



"NAVY 2020: STRONG AND CREDIBLE"

Headquarters Philippine Navy
Naval Station Jose V. Andrade
2335 Roxas Boulevard, Manila



***"A Vital Partner for Peace, Security & Development
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Date: 21 FEB 2012

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Navy seizes smuggled goods worth P6.2M in Sulu

Navy operatives seized 8,500 sacks of rice and other smuggled goods, with an estimated value of P6.2 million, during an operation in Sulu province over the weekend.

Quoting belated reports reaching the Navy headquarters in Manila, Navy spokesman Lt. Col. Omar Tonsay said that personnel of Navy fast craft DF-341, along with the Naval Task Force-61 and Naval Intelligence and Security Unit-63, intercepted motor launch (ML) Janna which was spotted off Candea Point in Sulu after a brief chase on Saturday.

"After a brief chase that ended in Indanan, Sulu, the operatives caught up with the ML as it tried to escape," Tonsay said.

The Navy operatives, upon inspection of the motor launch, discovered 8,500 sacks of undocumented Vietnamese long grain white rice and other imported goods from Sandakan, Malaysia aboard the vessel.

The smuggled goods were estimated to have a market value of P6.205 million.

Further checking revealed that the motor launch was registered under the name of Furishia Pandangan of Serantes, Jolo, Sulu.

The launch's nine crew members were also apprehended.

Tonsay said the contraband and the seized goods were subsequently turned over to the Bureau of Customs in Jolo, Sulu for proper disposition. **Mario J. Mallari**

Navy seizes rice smuggled from Vietnam

NAVAL Forces Western Mindanao (NFWM) personnel last Saturday seized 8,500 sacks of smuggled rice from Vietnam and arrested eight people following a chase off the waters of Sulu province.

Navy spokesman Lt. Col. Omar Tonsay said forces of the NFWM's Naval Task Force 61 and Naval Intelligence Security Unit 63 aboard a fast-craft DF 341 spotted a motor launch supposedly involved in smuggling off Canda Point

Tonsay said the motor launch, identified as the ML *Jama*, tried to evade the Navy forces, resulting in a brief chase that ended

in Indanan, Sulu.

A board and search procedure at the VJ Pier in Indanan showed that the motor launch had 8,500 sacks of Vietnamese long grain white rice worth about P6.2 million and other imported goods from Sandakan, Malaysia.

The motor launch, registered to one Firishia A. Pandangan of Jolo, Sulu, had nine crew members who are facing charges of violation of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines.

The motor launch, the contraband and the crew were turned over to the local Bureau of Customs, said Tonsay. — *Victor Rey*

ISSN: 2502-383

SAKSI

SA BALITA

KAKAMPI NG KATOTOHANAN

VOL. 19 NO. 348

MARTES

PEBRERO 21, 2012

P10.00

8,500 sako ng imported rice, nasabat sa Sulu

TINATAYANG 8,500 sako ng imported na bigas na ipinailat sa bansa ang nasabat ng Philippine Navy sa Sulu.

Ayon kay Colonel Omar Dorsoy, tagapagsalita ng Philippine Navy na sakay ng ML Junia ang 8,500-sakong Vietnamese long grain white rice galing Sandakan, Malaysia.

Humabol aniya ng mga tauhan ng Naval Forces Western Mindanao ang barko na nagtangkang tumakas papunta sa direksyon ng Indanan, Sulu.

Siyam na tripulante ng barko ang naaresto at ipinasa sa custody ng Bureau of Customs sa Sulu para kandiyan ng smuggling.

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ISSN 1105-1383

SAKSI

SA BALITA

KAKAMPI NG KATOTOHANAN

VOL. 19 NO. 348 MARTES PEBRERO 21, 2012 P10.00

Ika-2 barkong pandigma ng AFP, malapit nang makuha

PATULOY ang ginagawang pagpapalakas ng power sa ng Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Kinatatapuhan na kani ni Navy Chief Vice Admiral Alexander Pama na interesado ang Pilipinas sa alok ng Amerika na ibigay sa hima ang U.S. Navy Coast Guard Cutter Dallas.

Ayon kay Pama, nagpadala na kani ang Amerika ng sulat sa Pilipinas kung saan inalok ang bansa kung interesado ba ang Pinoy na makuha ang nasabing warship dahil inagrobahan na ng U.S. government ang pagbibigay nito.

Dagdag pa ni Pama, kung magiging maayos ang pag-unsa ay inaasahang makukuha ng Pilipinas ang ikalawang barkong pangglyera nito sa Mayo kung saan kinailangan gumastos ng P450 million para sa transportation.

Matatandang tuong (sang 1800 ay nakala ng Pilipinas ang pinakamalaking barkong pandigma mula sa Amerika na tinawag na BRP Gregorio del Pilar

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New AFP chief Dellosa, 71 generals take oath

By DELON PORCALLA

New Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff Lt. Gen. Jessie Dellosa along with 71 generals and other Cabinet appointees took their oath before the commander-in-chief at Malacañang yesterday.

Dellosa was appointed in December 2011 after his predecessor Eduardo Oban Jr. retired.

Other officials who took their oath include Philippine National Police (PNP) Deputy Director General Arturo Caedac (deputy chief for administration); Director Samuel Pagdilao Jr. of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group; spokesman Chief Superintendent Agrimero Cruz and Chief Superintendent Alejandro Gutierrez, former Manila Police District Station 5 chief.

President Aquino also swore in Solicitor General Francis Jardeleza, former Luzon ombudsman, who replaced Anselmo Cadiz. Cadiz

recently resigned after almost two years in government service. Presidential Adviser on Legislative Affairs, former Bataan Rep. Manuel Mamba; Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) administrator Roberto Garcia; National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Public-Private Partnership Center executive director Cosette Canilao; Philippine Coast Guard commandant Edmund Tan; and Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth) acting president and chief executive officer Eduardo Banzon were also sworn in. Department of Education's (DepEd) National Book Development Board (NBDB) acting executive director Ma. Andrea Pasion-Flores; board members professor Isagani Cruz and journalist Ruel de Vera; and private sector representatives Ma. Karina

Bolasco and Ani Rosa Almario also took their oath before Aquino.

Other appointees sworn in were Governance Commission chairman for government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) Cesar Villanueva and commissioners Angela Ignacio and Rainier Butalid.

Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) undersecretary Parisya Taradji; Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) acting undersecretary Rebecca Chato; Department of Tourism (DOT) assistant secretary Eugene Kaw; and Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) assistant secretary Catherine Jennifer Gonzales and DepEd assistant secretary Elena Ruiz also took their oath. Also sworn in were SBMA board member

Joven Reyes; DOT Promotions Board member Kaye Tiñga; Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council deputy secretary-general Felix William Fuentesbella; and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System trustees Emmanuel Caparas, Benjamin Yambao, Ma. Cecilia Soriano and Hermogenes Fernando. National Labor Relations Commission presiding commissioner Joseph Gerard Mabilog; and Philippine Foreign Trade Service Corps trade officers Benedict Uy and Magnolia Uy, Christine de la Cruz, Anne and Marie Kristine Umali also took their oath. PhilHealth board members Jane Sta. Ana and Francisco Vicente Lopez, along with Irene Maramag, Monina Camacho and Edgardo Amista – who all represent the private sector as members of the DOH's National Nutrition Council – were also sworn in.

New AFP chief, SolGen, slew of ranking officials sworn in

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

PRESIDENT Aquino yesterday swore into office newly-appointed Solicitor General Francis Jardeleza and presidential adviser on legislative affairs Manuel Mamba.

Jardeleza, who was the deputy ombudsman for Luzon prior to his new job, was also a former senior vice president and general counsel of San Miguel Corporation. He replaced Jose Cadiz who resigned earlier this month.

Mamba was mayor of Tuao

town in Cagayan until he became congressman in 1995-1998 and in 2001. He replaced former Bataan Rep. Antonio Roman as head of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office.

The Palace said Cadiz resigned because he wanted to return to the private sector but there were reports claiming that it was because of differences over the Hacienda Luisita issue.

Roman reportedly asked Aquino to replace him, but there were claims that his exit was due to controversy generated by

the "expensive" lunch during a meeting of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council.

The President also administered the oath of office to Armed Forces chief Lt. General Jessie Dellosa and Coast Guard commandant Edmund Tan.

Also sworn in were Cesar Villanueva as chairman of the Governance Commission for Government-Owned and/or -Controlled Corporations, and his commissioners Angela Igna-

See NEW ► Page B4

NEW

cio and Rainier Butalid; Roberto Garcia as administrator of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and Anne Gordon and Joven Reyes as members; Felix Fuentebella as deputy secretary general of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council; Joseph Gerard Mabilog as presiding commissioner of the National Labor Relations Commission; and Cosette Canilao as executive director of the Public-Private Partnership Center.

Others who took their oath were Parisya Taradji as Social Welfare undersecretary; Rebecca Chato as acting Labor undersecretary; Flena Ruiz as education assistant secretary; Eugene Kaw as Tourism assistant secretary; and Catherine Gonzales as Transportation assistant secretary.

Eduardo Banzon, acting president of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp., and Jane Sta. Ana and Francisco Lopez as acting board members; Kaye Tinga, acting board member of the Tourism Promotion Board; Emmanuel Caparas, Benjamin Yambao,

Ma. Cecilia Soriano, and Hermogenes Fernando, as acting members of the board of trustees of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System; and Maria Andrea Pasion-Flores, acting executive director of the National Book Development Board and Ma. Karina Bolasco, Ani Almario, Flor Cruz, Isagani Cruz, and Ruel de Vera as acting board members.

The President also presided over a mass oath-taking of 25 promoted officers of the Armed Forces and 71 promoted officers of the Philippine National Police.

Tuesday, February 21, 2012

New Palace Appointees Take Oath

By **MADEL R. SABATER**

President Benigno S. Aquino III administered the oath of office to newly appointed officials, including Solicitor General Francis Jardeleza and Presidential Adviser on Legislative Affairs Manuel Mamba, at the Rizal Ceremonial Hall in Malacanang yesterday.

Jardeleza replaced former solicitor general Joel Cadiz who resigned from his post to go back to private life.

Other officials who took their oath yesterday include Cesar Villanueva chairman of the Governance Commission for Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) Angela Ignacio and Rainier Butalid, commissioners, Governance Com-

mission for GOCCs; Parisya Taradji, undersecretary, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); Rebecca Chato, acting undersecretary, Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE); Elena Ruiz, assistant secretary, Department of Education; Eugene Kaw, assistant secretary, Department of Tourism; Catherine Jennifer Gonzales, assistant secretary, Department of Transportation and Communication;

Roberto Garcia, administrator, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA); Cosette Canilao, executive director Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Center; Maria Andrea Pasion - Flores, acting executive director, National Book Development Board (NBDB); Joseph Gerard Mabilog, presiding commissioner, National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC); Edmund Tan, commandant of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG); Eduardo Banzon, acting president and chief executive officer of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth); police chief superintendents Ramon Garcia Ancheta and Marlon Valdez Madrid; and Armed Forces chief of staff Jessie Dellosa.

Promotion of Armed Forces chief, 26 others confirmed

THE Commission on Appointments confirmed the four-star rank of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Jessie Dellosa along with the confirmation of promotion of 26 other senior officers, Public Affairs head Col. Arnulfo Marcelo Burgos Jr. announced Monday.

Dellosa's promotion was confirmed together with those of Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Bautista, commanding general of the Philippine Army, and 25 others.

Among the promoted were Maj. Gen. Cipriano Gundao, Chief of the Air Logistics Command; Rear Admiral Miguel Jose S Rodriguez, Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations [J-7]; Maj. Gen. Jose Mabanta, Commander of 3rd Infantry Division; Maj. Gen. Eduardo del Rosario, Commander of 2nd Infantry Division; Rear Admiral Edgardo Tamayo, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics [J-5]; Maj. Gen. Raoul Reyes, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel [J-1]; and Maj. Gen. Roy Deveraturda, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans [J-4]. **Florante S. Solmerin**

DELLOSA, 26 OTHER GENERALS TAKE OATH

ARMED Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff Lt. Gen. Jessie Dellosa and 26 other newly promoted generals, flag officers, and reserve force commanders on Monday took their oath in Malacanang to formalize their promotions. With Dellosa were Commanding General of Philippine Army (CGPA) Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Bautista, eight major generals and rear admirals, 14 brigadier generals and three reservist generals. The 27 generals and flag officers, after taking their oath, proceeded to the AFP General Headquarters (GHQ) in Camp Aguinaldo where they were given arrival honors. "As we accept our new ranks and utter our oath, we have likewise accepted the responsibilities and duties that come with them. Hence, we must always bear in mind the weight of expectations that each star on our shoulders amounts to," Dellosa said.

WILLIAM B. DEPASUPIL9
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AFPSLAI to hold Annual Membership Meeting

The 40th Annual Membership Meeting of the Armed Forces and Police-Savings & Loan Association, Inc. or AFPSLAI will be held on May 26, 2012 at 8:00 in the morning at the Dilwagang General Arturo T. Ermita (MFP Theater) in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. The Annual Membership Meeting will determine the composition of the AFPSLAI Board of Trustees for the Year 2012-2013. In this meeting, also, RAdm George T. Uy AFP (Ret), President & CEO of AFPSLAI, will report on the major accomplishments and other programs initiated in 2011. The Meeting will be presided by the Chairman of the AFPSLAI Board of Trustees, the AFP Chief of Staff, Gen. Jessie D. Delosa AFP. All regular members of AFPSLAI are invited to attend.

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DE KAPUSULAN NG MANILA SINCE 1860
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Tuesday, February 21, 2012**AIDING SOLDIERS**

The Alay sa Kawal Foundation (ASK) released a total of P7.7 million financial assistance last year to families of soldiers killed or injured during combat. ASK is the oldest non-governmental organization devoted to the welfare of enlisted personnel in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Vice President Jejomar C. Binay, who chairs the foundation, said that ASK gave P30,000 each to 258 families, including those who lost their loved ones in Al-Barka, Basilan. "We know we can never repay the sacrifices of our soldiers. Still, we believe we owe it to them to at least help their families in any way we can," said Binay, a reserve Marines colonel. (JC Bello Ruiz)

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NOT KIDNAPPED, NINE MEDIA MEN STRANDED

THE ARMED Forces of the Philippines (AFP) yesterday said the nine media men that were reported snatched in Zamboanga Del Sur were safe and insisted that they were just stranded not kidnapped. Philippine Army spokesman Major Harold Cabunoc said the nine media practitioners were stranded in Sitio Balabag, Barangay Bitore, Bayug, Zamboanga del Sur and belied earlier reports that armed groups operating in the area snatched them. Cabunoc also added that the group has encountered a landslide in that place, prompting them to stay. The group of reporters, some human rights advocates and other civilians stormed that town to cover and expose the alleged illegal mining activities.

RAFFY AYENG

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Tuesday, February 21, 2012

Rabusa Faces New Plunder Raps

By SHIANEE MAMANGLU

Retired Lt. Col. George Rabusa, who exposed corruption in the military, is facing another plunder complaint before the Office of the Ombudsman.

The complaint was filed by Maj. Emerito Angulo, through his counsel former Misamis Oriental Gov. Homobono Adaza. Angulo alleged that Rabusa "illegally amassed assets amounting to more than P50 million, including two condominium units in

Libis, Quezon City, and several lands in Tagaytay City."

He is also allegedly the beneficial owner of a Pancake House franchise in Alabang, a Max's Restaurant in SM Bicutan, and a third restaurant at the Mall of Asia (MOA), according to the complaint.

Angulo likewise stated that Rabusa purchased and owned, together with his wife, Debbie, two houses in the United States at 18751 Tuba Street, Northridge, California; and at 13230 Washington Pointe, Orlando, Orange Country, Florida.

Coast Guard saves 9 Viet fishers off Palawan

THE PHILIPPINE Coast Guard (PCG) yesterday said it rescued nine Vietnamese fishermen off the coast of Palawan after their vessel drifted to shallow waters due to bad weather over the weekend.

Reports reaching the PCG showed the fishing vessel, the Ong 95712, encountered rough weather on Saturday, causing it to drift to Bowen Island southeast of Palawan and north of Bugsuk Island.

Commodore Enrico Efren Evangelista, Palawan Coast Guard District commander, directed search and rescue operations after the PCG action center in Manila and the Vietnam Search and Rescue Coordination Center reported the incident at 4:30 a.m. Saturday.

Those rescued were identified as boat captain Bui Viet Anh, Bui Quoc Trung, Vo Hung, Pham Quoc Vinh, Nguyen Van Nhon, Levan Khanh, Nguyen Tan, Truong Van Hoang and Nguyen Van Tri.

Evangelista said initial investigation showed no major damage to the vessel which was loaded with water and ice. The fishermen could not explain how they ended up within the Philippines' area of responsibility since none of them could speak English, said the Coast Guard officer.

Evangelista said it was suspicious how the fishermen ended up in Palawan. He said they will be turned over to the Palawan Committee on Illegal Entrants for processing and for further investigation.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Lim orders arrest of 10 policemen

By Macon Ramos-Araneta

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim on Monday ordered the arrest of 10 Manila policemen tagged in the alleged kidnapping, extortion, and planting of evidence on four Korean nationals in Manila.

Four of the 10 were identified as Senior Insp. Glenn Gonzales, PO2 Jolly Alyagan, PO2 Richard Sibayan, and PO1 George Burabo. The six other policemen were not named.

Two other suspects, both Korean nationals, were also named as suspects. They are tour guides Choi Jang Tac and Gil Il Bang alias Tom. Both Choi and Gil have been arrested in separate incidents.

The policemen suspects who had not reported for duty after the incident have been declared absent without leave. Lim moved for their summary dismissal.

In a news conference at the Manila City Hall, Lim also ordered the dissolution of anti-drug units in all police stations.

Lim directed Manila Police District director Chief Supt. Alex Gutierrez to dissolve all the units and conduct a thorough investigation on the irregularities.

"Effective today we are going to dissolve all these drug units in all the police stations because of these drug incidents, and transfer them all to MPD headquarters in different assignments, while these people involved in the kidnapping will be arrested," said Lim.

The victims, identified as Kim Youn Ho, Nam Sang Jik, Do Wan Kuk, and Lee Byung Soup, together with their families, sought the assistance of the Korean Consul General Jung Soon Chul who then requested for police assistance.

Investigations disclosed that on Feb. 14, while the four Koreans were inside Diamond Hotel preparing for their departure to South Korea, tour guide Choi enticed them to go shopping.

No way for MILF parliamentary govt

MALACANANG on Monday clarified that it favored genuine autonomy for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) but not a parliamentary or any other form of government, contrary to a report published by *The Manila Times*.

Its spokesman, Edwin Lacierda, denied *The Times* report, which

cited the *Oman Tribune* article quoting Mohagher Iqbal—the MILF's chief peace negotiator—as saying that President Benigno Aquino 3rd has approved a proposal of the rebel group to set up a parliamentary form of government.

"Genuine autonomy has always been the position of the govern-

ment. But the details are still in the works. No form of government is being discussed," the spokesman told *The Times* in a text message.

Meanwhile, Marvic Leonen, the government's chief peace negotiator, in a statement, also on Monday said that genuine autonomy is not

►ParliamentaryA2

■ PARLIAMENTARY FROM A1

No way

being delivered by the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

"As of the last round of talks between the government and the MILF, details of such autonomy [were] still being discussed," Leonen added, referring to the February 15 talks in Kuala Lumpur.

He said that President Aquino had ordered the government peace panel to "work within the flexibilities of the Constitution and within the parameters of national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

The President, according to Leonen, also instructed them to push for "inclusivity to acknowledge all stakeholders within the [autonomous region], define goals, articulate interests and agree on common courses of action."

He said that the government will continue its consultations with all constituents affected.

Leonen added that 65 consultations have taken place

He said that he was confident that a peace agreement with MILF would be signed this year.

Leonen's counterpart seemed as optimistic despite the "[p]athway to peace [being] tortuous, rugged and treacherous."

Iqbal also on Monday said, "We have never entertained false hope starting from Day 1."

He told *The Times* that the MILF panel recognized that negotiating with the government would be a "tough" job.

But Iqbal said that there had been "full understanding [by] the two parties of all issues at hand."

According to him, the peace talks were moving "forward."

Iqbal also announced that the parties gave the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group one more year to isolate kidnap-for-ransom groups and other similar criminal gangs operating in or near areas where MILF operates.

He said that unfinished business during the 25th exploratory talks would be tackled in the next round of talks in the Malaysian capital.

JAIME R. PILAPIL AND
JULMUNIRI JANNARAL

16

Gunmen storm city jail to spring comrade; 3 killed

DOZENS of black-clad gunmen armed with grenades and bombs stormed a jail in North Cotabato trying to free a detained comrade, but they were repulsed by police in a chaotic night battle that killed three people, officials said Monday.

Fifteen people were wounded, most of them civilians caught in the firefight late Sunday outside Kidapawan's city hall compound and along a key commercial road. Military and police officials blamed former members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front,

but a spokesman for the Muslim rebel group denied the claim.

The attackers fired a grenade into the gate of the Kidapawan city jail but missed around 10 p.m. Sunday, sparking a gunfight with guards who were later reinforced by nearby police forces.

At least three people died, including a Red Cross driver who was trying to bring wounded civilians to a hospital, regional police director Chief Supt. Benjardi Mantele said.

Kidapawan police chief Chino
Next page

Gunmen...

Mamburam told The Associated Press that the attackers were believed to be rogue members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front who wanted to rescue a comrade detained for robbery and other crimes.

Regional military spokesman Col. Leopoldo Galon said about 50 attackers, who were in black fatigues, attempted to rescue Datikan Samad, an alleged member of the rebel group Moro Islamic Liberation Front, but failed. They then detonated a bomb

and fired on civilians to cover their escape and stall the advance of policemen, he said.

"The attack was planned to spring [Samad alias] Lastikman from jail," Galon said.

The dead included two students who were at a store fired upon by the fleeing gunmen.

"It was an act of terrorism and desperation," Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo said.

"They turned on civilians to save themselves."

Robredo said he had long asked court officials to transfer Samad—who has been blamed for robbery, kidnappings and killings—and 15 other high-risk detainees in North Cotabato to

a maximum-security police jail in metropolitan Manila.

Mamburam said the assault failed because guards had bolstered security before the attack after being warned by police that Muslim rebels were planning an assault. Jail guards were also rapidly reinforced by police from a nearby station, he said.

Government forces were pursuing the attackers, he said.

Rebel spokesman Von al Haq denied his group was involved in the attack.

He said the attackers were not members of the Moro group, which has been focusing on years-long peace talks with the Philippine government and has forged an accord that allows the

rebels to help the government track and capture criminals and al-Qaida-linked militants.

Poor security has fostered jailbreaks and bold attacks on Philippine prison and jails, derisively called among the world's "most porous."

In 2009 Muslim guerrillas attacked the provincial jail in another part of North Cotabato to spring another batch of comrades, but failed when troops fought back.

Two years earlier, gangsters involved in kidnappings stormed the provincial jail and freed 49 inmates, including three who were detained for deadly bombings in the south.
AP, with Florante S. Solmerin

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3 dead in Kidapawan city jail attack

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Three persons were killed while 15 others, including a senior jail official, were wounded as armed men tried to spring a robbery suspect from the city jail on Sunday night.

Supt. Chino Mamburam, city police chief, identified the detainee as Datukan Montok Samad, also known as "Lastik Man" and suspected to be a member of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Samad has been held at the city jail for two years, he said.

Senior Supt. Cornelio Salinas, provincial police chief, said the gunmen fired a rocket-propelled grenade at 9:30 p.m. at the city jail, which is near City

Hall and the city fire office. Several fire officers, including provincial fire marshal Insp. Romeo Tactaquin and jail guards were wounded.

Red Cross workers, who were nearby at that time, tried to bring the victims to the hospital, but the attackers suddenly opened fire. Killed were Benny Balmediano, a Red Cross driver, and students Ian Carlos Sevilla and Mark Anthony Morales,

who were in a store near the jail.

Guards and policemen traded shots with the attackers for five minutes until they withdrew. Some rode on motorcycles while others fled on foot, Salinas said.

"The wounded are now safe and some of them even went home after being given medical attention," he said.

The attack was the latest in a series of daring attempts by armed men to rescue their imprisoned comrades.

In June 2009, suspected MILF rebels stormed the provincial jail in Barangay Amas here but failed to get their comrades.

In 2007, 49 inmates bolted jail after alleged members of kidnap gang, Pentagon, mounted a lightning rescue operation to free three gang members. Among those who escaped following the raid were three inmates linked to the spate of bomb attacks in Central Mindanao.

Mamburam said Sunday's incident only heightened the need to transfer high-risk prisoners to more secured facilities. A few years ago, several such prisoners, including bombing suspects, were moved from various jails in North Cotabato to the Bicutan facility in Metro Manila. *Williamor A. Magbanua with a report from Jeffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*

Warring pols agree to end clashes

COTABATO CITY—Authorities expect an end to the bloody confrontation between followers of two local politicians in Rajah Buayan town in Maguindanao following their pledge to bury the hatchet.

Duma Ugayan and Jerry Macalay, chairs of Barangays Malibpolok and Tabungao (not Baital as earlier reported), respectively, swore before the Koran that they would end their animosity in a dialogue facilitated by local clerics, other officials and the military on Thursday at the headquarters of the Army's First Mechanized Brigade.

Two weeks of fighting between followers of the two had resulted in the deaths of three people and injuries to nine others. About 10,000 people from at least seven Rajah Buayan villages had fled their homes.

"They shook hands and embraced each other with the promise that they will sign a peace pact in another meeting scheduled next week in Rajah Buayan," Col. Mayoralgo dela Cruz, a brigade officer, said on Friday.

Maguindanao Gov. Esmel Mangudadatu lauded the two officials for reconciling their differences.

He said he was worried that the clashes could affect the ongoing peace talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Ugayan is a former Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) commander while Macalay have relatives and supporters from the MILF.

The two village leaders said their feud had nothing to do with the MNLF and the MILF because it started from killings related to land disputes in Barangays Mileb, Baital, Gannan, Panadtaban and Sapakan.

Charlie Señase and Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao

Army officer to head panel with MILF

A SENIOR Army officer assigned to Mindanao will take over as head of the military panel that officially coordinates with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) regarding law enforcement operations.

Brig. Gen. Roland Amarille will sit as chair of the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group, a bilateral committee through which government security officials coordinate with MILF leaders on law enforcement matters to avoid misencounters.

He replaced Brig. Gen. Allan Luga, who was appointed commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division.

Amarille was assistant commander of the 1st Infantry Division based in Zamboanga del Sur. He was also commander of Task Force Makalintad, where he was at the forefront of disaster response and relief operations when Tropical Storm "Sendong" hit Mindanao. *Dona Z. Pazribugan*

Three dead as cohorts of MILF rogue try to spring him from jail

THREE civilians died Sunday night while 12 other civilians and jail and fire personnel were wounded when 'cohorts' of a Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebel tried to spring him out of the Kidapawan City jail.

Col. Leopoldo Galon, spokesman of the military's Eastern Mindanao Command, yesterday said about 50 men in black fatigues and carrying high-powered firearms swooped down on the city jail around 9:30 p.m.

Police said there were about 12 attackers who were wearing bonnets, black shirts and black pants.

Senior Supt. Cornelio Salinas, North Cotabato police chief, said the suspects fired a rocket-propelled grenade aimed at the main gate but missed as it hit the ground in front of the jail facility.

Galon said the suspects attempted to breach the jail perimeter by detonating two improvised explosive devices and firing a rocket-propelled grenade that hit the ground in front of the jail's main gate, followed by a volley of fire.

Jail guards and reinforcing members of the Bureau of Fire Protection engaged the suspects in a firefight, repulsed the attackers, and foiled the suspects' attempt to rescue Datukan Samad alias Lastikman, a member of the MILF-Special Operations Group.

"Based on information from the 6th Infantry Division, he (Samad) is the subject of the rescue operation...Lastikman is a member of the MILF-SOG, so whoever will spring him out are his cohorts," Galon said.

Among charges Samad is facing are kidnapping-for-ransom, murder, robbery/hold up, and firearms theft.

Police said Samad is a former member of the 108th Base Command of the Moro Islamic Base Command who got involved in a kidnapping incident in 2007. He was then disowned by the MILF.

Galon said the attackers, failing to rescue Samad, fled toward Nuwangan village and fired at civilians in the streets. The suspects also exploded another improvised explosive as more government troops arrived to

pursue them.

Salinas said the suspects fired indiscriminately and hit bystanders as they sensed the arrival of responding government troopers.

"Sa galit nila nag-indiscriminate firing sila kaya may mga tinamaan na mga sibilyan na nakiusapoon doon sa area," he said.

He said the suspects even detonated three improvised explosive devices, the first two of which did not inflict casualties. He said the IEDs, which were earlier planted, were meant to drive off responding security forces.

The civilian fatalities were identified as Mark Anthony Morales, 23, Ian Carlo Sevilla, 22, and Benny Balmediano.

Injured were Fire Chief Insp. Romeo Tacatin, Fire Officer I Jonathan Cornejo, Fire Officer I Jerry Anunciado and Jail Officer Joel Letada, and civilians Adrales Cabriles, 16, Elvin Dulay, 27, Ernie Aguirre, 25, Raffy Yusalan, 16, Joemar Lizardo, Dave Dapan, Rizaldo Dapan, and Al Temojin Lao.

Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo lauded the jail personnel for repulsing the attack. — Victor Reyes and Raymond Africa

Three civilians dead, 12 hurt in Kidapawan jail raid

THREE people were killed and 12 others were injured in a failed attempt to spring out from detention a high value inmate wanted for various high crimes.

Col. Leopoldo Galon, spokesman, Armed Forces of the Philippines-Eastern Mindanao Command (AFP-Westmincom), disclosed Monday that some 50 unidentified armed men wearing black fatigue uniforms attempted to rescue detainee Datukan Samad, a.k.a. Lastikman, but were repulsed by government forces.

Samad, who was arrested last December, is a notorious member of

the Moro Islamic Liberation Front-Special Operations Group (MILF-SOG). He is facing charges of kidnapping with ransom, robbery, double murder and multiple murder.

Galon said the incident happened Sunday at around 9:50 p.m.

He identified the fatalities as Mark Anthony Morales, Ian Carlo Sevilla, and Benny Balmediano, all civilians.

Injured were Fire Chief Inspector Romeo Tactain and Fire Officers 1 Jonathan Cornejo and Jerry Anonciado, and Adras Cabriles, Eivind Dulay, Ernie Aguirre, Raffy

Yusalan, Joemar Lizardo, Dave Dapan, Rizaldo Dapan, Al Temojin Lap and Jail Officer 2 Joel Letada.

"Said group tried to breach the jail perimeter by successfully detonating two improvised explosive devices (IEDs), which wounded five personnel of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology," Galon added.

The group, he said, were all carrying high-powered firearms, including a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG).

According to Galon, the attackers initially fired an RPG which hit the

ground in front of the city jail main gate before they fired at the main gate using high-caliber firearms.

The jail guards, he added, stood their ground forcing the group to flee towards Brgy. Nuwangan.

While retreating, Galon further said, the attackers fired on civilians and planted IEDs along their escape route to stop the government reinforcement force.

"An IED exploded resulting in injuries of 12 and the death of three civilians who were rushed to the hospital," Galon said.

WILLIAM B. DEPASUPIL

3 killed, 15 hurt as gunmen storm Kidapawan City jail

About a dozen gunmen armed with grenades and bombs stormed a jail in Kidapawan City, North Cotabato, in an attempt to spring a detained comrade, but were repulsed by police in a chaotic night attack that killed three people, officials said yesterday.

Fifteen people were wounded, most of them civilians caught in the firefight outside Kidapawan's city hall compound and along a key commercial road. Police blamed former members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), but a spokesman for the rebel group denied the claim.

The attackers fired a grenade into the gate of the Kidapawan city jail but missed around 10 p.m. Sunday, sparking a gunfight with guards who were later reinforced by nearby police forces. The gunmen detonated a bomb and fired on civilians as they withdrew toward a mountainous region late Sunday, police said.

At least three people died, including a Red Cross driver who was

trying to bring wounded civilians to a hospital, Chief Superintendent Benjardi Mantele, regional police director, said.

Among those wounded during the attack were Chief Inspector Tactaquin of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) BFP-North Cotabato and two jail personnel.

Kidapawan police chief Chino Mamburam told The Associated Press that the attackers were believed to be former members of the MILF who wanted to rescue a comrade known as "Lastikman" detained for robbery and other crimes.

Mamburam said the assault failed because guards had bolstered security at the jail before the attack after

being warned by police that Muslim rebels were planning an assault. Jail guards were also rapidly reinforced by police from a nearby station, he said.

Government forces were pursuing the attackers, he said.

Rebel spokesman Von al Haq denied his group was involved in the attack.

He said that the attackers were not members of the Moro group, which has been focusing on years-long peace talks with the Philippine government and has forged an accord that allows the rebels to help the government track and capture criminals and al-Qaeda-linked militants.

(AP & Malu Cadelina Manar)



POLICE operatives conduct an investigation in front of the Kidapawan City Jail where an improvised bomb exploded past 9 p.m. Sunday as gunmen stormed the facility. The attack left three people dead and 15 others wounded. (Photo by Alexander D. Lopez)

MILF's dev't arm names officer

To widen its peace and development reach, the development arm of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), called Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA) has formally designated its officer for the provinces of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

The two provinces, both in Region 9, comprised the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, along with Basilan, Lanao del Sur, and Maguindanao, and the cities of Lamitan and Marawi.

BDA manages and develops projects and programs aimed at uplifting the living condition of the Mindanaoans.

No less than the MILF's policy-making body, the Central Committee, appointed Alradzdi A. Hayudini the regional manager of the BDA's newly created Regional Management Office for Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

The MILF-CC, chaired by Al-Hajji Murad Ebrahim, issued a resolution on January 12 to make the appointment of Hayudini, who, in January 1999 was cited as the Most Outstanding Barangay Captain of the Philippines in awarding rites held at the historic Manila Hotel from the Leadership Organization of the Philippines. **(Edd K. Usman)**

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■ CATANDUANES

Suspected NPA leader held

ARMY soldiers captured a suspected leader of the communist New People's Army in Catanduanes during an encounter in a hinterland village of Sioron in the coastal town of Gigmoto on Friday, the military said.

Lorenzo Jimenez, alias Enzo, 33, a native of Gigmoto, and five other rebels were cornered after a five-minute firefight with the soldiers belonging to the 83rd Infantry Battalion in Barangay Sioron, 52 kilometers from the capital town of Virac, said Col. Arthur Ang, commanding officer of the 901st Infantry Brigade.

Troops seized an Uzi sub-machinegun from Jimenez while an M-16 rifle was recovered from the battle scene. **Mar S. Arguelles, Inquirer Southern Luzon**

Journalists, rights group held by Caggu

TWELVE journalists and some members of a human rights group were stopped and held for hours by government militias in Depore village in Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur, while on their way to the mining site of a Canada-based company, Weng Paraan, secretary-general ng National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, said Monday.

Paraan said the convoy was

on its way to the mining site of TVI Resources to verify residents' complaints about the environmental destruction brought about by mining when they were stopped.

"They were stopped by [the militiamen] assigned there for unknown reasons," Paraan said.

"The militiamen had no nameplates. They barricaded the road and even destroyed a por-

tion of the road ahead of them so no vehicles could pass."

Paraan could not immediately give the names of the journalists and the other members of the supposed fact-finding mission. But she confirmed that one of them was Pagadian City-based Jon Cadion, a member of her group.

"The latest update we got is that the fact-finding mission together

with the 12 journalists were already heading back to the town center at around 4 p.m.," Paraan said.

She said they sought the help of the mayor and the military in the area, who acted immediately. She said there were reports that the militiamen had been pulled out and replaced by another unit.

Florante S. Solmerin

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EX-REBELS TURN OVER A NEW LEAF

FORMER rebels were given a new life after the government have implemented a livelihood plan for them, in a recently concluded Livelihood and Entrepreneurial Management Seminar held in 1st Special Forces Liaison Office, Southern Luzon Command in Camp General Nakat, Lucena City on February 16-17, 2012. 12 former members of New People's Army has attended the said seminar as a prerequisite of their P50,000 livelihood assistance grant from Office of the President for Peace Process, Office of the Provincial Government, Department of Social Welfare and Development and Armed Forces of the Philippines.

RAFFY AYENG

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Wanted: PPP for Sulu

THIS article is not about public-private partnerships, a.k.a. build-operate-transfer (BOT) and similar schemes for infrastructure provision by the private sector—although that would be useful too. On a visit to Sulu last week in my work for economic development in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), I found out that the most critical needs in the island province could be summed up in three Ps. I discuss each one below.

There is a view that what ARMM needs at this time are some high-impact investments, for at least two reasons. One, ARMM now has well-meaning interim regional leaders, led by reformist Regional Gov. Mujiv Hataman, who only have 15 months to do their work and chart a new course for ARMM. And among President Aquino's marching orders for Hataman is to identify and embark on high-impact initiatives that would set ARMM on the path of sustained development. Two, even as good initiatives at the local and community levels from government and foreign donors have yielded positive results at the grass roots, the aggregate welfare indicators have shown little change. After years of dedicated efforts on the ground, ARMM provinces have nonetheless remained the poorest in the country. It is thus believed that more far-reaching interventions and initiatives are needed, as quickly as possible. The poor in Muslim Mindanao have waited for too long.

Sulu is illustrative of ARMM's daunting challenges. Long an agricultural, fishing and trading economy, it lacks significant industrial activity to provide adequate livelihood and employment for more than 800,000 inhabitants. Until operations were stopped in the wake of the global financial crisis in 2009, BJ Coconut Oil Mill was the only large industrial enterprise in the province, established in 1996 by Ben Loong, now vice governor of the province and formerly governor in 2004-2007. BJ Coco Oil had the capacity to crush 15 tons of copra daily. With an annual requirement exceeding 50,000 tons of copra, it provided a ready market for the coconut farmers of Sulu

No FREE LUNCH



Cielito F. Habito

and neighboring Basilan and Tawi-Tawi, and, as farmers we interviewed attested, at better prices than offered by other buyers.

But among other problems, costly and unreliable power—first of our three Ps—was a formidable challenge for the company, leading it to invest in its own power generator to ensure stability of its power supply. It is readily evident that power is among the foremost constraints to attracting significant investments in the province, which is true for Basilan and Tawi-Tawi as well. It is a challenge that is both technical and institutional in nature. Apart from inherently higher costs of power due to dependence on costly diesel generating plants in island areas, inefficiencies and financial difficulties typically hounding electric cooperatives (especially in ARMM) compound Sulu's power problem.

National Electrification Administration data for 2010 indicate that Sulu Electric Cooperative (Suleco) had a collection efficiency of only 39 percent, and systems losses running to 24.5 percent, second worst in the country for both measures. This means that nearly two-thirds of its power bills were not being paid for (against only 0.5 percent for most of the country), and one-fourth of its power is lost to technical inefficiencies and pilferage (about twice the national average of 12.95 percent). Much of the unpaid bills, I was told, were owed by government entities, including the military brigade in Jolo. Suleco had accumulated a whopping P930 million in debts to the National Power Corp. as of early last year. Sulu's power problem is, to say the least, a formidable one, whose solution calls for draconian

measures and concerted efforts. But the impressive turnaround story of the Lanao del Sur Electric Cooperative that I recently wrote about ("An impressive turnaround," *Inquirer*, 11/15/11) gives me confidence that Sulu's problem can be similarly solved.

Potable water is the second P that my hosts told me demands attention. The Jolo water system is antiquated and rendered unsafe by severely rusted and leaky pipes. There's a story going around of an American military officer who refused to bathe in anything but bottled drinking water, believing the tap water to be unsafe even on his skin. While some improvements had been made through USAID assistance in recent years, there remains much to be desired. In my inn, pail-and-tubo (dipper) was the only way to bathe, given water pressure that was little more than a trickle—and yet the Jolo Mainland Water District facility was just across the street. According to former provincial administrator Al Anzar, our gracious guide throughout our visit, sources of fresh water supply are not a problem in Sulu; it's in the distribution system where the inadequacy lies. Here is where PPP in its usual meaning—a la Manila Water Company—can help.

The third P came up when I popped the question I always make a point to ask in field visits, with farmers we gathered for an informal discussion: If there was one thing you could ask of the government, what would it be? Elsewhere, I have heard farmers ask for carabaos, horses or other concrete needs. For the Sulu farmers we gathered, the reply was different, and unanimous: Give us peace. Tired of having to abandon their farms—and losing their livelihoods—every so often due to periodic military operations, the farmers declared: "The government can give us everything we need for our farms, but without peace, all these are for nothing."

Peace, power and potable water for Sulu—any high-impact initiatives for any of these, anyone?

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Guns and drags

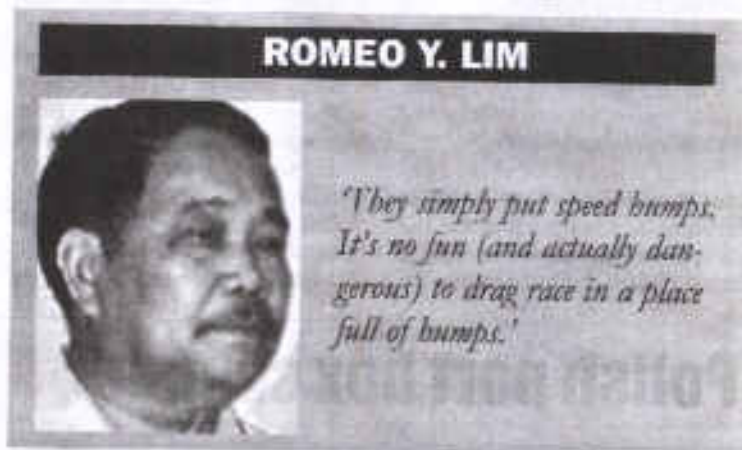
OVER the weekend there were news reports that a group of incelated young adults mauled Raul Reo-ares, an MMDA traffic enforcer who tried to stop the group of around 30 from drag racing along the Diosdado Macapagal Avenue in the wee hours of the morning.

Well of course this elicited a stern reaction from MMDA Francis Tolentino who ordered a tougher crackdown on violators as he tried to revive a controversial proposal to arm MMDA enforcers.

While I am upset over the brazen attitude of these young people, I still feel ambivalent about arming the MMDA personnel in the performance of their duties.

The right to bear arms carries with it a responsibility that may not be important to some people who are more interested in the feeling of superiority that it gives a person given the right to own a gun.

I remember the controversy over the arming of the paramilitary group of Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units (CAFGUs) sometime in the 80s and 90s. Even though these units were supposed to complement the members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in insurgent-ridden



ROMEO Y. LIM

'They simply put speed humps. It's no fun (and actually dangerous) to drag race in a place full of humps.'

areas, it was not an immediate decision to arm them. This happened despite the fact that it was members of the AFP who actually train CAFGUs.

This hesitation on the AFP's side was not without cause. There have been several instances over the years of abuses committed by the CAFGUs and most of these abuses were made because they carried guns, making them feel superior over the general populace of the areas they were in.

In fact, it was only in the elections of 2010 where the Commission on Elections allowed CAFGUs to bear arms during the

campaign period.

Now, this issue of drag racing is nothing new to Metro Manila. I am not saying that the MMDA personnel will abuse, but owning a gun sometimes makes you feel invincible an oftentimes, no amount of training and discipline can curb a perfect storm of temper, injustice, or protecting a loved one.

Now, I remember in the 70s and 80s, drag racing was the "sport" of the rich kids who wanted to parade their fast cars and the respective performance of these mean machines.

From muscle cars to ordinary fast cars like the Mitsubishi Lanc-

ers and the Datsuns of those decades, these cars were "loaded" so they could compete either in short drives (poste-to-poste) or actual laps. The herring that occurred among these rich kids was nothing to sneeze at. In fact, there were bets as high as P5,000 for a poste-to-poste contest during the time when an ordinary government worker's take home pay was around P600 pesos.

A friend of mine reminisced that she and her best friend (also a girl) took on a poste-to-poste contest and won with her souped-up Lancer. She was so relieved because her collateral was a diamond engagement ring that her fiancer gave her a few weeks back. That is how addictive these drag races could be.

The "tracks" during that time were the virtually empty roads in the Ortigas and Greenhills areas. Weekends were rowdy street parties in these areas where beer and gas flowed.

How did the government curb these drag races? No guns. No fanfare.

They simply put speed humps. It's no fun (and actually dangerous) to drag race in a place full of humps.



It's official. President Aquino congratulates AFP chief Lt. Gen. Jessie Dellosa after administering the oath of office at Malacañan Palace. Next on the agenda: Promotion to the rank of General. Dellosa is a member of the PMA Class '79.

Shift to Asia-Pacific to improve China-US ties

WASHINGTON, D.C.: The US military's strategic shift to the Asia-Pacific region provides an opportunity to improve Washington's relations with China, US Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey said on Sunday (Monday in Manila).

During an interview with the Cable News Network (CNN), America's top military officer said that the US Armed Forces had "taken a decision to rebalance ourselves toward the Pacific" in a re-strategy move.

"I think this is more [of an] opportunity than liability to improve our relationship with China, and I am personally committed to having that as the outcome, rather than get into an arms race or into some kind of confrontation with China," Dempsey said.

The administration of US Presi-

dent Barack Obama has launched with huge fanfare its "Pivot to Asia" strategic shift since late last year, arousing widespread suspicion that this move is aimed at containing the rise of China, whose influence in the Asia-Pacific region has been rapidly increasing to counterbalance America's dominance.

During Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping's February 13-17 visit to the United States, the two countries reaffirmed their commitment to further boost their cooperative partnership based on mutual respect and mutual benefit.

They also agreed to promote the steady and sound development of bilateral military ties based on the principle of mutual respect, mutual trust, reciprocity and mutual benefit.

XINHUA

Korea gives \$200,000 relief goods to quake victims

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MONDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2012 10:05 CATTI ORDINARIO 1 REPORTER

THE Philippine government recently received \$200,000 worth of relief goods from the Republic of Korea to augment the food and nonfood needs of those affected by the earthquake in Negros Oriental.

The relief goods, coursed through the Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica), consisted of ready-to-eat meals, tents, water-purification tablets, water bottles, radios, towels and paper cups.

Koica said 2,000 sets of ready-to-eat meals, 350 tents, 2,853 water purification tablets, 950 water bottles, 140 radios, 500 towels and 900 paper cups arrived in Cebu City over the weekend.

"Ambassador Hye Min Lee expressed his deepest condolences to the victims and hopes for their immediate recovery. He remarked that the Korean people will always be ready to help the Filipino people just as the latter have shown unwavering support during their country's difficult times," the Koica said in a statement.

Earlier, the Korean government donated \$500,000 worth of relief goods for the victims of Tropical Storm Sendong composed of 500 tents, 15,000 p towels, 63,000 ready-to-eat meals, and 6,800 water-purification tablets from Korea.

The relief goods were also coursed through Koica and transported to Cagayan de Oro City through the help of the Philippine Navy.

Data showed that Korea's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the Philippines amounted to \$287 million between 2006 and 2010. During the period, around \$238 million were extended as concessional loans while around \$49 million were given as grants.

The highest loan amount extended by the Korean government to the Philippines was in 2009 with \$182.9 million, while Koica extended its highest grant amount in 2010 with \$17.9 million.

The total ODA extended by the Korean government to the Philippines between 2006 to 2010 covered 24 projects composed of loans for six projects and total grants for 16 projects.

The transportation sector was the main priority of the Korean government and accounted for 86 percent of total ODA.

This was followed by environment which accounted for 7.3 percent of the total; agriculture and fishery, 4.8 percent; and information, communication, and technology with 2 percent.

Most of the projects funded by the Korean government in the past five years were located in Metro Manila and Palawan.

<http://businessmirror.com.ph/home/regions/23491-korea-gives-200000-relief-goods-to-quake-victims>

PMA HONORARY MEMBER RICHARD GOMEZ AT ALUMNI HOMECOMING



[PHOTO - Members of PMA Class '82 together with honorary member actor Richard Gomez wave to the crowd during the 113th PMA alumni homecoming at Fort del Pilar in Baguio City yesterday. **ANDY ZAPATA**]

FORT DEL PILAR, BAGUIO CITY, FEBRUARY 21, 2012 (PHILSTAR) By Artemio Dumiao – President Aquino is not attending the alumni homecoming rites of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) here today.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin (photo at right) will attend on behalf of the commander-in-chief the 113th PMA alumni homecoming at Borromeo Field today.

PMA spokesperson Capt. Lynnette Flores said it was the PMA Alumni Association (PMAAA) taking the cudgels for the occasion. PMAAA president retired Col. Rolando Jungco, however, could not be reached for comment. The attendance of Aquino's sisters, all adopted "mistahs" of various PMA classes, has also not been confirmed.

Malacañang confirmed the President would not be attending today's alumni homecoming due to prior commitments. Aquino will be in Baler, Aurora.

But the Palace said Aquino would likely attend the PMA graduation this summer.

Aquino last year graced his first PMA alumni homecoming as commander-in-chief. When he was running under the Liberal Party in 2010, Aquino was invited by several PMA classes to become their adopted "mistah" (classmate), but he had declined, saying he "did not want to politicize the PMA."

Balisy Aquino-Cruz and Pinky Aquino-Abellada were adopted as members of PMA Class '80 in 2011. Viel Aquino-Dee and actress-television host Kris Aquino also took their oath as adopted members of Mapitagan Class of 1980, the PMA class of Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Nicanor Bartolome. Expected to attend the alumni homecoming are politician-adoptees like Secretary Manuel Roxas II (1984), Senators Minam Santiago and Loren Legarda (both 1969), Francis Pangilinan (1985), Manuel Villar (1977), Jinggoy Estrada and Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (1979).

Former defense secretary and 2010 presidential bet Gilbert Teodoro is an adopted member of Class 1976. Former president and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is an honorary member of PMA Class 1978, while her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo was adopted by Class 1974. Their only daughter Luli is an honorary member of Class 1991.

Other PMA alumni expected this weekend are former Armed Forces chiefs Roy Cimatu (1970) and Diomedio Villanueva (1968), both accused before the Ombudsman for the multi-million retirement "pabaon."

Their accuser, former military budget officer Lt. Col. George Rabusa (Class 1981), is also expected to grace the event.

Controversial former military comptroller Carlos Garcia (1971) was stricken off the alumni list.



[PHOTO - P.M.A. HOMECOMING: Secretary of National Defense Voltaire Gazmin (center) is flanked by Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Supt. Nonato Alfredo Peralta Jr. (right) and Philippine Military Academy Alumni Association Inc. Cav. Remie Tigulo as they shared a light moment at the PMA Homecoming in Baguio City Saturday Feb. 18, 2012. The PMA played host to thousands of alumni and family members during the event. (Photo by JJ LANDINGIN)]

Outstanding alumni awards would be given to former AFP chief Eduardo Oban (1979) for the "Highest Command and Achievement Award" along with his mistahs, current AFP chief Gen. Jessie Dellosa, former Coast Guard commandant Ramon Liwag, Navy chief Alexander Pama and Emmanuel Bautista (1981), and Lauro de la Cruz and Edmund Tan (both 1980).

Class 1952 alumnus Cesar Pobre is this year's Lifetime Achievement awardee, while 1977 alumnus Philippine Ambassador to Brunei Nestor Ochoa and UN Defense Forces in the Golan Heights commander Natalino Ecarma of Class 81 are getting the "Prominently Meritorious Achievement" awards. Cavalier awardees for this year are: For Command and Administration – Jose Alano (1979) and National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Alan Punsima (1981), Military Professional in Army Operations – Juvymax Uy (1989), Military Professional in Navy Operations – Erick Kagawan (1981); Military Professional in Air Force Operations – Oliver Casuncad (1998).

Police Professional in Police Operations – Mario Yanga (1983); Military Professional in Staff Functions – Emmanuel Bautista (1981); Public Administration – Joseph Abaya (1988) and For Contribution to Alumni Affairs – Efren Yebra (1980).

PMA Class of 1952 is celebrating their Diamond Jubilee this year while Class 1962 their Golden Jubilee and 1987 their Silver Jubilee. – [With Aurea Calica, Non Alquitran](#)

AFP modernization done in two years By Jaime Laude (The Philippine Star) Updated February 19, 2012 12:00 AM Comments (7)



MANILA, Philippines - The government can get the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) back on its feet in two years, Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said yesterday.

"It won't take until 2016," Gazmin said on when the Filipino people could again be proud of its military.

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He said at least 138 defense contracts would be approved by July 31, adding that they are scouting for big military items from countries other than the US.

"Our defense system acquisition units went to South Korea. We have also dispatched our people to Spain. Some also went to France, all to determine the best offer and to know if we can foot the bills for these equipment that are being offered to us," he said.

The AFP reportedly plans to acquire a Multi-Role Vessel from South Korea.

The AFP is also looking at France and Italy for fighter jets, aside from the reported plans to acquire a squadron of F16s from the US.

Gazmin did not give details, except that the defense department is looking at military hardware to protect the country's air and maritime domain.

"We need to guard our surroundings, our boundaries, so that we are not taken advantage of," the defense chief said in Filipino, apparently referring to air and maritime intrusions of foreign aircraft and vessels.

Navy chief Vice Admiral Alexander Pama said they expect the formal turnover of another Hamilton Class cutter from the US Coast Guard by May.

The first Hamilton Class cutter, named BRP Gregorio del Pilar, is patrolling the West Philippine Sea.

Pama said they requested the US government to retain some of the equipment installed in the vessel.

'PMA cadets not affected by political squabbling'

Meanwhile, Gazmin said Philippine Military Academy (PMA) cadets are not affected by political squabbling as a result of the impeachment trial of Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona.

Gazmin said he received this assurance from PMA officials in yesterday's PMA alumni homecoming in Fort del Pilar, Baguio City, where he was the guest of honor and speaker.

"I talked with the PMA officials and they told me that they and the cadets are not affected. But they are also discussing the issue (impeachment trial) among themselves to understand what's going on in the political front," he said.

In President Aquino's PMA message which Gazmin read, the Chief Executive reminded the cadets not to abuse their position as government servants.

"The President wants to drive home a message to the cadets that as government servants they must come clean in serving the people," Gazmin said.

<http://www.newsflash.org/2004/02/h/h111557.htm>

Singing Soldiers Raise Funds For Comrades

By CRISPINA MARTINEZ-BELEN

February 20, 2012 2:50am



Col. Nolasco and his board of trustees with DILG Secretary Jesse Robredo and P/Sr Supt. Ronald Vicente during the turnover of the proceeds of the show for families of the fallen soldiers and cops.

MANILA, Philippines — Air Materiel Wing Savings & Loan Association, Inc – or simply AMWSLAI – raised funds for families and dependents of our servicemen who died in the line of duty via "AMWSLAI AFP-PNP Singing Stars Battle of the Champions" held recently at the Music Museum.

We were prepared to see a simple, no-frills production in keeping with the somewhat stern, no-nonsense image of our men and women in uniform, not to mention that the man calling the shots himself came from the military. Instead what we saw – and heard – thrilled us no end as AMWSLAI Chair and President Col. Ricardo L. Nolasco Jr., PAF (ret.), in tandem with Arthur Manuntag, mounted a show that should teach concert producers a thing or two on how to sustain audience interest for two and a half hours.

With me in the panel of judges were former Pres. Joseph Estrada, Madame Imelda Romualdez Marcos, US Consul General Mike Schimmel who came in with his better half, Mrs. Mary Rose Dellosa, lovely wife of AFP Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Jesse Dellosa, arts patron and philanthropist Jenny Napoles, TV host and wellness guru Cory Quinno-Tapalla, Prof. Raul Sunico of the UST Conservatory of Music and CCP chair person, Joseph Calata, Aficionado Germany Perfume head Joel Cruz, Emmie Velarde of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Ricky Lo of the Philippine Star, and Eugene Asis of People's Journal.

Col. Nolasco thanked Lt. Gen. Jesse Dellosa and PNP Director General Nicanor Bartolome "for their full cooperation and great support."

Col. Nolasco turned over to Dir. Gen. Bartolome, who was represented by P/Sr Supt Ronald Vicente, a check for families of the soldiers killed in action.

Likewise, Col. Nolasco thanked the following sponsors and donors: Beneficial-PNB Life Insurance Co. Inc., Paramount Life Insurance, Hannah's Beach Resort & Convention Center in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte and Advancekonek, 5th of March Graphic Services, Aficionado Perfumes, Armendi Loan Assistance Services, Composite Wing Savings

and Loan Association, Inc., Joy and Tim Enterprises, LT Enterprises, Malayan Insurance, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Red Fox Security Agency, Inc., Triple-A Insurance Agency, Malayan Bank, Emeco International Trading & Construction, Netsecure Technology Service Company, Great Pacific Life Insurance Co., Philippine Navy Savings and Loan Association, Inc., and Philippine Veterans Bank-Camp Aguinaldo Branch.

We could hardly wait for what Col. Nolasco and AMWSLAI will do next to further explore the musical talents of the 11 Battle of the Champions participants, particularly retired Navy Ensign Mei Sorillano (first place), Army T/Sgt. Wilhelmo S. Celestial (second), and Army Pfc Malou V. Eslaga.

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Tidbits: Happy b-day greetings today, Feb. 20, go to former Rep. Dolly Bohol, Mrs. Ditas Remulla, Betty Luz Go Chua, Teresita "Tita" Aviva, Chari La'O Bagatsing, Emy Rodriguez, Lito Gruet, Amelia Lopez, Lalaine Legasto, Enrico Castelo, Manna Calma Visaya, Perla Dungo, Tiffany Santos Red, Diego Nicolas Capili, Mary Grace Agoncillo, Prof. Lulu L. Geslani and US-based newsman Antonio Antonio...

<http://www.mb.com.ph/articles/351880/singing-soldiers-raise-funds-for-comrades>