

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



TEAM ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

17 December 2017

Sunday

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

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BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST **DECEMBER 17, 2017** **SUNDAY**

TROPICAL STORM "URDUJA"
ESTIMATED AT 1.25 KM EAST NORTHEAST
OF BORONGAN CITY, EASTERN SAMAR
(As of 8:00 AM - December 16, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:14 AM	5:30 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
5:09 AM	4:52 PM
LAST QUARTER	NEW MOON
DEC 10 3:51 PM	DEC 18 2:30 PM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
4:51 AM -0.06 Meter	9:21 PM 1.04 Meter

☁ Partly cloudy or at times cloudy with light showers and/or drizzle
 ☁ Cloudy with occasional drizzle or showers
 ☁ Light rain
 ☁ Rain with gusty winds
 ☁ Stormy

METRO MANILA	22-29°C 23-30°C	TAGAYTAY	18-24°C 19-24°C	TACLOBAN	21-24°C 24-28°C
TUGUEGARAO	20-27°C 21-28°C	LEGAZPI	24-29°C 25-30°C	CAGAYAN DE ORO	24-29°C 24-32°C
LAOAG	21-30°C 21-30°C	PUERTO PRINCESA	23-26°C 23-26°C	METRO DAVAO	25-33°C 25-32°C
BAGUIO	12-23°C 13-24°C	ILOILO/ BACOLOD	23-26°C 25-29°C	ZAMBOANGA	23-29°C 24-32°C
SBMA/ CLARK	21-28°C 22-29°C	METRO CEBU	19-24°C 23-29°C		

MONDAY - FRIDAY
11 AM & 5 PM

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

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THOUSANDS FLEE 'URDUJA'S' WRATH

STORY BY JEANNETTE I. ANDRADE AND JAYMEE T. GAMIL

Floods and landslides drove some 35,021 families from their homes in 322 barangays in the Eastern Visayas and Caraga regions as Tropical Storm "Urduja" (international name: Kai-tak) barreled westward across Samar Island on Saturday. At least four people were buried alive under tons of soil loosened by heavy rains and four others remained missing hours after Urduja, packing maximum sustained winds of 80 kilometers per hour, made landfall at 1:30 p.m. in San Policarpio town, Eastern Samar.

A2

FROM A1

**By Jeannette I. Andrade
and Jaymee T. Gamil
@Team_Inquirer**

Tens of thousands of families were driven from their homes by floods and landslides in 322 barangays in the Eastern Visayas and Caraga regions as Tropical Storm "Urduja" (international name: Kai-tak) barreled westward across Samar Island on Saturday.

Five hours after making landfall at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday in the vicinity of San Policarpio, Eastern Samar, Urduja increased speed to 15 kilometers per hour and packed maximum sustained winds of 80 kph while slicing through the town of San Jose de Buan.

At least four people were killed in landslides in Biliran and Ormoc City and four others, including three fishermen in Samar, remained missing, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

Ferry and air transport services remained suspended in Eastern and Central Visayas, and disaster relief officials issued warnings of more flooding and storm surges as Urduja headed for Central Visayas.

Some 1,000 families from 15 coastal villages in Daanbantayan, Cebu, were asked to vacate their homes under threat from huge waves.

According to the NDRRMC operations center in Camp Aguinaldo, a total of 8,832 families, made up of 38,850 people, were moved to evacuation centers on Friday in Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Western Samar, Leyte, Southern Leyte, Dinagat Islands and Surigao del Norte.

The evacuees were part of the 158,166 people from 35,021 families displaced by floods in the Eastern Visayas and Caraga regions.

A total of 11,101 passengers, as well as 1,322 rolling cargoes, 52 vessels and 33 motorized boats, were stranded in the seaports of Calabarzon, Mimaropa, the Bicol region, Western and Eastern Visayas, and Metro Manila, officials said.



LIFELINE Rescuers hold on to ropes as they facilitate the evacuation on Saturday of residents in Sitio Bagtan, Barangay Poblacion in Albuera town, Leyte. Heavy rains caused by storm "Urduja" caused the Talisayan River to overflow. —ROBERT DEJON

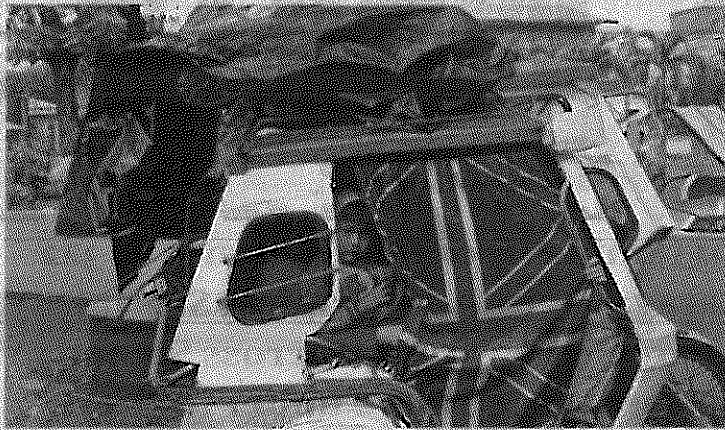
Nearly 30 areas in the country were placed under storm signals by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) which expected Urduja to bring more rains and pack stronger winds in the next three days.

Pagasa weather specialists said Urduja would leave the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) as early as Tuesday evening. Unfortunately, Urduja may not be the last tropical cyclone for the month or the year.

At 5 p.m. on Saturday, a low pressure area (LPA) was located 2,180 km east of South Cotabato and could enter the PAR on Wednesday, according to weather specialist Samuel Duran.

In a later briefing, the Pagasa's Aldezar Aurelio said that the LPA would be named "Vinta" should it intensify into a tropical cyclone.

The Pagasa warned of continued scattered to widespread moderate to heavy rains, which may cause floodings and landslides, over the Bicol region, the Visayas, southern Quezon, Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Mindoro provinces, Marinduque



ON TO SAFER GROUND A little girl peeps from a tricycle as her family living at the foot of Mt. Mayon heads to an evacuation center in Guinobatan, Albay. —MICHAEL B. JAUCIAN

and Romblon.

Sea travel was still discouraged over the country's eastern seaboard from Bicol to the tip of Mindanao and in both seaboard in Central Visayas.

By 5 p.m. on Saturday, only areas in southern Luzon and the Visayas remained under storm signal.

Under signal No. 2 were Sorsogon and Masbate, including Ticao Islands, and Romblon, northern Samar, the northern part of Eastern Samar, the

northern part of Samar, Biliran, Antique, Aklan, Capiz and northern Iloilo.

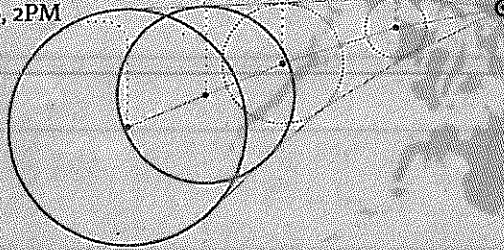
Signal No. 1 was hoisted over southern Quezon, Marinduque, the southern parts of Occidental and Oriental Mindoro, Catanduanes, Camarines Sur, Albay, Burias Island, northern Palawan, Cuyo Island, Calamian Group of Islands, Iloilo, the rest of Samar, the rest of Eastern Samar, Guimaras, Negros Occidental, the northern part of Negros Oriental, northern Cebu

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TROPICAL STORM "URDUJA"

- December 16, 2PM
- December 17, 2PM
- December 18, 2PM
- December 19, 2PM
- December 20, 2PM



SOURCE: PAGASA

GRAPHICS

and Leyte.

The NDRRMC identified the four fatalities as Winnie Garbo, 55, Maribeth Garbo, 52, Wilma Garbo, 12, and Jimmy Jorge, 2. They were killed in a landslide in Sitio Barobohan, Barangay Iyusan, Almeria town in Biliran.

Rescuers were still searching for Juanita Montellana Cabillo, who was believed to have been buried alive when a landslide destroyed her house in Barangay Tongonan, Ormoc City.

Cabillo's husband, Nelson, survived after his brother-in-law and his two sons pulled him out of a huge mound of earth that had covered him from the neck down.

Leyte Gov. Dominico Petilla placed the province under a state of calamity as floods inundated 60 percent of the 138 villages in Tacloban City alone.

More than 2,000 families in Tacloban and another 300 in Ormoc City were moved to evacuation centers as floodwaters rose to at least waist-deep, said Lutgarda Barredo, chief of the Tacloban Rescue Team Unit.

A baby girl and a woman, both unidentified, were also injured in the city, the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) reported.

In Samar, some 5,000 families from 18 towns were evacuated to safer grounds while massive landslides blocked the national highway at Barangay Laygayon in Pinabacdao town

and at Barangay Tarabucan in Calbayog City, said Van Torrevillas of the the province's PDRRMO.

Another 2,024 families living in coastal villages were evacuated because of the threat of storm surges and flooding, said Brig. Gen. Mario Lacurom, commanding officer of the Army's 803rd Infantry Brigade based in Catarman town.

Samar and Leyte, with a combined population of about 4.5 million, had borne the brunt of Supertyphoon "Yolanda" (international name: Haiyan) four years ago that left more than 7,350 people dead or missing.

But the heavy rains unleashed by Urduja did not prevent Catholics in Southern Luzon and the Visayas from attending the first Mass of the nine-day "Simbang Gabi" on Saturday.

"The rains were nonstop but this did not stop people from hearing Mass," Fr. Jenious Mansalay, social action director of the Diocese of Mabate, said over Church-run Radio Veritas.

Fr. Alcris Badana, of the Diocese of Palo, noted that the turnout for the Mass was smaller than last year's.

"There were many churchgoers who attended the Simbang Gabi but their number was smaller because of the rains and floods," Badana said.

—WITH REPORTS FROM JOEY A. GABIETA, ROBERT DEJON, MA. APRIL MIER, REY ANTHONY, MICHAEL JAUCIAN, MADONNA VIROLA, JULIE M. AURELIO AND AFP INQ

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Military anticipating stepped-up NPA attacks

Amid the reported plans of communist rebels to launch attacks on its anniversary on Dec. 26, the military directed all troops to intensify operations to protect civilians and communities.

Army spokesman Lt. Col. Ray Tiongson said orders were given to the troops to protect civilians and put premium on human rights so as not to give the rebels an excuse to attack or recruit.

"While our troops on the ground are intensifying focused military operations, they are directed to remain faithful and committed in the performance of their mandate

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Military From Page 1

to ensure peace and security in the communities, protect human rights and follow the rule of law," Tiongson said.

Tiongson made the statement following reports that the communist New People's Army (NPA) is gearing up to attack government forces to highlight the scheduled plenum in Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur in celebration of the 49th founding anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philip-

pines (CPP) on Dec. 26.

Reports said the attacks will take place where the NPA has established strong presence in Eastern and Northern Mindanao, as well as provinces in Eastern and Western Visayas, Southern Tagalog, Bicol region, Central and Northern Luzon, Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and Cagayan Valley.

The military leadership has vowed to uphold human rights with the extension of

martial law in Mindanao for another year.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero said the one-year extension of martial law in Mindanao would specifically deal with the threats of Islamic State (IS) remnants and the communist NPA in the region.

The military used the strong presence of communist rebels in Mindanao as one of the arguments for recommending the extension of martial law for one year.

The AFP has activated two new military groups, the 88th and 89th Infantry Battalions. They will be deployed to the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) to support the 15th IB and the 2nd Scout Ranger Battalion, both veterans of the fighting in Marawi City.

Eastmincom covers Southern Mindanao, Northern and Eastern Mindanao as well as part of Central Mindanao, the areas where the NPA mostly operate.

At least 50 percent of the

total strength of the NPA in the country is reportedly operating in Eastmincom's area of operations.

Eastmincom said there are about 1,900 NPA rebels in its area.

Local military officials also warned of possible NPA attacks on its anniversary on Dec. 26.

Col. Andres Centino, commander of the Army's 401st Brigade in Agusan del Sur, said they have received directives from the Department of National Defense (DND) to sustain

the military offensives against the NPA since there will be no traditional truce with the rebels during the holidays.

Centino said the directive was to prevent the NPA from gathering forces for their plenum in the area.

Centino was referring to the annual gathering of the NPA in the hinterlands of Agusan del Sur during their anniversary to show off their firepower before civilian supporters and local officials.

- With Jaime Laude, Ben Serrano

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NPA ANNIVERSARY

ARMY BRACES FOR REBEL ATTACKS

LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN— Army soldiers operating in the provinces of Pangasinan, Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Ecija are preparing for possible New People's Army (NPA) attacks, on the run-up to the 49th anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) on Dec. 26.

The CPP was founded on Dec. 26, 1968, in a remote village in Alaminos City in Pangasinan.

The NPA may be on the run, following President Duterte's declaration that the armed communist rebels are terrorists, but it may still launch attacks to mark the CPP anniversary, said Lt. Col. George Bergonia, commanding officer of the Army's 84th Infantry Battalion based in San Jose City in Nueva Ecija.

Two NPA guerrilla fronts used

to operate in the Caraballo mountains straddling Pangasinan, Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Ecija, said Bergonia, who attended the Pangasinan peace and order council meeting here on Friday.

One front operates in eastern Pangasinan and its members have been sighted in the remote villages of the towns of Umingan, San Quintin, Natividad and San Nicolas, he said.

But this rebel outfit was disbanded after nine of its members, including its leader, Joel Managan alias "Ka Razul," were killed in an encounter in Carranglan town in Nueva Ecija on Sept. 20, he said.

After the encounter, the NPA rebels in eastern Pangasinan have been reduced into a single group that is "on the run," he said.

—GABRIEL CARDINOZA INQ

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Army commander fetes troops involved in Marawi liberation

Philippine Army commander Lt. Gen. Rolando Joselito Bautista honored troops and units from various services involved in the five-month battle to liberate Marawi City from Maute Group terrorists in a short ceremony at Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City last Friday.

Bautista led the awarding ceremony where personnel and units of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Philippine National Police and Philippine Coast Guard were honored for their contribution in defeating the terrorists, Army spokesman Lt. Col. Ray Tiongson said.

Tiongson added a total of 39 Combat Commander Kagitingan badges, four Silver Cross medals and 14 Military Merit medals were awarded.

Meanwhile, plaques of recognition were given to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th Infantry Divisions; Special Operations Command; First Scout Ranger Regiment; Light Reaction Regiment; Special Forces Regiment (Airborne); Mechanized Infantry Division; Army Artillery

Regiment; Army Signal Regiment; Army Intelligence Regiment; Civil-Military Operations Regiment; 52nd Engineer Brigade; 53rd Engineer Brigade; 54th Engineer Brigade; 500th Engineer Combat Battalion; Army Reserve Command, and the Army Support Command.

Bautista also recognized 16 other military, police and Coast Guard units: Philippine Air Force's 15th Strike Wing, 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing, 5th Fighter Wing, 300 Air Intelligence and Security Group, 3rd Tactical Operations Group, and 710th Special Operations Wing; Philippine Marines Corps; Naval Special Operations Group; Armed Forces of the Philippines' Health Service Command, and Intelligence Service; PNP Special Action Force; Police Regional Office 10; Police Regional Office Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao; Health Service; Maritime Group, and the Philippine Coast Guard.

"Bilang dating Commander ng Joint Task Force Marawi, nakita at naramdaman ko po lahat ng sakripisyo ng inyong mga units

at kawal upang ating malampasan ang tinuturing natin na isa sa pinakamatinding pagsubok na kinaharap hindi lamang ng ating Armed Forces kundi ng ating buong bansa (As former commander of Joint Task Force Marawi, I witnessed and felt all the sacrifices of your units and troops to get through one of the most serious trials faced not only by the Armed Forces, but also by the entire country)," Bautista said.

"Kasama na rito ang hamon sa PNP at Philippine Coast Guard. Kung kaya't sa araw na ito, manarapat natin na kilalanin at pasalamatan ang lahat ng mga units at individual na tumugon sa hamon na mapalaya ang Marawi at maprotektahan ang lahat ng mamamayan nito laban sa mga teroristang grupo (This includes the challenges faced by the PNP and the Philippine Coast Guard. That is why on this day, we fittingly recognize and thank all units and individuals who responded to the challenge to free Marawi and protect all citizens from terrorist groups)," Bautista said. **PNA**

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Seized weapons in Marawi not from military – AFP

None of the weapons seized from Marawi City and destroyed this week showed any sign that they came from military stocks, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero said Friday.

“As for the (seized Maute Group) firearms inventoried so far, we are still to see any weapon (serial numbers) matching those in the inventory of the AFP,” Guerrero said in Filipino when asked during a press briefing in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City whether AFP weapons were found among the terrorists’ arms cache.

More than 1,000 firearms of various calibers and types were seized

by government forces in the battle to liberate Marawi City.

The battle began when government troops tried to arrest Abu Sayyaf leader and ISIS “emir” in Southeast Asia, Isnilon Hapilon, last May 23.

Fighting was declared after authorities confirmed the death of Hapilon and Maute Group co-founder, Omar Maute, last October 23.

Some 652 weapons were taken to the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, to be destroyed ceremonially early this week.

The remaining 400 are still being processed as of this posting. (PNA)

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2 activist priests urge Duterte to call holiday truce

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
@dtmallarijrINQ

LUCENA CITY—Two activist priests on Saturday made a last-minute appeal to President Duterte to observe a truce with communist rebels this holiday season.

"We ask you, especially your poor countrymen and women, for this precious gift of a Christmas ceasefire, of peace this Christmas and the days to come," Fr. Robert Reyes said.

"After all this is Christmas—the triumph of peace over war and the triumph of generosity and compassion over greed and violence," he said.

Fr. Pete Montallana, coordinator of Indigenous Peoples' Apostolate of the Diocese of Infanta in Quezon province, said: "Let the ceasefire happen. God will pave the kingdom of peace, justice and love. What we cannot do He will make things happen. For too long, too many have suffered."

The two priests made the appeal after the military said they had seen no need for a Christmas truce this year. Mr. Duterte concurred and said he would not order a truce.

Communist leader Jose Maria Sison had earlier suggested that the rebel group might call a unilateral ceasefire for the holidays, as had been

done several times in the past.

However, the rebels have not declared a truce since the military publicly announced they would not suspend of military operations.

Respite from violence

Mulanay, Quezon, Mayor Joselito Ojeda also appealed to Mr. Duterte and the rebels to call a truce "for the sake of peace, especially in the countryside."

"A couple of days of gun silence from both armed protagonists is a welcome respite for those in the countryside," Ojeda, former president of Quezon Mayor's League, said.

Ojeda recently initiated localized peace talks in Quezon,

but the talks are in peril after Mr. Duterte tagged the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army as terrorist organizations.

"We've temporarily stopped the initiative as we assess the situation," he said.

Maj. Gen. Rhoderick Parayno, commander of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division operating in Southern Tagalog, said he encouraged local peace talks.

"I'll still encourage it. The main consideration I think is sincerity. If this is present at the local level, I don't see why we won't respect it. After all, peace is what we want," Parayno said in a phone interview. INQ

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THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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QUAKE DRILL – Armed Forces of the Philippines – Central Command forces in Camp Lapu Lapu undergo a briefing prior to an earthquake drill to enhance the military's preparedness and disaster response capabilities. (Juan Carlo De Vela)

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5 Reds yield to Northern Mindanao cops

By ALFRED DALIZON

POLICE Regional Office 10 director Chief Supt. Timoteo Pacleb yesterday announced the surrender of five members of the New People's Army who also turned over an estimated P140,000 worth of high-powered firearms to the police this month.

The official said the surrender of the five came in the wake of their ongoing drive to convince NPA rebels in the region to yield to authorities and return to the mainstream of the society to fend for their families.

Last December 5, he said that Marion Talisik, Bebert Damasco Jr. and Rodolfo Talisik Jr., identified as members of the NPA's Security Committee 89, turned themselves over to the PRO10 Regional Intelligence Division following negotiations with Datu Jerry Magaling. The three were members of the Higa-onon tribe.

The three were escorted by personnel from the PRO10 Public Safety Mobile Forces Company in Bukidnon led by Senior Insp. Noel Cano, who fetched them in Bgy. Casisang, Malaybalay City.

Pacleb said the three

turned over a 5.56 Barret IG sniper rifle with one magazine containing seven live ammunition, one M-14 rifle with a modified silencer and telescope and a magazine with seven bullets and a Carbine cal. 30 rifle with a loaded magazine.

The weapons were valued at P125,000.

During a debriefing, the three claimed they used to be under one Commander Caesar and involved in NPA extortion activities and other atrocities in Bukidnon from 2014 to 2015.

Last Monday, Pacleb said that two other comrades of the three, identified as Arnel and Mablet

Timbangan, both members of the Omayamnon tribe based in Bgy. Canagaan, Cabanglasan, Bukidnon, surrendered to PRO10-RID.

The official said that the two confessed their involvement in the procurement of NPA firearms and other supplies in Bukidnon as well as Agusan del Sur since 2016. The two turned over two 12-gauge shotguns with sling magazines to the police. The firearms were valued at P25,000.

"The five rebels surrendered after being demoralized by extreme hardships and false promises within the revolutionary movement," Pacleb said.

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Rebel's body claimed by kin

CAMP Simeon Ola, Legazpi City – About half an hour encounter between a Scout Rangers platoon of the Army's 31st Infantry Battalion and some 30 communist rebels in Bgy. Salvacion, Magallanes, Sorsogon, left one rebel dead, identified as Ruel Amatorio Gutierrez, 26, whose body was claimed by relatives from Bgy. Pili, Magallanes, the Police Regional Office 5 here reported on Friday.

Reportedly, Gutierrez's body was handed over by the Philippine Army to Maricel Dioquino Gutierrez, sister of the slain rebel, and his live-in partner, Lilibethany Cahol Mollo, who both positively identified the body of Gutierrez.

The firefight between Scout Ranger troopers, led by Army 1st Lt. Eddie Badol, and suspected communist rebels, led by a certain Edwin Dematera, alias "Ka Dupax", of the NPSRL, CO, KSPNI, KP3, Bicol regional party committee of the CPP-NPA-NDF, resulted in one rebel casualty and the recovery of two long firearms and ammunition.

Earlier, two of four suspected armed communist rebels who fired at an Army checkpoint at Bgy. San Isidro, Bulan, Sorsogon have been charged with attempted murder before the Provincial Prosecutor's Office in Sorsogon City, docketed under NPS No. V-13-INV-171-5626, administered by Assistant Provincial Prosecutor Charo Cadag-Embile, dated Dec. 13. They two were identified as Jose Marie Estiller, alias, "Ka Nog-nog", or "Hulog-Hulog", of Calpi, Bulan, and Maria Hamto, alias, "Ka Alvin", of Gabao, Irosin, both in Sorsogon.

The two suspected NPA rebels were among a group of communist rebels who fired at an Army checkpoint while on board an L300 (Mitsubishi van) with no license plates. The vehicle was later recovered by personnel of the Bulan, Municipal Police Station and the Police Public Safety Company in Bgy. San Isidro, Bulan, Sonny Sales

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Urban poor hits ML extension in Mindanao

By RHODINA VILLANUEVA

The urban poor sector hit the government for extending martial law in Mindanao for one year.

The militant Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay) said the extension of martial law in Mindanao is a means to crush opposition to the planned disenfranchisement of thousands of informal settlers in Marawi City as well as to resistance to demolitions against urban poor communities all over Mindanao.

Kadamay national president Gloria Arellano said the reconstruction of war-torn Marawi is an opportunity for the government to get rid of its thousands of informal settlers without having to provide even the minimum housing and financial assistance mandated by law.

"By simply barring them from going

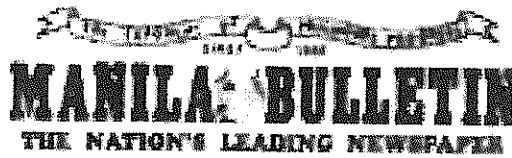
back to the sites of their old homes, these lands will be opened up to the 'hordes of corporations' looking for cheap properties," Arellano said.

Arellano added that outside Marawi, martial law will also be used against the urban poor in other cities across Mindanao.

Arellano said Surigao, Butuan and Malaybalay in Bukidnon will follow the lead of Davao City as "a killing field" of the urban poor.

She said Kadamay would not take the extension of martial law sitting down, vowing that its thousands of members nationwide would campaign for the redistribution of idle housing units to the homeless and also for the ouster of President Duterte, whom the group branded as the number one enemy of the urban poor.

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Martial law won't affect 'Simbang Gabi'

"Simbang Gabi" or dawn masses will not be affected by the prevailing martial law in Mindanao, Catholic prelates said. Ozamiz Archbishop Martin Jumoad said people even appreciate the presence of the military during the observance. "Martial law will not affect the observance and celebration of Misa de Gallo," he said in an interview. "People trust our military and their presence is well appreciated," added Jumoad. Lawmakers on Wednesday approved the extension of the military rule in Mindanao until the end of 2018. President Duterte earlier asked Congress to extend martial law due to supposed threats posed by communist rebels and Muslim extremists. (Leslie Ann Aquino)

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KAHIT DEDMA ANG MGA PINOY

Federalism sa 'Pinas, igigiit ni Digong

NI ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

Determinado ang Malacañang na isulong ang pagpapalit ng bansa ng federal na uri ang gobyerno kahit hindi interesado ang mga Pilipino sa ipinangakong ito ni Pangulong Duterte noong nangangampanya pa.

Ito ay makaraang aminin ni Duterte na karamihan sa mga Pilipino ay hindi pa handa sa federalism, lalo na ang mga naninirahan sa mga inaakala niyang makakukuha siya ng malakas na suporta para sa kanyang kampanya.

Ayon kay Communications Secretary Martin Andanar, hindi susuko ang administrasyon na ipabatid at ipaunawa sa mga Pilipino ang benepisyo ng federal na gobyerno, kahit na patuloy nilang hindi ito tangkilikin.

Aniya, tinanong niya ang Pangulo sa Christmas Party kasama ang Malacañang Press Corps (MPC), kung

ito na ang panahon upang sumuko sa federalism.

"Sabi niya, dapat ituloy ito, dapat ituloy 'yung information drive para maintindihan ng ating mga kababayan," lahad ni Andanar sa panayam kahapon ng Radyo Pilipinas.

"Federalism was part of the President's platform of government during the campaign, and we will continue this push for federalism," dagdag pa ni Andanar.

Binanggit din ni Andanar kung paano humihingi ng tulong si Duterte sa mga pribadong mainstream media organizations, dahil ang government channels, kabilang ang Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO), ay mukhang hindi sapat.

"Kaya nga nakita natin, 'di ba, na ang ating Pangulo, sinabi niya na dapat tumulong ang mass media para nga

i-inform ang ating mga kababayan pangtungkol sa federalism," ani Andanar.

Bago pa man siya tumakbo bilang pangulo, ay ikinakampanya na ni Duterte ang pagkakaroon ng federal na gobyerno.

Gayunman nitong Martes, inamin ni Duterte na hindi nais ng mga taga-Visayas at Mindanao ang ideya.

"It does not seem to ring a bell in the Visayas and Mindanao or, if at all, [only among] those who are really dedicated and are thinking Filipinos," aniya, at sinabing umaasa siyang susuportahan ng mga taong naninirahan doon, lalo na sa Mindanao, ang kanyang kampanya dahil magiging mabuti ito para sa kanila.

Isinusulong ni Duterte ang federal government sa pag-asang maresolba nito ang matagal nang sigalot sa Mindanao.

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Palace: 'Joma' has no more influence over NPA rebs

By Ted Tuvora

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founding chairman Jose Maria "Joma" Sison should better keep his mouth shut.

Malacañang said this yesterday as a response to Sison's recent statement that both the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) will soon turn their backs on President Duterte.

In an interview over state-run Radyo Pilipinas, Presidential Communications Secretary Martin Andanar said before the septuagenarian communist leader opines on state operatives, he should first have a reality check if he still has the influence over



SISON

communist forces in the Philippines.

"Well, obviously Joma Sison is really out of touch. He's too far from the Philippines," Andanar said.

"He's been in The Netherlands for the longest time. Now, even if he avails himself of all the available technology in communication, if he is not able to talk to his men on the ground, he cannot get their actual pulse," the Palace official elaborated.

Sison has stayed in Utrecht in The Netherlands since 1987, saying there are lots of assassination attempts and legal charges ought to track him down in the Philippines.

The aging communist ideologue used to be a college professor of Mr. Duterte back in the 1960s.

But recently, Sison's student turned President declared his group, the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), as terrorist groups after more than a year of the government's attempt to talk peace with the 49-year-old insurgency.

Moreover, Andanar stressed the AFP and PNP remain to be loyal to their Commander in Chief.

"I believe that our AFP and the PNP are strong and number one, their loyalty is with the President and our country," Andanar said.

"I know that the AFP and the Philippine National Police are overwhelmingly – overwhelmingly very powerful and really a force to reckon with," he added.

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Joma Sison pinaaresto na!

PINAPLANTSA na ng pamahalaan ang posibleng pagaresto at paghahain ng extradition laban kay Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army founder at National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) chief political consultant Jose Maria "Joma" Sison kasunod ng pagdedeklara ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na isang terrorist group ang CPP-NPA.

Sa ginanap na Christmas luncheon ng DFA Press Corps na host ng Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) kahapon, sinabi ni Cayetano na hindi pa lusot si Joma, na nasa Netherlands at may political asylum, sa pananagutan matapos ang mga ginagawang pag-atake at pambobomba ng teroristang NPA sa iba't ibang lugar.

Sinabi ni Cayetano na kapag napatunayan na may kinalaman, at may "conspiracy" o nakikipagsabwatan si Joma sa mga ginagawang karahasan ng NPA sa bansa, ay mahinaw na kabilang siya sa naturang teroristang grupo na nanabotahe ngayon sa pamahalaan.

Binigyang-daan ni Cayetano na layunin ng Duterte administration na maisulong ang kapayapaan sa bansa.

Sa kabila umano ng pagsusulong ni Pangulong Duterte

sa minimithing kapayapaan lalo na sa Mindanao, ang CPP-NPA-NDF umano ay hindi tumutupad sa usapan at kasunduan lalo na sa mga idinedeclarang "ceasefire".

Sinabi ni Cayetano na sa tuwing may tigil-putukan, tila pinipitik naman ng NPA ang "tenga" ng pamahalaan kungsaan patuloy ang isinasagawa nilang pag-atake, paghingi ng revolutionary tax, pagdukot, panununog sa mga proyekto ng DOTr, DPWH at tuluy-tuloy ang kanilang recruitment ng bagong mga miyembro para palakasin ang kanilang grupo.

Sa kabila umano ng pagbibigay ng Cabinet position, ang direktang pakikipagdayalogo ng Pangulo sa mga opisyal ng CPP-NPA at pagiging bukas ng pintuan ng Malacañang sa mga makakaliwa, hindi umano maintindihan ng gobyerno ang tinatahak na direksyon ng nasabing grupo na nagsasagawa ng terorismo.

Magugunita na mismong si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang naghayag na kanyang ipaaresto ang mga napalayang mga miyembro ng makakaliwang grupo kasunod ng pagdedeklara nito bilang terrorist group ang CPP-NPA.

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Suspected Sayyaf rebel caught in QC

By EMMANUEL TUPAS

A suspected Abu Sayyaf rebel wanted for murder was arrested in Quezon City yesterday.

Abdulmuin Yahiya, 35, was arrested along AD Basilan street at Salaam Compound in Barangay Culiati at around 10 a.m.

Chief Superintendent Guillermo Eleazar, Quezon City Police District (QCPD)

director, said teams from the District Special Operations Unit, Naval Intelligence and Security Force and National Intelligence Coordinating Agency served an arrest warrant against Yahiya.

The warrant is for four

counts of murder and was issued in August 2006 by Judge Leo Jay Principe of Isabela City Regional Trial Court Branch 1 based in Basilan.

Authorities first spotted the suspect along Tandang Sora Avenue. They followed Yahiya and apprehended him in his home.

According to the police, Yahiya was working as a tricycle driver before he was arrested.

"He has been hiding here to avoid the pending cases against him," Eleazar said in a phone interview.

Yahiya is reportedly affiliated with Hadji Taufik Sanihin Yahiya, another Abu Sayyaf rebel wanted for nine counts of murder and four counts of frustrated murder.

He was brought to the QCPD headquarters at Camp Karingal for further investigation.

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Pahina. 1

ASG member na wanted, timbog sa QC

Isang hinihinalang miyembro ng notoryosong Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) na isinasangkot sa kasong pagpatay ang nalambat ng mga tauhan ng Quezon City Police District (QCPD) sa nasabing lungsod kamakalawa.

Ayon kay QCPD Director, P/Chief Supt. Guillermo Lorenzo Eleazar, ang suspek na si Abdulmuin Yahiya alyas Jayson at Mauhmin Yahiya, 35, at may tatlong taon nang naninirahan sa Basilan St., Salaam Comp., sa Brgy. Culiati, ay naaresto sa bisa ng warrant of arrest na inisyu ni Judge Leo Jay Principe ng Isabela City, Basilan Regional Trial Court noong Agosto 2006 pa dahil sa kasong murder, kaya't walang inirekomendang piyansa para sa

kanyang pansamantalang paglaya ang korte.

Si Yahiya ay hinihinalang miyembro ng ASG dahil sa malapit na ugnayan kay Hadji Taufik Sanihin Yahiya alyas Nonong Yakan at Nonong Yahiya na isa sa mga hardcore members ng ASG at wanted din sa 9 na bilang ng kasong murder at apat na bilang ng kasong frustrated murder.

Naaresto ang suspek dakong alas-10:00 ng umaga sa Tandang Sora Avenue, Quezon City matapos na matukoy ng District Special Operations Unit (DSOU) na pinamumunuan ni P/Supt Rogarth Campo na nag-

tatago sa Salaam Compound at nagpapanggap na isang tricycle driver.

"Ito pong arrested wanted person ay naging miyembro ng Salaam Crime Watch Group at nagsilbi nang maayos, ngunit gusto man niyang magbagong buhay, may pananagutan pa rin siya sa batas. Kaya ako ay lubos na nagpapasalamat sa ating mga kasamahang Muslim sa Salaam Compound sa patuloy na kooperasyon at suporta sa ating mga adhikain," ani Eleazar.

Pinapurihan ni Eleazar ang kanyang mga tauhan dahil sa matagumpay na pagkakaaresto sa suspek. *(Mer Layson)*

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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GPH-MILF panels meet in KL, reaffirm commitment to peace

By ALI G. MACABALANG

COTABATO CITY – The implementing panels of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) met on Friday in Kuala Lumpur, and signed four supplemental agreements reaffirming their commitment to the Mindanao peace process.

The GPH group was headed by Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza and GPH Implementing Panel Chair Nabil Tan, while its counterpart was led by MILF Chairman Murad Ebrahim and Implementing Panel Chair Mohagher Iqbal.

The signed agreements included the Revised Implementing Guidelines on the Joint Communiqué of May 6, 2002;

Guidelines for the Operationalization of the Bangsamoro Normalization Trust Fund (BNTF); the Terms of Reference of the GPH-MILF Joint Communications Committee; and a certification extending the mandate of the Civilian Protection Component (CPC) of the International Monitoring Team (IMT), the panels said in a statement.

The statement, a copy of which was furnished The Manila Bulletin, said the new pacts will reinforce the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB), which the MILF and the government inked in March 2014.

Tan and Iqbal signed the four accords in the presence of Dureza, Murad and Malaysian Special Adviser Dato' Kamarudin Bin Mustafa, as well as

members of the International Contact Group (ICG) from Japan, Republic of Turkey, United Kingdom, and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, and Conciliation Resources.

In his speech, Dureza underscored the need for resilience and patience in the peace process.

"Peace doesn't come overnight. We have to work hard for it," Dureza said.

He said the Kuala Lumpur meeting, and the signing of the new agreements "are clear signals that we'd like to move from where we are today... (to) move forward 'piece by piece.'"

For his part, Murad noted that the "all the [peace] structures are working very hard in order for this [peace] process - which took decades - to succeed."

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8 Estudyanteng Lumad, inaresto ng Marines

GENERAL SANTOS CITY - Mariing kinondena ng mga progresibong grupo ang pag-aresto ng Marine Battalion Landing Team o MBLT sa walong mga Dulangan Manobo sa Sitio Tinagdanan, Barangay Hinalaan, Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat alas-4:30 ng hapon nitong Miyerkules, Disyembre 13, 2017.

Kinilala ng grupong Karapatan Socsargen ang mga inaresto na sina Kuya Gantangan, Anto Gantangan, Jonard Gantangan, Dod Gantangan, Dink Gumpay, Palut Saglang, Kasi Osiano at Jitre Gantangan pawang mga residente sa naturang lugar.

Ayon sa grupong Karapatan ang mga himuli mga miyembro ng Kesasabanay Dulangan Manobo o KEDUMA na mariing tumutol sa pag-ukopa sa lupain ni David M. Consunji Inc. o DMCI na kanilang ancestral land.

Ayon sa Center for Lumad Advocacy Networking and Service o CLANS mga estudyante sa adult literacy program ang mga inaresto na nag-aaral sa Lumad School sa Sultan Kudarat.

Patuloy na pinaghahanap ng grupong Karapatan ang mga himuling mga estudyante.

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INQUIRER

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China dismisses 'hype' over military buildup

Philippine foreign secretary also downplays report on Chinese military buildup

BEIJING—China has defended its construction on disputed islands in the South China Sea as “normal,” after a US think tank released new satellite images showing deployment of radar and other equipment.

Beijing claims nearly all of the sea and has been turning reefs in the Spratly and Paracel chains into islands, installing military facilities and equipment on them.

The Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AmTi) said the buildup continued this year despite rival claims across the sea from Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

Responding to the report, foreign ministry spokesperson Lu Kang on Friday said: “If China is conducting any peaceful construction activity or deploying necessary defense facilities, it’s very normal because it’s within our sovereignty.”

“We believe that some individuals are making a fuss about this. They’re trying to hype it up,” Lu told a regular news briefing.

Over the course of 2017, China has been advancing the next phase of development with construction of infrastructure to support air and naval bases, such as underground storage areas and “large radar and sensor arrays,” the Washington-based think tank said in a report

on Thursday.

Fiery Cross Reef saw the most construction this past year, with building work spanning 27 acres, or about 110,000 square metres, AmTi said its analysis of satellite images showed.

There is now a high frequency radar array at the northern end of the island, it added.

In Manila, Foreign Secretary Alan Cayetano on Saturday downplayed AmTi’s report, saying the Chinese were not occupying new areas in the disputed waters.

“We’ve never said that everyone stopped (building) or some are not building. What we said is, they’re not now occupying any new feature that’s uninhabited and there’s (no) new building in new areas,” Cayetano told reporters.

He said Manila has monitored “a lot” of construction in areas occupied by different countries.

China, Malaysia and Vietnam were “repairing” their facilities and the Philippines was also doing “repairs” on Pag-asa island, he said without specifying what Filipinos were fixing.

Meanwhile, the official Xinhua news agency reported on Friday that China’s southern island province of Hainan has revealed a satellite launch plan to

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WOODY ISLAND
November 15, 2017



IT'S NORMAL China defends construction on disputed islands in South China Sea. This satellite image shows two Chinese Y-8 military transport aircraft on Woody Island in the Paracel island chain in South China Sea. —AP

“assist remote sensing coverage” over the South China Sea.

The mission will start in 2019 with the launch of three optical satellites, Xinhua cited the Sanyan Institute of Remote Sensing as saying.

The report follows recent moves by China to ease concerns among rival claimants around the sea, through which

some \$5 trillion in annual shipping trade passes.

Vietnam and China agreed last month during President Xi Jinping's visit to Hanoi to avoid conflicts in the hotly contested waters.

At a meeting with the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) in November, China and Asean

countries agreed to begin talks on a much-delayed code of conduct for the sea.

The Philippines had for many years stood alongside Vietnam as one of the region's strongest opponents to Chinese expansionism.

Following Manila's complaint to a UN-backed tribunal, the panel ruled last year that

China's territorial claims in the sea were without legal basis.

But the Philippines, after President Duterte took office last year, decided not to use the ruling to pressure China.

He instead chose to build closer ties in return for billions of dollars in investments and aid.

Cayetano said the Chinese construction would be taken up at the upcoming discussions between China and the Asean on the code of conduct.

Manila will also take up the matter with Beijing during a bilateral consultation early next year.

What was important to the Philippines was not losing more territories, according to Cayetano.

“Have we lost a single inch of water or any features when President Duterte became president? No. But we lost a lot in the previous administration and administrations. Again, we're not blaming them but we're trying to solve that problem,” Cayetano said.

“President Duterte thinks that if we went all out with the criticism ... we'll keep winning international support and legal cases but there won't be an enforcement mechanism. China or other countries will continue building and getting more areas,” he went on. —REPORTS FROM AFP AND DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN INQ

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China, RP cement peaceful settlement

China and the Philippines stressed the “peaceful settlement of disputes” during a meeting of both countries’ security officials during the 5th Annual Defense Security Talks (ADST) that sought to strengthen the bilateral defense cooperation between both countries.

Both countries highlighted the importance of the South China Sea for the region’s economic growth and development, the Department of National Defense (DND) said in a statement.

The Philippine panel expressed optimism that the adoption of the Framework for the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea last August has brought the two nations closer to the long-sought conclusion of a binding and meaningful CoC.

Undersecretary for Defense Policy Ricardo David Jr. led the Philippine delegation while assistant chief of China’s Central Military Commission (CMC) General Staff, Rear Admiral Jiang Guoping, represented China as well as other officials of the CMC.

“Along with this, both sides expressed support for the peaceful settlement of

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disputes thereat through lawful, non-coercive, and transparent means,” according to the DND.

“The Philippine side likewise expressed optimism that the adoption of the Framework for the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) in August 2017 has brought us closer to the long-sought conclusion of a binding and meaningful COC,” the statement added.

Both panels also agreed to increase cooperation between the two nations in the area of training and education “not only to share expertise and best practices, but also foster friendly relations between both peoples.”

The ADST, held this year in the Philippines, is a bilateral dialog mechanism alternately hosted by the two countries annually.

It was established in line with the 2004 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Defense Cooperation to provide both sides an opportunity to exchange views on the current regional security situation and flesh out concrete plans to cooperate in

addressing security concerns mutually being faced.

“Both sides expressed confidence that with avenues for open and substantive dialog, such as the ADST, the Philippines and China would be able to further cooperate and manage differences towards contributing to a peaceful, stable, and prosperous region,” the DND added.

Alternate venues

Since 2005, four ADSTs have been alternately hosted by the two countries, with the last held in Beijing in 2013.

DND public affairs office chief Arsenio Andolong said the 5th ADST provided both sides the opportunity to exchange views on the current regional security situation and flesh out concrete plans to cooperate in addressing security concerns mutually faced by the Philippines and China.

Specifically, the discussions underscored defense cooperation in addressing non-traditional security challenges, such as terrorism and violent extremism, as well as man-made and natural disasters.

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The Philippines and China also agreed to increase cooperation in the area of training and education, not only to share expertise and best practices, but also foster friendly relations between both peoples.

In a joint statement last Nov. 22, China and the Philippines have agreed to continue to actively advance consultations and negotiations on a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea and ensure full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety.

“Both sides affirm that contentious maritime issues are not the sum total of the China-Philippines bilateral relationship,” the joint statement said.

The two countries had reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting regional peace and stability, freedom of navigation in and over-flight above the South China Sea.

China and the Philippines have agreed to enhance cooperation in defense and law enforcement, particularly the anti-terrorism campaign and drug-related crimes.

In the field of trade and business, both sides have agreed to implement the Six-Year Development Program for Trade and Economic Cooperation (2017-2022), and jointly formulate and implement a program on the China-Philippines Industrial Park Development.

Both sides also agreed to the potential of the Belt and Road Initiative as a grand platform for policy coordination, connectivity of facilities, unimpeded trade, financial integration and strengthened people-to-people ties.

The implementation of the first batch of major projects, such as the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project, Chico River Pump Irrigation Project, Philippine National Railways South Long Haul Project, and Binondo-Intramuros and Estrella-Pantaleon bridges will be hastened in accordance with the related exchange of letters and agreements signed during Li's visit.

Both countries have agreed to identify the second batch of priority cooperation projects, vowing to be transparent and laws compliant to assure smooth implementation of

the projects.

More direct flights between the two countries are also being eyed to boost two-way tourism. The Philippines is hoping to reach one million Chinese tourist arrivals this year.

Threats reduced

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the start of talks on a Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea will head off threats of miscalculation and misunderstanding among claimant countries.

“They (China) themselves are saying that they want it. So I believe they are sincere. The President (Duterte) also believes that they are sincere and we are pursuing that, together with the other claimants, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and us. We will be going to the table and talk about things that will benefit everybody,” Lorenzana said when asked whether the COC would be productive for all parties concerned.

With parties talking, a major benefit is that there would be no miscalculation and misunderstanding among the

claimants, he added.

Lorenzana added Filipino fishermen could continue fishing in the disputed waters and the Philippines could continue developing islands under its control and jurisdiction.

“Our benefit is there will be no miscalculation, misunderstanding.. Our fishermen will have unlimited access, and at the same time, we are going to continue developing the islands under our control,” he said.

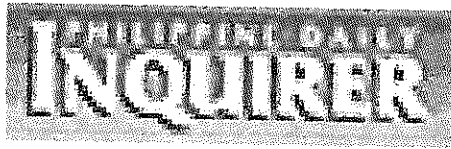
During the recent Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit, leaders of the Asean and China have agreed to start talks on the Code of Conduct based on the Framework approved by the Foreign Ministers last August.

“China has graciously agreed to a Code of Conduct and it binds itself to the agreement,” President Duterte said following the conclusion of the 31st ASEAN Summit and Related Summits.

He said China also pledged to adhere to the international principle of freedom of navigation and overflight in the strategic sea, where an estimated \$3 trillion worth of trade passes every year.

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THE GRADUATE Senator Loren Legarda receives from Major Gen. Herminigildo Aquino the Armed Forces of the Philippines Command and General Staff College badge. Legarda, along with her classmates that included Sen. Manny Pacquiao, graduated as part of Class 62 of the Command and General Staff Course, which will qualify her for promotion to full-fledged colonel. Legarda also received the Academic Excellence Award for her research paper, "The AFP in the Humanitarian Space: Building Resilience, Fostering Resilient Communities." Legarda was topnotcher when she finished her master's degree in national security administration from the National Defense College in 1993.
—CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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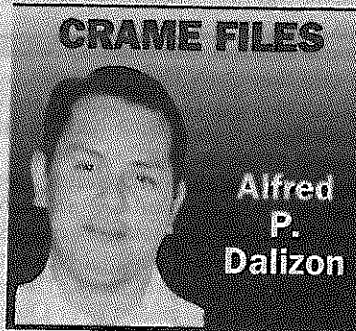
No one can question the presidential prerogative to extended PNP, AFP chiefs' terms

MANY of my friends in the police force mentioned this to me in the aftermath of President Duterte's decision to extend PNP chief, General Ronald 'Bato' dela Rosa's term to at least three months when he officially retires at the age of 56 this coming January 21.

"That's what we call presidential prerogative and nobody can't question his wisdom," one police general told me in the aftermath of the presidential decision announced last Wednesday. Some officials whispered to me that Gen. dela Rosa himself was surprised by the President's decision since he and his wife Nancy were already packing their things at Camp Crame's White House, ready to move out on January 21.

I heard that President Duterte was conferring with his top security officials at Fort Bonifacio when he told dela Rosa he plans to extend him. I learned that the PNP chief apparently thought that the President was merely joking but he was surprised when Mr. Duterte announced his decision in a televised speech hours later.

Prior to that, I learned that the PNP chief was readying for his retirement already despite the presence of some of his mistahs from PMA 'Sinagtala' Class of 1986 who are encouraging him to seek an extension. But it was a big No for the Chief. Some people whispered to me that Gen. dela Rosa maintained he lacks the courage to have an audience with the President and seek an extension. The reason: he already has been given the chance by the President to be the



PNP chief for 18 months until his retirement and that's it. Not all police generals can be given that chance indeed.

My question now is who convinced President Duterte to extend dela Rosa's term? Many officials informed me that it could not be the President's Special Assistant Bong Go since the latter is known rooting for PNP Deputy Chief for Administration, Deputy Director General Ramon Apolinario of PMA 'Sandiwa' Class of 1985.

Right now, I believe that hardest hit by the President's decision was Gen. Apolinario and some of his classmates whose age are fast catching up with them. If the President indeed extends dela Rosa's for three months, or until April 21, it would mean that Apolinario would only have four more months to become the next PNP chief since he would be retiring this coming August 31 unless the President extends his term too just like what he did to Armed Forces chief General

Rey Leonardo Guerrero who has only two months left in the service until he got an extended term courtesy of the President.

Section 26 of Republic Act 6975 or An Act Establishing the Philippine National Police under a Reorganized Department of the Interior and Local Government states that "the Chief of the PNP shall serve a term of office not to exceed four (4) years; Provided, further, that in times of war or other national emergency declared by Congress, the President may extend such term of office."

The law also says that "the Chief of the PNP shall be appointed by the President from among the senior officers down to the rank of Chief Superintendent or a one-star police general. President Duterte made that clear on Wednesday night when he said that as chief of the Executive Department who has jurisdiction over the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the PNP, "I have that discretion to extend even beyond retirement age."

President Duterte likewise made it clear that after his extended term is over, Gen. dela Rosa will go to the Bureau of Corrections. "Yeah, I said I will extend his tour of duty to something like 2 to 3 months. Once the projects are in place or operational or functional, then he goes to the BuCor. BuCor, mas malawak rin yan kasi marami tayong problema sa mga penal colonies and other places of the...not really detention but the pris-

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No one can... FROM PAGE 4

oners convicted by final judgment and serving sentence," he explained.

Gen. dela Rosa said he is somewhat 'pressured' by the President's decision but explained he is not the one who will back out from challenges specifically his main mission to lead the PNP's campaign against drugs, criminality, corruption and terrorism. "Hindi ako puwedeng mag-ayaw. Given the choice, ang sarap na retired ka na at wala nang ginagawa but I'm not running away from that responsibility. I cannot refuse the President," he said.

There is this Section 25 of RA 6975 which also says that "in no case shall any officer who has retired or is retirable within six (6) months from his compulsory retirement age be appointed as Chief of the PNP." However, I don't think that that provision would hinder Gen. Apolinario's appointment since it would always be a Presidential Prerogative.

As I have reported previously, unless Gen. dela Rosa's term is extended by President Duterte, there will be a 22nd PNP chief come January 21. Last week, highly-placed sources told me that the President hinted that Gen. Apolinario will be the incoming PNP chief. He made the statement during a command conference at the Palace

with Gen. dela Rosa on an official travel in the United States. But that's all water under the bridge.

Shortly before he assumed the presidency on June 30, 2016, President Duterte has named Generals de la Rosa and Apolinario as three of the PNP officials closest to his heart, all having served well under him as Davao City police chief.

The 3rd Director Rene Aspera, a member of PMA 'Hinirang' Class of 1987 and currently the PNP Director for Personnel and Records Management could be a very strong candidate for PNP chief after dela Rosa and Apolinario with the President's pronouncement. However, Aspera's age is his major setback: he would be retiring this coming May 7 or three months before Apolinario's retirement.

So far, my sources are telling me that the other contenders for the post belong to either PMA Class 1985 and PMA 'Sinagtala' Class of 1986 of which Gen. dela Rosa belong. They include Director Greg Pimentel (PMA '85) of the PNP Directorate for Intelligence and PMA Class 1986 members, Deputy Director General Jojo Mendez Jr., currently the PNP Deputy Chief for Operations or its No. 3 man; Deputy Director General Archie Gamboa, the PNP Chief Directorial Staff or its no. 4 man; National Capital Region Police Office chief, Director Odi Albayalde and Director Pikoy Cascolan, the PNP Director for Operations.

17 December 2017



Pahina. 1



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SINO naman ang Turaife Group na binabantayan ng militar? Ayon sa AFP, banta ang nasabing grupo sa bansa. Si Esmail Abdulmalik o Abu Turaife ang tila pumalit kay Isnilon Hapilon nang mapatay sa Marawi. Siya ang isa sa mga dahilan ng paghiling ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa Kongreso na palawigin pa ng isang taon ang Batas Militar sa Mindanao. Maliit pa lang daw ang grupong inspirado rin ng ISIS, pero may kakayahan nang magsagawa ng mga pag-

atake at pambobomba.

Ayon kay Col. Edgardo Arevalo, hindi raw puwedeng maliitin ng militar ang grupo ni Turaife. Nasa dalawampu pa lang daw ang bilang ng miyembro ng grupo pero dahil mga radikal tulad ng mga Maute at inspirado ng ISIS, hindi sila puwedeng isantabi lang. Patuloy pa umano ang kanilang paghahanap ng mga manlalaban kaya binabantayan ng AFP. Sa tingin natin, kung may hinala na kilos ng masama, sugpuin na kaagad at huwag nang paabutin nang tulad ng naganap sa Marawi.