government had adopted an independent foreign policy, where the Philippines was friendly to all countries.

He said the conduct of marine scientific research in the Philippine Rise should be a "whole of the world" initiative since it would benefit the global population.

But he stressed the research should also be within the framework of an independent foreign policy.

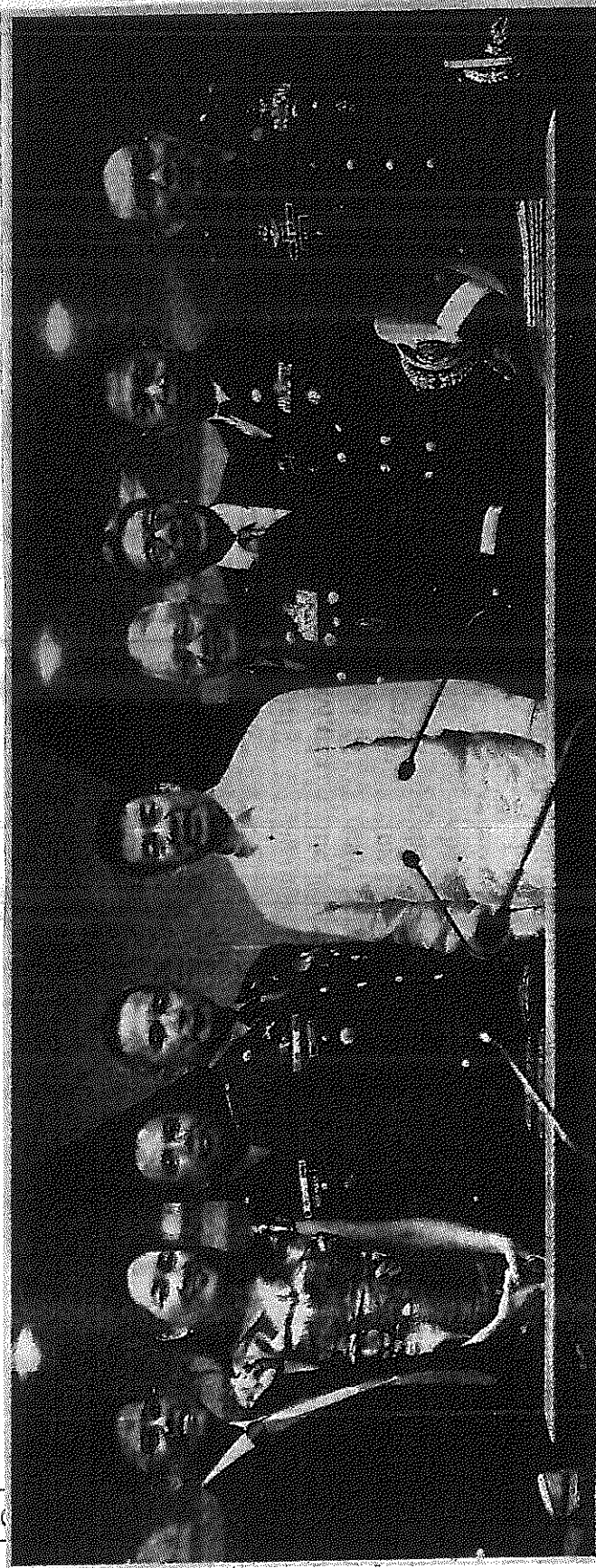
On Tuesday, the University of the Philippines' Maritime Science Institute admitted to the Senate they left Chinese researchers to explore the Philippine Rise despite their permit requiring them to conduct the study in the presence of Filipino contingents.

The Philippine Rise or Benham Rise is a protected food supply exclusive zone located east of Dinapigue town in Isabela province in the Philippines' Luzon island.

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**NEW RANKS.** Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III (center), poses with the five new-ranked General/Flag and Senior officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including Alden Juan Masagca to the rank of Brigadier General, Reynaldo M. Aquino to the rank of Brigadier General, Perfecto M. Miranda, Jr. to the rank of Major General, Ramolito A. Guimorra to the rank of Commodore, and Jose B. Mier to the rank of Brigadier General. Also in photo are (from left): Rep. Roy Loyola, Senator Risa Hontiveros and Rep. Rodolfo Albano during their confirmation by the Commission on Appointments in the Senate. Lino Santos

01 March 2018

The Manila Times

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## To defend our seas, get missiles, not ships

**BY RICARDO SALUDO**  
Columnist

**W**HEN asked in the Senate last week what the Philippine Navy needed to watch over our maritime territories

and resources, PN Flag Officer-in-Charge Rear Admiral Robert Empedrad said four more frigates like the two ordered from Hyundai Heavy Industries, costing P15.7 billion.

► SaludoA5

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## ■ SALUDO FROM A1

# To defend our seas, get missiles, not ships



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So, for another P60 billion or so, the Navy can watch over our vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ), 200 nautical miles or about 370 km from our territorial baseline, and our extended continental shelf (ECS), 320 nm out at sea, including the Philippine Rise. That's based on the PN modernization program till 2028.

That's six ships to patrol waters with a combined EEZ and ECS area of 531,000 square km, far exceeding the 300,000 sq km of the entire Philippines itself. No way six frigates are enough to watch over our seas, let alone engage the larger and more heavily armed ships of rival claimants, backed by submarines, warplanes and missiles.

In fact, when a leading Washington defense think-tank, the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment, analyzed our security needs after we lost control of Panatag Shoal in 2012, CSBA urged the United States and our other allies to help us acquire not frigates, but maritime surveillance planes to watch our waters, anti-ship missiles to deter and destroy intruders, and anti-aircraft systems to protect the missiles.

## We need A2/AD

CSBA's report "The Geostrategic Return of the Philippines" called these military assets "anti-access/area denial," or A2/AD systems, the kind that prevent threats from entering vast expanses, like our EEZ and ECS.

The think-tank's thinking isn't hard even for a military newbie to figure out. In just hours, planes cover much larger areas than a ship can in a day, and their radar and other surveillance gear see far beyond the horizon limit of most vessels at sea level.

Anti-ship projectiles can take out

anything on the ocean even several hundreds of kilometers away. That's more than enough to cover the entire EEZ and ECS, and at the cost of one frigate, as 50-200 mobile truck-mounted missiles can be deployed, blanketing nearby seas and far more difficult to find in land camouflage than a vessel sticking out in the open ocean.

And while warplanes with cruise missiles can sink ships while out of range of their defenses, enemy aircraft would have difficulty even finding rocket batteries concealed in vegetation. Plus anti-aircraft systems can hit the jets even before they get close enough to line up targets.

The best part about CSBA's A2/AD recommendations is that they would provide far greater deterrence and surveillance capability for far less than the P75 billion or so needed for six frigates.

This is the real naval defense issue that senators should have looked into, not the fake news claiming Palace meddling in the frigates contract.

(The other issue is the frigates contract provision allowing shipbuilder Hyundai Heavy Industries to select the weapons supplier, and penalizing the Navy if it chose another. Aquino-era Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin must explain why he urged his successor to sign the HHI deal despite this PN-opposed condition.)

## More bang for the buck

So, what can the Philippine Navy

get for, say, P35 billion or about \$700 million, less than half the cost of six frigates? Going by the CSBA list of A2/AD assets, first to buy should be marine patrol aircraft. Luckily, Japan has kindly decided to donate eight T-90 Beechcraft-design MPAs

The Navy should add surveillance-capable versions of planes like the C-295 ordered by the Philippine Air Force in 2014 from a joint venture of Europe's Airbus and CASA of Spain (also made by Indonesia's aircraft firm IPTN under license from CASA). Cost: about \$60 million.

Less costly planes to consider are CASA's smaller C-212 (\$20 million) and Germany's Dornier 228 (\$12 million). Cost of one C-295, two C-212s, and two Dorniers: about \$150 million, including ancillary facilities.

Next: anti-ship missiles (ASMs). Former National Security Adviser and congressman Roilo Golez, a US Naval Academy graduate, has long urged buying 200 BrahMos supersonic ASMs, made in India from a Russian design. Its range of 300-400 km would cover the entire EEZ. Cost: over \$3 million each. Last year India agreed to sell the BrahMos to Vietnam.

In 2013, the Philippine Army was reportedly planning to buy long-range missiles, which could also target ships. It budgeted \$144 million for 12 launchers. With Japanese aid, we may consider buying the 200-km range Type 88 or Type 12 ASMs made by Mitsubishi.

For \$350 million, the Navy can get 50 BrahMos (\$150 million total) and maybe 200 Type 88s or 12s at a friendly price. All are truck-mounted, to be moved anywhere there are threats. And since adversaries don't know which ASMs are placed where, deterrence

covers the entire EEZ.

That leaves \$200 million for air defense and small, fast missile craft like Indonesia's KCR 60 fast missile boats. The patrol boats can confront intruders at sea, but with shore-based missiles providing formidable firepower against even large warships.

Now, which can monitor our vast seas more effectively, and pose greater risk to intruders: six frigates with maybe 20 or so anti-ship missiles each of 150-200 km range, costing \$1.5 billion total, or five marine patrol aircraft (plus 8 MPAs donated by Japan), 250 long- and medium-range mobile and camouflaged ASMs with air defense and fleets of KCR 40s and 60s — at half the price?

## Why the Navy likes ships

Don't answer the question. It would take far more information than we just analyzed to make the right judgment. But what we need to remove right now are a couple of blinders blocking clear military thinking.

First, the Navy should avoid being wedded to ships because it thinks MPAs and ASMs are for the Air Force and the Army. There is no reason why marine patrol aircraft and anti-ship missiles securing our seas should not be part of PN assets, along with frigates. Don't let a turf war among PN, PAF and PA get in the way of the real war to protect EEZ and ECS.

And the other policy block is America. Ever wondered why Uncle Sam didn't listen to its own CSBA think-tank and help us get A2/AD gear? Just a wild guess, but maybe, just maybe, if we have rockets, planes and boats to watch our waters on our own, we might not let the Seventh Fleet use our bases.

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## ONLINE NEWS

01 MARCH 2018

# PH friend to everyone, enemy to no one: Esperon

By Juzel Danganan February 28, 2018, 6:13 pm



President Rodrigo R. Duterte (L) with National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. (R) (File Photo)

**MANILA** -- The Duterte government is adopting an independent foreign policy and a diplomatic stance on national security issues amid current global policy settings, where the Philippines is "a friend to everyone and an enemy to no one".

National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. pointed this out, as he outlined the security challenges the country is facing in a keynote speech at the Third Katipunan Conference held at the University of the Philippine Law Center on Tuesday.

Esperon said the administration was taking on creative and innovative approaches to addressing long-standing and emerging security issues and concerns, particularly, the West Philippine Sea, the Philippine Rise, cyber-security, climate change, and the peace and order situation in Mindanao.

Esperon said amid accelerating strategic competition and shifting power dynamics among great powers, such as China, Russia, Japan, Australia, the United States, and India, the government had adopted an independent foreign policy, where the Philippines was friendly to all countries.

He said the conduct of marine scientific research in the Philippine Rise should be a "whole of the world" initiative since it would benefit the global population.

But he stressed the research should also be within the framework of an independent foreign policy.

On Tuesday, the University of the Philippines' Maritime Science Institute admitted to the Senate they left Chinese researchers to explore the Philippine Rise despite their permit requiring them to conduct the study in the presence of Filipino contingents.

The Philippine Rise or Benham Rise is a protected food supply exclusive zone located east of Dinapigue town in Isabela province in the Philippines' Luzon island.

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

The national security adviser said the Philippines would go on with its diplomatic engagements with China, especially in the joint development and management of natural resources in the West Philippine Sea.

Again, he stressed, this would all be without compromising national interest.

Esperon said the diplomatic engagements would cover marine protected areas, marine peace parks, regional fishery management organization or multilateral fishery arrangements, and aquaculture.

As for the peace and order situation in Mindanao, Esperon advocated for the passage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law to establish a more representative and responsive autonomous government, continuation of development initiatives that would curb poverty and minimize the threat of violent extremism and radicalization in the country.

He added the country has invested in research and development on the impacts of climate change, as the phenomenon could contribute to the factors of group conflict and social instability.

He further pointed out that the country needs to enhance its cyber-security systems to protect processes and data against cyber attacks, which could do harm to a person or a nation's infrastructure. (PNA)

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

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# AFP welcomes US tag of ISIS in PH, Maute Group as SDGTs

By Priam Nepomuceno February 28, 2018, 2:01 pm

**MANILA** -- The United States decision to designate ISIS Philippines and the Maute Group as "Specially Designated Global Terrorists" (SDGTs) will greatly assist the Philippines in its ongoing anti-terrorism campaign.

This was emphasized by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson Brig. Gen. Bienvenido Datuin in a message Wednesday.

"Such declaration from foreign countries will of course invariably help us in many ways in our fight against local terrorists and their foreign cohorts. Specific advantage on such declaration/list is the checking of money trail, financial sources, logistics lines and conduits of terror groups in foreign countries that may have connections with local violent extremists," he added.

Earlier, the US State Department has designated the ISIS Philippines, ISIS West Africa and ISIS Bangladesh as "SDGTs" under Section 1 (b) of Executive Order 13224 as "Foreign Terrorist Organizations" pursuant to Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Also tagged as "SDGTs" are ISIS-Somalia, Jund al-Khilafah-Tunisia, ISIS-Egypt, and the Maute Group.

With this development, American nationals or citizens are prohibited from transacting with the above-mentioned groups while their properties or holdings in the US are blocked.

Also, Datuin said that such declaration falls within the right of the US as well as every government in the world to distinguish such groups as may be provided by the law in a particular country. His views were shared by Department of National Defense (DND) spokesperson Arsenio Andolong.

"The inclusion of the Maute Group and ISIS Philippines in the US list of foreign terrorist organizations is an affirmation of what Philippine authorities already know - that the Maute Group and the Dawlah-Islamiya are terrorist groups that need to be dealt with decisively using the full force of the law," he added.

With this development, these terror organizations will be denied access to the US financial system and will face sanctions as may be deemed appropriate, making it more difficult for them to conduct their activities in the Philippines and abroad, Andolong stressed. **(PNA)**

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

# No grievances in military ranks: AFP spokesperson

By Priam Nepomuceno February 28, 2018, 11:11 am

**MANILA** -- There are no grievances wracking the ranks of the military, newly installed Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Spokesperson Brigadier General Bienvenido Datuin Jr. said Tuesday.

"We (always) go by (our) mandate always and we have a grievance system. Right now (our) soldiers are very professional," Datuin said.

The grievance committee of the AFP is operational should anyone from their ranks feel a need to air their sentiments on any issue, he added.

The AFP spokesperson made the statement to clarify reports claiming that military personnel are against charter change, as well as issues plaguing the PHP18 billion frigate acquisition project.

"*Wala (naman)*, we are all for modernization, capability upgrade and the improvement of the Armed Forces," he added.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana is standing by Hyundai Heavy Industries' decision to use the Hanwha CMS for two ships while former Philippine Navy flag-officer-in-command Vice Admiral Ronald Joseph Mercado is batting for the Thales Tacticos system.

The impasse, which caused the relief of Mercado last December, prompted the Senate to conduct a hearing on the issue last Feb. 19. **(PNA)**

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

## NPA rebels burn tractor

**From the Visayan Daily Star (Feb 28): NPA rebels burn tractor**

The New People's Army again went on a rampage and burned farm equipment Monday in La Castellana, Negros Occidental, after claiming responsibility earlier for the burning of a cargo truck in Canlaon City, Negros Oriental.

The four armed suspects, who introduced themselves as NPA members, torched the farm tractor owned Jorge Vargas in Hacienda Conchita, Brgy. Sag-ang, La Castellana.

Investigation of the La Castellana police showed that the farm tractor driven by Manuel Jamandre Jr. was flagged down by the four suspects, who were armed with .45 caliber and KG9mm automatic pistols.

Jamandre was ordered to get down from the tractor, and open the fuel tank, a police report said.

The suspects poured gasoline on the driver's seat and set it on fire. Not contented with that, they also lobbed a grenade at the tractor, the report added.

**Chief Inspector Irma Teoxon, La Castellana police chief, yesterday said that the NPA suspects spared Jamandre from harm.**

Investigation of the La Castellana police further showed that failure of the farm tractor owner to pay revolutionary taxes had triggered the burning incident.

**The La Castellana police placed the estimated damage at P20,000.**

The NPA Leonardo Panaligan Command also claimed responsibility for the burning last week of a cargo truck owned by Lito Alvillar in Brgy. Budlasan, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental.

The burning of the cargo truck was also triggered by the refusal of Alvillar to pay revolutionary taxes, Lt. Col. Darrel Bañez, 62nd Infantry Battalion commander, said.

The rebels had also claimed several killings earlier in Moises Padilla and its neighboring towns and cities in central Negros.

[www.visayandailystar.com](http://www.visayandailystar.com)