

## Sound Snipings

BY Jimmy Cabato

Authorities called on IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) to be ever-vigilant against any possible intrusion of outside elements that may threaten their safety and security in transitory sites .

Addressing them in Pilipino, Army Capt. Marvin Ligutan of Task Force Zamboanga cautioned them to be vigilant and join in peacekeeping efforts for everyone's security.

Ligutan pointed out that the infamous siege transpired due to complacency of many in the conflict-affected areas, having kept mum on the presence of armed groups in their midst. Nobody cared to report their presence to authorities. In view thereof, several houses were burned down, many died and all of them were imperiled, he emphasized. He told the IDPs to be bold in reporting suspicious persons and activities noticed in their vicinity.

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Government troopers on Thursday succeeded to capture two Abu Sayyaf camps and seized several firearms during operations in Patikul, Sulu.

Brig. Gen. Alan Arrojado, Joint Task Group Sulu commander, said soldiers from the 10th Scout Ranger Company while on patrol encountered some 30 suspected ASG bandits under sub-leaders Namel Ahajari and Arkam Udjaman at Sitio Mabusing, Barangay Langhub.

The militants retreated after a 15-minute firefight, sustaining an undetermined number of casualties.

Government forces, Arrojado said, suffered no losses.

In subsequent pursuit operations, government troopers seized two ASG camps, one of which can house 50 bandits. The second camp, captured by the 11th Scout Ranger Company, can accommodate 100 individuals.

Seized were a rocket-propelled grenade, a M-16 automatic rifle with 45 rounds and assorted foodstuff.

Pursuit operations are still ongoing.

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Tiene pa man gale juisio, despues de todo. (Wisdom-filled still, after all).

That is how the Commission on Elections (Comelec) is, or so it appears, as it announced initiation of preparations to possibly resort to manual voting, in deference to the Supreme Court order for it to issue ballot receipts during the elections.

In a four-page resolution, the Comelec said it will “prepare a contingency Project of Precincts (POP) with a cluster of 400 voters each - or half the current number in the event that it would have to undertake manual polls to ensure that the elections push through on May 9.

Ansina. No hace miedo kay hay palsia o move kol eleccion. (That's it. Do not threaten us of failure or postponement of elections.)

Ay, tampa loko pa gale siempre, o... (Hey, Comelec still acts dubiously, here...)

Comelec Chair Andres Bautista still persists, saying, despite such a measure, he could not say which was the better option: To hold manual elections or postponing the polls.

Chongo-chongo man este! (Monkey-like this guy appears!)

Claro gayot kay tiene pa intencion de hace chupieh kol eleccion. (It's the intent to cheat is still evident).

He then mouthed, the back-up plan has to undergo consultations first, and that there may be no need to talk about manual elections for now because we still have time left.

Chongo-chongo gat deberas! (Monkey-like truly!) It was reported only yesterday that they argued in their petition to the Supreme Court, the latter should reconsider its decision because there is no more time left to install the safety features in the (inept) Vote Counting machines (VCMs), aka PCOS

By all means, the law must be followed. Let us push for the elections to go on as scheduled.

If the safety nets cannot be activated in time for the polls, as a last resort, go **MANUAL VOTING/COUNTING**.

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Former Sen. Francisco “Kit” Tatad on Saturday bared his camp will ask the Supreme Court to conduct new hearings and hold a re-voting on the disqualification case filed against Senator Grace Poe once they receive an official copy of the decision.

SS believes otherwise. Leave it be, man. To disqualify Poe will bring the country more harm than good. He must bear in mind, Poe’s name is printed on the ballots. She can be voted upon even if disqualified.

And that spells trouble - chaos!

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Resigned Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario is urging the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague, Netherlands to issue an early ruling on the petition of the Philippines over China’s occupation of the disputed areas in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

But is this ruling that good for the Philippines?

Points to ponder. China did not participate in the hearings as it had rejected the PCA’s authority to hear the case. Under such set-up, will the ruling bind China?

Del Rosario said, yes. But given then dogged stand of China, it will not budge.

Now, who will implement the decision?

Does The Hague have an implementing arm?

Inflexible as China's position is, can the Philippines take up arms and drive out China from the contested reefs? Will any nation, including America, do it for us?

Dear me... SS is at a loss.

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Sheepishly petite-looking she may be, but Liberal Party (LP) vice presidential candidate Rep. Leni Robredo can also turn furious, after all. She lashed out at Sen. Francis Escudero on Saturday for saying that President Benigno Aquino 3rd should have stayed out of the political field, and is wrong in having endorsed candidates in the 2016 polls, as a supposed measure for a credible conduct of polls.

Robredo charged that Escudero is now whining, when in 2013 did not complain that the president drafted him to be part of the administration's Senate ticket, winning a six-year mandate.

Robredo maintained, it is Aquino's duty to support the candidates whom he believes in. There's no room for relenting at this time, she added.

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The Partido Demokratikong Pilipino-Laban (PDP-Laban) on Friday decried what is called as black propaganda against its standard bearer Rodrigo Duterte.

It accused the Aquino administration of such machination, ostensibly to discredit Duterte ahead of the May 2016 elections.

Peter Laviña, Duterte's spokesman, bared that allies of President Benigno Aquino 3rd are poised to file charges against Duterte for his supposed role and involvement in extra-judicial killings as mayor of Davao City.

The charges, Laviña said, is reportedly based on affidavits executed by a ranking police officer and supposed self-confessed gunmen.

Laviña questioned the timing of the charges to be filed, as the case could have been filed earlier when Duterte was not yet running as president.