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SMARTER FORCE



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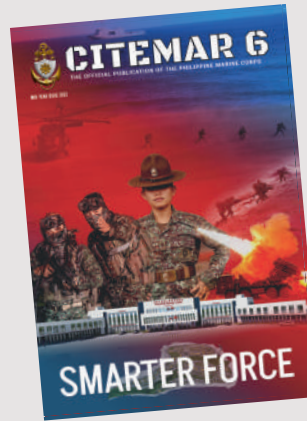
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ABOUT THE COVER



The Commandant of the Philippine Marine Corps, MGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M), has instituted significant accomplishments to intensify Internal Security Operations, modernize the organization, employ Archipelagic Coastal Defense (ACD), and implement new operational concepts that emphasize distributed operations and long-range precision strikes without duplicating the capabilities of other branches of service.

With these elements, the cover illustrates the Philippine Marine Corps' capabilities in combined arms operations, projects its future headquarters, highlights its future assets, and strengthens the significant part of the Philippine Marine Corps - the courageous men and women who serve as the most vital foundation of the corps as it transforms to be a SMARTER FORCE.

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Message from the


COMMANDANT

Philippine Marine Corps

We are pleased to present to you this edition of CITEMAR6 that not only shares narratives of success stories, aspirations, and advocacies, but also provides strategic insights on where the Philippine Marine Corps is heading as we build a SMARTER FORCE.

By sharing stories from the field, we learn more about our troops' grounded experiences, struggles, and accomplishments. By putting these into words, we get to understand the impacts of our actions. These ring true especially in the recent months when we were able to clearly define our Archipelagic Coastal Defense strategy, contribute to the conduct of safe, orderly, and peaceful elections, defeat the communist-terrorist enemy, provide vital support to law enforcement, assist disaster-stricken communities, strengthen our capabilities through military exercises and trainings, and deepen and broaden our engagements with Marine reservists and other civilian stakeholders. With our collective effort and relentless spirit, the future certainly looks bright for the Philippine Marine Corps.

This publication would not have been made possible without everyone's support including the hard-working editorial team. I encourage you to comb through the pages and reflect on how best we can further build the Corps as a SMARTER FORCE. Be informed, be inspired, and be thankful for your Philippine Marine Corps!



NESTOR C HERICO
Major General PN(M)




Message from the
**COMMAND
SERGEANT MAJOR**
Philippine Marine Corps

As a warfighting institution, the Marine Corps nests within the joint force as a forward and ready combat force. Being the smallest and most expeditionary service in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Marine Corps largely focuses on offensive tactics and contingency readiness because of its forward posture. Considering today's global threats and the anticipated future operating environment, this mindset must remain primary for Marines at every level.

Currently, the PMC as a force provider that prioritizes the Defense System of Management (DSOM) in order to capacitate the Corps and also to anchor it with the Commandant's Guidance through the five (5) pillars of modernization which are 1) Force Restructuring and Organizational Development (FROD), 2) Human Resource Development (HRD), 3) Education, Training, and Doctrine Development (ETDD), 4) Bases and Support System Development (BSSD) and 5) Capability, Materiel, and Technology Development (CMTD).

As the current Command Sergeant Major, PMC, I speak in behalf of the Enlisted Corps that we are fully aligned with Commandants vision to make the Corps a "SMARTER FORCE," ready for any eventuality that may occur. It will be the job of every Marine to see these through in order to further protect and serve our fellow citizens while maintaining our long held values of "Karangalan, Katungkulan, at Kabayanihan." The times are changing and we as a force and as individuals do need to adapt, however, we must keep the Marine Oath as our gold standard in our every action so as to not bring shame to our uniform but rather glory and honor.


Antonio O Limitares
CMS PN(M)



MARITES: MARInes ano ang laTESt?

On March 16, 2021, the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) published the Archipelagic Coastal Defense (ACD) Strategy, the new Marine Corps Operating Concept (MCOC). The said strategy describes how the Marine Operating Forces (MOFs) shall operate as the coastal instrument of naval power, aligned with the Active Archipelagic Defense Strategy (AADS) and the modernized Naval Operating Concept (NOC) of the Philippine Navy. It also defines how the Marines should operate and deploy in an archipelagic state's overall defense architecture.

Based on the preceding, the Command, through the Office of the Assistant Chief of Marine Staff for Plans and Programs, MC5, has undertaken various initiatives and activities to promulgate and propagate the said strategy within the Corps and among its stakeholders. The office of MC5 was tasked to facilitate the PMC Cascading and Assessment of Archipelagic Coastal Defense Strategy across all PMC units scheduled to be accomplished this year. To cascade the new Marine Corps Operating Concept to line units, the office of MC5 was able to:

1) Conduct cascading and assessment to personnel of 3rd Marine Brigade (3MBde) including the Operational Control (OPCON) Battalions (MBLT-3 and 4) in the Province of Palawan from April 5-7, 2022; and,

2) Spearhead an ACD forum at Headquarters, 1st Marine Brigade (1MBde), Sitio Bombaran, Barangay Togaig, Barira, Maguindanao, on April 22, 2022, with BGen. Raul Jesus L. Caldez PN(M), the Deputy Commandant of PMC as Keynote Speaker. The said undertaking was attended by the Organic and OPCON/Attached Officers, Senior Enlisted Leaders, and Enlisted Marines of 1MBde.

Soon, other remaining units will be engaged for the said activity. For the units that were already disseminated with the ACD Strategy, it is imperative to continuously cascade it down to the lowest rank as the Deputy Commandant of the PMC, BGen. Caldez stressed during his message in the ACD forum at Headquarters 1MBde, "I encourage and challenge everyone to take ownership of this ACD Concept and actively fulfill the shared responsibility of cascading to our fellow Marines. By doing so, we can say that this activity has fully achieved its objective."

The PMC Cascading and Assessment of the ACD Strategy is an excellent opportunity for Marines to understand the ACD Strategy and evaluate the participants' general knowledge and appreciation which will be used as a baseline as well as input for further refinement. It is also a significant undertaking that contributes to the overall success of the Command's pursuit of a credible ACD posture.

References: O/MC5 LOI Nr 03-22 "PMC Cascading and Assessment of ACDS" and 1MBde O/G3 DF Nr "Cascading of ACDS."



1LT ELICA ANTONIETTE KAYLA V HONDUNA PN(M)
Acting Civil Military Operations Officer, 1st Marine Brigade



Integrating Cyber Defense in the Marine Corps Today

Cyberspace protection and defense are crucial to the security of our nation. In addition to the traditional land, sea, and air domains, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) began to recognize cyberspace as one of the domains of its operations.

Several units, such as the Coastal Defense Regiment (CDR) and Marine Corps Intelligence Battalion (MCIBN), were recently activated to support the Philippine Marine Corp's transformation into an Archipelagic Coastal Defense Force. These units will provide the tasks and capabilities essential to executing the Archipelagic Coastal Defense (ACD) Strategy. Complementary to this is acquiring the necessary technological equipment to fulfill such roles. Cyberspace defense is one of the National Military Objectives of the ACD Strategy.

As stated in the Philippine Navy (PN) Cyberwarfare Doctrine, the primary purpose of cyber defense is to limit, if not prevent, losses resulting from illegal access to a computer system or network. It focuses on the technological means available for identifying and detecting intrusions, isolating the source of the problem, assessing and repairing the damage, preventing the damage from spreading deeper into the network, and recovering or reconstructing data or hardware damaged by an attack. An essential idea in cyber defense is "defense-in-depth," or the use of multiple software or hardware at different system layers to detect an intrusion, prevent an exploit, or trace and block the source of the attack.

Moreover, the PN Defensive Cyber Operations consist of efforts ranging from policy formulation to technical measures designed to protect PN cyberspace and ensure the continued use of vital information and communication infrastructure. Defensive cyber operations include the use of passive and active measures, as well as network security appliances, threat management hardware and software, information assurance policies, and all other essential tasks necessary to secure network connectivity, maintain network operations, and enable the use of information systems

residing in PN cyberspace. In addition to computer incident response, cyber forensics, and data recovery, defensive cyber operations comprise efforts that can reduce the effects of a cyber-attack.

Cyberwarfare is defined as the employment of a combination of technologies – sensors, information, and weapons – to achieve the operational objectives in and through cyberspace and the physical domains of air, sea, and land. As a fundamental concept of modern naval warfare, PN cyber warfare refers to the measures required to protect cyberspace and deflect potential attacks. However, it emphasizes that in the PN, we only focus on the unimpeded flow of information for command and control and situational awareness, or in the battlespace, and the protection of our cyberspace against cyber threats and attacks.

As the Corps prepares its 2nd Marine Amphibious Ready Unit (MARU), the necessity to equip our cyber warfare capacity persists. The aim is to provide smooth interoperability among units that have redundant internal and external communications and disorderly conduct of Seaward, Landward, and Supporting Maneuvers in executing the Corps' ACD Strategy.

Given the ambiguity and inapplicability of certain parts of the PN Cyber Warfare Doctrine to our context as a developing organization protecting our archipelagic totality as a nation, we must formulate our doctrine. As we prepare for the modernization of our forces and the emergence of additional cyber-capable units, such as the Shore-based Anti-Missile Systems, an up-to-date and mission-specific doctrine must lead our cyber systems.

Source: Philippine Navy Cyber Warfare Doctrine (2017)



2LT GABRIELLA MICHAELLA V GAN PN(M)

2nd Platoon Commander, 56th Marine Company, 6th Marine Battalion



Philippine Marine Corps: Gearing up Towards a CBRN Capable Unit

As part of the Balikatan 37-2022 (BK 37-22), the 6th Marine Battalion (6MBn), together with Combat and Service Support Brigade (CSSB), Force Recon Group (FRG), Naval Reserve Command (NRC), and US Marine Corps (USMC) Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 1 CBRN Platoon and 3rd Motor Transport Battalion, kicked off the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Mass Casualty Drill on April 4, 2022 at The Basic School (TBS), Marine Base Gregorio Lim (MBGL), Ternate, Cavite.

This exercise, tagged as Combined Interoperability Event (CIOE) 3, was integrated into the CIOE 4 Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) and was designed for the vision of the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) to develop capability in CBRN by acquiring introductory lectures and training in safeguarding people and countries from the awful effects of CBRN.

As part of the Mass Casualty Drill, the PMC and the USMC received information that a gas explosion occurred at the TBS, MBGL, Ternate, Cavite. Because of the incident, the CBRN team was directed to respond to the situation. They were escorted by the personnel of the third motor transport battalion of the USMC and the 6MBn. The CBRN reconnaissance team wore the highest level of personal protective equipment called Mission-Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) 4.

The CBRN reconnaissance team gathered information on the explosion through Joint Chemical Agent Detector (JCAD) and M8 Chemical Detection Paper. It stated that it was a VX or Nerve Agent explosion, one of the nerve agents and most toxic chemical warfare agents. They also identified how many casualties were to be rescued. An example of applicable information highlighting the actual delivery of CBRN methods is the application of Reactive Skin Decontaminating Lotion (RSTL), which is applied if the contaminant was exposed to the skin of a casualty.

The drill allowed the PMC and USMC to exhibit Detailed Troops Decontamination (DTD) and Detailed Equipment Decontamination (DED) process for the

casualties before transferring them to the Medical Team. It is meant to help the participants distinguish how to apply proper procedures and delay the effects of specific agents if casualties are contaminated. Throughout this portion, participants had the opportunity to actively demonstrate the knowledge they gained during the lectures and training.

Understanding how these chemical agents react to the human body, identifying symptoms, and initiating proper response procedures are valuable materials and pivotal for CBRN defense.

Establishing a CBRN unit requires a lot of equipment and training. As identified in the PMC Force Structure for 2040, in line with the PMC Beachhead 2028, capability-based teams will more likely to shape the organization to be more versatile and aligned in implementing the Archipelagic Coastal Defense (ACD) Strategy. Like being able to differentiate what liquid is presented with the M8 Chemical Detection Paper, most things learned in the BK 37-22 can be a perishable skill. Instead of simply learning the data, the PMC is now at the starting point of creating a CBRN-capable unit.

Acquiring proficiencies in CBRN situational awareness will be critical for practical risk calculation and will require a tactical and operational decision-making process. The PMC aims to develop a CBRN Unit that is relevant to the National Marine Amphibious Force (NMAF) for nationwide rapid response that provides commanding officers with reliable surveillance and adaptable solutions for a variety of CBRN situations and scenarios as part of the execution of its Seaward, Landward, and Supporting Maneuvers in the performance of the ACD Strategy.



2LT SWEET FAITH F VILLADOS PN(M)

3rd Platoon Commander, 26th Marine Company, 6th Marine Battalion



The Corps'

2nd Marine Amphibious Ready Unit

After 44 years of focusing more on land-based missions and supporting land operations in the operational area as Marine Battalion Landing Team (MBLT), the 6th Marine Battalion (6MBn) is now undergoing its retraining and refurbishing to be the Philippine Marine Corps' 2nd Marine Amphibious Ready Unit (MARU). With the goal of finding new approaches to enhance and develop our capabilities, the MARU was activated to be the coastal maneuver force in executing the Archipelagic Coastal Defense (ACD) Strategy employing its Seaward, Landward, and Supporting Maneuvers as its core competencies.

Through the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Modernization Program, there is a need to increase the capability of the Navy, one of which is its marine component through the activation of MARU that is rapid, amphibious, hard-hitting, joint, combined, and inter-agency ready.

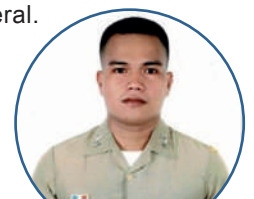
The 6MBn will be the second battalion of the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) to undergo the transition from MBLT to MARU. The retraining and refurbishing of this unit will still be under the experimental training module concentrated on seaborne maneuvers, sustained maneuvers ashore, and humanitarian assistance and disaster response for multinational engagements and cooperation. The training also aims to strengthen the distinctive character of every Marine as a hard-hitting seaborne force that can be rapidly deployed anywhere in the country to support the mission of the naval and joint forces of the United Commands and the AFP a whole.

Under the retraining phase of this unit as the 2nd MARU, each line company will be specialized to perform amphibious operations using different platforms such as small boats (for assault boat company), the newly acquired Amphibious Assault Vehicles or AAVs (for the mechanized amphibious company), and medium-lift air assets (for

helicopter assault company). Service support units and special operations units (SpecOps) will also be integrated into MARU during and after its training phase, which includes the AAV component, Light Armored Reconnaissance (LAR) component, 105 Howitzer component, Force Recon component, Service Support component, (Communication, Electronics, and Information System - CEIS, Medical, EOD/K9 and Military Intelligence component). The integration of these capabilities, when fully utilized to their best capacity, will give an extensive range of operational strategies for accomplishing the unit's mission.

The PMC is working to address the challenges and gaps encountered during the retraining and refurbishing of the 9th Marine Battalion (9MBn) as its first MARU. Continuous assessment in all levels of force integration is being conducted to achieve its total capacity and sustainment. To maintain and fully develop every Marine's knowledge, skills, and attitude under the MARU and to further enhance its interoperability and cohesiveness, this unit will undergo continuous training, especially in joint and combined exercises. It will help them improve and maintain the standards of a high level of readiness, responsiveness, and coordination.

By the end of the retraining and refurbishing program, this unit is expected to become highly capable, competent, and effective in achieving the Corps' mission and bringing pride to the PMC and the AFP in general.



1LT ALBERT M REMPILLO PN(M)

Commanding Officer, 36th Marine Company, 6th Marine Battalion

The Philippine Marine Corps in Defense of Key Coastal Terrains

By: AC of MS for Plans and Programs, MC5

Introduction

The Philippines is a maritime and archipelagic state with more than 7,641 islands sharing the richness of the seas with its neighboring countries. The country has a long porous border and fragmented geography, situated in a geostrategic location whose territorial claims comprise those disputed areas in the South China Sea and are jeopardized by hybrid and rapidly evolving threats. This plight pushed the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) to see the need for a more responsive warfighting strategy.

In 2021, the Corps introduced the Archipelagic Coastal Defense (ACD) as its new strategy. *The Archipelagic Coastal Defense or the ACD is defined as securing and defending the country's territorial integrity, coastal zone, sea lines of communications (SLOCs), and offshore possessions, including islands, features, resource exploration/exploitation, friendly shipping, capital areas and other critical infrastructures.* The ACD Strategy calls for a collective effort from all sectors of society to defeat any adversary and preserve the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

This endeavor is anchored on the PN's Active Archipelagic Defense Strategy (AADS) and Naval Operating Concept (NOC), as well as in the Armed Forces of the Philippines' (AFP) Joint Operating Concept (JOC) and National Military Strategy. With the country's maritime and archipelagic setting, and as the AFP shifts its priorities from internal to external defense confronting various threats, the PMC has defined its role in the naval and joint operating environment in a more explicit context as Coastal Instrument of Naval Power. In particular, the PMC shall be the primary component of the country's coastal defense, amphibious maneuver, and defense of strategic offshore islands and SLOCs.

MOF's Operating Environment – the Key Coastal Terrain

With the ACD Strategy, the Philippine Marine Corps has established its operating environment where the Marine Operating Forces (MOF) could best perform their core competencies. These areas are on offshore islands, coastal areas, and islands in the SLOCs, capital area, and other littoral areas.

The said areas are considered key coastal terrains wherein possession or control of these zones would get the upper hand in both offensive and defensive actions. These locations are the most suitable emplacement sites for mixed shore-based fires to support sea control, staging areas for rapid response, and locations for responsive, forward sustainment and support systems essential in executing ACD maneuvers. Deployment of MOF in these areas will deny the enemy from using these key coastal terrains and allow access for friendly and allied forces to joint and combined operations.

As the defined operating environment of the MOF, these key coastal terrains can be further categorized into Sentinel Islands, Island Clusters, Coastal Maneuver Areas (CMAs), SLOCs, and Maritime Economic and Governance Areas (MEGA).

Sentinel Islands are offshore islands in the border areas that serve as the outermost defensive line in the JOC's multi-layered defense approach. These are the gateway going to the mainland. From the invaders' point of view, these islands serve as "stepping stones" for offensive actions. As per NOC, a forward-deployed force should physically occupy these areas as a powerful diplomatic tool, while its military capability can serve as strategic deterrence.

Island Clusters are a group of offshore islands and islands in SLOCs, including reefs, rocks, sandbars, and other formations. Occupying and controlling these island clusters support chokepoint defense, mine warfare, and other sea control operations of the fleet and other naval units.

Coastal Maneuver Areas (CMAs) are staging areas for amphibious maneuver and support and sustainment for coastal defense. Selected strategic locations in CMAs are the emplacements sites for the highly mobile shore-based missile systems. These areas are also the locations of naval forward operating bases (FOBs) that serve as Command and Control (C2) and logistical points and hubs that support the sentinel islands and island clusters.

Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) are the main highways for maritime traffic and trade. These are also the main maritime routes for both adversary offensive action and allied partners' support. For the MOF, these are critical emplacement sites for mixed shore-based fires to support anti-access/area denial (A2/AD). The MOF's littoral maneuver capabilities can support naval operations and other littoral monitoring activities.

Maritime Economic and Governance Areas (MEGAs) are major urban areas that serve as hubs for maritime economic activities such as significant seaports, fish ports, and ship-building industries. These sites also include the capital areas where the seat of government is located. The MOF can employ a combination of shore-based fires, littoral maneuvers, and ground combat maneuver capabilities to ensure the security and integrity of the MEGA and its nearby coastal zones, which guarantee a safe and stable political and economic environment.

The Marines' Role in Defending these Key Coastal Terrain

Having established these key coastal terrains as the domain wherein the MOFs are best deployed, the Corps is to develop its capacity and capabilities to perform its roles in this domain as complementing force to naval, joint, and



combined forces, as well as to other agencies.

Anchored on the AFP's JOC and PN's AADS and NOC, the MOFs focus on how they will perform the Archipelagic Maneuver in tandem with the fleet component of other naval units. The MOFs concentrate mainly on these four major tasks: Forward Deployment, Amphibious Operation, Coastal Defense, and Sustained Operations Ashore. The MOFs shall perform other functions under different naval operational approaches in supporting roles.

Forward Deployment. With our island territories expanding our sovereign rights, their vulnerability to aggressive competing claimants is more emphasized. Moreover, the country has a lot of coastal territories and contested island territories separated from the mainland that also require constant military presence. Securing these offshore islands and key coastal areas shall be an emerging concern. With the littoral battlespace in consideration, a forward-deployed force is a powerful diplomatic tool, while its military capability can increase the country's security posture in the area.

Amphibious Operation. These operations are directed against an amphibious objective area (AOA) using the sea as a maneuver space. Amphibious operations are conducted to facilitate the entry of MOFs into a particular territory to achieve specific objectives such as securing territorial landmasses, facilitating coastal defense or naval advance, projecting naval power, and establishing a forward base. Thus, these maneuvers require specialist equipment such as amphibious ships, landing crafts, amphibious assault vehicles, and helicopters. Amphibious operations should be rapid, which means the availability of sealift and airlift platforms for different naval forces and the ability to deploy brigade-sized forces within a desired reaction time and area of deployment.

Coastal Defense. The MOFs conduct coastal defense to deny the adversary the use of adjacent seas and littorals to protect friendly shipping and support other naval operations. Thus, the MOFs must have shore-based defense systems to take down surface threats up to the EEZ. Within the littorals, especially in landing sites, coastal defense shall mean conducting anti-amphibious operations. Employing coastal missile defense capabilities is anchored on the Integrated Missile Defense System (IMDS), wherein there is a need to achieve decisive speed and accuracy across the modern missile kill chain execution, requiring a simplified command and control (C2) that connects directly with National Command Authorities.

Sustained Operations Ashore. The MOFs conduct sustained operations ashore as part of an amphibious operation, joint land defense, or as a support to sustained land power maneuvers. These are conducted in the landward littorals to further inland as the operational conditions may require. These operations include ground combat maneuvers and civil-military engagements. The abovementioned roles are consistent in the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG). The PN was specifically directed to capacitate the Amphibious Ready Force to the AFP Strategic Defense Command as a naval maneuver component. The PMC Battalions are likewise designated as maneuver component to the AFP Joint Rapid Reaction Forces.

DPG also dictated the activation of the Coastal Defense Regiment in 2020 to employ missile defense capabilities to maintain territorial integrity, assert sovereignty and jurisdiction, protect the SLOCs and support other naval and joint operations. In DPG 2021 (2023 – 2028), the acquisition of Shore-based Anti-Ship Missile System (SBASMS) and Shore-based Air Defense System (SBADS) are two of the priority acquisition programs of the defense department.

Conclusion

Recognizing the sea as a source of the nation's wealth and power that will catapult its progress and interest, there is a critical need to shift the mindset of the Filipinos from a continental-type defense to an archipelagic defense. It is also imperative to start maritimizing the hearts and minds of the people through redefining national security priorities and its national policy, incorporating it into the educational system, economic and defense architecture, and the Filipino way of life. As an archipelagic country, the development of archipelagic coastal defense capabilities in the key coastal terrains becomes inevitable.

The Corps continues to put in a clearer context how it fits in the country's overall defense architecture. With the introduction of the ACD as its new warfighting strategy, the Corps can solidify its operating environment not only based on historical accounts but also current and future warfare. The identified key coastal terrains, as the operating environment of the Corps, are being elaborated by categorizing them as sentinel islands, cluster islands, coastal maneuver areas, SLOCs, and MEGA.

The PMC intends to fully develop its capacity and capabilities to perform its roles in these key coastal terrains. These would-be added capabilities will reinforce the arsenal of the Unified Commands to attain their campaign objectives and support higher headquarters' strategic missions as well.



PMA CONFERS THE CAVALIER AWARDS TO PMC OFFICERS

By: 2nd Marine Brigade

The Philippine Military Academy Alumni Association Incorporated (PMAAAI) conferred the Cavalier Award for Association Year 2021-2022 to two distinguished Officers of the Corps during their annual General Assembly and Alumni Homecoming 2022 at PMA, Fort del Pilar, Baguio City on February 19, 2022. The Cavalier Award is the highest recognition given to a PMA alumnus or alumna with outstanding achievements in their respective fields.

Lt. Col. Ashley N. Nastor PN(M)(GSC) of PMA Class 2000 and Cpt. Junrey S. Sajulga PN(M) of PMA Class 2013 were among the PMA alumni who received the most coveted Cavalier Award from President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, represented by the Secretary of National Defense, Honorable Delfin N. Lorenzana. This year's Cavalier Award for Naval Operations, Senior and Junior Categories were received by the two officers given their exemplary achievements in the field of Operations.

Lt. Col. Nastor's significant accomplishment is attributed to his stint as Operations Officer, Executive Officer, and Commanding Officer of a Marine Battalion Landing Team. He is a recipient of various awards both for combat and service administrations. Recently, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Star, Gold Cross Medal with Bronze Anahaw Leaf, Distinguished Navy Cross, Silver Cross Medal, Military Merit Medals with Spearhead Devices, and the revered award of the Order of Lapu-Lapu, Kamagi Medal by President Duterte for his active role in the liberation of Marawi City in 2017. During his stint as Commanding Officer

of Marine Battalion Landing Team-1 stationed in Sulu, he steered his unit for the following prestigious awards: Naval Forces Western Mindanao Best Battalion CY 2019 and the Philippine Marine Corps "KAHUSAYAN AWARD" recognizing their award as the Best Marine Battalion for CY 2019 and 2020.

As a Marine warrior, his effective command and control of various operations against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Sulu successfully led to the following: rescue of six (6) foreign Kidnap Victims (KVs); neutralization, capture,



and surrender of numerous ASG sub-leaders/members and supporters; recovery of assorted high-powered firearms of different calibers; and the eventual clearing of various enemy strongholds and areas. His excellent peacebuilding initiatives and unit's war against terrorism ended the ASG's kidnapping activities in the 2nd District of Sulu. Thus, it paved the way for the establishment of a "new growth center" conducive to sustainable peace and development in the area.

As a Special Operator, Cpt. Sajulga garnered feats and awards due to his accomplishments against the ASG in Sulu, the Maute-ISIS group during the Marawi campaign, and the communist terrorist group (CTG) in Palawan. His active participation resulted in various enemy engagements that led to the eventual neutralization of enemy leaders and their active members, recovery of assorted high-powered firearms and equipment, clearing of strategic areas and enemy strongholds, and the successful rescue of trapped civilians, particularly during the Marawi Siege.

During his stint with the 3rd Marine Brigade (3MBde) stationed in Palawan, Cpt. Sajulga and his unit, the 61st Force Reconnaissance Company (FRC), participated in numerous operations against the CTG operating in the area. In the execution of the OPORD "VACCINE" of the Marine Battalion Landing Team-4 (MBLT-4) in 2020, he was engaged in a close combat battle with the Kilusang Larangan Gerilya-Palawan, the Communist-Terrorist Group (CTG) operating in the province. The brief encounter resulted in the neutralization of five communist-terrorist, wherein three of them were the top three leaders of the Kilusang Larangan Gerilya (KLG)-Palawan. The encounter also resulted in the recovery of assorted high-powered firearms, ammunition, and various equipment with high-intelligence value. The said encounter delivered a demoralizing blow to the CTG that led to the surrender of the remnants of the United 4E of the Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee and the subsequent mass withdrawal of support from the CTG.



Because of this accomplishment, the 3MBde, MBLT-4, and his unit, the 61st FRC were awarded the AFP Campaign Streamer and the eventual declaration of Kilusang Larangan Gerilya-Palawan of Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee as "Dismantled."

Lt. Col. Nastor and Cpt. Sajulga are presently assigned with the 2nd Marine Brigade (2MBde) stationed at Marine Base Domingo Deluana, Brgy. Sanga-Sanga, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. The former currently serves as the Chief of Staff of 2MBde, while the latter is the current Commanding Officer of the 61st FRC, Force Reconnaissance Group. The leadership, discipline, and professionalism showcased by these officers in the field of Naval Operations led to the accomplishment of several AFP missions, which ultimately made a significant impact on the nation's peace and security. Notably, their accomplishments brought pride to the rich history of excellence in the Marine Corps organization, worthy of recognition and emulation from others.





Marine Corps Commandant visits Central Mindanao

MGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M), the Commandant of the Philippine Marine Corps, visited the Marines deployed in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur on March 19-20, 2022. The Joint Task Force Central accorded him full military honors in Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat and at the 1st Marine Brigade (1MBde) in Barira, Maguindanao. He also laid a wreath in honor of the fallen Marines in Central Mindanao during the 2000 Campaign. He presided over the Change of Command of 1MBde held at Headquarters 1MBde, Sitio Bombaran, Barangay Togaig, Barira, Maguindanao.

Penansaran, Datu Blah Sinsuat, Maguindanao. The proposed MFOS is the parcel of land donated by the local government of Datu Blah Sinsuat to the Philippine Marine Corps as the Commandant himself was involved in signing the deed of donation. The said MFOS is a projected facility to serve as a staging area for seaward and landward littoral maneuvers, a hub for Marine Reservist administration, and a potential site for maritime exercises.



PFC Avery Lazaro PN(M)
Civil Affairs Specialist NCO, 1st Marine Brigade

During his talks with the Marines of 1MBde, Marine Battalion Landing Team-2, Marine Battalion Landing Team-5, and Combat and Service Support Elements, he emphasized the value of Marine Ethos and SMARTER FORCE. Further, the Commandant also took the time to visit the proposed Marine Forward Operating Station (MFOS) in Barangay





CHANGING OF THE WATCH AT 1MBDE

Barira, Maguindanao – After two years and three months, MGen. Jonas R. Lumawag PN(M), relinquished his post as Commander of 1st Marine Brigade (1MBde) to Col. Eric A. Macaambac PN(M)(GSC) during the Change of Command Ceremony at Headquarters, 1MBde, Sitio Bombaran, Brgy. Togaig, Barira, Maguindanao on March 21, 2022. The said activity was presided by the Commandant of the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC), MGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M).

During the ceremony, MGen. Lumawag commended and expressed his gratitude to all the men and women of Team “Laging Handa” including its Operational Control (OPCON) and attached units for the significant accomplishments that the brigade achieved despite the numerous obstacles and challenges during his stint. Likewise, he also expressed his gratitude to the local chief executives, local government units, government agencies, non-government organizations, PNP, and Philippine Army for their active participation and commitment that lead to a better, safer, and progressive communities for the people within the Areas of Operation in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur.

Col. Macaambac, the newly designated Commander of 1MBde is guided by his motto of Knowledge, Stability, and

Character. This philosophy will set the tone on how every Marine in Central Mindanao will execute their mandate. Moreover, he will continue to aspire for peace, progress, and prosperity, as well as support and partner with the Marine and Navy Reservists. The presiding officer, MGen. Herico lauded MGen. Lumawag for his feat in internal security operations, support to law enforcement operations, inter-agency operations, key leaders’ engagements, and strategic alliance with the “Peace-Inclined Armed Groups.” He also highlighted the neutralization of 183 personalities, both killed and apprehended, and capture of various war materials and subversive documents.

MGen. Lumawag recently assumed as The Naval Inspector General based at Bonifacio Naval Station, Taguig City. He is a member of PMA “Bigkis-Lahi” Class of 1990.



CPT MARITES L ALAMIL PN(M)
Former Civil Military Operations Officer, 1st Marine Brigade





1MBDE HOSTS JPSCC FORUM FOR MAGUINDANAO AND LANAOS DEL SUR

In preparation for the National and Local Elections 2022, the 1st Marine Brigade (1MBde) hosted a Joint Peace and Security Coordinating Council (JPSCC) Forum for the Municipalities of Kapatagan, Balabagan, Malabang, Marogong, and Picong, in Lanao del Sur; and Municipalities of Datu Blah Sinsuat, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Parang, Buldon, Barira, and Matanog, in Maguindanao. The activity was held at Headquarters 1MBde, Barira, Maguindanao on April 6-7, 2022.

The JPSCC was jointly presided by the Commander, 1MBde, Col. Eric A. Macaambac PN(M)(GSC), and the Provincial Election Supervisors of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao; and was attended by the Commanding Officers of MBLT-2 and MBLT-5 and its Marine Companies; representatives from the PNP Regional Office - BAR, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao Provincial Police Office; and Municipal Election Officers and Chiefs of Police.

During the forum, the attendees were apprised of the detailed security preparations and security plan of the Marines to secure election paraphernalia, polling centers, and voters' ballot. The attendees discussed various issues surrounding their respective trials and probable scenarios that may occur during the election, as well as explored potential solutions to address these problems. They also discussed possible ways of integrating the efforts of the Marines and PNP and synchronizing these efforts with the Commission on Elections in the Provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao.



1LT ELICA ANTONIETTE KAYLA V HONDUNA PN(M)

Acting Civil Military Operations Officer, 1st Marine Brigade





The role of Civilian Human Resources in the Military Workforce

It was in late 2016 when I entered the military as a civilian employee. It was also the first time I heard of the phrase, “lowest mammal”, referring to a civilian employee inside the military. Being in the corporate world for more than a decade, I would say that this reference is not too nice to hear because:

A civilian employee is called Civilian Human Resource (CHR) who works alongside the military (not in terms of warfare though) to complement the burden of the military in administrative works as the military personnel come and go for their regular rotational deployment in other units of the Philippine Navy (PN).

Some of us form an integral part of planning, policy-making, and research, while others are loaded with collateral duties. Being a CHR in the military workforce requires efficiency to surpass the battleground of drafting communications, monitoring the progress of every activity, and “performing other tasks as directed”. We are innovative as we tend to create our strategy to cope with the stack of files, requests, and compliances. Being a CHR also needs dedication as we sometimes carry the workloads at home or render complementary services for the sake of finishing tasks. Our firm dedication is evident as we delivered to CHRs their role in the organization:

“As part of the 1.7 million government workforce, I firmly believe my contribution as a public servant is that I serve, perform my duties and responsibilities in the sector where I am employed as a CHR (institutional memory) of Philippine Marine Corps (PMC). I can help the government to deliver effective and efficient service for the people with a heart for a good cause.” - Jhay Jarabejo, Civilian Affairs Board, PMC.

“Tayo dapat ang organizational knowledge, para suportahan ang mga bagong dating na sundalo, para buo ang impormasyong maibibigay sa kanila, to help them in accomplishing their mission, our mission. For example, in Sail plan and Quarter Masters, CHRs are also involved in

planning and accomplishing the mandates of the higher headquarter” – QMS Bernard Imperio RN, QMS Specialist, Cavite Naval Hospital.

“Since military/soldiers’ experience was largely on the battlefields and they moved from one office/unit/ command to another, I consider myself significant in the military organization by assisting them in maintaining the continuity of a high standard of work. As soldiers risk their lives to defend the country, we in CHR devote our talents and knowledge to administrative, intelligence, operations, and budget/financial problems.” – Melissa Narito, Admin Officer IV, O/NR1, Naval Reserve Command.

“Most CHRs report in the military without prior background and training concerning military affairs and its corresponding tasks but they initiate every task efficiently and religiously. Despite the tremendous workloads, the CHRs remain professional and persistent in carrying out and delivering their tasks regardless of time constraints and health situations. We do not falter and decline tasks assigned to us, instead, we study and try our best to respond to the outputs expected of us. I hope not only a few, but our military workforce learns to appreciate the significance of CHR and our contributions to the mission of our offices and organization as a whole.” - Liza A. Soler, Admin Officer IV, MC10.

Not only being the institutional memory, but the CHRs’ collection of experiences and professionalism also greatly contribute to planning, policymaking, research, administration, utility, and others. No one can deny that the civilian workforce is the backbone of the AFP and their everyday contributions greatly help in achieving the mission and vision of the organization.



Ms. Ria B. Reyes Civ HR
MCPAO, Administrative Officer

My Journey Towards Finding an Amazing Sisterhood

On that fateful day of March 15, 2020, I left Cagayan de Oro City together with my kids to attend the graduation of my husband from the Naval Command and Staff Course. The plan was to stay for a few nights in San Antonio, Zambales and fly home after the graduation ceremony. But as fate would have it, after our plane landed being the last flight from Cagayan de Oro, then-President Rodrigo Duterte ordered a nationwide lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of that already depressing situation, my husband told me that their graduation would push thru but no dependents were allowed to attend because of the strict implementation of safety protocols. I saw the country in total disarray as people tried hard to make sense of what was happening. The death toll was also scary that my children and I locked ourselves up in my husband's quarters for one year. After graduation, my husband was assigned to the Headquarters, which was one of the silver linings of my situation. At least I wouldn't have to tend to my children alone as I have been doing for the past seven years. The kids also had the chance to spend much time with their dad inside the house and on our street when it's raining. We did not see the insides of a mall for one year. My husband did the groceries and other necessary stuff to limit his exposure. We cannot afford to be careless because of the kids.

A few months after my husband reported to his new assignment, we found out that I was pregnant with our third child. I had mixed emotions at that time. Of course, I was thankful for the beautiful blessing, but part of me was also scared because of what was happening in the world. I asked myself how I could raise a child amid a pandemic. What future will the child have? We have already decided to home-school our children by this time because the government banned face-to-face classes. What kind of environment would my youngest grow up in if there were no more "physical" schools? My little one would grow up not experiencing the things that we did. Then there was also the fear of giving birth during a pandemic. Hospitals were full of Covid patients, and there was a good chance that I might contract the virus if I kept going to the hospital. Lots of horrible thoughts crossed my mind during that time. My only saving grace was that I kept my faith in God. I keep reading and listening to gospels and other teachings to keep my faith in Him. There was also our expectation that maybe we would be having a baby girl this time.

But, once again, fate intervened. When I had my ultrasound to determine the baby's status and gender, the doctor told me that the baby was healthy baby boy. I have been filled with mixed feelings once again. I was thankful that my baby was healthy, but part of me felt an unexplainable emotion. Maybe it's because we expected a baby girl. Nonetheless, we were very thankful to God for giving us another son to cherish and love.

After giving birth in February of 2021, I was plunged into a roller coaster ride that I thought I had already finished. Having another baby was like graduating from college only to go back to elementary. The sleepless nights, the pain of the wound (I underwent a C-section for the third time), the stress, and most significantly, the mental struggle. After a

few months, I spiraled down into post-partum depression. The only thing that was keeping me afloat was my faith in God. But even during that time, I can say that it wasn't enough. Maybe it was enough to keep me stable, but it wasn't enough to pull me up. There was also the fact that I felt so alone. All my relatives were in Cagayan de Oro, like my husband. Because of the pandemic, nobody came to check up on me from the moment I conceived until I gave birth. All they could do was call me or send me messages. And yes, this was the point in time that I said the pandemic sucks.

I was in this situation when I was invited to join a gathering of the ladies from the Philippine Navy Officers Wives and Husbands Association (PNOWHA) in December 2021. It was there that I had the privilege to meet some of the wives of senior officers from the Navy and Marines. I hardly knew anyone there except Mrs. Grace Albalate, who has been my friend for a long time. At first, I was hesitant because I was a newcomer and my husband was a junior officer. But as the event progressed, I saw that they were accommodating and friendly. Before the night was over, I could befriend most of them. Before I left, somebody told me if I would like to join them as an officer. I did not give my answer right away. I asked my husband what their organization was all about and I also researched. When I found out that their goal was to support the organization and help people, I was convinced to join them. After a few months, I was also asked by Dr. Sheryl Mangoroban, the President of the Philippine Marine Corps Officers Spouses Association, Incorporated (PMCOSAI), to join them and being a Marine wife, I readily agreed.

A few months after joining both organizations, I can genuinely say that I have found a wonderful sisterhood among these fantastic women. I know it was only a short time, but it feels like a lifetime for me. Some people have asked me why I joined these organizations. They asked me what do I have to gain. I told them that I joined because I wanted to be part of a group that shares my passion for helping people and I want to develop a friendship with them as we go along this beautiful journey called life. Most of all, I joined – I'm happy I did, to boost my mental health.

My last couple of years had been a roller coaster ride, but I'm glad I have met these lovely people who helped me grow as a person. I'm also thankful that through them, I could have a clear understanding of what my husband's world is all about. I now understand the sacrifices he makes. Most of all, I'm thankful to my husband for giving his all-out support when I joined these organizations. I know there will still be challenges ahead, but I am now confident that I can face them with renewed strength and faith in God. Like it's been said so many times: "Life is all about the journey...."



Mrs. Maria Irene Generale Belonio
Business Manager of PMCOSAI

PMCOSAI: The Heart of Service

Caring Together

The Philippine Marine Corps Spouses Association, Incorporated (PMCOSAI), a social organization among the spouses of the Marine Officers, is designed to support the objectives of the Philippine Marine Corps as it pursues its mission. As a support organization, PMCOSAI helps the Corps accomplish its civil-military objectives through well-placed, grounded, and meaningful community projects in the Corps' deployment areas. This they do while also promoting kinship, camaraderie, and togetherness within its rank and providing a support system to each member when left alone to fend for their respective family whenever the Officer is out on deployment in the operational area.

Through the years, they did just that and more. Helping the Corps wherever and whenever it can, PMCOSAI has been at the forefront of supporting and gathering support for the Corps in any way it can. Truly giving credence to the adage of being the number one fan to their respective spouses.

In year 2022, PMCOSAI started the ball running with a courtesy call to the newly installed Commandant, MGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M) at the Commandant's Lounge in PMC's venerable Brown Hall on March 8. Aside from the call, the occasion also marked the formal launching of the PMCOSAI's "Caring Together" logo and getting-to-know fellowship of the members with their new adviser, Mrs. Laarni Herico.

That courtesy call was then followed by a meeting with the Philippine Marine Enlisted Spouses Association (PMESA) on March 14 when its Officers met with the new PMCOSAI Adviser, Mrs. Laarni Herico at the Commandant's Lounge. Through the interaction, Mrs. Herico was able to personally listen to and advised on some issues and concerns hounding the PMESA. More importantly, the meeting was also able to synchronize the projects, objectives, and activities of PMESA with that of PMCOSAI, thereby consolidating the various support system for the Corps.

Two days later, on March 16, PMCOSAI held an activity that aimed to promote health and wellness among the Marines. With the motto, "Health is Wealth", PMCOSAI partnered up with ONE LIFE Foundation and the Philippine Marine Corps in conducting the "One Life Medical Mission" at the Senior NCO's Club in Marine Barracks Rudiardo Brown, Taguig City. The activity gave free medical check-ups to some 100 Marines presently aboard the said Marine Barracks.

PMCOSAI also conducted a beauty, health, and wellness seminar dubbed as "Magandang Kutis sa Tag-init." The activity was graced by the renowned Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeon, Dr. Radi V. Apostol. The seminar

was held at Acero Hall on March 19 with some watching it online. It was attended by ladies from PMCOSAI and the Philippine Navy Officers Wives and Husbands Association (PNOWHA). During the seminar, Dr. Apostol shared with the participants the different ways on how to take care of their skin and ways on how to keep it radiant and glowing especially during summertime.

On March 27, PMCOSAI, headed by its indefatigable adviser, Mrs. Laarni Herico, went to Morong, Bataan to conduct an outreach program to the community near the projected new Headquarters of the PMC. Purposely conducted to give thanks to the community for accepting the Marines in their midst, PMCOSAI, together with some of the Marine reservists, brought 200 grocery packs that were distributed to the residents of the nearby community.

On April 1, boxes of toys were donated to PMCOSAI by the former Commandant, Lt. Gen. Rustico Guerrero AFP (Ret), and his wife, Mrs. Maricor Guerrero. Through the efforts of the 2nd Marine Brigade, these were distributed by the personnel of Marine Battalion Landing Team 12 to the people of Brgy. Paniongan and two other adjacent barangays in Bongao, Tawi-tawi. The distribution of toys was conducted in line with the All-in-One Mission of 2MBde.

On April 24, PMCOSAI held a Special General Assembly meeting, which also became a venue for the members to get to know each other better. The Special General Assembly meeting was held at Acero Hall wherein the organization's amended by-laws were presented by Mrs. Laarni Herico and the new members were also welcomed.

As part of the global celebration of Mother's Day on May 18, PMCOSAI conducted a gift-giving activity in coordination with the Makati Medical Center Foundation and Uniqlo through the facilitation of BGen. Cherrisse Manzano PN(M). The activity benefited Marine wives with maternal and children clothes from Uniqlo.

It is almost halfway through the year but there are still more in store for PMCOSAI in so far as activities are concerned. We are continuing the traditions and legacies of support to the beloved Corps that past members have painstakingly imbibed, thought, and entrusted to the current crop of members. These activities are just but a prelude to several activities leading up to the Marine Birthday and to the Holiday season before the PMCOSAI counts again another year under their belt.



Dr. Sheryl S. Mangoroban
PMCOSAI President



Back Row (From Left)

Mrs. Josephine H. Macaambac
PMCOSAI Board of Trustee

Mrs. Ma Arme M. Canson
PMCOSAI Corporate Secretary

Mrs. Elmina T. Rojas
PMCOSAI Board of Trustee

Mrs. Daisy Marie G. Rojas
PMCOSAI Social Secretary

Mrs. Shermalane G. Larida
PMCOSAI Board of Trustee

Engr. Viviene A. Candelario
PMCOSAI Board of Trustee

Mrs. Laarni L. Herico
PMCOSAI Adviser

Dr. Sheryl S. Mangoroban
PMCOSAI President

Mrs. Rita L. Batalla
PMCOSAI Vice President



Mrs. Lorna D. Daracan
PMCOSAI Assistant Treasurer

Engr. Karmela L. Rimas
PMCOSAI Treasurer

Mrs. Maria Irene G. Belonio
PMCOSAI Business Manager

Mrs. Maria Grace C. Albalate
PMCOSAI Auditor

Front Row (From Left)
Mrs. Susan C. Racadio
PMCOSAI Board of Trustee

Mrs. Mercedes L. Caldez
PMCOSAI Board of Trustee

Dr. Lyra E. Blanco
PMCOSAI Board of Trustee
(Not in Photo)





SULU, Philippines - A remote island province in the southwestern part of the republic that has been known as a haven of the bandit Abu Sayyaf Group broke its record of having the 'most peaceful' national and local elections in its local history.

SULU 2022: HISTORIC TRANSFORMATION in its ELECTIONS

Elections are an integral requirement of democratic governance. A “major source of political recruitment, a means of making government and transferring government power, a guarantee of representation, and a major determinant of government policy” (Heywood, 2000:200). Through the mechanism of elections, politicians are held accountable for their actions and are compelled to implement policies that reflect and respond to public opinion. In the local history of politics in the Sulu archipelago, violence always recurs during elections, violent extremism, banditry, and criminality. This year, however, Sulu broke its record of having the ‘most peaceful’ national and local elections in its local history as it was declared as a non-election hotspot with no record of election-related violence.

MGen. Ignatius N. Patrimonio PA, Commander, Joint Task Force Sulu, said, “We are happy and proud to say that the election in Sulu is successful, with zero election-related violent incidents. In all areas we were deployed, the election went on smoothly as scheduled and planned.” Thorough planning and careful execution led to the success of Secure, Accurate, Fair, and Free Elections (S.A.F.E.) in 2022. The presence of our uniformed personnel provided relief and confidence to our citizens to vote and prevented the enemies from conducting atrocities. The combined vigilant security forces composed of Philippine Marines, Navy, Army, National Police, and civilian authorities generated a huge impact on the safe conduct of the elections. Although there were minor incidents involving fistfights and heated verbal exchanges from the opposing political supporters, these did not cause major tensions in the communities. The security forces were deployed and stabilized the situation.

Furthermore, Police BGen. Arthur Cabalona PNP, Police Regional Director of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, declared that Sulu Province has no “red code” areas. Still, other communities were listed as possible areas of concern or “yellow code” (Fernandez, 2022). These tagged communities have a history of election-

related incidents. It also marked a considerable change in the history of Sulu elections when it was no longer considered as an election hotspot. The government forces’ initiatives were a catalyst of change to convince the locals to participate peacefully in the elections. The activities included “Ride for S.A.F.E. NLE 2022,” information campaigns, and inter-agency coordination of the Marine Battalion Landing Teams 7 and 8 (MBLT-7 and MBLT-8) under the 4th Marine Brigade (4MBde). Also, these had been the results of decade-long campaigns and efforts of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in eradicating violent extremism caused by the Abu Sayyaf Group and other adversaries in the province.

Breaking the record of having the ‘most peaceful and orderly’ elections in its local history is a stepping stone toward a peaceful Sulu. Non-election hotspots and non-violent election-related incidents are proofs of the changing security landscape that bodes well for long-lasting peace and prosperity in the province.

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2LT MARK JOEL L BUCAYU PN(M)
Headquarters Service Company, Marine Battalion Landing Team-7



Train the Trainers Training held in preparation for National & Local Elections

By: 2nd Marine Brigade

The Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi (JTF-TT) and 2nd Marine Brigade (2MBde), Philippine Marine Corps hosted the conduct of the 3rd Joint Security Control Center (JSCC) coordinating conference through the "Train the Trainers Training" held at Toong Hall, H2MBde, Marine Barracks, Domingo Deluana, Brgy. Sanga-Sanga, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi on January 20, 2022. The said activity was conceptualized as a result of the 2nd JSCC conference on January 19, 2022, and as part of the overall preparations for the National and Local Elections (NLE) 2022.

Various lectures related to the NLE 2022, particularly on the security aspect were provided to the participants by Attorney Allan C. Kadon, the Provincial Election Supervisor, to ensure that all security forces detailed for election duties gain the necessary training and education.

A total of 50 attendees participated in the training composed of the personnel from the following units: JTFTT/2MBde, Marine Battalion Landing Team-1, Marine Battalion Landing Team-12, 61st Force Reconnaissance Company, Tawi-Tawi Provincial Police Office, Philippine Air Force, Philippine Coast Guard, and support personnel from the COMELEC, Tawi-Tawi.

Attorney Kadon lauded the initiative spearheaded by the unit, particularly on the latter's preparations for the NLE 2022. He further commended the excellent collaboration and unity of efforts being undertaken by all security forces in the province in ensuring a safe, free, orderly, and peaceful 2022 elections.





MBLT-2 SUPERSTARS: Mediator for Peace in Malabang

The Municipality of Malabang in Lanao del Sur has been in the spotlight for years due to prevailing family feuds (rido) that turn to worse when family members resort to criminal activities against their rivals. These incidents have been causing fear amongst residents, preventing them from going out of their homes and performing their regular daily routines. Some non-Muslim residents plan to evacuate from their homes and transfer to other municipalities because of the unsafe environment. Natives of Malabang also fear for their lives since even distant relatives have allegedly been the subject of several attempted killings by rival clans. The election season is also another reason for rivalries to heat up.

Since the deployment of Marine Battalion Landing Team-2 last October 2021 in the five coastal Municipalities of Lanao del Sur, namely: Kapatagan, Balabagan, Malabang, Picong, and Marogong, the Unit has been assessing the situation and determining the most viable methods to address the security concerns in each municipality.

Malabang has been consistently labeled as an election hotspot by the COMELEC; hence, the Superstar Battalion deployed one rifle company last January 16, 2022 as designated to address the current situation. Along with this, constant engagements with key leaders, political parties, local governments, government agencies, non-government agencies, business sector, and religious sector are being conducted. Furthermore, daily checkpoints and 'round the clock mobile/foot patrols are also being done in the entire municipality to deter any threat groups or personalities from doing harm. Daily dialogues are also conducted with small business owners and residents to hear their sentiments and assure them that the "Superstar" Battalion is doing its best in maintaining peace and security in Malabang.

With the Marines' visibility in every corner of the municipality, it has been observed that the number of criminal activities has lessened and this is one reason the civilian community has been thankful for. The "Superstars" will never get tired of performing their duties even in the face of any adversity and hardship.



1LT JAYNE ANNE O DIN PN(M)

Acting Commanding Officer, 22nd Marine Company, MBLT-2



WORKING FOR PEACE: CHRONICLES OF AN ENLIGHTENED COMMUNIST

By: Ms. Justine Kate Raca

I was once a communist. In fact, I spent seven years of my golden youth working for the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). It took me two near-death experiences to finally come to my senses—and it was not an easy journey. But now, I'm here to tell the truth of how I ended up as a member of the New People's Army (NPA) in the mountains of Palawan and how I am now working with the Marines for peace.

WISFUL THINKING

I was exposed to numerous societal issues when I entered college. My curiosity was a beacon to these organizations posing to be for national democracy, and they took me under their wing. For five years, I was taught that for there to have peace, there has to be war. To resolve the problems in our society, we must replace the government through armed revolution. Looking back now, it was wishful thinking. It was supposed to work, ideally, if the CPP and the NPA were actually what they said they were—stalwarts of human rights. Not knowing the whole story, but hearing only the jaded accounts written in the MKLRP (Maikling Kurso sa Lipunan at Rebolusyong Pilipino), I was lured into the venus flytrap that is the Communist Party of the Philippines. Eventually, I joined the NPA—following what I was taught to be the truth. But now, I have learned that being critical means I should have looked for flaws not only in the government, but also in the revolution I was about to take part in. I was not critical when I joined the NPA—I was fevered with a fervor to change the society, and that was my first mistake.

THE GUERRILLA IS A LIAR

I have had to lie multiple times while working as an NPA. Small white lies at first, but eventually it turned so

horrible I had to lie to myself to keep myself sane. Before I knew it, I became very good at lying—both to myself and the masses we were supposed to serve. What pained me most was recruiting other youth. I was working with an IP community, arousing them about the disadvantages they were experiencing. When I came back to the unit and we assessed my task, I did it wrong. What did I do wrong? According to Ka Rise, I did not maximize my '*womanly charm*' to entice the young natives to join us full-time. I was appalled and offended. Were our principles not enough to recruit? Was that the reason I was chosen to do the job? Apparently, I should have smiled more and talked more with the young men. I was engrossed conversing with the elders, women, and youth and their struggles—but apparently, it was fruitless.

It bothered me a lot as well when I was told not to mention financial support in recruiting. I would learn later on after I surrendered that it was Party policy to provide within its own capacity financial support to NPA fighters' dependents. Why should I omit it? I was told that I should only open it up if the potential recruit asks. If not, it was a free pass—they are foregoing their right to SuPamil (Suporta sa Pamilya). We'd save money by lessening expenses. But I knew it deep inside my heart—it was a big fat lie. Deception. I was too scared to ask the higher-ups about finance because I would be suspected of being a financial opportunist. Only few officials knew just how much money the CPP-NPA has. I would learn later on just how much money we were raking in. In 2018, we gained as much as 20 million from extortion. Funny how I only learned of that from the Marines, not from my own comrades.

In the last encounter that ensued, a young NPA died. He was Aremil Rodriguez. He was a breadwinner, he worked



in farms and sold longganisa in the market at the young age of 15 to support his younger sister who was still studying. When he left his family for the NPA, his only worry was: who'd finance her sister's education? Rise recruited him, so no SuPamil was allotted for his family. It was heartbreaking to think that he died fighting for the NPA when the NPA deprived him of financial support to his family. Until the day he died, his family received not a single cent from Bienvenido Valleber Command (BVC).

Another young NPA died from infection and disease. It was after the Mainit encounter and it broke me because she died under my care. I was the only political officer left in the unit. We had nothing but the clothes on our backs and we were hungry and scared. She got sick in a few weeks, an infection in the gums. In two weeks, she succumbed to death. I asked Rise desperately for help, because my sanity really can't take any more responsibilities. It was death after death after death. She told me to bury her somewhere and refrain from telling anyone about her death. I was broken after that. We were transferred to the unit in the North, and I followed up about her, Norelin Dabdab. I said, we should tell her family so they can pay their respects. I was ordered to keep my mouth shut, because if the family knew, they would hate us and they would go to the Marines. It was agonizing, but I had no choice but to follow orders. I buried all the truth deep in the recesses of my mind, but I was beginning to feel rotten inside. Even after surrendering, I despised myself so much, I couldn't sleep normally for months.

It was a cycle of lies, deception, and half-truths and I was caught in it. I turned into a liar because I myself was being lied to. I omitted truths because I myself knew only half-truths. Some lies, I was ordered to tell so. The organization I prized so much so that I risked my life multiple times to protect—it was corrupted, and it corrupted me for a while, too. But as they say, *veritas liberabit vos*—the truth will set us free.

WORKING FOR PEACE

All these realizations came to me only after I surrendered. It was the only time I could finally breathe and reflect about the past, check my moral compass. It was a grueling battle I had with myself—a part of me still stubbornly loyal to the Party versus a part of me struggling to keep in touch with my humanity. I unleashed the truth on my own, not because the Marines or anyone forced me to—how could they? These were secrets only I knew. It was not easy, but I eventually accepted that these things I did were wrong. Lying to myself everyday was too tiring. The weight of all these young lives lost in deceit—lies in my conscience. The only way I can pay for my sins is by working to end this armed communist insurgency—it's the only way I can live with myself.

This third chance at life is something I owe to the Marines. I have nothing but respect for the 3rd Marine Brigade and the MBLT-3 that facilitated my surrender. I am eternally grateful to all these good men and women. They have treated me and all the other surrenderees with compassion and professionalism. It was startling to see that in actuality, what their job is asking for exceeds their obligations. I have seen it firsthand. While in custody of the MBLT-3, I took part in civil-military operations like community support programs (CSP).

Funnily, I used to write condemnation statements about CSPs when I was still an NPA, so I was curious about it. But I was, yet again, wrong about those statements. The Marines genuinely want to help and provide support. I was talking to the masses I used to organize and I was afraid they'd hate me. I was surprised when they hugged me and told me, *"Buti naman anak at bumaba ka na. Wag ka nang babalik doon ha?"* They were always worried about us and were hoping we'd surrender, but they were afraid to tell us so, knowing how we would respond. They gave me the courage to speak to the youth in the barangays we used to organize. I told them of the lies I used to tell and the truths I am telling now. They were shocked. We united to condemn the CPP-NPA. All the barangays we conducted CSPs in had the same response.

The MBLT-3 was also the first to respond when Typhoon Odette ravaged Roxas, even when the battalion headquarters itself was severely damaged. Afterwards, the MBLT-3 lent their own power generator and provided a charging station for the neighboring civilians. There was no electricity in the barangays near the coast, and the masses flocked to the battalion for free electricity. Relief operations that ensued after were also spearheaded by the Marines; they initiated efforts to collect relief goods from local governments as well. I also witnessed the countless Brigada Eskwelas the Marines took part in. The NPAs never could do this, resource-wise and principle-wise. Resource-wise, whatever we collected from local politicians, we take for our own operations. Principle-wise, we always thought such efforts were band-aid solutions. But is it really futile if it's what the people need at the time?

At this point, I knew exactly how I can still right the wrongs I have done. I just had to continue what I'm doing with the Marines, but this time, as a Marine. There is a need to continue civil military operations to ensure the end of this insurgency, otherwise the CPP-NPA will find an opportunity to deceive the masses once more—and the cycle of lies, deceit, and death will never end. I have seen for myself that the lies we were told about the AFP were just that—lies. There is no reason for me to stop serving the people. I will continue to serve the people, the right way. Currently, I am applying for the Naval Officer Candidate Course. I will spend my life working for peace, this time with the right people—the Marines.



JTF-Tawi-Tawi witnesses end of rido

By: 2nd Marine Brigade

The Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi (JTFTT)/2nd Marine Brigade (2MBde) and Local Government Unit headed by Governor Hon. Yshmael “Mang” I Sali, Al-haj and Municipal Mayor of Bongao, Hon. Jimuel S. Que, with the presence of the different local leaders, religious, and security sectors from the province, assembled for a conflict resolution and reconciliation on February 23, 2022 to facilitate the rido (clan conflicts) settlement between two warring families from Brgy. Montay-Montay, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. The rido stemmed from a simple argument that escalated into a serious altercation resulting in unexpected and unnecessary loss of lives from both sides.

The settlement was initiated by Governor Sali, through the efforts of the Municipal Mayor of Bongao, Hon. Que. Both warring parties signed the deed of agreement in the presence of JTFTT/2MBde and PNP representatives.

Meanwhile, Governor Sali, expressed his gratitude to both parties as they reconciled with each other citing that “life is a precious thing that must be preserved”. Gov. Sali assured, “The provincial government and the support of security sectors will continue to be sustained in order to make the province a very peaceful place to live in.”

The interagency engagement proved to be an effective approach in resolving the conflict. Likewise, collaboration and cooperation of lead agencies will strengthen partnerships among stakeholders in pursuing common goals and objectives that benefit the people of Tawi-Tawi.



The provincial government of Tawi-Tawi, together with the religious and security sectors, initiated the successful reconciliation of two warring families on February 23, 2022.



3MBde bags PMC'S Brigade of the Year, 3 years in a row

By: Marine Corps Public Affairs Office

The 3rd Marine Brigade (3MBde) accomplished unprecedented achievements in the pursuit of its mission to end the local communist armed conflict in its area of operations (AO) in the Province of Palawan and sustained its exemplary organizational administration. It has won the coveted award as the PMC's Best Marine Brigade for three consecutive years now from 2020 to 2022.

Recently, the Brigade, under the leadership of BGen. Jimmy D. Larida PN(M), was adjudged as the PMC's Best Brigade for 2022 following its major accomplishment of neutralizing the remnants of the Community-Terrorist Group's (CTG) Bienvenido Vallever Command (BVC) that resulted in the AFP's **total victory** against the communist terrorists in Palawan province.

BGen. Jimmy D. Larida PN(M) received the Flag Officer in Command (FOIC), Philippine Navy (PN) streamer during the 124th PN anniversary celebration, which was held at Headquarters PN, Roxas Boulevard, Manila, on May 20, 2022. The award was personally handed by the Secretary of National Defense, Delfin Lorenzana, and Vice Adm. Adeluis S. Bordado PN, FOIC PN.

The accomplishments of 3MBde in ending the local communist armed conflict in Palawan are the result of its focus and determination for mission accomplishment, while simultaneously performing the task for other mission areas.

Even if it was heavily hit by Super Typhoon "Odette" on December 17, 2021, the 3MBde has continuously performed its mandated mission on Internal Security Operations (ISO), most especially on Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Response (HADR), by providing logistical and manpower support to the Palawan Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (DRRMO) and the local DRRMOs of affected municipalities. While actively engaged in Disaster Relief Operations, the Brigade simultaneously conducted reconstruction and rehabilitation of its damaged facilities. Moreover, the calamity did not hinder the brigade

from performing Focused Military Operations, Intelligence Operations, and Civil-Military Operations (CMO) to neutralize the remaining CTGs or convince them to surrender and prevent the recovery and reentry efforts of CTGs to the cleared barangays.

The relentless intelligence-based focused military operations conducted by the Brigade resulted in the decisive encounters, neutralization of Communist Terrorists, surrenders of regular CTG members, Milisya ng Bayan (MB) and supporters/sympathizers and continuous recovery of war materials.

The 3MBde CMO Team played a vital role in the surrender of high-value targets who were members of CTG in Palawan. The initiative of the CMO Team had a significant impact on the continuing peace and order in the province restricting the recruitment of CTG by conducting massive information campaign, distributing printed materials and displaying tarpaulins, delivering radio broadcasts/interviews, and discussing enemy atrocities with the locals. In addition, the CMO Team held education drives through the conduct of film showings, lectures, and symposia to various sectors of the community, including youth, farmers and fisherfolks, and business and local government officials. Moreover, 3MBde has been facilitating various de-radicalization efforts to former rebels and their families who surrendered peacefully to the fold of the law by facilitating financial assistance from other government agencies that have been instrumental in conducting livelihood training, providing educational assistance, and introducing sustainable livelihood programs. In total, this Command was able to accomplish a total of **204,130** occasions of CMOs broken down as follows: 104,150 Information Support Affairs, 47,004 Civil Affairs Activities, 5,851 and 47,125 Public Affairs activities in partnership with local government units (LGUs), local government agencies (LGAs), non-government organizations, religious groups, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders in order to win the peace and establish a physically and psychologically secured Palawan.



The 3MBde also supported the other missions of Western Command (WesCom), namely: Territorial Defense Operations, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations, Security Cooperation and Engagement, and other tasks from higher headquarters.

The 3MBde provided personnel to guard the seven island detachments on the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG) on a rotational basis. Likewise, the 3MBde vigorously addressed the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic through a series of activities with joint forces and partners as part of security cooperation and engagement.

The unit also actively and continuously engaged with the different LGUs and LGAs in Palawan. As a reliable member of various inter-agency mechanisms, the 3MBde has forged strong collaboration with other agencies and contributed to the success of the National and Local Elections (NLE) 2022 on May 9, 2022. The Brigade/JTF Peacock, tasked as the Western Command's main effort in securing the NLE 2022, deployed 1,349 personnel in the whole province to perform election duties in collaboration with the PNP and the COMELEC. As a result, the government has ensured free, orderly, honest, peaceful, and credible elections in Palawan with no untoward incidents.

In the field of International Defense Security Engagement (IDSE), the 3MBde successfully hosted the US-PH bilateral amphibious landing exercise during the Marine Exercise 2022 (MAREX 22) in February 2022 at Samariñana, Brooke's Point, Palawan. The MAREX 22 showcased the partnership of the 3MBde with LGUs of the municipality of Brooke's Point and the Province and recognized the LGU as champions for hosting similar military engagements in the future.

The 3MBde also had a program that bolstered the morale and welfare of personnel, while efficiently and effectively exercising accountability, responsibility, and transparency resulting in 78 mission-essential projects. These projects improved and upgraded the living conditions of the personnel through constructions, renovations, repairs, and repainting of the different brigade facilities such as 3MBde galley with procured monoblock chairs/refrigerator and stand fans, installation of Admin Building partition, wardroom, JNCO's head, 3MBde admin, training, female, JNCO's, G-2, motor pool and EP barracks, DBC/G3 quarters, generator, motor shed, mobility assets, procured radios, thermal gun, insulation foams, curtains, washing

machines, desktop computer, grass cutters, PA systems, cameras, procured electrical material for 3MBde tower light/street lights and upgrading/rewiring electrical line of 3MBde, maintenance of AFPMBAL donated laptops with printer, and the ongoing construction of 3MBde perimeter fence from TIKAS project.

With these significant achievements, the 3MBde became a recipient of various military awards/decorations. Deserving personnel of the unit were awarded 50 military awards and 60 Plaques of Appreciations/ Commendations/ Letters/Badges.

These recent accomplishments of 3MBde that earned the unit the 2022 Best Marine Brigade is a continuing legacy of its standard of excellence. In 2020, the 3MBde, under the leadership of then BGen. Charlton Sean M. Gaerlan PN(M), won the PMC Best Brigade of the Year following the dismantling of CTG's Kilusang Larangang Gerilya (KLG-North). The Brigade was also awarded the AFP Kapayapaan Plaque for this accomplishment.

In the following year, 2021, the Brigade, under the leadership of then BGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M), was again adjudged as the PMC Best Brigade of the Year with the major operational accomplishment of dismantling the CTG's KLG-Palawan. It was also in this year that the 3MBde neutralized the top three leaders of KLG- Palawan, namely: SRMA-4E Secretary Bonifacio Magramo alias Boywan/Salvador Luminoso; Provincial Operational Commander Noel Siasico alias Selnon; and Deputy Secretary SRMA-4E Andrea Rosal alias Naya.

The 3MBde's unprecedented achievement in ending the local communist armed conflict in Palawan, which had been the source of terror and fear for the people for the longest time, is a significant victory for the people. Likewise, this achievement is a testimony of the hard work and sacrifices of every member of Team Agila that resulted in the 3MBde winning the PMC's Best Marine Brigade for three consecutive years.

Finally, the Brigade will continue serving with its standard of excellence and commitment to sustain the gains in internal security and development support to the Province of Palawan. It will remain to be a reliable partner of various stakeholders so that Palawenos may continue to live in peace and prosperity.



224 CTGs SURRENDERED
*REGULAR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

76 EXPLOSIVES SEIZED

46 FIREARMS CAPTURED

ART OF WAR: MBLT-3 ends longest-running insurgency in Palawan

By: Marine Battalion Landing Team-3, "Tamed but Fierce"

In 2019, the Marine Battalion Landing Team-3 (MBLT-3), then led by Lt. Col. Ramil DC Holgado PN(M), departed the rugged terrains of Lupah Sug (Sulu) for the country's "Last Frontier," Palawan.

The island province is an archipelagic portion of the country located in the Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan (MIMAROPA) Region. It is the largest provincial territory in total land area, with 14,649.73 km² (5,656.29 sq mi). It is referred to as the Last Frontier because it preserves its original forest cover and contains extensive expanses of old-growth trees on its hilly slopes.

The MBLT-3, as one of the pioneering battalions of the Philippine Marine Corps, is typically deployed to Muslim territories in the south of the Philippines. With the redeployment, the battalion will no longer be confronting the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) or the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), but rather a new and more complex enemy: the Communist Terrorist Group (CTG) CPP-NPA-NDF.

Under President Rodrigo Duterte's Executive Order (EO) 70, or the Whole-of-Nation Approach, the battalion was charged with neutralizing the then-present CTGs in Northern Palawan.

However, neutralizing the adversary would not be a simple task for the battalion. It lacked experience in combating the CTGs and its military wing, the Communist NPA Terrorists (CNT); as a result, executing the new task presented significant challenges.

The CTGs have plagued the nation for nearly 54 years and have been present in Palawan for 25 years. It is notably distinct from the ASG, the battalion's previous adversary, as it is deeply rooted in the communities of Northern Palawan. The terrorist organization is familiar with the Palaweños and has used the residents' legitimate socio-economic concerns to recruit the civilian population.

To some extent, they are also better organized than the ASG and MNLF because they adhere to a politico-military structure that ensures each Unit adheres to operation security, conducts recruitment, produces publicity materials, and has a large number of paralegals prepared to engage in court battles.

However, the Marine Corps is agile, and the battalion is not overly bothered. It confronted these challenges head-on and filled its inadequacies.

Lt. Col. Charlie A. Domingo Jr. PN(M) succeeded Lt. Col. Holgado PN(M) as Battalion Commander and BGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M) succeeded BGen. Charlton Sean Gaerlan as Commander, 3rd Marine Brigade (3MBde).

The commanders then realized that the Unit had difficulties acquiring intelligence on the adversary. Thus, Lt. Col. Domingo commenced familiarization (understanding the enemy) through lectures using Former Rebels (FRs) as teachers and Intelligence operatives, educating troops in agent spotting, acquisition, and management. In addition, before deployment to the influenced/threatened barangays, competent instructors from Mindanao equipped the operators to execute the Community Support Program (CSP) and trained them.

Thus, the initiative cleared the way for discovering and demolishing politico-military organizations constructed by the CTG in numerous towns in Northern Palawan, namely Taytay, San Vicente, portions of Roxas, and Dumarán. The CSPs were effectively executed through interaction with the relevant local government units and agencies and activated Municipal Task Force-ELCAC convergence mechanisms to ensure continuation of Civil-Military Operations activities. As a result, the Palaweños felt the government's sincerity and care in delivering the basic and priority development projects and programs to the twelve barangays identified as CTG Influenced/Focus Areas (FOCARs). Subsequently, the unit also effectively uncovered CPP-NPA front organizations,



such as “Samahang Inaasahan ng mga Katutubo sa Alimanguan, Palawan (SIKAP)” and “Norunutan a Datay Botuanan (Mga Katutubong Walang Iwanan).” CSP teams have also effectively reached out, reoriented, and coopted 76 local leaders and members of CTG-organized/affiliated mass organizations, resulting in their withdrawal of support for the CTG. Additionally, 64 locals willingly surrendered to MBLT-3 and MTF-ELCAC PLEDS Cluster.

In addition to reinforcing and expanding the CSP, the battalion intensified intelligence operations with other Intelligence Units throughout Northern Palawan. With the dismantling of Kilusang Laranga Gerilya (KLG)-South on September 2, 2020, all eyes were on the remaining CTGs, the KLG-North. All of this demonstrated how widespread the enemy’s actions were, given that the KLG-North is comparable to a size of a marine company. Finally, the battalion’s efforts bore fruit.

On April 9, 2021, a Focused Military Operation (FMO) was initiated in Brgy. Concepcion, Puerto Princesa City, under the supervision of a new Brigade Commander, BGen. Jimmy D. Larida PN(M). Raul Reguma, a regular Communist NPA Terrorist (CNT) member of the Bienvenido Vallever Command, was killed following a brief confrontation. Various war materials were recovered on-site. This incident prompted countless more and marked the beginning of the Bienvenido Vallever Command’s (BVC) defeat.

Maj. Ryan F. Lacuesta PN(M), the youngest Battalion Commander in the Corps, assumed MBLT-3 command. Maj. Lacuesta’s first order of business was to accelerate intelligence operations through the Joint Intelligence Task Unit (JITU) - North, as there was still much to be accomplished with the pressure from headquarters to sustain the gains. The harmonious working relationship of the intelligence units in the area with the support of the 3MBde and U2, Western Command, given the fact that operatives are accustomed to having a strong sense of information compartmentalization, was yet another example of the CO, MBLT-3’s skillful leadership.

As a result, it was ascertained that KLG-North, the sole enemy unit in Palawan, has concentrated in the southern part of Roxas municipality. The CTG’s mobility corridor was constricted away from its previous influenced areas in Puerto Princesa and San Vicente by successfully shaping the operating environment. Lacking a mass base and support in the surrounding areas, the BVC fell prey to yet another successful FMO in Nicanor Zabala under the new Battalion Commander. On July 12 and 13, 2021, the marine operating forces in Zabala engaged the CTGs with effective mortar fires directed toward the enemy position.

The two encounters resulted in the recovery of firearms, explosives, and numerous subversive documents. After facing hardships due to intensified operations by the Marines, several regular NPA fighters and even high-ranking cadres surrendered to authorities. The Unit then capitalized on working with former rebels and utilizing vital information on the enemy’s intelligence and operation practices. After several compromised battalion operations that led to the escape of the targets, identification of the need to deploy a small special operations unit was identified. Maj. Lacuesta immediately directed the Training Officer to hold Squad Designated Marksman and Sniper Orientation Training to make up for the identified gaps.

On December 10 of the same year, the Command Team of MBLT-3 under Maj. Lacuesta launched FMO in Brgy. Tinitian, Roxas. With careful planning from accurate and timely intelligence executed by well-trained and motivated Marines, a decisive engagement transpired with the BVC, which caught them unprepared and the members scurrying in different directions. The encounter resulted in the death of Arimel Padilla Rodriguez, a regular CNT member, and the seizure of almost all of their firearms and equipment. Eventually, except for the cadre from Mindoro, the remaining members surrendered to the authorities. With proper handling and treatment of the former members of BVC, the Former Rebels (FRs) are now working with government troops to clear all the remaining organized mass bases and supporters and recover all cached firearms. The mission of the Unit, which was to defeat the BVC, was accomplished after the Political/Armed Component of the enemy (the Center of Gravity) was neutralized, 46 firearms, 76 Anti-personnel/ Anti-tank explosives (Critical Requirement) were seized, and 84 members of Politico-Military Organs surrendered. During Maj. Lacuesta’s tenure, no MBLT-3 troops were victims of CNT terrorist attacks, which is remarkable.

The MBLT-3 has once again demonstrated the efficacy of Sun Tzu’s sage advice through all of its successes. Northern Palawan activities were more successful than ever before by truly identifying the Unit’s deficiencies and thoroughly analyzing the CTG. Sustained civil-military actions in designated red mass bases proved crucial for limiting enemy operations by severing their local support and forcing them into a corner to our benefit. The mastery and familiarization of terrain, coupled with the decisive guidance of the Commander, pressured the CNTs and caused severe hardships and hunger. Moreover, coopting the enemy without firing a weapon to kill a fellow Filipino is unquestionably the pinnacle of military strategy.

The local communist insurgency cannot be defeated by a single unit alone. Without the steadfast guidance, direction, and support of the Western Command (WESCOM) and the past and present commanders of the 3rd Marine Brigade, namely BGen. Charlton Sean Gaerlan PN(M) (Jul 2018-Feb 2020), BGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M) (Feb 2020-Jan 2021), and BGen. Jimmy D. Larida PN(M) (Jan 2021-Present), none of these achievements would have been possible. The battalion, echoing their thoughts, believes that while the CPP-NPA has been decisively destroyed, the sociopolitical challenges they have exploited for decades still exist. To ensure that CTGs have no place in Palawan, the MBLT-3 will continue to assist underprivileged communities with essential social services and government aid via the MTF-ELCAC. We will continue to work tirelessly for peace and economic prosperity in genuine service to our beloved Palawenos.

THE 42ND MODERN MARINE DAY EXPOSITION



Commandant, PMC, MGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M) and the PMC Delegation meeting with the USMC Commandant, Gen. David H. Berger on May 10, 2022.



Arrival of PMC Delegation at Dulles International Airport, Washington D.C., USA on May 8, 2022.



Courtesy call to the Philippine Ambassador, HE Jose Manuel Romualdez along with the Defense and Armed Forces Attaches to the United States of America on May 9, 2022.



PMC Delegation attended product briefs of Lockheed Martin on HIMARS and GM Defense's TCV that are part of the Horizon 3 Modernization Program of the PMC.



PMC Delegation's visit in USMC's Training and Education Command and The Basic School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia on May 12, 2022.

Lt. Col. Rowan L. Rimas PN(M)(GSC), MC3, PMC was one of the panelists during the talk on Partnership in the Littorals on May 11, 2022.



“CULTURE OF ARMS”

Mindanao is dubbed as the “Land of Promise” because of its biodiversity and natural resources. Maguindanao Province, in particular, has a lot of potential in the agriculture and tourism sectors and boasts of rich and colorful culture that is passed from one generation to another. However, one culture that is prevalent is the ‘culture of arms’, which often causes armed conflicts and unnecessary loss of lives. With a weak justice system, there had been numerous cases of people resorting to violence that escalate into clan wars or ‘rido’.

The current peace and development in the province welcome new opportunities for growth; however, more needs to be done. Local government leaders must come forward and develop genuine programs that minimize, if not totally eradicate, the culture of arms through Clan Identity, Education, and Rule of Law.

In the end, the people of Maguindanao must appreciate that Clan’s identity must espouse individual moral character. Education, on the other hand, is an effective tool in teaching the youth about cultures and identities that foster peace, respect, and justice. Lastly, with Rule of Law, there shall be strict enforcement of legal rules that will pave way for fairness, accountability, and stability. All of these will certainly strengthen all aspects of development in Maguindanao and bring us closer to national progress.



MAJ LAURENCE M SANTILLAN PN(M)
Operations Officer, Marine Battalion Landing Team-5

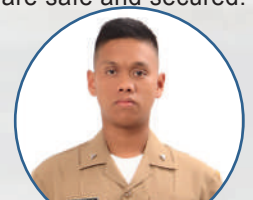
SAFE TRAVELS

Various shooting incidents caused by rido or family feuds and lawless armed groups are rampant in the unit’s Area of Operation (AO). These cause a lot of fear among the locals who avoid going out or traveling alone especially at night. Because of these threats, the Marine Battalion Landing Team-5 (MBLT-5) initiated intensive Security Operations such as mobile patrols, combat patrols, area security, and checkpoints in the AO 24/7 to lessen the people’s anxiety and make them feel safe. This unit neutralized some of the most wanted persons. It also intercepted persons with unlicensed firearms, which were later on surrendered to the Philippine National Police (PNP) for proper disposition, and intercepted persons selling smuggled goods.

With the continuing efforts of MBLT-5, people seem to have regained their confidence and sense of security. Many travelers pass through the AO to conduct their businesses or attend to personal matters. Some of them are bound for Zamboanga City, Cotabato City, and Davao City. It is indeed

now safer to travel even at night. Some bus terminals have already opened their doors traveling from Dipolog City to General Santos City. One example of this is the Rural Transit Mindanao, Incorporated (RTMI), which recently announced its new regular operations.

These developments show that the Marines are trustworthy and can implement discipline in the area all the time. They are selflessly doing their job and helping the local communities live peacefully and safely. Whenever they see a Marine in the area, they know they are safe and secured.



2LT JAXL L DEDUQUE PN(M)
Acting Civil Military Operation Officer, Marine Battalion Landing Team-5

Building Peace through Rido Settlement

By: Marine Battalion Landing Team-5

What is Rido?

Rido is a Maranao word for “clan feud”. It is a type of conflict characterized by sporadic outbursts of retaliatory violence between families and kinship groups and between communities. It can occur in areas where government or central authority is weak and where there is a perceived lack of justice and security (Torres, 2014). In the book of Wilfredo Torres III, *Rido: Clan Feuding and Conflict Management in Mindanao*, *rido* has been characterized as having broader implications for conflict in Mindanao primarily because it tends to interact in unfortunate ways with separatist strife and other forms of armed violence. A local *rido* triggered many armed confrontations involving insurgent groups and the military in the past.

Rido Settlement

Local Government Units (LGUs) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) initiate and facilitate amicable settlements between or among feuding families. Families involved voluntarily negotiate in the presence of key government leaders and religious leaders as witnesses and sign a peace agreement.

Even before the Marine Battalion Landing Team-5 (MBLT-5) set foot in its area of operations (AO), many *rido* cases already existed and these caused fear among the people of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao. As part of the

unit’s mission to conduct Development Support and Security Operation (DSSO) in support of the 1st Marine Brigade’s (1MBde) mission, the unit has put a lot of efforts in settling *rido* cases.

This unit recorded 87 *rido* cases since June 2019 within four municipalities of Lanao del Sur and four municipalities of Maguindanao. To this date, 41 were settled, 10 are still active, and 36 are inactive because there was no reported violence between the members of the warring clans for the past decade. Excluding the inactive cases, this unit has already achieved 80% of its goal in eradicating clan wars in its AO.

MBLT-5 shall continue to build and advocate for peace in its AO and address security threats. *Rido* settlement is a laudable approach to lessen violence, criminality, and unnecessary competition in this part of the country. MBLT-5, with Maj. Melchor A. Gonzaludo PN(M), as the Commanding Officer, shall continue to support nation-building, provide support to law enforcement in the fight against criminality and illegal drugs, establish civil-military relations, and apply military force against terrorists and other threat groups to attain peace and order in the area of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao provinces. These are the unit’s ways of demonstrating selfless service to our nation and the Filipino people.

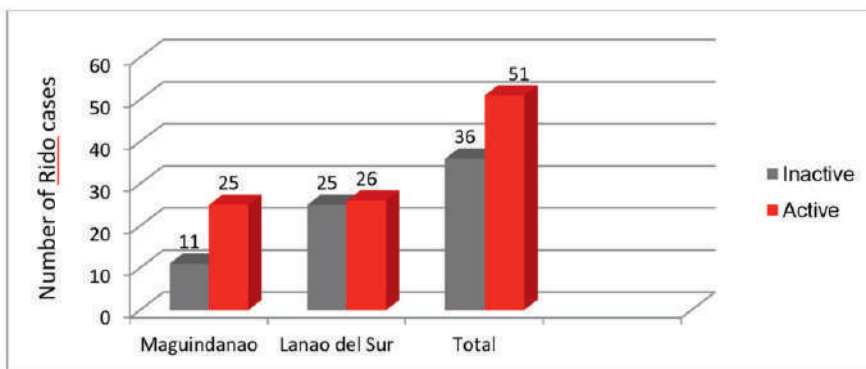
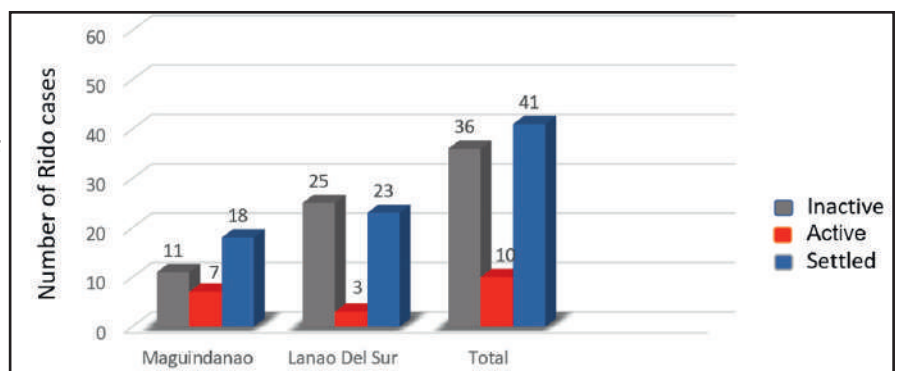


Figure 1: Statistical data of rido cases within the AO in June 2019 with 51 active and 36 inactive.

Figure 2: Statistical data of settled rido cases as of this date with 10 active and 36 inactive remaining.





Picong-based ALG leader surrenders

The most wanted Armed Lawless Group (ALG) leader, Mamaroba Calib Gaosil, alias Manny/Tuttoh of Picong, Lanao del Sur, surrendered to the Commander of Naval Task Group Central (NTG-C) at Headquarters Naval Task Group Central, Sitio Bombaran, Barangay Togaig, Barira, Maguindanao. He turned over one M14 rifle, one (1) AK47 rifle, and one (1) Caliber .45 pistol. He was presented to the Commander, Joint Task Group Central, MGen. Juvy Max Uy PA, in Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

Gaosil is wanted for various kidnapping and murder cases in Lanao del Sur with 11 standing warrants of arrest. A series of law enforcement operations were directed against his group by the joint elements of the Marines of 1st Marine Brigade and the Philippine National Police in 2021 and early 2022.

His surrender was made possible through the Marines and Intelligence Units 3 (NTU3) efforts. However, the members of his group are still at large. Nevertheless, the NTG-C will continue performing its mandate and conduct security and law enforcement operations to neutralize the peace spoilers in the area of operations or sway them to voluntarily submit themselves and return to the folds of the law.



TSgt Fernando C Quimelat PN(M)

Civil Military Operations, Non Commissioned Officer in Charge, 1st Marine Brigade





THE *EXTERMINATOR* - Special Operations Platoon-5 Quick Ready Force

For many years, Special Operations Platoon – 5 (SOP-5) has been significant in conducting Development Support and Security Operation (DSSO), aligned with the battalion’s mission. It is designed for unconventional tactics, equipped force, well trained, organized, and specially designated as Quick Reaction Force (QRF) of the battalion. Silent, swift and deadly, specialized for direct and indirect military actions focused on strategic and operational objectives.

QRF is an armed military unit capable of rapidly responding to developing situations or emergencies. As platoon-sized, SOP-5 has carried out its mandated mission to be the military reserve and quick reaction force that belongs directly to the unit commander that can react to threats anytime, anywhere in the area of operation.

SOP-5 daily routine differs from the others. Being the QRF means that they should stay physically fit and always ready for deployment anytime. Almost every morning after the reveille road run is the mandatory boots on for the platoon. Packs are prepared and the cleanliness of their guns required, for it is their everyday lifestyle and pledge of discipline.

The platoon’s name - *Exterminator*, determines the mission of every member of the platoon. It eliminates unwanted circumstances such as terrorism and armed threat groups in operation, utilizing military force to attain a peaceful and harmonious environment. Its call sign, *Extreme*, defines the character of every individual in

the platoon. They put excellence in everything they do, reaching the highest degree or intensity with courage and determination to accomplish the given mission.

The Medal for Valor awardee, late Cpl Gener Tinangag PN(M), died with honor as a member of the Exterminator, sacrificing his life to save his comrades during the 2017 Marawi Siege. The Exterminator (SOP-5) was one of the units that reacted quickly in response to the laid siege by the Maute Terror Group in Marawi City on May 23, 2017, in an attempt to establish a caliphate or base of Islamic State in the country. It was nothing but an extreme heroic act and an example of the best in soldiery with courage and determination.

SOP-5 has been the battalion’s relied upon and trusted small unit to respond quickly to threats in the area of operation. It has always been significantly contributing to the accomplishment of the battalion’s mission and shall continue to do its mandated tasks. It will never fade and grow dim for they have sworn to serve and uphold the tradition of their beloved organization, The Philippine Marine Corps.



2LT AR-GEMAR S HASSAN PN(M)
Platoon Commander, Special Operation Platoon, MBLT-5

Knowing no Borders in Defeating Terrorism

The Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) has been noted for intelligence work and intelligence operations especially in Mindanao area, particularly in Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi where the Marines operate. High value targets were neutralized and many kidnapped victims were rescued through active intelligence operations employing different kinds of tradecraft activities against Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). Notable of which are the rescue of victims of Dos Palmas kidnapping on June 7, 2002; neutralization on September 4, 2006 of Khadaffy Janjalani, an ASG leader and FBI's one of the most wanted terrorists; rescue of Ces Drilon and two other ABS-CBN Network employees in June 2008; and the staff of International Committee on Red Cross and staff of the Philippine Red Cross on January 15, 2009 (Teves & Romero, 2009). The rescue operations of these victims would not be possible without the clandestine work of the members of the intelligence community.

The capability of the PMC Intelligence was tested when two of the ASG sub-leaders, who were stationed in the Second District of Sulu, were traced to have crossed the Philippine borders going to Sabah to hunt for their next prey. This has posed a challenge to the Marines as they are deployed to secure the southern borders of the country. However, our intelligence operatives made a way to trace and neutralize the said ASG sub-leaders and their members.

It is well-known not only in the intelligence community and the Armed Forces as a whole that terrorist groups such as the ASG/Kidnap for Ransom Group, which are linked with Al-Qaeda, Dawlah Islamiyah (DI) and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or Daesh, can easily cross our borders especially through the use of backdoors. A handful of traders have been going in and out to trade for goods such as rice, canned goods, noodles, coffee, among others, without undergoing the formal importation processes prescribed by the Bureau of Customs. Many Filipinos have also been crossing Sulu waters to work in Malaysia even without proper documentation (The Asia Foundation, 2019). Some of them have already been deported to the Philippines. Sulu Strait has been a busy trade route not only for traders but also for terrorists and other threat groups that cross borders to import guns and abduct victims that they can bargain for ransom money. Preventing these activities, including terrorism and transnational crimes, are the main reasons why the intelligence community intensifies its intelligence operations, while taking advantage of the tri-lateral agreement with the neighboring countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, to prevent and counter the recruitment of would-be extremists by disrupting their recruitment activities.

What transpired at Jalan Taman Sri Arjuna, Beaufort, Sabah to neutralize ASG sub-leaders, Sansibar Bencio and Mabar Binda, and their cohorts on May 8 and 17, 2021 was the first intelligence operations of the Philippine Marine Corps outside the Philippine territory which is anchored on the on-going trilateral security agreement with the neighboring countries to counter terrorism. This tested how the Marine Intelligence operatives planned, worked, and implemented the plan which hunted the ASG that crossed to Sabah.

Further, this very rare intelligence operations were repeated on August 20, 2021 at Timbang Island, Sandakan, Sabah, North Borneo through a follow-on operation against the remaining ASG/KFRG members under ASG Sub-Leader Sansibar Bencio.

These operations were launched in pursuit of the remaining ASG members in the Second District of Sulu. The 4th Marine Brigade (4MBde) conceptualized a plan to neutralize ASG sub-leaders Sansibar Bencio and Mabar Binda and their cohorts. Their groups were operating in the 2nd District of Sulu doing kidnapping, extortion, and recruitment. Through the execution of the plan, three focused military operations were conducted which resulted in the neutralization of Barahama Bencio, the father of Sansibar, and Munap Binda, the father of Mabar and who was also an ASG sub-leader. These forced them to leave Sulu and looked for a place where they could hide from the military forces hunting them. That time, they went to their relatives in Beaufort, Sabah. The place had been their hideout as they took refuge with their relatives to evade the Philippine Government forces. Moreover, previous reports (November 2018) had it that Beaufort was a known hiding place/staging area of foreign terrorist, Andi Baso, before he set foot in the Philippines and merged with local DI/ASG groups in Sulu Province. Andi Baso, a bomb expert and facilitator of entry and exit of foreign terrorists from Indonesia and Sabah to Southern Philippines particularly in Sulu and Basilan, is the son-in-law of the Indonesian couple who committed suicide bombing at the Jolo Cathedral.

As the groups of Sansibar and Bencio traversed the borders of the Philippines, they were traced by the PMC Intelligence Operatives. They utilized their exceptional means to link and coordinate with the authorities in monitoring the activities of the said ASG sub-leaders.

The 4MBde presented the information to higher headquarters to get the approval for the said intelligence operations. PMC Intelligence operatives also coordinated



with the Malaysian counterpart. They employed two-pronged approach to ensure that what they were doing would have approval from both ends. In this manner, the plan could be executed in no time while the targets believed they were still untraced.

Upon approval of the authorities, the Malaysian Special Forces locked in the targets. On the eve of May 7, 2021, the Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM), Intelligence Division coordinated with 4MBde NTU 4.0 for the intelligence information and other pertinent data during their final briefing with the operating elements in support of their special operations against the target ASGs. This resulted in the apprehension of two ASG/KFRG sub-leaders Sansibar and Faizal Kansa with six other ASG members. The follow-on operations were launched on May 17, 2021 and resulted in five ASG/KFRG killed. Among them was Mabar Bindah. A total of 37 Filipino-Muslims were arrested and the targeted eight ASG/KRFG members were transported to Sulu via LCH 298 (BRP Ivatan) of the Philippine Navy. They went through the required legal procedures before they were brought to the Sulu Provincial Jail while waiting for trial. This intelligence fusion paved the way for the discovery of ASG's staging area at Jalan Taman Sri Arjuna, Beaufort, Sabah. Moreover, two ASG/KFRG sub-leaders were killed – Amman Adam and Jimdan Hairudin, while 13 ASG/KFRG were apprehended in the next special operations conducted on August 20, 2021 on Timbang Island, Sandakan, Sabah. Meanwhile, 7 of 13 were confirmed ASG/KFRG members and supporters.

Indeed, the intelligence operation was a great success. It achieved its purpose and neutralized its targets. The intelligence coordination between ESSCOM-ID and Naval Task Group Sulu/4MBde was proven effective in addressing violent extremism that knows no border.

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CPT MARIA ROWENA B DALMACIO PN(M)

Former Civil Military Operation Officer, Marine Battalion Landing Team-8



Tawi-Tawi sea mishap survivors repatriated

By: 2nd Marine Brigade

The Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi (JTF-TT), Naval Task Group and 2nd Marine Brigade (2MBde), Philippine Marine Corps headed by BGen. Romeo T. Racadio PN(M), facilitated the successful rescue and eventual repatriation of 15 sea mishap Filipino survivors from Sabah to Tawi-Tawi. They were rescued by the Malaysia Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) from the shorelines of Bukit, Lawa-Lawa, Sabah. The survivors, who are residents of Tawi-Tawi, were on board the M/L Dayang Jubaira Express that originated from Chinese Pier, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi bound to Turtle Island, Taganak, Tawi-Tawi on January 6, 2022. However, their watercraft experienced engine trouble and was dragged by big waves due to bad weather and drifted along the vicinity of Bukit, Lawa-Lawa, Sabah.

Their immediate rescue was made possible through the prompt response made by Col. Nestor E. Narag Jr. PN(M) (GSC), Director, Maritime Coordinating Center Tawi-Tawi of the Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines Trilateral Maritime Patrol (JTF INDOMALPHI) and the Deputy Commander, Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi, in asking for assistance from their counterpart in Tawau, Malaysia after receiving information of the location of the survivors from one of their relatives.

The successful repatriation of the survivors was also made possible through the efforts of Turtle Island Mayor, Hji. Mohd. Faizal H. Jamalul, and his staff in facilitating the coordination and arrangements with Malaysian counterpart and through the collective efforts of the personnel of JTF-TT, 2MBde and its OPCON units including the Marine Battalion Landing Team-12, personnel of the Forward Support Medical Team 30, Philippine Navy water assets through 3rd BAD MPAC and PC 393, representatives from the Bureau of Immigration, the Tawi-Tawi Provincial Police Office and the representatives from the MMEA.

The 15 sea mishap survivors composed of seven (7) TESDA personnel and eight (8) ship's crew were formally turned over by the Malaysian authorities to JTF-TT represented by Col. Narag along the borders of sea waters of Sabah aboard a Malaysia Coast Guard vessel on January 10, 2022. As a way of thanking the former for their assistance, a token of appreciation was given to the Malaysian counterpart. It was a fitting recognition for their assistance and continuous commitment to the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement and partnership program under the Joint Task Force INDOMALPHI for rendering Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response to Filipino citizens.

On January 11, 2022, Col. Narag formally handed over the rescued Filipinos to the local governments through a formal ceremony held at Toong Hall, Marine Barracks Domingo Deluana, Headquarters 2nd Marine Brigade, Brgy. Sanga-Sanga, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. The former lauded the collective cooperation and untiring efforts made by all involved units and agencies. Ms. Maryam S. Nuruddin, MBHTE-TESDA, Provincial Director, thanked everyone for their assistance and handed over a token of gratitude to the Deputy Commander, JTF-TT.





Superstars on the Way!

A few weeks before Yuletide Season, Super Typhoon Rai, locally known as “Bagyong Odette,” made its landfall, ravaging the Visayas and Mindanao islands with torrential rains, floods, storm surges, and violent winds.

Days before the Super Typhoon Rai’s landfall, with the guidance of MGen. Jonas R. Lumawag PN(M), then the Commander, 1st Marine Brigade (1MBde), in coordination with the Local Government Units (LGUs) of Buldon, Barira, Parang, Matanog, all of Maguindanao Province, and Kapatagan, Balabagan, Malabang, Picong, Marogong, all of Lanao Del Sur Province, the MBLT-2 “Superstar” Battalion conducted monitoring of landslide and flood-prone areas for the preemptive evacuation, proactive measures, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) Operations.

During landfall, heavy flooding caused mud to pile up along parts of the Narciso Ramos Highway, particularly in the Municipality of Balabagan, Lanao Del Sur causing traversing vehicles to bog down and get stuck in the mud blocking the said highway. Members of the Superstar Battalion’s quick reaction teams immediately came to the aid of civilians amidst the ongoing onslaught of Odette, facilitated the hauling of the vehicles with available mobility assets, and provided transportation assistance to the stranded civilians. In its wake, Odette left unimaginable damage to the severely affected areas, leaving the Philippines with numerous deaths and millions worth of destruction to lives and property. The Superstar Battalion followed up its HADR Operations by

clearing the road with debris to allow regular traffic flow from the Pagadian-Cotabato route to return.

The conduct of Relief Operations is not only our duty as members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines but also a collective moral obligation as Filipinos. It is a standard and proactive effort to enhance military to LGU integration and significantly improve the direct relationship with the communities who benefit from the delivered assistance by the military. In areas severely affected by poverty, lawlessness, or armed conflict, HADR Operations and other Civil-Military Operations increase the likelihood of winning the hearts and minds of the locals, who feel safe and secure whenever they see men in uniforms – the Marines. It has also been apparent during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic wherein the general public has greatly appreciated the rapid mobilization of our forces.

As we endeavor to transform into a SMARTER FORCE, we further appreciate the impact of the humanitarian response to our operating concept as a National Maneuver Amphibious Force as with the emergent challenges that come along with it.



2LT ARGEL LOUIS G DELOS REYES PN(M)
Acting Commanding Officer, 22nd Marine Company, MBLT-2





MBLT-3 Frontliners: Fiercer than a Super Typhoon

By: Marine Battalion Landing Team-3, “Tamed but Fierce”

After a successful focused military operation in December 2021 at Brgy. Tinitian, Roxas, Palawan, the troops of the Marine Battalion Landing Team-3 (MBLT-3) were in high spirits. This celebratory mood, however, was dampened by a storm warning as super typhoon “Rai” (locally named, “Odette”) was making a landfall in the province. Northern Palawan was warned about heavy rainfall that may result in landslides and flooding.

of disaster and calamity and to inform, provide precaution, and advise the public on emergencies. The mechanism proved to be efficient, especially in conducting immediate evacuation.



To plan for the stormy days ahead, the MBLT-3 took the necessary preparations before Odette’s landfall. In coordination with the Local Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Offices (MDRRMOs), Philippine National Police, Philippine Coast Guard, respective Local Government Units (LGUs), and Local Government Agencies (LGAs), the battalion established Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) in the municipalities of Northern Palawan. At the same time, MBLT-3 sub-units mustered their respective Disaster Risk Reduction Teams (DRRT). This effort sought to address the communities’ needs that may arise in times



When Odette had its landfall in Roxas on December 17, heavy rains and powerful winds ceaselessly ravaged the northern part of Palawan for over 10 hours. As the first responders, the troops as DRRTs were deployed in the communities for rescue and evacuation on the storm’s onset. While the DRRTs were occupied evacuating those who needed help, it took a while for them to notice that their headquarters was severely damaged. It was surreal when personnel conducting HADR operations called the HMBLT-3 requesting dry clothes but received a response saying, “Sarge, wala na tayong barracks.” No one could do anything but huddle and wait for it to end. Most of the personnel and officers’ barracks were uprooted due to the powerful winds. The same transpired in the battalion’s sub-units.



The devastation brought about by Super Typhoon Odette in the Municipality of Roxas.



Overview shot of the battalion before and after the onslaught of Super Typhoon Odette.

Odette's aftermath painted quite a picture of Northern Palawan. Farms and agricultural livelihoods that provided a source of food and income for the locals during the pandemic were destroyed. Homes, churches, schools, business establishments, and even the MBLT-3 headquarters were not spared by Odette. Flooded rivers and strong waves from the coast created flash flooding that wrecked bridges and filled the roads with debris from landslides. These damages blocked many routes and made vehicle passage impossible—people had to walk on foot to pass through. The former vibrant towns of Roxas, Taytay, San Vicente, Dumarán, and Araceli were heavily damaged and looked more like ghost towns after Odette. With such paralyzing damages, an immediate response was necessary to resume operations. Thus, despite incurring heavy damages in its backyard, the unit prioritized stability operations.

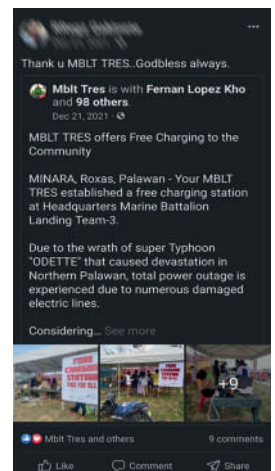
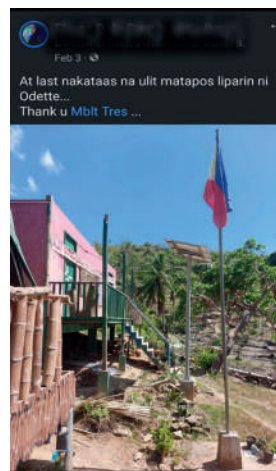
Until Christmas day, most remained homeless, with no access to electricity and telecommunications, and immobile due to closed roads. Despite this tragedy, Palaweños' resiliently adapted to the situation. They utilized Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) to provide shelter and action centers to the barangays. With the willingness to serve, Marine forces rushed to provide HADR. As they conducted Search and Rescue Operations, it was devastating to discover that several lives were lost. Nevertheless, the speedy reaction to calamity prevented further loss of lives.

and its sub-units extended its workforce to clear mud-blocked roads, remove fallen trees and debris, and provide medical aid and transport tons of relief goods to those in need. Marines were commonly requested and visible in evacuation centers as the unit provided a workforce in the community kitchens. Despite limited equipment and capabilities, the MBLT-3 in its headquarters generously offered a free charging service to reach out to all the barangays in the vicinity. Even a PNP mobile car requested a pit stop at HMBLT-3, as gasoline stations were closed. It was, after all, Christmas time.

December is supposed to be a season for celebration, but Odette extinguished hope of any merriment when it ravaged the island. Though lives were lost, the situation brought out the best in Palaweños. Mutual support, cooperation, and teamwork were evident in the LGUs, LGAs, and security forces in the recovery of every municipality in the North. This seeded hope in starting anew and gave cause for celebration to all. This sudden disaster was also a trial for the unit, and it proved true that the Marines are the first to volunteer themselves to the frontlines—both in battle and in calamity. With a simple thank you from Palaweños and the Filipino people, the gesture was enough to relieve the fatigue and stress of the Tamed but Fierce Battalion.



The situation called for timely assistance and mitigation of the effects of the super typhoon on the communities, and the Marines provided that. The MBLT-3





Marines establish Historical Marker in Tawi-Tawi

By: 2nd Marine Brigade

The leadership of the Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi/ Naval Task Group Tawi-Tawi/ 2nd Marine Brigade (JTF-TT/ NTG-TT/2MBde), led by its Commander, BGen. Romeo T. Racadio PN(M) has embarked on another historical accomplishment in strengthening the country's sovereign rights over its territory through the successful establishment of sovereignty marker on Panguan Island, Datu Baguinda Puti, Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi on March 7, 2022. The establishment of the said landmark is considered as one of the significant milestones in the province's history as the province formally established its solid assertion of the area located at the Philippines' southernmost frontier.

The activity, the first of its kind in Tawi-Tawi, was attended by over 600 constituents and stakeholders from the security, academe, and government sectors under the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and the provincial government headed by Governor Yshmael I. Sali, Al-haj, the provincial governor. They travelled the extensive sea area and endured the unfavorable weather and sea condition to witness the significant event.

An All-in-One Mission benefiting the constituents was also conducted. The activities included distribution of food packs and relief goods, clean-up drive, coconut planting, and counselling sessions for Bajau women, youth, and elders. The activity was further highlighted through the conduct of the flag-raising ceremony; the inauguration of the newly constructed multi-purpose hall donated by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to the Jade's Bajau Learning Center, Inc. (JBLCI) privately administered by philanthropists couple Mr. Ely and "Inday" Erana; and the historic unveiling of the installed Panguan Sovereignty Marker, where attendees collectively raised and waved flaglets while joyfully voicing the words, "Pilipino Ako".



BGen. Racadio stressed that establishing a sovereignty marker on the island is a way of exercising the state's power in demonstrating its lawful ownership of its territory and all the inhabitants living on the said island. He



said, "It is a way of imparting the residents' mindset of the equal entitlement of their right and protection as mandated by the Philippine Constitution."

Governor Sali remarked, "I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to the 2nd Marine Brigade for initiating the said activity. The provincial government of Tawi-Tawi and the rest of my family will continue to support placing more sovereignty markers on the isolated island and further provide necessary assistance to the marginalized community in the province."

Pangan Island (locally known as Pangan or resting place) is the most remote island in the municipality of Sitangkai, Tawi-Tawi, province. It is located in the southernmost part of the Sulu Archipelago bordering the marginal area of the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia. It has an area of 0.06 km² with a white beach and turquoise water gateways. Some of the locals refer to the island as "Malamanok," which emanated from the Sama-Bajau dialect meaning "eat chicken." Locals who travel to North Borneo usually use the said island as a stop-over to eat roasted chicken before continuing their journey. The island is 110 km away from mainland Bongao but only 17 km away from the nearest island of mainland North Borneo. The said island was once used as a hideout by the terrorist Abu Sayyaf

Group and served as a staging area for kidnapers, among other lawless criminals/smugglers operating in Southern Philippines until the Philippine Marines liberated the same in April 2017.

Currently, a total of 252 people from the Sama-Bajau tribe, including 108 children, are being educated by a civilian volunteer teacher and the Marines under the 2nd Marine Brigade. The military's effort in collaboration with its partner agencies and stakeholders in the province continues to educate the marginalized Sama-Bajau community and seen as a long-term solution in preventing violent extremism in the province. Further, their empowerment adds a force multiplier for the country in protecting and securing its territory.

The mission was conducted in line with the thrust of the Commander, JTF-TT/NTG-TT/2MBde, to promote and sustain peace and development initiatives in the province through inter-agency cooperation and partnerships that would address the root causes of armed conflict all aimed at the following: advocating for good governance; promotion of socio-economic, cultural cohesiveness and harmony; good environmental management; and dissemination of information, particularly to the vulnerable and marginalized community who are residing in the farthest island/islets of the country such on Pangan Island.



Lent in Batanes in COVID-19 pandemic

The predominantly Catholic Ivatans of Batanes have always revered lent as they struggle to hold fast to the teachings of the Church during this important celebration. This year's Holy Week was the second Lent. Everyone was affected, directly or indirectly, by the COVID-19 pandemic, with traditional religious activities and attendance of masses conducted while strictly observing minimum health protocols. The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Batanes requested assistance from our troops and other uniformed men to ensure the safety of everyone involved during the entire Holy Week.

Like in other places of the country, the Ivatan devotees here in Batanes hold on to the cherished traditions and significant activities which reflect upon the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, their redeemer. This over a week-long celebration requires the devout to fast, pray more, walk-in penance, and meditate more fervently on their religious beliefs. Amidst the lingering threat of COVID-19 infection, the contribution of our troops proved to be beneficial in maintaining order so that the devotees can still immerse themselves in acts of worship and focus on their faith in this once in a year celebration.

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception was grateful for the efforts of our troops and other uniformed

men, as they have always been partners in maintaining order during the celebration of critical Catholic events, most especially Lent. This year's lent was extraordinary because of the pandemic, and, thankfully, no untoward incident occurred.

Catholic troops were also able to practice their faith and their other duties. The Church and the constituents very much appreciated this portrayal of faithfulness.

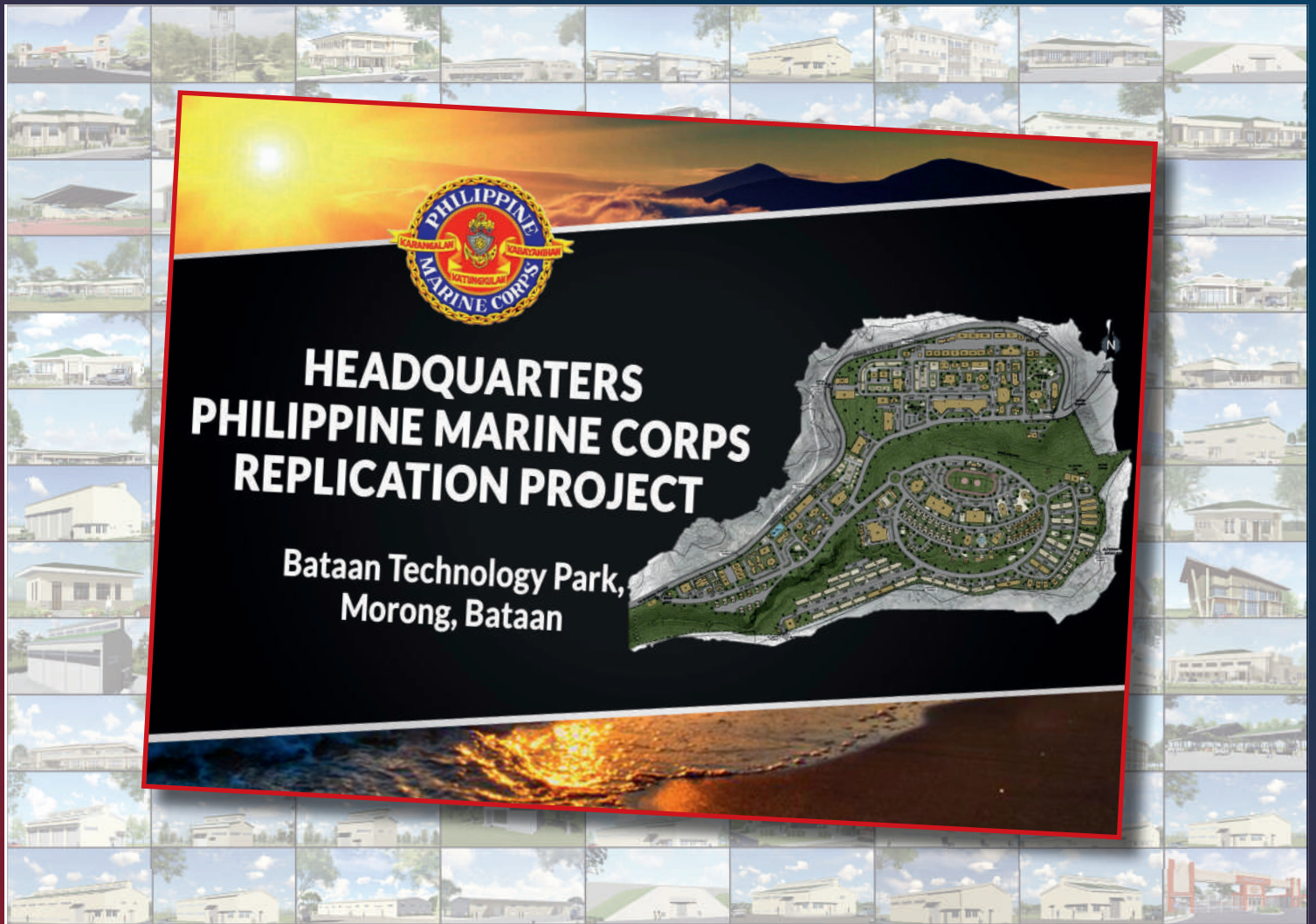
Through the cooperation of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, Bureau of Fire Protection, Philippine Coast Guard, Catholic Church, Provincial Government of Batanes, and all the devotees, this year's celebration of Lent in the Province of Batanes, amidst the pandemic, was a true success.



2LT JEFFERSON Y SALAZAR PN(M)

3rd Platoon Commander, Headquarters Service Company, MBLT-10





THE HPMC REPLICATION PROJECT AT BTP, MORONG, BATAAN

Republic Act No. 7227, also known as the Bases Conversion and Development Act of 1992, accelerated the conversion of military reserves to productive uses and transferred the ownership of certain portions of Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City to the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA). The development and disposition of these properties were aimed at raising funds for the Armed Forces of the Philippines' modernization program and the development of other former United States military bases into alternative productive civilian use.

In the performance of its mandate, the BCDA facilitated the titling and disposition of the portion of Bonifacio Naval Station where Marine Barracks Rudiardo Brown (MBRB) is situated and is now known as the Bonifacio South Point. The BCDA upheld its commitment to the Philippine Navy (PN) and Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) that all affected facilities within MBRB will be functionally relocated and replicated.

For the replication of the headquarters and support facilities of the PMC at MBRB, the BCDA facilitated the approval to develop a 100-hectare area relocation site at the Bataan Technology Park in Morong, Bataan. The PMC designated a technical working group for the replication project that subsequently undertook a series of coordinating meetings, joint surveys, and workshops with BCDA technical and administrative representatives to ensure the systematic and comprehensive implementation of the project.

On November 4, 2021, the PMC, PN, and BCDA highlighted the implementation of the replication project through a simple yet auspicious groundbreaking ceremony.



Force Development and Employment in the 7th Marine Brigade (Reserve)

The 7th Marine Brigade (Reserve) is one of three Marine Brigades (Reserve) and was activated on January 1, 2010 per HPN General Order Number 17 dated February 2010 with headquarters currently located at Marine Barracks Rudiardo Brown, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

The mission of the 7th Marine Brigade (Reserve) is to provide command, control, and administration of Marine Corps Reserve units in its AOR in order to maintain readiness to respond to its mission as a part of the Citizen's Armed Force, mandated in Article III, Section 7, Republic Act No. 7077:

- To provide a base for the expansion of the Philippine Navy (PN) and the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) in particular, in the event of war, invasion, or rebellion;
- To assist in relief and rescue in disasters or calamities;
- To assist in socio-economic development; and
- To assist in the operation and maintenance of essential government and/or private utilities in the furtherance of its overall mission.

According to the official Table of Organization at General Headquarters, AFP, the 7th Marine Brigade (Reserve) is designated as a Combat Unit. Accordingly, the Brigade trains and undertakes exercises for integration and interoperability with line regular units of the PMC to practice core war fighting competencies. The Brigade undertakes these during unilateral, joint and combined exercises with allied partners, such as during Exercise BALIKATAN, KAMANDAG, and Rim of the Pacific ("RIMPAC").

In this regard, training, force development, and employment are among the major lines of effort of the 7th Marine Brigade and among its principal accomplishments over the years. This article seeks to give the reader a sense of the level of training that the Brigade undertook and completed.

The following represents the competencies that reservists of the 7th Brigade have acquired over time through formal training:

Military Education Courses:

1. Field Artillery Basic Course
2. Armor Officers Basic Course
3. Armor Crewmanship Course
4. Advanced Marksmanship Instructor
5. Combat Pistol Qualification
6. Martial Arts Instructor
7. Battalion Commanders Preparatory Course
8. Basic Intelligence Operations
9. Intelligence and Information Collection
10. Incident Command System (ICS) Cadre
11. Marine Corps Planning Process
12. Master of National Security Administration (MNSA)
13. Command and General Staff Course (CGSC)
14. Naval Command and Staff Course (NCS)

The following lists of training that reservists of the Brigade undertook through PMC during Joint and Combined Operations with international allied partners such as the United States Marine Corps, the Guam and Hawaii National Guard, among others:

1. Amphibious Operations
2. Ship to shore movement
3. Amphibious assault aboard PMC and USMC AAVs
4. Boat Operations & Raids
5. Air Assault and Jump Operations
6. Crew-served weapons: 60mm/81mm mortar operations
7. Mechanized operations: Familiarization with armor operations and weapons systems
8. Fires integration: Forward Observer (FO) and Fire Direction Center (FDC) Training; Map Reading & Plotting; Radio communications, FDC plotting of azimuth and deflection of targets; Gun drills; Setting up fire base
9. Fire Team Attacks, Squad Attacks, Platoon Attacks, AAV live fire; IAD through fire team movement
10. Mechanized Assault: Live fire exercise with FA 155mm, 105mm, 60MM and 81mm mortars; LFEM & Infantry- armor maneuvers
11. Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT)
12. Live Fire Day and night training
13. Room clearing (CQB)

14. Jungle Survival
15. Combat Life Support (CLS)
16. Basic Life Support (BLS)
17. Protective Security Operations
18. Sentry Duty
19. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Operations
20. Civil Military Operations (CMO)

One of the accomplishments of the training and development of reservists is their integration with regular Marine Forces in the practice of their core competencies. These are illustrated in the following photos:



Reservist Integration during Bilateral and Unilateral Exercises

At the same time, apart from core war fighting competencies, the 7th Brigade acquired and practiced further competencies which support the mission of the Reserve Force of the PN and the PMC. These are as follows and were likewise practiced during unilateral and multilateral joint and combined operations:

- Promoting Peace and Fellowship in Communities
- Community Relations
- Medical / Dental Missions
- Cooperative Health Engagement (CHE):
 - Basic First Aid
 - Basic Life Support
 - Basic Emergency Care/ Men and Women Health
 - Dental Hygiene
 - Hand Hygiene
 - Rabies and Animal Bites

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Operations:

One of the priority lines of effort in the 7th Brigade is training readiness at the personnel and unit level. This is in line with the overall effort to recruit and replenish personnel whose numbers have diminished over the years due to changes in personal and professional circumstances and health issues, among others. In support of this effort, the 7th Brigade has been undertaking its own in-house training initiative to maintain a training regimen among its reservists



apart from the training programs provided by the PN and the PMC. These are led by reservists in the Brigade who shared their talent and expertise with fellow reservists. Personnel training continues with the commencement of career, specialist, and other training courses which were undertaken by officers and EP from the 7th Brigade.

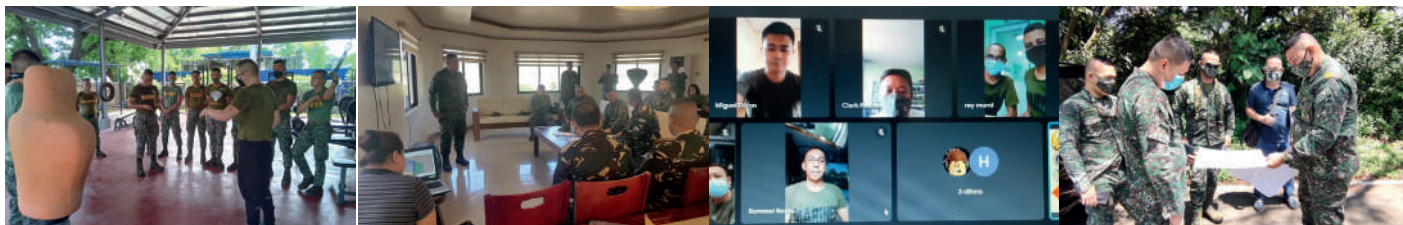
Part of the in-house training consists of physical fitness and conditioning, which is undertaken at the Battalion level. This consists of athletic activities and sports to exercises that draw from martial arts such as hand-to-hand combat. These are undertaken under the supervision of reservist officers who have established backgrounds as martial arts instructors and competitors.

Marine Reservists as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

Historically, Marine Reservists have been employed as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) based on their knowledge and expertise. This goes back to the activation of the Reserve Marksmanship & Sniper Detachment (RMSD) in 1969, whose reservists were experts in precision marksmanship and undertook training for the Philippine Marines. Since then, this has continued and deepened. As part of a directive to integrate and capacitate Marine Reservists, 7th Marine Brigade (Reserve) reservists apply their knowledge and experience in assisting the Corps as SMEs in their respective fields. One of the examples of this initiative is the use since 2020 of 1Lt. Melchor B. Arellano PN(M)(Res) and then Sgt Dianne Marie C. Malonzo PN(M)(Res) who have been part of the Technical Working Group (TWG) for the PMC Replication Plus Project to undertake the Replication and Relocation Project of the new Headquarters Philippine Marine Corps (HPMC) in Morong, Bataan. 1Lt. Arellano is a licensed civil engineer. An Architectural Finishing Specialist, Sgt. Malonzo was recently commissioned and is now 1Lt. Dianne Marie C. Malonzo PN(M)(RES).

In addition, 1Lt. Arellano and Malonzo assisted the TWG in the formulation of the Site Development Plan for the Combat Service and Support (CSS) Satellite School to be located at Colonel Ernesto Ravina Air Base ("CERAB") in Capas, Tarlac. 1Lt. Arellano and Malonzo have been acting in this capacity to support O/MC4 since October 2020.

The information and photos presented here



demonstrate the competencies which the 7th Marine Brigade (Reserve) has built up over the years in its effort to integrate with regular Marine units in support of the mission of the PN and the PMC. During peacetime and times of crisis, emergencies, and wartime and other contingencies, the 7th Marine Brigade (Reserve) strives to continue its

development as a force to carry out its mission and help the Filipino people. As new reservists enter the force, the Brigade looks forward to continuing the spirit of volunteerism, fortified with the Marine ethos.



COL ROBERTO EMMANUEL T FELICIANO PN(M)(MNSA)(RES)
Commander, 7th Marine Brigade Reserve

BUILDING AND SUSTAINING MARINE RESERVIST CAPABILITIES IN NORTHERN LUZON

By: Sgt Adela Bersamina Suarez PN(M)(Res)

The Philippine Navy Marine Reserve Force is made up of Filipinos who volunteered to be of service to the country. They are ready to step up to any challenges - if and when the country needs them. Being part of reserve force has the same prestige as being in the Regular Force in serving the country.

The Marine Reservists of Marine Brigade Reserve-Northern Luzon actively joined the activities from various municipalities that conducted Coastal Clean Up Drive Activity in Binmaley Baywalk, Lingayen Baywalk, and Dasol Beachwalk under the leadership of Lt. Col. Vladimir T. Mata PN(M)(MNSA)(Res), Acting Brigade Commander of Marine Brigade Reserve - Northern Luzon.

On March 14-21, 2022, the Naval Reserve Center-Northern Luzon (NRCen-NL) conducted Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE) to the PN Marine Reservists based on their competencies and skills through augmentation to different offices of NRCen-NL. Their mission was to undertake necessary planning and preparations to ensure the successful conduct of capacity building training for reservists. Specifically, the objective was to enhance, develop, and capacitate the PN Reservists' operational readiness, competencies, and interoperability between the regular components.

The NRCen-NL also conducted an Information Collection Training to the PN Reservist on March 21, 2022. The training equipped the participants with knowledge and skills to become effective information collectors. Twenty Marine Reservists participated in the activity.

On April 1-3, 2022, the Northern Luzon Command in Camp Aquino, Tarlac City hosted the Regional Reservist Convention 2022 with the theme, "Building a Capable Reserve Force Amidst the Pandemic Situation in a New Environment." The 20 Marine Reservists of Naval Reserve Center-Northern Luzon participated in the said convention.

The Assistant Chief of the Unified Command Staff for Reservist and Retiree Affairs, U9 Northern Luzon Command, Col. Angel E. Cuenco, remarked, "The primary purpose of this activity is to strengthen and unify the reserve components of the AFP by highlighting their important role as reservists. This is to motivate and push all of you to rededicate yourselves on your mandated mission of nation building."

As Reservists, service is putting first the interest of others before our own without expecting anything in return. Being a Reservist is always a humbling and life-changing experience. As a citizen, it is our duty to love and serve our country, to help our countrymen in the best of our ability, and to promote volunteerism, service, and peace.





The Reserve Component in the Promotion of Marksmanship in the Philippine Marine Corps and the Philippine Navy

The ethos of the Marine Corps lies in the individual Marine with his rifle. This is why the fundamental member of the Marine Corps organization is the Marine rifleman who underscores the importance of marksmanship and the use of small arms as the foundation of the individual warfighting competency in the Corps. It is this aspect that drove the establishment of the first Philippine Marine Reserve unit, which started with the Reserve Marksmanship and Sniper Detachment (RMSD) in 1969. At the time, there was no dedicated marksmanship training unit in the Philippine Marines. The events and circumstances behind this that follow in this article were narrated over time to the author by the late Col. Danilo L. Gamboa PN(M)(GSC)(Res) and drawn from research conducted.



Above, left: then-CDR **DANILO L. GAMBOA PN(RES)**.
Right: **LCDR ADOLO S. FELICIANO JR PN(RES)**, during a rifle competition



Above: **LTSg GAMBOA (left)** using the newly issued M16A1 service rifle and **LCDR FELICIANO (right)** of the Reserve Marksmanship and Sniper Detachment (RMSD) with the M1 Garand at Fort Bonifacio.

In June 1970, then LTSg Gamboa reported to the Philippine Marines to join several reservists who were with the Reserve Marksmanship and Sniper Detachment (RMSD), which was activated in 1969 with LCdr. Adolfo S. Feliciano Jr. O-101338 PN and LTSg. Horacio R. Miranda PN, LTJg. Edgar V. Bond Jr. PN, and LTJg. Eduardo Zalvidea PN. All were newly commissioned reservists and members of the Philippine National Shooting Team. In November 1969, the RMSD was activated as the first line reserve unit of the Philippine Marines with LCdr. Feliciano as its first Commander. At the time, there was no dedicated marksmanship training unit. According to Col. Gamboa, the RMSD was tasked to upgrade and improve the standards of marksmanship not only for the Marines but the whole AFP. Under LCdr. Feliciano, the RMSD became the principal marksmanship training unit of the Philippine Marines and was the first to receive the newly issued M16A1 5.56mm service rifle.

The first Commander of the RMSD, LCdr. Feliciano or “Chito” as he was known, excelled in numerous domestic and international competitions where he represented the Philippines in the Olympics, Asian Games, and other shooting and fencing matches. In January 1966, he broke the world and Olympic record of 597 x 600 for the 50-meter Olympic Prone rifle event by shooting a perfect score of 600 x 600 with 18xs at a match at the National Rifle and Pistol Association range in Quezon City. It was primarily because of his credentials as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) in precision marksmanship that Chito was commissioned as a reservist officer for the Philippine Marines to head the RMSD.

In June 1970, the RMSD initiated marksmanship and sniper training with the Marines. Apart from the military aspects of marksmanship, the RMSD trained Marines for competitive sports shooting and positioned the Marines as the most accomplished among the AFP competitive shooting teams. The program produced international shooters among the Marines, such as MSgt. Ludovico Espinosa PN(M), MSgt Pacifico Salandanan PN(M), Teofilo Gonzales, and Manuel Maclang, among others. The Marines participated in National Open Shooting Championships as members of the AFP Shooting Team and competed in many international shooting events.

The RMSD likewise competed with the United States Marine Corps (USMC) shooting teams, as Col. Gamboa recounted. In the 1970s, the Philippine Marines competed and won twice against the USMC teams while demonstrating

their skill with the M1 Garand service rifle using standard iron sights at 500 meters.

In providing marksmanship and sniper training, the RMSD played a direct role in building and maintaining the core war fighting competency of the Marines. At this early time, they already practiced a direct role in augmenting and integrating as subject matter experts (SMEs) with line units to apply their skills in precision marksmanship. The principal rifles issued to the RMSD were the M1D Garand sniper rifle. In June 1970, then-Capt. Rudiardo A. Brown PN became Commandant, Philippine Marine Brigade. This was the period characterized by violent anti-government demonstrations taking place in Manila. During these tumultuous times, Marine reservists played an active role in helping secure the Commander-in-Chief and his family. LCdr. Feliciano and the Marine reservists of the RMSD were placed on continuous Annual Active Training (AADT) orders for their assignment to the Presidential Security Command (PSC) as part of the sniper contingent that secured Malacañang Palace.

Duty with the RMSD was not without risk. On January 30, 1973, LCdr. Feliciano was aboard a Philippine Navy De Havilland L-20 Beaver light aircraft with the Commandant, then Commodore Rudiardo A. Brown AFP, and five personnel. While en route to inspect an amphibious exercise being undertaken by reservists integrated with the 1st Marine Battalion in Bataan, their aircraft crashed on landing in Lamao, Bataan with no survivors. LCdr. Feliciano became the first Marine reservist to die on active duty. Thereafter, the Philippine Marine Training Center and 50-meter firing range and Marine Headquarters building were named Feliciano Hall and Brown Hall, respectively.



Above is the plaque at the entrance to Feliciano Hall, site of the Marine Corps Force Development Center at Marine Barracks Rudiardo Brown, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City

Nonetheless, the reserves continued their role in training and capability development. In late 1979, the Naval Reserve Command formed a Marine Battalion from reservists which was designated as the 10th Marine Battalion with then Lt. Col. Gamboa in command. Previously, in May 1978, the Marines had adopted ground ranks. After their training, the reservists were demobilized and the Marksmanship and Sniper Detachment (MSD) was established under the Philippine Marine Training Center (PMTTC) with Lt. Col. Gamboa as its Commander. Under Lt. Col. Gamboa, the MSD continued the role of the RMSD to train Marines in basic marksmanship and sniping. Sometime thereafter, Lt. Col. Gamboa went to West Germany to inspect and bring back two Heckler & Koch PSG-1 sniper rifles for the use of the Philippine Navy. At that time, the PSG-1 was the most capable semi-auto sniper rifle in service.

This account helps trace the origins of the Marine reserve component in helping develop warfighting capabilities of the Philippine Marine Corps. It also documents how, from

early on, the Marines had been organizing and employing their reserve component based on their skills as subject matter experts (SMEs), in this case, for marksmanship, to help build core war fighting capabilities. The Corps has continued to do this as it has trained reservists as advanced marksmanship instructors with the 4th Marine Brigade (Reserve) in 2008. Reservist officers and enlisted personnel were integrated with regular Marines for the duration of the course at MBGL, Ternate, Cavite. Over time, what started as the RMSD and the first institutionalized marksmanship and sniper unit in the armed forces evolved to become The Special Operations and Scout Sniper School (TSOSSS) of today.

In recognition of the contribution of the reserve component to marksmanship development in the Philippine Marine Corps, an award was conceived in 2006 by then BGen. Jonathan C. Martir PN(M), as Commander, CSSB and designated as the Chito Feliciano Award. Since then, the award has been presented to the top graduating student of the Marine Scout Sniper Course. The award consists of a figure of a Marine Scout Sniper with his ghillie suit and scout sniper rifle that is mounted on a base with the Marine Scout Sniper Badge. The badge was designed by then Col. Martir in 2001 during his term as MC5.



Above left: The Chito Feliciano Award which is awarded to the top graduate of the Marine Scout Sniper Course. Right: Detail of the Marine Scout Sniper Badge

Reservists have continued to support marksmanship training in the Corps. In 2006, Officer and enlisted reservists from the 4th Marine Brigade (Reserve) undertook the PMC Advanced Marksmanship Instructor Course which took place at MBGL, Ternate and was attended by both regular and reservist Marines. Graduates of the course are part of the 7th Marine Brigade (Reserve).

Accordingly, this account helps trace the origin of the Marine Reserve Brigades, which started with the 4th Marine Brigade (Reserve), activated in 1996 as the first Brigade-sized line reserve unit of the Philippine Marine Corps with Col. Gamboa as its first Commander. The 4th Marine Brigade (Reserve) was succeeded by the activation of the 7th, 8th, and 9th Marine Brigades (Reserve) in 2010.

The current Table of Organization from General Headquarters, AFP designates the Marine Reserve Brigades as a Combat Unit. This underscores core war fighting competencies, whose importance was the original basis for the establishment of the RMSD as first line Marine reserve unit. This continues to this day when Marine reservists are integrated with regular Philippine Marine units and international allied partners for joint and combined exercises.



COL ROBERTO EMMANUEL T FELICIANO PN(M)(MNSA)

Commander, 7th Marine Brigade Reserve



Nothing Beats the Heart of a Volunteer

When I decided to join the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC), they told us we were volunteers. Nobody forced us to join the Corps. We chose to sign up and become Marines and that is the principle that has stuck with me ever since. Marines are volunteers committed to risking everything (lives and limbs) to protect the Filipino people. Aside from the men and women deployed all over the country to make sure our citizens sleep soundly at night, there are also those unique breeds of volunteers who chose to serve under the banner of the few, the proud. These are the Marine Reservists.

I first met many of them when I was a second lieutenant back in 2009. I was the executive officer of the 38th Marine Company, Marine Battalion Landing Team-8. Our battalion was undergoing retraining and refurbishing and chose our company to participate in the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Exercise in Cebu, a bilateral exercise between the Philippine and United States Marines. During this time, I met the group of Technical Sergeant Ferrer, a Marine Reservist. At the time, I only knew about the reservists but did not know how they functioned and what they were doing so I decided to find out more. I talked to them whenever I had a chance during breaks while rehearsing for the Amphibious Assault, which was the culmination of the said Exercise. It was then that I found out that TSgt. Ferrer is a native of Cebu, a businessman, and a diver. His other colleagues came from different walks of life and held various jobs. One of them was even an NBI agent. They were all from Cebu. They told me that they joined the Reserve Force mainly because they wanted to become soldiers at some point in their lives. But destiny had a different path for them, so they ended up with their current professions. They sought a way to be able to serve still and being in the Reserve Forces allowed them to do so. Though it would not be in a total capacity since they have day jobs, they are contented with being able to continue their passion

during their free time. That is something that I found very admirable. They have to balance their time between their jobs, family, and serving in the Marines. When I asked them why the Marines, they outright replied that they admire the Marines because it is the most disciplined unit in the Armed Forces. A few days later, our company headed back to Manila. We still kept in touch, but we hadn't seen each other after that.

I was assigned to the Naval Reserve Command (NRC) ten years later. It was only then that I fully understood our reservists' function and purpose but my admiration for them remained the same. I then had a clear picture of what they stand for in our organization. The Marine reservists are:

- The men and women who are our force multipliers in the event of war.
- Our partners in nation-building during peacetime.
- Our active supporters as we carry out our day-to-day Civil-Military Operations (CMO).

In the event of war, invasion, or uprising, we will call upon our Reserve Force to reinforce our Marines on the frontlines as we face whatever threat comes our way. These reservists have also been trained to be integrated into our regular force. Although we cannot give as much training as needed to enhance the skills of our reservists, the Command is now focusing on making sure that they seamlessly blend in with the regular units. We also see to it that we recruit reservists who have the skills that we need to boost our capability, especially in Information Security and Engineering.

We also rely on our Reserve Force as partners in nation-building during peacetime. Since the Reservists are still partly civilians, they are our link to our civilian



stakeholders. Through them, we are able to reach out to our civilian counterparts in the government, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, and private organizations. Since these Reservists come from all walks of life, they can help us reach out to the people who can help us accomplish our goal of nation-building towards a progressive and prosperous future.

As Marine Reservists, they can help us in our CMO. In the past decade, we have seen an increase in the CMO activities among the units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Of course, the same goes for the PMC. In the past years, we have focused our CMO activities in our Areas of Operation, mainly where there is an enemy presence. But as time went by, we extended our operations to include the urban areas. We have also given due focus on building our image and recognizing how our people perceive us. We have come to consider the significant effect of public perception in our effort to defeat the enemies of the state. In these efforts, our Marine Reservists are very supportive and have given their valuable time to assist us. Time and time again, our Marine Reservists have shown us that they are indeed our force multipliers not only as we prepare for a more significant threat but also as we persevere to keep the peace that our forebears worked hard to achieve.

During one of these CMO activities, I encountered another group of amazing Marine Reservists. In December 2021, during the onslaught of Typhoon Odette, several regions in the country were severely damaged and the people were in dire need of relief goods at the soonest possible time. One of the affected areas was the province of Palawan, which happens to be under the 3rd Marine Brigade Area of Responsibility (AOR). All the relief efforts were concentrated in the Visayas region and there was only one Navy Vessel bound for Palawan at that moment. We had to fill it up with as many relief goods and other much-needed resources as possible, not only for the affected units but also for civilians. I got in touch with Lt. Col. Emmett Manantan PN(M)(Res) and 1Lt. Dante Perello PN(M)(Res). They immediately sprang into action, and after a couple of hours, they called to tell me that they got in touch with some stakeholders and that relief goods for Palawan were on the way. The goods arrived later that afternoon and were delivered to the port where the Navy vessel was waiting. We needed an extra workforce for the

hauling and loading of goods at that time and our Reservists did not disappoint. Several enlisted Marine Reservists arrived shortly, led by SSg. Arnold Fernandez, SSg. Eric Tabujara, and Sgt. Romnick Cruz. As a result, 1,000 relief goods were able to reach Palawan the very next day.

Another encounter I had with them was when there was a massive fire in Cavite City in March of this year. As the affected area was near a Navy Camp, the Navy wanted to conduct an outreach program to give relief goods to the victims. However short notice it was, Lt. Col. Manantan, and 1Lt. Perello assured me that they could come up with something for the activity. A few days later, 1,000 relief packs filled with 3kg of rice, canned goods, noodles, chocolate drink, drinking water, soap, and shampoo arrived. We went to Cavite City and we were also joined by Marine Reservists from Motolite led by Sgt. Roy Reyes PN(M)(Res).

The activities mentioned above were only two of my interactions with our Marine Reservists. Still, it shows how dedicated they are to supporting the Corps in our endeavors. They are not only present during Civil-Military Operations but also during trainings and exercises. In the recently concluded Balikatan Exercise, reservists from the units led by Lt. Col. Kenneth Santos PN(M)(Res) and Lt. Col. Angie Andrada PN(M)(Res) participated in the activities conducted in Ternate, Cavite. Marine Reservists from Cagayan also participated in the said Exercise.

There is strength in numbers. I know that every avid basketball fan knows this. And this also holds in the military. The numbers always tell the difference between victory and defeat in every warfare. In our case, if our Reserves are as well-equipped and well-trained as that of the Regulars, then we can accomplish any given mission. The dedication and commitment of our Reservists are already unfathomable. Their willingness is undeniable. They are their breed of volunteers. In the years to come, these volunteers will play a significant role as we advance into the kind of Marine Corps we want to be.



MAJ JERBER ANTHONY J BELONIO PN(M)
Member of Philippine Military Academy "Maragtas" Class of 2007



A Tree That Bends

In this season of uncertainty and loss, the reservist community continuously encounters new challenges in doing things, particularly in reservist-related program implementations and service delivery. The new normal and the changes in the policies created both difficulty in executing the usual procedures and an opportunity to develop new solutions to the problems.

For the case of some reservists, providing education and training to our Marine troops to use virtual tools and online platforms was the way to cope with the current challenges. As we are all aware, business operations, public education, and even government service deliveries suddenly shifted to online platforms because of the limitations brought by the pandemic. As much as we wanted to return to the old normal, the pandemic and the lockdown forced us to shift towards new procedures and online tools. Regrettably, most of our Marine units could not anticipate this sudden paradigm shift, and many personnel were left struggling and clambering to adjust to the new virtual operations. As luck would have it, many of our reservists have the skills, resources, and experience to address operational needs.

In the case of the 7th Marine Brigade (7MBde), reservists design and provide short course lectures to empower our Marine office personnel in the use of essential office software, such as Canva and Microsoft PowerPoint, as well as improving the Marines' social media presence competencies through lectures on basic photography, videography, multimedia design principles, and English writing. These lectures are provided either through virtual conferencing applications or an actual classroom presentation, depending on the availability of resources and audience.

In its latest activity, the 73rd Marine Battalion (Reserve) spearheaded a Multimedia Design Principles and Social Media Management workshop. The SMEs (Subject

Matter Experts) - MSg. Luis Paolo Sotto PN(M)(Res), Sgt. Paolo Martin Portillo PN(M)(Res) and Sgt. Jaimie Sarmiento PN(M)(Res) aimed to teach the Marine reservists the multimedia design and photography standards to prepare them in creating better social media content and PMC promotions in line with the Philippine Navy Social Media Management Guidelines. This workshop is only the first of the many learning and development workshops that the 73rd Marine Battalion will be offering to its members this year.

The continuous demand for these lectures reflects our reservist community's vast potential and opportunities to unceasingly contribute to the Philippine Marine Corps amidst their limitations and sporadic policy changes. Even though the pandemic continues to remind us of our weaknesses, it also highlights our power to adapt and develop into better versions of ourselves. The emergence of this new paradigm provides us with various possibilities to continuously serve and contribute long-term developments to our unit. After all, there will always be a persistent call for a new brand of reservists who will be able to thrive and deliver in today's needs and challenges.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, I believe that resilience will be the best word to use. Resilience in adapting to sudden losses and changes. Resilience in pursuing our mission to serve as reservists of the country amidst the current challenges. And resilience in discerning new ways to contribute to the unit's goals despite our limitations and system changes. Remember – the wind does not break a tree that bends.



Sgt Jaimie Lou T Sarmiento PN(M)(Res)

Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, S7, 73rd Marine Battalion (Reserve)



WORDS OF GRATITUDE

By: MAJ TIRSO R TUGAGAO PN(M)(RES)

Making this remarkable event a victorious one is indeed unimaginable without all your support. Hence it is only but fair to grab this moment, to acknowledge and be grateful for the people who have contributed much from the recently held Philippines-US Balikatan Exercises 2022.

My utmost respect to the United States Government, particularly the US Marine Corps, and to all of you who have been a part of our trainings.

Your motivation and conviction are our backbone in becoming resilient against all odds and in continuing what we started.

You are our inspiration to improve the quality of our public service as Marine reserves and rest assured, we will continue to strengthen bilateral inter-operability, capabilities, trust, and cooperation.

In the 8-day duration of the PH-US Balikatan Exercise 2022 in our hometown, Aparri, Cagayan, we have been tested by circumstances beyond our control, but we are the Marines. I am so happy to have met these special people: Cpt. Ronny Leinherdt/ 2nd Platoon Commander Company B, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Company, 1Lt. Joshua Ziev/ 2nd Platoon Commander Engineer Company A, MSg. Jeremy Roberts/ Company Operations Chief, 9th ESB, Engineer Company A, and Sgt. Michael Urias/ CRG Crew Chief, 1-1 ADA HHB.

This Balikatan Exercise 2022 is one of the most significant events in my life. You have influenced me to become the OFFICER that I can be. I am very privileged for you have given me many chances to prove myself to lead and grow confidently with your trust. To all the members of the US Marine Corps, we are grateful for you have guided us well.

It is sad to see you go, but we are happy because you inculcated to us your special troop tactics and combat trainings and demonstrated high powered weapons and equipment.

To MGen. Nestor C. Herico PN(M), Commandant Philippine Marine Corps (PMC), Col. Eloise Sotero Fabian PN(M), Commander NRCen-NL, Cdr. Joseph Eric Palattao PN, Deputy Commander NRCen-NL, Sgt. Samuel Pongawis PN(M), Training Staff, I owe you much. Everything that we have done in the Balikatan Exercise 2022 have been documented in my thoughts. To Lt. Col. Rowan Rimas PN(M) (GSC), MC3 PMC, your exemplary leadership marks a big space in our hearts. You deserve more than any other rewards the PMC could offer. If only I have the power to promote all of you because of your gracious heart, I could have done so. You are the very people who deserve admiration, respect, and love.

And now, we see your excitement and eagerness as you have witnessed us finish our Territorial and Coastal Defense and be the first to experience joining Balikatan Exercise as proud member of the Reserve Force of the Philippine Navy-Marines, particularly 11th Marine Battalion Reserve.

With this, we can say that we've done a great job. We are hoping for your support in all our future undertakings. To the regular forces of the AFP and US Marine Corps, let us join hands and walk together in achieving our hopes and aspirations. Help us discover and explore God's gift to us. Help us promote the vision and mission of the Philippine Navy and the AFP as a whole.

Once again, our heartfelt gratitude. Congratulations. Snappy Salute to all. Hooraaaah! Hooraaaah! Hooraaah!





Marines in the largest Balikatan Military Exercise

An annual event, Balikatan Exercises (BK), aims to develop trust and cooperation, showcase capabilities, and improve the interoperability and combat readiness between the Philippines and the United States armed forces. This Bilateral Engagement of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) enhances the Philippine Marine Operating Forces' (MOF) capability for Archipelagic Coastal Defense (ACD) maneuvers, which will significantly impact the national policies and strategies for external and internal defense of the Philippine Archipelago. (Archipelagic Coastal Defense – MCOC, 2021).

The 37th Balikatan Exercise (BK 37-22) was participated by nearly 9,000 Filipino and American soldiers. Among the 3,000 participants of the AFP, 657 are from the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC). In this large-scale military exercise, the Marine Corps' focus on the interoperability training and subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs) benefit the PMC as we evolve into an Archipelagic Defense Force that can perform seaward landward maneuvers being the ground combat instrument of the Philippine Navy.

The two-week exercise incorporated Territorial Coastal Defense, Engineer Coastal Support, Recon Interoperability, Combined and Joint Special Operations Forces (CJSOF), Ground-Based Defense, Amphibious Operations, Information Operations, Combined-Joint High Mobility Artillery Rocket System Rapid Infiltration (CJHIRAIN), Joint Forward Arming/Refueling Point (JFARP), Combined Arms Live-Fire Exercise (CALFEX), Chemical

Biological Radiological Nuclear (CBRN) Operations, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) Operations. These capability trainings between the US and Philippine Marines respond to the rapidly changing security environment as AFP pivots from internal security operations to external defense.

The 6th Marine Battalion (6MBn), currently undergoing a retraining and refurbishing program, was the primary unit to participate in the said activity, along with Marine Battalion Landing Team – 10 (MBLT-10) and other supporting units of the PMC such as the Field Artillery Battalion, Assault Armor Battalion, Marine Corps Engineering Battalion, Coastal Defense Regiment, and Force Reconnaissance Group.

As the 6MBn transitioned to become the 2nd Marine Amphibious Ready Unit (MARU) through the leadership of Lt. Col. Venjie P. Pendon PN(M), companies were tasked to partake in various capability training with the US forces. The 56th Marine Company participated in CALFEX at Crow Valley, Capas, Tarlac. The said activity tested the assets and capabilities of both countries and their doctrines. It developed interoperability in performing combined arms operations while improving the operational readiness of both armed forces.

Similarly, the 36th Marine Company (36MC) and 6th Marine Company (6MC) were sent to Ternate, Cavite to participate in Heliborne Operation, CBRN, and HADR operation exercises. The 36MC was tasked to participate and



perform heliborne operations with USMC counterparts. They also underwent Reconnaissance Interoperability training with US Marine Force Recon held at Force Recon Group, Ternate, Cavite. The 6MC, on the other hand, was tasked to take part in and execute CBRN and HADR operations with the US military counterparts. It is in connection with the four Major capabilities of the MOFs as the PMC equips itself to be a rapid response force. It will support the attainment of the National Military Objectives by protecting the people, rendering aid and assistance, and reducing suffering during natural and human-induced disasters.

The main event of BK 37-22 was the Amphibious Landing Exercise held in Claveria, Cagayan, which was participated by the 26th Marine Company (26MC) and Special Operations Platoon-6. The said activity equipped the MOF with the capability to perform seaward and landward maneuvers in support of the Archipelagic Coastal Defense Force that would secure and defend the country's territorial integrity, coastal zone, Sea Lanes of Communications, all offshore possessions, including islands, features, resource exploration/exploitation, friendly shipping, capital areas, and other critical infrastructures.

The 37th iteration of the Balikatan Exercise once again proved the strong bond and interoperability between the Philippines and United States Marines. This bilateral exercise paved way for capability development as the PMC evolves into a future-oriented Archipelagic Coastal Defense Force that shall adapt to the volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous, and disruptive operating environment. Through this, the PMC will become a highly capable amphibious force-in-readiness for archipelagic defense, ever guided by our ethos of Karangalan, Katungkulan, and Kabayanihan.



1LT LOURDES VICTORIA D SISON PN(M)
1st Platoon Commander, 26th Marine Company, 6th Marine Battalion



MAREX 22 PH IN TAWI-TAWI

By: 2nd Marine Brigade

The Marine Ready Group (MRG) "MAREX 2022" Tawi-Tawi headed by Col. Nestor E. Narag Jr. PN(M)(GSC), Deputy Brigade Commander, 2MBde, and the designated Commander, MRG, formally commenced the training exercise for MAREX 22 PH between the Philippine Marine Corps and the United States Marine Corps (USMC) on January 28, 2022.

The first day of the bilateral exercise started with the consolidation of all participants in the designated training venue. Meet-and-greet sessions and the introduction of the participants signaled the formal start of the training events. The lectures were facilitated by USMC/PMC Subject Matter Experts focusing on Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure (VBSS) special equipment and procedures, Rigid Inflatable

Boat (RHIB) Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs), capability brief, safety procedures, and planning processes. The first day culminated with the conduct of rehearsals, Field Training Exercises, After Action Review, and debriefings.

In compliance with the safety protocols against COVID-19 and for the safety of all the participants, a mandatory antigen test was conducted by the Forward Medical Team. Lectures and orientations related to the strict observance of COVID-19 guidelines and protocols were also conducted.



The first batch and honorary members of FOM are composed of 68 distinguished individuals from various fields across the country.

PMC launches “Friends of Marines”



The Philippine Marine Corps formed a civilian organization called, “Friends of Marines” or FOM, with the PMC Foundation Incorporated (PMCFI) as the proponent. It was launched on May 24, 2022 at Headquarters, PMC.

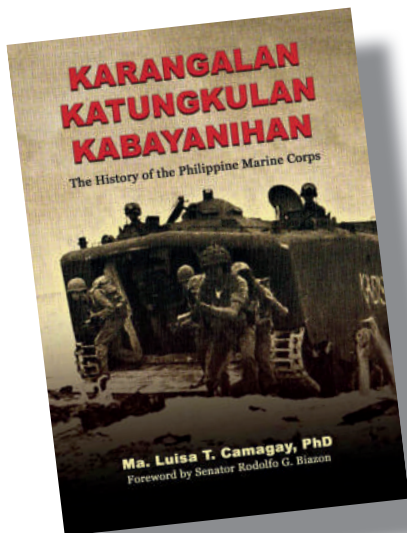
FOM aims to support the Corps with their technical expertise, networks, and resources through PMCFI and its Karangalan, Katungkulan, and Kabayanihan Programs.





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MARINE CANDIDATE SOLDIER

QUALIFICATIONS

- AT LEAST 18 YEARS OLD AND NOT MORE THAN 25 YEARS OLD
- MUST BE A NATURAL BORN FILIPINO CITIZEN AND OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER
- SINGLE, NEVER BEEN MARRIED AND HAS NO CHILD OF HIS/HER OWN
- COMPLETED THE K-12 OR AT LEAST 72 UNITS IN COLLEGE OR TESDA NCII FOR OLD CURRICULUM HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES
- AT LEAST 5'0 (60 INCHES)
- MUST HAVE NO TATTOO

INITIAL REQUIREMENTS

- PSA BIRTH CERTIFICATE
- K-12 DIPLOMA / TESDA DIPLOMA
- TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS
- 2 X 2 PICTURE (WHITE BACKGROUND)

MARINE OFFICER CANDIDATE

QUALIFICATIONS

- AT LEAST 20 YEARS OLD BUT NOT A DAY OLDER THAN 25 YEARS OLD ON THE DATE OF ADMISSION
- MUST BE A NATURAL BORN FILIPINO CITIZEN AND OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER
- SINGLE, NEVER BEEN MARRIED AND HAS NO CHILD OF HIS/HER OWN
- GRADUATE OF 4-YEAR BACCALAUREATE DEGREE
- AT LEAST 5'0 BUT NOT MORE THAN 6'4
- MUST HAVE NO TATTOO

INITIAL REQUIREMENTS

- PSA BIRTH CERTIFICATE
- COLLEGE DIPLOMA
- TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS
- 2 X 2 PICTURE (WHITE BACKGROUND)

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F

Focus on the Defense System of Management to effectively align capability development strategy with resource management.

O

Optimize Operational Tempo responsibilities for rapid deployments and mission accomplishments.

R

Revitalize Gender and Development programs and reinforce gender perspectives at all levels.

C

Capacitate the Corps as a force provider.

E

Ensure smooth transfer of Headquarters, PMC to Morong, Bataan.