



# PRESS RELEASE

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## Secretary Lorenzana cites programs to honor vets

Leading the celebration of the 2018 Philippine Veterans Week, Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana highlighted the programs that aim to promote the welfare of war veterans and their dependents at the Wreath-Laying Ceremony on April 5, 2018 at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

“Recognizing the veterans’ great contribution to society, the Department of National Defense, through the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), endeavors to honor them through programs that intend to ensure their welfare and wellbeing and that of their families.” Secretary Lorenzana said during his speech.

The defense chief shared that from September to December 2016, a total of PhP4.773 billion Total Administrative Disability Pension (TADP) had been paid to 21,976 surviving spouses of deceased WWII Veterans and to 4,232 living post second world war veterans who are 80 years old and above.

With PVAO actively pursuing legislation to reform the pension system and upgrade veterans benefits, Secretary Lorenzana announced that House Bill Number 270, which seeks to increase the old age pension of senior veterans from PhP 5,000 to PhP20,000, has been approved by the House Committees on Veterans Affairs and Appropriations.

Secretary Lorenzana also mentioned that President Duterte handed PhP 150 million to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) for the further improvement of its facilities, services, and equipment as the President intends to provide the best hospital for the veterans. As instructed by the President, PhP100 million will be allotted for medical equipment and the PhP 50 million for medicines.

PVAO’s efforts to uplift the welfare and wellbeing of Filipino veterans include their empowerment by unifying Filipino veterans organizations across the country under one umbrella organization, the Veterans Federation of the Philippines. PVAO also continues to preserve and develop military shrines and to digitize world war records to memorialize the veterans’ heroic deeds and keep alive their ideals.

The agency has also launched programs to make transactions more convenient for veterans and their beneficiaries. It launched the Skype Validation Program to spare the veterans and surviving spouses from personally submitting their Pensioner’s Update Form (PUF) and establish their continued entitlement to benefits from PVAO.

“Indeed, your **One Defense Team** is doing all we can to facilitate the continuous stream of benefits for our veterans. This reflects that our first commitment is to our people—not only to our war veterans, but to our present and future defenders as well,” Secretary Lorenzana concluded.

The Wreath-Laying Ceremony, which is part of Philippine Veterans Week, is an institutional way of venerating the memory of Filipino patriots and martyrs who laid down their lives for the motherland.

Proclamation No. 466, Series of 1989, designated the period from April 5 to 11 of every year as Philippine Veterans Week, in order to promote, preserve, and memorialize principles, ideals and deeds of our war veterans as a means to enhance patriotism and love of country, especially among the youth of the land.

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