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04 September 2018

Tuesday



Honor. Patriotism. Duty

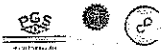
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Rody apologizes to Obama

By ALEXIS ROMERO

JERUSALEM – In an unexpected move, President Duterte yesterday apologized to former United States president Barack Obama for cursing him publicly out of anger at the US leader's criticism of his bloody crackdown on illegal drugs.

The tough-talking Duterte changed his tune during a meeting with the Filipino community here, adding that he had also "forgiven" Obama for criticizing the war on drugs.

After recalling how he had cursed Obama for supposedly humiliating him publicly, Duterte offered his apologies.

"I got angry. I said, 'son of a b****, Obama, you can go to hell. You son of a b****.' I said that because he was not a civilized person anyway. Being a president of a republic you ought to know the basic rules. You do not criticize, especially if it is a

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Rody

From Page 1

problem of the country that you are criticizing," Duterte said.

"Well then, it would be appropriate also to say at this time to Mr. Obama that you are now a civilian and I am sorry for uttering those words. No, it was just a plain talkatise also like yours. We have learned our lessons very well," the President said.

Duterte said he had already forgiven Obama for criticizing his war on drugs. He explained that he tends to use foul language whenever he loses his temper.

"I am forgiving you, just like my girlfriends when I was still a bachelor. I am forgiving you. I have forgiven all of them," the President said.

Duterte's controversial campaign against narcotics has left more than 4,000 people dead, sparking concerns among human rights advocates.

Aside from Obama, the European Union (EU) had also expressed concern over Duterte's war on illegal drugs, one of the campaign promises that catapulted him to victory in 2016.

Obama's criticism of the drug war prompted Duterte to declare the Philippines' "separation" from its traditional ally the US and to emphasize the need for an independent foreign policy.

While Duterte was combative towards Obama, he had kind words for US President Donald Trump, whom he described as "warm."

"Look at America now, look at Netflix, the dope and everything, they are suffering. Now, here is America, then comes Trump. Trump is a good friend of mine," the President said.

"He (Trump) is because he speaks my language and he is a bit warmer. Obama was a cold person... always at a distance even his talkatise," he added.

Duterte said Trump had

told him that he was "doing it right" in his anti-drug crackdown. He said the US president had even expressed interest to follow his example.

"So forcing me to say, where do I go from here? Here is one guy president and another president. So what will I do? I cannot understand you. Two presidents - praising you and one is condemning you," he added.

Trump earlier invited Duterte to the White House but the Philippine leader has not yet accepted the invitation.

Duterte reiterated his warning to drug lords, saying he would not hesitate to kill those who seek to destroy the youth.

"They are asking if it is true, then I'm telling everybody, including the whole world, it is true. Because if you destroy my country, you are destroying me and my beloved Philippines," he said.

In a statement, meanwhile, Malacañang denied Israeli

media reports there were 400 people in President Duterte's retinue.

The delegation included military and police officials who are expected to visit Israeli camps.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said less than 50 officials would join the trip but admitted that the business delegation was "substantial."

"The total number of official delegates and accompanying delegates consists of 46 people total. That's in the official list," Roque said in a statement.

"I do know there's a substantial business delegation of at least 150 who are all traveling on their own accounts. Not sure where figure of 400 came from," he added.

Duterte previously said "many" retiring police and military officials would join him in his Israel trip as a "reward" for their service.

DUTERTE SAYS SORRY FOR CURSING OBAMA

'If it is [in] your heart to forgive, you forgive. I have forgiven you,' says the Philippine leader. He also defends his latest rape joke, invoking 'democracy' and 'freedom of expression.'

By Christine O. Avendaño
@10avendanoINQ

JERUSALEM—President Duterte has apologized to former US President Barack Obama for calling him a "son of a bitch" in 2016, which sparked a new low

in their nations' long alliance. Mr. Duterte lobbed the insult at Obama in response to steady criticism from the United States over his violent war on drugs, which had killed thousands of addicts, becoming a target for international

condemnation. But Mr. Duterte said the Philippines' relationship with America had since improved under US President Donald Trump, whom he described as a "good friend" who "speaks my language."

"It would be appropriate also to say at this time to Mr. Obama that you are now a civilian and I am sorry for uttering those words," Mr. Duterte said on Sunday night in a speech at an event with Filipinos in Israel held at the Ramada Hotel.

"If it is [in] your heart to forgive, you forgive. I have forgiven you, just like my girlfriends when I was still a bachelor... I have forgiven them also," Mr. Duterte said. Mr. Duterte and Obama were scheduled to meet on the

sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit in Laos in September 2015, but the US leader canceled the meeting after the Philippine President vowed to curse him if he brought up human rights at their talks.

FROM A1

Mr. Duterte explained that he cursed Obama because the then US president criticized his war on drugs.

He said he would have preferred Obama bring a complaint against him in the United Nations than telling the public that "I am wrong."

The Philippine leader arrived in Tel Aviv earlier on Sunday for a four-day official visit as his nation sought to develop new sources of military hardware and nail down protections for 28,000 Filipinos working in Israel.

After his election in 2016, Mr. Duterte quickly earned a reputation for using vulgar language against critics, which his aides had tried to minimize or explain away.

Other 'sons of bitches'

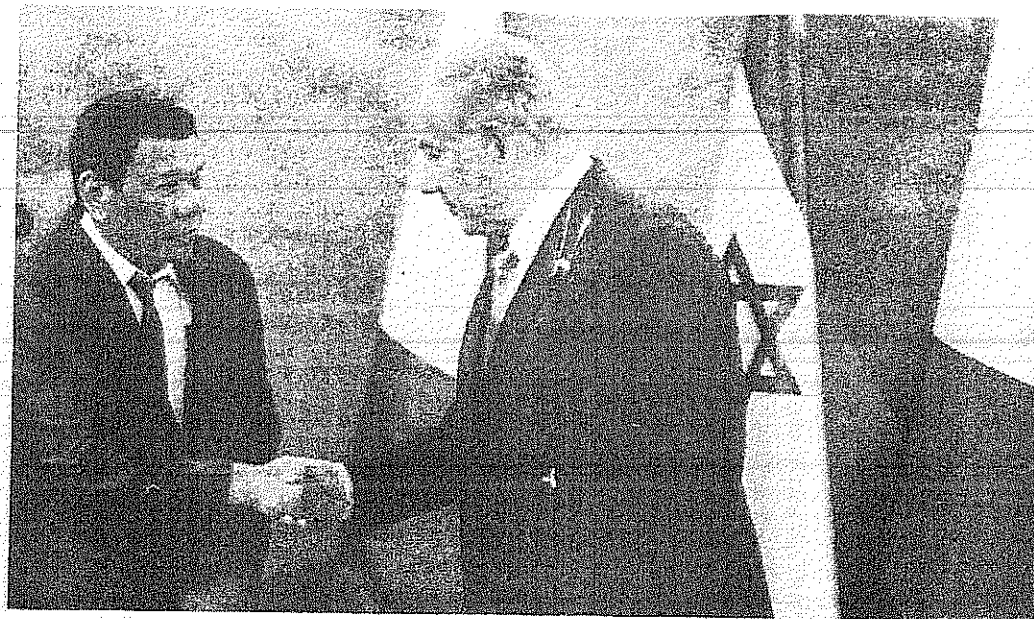
He branded Pope Francis and the then US ambassador to Manila, Philip Seth Goldberg, "sons of bitches."

He also fired expletives at the United Nations and during a speech raised his middle finger to the European Parliament in defiance of its criticism of alleged human rights abuses in his war on drugs.

Mr. Duterte sparked fresh criticism ahead of his departure for Israel, blaming the high number of rapes in his hometown, Davao City, on the large number of beautiful women there.

"They say there are many rape cases in Davao," Mr. Duterte said in a speech on Thursday. "For as long as there are many beautiful women, there will be many rape cases, too."

Mr. Duterte has on several occasions made rape jokes in



JERUSALEM MEET President Duterte, who is on a four-day official visit to Israel, is welcomed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during their meeting in Jerusalem on Monday. —REUTERS

public since his presidential campaign in 2016.

The latest comment was denounced by women's rights defenders.

Beauty doesn't invite rape

"Beauty doesn't cause rapists do," said opposition Sen. Risa Hontiveros.

"Rape happens because of the rapist, not because of the beautiful women. We take this issue seriously. We do not poke fun at it," Vice President Leni Robredo told reporters in Manila on Monday.

Robredo said Filipinos should not just shrug when someone made fun of rape.

"To imply that it is the women's fault why they are being raped is not funny. We must protest this, knowing this is not right," she said.

In Israel, Mr. Duterte de-

fended his rape joke.

"This is democracy. Freedom of expression," the President said at his meeting with the Filipino community.

"I did not say all of them were raped. But you are almost mesmerized or tempted because that's how you control yourself," he said.

Mocha defended

Mr. Duterte also defended his assistant communications secretary, Mocha Uson, in connection with her controversial statements on social media.

Pointing out Uson in the audience, Mr. Duterte said she had many enemies, although he acknowledged that she had done things that he considered going overboard.

"But just the same, as President who is sworn to protect the Constitution and enforce it, she

is covered with this privilege, freedom of expression," he said.

At the start of the meeting, Mr. Duterte appeared teary-eyed as he looked at his compatriots in Israel.

"This is the first time I was moved to tears with our people," he said. "Maybe because I'm here in the Holy Land."

Mr. Duterte also warned his critics who invoked God and pictured him as the devil, saying he was open to a debate on the matter.

He also called talk that he did not believe in God "intrigue," saying he did not believe only in the God of his critics.

"I believe in the Supreme God that my father and mother passed into me. So do not believe in those intrigues that I do not believe in God," he said. —WITH

REPORTS FROM MELVIN GASCON, DARRYL JOHN ESGUERRA AND AFP INQ

NEWS BRIEFS

Tugboats start extricating troubled Navy flagship in WPS
 Two Philippine tugboats have arrived at Hasa-Hasa (Half Moon) Shoal in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) to immediately start extricating the Navy flagship, BRP Gregorio del Pilar, which ran aground there last week. Armed Forces spokesperson Col. Edgard Arevalo said the tugboats—M/T Vigilant and M/T Trabajador, both owned by the Malayan Towage and Salvage Corp.—may start the extraction process during high tide. Joint task force “Goyong” commander Commodore Rommel Galang is “determining how they can successfully extricate the ship with least collateral damage to herself and the environment,” Arevalo said. AFP public affairs office chief Col. Noel Detoyato said the grounding caused the detachment of the frigate’s right propeller. —JEANNETTE I. ANDRADE *A7*

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China sends rescue ship to 'Hasa Hasa' Shoal vicinity

By ROY G. NABASA

China has confirmed that it has sent rescue and retrieval ships in the vicinity of 'Hasa Hasa' (Half Moon) Shoal in the waters off Palawan in the West Philippine Sea where a Philippine Navy vessel ran aground on August 29.

According to the Chinese foreign ministry, "Nanhaijie 115," a search and rescue ship, and other Coast Guard vessels "are already at the scene" where the BRP Gregorio del Pilar hit a submerged land feature while on patrol mission.

"China has learned of the relevant situation. China Coast Guard vessels are already at the scene. "Nanhaijie 115," specialized in maritime search and rescue, is also in

nearby waters," Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying told reporters in Beijing over the weekend.

The foreign ministry official said China is discussing with their Philippines counterpart the "relevant search and rescue matters."

Earlier reports showed that the Nanhaijie 115 was originally stationed at Subi Reef, the largest of China's seven man-made outposts in the Spratlys and home to a lighthouse and extensive docking facilities.

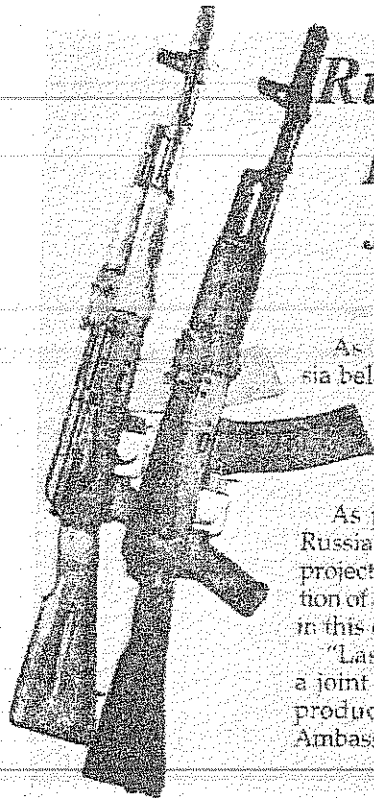
On the evening of August 29, the BRP Gregorio del Pilar, a former US coast guard ship acquired by the Philippines in 2011, was on a regular patrol operation when its right side hit one of the submerged land features in the area.

Hasa-Hasa or the Half Moon Shoal is within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone and is known to be frequented by Chinese vessels.

While the impact did not seriously affect the vessel's hull or engine, the Armed Forces of the Philippines confirmed that some of the ship's operating systems such as secondary side propellers were damaged.

The AFP's Western Command (Wescom), the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and tugboats from Batangas have been mobilized for retrieval operations.

The PCG has immediately dispatched its own Multi-Role Response Vessel (MRRV) 4407 in the site of the incident to assist in the retrieval process.



Russia offers joint project for AK factory in Phil

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN
and PIA LEE BRAGO

As bilateral ties become warmer, Russia believes it is time for the Philippines to "diversify" defense and other forms of cooperation with other countries, without damaging its traditional alliances.

As part of a blossoming "partnership," Russia is proposing, among others, a joint project with the Philippines for the production of assault rifles, including Kalashnikovs, in this country.

"Last year... we proposed organizing a joint production facility here, to jointly produce Russian assault rifles," Russian Ambassador Igor Khovaev told "The Chiefs."

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Russia From Page 1

last night on Cignal TV's *One News* channel.

Khovaev, however, said there has been no response so far from the Philippine government.

He stressed that Russia's proffered hand of partnership has no "hidden agenda" or political strings attached.

"Russia has experience of supplying arms and military weapons to Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, so it's time to be open-minded. It's

time to diversify. Diversify cooperation with no damage to your traditionally close relationship with the some other allies," Khovaev said.

The Kalashnikov range of assault rifles includes the AK-47 - Avtomat Kalashnikov or Kalashnikov's Automatic Rifle, arguably the most widely used of its kind in the world. Developed by Mikhail Kalashnikov, the AK-47 was first used by Soviet forces in 1949.

Kalashnikov also produces shotguns, rifles, pistols and ammunition.

Asked about the status of his proposal, Khovaev replied, "I hope it's still under consideration."

The proposal is likely to be blocked by the United States, with which the Philippines has a defense alliance.

Last month, during a visit to Manila, Randall Schriver, US assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific security affairs, cautioned Manila against buying military hardware from US rival Russia. Schriver issued the statement as Philippine de-

fense officials were reportedly considering the acquisition of a submarine from Russia.

President Duterte slammed Schriver's statement, saying, "Is that the way you treat an ally?... You want us to stay with you for all time? Who are you to warn us?"

Reacting to Schriver's warning, Khovaev emphasized that the US and other traditional allies of the Philippines should not interfere in the bilateral cooperation between Manila and Moscow and the choices made by the two countries, including defense cooperation and acquisition of arms and weapons.

Go lauds new batch of soldiers

Special Assistant to the President (SAP) Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go congratulated the Candidate Soldier Class 532-2018 and lauded them for their support for the Duterte administration.

In his speech at the closing ceremonies held at Camp Gen. Mateo Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal last Saturday, Go said the batch can rest assured of support from the government.

"The current administration under the leadership of President Duterte ensures your welfare. As your Big Brother Bong, I am telling you that we will take care of you by increasing your salaries and modernizing the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)," he said.

The 240 candidate-soldiers will be deployed to Mindanao,

Region IV-A (CALABARZON) or Region IV-B (MIMAROPA) after they completed their 16-week training.

Go said the aspiring soldiers will be eligible for the increased base pay that the Duterte administration had set for the AFP.

He said the salary for new soldiers used to be around P14,000 but now it is P29,000.

Go also noted that the modernization of the military is ongoing.

"We are already in the third horizon of the modernization and the SND (Secretary of National Defense) is currently looking into the priorities, like the dual purpose equipment for the external defense of the Armed Forces, Air Force, Navy and Army," he said.



Negres cop gunned down

BACOLOD CITY - A police officer was shot dead by a suspect in a shooting incident in Victorias, Negros Occidental on Sunday.

Senior Police Officer 2 Antonio Broce was declared dead on arrival at the Kaayong Lawas Primary Hospital.

Richard Artagame, who claims to be a civilian confidential agent of an Army unit based in Cebu, was arrested.

Chief Inspector Eduardo Corpus, Victorias police officer-in-charge, said Broce, 42, was off-duty when he was called to the scene after Artagame reportedly shot Edgar Saludes in Barangay 21.

Saludes was confined at the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital in this city.

Corpus denied claims of a shootout, noting that Artagame used a human shield.

9 - Gilbert Bayoran

CHR bucks martial law extension in Mindanao

By Melvin Gascon
@melvingascon110

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on Monday raised its objection to proposals that would extend the imposition of martial law in Mindanao, saying it believed in the capability of the country's security forces to address the recent acts of violence in the region.

The CHR also condemned the consecutive bombing incidents in Isulan town, Sultan Kudarat province, that had killed four people and wounded at least 40 others.

"We trust that our security forces are fully capable of

quelling lawlessness without extending martial law months before even the current declaration ends," said lawyer Marjorie De Guia, CHR spokesperson.

Medialdea remark

The CHR released the statement in reaction to a remark by Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea last week that the government was considering extending martial law in Mindanao, following the fire bombing that killed three people and wounded 37 others in Isulan.

The country's policy makers need to "cautiously assess" the situation on the ground, considering the "harsh effects"

of the imposition of martial law on the affected communities.

Citing reports of internal displacement, allegations of torture, profiling and other forms of "unwarranted violence" in Mindanao, the CHR said the government should weigh the implications before making a decision, which impacts on the lives of Filipinos.

'Senseless violence'

De Guia called on the authorities to make sure the perpetrators were held accountable.

"The perpetrators need to be accountable before our laws that seek to instill respect and protection of our rights

and dignity," she said.

Senators have raised doubts that extending martial law in Mindanao would bring peace to the island.

Last week, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said a security plan that includes talking to all disgruntled groups on the island, not martial law, would ensure peace in Mindanao.

Members of the Senate majority have also criticized Medialdea's statement, with Senate Minority Leader Francis Dillon and Senators Francis Pangilinan, Bam Aquino III, Honeriveros and Antonio Trillanes IV vowing to vote against martial law extension.

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Baguio City celebrates 73rd Victory Day

By ZALDY COMANDA

BAGUIO CITY — Modest but meaningful activities were held in this city yesterday to commemorate the 73rd Victory Day of Baguio.

The Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) participated in the activities, where war veterans were recognized for their roles in the victory of the Filipino and American forces over the Japanese Imperial Army.

Before the regular flag-raising rites, city officials and surviving war veterans took part in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park.

Baguio City Mayor Mauricio Domogan and Brig Gen Restituto M. Aguilar (ret.), chief shrine curator and chief of the Veterans and Memorial Historical Division of PVAO, delivered their Victory Day messages.

Domogan asserted that it is fitting to hold the celebration of Victory Day simultaneous with the regular flag-raising rites at Veterans Park to give appropriate recognition and honor to the surviving veterans and the sons and daughter of veterans for their gallantry and bravery in fighting for the liberation of the country during the

Japanese occupation.

He urged residents and visitors alike to join the local government and the PVAO in the celebration of Victory Day and recognize the significance of Baguio City's role during World War II.

On September 3, 1945, Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita of the Japanese Imperial Army formally signed his surrender documents before ranking commanders of the allied forces at the Ambassador's Residence inside Camp John Hay (CJH) after he was captured by Filipino and American forces in Kalina, Ifugao on September 2, 1945.

World War II started and ended in Baguio City because Japanese warplanes bombed the gates of Camp John Hay on December 8, 1942.

Newsbits

Navy men help fight fire in Bongao

ZAMBOANGA CITY - Philippine Navy vessel of the Naval Forces Western (NaForWeM) Mindanao responded to a 3-hour fire that started at dawn yesterday at Port area in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. NaForWeM Commander Rear Admiral Rene V. Medina said yesterday soldiers from BRP Miguel Malvar (PS 19) responded to a fire incident that took place at Kanapan St., Port Area about 2:30 am, yesterday and was declared under control by the Bureau of Fire Protection at around 5:30am. Medina said Cmdr. Charles Merric A. Villanueva head of PS 19 sent two firefighting teams with pumps and fire hoses to combat the fire. The fire had gutted several buildings and houses in the nearby vicinity of Bongao Pier. PS 19 was moored at the Pier when the incident happened. Medina added that navy men also rescued and evacuated about 50 families in the area with no casualties that were reported.

The immediate and prompt action of the two firefighting teams of PS 19 prevented the spread of fire in the port area which could have razed nearby houses and establishments, Medina said. "Rest assured that the Philippine Navy will continuously provide services and assistance to its citizens in times of disaster," he said. (Nonoy E. Lacson) 12

Lapeña warns smugglers in ZamBaSuTa area

By NONOY E. LACSON

ZAMBOANGA CITY - Customs commissioner Isidro Lapeña warned rice and sugar smugglers operating in the Zamboanga-Basilan-Sulu and Tawi-Tawi (ZamBaSuTa) area that he would make it "very hard" for them to continue their activities in this part of the country.

Commissioner Lapeña, during his visit here on Saturday said, "if we cannot stop it, we will minimize it. And we will make it very hard for the smugglers to do their illegal activities in this part of the country."

The BOC chief also ordered the smugglers to go to the BOC office in this city and pay their tariffs, duties and taxes "para hindi na sila (smugglers) kailangan pa magtatago at maghabulan pati ang Navy at Philippine Coast Guard (PCG).

He said the BOC, with the support of other law enforcement agencies, will continue its "anti-smuggling effort in this area."

As this developed, the PCG formally turned over to the BOC last Saturday an estimated 23,000 sacks of 25 kilos per sack of imported rice coming from Sandakan in Sabah Malaysia.

Zamboanga City BOC District Collector Atty Lyceo C Martinez said "this is now the second turn over made by the PCG to BOC and it consists of two motor launches - the M/L Overseas and M/L Nadeepa with a combined rice cargo of 25,000 sacks.

Martinez said the M/L Overseas was skippered by a certain Berdasher Usman and owned by Hadji Sukarno Usman with business address in Lamion, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi while the M/L Nadeepa was skippered by Hayatulla

Dahim and operated by Hadja Nancy Aharadji with business address in Sta. Catalina, Zamboanga City.

The BRP Cape San Agustin was conducting seaborne patrols in the vicinity of Tamuk Island, Basilan Province when they intercepted the two vessels loaded with smuggled rice en route to Maluso, Basilan last August 26.

Martinez said they will give the owner of the rice cargoes 15 days to visit the BOC office and present his importation papers.

Should the owner fail to appear the cargoes will be forfeited in favor of the government and will be subjected to public bidding, Martinez said.

"What we want here is to facilitate the inflow of these critical commodities para the flow sa market and those who will benefit from the rice will be those from this city," Martinez said. R

Govt allots P3.8B for Coast Guard upgrade — Go

SPECIAL Assistant to the President (SAP) Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go said the Duterte administration has earmarked P3.8 billion for the purchase of new ships, patrol boats, firearms and other equipment.

Go said Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Commandant Admiral Elson Hermogino would be scouting for new equipment in Israel. He was one of the officials who accompanied President Rodrigo Duterte in his official visit to Israel from September 2 to 5.

In his speech during the 33rd founding anniversary of the Coast Guard District in Southeastern Mindanao ceremony, Go said the Coast Guard plays an important role in the Duterte administration's campaign against drugs, corruption, and crime.

"Thank you for your support. Without you, government would have a hard time. I ask you to continue to support the President in

his campaign against drugs, corruption, and crime," he said.

Go was inducted as member of the Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary (PCGA).

He lauded employees who received awards, saying the best asset of the Coast Guard is its personnel.

"To the awardees, remember that these awards are not just decorations for your uniforms but are symbols of your responsibilities. May they motivate you to strive harder. Excel at all times. Rise above yourselves. Be an inspiration to others," Go said.

He said that entry positions of the Coast Guard were included in the base pay increase along with the Philippine National Police, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Department of National Defense, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, Bureau of Fire Protection, and the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority. *AY*

Duterte fetes Netanyahu, forgives Obama

BY RAYMOND AFRICA

PRESIDENT Duterte has expressed his gratitude to the Israeli government for giving the "best care" to more than 28,000 Filipino workers there.

This as Duterte said he is ready to forgive former US President Barack Obama for criticizing him on human rights issues.

Duterte upon arrival in Israel on Sunday night (Israel time) met with the Filipino community at the Ramada Hotel in Jerusalem.

"First, I would like to thank Israel for inviting me to visit the Holy Land. Second, I would also like to say thank you for hosting so many of my countrymen in the State of Israel," Duterte told some 1,400 Filipinos.

"Israel is one of a kind because it knows how to define a human being," he said, adding that the working conditions of Filipino workers in Israel are far better than in other countries in the Middle East.

With the growing number of caregivers going to Israel, the President said he would discuss with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu how to "better manage" the influx of Filipino caregivers there.

On Monday, Duterte and Netanyahu witnessed the signing of agreements on labor, science and trade.

The agreement on labor seeks to reduce exorbitant placement fees being charged by recruitment agencies to caregivers who want to work in Israel.

The Philippines and Israel are celebrating the 81st anniversary of the Open Door Policy of the Philippines under then President Manuel L. Quezon who provided shelter to around 1,300 Jewish refugees escaping the Holocaust in Europe in the late 1930s.

Duterte assured OFWs that he has been working hard to fulfill his campaign promises such as eliminating corruption, combating illegal drugs, fighting crimes, and seeking peace with the enemies of the state.

In his more than an hour extemporaneous speech, Duterte mentioned his spat with former US President Barack Obama, saying that he was ready to bury the hatchet.

Duterte said he found it inappropriate for Obama to criticize him regarding human rights issues as he has been elected as President of the Philippines, prompting him to curse the US leader.

"He went too far. If you have qualms, if you have complaints against me, go to the United Nations. File your complaint there and ask for a hearing. Do not say it right to my face, you tell the public that I am wrong," Duterte said.

"Well then it would be appropriate also to say

DUTERTE FETES

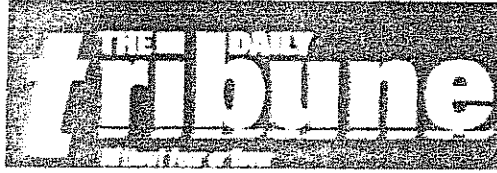
at this time to Mr. Obama that you are now a civilian and I am sorry for uttering those words... No, it was just a plain 'talkatise' also like yours. We have learned our lessons very well. We now understand each other," he said.

"So if it is to your heart to forgive, you forgive. I have forgiven you," he added.

Palace spokesman Harry Roque said the country plans to acquire Uzi sub-machine guns from Israel to be used by the Armed Forces.

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September 2016



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Strings-free Israel arms deals growing

TEL AVIV, Israel — Unlike the United States and Canada which attach conditions to their arms contracts that lately had resulted in the deals falling through due to allegations of rights violations on President Rodrigo Duterte, Israel has been a trusted arms supplier for the country.

As part of Mr. Duterte's independent

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Bigger deals are in the offing for both countries

From page 1

foreign policy, the Philippines had strengthened diplomatic and economic ties with "untraditional allies" including Israel, which is one of the world's top arms dealers with more than half of its defense exports going to the Asia Pacific region.

"Do not buy any more from Canada or from the United States because there is always a condition attached," Duterte said in Davao City last February.

Major military hardware deals with the United States and Canada were thereafter aborted. Deals with Israel, however, have been without hitches so far.

The Philippines, last year, purchased \$21-million worth of radar and anti-tank equipment.

Prior to that, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has purchased 28 Israeli armored vehicles and just last May, the Philippine Navy acquired Spike-ER missiles from Rafael

Advanced Defense Systems. These are the first surface-to-surface missiles to be mounted on Philippine Navy ships.

Bigger deals are in the offing for both countries with the Chief Executive's plan of a bigtime retooling of the Armed Forces and his trip to Israel may just yield more agreements in defense and security.

Mr. Duterte in a meeting with the Filipino community here Monday night (Tuesday morning, Manila time), said requirements for national security including fighting insurgency and terror sowed by armed groups like the New People's Army are his top priorities.

Modernization of the Philippine Coast Guard is also in the pipeline.

"That would be in defense of my people, in defense of the Filipinos. That's what the military is for. So what's our purpose here? What's the purpose of the Armed Forces? To protect the people and preserve the Republic of the Philippines," he said.

Part of buildup

Malacañang said the military and police officials that Mr. Duterte have in tow will have a "separate agenda," including interactions with their counterparts in the Israel Defense Forces who handles among the world's elite security units.

Security forces, according to the Palace, can greatly benefit from their collaboration with the Israelis given their experience in fighting extremism and terrorism.

Modernization of the Philippine Coast Guard is also in the pipeline, with the government allocating P3 billion for the procurement of new equipment and floating assets such as ships, patrol boats, weapons and other equipment.

A tentative visit to the Magen David Adom — an emergency medical, disaster, ambulance, blood bank service, by the President is scheduled for today, 4 September. He is also set to be presented with and view military equipment.

46 in entourage

Malacañang, meanwhile, corrected reports that Mr. Duterte brought with him a 400-member delegation during his visit to Israel saying only 46 were on the official list.

"The total number of official delegates and accompanying delegates consists of 46 passengers total. That's on the official list," presidential spokesman Harry Roque said.

Roque said there were at least 150 members of a business delegation who joined the trip but paid for their own airfare and accommodations.

"I do know there's a substantial business delegation of at least 150 who are all traveling on their own accounts. Not sure where figure of 400 came from," he added.

Duterte praises Israel for humane treatment of OFWs

JERUSALEM – President Duterte yesterday thanked Israel for its humane treatment of Filipino workers and described it as one of the best employment destinations.

Duterte said Filipino workers in Israel have better working conditions compared to those employed in other parts of the Middle East.

"(Israel) is one of the best places you can go to and you are treated as a human being," the President said in remarks before some 1,400 Filipinos here.

"You are better off than... the rest of your brothers and sisters in this region," he said.

Duterte said he was teary-eyed after seeing that Filipinos are in good condition.

"I said, *hindi ako paia-bolina tao* (I don't go for flattery). When I call a spade, it's spade. I do not tread into melodramatics. But *napatala ako kanina* (I got teary-eyed earlier)," the President said.

"I saw you and you are

happy. And it gives me one of the greatest pleasures... that I have done something to make my Filipino brothers and sisters happy," he added.

Duterte said it was the first time he shed tears while visiting fellow Filipinos abroad.

"If there's nothing wrong with it, if it is not really a wrong proposal, pardon me, but if Israel would want, I will send all Filipinos here because life is good here," he said.

There are about 29,000 Filipinos in Israel, most of them caregivers.

Duterte has been pushing for labor agreements that would improve the working conditions of Filipino workers in the Middle East.

He is expected to witness the signing of bilateral agreements on the employment of Filipino caregivers during his visit here, the first by a Philippine president.

Sen. Richard Gordon, a member of Duterte's delegation, said he hoped to get a

better understanding of the issues involving Filipino workers in the two countries in the hope of coming up with new legislation that would help them and their families.

Gordon is also scheduled to present to the Knesset – Israel's legislative assembly – Senate Resolution No. 757, reaffirming and strengthening Philippine-Israel relations by establishing an association among parliamentarians from the two countries.

The resolution, filed by Gordon and adopted by the Senate, hopes to pave the way for regular discussions on matters of mutual interest and cooperation between the

two nations by establishing a Philippines-Israel Parliamentary Friendship Association.

Gordon and the rest of the Philippine delegation will also meet with the Magen David Adom, Israel's national emergency medical, disaster, ambulance and blood bank service, in the hope of gaining more knowledge from its expertise in responding to disasters and terrorist attacks.

The delegation will witness a demonstration of the joint response by the Israeli police and the Magen David Adom to a terrorist attack.

Caretaker gov't OK

In Manila, election law-

yer Romulo Macalintal said President Duterte did not violate the Constitution when he designated Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra as caretaker while he is on official visit to Israel and Jordan.

He made the statement after Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison said over the weekend that Duterte's designation of a caretaker to run the government while he is abroad is as an inclination toward fascist dictatorship.

"The Constitution does not likewise provide that the vice president shall be the 'acting president' when the president is out of the country on offi-

cial mission," Macalintal said.

The vice president, he said, can take over the presidency only as an "acting president" when a written declaration is submitted either by the president or by a majority of his Cabinet members to the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives attesting to the president's being "unable to discharge" his functions as chief executive.

Macalintal is the lead counsel of Vice President Leni Robredo in the ongoing electoral protest filed against her by former senator Ferdinand Marcos Jr. – Alexis Romero, Paolo Romero, Helen Flores, Rhodina Villanueva *D*



Soldiers clash with Reds in Aurora; 2 dead

Two New People's Army (NPA) rebels were killed in an encounter with government troopers in Maria Aurora town in Aurora on Sunday.

Reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo showed that the clash occurred when soldiers of the 91st Infantry Battalion (IB) responded to reports of extortion and harrassment in Barangay Villa

The firefight lasted for around 45 minutes.

The military said two rifles, one with a grenade launcher, were recovered at the scene.

In Batangas, soldiers over-run an NPA camp following a firefight with rebels in Barangay Calumpit, Lobo also on Sunday.

Lt. Col. Jonathan Manio of the First IB said at least 30 makeshift tents, ammunition, bombs and cellular phones were among those recovered from the rebel camp.

Bomb blast

In Masbate, a newly delivered speedboat of the Army and a patrol boat of the Philippine Coast Guard were damaged in a bomb explosion at the Masbate City port in Barangay Bapor yesterday.

Authorities said NPA rebels perpetrated the attack, noting that the explosives used in last month's attack at the same pier were identical.

Superintendent Paul Cabug, Masbate police chief, said the improvised explosive device was similar to the pipe bombs that police recovered from a rebel camp in July.

"The rebels could have intentionally destroyed the speedboat which would be a big help in the anti-insurgency campaign," Cabug said.

- Michael Punongbayan, Ed Amoroso, Celso Amo, Cet Dematera

HEIGHTENED ALERT RAISED

EXPLOSION DAMAGES 2 GOV'T RESCUE

BOATS IN MASBATE

By Stephanie M. Florida
and Mar S. Arguelles
@Team_Inquirer

LEGAZPI CITY—An improvised explosive device went off at the port of Masbate City on Monday morning, damaging two government vessels, police said.

Supt. Paul Cabug, Masbate City police chief, said the bomb exploded around 12:30 a.m., damaging a 7.5-meter speedboat of the 2nd Infantry Battalion, Philippine Army, and a 7.5-m rescue boat of the Philippine Coast Guard that were docked at Masbate Port.

No one was reported hurt in the explosion.

Capt. Joash Pramis, public

affairs chief of the Army's 9th infantry Division, said security at the port was tightened after the explosion.

The explosion came after another homemade bomb went off at the port on Aug. 2, damaging a motorized passenger boat.

Pramis said investigation indicated Monday's explosion could be connected to the Aug. 2 blast, as the same type of bomb was used.

Police were still investigating, but Pramis blamed the two explosions on the communist New People's Army (NPA), which he said carried out the attacks to sow fear and retaliate against government forces for

recent setbacks.

"I am putting the blame on the NPA since they are the only group that uses improvised explosive devices in their initiated attacks on government facilities and personnel," Pramis said.

Agreeing with Pramis, Cabug said the real target of the explosion was the Army's rescue boat, which was turned over to the 2nd IB on Sunday.

Pramis said the NPA operating on the island province recently carried out a series of attacks on military and police forces, using homemade bombs and staging ambushes that killed a number of policemen, soldiers and civilians. INQ

Blast jolts Masbate port; Army speedboats damaged

By NINO N. LUCES

CAMP OLA, Legazpi City — An explosion rocked Masbate port early yesterday morning and partially damaged two speedboats of the Philippine Army's 2nd Infantry Division (2IB).

Chief Inspector Malu Calubaquib, spokesperson of Police Regional Office 5 (PRO-5) told the Manila Bulletin that

based on field reports, from Masbate City, the explosion was reported at around 12:30 a.m. at the port in Barangay Bapor.

She said that a still unidentified suspect planted an improvised explosive device (IED) on one of the speedboats.

The suspect immediately fled.

No casualties or serious injuries were reported.

Further investigation and pursuit operations against the suspect are ongoing.

Calubaquib added that Bicol regional police director Chief Superintendent Arnel Escobal sees no need to relieve Masbate police provincial director Superintendent Froilan Navarroza.

"Pinapa-imbestigahan niya (Escobal) yung mga Coast Guard na nakaduty sa area na yun kasi sa kanila talaga

yung area na yun kung may mga lapses na na-encounter dun kung bakit may mga nakakalusot na mga nagpapas-abog," Calubaquib said.

Last month, IED also jolted the same area.

Capt. Joash Framis, spokesperson of 9th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army told the Manila Bulletin that blast incident is the handiwork of the rebels.

"This is another diversionary action ng kalaban to create scenario at ma-focus doon mga isinasagawa naming operations in areas where we have reports about their presence. This is their desperate act to retaliate from their tactical losses in the province of Masbate," Framis said.

Framis added that the Masbate blast is not connected to the recent bombings in Mindanao. J

Masbate blast destroys Army, PCG boats

BY RHAYDZ B. BARCIA

LEGAZPI CITY: A month after an improvised explosive device (EID) exploded in the Masbate seaport, another bomb went off at midnight on Monday, destroying the speedboats of the Philippine Army (PA) and Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), said a report reaching Camp General Simeon Ola here.

Maria Luisa Calubaquib, Philippine National Police-Bicol spokesperson, said unidentified suspects lobbed the grenade at about 12:30 a.m. on Monday near the premises of the Masbate City Coast Guard at the seaport in Barangay Bapor.

Personnel of the Masbate City police station led by Supt. Paul Cabug

responded to the blast site and recovered pieces of orange polyvinyl chloride pipes and parts of the speedboats.

Initial investigation showed that a white 25-footer fiberglass rescue speedboat of the Army's 2nd Infantry Battalion and the PCG's rescue boat were partially damaged.

Calubaquib said no one was

reported harmed by the latest blast.

"Our policemen are still establishing the persons or suspects behind the two consecutive explosions in the Masbate seaport," she said.

Last August 2, an improvised bomb exploded in the same area wherein two men were wounded and a Coast Guard speedboat was destroyed.

NPAs scored for harassment of highland people

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City - The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has condemned the Communist New People's Army Terrorists (CNTs) for their alleged continuous harassments to tribal leaders, Capt. Norman M. Tagros, chief of Civil Military Operation (CMO) of the Army's 403rd Infantry (Peacemaker) Brigade told the Manila Bulletin on Monday.

AFP field commanders claimed that this alleged desperate continuous harassment of the highland tribal leaders is a clear manifestation of the CNTs "glaring and blatant violation of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL)," he added.

Brig. Gen. Eric C. Vinoya, commanding general of the Army's 403rd Infantry (Peacemaker) Brigade scored the CNTs for their "dastardly act and gross violations of the provisions of the IHL and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) in murdering an innocent tribal leader in Bukidnon province.

The 403rd "Peacemaker" Brigade cited the killing of 70-year old Higaonon tribal leader Benedicto Dinoy, also known as Datu Mantalasan, an Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative of Higaonon tribe based in Dumalaguing, Impasug-ong, Bukidnon province.

On Aug. 13, 2018, ten unidentified heavily armed men broke into Dinoy's house around 9 p.m. and dragged him out to the wilderness. The following day (Aug. 14), the villagers found "Dinoy's bullet-riddled body in the wilds. The motive of the incident is not known.

The 403rd "Peacemaker" Brigade pointed at the members of Section Committee 89 of the CPP-NPA North Central Mindanao Regional Committee as the alleged perpetrators.

Lt. Col. Ronald M. Illana, commanding officer of the Army's 8th Infantry Battalion (8th IB) also condemned the CNTs for their cowardly attack.

"We condemn, in the strongest terms another dastardly act committed by the CNTs. The Higaonon tribal leader was never a military target and in no way was he taking part in the hostilities, yet, these terrorists killed him," General Vinoya said.

"The CNTs have once again proven their true nature as terrorists and oppressors of the Lumads. They blatantly violated the provisions of International Humanitarian Law and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and they will be punished," the 403rd "Peacemaker" Brigade commander added.

"We mourn the loss of the Indigenous Peoples community. This act is a clear evidence that the CNTs show no respect for the IP culture and are unmindful of the people's right to life. They do not value the lives of innocent civilians who have no participation in any conflict. By doing so, they also violated the International Humanitarian Law which protects civilians from harm regardless of race, religion, beliefs, and culture," said Lt. Col. Illana.

Brig. Gen. Franco Nemesio M. Garcia, commanding general of the Army's 402nd Infantry (Stingers) Brigade also condemned the CNTs for their alleged involvement in the killings of lumad leaders in Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Sur since early this year.

The 402nd "Stingers" Brigade commander called upon the human rights group to look into the killing of lumad (native leaders) and file criminal charges against the CNTs. (Mike U. Crismundo)

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The Manila Times

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RANKING NPA COUPLE NABBED IN CAGAYAN

TUGUEGARAO, Cagayan: Two ranking New People's Army (NPA) leaders were arrested with firearms and explosives at Sitio Nagtapulan, Barangay Naguillan in Camiguin Island, Cagayan town, this province. Arrested were Edison Culasing Erese with aliases "Jingjing," "Ronnel" and "Elmer" and his wife Divina Manuel Erese. Police said Edison is in the staff of the NPA's Cagayan Valley regional operational command while Divina is a former medical officer of the NPA's Danilo Ben command west committee. Confiscated from the couple were a Remington .45-caliber pistol, Armscore .45-caliber pistol with ammunition and two hand grenades. **LEANDER C. DOMINGO**

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ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Farmers slain, soldiers wounded in BIFF attacks

MAGUINDANAO – Suspected members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) killed two farmers in Datu Hofer town in this province on Sunday night.

Nestor Daingan and Rene Usman of the ethnic Teduray community were on their way to their farm when they were snatched, hogtied and then shot. The bandits were led by Jai Abubakar and Boy Sarong.

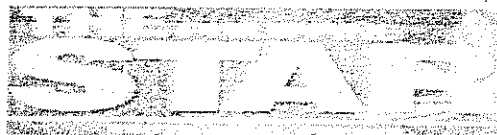
Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana of the 6th Infantry Division said Abubakar and Sarong's men are wanted for burning more than a dozen houses and taking away farm animals of Teduray communities last year.

In nearby Datu Linsay town, First Lt. Rey-Jay Ramos and Sgt. Jerry Nicor were wounded in a clash with BIFF men who attacked a military detachment.

Residents said four BIFF men identified only as Kemzar, Norodin, Bansil and Uruk were wounded in the gunfight.

14 - John Unson

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PNP chief sacks Kudarat top cops over bombings

By CECILLE SUERTE FELIPE

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Oscar Albayalde has ordered the relief of Senior Supt. Noel Kinazo, Sultan Kudarat police director, and Supt. Celestino Daniel

Jr., Isulan police chief, following the blast Sunday night that killed two people.

Albayalde, in Brunei for the ASEANAPOL Conference, has also directed police units in SOCCSKSARGEN to intensify

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PNP chief From Page 1

the conduct of checkpoints, police visibility patrols and focused intelligence and law enforcement, in close coordination with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said PNP spokesman Senior Supt. Benigno Durana Jr.

Capt. Arvin Encinas, spokesman for the Philippine Army's 6th Infantry Division (ID), said combined troops of the AFP and the PNP placed an overnight lockdown on Isulan and are conducting zoning operations to arrest the perpetrators and clear the area of the effects of the explosion, the second in less than a week in the provincial capital.

The military official attributed the bombing to a faction

of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) under Esmael Abdulmalik alias Abu Toraiife/Toraype, known to be an influential cleric and skilled bomb expert.

"Terrorism is a global issue. Even the most advanced and developed countries have similar incidents. But security is not the sole responsibility of (government) forces, that is why we are asking the support and vigilance of each and every one," he said.

The fatalities were Jan Mark Luda, 19, who died while being rushed to hospital, and his 15-year-old cousin Marialyn Luda, who succumbed to multiple shrapnel wounds past 10 a.m. yesterday.

Eleven of the wounded are being treated at Isulan hospitals while the four in critical condition have been brought to the General Santos Doctors Hospital.

Fake news

Durana, meanwhile, labeled as fake news the reports insinuating that the two successive blasts in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat were meant to support the extension of martial law.

Durana said people behind the spread of fake news were apparently not concerned with the good of the country.

"It's fake news. Even to accuse the government of having a hand in these attacks, that's farthest from the truth," he said.

"We are here to serve and protect and prevent crime.

ensure public safety and security of the people," he noted.

Senators maintained their position that extending martial law in Mindanao is not the solution to stop the bombings.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson renewed his call for authorities to improve their intelligence gathering instead.

"I think the better solution is for our ground forces, especially our intelligence units, to really stick their nose on information, keep their ears on the ground and intensify intelligence operations," he told reporters.

- With John Unson, Michael Punongbayan, Christina Mendez, Evelyn Macairan, Paolo Romero, Roel Pareño

Military says BIFF rebels behind Sultan Kudarat blast

By Jeffrey Maitem and Edwin O. Fernandez @inquirermindanao

ISULAN, SULTAN KUDARAT —The military on Monday blamed Sunday night's bombing here that killed two people and wounded 12 others on a faction of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) that had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (IS) jihadi group in the Middle East.

Malacañang condemned the "dastardly attack," the second in Isulan since Aug. 28, when a bomb ripped through a row of used-clothes stores at Barangay Kalawag 3, killing three people and injuring 36 others.

"We strongly denounce the latest attack in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat," presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said in a statement issued in Jerusalem, where President Duterte was on a four-day official visit.

The Aug. 28 bombing in Isulan was also blamed on the BIFF faction led by Abu Toraiife.

Police chiefs sacked

The police chief of Isulan, Supt. Celestino Danie, and the provincial police director, Senior Supt. Noel Kinazo, were sacked on Monday after the latest explosion.

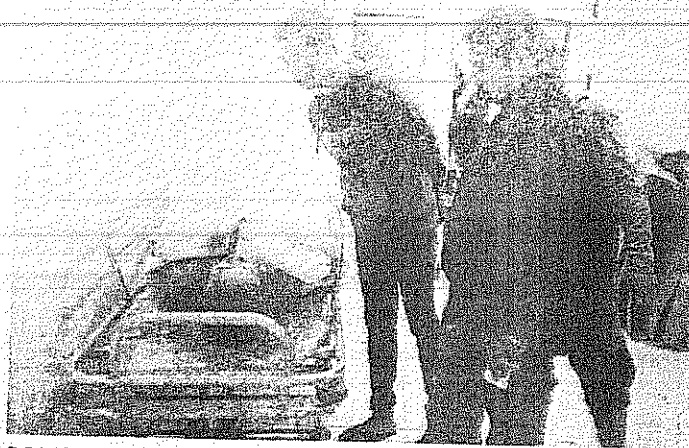
The death toll in Sunday night's attack rose to two after the sister of the 18-year-old boy who was killed in the explosion that ripped through an internet café at Barangay Kalawag 2 died on Monday morning.

Maria Lyn Luda, a cousin of Jan Mark Palencia Luda (not Lupa as earlier reported), died at the Sultan Kudarat provincial hospital, according to Supt. Aidrin Gonzales, spokesperson for the Police Regional Office 12.

Isulan Mayor Marites Palasigue called off classes at all levels in public and private schools as a security measure.

Chief Supt. Eliseo Rasco, the regional police commander, announced the sacking of Danie and Kinazo on Monday morning, saying the order came from Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Albayalde, who was in Brunei attending a regional police conference.

No one has claimed responsibility for Sunday night's bombing, but Capt. Arvin John Encinas, spokesperson for the military in the region, said followers of Abu Toraiife, leader of the BIFF faction that had pledged loyalty to IS, carried out the attack in retaliation against the military for air and ground operations in Maguindanao.



BOMBING VICTIM A man who is among 12 people wounded in Sunday night's bombing of an internet café at Barangay Kalawag 2 in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat province, awaits treatment at the provincial hospital. —JEFFREY MAITEM

province that killed several fighters from the group.

"They are losing men . . . that's why they are resorting to bomb [attacks]. It's part of their retaliation and to divert our concentration [from] them," Encinas said.

"Last night, we locked down the town as we hunted the perpetrators," he added.

Bomber seen on video

Dave Bryan Leliza, 26, caretaker of the internet café, said on Monday that a male teenager carrying a paper bag arrived at 7:15 p.m. on Sunday and oc-

cupied cubicle No. 8.

Leliza said the boy left after 10 minutes, and a man took the same cubicle.

"Our [security cameras] recorded all these . . . [A camera] clearly showed the face of the [teenager who came in carrying a paper] bag," he said, adding there were 15 customers at the time.

Then, at 8:28 p.m., a blast tore through the internet café.

"Our [computers] were flying, the ceiling falling, smoke billowing and everyone inside crying for help," Leliza said.

"I tried to help but realized I

was hit in the legs and head," he said.

Leliza was one of the victims rushed to various hospitals. Doctors extracted fragments of floor tiles from his head and nails from his legs.

Two of the victims, including Leliza, remained in critical condition at the hospital.

Outrage

Cardinal Orlando Quevedo, the archbishop of Cotabato, on Monday expressed outrage at the attack and called on Church followers "to pray for the victims and for their families."

Quevedo urged the military, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Moro National Liberation Front, both of which have signed peace agreements with the government, to flush out the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

The United Kingdom and Australia on Monday renewed their warnings to their citizens against traveling to western and central Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago because of terrorist activities and clashes between the military and insurgent groups.

The British advisory included warning of a possible terrorist attack in Manila. —WITH REPORTS FROM JULIE M. AURELIO AND TINA G. SANTOS IN MANILA AND BONG SARMIENTO IN KORONADAL CITY INQ

Two killed, 12 hurt as another bombing rocks Sultan Kudarat

By MARTIN A. SADRONGDONG

Two persons were killed while at least 12 others were wounded when a suspected improvised explosive device (IED) rocked Isulan, Sultan Kudarat, Sunday night - the second bomb attack in the town in less than a week.

President Duterte, who is on official visit to Israel, immediately directed security forces to tighten security by increasing visibility and patrol operations. Director General Oscar Albayalde, Philippine National Police (PNP) chief, who was in Brunei for the ASEAN chiefs of police confer- ▶2

Two killed, 12 hurt...

◀1

ence, ordered the immediate relief of Sultan Kudarat provincial director Senior Superintendent Noel Kinazo and Isulan town chief of police Superintendent Celestino Daniel.

Senior Superintendent Benigno-Durana, PNP spokesman, said the IED was detonated inside a computer shop in Barangay Kalawag 2, Isulan town at around 7:20 p.m. Sunday.

Slain were John Mark and Marialyn Luda, age 18 and 15, respectively.

Five of the wounded were taken to the Sultan Kudarat Provincial General Hospital, four to Holy Nazarene Hospital, two in Specialist Hospital, and one to Galinato Hospital, said Chief Inspector Aldrin Gonzales, Soccsksargen police spokesperson.

"The PNP is mobilizing all available security forces in pursuit operations against persons responsible for the latest act of terrorism in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat [Sunday] even as we extend our sympathies to the family of the fatalities in the explosion incident," Durana said.

Capt. Arvin Encinas, spokesman of the Army's 6th Infantry Division (6th ID), said they are looking at the possibility that the Daesh-inspired group under

Esmael Abdulmalik alias Abu Toraiife/Toraype was behind the blast.

He said the suspects' main purpose is to sow terror and create fear in the community.

The group's areas of operations are in Maguindanao and Sultan Kudarat.

"Itong pagpapasabog, eh, part ng retaliation nila (This blast is part of the retaliation) as they suffered significant loses during our FMO (focus military operations)," Encinas said.

Army 6th Infantry Division chief Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana said the explosion that hit Kalawag 2, is about 400 to 500 meters away from where another IED exploded almost a week ago that claimed the lives of three people and wounded 34 others.

Last August 26, another IED exploded in Barangay Kalawag 3, Isulan, during the town's Hamungaya (bountiful harvest) festival, killing two persons and wounding 36 others.

Related?

Durana said investigators have yet to determine whether the two bomb attacks in the same town are related. However, he confirmed that the latest incident has already been considered

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as a "terror attack."

"Based on initial investigation, some elements of the modus operandi are the same. The IED was planted where a lot of people converge so previously near an ukay-ukay and now inside an internet cafe. We were told by our people in Sultan Kudarat that the second attack happened near the place where the first incident happened," he said.

"It was apparently designed to maim and kill a lot of people, sow fear and chaos in that part of Mindanao. That's the handiwork of a terrorist group," he added.

With the second bomb attack, the PNP official is convinced that there are still security lapses in the security system in the province that's why the top police officers in the area were ordered relieved, he added.

"The PNP decided to change players

to make way for an impartial investigation and to see why are there still gaps even after. Obviously, we should have doubled if not tripled our efforts to install security measures to prevent similar incidents from happening. Unfortunately, we found out there are still security lapses at this point," he explained.

Kinazo will be replaced by Senior Supt. Reynaldo Felestino while Daniel will be replaced by Superintendent JunnyBuenacosa.

Martial law

After the August 28 bombing, Albayalde said the entire PNP in Mindanao was placed in a full alert status. It means all personnel shall be available for deployment to ensure peace and security.

However, the fact that the attacks still happened puts to question the capability of the national police force to prevent or prepare for security threats in

the region, according to some critics.

This is aside from the fact that Mindanao is also under martial law.

Durana noted that worse scenarios could happen if there is no martial law in the region.

He also slammed accusations that the attacks were perpetrated by soldiers and policemen themselves to justify the extension of martial law.

"That is a very irresponsible speculation because harming innocent people is farthest from the mind of the AFP and PNP. We are here to prevent crime and ensure public safety. Those who are peddling that speculations are very much irresponsible and the good of the Filipino people is farthest from their minds. That's not true. Fake news," he said. (With reports from Joseph Jubelag, Genalyn D. Kabling, and Francis T. Wakefield)

Sultan Kudarat police execs relieved over 2nd blast

MANILA/SHARIEFF AGUAK, Maguindanao: The Philippine National Police (PNP) has relieved two police officials in Sultan Kudarat and admitted to security gaps that led to a second bomb attack in Isulan town in just five days, despite the full-alert status of policemen and martial

►Relieved A3

RELIEVED FROM A1

Sultan

law in the entire Mindanao.

Senior Supt. Benigno Durana, PNP spokesman, said the Socorsargen (Region 12) police regional office (PRO) had ordered the relief of Sultan Kudarat provincial director Senior Supt. Noel Kinaso and the Isulan municipal police station chief, Senior Supt. Celestino Daniel Jr.

Kinaso was replaced by Sr. Supt. Reynaldo Felestino, while Daniel was replaced by Sr. Supt. Junny Buenacosa, who was the chief of police of the adjacent city of Tacurong.

"Obviously, there were gaps in the security measures systems that were in place especially right after the declaration of martial law and especially right after the first bombing, and that's why the leadership of PRO 12 decided we need to change players to give way for our partial investigation and see why there were gaps," he said.

"Obviously we should have doubled if not tripled our security measure to prevent similar incidents. Unfortunately, we believe that we have lapses as of this point," Durana added.

The PNP chief, Director General Oscar Albayalde, had ordered all regional directors in Mindanao to be on full alert after the first Isulan bombing on August 28.

This meant more police presence, heightened checkpoint operations, and intensified implementation of "Oplan Sitia" or spot inspections.

The second attack in Isulan town resulted in the death of two minors and the injury of 13 others.

The victims who died from the incident were identified as 15-year-old Marialyn Luda and 18-year-old John Mark Luda, who were related

to one another.

The 15-year-old Luda died at Sultan Kudarat Provincial Hospital on Monday morning after suffering from multiple wounds.

Same bomb

Scene of the crime investigators said the same type of improvised explosive was used during the August 28 blast.

Capt. Arvin Encinas, spokesman for the Philippine Army's 6th Infantry Division, told *The Manila Times* that both explosions were the handiwork of members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), but from different factions.

Encinas said the August 28 bombing was carried out by the BIFF's Bongos Faction, while the Sunday bombing was by the Abu Toratife Faction.

Camp Aguinaldo confirmed this. "Government security forces will address these vile aggressions with vehement counteractions and with the support of the community, we will get those criminals," said Col. Edgard Arevalo, the military spokesman, told reporters in a news conference.

Palace denounces blast

Malacañang on Monday condemned the latest explosion in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat.

In a statement, Palace spokesman Harry Roque Jr. assured the public that the government would bring the perpetrators of the attack to justice.

Roque said President Rodrigo Duterte, who was in Israel, had been updated on all developments by the PNP.

"We ask the residents to report anything suspicious to the authorities as we bring to justice all culprits behind this dastardly attack," Roque added.

ROY NARRA, JULMUNIRI JAN-NARAL AND CATHERINES VALENTE

Gov't in control, says Palace amid series of blasts

By Nat Mariano and Francisco Tuyay

THE Palace assured the local government of Isulan town, Sultan Kudarat that the national government is in control of the situation after a second bomb attack left two people dead and 14 others wounded.

"To the mayor and the residents of Isulan, President Rodrigo Duterte will not abandon you. In the midst of terrorism, the President's message is that we are in control," said Presidential spokesman Harry Roque in a radio interview upon the delegation's arrival in Jerusalem. *Next page*

Gov't..

From A1

"We will not be threatened. We will defend our democracy, and we will defend our republic," Roque said, adding that the President and his Cabinet members had a small meeting while en route to Israel.

"The President has said that he has ordered the police and the military to actively investigate the two explosions in Isulan. And the President expressed thoughts that maybe there's really a threat there," said the Palace official.

"Even though the President is in Israel, he would do everything to go after the perpetrators of the incident," he said.

"The President would task the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development), Department of Health, and the PNP (Philippine National Police) to provide aid that the town of Isulan needs," he said.

In a separate statement, Palace denounced the latest attack in the south, adding it is deeply saddened by the casualties the incident caused.

"The President has been kept updated on all developments by the PNP, which has already ordered its men on the ground to increase visibility and patrol and tighten security," said Roque.

"We ask the residents to report anything suspicious to the authorities as we bring to justice all culprits behind this dastardly attack," he added.

The second in five days, the latest bombing occurred inside an Internet shop in Barangay Kalawag 2 at past 7 pm.

PNP chief Oscar Albayalde said the police are still looking if the previous blast on Tuesday was related to the recent incident.

Albayalde has already ordered the relief of provincial police officials.

Town officials suspended classes in all levels after the second blast, bringing to five the number of dead in a span of six days.

The latest victims of explosion were teenagers

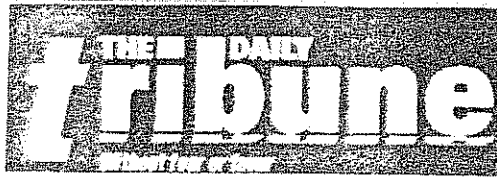
Marielyn Luda, 15 and Jan Mark Luda, 18, cousins who died hours apart after an improvised explosive device went off at an internet café near Novo Department Store in Barangay Kalawag 2 in Isulan town at about 7:30 pm Sunday.

The attack heightened anxiety among residents, and led Isulan Mayor Marites Pallasigue to suspend classes in all levels until the security situation stabilized.

Reports said residents were cautioned from going to populated places and refrain from wandering in vulnerable areas during wee hours of the night, such as night markets, bars, and parks.

AFP spokesman Col. Edgard Arevalo urged communities to unite to reject attacks by terrorists.

"Only with that unity of our communities; only with that degree of vigilance and participation of our people combined with the diligent and dedicated government security forces can we as a nation triumph over these terrorists," Arevalo said. **With Macon Ramos-Araneta, PNA**



Bombings continue; PNP heads axed

By Elmer N. Manuel
and Raymart Lolo

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Oscar Albayalde relieved yesterday the provincial directors of Sultan Kudarat and Masbate following the explosions that rocked Isulan, Sultan Kudarat and the recent blast in a port in Masbate.

Albayalde also ordered the relief of the chief of police in Isulan town, Sultan Kudarat.

"We are saddened by the casualties brought about by this cowardly act perpetrated

by people hell-bent on their nefarious goals without regard for the lives of civilians," Albayalde said.

Last Sunday, two persons died while 15 others were injured when a bomb ripped through an Internet cafe in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat which came just days after an explosion during a festival in the city left three

dead.

PNP spokesman Senior Supt. Benigno Durana during a press briefing said the second victim died at 10:15 a.m., according to information from the regional director of Soccsksargen.

He also admitted to a possible "failure of intelligence" resulting to the second deadly bombing in

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The agreement with the Moro people should include all the Muslim tribes

From page 1

less than a week in Sultan Kudarat.

"We cannot discount that it may be a failure of intelligence but that would be subject to the conduct of investigation by local authorities, also in coordination with other security forces in the area," Durana said.

"Investigators are already looking at local terrorists as the ones responsible for this latest cowardly attack and are piecing together witness accounts and physical evidence," he added.

No IS link yet

But the PNP said that they have yet to find a link between the incident and the first bombing, which was claimed by the Islamic State (IS) and added that it was "highly likely" that the pro-IS Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters plotted the 28 August attack in retaliation for state offensives, the military earlier said.

Meanwhile, President Rodrigo Duterte, who is on a state visit to Israel, has been informed of the latest explosion in the south.

Malacañang said it is "deeply saddened" by the blast that killed an 18-year-old man and wounded 14 others.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr said in a statement residents should report anything suspicious to authorities "as we bring to justice all culprits behind this dastardly attack."

Town on lockdown

Isulan was placed on lockdown since the suspect in the attack could still be inside the town, said Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, commander of the Army's 6th Infantry Division.

Archbishop Orlando Cardinal Quevedo condemned the latest terror attack in Maguindanao.

"Two bombings in the past five

days have mercilessly snuffed out the lives of at least five innocent people, including two young men who are active in our Catholic youth ministry. Scores of others, equally innocent, have been wounded," Quevedo said.

The archbishop added the extremist group IS which claimed responsibility for the bombing has been distorting Islamic teachings. "In either case, religion is distorted in order to commit brazen crimes that cry out to heaven," he said.

Quevedo also urged security officials to strengthen peace and order in the country.

"I strongly urged military, security and peace officers with the collaboration of the MILF and the MNLF, now forces for peace, to flush out the perpetrators and bring them to justice," he added.

Different tack urged

Amb. Macabangkit Lanto, a former speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Autonomous Region 12 and columnist of *Daily Tribune*, said the government may have to explore a different approach in forging peace in Mindanao as he indicated a likely link of the bombings to the enactment of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL).

He said the agreement with the Moro people should include all the Muslim tribes.

Mr. Duterte is sincere in his aspirations for peace. The BOL is a good solution if it will only get the support of all the other tribes.

"The President has to walk the extra mile for Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) chair Nur Misuari, to accept the deal," he said.

"Did you notice that every time the President meets with Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chairman Al-Hajj Murad Ebrahim and the MILF leadership, the following day he meets with Misuari just to explain to him because this (BOL) will not work if this is not supported by all the tribes in Mindanao," he added.

Lanto said the proposed Bangsamoro government is dominated by the MILF that in turn are mostly made up of Maguindanaoans.

S. Kudarat police chiefs sacked after 2nd blast

BY RAYMOND AFRICA AND VICTOR REYES

THE chiefs of the Sultan Kudarat Police Provincial Office and the Isulan town police were ordered relieved yesterday following an explosion in the town on Sunday night, the second in less than a week.

The blast at a computer shop in Barangay Kalawag 2 initially killed one person and injured 15 others.

A second victim died yesterday.

The first blast occurred in Barangay Kalawag 3 on August 28. It killed three persons and injured 36 others.

The latest blast was about 400 to 500 meters from the site of the August 28 explosion, said 6th ID commander Maj. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, who blamed the attack

See S. KUDARAT ► Page B5

S. KUDARAT

on the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.

Police investigators are eyeing a BIFF faction to be behind the explosion.

Relieved were Senior Supt. Noel Kinazo, the provincial police director, and Supt. Celestino Daniel, Isulan town chief of police.

"Obviously there were lapses in the security measure systems that were in place... That's why the Police Regional Office 12 decided to change players to pave way for an impartial investigation to find out why there were lapses when they should have doubled the efforts to install security measures to prevent similar incidents from happening," said Senior Supt. Benigno Durana Jr., PNP spokesman.

The latest blast, which occurred at 7:35 p.m., was caused by an improvised explosive device planted by unidentified men at the Renc Internet Café at the corner of Valencia and Valdez streets in Barangay Kalawag 2.

The first fatality was identified

by the police as Mark John Luda (identified by the military as John Mark Palencia), 18. He was declared dead at the Sultan Kudarat Provincial Hospital on Sunday. The second fatality, Marialyn Luda, 15, died in a hospital yesterday morning. She was earlier reported to be in critical condition.

Durana said investigators suspect a BIFF faction wants to prevent peace in Mindanao, even after the passage of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL).

"The passage of the BOL signals the start of a lasting peace in Mindanao. But like any other peace process, there are peace spoilers. I am sure this is the handiwork of the spoilers of peace and the local terrorists," he said.

Durana also said PNP chief Oscar Albayalde, while on an official mission abroad, has directed police units in Region 12 (Central Mindanao) to further intensify the conduct of checkpoints, police visibility patrols, and focused intelligence and law enforcement operations in close coordination with the AFP and other members

of the security sector to prevent a similar incident.

Albayalde is in Brunei Darussalam heading a police delegation in the annual ASEAN Association of Chiefs of Police Conference.

Sobejana, asked which group carried out the attack, said, "Most likely, it's still the BIFF."

"There is no other group that would dare to carry out the bombing and there is no other group that would bomb without any reason," he also said.

The military has been on heightened alert since the first blast.

"Terrorism is a global issue. Even the most advanced and developed countries experience same incident, said Capt. Arvin Encinas, spokesman of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, when asked why another explosion occurred despite the heightened alert.

MASBATE BLAST

An explosion occurred at the Masbate port in Masbate City at around 12:30 a.m. yesterday, about 100 meters away from a Philippine

Coast Guard station, said PCG spokesman Capt. Armand Baliilo.

Baliilo said a newly-procured rescue boat of the Army was destroyed while one of the PCG's aluminum boats incurred minor damage from the explosion.

Capt. Joash Pramis, spokesman of the Army's 9th Infantry Division, said investigations are ongoing but said the attack could have been perpetrated by the New People's Army.

"There is still no official investigation report but here in Bicol, the one capable of doing that, using an IED (improvised explosive device), is the NPA," said Pramis.

The port was bombed by unidentified suspects also on August 1.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said President Duterte, who is on an official trip to Israel, is being informed of developments.

Roque reiterated it is too early to talk about another extension of martial law in Mindanao, which was declared by Duterte in May 2017 after the Maute group attacked Marawi City.

Dureza: Peace table now wide open for all

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

“**T**he peace table is now wide open for everybody.”

This was declared by Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza during the launch of the National Peace Consciousness Month at the Rizal Park in Davao City on Sunday.

Dureza was referring to the larger peace table - the general public - who, he said, should be at the forefront of the peace process between the national government and the various rebel groups.

“This table is not only for the Muslims, for the New People’s Army, for the indigenous peoples, but for all Filipinos,” he said.

Dureza noted that peace agreements signed between government and rebel organizations will not succeed if these do not have the support of the general public.

Citing the recently approved Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL), he said the landmark measure was passed due to the desire of the Duterte Administration to uplift the lives of the people and make development as inclusive as possible.

“With the BOL’s passage, we will no longer walk but run for peace,” Dureza said.

In the meantime, the peace adviser underscored the need for the government to focus on the plight of underprivileged sectors such as the Lumad.

“We need to make them feel that they have not been forgotten by government and their needs are being attended to,” he said.

He said the nation’s indigenous peoples are among the most vulnerable when conflict arises in their communities.

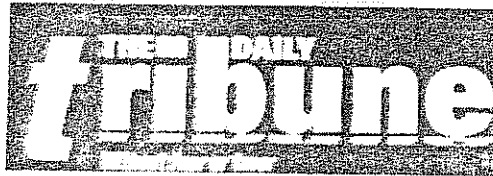
“They are the ones who are caught

in the crossfire,” he said.

Dureza said this is one of the reasons why it is easy for communist rebels to recruit Lumads who make up 80 percent of its new members.

He said this is the reason why the government’s programs and projects aim to empower IPs and make them part of the mainstream of development.

He said as the nation celebrates the month of peace, it is important for stakeholders to highlight their efforts to help bring long-lasting peace and sustainable development throughout the country. *R*



Davao City urges terror vigilance

Vigilance and cooperation with police and Armed Forces is key in preventing terror attacks from happening in the area, the City Government of Davao said Monday.

Thus, the local government is urging Davaoeños to give their full cooperation and vigilance to report any suspicious incidents no matter how big or small following the two separate bombings in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat, which saw at least six people dead and scores injured.

Public Security and Safety Center chief Benito de Leon reiterated the importance of reporting incidents in their area that are suspicious during the opening of the National Crime Prevention Week in Davao City on Monday.

Earlier, Davao City mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio urged the citizens to be vigilant after the first Isulan attack – five days before the commemoration of the blast that killed 15 people in Davao City on 2 September two years ago.

“I echo the call of the City Mayor for the citizens to help the security forces so that this sort of tragic incident would not happen in our city,” De Leon said.

He also ensured Dabawenyos that the security was already heightened and law enforcers in the area are on an all-time high-alert with the recent bombing incidents.

On the other hand, Police Regional Office XI Director Chief Superintendent Marcelo Morales revealed that 175 additional

police forces from the regional office were deployed to do patrol duties around Davao City to strengthen the security.

“We have added police forces to patrol all over the city on a daily basis. That would be 35 additional officers per day,” said Morales.

At present, Davao City has no threats but the police remain vigilant and are not discounting the possibility of attacks, he added.

The National Crime Prevention Week in Davao will have symposium, seminars, information drives in communities, schools and universities in order to generate support in crime prevention, according to the Davao City Police Office. 12 ENM

SECOND BOMBING CASE

No leads on Masbate blast

No one was wounded in the blast but they have yet to determine the motive behind the explosion

By Elmer N. Manuel and Alvin Murcia

Another explosion rocked Masbate on Monday with the blast at the port destroying a newly-procured military boat.

Also damaged by the explosion was a vessel belonging to the Philippine Coast Guard, according to PCG spokesman Captain Armand Balilo.

Balilo narrated that the explosion occurred 100 meters away from a PCG station in Masbate Port at 12:30 a.m. on Monday.

"Two aluminum boats and Army's newly procured rescue boat were damaged," said Balilo. "The army boat was totally wrecked while one PCG aluminum boat incurred minor damage."

So far, Balilo said no suspects have been identified but witnesses said that a small motorized banca was seen within the vicinity of the incident prior to the explosion.

He added that no one was wounded in the blast but they have yet to determine the motive behind the explosion. They are now investigating the incident.

The explosion in Masbate is the second blast in the city's seaport in just a little over a month.

An improvised explosive device

Two aluminum boats and Army's newly procured rescue boat were damaged.

also exploded at the port of Barangay Bapor in the same city.

The reports indicated that two men were seen leaving an IED in the area before it exploded, destroying another boat in the vicinity.

Recovered from the blast were PVC pipes

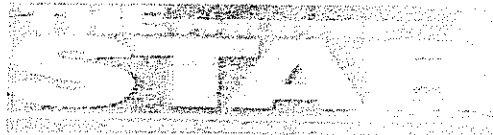
and a SIM card.

But the police said it is facing a blank wall on the explosion.

Police has yet to gather information on the perpetrators.

The military earlier blamed the pro-IS-Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters or BIFF in southern Philippines in the first attack that killed an 18-year-old at the blast site - an internet shop.

No group has yet to claim responsibility in second blast.



Rice hoarders

EDITORIAL

As rice prices continue to rise and supplies are depleted in certain parts of the country, President Duterte has warned that he would order military and police personnel to conduct the raids. The President, on a visit to Israel, also stressed that there is no rice shortage in the Philippines.

Joint teams of the National Food Authority and Bureau of Customs have in fact been conducting periodic raids on warehouses where smuggled or hoarded rice stocks are believed to be stored. The question is whether any rice smuggler or hoarder has ever been prosecuted, convicted and punished.

As in other offenses, impunity reigns when no one is penalized for wrongdoing. The country has enough laws against smuggling, and there are laws against economic sabotage that perhaps can be applied against rice traders who hoard the grains to manipulate prices.

Some quarters have pointed out the difficulty in proving

rice hoarding and cartel-type business operations. If there is such difficulty, the problems should be addressed by lawmakers in coordination with agriculture officials, who should know what loopholes can be plugged through legislation.

Apart from the rice traders, the government must run after anyone who might be abetting the smuggling and hoarding, including Customs personnel. The public can do its part by being vigilant and reporting potential cases of hoarding. To facilitate this, the government must provide a hotline where such reports can be coursed, and ensure that action will be prompt.

For many years now, there have been regular reports of smuggling, hoarding and price manipulation in the rice industry. As long as no one is indicted, prosecuted, convicted and sent to prison, no lessons will be learned, and the problem will persist.

Resilience in the age of global insecurity

By Sen. LOREN LEGARDA

(Speech at the launch of "The AFP in the Humanitarian Space: Building Resilience, Fostering Resilient Communities" book, Aug. 16, 2018, Manila Hotel.)

Since the enactment of the Climate Change Act of 2009 and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (NDRRM) Act of 2010, which I both authored, the Philippines has made significant gains in terms of mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCAM) and disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) into the different plans and programs of the government.

Climate change is an important inclusion in military security planning because for one, it accelerates conflict that contributes to instability and loss of harmony in various sectors. There is a need to know how resilient the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is against the current and imminent risk environments, and to see how the armed forces can expand its traditional resilience framework to include CCAM and DRRM, enhancing risk management, and adding value to its sustainability and resilience building efforts.

As a long-time advocate for environmental protection, and as an AFP reservist, I believe that building resilience is a shared responsibility. Traditionally, the military's role in nation building has been limited to upholding national security, and humanitarian and disaster response (HADR). As key players in the humanitarian sphere, locally and internationally, the armed forces are now being progressively engaged in building resilient systems across all spaces, to include CCAM and DRRM.

As a former media practitioner, I see the role of information as a vital element in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of reforms.

Information empowers the public to demand more from the government. Because I want to elevate the level of involvement of the AFP in the nation-building process, the first step is to let the people know the important role of the AFP on this crucial issue of resiliency in relation to CCAM-DRRM. You can only communicate your plans to the public if the institution itself is certain and convinced of its expanded role, and this is what I want to achieve in this book – to emphasize the role of the AFP as a partner in national development and security.

It is a great pleasure and honor to be with you today to launch my Command and General Staff Course (CGSC) research paper, turned into book, titled: "The AFP in the Humanitarian Space: Building Resilience, Fostering Resilient Communities."

This book is about codifying the relevance of military resilience building of the AFP as an institution, inclusion of CCAM and DRRM in the AFP's practice and governance framework, and fostering resilient communities in response to risks caused by climate change to the community and the environment.

This emphasizes that building resilience not only means responding to threats brought by climate change and natural hazards, but also involves re-

forms to strengthen the adaptability of institutional structures and systems. In this case, the AFP, in performing its expanded role in supporting national and local agencies, should pursue the objective of co-managing and building more resilient communities.

Resilience, as a concept, is applied in making sense of how to respond to contemporary threats. Such response can be approached in different levels: individual, familial, institutional, national, regional and global. Because resilience is not inherent to communities and institutions, it needs to be developed and harnessed to ensure that threats are squarely addressed to prevent them from escalating into disasters.

The military has a similar concept of resilience. The Australian Army defines it as the "capacity of individuals, teams and organizations to adapt, recover and thrive in situations of risk, challenge, danger, complexity and adversity." The US Air Force defines resilience as "the ability to withstand, recover, and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands."

For many years, I have looked for any work or document that defined resilience from the point of view of the Philippine military. While various statements issued by the Office of Civil Defense and AFP referred to the need to build resilient communities in the context of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, the AFP HADR Concept of Operations never referred to resilience building as a key component of the HADR strategies.

This is one of the reasons why I chose this topic for my CGSC paper. As an AFP reservist and, at the same time, appointed Global Champion for Resilience by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), I saw the need to have a concrete framework which will establish the link between the AFP and the national CCAM and DRRM efforts. I believe that AFP's resilience as an institution is just as important as building resilience in communities. You can find the detailed framework on Chapter 2 of this book.

I also included in this book essential inputs in developing the proposed action agenda for building resilience, and fostering resilient communities:

1) First is adopting an AFP Resilience Scorecard that will provide a set of metrics upon which the AFP may base specific measures and actions it needs to achieve within a targeted time frame. Having this management tool will provide a benchmark for monitoring progress and prioritizing actions in terms of creating a more resilient AFP.

2) Second, develop a Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Roadmap for the AFP since climate change and its accompanying hazards have significant impacts on the infrastructure and operations of the military.

The AFP should follow suit with other military institutions in many other countries that have already recognized that climate change affects everyone and that their facilities and infrastructure are in the same way exposed to the dangers of climate change which may result in mission vulnerabilities.

3) Third, conducting a Climate and Disaster Risk Assessment on AFP installations is also imperative especially since there is an absence of an AFP-wide and integrated initiative to identify the effects of climate change and disaster impacts on the AFP. This assessment should include the use of specific metrics

and science-based data. Until now, not even a baseline survey to assess the risks of all its military installations has been undertaken despite the fact that disaster impacts on military installations have been experienced in varying degrees over the past years. This exposes the AFP and its facilities to unforeseeable risks which the institution may not even be capable of dealing with. The lack of such assessments makes credible planning for different disaster scenarios difficult, if not impossible.

4) Another recommendation is to develop an AFP Climate and Disaster Resilience Toolkit that would address the issue of the lack of a deeper understanding of the relationship among climate change, disaster risks and national and human security.

The toolkit would also address the concerns that were raised regarding the limited reach of a comprehensive learning experience on these vital issues across the ranks of the AFP. In addition,

this toolkit shall also address the need for improvement on the quality and depth of knowledge being imparted since many of the pieces of information are just sourced by the AFP from the internet.

5) Lastly, incorporating CCAM and DRRM in key guidance and planning documents like the AFP Transformation Roadmap (AFPTR) and Defense Planning Guidance will also be crucial in achieving resiliency within the AFP. Given that the AFPTR is geared towards capability development and professionalization of all ranks, the inclusion of resiliency building as an element of capability development would not only be relevant but would also address the strategic nature of the AFPTR.

In closing, I would like to present to you this book as my humble contribution to the AFP and to the defense community.

The AFP has been and will always be there when the Filipino people need them. But in order to carry out

its duties to the country more effectively, especially in times of calamities, the AFP must work towards raising the visibility of climate change in its policies, particularly in the AFPTR. Climate change must be considered in the formulation of the AFP's resiliency plan and not just an incidental factor in assisting other agencies and the general public.

A resilient AFP is a more effective AFP, thus, it must also be able to look after itself and allow itself to first address its shortcomings in terms of institutional resiliency so that it may perform its HADR operations, one of its many duties, more efficiently. Through this publication, I hope that the AFP will be guided on how we can work towards a resilient, dependable and capable armed forces.

The government as rapist

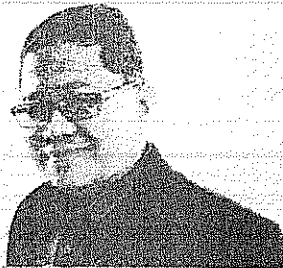
President Duterte's speech to mark Mandaue City's charter day last week, where he joked about rape, is even more abhorrent when considered as a whole.

It shows us a President indulging his worst instincts. (I am using the official PCOO transcript, which includes its own fair but sometimes incomplete English translations of the President's Bisaya.) A few lowlights:

He displayed a characteristic tokenism toward government functions and the work of government functionaries. As in many other speeches, he began by mentioning his prepared address, and his disinclination to read it. "I will not read my... it's just two pages." Then he adds: "But I will—so that the person who wrote this won't be offended. I will just read the last paragraph." Cue audience laughter.

I assume the President's speechwriters are aides he personally chose, but there is hardly any difference in his treatment of his own staff and his disdain for the government bureaucracy (which, of course, he now heads). Introducing one of his current favorites, Ed del Rosario, he says of the Bangon Marawi operation: "I just listened. I said if I were to hand this over to the bureaucracy, I said no offense intended, this will never be successful. We'll only lose the money." This makes sense as a campaign theme, but the Duterte administration is already two years in power; it IS the bureaucracy.

He showed a knowing, winking disregard for his own personal reputation, adding another layer to his image as gangster in chief. Let me quote the original first. "*Kanang binastos gyud nga kawat ba. Kawatan man ko pero di nako na masikmura nang... Mangawat ko og babaye nga gwapa pero dili...*" The official translation captures the gist: "It's a shameless kind of stealing. I steal too but I can't stomach that kind of... I



NEWSSTAND

JOHN NERY

would steal a beautiful woman."

I would translate the President's remarks this way: "That's an obscene kind of stealing. I'm a thief too but I cannot stomach that... I would steal a beautiful woman but not..."

It is here, while alluding (wink, wink) to his reputation as a breaker of laws, that he introduced one of the main themes of his improvised Mandaue remarks: His claim to beautiful women.

He pointed to current examples of corruption, liberally sprinkling obscenities and highlighting facts (but not addressing concerns raised by his own people whom he had accused of corruption): the AFP Medical Center mess, the Navong Pilipino contract, and then something new he only hinted at. He rehashed tired lessons, though his use of conditional clauses softened the impact: "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, Philippines should never reach the level of economic progress enjoyed by Malaysia and Indonesia on the present level." (That's the President's English, as transcribed.)

Then, because he remembered the adage that life is not fair, he remembered his war on the Christian God. "I have a God. But it is not the God of the priest and the *itong mga obispo na mga u****." The last phrase—"and these idiot bishops"—is not translated in the transcript.

He went on this attacking vein for about 20 paragraphs, then segued to human rights. He graphically describes the rape of a 2-year-old child, and asked: "Why a President should so be blatant and very bestial in his language? Because you asked for it." By "you" he (for some reason) meant priests.

He then expressed a desire to violate the Constitution. "I said you're better off choosing a dictator in the likes of Marcos. That is what I suggested, *Pwede man kay-ong mag-suce*—constitutional succession, it's Robredo. But she cannot hack it."

This was followed by a summary of his legacy as Davao mayor—which brings us, only a third of the way through his remarks, to his horrifying justification of Davao's record as the city with the most number of rapes. "*Ingon sila nga daghang rape ang Davao. Basta daghang gwapa, daghang rape gyud na.*" My translation of this "joke": "They say many are raped in Davao. Well, if there are many beautiful women, there are many rapes."

This is wrong on many levels, but on reflection it is characteristic. Of the President, whose remarks are soaked in the toxins of runaway masculinity ("I have a girlfriend here. Look to your left and at your front.") And of the Duterte administration, which governs by force, manufactured consent, grave abuse, act of obscenity: the elements of rape.

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Reach and limits of Sharia

Cagayan de Oro—Ongoing since Sunday is a workshop called "Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL): Preparing for Plebiscite, Reaching Out to Mainstream Media, Building Relationships Between CSO's and Media."

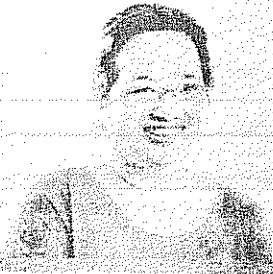
That mouthful really has quite a simple premise: to prepare civil society groups supportive of the passage of the BOL to reach out to the media, local or national, to win popular support for this historic passage in the nation's history.

The BOL marks, it is hoped, a true and final end to decades (maybe even centuries) of conflict between Moro liberation forces and the government forces, mainly the military and police. But the ceasefire is only the most obvious part of the entire historical task of reshaping the relationship between our Moro brothers and sisters and the Christian majority.

Though often overlooked in media reports, the passage by Congress and signing by the President of the BOL marks a turning point in the Moro people's search not just for autonomy, but also for political identity. It is a recognition of the uniqueness and integrity of Moro society and culture, which nonetheless forms a crucial part of Filipino identity, even if, as a minority, the Moro people have been overlooked, demeaned and marginalized.

But meeting participants in this workshop, most of them representatives of Moro civil society groups, most of them women, gives one the sense that, truly, a new generation of Moro leaders is giving a new "spin" to the Moros' historical search for a "separate but equal" status in our country's political system.

To be sure, so much still remains up



AT LARGE

RINA JIMENEZ-DAVID

in the air, even as the date for the plebiscite nears. Questions about the sharing of natural resources, the sharing of powers between the national government and the soon-to-be-created Bangsamoro entity, the melding of Moro traditional law and cultural practices within the legal system—all these have to be threshed out in finer detail. So much depends on the new laws and policies to be decided by the Bangsamoro Transition Commission and eventually the Bangsamoro council and parliament.

One of the more contentious issues, at least from the point of view of Manila-based commentators, is the coverage of Sharia—the Islamic-based legal code that has been in place for centuries in Muslim-dominated countries.

In the Philippines, because of a law signed by the late president Marcos, Sharia is confined to Filipino-Muslims and covers mostly personal and family relations. Fears have been expressed that the rights of women under Sharia will be severely curtailed in the Bangsamoro.

The discussion on Sharia fomented the most heat and interest during the discussion of the salient parts of the BOL. Lead discussant was lawyer Anna Tarhata Basman, who used to serve as a legal adviser to the government peace panel during the Aquino administration. And she was, for the most part, reassuring on the reach and limits of Sharia.

Women from across the Bangsamoro areas expressed reservations about how the new entity would treat women. "In our communities," said one, "disputes, including those on violence against women, are settled internally, between families. Our communities have little access to the Sharia courts."

Basman assured that Sharia covers only crimes punishable by a maximum of imprisonment of 30 days. More serious crimes, such as rape and violence against women, would fall under the regular courts. And, indeed, the Sharia legal system is severely hampered by the lack of qualified judges (the Supreme Court now requires all Sharia court judges to pass the Bar) and the absence of facilities.

To better "sell" the passage of the BOL in the areas covered (in some provinces, the approval even of non-Muslim voters is required), supporters must convince the public that the "new order" will redound to the benefit of all. The end of armed conflict is but the start of the entire rebuilding effort, not just the infrastructure of a new economic and legal system, but especially the strengthening of the system of protection for the most vulnerable, the women and children.

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Honorary consuls

THE quintessential pork barrel man and recipient of P100 million from the illegal Noynoy Aquino/Butch Abad-concocted Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP), Senator Franklin Drilon, has urged Supreme Court justice Antonio Carpio to vie for the post of Chief Justice to be vacated by the incumbent Teresita de Castro on October 8.

Carpio previously opted not to be considered for the top post out of delicadeza, according to him, because he voted against the ouster through a quo warranto petition of former chief justice Maria Lourdes Sereno.

Drilon said Carpio can now set aside delicadeza since he would be replacing De Castro on the basis of seniority.

Of course, it is entirely up to Carpio to heed or not Drilon's advice. He, however, may wish to consider the following in making a decision:

First, he is a known loyalist of the Aquinos.

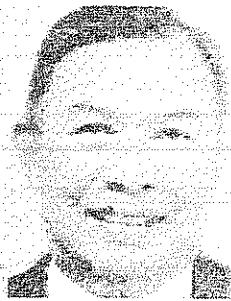
Second, his position on the South China Sea/West Philippine Sea (SCS/WPS) issue directly contradicts the government's.

Third, his position on the Philippine withdrawal from the International Criminal Court is also opposite that of the government.

Fourth, he is against the plan to have joint exploration of resources in the SCS/WPS between China and the Philippines.

Last but not least, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte aka Digong has already categorically discounted the possibility that Carpio would succeed De Castro.

Then again, Digong could possibly change his mind. couldn't he?



CROSSHAIRS

REY O. ARCILLA

Are the privileges extended to honorary consuls in the country provided for in the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations?

Let's watch what happens.

CARPIO ON S. CHINA SEA

Lt. Gen. Antonio E. Sorelo (Reid), former Philippine Air Force chief and a penumbral hero of EDSA I, had something to say about a recent statement by Carpio, who appears to fancy himself as an international relations expert.

Carpio's statement was published by the Philippine Daily Inquirer last August 26 titled, "Carpio: World powers helping PH assert sea-row ruling."

Sorelo's comments follow:

"This is fake news. These countries' (United States, United Kingdom, France, Australia and Japan) interest is freedom of navigation but ours is the right to exploit the resources within our EEZ so as to feed our teeming millions. DFA says that we are now in conference with China for the sharing and exploitation of the resources in the SCS.

"The implication of Carpio's

statement is that we must ally ourselves with these countries. We must remember that these countries are the mortal enemies of China (read China's history in the past 200 years) and if we do that we become a mortal enemy, too. "It is wise and proper that we maintain our country's foreign policy of being neutral, meaning 'a friend to all nations'.

"Further, we must remember that the United States is the superpower and China is the rising superpower. As such, America wants to maintain its hegemony around the world (pivot to Asia) but China will not take that sitting down. Someday soon, there will be a clash of civilizations and we as a nation must keep ourselves smart so as to survive as a people."

SMC'S BULACAN AIRPORT PROPOSAL

The recent Xiamen Airline incident at NALA further accentuated our urgent need for a new airport.

It also gave rise to speculations as to why the P735-billion airport proposed by San Miguel Corporation remains unacted upon.

No less than presidential spokesman Harry Roque reportedly asked why negotiations for a concession agreement with San Miguel has not yet been started by Transportation Secretary Art Tugade more than four months after the National Economic and Development Authority endorsed the proposed airport.

According to Roque, NEDA Secretary Enoie Pernia said negotiations should have started "three months from the time that the ICC-NEDA approved the proposal for the Bulacan Airport."

Why indeed, Mr. Tugade?

HONORARY CONSULS

Eminent journalist Emil Jurado wrote in his column of August 28 in the Manila Standard about the privileges extended to honorary consuls here, to wit:

"Speaking of honorary consuls—would you believe they can import luxury goods tax-free?"

"I am told this is a big racket since they sell to different outlets. I know of one consul who has high-end wine shops. He definitely knows how to use his privilege."

"There are a lot of shenanigans going on with this privilege. The Department of Foreign Affairs should look into this."

I understand they are also given diplomatic or consular car plates.

Not one of the six countries where I had been accredited as ambassador extended such privileges to honorary consuls.

I have previously asked the DFA

See HONORARY ► Page B5

HONORARY

Protocol Office about the privileges extended to honorary consuls in our midst who, more often than not, are wealthy and prominent members of society. The answer I got is that "it has been the practice ever since."

Indeed, the DFA should review these privileges extended to honorary consuls. For starters, are these privileges provided for in the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations?

REMINDERS

This segment is intended to remind the Duterte administration of some of its yet unfulfilled promises and matters that need attention and/or follow-up action. More importantly, the people are entitled to know what's being done about them.

1. Digong's promise to rid the country of foreign troops. This, of course,

necessitates abrogating the lopsided and constitutionally infirm VFA and the EDCA.

2. Reciprocal visa arrangements with the US and other countries. (What is the DFA doing about this? Our embassy in Washington?)

3. The retrieval of the Balangiga bells. (NOTE: The US Embassy has confirmed that Defense Secretary James Mattis has notified the US Congress of the intention to return the bells to us. However, some people in the state of Wyoming where two of the bells are located, the third one being in a US military base in South Korea, have objected to returning the bells.)

4. The return of the Canadian waste. (Sources say the DOJ has filed a motion before the proper court for the importer to return the waste to Canada. No decision yet. No word about what Canada is doing either. The DFA should be following this up.

Today is the 129th day of the twelfth year of the enforced disappearance of Jonas Burgos, son of the late press icon and founder of this newspaper, Joe Burgos.

After the acquittal of Major Harry Baliaga, Jr., the only person formally charged with Jonas' kidnapping, I guess what happens next is now up to Divine Providence.

From an internet friend:

A 60-year-old millionaire married a stunning 23-year-old bride, followed by a lavish reception in the vast garden of his 50,000-square-foot mansion.

Champagne was flowing and an enormous team of waiters was flitting about serving the finest hors-d'oeuvres in the land.

Naturally, the millionaire's less wealthy friends couldn't help but feel jealous.

In a quiet moment, one of them asked him how he landed such a young beauty.

"Simple," grinned the millionaire, "I faked my age."

His friend was really amazed and asked him how old he said he was.

"87!" he replied.

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ONLINE NEWS
04 SEPTEMBER 2018

www.inquirer.net

NPA confirms rebel killed in Mountain Province clash

Inquirer Northern Luzon / 06:14 PM September 03, 2018

BAGUIO CITY – The New People's Army confirmed on Monday that a rebel was killed during an Aug. 30 clash with soldiers in the Mountain Province capital town of Bontoc.

Noe 'Ka Gilbert' Magkachi was the lone fatality in the firefight at a ridge below Mt. Amungao, a few kilometers from Barangay (village) Mainit during an 11:30 p.m. clash that lasted for a few minutes, not the six-hour fight announced by the Army's 5th Infantry Division last week, said Martin Montana, spokesman of the NPA Chadli Molintas Command in a Sept. 1 statement released on Monday.

The platoon of soldiers attacked the members of the Leonardo Pacsi Command, the NPA unit operating in Mountain Province, who were traveling back to their temporary camp, the rebel spokesman said.

Montana said Ka Gilbert was killed during the first burst of gunfire and is being honored as a martyr.

www.inquirer.net

2 suspected NPA rebels killed in Sunday clash in Aurora

By: Armand Galang - @inquirerdotnet

Inquirer Central Luzon / 03:51 PM September 03, 2018

FORT RAMON MAGSAYSAY, Palayan City – Two suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels were killed in a 45-minute firefight between soldiers and armed men in Aurora province on Sunday afternoon, the military reported on Monday.

Members of the Army's 91st Infantry Battalion, led by 2Lt. Hamton Dawaton, engaged about 20 armed men at 3:45 p.m. in Barangay (village) Villa at Maria Aurora town, said Major Gen. Felimon Santos, Jr., commander of the 7th Infantry Division.

The identities of the slain men have not been established. No soldier was hurt.

www.inquirer.net

Alleged NPA rebel leader, wife nabbed in Cagayan

By: Villamor Visaya Jr. - @inquirerdotnet

Inquirer Northern Luzon / 02:22 PM September 03, 2018

TUGUEGARAO CITY – An alleged leader of the New People's Army and his wife were arrested on Sunday in the Cagayan town of Calayan, police said on Monday.

Edison Erese and his wife Divina were served arrest warrants by the police at Sitio (subvillage) Nagtapulan in Naguilian village.

The warrants were issued over charges of illegal possession of firearms, qualified assault upon a person in authority and attempted murder which are being heard by the Regional Trial Court-Branch 1 in Tuguegarao City and for an arson case issued by the judge of Regional Trial Court-Branch 8 in Aparri town.

Erese is allegedly a staff member of the NPA Regional Operations Command of the Komiteng Rehiyon in Cagayan Valley while Divina was reportedly a former medical officer of the Danilo Ben Command-West Committee which operates in the region, said Senior Supt. Warren Tolito, Cagayan provincial police director.

Erese replaced Victorio Tesorio who was killed in a gunfight in Tarlac province early this year.

Seized from the couple were two Cal. 45 pistols and two hand grenades, police said.

Erese and his wife were brought to the Cagayan field office of the Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

www.pna.gov.ph

Hunt on for BIFF members who killed farmers, burned houses

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 3): **Hunt on for BIFF members who killed farmers, burned houses**

CAMP SIONGCO, Maguindanao – A military manhunt is ongoing against a group of Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) who shot dead two farmers and burnt houses over the weekend in Datu Hoffer Ampatuan, Maguindanao.

A military report identified the fatalities as Teduray farmers Nestor Daingan and Rene Usman, both of both Sitio Buntod, Barangay Limpongo, Datu Hoffer Ampatuan.

"The victims were summarily executed around 8:45 a.m. Saturday (Sept. 1) in the vicinity of Sitio Buntod," Capt. John Arvin Encinas, the Army's 6th Infantry Division (ID) spokesperson, said.

Encinas said the perpetrators behind the incident were from the group of BIFF sub-leaders Jai Abubakar and Boy Sarong of the BIFF Khadafy Abdulatip-Bungos faction.

Responding government troopers brought the cadavers of the farmers to Barangay Limpongo after the incident for proper disposition.

Around 3 p.m. on the same day, the 40 strong-armed group of Abubakar and Sarong proceeded to Sitio Talib, Barangay Kumbintong in the same town and burned two houses owned by Teduray natives in the area.

"The series of incidents prompted the military-led Joint Task Force Central to take appropriate security measures that pushed away the terror group to flee towards the mountainous part of Barangay Macalag," Encinas said.

In a statement, **Brigadier General Cirilito Sobejana, 6ID commander**, expressed condolences to the victims' families.

"We condemn the criminal and barbaric acts of the BIFF in the (Teduray) community that has been living peacefully to preserve their culture, traditions and ancestral homeland," Sobejana said.

Sobejana said the military will go after the BIFF to safeguard the civilians and put an end to the terror group's atrocities.

www.pna.gov.ph

Rebel leader, wife nabbed in Cagayan

From the Philippine News Agency (Sep 3): Rebel leader, wife nabbed in Cagayan

An alleged leader of the New People's Army (NPA) and his wife were arrested on Sunday in Sitio Nagtapulan, Naquillian village in Calayan island-town, Cagayan province, police said on Monday.

Senior Supt. Warren Tolito, Cagayan provincial police director, identified the arrested rebels as Edison Erese alias Ka Jingjing/Ronnel/Elmer and his wife, Divina. Edison was tagged as an incumbent NPA Regional Operations Command staff member and armed staff of the Komiteo Rehiyon-Cagayan Valley of the communist group while Divina was a former medical officer of the Danilo Ben Command-West Committee operating in the region.

Edison is said to have replaced Victorio Tesorio, a third-ranked NPA leader, who was killed in a clash with government troops in Tariat early this year.

Seized from the arrested couple were two caliber .45 pistols and two hand grenades.

"This is a breakthrough arrest as we were able to put a rebel leader into the justice system so that he can answer for the charges against him," Tolito told the Philippine News Agency in a mobile phone interview.

"The arrest exemplifies that justice has been achieved for the victims of the NPA atrocities in this side of the country. The PNP is continuously working to bring these culprits to the fold of the law," he added.

The Erese couple was served an arrest warrant for their pending cases of illegal possession of firearms, qualified assault upon a person in authority and attempted murder issued by the Regional Trial Court-Branch 1 in Tuguegarao City and another for an arson case issued by the Regional Trial Court-Branch 8 in Aparri town.

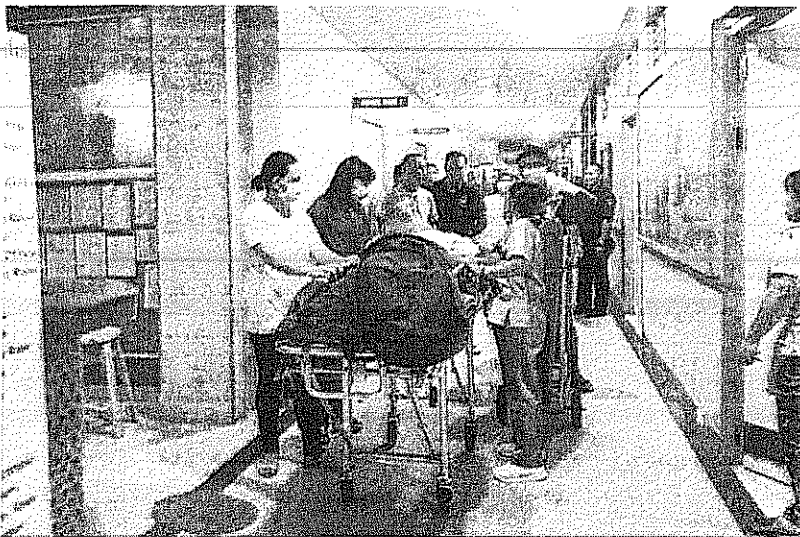
Edison and his wife were brought to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG)-Cagayan field office for custody.

The arresting team comprised members of the CIDG, Cagayan provincial police and Calayan town police, Marine Battalion landing team, special operations platoon and other government agents.

www.pna.gov.ph

Second blast hits an internet cafe in Isulan; kills 1, injures 15

From UNTV News & Rescue (Sep 3): **Second blast hits an internet cafe in Isulan; kills 1, injures 15**



Courtesy of JB Utto

SULTAN KUDARAT, Philippines – Barely a week after the explosion of an improvised explosive device (IED) in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat, the town was again horrified by another blast that ripped through an internet café on Sunday night (September 2).

The explosion left one teenager dead and injured 15 others, four of them in critical condition, according to Isulan Mayor Marites Pallasigue.

Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Oscar Albayalde on Sunday (September 2) expressed sympathy to the victims and their families and called the perpetrators “cowards.”

“We strongly condemn the attack on the people of Isulan. We are saddened by the casualties brought about by this cowardly act perpetrated by people hell bent on their nefarious goals without regard for lives of the civilians,” Albayalde said.

Due to the incident, the PNP maintains a full alert status in Mindanao while martial law is in effect. The PNP Chief said he already ordered the hardening of security measures in the region especially in checkpoints and intensified intelligence gathering.

“Makakaasa kayo na tutugisin namin at hindi po kami titigil hanggat hindi napapanagot ang may kagagawan nito. I have instructed our men on the ground to increase patrol, tighten security in the area, and intensify our cooperation with all other allied forces,” the PNP Chief assured.

Meanwhile, Malacañang also condemned the incident and assured that authorities have already launched an investigation as they “vow to bring the perpetrators of this brazen attack to justice.”

“We will apply the full force of the law,” said Presidential Spokesperson Harry Roque in a statement.

Prior to Sunday’s blast, an IED exploded along the national highway in Isulan on Tuesday night (August 28) coinciding with the town’s week long celebration of its 7th Hamungaya Festival. The incident killed three persons and injured at least 30 others.

www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

Bicol communist rebels could be behind bombing at Masbate port — Durana

From the Manila Bulletin (Sep 3): **Bicol communist rebels could be behind bombing at Masbate port — Durana**

Communist rebels operating in Bicol could be behind the bombing on a port in Masbate that led to the destruction of boats of Philippine Army and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG).

Senior Supt. Benigno Durana, spokesman of the Philippine National Police (PNP), said the traces of the improvised explosive device (IED) recovered during the post-blast investigation would reveal the kind of bomb that the New People's Army (NPA) usually makes.



Philippine National Police Spokesperson Senior Supt. Benigno Durana Jr. (Kevin Tristan Espiritu / MANILA BULLETIN)

"Our Crime Laboratory Office has recovered orange PVC pipes. We have seen this preferred signatures and materials of communist rebels," Durana said.

At around 12:30 a.m. yesterday, a loud explosion ripped through the Masbate Port area in Masbate City.

Responding cops reported that two boats were damaged—a 25-footer rescue boat of the 21st Battalion of the Philippine Army and another 25-footer boat with Coast Guard marking.

Fortunately, there was no reported casualty during the attack.

Police are now conducting investigation to identify the persons behind the attack which occurred a few hours after the second bomb attack in Isulan, Sultan Kudarat that left two civilians dead.