

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



TEAM ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

26 March 2018

Monday

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

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PANAHON TV
www.panahon.tv /PanahonTV

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS • FEARELESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | MARCH 26 2018 | MONDAY

LAOAG CITY 21-32°C
TUGUEGARAO CITY 28-29°C
BAGUIO CITY 12-24°C
SBMA/CLARK 22-31°C
METRO MANILA 23-32°C
TAGAYTAY CITY 24-30°C
LEGAZPI CITY 24-30°C
ILOILO/BACOLOD CITY 25-31°C
PUERTO PRINCESA 25-32°C
TACLOBAN CITY 23-30°C
METRO CEBU 25-33°C
CAGAYAN DE ORO 24-31°C
ZAMBOANGA CITY 24-33°C
METRO DAVAO 23-32°C

NORTHEAST MONSOON AFFECTING LUZON
TAIL-END OF A COLD FRONT AFFECTING EASTERN VISAYAS
TALENT OF EASTERN VISAYAS as of 5:00pm - March 25, 2018

SUNRISE 5:56 AM	SUNSET 6:08 PM
MOONRISE 1:13 PM	MOONSET 1:26 AM
FIRST QUARTER MAR 24 11:35 PM	FULL MOON MAR 31 6:37 PM
LOW TIDE (MANILA SOUTH HARBOR) 12:48 AM -0.32 Meter	HIGH TIDE 4:33 PM 0.86 Meter

- Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers
- Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorm
- Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms
- Light rain

	MAR 27	MAR 28	MAR 27	MAR 28	MAR 27	MAR 28		
METRO MANILA	24-32°C	24-33°C	TAGAYTAY	22-30°C	22-31°C	TACLOBAN	24-31°C	24-31°C
TUGUEGARAO	22-31°C	23-31°C	LEGAZPI	24-31°C	24-31°C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	23-30°C	24-30°C
LAOAG	22-32°C	23-32°C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25-32°C	25-32°C	METRO DAVAO	25-33°C	25-34°C
BAGUIO	13-25°C	13-26°C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	26-31°C	26-31°C	ZAMBOANGA	24-34°C	25-34°C
SBMA/CLARK	23-31°C	23-32°C	METRO CEBU	25-31°C	25-31°C			

DZRH NEWS TELEVISION

MONDAY - FRIDAY
11 AM & 5 PM

PILIPINASH

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

26 March 2018



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Resume peace talks, 61 solons urge Du30

FROM A1

By Vince F. Nonato
@VinceNonatoINQ

One-fifth of the members of the House of Representatives have crossed party lines to urge President Duterte to "listen to the clamor of the people" to resume peace talks with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

The NDFP is the political arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which has been waging an armed insurgency for almost 50 years.

In House Resolution No. 1803, the 61 lawmakers also called for the conclusion of the comprehensive agreements on socioeconomic and political reforms to "lay the basis for a just and lasting peace."

The lawmakers held on to Mr. Duterte's remarks on Feb. 20 that he might reopen the negotiations but would have to consult military officials first. This followed a meeting with Norwegian officials who host the talks.

Norwegian special envoy

Mr. Duterte met with Idun Tvedt, Norwegian special envoy to the peace process between the Philippine government and the NDFP, in Davao City on Feb. 15.

The President on Nov. 23 last year terminated the peace talks through Proclamation No. 360, which cited the alleged insincer-

ity of the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, by committing unspecified "acts of violence and hostilities."

The termination came two days before the fifth round of formal talks were supposed to be held from Nov. 25 to 27 in Oslo. The agreements on socioeconomic reforms and general amnesty for political prisoners were supposed to have been discussed.

'Terrorist' declaration

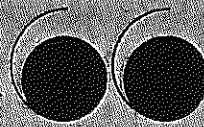
Last Dec. 5, the President issued Proclamation No. 374 declaring the GPP and NPA terrorist organizations.

"Compared to previous administrations, peace negotiations under the Duterte administration have reached remarkable and unparalleled headway after the four successful rounds of negotiations," the resolution read.

"Continuing the peace talks would benefit the Filipino people, most of whom are poor peasants and workers, as the agreements on agrarian reform and national industrialization may address their issues and concerns and help provide relief for their economic hardships," it added.

Signatories

When Mr. Duterte ended the talks, negotiators were already working on the draft of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (Caser), aimed at addressing the economic grievances and social inequalities that caused the insurgency.



Continuing the peace talks would benefit the Filipino people, most of whom are poor peasants and workers

House Resolution No. 1803

The resolution was signed by the peace, reconciliation and unity committee chair, Ruby Sahali, and three of the four vice chairs—Jose Christopher Belmonte, Jesus Nonato Sacdalan and Amihilda Sangcopan.

The fourth vice chair, Shernee Tan, did not sign the resolution. Tan is an advocate of martial law nationwide.

The call for the resumption of talks was also supported by Deputy Majority Leaders Gerald Anthony Gullas Jr. and Arnel Ty, and Deputy Minority Leaders Anthony Bravo, Eugene Michael de Vera and Alfredo Garbin Jr.

All seven members of the Makabayan bloc—Carlos Isagani Zarate, Arlene Brosas, Ariel Casilao, France Castro, Emerentiana de Jesus, Sarah Jane Elago and Antonio

Tinio—signed the resolution.

Likewise, five members of the opposition Magnificent Seven bloc—Teddy Baguilat Jr., Emmanuel Billones, Raul Daza, Edcel Lagman and Tomasito Villarin—expressed support for the resolution.

Eight representatives from Mindanao, which Mr. Duterte placed under extended martial law by invoking the communist insurgency, signed the resolution, too. They are Ma Lourdes Acosta-Alba, Joel Mayo Almario, Lorna Bautista-Bandigan, Lawrence Fortun, Zajid Mangudatu, Maximo Rodriguez Jr., Juliette Uy and Manuel Zubiri.

Among the signatories are 14 lawmakers from Luzon: Jorge Banal, Leopoldo Bataoil, Bayani Fernando, Gabriel Bordado Jr., Eleanor Bulut-Begtang, Edward Maceda, Allen Jesse Mangaoang, John Marvin "Yulervo" Nieto, Strike Revilla, Cesar Sarmiento, Deogracias Victor Savellano, Eric Singson, Noel Villanueva and Victor Yap;

Nine lawmakers from the Visayas signed the resolution: Erico Aristotle Aumentado, Wilfredo Caminero, Leo Rafael Cueva, Juliet Marie Ferrer, Carlito Marquez, Edwin Ong, Henry Ong, Raul Tupas and Melecio Yap Jr.

Nine other party-list representatives also backed the resolution: Michelle Antonio, Milagros Aquino-Magsaysay, Salvador Belaro Jr., Sabiniano Canama, Virgilio Lacson, Benhur Lopez Jr., Rodante Marcoleta, Ron Salo and Orestes Salon. INQ

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Call for peace

60 solons ask gov't to resume talks with Reds

By ELIZONA QUISMORIO and GENALYN D. LABILING

Nearly 60 congressmen or about a fifth of the membership of the House of Representatives crossed party lines and asked President Rodrigo Duterte to resume the stalled peace talks between the Philippine government and the National Democratic Front of the

Philippines (NDFP).

The lawmakers manifested this call via House Resolution (HR) No. 1808, which was signed by at least 58 representatives from across various factions and political parties.

Presidential adviser on the peace process Jesus Dureza said that a "de-

sired enabling environment" conducive to peace talks must first be evident before the government considers the resumption of negotiations with the communist rebels.

"We thank the House and welcome the resolution for such interest in the continuation of the peace process. Such a resolution, however, is not as necessary as the presence of

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an enabling environment conducive to the resumption. This will be the sole determining factor. The collective voice from Congress can very well contribute to that desired enabling environment," he said.

Asked if the House resolution would convince the President to jumpstart the peace talks, Dureza said: "Only an enabling environment conducive to negotiations will convince us."

Early this month, President Duterte said he might "reconsider" his position on the peace talks with the communists if they forge a ceasefire pact with the government.

Bayan Muna Party-List Rep. Carlos Zarate, one of the vocal supporters of the peace talks, expressed optimism that the stalled peace negotiations between the government and the Reds would be jumpstarted anew.

"This is very encouraging and we are calling on the Duterte administration to heed this call for a just peace. We are also urging our other colleagues to also co-author the resolution as there is a more urgent need and reason how to continue the GRP-NDFP peace process in the midst of escalating clashes between the military and the communist rebels," said Zarate, a member of the leftist Makabayan bloc.

Signatories of the resolution included solons from the Supermajority, the Minority, and the two independent blocs from House, which are the Magnificent

Seven and the Makabayan. The House currently has 292 members.

"We are calling on all peace-loving people to intensify our earnest call for the government and NDFP to give the quest for a just and lasting peace a chance. This is not the time to abandon it for the greater interest of our country and people," he further said.

'Most cowardly'

President Duterte has branded Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison as the "most cowardly of all cowards" for seeking a coalition government with communists in exchange for a peace agreement.

The President said Sison wanted to join government and create a "politburo" or a committee where both government and communist officials would share power.

"Sison is the most cowardly of all cowards. He was my idol when I was still a student. But now, whenever I talk to him, he tells me that he wants to join the government. We are like a politburo if that's the case. They want a committee (where) they're on the other side while I'm on the government side," he said during the 16th anniversary rites of the Supreme Tribunal for Peace and Development Inc. in Davao City last Friday.

In his speech, Duterte also lashed out at the communist rebels for abandoning their children and following Sison to their deaths as if he was a god.

"Look at what you did not just to your fellow person, but to the person whom you gave birth to. Son of a b*tch and then you leave them. What's worse is that you join the NPA and die for it. You will lose yourself to nothing. Then you follow Sison whom you've treated as your God," he said.

Reds in PNP

The Philippine National Police (PNP) is willing to open its doors for communist rebels who would return to the government fold and want to serve as law enforcers.

But PNP chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa said those interested should meet the necessary requirements to enter the police profession, such as a college degree, height, and age limits.

"If they are sincere, if they want to be a policeman and they are qualified, why not," said dela Rosa.

The Chief PNP's statement came after President Duterte was quoted saying that the police and military are open to the rebel returnees as part of the effort to convince them to change.

Dela Rosa said that they have no problem accommodating the rebel returnees especially if this would boost the law enforcement function of the PNP, especially when it comes to anti-insurgency operations.

If it would happen, the scenario of the PNP absorbing rebel returnees is not something new.

"In fact, we have a lot of former NPA rebels who joined the police force after their surrender," said Dela Rosa. (With a report from Aaron Recuenço)

26 March 2018

The Manila Times

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Resume talks with 'Reds,' lawmakers ask Duterte

DOZENS of lawmakers at the House of Representatives filed a resolution urging President Rodrigo Duterte to resume the peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF).

House Resolution 1803, received by the Lower House on Thursday, was signed by 61 lawmakers from the supermajority, minority, opposition and militant blocs.

"Peace advocates and religious groups lamented the termination of the peace talks. The Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform called on both the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines)

and the NDPP to stay the course and resume the peace talks and pursue the positive results generated from the peace talks that formally started under the Duterte administration," the resolution read.

"Kapayapaan, an alliance of advocates for a just peace, said that the continuing armed clashes between government forces and the CPP-NPA-NDF is all the more reason for both parties to return to the negotiating table," it added.

The lawmakers said reviving the peace talks would benefit the poor peasants and workers since the agreements on agrarian reform and national industrialization may

➤ TalksA8

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address the issues and concerns and help provide relief for their economic hardships.

"It is highly imperative that Congress hear and echo the Filipino people's desire for the resumption of the peace negotiations and for the GRP and NDFP to forge substantive agreements [that] will resolve the root causes of the nearly five-decade old armed conflict," the resolution read.

Rep. Carlos Zarate of Bayan Muna party-list explained that the call is for "just peace."

He called on other lawmakers to co-author the resolution, stressing that there is "a more urgent need and reason now to continue the GRP-NDFP peace process in the midst of escalating clashes between the military and the communist rebels."

"Peace negotiations should continue even if both sides have not yet ceased armed hostilities. That is precisely why peace talks must proceed because the two sides are at war. The no cease-fire, no peace talks policy being pushed by the militarists elements in the cabinet practically negates the inherent purpose of a peace negotiation," Zarate said in a statement.

"We are calling on all peace-loving people to intensify our earnest call for the government and NDFP to give the quest for a just and lasting

peace a chance. This is not the time to abandon it, for the greater interest of our country and people," Zarate added.

Palace mum

Malacañang, however, refused to comment on the resolution.

In a text message to *The Manila Times* on Sunday, Palace spokesman Harry Roque, Jr. said he will not issue a statement since the resolution has not been adopted yet.

Duterte terminated the peace talks between the government and the communist rebels in November last year.

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza officially announced the cancellation in a statement.

"Recent tragic and violent incidents all over the country committed by the communist rebels left the President with no other choice but to arrive at this decision," he said.

On December 5, 2017, Duterte signed Proclamation 374 on December 5, 2017 declaring the NPA and CPP as terrorist groups.

CPP-NPA-NDF founder Jose Ma. Sison earlier warned that the NPA could kill one soldier a day, prompting the President to say that he can order government forces to kill five NPA rebels for every soldier killed.

RALPH EDWIN U. VILLANUEVA

26 March 2018

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Soldier killed in rebel attack in Albay

By RUEL SALDICO

CAMP ELIAS ANGELES, Pili, Camarines Sur - Communist guerrillas skirmished with Army troops in Barangay Magogon, Camalig, Albay, Saturday, killing an Army corporal before retreating.

Based on a military report, at least five members of KSPNB, KP3 of Bicol

Regional Party Committee (BRPC) fired at soldiers from Bravo Company, 2nd Infantry Battalion who were on peace and development mission in the barangay.

The troops fired back and the rebels pulled back after five minutes.

The corporal, identified as Felipe Delfino Jr. was wounded and died before reaching UST Hospital in Legazpi City.

Following the encounter, Major Gen-

eral Jesus A. Manangquil Jr., commander of the 9th Infantry Division, directed all units to be on alert against possible attacks by the rebels.

"This act is clearly out of their frustration to stop the peace and development in the area wherein they exploited and took advantage of the issues and concerns to lure the civilians to support their communist agenda," Manangquil said.

"They even attacked the government forces without considering the presence of civilians that might be caught in the crossfire."

Despite the incident, he said his troops "will continue to pursue our peace and development efforts here. We will not be cowed and disrupted by the harassment being perpetrated by these terrorists."

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Army sergeant strafes men; 1 killed, 4 hurt

By JENNIFER RENDON

ILOILO CITY - A militiaman was killed while four others were wounded when an Army sergeant opened fire at his men in Maasin, Iloilo yesterday morning.

Authorities are eyeing exhaustion and lack of sleep as the reason why S/Sgt. Alvin Estorco, chief of an Army detachment in Barangay Panalian, opened fire at his men who were members of a government militia.

Albert Magarse, 28, was declared dead on arrival at the Ramon Tania Memorial District Hospital in nearby Cabatuan town.

He suffered gunshot wounds in the back and abdomen, according to Senior Inspector Felix Alianza Jr., Maasin police chief.

Taken to the same hospital for treatment were Magarse's brother Aljohn, 24; their cousin and uncle Michael and Juan, respectively, and George Calubayan, 45.

Aljohn suffered a gunshot wound in the leg, Michael in the leg and thigh, and Juan in the back. George was hit

in the side of the body.

Alianza said that prior to the shooting, Estorco and 17 personnel of the CAGU Active Auxiliary (CAA) secured a community program in nearby Barangay Ubian, which celebrated a fiesta.

The group was on its way back to the detachment when Estorco reportedly took his rifle and shot the militiamen.

Rene Maderable, one of those who survived the shooting, said there was no reason for Estorco to shoot them.

Maderable was among those who brought his colleagues to the hospital.

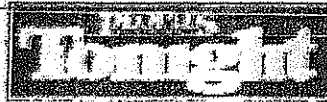
The wounded victims were transferred to the Western Visayas Medical Center in Mandurriao, Iloilo City.

Some militiamen disarmed Estorco and hid him in the detachment's armory for fear that he might be harmed by the families of the victims.

Estorco arrived at the police station at noon to explain the incident.

He claimed he saw a band of rebels about to attack them.

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AFP seizes 269 firearms, 174 IEDs from Reds

By **ZAIDA DELOS REYES-PALANCA**

GOVERNMENT forces confiscated a total of 269 high-powered and low-powered firearms and 174 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) from the New People's Army (NPA) from January to March 15, 2018.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Public Affairs Office (PAO) chief Lt. Col. Emmanuel Garcia said that in Eastern Mindanao alone, a total of 174 firearms and 140 IEDs were confiscated from the NPA terrorists and their supporters in

the same reckoning date.

In the recent focused military operation of the Army's 26th Infantry Battalion (IB), they were able to seize a 7.62mm rifle and an AK47 rifle from a member of NPA killed in an encounter in Kalinga on March 12.

Six PVC pipe guns, four shotguns, four pistols, IEDs, grenade and other war materiel were surrendered by four former rebels and five Militia ng Bayan members to 29th Infantry Battalion in Butuan City, Agusan del Norte, last March 12.

Joint AFP-PNP troops

seized four M16 rifles and two M14 rifles from the six apprehended CNT members in Manjuyod, Negros Oriental, last March 9.

In Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, two high-powered firearms were also surrendered on March 2.

Garcia added that surrenderees, mostly from the eastern part of Mindanao, surrendered their firearms to authorities while other firearms were seized in other parts of the country.

Those who surrendered received financial help and were enrolled to the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program or E-CLIP for livelihood and other assistance.

Former rebels also receive remuneration for firearms they surrender.

In line with these the AFP vows to continue the conduct of focused military operations to degrade the armed capability of the terrorists and further enhance Com-

munity Support Program to empower local government units in providing basic services to the people in their communities to encourage more CNTs to surrender.

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INQUIRER

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Myles Albasin and five of her fellow detainees await a hearing at the Negros Oriental prosecutor's office. —FERDINAND EDRALIN/CEBU DAILY NEWS

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INDIGENOUS ASSEMBLY

DUTERTE LIKENS REDS TO BIBLICAL SERPENT

DAVAO CITY—President Duterte has likened communist rebels to the serpent in the biblical garden of Eden that tempted Adam and Eve into committing the original sin.

Mr. Duterte said everything was good in paradise before the snake came and enticed Eve to eat the apple together with Adam.

"So now there was malice," the President said in a speech before at least 500 "lumad" (indigenous) leaders who gathered here on Friday for the 16th anniversary of the Supreme Tribal Council for Peace.

"That's what communism is," Mr. Duterte added.

Political officers

He said like the biblical snake, communists would send "political officers" into villages and convince the people to support them.

"The political officers talk well, explaining that 'Duterte is corrupt,' 'that he spends government money over this and that,' and some people actually believed them," he said.

The President said he believed that the lumad were inherently peaceful as they decided long ago to stay away from trouble when nonlumad came in and started occupying their lands.

"You went away because you were avoiding a fight. That's the truth about your an-

cestors," he said.

But today, many lumad, according to Mr. Duterte, have been lured into communism because of false promises by the New People's Army (NPA), armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Unlike in the past, when most NPA guerrillas and supporters were Christians, the lumad make up the bulk of the rebels' mass base these days, according to Mr. Duterte.

"Almost 60 percent (of supporters are) lumad, the women included," he said.

Stunned

"So I was stunned. Who could solve this? Me? The military? Who else? Nobody but you," the President said.

He then asked the audience what their lives were before the communists came into their communities.

"Is it better or not? If compared to your lives today [after supporting the communists], did you fear [the government before]?" the President said.

He said he was certain that the lives of the lumad were better before they supported the NPA.

"Your lives now are in disarray. So who could solve it? Only you," Mr. Duterte said.

Mr. Duterte said the communist ideology did not provide anything good to the lumad. But he said the government could bring them good things. —ALLAN NAWAL INQ

26 March 2018



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61 lawmakers urge Duterte to resume peace talks

By DELON PORCALLA

Crossing party lines, 61 members of the House of Representatives signed a

resolution calling on President Duterte to resume peace talks with communist rebels represented by the National Democratic Front (NDF).

Administration and opposition lawmakers, including those in the left-wing Makabayan bloc, signed House Resolution 1803, which urges the Chief Executive to complete the government's comprehensive agreements on social, economic and political reforms.

The House resolution pointed out that the government peace negotiating panel and the NDF have already reached "remarkable and unparalleled headway" when it comes to peace negotiations, having been able to hold four successful rounds.

"Continuing the peace talks would benefit the Filipino people, most of whom are poor peasants and workers, as the agreements on agrarian reform and national industrialization may address their issues and concerns and help provide relief for their economic hardships," it stated.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Isagani Carlos Zarate, who belongs to the opposition, said the filing and support of lawmakers to the resolution is "very encouraging" in urging the Duterte administration to heed the call for a just peace.

"The best government policy to deal with the root causes of the armed conflict is through the peace talks and in implementing genuine agrarian reform and national industrialization," he said.

"We are calling on all peace-loving people to intensify our earnest call for the government and NDF to give the quest for a just and lasting peace a chance. This is not the time to abandon it, for the greater interest of our country and people," he added.

But presidential adviser on the peace process Jesus Dureza said only an environment conducive to the talks could persuade the President to resume the negotiations.

Dureza, however, believes the House resolution can contribute to the attainment of such environment.

"We thank the House and welcome the resolution and for such interest in the continuation of the peace process," Dureza said in a text message.

"While such a resolution is not necessary as the presence of an enabling environment conducive to the resumption will be the sole determining factor, that collective voice from Congress can very well contribute to that desired enabling environment," he added.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. declined comment.

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"No comment. That has not been adopted anyway," Roque said.

Militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) yesterday lauded the move of the lawmakers.

Bayan secretary-general Renato Reyes said they welcome the resolution as it is apparent that all-out war, which was promised by President Duterte last year when he ended the talks, has not solved the root causes of the armed conflict in the country.

"The call is timely and urgent as the human rights and economic crisis worsen for the majority of poor Filipinos," Reyes said in a text message sent to reporters.

Reyes also urged the administration to use the Lenten season for reflection "on the urgent demand for a just peace and meaningful reforms."

Lawmakers who signed the resolution:

1. Ruby Sahali Tan (Tawi-Tawi)
2. Sarah Elago (Kabataan party-list)
3. Carlos Zarate (Bayan Muna party-list)
4. Raul Daza (Northern Samar, 1st District)
5. Ariel Casilao (Anakpawis party-list)
6. Emmanuel Billones (Capiz, 1st District)
7. Carlito Marquez (Aklan)
8. Leo Cueva (Negros Occidental, 2nd District)
9. Melecio Yap Jr. (Negros Occidental, 1st District)
10. Anthony Bravo (COOP-NATCCO party-list)

11. Lorna Bandigan (Davao Occidental)
12. Joel Almario (Davao Oriental, 2nd District)
13. Cesar Sarmiento (Catan-uanes)
14. Jose Christopher Belmonte (Quezon City, 6th District)
15. Edcel Lagman (Albay, 1st District)
16. Tom Vallarin (Akbayan party-list)
17. Emmi De Jesus (Gabriela Women's Party)
18. Victor Yap (Tarlac, 2nd District)
19. Noel Villanueva (Tarlac, 3rd District)
20. Arlene Brosas (Gabriela Women's Party)
21. Benhur Lopez (YACAP party-list)
22. Eric Singson (Ilocos Sur, 2nd District)
23. Lawrence Fortun (Agusan del Norte, 1st District)
24. Henry Ong (Leyte, 2nd District)
25. Raul Tupas (Hoilo, 5th District)
26. Edwin Ong (Northern Samar, 2nd District)
27. Milagros Magsaysay (Senior Citizen party-list)
28. Salvador Belaro Jr. (1-Ang Edukasyon party-list)
29. Rodante Marcoleta (SAGIP party-list)
30. Alfredo Garbin Jr. (AKO BICOL party-list)
31. Eugene Michael de Vera (ABS party-list)
32. Ron Salo (Kabayan party-list)
33. Bayani Fernando (Marikina City, 1st District)
34. Deogracias Victor Savelano (Ilocos Sur, 1st District)
35. Teddy Baguilat Jr. (Ifugao)
36. Allen Jesse Mangaoang (Kalinga)
37. Manuel Zubiri (Bukidnon, 3rd District)
38. Leopoldo Bataoil (Pangasinan, 2nd District)
39. Bolet Banal (Quezon City, 3rd District)
40. Juliet Marie Ferrer (Negros Occidental, 4th District)
41. Gerald Gullas (Cebu, 1st District)
42. Wilfredo Caminero (Cebu, 2nd District)
43. Virgulio Laeson (Manila Teachers party-list)
44. Eleanor Begtang (Apayao)
45. Sabiniano Canama (COOP-NATCCO party-list)

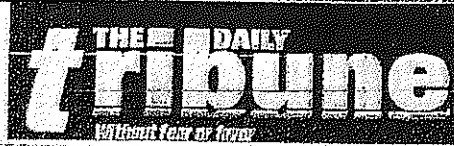
46. France Castro (ACT Teachers party-list)
 47. Amihilda Sangcopan (AMIN party-list)
 48. Erico Aristotle Aumentado (Bohol, 2nd District)
 49. Michelle Antonio (AGBIAG party-list)
 50. Maria Lourdes Acosta-Alba (Bukidnon, 1st District)
 51. Juliette Uy (Misamis Oriental, 2nd District)
 52. Strike Revilla (Cavite, 2nd District)
 53. Arnel Ty (LPGMA party-list)
 54. Gabriel Bordado Jr. (Camarines Sur, 3rd District)
 55. Antonio Tinio (ACT Teachers party-list)
 56. John Marvin "Yul Servo" Nieto (Manila, 3rd District)
 57. Edward Maceda (Manila, 4th District)
 58. Maximo Rodriguez Jr. (Cagayan de Oro, 2nd District)
 59. Jesus Sacdalan (North Cotabato, 1st District)
 60. Orestes Salon (AGRI party-list)
 61. Zajid Mangudadatu (Maguindanao, 2nd District)
- With Alexis Romero, Romina Cabrera

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people. Securing the land.

24 March 2018



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Reds now in despair amid massive surrender of members – Defense chief

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) denial of the massive surrender of its armed rebel fighters is a manifestation of its desperation and futile attempt to discredit government efforts to secure peace, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said.

The latest statement of the CPP shows that they (communist leaders) are now in a quandary as to how they can reverse their current predicament. Because of the government's sincere call for peace, they have lost a lot of fighters lately, and their mass base has rapidly dwindled. Labeling everything that the government has achieved so far as a mere 'hoax' manifests

desperation and obviously a futile attempt to discredit our efforts in forging peace," he stressed.

Also, Lorenzana said the public is well aware of the lies being perpetrated by the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA).

How can the CPP claim that most of the surrenderees are not NPA fighters but 'supporters' and even demand a public apology from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) when, in fact, these former rebels who responded to the government's call for peace include their former regional secretary in far south Mindanao, their former

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regional secretary in far sought Mindanao, their former regional SDG (sentro de grabidad or fighting unit) commanders in northern Mindanao, and in Surigao, a front secretary in Davao, and a number of their platoon and team leaders, along with their firearms? It is the communist terrorist CPP-NPA who should apologize to these people whom they have deceived, and who have sacrificed their lives and their families because of this deception," the Defense chief added.

Earlier, the AFP reported that a total of 4,356 NPA regular members and their supporters have surrendered to government forces nationwide starting January 1 up to March 15 this year.

"The figure is composed of 626 NPA regulars and Sangay sa Partido Lokal (SPL) or local party members and 3,730 Militia ng Bayan (MB), Underground Mass Organization (UGMO) members and mass supporters. Majority of surrenders happened in eastern Mindanao particularly in the regions of Davao and Caraga totaling 97 percent or 4,194," the military leadership stated.

In line with this, Lorenzana urged

all remaining NPA rebels to surrender peacefully as they no longer have any ideology to fight for.

"What's left is an organization that uses the plight of vulnerable sections to promote their ultimate plan of amassing money through extortion and seizing power for their leaders' selfish agenda," he said.

Relatedly, focused combat operations against the communist rebels have resulted in the seizure or surrender of a total of 269 firearms and 174 improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Lt. Col. Emmanuel Garcia, AFP Public Affairs Office chief, said the huge success was recorded also from January 1 to March 15, 2018.

Garcia noted that Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) yielded the biggest accomplishment with a total of 174 firearms and 140 IEDs confiscated from the NPAs and their supporters.

Recently, the 26th Infantry Battalion seized one 7.62-mm rifle and one AK-47 rifle from a CNT member killed in an encounter in Kalinga province on March 12.

Six PVC pipe guns, four shotguns, four pistols, IEDs, grenade and other war materiel were surrendered by four former rebels and five Militia ng Bayan members to 29th Infantry Battalion in

Butuan City, Agusan del Norte last March 12.

Joint AFP-PNP troops seized four M-16 rifles, and two M-14 rifles from the six apprehended CNT members in Manjuyod, Negros Oriental last March 3.

In Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, two high-powered firearms were also surrendered on March 2.

"Surrenderees, mostly from the eastern part of Mindanao, bring along their firearms and submit them to authorities while other firearms confiscated were from different parts of the country," noted Garcia.

"Surrenderees receive immediate financial help and are being enrolled to the Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program or E-CLIP for livelihood and other assistance. Former rebels also receive remuneration for firearms they surrender," he added.

Garcia said the AFP will continue to conduct focused military operations to degrade the armed capability of the terrorists and further enhance Community Support Program to empower local government units in providing basic services to the people in their communities to encourage more CNTs to surrender.

Mario J. Mallari and PNA

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Abu bomb expert nabbed

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysian police have arrested seven men, including a Filipino with links to the Islamic State (IS) militant group who were planning attacks on non-Muslim places of worship and other targets, authorities said on Saturday.

The Muslim-majority country has been on high alert since gunmen allied with IS carried out a series of attacks in Jakarta, the capital of neighboring Indonesia, in January 2016.

Six Malaysians were arrested in Johor state, north of

Singapore, while a seventh, a Filipino member of the IS-linked Abu Sayyaf group, was detained in Sabah, in multiple operations between Feb. 27 and March 15, Police Inspector General Mohamad Fuzi Harun said in a statement.

Trusted lieutenant

Police detained the 31-year-old Filipino national in Sabah on Borneo island, who was said to be a trusted lieutenant to Abu Sayyaf group leader Furtji Indama and had links to Malaysian

militant Mahmud Ahmad, Mohamad Fuzi said.

The man, wanted in the Philippines for his involvement in a kidnap for ransom syndicate, was also an expert in making improvised explosive devices.

Mohamad Fuzi said the suspect had planned to carry out several attacks in Sabah and was responsible for making the state a safe haven for terror groups from the Philippines.

He said the six detained in Johor were members of an IS cell and included a 37-year-old

technician who recruited new militants and was believed to be the mastermind of planned attacks on non-Muslim places of worship in the state's capital.

Secret activities

A second suspect was a security guard who served as the cell's adviser and ensured members kept their activities secret.

A third man was tasked with buying firearms from a neighboring country and identifying targets for attacks, he said. —REUTERS

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UP graduate, 5 others tagged as NPAs negative for gunpowder

By Ador Vincent S. Mayol
@adorCDN

CEBU CITY—The University of the Philippines masscom graduate and her five supposed comrades in the New People's Army (NPA), who had been detained after what the military said was a gunfight in Negros Oriental on March 3, had tested negative for gunpowder burns.

Results of paraffin tests made by the Negros Oriental Provincial Crime Laboratory cast doubt on the military's claim that Myles Albasin and her five companions were captured after a clash in the town of Mabinay between soldiers and an NPA group.

Young detainees

Grace Albasin, Myles' mom, said in a phone interview that she believed the findings would "somewhat prove that there was no encounter, contrary to the claims of the military."

Myles, 21, was captured by the military along with Carlo Ybanez, 18; Ajomar Indico, 29; Randel Hermino, 19; Joel Baylo-sis, 18; and Bernard Guillen, 18.

The military described them as NPA members who were in Mabinay to harass residents, but Grace said her daughter was an activist who often visited impoverished communities to share insights with the poor and learn about their plight.

Myles is a mass communications graduate of UP Cebu College and secretary general of the activist youth group Anakbayan Cebu.

She and her five companions were charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives at the Negros Oriental Provincial Prosecutor's Office in Dumaguete City and were being detained at the provincial jail.

The 62nd Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army tagged the six as part of an NPA group that

clashed with soldiers in Mabinay.

Illegal possession of guns

The military said soldiers recovered assault rifles and a grenade launcher from the six.

Myles and her companions, however, failed to meet a March 19 deadline to submit counter-affidavits to refute the

military accusation.

According to Grace, the delay was caused by the tight schedules of the six detainees' lawyers.

The detainees were also unable to present to the prosecutor the results of the paraffin tests.

During a hearing on Monday, the detainees were told that the resolution of the cases

filed against them by the military would be released soon.

Grace said she hoped the cases would be dismissed because the family would otherwise have to "go through the arduous legal process."

The detainees were represented by lawyers Ian Sapayan and Benjamin Ramos. INQ

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Duterte warns *lumads* vs joining NPA

By ALEXIS ROMERO

President Duterte has vowed to provide livelihood to *lumads* or members of indigenous groups as he warned them against joining the communist rebellion.

Speaking during a gathering of *lumads* in Davao

City last Friday, Duterte vowed to provide tractors and seedlings to indigenous groups so they can cultivate their lands. He said each tribe would receive five tractors as well as financial assistance and seedlings.

"I will help you survive, but you have to start now," the President said. "I will give you financial

assistance to cultivate your lands. If you are not in good terms with each other, just go here and I'll be the one to mediate. If you have more relatives, then that's okay."

Last month, the President said the government would release P100 million to tribal communities in

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Mindanao to spur development in the countryside.

Military officials have said the rebels are exploiting the lack of development in *lumad* areas to recruit new members.

In the same event, Duterte urged *lumads* to stop supporting the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the communist movement. The President said those who joined the armed struggle had abandoned their families.

"What's worse is that you join the NPA and die for it. You

will lose yourself to nothing," the President said.

He also took a jab at Communist Party of the Philippines founding chairman Jose Maria Sison, whom he described as "the most cowardly of all cowards."

"You follow Sison whom you've treated as your God. Sison is the most cowardly of all cowards. He was my idol when I was still a student. But now, whenever I talk to him, he tells me that he wants to join the government. We are like a politburo if that's the case.

A committee. They like that," Duterte said.

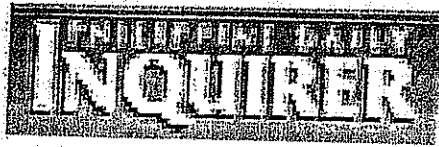
Sison is a former professor of Duterte at the Lyceum University, where he completed his political science degree.

"They want a committee then they're on the other side while I'm on the government side. Our Constitution is the basis of sovereignty and the government. It can only be given to the person that was chosen by the people," he added.

Duterte scrapped the peace talks with the communists, saying they are pushing for a coalition government, a setup that he said is not allowed under the Constitution.

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PH softness in sea dispute emboldens Chinese poachers

BOLINAO, PANGASINAN—The administration's "soft-landing" approach in dealing with the country's maritime dispute might have emboldened Chinese fishermen to continue to fish without restrictions and interference in the West Philippine Sea, an expert said here over the weekend.

Increased Chinese fishing activities have been observed in the Philippines' rich fishing grounds since 2012, based on satellite data, according to lawyer Jay Batongbacal, director of the University of the Philippines' Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea.

"We have not heard of any arrest of Chinese poachers ... Viet-

namese, maybe, but not Chinese," Batongbacal told a forum at the UP Marine Science Institute Laboratory here on Saturday. "But we know that they are there," he said.

Nine-dash line invalid

Batongbacal said President Duterte took a completely opposite approach by setting aside discussions concerning the Permanent Court of Arbitration's (PCA) ruling in favor of the Philippines.

In 2016, the PCA ruled that China's claim to the South China Sea represented by the nine-dash line was invalid, concluding that China was, in effect, intruding into the resources of other nations,

particularly, the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf (CS).

"The only claim that China can make are limited to its own EEZ and CS and territorial sea. Beyond it, whatever claims it might have had should be considered to have been abandoned by them when they signed the Unclos (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea)," Batongbacal said.

But a consequence of Mr. Duterte's policy had been Chinese fishermen's encroachment into the rich Philippine fishing grounds, such as the northern region of Palawan province, which had increased, he said.

"They are permanently present in Panatag. The coast guard vessel is always on guard at the entrance of the shoal to keep Philippine fishermen from entering," Batongbacal said.

Panatag Shoal, a triangular chain of reefs and rocks surrounding a 150-square-kilometer lagoon, is about 240 km southwest of Infanta town, and a traditional fishing ground for locals.

"Anytime our fishermen try to cross into the shoal, the Chinese vessel would move near the fishermen, and our fishermen would just have to pull out," said Batongbacal. —GABRIEL CARDINOZA INQ

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China holds drills in SCS, Western Pacific anew

BEIJING - China's air force has held another round of drills in the disputed South China Sea and the Western Pacific after passing through Japan's southern islands, the air force said yesterday, calling such exercises the best preparation for war.

China is in the midst of an ambitious military modernization program overseen by President Xi Jinping with a heavy focus on its air force and navy, from building stealth fighters to adding aircraft carriers.

China insists it has no hostile intent, but its saber-rattling in the busy South China Sea waterway, and around Taiwan, has touched a nerve in the region and in Washington.

In a statement, the air force

said H-6K bombers and Su-30 and Su-35 fighters, among other aircraft, carried out combat patrols over the South China Sea and exercises in the Western Pacific after passing over the Miyako Strait, which lies between two southern Japanese islands.

It did not say when the exercises took place nor specify the parts of the South China Sea or the Western Pacific.

In a "freedom of navigation" operation on Friday, a US Navy destroyer came within 12 nautical miles of an artificial island China has built in the South China Sea, provoking condemnation from China, which claims most of the strategic waterway.

Sending Su-35 fighters over the South China Sea aims to

help increase the air force's ability to fight far out at sea, the air force said in the statement on its microblog.

Flying across the Miyako Strait, which also sits to the northeast of the self-ruled island of Taiwan that China claims as its own, accorded with international law and practice, it added.

"Air Force exercises are rehearsals for future wars and are the most direct preparation for combat," it said.

The more exercises China practices far from its shores, the better it will be positioned as "an important force for managing and controlling crises, containing war and winning battles," it added. - Reuters

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Military drills in South China Sea are rehearsals for future wars – China Air Force

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3 more Beechcraft TC90 aircraft from Japan due today

By FRANCIS T. WANEFIELD

The Philippine Navy will formally receive today three more units of the Beechcraft TC90 aircraft from the

Japan Ministry of Defense (JMOD), through the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), in a transfer ceremony at the headquarters of the Naval Air Group (NAG), Naval Base

Haracleo Alano, Sangley Point, Cavite City.

Naval Public Affairs Office Director Captain Lued L. Lincuna said Defense Secretary Delin Lorenz

zana will witness the turnover together with Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Koji Haneda and delegates from JMOD and JMSDF. The transfer ceremony will start at 7 a.m.

"These TC90 aircraft are in addition to the two units previously transferred to the Philippine Navy last year and will complete the whole project involving five units of TC90 aircraft pursuant to the agreement between the Philippines and Japan," Lincuna said.

The Philippine Navy had earlier said the aircraft donated by Japan would help boost the Naval Air Group Air Operations and Maritime Air Surveillance capabilities.

The aircraft would also enhance the skills of the naval aviators and maintenance personnel in handling modern equipment.

The two units of Beechcraft TC90 training aircraft arrived in March, 2017, also at the Naval Air Group (NAG), Naval Base Haracleo Alano, Sangley Point, Cavite City.

On March 19, the Philippine Navy through the Naval Air Group (NAG) conducted an Activation and Blessing Ceremony for the 2nd Beechcraft King Air C90 Aircraft at the Naval Air Group, Naval Base Haracleo Alano, Sangley Point, Cavite City, with Philippine Fleet Rear Admiral Danilo R.

Rodelas.

With the completion of the installation of its navigational equipment and paintings, the 2nd C90 aircraft is ready for operation.

The activity was formally opened by Captain Juanito C. Marayag, the commander of the Naval Air Group, who emphasized the worthiness and usefulness of NV390 (C90 Aircraft) in maritime air surveillance which is vital in producing critical and sensitive information necessary for maritime situational awareness.

The first C90 aircraft was activated last November 21, 2017, and made its maiden flight conducting Maritime Air Surveillance at Bajo de Masinloc on January 31, 2018, under the Operational Control of the Northern Luzon Command.

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The Manila Times

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Navy activates aircraft for patrolling sea borders

A Beechcraft King Air TC-90 aircraft of the Philippine Navy has been activated and is now ready for patrolling the country's maritime borders and vast sea areas, according to the Philippine Fleet.

Lt. Sahirul Taib, Philippine Fleet spokesman, said the activation ceremony was held last week at the Naval Air Group's headquarters in Sangley Point, Cavite City, with Rear Admiral Danilo Rodelas, Philippine Fleet commander, gracing the event.

Another TC-90 aircraft that was also activated in November last year made its first maiden flight by conducting maritime air surveillance over Bajo de Masinloc off Zambales in January this year under the operational control of the military's Northern Luzon Command.

The aircraft spotted several Chinese fishermen and Coast Guard vessels in the area.

The two TC-90s were donated by Japan and these were originally for leasing but it was decided that they be turned over during bilateral talks between Tokyo and Manila last year.

Three more TC-90 aircraft will be given today, also at Sangley Point, with Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Japanese

government representatives attending the turnover.

Rodelas said the activation of the second TC-90 aircraft would strengthen the Navy's capabilities in securing the maritime areas of the country.

"As we activate the second TC-90 aircraft, it will bolster our surveillance capabilities as we patrol our vast sea lanes of communication and maritime borders," he added.

"In time, these aircraft will be deployed to areas of critical interest to our national security," Rodelas said.

He cited threats being faced by the Philippines as a maritime nation such as piracy, terrorism, border protection and climate change, saying all these threats "dictate" that the country must be "perpetually ready" in addressing problems.

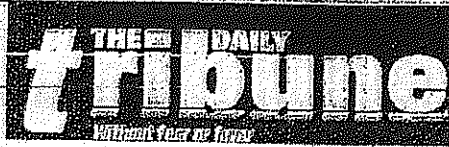
The Philippines is in a row with China over territories in the South China Sea (West Philippine Sea).

China was recently found to have named several underwater features within the mineral-rich Philippine Rise (Benham Rise), a move that alarmed several Philippine government officials.

DEMPSEY REYES

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Military continues implementing security measures on Holy Week

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will continue implementing appropriate security measures to fully secure the country during the Holy Week despite the absence of major security threats against the annual religious observation.

"There is no specific threat monitored for the Holy Week but the AFP will not put its guard down. We will continue to conduct appropriate security measures where needed to safeguard vulnerable communities," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Bienvenido Datuin said in a text message.

He added the military will make appropriate deployment when and where the need arises.

"In every security measure, there will always be a gap that criminals

and terrorists will pursue and take advantage of," Datuin said.

And while the AFP does everything it can to protect the country and its people against all forms of threat, the military official said the help of the public in foiling lawless elements is always welcome.

"Again we recognize the importance of the help of our citizens and the community against the enemies of peace. We call on our people to be part of the security net to detect, deter and frustrate any move by criminals and terrorists," he added.

Meanwhile, Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region commander, said his unit has organized Task

Group "Lenten" to secure places of convergence for the coming Holy Week observance.

The task group will deploy about 500 regular troops and 100 reservists to secure the Quiapo Church in Manila, various bus terminals, and the South and North Harbors also in Manila; Airport Terminals 1, 2 and 3; all MRT stations; Bonifacio Global City in Taguig; SM Mega Mall in Mandaluyong and SM Mall of Asia in Pasay.

"Another force of 200 soldiers will be on standby at major service camps of the Army, Navy and the Philippine Air Force for contingencies. No threat has been detected so far but the command remains on alert," Arrojado added.

PNA

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Military sees no Holy Week threat

The Armed Forces of the Philippines said yesterday that it has not monitored any specific threat but assured that it will not put its guard down in ensuring that the Holy Week will be shielded from violence.

The AFP said that it will continue to conduct appropriate security measures where it's needed to safeguard vulnerable communities from criminals and possibly terrorists.

"There will be appropriate deployment when and where the need arises. In every security measure, there will always be a gap that criminals and terrorists will pursue and take advantage of," the AFP said.

"Again, we recognize the importance of the help of our citizens and the community against the enemies of peace."

"We call on our people to be part of the security net to detect, deter, and frustrate any move by criminals and terrorists," it added.

The AFP Joint Task Force National Capital Region will deploy at least 700 soldiers in various areas in Metro Manila to augment police in securing public places and other areas in the metropolis during the Holy Week.

AFP JTF-NCR commander Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado said an additional 100 military reservists will also join in securing transport hubs, malls, and other areas where people usually converge.

(Francis T. Wakefield)

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Marawi mayor seeks extension of IDPs' stay in Iligan City

BY BONITA L. ERMAC

ILIGAN CITY - A delay in the completion of a temporary relocation site has left Marawi Mayor Majul Gandamra no choice but to ask Iligan City, host of at least 300 displaced Marawi residents, for an extension of their stay in evacuation centers.

In a press briefing at the Task Force Bangon Marawi headquarters here, Iligan City Mayor Celso G. Regencia disclosed that Gandamra has already sent him a letter, requesting the extension of the internally displaced persons' (IDPs) stay in the city's evacuation centers.

The IDPs are supposed to return to Marawi City as scheduled on March 31, but according to Gandamra, the construction of the temporary relocation site in Marawi Poblacion intended for these evacuees was still ongoing. The relocation site is being constructed to accommodate at least 300 families.

"At iyan po ay humingi tayo ng at least fifteen days until April 15, 2018 sa ating mahal na Mayor, kung pwede bigyan po tayo ng two weeks. (That's why we're asking for another 15 days from the mayor, if he can give us two more weeks)," Gandamra said.

It was the second instance that Gandamra had asked for an extension.

He had first requested for an extension of the evacuees' stay until March 31 for the benefit of students who were studying in Iligan City.

"Dahil nga sa mga bata na nag-aaral dito sa Iligan City, so inunawa natin iyon, kasi naman dapat matulungan ang mga bata (That was for the children who were studying in Iligan City, so we had to understand because we need to help them)," he said.

Regencia is hoping that the temporary shelters in Marawi will finally be completed so that the facilities, which have been occupied by the IDPs for the last 10 months, will now be utilized by the city.

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Gov't backs ARMM's reintegration program for former ASG members

By NONOYE LACSON

ZAMBOANGA CITY - The national government is supporting the reintegration program that has been initiated by the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) government for former members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the reintegration program of ARMM was being supported by the national government after the government has delivered positive results from its initial interventions.

Lorenzana, along with Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Assistant Secretary Alexander Macario, attended the ARMM's Regional Peace and Order Council meeting on Thursday, March 21, at the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Western Mindanao Command (AFP West- MinCom) in Zamboanga City.

The reintegration program dubbed Program Against Violence and Extremism (PAVE)

PAVE was designed to provide opportuni-

ties to members of the ASG who surrendered and returned to the fold of law for reintegration into society.

The program was expected to result in more ASG members surrendering in the coming months.

In a separate interview, former Sulu Governor Abdusakur Tan expressed objection to the program saying that the program may only caused disappointment to people of Sulu who are law abiding citizens.

"We just do not understand why those criminals are being given attention by the government while those law abiding citizen could hardly get the attention of the government for livelihood programs," Tan lamented.

I hope they will review again the effect of the program and if the program will bring good to the people of the province, Tan continued.

A total of 173 former Abu Sayyaf members from the provinces of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi have recently surrendered to the AFP or to their local government units (LGUs).

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Bato wants PMA grads back in PNP

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa may push for the reentry of graduates from the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) into the police organization to fill vacancies.

Dela Rosa said graduates from the PNP Academy (PNPA) are not sufficient to meet the demand for police officers with rank of inspector and higher.

He, however, noted that PMA graduates yearly could also not fill the need of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Dela Rosa said he would also ask the PNPA under Philippine Public Safety College president Ricardo de Leon to "increase the quota" of PNPA cadets to address the PNP's needs.

For this year, there were about 150 graduates of PNPA, but only about 50 percent of them joined the PNP while the rest chose the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), both attached agencies of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Upon graduation from the PNPA, cadets are conferred the rank of inspector, equivalent to lieutenant in the military.

The late president Corazon Aquino initiated the demilitarization of the police force in an effort to address abuses and other human rights violations committed by the Philippine Constabulary/Integrated National Police during martial law.

In 1991, Republic Act No. 6975 creating the PNP was signed. The law is national in scope but civilian in character, distinct from the AFP.

PMA Class 1992 became the last batch of military graduates that entered the PNP and will be serving in the PNP until 2026, upon reaching the mandatory retirement age of 56.

The same law paved the way for the creation of the PNPA, which trains future police officers for public safety.

At present, many key positions in the PNP are held by PMA graduates, including Dela Rosa, a member of PMA Class 1986.

Dela Rosa's predecessors, who were also PMAers, tried but failed to have PMA alumni back into the police organization.

In the past, some PNPA graduates claimed they were treated as "second class citizens" by PMAers, who denied such perceptions. - Cecille Suerte Felipe



Dela Rosa is seen congratulating his son, Rock, a PNPA student during an event in the school last year.

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PNP willing to take rebels as cops

Former communist rebels can become police officers.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa over the weekend said rebel returnees could join the police force "if they want to (and if they are) sincere and qualified."

Dela Rosa made the statement in response to the pronouncement of President Duterte that the PNP and the Armed Forces of the Philippines are open to rebel returnees as part of the effort to confidence building and to reform them.

Accepting former rebels is not new in the PNP.

"In fact, we have a lot of former

New People's Army members who joined the police force after their surrender," Dela Rosa said in a briefing over the weekend.

PNP's program for former rebels is expected to boost the law enforcement function of the PNP, particularly anti-insurgency operations.

Dela Rosa said interested rebel returnees should meet the necessary requirements to be able to enter the police organization, which at present has a total strength of 190,000 personnel.

The requirements for police recruits include a college degree, a height of five feet and four inches for males and five feet and two

inches for females, and not more than 30 years old.

Duterte has approved the increase in the salary of Police Officer 1, the lowest rank in the police service, to almost P30,000 or double the previous salary.

The government, through the Department of the Interior and Local Government, also has programs to encourage rebels to return to the fold of the law.

They will be given assistance including livelihood projects and cash depending on the firearm they will surrender. The President also promised to give rebel returnees a decent home.

- Cecille Siente Felipe

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Soldier, teacher robbed at gunpoint

LABRADOR, Pangasinan – A Marine trooper and a teacher were robbed at gunpoint by motorcycle-riding men in separate incidents in this province on Friday.

Cpl Joseph Servanda, 29, was waiting for a ride in this town when a motorcycle with two men on board pulled over in front of him.

One of the men reportedly poked a gun at Servanda and took his bag containing identification cards, a phone and P10,000 cash.

Meanwhile, Monica Garcia, 24, a teacher, was waiting for a bus in front of a barangay hall in Bugallon town when two motorcycle-riding men poked a gun at her.

The suspects took Garcia's bag containing identification cards, P200 cash, a laptop and a phone. – Eva Visperas

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Soldier shoots own men in Iloilo; 1 killed, 4 wounded

'He thought they were their enemy'

By: **Nestor P. Burgos Jr.** - @inquirerdotnet Inquirer Visayas / 07:48 PM March 25, 2018

ILOILO CITY—A soldier shot dead a government militiaman and wounded four others in Maasin town in Iloilo early Sunday.

Staff Sergeant Alvin Estorco, controller of the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit Active Auxiliaries (CAA), allegedly shot dead Albert Magarse and wounded Juan Magarse, Aljun Magarse, Michael Magarse and Jorge Calibayan around 4:30 a.m. in Barangay Panalian.

Officials of the Army's 12th Infantry Battalion turned over Estorco and his R4 assault rifle to the Maasin police station around 11:30 a.m., according to Senior Insp. Feliz Allanza Jr.

Allanza said the shooting happened while Estorco and 16 CAA members under his command were coming home on foot from the neighboring village of Ubian where they provided security for a community dance.

Estorco was in the middle of the group who was walking single file when he went to the front of the line.

He suddenly shot the five CAA personnel on the back, according to Allanza.

"He told us that he thought they were their enemy," Allanza told the INQUIRER.

One of the CAA members behind Estorco managed to wrestle the firearm from the soldier.

Estorco, who realized he shot his own men, helped load the victims in vehicles before he returned to their detachment in Panalian village where he waited for the police and his superiors.

The victims were brought to the Ramon Tabiana Memorial District Hospital in the neighboring town of Cabatuan but physicians pronounced Albert Magarse dead on arrival due to multiple bullet wounds in the back.

The four wounded CAA members also had back wounds, according to Allanza.

Allanza said Estorco and the CAA members were intoxicated when the shooting happened.

The Maasin police office is preparing to file criminal complaints against Estorco for murder and four counts of frustrated murder.

Security has been enhanced in Maasin town following attacks of New People's Army rebels in Maasin, around 31 kilometers from Iloilo City.

On Nov 24 last year, NPA rebels ambushed a convoy of policemen coming home from an operation, killing a policeman and wounding 10 others.

Earlier on June 18, NPA rebels raided and overran the Maasin police station before fleeing with 15 firearms including 12 high-powered rifles. /je

www.retirednalayst.blogspot.com

Military remains on tight watch for Holy Week

From the Philippine News Agency (Mar 25): Military remains on tight watch for Holy Week

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will continue implementing appropriate security measures to fully secure the country during the Holy Week despite the absence of major security threats against the annual religious observation.

"There is no specific threat monitored for the Holy Week but the AFP will not put its guard down. We will continue to conduct appropriate security measures where needed to safeguard vulnerable communities," AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Bienvenido Datuin said in a text message to the Philippine News Agency (PNA) on Friday.

He added that the military will make appropriate deployment when and where the need arises.

"In every security measure, there will always be a gap that criminals and terrorists will pursue and take advantage of," Datuin said.

And while the AFP does everything it can to protect the country and its people against all forms of threats, the military official said the help of the public in foiling lawless elements is always welcome.

"Again we recognize the importance of the help of our citizens and the community against the enemies of peace. We call on our people to be part of the security net to detect, deter and frustrate any move by criminals and terrorists," he added.

Meanwhile, Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region commander, said his unit has organized Task Group "Lenten" to secure places of convergence for the coming Holy Week observance.

The task group will deploy about 500 regular troops and 100 reservists to secure the Quiapo Church in Manila, various bus terminals, and the South and North Harbors also in Manila; Airport Terminals 1, 2, and 3; all MRT stations; Bonifacio Global City in Taguig; SM Mega Mall in Mandaluyong and SM Mall of Asia in Pasay.

"Another force of 200 soldiers will be on standby at major service camps of the Army, Navy and the Philippine Air Force for contingencies. No threat has been detected so far but the command remains on alert," Arrojado added.