

AFP Bayanihan News

FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS



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Congratulations to the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation team for winning 5 Golds and 2 Silvers at the 10th International World championship in Florida, USA!

Pres Aquino designates 5 AFP Generals

The President and Commander-in-Chief Benigno Simeon C Aquino III has approved the designation of the five AFP generals and other senior officers to key positions recently.

According to the AFP Public Affairs Office (PAO) the new designation of the five officers took effect last June.

BGen Cipriano D Gundao was designated as commander of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) Air Logistics Command, which he previously held in acting capacity. BGen Joel C Marayag, previously the commander of the 1st Air Division is the new Deputy Chief of Staff for AFP Reservist and Retirees Affairs, J9.

Former chief of the Army Management Information

Center Col Luis C Vinoya Jr is now chairman of the AFP General Headquarters Bids and Awards Committee 2; Col Danilo H Peñafiel then the Deputy Commander of the PAF Air Education and Training Command is now the Deputy Wing Commander, 355th Aviation Engineering Wing; and Navy Capt Abraham F Celzo is Commander of the Naval Forces in Southern Luzon.

The Chief of Staff, AFP Gen Eduardo SL Oban Jr stressed that the AFP is committed to further strengthen professionalism within its ranks. Gen Oban said the designation of new positions is part of the dynamics of the organization which is vital in carrying out the AFP mission effectively and efficiently. ♦

Women's voice in Peace

Two women were designated as members of the Board of Consultants (BoC) of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) peace panel.

The two women to assist the MILF members were lawyer Raissa Jajurie and educator Bai Cabaybay Abubakar.

Atty. Jajurie is a Tausog and the head of Nisaul-Haq Bangsamoro (Bangsamoro Women's Rights) and Bangsamoro Lawyers Network.

Mohagher Iqbal, chairman of the MILF peace panel confirmed on July 14 this year

the membership of the two women.

He said that the MILF believe in the ability of the Moro women in fostering peace that will eventually lead in the success of the peace process.

"The MILF welcomes them as members of the BoC and counts on them to help in the peace process," Iqbal said.

The BoC is a body that would advise the peace panel in many aspects of the efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace settlement in Mindanao. ♦

PNoy leads awarding of AFP/PNP housing units in Laguna

President Benigno Simeon Aquino III led the awarding of housing units to 200 military and police personnel in Calamba, Laguna on July 15 this year.

The awarding ceremony is part of Administrative Order no. 9 issued by the president last April directing the National Housing Authority (NHA) to come up with a housing program that will provide affordable houses to 20,000 military and police personnel nationwide.

The Aquino administration has allotted a total of P4.2 billion for the implementation of the program.

Monthly amortization payments are based on a 30-year payment period at an interest rate of six percent (6%) per year. Salary deductions for the payment of the monthly



New homes. Pres Benigno Simeon C Aquino III hands over keys to soldiers and policemen who are the beneficiaries of the government's housing program for uniformed personnel.

amortization shall be arranged between the NHA, PAG-IBIG Fund, and the AFP and PNP.

Over 1,000 soldiers have filed their application for the housing project 97 of which are members of the AFP while the rest are from the Philippine National Police (PNP) who are

all beneficiaries of the housing program.

Meanwhile, also present during the awarding ceremony were DND Sec. Voltaire Gazmin, other Cabinet members, AFP, PNP and National Housing Authority officials. It likewise attended by military personnel who were the beneficiaries of the housing project. ♦

Mangyan children receive gift from AFP, private sector

School children of Upper Yunot Elementary School in Brgy Nasucob, Bulalacao, Oriental Mindoro received two new classrooms in a turn-over ceremony on July 19 this year.

Col. Generoso L Bolina, Southern Luzon Command (SOLCOM) spokesperson said the project will benefit the 370 Mangyan students who were then attending their classes in a nipa hut and coco lumber-made classrooms.

He said the reconstruction of the classrooms has been held in abeyance due to lack of funds since 1978. But through the convergence of efforts of the military and private donors the project was made possible this year.

The newly-built classrooms were funded by ABS-CBN Foundation "Sagip Kapamilya" program, while troops from 51st Engineer Brigade and the 514th Engineer Construction Battalion handed their technical supervision and skilled labor, the 203rd Infantry Brigade was tasked for the landscaping.

Meanwhile, the 4th Infantry Battalion and ABS-CBN also facilitated a feeding program during the activity.

The local governments of Oriental Mindoro and Bulalacao together with ABS-CBN, Manila Rifle and Pistol Club, OB Montessori, Philippine Red Cross, Bato Balani Foundation, Julie Ann Ramos and columnist Ramon Tulfo partnered in the meaningful activity.

The group provided services like water system and electricity connection and school supplies like blackboards, books, chairs, tables and cabinets.

The turn-over ceremony was led by SOLCOM chief Lt. Gen. Roland Detabali who served as the guest of honor and speaker. Also, present during the inauguration were National Development Support Command (NADESCOM) Commander MGen. Carlos B. Holganza, Mr. Marcel Renon of ABS-CBN Sagip Kapamilya, Oriental Mindoro Acting Governor Humerlito Dolor.

LtGen. Detabali said in his speech that whatever endeavor the AFP undertakes reflects its mission of serving the nation not only by protecting it but likewise in furthering community development through working hand and hand with different stakeholders. ♦

Overhaul of AFP Pension System

There will be an overhaul of the AFP Pension System, in the immediate future.

The AFP has embarked on a mass information campaign on a proposed new retirement benefits law that would do away with the automatic increase in pension rates when the salaries of soldiers are increased.

AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (J1) BGen Honorato de los Reyes said they would use "all available means of communication" to make sure that soldiers and their families are properly informed of the proposed retirement and benefits system.

BGen De los Reyes said that until the new retirement plan is approved by Congress, the current AFP retirement law for or Presidential Decree 1638 is still in effect and remains unchanged. He said the objective of the new plan "is to make the system more effective and sustainable for the AFP." ♦

Editorial**Use of the Filipino Language : Initial step to straight and righteous path**

Millions of Filipinos around the globe tuned in to President Benigno C Aquino III's second State of the Nation Address (SONA) last July 25. The President gave emphasis on his accomplishments made in his first year in government office. He also conveyed his stand on the different issues confronting our country and his programs to alleviate the life of every Filipino. The 20-minute speech received various commendations not only because the President opted to deliver his speech in Filipino which made it clear, simple and easy to comprehend but more so because of its soundness and substance. It is indeed a right decision on the part of the President to speak in the vernacular since it made a much stronger impression and was better appreciated by the majority of the people.

In addition, the speech coincidentally was made a month before the celebration of our "Buwan ng Wika" (National Language Month) this August, making it more symbolic. Through his speech, the President made emphasis on the significance of using the national language in the conduct of our official as well as day to day business.

Previously, the commemoration of the event was only held for one week when former Pres Sergio Osmeña designated March 27 to April 2 as "Linggo ng Wika" (Language Week). Later, during the term of President Ramon Magsaysay the date of the celebration was changed to August 13 to August 19 in honor of the "Father of the Filipino Language", President Manuel L Quezon's birthday on August 19.

After the EDSA Revolution, the late Pres Cory Aquino substantiated the former proclamation made by President Magsaysay on the celebration of the "Linggo ng Wika". Until in 1997, former Pres Fidel Ramos issued Proclamation Nr 1041 which declared the whole month of August as "Buwan ng Wika." The National Language Month is a call to the Filipinos to recognize and rekindle our sense of nationalism. The national language is our forefather's gift to us so that we can instill in ourselves our true sense of identity as Filipinos and likewise serve as a tool for our unity. The unity needed for us to tread the straight and righteous path. ♦

NGOs, military to infix 10,000 solar bulbs

At least 10,000 solar bottle bulbs are set to be placed in various households belonging to high density communities across the country.

The placing of solar bottle bulbs is a joint project of My Shelter Foundation, Civil Military Operations (CMO) Groups and CMO units of the Unified Commands.

The innovative solar bottle bulbs provide good source of light equivalent to 55 watts without using electricity during daytime.

Recycled materials are the primary components of the bottle bulbs. Plastic soda bottles are encased with galvanized iron sheets and filled with a solution of water, chlorine, and salt. During daytime, the transparent bottles are inserted through the roof, illuminating the room as it derives its light directly from the sun.

All CMO units of the

Philippine Army ranging from the infantry divisions down to its respective battalions will be directed to execute the project in their assigned local communities. Expected to undertake the same are the Philippine Navy's CMO units in the National Capital Region (NCR), Northern and Southern Luzon, Eastern and Western Mindanao, and Visayas. CMO offices from headquarters down to the wing-command level of the Philippine Air Force are likewise tasked to carry out the project.

Soldiers will be deployed in order to provide manpower assistance in the installation of the bottle bulbs. "These activities are geared towards the creation of healthy and peaceful communities. The AFP is supportive of efforts to harness renewable sources of energy to sustain our needs," Chief of Staff General Eduardo SL Oban Jr said. ♦

CARAT Projects more than just Facilities

The newly-constructed comfort rooms in Mangingisda West Elementary School in Bgy Mangingisda, Puerto Princesa City may seem as the most basic of the facilities that a school needs.

But to the people involved in its construction, it stands for something more than just the convenience it brings.

The comfort rooms were constructed as part of the community service projects lined up for the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2011, a ten day bilateral military exercise between the United States and the Philippine Navies.

To the Commander of CARAT 2011 Exercise, CAPT

David Welch USN, the comfort rooms were a testament to the dedication of the soldiers to the project and the potent power of cooperation in bringing development.

According still to Captain Welch, the project is a blessing both to the benefactors and the beneficiaries. "It is a blessing to have been given the opportunity to serve and give back to the community," he expressed.

Which is why, for CAPT Ronald Joseph Mercado PN, Deputy Commander of NAVFORWEST, the newly-constructed facilities at the said primary school also signifies a better future for the students there. ♦

SAR Workshop with Australia

To improve the government's response to maritime challenges, representatives from the different rescue units attended a five-day training workshop on search and rescue (SAR) on July 5 this year.

The workshop ended last July 8 and was attended by 25 medium and senior officials from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, Philippine National Police, Philippine Navy, Philippine Army, Philippine Air Force and Civil Aviation of the Philippines. The activity jointly conducted by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and the Philippine

Coastguard (PCG). Australian Ambassador Rod Smith said the Philippines was chosen as one of its partners to hold the workshop because the Philippines is one of their strong allies in the implementation of maritime security.

The Ambassador said that improving a country's capability in performing SAR is important to the Philippines because of the many maritime challenges that it now faces. He added that SAR is always a very demanding area in maritime security and the Philippines is a country that sadly faces a lot of typhoons and other heavy weather. ♦

Lease of US military equipment studied

The present administration disclosed that it would lease from the United States long-range patrol aircraft and watercraft to help defend its claims to disputed waters in the West Philippine Sea.

Department of National Defense Secretary Voltaire Gamin said he hoped to receive the first pieces of equipment within the year. The

lease of the aircraft and watercraft could be financed with funds from the Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization fund. He also said the defense department would seek an additional budget for the purpose needed. "We are looking at modern equipment, with the very long range patrol aircraft and also watercraft so we can guard our territory," said Sec Gazmin. ♦

Editorial Board

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AFP/PNP housing also in Visayas, Mindanao

Vice President and Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chair Jejomar C Binay announced on July 14 this year plans to implement the housing program for soldiers and policemen in Visayas and Mindanao.

"Gusto ko pong ipaalam sa inyo, lalung-lalo na sa magang tauhan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines at Philippine National Police, na sisimulan natin ang phase two nating AFP/PNP housing program," said VP Binay during the Pabahay Caravan held in Tacloban.

"Ito'y proyekto mismo ng ating Pangulong Noynoy Aquino. At ang phase two ay sa visayas at Mindanado natin ipapatupad," the housing czar added.

VP Binay added the National Housing Authority and the AFP/PNP housing board are looking for sites where the project can be implemented. The boards have proposed Cebu, Bacolod, Davao and Zamboanga as possible housing sites. ♦

AFP supports peace talks

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) fully supports the ongoing peace talks with the communist insurgents and the Muslim separatists in Mindanao to attain long-term peace in the country.

In the "Pilipinas Natin" Cabinet Cluster Forum on Security, Justice and Peace last July 20, 2011, AFP Spokesman and AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil-Military Operations Commodore Miguel Jose Rodriguez said that soldiers are tired of the decade-long battle and they want lasting peace to prevail in the country.

Commodore Rodriguez said that observations have proven that combat engagements are now rare. People on the ground are the most affected by insurgency and the soldiers are exhausted of it so the military fully supported the peace negotiations.

More than anybody else, the soldiers desire peace because they are the ones positioned in the frontlines whenever there are conflicts. The country has endured many decades of insurgency and separatism and has not tried sincere negotiations to resolve the problem. ♦

Soldiers donate blood to Nurse

MGen Mario F Chan, commander of 8th Inf Div based in Camp Lukban, Catbalogan City recently received an appreciation letter from 24 year old Juniel Tagarino.

Juniel Tagarino is a registered nurse and presently working as Clinical Instructor in Samar State University – College of Nursing. He had contracted dengue fever last June 22 and needed blood transfusion of four (4) units of A+ blood type as well as blood donors.

He had difficulty in looking for his blood donors. Juniel's friend suggested to ask the 8ID training unit for the assistance.

Immediately, 8ID responded and directed its soldiers with same blood type

to donate. Trainees from the RRT Class 74-11 namely SSg Eleuterio Besada and Sgt Regie Milan volunteered which led to Juniel's successful blood transfusion.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all and especially to MGen Mario F Chan because of the unselfish efforts of his men. You are a good leader of the gallant men of the 8th Inf Div (Stormtroopers) PA," Juniel said in his letter.

As a response, MGen Chan said as the AFP Bayanihan IPSP continues, the government troops will continue to help and protect the Samareños in one way or the other. He furthered that 8ID is always willing to extend a helping hand to everyone. ♦

NPA supporter surrenders in Catanduanes

A known communist-terrorist supporter surrendered to an army unit in Brgy Lictin, San Andres, Catanduanes on July 17, 2011.

Arnel Flores aka Aning heeded the call for peace being implemented by AFP Southern Luzon Command when he decided to sever his ties with the CPP-NPA.

Flores is a former regular member of SDG, KSPN PUSA operating in Catanduanes and a member of the NPA's *militia ng bayan* (MB) in Brgy Hilawan, also of San Andres.

SOLCOM spokesperson Col. Generoso L. Bolina said that the surrender was facilitated by 83IB through the persuasion of Lamberto Niebla, a former rebel also of KSPN PUSA where Flores previously belonged.

At present, Flores is undergoing custodial debriefing. He also expressed

his willingness to help his former comrades who desire to return to the folds of the law.

Col. Bolina further said that Flores, being a former NPA may avail of the benefits from the government's *Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan* (PAMANA) program which is being implemented under the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP).

Meanwhile, SOLCOM Commander LtGen. Roland M. Detabali lauded the efforts of the AFP forces in the area saying that the surrender of Flores inflicted a setback for the CPP-NPA-NDF in the area.

He then instructed the troops to continue exploring all possible peaceful means to address insurgency through community development services and to do the same with strict adherence to the protection of human rights. ♦

NPA raids Negros Occidental fish farm

About 25 New People's Army rebels recently raided a fish farm owned by the nephew of Gov Alfredo Merañon Jr of Negros Occidental.

The rebels carted away five high-powered firearms and ammunition, as well as personal belongings of the workers.

Merañon has ordered the police and the military to secure all mining firms in the province following the NPA raid on Philex Mining Corp in Sipalay City last month.

The firearms taken from the guards were two M14 assault rifles, an M16 armalite rifle, a 12-gauge shotgun, and a homemade .22 caliber revolver. Wallets and cellular phones of fishpond workers and an ICOM base radio were also taken by the NPA.

Recently, suspected rebels also raided two haciendas in EP Magalona, Negros Occidental and torched three farm tractors for the refusal of the owners to pay extortion money. ♦

2ID Chief assumes as NOLCOM Commander

The 30th commander of the 2nd Infantry Division (2ID) of the Philippine Army, MGen Jessie D Dellosa, was welcomed as the 22nd commander of the Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) last 22 July 2011 at Camp Servillano Aquino, Tarlac City.

MGen Dellosa replaces LtGen Gaudencio Pangilinan who has reached mandatory age of retirement. MGen Dellosa is a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1979 and was born in Sorsogon. Prior to being Commander of 2ID, he was the Deputy Commander of AFP Central Command and the Commandant of Cadets of PMA.

His outstanding experience is comprised of his achievements in military service. He was designated as 302 Brigade Commander, Chief of Staff of the 4th Infantry Division, Officer-In-Charge of the Office of Ethical Standard and Public Accountability (OESPA) of the AFP, and a former Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations G3 of the 1st

Infantry Division.

Dellosa's acquired mastery in military operations is attributed to his extensive military training. He took several courses which contributed to his unquestionable competence. Courses such as Intel Officer Basic Course, Basic Airborne Course, Scout Ranger Course, Counter Terroristic Action Course, Command and General Staff Course, and Infantry Officer Advance Course, these to name a few. Being a recipient of several awards such as Military Merit Medals, Bronze Cross Medals, Long Service Medals, Marksmanship Badge Expert, and PMAAAI Outstanding Achievement Award for Military Operations, he is a soldier worthy of emulation.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and AFP Chief of Staff Eduardo SL Oban Jr presided the turnover of command ceremonies. "MGen. Dellosa is one of the best assets of the military with respect to his fulfillment of service and career." Gen Oban said. ♦

NPAs hit Philex mines

About 30 New People's Army (NPA) rebels raided the Philex Mining Company compound in Barangay Nabua, Sipalay City in Negros Occidental on July 6, 2011.

Lt. Col. Rodrigo Sosmena, 47th Infantry Battalion commander said that although no firefight had transpired the NPA rebels burned two vehicles: a cargo truck being rented by the firm and a Kia Rio car and a bunk used by the workers and guards of the firm.

They also took six (6) shotguns and two-way radio sets from the company's guards. The NPAs were believed to be members of the Armando Sumayang Command.

The director of the 6th Regional Public Safety Battalion, Supt. Milko Lirazan said the rebels seized the service pickup of the company then later burned the pickup before withdrawing toward a runway being used by Philex.

Negros Occidental Gov. Alfredo Marañon Jr. said such attack by the NPA rebels could negatively affect the tourism possibilities and could scare away future investors in the province. ♦

News briefs, News briefs, News briefs

Dialogue with AFP pensioners

Pensioners, composed of soldiers and wives of military personnel converged in Camp Aguinaldo, QC last 18 July 2011 to release their pension increases and fast-track the release of funds as they rely on their pension alone. In the dialogue, Col Rolando Jungco, Chi8ef, AFP Pension and Gratuity Management Center said the increases takes effect on January 2011 and not in this year's budget. The Department of National Defense created a team to study possible reforms in the system.

New AFP Logistics Chief

PMA Class 1980 Commodore Edgardo Tamayo is the newly installed Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, J4. He replaces Commodore Teddy Pan, who reached the mandatory age of 56. Commo Tamayo asked for the support of the "Logistics Family" to accomplish the unit mission.

NADESCOM projects for poor barangays

NADESCOM projects have already benefited 50,000 people in 22 development projects initiated by the Command. According to Maj Emmanuel Garcia, NADESCOM Public Affairs Officer, these beneficiaries are residents of more than 100

poor barangays in remote areas.

NADESCOM semi-annual report reflects 22 completed projects that include rural electrification, water systems, health/day care centers, schools and farm-to-market roads.

Peace program launched in Sulu

Recently cabinet officials launched a peace project under the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA) program of the Aquino administration despite a perceived risk spawned by fierce clash between Abu Sayyaf members and government forces that left seven marines dead and 12 others injured.

New recruits for NOLCOM

The Northern Luzon command (Nolcom) is calling on residents of Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, cordillera and Central Luzon regions to take the opportunity to have a promising career in the military by taking the 2011 entrance exam of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) on August 28. LTC Rosendo Armas said the exam is open to all Filipino citizens aged 17 to 22 years old, single; at least 5'4" for males and 5'2" for females and high school graduate with a general average of 85% or higher.

AFP supports Poll Probe

The Armed Forces of the Philippines is ready to support efforts to reopen the probe on alleged fraud during the 2004 elections.



CSAFP Gen Eduardo SL Oban Jr AFP

"The alleged military involvement may be put to rest. If proven, then we will help prosecute them (erring soldiers). If there is none (military involvement), then the issue will be put to rest," Gen Oban said.

AFP buys choppers

The Armed forces of the Philippines has purchased eight new combat helicopters worth about P400 million to modernize its air fleet.

The Chief, AFP Modernization Program Management Office BGen Roy Deveraturda, said the first four helicopters will come in November while the others will be given in 2012.

Meantime, BGen Deveraturda said the newly acquired cutter from the United States Coast named Barko ng Republika ng Pilipinas (BRP) Raja Humabon is expected to arrive in the country in 30-45 days. The ship will be commissioned by August or September for sea patrol. ♦

Voices from the grave

End of the series)

By Agnes Lopez Reano

"The right of the child to be protected from physical or mental harm and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation" . . . as an NPA "child soldier" we were always on harm's way. The never ending back breaking trek during tactical offensives, the nerve-racking fear of another chance encounter with the soldiers made us all CIAC a nervous wreck.

These are only some of our rights which were brazenly violated by the front organizations we joined, in my case the LFS or League of Filipino Students. Rights which should and must be protected at all cost but sad to say exploited and abused by the New People's Army and its front organizations.

On the other hand, the AFP has been and still willing to rescue children involved in armed conflict recruited by the CPP/NPA/NDF. At present CIAC who had been rescued by the AFP from the clutches of the repressive and abusive

NPAs are now undergoing treatment on their psychosocial trauma. The likes of the Gumanoy sisters, Maricel Sotto, Salve, Rolly, and many other CIACs are enjoying a life of freedom and the very essence of being a child which the NPA robbed from them when they were recruited and brought to the mountains and exposed to danger and possible death.

The atrocities enumerated above, all of them are clear messages of VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS . . . as "discerning people" are we to continue to be hoodwinked by the lies and twisted truths of the front organizations of the CPP-NPA-NDF? Are we going to swallow "hook line and sinker" their lies, deceit, fabrications and deceptions. The CTM's front organization's goal is not to protect the rights of a person, but solely to generate funds and for publicity mileage. SOBRIETY IS OUR WEAPON . . . discern the true pictures and then decide. ♦

The Logic behind Maintaining Good Media Relations

by Maj Enrico Gil Ileteo

Fourth of a Series

We try to be proactive in telling our story and yet, why can't we penetrate the airwaves? newspaper?

To celebrate its founding anniversary, an AFP unit once held a cleanup drive in one of the polluted riverbank in Metro Manila. It was good news all in the spirit of delivering services and bring hope to the local people in that particular area. Resources were poured where a huge number of personnel, together with the community, joined together in the activity. The media were invited to cover the event. Only a few came and on the next day, the story heard or seen by the public.

The word we must keep in mind is Newsworthy. We must understand what news is. News is Information that has relevance to the audience of a specific news media outlet. Anything that departs

from normal human behavior and expectation, even a report of a recent event, marked by fairness, currency, accuracy, conciseness, balance and objectivity, is what the media will always consider.

News is an event or belief that threatens to alter the status quo of society in a rationally important manner. **It follows the logic of believing what the editor says it is.**

Timeliness, Immediacy, Currency, Impact, Consequence, Unusualness, Oddity, Rarity, Prominence, Proximity and Change are the elements that should always be remembered that when we tell our story. A usual sports fest at the General Headquarters was once held and got monumental media coverage. The reason, Manny Pacquiao, our favourite "Pambansang Kamao" was the guest speaker.

To be continued

Fun Run for IHL Day



Soldiers during the Fun Run marking the significance of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Day.

An AFP Fun Run in commemoration of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Day was held last 11 August 2011.

The theme of the Fun Run is "Takbong Matuwid Tungo sa Pagpapahalaga at Pagtalima sa IHL".

The activity kicked-off at the EDSA – Ortigas People Power Shrine and ended at the GHQ Grandstand in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

August 12 of each year is IHL Day while the whole of August is IHL month.

The celebration is a time to reflect on what still needs to be done with regards to IHL. Republic Act 9851 was passed into law in late 2009. It was a breakthrough moment for IHL in the Philippines as RA9851 takes many of the obligations found in international treaties and transformed them into domestic law.

There has been progress in IHL and this is an inspiration in taking the next steps so that the law shall continue to enhance protection of those affected by armed conflict. ♦

New modernization program proposed

A bill will be filed by Chairman of the House Committee on National Defense and Security that will set a new modernization plan for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) as the current program ends this year.

According to Muntinlupa Rep Rodolfo Biazon, the modernization program under Republic Act 7898, passed into law in 1995, will expire in December.

The new 15-year modernization program will have a P428-billion budget, whereby it will be funded by the

annual budget and the rest from proceeds in the sale of military lands and oil exploration, among others, said Mr Biazon.

Mr Biazon explained that the new modernization program plan will be divided in three parts, with each section implemented in five years.

The first part will focus on internal security against insurgents and terrorist groups. Part two will be a combination of internal security and external defense and part three on external defense. ♦

Watch your health!

Health Benefits of Eggs

1. Eggs are great for the eyes. According to one study, an egg a day may prevent **macular degeneration** due to the carotenoid content, specifically **lutein** and zeaxanthin. Both nutrients are more readily available to our bodies from eggs than from other sources.
2. In another study, researchers found that people who eat eggs every day lower their risk of developing cataracts, also because of the lutein and zeaxanthin in eggs.
3. One egg contains 6 grams of high-quality protein and all 9 essential amino acids.
4. According to a study by the Harvard School of Public Health, there is no significant link between egg consumption **and heart disease**. In fact, according to one study, regular consumption of eggs may help prevent **blood clots, stroke** and **heart attacks**.
5. They are a good source of choline. One egg yolk has about 300 micrograms of choline. Choline is an important nutrient that helps regulate the brain, nervous system, and cardiovascular system.

BRP Gregorio del Pilar commissioned

President Benigno C Aquino III led the inspection of the newly-acquired warship BRP Gregorio del Pilar last 23 August 2011 which is part of the upgrading and modernization efforts of the government on the maritime capabilities of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)

The President was welcomed at Pier 13 in South Harbor by government officials including Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, AFP Chief of Staff Gen Eduardo Oban Jr, Philippine Navy Flag Officer-In-Command VAdm Alexander Pama and PF17 Commanding Officer Capt Alberto Cruz.

The BRP Gregorio del Pilar manned by 13 officers and 82 enlisted personnel, arrived in the country this August after a month-long voyage from the United States. The warship dropped anchor at the Manila Bay 22 August 2011 to undergo customs, immigration and quarantine inspection.

The Philippine Navy recently acquired the refurbished US Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton (WHEC-715) and commissioned it as BRP Gregorio del Pilar Pacific Fleet 15.

The 378-foot vessel with a crew capacity of 180 is equipped with armament and weapons system, propulsion plant, electrical generation, helicopter hangar and flight deck, among others.

The BRP Gregorio del Pilar is to carry out missions for drug interdiction, law enforcement, search and rescue operations, defense readiness and migrant interdiction. Likewise, it will perform tasks in protecting the country's natural gas and oil exploration projects off Palawan amid reported incursions in the West Philippine Sea.

Col Hernando Iriberry, Defense department spokesman said the President's presence during the event signifies the government's seriousness in modernizing the military.

"It shows the commitment of the government to improve the capability of the AFP to perform its constitutional mandate as protector of our people and guardian of our territory," said Iriberry.

He also said the arrival of the BRP Gregorio del Pilar "is a step forward toward the realization of the thrust to modernize the AFP. ♦