



P N P News Release

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WE CAN NOW SLEEP BETTER AT NIGHT WITH AL-GHOZI GONE

Filipinos should be very glad that police operatives were able to neutralize convicted Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi in North Cotabato last Sunday.

If critics doubt PNP Chief Hermogenes Ebdanes's narrative that it was a legitimate shoot-out that led to Al-Ghozi's death, then they should offer concrete proof to the contrary, not innuendo and speculation.

Al-Ghozi orchestrated the lethal Dec. 30, 2000 bombings of the Light Rail Transit, a bus, a park, a gas station and the international airport's carpark. That precision attack killed 21 people and injured more than 100 others.

Anyone who could perpetrate the killing and maiming of innocent civilians, including children, for a misplaced cause is a hardcore criminal who deserves to be punished severely.

Al-Ghozi was convicted to serve 17 years in prison for illegal possession of tons of explosives that could have dealt more murder and mayhem in the country had he not been captured.

And with his escape from prison, he had the capability once again to mount further terrorist attacks that could have resulted in more casualties.

Thus, when police and military operatives finally cornered him in Pigkawayan, North Cotabato last Sunday, they were perfectly within their right to neutralize him as he was armed and dangerous.

The operatives who carried out the operation deserve praise, not condemnation. After all, the PNP and AFP were given express authority by the president to go after Al-Ghozi and bring him back to prison where he belonged.

But in choosing to fight it out with law enforcers, Al-Ghozi signed his own death warrant.

While other countries, particularly the United States, Australia and Singapore unequivocally hailed Al-Ghozi's killing as a significant victory in the war against terrorism, our homegrown detractors unfairly accuse the police of a rub-out, without offering any proof.

Al-Ghozi's killing should unify us, rather than divide us.

We Filipinos should all unite against terrorism. Al-Ghozi may be gone, but there are still terrorist cells out there just waiting for the right opportunity to carry out cowardly attacks against innocent people.

Let's stop all the carping criticism and let law enforcers pursue the terrorists in our midst, because the bombs that they detonate do not discriminate at all between combatants and non-combatants.

As far as terrorists are concerned, everyone is fair target, including you and me.