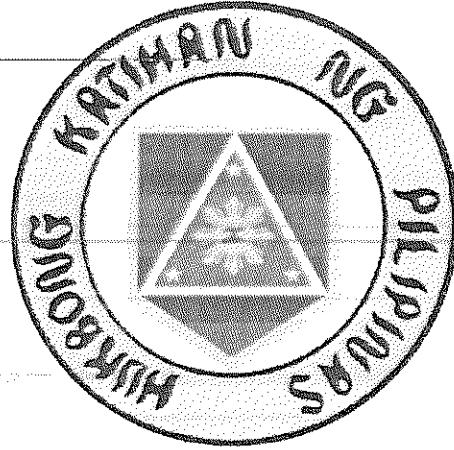


Army Vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride



TEAM ARMY

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NEWS CLIPPINGS

17 March 2018

Saturday

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

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PILIPINAS NOW
MONDAY - FRIDAY
11 AM & 5 PM
WEEKDAYS
8 AM, 11:30 PM & 2-9 PM
WEEKENDS
8 AM

AR21
REPORT THE PHILIPPINE NOW

Panahon.TV

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST - MARCH 17, 2018 | SATURDAY

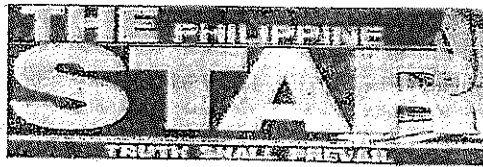
EASTERLIES AFFECTING THE COUNTRY
as of 9:00 am - March 16, 2018

LAOAG CITY 21 - 30 °C
TUGUEGARAO CITY 21 - 32 °C
BAGUIO CITY 14 - 23 °C
SBMA/CLARK 22 - 32 °C
METRO MANILA 23 - 32 °C
TAGAYTAY CITY 18 - 29 °C
LEGAZPI CITY 25 - 31 °C
ILOILO/BACOLOD CITY 25 - 31 °C
TACLOBAN CITY 23 - 31 °C
PUERTO PRINCESA 25 - 32 °C
METRO CEBU 25 - 31 °C
CAGAYAN DE ORO 23 - 32 °C
ZAMBOANGA CITY 25 - 34 °C
METRO DAVAO 25 - 33 °C

EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	MAR 18			MAR 19			MAR 20			EXTENDED WEATHER FORECAST	MAR 18			MAR 19			MAR 20		
	SUN	SUN	MON	MON	TUE	TUE	SUN	SUN	MON		SUN	SUN	MON	MON	TUE	TUE			
METRO MANILA	23 °C 32 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C				
TUGUEGARAO	22 °C 32 °C	22 °C 33 °C	22 °C 33 °C	22 °C 32 °C	22 °C 33 °C	22 °C 33 °C	26 °C 32 °C	26 °C 32 °C	26 °C 33 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	26 °C 32 °C	26 °C 32 °C	26 °C 33 °C	26 °C 33 °C	26 °C 33 °C				
LAOAG	22 °C 31 °C	22 °C 32 °C	22 °C 32 °C	22 °C 32 °C	22 °C 32 °C	22 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 32 °C	METRO CEBU	25 °C 31 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C				
BAGUIO	15 °C 24 °C	15 °C 24 °C	15 °C 25 °C	15 °C 24 °C	15 °C 25 °C	15 °C 25 °C	23 °C 32 °C	23 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	TACLOBAN	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C				
SBMA/CLARK	23 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C	25 °C 32 °C	23 °C 32 °C	23 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	23 °C 32 °C	23 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C	24 °C 31 °C				
TAGAYTAY	19 °C 29 °C	19 °C 30 °C	19 °C 30 °C	19 °C 29 °C	19 °C 30 °C	19 °C 30 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	METRO DAVAO	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C				
LEGAZPI	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C	ZAMBOANGA	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C				

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

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Napoles admitted to witness program

By EVELYN MACAIRAN

Accused pork barrel scam mastermind Janet Lim-Napoles has moved a step closer to turning state witness, with Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II confirming yesterday that she is now under the provisional witness protection program (WPP).

"We confirm that Janet L. Napoles has been placed under provisional admission of WPP subject to affidavit she submitted which is now undergoing assessment," Aguirre said in a statement.

While her admission to the program is provisional, Aguirre explained that upon

Napoles' request, "we can provide additional security and as warranted, address medical needs."

Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Ma Nerissa Molina-Carpio, director of the WPP under the Department of Justice (DOJ), issued a certification that Napoles

"has been provisionally covered by the Witness Protection Security and Benefit Program (WPSBP) effective Feb. 27, 2018."

The admission of Napoles to the WPP would have no effect on her pending cases before the Sandiganbayan, Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales said yesterday in a statement when asked for comment.

"It has no effect on the cases under trial in court," said Morales, the former Supreme Court associate justice who filed 12 cases of plunder, graft and malversation

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Napoles From Page 1

of public funds against Napoles.

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Amparo Cabotaje-Tang refused to comment on the motion filed yesterday by Napoles' counsel, seeking her transfer from Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig to the WPP, which could allow Napoles to be placed under house arrest.

"The motion is scheduled for hearing on Monday. The matter is thus sub judice. For this reason, I cannot make any comment thereon," Tang explained.

Napoles is facing three plunder charges as a co-accused in the cases of former senators

Juan Ponce Enrile, Ramon Revilla Jr and Jinggoy Estrada.

Records showed that the Office of the Ombudsman also filed nine other pork barrel fund scam cases against Napoles at the Sandiganbayan as a co-accused in the criminal cases of nine former lawmakers.

Napoles appeal

Claiming that she is already under threat, intimidation and harassment, Napoles had asked the Sandiganbayan to transfer her custody from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) to the WPP.

In a three-page urgent mo-

tion filed yesterday, she submitted a certification issued by the DOJ Witness Protection Security and Benefit Program signed by Molina-Carpio as the program director stating that she was indeed admitted to the WPP on Feb. 27, 2018 pursuant to Republic Act 6891 of the Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Act.

"To enable the DOJ to perform its duty to secure herein accused-movant, it is imperative that the custody over her person be transferred from the BJMP, Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan where she is presently being held, to the DOJ-WPP," Napoles, through her lawyer Stephen David, said.

Her motion noted that based on the provisions of the law and its implementing rules

and regulations (IRR), a covered witness shall be secured until she has testified.

"In addition, she is also entitled to have a secure housing facility until the threat, intimidation or harassment disappears or is reduced," Napoles stressed.

She claimed that "there are already manifestations of threat, intimidation and harassment, making her security a concern in view of the fact that her present place of confinement is publicly known."

She further claimed that there were recorded incidents of harassment, intimidation and threats on her life and security which could be avoided if the DOJ-WPP would be allowed to perform its mandate to protect her.

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Napoles, tagged as the brains behind the misuse of billions of pesos in pork barrel funds or the Priority Development Assistance Fund of lawmakers based on a Commission on Audit (COA) investigation covering 2007 to 2010, is facing a string of plunder and graft charges before the Sandiganbayan.

She is a principal accused in the criminal cases lodged by the Office of the Ombudsman against former senators Enrile, Revilla and Estrada.

All three cases are now on trial with witnesses being presented by government lawyers to prove their allegations that the lawmakers received kickback or commissions in exchange for funding host projects implemented by bogus

non-government organizations (NGOs) controlled by Napoles.

Enrile and Estrada have been released on bail while Revilla remains detained at the Philippine National Police (PNP) custodial center in Camp Crame, Quezon City.

Revilla is seeking the dismissal of his plunder and graft cases through a demurer to evidence, a move that seeks to have the charges junked halfway through the trial on grounds that the prosecution failed to prove its case.

Napoles is also facing a handful of other plunder, graft and malversation of public funds cases also for alleged involvement in the misuse of pork barrel funds by various former congressmen. – **With Michael Punongbayan**

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SYSTEM AND STRATEGY YARDSTICK

PH ARMY WINS PALLADIUM AWARD

The Philippine Army has been given the Palladium Balanced Scorecard Hall of Fame Award in London for successfully implementing its Transformation Roadmap strategy according to the standards set by the Kaplan and Norton Strategy Management System.

The management system's co-developer, Dr. Robert S. Kaplan, is a Harvard Business School professor.

The Army, in a statement, said it passed the on-site evaluation process last Jan. 22-24

conducted by David McMillan, director of the Office of Strategy Management of the Palladium Group.

Lt Gen. Rolando Bautista, Philippine Army chief, said in a speech accepting the award in London that the armed service "strived hard" to implement the Kaplan and Norton system to clinch the award.

Bautista said the implementation of the system was "in keeping with our vision of becoming a world class army by 2028." INQ

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Standard

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ARMY AWARD.

The Philippine Army received the Palladium Balanced Scorecard Hall of Fame Award for executing strategy in London, United Kingdom on March 14, 2018. Lt. Gen. Rolando Joselito D. Bautista, (left) the Commanding General of the Philippine Army, was accompanied by the Chief of the Army Governance and Strategy Management Office, Col. Joel M. Paloma, (right) as the Philippine Army was awarded at the Reimagine Strategy: Palladium Positive Impact Summit 2018 in London. The coveted award was bestowed by the co-creator of the Balanced Scorecard, and Harvard Business School Professor Emeritus, Dr. Robert S. Kaplan.

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NPA leader yields

CAMP BANCAST, Butuan City – A platoon commander of the New People's Army (NPA) voluntarily surrendered to the 36th Infantry Battalion (36th IB) over the weekend, bringing with him nine anti-personnel and anti-tank improvised explosive devices (IEDs). According to Capt. Francisco B. Garelo, Jr., Civil Military Operation (CMO) officer of the 36th IB, the NPA leader, whose identity he purposely withheld for security reasons, was the squad commander of Platoon 1 of Sub-Regional Base Order Grabidad (SRBOG) 2130 (Westland) of the CP NPA Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee (NEMRC). Garelo said the surrenderer disclosed he yielded due to the hardship he experienced in the mountains. (Mike U. Crismundo)

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3 NPA-Milisya ng Bayan members yield to Army

MIKE D. CRISOSTOMO

TRENTO, Agusan del Sur - Three New People's Army (NPA)-Milisya ng Bayan (MB) members operating in the border of Agusan del Sur and Compostela Valley (ComVal) provinces surrendered to the Army's 25th Infantry (25th IB) Battalion, said Capt. Alan B. Aparo, Civil Military Operation (CMO) officer, on Friday.

Trento town Mayor William E. Calvez of Agusan del Sur province and 25th IB Commander Lt. Col. Oscar B. Balignasay Jr. welcome back to the fold of society the former NPA-MB members at the headquarters of the 25th IB, in Camp Kalaw, Poblacion, Monkayo, ComVal province last Tuesday.

The identities of the surrenderers were withheld for security reasons, but all of them were residents of Purok 2, Barangay Pangyan, Trento town, Agusan del Sur, Aparo told The Manila Bulletin on Friday.

"They have voluntarily submit-

ted themselves to this unit due to the realization that the government is sincere in defeating insurgency in the country," the CMO officer of the 25th IB said.

"The trio also cited the disorganization of their structure in the area due to mass surrender as answer to the call of the President Duterte," he said.

Meanwhile, a set of skeletons, believed to belong to an NPA terrorist, was found by troops of the 75th Infantry Battalion (75th IB) in Road 1K, Barangay Bunawan Brook, Bunawan town, Agusan del Sur province, according to First Lt. Tere Ingente, chief of Public Affairs Office (PAO) of the Army's North-eastern and Northern Mindanao 4th Infantry (Diamond) Division (4th ID), on Thursday afternoon.

The 4th ID PAO chief also added an AK 47 rifle with five magazines loaded with live ammunitions were found beside the bones of the NPA when there remains were discovered by the 75th IB troops at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

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3 NPA, sumuko sa Agusan del Sur

TRENTO, Agusan del Sur-Tatlo pang kaanib ng New People's Army (NPA)-Milisya ng Bayan (MB) ang sumuko sa militar nitong Martes ng hapon.

Sinabi nina Trento, Agusan del Sur Mayor William Calvez at 25th "Fireball" Commander Lt. Col. Oscar Balignasay, Jr. na hindi muna nila ibinubunyag ang pagkakakilanlan ng tatlo para na rin sa kanilang seguridad.

Anila, ang mga rebelde ay pawang residente ng Purok 2, Barangay Pangyan, Trento, Agusan.

"They voluntarily submit themselves


to this unit due to the realization that the government is sincere in defeating insurgency in the country," ani Calvez.

Bingyang-din ng NPA na ipinasyang magbalik-loob sa pamahalaan ng tatlo nang mapag-ispang mahirap ang kanilang buhay sa kabundukan at balewala lamang ang kanilang ipinaglalan.

"The trio also cited the disorganization of their structure in the area due to mass surrender as answer to the call of the President Duterte," sabi pa ng Calvez.

Mike U. Crismundo

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Top NPA leader in Bicol killed; 11 guns seized in Masbate clash

By RUEL BALDINO
and DANNY ESTACIO

PILI, Camarines Sur/CAMP NAKAR, Quezon — A high-ranking leader of the New People's Army (NPA) in Bicol was killed the other night in Naga City, Camarines Sur, hours after an encounter broke out between soldiers and rebels in Ticao, Masbate in the same region.

Col. Ferozaldo Paul T. Regencia, spokesman of 9th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army, identified the said NPA leader as Joey Fajardo, with aliases "Ka Owen" and "Budoy," secretary of the Bicol Regional Party Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)-NPA-National Democratic Front (NDF).

Police and army troopers were supposed to serve an arrest warrant for Fajardo issued by Judge Bernhard Beltran of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 24 for the crimes of murder frustrated murder and damage to properties in 2013, but the NPA leader resisted arrest.

Regencia said Fajardo, who was with a lady companion, fired at the lawmen supposed to arrest him at 9:25 p.m. Thursday inside Camella Heights Subdivision, Barangay Cararayan, Naga City.

Troopers had no other recourse but to return fire, killing Fajardo and his still unidentified companion.

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Collected by the arresting team in his possession were one 45-caliber pistol, a 30-cal. Carbine rifle, a hand grenade, a rifle grenade, and bullets.

The incident happened 15 hours after the soldiers from the Southern Luzon Command (SOLCOM) figured in a 20-minute gun battle with around 15 NPA rebels in Barangay Talisay, San Fernando Island in the municipality of

Ticao, Masbate

Lieutenant General Danilo Pamonag, SOLCOM chief, cited the report from the 9th Infantry Division (9ID) that troopers from the army's 2nd Infantry Battalion (2IB) encountered the rebels at 6:20 a.m.

There were no casualties on the government side, but residents reported sighting several of the fleeing rebels

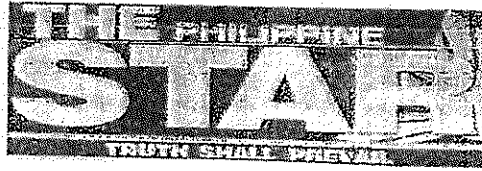
wounded, the SOLCOM reported.

Clearing operations that followed resulted in the seizure of 11 high-powered firearms – nine M-16 rifles, one M653 Carbine, and a .30-caliber Carbine rifle. Troopers also collected five rifle grenade, M203 grenades, three cell phones, nine backpacks, two improvised explosive devices (IEDs), a laptop and several banca and motorboats.

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Rappler banned from PMA graduation rites?

By JAIME LAUDE

Online news site Rappler could be barred from covering the graduation rites tomorrow at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) where President Duterte is the guest of honor and speaker.

Sources revealed there was instruction from Malacañang's Media Accreditation and Relations Office (MARO) asking the military to forward all media accreditation requests to them.

"There was no specific order to ban Rappler but from the looks, it is more likely because MARO told the military to forward all media accreditation requests to cover the event to their office," a military official said.

The PMA leadership, on the other hand, is silent on the issue of media accreditation.

Duterte is skipping the Southeast Asia regional summit in Australia to attend the PMA graduation rites.

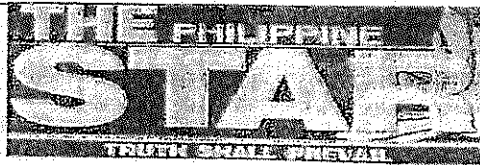
Duterte is slated to hand over the presidential sash to Cadet 1st Class Jaywardene Hontorio as valedictorian and baron of this year's 282 cadets of PMA Alab Tala Class of 2018.

Rappler reporters, on the other hand, are no longer allowed to cover presidential engagements.

The Palace directive stemmed from claims made by the President and key government officials that Rappler, aside from its ownership issue, has been spreading fake news against the administration.

Rappler's Pia Ranada was the first victim of this directive when she was totally barred from entering Malacañang compound to cover the President.

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Abu death toll hits 7

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Two more Abu Sayyaf bandits were killed in an encounter with government troopers in Patikul, Sulu on Thursday.

The clash raised the death toll in military offensives against the Abu Sayyaf this week to seven.

On Tuesday, five bandits were killed in an operation to rescue the remaining kidnap victims also in Patikul. Six soldiers were wounded in the clash.

The body of one of the fatalities identified as Roger Samlahon as well as his gun, two mobile phones and backpack were recovered at the scene.

"We are still trying to determine where he was

buried," Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, Joint Task Force Sulu commander, said, referring to the other fatality whose body was brought by the bandits as they fled.

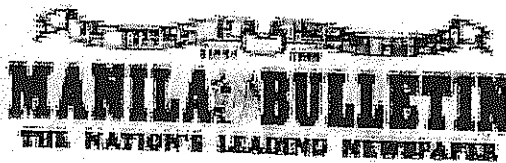
Sobejana said members of the Citizens Armed Force Geographical Unit and soldiers of the 2nd Special Forces Battalion clashed with the Abu Sayyaf in Barangay Latih at around noon.

He said the bandits are followers of sub-leader Sukara Inggug.

The military said the Abu Sayyaf fighters could be part of the group that they encountered in Barangay Panglahayan on Tuesday.

– Roel Pareño

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2 ASG fighters killed in Sulu

By MONGY E. LACSON

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Two members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) were killed in an hour-long gunbattle with the military in Patikul, Sulu that started at noon Thursday.

Joint Task Force Sulu (JTF-Sulu) Commander Brig Gen Cirilito Sobejana said only one of the slain terrorists was identified.

A local official said the fatality was Roger Samlahon, reportedly a notorious kidnap-for-ransom operator in Jolo.

Recovered from where Samlahon was found dead were an R4A3 rifle, an M203 Grenade launcher, two cellular phones, and a back pack with personal belongings.

Sobejana added the ASG members that the military encountered were under the Radulan Sahiron.

"We immediately sent two Special Forces teams and CAFGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) members as reinforcements of our troops at the area of encounter," he said.

"Our supporting units also provided artillery rounds towards the target upon the request of the troops who have eyeball on the enemy's location," Sobejana added.

He added that it was also reported that another ASG fighters was killed in the encounter.

"We are still in the process of determining where he was buried," Sobejana said.

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2 Abu Sayyaf tepok, 1 sumuko

ZAMBOANGA CITY - Dalawang miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) ang napatay matapos ang isang oras na pakikipagbakbakan sa militar sa Patikul, Sulu, habang isa pa ang sumuko sa lalawigan.

Ayon kay Joint Task Force Sulu (JTF-Sulu) Commander Brig Gen Cirilito Sobejana, tumagal ng isang oras ang engkuwentro na nagsimula ng Huwebes ng tanghali at dalawang bandido ang nasawi.

Narekober din ang isang R4A3 rifle, isang M203 Grenade launcher, dalawang cell phone, at isang back pack na may mga personal na gamit.

Sinabi ni Sobejana na nagsilbing blocking force ang 5th Special Forces Company sa mga tropang tumugis laban sa mga papatakas na bandido, na pinamumunuan ni Radulan Sahiron, sa Barangay Lath sa Patikul.

Matapos ang bakbakan, natagpuan

ng militar sa lugar ang isang bangkay, na kalaunan ay kinilala ng mga opisyal ng barangay sa lugar bilang si Roger Samlahon, miyembro ng kilabot na Urban Terrorist Group na sangkot sa pangungidnap sa Jolo, ayon kay Sobejana.

Dagdag pa ni Sobejana, nakarating sa kanyang kaalaman na isa pang bandido ang nasawi sa bakbakan, bagamat inaalam pang militar kung saan ito milibing at ang pagkakakilanlan nito.

Miyerkules naman nang sumuko si Muksarn Damsid Ayang, tauhan ng ASG sub-leader na si Maradjan Hadjiri Ayang, sa Marine troops sa Sulu, bitbit ang kanyang M1 Garand rifle.

Nonoy E. Lacson

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Support for bill separating Marines from Navy snowballs in Congress

By BEN ROSARIO

Faced with serious internal and external security concerns and broader responsibilities towards its allies, the country can expect improvement in its national defense capabilities with the passage of a bill seeking to establish the Philippine Marine Corps into an independent service command under the AFP.

Former Senator Rodolfo Biazon and several members of the House Committee on National Defense echoed this view as they strongly backed the passage of House Bill (HB) 7304 or the Philippine Marine Corps Act.

Authored by Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez and Majority Leader Rodolfo C. Farnas, HB 7304 proposes to separate the Marines from its mother unit, the Philippine Navy, and establish the PMC as "an armed uniformed service, amphibious in character, distinct, au-

tonomous, but complementary to the Army, the Air Force and the Navy, as an independent branch of service of the AFP."

Alvarez and Farnas are reserved Marine officers who were recently promoted to full colonel.

Currently being studied by the House Committee on National Defense, HB 7304 quickly won bipartisan support.

Assistant Minority Leader and ACT-OFW Party-list Rep. Aniceto "John" Bertiz JR. batted for the immediate approval of the bill, stressing that a separate Marines service will help boost the country's national security capabilities.

Reps. Ruffino Biazon (PDP-Laban, Muntinlupa City) and Johnny Ty Pimentel (PDP-Laban, Surigao del Norte), both majority members of the defense panel, noted that an archipelagic state like the Philippines requires a strong

military unit with exceptional amphibious capabilities for military defense and disaster response.

Pimentel and Bertiz asked the principal proponents to include them as co-authors of the bill.

"Although the Marine Corps is a relative small unit compared to the other major services, there are some administrative and operational aspects that may justify its establishment as a separate service such as budget allocation, Command structure and unit distinction from the Navy," said Biazon.

Rep. Biazon is the son of former Sen Biazon, who served the Marines for 28 years and became its commander.

The elder Biazon cited the timeliness of the filing of the legislative proposal, saying that an independent Marine Corps will have a vital role in internal security operation and more "importantly, in the area of external ground force defense."

ONLINE NEWS

17 MARCH 2018

Army honors Tejeros Convention

By Priam Nepomuceno March 16, 2018, 3:37 pm

MANILA --- As part of its 121st founding anniversary celebrations, the Philippine Army (PA) on Thursday conducted a wreath-laying ceremony in Kawit, Cavite Thursday in honor of the Tejeros Convention.

Lt. Col. Louie Villanueva, PA spokesperson, said the Tejeros Convention was one of the significant events of the past that helped shaped the Philippine Army.

"The said activity is also part of the activities in line with the celebration of the PA's 121st founding anniversary," he added.

The Tejeros Convention was held in Tejeros, San Francisco de Malabon in Cavite (now Gen. Trias) in March 22, 1897 and heralded the birth of the Philippine Revolution Government headed by Emilio Aguinaldo and the formation of its army, Ejercito en la Republica de las Islas Filipinas, which was commanded by Gen. Artemio Ricarte.

Aguinaldo's army is considered the direct ascendant of the modern day PA. **(PNA)**

www.pna.gov.ph

WW2-era BRP Rajah Humabon to be turned into a museum exhibit

By Priam Nepomuceno March 16, 2018, 1:31 pm

MANILA -- The decommissioned World War II-era BRP Rajah Humabon (PS-11) will be turned into one of the exhibits at the Philippine Navy (PN) Museum in Sangley Point, Cavite City.

Philippine Fleet Spokesperson Lt. Sahirul Taib said in an interview Thursday that turning the ship into an exhibit would happen shortly after it is stripped of its navigational equipment and other usable items.

Taib added that turning it into one of the exhibits was in honor of its 38 years of service and long-tenure as the Navy's flagship.

The retirement of BRP Rajah Humabon is in-line with the Navy's Strategic Sail Plan of "moving to legacy vessels to more and capable and modern vessels," he earlier said.

Earlier, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana issued a directive to retire the Navy's remaining World War II-era warships due to their old age.

Prior to the arrival of the BRP Gregorio Del Pilar (FF-15) in 2011 and BRP Ramon Alcaraz (FF-16) in 2013, the BRP Rajah Humabon together with the three Jacinto-class patrol vessels (formerly the Royal Navy's Peacock class patrol ships) served as the backbone of the PN and acted as its flagship.

It also served a ceremonial ship welcoming arriving foreign warships in Manila Bay.

As of this posting, the Navy is awaiting the completion and delivery of two missile-armed frigates from South Korean shipbuilder Hyundai Heavy Industries. The contract is worth PHP18 billion, including weapon systems and munitions, with the delivery of the first ship expected by 2020.

Once commissioned in Philippine service, the frigates will give the PN an anti-air, anti-surface, anti-submarine and electronic warfare capability. **(PNA)**

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