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# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

**01 September 2018**

**Saturday**

PGS



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# Navy flagship runs aground near shoal

By JAIME LAUDE

The flagship of the Philippine Navy ran aground Wednesday night while on a patrol mission in the vicinity of Hasa Hasa (Half Moon) Shoal in the waters off Palawan in the West Philippine Sea.

The BRP *Gregorio del Pilar*, a former US coast guard ship acquired by the Philippines in 2011, was on a regular patrol operation when its starboard or right side hit one of the submerged land features in the area, said Col. Noel Detoyato, chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Public Affairs Office.

The area is within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone but is witness to frequent incursions by Chinese vessels. There were no reports of casualties in the mishap.

The impact did not seriously affect the vessel's hull or engine, but some of the ship's operating systems such as secondary side propellers suffered some damage, he said.

Detoyato said floating assets of the Western Command (Wescom), the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and tugboats from Batangas have been mobilized for retrieval operations.

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# Navy

From Page 1

The ship is based in Palawan. It is not clear how long retrieval operations will take.

"In line with our interagency retrieval efforts, Multi-Role Response Vessel (MRRV) 4407 of the PCG arrived at Hasa Hasa Shoal at around 11 p.m.," Detoyato said.

"An investigation is expected in such situations to find out the possible causes of the grounding and to come up with steps to ensure that similar incidents will be prevented,"

Detoyato said.

The Navy has not named the captain of the ship, but a source said the official would be relieved, along with the other officers of the ship. The number of the ship's crew was also not revealed.

"They are relieved -- and will be subjected to an investigation. That's an SOP in the Navy," the source said.

The *Del Pilar* was the first of three vessels of its class that the Philippine government acquired from the

United States under the latter's Excess Defense Article (EDA) program.

The two others are *BRP Ramon Alcaraz* (PF 16) and *BRP Andres Bonifacio* (PF 17).

All three were decommissioned all-weather high endurance US Coast Guard cutters.

The Philippine Navy commissioned the *Del Pilar* in 2011 or a year before the country's maritime row with China took a turn for the worse with the latter's seizure of Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal off Zambales.

Hasa Hasa Shoal is only 60 nautical miles from Bataraza, Palawan.

The shoal serves as rich fishing ground for Filipino fishermen.

In 2012, a Chinese frigate also got stuck at Hasa Hasa while enforcing Beijing's nine-dash-line claim to almost 90 percent of the South China Sea.

Wescom has been conducting routine maritime patrols at Hasa Hasa Shoal, which authorities identified as a trading point for unscrupulous local fishermen who sell their catch, including endangered sea turtles, to Chinese fishermen.

Navy ships supplying Wescom's remotest outpost, the Rizal Reef,

regularly pass through Hasa Hasa.

Rizal Reef is a small outcrop near the country's border with Malaysia.

In 1999, the Philippine Navy deliberately ran aground the ageing transport ship *BRP Sierra Madre* at Ayungin Shoal to serve as an outpost for a handful of Filipino troops guarding the area. The Department of Foreign Affairs said earlier the old World War II-era transport ship was placed at the shoal "to serve as a permanent Philippine government installation in response to China's illegal occupation of Mischief (Panagaruban) Reef in 1995."

# COPS FILE RAPS VS CEBU MAYOR WHO RILED DU30

STORY BY BENJIE B. TALISIC AND ADOR VINCENT S. MAYOL

President Duterte threatens to slap Mayor Tomas Osmeña for reportedly saying he is a protector of illegal drugs as the Cebu City police accused the local executive of obstructing justice and abusing authority.

## FROM A1

By Benjie B. Talisic  
and Ador Vincent S. Mayol  
@Inquirervisayas

CEBU CITY—Police pressed charges against Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña for allegedly interfering with their work, hours before President Duterte ranted against the official who reportedly accused him of being a “protector” of illegal drugs and telling the national government not to meddle in the affairs of the city.

In a complaint filed on Thursday at the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas, Senior Supt. Royina Garma, Cebu City police chief, accused Osmeña of facilitating the release of three detainees arrested last week for illegally refilling butane canisters with liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

Garma said Osmeña was liable for obstruction of justice, abuse of authority and violation of ethical standards for public officials.

Osmeña has been at odds with the police since last year after the National Police Commission removed his supervision over the city police office.

But what surprised many was Mr. Duterte's verbal attack against Osmeña, who was known to be close to the President since he was still mayor of Davao City.

### 5-minute rant

As late as last week when he spoke at the League of Municipalities of the Philippines meeting in Cebu City, Mr. Duterte was even thanking Osmeña for his support in the fight against illegal drugs.

But in a speech on Thursday at the 49th Mandaue City Charter Day celebration, Mr. Duterte went into a five-minute rant against Osmeña for allegedly accusing him of being a protector of illegal drugs and saying the national government should not interfere with the affairs of the city.

“There is one official I wanted to talk to who has been spreading false stories,” Mr. Duterte said without first mentioning Osmeña by name.



Tomas Osmeña

Mr. Duterte said he had asked someone to arrange the meeting “so that when I see him I could slap him.”

“You know who he is. He is the braggart who has been in politics for a long time, who says something like, ‘Don’t interfere with Cebu because it is ours,’” Mr. Duterte said. “You son of a bitch! If you want to leave the Philippines, drag Cebu along with you in the Pacific.”

“Who are you to say that? As



JUN 16 MEMPHIS 24 / CEBU DAILY NEWS

President Duterte  
if you own Cebu. By what right?  
Just because you were a former  
... President's son or grandson?  
Osmeña is the grandson of  
the late President Sergio Osme-  
ña Sr.

"So be it"  
"Hey! Tomas! This isn't the  
Spanish times anymore, OK?  
Your style and the way you  
speak is as if you're so high and  
mighty. And you even said that I  
am supposedly a protector of

'shabu' (crystal meth)," Mr. Dur-  
erte said.

Minutes after the President  
finished speaking at the Mandaue  
Cultural and Sports Complex, Os-  
meña responded, saying he was  
just pointing out a problem.

"The President is entitled to  
say whatever he wants. As a  
lawyer, I am sure that he knows  
there are two sides to any story,  
and not just what [Presidential  
Assistant for the Visayas  
Michael] Diño and PRO-7 (Police  
Regional Office 7) are telling  
him," the mayor said in a post  
on his Facebook page.

He explained that he was  
just pointing out the problem of  
illegal drugs and criminality in  
Cebu, which he said the police  
had refused to admit, insisting  
instead that Cebu was still safe.

"If I have to be the bad guy  
for mentioning that there is a  
problem, so be it," he said,  
adding that he would continue  
doing his job.

"I was elected by the Ce-  
buanos, and it is them I am obli-  
gated to. I will continue to act in  
the interest of my people, espe-  
cially those who have no one else  
to stand up for them," he added.

The complaint filed against  
Osmeña by the Cebu City police  
was accompanied by video  
footage taken by security cam-  
eras at the Parian Police Station  
and affidavits of five policemen  
when he went to the precinct on  
Aug. 24 to take custody of three  
detainees—Ramil Amaca, Romeo  
Appareca and Romeo Cueva.

The three were arrested for  
allegedly refilling butane canis-  
ters with LPG, a violation of  
Presidential Decree No. 1865, at  
T. Padilla Public Market.

#### Bending law 'a little bit'

Osmeña, Garma said, violat-  
ed "a very basic rule— not to in-  
tervene in any arrest."

"The bottom line here is re-  
spect," Garma said.

In a previous interview  
about the incident, Osmeña said  
he "bends the law a little bit for  
poor people because of mercy."

He said he just wanted to  
help people who were trying to  
make a living by hawking.

"They were caught on a Fri-  
day and they're going to be in  
jail the whole weekend," he  
said. —WITH A REPORT FROM JOSE  
SANTINOS, BUNACHITA INQ

VESSEL RUNS AGROUND IN DISPUTED WATERS

# PALACE: PH NAVY SHIP RETRIEVAL 'NO PROBLEM' WITH CHINA

By **Jaymee T. Gamil**  
and **Julie M. Aurelio**  
@Team\_Inquirer

Retrieval operations are underway for the Philippine Navy flagship BRP Gregorio del Pilar, which ran aground on a shoal in the West Philippine Sea on Wednesday night.

The operation may take until next week to be completed, according to the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

BRP Del Pilar and its crew got stranded in the vicinity of Hasa-Hasa Shoal while the vessel was conducting maritime patrols in the area. The barren shoal is known internationally as Half Moon Shoal and lies on the eastern edge of the hotly contested Spratly archipelago.

In a briefing on Friday, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said the retrieval efforts were proceeding "without any problems from China."

#### Acquired from US

Roque made the remarks when asked what the government would do should China stop the Philippine Navy from retrieving the vessel in the disputed waters.

The frigate is one of three former US Coast Guard cutters

which were acquired by the Philippine military from the United States and now are the country's largest warships.

A military report seen by The Associated Press (AP) said the propellers of the frigate, which has more than 100 crew members, were damaged by the grounding.

The crew checked the frigate after it ran aground and found it was not taking in water.

#### Same ship sent by P-Noy

Roque said this was the same vessel that former President Benigno Aquino III deployed to Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal to assert the coun-

have a strong pull, but they run slow," he said.

#### Vessel secured

Since the timeline of the retrieval would depend on the arrival of the tugboats in the area, the operation is expected to be completed by next week at the earliest.

In the meantime, Detoyato said, "floating assets in the vicinity" are available to secure the grounded warship, such as the Philippine Coast Guard patrol vessel BRP Sindangan, which arrived at the shoal around noon on Friday.

No one was reported hurt in the incident.

Detoyato said initial information indicated that the sides of the boat ran aground, not the main propeller or the rudder. There was "very minimal damage" to the hull but no lasting damage such as dents or holes, he said.

The engine remains functional and "all other systems are working," the official added. "An investigation is expected in such situations to find out the possible causes of the grounding and to come up with steps to ensure that similar incidents will be prevented." —WITH A REPORT FROM AP INQ

try's sovereignty there.

"(This) led the Chinese to send multiple Coast Guard vessels to the area, leading to exclusion from Scarborough Shoal. It's the same BRP Gregorio del Pilar," Roque said.

AFP spokesperson Col. Noel Detoyato told reporters that an "interagency effort" to extricate

the frigate was in progress, with two tugboats from Batangas province—more than 800 kilometers away from where the ship is stranded—already deployed as of Friday.

Detoyato said the tugboats may take around two days, or this weekend, to reach the area: "They have the muscle; they



# Massive effort to remove Navy flagship from shoal

By MARTIN A. SADRONGONG

All vessels of the military's Western Command have been mobilized in the operation to remove Philippine Navy (PN) flagship BRP Gregorio del Pilar which ran aground in Hasa-Hasa (Half Moon) Shoal in Palawan Wednesday night.

Col. Noel Detoyato, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman, said Friday the vessels of Western Command area have been ordered to sail to Hasa-Hasa to assist in retrieving the Gregorio del Pilar.

Detoyato said the frigate ran aground in the shoal about 60 nautical miles off

Rizal, Palawan, while on routine patrol in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

The cause of the incident still has to be established since the retrieval of the ship is the primary concern, Detoyato said.

"As of now, we are concentrating on the retrieval and the morale of the troops who are on board. We will just conduct the investigation after it is retrieved," he said in a television interview.

Damage to the ship was "very minimal," he said, and no casualty or injury has so far been reported.

The Gregorio del Pilar, which weighs 3,250 tons and is 378 feet long, was expected to be towed within the next 24 hours barring unforeseen problems.

In a separate military report, the AFP said the vessel was grounded "from bow to amidship," and the propellers were also damaged.

"An investigation is expected in such situations to find out the possible causes of the grounding and to come up with steps to ensure that similar incidents will be prevented," Detoyato said.

The Gregorio del Pilar is a former US Coast Guard cutter that was donated to the Philippine Navy in 2011, along with the BRP Ramon Alcaraz and BRP Andres Bonifacio.

It has since been transformed into a frigate powered by two diesel and two gas turbine engines. 2

## NAVY SHIP RUNS AGROUND IN SCS

A Philippine Navy ship ran aground in the South China Sea (West Philippine Sea) on late Wednesday, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said on Friday.

Col. Noel Detoyato, AFP public affairs chief, reported there was no Navy personnel hurt as a result of the the grounding of the *BRP Gregorio del Pilar* (FF-15) at the Hasa-hasa Shoal, which is located between Pagasa (Thitu) Island and

the southern tip of Palawan.

The vessel carries 117 Navy personnel, of which 15 are officers.

All vessels from the AFP's Palawan-based Western Command (WesCom) were already mobilized to assess and retrieve the stricken vessel to enable it to return to a safe harbor, Detoyato said.

Apart from other ships near the area, tugboats based in Batangas will be deployed for

the retrieval operations.

"An investigation is expected in such situations to find out possible causes of the grounding and to come up with steps to ensure that similar incidents will be prevented," Detoyato said.

As of 11 a.m. on Friday, inter-agency efforts had started to retrieve the fast frigate, after a ship from the Philippine Coast Guard arrived at Hasa-hasa Shoal for the

rescue operations.

According to Detoyato, the removal of the *BRP Gregorio del Pilar* may last until next week, as he assured that the ship has not been damaged.

"[But] we have very minimal damage in the hull," he said, adding that the ship can still run once retrieved.

Detoyato explained that the grounding of the frigate was "unintentional." **DEMPSEY REYES**

## Navy flagship runs aground, still functional

MILITARY authorities have given assurances the *BRP Gregorio Del Pilar*, one of the Philippine Navy's largest warships, is still operational despite minimal damage when it ran aground near Hasa-hasa Shoal in Palawan Wednesday night.

The impact did not cause any heavy damage to the ship's hull, AFP public affairs office chief Col. Noel Detoyato said Friday.

"Damage to the hull is very minimal," Detoyato said, adding the starboard or right propeller sustained damage due to the grounding.

But he maintained the port or left propeller and engines remained intact.

Detoyato said two tugboats from Batangas had been deployed to aid in the recovery of the *BRP Gregorio Del Pilar*, which had 117 Navy personnel on board, with one leaving Thursday afternoon and another later on Friday.

These small craft are expected to reach the grounded frigate in two days and will be used in removing it. The grounding site is being secured by other naval assets in the area, military sources said.

The ship is one of three Hamilton-class cutters acquired by the PN from the United States Coast Guard and converted into frigates. PNA with Francisco Tuvay. AR

## Retrieval of grounded PH navy ship ongoing

MALACAÑANG sees "no problem" with China when the Philippines extricates the navy warship that ran aground on a shoal in the disputed South China Sea.

The BRP Gregorio del Pilar (FF-15) was stranded on Wednesday evening at the Hase-Hasa Shoal, internationally known as Half Moon Shoal, located near the hotly-contested Spratly Islands.

"I understand that efforts are being undertaken to retrieve the grounded Del Pilar. If you remember, this

was the same Del Pilar that was sent by then President [Benigno Simeon III] Aquino to Scarborough, which led the Chinese to send multiple Coast Guard vessels to the area, leading to exclusion from Scarborough Shoal. It's the same Del Pilar," Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque Roque said in his regular Palace briefing yesterday.

Speculations surfaced that China, which has expansive claims in the South China Sea, might not allow Philippine rescuers to retrieve the grounded ship.

## Barko ng Phil Navy sumadsad sa WPS

Sumadsad ang barkong pandigma ng Philippine Navy sa Haka-Haka Shoal sa pinag-aagawang teritoryo sa West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

Ayon kay AFP Public Affairs Office chief, Col. Noel Deloyato, nagsasagawa ng maritime patrol ang Philippine Navy frigate na BRP Gregorio del Pilar nang sumadsad ito sa nasabing shoal na sakop ng 200 miles Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) ng bansa.

Napinsala ang propellers ng barko at wala namang nasaktan sa may mahigit 100 crew members ito.

Sinabi ni Deloyato na dalawang tug boat na ng Philippine Navy ang patungo sa lugar upang maialis ang barko.

Ang nasabing barko na dating US Coast Guard cutters na na nabili ng Pilipinas sa Estados Unidos sa ilalim ng US Excess Defense Article Program noong 2011 ang pinakamalaking barkong pandigma ng Philippine Navy sa ngayon.

Ang dalawa pang barko na galing sa nasabing bansa ay ang BRP Andrea Bonifacio at BRP Ramon Alcaraz.

Noong 2012, isang Chinese frigate ang sumadsad din sa Haka-Haka Shoal, idoy Clintos Hermie Aguirre - trapeze



## Warship ng Ph Navy sumadsad sa WPS shoal

Sumadsad sa West Philippine Sea (WPS) sa Hasa-Hasa Shoal ang BRP Gregorio del Pilar, isang Philippine Navy frigate o barkong pandigma.

Ayon kay Col. Noel Detoyato, Chief ng AFP Public Affairs Office (AFP-PAO) ang nasabing Philippine Navy frigate ay sumadsad sa mababaw na bahagi ng Hasa-Hasa Shoal, isa sa fishing ground sa nasasaklaw na teritoryo ng bansa sa Spratly Islands.

Sinabi ni Detoyato na dalawang tug-boat na ng Philippine Navy ang patungo sa lugar upang maalis ang sumadsad na BRP Gregorio del Pilar sa nasabing shoal na nasa silangang bahagi ng pinag-aagawang teritoryo sa West Philippine Sea.

Nitong Huwebes ng gabi, ayon sa opisyal

Lumilitaw sa imbestigasyon na simula pa noong Agosto 24 ay nag-iinuman na ang mga bik-uma. - *Joy Cantos*-

matapos mabatid ang insidente ay minobilisa na ng Philippine Navy ang naval assets nito para magsagawa ng assessment at maalis sa lugar ang sumadsad na barkong pandigma kung saan ay nasundo na ang lahat ng mga personnels ng PH Navy na lulan ng BRP del Pilar.

Napinsala sa nasabing insidente ang propellers ng BRP Gregorio del Pilar na may mahigit 100 crewmembers at ayon sa opisyal ay mabuti na lamang na wsiang nasaktan sa mga ito.

Ang nasabing barko ay dating US Coast Guard cutters na nabili ng Pilipinas mula sa Estados Unidos sa ilalim ng US Excess Defense Article Program noong 2011 at sa kasalukuyan ay siyang pinakamalaking barkong pandigma ng Philippine Navy.

Ang dalawa pang barko na galing sa nasabing bansa ay ang BRP Andres Bonifacio at BRP Ramon Alcaraz. - *Joy Cantos*-

# Leni to Rody: Stop 'glorifying a dictator'

By Melvin Encarnacion and Nestor Corrales  
@Team\_Inquirer

Work on purifying the nation instead of "glorifying a dictator." Vice President Leni Robredo on Friday said in a critique to President Duterte, reacting to his remarks that the country was better off with a dictator "like Ferdinand Marcos" than with her at the helm.

"Instead of attempting to glorify a dictator who stole billions from our country, drove his son into debt, and presided over the murder and imprisonment of thousands of Filipinos,"

Robredo said, "let us focus on work by truly unifying the nation and ensuring our people, especially those at the fringes, that their voices are being heard and that their daily suffering will soon be eased."

In a speech on Thursday, Mr. Duterte said he wanted to

hand over power to Robredo who was not his naming man.

"You're better off with a dictator in the likes of Marcos. That is what I suggested. You can have constitutional succession [with Robredo], but who cannot back it," he said during the 49th Mandaue City Charter Day in Cebu.

Mr. Duterte earlier said he wanted former Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., the late dictator's son who lost in the 2016 vice presidential race, to be his successor. The younger

Marcos had filed an appeal with the Supreme Court asking for his reinstatement.

President's spokeswoman Harry Roque said the president's preference for Marcos was just for "personal belief."

"With an address to the Vice Presidential Office's periodical assembly made by the President," Roque said.

Members of the opposition also slammed Mr. Duterte's remarks, with former Commission on Human Rights Chief Eric Roa saying it was tantamount to saying "let's go back to the government of Ferdinand Marcos."

"That's the reason he wants to get rid of the 1987 Charter," a lawmaker of government said, "and restore democratic rule and the principle of separation of powers, checks and balances, human rights and justice."

Robredo, however, said

### Diverting public attention

Robredo, a lawyer of martial law eras, said Mr. Duterte's words reflected the thinking of a "fanatic leader who does not believe in democratic rule or a better future."

She compared the move to Marcos, who she said "tried to buy the sword and did not have the will to wield it on himself and stay in power."

For Sen. Francis Pangilinan, the President's remarks were an attempt to divert the pub-



Leni Robredo

lic attention from other important issues.

Robredo said the administration should focus on addressing pressing issues that concerned the country, such as the smuggling of illegal drugs, the imposition of a minimum-waged list, and women's empowerment.

Robredo said she was surprised from the tone of roasting "knob" and raising the National Food Authority's rice from the market, Pangilinan said.

Sen. Antonio Trillanes Jr. warned that the President was "laying the groundwork for an unconstitutional takeover."

"It is trying to influence the military leadership by romanticizing an autocratic rule," Trillanes said. "But it simply won't work. The military knows right from wrong and will never give in to that."

Trillanes said the President

was demanding Robredo to choose he was aware that in any scenario where there is a constitutional transition of power, he and his family would surely be made accountable for their actions.

Robredo said Mr. Duterte's remarks would not affect the election process against Robredo, who has been critical of the President's handling of an issue.

### Electoral protest

The Presidential Electoral Tribunal is conducting what is called the conduct of the ballot. So it's the nation that will not be affected," he said.

Mr. Duterte's expressed an unusual faith in much-wilting Marcos has been controversial with many Filipinos still unsettled by his brutal two-decade rule which ended in his

overthrow in 1986.

Over the years, the Marcos family has regained political power, with Marcos' widow Imelda now a congresswoman, his son and daughter a former senator and daughter Imee a provincial governor, widely believed to be running for senator in 2019.

President Duterte had earlier called Marcos the "brightest" Philippine President and amid public outrage, had allowed the burial of his body in Manila Bay on November 2017.

—WITH REPORTS FROM JIMMY M. AURELIO, GABRIEL PARCO LAY AND REUTERS INC.

## 'Premature to talk about ML extension'

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Malacañang has ceased talking about the possibility of extending martial law in parts of Mindanao after the deadly attacks in Sultan Kudarat that left three people dead and several others wounded last Tuesday.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. yesterday said it is still too early to talk of any extension since the previous martial law proclamation granted by Congress runs until

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## Premature

From Page 1

yearend.

While he goes by the statement of Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea on the principle of primus inter pares or first among equals, Roque said the President has not yet considered seeking an extension.

Any extension of martial law in the region will need consultations between the executive branch and the security cluster of the Cabinet.

Roque pointed out that December is still a long way off, when the President will need to ask Congress for an extension of martial law, if at all.

He said Duterte as commander-in-chief will be seeking the recommendation of the Armed Forces of the Philippines regarding the matter.

The other day, Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said she supports the third extension of martial law in Mindanao. She was seconded by Majority Leader Rolando Andaya Jr., who has stated that Congress would extend martial law if the President asks for it.

"We thank Congress for their cooperation but as I said, the decision whether or not to extend will be pursuant to a recommendation to be made by our security forces and they have not given us any recommendation," Roque said.

## CHR probes bombing

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) is conducting its own investigation on the Sultan Kudarat bombing that claimed the lives of three people and injured more than 30 others.

In a statement, the CHR regional office in Soccsksargen (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos City) condemned the incident and expressed solidarity with families of the victims of the Aug. 28 bomb blast in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat.

"The CHR Region XII is currently conducting an investigation of the incident," it added in Filipino.

The commission has yet to comment on proposals to extend the declaration of martial law in Mindanao following the bombing.

But in an earlier statement, CHR spokesperson Jacqueline de Guia said the government should already lift martial law as the military could ensure peace and order without it.

"With the liberation of Marawi, there is no reason to extend martial law and (the CHR) instead urges the government to lift it," she said at the end of Marawi crisis last November.

"The commission has consistently maintained that it has full trust and confidence in the capability of the Armed Forces to maintain peace and order in Mindanao," De Guia added.

Sultan Kudarat officials have said they are not against the martial law extension.

## Bomb experts

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has deployed bomb experts to help in the investigation of the explosion during a festival in Isulan.

PNP chief Director General Oscar Albayalde sent personnel from the Explosives Ordnance Disposal and Canine Group (EOD/K9) and Bomb Data Center under the Directorate for Operations (DO) to support their investigators in Isulan.

Albayalde, who visited Isulan



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Thursday, said investigators have identified the bomber and his group but it is too early to tell if the Islamic State, which claimed responsibility for the bombing, is really involved.

"There are a lot of claimants, even

that foreign terror group," he said.

He said probes have obtained leads on the man who could be responsible for the explosion.

According to witnesses, the suspect placed a bag containing the

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improvised explosive device (IED) under a motorcycle owned by a militiaman moments before the blast.

"They (residents) chased this person but then he apparently has a companion who was driving a mo-

torcycle," said Albayalde.

Albayalde said that residents told investigators that the suspect even bought fruits from a vendor before the explosion. — With Janvic Mateo, Emmanuel Tupas

PREMATURE SPECULATIONS

**'STILL TOO EARLY' FOR PRESIDENT TO ASK FOR MARTIAL LAW EXTENSION**

Despite the two bomb blasts that killed a total of 14 people in Basilan and Sultan Kudarat in less than a month, Malacañang said it was still premature to discuss the possible extension of martial law in Mindanao.

Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque noted that martial law on the island would not lapse until December.

"It's still too early if the President [will ask] Congress to extend martial law there, and this will be based on the military's recommendation," he said.

Earlier, Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea said the possible extension of military rule in Mindanao was an option after Tuesday's blast in Sultan Kudarat that killed three people

and injured 36 several others.

Mindanao was placed under martial law in May 2017 after Islamic State-inspired jihadi groups laid siege to Marawi City. This was extended to last until Dec. 31 this year.

Medialdea's remark has drawn criticisms from lawmakers and human rights groups.

Former Solicitor General

Florin Hilbay reminded Mr. Duterte that about 70,000 Filipinos fell victims to human rights violations during the Marcos-era martial law.

"With how his administration has been running, it seems that Mr. Duterte would eclipse this number before his term ends," Hilbay said.

—REPORTS FROM JULIE M. AURELIO AND MARLON RAMOS INQ

PALACE:

## 'Too early' to talk about martial law extension

MALACANANG said it would be "too early" to recommend the extension of martial law in Mindanao despite a recent bomb explosion in Sultan

Kudarat in the southern region that killed three people.

In a news briefing on Friday, Palace spokesman Harry

► **ExtensionA8**

■ EXTENSION FROM A1

## 'Too early' to talk about martial law

Roque Jr. said President Rodrigo Duterte had yet to consult security officials on the possible extension of military rule in the conflict-torn region.

"*Sa ngayon po tingin ko masyado pang maaga* (I think it's too early [to talk about the possible extension of martial law in Mindanao])," Roque told reporters.

Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea had said extending military rule was an "option" though Malacanang would not necessarily ask for it.

House leaders on Thursday said

they were open to extending martial law for a third time.

Roque earlier said the Palace would go by the statement of Medialdea but pointed out that martial law in Mindanao would remain in effect until December 31, 2018.

"The truth is, December is still a long way off... We thank Congress for their cooperation but... the decision whether or not to extend [martial law] will be pursuant to a recommendation to be made by our security forces," he added.

Roque added that it was "premature" to conclude that the bombing

in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat earlier this week would impact the effectiveness of martial law in the region.

"This is [only] the second incident that we've had in Mindanao since martial law was declared, the first being Basilan and the second being in Isulan. So let's monitor first," Roque said.

Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo and several senators are opposed to another extension of martial law, saying it had failed to stop violence in the South.

In May last year, Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao

and suspended the writ of habeas corpus to allow government forces to wipe out the Maute group of terrorists who had seized Marawi City in Lanao del Sur.

The declaration was supposed to be good for 60 days under the Constitution. The President asked Congress to extend it up to the end of December 2017.

Before the December 2017 extension ended, Duterte again requested his congressional allies to lengthen it up to the end of this year.

CATHERINE S. VALENTE

# Duterte warns: PH to become Asia's laggard if corruption is not stopped

By GENALYN D. KABILING

The Philippines might not become as progressive as Malaysia and Indonesia if authorities could not stop corruption and keep law and order in the country, President Duterte declared Thursday.

The President, exasperated with the endemic corruption in government, said it would take more than a decade for the country to catch up with these developed neighbors.

"Many years from now or a few years from now, or maybe a year after if we cannot stop graft and corruption and

cannot maintain law and order in this country, the Philippines should never reach the level of economic progress enjoyed by Malaysia and Indonesia on the present level," Duterte said during his visit to Mandaue City, Cebu.

"Pero tayo, it would take us about 10 years or 15 years to catch

▶ 4

## Duterte warns: PH...

◀ 1

up, maybe more than. Yan ang problema sa Pilipino (That's the problem with Filipinos), he said.

The President admitted that he was having difficulty in fighting corruption in government, which prompted him to consider resigning. He lamented that corruption has become part of the transactions in national and local government.

"Hindi ko mahabol ang corruption kay kada transaction sa gobyerno, be it in the local governments, sa national, and even sa Office of the President, na agwad ka buang," he said.

Duterte said he was "so pissed off" when he learned about the alleged anomalous transactions in a military hospital as well as the irregular long-term lease deal involving Nayong Pilipino Foundation and a casino developer.

He said he could not understand how some military officers had the audacity "to order medicines that are not delivered but are paid for."

On the controversial Nayong Pilipino project, Duterte said the original proposal contained a lease of a government property for 75 years, which he strongly opposed.

"Of course they are denying but the first draft, yung sa Nayong Pilipino was really for 75 years. Of course they are

denying because it was not approved. It was not approved because I blew my top," he said.

Faced with the lingering problem of corruption, Duterte said he has offered to quit his post and be replaced by a competent successor.

"Kung ganito na lang, I am offering to step down not because I am afraid of you. Far from it actually. Mayroon akong task, I am a government worker chosen by the people to administer the affairs of the country," he said.

The President recently ordered the relief of Brig. Gen. Edwin Leo Torralavega, head of the AFP-HSC, Col. Antonio Punzalan, commander of the V Lina Medical Center, and 18 others for alleged anomalous transactions. He also authorized court martial proceedings against the concerned officers for the alleged "ghost deliveries" in the military hospital.

Duterte also fired the entire NPF board for approving a "grossly disadvantageous" lease deal with the Hong Kong-based company Landing. The dismissal of the NPF officials was announced the same day the company broke ground for a \$1.5-billion resort and casino project on the NPF property in the Entertainment City.

# Corruption preventing PH economic progress—Du30

**P**RESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has lamented how the Philippines would take longer to reach the economic progress achieved by its neighboring countries due to massive corruption within government.

"If we cannot stop graft and corruption and cannot maintain law and order in this country, Philippines should never reach the level of economic progress enjoyed by Malaysia and Indonesia on the present level," Duterte said in his speech Thursday during the 49th Charter Day celebration at Mandaue City, Cebu.

"It would take us about 10 years or 15 years to catch up, maybe more than. That's the problem with Filipinos. But do not also try to crucify the

country. I don't like it," he added.

Duterte made this remark after criticizing sacked officials of government-owned and-controlled corporation Nayong Pilipino Foundation and high-ranking officials and employees of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Health Service Command anew over alleged corruption.

On Aug. 7, the President fired the entire board of NPF for leasing its property for a \$1.5-billion casino resort in Parañaque City despite his

moratorium on casinos.

Duterte was not only against the construction of new casinos, he also believed the contract was flawed.

"You grant a franchise for 75 years? You must be crazy," Duterte said.

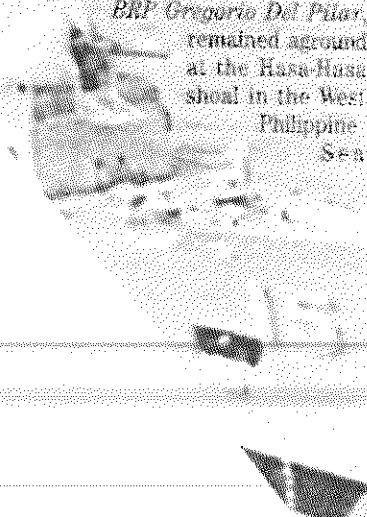
"I was so pissed off that I was trying to fix Nayong Pilipino's anomaly. And here comes a report that afternoon," he added.

A week later, Duterte fired at least 20 high-ranking officials and employees of the AFP-HSC over alleged corruption at the V. Luna Medical Center in Quezon City involving the anomalous purchases of equipment and fraudulent transaction, such as ghost purchases, splitting of contracts to circumvent the mandatory bidding processes, and conceiving fictitious suppliers.

## Tugboats in 'slow' rescue of *Del Pilar*

By Kathleen Mae Balquarin

The country's hand-me-down frigate from the United States, the *BRP Gregorio Del Pilar*, remained aground at the Hasa-Hasa shoal in the West Philippine Sea



yesterday evening.

The ship was stalled on shallow water in the wee hours of 29 August. According to Armed Forces of the Philippines Public Affairs Chief Col. Noel Detoyato, they have already launched tugboats to retrieve the ship.

"The tugboats will come from Batangas so it is expected that it will be a bit slow," Detoyato said, adding they will reach the grounded ship in two days after refueling along the way.

The AFP officer added all other Navy ships needed to retrieve the *BRP Del Pilar* had been sent to the area. No one in the ship had been reported hurt from the grounding.

An investigation is ongoing to determine the circumstances that led to the grounding.

## ARMY OPERATION

## AIR STRIKES NEAR 'LUMAD' SCHOOL TRAUMATIZE KIDS

By Mart D. Sambalud  
@inquinindanac

DAVAO CITY—"Lumad" school children were shaken by military air strikes which nearly hit their school in Talaingod town in Davao del Norte province earlier this week, a spokesperson of a lumad group said.

Jong Monzon, secretary general of the lumad group Pasaka in Southern Mindanao, said the Army's 10th Infantry Division conducted air strikes in the afternoon of Aug. 27 in the village of Dagohoy in Talaingod near a lumad school.

Pasaka, according to Monzon, was trying to determine how many bombs had been dropped in the area and how much damage it had caused.

The bombs fell just 500 meters away from Salugpungan School, where lumad children were attending classes.

### Trauma

Earlier, on Aug. 25, a teacher and schoolchildren also heard gunshots that lasted 30 minutes less than 500 meters away, Monzon said.

"This traumatized teachers and students," Monzon said.

Maj. Ezra Balagtey, spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command, said there was a clash between soldiers and communist rebels on Aug. 27 in Dagohoy.

Balagtey said the Army had to conduct air strikes to extricate wounded soldiers.

"For us to extricate them (3 wounded soldiers) we have to conduct close air support and it was precisely implemented," he said.

Balagtey said it had never been military policy to target schools.

Monzon said Pasaka had documented 21 cases of aerial bombardments in Southern Mindanao since President Duterte assumed office.

Militant groups claimed the military had escalated attacks on lumad communities, leading to mass evacuations and abuses.

### Evacuees

Just recently, thousands of indigenous peoples fled their homes in Surigao del Sur for fear of getting caught in the crossfire between the military and communist guerrillas.

At least 1,600 lumad from Lianga town returned to their homes only after they were given an assurance that the military was not building a detachment in their community.

The Lianga lumad residents, who had spent 23 days at an evacuation center, had been convinced to return home after Church leaders gave them assurance that soldiers were not staying permanently in their neighborhood. INQ

## NPA rebels kill Negros b'gay chief

BACOLOD CITY- Another barangay official was shot dead by suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Marituyod, Negros Oriental on Thursday.

Mario Gonzales, chairman of Barangay Panciao, was in front of his house when three rebels arrived and shot him several times.

Gonzales is the fifth barangay official slain by communist guerrillas on Negros island this month.

Last February, NPA rebels barged in during a barangay council meeting while Gonzales was presiding. The communist guerrillas later raided his residence and took his two guns.

In Mountain Province, a rebel who has yet to be identified was killed in an encounter with government troopers in Barangay Marut, Bontoc town.

The military said two M16 rifles were recovered from the fatality.

In South Cotabato, Jonathan Dawang, 32, of the Guerrilla Front 72 surrendered to personnel of the 27th Infantry Battalion and provincial police also on Thursday. Dawang turned over a rifle, two improvised explosive devices and bomb materials, Lt. Col. Jones Otida, 27th IB commander, said.

- Gilbert Bayoran, Artemio Dumlao, Michael Punongbayan, Jaime Laude



# NPA kills village chief in Negros Oriental

By Kathleen Mae Bulquerin

A village chief was gunned down by members of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) in front of his residence in Manjuyod town in Negros Oriental on Thursday for allegedly resisting extortion, coercion and robbery activities of the terrorist group in his locality.

The victim was identified as Mario Gonzales. A belated report reaching Camp Aguinaldo said three suspected members of the CPP-NPA shot Gonzales in different parts of his body. It was learned he once expressed his desire to resign as village chief after becoming victim of illegal activities of CPP-NPA group.

Lt. Col. Egberto Dacoscos, the commanding officer of the 62nd Infantry Battalion assigned to Negros, lauded Gonzales for his bravery and commitment despite the threats from the terrorist group.

"He is the epitome of a public servant living the tradition of heroism of our forefathers. Rest assured his efforts and sacrifices will not be in vain," he said.

Soldiers from the 15th Infantry Battalion, who were in the area to attend the celebration of "Buwan ng Wika," quickly launched a pursuit operation against the perpetrators but lost the killers in the mountainous part of the province.

Dacoscos condemned the killing and the other reported atrocities of the CPP-NPA terror organization in central Negros, victimizing defenseless village

chiefs and civilians which are a clear violation of human rights and international humanitarian law.

**He is the epitome of a public servant living the tradition of heroism of our forefathers. Rest assured his efforts and sacrifices will not be in vain.**

Meanwhile, a former communist rebel surrendered to the joint elements of 27th Infantry Battalion and South Cotabato Provincial Police Office in Tampakan, South Cotabato on Thursday. Jonathan Pilay Dawang, aka Caloy, 32, resident of Sitio Tukay-mal of Barangay Tablu, and a former member of CPP-NPA's Yunit Milisya (Yumil) voluntarily surrendered to government forces after he was convinced by his family and barangay officials.

According to Lt. Col. Jones Ojeda, commander of 27IB, Dawang was a former member of Yumil under Guerilla Front 72 that operates in the boundaries of South Cotabato-Sultan Kudarat-Davao del Sur and Sarangani Province.

He also surrendered one Carbine rifle and two improvised explosive devices (IED) with two blasting caps and electric wire.

Dawang is now undergoing custodial debriefing and will be enrolled in the government's Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) after verification and validation process.

Ojeda added that Dawang would receive the same benefits as the regular NPA terrorist members get under the E-CLIP program.

He will be provided with P21,000 reintegration assistance, P15,000 immediate assistance, P50,000 livelihood assistance, additional cash for his surrendered firearms and housing program for his family.

# NPA rebels kill village chief in Negros Oriental 13

**By Alfred Dalizon**

**SUSPECTED New People's Army rebels on Thursday shot dead a barangay chairman in Manjuyod, Negros Oriental and wounded the victim's wife, police said.**

Killed was Mario Gonzales, chairman of

Bgy. Panciao in Manjuyod municipality.

Gonzales' wife, Evangelina, was taken to a local hospital for treatment.

Police Regional Office 7 director Chief Supt. Debold Sinas said the gun attack was reported to the local police by Manjuyod Vice Mayor Joan Abuso.

Sinas said that the local police led by Sr. Insp. Antonio Jabar were told by

the vice mayor that the victim was shot by three armed men in front of his house in Bgy. Panciao, which is about 35 kilometers away from the Manjuyod town proper.

According to the vice mayor, Gonzales was hit in different parts of the body and was taken to his house while awaiting a vehicle that will transport him to the hospital.

A police investigation later showed that Gonzales suffered multiple gunshot wounds and died on the spot. His wife was hit by a bullet in the leg.

Responding policemen recovered at the crime scene spent caliber .45 cartridges.

Several witnesses, including a son of the couple, told investigators that

prior to the shooting, the village chief had received death threats from the local NPA.

Members of the Army's 15th Infantry Battalion who were guarding a local government program "Buwana ng Wika" rushed to the site but failed to get the gunmen.

The place is considered a New People's Army-infested area.

## Kapitan Tinumbaga ng NPA — Army

### NI TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY - Tinatay umano ng grupo ng New People's Army (NPA) ang barangay chairman

sa Manjuyod, Negros Oriental, alitong Huwebes.

Ikamitala ni Lt. Col. Ezequiel Dacascos, commander ng 62<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion (62 IB) ng Philippine Army (PA), ang biktima na si Mario Gonzalez.

Si Gonzalez, kapitan ng barangay Pancia, ay pinagbaberil at napatay ng tatlong hindi pa nakikilalang jalala sa nasabing lugar.

Ayon sa militar, liang araw bago ang insidente ay binantian si tinatay ng mga rebelde ang biktima.

Matatandaang mabisang grupo ng mga rebelde ang barangay hall sa lugar habang nagouputong ang mga opisyal ng barangay kung saan tinumbaga ang nasabing auto.

Paliwanag ni Dacascos, kasalungap, may kinalaman sa insidente ang paglaban ni Gonzalez sa pangangotang ng NPA sa nabanggit na lugar.

He was the epitome of a public servant. His efforts and sacrifices will not be in vain. Rest in peace, Dacascos.

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## 'Ratify Bangsamoro law first before we decommission forces,' says MILF commander

By KEITH SACONGCO

**PIKIT, North Cotabato** - A seasoned commander of one of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's (MILF) biggest units has assured that they were ready to be decommissioned once the Bangsamoro law is ratified, and all other remaining agreements are implemented.

"As long as the Bangsamoro law would be ratified, no problem, we are ready to be decommissioned," Jack Abbas, chief of the MILF's Eastern Mindanao Command, told *The Manila Bulletin* in an interview at his headquarters here.

Under the agreement, 80 percent of the MILF's armed wing Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) would be decommissioned after the ratification of the Organic Law on the Bangsamoro for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (OLBARMM).

Another 35 percent of the forces

and weapons will also be decommissioned after the operationalization of the Bangsamoro police, and the remaining 35 percent after the implementation of all signed agreements.

"I hope that the Bangsamoro police would be realized so that the full decommissioning would be realized as well," the 65-year old MILF commander added.

The MILF leadership says the OLBARMM was 85 percent compliant to the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB).

Abbas believes that Bangsamoro Transition Commission-proposed provisions on Bangsamoro police was among those in the CAB that were not included in the approved law.

But for MILF Information Committee chair Mohagher Iqbal said that while they were not able to attain that, the MILF would just have to adapt to the provisions stated in the law.

"Pero kahit papaño, yung nalagay

dyan sa batas na yan, kung magamit natin ng husto palagay ko, mapakinabangan natin yan. Pag usapan natin yan," Iqbal said referring to the Bangsamoro police provisions in a recent gathering.

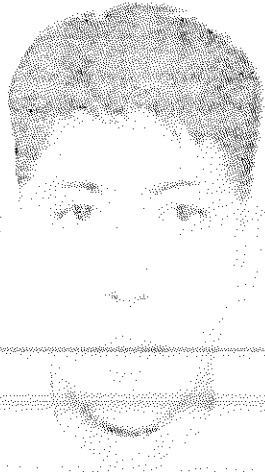
Abbas said the MILF's Eastern Mindanao Command extends from North Cotabato all the way to Davao del Sur and Davao Oriental provinces.

Though he did not disclose the actual number of forces under his unit, *Manila Bulletin* sources disclosed that Abbas commands at least 6,000 BIAF regulars across Eastern Mindanao.

The Eastern Mindanao Command's headquarters is situated in the sprawling Camp Rajamuda in this town. But its operational territory spreads across its neighboring towns in Maguindanao province.

Camp Rajamuda, which is said to be the third largest MILF camp, had been a target of military campaigns in 1997, 2000 and 2002. *J*

# PNP releases facial image of bomb suspect



By Nat Mariano and  
Marion Ramos Argueta

Manila, Sept. 27 (Standard Today) — The Philippine National Police (PNP) released a composite sketch of the suspect in the recent bombing in Davao City, Philippines.

PNP chief Director General Oscar Alvarado said the composite image was prepared by the police's forensic unit.

The suspect is a male, aged 25 to 30, with a height of 5-foot 7 inches, a medium build, and a fair complexion.

PNP is currently conducting a search for the suspect in the area.

Standard Today

## PNP...

From A2

6 inches to 5-foot 7 inches in height, has a medium build, likely weighs around 55 to 60 kilograms, and has fair complexion.

PNP chief Director General Oscar Alvarado said the suspect could be identified by a fruit vendor from whom the suspect bought fruits before the incident.

The suspect was later known to have placed a bag and shoved it under a motorcycle of a Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit member before the explosion, which killed three and wounded 30 others.

Police are also looking into other "persons of interest" who may be involved in the bombing.

Meanwhile, the Palace said Friday that talk about extending martial law in Mindanao is premature, despite the recent bomb attacks in Basilan and Sultan Kudarat.

At a press briefing, Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque said there were still three months before martial law expires at the end of the year, and that President Rodrigo Duterte would need the advice of the military.

"Let's assess [the situation] first. I am not in a position to substitute my decision for that of the men on the ground," he said.

Roque, however, thanked House Majority Leader Rolando Andaya for expressing the readiness of Congress to support an extension, if the President seeks it.

"We thank Congress for their cooperation but as I said, the decision whether or not to extend [martial law] will be pursuant to a recommendation to be made by our security forces," shared Roque. With PNA

## Uphold rules-based int'l system

### COMMENTARY

DINDOMANHIT

All states have the duty to defend the rules-based international system. This was the message of Australian Ambassador Amanda Gorely and British Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific Mark Field at a recent forum organized by Stratbase ADR Institute.

Both diplomats agreed that the rules-based international system has provided clear benefits to their countries, including an extended period of peace, security and prosperity. In order to protect our security and sustain prosperity, states need to defend the integrity of the system, they said.

Gorely and Field noted the presence of threats from countries and leaders who challenge, ignore and undermine international law, as well as the norms that govern how states interact with each other. The militarization of the South China Sea, for instance, remains to be one of the most important and contentious external threats not only for the Philippines, but for the region.

The Australian envoy warned about the significant risk of countries not defending the rules when they are challenged. She urged all states, including the Philippines, to place a high priority on protecting and strengthening the rules that govern state conduct.

Field, meanwhile, stressed that we will all be worse off in the long run if we stand back, perhaps in the hope of some possible short-term gain. The rules-based international system is a network of agreements and institutions that requires support, he said, because it has a huge positive impact on global security and prosperity.

As Gorely pointed out, the use of negoti-

ations—including efforts to negotiate the Asean-China Code of Conduct—is a constructive step that all claimants should participate in to clarify their claims in accordance with international law. She warned countries against pursuing their claims through unilateral action that only destabilizes the region and increases militarization.

She also stressed that the Code of Conduct should not prejudice the interests of third parties or the rights of the states under international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Based on the Single Draft South China Sea Code of Conduct Negotiating Text, third parties are not signatories to the COC. According to reports, China's inputs urge Asean member-states to be bound to the COC, while limiting, if not completely excluding, the involvement of third parties.

For his part, former foreign secretary Albert del Rosario agreed that international law has given equal voice to nations regardless of political, economic or military stature, banishing the unlawful use of sheer force. The Philippines can learn from the best practices of Australia and the United Kingdom in adopting the rules-based system, he said. Both Australia and the United Kingdom are parties to UNCLOS, and they have found the rules incredibly helpful when it came to resolving the maritime

boundaries they share with neighboring countries. Earlier this year, Australia and Timor-Leste agreed on a maritime boundary following the first-ever conciliation proceedings under UNCLOS.

At all times, countries must work to ensure the integrity of the rules-based international system, and oppose any action that raises tensions such as militarization. This is critical to ensuring regional peace and stability. All disputes in the region should be resolved not through force or coercion, but in accordance with international law.

The Philippines has the moral and legal obligation to uphold the 2016 Ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration. But we cannot do this if the administration will continue to adopt a policy of appeasement toward China. We need to regain the respect of responsible nations by clearly standing up for the rule of law.

The Philippines should start rallying for the promotion of a rules-based international system by looking beyond Asean and engaging other external powers like Australia and the United Kingdom. Multilateralism could be a critical step in achieving meaningful political security and economic community.

In the face of these challenges and threats to the rules-based international system, we can either work collectively with other states to defend the rule of law and uphold our sovereign rights, or allow the rule of might to prevail. *DM*

Dindo Manhit is founder and managing director of Stratbase Group.

**ONLINE NEWS**  
**01 SEPTEMBER 2018**

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# DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS | 140 Ex-NPA Mass Supporters Surrender

Posted by [Alvin Santiago](#)

**CAMP MAJOR SABIDO, Guipos, Zamboanga Del Sur (DWDD)** – One hundred forty mass supporters of the New People's Army (NPA) from the mountainous Barangay of Saad, Dumingag town in Zamboanga Del Sur surrendered and pledged their allegiance and support to the government during the "Panagtigum Alang sa Kalambuan Ug Kalinaw" (Union for Development and Progress) during the celebration of their "Araw ng Barangay" last Aug 26.



Col Bagnus Gearlan GSC (INF) PA, the Brigade Commander of 102 Infantry "Igsoon" Brigade, 11D, PA, graces the occasion along with Dumingag Mayor Mark Pacalioga, Lt. Col. Marlowe Patria Inf (GSC) PA, the Commanding Officer of the 53rd Infantry (Matapat) Battalion, 11D, PA and PCI Norbert Velonza, Chief of Dumingag police station.

Hon. Jeffrey Señara, the Barangay Captain of Saad led his community in denouncing the Communist NPA Terrorists (CNTs) influence in their barangay and in burning CPP-NPA flags to cap the ceremony. He mainly attributed their poor condition to the continued presence of armed rebels in the vicinity.

However, as they denounced the armed revolution of the CPP-NPA-NDF, they are hopeful that development can finally come to their community for the improvement of their living conditions.

Mayor Pacalioga, who also brought along with him representatives of their LGU Offices, vowed to continue to improve their delivery of basic services up to far-flung communities.

*"The LGU of Dumingag, ZDS promises to provide and deliver the basic services of the people especially those who are living in far-flung areas like barangay Saad. We want to thank the military for being a partner always in the development of our municipality especially in their effort to fight against insurgency. Thus, we promise to bring heavy equipments for the repair of the road in the area to help our people in their daily living,"* he said.

He also resumed the paving and concreting of the access road to the said barangay, a project that was often stalled due to NPA harassment and extortion activities.

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

The military, meanwhile, committed to put more soldiers in the vicinity to increase their presence and ensure that the communities are continuously protected and government projects can continue towards their completion.

*“Even if there is peace it does not mean that there is no conflict. Our hands are always open to help those who want to go back to the side of the government. Let’s cooperate and help each other if we want to achieve a peaceful life.” Col Bagnus said.*

Saad is a depressed barangay of Dumingag in Zamboanga del Sur. It is categorized as influenced by the NPA for decades since many are active members of CNTs underground organizations. These members used to form part of the mass base of CPP/NPA/NDF that sustains the armed group by providing it with able members among residents they have agitated and aroused through their deceptive and manipulative propaganda. They also facilitate collection of goods and money for extortion and information about government forces to avoid armed encounter, capture or arrest.

Lt Col Patria in his speech also emphasized the governments’ re-integration program, particularly the Enhanced-Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP).

He said, “E-CLIP is now being enjoyed by former rebels who chose to abandon armed revolution and decided go back to the mainstream society to live normal and peaceful lives with their families.” **102IBde Igsoon / MCAG**

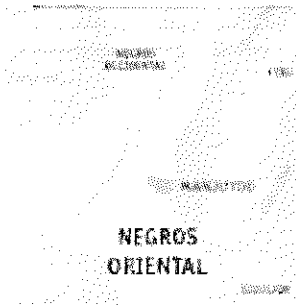


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# CONSTITUENTS MOURN | Village Chief killed by CPP-NPA Terrorist in Negros Oriental

Posted by Alvin Santiago

**MANJUYOD, Negros Oriental (DWDD)** – Residents of Barangay Panciao, Manjuyod, Negros Oriental are now in deep sorrow over the death of their hero village chairman who was killed by the CPP-NPA Terrorists (CNTs) at around 11:45 am of August 30, 2018.



Three unidentified members of the terrorist organization gunned down Village Chief Mario Gonzalez in front of his residence. The victim sustained gunshot wounds in different parts of his body that led to his instantaneous death. Pursuit operations was immediately conducted by members of the Alpha Company, 15th Infantry Battalion who happened to be attending the "Buwan ng Wika" Celebration at the aforementioned Barangay.

Gonzalez was a victim of the coercion, extortion and robbery activities of the CPP-NPA Terrorist. Sometime in February of this year, during a barangay session, CNTs ransacked the Barangay Hall and carted away the belongings of the village officials. He once attempted to resign from his position but his passion and conviction to his constituents motivated him to continue the fight for his people.

LTC Egberto O Dacoscos, the Commanding Officer of the the Army's 62nd Infantry Battalion lauded Gonzalez for his bravery despite the threats he received from the CPP-NPA Terrorist. "He is the epitome of a public servant living the tradition of heroism of our forefathers. Rest assured that his efforts and sacrifices will not be in vain" he added.

Dacoscos also condemned in the strongest possible terms the killing rampage of the CPP-NPA Terrorist in Central Negros victimizing defenseless village chairmen and civilians which is a clear violation of human rights and international humanitarian law. **62IB Unifier / MCAG**

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# Ozamiz archbishop supports martial law extension

By Ferdinand Patinio

**MANILA** -- A Catholic prelate on Friday expressed support for the possible extension of martial law in Mindanao.

"I am for the extension of martial law provided the Constitution of our land is its basis," Ozamiz Archbishop Martin Jumoad said in an interview.

Jumoad lauded personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP) who are overseeing peace and order in the region.

"I am happy with our soldiers and policemen in the detachments. They are very respectful and courteous," he said.

"Well-disciplined and ready to implement the Rule of Law, our people need to be disciplined," the Ozamiz archbishop added.

Jumoad admitted that the authorities are doing their best in safeguarding the people but they are not perfect.

"There are always lapses and we are just human beings," he said.

On Thursday, House of Representatives Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said she is ready to support President Rodrigo Duterte if he decides to extend martial law in Mindanao.

Last Tuesday, three people died when an improvised bomb exploded near a grocery store in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat as the founding anniversary of the town was being celebrated. Authorities are investigating the incident.

Last year, lawmakers extended martial rule in Mindanao until the end of 2018. (PNA)

www.inquirer.net

# Suspected rebel killed in Mountain Province clash

By: Villamor Visana Jr.

CAMP MELCHOR DELA CRUZ. Isabela — A suspected member of the New People's Army was killed during an overnight running gun battle between armed men and Army soldiers at the mountains of Mainit village in Bontoc town, Mountain Province.

The military said the clash took place from Thursday night until Friday morning, after soldiers from the 50th Infantry Battalion pounced on about 39 armed men during a security operation in Mainit.

No casualties were reported from the government side, according to Captain Jefferson Somera, 5th Infantry Division spokesperson and public affairs chief. Two M-16 Armalite rifles allegedly belonging to the armed group were confiscated, he added.

The military said the slain rebel has not been identified and was brought to a funeral parlor where it underwent an autopsy. /kga