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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

13 May 2018

Sunday

PGS



Honor. Patriotism. Duty

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Science and Technology
Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and
Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA)
Weather Division
ISO 9001:2008 Certified
Registry No. 01 100 1534769

24- HOUR PUBLIC WEATHER FORECAST

Issued at: 4:00 AM 13 May 2018
Valid until: 4:00 AM Tomorrow

SYNOPSIS: Easterlies affecting the country.

FORECAST WEATHER CONDITIONS			
Place	Weather Condition	Caused by	Impacts
Samar Provinces	Cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorm	Easterlies	Possible flooding or landslide due to light to moderate with at times heavy rains
Metro Manila and the rest of the country	Partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers	Localized thunderstorms	No significant impact

FORECAST WIND AND COASTAL WATER CONDITIONS			
Place	Winds		Coastal Waters (Wave Height)
	Speed	Direction	
The northern and central Luzon	Light to Moderate	East	Slight to Moderate (0.6 - 2.1m)
The rest of the country	Light to Moderate	East to Northeast	Slight to Moderate (0.6 - 2.1m)

EXTREMES OF TEMPERATURE AND RELATIVE HUMIDITY FOR THE 24-HOUR PERIOD ENDING AT 8:00 PM YESTERDAY
Recorded at PAGASA Weather Station, Science Garden, Diliman, Quezon City

YESTERDAY							
Temperature (C)	Maximum	34.8	1:50 PM	Relative Humidity (%)	Maximum	86	6:00 AM
	Minimum	24.0	6:00 AM		Minimum	45	1:50 PM

TIDES AND ASTRONOMICAL INFORMATION Over Metro Manila								
		Today		Tomorrow			Today	Tomorrow
		Tidal Predictions for Manila Bay (m) (Courtesy of NAMRIA)	High	9:03 AM	0.76		-	-
Low	3:11 PM		0.25	-	-	Sunset	6:16 PM	-
High	9:13 PM		0.62	-	-	Moonset	4:13 PM	-
Low	-		-	2:40 AM	0.26	Moonrise	-	4:26 AM
High	-		-	-	-	Illumination	-	5 %

PREPARED BY: SFD

"Tracking the sky ... helping the country"

CHECKED BY: *[Signature]*



Republic of the Philippines
 Department of Science and Technology
**PHILIPPINE ATMOSPHERIC, GEOPHYSICAL AND
 ASTRONOMICAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (PAGASA)**

WFS-02
 Rev.1.05-06-2016

Weather Division
 ISO 9001:2008 Certified
 Registry No. 01 100 1534769

24-Hour Weather Forecast and Extended Weather Outlook for Selected Cities:

ISSUED AT : 4:00 AM 13 MAY 2018
 VALID BEGINNING : 4:00 AM TODAY

CITIES	24-Hr Weather, Winds and Sea Condition Forecast <i>from 4AM today until 4AM tomorrow</i>		Extended Weather Outlook <i>Duration: 4AM until 4 AM of the following day</i>			
	13 MAY		14 MAY	15 MAY	16 MAY	17 MAY
Metro Manila	24 °C 34 °C	Light to Moderate: East Manila Bay: Slight to Moderate	24 °C 34 °C	24 °C 33 °C	22 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C
Tuguegarao City	24 °C 36 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Southeast	24 °C 36 °C	24 °C 37 °C	25 °C 37 °C	25 °C 37 °C
Laang City	25 °C 34 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Southeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25 °C 34 °C	25 °C 34 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C
Baguio City	16 °C 22 °C	Light to Moderate: East	16 °C 22 °C	16 °C 22 °C	15 °C 23 °C	15 °C 23 °C
SBMA (Olongapo) / Clark Zone (Angeles City)	26 °C 35 °C	Light to Moderate: East Subic Bay: Slight to Moderate	26 °C 35 °C	26 °C 35 °C	25 °C 34 °C	25 °C 34 °C
Tagaytay City	23 °C 31 °C	Light to Moderate: East	23 °C 31 °C	23 °C 31 °C	23 °C 31 °C	23 °C 31 °C
Lipa City	25 °C 33 °C	Light to Moderate: East	25 °C 34 °C	25 °C 34 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C
Legazpi City	25 °C 32 °C	Light to Moderate: East Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C
Puerto Princesa City	26 °C 33 °C	Light to Moderate: East Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	26 °C 33 °C	26 °C 33 °C	25 °C 32 °C	25 °C 32 °C
Iloilo City / Bacolod City	27 °C 33 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	27 °C 33 °C	27 °C 33 °C	26 °C 32 °C	26 °C 32 °C
Metro Cebu	25 °C 33 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C	25 °C 33 °C
Tacolban City	25 °C 33 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25 °C 33 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C
Cagayan de Oro City	24 °C 32 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	24 °C 32 °C	24 °C 32 °C	23 °C 31 °C	23 °C 31 °C
Valencia City	20 °C 32 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Northeast	20 °C 32 °C	20 °C 32 °C	21 °C 31 °C	21 °C 31 °C
Metro Davao	25 °C 35 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	25 °C 35 °C	25 °C 35 °C	25 °C 34 °C	25 °C 34 °C
Zamboanga City	24 °C 34 °C	Light to Moderate: East to Northeast Coastal Waters: Slight to Moderate	24 °C 34 °C	24 °C 34 °C	24 °C 33 °C	24 °C 33 °C

LEGEND:

	Clear Skies		Partly Cloudy to at times Cloudy with Rainshower and/ or Thunderstorms		Occasional Rains		Rains with Gusty Winds
	Partly Cloudy Skies		Cloudy Skies with Rainshower and/ or Thunderstorms		Monsoon Rains / Rains		Stormy
	Partly Cloudy to at times Cloudy with Rainshower		Light Rains				

END OF FORECAST

PREPARED BY: SFD

CHECKED BY: MLM

No constitutional crisis from CJ ouster'

By PAOLO ROMERO

Senators do not see a constitutional crisis arising from a Supreme Court (SC) ruling unseating Maria Lourdes Sereno as chief justice, which lawmakers warned weakened the powers of Congress to remove impeachable officials.

In separate interviews, Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III and Minority Leader Franklin Drilon said it appeared that the House of Representatives would no longer insist on impeaching Sereno after the SC granted the quo warranto petition filed by Solicitor General Jose Calida.

They said if the House would not transmit the articles of impeachment to the Senate, there is no need for the chamber to convene as an impeachment court to try Sereno for her alleged violations of the law and the Constitution.

Turn to Page 2

No From Page 1

"We will only have a constitutional crisis if the House says Sereno's ouster was not valid and the House thinks Sereno remains seated so they will transmit the articles of impeachment, and when that reaches us, we will say 'the House is right, that's why we will conduct a trial,'" Pimentel told *dwiZ*.

He said the next move of the House would be crucial as he downplayed concerns of possible unrest owing to the historic SC decision.

"The decision is controversial but since we are in a democracy, we can speak out," Pimentel said, adding the credibility of the high court will depend on the soundness of the arguments in the ruling.

He said the ruling could also prompt

the constitutional commission to propose amendments to the Charter to strengthen the impeachment process or speed up the removal of erring impeachable officials.

Dilon expressed doubts there would be a constitutional crisis, noting Sereno is not expected to insist to remain as chief justice, even as he reiterated his warning that the decision violated the Constitution.

He said the Senate could not compel the House to transmit the articles of impeachment for Congress to assert its impeachment powers.

Dilon said some senators might file a resolution to protest the move of the SC, but such may not go far due to the separation of powers and independence of the three branches of government.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the quo warranto was a complicated and unprec-

edented legal issue, considering Sereno was removed from office not through impeachment which is what the Constitution mandates.

"The legal question before us therefore is what plenary powers if any does the Senate as an impeachment court have over the acts of both the executive and judicial branches, meaning the solicitor general and the Supreme Court, that have encroached on its exclusive power to remove the Chief Justice," Pangilinan said.

Senate President Pro Tempore Ralph Recto and Sen. Joel Villanueva said the chamber could not press the House to proceed in impeaching Sereno.

House Majority Leader Rodolfo Farinas on Friday said the chamber will likely not transmit the articles of impeachment to the Senate.

Welcomed

Meanwhile, Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez welcomed the SC decision, saying it showed that "the rule of law is prevailing in this country."

He said the high court "interpreted the law correctly."

Alvarez earlier said the House would vote on Sereno's impeachment within two weeks from the resumption of the session of Congress on Monday.

Lawmakers went on an eight-week Lenten recess in March.

Farinas said the impeachment proceeding has become "moot and academic" with Sereno's removal from office by her peers.

Still, he said the House would await the resolution of a motion for reconsideration should the ousted chief justice file one before finally acting on the re-

port of the committee on justice recommending her impeachment.

Sereno has argued that she, being an impeachable officer, could be removed only through impeachment as provided under the Constitution.

She urged the House to send the impeachment complaint to the Senate, where she expected to be accorded a fair trial.

Opposition congressmen urged her to appeal her ouster by filing a motion for reconsideration.

"The close 8-6 vote deserves a very serious review of the decision in a motion for reconsideration. Six of the eight justices who voted to oust Sereno refused to inhibit themselves despite their being biased by testifying against her in the hearing of the impeachment complaint by the House committee on justice," Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman said.

He said four of the eight justices are appointees of President Duterte, who has publicly and actively sought Sereno's removal.

"The Supreme Court has no jurisdiction to remove the chief justice in a quo warranto action because the Constitution mandates that an impeachable official, like the chief magistrate, can only be removed through impeachment by the House of Representatives and conviction by the Senate as the impeachment court," he said.

He said the resort to quo warranto by Calida has expired six years ago, as it was available only within a year from Sereno's appointment by former president Benigno Aquino III in 2012.

"It must also be underscored that the Supreme Court has no jurisdiction to void a presidential appointment based on the endorsement of the Judicial and Bar Council, which is the constitutional body empowered to screen nominees for appointment in the judiciary," Lagman said.

His fellow opposition lawmaker Tom Villarin of Akbayan shared his call for Sereno to appeal her ouster.

"She should file a motion for reconsideration. For the sake of taking out our judiciary from the abyss they plunged themselves in. Against all odds, she must fight," Villarin said.

He called on the House to transmit the impeachment case against Sereno to the Senate on Monday.

"By immediately transmitting the impeachment complaint to the Senate, this will trigger a reversal of the SC decision and will cure the unsound decision by making the impeachment process as the sole remedy for ousting justices. It's a judgment call of the Speaker worth making and rightfully so," he said.

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Grandstanding

Philippine ambassador to the United Nations Teodoro Locsin Jr. has warned SC Associate Justice Marvic Leonen from grandstanding his opposition to the decision removing Sereno.

"Leonen should shut up and act like Carpio with dignity," Locsin posted on Twitter, referring to Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio who also dissented from the decision of the majority.

"Hectoring and faux heroics that cost nothing when his job is not on the line will only alienate the justices who might be convinced to change their vote. Grandstanding – to no effect and without eloquence – is self-abuse," he added.

Locsin was reacting to reports citing Leonen's dissenting opinion, which the justice shared on his social media account.

"I dissent. This petition should have been dismissed outright and not given due course. It does not deserve space in judicial deliberation within our constitutional democratic space," said Leonen.

"Even if the Chief Justice has failed our expectations, quo warranto, as a process to oust an impeachable officer and a sitting member of the Supreme Court, is a legal abomination. It creates a precedent that gravely diminishes judicial independence and threatens the ability of this Court to assert the fundamental rights of our people," he added.

Leonen, a former dean and colleague of Sereno at the University of the Philippines College of Law, urged law students to read the dissenting opinions.

"History has shown that the precedents we hate can be overturned in future more enlightened times with better lawyers who have a better sense of justice. Be that kind of lawyer. Study critically. Do not lose your soul," he wrote.

Not a trier of facts

On Twitter, Locsin – a lawyer and former lawmaker – also raised questions on the removal of Sereno as chief justice.

Locsin noted the SC is not a trier of facts, saying the question that should have been resolved was whether or not quo warranto is an appropriate procedure to remove a justice.

"How can the court oust the CJ when it is not a trier of facts? All it can do and did was say quo warranto is another way to remove a justice, but the quo warranto proceeding must proceed and it may end in an acquittal," he said in an exchange with a journalist.

"I thought quo warranto was questioned as appropriate procedure to remove a justice. Saying yes means the quo warranto proceeding now proceeds. How did they jump to ousting her in the same decision? They granted jurisdiction and made decision?" he asked.

- With Jess Diaz, Janvic Mateo

LEONEN: ALL APPOINTEES NOW OPEN TARGETS FOR SOLGEN

STORY BY DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN AND MARLON RAMOS

Associate Justice Marvic Leonen warns that the ouster of the Chief Justice through a quo warranto petition has given the Solicitor General 'awesome powers' to target appointees of previous administrations, including members of the judiciary, undermining the independence even of the Supreme Court justices.

AT3

FROM A1

By **Dona Z. Pazzibugan**
and **Marlon Ramos**
@Team_Inquirer

The Supreme Court's unprecedented decision to oust Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno through a quo warranto petition has opened the floodgates to similar moves against others in the judiciary, according to one of the dissenting magistrates.

In his dissenting opinion on Friday's majority ruling, Associate Justice Marvic Leonen said the high court granted the Solicitor General "awesome powers" to target appointees of past administrations through quo warranto, which is a means to challenge an official's qualifications for the post.

"Even if the Chief Justice has failed our expectations, quo warranto as a process to oust an impeachable officer and a sitting member of the Supreme Court is a legal abomination," Leonen said.

"Granting this petition as a circumvention of the constitutionally mandated impeachment process will have the deleterious effect of allowing unimpeded incursions into our

judicial independence," he said.

Leonen said the majority should not have entertained Calida's petition, which was filed well beyond the one-year period for questioning appointments.

Undoing appointments

Leonen said allowing the Solicitor General to question an appointment of a previous administration several years later would set a "dangerous precedent."

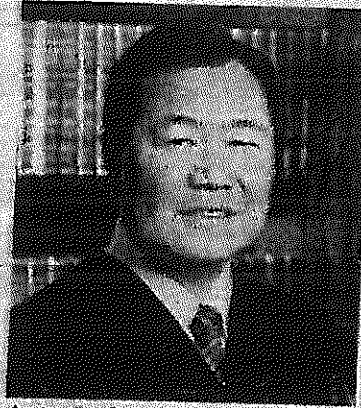
"The current administration can just as easily undo all judicial appointments made by a previous administration," he warned.

He said removing the security of tenure of judges made them "vulnerable to currying favor with whichever political entity is in power, if only to guarantee that they remain in office until retirement."

All candidates for the judiciary, from trial courts to the Supreme Court, including the Ombudsman, are vetted by the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC). The President appoints from the JBC short list.

These appointees serve until their retirement at age 70, except the Ombudsman, who has a fixed seven-year term.

The Solicitor General is a presidential appointee who is not screened by the JBC.



Antonio Carpio



Marvic Leonen

Leonen warned that even Supreme Court justices "who will consistently dissent against the majority" would have no security of tenure since the Solicitor General could question their appointment.

'Aggressive SolGen'

"We render this court subservient to an aggressive Solicitor General. We render those who present dissenting opinions unnecessarily vulnerable to powerful interests," he stressed.

Voting 8-6, the court granted Solicitor General Jose Calida's petition and declared Sereno's appointment six years ago invalid because she did not file her complete statements of assets, liabilities and

net worth (SALNs).

In expelling Sereno, the justices said she flouted the Charter and the Code of Judicial Conduct by failing to submit all her SALNs to the JBC when she applied for the post.

"She should have been disqualified at the outset," the majority ruling said.

"A member of the judiciary who commits such violations cannot be deemed to be a person of proven integrity," it said, agreeing with Calida.

The decision also had the effect of giving appellate court justices the power to exercise discipline and control over lower courts through quo warranto petitions, a power that used to rest with the Supreme Court,

Leonen said.

He warned that "we will be ushering in the phenomena of a trial court judge ousting a colleague from another branch or another judicial region or a Court of Appeals division ousting another justice belonging to another division or working in another region."

Carpio opinion

In his separate dissenting opinion, acting Chief Justice Antonio Carpio said Sereno could be held liable for not religiously filing her SALNs, which is a violation of the Constitution and a ground for impeachment that should be left to Congress to decide on.

The court ruled that the quo warranto could proceed simultaneously with impeachment, saying the remedy was for challenging an appointed official's qualifications while impeachment was for acts made after appointment.

"This is erroneous," Carpio said.

"The House impeaches, and the Senate convicts. This is the only method allowed under the Constitution to remove a member of this court. To allow any other method is to rewrite the Constitution. To permit this quo warranto petition to remove an

incumbent member of this court is to violate the Constitution," he said.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III said in a radio interview that the decision weakened the impeachment process and that the filing of SALNs was not a constitutional requirement for a Chief Justice.

But he believed that the Senate could not legally intervene in the quo warranto case and assert its power to try her because the House had not impeached Sereno.

President Duterte's legal counsel, Salvador Panelo, denied the President was involved in Sereno's ouster, saying it was "out of character" for the Chief Executive.

The National Union of Peoples' Lawyers on Saturday said "our democracy is in peril" and called on lawyers, court workers and law students for a national day of indignation on May 15.

New York-based Human Rights Watch said Sereno's expulsion removed checks and balances and "concentrates power in the hands of Duterte and his allies, posing the greatest danger to democracy in the Philippines since the Marcos dictatorship." —WITH REPORTS

FROM MELVIN GASCON, LEILA B. SALAVERRIA, CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO AND FAYE ORELLANA INQ

**ADVICE FOR DU30
THINK TANK: DON'T
USE WEAK MILITARY
AS EXCUSE ON CHINA**

An independent private think tank said the Philippines had options other than going to war with or being subservient to China in dealing with the installation of military facilities in Philippine-owned reefs by the Asian giant.

Dindo Manhit, head of the Stratbase Albert del Rosario Institute, said the installation of missiles by China in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) should serve as a wake-up call for the Duterte administration to revisit its foreign policy.

While China's conversion of contested areas in the WPS into military facilities had been going on for long, the installation of missiles in at least seven Philippine reefs escalated the tension.

It also became a challenge to the administration to explore other ways to deal with the volatile situation, Manhit said.

"The most common rationale cited—we are militarily not in a good position to wage war on Beijing—should not be license to kowtow to China's every whim," he said.

—FRANCES MANGOSING INQ

Comelec all set for polls

By SHEILA CRISOSTOMO

Voters should bring "passion and patience" when they go to their polling precincts tomorrow for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) polls, according to

the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

Acting Comelec chairman Al Parreno said almost all aspects of the elections are 100 percent complete, including the deployment of ballots and election materials to the field.

According to Comelec spokesman James Jimenez, voters are not required to bring anything to polling precincts since the poll body would provide ballpens and voters are not even required

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Comelec From Page 1

to bring Comelec identification cards.

Given the hot weather and the possibility of people crowding in the polling precincts, Jimenez noted that "the determination to make our vote count" must really be there.

"As far as preparation is concerned, again, there's nothing required per se. But there are some things that are good to have - passion and patience for voting," he added.

The poll body has downloaded the payment of the over 500,000 teachers who will serve as Board of Election Tellers (BET) in 177,575 clustered precincts across the country.

Parreno said local poll officers have identified possible replacements for teachers who may not show up for the elections.

He added that the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have identified and trained their personnel who could provide security during the elections.

Up for grabs in this election are one seat for chairperson and seven seats for *kagawad* (councilman) in each of the 42,044 barangays nationwide.

For the SK polls, the available positions are one chairperson and seven members for each barangay.

Comelec data show there are 78,002,561 registered voters, including 20,626,329 voters for SK and 57,376,232 voters for barangay. Some 17 million voters aged 18 to 30 can vote for both the barangay and SK.

The National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) has cautioned against the return of various forms of election fraud as the country is seeing manual polls again after five years.

"Vote buying can happen whether it's manual or automated elections. But with manual, we can expect to see how this can be executed in many forms," said Namfrel secretary general Eric Alvia.

One of the methods is the use of carbonized or thermal paper by voters when they cast their votes.

Alvia revealed that voters could then show the paper to the vote buyers so they can collect the payment or prove that they voted for the desired candidates.

He claimed there is also the so-called "chain method"

wherein a piece of paper serving as "kodigo" is passed from one voter to another. The voters are supposed to copy the names written on the paper.

Ballot snatching was also rampant in previous manual elections.

"All forms of cheating will return but if the public is vigilant, it can easily be caught. All we need to do is observe and report. The more people are engaged, the greater the chance to stop cheating," he added.

Poll violence

The PNP has recorded 25 violent incidents believed to be related to the barangay and SK elections tomorrow.

As of 6 p.m. Friday, the PNP has recorded 23 shooting incidents and two cases of kidnapping nationwide.

The most numbers of incidents are in Central Luzon with 12, followed by the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao with three and Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), Central Visayas and Eastern Visayas with two incidents each. The remaining four incidents happened in other parts of the country.

However, PNP chief Director General Oscar Albayalde expects fewer violent incidents resulting in death and injuries.

Albayalde said what he expects to happen are incidents such as fistfights and verbal confrontations between supporters of opposing candidates. He added incidents of vote buying could be intense before election day.

PNP spokesman Chief Supt Jonathan Bulalacao said 27 people were killed and six were injured from these poll-related violent incidents, five of which are validated.

"The suspects in these incidents have reached 86 persons already, three of whom were arrested," said Bulalacao in a text message.

Around 163,000 police officers will secure the barangay and SK elections.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) announced yesterday that the number coding scheme will be suspended tomorrow for the polls.

The city government of Makati also said the number coding scheme will be lifted in the city.

Teachers' neutrality

The Department of Education (DepEd) has reminded teachers who will serve as election officers tomorrow to be neutral and not take part in any partisan activity.

Education Undersecretary Alain del Pascua said in a press conference on Friday teachers are prepared for the polls, adding all of them have undergone thorough orientation and training conducted by the Comelec.

"The orientation of teachers has already been conducted by Comelec in every school and in every district nationwide," he said.

Over 300,000 officers will serve in the elections tomorrow, according to Pascua.

Under the new Election Service Reform Act, public school teachers have the option not to serve as election officers.

Alternatives include private school teachers, national government employees except uniformed personnel of the defense department, members of accredited citizen arms or civil society organizations accredited by Comelec and any registered voters of known competence who is not connected with any candidate or party.

Uniformed personnel of the PNP may also be deputized as a last resort in areas where there are no qualified voters willing to render election services.

DepEd on Friday also announced that some teachers will be exempted from the five percent tax to be collected from

the honoraria and travel allowances that they will receive for rendering election services.

Citing the opinion of Bureau of Internal Revenue commissioner Caesar Dulay, DepEd assistant secretary Revsee Escobedo said only those who receive an annual salary of P250,000 or less will be exempted from the tax amounting to P300 to P350.

The honoraria are as follows: P6,000 for those who will serve chair of electoral boards, P5,000 for members of electoral boards; P4,000 for DepEd supervisor officials, and P2,000 for support staff.

Those who will render election services will also receive an additional P1,000 as travel allowance.

Other benefits include a minimum of five days service credit, legal indemnification package worth P50,000, medical assistance of up to P200,000 and election-related death benefit amounting to P500,000.

As the official campaign period comes to a halt today, a waste and pollution watch group challenged all candidates to prepare for clean-up of campaign materials. — With Emmanuel Tupas, Janvic Mateo, Rhodina Villeneuve, Robertzon Ramirez, Celso Amo

10 hurt in Sulu bomb attack

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Ten persons were wounded when an improvised explosive device went off at a karaoke bar in Jolo, Sulu on Friday night.

Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, Joint Task Force Sulu commander, said the explosion occurred in Sitio Martinez, Barangay San Raymundo.

Initial investigation showed a cell phone was used as a detonating device.

13 - Roel Pareño

BACK-CHANNEL TALKS

GPP CAUTIONS GOV'T VS 'LEAKS' AS RODY LIKENS REDS TO POL POT AND HIS MEN

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Allan Nawal @Team_Inquirer

LUCENA CITY—The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has cautioned government officials against prematurely releasing information on ongoing back-channel talks between the two sides amid President Duterte's latest effort to vilify the insurgents.

Saying that leaks on the progress of the preliminary talks could jeopardize efforts to restart formal peace negotiations, the CPP said officials of the Duterte administration "should be more circumspect" in talking about it in public "so as not to preempt the outcome."

In a statement posted on its website, the CPP said negotiators from the government and National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), the umbrella organization of underground groups aligned with the CPP, had earlier agreed to keep mum on the back-channel efforts.

Interim agreement

Last week, Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III, who also chairs the government peace panel, said formal talks were likely to resume by the second week of June after the two sides reached an interim peace agreement.

The deal would pave the way for a formal ceasefire between the military and New

People's Army (NPA), the CPP's armed wing, for the duration of formal negotiations, according to Bello.

Sources earlier revealed that both sides were working on an arrangement that would suspend the alleged collection of "revolutionary taxes" by the rebels.

Mr. Duterte has said the rebels must stop collecting revolutionary taxes, which the military likens to plain extortion, as a gesture of sincerity in the negotiations to peacefully end the country's nearly half-a-century-long Maoist insurgency.

On Friday, the President denounced the insurgents anew before the people of Lanao del Sur and Marawi City by saying the communists did not believe

in God and that a "genocide" might take place if the NPA managed to take over in Mindanao.

He cited Cambodia's experience under the communist Khmer Rouge, led by the tyrant Pol Pot, between 1976 and 1979 when two million of its citizens were ordered killed.

"If you are associated with a person who does not believe in God, does not have a religion, if they will prevail—look at what happened to Cambodia, genocide," he said in a speech during his visit to Marawi.

"You better be careful. At the end of the day, if they get Mindanao, they will finish us off," he added.

Mr. Duterte said that instead of supporting the communists,

the people of Lanao should talk to him so they could thrash out any problem.

"All I am asking you is don't take up arms," he said.

Clamor for justice

The CPP, in its statement, said that while the government had publicly declared that it wanted rebels to commit to a truce, the NDFP "has underscored the clamor for justice."

The government should declare a general amnesty to release at least 500 political prisoners and commit to massive social and economic reforms that would include a sweeping land reform program and national industrialization, it said.

Because formal talks have

not started, clashes between government forces and the rebels persisted.

On Saturday morning, two Army soldiers were killed and eight others were wounded in an encounter with the insurgents at Sitio Atubon, Barangay Tan-awan, in Kabankalan City, Negros Oriental.

Thirty soldiers from the 62nd Infantry Battalion were patrolling Sitio Atubon at about 5 a.m. when at least 60 armed men ambushed them, said Capt. Ruel Llanes, chief of the 303rd Infantry Brigade Civil Military Operations office.

Llanes withheld the identities of the slain and wounded soldiers. —WITH A REPORT FROM CARLA P. GOMEZ INQ

Top NPA leader nabbed in hospital

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – A suspected guerrilla leader of the communist New People's Army (NPA) operating in southern Mindanao was arrested yesterday at a hospital in Bukidnon while recuperating from gunshot wounds.

The military identified the arrested rebel leader as Elizalde Cañete alias Jinggoy.

Officials said Cañete is

the leader of the Pulang Bagani Command of the NPA's Southern Mindanao Regional Command operating in Bukidnon, Davao del Norte and the mountainous districts of Davao City.

Cañete was said to be behind the attacks on government forces and atrocities in this part of the region. The rebel leader is facing charges of murder, officials said.

Cañete was arrested while confined at the Don Carlos Doctors Hospital in

Don Carlos town, Bukidnon. He was reportedly recuperating from gunshot wounds sustained during an encounter with government troops in Kitaotao, Bukidnon on May 10.

Cañete was first arrested sometime in 2010 after government troops saved him following an encounter in Montevista, Compostela Valley. However, he was able to jump bail in 2013 and went back to the NPA.

As this developed, the

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) said they are looking forward to positive resolutions of issues being tackled in the ongoing informal talks with the government.

The CPP also urged the government to be more circumspect in issuing statements or comments while the informal talks are ongoing "so as not to preempt the outcome of the informal talks and efforts to revive formal negotia-

tions "

"It was earlier agreed by both sides that unilateral statements will not be issued prior to actual agreements," the CPP said.

The CPP also urged the media and the public to wait for official statements from the government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) on the outcome of the informal talks.

– With Jaime Laude,
Jose Rodel Clapano, Artemio Dumlaog //

NPA LEADER ARRESTED AT BUKIDNON HOSPITAL

A SUSPECTED New People's Army leader was arrested by the military and police Saturday morning while getting medical treatment at the Don Carlos Doctors Hospital in Bukidnon.

Armed Forces' Eastern Mindanao Command spokesman Maj. Ezra Balagtey said the rebel, Elizalde Cañete alias Jinggoy, was being treated for wounds that he allegedly sustained in a recent encounter with government troops in Kitaotao town Thursday.

Balagtey said Cañete was served with a warrant of arrest for multiple murder and arson.

"He has been charged for numerous crimes and atrocities he committed. He was responsible for the death of fish vendor Larry Buenafe in Davao City in May last year during the NPA burning of the Lapanday Facil-

ity there. His group was also responsible for the burning of construction equipment used in road projects in Paquibato in Davao City," Balagtey said.

The rebel leader was previously captured in 2010 in Montevista town in Compostela Valley province but he jumped bail in 2013.

"The arrest of the rebel leader and his eventual prosecution will now give justice to the victims of his many atrocities particularly, to the late Larry Buenafe who was just peacefully earning a living when he was killed by an NPA-laid landmine," Eastern Mindanao Command chief Gen. Benjamin Madrigal Jr. said.

Balagtey said Cañete heads the Pulang Bagani Company 1 of the NPA's Southern Mindanao Regional Command, which covers Bukidnon, Davao del Norte and Davao City. 13

2 soldiers killed in clash with Reds

By GILBERT BAYORAN

BACOLOD CITY – Two soldiers were killed and eight others were wounded in an encounter with New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Barangay Tan-awan, Kabankalan, Negros Occidental yesterday.

The identities of the victims have been withheld pending notification of their respective families.

It was not immediately known if there were casualties on the side of the communists.

Capt. Ruel Llanes, 303rd Infantry Brigade (IB) Civil Military Operations officer, said soldiers of the 62nd Infantry Battalion were conducting clearing and combat opera-

tions in preparation for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections when they clashed with around 60 rebels.

At least 80 barangays in Negros Occidental have been classified as election areas of concern, mostly due to the presence of communist guerrillas.

Brig. Gen. Eliezer Losanes, 303rd IB commander, said the rebels were believed

involved in the burning of heavy equipment used for a dam project of the National Irrigation Administration in Kabankalan, killing of a civilian in an ambush in Toboso and burning of a cargo truck loaded with fertilizer in Moises Padilla town earlier this week.

5 rebels slain

In Camarines Sur, an NPA rebel was killed in an encounter with government troopers in Barangay Gubat, Lagonoy on Wednesday.

Four other NPA guerrillas were slain in a clash at the boundary of Bato and Balatan

towns on Thursday.

Roadside bombing

An Army soldier was killed and two government troopers were wounded when rebels detonated an improvised explosive device planted along the road at the boundary of Barangays Malinao and Paguring in Libmanan also on Thursday.

More than 200 barangays in Camarines Sur, including rebel-infested areas, are included on the poll watchlist.

Capt. Joas Framis, 9th Infantry Division public affairs officer, said there are around 200 NPA rebels in Bicol.

15 - With Celso Amo

2 soldiers killed, 6 wounded in Negros Occidental clash

BY EUGENEY. ADIONG

BACOLOD CITY: With only two days left before the Barangay and Sanggunian Kabataan (SK) elections, two soldiers were killed while six others were wounded in a clash early on Saturday morning between government troops and suspected rebels in a mountain village in Negros Occidental.

Brig. Gen. Eliezer Losanes, commander of the 303rd Infantry Brigade (IB), said troops of the 62nd Infantry Battalion were conducting combat clearing operations in preparation for the elections on Monday when they encountered about 60 members of the New People's Army (NPA) in Sitio

Atubon, Barangay Tan-awan, Kabankalan City.

Captain Ruel Llanes, civil-military operations officer of the 303IB, said slain were Sgt. Sandy Arevalo and Private First Class (Pfc) Vicente Marcon.

Wounded were Pfc. Michael Bisana, Voltaire Catamin and Kenneth Cerbo; Privates Ryan Las Piñas, Joven Taghap and John Daryle Delgado.

But a statement released by the NPA's Mount Cansermoon Command on Saturday claimed the incident was not an encounter as claimed by the

military but an ambush they conducted against the troops. It also claimed no casualty or wounded on their side during the 30-minute firefight.

Last week, the group also burned down heavy equipment and a bunk for workers of a dam project of the National Irrigation Administration.

A statement it released claimed responsibility for the atrocity because they said project will affect farmers in the area.

A hot pursuit operation against the retreating rebels was ongoing as of late Saturday. 17

4 NPA rebels captured in Masbate

By NIÑO N. LUCES and RUEL SALDICO

CAMP ELIAS ANGELES, Pili, Camarines Sur - Four suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels were captured after clashing with elements of the Philippine Army's Charlie

Company, 2nd Infantry Battalion Saturday morning in Talisay, San Fernando town, Masbate province.

"One platoon of Charlie Company of the said unit encountered more or less six members of the said group while they were conducting security operation in the said area in connection with the upcoming

elections," Capt. Joas Pramis, 9th Infantry Division (ID) information officer told the Manila Bulletin.

He said that 2 of the four captured were wounded while their two other comrades escaped.

Pramis identified the arrested suspected rebels as Ricky Fernandez, 45; Joseph Azuela,

49; Tirso Cantre, 41 and Abel Altajeros, 32.

"Based on initial investigation, the arrested men are members of the NPA under Almario Esparaguera," Pramis said.

Recovered from the encounter site were a .45 caliber pistol, three .38 caliber revolvers, five mobile phones, cash, and various documents.

NPA leader captured in Bukidnon hospital

ZAMBOANGA CITY: A senior communist rebel leader, responsible for multiple murder and arson, wounded during a recent clash with military forces was arrested at a hospital in Don Carlos, Bukidnon on Saturday.

Major Ezra Balagtey, Philippine Army spokesman, said Elizalde Cañete, alias "Jing-goy," was tracked down to the Don Carlos Doctors Hospital where he sought treatment for a gunshot wound sustained during a firefight in Kataotao town also in Bukidnon on Thursday.

Cañete reportedly took over leadership of the Pulang Bagani Command after New People's Army (NPA) leader Leoncio Pitao was slain.

"Cañete has been charged for committing numerous crimes and atrocities. He was responsible for the death of fish vendor Larry Buenafe in Davao City in May last year when the NPA burned the Lapanday Facility there. His group was also respon-

sible for burning construction equipment used in road projects in Paquibato, Davao City," Balagtey said.

The rebel leader was previously arrested in 2010 after he was wounded in a gun battle with troops in Montevista town in Compostela Valley but he escaped after posting bail then resumed his criminal activities.

Gen. Benjamin Madrigal Jr., chief of the Eastern Mindanao Command, lauded the soldiers and policemen for the capture of the notorious NPA leader, saying "the arrest of the rebel leader and his eventual prosecution will now give justice to the victims of his many atrocities particularly the late Larry Buenafe who was peacefully earning a living when he was killed by an NPA-laid landmine."

There was no immediate statement from the NPA on the capture of its leader as of this writing.

AL JACINTO
AND KIMBERLY MALAIT

Rody seeks Malaysia's help for Mindanao peace build-up

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

President Duterte wants to meet with returning Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad to allow reformed members of the terrorist Maute group and other Muslim Filipinos to study agricultural technology.

Duterte earlier congratulated the 92-year-old Mahathir for winning the recent polls in Malaysia.

He said Mahathir brought progress to Malaysia for several decades of his rule. Mahathir was Malaysia's fourth prime minister from 1981 to 2003 and now, the country's seventh premier after defeating Najib Rajak in hotly-contested elections last May 9.

Mahathir returned to power after his party won 122 seats in the 222-seat parliament.

Duterte said he would just call Mahathir to arrange a program to allow Filipinos in Malaysia to study how to cultivate rubber trees and produce palm oil.

The President revealed his plan when he met last Friday with 27 surrenderees of the disbanded Maute group in Marawi City.

He promised the former rebels shelter and livelihood assistance as long as they commit to peace.

Talking to the members of the rebel group inside Camp Ranao, Duterte said the former rebels should first develop technical know-how in palm oil and rubber tree planting so that they can cultivate idle lands in Lanao del Sur.

Once the government aids the rebels, Duterte said they should also start committing themselves to peace and stop propagating the jihadist ideologies.

Duterte said he is looking at the possibility of granting amnesty for members of the rebel group with existing arrest warrants once they have vowed

to talk peace.

After his meeting, Duterte also witnessed the presentation of 2,708 loose firearms that were surrendered to the police and the military during simple ceremonies at the provincial capitol last Friday.

In his speech, the President renewed his offer of reconciliation, calling members of the Islamic State-inspired Maute group who are still in hiding to surrender.

Duterte also thanked the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) for helping attain peace in the region.

"On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank the AFP for this

milestone and I look forward to see more surrenderees and comfortable lives for the Maranaos," he said.

At the same event, the President also declared his plans to proclaim Maguindanao, Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur as land reform areas.

"But first you must study how to plant rubber trees and produce palm oil before I give you these lands," he told the former rebels.

Duterte promised to provide assistance such as tractors, fertilizer and seedlings to the surrenderees.

Duterte recalled that when he saw the Maranao people start

returning to Marawi to reclaim their land, their homes and their lives, he immediately felt a sense of hope that Mindanao can rise as a center of growth and development, not just in the Philippines but in the ASEAN region.

"That is why we have embarked on unprecedented infrastructure development program that intends to facilitate commerce and trade in Mindanao," he said.

"With the support of the Maranaos, I am confident we can spur economic growth and solve the political and socio-economic roots of violent extremism in the region," Duterte

added. - With Edith Regalado

Duterte wants Maranaos to study farming in Malaysia

By **GENALYN D. KABILING**
and **BONITA L. ERMAC**

President Duterte is planning to talk to newly elected Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and seek agricultural training for Filipinos amid government plans to declare Lanao provinces as land reform areas.

In his return visit to Marawi City Friday, the President said he intends to send Maranaos, including rebel returnees, to Malaysia so they can learn skills on rubber and palm oil plantations.

"Tawagan ko lang si Mahathir. Nanalo eh. Talagang bilib ang Alam mo bakit? What is Malaysia today? Pawis ni Mahathir 'yan. Alam ninyo 'yan. Kaya kausapin ko siya na may papuntahin ako para mag-aral lang kayo [I'll just call Mahathir who just won. They are impressed, you know why? What is Malaysia today? That's because of Mahathir's hard work and you know that. I will talk to him about sending you there to study]," the President said during the turnover of loose weapons and distribution of aid to former members of the Maute rebel group.

A total of 2,708 assorted firearms, culled by

Task Force Ranao and local officials of Lanao Del Norte, Lanao Del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay, was turned over to Duterte.

"Sabi ko sa mga Maute surrenderees, mag-punta kayo ng Malacañang at mag-usap tayong papuntahin ko kayo ng preferably Malaysia. Mag-aral kayo doon magtanim ng rubber pati palm oil [I told the Maute surrenderees to go to Malacañang so we can talk. I will send you to Malaysia preferably. You can study there how to plant rubber and palm oil]," he said.

The President said he plans to put "the whole of Lanao" under land reform once the rebuilding efforts in war-ravaged Marawi are completed.

He said he plans to give away idle government lands to the Maranaos so these can be converted into productive plantations. He noted that they can get training from Malaysia, one of the world's largest producers of palm oil.

"Yung the whole of Maute group can go there. Unahin ko sila tapos bigyan ko ng lupa. Tapos kung sino'yung interesado na - lahat dito ibigay ko, sa Maranao lang [The whole of Maute group can go there. I will prioritize them and I'll give them lands. Then whoever is interested, I will give them all away to Maranaos only]," he said. ||

Govt offers new hope for Maute surrenderers

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte, together with Special Assistant to the President and Secretary Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go and top officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police, witnessed the presentation of surrenderers from the Islamic State-inspired Maute group on Friday at Kampo Ranao in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur.

Also presented and turned over to the government by Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte residents were 1,678 unlicensed guns that they have been keeping in support of the government's campaign against loose firearms.

Introduced to the President were 27 surrenderers, including 34-year-old Adliah Miimbantas Maute, wife of Mohammad Kahyam "Otto" Maute, the oldest of the Maute brothers, and 69-year old Ibrahim

➤Maute A2



BACK TO MARAWI President Rodrigo Duterte and his top aide, Christopher Lawrence 'Bong' Go, are welcomed by the military upon their arrival at Kampo Ranao in Marawi City on Friday. Twenty-seven surrenderers from the terrorist Maute group that attacked Marawi last year, and their weapons, were presented to Duterte. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

■ MAUTE FROM A1

Govt offers

Mitoan Macadato, former mayor of Butig, Lanao del Sur.

"Give us time to rebuild and establish the good will. I'm inviting [the rest of the] Maute [group] to come down and we will talk on how we can improve your lives," Duterte said, underscoring the government's sincerity to talk peace with the rebels.

The President announced that the government will provide the surrenderers with housing, capital, land and employment.

Go, meanwhile, declared his readiness to assist in delivering on the promises of Duterte.

The President also gave his commitment to distribution of land to the landless.

"I'm ready to proclaim land reform in Maguindanao and the whole of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur," he said.

The President then ordered Go to ensure a comprehensive land survey in Marawi City to segregate portions that will be given to Maranaos and other indigenous groups.

Duterte said the government will also provide tractors so that land can be tilled and planted to rubber or palm trees.

The surrenderers will be brought to Malacañang in Manila, and then to Malaysia or Indonesia to learn the technology of developing a palm oil plantation.

Duterte pledges better lives for Maute rebels

President Duterte has vowed to improve the lives of members of the Maute by providing them with housing, capital, land and employment should they decide to surrender.

"I propose to you, the other Maranaos, you better come down and as you can see your arms, there is really no purpose," the Commander-in-Chief said in his speech during the presentation of surrendered firearms and distribution of assistance to Maute Group surrenderees in Marawi City on Friday.

"I look forward to see more surrenderees and a comfortable lives for the Maranaos. You come down and we will talk how we can improve your lives," he added.

Mr. Duterte said he would bring Maute surrenderees in Malacañang and then to Malaysia to learn the technology of developing palm oil and rubber tree plantations.

"I told the Maute surrenderees, you go to Malacañang and let's talk. I will bring you preferably in Malaysia. You study their how to plan rubber (tree) and palm oil," he stressed.

The President said he will ask newly-installed Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad to assist the Maute surrenderees.

"I will talk to him that I will send you there to study. The whole of Maute group can go there," he added.

According to Mr. Duterte, he is ready to proclaim land reform in Lanao del Norte and del Sur as well as in Maguindanao and distribute the government property to the poor Maranaos.

He also assured local residents displaced by a five-month conflict between the government troops and Islamic State (IS)-inspired Maute Group last year that will get back their land in Marawi City.

"I will commit to you, as a Maranao, I will commit to you now that I will pour assistance, tractors, fertilizers and even seedlings," Duterte said, drawing applause from the audience.

He appealed to the Maranao people to give the government enough time to rebuild Marawi and establish the goodwill. **Turn to page 3**

From page 1

"There will be some improvements only if you give me time," Mr. Duterte said.

He added special assistant to the President Christopher "Bong" Go can help facilitate the completion of the government's assistance to the Maute surrenderees.

When asked by a surrenderee about other Maute-IS members who want to surrender but have pending cases, Mr. Duterte said he will send Secretary Abdullah Laman-o to negotiate and talk with them for assessment if amnesty

can be granted.

The Chief Executive, however, cautioned the Mautes not to make alliance with New People's Army (NPA).

"I hope, brothers, don't follow the NPA. This is a group who don't believe in God. You better be careful. At the end of the day, if they will get Mindanao, you will be consumed. Believe me," he warned.

Mr. Duterte thanked the Armed Forces of the Philippines for its efforts to convince Maute members to surrender and for their sacrifice to bring peace in Mindanao.

He also expressed

appreciation to the people of Marawi City for their understanding and cooperation.

"My brothers in Marawi, the government wanted peace. We don't want the government to come here and fight. That's a waste of time and money and the lives of the people," he said.

The Maute brothers - Abdullah and Omarkhayam Maute - started fighting the government in 2016 by momentarily seizing the town of Butig in Lanao del Sur in February and November of that year. The attacks apparently were a prelude to bigger operation that culminated in the capture and

occupation of Marawi City in May 23, 2017. They were joined by Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf leader, Isnilon Hapilon, as well as foreign volunteers and elements of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters in the Marawi City attack.

The government counter-attack to capture Marawi City eventually led to the deaths of the Maute brothers and Hapilon as well as dozens of insurgents who took part, but the adventure also left more than 200,000 residents of Marawi City in misery as they lost their homes and family from the fighting. **PNA**

AMNESTY FOR 27 MAUTE REMNANTS

By Vito Barcelo

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte vowed to provide former members of the ISIS-Maute group with lands to till, shelter and livelihood assistance as long as they commit to peace.

At least 27 members of the ISIS-Maute group who surrendered to the government and were presented to Duterte would also be granted amnesty as part of Duterte's intention to solve rebellion and extremist movement in Mindanao by providing them decent living and income through farming.

Talking to the members of the rebel group inside Kampo Ranao, the Chief Executive expressed intentions to give the members of the rebel group idle lands in Lanao del Sur, adding they could cultivate rubber tree and palm oil.

In addition, Duterte told them he was willing to send them to Malaysia for them to see first hand how palm oil and rubber trees were being grown.

The President, however, said the members of the ISIS-Maute group should be willing to talk peace and shun foreign ideologies such as that of the ISIS, which he said originated from Arab countries. **Turn to A2**

AMNESTY...

From A1

For members of the rebel group with existing arrest warrants but are willing to surrender, Duterte said he would look at the possibility of granting them amnesty.

He also warned them of forging an alliance with communist rebels.

Meanwhile, the President witnessed the turnover of 2,708 loose firearms that were surrendered to the police and the military.

In his speech, the President renewed his offer of reconciliation, calling members of the ISIS-Maute group who are still hiding to surrender.

"That is a waste of time and money and the lives of people," he said.

"I'm inviting the other Maute or whatever, you come down and we will talk how we can improve your lives," the President further said.

Duterte also expressed gratitude to the Armed Forces of the Philippines for the milestone.

"On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank the AFP for this milestone and I look forward to see more surrenderers and a comfortable lives for the Maranaos," he said.

During his speech, the President declared his plans to proclaim Maguindanao, Lanao del Norte, and Lanao del Sur as land reform areas.

At the same time, the President promised to provide assistance such as tractors, fertilizer, and seedlings.

Duterte recalled that when he saw the Maranao return to Marawi to reclaim their land, their homes and their lives, he immediately felt a sense of hope that Mindanao could rise as a center of growth and development, not just in the Philippines but the entire Asean region.

"That is why we have embarked on unprecedented infrastructure development program that intends to facilitate commerce and trade in Mindanao," he said.

"With the support of the Maranaos, I am confident we can spur economic growth and solve the political and socioeconomic roots of violent extremism in the region," the President added.

Sumukong Maute members pag-aaralin ni Duterte

Umaasa si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na mas marami pang miyembro ng ISIS-Maute group ang susuko sa gobyerno matapos personal na makausap kamakalawa ang nasa 27 na miyembro na naunang sumuko sa pamahalaan.

Sa kanyang talumpati sa presentasyon ng mga isinukong armas ng mga ISIS-Maute surrenderees sa loob ng Kampo Banao, umapela ang Pangulo sa iba pang miyembro ng rebeldeng grupo na bigyan ng pagkakataon ang gobyerno para matulungan sila.

Ayon pa sa Pangulo magpo-proklama siya ng land reform sa Maguindanao dahil malawak ang nasabing lugar at isasama rin ang Lanao de Norte at Lanao del Sur.

Pag-aaralin din umano ang mga sumuko para matutunan ang teknolohiya sa pagtatanim ng rubber at papupuntahin pa ang mga ito sa Malaysia.

Tatawagan din umano ng Pangulo si Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad tungkol sa gagawaring pag-aaral ng mga sumukong rebelde sa nasabing bansa.

Bukod sa lupa, nanga-ko rin ang Pangulo na magbibigay ng iba pang tulong katulad ng tractors, fertilizer at seedling (Malou Escudero)

5 Abus surrender

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY— Five Abu Sayyaf bandits have surrendered while another has been arrested in Sulu.

Berham Lutian, alias Vietnam, and his followers Abdulsalam Ajul, Simal Sali and Alvin Alibasa surrendered to the Marine Battalion Landing Team 3 (MBLT-3) in Kalingalang Caluang town on Thursday, Rear Admiral Rene Medina, Naval Forces Western Mindanao Command, said yesterday.

Medina said the bandits turned over an M16 rifle, a grenade launcher and several rounds of ammunition.

Ahnajir Ahmad, alias Abu Darda, who was picked up from his hideout in Barangay Ipil, Maimbung, was brought to the MBLT-3 headquarters along with the other surrenderees.

On Friday, Aizar Latip, with aliases of Utchung, Christopher Palomar and Abu Husni, was arrested at a restaurant in this city.

Latip is facing charges

in connection with the kidnapping of Golden Harvest plantation workers in Lantawan, Basilan in June 2001, Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi in Zamboanga Sibugay on June 10, 2007 and restaurant owner Larry Tam delos Santos in Isabela, Basilan on Dec. 16, 2010.

Latip was also tagged in the killing of Marine soldiers who tried to rescue Bossi.

Rescue operation

Meanwhile, six gunmen with alleged links to the Abu Sayyaf were arrested at the border of Luuk and Kalingalang Caluang towns during an operation to rescue the remaining hostages on Thursday.

Uttal Ibno, Hamad Sarahadil, Said Abdusali, Menfabad Jundail, Haminod Sarahadil and Abdukahal Ala yielded a machine gun and three rifles.

The Abu Sayyaf is still holding Police Officer 2 Benierose Alvarez and PO1 Dinah Gumahad, five other Filipinos, a Dutch man, a Vietnamese and three Indonesians.

— With Jaime Laude

5 ASG FIGHTERS SURRENDER, 1 ARRESTED

ZAMBOANGA CITY: Five Abu Sayyaf rebels have surrendered to the military in Sulu while another was arrested by the police here. Rear Admiral Rene Medina, regional Navy commander, identified the surrenderers as Berham Lutian, a sub-leader of the group; Abdulsalam Ajul, Sirmal Sali, Alvin Albasa and Ahmajir Ahmad. They also turned over weapons and currently being investigated at an Army base in the province. Meanwhile, Chief Insp. Helen Galvez, regional police spokesperson, said Abu Sayyaf fighter, Aizar Latip, is also being interrogated following his capture on Friday in Zamboanga City where he was believed on a mission to kidnap civilians. She said Latip is facing a string of criminal charges and was linked to the June 2007 kidnapping of Italian priest Father Giancarlo Bossi in Payao, Zamboanga del Sur, as well as the attacks on government troops and civilians in Basilan over the last decade. **A7 AL JACINTO**



Abu Sayyaf 'spotter' falls in Zamboanga

ZAMBOANGA CITY – An alleged spotter of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), who was also implicated in the killing of 14 marine troops 10 years ago, was arrested in police operations in this city, an official yesterday said.

Chief Supt. Billy Beltran, Police Regional Office-9 (PRO-9) director, identified the arrested ASG spotter as Aizar Latip, who carries the aliases of Christopher Palomar, Abu Utchung, and Abu Husni.

Beltran said Latip, a member of the Basilan-based ASG, was arrested around 6 a.m. Friday near

a restaurant along R.T. Lim Boulevard, Barangay San Jose-Cawa-Cawa, this city.

Beltran said Latip was arrested while he "was tasked to monitor all possible targets for kidnapping in Zamboanga City."

Beltran said Latip has standing warrant of arrest for six-count kidnapping and serious illegal detention cases with no recommended bail for his involvement in the raid of a plantation 16 years ago in Lantawan, Basilan.

In that incident, the Abu Sayyaf bandits seized 15 plantation workers

when they raided on June 11, 2001 the Golden Harvest plantation in Barangay Tairan, Lantawan.

Five of the 15 workers were beheaded by the bandits while the remaining 10 have either escaped or rescued by pursuing military forces.

Beltran said Latip was also involved in the kidnapping of Italian priest, Fr. Gian Carlo Bossi, on June 10, 2007 in Barangay Bulawan, Payao, Zamboanga Sibugay. The suspect was also involved in the kidnapping of businessman Larry Tam Delos Santos on Dec. 16, 2010

in Farmland Resort in Barangay Lanote, Isabela City, Basilan.

He said Latip has also participated in the July 10, 2007 ambush of marine troops in Barangay Guinanta, Al-Barka, Basilan, resulting to the death of 14 marines troops, 10 of them beheaded, and nine others injured.

Beltran said Latip is a follower of Basilan-based ASG sub-leader known as "Commander Abogao."

He was temporarily placed under the custody of 904th Mobile Company of Regional Mobile Force Battalion-9 for proper disposition. **3 PNA**

Bomb explodes in N. Cotabato

MIDSAYAP, North Cotabato — A powerful homemade bomb went off Friday in a vacant lot beside the provincial road here, police said.

Supt. Gilbert Tuzon, police chief of Midsayap, said nobody was hurt in the 8:15 a.m. explosion of an improvised explosive device (IED) fashioned from an 81 mm mortar, with iron round bars, metal sheets and mobile phone as trigger mechanism.

The Midsayap police said a certain Rasol Dubpaleg, a member of IS-linked Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), allegedly planted the IED.

Police said it was meant for military or police vehicles passing by Sitio Narra, Barangay Tugal,

Midsayap, the lone road that connects this town with Datu Piang, Maguindanao, where the BIFF operates.

Police are trying to determine if the bomb-planting was election-related since it was placed on a vacant lot across the Datu Demandtang Dilangalen Elementary School in Barangay Tugal, one of the voting centers in Monday's barangay and youth council elections.

"We are still investigating the case," Tuzon said.

Following the incident, more police checkpoints were positioned along the provincial road, especially in Barangay Tugal, one of the identified election's areas of immediate concern. 3 PNA

FROM A DISTANCE

CARMEN N. PEDROSA

A prediction that became true; Stand with refugees

When I interviewed Mahathir Mohamad in 2015 he was already having second thoughts on why and how he supported PM Razak against his own protege, Anwar Ibrahim. I had come for the trial of Anwar Ibrahim which found him guilty of sodomy. I had friends on the other side of the court who were devastated by the decision because it would mean more than a legal judgement. I would also mean that Anwar would not have a political future. That is how big Mahathir's influence is on Malaysia's political life. He became world news when he attacked George Soros for meddling in Malaysia's economy and politics.



But in our conversation which was more on Philippine politics, we were able to veer to Malaysian politics as well. And even then I knew Razak was in trouble. When and how it will depend on the 92-year-old Malaysian leader who would be called "the world's oldest prime minister, in a stunning electoral victory recently.

In a previous posting showing my picture with former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir, I wrote he would lead a crusade against incumbent prime minister Najib Razak whom he considered corrupt.

"Less known here is that Najib Razak was a close friend of then president Aquino who was pushing for the BBL. It was suspected that money was exchanged. That is a political prerogative of whoever is president but it was shocking when we later found out that Aquino did not only support it, it was drawn up with the legal assistance of Malaysians themselves. When the BBL ran into difficulties, Razak sent his defense minister to Manila to talk to Aquino.

Now Razak is in deep trouble. The Wall Street Journal released documents showing nearly \$700 million of deposits went into his personal bank accounts. The accounts have now been frozen by Malaysian authorities. Razak founded the state investment fund Malaysia Development Bhd and heads its board of advisers. The fund amassed \$11 billion of debt.

If Razak falls, what will president Aquino do? And what about the promise of the Malaysians to develop a future Bangsamoro state?

President Aquino should choose his friends carefully. So should Iqbal. Who can forget Mahathir's angry words vs. Soros and other currency traders. But in Dec 2006, when Mahathir admitted it was not Soros' fault and forgave him! Who then is responsible?

"If you take credit for the loosely managed fast growth years then who should take the blame for the subsequent devastating crash?

This is why Najib's government is doing such "strange" things which include imposing "cooling measures" and limit bank loans to cool down and limit growth in the property and car sales even though it will affect our current economic growth.

If you really wanted strong growth, all govt can do is to encourage speculations, make loans easily available, change back the stock market to T+7, and allow foreign speculators to come in. And of course the party will eventually end again with many people hurt.

Which is why this current government is putting long-term, responsible and sustainable growth instead of out of control growth that will inevitably bring us to tears eventually."

When I asked for the interview he was on his way to the airport and it was his confidential assistant, Sufi Yussof who is now my FB friend, who accommodated the request because I was the mother of Veronica Pedrosa, then the head anchor of Al Jazeera in Kuala Lumpur. Hmm. It was good to have the right connections for something like asking for an interview with Mahathir especially. At the end of the interview I requested Sufi to take a picture. He remained seated so I had to bend my head toward.

June 20 is World Refugee Day, commemorated annually as such since the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed via Resolution 55/76 to mark 20 June 2001 as the first such day following the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. I would have written an entire column on Rohingya refugees but I will reserve that for another day.

If we do not join the protest about denying Rohingyans the right to their home and citizenship we would not be doing what is right.

In the past few years we have seen many forced to flee their homes due to wars and conflicts occurring in various parts of the world, notably Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Myanmar as well as to escape widespread famine caused by the onslaught of global warming and escalation of climate change happening in places such as India and Africa due to, among others, inaction on the part of governments to mitigate the same ever since the Paris Agreement was agreed in December 2015. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, climate change will displace hundreds of millions of people by the end of this century, increasing the risk of violent conflict and wiping trillions of dollars off the global economy if further action is not taken soon to mitigate its effects.

These refugees, many of whom are women and children, must cross-global borders and navigate deep seas, risking their lives in pursuit of safety and survival. Worse still, these refugees, particularly those Syrian refugees who have fled or intend to flee to Europe via Turkey, are not well received and are often forced to fend for themselves against an unwelcoming migration system that treats them as political capital and bargaining chips between the Turkish and European governments.

The Rohingya Muslims, another well-known persecuted group native to Myanmar, are not recognized as citizens by that country and were most recently in 2015 forced to abscond their homeland in large numbers and migrate all over South East Asia to escape brutal suppression of their personal, religious and economic liberty by the ethnic Rakhine.

Buddhists tacitly condoned by the supposed liberal democratic government headed by Nobel laureate Aung San Su Kyi, who continues to turn a blind eye to their internationally recognized plight. Last but not least, let us not forget the Palestinians, who are people forced to exist without a homeland since the creation of Israel in 1948, their right of return to an independent State of their

EDITORIAL

Dismal PH outposts in the Spratlys

Malacañang has taken strong exception to a report in this paper, quoting observations by local officials and international experts alike, that the Philippines appears to have been left behind by rival claimant-countries in developing territories it occupies in the South China Sea.

Carlyle Thayer, a Southeast Asia security expert and professor emeritus at the University of New South Wales' Australian Defense Force Academy, for instance, noted that the Philippines appears to exercise "a form of self-restraint in allowing some of its facilities to fall into disrepair and in not undertaking new construction to keep China from exerting diplomatic pressure."

President Duterte's spokesperson Harry Roque was quick to dismiss this characterization: "If they've overtaken us in asserting their rights and sovereignty, I dispute that," he said, adding that the Philippines is the only one among the claimants "that can claim sovereignty over the islands that we own"—presumably alluding to the favorable ruling the country had won in the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague in 2016 that invalidated China's competing claim to waters and features within Philippine territory.

But the observation, in fact, is hardly new. In April 2017, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, along with a few other military officials and Palawan Gov. Jose Alvarez, flew to Pag-asa Island—the largest of the nine islands that the Philippines occupies in the Spratlys, known collectively as the Kalayaan Island Group—to announce that the Duterte administration was setting aside P1.6 billion to develop Pag-asa into a tourist attraction and a marine research center. Each of the other islands would also be allocated P20 million to build structures on them.

Citing China, which had developed Subi Reef—an island 26 kilometers (14 nautical miles) from Pag-asa—into a highly fortified outpost,

Lorenzana was quoted as saying: "You've seen the other side... You saw Subi Reef. We are the ones who are being left behind here." As for Vietnam, it has "also built up [its islands] so we should have done this before."

What should have been done long before was for Pag-asa and the other Philippine territories to be developed to host permanent, sustainable and thriving habitation, civilian and military, to strengthen the country's territorial claim on them. Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and China have all done extensive work on their own claimed islands. Thus, most of Vietnam's outposts bristle with artillery, gun emplacements, solar panels and bunkers, while Malaysia has transformed one of its islands into both a naval base and a luxury resort.

The Philippines' outpost in Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal, on the other hand, continues to be a desolate, dispiriting picture of the country's state of commitment to its far-flung territories: The BRP Sierra Madre, a rusting, decrepit World War II ship, was intentionally grounded there by the Philippine Navy in 1999 to serve as the garrison for the few hardy Filipino soldiers stationed on rotation as the bulwark of the country's territorial claim on the shoal.

Pag-asa does have an airstrip, a watchtower, a naval station, and a community of some 100 civilians. But the 13-km airstrip is eroded and too short for big aircraft. China, meanwhile, has built 3-km airstrips on three Philippine-claimed reefs that it has turned into massive, missile-armed artificial islands.

Pag-asa also doesn't have a dock, forcing large vessels to anchor far from shore and unload to smaller boats to deliver basic goods to the local community. Lorenzana's visit last year carried news that a port, at last, would be constructed. But more than a year later, nothing has been done.

Against that sorry history, "left behind" seems benign a description of the Philippines' decades-long neglect of its frontiers in the Spratlys. It is a negligence now made even more acute by China's moist eyes on them.

THE DEFENSE CHIEF WAS QUOTED AS SAYING: YOU'VE SEEN THE OTHER SIDE... YOU SAW SUBI REEF. WE ARE THE ONES WHO ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND HERE

ONLINE NEWS

13 May 2018

MANAGEABLE SITUATION | Basilan, a better place now

Posted by **Alvin Santiago** on May 12, 2018 at 8:52 PM

BASILAN (DWDD) – The situation now in Basilan is more manageable compared to previous years due to the large improvement in security and development.

This was the assessment made by Brigadier General Juvymax Uy, Commander, Joint Task Force Basilan.

Admittedly, Basilan is very influential to various armed groups since the former emir of the IS in Southeast Asia, Isnilon Hapilon, is from Eastern Basilan, and was also a former leader of the IS-inspired terror group Abu Sayyaf.

But the death of Hapilon in Marawi proved to be a big blow to these armed groups and is contributory to the improvement of the security situation in the province. The fight against the remnants of the ASG in the province has shifted from pure military efforts to a fight of the AFP together with the Local Government Units up to the Barangay level.

BGen Uy attributed the success of this shift to the previous area commanders and now AFP Chief of Staff Gen Carlito Galvez and Philippine Army Commanding General Bautista.

"it cannot only be attributed under my leadership but it can also be attributed during the time of Chief of Staff Gen Galvez, CGPA Gen Bautista at kung tiignan mo po minana ko na lang ang kanilang naunang ginawa sa Basilan and then I continued the good deeds in the past, ipingpatuloy ko lang." said BGen Uy.

BGen Uy added that remaining ASG members in the province are no longer safe because they have lost most of their influence. In fact, their province mates are turning on them and are reporting to authorities their whereabouts and activities. Their Provincial Government has led the fight against terrorism.

With the influx of ASG surrenderees, their leadership (leaders and sub-leaders) have collapsed. Testament to this is that: First, there was no ASG recruitment in province for the past year; and, second, no incident of kidnapping for more than a year. The last kidnapping incident was recorded March 2017, but it was immediately resolved.

Tourism has also increased, last year they were able to register 1,000 visitors in the first quarter then it swelled to 4,000 or a 300% increase.

The people's response to the reshaping of Basilan was very positive. Their LGUs has been awarded twice for the Seal of Good Governance. **AES**

CAPTURED | Joint Operation nets notorious NPA leader in Davao

Posted by **Alvin Santiago** on May 12, 2018 at 7:31 PM



*Zaldy Cañete
Notorious NPA leader in Davao*

DAVAO (DWDD) – Authorities arrested a notorious leader of the Communist-terrorist New People’s Army (NPA) responsible for several atrocities in Davao City.

According to Major Ezra Balagtey, Public Information Officer, AFP Eastern Mindanao Command (EASTMINCOM), the arrested NPA Leader was identified as Elizalde Cañete Alias Jinggoy, who replaced Leoncio Pitao @ Parago upon the latter’s death as leader of PBC1, SMRC that covers the boundary of Bukidnon, Davao del Norte and the mountainous districts of Davao City.

Cañete was arrested during an Inter-Agency Law Enforcement Operations on May 12, 2018 at 10 o’ clock in the morning at Don Carlos Doctors Hospital, Don Carlos, Bukidnon. The Inter-Agency Report of 1003rd Infantry “Raptor” Brigade, 403rd Infantry Brigade and the Don Carlos Municipal Police Office stated that the team served the warrant of arrest for multiple murder and arson as the said NPA Leader was in the Hospital seeking medical treatment after he was wounded in an encounter in Kitaotao, Bukidnon on May 10, 2018 between the troops of 1003rd Brigade and his group.

Alias Jinggoy has been charged for numerous crimes and atrocities he committed. It can be recalled that he was the one responsible for the death of fish vendor Larry Buenafe in Mandug, Davao City sometime on May 2017 during the NPAs burning of Lapanday Facility in the said Barangay. Likewise, his group was the one responsible for burning of the equipment being used in the ongoing by-pass road at Barangays Mandug and Fatima, both of Paquibato, Davao City.

Jinggoy was first arrested sometime 2010 after soldiers of the Special Forces saved him after he was seriously wounded in an encounter in Montevista, Compostela Valley. However, he was able to jump bail sometime on 2013 and went back to the NPA Terrorist Group.

Meanwhile the Inter-Agency group is now coordinating with the proper court for the legal processing, commitment and security procedures for the said NPA Leader.

Lt. General Benjamin R. Madrigal Jr. Commander – EASTMICNOM, expressed his appreciation to the Inter-Agency Group on the arrest and further extended support in the prosecution of Alias Jinggoy.

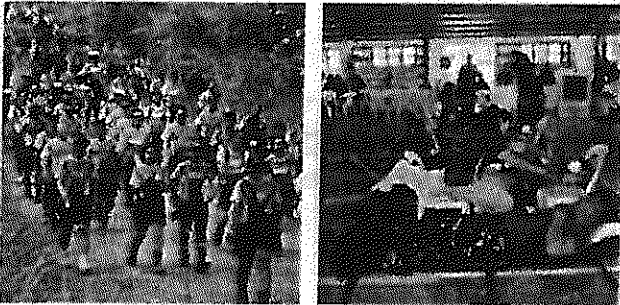
“The arrest of Jinggoy and his eventual prosecution will now give justice to the victims of his many atrocities particularly, to the late Larry Buenafe who was just peacefully earning a living when he was killed by an NPA-laid landmine. While he is receiving medical treatment, we will be backing up the Philippine National Police in providing security and in the eventual prosecution of his numerous cases.” Lt Gen Madrigal Jr said.

“Just like the first time that he was hospitalized in Davao City in 2010, aside from security, I also directed the units concerned to provide and facilitate necessary assistance for his recovery for him to face his charges in the proper court.” Madrigal Jr. added. **AES / EASTMINCOM / MCAG**

ACTIVITIES | 3rd Infantry Division 44th Founding Anniversary

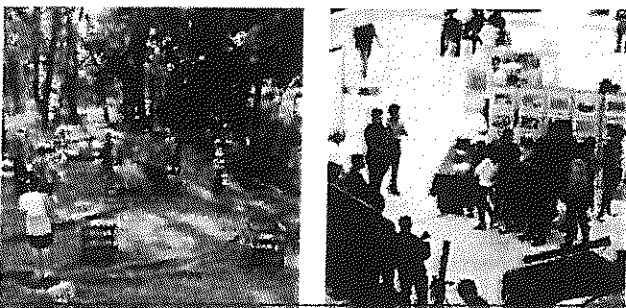
Posted by Alvin Santiago on May 11, 2018 at 2:04 PM

CAMP MACARIO PERALTA, Jamindan, Capiz (DWDD) – The Army's 3rd Infantry "Spearhead" Division under the leadership of Brigadier General Dinoh Dolina staged its pre-anniversary activities highlighting the Division's founding year.



Numerous activities were held to mark the Division's 44th Founding Anniversary. To enhance the camaraderie and skills of our personnel and to develop their competitive spirit, the Division Sports Fest was conducted on March 20-April 16, followed by the Infantry/DRO Squad Challenge on May 01-05 of this year.

Also achieved was a successful Blood Letting Activity held at Camp Peralta on April 30, 2016. To support and promote environmental protection, Nature Trekking and Tree Planting activity were held on May 04. Most Reverend Jose Advincula, D.D, Archbishop of Capiz also joined in the aforementioned activities. In line with the Division's objective of becoming the cleanest and greenest camp, the Clean and Green Contest was also held wherein, General and Special Staffs, together with posts and tenant units actively participated. A Night of Music with the 3ID Combo was held on May 05 and series of successful Kinetic and Static Display on May 06 at Plazuela de Iloilo and Gaisano, Silay City and on May 07 at Gaisano, Roxas City.



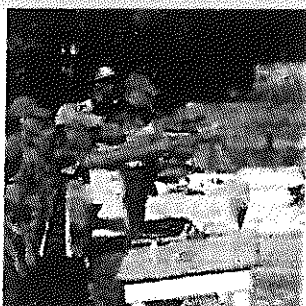
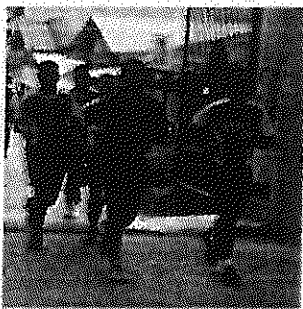
Other activities like Military Artifacts and Photo Contests in connection with the said celebration was also conducted.

Brigadier General Dinoh Dolina, Commander, 3ID, PA, said that the 3ID adopts this year's theme: "Apat na pu't apat na Taong Tapat na Paglilingkod at Bayanihan para sa Kapayapaan Tungo sa Maunlad na Gitna at Kanlurang Bisayas."

"Your Army in Central and Western Visayas has been serving the nation with great distinction of professionalism and excellence. Your Spearhead troopers will continue safeguarding the land and will remain prepared to meet the challenges to our internal security, with the ultimate purpose of protecting the property and lives of our people towards a peaceful and progressive Central and Western Visayas", Dolina added. "

Our concerted efforts to attain peace and prosperity will not end on this decade, rest assured that your Spearhead Troopers are here to protect you at all times", Dolina further said.

The 3ID held its 44th founding anniversary celebration May 10, 2018, graced by Lt Gen. Rolando Joselito Bautista, Commanding General, Philippine Army and Honorable Antonio del Rosario, Governor of the province of Capiz. **3DPAO / MCAG**



Navy eyes deployment of missile-firing ships

Jaime Laude (The Philippine Star) - May 12, 2018 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Navy is eyeing to deploy its first ever missile-firing multi-purpose attack craft (MPAC) to the north of Palawan and other strategic maritime areas of the country.

At least three brand-new locally manufactured and commissioned MPACs are undergoing missile integration and are all expected to be fully operational in two to three months, Navy chief Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad said.

"We are still studying where to deploy our (MPACs) – probably West of Palawan or Zamboanga," said Empedrad on the sidelines of the Maritime Security Forum at the New World Hotel last Thursday.

Palawan is where the country's Malampaya Deepwater Gas-to-Power project is located. It is also close to the West Philippine Sea's reported mineral-rich Recto (Reed) Bank.

Empedrad described the surface-to-surface Spike missiles the Navy has acquired from Israel's defense supplier Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, which are now being refitted to the three MPAC, saying these could destroy targets with pinpoint accuracy.

He added that this latest addition of firepower to the Navy is expected to command respect from other navies sailing within the country's maritime waters and at the same time serve as force deterrence to any threat that challenges the country's security.

With top-speed of up to 42 knots, these missile-firing MPACs are highly capable of fast interdiction of hostile targets and highly ideal for rapid deployment and insertion of troops in the country's maritime islets anywhere in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao, the Navy chief said.

Empedrad also said the Philippine Navy is expected to receive a decommissioned Pohang-class corvette from the South Korean government, without cost except for repairs, refurbishment and the actual transfer.

NPA leader arrested while getting treatment in Bukidnon hospital

By: Frinston Lim - @inquirerdotnet
Inquirer Mindanao / 09:31 PM May 12, 2018

DAVAO CITY – A communist rebel leader blamed for a series of attacks here and nearby areas last year was arrested while undergoing treatment for gunshot wounds at a hospital in Bukidnon.

The military on Saturday confirmed that Elizalde Cañete, alias Ka Jinggoy, was arrested inside a hospital in Don Carlos, Bukidnon around 10 a.m.

Maj. Ezra Balagtey, the spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command, described Cañete as the successor to Leoncio Pitao, alias Commander Parago, who was killed in an encounter in Paquibato district here in 2015, as head of the Pulang Bagani Company 1 of the New People's Army.

This NPA unit operates in the tri-boundaries of Bukidnon and Davao del Norte provinces and Davao City.

Cañete was reportedly wounded in a recent clash in Kitaotao, Bukidnon.

According to Balagtey, Cañete was arrested by virtue of several arrest warrants for a string of murder and arson charges due to his group's attacks on government forces, civilians and businesses in Davao City, particularly the spate of attacks against Lapanday Foods Corp. (LFC) last year that resulted in over P1 billion in losses and death of fish vendor Larry Buenafe.

He said Cañete also faced similar cases in other parts of the region due to his involvement in NPA attacks in Compostela Valley and Agusan del Sur, where he also used to head a rebel fighting unit.

The Compostela Valley native was first arrested in 2010 after getting wounded in a firefight with the 3rd Scout Rangers Battalion in Laak town, Compostela Valley. Three of his followers died in that fighting.

"However he was able to jump bail sometime in 2013 and went back to the terror group," Balagtey said.

Lt. Gen. Benjamin Madrigal Jr., Eastmincom chief, hailed Canete's arrest.

"The arrest of Jinggoy and his eventual prosecution will now give justice to the victims of his many atrocities, particularly to the late Larry Buenafe who was just peacefully earning a living when he was killed by an NPA-laid landmine," Madrigal said.

He added that the military would coordinate with the Philippine National Police in providing security while the rebel leader was undergoing treatment. /atm