

Army Vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride



TEAM ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

06 August 2017

Sunday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST AUGUST 6, 2017 SUNDAY

SOUTHWEST MONSOON AFFECTING THE WESTERN SECTION OF LUZON AND VISAYAS (As of 4:00 AM - August 5, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE 5:40 AM	SUNSET 6:23 PM
MOONRISE 5:16 PM	MOONSET 4:09 AM
FIRST QUARTER JUL 30 11:23 PM	FULL MOON AUG 8 2:11 AM
LOW TIDE 5:08 PM 0.09 Meter	HIGH TIDE MANILA SOUTH HARBOR 8:50 AM 1.21 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

METRO MANILA 26 - 31 °C	TAGAYTAY 22 - 28 °C	TACLOBAN 25 - 32 °C
TUGUEGARAO 24 - 33 °C	LEGAZPI 26 - 33 °C	CAGAYAN DE ORO 24 - 33 °C
LAOAG 24 - 31 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA 24 - 32 °C	METRO DAVAO 26 - 33 °C
BAGUIO 16 - 22 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD 25 - 32 °C	ZAMBOANGA 24 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK 25 - 32 °C	METRO CEBU 24 - 34 °C	

MONDAY - FRIDAY
11AM & 5PM

WEEKDAYS
6AM, 6:30 PM & 9PM
WEEKENDS
6AM

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The Manila Times

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Military braces for Marawi spillover

BY JAIME R. PILAPIL

MILITARY officials expressed fears that terrorists operating in Marawi City, in a daring move, could move to Manila.

The possibility of a spill over has prompted authorities to deploy of a 25-man Philippine Army contingent in areas near the Golden Mosque in Quiapo, Manila.

Major Jeoffret Braganza admitted that this fear is the main reason why his group was directed to stay in Quiapo, particularly in two barangays, for three months mainly to profile the people living there and prevent the entry of any terrorist.

"Imagine if extremists will take hold of Quiapo, it will be a disaster," Braganza told reporters when he visited them at the Manila Police District Press Corps office on Friday.

Braganza is the commanding officer of the 11th Civil-Military Operations Company Regiment, Philippine Army based in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. The deployment started on July 20 with two teams making rounds 24 hours daily.

"The Quiapo area is under strict surveillance, particularly Barangays 383 and 384. We cannot be caught with our pants down," Braganza said, adding that they make sure no "foreign" individual would be able to infiltrate the place.

Braganza said it is not easy to win the trust of barangay residents and their leaders from the barangay chair-

men to village councilors.

As part of efforts to establish rapport with people in the area, the contingent is launched "Community Support Program," or activities consisting of medical and dental missions, feeding, haircut, youth leadership summit, educational tours, and operation clean-up, among others.

Meanwhile, a total of 265 school children from Marawi City have moved to Manila and many of them are now staying with their relatives in Quiapo area, including Barangays 383 and 384.

Concerned about their situation, Mayor Joseph Ejercito Estrada instructed Wilfredo Cabral, head of the Division of City Schools, to conduct therapy and trauma treatment sessions for transferees from Marawi City.

"As long as we can, we will continue helping these children and their

families gravely affected by the war in Marawi. They need all the help they can get, especially those innocent children," Estrada said in a statement.

Many of the Marawi school children were transferred to the Geronimo Santiago Elementary School in Quiapo and Ramon Avanceña High School last July 13.

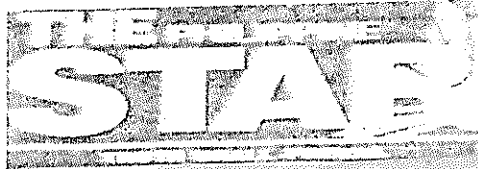
Cabral said they will include in their debriefing parents and relatives of the school children.

"This is a psychological first aid for the children. We will give them counseling, together with their parents, and we will assess their psychological and emotional well-being," he added.

The Marawi siege started last May 22. Some 389,300 residents left the city and about 70,380 are housed in 79 government-run evacuation centers, while the rest have sought shelter with their relatives in nearby provinces or fled to Metro Manila.

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Army tightens security in Cebu, Bohol amid NPA threats

By GILBERT BAYORAN

BACOLOD CITY – The Army's 3rd Infantry Division (ID) has tightened security in Cebu and Bohol to prevent communist New People's Army (NPA) rebels from infiltrating the islands.

Maj. Gen. Jon Aying, 3rd ID commander, disclosed that the NPA and its allied groups plan to reestablish their presence in Cebu and Bohol that have been insurgency-free for more than a decade now.

Aying said that government forces are monitoring the guerrillas based in Panay and Negros that could infiltrate Cebu and Bohol.

He said the military received reports that the rebels are moving from one island to another in the Visayas.

The 3rd ID has jurisdiction over 10 provinces in Western and Central Visayas, as well as Negros Island Region.

"They (NPA) are struggling, but they are doing it. That is what we are trying to do also because we want Cebu and Bohol to be vigilant, to prevent the resurgence of the communist movement there," Aying said.

There were reports that the NPA rebels responsible for the ambush-slay last month of six policemen and a civilian in Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental have fled to Bohol to avoid military operations being conducted by the police and the Army's 303rd Infantry Brigade.

Aying said the NPA has an estimated 200 armed fighters in the Negros Island Region and have remained a major threat to peace and order in the Visayas, aside from threats from other terror groups.

Aying said the operations against the NPA is a continuing process since the rebels were able to consolidate their forces during the peace talks that President Duterte recently suspended following various attacks by communist forces on government troops.

Negros Occidental Gov. Alfredo Marañon Jr. recently allocated a P21.2 million for the projects of Task Force Buglas that was organized to address the threat of

terrorism in the province.

Ilocos Sur clash

A soldier was wounded last Friday during an encounter with NPA rebels in Barangay San Ramon, Sigay, Ilocos Sur.

The wounded soldier was not immediately identified. Ilocos Sur police director Senior Supt. Jovencio Badua Jr. said troopers of the 81st Army Battalion led by Lt. Ahmad Sahirani clashed with several rebels in the area. Police and Army units were deployed to conduct pursuit operations.

Solicitor General Jose Calida yesterday said that Edre Olalia, legal consultant of the National Democratic Front (NDF), is dreaming if he still thinks there is still a chance to resume peace negotiations.

Olalia reportedly said that Calida's request for various regional trial courts (RTCs) to issue recommitment orders for the re-arrest of 21 NDF leaders and members who were allowed to post bail last year so they could participate in the peace talks in Norway was still premature and "ties the hands" of President Duterte.

In his Twitter account, Calida posted yesterday afternoon, "Olalia is either dreaming or crying over spilled milk. He obviously failed to get the drift of President Duterte's statements."

"PRRD's (President Duterte) declaration that the CPP/NPA/NDF (Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army/NDF) is an 'enemy of the State' signifies that peace negotiations with them have been rendered inutile," Calida added.

He also pointed out that it was the NPA that caused the peace negotiations to crumble. "It was the perfidy of the NPA which caused the collapse of the peace talks."

Calida had explained that when the Supreme Court (SC) granted bail to them in its resolution in August last year, which was adopted by the RTCs, the SC had set specific conditions.

Human rights advocates have sought the release of 74-year-old political prisoner Marcos Aggalao.

Aggalao was nabbed last Sept. 11 in his village in Barangay Gawaan, Balbalan, Kalinga on alleged trumped-up charges.

The elderly detainee is suffering from pneumonia, dementia and hypertension.

Aggalao has a pending warrant of arrest for murder that was issued by Judge Marcelino Wakas of the RTC in Tabuk City.

Human rights group Karapatan sees no reason for Aggalao to remain in jail.

Last month, Aggalao suffered a stroke, which paralyzed half of his body and after

a brief hospital confinement, he was returned to Tabuk City jail.

"This callousness of this government is infuriating, opting to release and hand out favors to the guilty and the rich, while condemning political prisoners to rot in detention,"

said Karapatan.

Last July 26, the Kalinga jail warden wrote Baguio City RTC Judge Emmanuel Rasing that they lack the capability to take care of Aggalao in his current condition. - With Evelyn Macairan, Raymund Catindig, Artemio Dumlao

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BIFF in simultaneous Maguindanao attacks

By JOSEPH JUBELAG

COTABATO CITY — A policeman and two soldiers were wounded when Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) rebels launched simultaneously attacks Friday night on a police station and an Army detachment in Datu Unsay and Datu Saudi, Maguindanao.

Sr. Supt. Agustin Tello, Maguindanao police director, said BIFF rebels attacked the municipal police station of Datu Unsay town around 7:30 p.m., which lasted for an hour that resulted in the wounding of PO1 Usman Datuan.

The BIFF rebels also launched an attack on an Army detachment in nearby Barangay Meta, Datu Saudi Ampayuan town at around the same time.

Capt. Arvin John Encinas, spokesperson of Sixth Infantry Division (6th ID), said rebels opened fired at the soldiers who were conducting patrol in the area.

He said a 20-minute gunfight ensued which resulted in the wounding of two soldiers.

He said the troops launched pursuit operation against the rebels who fled toward the marshland area of nearby Datu Piang town.

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INQUIRER

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'Pulong' wants VIP treatment for cops, soldiers at Davao airport

DAVAO CITY — Vice Mayor Paulo "Pulong" Z. Duterte has asked the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) office managing the Francisco Bangoy International Airport (FBIA) here to provide special facilities so that policemen and soldiers could be treated as VIPs, or Very Important Persons.

In a statement released Friday, Duterte said that it was but proper for the government to further honor police officers and soldiers passing through Davao City's international airport, as these men and women were constantly laying their lives down for the country.

Duterte said that the VIP treatment should be accorded to those who will be on their way to a mission.

"Food and drinks and the amenities of the facility should be available for our soldiers and cops for free, especially those who are traveling on a mission – while waiting for their flights," the eldest son of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte said.

"Our soldiers and cops are only doing their jobs and they may be driven by other motivations when they joined the service, but for all their sacrifices for us, for what they are doing for our country, they deserve a little show of recognition and appreciation," he added.

Duterte noted that soldiers and cops were already seeing action in different conflicts, among them the war against drugs and the retaking of Marawi City. (Yas D. Ocampo)

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AFP includes drug test as requirement for promotion

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has included drug testing in its requirement for promotion and trainings and schoolings abroad to ensure that no soldier and civilian employees are using or addicted to illegal drugs.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief military information officer, said the move is part of the effort of the AFP leadership to make all military camps and officers across the country a drug-free workplace.

"Drug testing will be part of the requirements for promotion, schooling, and designations to key positions of all our members in the military, including our civilian employees," said

Arevalo.

He warned that personnel who would test positive in both the initial conduct of drug test and the subsequent confirmatory tests would be in for a lot of trouble as these may lead to dismissal from service.

Arevalo said the new policy is not selective since it also mandates top brass of both the AFP and the Department of National Defense to be subjected to annual drug test.

"The DND Circular requires all persons in decision-making positions from the Secretary of National Defense to all Generals and Flag Officers of the AFP, down to Division Chiefs of

the DND and all its attached Bureaus to undergo the annual drug test," said Arevalo.

Approved last July 17 by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, the policy provides for the institutionalization of the drug-free workplace policy and the adoption of the uniform guidelines on drug testing program.

The circular also stipulates procedures in the disposition of personnel found administratively liable of using illegal drugs and or committing any prohibited acts under Republic Act 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002. **(Aaron B. Recuenco)**

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THE DAILY
tribune
An Online and a Daily

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Duterte boosts morale of soldiers in Marawi

Ranao commander; and other ground commanders.

In his message to the troops, President Duterte said he wanted them to stay alive and "practice caution until the end of the war."

"Malapit na itong matapos, konting tiis nalang. Just make sure na buhay kayo pag natapos itong gyera na ito," the President told around 300 soldiers and policemen who excitedly listened to him.

President met with ground commanders who are in the main battle area "to show them that he is, all the way, with them in this fight."

The President also pledged to put up a P50-billion trust fund for the soldier's and policemen's dependents.

He added that scholarship grants will also be given to the children of uniformed men.

Drenched in the rain, President Duterte spent about 20 minutes taking "selfies and groupies with the troops before he left the vicinity."

He was accompanied by National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr; Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana; AFP Chief of Staff, Gen. Eduardo Año; Army Chief, Lt. Gen. Glorioso Miranda; Navy Flag Officer in Command, Vice Admiral Ronald Joseph Mercado; and Air Force Chief, Lt. Gen. Edgar Fallorina.

Remnants of the Maute terrorist group, now pocketed in two villages in Marawi City, have slackened resistance, Armed

Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said Saturday.

Padilla based the assessment on reports from ground commanders who claimed that volume of return fire from the terrorists have considerably slackened compared to the first days of the campaign.

"They are still fighting back but their return fire is much lower compared to the early days of the campaign," Padilla said in Filipino.

This is indicative that the lawless elements are running low on ammunition and other supplies.

In the same vein, ground commanders placed the number of remaining Maute Group terrorists to around 40 to 60.

Death toll in the Marawi armed conflict reached 522 terrorists, 119 government troops and 45 civilians.

Meanwhile, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said that while the government will do everything to expedite the rehabilitation of war-torn Marawi City, they are grateful for whatever assistance the private sector and civil society organizations could extend in this endeavor.

In his message read to various stakeholders who gathered during Friday's "Bangon Marawi" forum at the Conrad Grand Hotel in Pasay City, Lorenzana urged "our partners to reach out to government through Task Force 'Bangon Marawi' so that our efforts can be properly coordinated and managed and our assistance to communities will be

properly delivered".

"I would like to assure our countrymen from Marawi City and other affected communities that their needs are being addressed with utmost consideration of their faith and culture. We will do our best to speed things up," he said in the message that was read by Office of Civil Defense deputy administrator, Assistant Secretary Kristoffer James Purisima.

"We are one nation and we stand together during the bad time(s), and more so, during the trying times that test our resolve as a nation. No one will be left behind as we embark on this great endeavor to revive and rekindle affected communities and enable them to rejoin in the progressive advance of our beloved country, the Philippines."

Consultations with the local government and Muslim community leaders are ongoing to ensure that rehabilitation efforts are aimed at inclusivity, ensure the adequacy, suitability and acceptability of the rehabilitation plans and the support systems, he said.

"Various committees under Task Force 'Bangon Marawi' are already working hard to attend to the complex requirements of post-conflict rehab and recovery. Transition shelters are being considered now along with the support infrastructure, like schools and markets, to facilitate the eventual return to normalcy of the way of life of our beloved Maranaws," the defense chief said.

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The Manila Times

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FUN AT THE CENTER Children of displaced families are joined by Army soldiers in games and artwork as part of their psychosocial intervention. PHOTO COURTESY OF JOINT TASK FORCE MARAWI

Marawi kids coping with life at evacuation centers

SOME 71 children whose families were displaced by the siege in Marawi City underwent series of psychosocial exercises organized by a United States alumni association and supported by the Lanao del Sur Department of Social Welfare and Development and the military.

The series of activities, which aimed to entertain and empower the children ages three to 12 years old, was held at the Lanao del Sur Provincial Social Hall in Marawi City.

A combination of fun games, art work, socialization and entertainment was conducted to address the stress experienced by the children affected by the conflict in the city.

The beneficiaries are temporarily sheltered at the Lanao del Sur Capitol Evacuation Center after Islamic State (IS)-inspired Maute terror group started attacking the city last May.

Combined personnel of the Joint Task Groups Ranao and Tabang were among those who mingled and played with the children.

OF "Despite the language gap, beneficiaries were noticed genu-

inely laughing and enjoying the series of activities and the interactions," said Col. Tom Sedano of the Joint Task Group Tabang.

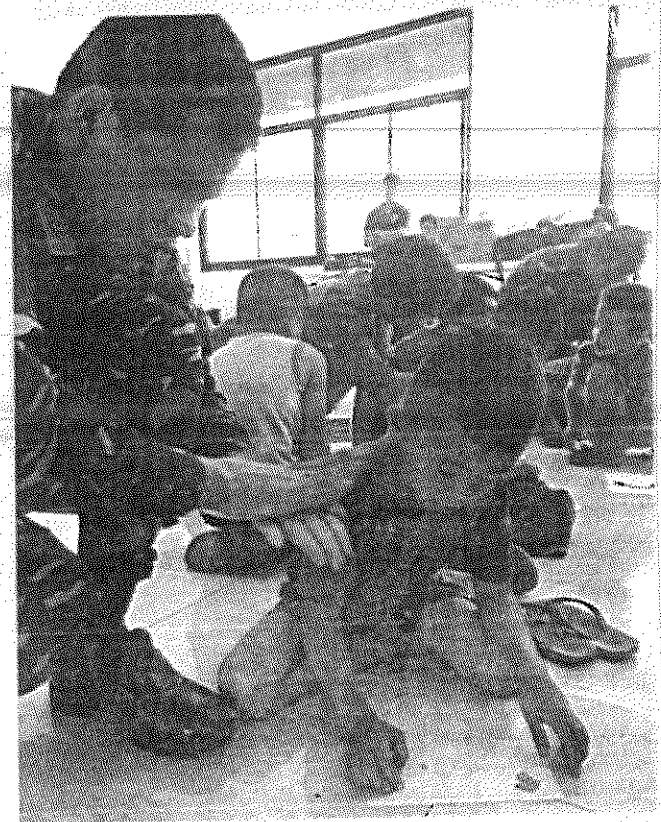
"Most of the instructions were done through sign language so that the kids will be able to understand the mechanics of the activity," according to Sedano.

"The ultimate goal is for them to enjoy and to have fun," he added.

A seven-year-old boy when asked how he feels about the activity said in his dialect, "I am happy playing with our *kuya* (brother)," referring to the soldiers who participated in the activity.

The program is expected to help the children in the evacuation centers cope up with their current situation and divert their attention from the stressful environment to a fun and enjoyable situation even for a short period of time.

"We want to take part in the initiatives of the government and concerned stakeholders in assuring the protection and welfare of the civilians who are caught in the crossfire,"



said Brig. Gen. Ramiro Rey, commander of the Joint Task Group Ranao.

Programs that benefit the evacuees are currently being

implemented, manifesting the sincerity of the government and the military in liberating the besieged city.

JULMUNIRI J. JANNARAL

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04 August 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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BACK AT THE FRONTLINES – President Rodrigo Roa Duterte (standing, center) visits wounded soldiers at the Tactical Command Post of the Joint Special Operations Task Force Trident in Barangay Kilala in Marawi City Friday night. It was Duterte's second visit to the conflict-stricken city since July 20. (Malacanang photo)

PRRD visits Marawi troops in battle zone amid rain

BY **NONoy E. LACSON**
AND
ARCYLL CYRUS B. BEDUCOS

ZAMBOANGA CITY – Days after troops successfully gained strategic structures previously held by the Islamic State (IS)-inspired militants, President Duterte as Commander-in-Chief visited Marawi City for the second time ▶ 4

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PRRD visits Marawi troops in battle...

Friday and entered the main battle area where he surprised soldiers and policemen fighting the militants for the 73rd day.

The President who was in fatigues arrived at Camp Ranao in Marawi City at 4:30 p.m. Friday bringing G-Shock watches and goods for the engaged soldiers amid a heavy downpour.

He was welcomed by Lieutenant General Carlito G. Galvez, Jr., Commander of the Western Mindanao Command; Brigadier General Rolando Bautista, Commander of the Joint Task Force Marawi; Major General Pamonag, Commander of the Special Operations Command; Brigadier General Ramiro Rey, Commander of the Joint Task Force Ranao; and other ground commanders.

"Even the heavy rain could not stop the Commander-in-Chief in visiting his troops in the front line yesterday (Friday, August 4)," the WestMinCom said.

The battle-weary troops got a moral boost upon seeing the President in their midst despite the danger in the main battle zone. The first time Duterte visited Marawi was last July 20. The President told the troops he wanted them to stay alive and "practice caution until the end of the war."

"I have to be here because I want all of you to know that mahal ko kayo (I love you)," Duterte said turning emotional and hoped government will not lose more troops in Marawi.

"Malapit na itong matapos, kon-ting tiis nalang. Just make sure na buhay kayo pag natapos itong gyera

na ito," he told around 300 soldiers and policemen who excitedly listened to him.

"I hope you will be able to clean up Marawi City and get rid of the terrorists," Duterte said.

The wounded, too

WestMinCom spokesperson Capt. Jo-Ann Petinglay said the Commander-in-Chief met with ground commanders, including battalion and company commanders in the main battle area, to show them that he is all the way with them in this fight.

He also visited wounded soldiers in Camp Ranao to know their situation and engaged them in small talk like a relative.

Duterte assured the wounded soldiers and those in frontlines that

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the government will take care of their needs.

He reiterated his earlier promise to establish a ₱50-billion trust fund to be solely dedicated to the education of their children.

"Yung promise ko na (My promise that) I will establish a trust fund of ₱50 billion when I go out of the presidency five years from now, kung buhayin pa ako ng Panginoong Diyos (God permits) that ₱50 billion will be dedicated solely sa education ng mga anak ninyo (to the education of your children)," he said.

"So with the scholarship that is already free, after that, she can pursue – kung gusto niyang mag-medicine, kaya na niya (if she wants to take up medicine, she now can)," he added.

"Kasi ang gagastusin lang ng trust fund is half. Yung first four years libre na lahat, eh (The trust fund will shoulder half of the expenses while

the first four years are now free)," he continued.

He also took the opportunity to inform the soldiers who are sending siblings and children to school that he has already made college education free to give everyone a chance to have a better future.

Despite the rain, the President obliged with selfies and groupies with his troops before he left after an hour visit.

Duterte was accompanied by National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr.; Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana; AFP Chief of Staff, General Eduardo Año; the Army Chief, Lieutenant General Glorioso Miranda; the Flag Officer in Command, Philippine Navy, Vice Admiral Ronald Joseph S Mercado; and the Air Force Chief, Lieutenant General Edgar R. Fallorina. (With a reports from PNA)

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

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‘Stay alive, we’re winning the war’

By Leila B. Salaverria
@LeilasINQ

“Stay alive and fight cool ... Do not go into [battle] in a rage [lest] you put yourself in trouble,” President Duterte on Friday cautioned soldiers on his second visit to Marawi to buoy their morale.

Mr. Duterte also promised to reward soldiers who proved themselves exceptional in the more than two months’ gunfight with extremist groups that have aligned themselves with the Islamic State.

“Let’s not rush. Anyway, [the fighting] is in the homestretch,” the President said, quoting a briefer that described the Marawi conflict as “winding [down] and entering its critical stage.”

Fighting bullets

“Remember, this is a war, and you’re fighting bullets,” Mr. Duterte said.

“You will have so many surprises coming your way. I hope that [you] stay alive, fight cool and not be in a hurry. Do not go into a rage because if you’re angry, you will put yourself in trouble,” the President told soldiers in Barangay Kilala in Marawi.

“I hope that there would be less heartaches and you’d be able to clean up Marawi [and]

get rid of the terrorists. I hope nobody would meet tragedy,” Mr. Duterte said.

“If you all have to sacrifice yourselves, do it. We will really finish this. And we will go into a very strict regimen,” he added.

Rewards await brave fighters, Mr. Duterte said, from guns to trips abroad.

“The valor [awardees], these tough ones [will get trips abroad]. Maybe Hong Kong; it will be free. If you want, bring a

partner or spouse,” the President said.

“If you don’t want to, tell us which actress you want and we’ll make a request,” he added in jest.

President Duterte also reiterated his promise to set up a P50 billion trust fund for the education of the soldiers’ children.

Since he had already signed the free college tuition bill into law, he said the trust fund could

be used for those who want to pursue further studies, as in medicine or law.

In the same speech, Mr. Duterte again talked about the illegal drug problem that, he said, was one of the root causes of the Marawi conflict, and lashed out anew at his predecessor, Benigno Aquino III.

Mr. Duterte had earlier called the former President a “fool” for questioning the effectiveness of his antidrug campaign.

“That hurt,” Mr. Duterte said, referring to Aquino’s comment on Tuesday, when the former President said that “it seems, nothing has changed” on the illegal drugs front.

The former Chief Executive told reporters that during his term in 2015, statistics showed that there were 1.8 million drug users in the Philippines. At the end of 2016, Mr. Aquino said the number of drug users in the country remained at 1.8 million.

“That’s insulting. Many of my soldiers died and my police were wounded,” Mr. Duterte said.

“So if you’re careless and say that ‘nothing happened,’ I’d really lose my cool. So don’t just comment on this because you don’t know the real score,” he added. INQ

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IN HIS ELEMENT, President Duterte (center) gamely poses for "groupies" with soldiers during his second visit to Marawi on Friday.
—MALACAÑANG PHOTO

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Duterte renews support for troops fighting in Marawi

President Duterte reassured soldiers of the government's full support as they continue to fight the remaining militants during a visit to Marawi City last Friday.

"I have to be here because I want all of you to know that mahal ko kayo," Duterte told soldiers of the Joint Special Operation Task Force Trident in Camp Kilala.

The President said that he is hopeful that the government will not lose more troops because of the ongoing battle. "I hope you will be able to clean up Marawi City and get rid of the terrorists," Duterte said.

He also reiterated his pledge to put up a P50-billion trust fund for the children of policemen and soldiers, adding that he recently signed the law on free tertiary education in state and local universities and colleges.

Last Friday's unannounced visit to Marawi was Duterte's second in two weeks. Duterte first visited Marawi last July after two failed attempts due to the bad weather.

He first set foot in the war-torn city while military operations against the pro-Islamic State Maute Group were ongoing.

Photos shared by Special Assis-

tant to the President Christopher Go with the media showed Duterte clad in military attire and surrounded by soldiers excited to take selfie with the 72-year-old President.

He also visited wounded soldiers in Camp Ranao and delivered a short message before members of Joint Task Force Marawi.

Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año also visited troops in Marawi two days before Duterte.

AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said Año's visit boosted the morale of the soldiers. Año noted that government troops are "raring to conduct military operations" to expedite the liberation of Marawi.

During his first visit to Marawi, Joint Task Force Marawi spokesperson Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera said Duterte gratitude for the soldiers' heroism and assured them of the government's full support.

"Dito natin nakita talaga 'yung suporta talaga ng ating Presidente. Pinakita niya talaga ang tapang at strong support sa ating mga kasundaluhan," Herrera said. **(Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)**

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Military ops in Marawi winding down – Duterte

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ and MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

The military operations in Marawi City have started to wind down, President Duterte declared after visiting the frontlines last Friday.

Duterte said the battle in Marawi has entered its critical stage, citing Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Gen. Restituto Padilla, who said the troops have started to clear out the booby traps and explosive devices left

by the terrorists in the city.

Padilla said only a few dozen gunmen of the extremist Maute group remain in two barangays covering an area of less than one square kilometer in the war-torn city.

He said the fighting between government troops and the terrorists are now at closer range.

Padilla added the troops are being more careful in

their approach now that the battle is nearing its conclusion.

Padilla revealed there are only about 40 to 60 extremists left fighting the troops, based on the assessment of the ground commanders leading the government forces.

"They are still putting up a fight but not as intense as before," Padilla said.

The military said the terrorists seemed to be saving their ammunition, indicating that they are running out of firepower.



President Duterte meets wounded soldiers during a visit to a military camp in Marawi City the other day.

As of Aug. 3, 119 soldiers and policemen, 522 extremists and 45 civilians have been killed in the over two months of fighting.

President Duterte imposed martial law across the entire region of Mindanao on May 23, within hours of the attack in Marawi in a bid to quickly crush what he said was the fast-rising threat from the Islamic State.

Congress approved Duterte's request for an extension of martial law in Mindanao up to Dec. 31.

In his second visit to the frontlines last Friday, Duterte rallied the troops, saying the battle in Marawi is coming to an end.

"I was reading the briefer last night and there was a statement that we are winding up... that we are entering the critical stage," Duterte told the troops at Barangay Kilala.

As operations wind up, Duterte said he is hoping that there will be fewer casualties on the government side.

"I hope that there would be less heartaches and you'd be able to clean up Marawi, get rid of the terrorists, hoping that there would be no casualties from our side," the President said.

Padilla added the AFP is still not giving itself a deadline insofar as completely defeating the Maute militants and

liberating Marawi City.

Since the battle in Marawi is drawing to a close, government troops on the ground are given the option on how to carry out its operations.

Additional troops from Negros and Panay have been deployed to augment the government forces in Marawi.

Mindanao lawmakers, on the other hand, expressed their support for the rehabilitation of Marawi City.

Misamis Oriental Rep. Juliette Uy said majority of the lawmakers in Mindanao have agreed to approve the proposed budget of the education sector so portions of it could be used to rebuild schools and classrooms destroyed in the Marawi conflict.

"Although we did not promise, but we will try our best to help, especially in the

allocation of the budget (for the construction of Marawi). We, the Mindanaoan legislators, will fight for its approval," she said.

South Cotabato Rep. Ferdinand Hernandez said some items in the 2018 national budget would be dedicated to the rebuilding of Marawi, adding assessment of the damage may have to come later as the conflict is still ongoing.

Officials said the Duterte administration has allocated P20 billion for the reconstruction of Marawi.

Since all the government agencies have received and utilized their allocation for this year, Hernandez said Congress could approve more funding for Marawi in the 2018 budget. - **With Gerry Lee Gorit, Roel Pareño, Gilbert Bayoran**

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Drug testing now...

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Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief military information officer, said the move is part of the effort of the AFP leadership to make all military camps and offices across the country a drug-free workplace.

"Drug testing will be part of the requirements for promotion, schooling, and designations to key positions of all our members in the military, including our civilian employees," said Arevalo.

He warned that personnel who would test positive in both the initial conduct of drug test and the subsequent confirmatory tests would be in trouble as these may lead to dismissal from service.

Arevalo said the new policy is not selective since it also

mandates top brass of both the AFP and the Department of National Defense to be subjected to annual drug test.

"The DND circular requires all persons in decision-making positions from the Secretary of National Defense to all generals and flag officers of the AFP, down to division chiefs of the DND and all its attached bureaus, to undergo the annual drug test," said Arevalo.

Approved last July 17 by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, the policy provides for the institutionalization of the drug-free workplace policy and the adoption of the uniform guidelines on drug testing program.

The circular also stipulates procedures in the disposition of personnel found administratively liable for using illegal drugs and/or committing any prohibited acts under RA 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

Under DND Circular No. 13, all personnel regardless of status are required to undergo annual mandatory drug testing as a requirement for retention in the government service. It will also apply to applicants and outsourced service personnel.

"Any personnel found positive for use of dangerous drugs will first undergo confirmatory testing, the result of which – if positive – may be challenged by the subject. If the person is found positive, he/she will be endorsed to the appropriate investigating body for the conduct of disciplinary or administrative proceedings," the circular read.

Drug testing now a requirement for promotion, training programs in AFP

By AARON B. RECUENCO

Drug testing has been made a requirement for promotion, training and schooling programs abroad to ensure that no soldier or civilian employee of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) are using or is addicted to illegal drugs.

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The Manila Times

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PRESIDENT HITS BACK AT AQUINO, POE

Duterte to troops: 'Stay alive, fight cool'

"STAY alive, fight cool." This was President Rodrigo Duterte's advise to government troops fighting Islamic State-inspired Maute terrorists in Marawi City during his visit to the war-torn city on Friday, the second time since the clashes broke out in May.

"Ang problema diyan 'yung mabilis ang gusto. Tandaan niyo giyera 'to, bala ang kalaban mo dito. Relax. One rule is that huwag kang pumasok sa giyera na may galit ka.

Pasok mo doon sa war zone, isipin mo may papatayin ka. But do not yung may hate ka. Kasi kung may galit ka, susubsob ka eh [The problem is some want to end it quickly. Remember, this is a war, and the bullet is the enemy here. Relax. One rule is do not enter a war with hate. When you enter the war zone, think about killing, but do not (enter) with hate. Because if you have hate, you'll fall down]," Duterte said in his speech.

"Stay alive, fight cool, do not be in a hurry, do not go into a rage *kasi pag galit ka, idamay mo sarili mo* [because if you have hate, you will only put yourself at risk]. Take time *tatal patapos na* [since the fighting is almost over]," he added.

The Commander-in-Chief's second visit to the besieged city, just like the first, was unannounced. Officials only confirmed the visit when the President already left the area.

The President, who believes that one of the root causes of the war in Marawi was illegal drugs, criticized former President Benigno Aquino 3rd.



President Rodrigo Duterte in second visit to war-torn Marawi

Aquino, who after being called stupid by Duterte, said the administration's drug war had not resulted in anything significant.

"Sabi kasi ni Noynoy... Tinanong siya about the drug operation at ang sinabi niya wala namang nangyari e, isang taon na... I answered back, napakagung-gong mo naman. Napakasakit naman niyan... Marami akong sundalong namatay, wounded sa police... Nakakainsulto 'yan. [According to Noynoy... He was asked about the drug operation and he said that nothing was happening and it's been a year... I answered back and said that he was stupid. What he said hurt... A lot of my soldiers died, police were wounded... I find that remark insulting]," Duterte said. "I am very sensitive *sa ganitong issue kasi marami ng mga pulis at sundalo na nangamatay, so kung*

careless magsabi ka na walang nangyari talagang mag-init ang ulo ko [I am very sensitive on this issue because a lot of police and soldiers have died, so if you're careless enough to say that nothing happened, I will really get angry]," he stressed.

During his visit, President Duterte inspected the improvised medical station for the soldiers on the ground.

The President was accompanied by National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Armed Forces Chief General Eduardo Año, and Special Assistant to the President Christopher "Bong" Go.

'My mouth is not for your mouth'

Duterte also hit back at Sen. Grace Poe after the latter reminded him to be careful with his language after he cursed at former president Aquino for criticizing the war on drugs.

"Sabihin pa ni Grace na [Grace said], 'watch your mouth.' You take care of your mouth, and I will take care of mine, because my mouth is not for your mouth. *Tahimik ka lang diyan kasi hindi mo naintindihan* [Just shut up because you don't understand] from whereof I stand," Duterte said.

Poe told reporters on Thursday she understood that cursing was part of the President's "style," but warned that this could influence children to do the same.

"Style niya 'yan pero siyempre 'pag ikaw ay pinapakinggan ng mga bata e gagayahin. Sang-ayon ba tayo dun [That has been his style. But of course, as a public figure being heard by children, you might be emulated. Do we agree with that?]" the senator said.

CATHERINE S. VALENTE

12@gl

18

people.

5285, 5295

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The Manila Times

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Troops arrest Abu Sayyaf bandit in Zamboanga

ZAMBOANGA CITY: Police and military operatives have arrested a suspected Abu Sayyaf Group bandit, involved in the abduction of plantation workers in Basilan in 2001, a police official said on Saturday.

Chief Insp. Elmer Solon, Police Station 4 chief, identified the arrested suspect as Hamad Ajjul Susulan alias "Hajer Sailani" and "Ahmad."

Solon said Susulan was arrested

at about 3:10 p.m. on Friday along the highway in Barangay Mercedes here in a combined police and military operation.

He said the suspect has standing warrant of arrest for eight counts of kidnapping and serious illegal detention with ransom issued by the regional trial court in Basilan province.

Susulan is reportedly involved in the kidnapping of farm workers of

the Golden Harvest Plantation at Barangay Tairan, Lantawan in Basilan on June 11, 2001.

The Abu Sayyaf bandits seized eight plantation workers during their attack and demanded ransom for their release.

The bandits beheaded some of the workers while others were either rescued by government forces or managed to escape during the firefight.

PNA

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POLICE FILES

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AFP: 2 BRGY. NA LANG ANG KONTROLADO NG MAUTE

Nasa dalawang barangay na lang sa Marawi City ang kontrolado o pinagtataguan ng teroristang Maute Group na sentro ng operation ng Armed Forces of the Philippine (AFP).

Ayon kay B/Gen. Restituto Padilla, spokesman ng AFP, nakatuon ngayon ang operation ng mga sundalo sa dalawang barangay kaya naniniwala ito na hindi na magtatagal at matatapos na ang krisis sa Marawi City.

Sa kasalukuyan, sinabi ni Padilla na umabot na sa 522 mga Maute group habang 119 na sundalo at 45 sibilyan ang nasawi sa nagpapatuloy na bakbakan mula

nang salakayin ng mga terorista ang Marawi City.

Sinabi ni Padilla na unti-unti na nauubusan ng bala ang mga terorista dahil na rin sa mistulang tinitipid na nila ang kanilang pagpapaputok o ganti ng putok sa mga sundalo di tulad ng mga nakaraang linggo.

Binigyaan-diin din ni Padilla na mataas ang morale ng mga sundalo lalo pa ng muling dumalaw o binisita ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang mga sundalo na nakikipagbakbakan sa Marawi City.

Bukod sa pagsuportang ipinakikita ng Pangulo, sinabi ni Padilla na pinagkukunan din ng inspirasyon ng kasundaluhan ang buong pagsuporta at pagtitiwala ng sambayanan. Dahil dito, sinabi ni Padilla na malinaw sa mga sundalo na tapusin ang kanilang misyon sa lalong madaling panahon upang maibalik sa normal ang pamuhay ng mga taga-Marawi. *(Mark Obleada)*

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Pahina. 6

BIFF harassment: 2 sundalo, pulis sugatan

Dalawang sundalo at isang pulis ang nasugatan matapos na paulanan ng bala ng mga miyembro ng Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter (BIFF) sa magkahiwalay na lugar sa Brgy. Meta at Datu Unsay, Maguindanao nitong Biyernes ng gabi.

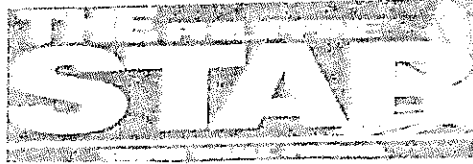
Ayon kay Captain Arvin Encinas, Spokesman ng Army's 6th Infantry Division (ID) bandang alas -7 ng gabi nang mangyari ang insidente na ikinasugat ng dalawang miyembro ng Army's 21st Mechanized Company na nagtamo ng sugat mula sa

shrapnel sa pinalang M203 grenade launchers sanhi ng 20 minutong bakbakan sa pagitan ng magkabilang panig.

Bandang alas-7:30 ng gabi, ayon naman kay Sr. Supt. Agustin Tello nang muli namang magpaulan ng bala ang BIFF sa Datu Unsay Police Station sa Brgy. Meta na ikinasugat ng isang pulis.

Nagkaroon rin ng palitan ng putok sa pagitan ng mga pulis na ikinasugat ni PO3 Zainudin Datuan sa kaniyang kaliwang balikat sa halos isang oras na bakbakan. **Joy Cantos**

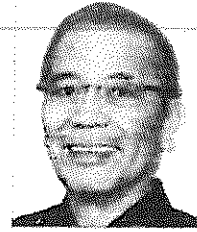
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BREAKTHROUGH

ELFREN S. CRUZ



Marawi and the Asian Caliphate

Marawi has increasingly become the focus of the world's attention as the street to street fighting enters its third month. The conflict in the city will eventually subside. However, the main concern is whether this violent episode is an isolated event or only part of a longer struggle whose historical roots is centuries old in Philippine history.

Major global think tanks and geopolitical experts have started writing more about the global implications of the Marawi siege on the ongoing worldwide jihadist movement. Here is one part of a report from Stratfor:

"Insurgency has a long history in Mindanao. The island group is far removed from the capital of Manila and has strong geographic and historical ties to a congruous region of Indonesia and Malaysia. And whereas the Philippines as a whole is more than 90% Christian, about 20% of the residents of Mindanao are Muslim, with many concentrated in the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, as well as the island provinces of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. The ethnic Moro Muslims have resisted the state on and off since the colonial period, with modern insurgencies tracing their roots back to the 1960s. Duterte, who was mayor of Davao City in southeast Mindanao for 22 years, understands the delicate balance among militant groups in the region."

The fragmentation of the Muslim groups and the presence of political war lords in the Muslim regions of Mindanao have also become major obstacles to a permanent peace process. In 2014, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the strongest militant group in Mindanao, made a peace deal with the government of then President Benigno Aquino. Essentially, the agreement proposed the Bangsamoro Basic Law which would create the Bangsamoro autonomous region with a law-making body, a judicial system and

motion collapse of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria will only exacerbate these problems. The movement is evolving into one that thrives in vacuums of authority and crisis of legitimacy – both of which describe Mindanao. If Manila cannot manage to get a handle on the region, it will continue to be a haven for radical groups."

Southeast Asian Caliphate

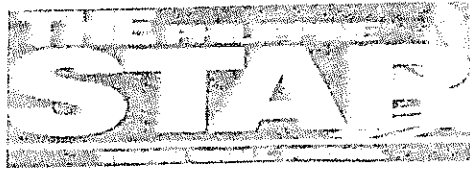
The formation of a Southeast Asian Caliphate has been the subject of speculation and studies ever since Osama Bin Laden made jihadism a worldwide concern. The Islamic state of Southeast Asia is envisioned to include the predominantly Muslim populated areas of Malaysia, Southern Thailand, Indonesia and Mindanao. There is an insurgency movement in all these places.

It is estimated that more than 1,000 fighters from Southeast Asia have gone to Syria and Iraq since 2012. While most of them travelled to the Middle East specifically to join Islamist forces, some were recruited while studying in the Middle East. Many of these fighters were also veterans of conflicts in Afghanistan, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Initially, the Southeast Asians joined three principal groups in Syria and Iraq – Al Qaeda, Jabat al-Nusra and Aynad al-Sham. However, with the rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq in 2013 and the pronouncement of the Caliphate in June 2014, most of the Southeast Asian jihadist groups have shifted to ISIS. More than 60 southeast Asian groups have pledged allegiance to al-Baghdadi, the self proclaimed Caliph of the Islamic Caliphate.

The recent losses in territories of ISIS in the Middle East is being seen as the principal motivation for shifting more attention to Southeast Asia. The region's long history of Islamic radical militancy and the rising number of extremist groups adopting ISIS ideology make Southeast Asia a very attractive target. The Asian fighters are said to

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making body, a judicial system and police force together with a substantial share of taxes and mineral wealth. The Philippine Congress was not able to pass the necessary legislation.

It has been reported that because of the failure of the MILF and the government to conclude the agreement and the entry of ideological groups like ISIS, the younger and more radical members of established groups, like the MILF, have begun challenging the more moderate policy of their leadership. The Maute group was reportedly organized by disaffected fighters of the MILF who formed their own organization under the leadership of Omarkhayam and Abdullah Maute. The other militant groups challenging the government and the MILF are the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and the Abu Sayyaf.

In the same Stratfor report, here is another excerpt on the Maute group.

"In 2015, the Maute group declared its allegiance to the Islamic state. And the Islamic State's rise has only complicated Mindanao's situation by providing a fresh rallying point. Foreign fighters – a number of whom appear to be participating in the Marawi City fight, according to the Philippine military – have buoyed the Maute group. The Islamic State in Syria also managed to make numerous small transfers of money to the Maute fighters in Marawi via Malaysian intermediary Dr. Mahmud bin Ahmad. The slow

target. The Asian fighters are said to be coming back to their homelands to continue their fight for a caliphate in this part of the world.

In Islamic tradition, a caliphate is a territory under the leadership of an Islamic steward known as the Caliph, a person considered a religious successor to the Islamic Prophet Muhammad and the leader of the entire Muslim community. The Caliphates were polities based in Islam which crossed ethnic and national boundaries. There have been four caliphates in world history. The last one was the Ottoman Empire which lasted from 1517 to 1924. At the height of its power, it ruled Turkey, Southeast Europe, North Africa, Middle East, Egypt, Caucasus and Western Asia.

The failure of ISIS to revive the Caliphate, similar to the Ottoman Empire, does not mean their ambition will end. They may yet look towards Southeast Asia as their next stage of their revolution.

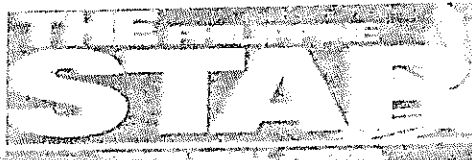
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BABE'S EYE VIEW

BABE ROMUALDEZ

Mindanao situation: Far more serious

Somebody close to one of the senators who met with President Duterte last Tuesday night confirmed that the decision to extend martial law in Mindanao up to December 31 this year was not only justified, but "absolutely necessary" to avert the spread of terrorist groups like the Abu Sayyaf, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters and the Maute terrorist group.



Let's face it - Mindanao has always been a major security problem, especially with our porous borders that have made it easy for terrorists and criminals to move around Indonesia, Malaysia and the Southern Philippines via the Sulu-Sulawesi seas. In fact, the Philippines was described a decade ago by the International Crisis Group as the "weakest link in the effort to contain the threat of further terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia by the Jemaah Islamiyah network" - which is why everyone is hopeful that the president's determination will get rid of this terrorist scourge sooner rather than later.

We recognize the heavy toll that the fighting in Marawi has wrought upon innocent civilians and the kind of sacrifice that our troops are making. According to our source, the president's request for additional soldiers and police personnel is more than justified considering the presence of ISIS-affiliated foreign terrorists in Marawi City.

Despite the continued fighting, morale among the troops is high not only because of the unrelenting encouragement shown by the president - going around camps and hospitals to visit the wounded, transporting them to hospitals in Manila using the presidential plane and even going to Marawi himself - but also because many Filipinos including the country's top businessmen are doing their part to help soldiers and boost their morale.

From the simple act of writing letters of encouragement and buying statement shirts to sending "care packages," the flow of support has been overwhelming. One of those who responded early was Go Negosyo founder and presidential consultant on entrepreneurship Joey Concepcion, who spearheaded the Kapatid for Marawi project that has gathered overwhelming support from some of the country's top businessmen who sent water, food and other relief goods and items including cellphone load for the troops.

The families of the fallen soldiers and police personnel have not been forgotten, with business groups providing financial help. One of the most laudable initiatives came from business tycoon Andrew Tan who donated P101 million for the families of the 101 "heroes of Marawi." While "no amount could equal the loss of loved ones" as the president said, the show of support from many Filipinos is appreciated by the families of the slain.

All our allies, most especially the United States, are helping in the fight against terrorism, providing intelligence information and military hardware that include drones and surveillance planes like the Cessna 208B Grand Caravan. US State Secretary Rex Tillerson who is here this weekend will most likely discuss what help is needed to fight the global terrorist scourge. Early on, Secretary Tillerson expressed concern that the ISIS is gaining a foothold in the Philippines, adding that the US is talking with countries such as Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and of course the Philippines to partner in fighting extremist groups.

Experts aver that the ISIS has already spread its tentacles in Asia and has set its eyes on the Philippines as the new "wilayat" or province that could serve not only as a training ground but also a sanctuary to militants coming from the Middle East. Undoubtedly, nations in the region must work together to prevent the ISIS network from spreading its deadly ideology of hatred and violence.

Balangiga Bells: For whom do they toll?

President Duterte's State of the Nation Address (SONA) brought attention to the Balangiga Bells - the significance of which are not known to many Filipinos especially the young ones today. In September 1901, Filipino guerillas fighting for independence attacked American soldiers stationed in the town of Balangiga in Samar - resulting in the massacre of men, women and children and the burning of the town and the church as retaliation, with allegations that the bells were used to signal the attack. The bells from the San

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Lorenzo de Martir church were subsequently taken, with two of them now on display at the Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming while one is in a US camp in South Korea.

It was president Fidel Ramos who first instructed then-Philippine Ambassador to the US Raul Rabe to seek the return of the bells, but resistance was mostly from a small group of war veterans in Wyoming that came up with a local law that prevents the return of the bells, claiming them as spoils of war.

Over the years, many including US veterans and their families have been working for the return of those bells, chief of them retired US Navy Captain Dennis Wright who has lived in the Philippines for many years, and our friend Henry Howard who is offering to make duplicate bells to be displayed in Cheyenne. Retired general Narcing Abaya also wrote to his former classmate, Senator John Reed (who is in the Committee of Appropriations' Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs) to seek support for the return of those bells which, in the first place, belong to the church in Balangiga and should not be considered as war booty. Other bells like the one in La Union, Russia and even Japan which was a foe of the US during WW2, were all returned.

In 1901, the Balangiga bells tolled amid the fighting between American and Filipino soldiers. The return of the bells will toll with the sound of peace and renewed friendship between the Philippines and the US.

Email: babeseyevew@gmail.com



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Pahina. 3



Mga atleta na 'naglalaro' sa Customs, mas malaki raw ang sahod kaysa sa mga sundalong nakikipagpatayan sa Marawi, buwisit!

P-DIGONG, APRUB SA FREE TUITION SA SUCs, PERO SINOYNOY, 'NGANGA' LANG DAW — Puwede naman palang magpairal ng libreng pag-aaral, nang lagdaan ni Pangulong Duterte ang Free Tertiary Act o ang batas na naglilibre sa tuition sa lahat ng State Universities and Colleges, pero, bakit hindi ito ginawang batas ni ex-Pres. Noynoy Aquino, gayung ang pinsan niyang si Sen. Bam Aquino ang author ng nasabing batas?

Ang sagot: "Nganga" lang daw kasi ang inaatupag ni Noynoy noong nasa Malacañang pa siya, boom!

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ONLINE NEWS

06 AUGUST 2017

<http://thephilippinepolitics.com>

Soldiers Found Thousands of Unused Robredo's Slippers in Abandoned NPA Camp



Members of the 61st Infantry Battalion who captured a camp believed to be owned by the New People's Army (NPA), in Salvador Benedicto town in Negros Occidental, have found 1,034 pairs of unused slippers labelled with Vice president Leni Robredo's name.

On Friday, government forces engaged in 4-hour gunfight with members of NPA in central Negros. An estimated 87 rebels fled after the battle that resulted to the death of six NPA rebels, and wounding four members of Philippine Army.

The rebels who fled the area at around 8PM on Friday left sacks of rice, 2 large boxes of ammunition believed to be from the government armory, clothes, subversive documents, and some clothing.

Authorities are still investigating why Robredo's campaign materials were found there, including large volume of unused slippers and large banners made of tarpaulins.

The military could not identify whether the materials were supplied to the rebels, or looted from the warehouse.

The central Negros NPA camp is the first rebel territory captured by government forces since President Rodrigo Duterte declared war on reds.

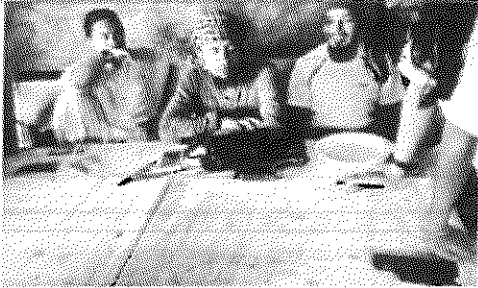
Police said they will also investigate Robredo's campaign coordinators who were responsible in distributing the materials during the campaign period last year. /Macky Pineda/

Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

<http://retiredanalyst.blogspot.com/>

Hapilon still in thick of fight in Marawi–AFP

From the Philippine Daily Inquirer (Aug 4): Hapilon still in thick of fight in Marawi–AFP



This image taken from undated video shows the purported leader of the Islamic State group Southeast Asia branch, Isnilon Hapilon, center, at a meeting of militants at an undisclosed location. AP FILE PHOTO

Isnilon Hapilon, the acknowledged leader of the Islamic State (IS) in Mindanao, remained in the main battle area here, contrary to earlier suspicions that he had fled the fighting, a ranking military official said.

Asked during an interview with reporters on Wednesday on the possible whereabouts of Hapilon, Western Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. said the notorious Abu Sayyaf leader with a \$5-million bounty from Washington was still fighting alongside members of the Maute group here.

"He is still in the area," Galvez said, citing latest information the military has gathered.

In June, Galvez said there were indications Hapilon might have escaped the battle, adding that there was no sighting of him anymore.

"We have some reports that he was already able to slip somewhere but as of now, we are still confirming the reports," Galvez said then.

There were also reports that Omarkhayyam Maute, one of the Maute siblings who led militants here, had been killed but these had not been validated so far.

Bloodier battle

Earlier this week, Capt. Jo-Ann Petinglay, the spokesperson of Task Force Marawi, said they also received another report that a ranking leader of the militants had been killed.

But Petinglay said they could not say if it was Abdullah Maute, Omarkhayyam's brother.

The fighting, which, Galvez said, had so far killed 114 soldiers, was expected to be bloodier as the

Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

militants moved inside a shrinking territory.

But he said the military was determined to finish the job.

Gen. Eduardo Año, Armed Forces chief of staff, during a visit to soldiers at the battlefield on Wednesday said the government was winning the battle against IS-inspired militants here.

"Just like in the game of basketball, we are already winning, but we should not rest on our laurels. We must be more motivated and more persistent. Many among our soldiers want to be here to help, but not everyone is given this rare chance to be here, to fight," Año said during a visit to troops at the Kilala detachment inside the war zone.

Año's projection came after ground commanders presented him a brief of the situation, more than two months since the fighting began.

'Well done'

Speaking to soldiers, Año also lauded the commanders for "a job well done."

He also spoke of President Duterte's full confidence in the Armed Forces, adding that the Chief Executive intends to visit the city anew.

"It is very rare that the head of our organization would risk his life and come to the battlefield in order to meet and motivate personally his officers and soldiers," Galvez said of Año's venture into the battle zone.

On Tuesday, Año also told soldiers during a visit to Tago, Surigao del Sur, that the day of reckoning for the New People's Army (NPA) was nearing because the Marawi crisis was heading to an end.

He said an all-out military operation against the NPA would be launched in the province right after the Marawi crisis and that battalions of Army troopers would be transferred to Surigao del Sur.

More ammunition

On Wednesday night, the military inserted more tanks, ammunition and brand new weapons here in support of ground troops fighting to flush out the remaining militants.

Around 18 tanks and 2,000 brand new M4 rifles arrived at the Port of Iligan City through BRP Pampanga.

The military also redeployed the FA-50 fighter jets, which it had suspended after a friendly fire killed soldiers during a sortie.

The South Korean-made aircraft was seen here anew starting Tuesday, dropping more bombs on suspected lairs of the extremists.

Aside from the FA-50s, the military also regularly pounded enemy positions using mortars and howitzers, Augusta attack helicopters, MG-520 helicopters and SF-260 bomber planes.

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CPP/NPA-Camarines Norte: The PNP-AFP will Pay for the Cowardly and Brutal Massacre of the Casiguran 4

NPA-Camarines Norte propaganda statement posted to the Communist Party of the Philippines Website (Aug 4): **The PNP-AFP will Pay for the Cowardly and Brutal Massacre of the Casiguran 4**

Carlito Cada, Spokesperson
NPA-Camarines Norte (Armando Catapia Command)

4 August 2017

The Armando Catapia Command (ACC)-NPA Camarines Norte extends its condolences to the family and friends of the two NPA comrades Andres "Ka Magno/Ka Carlo" Hubilla and Miguel "Ka Billy" Himor from the Celso Minguez Command (NPA-Sorsogon), and the two civilians Arnel Borres and Dick Laura. The ACC is one with the Communist Party of the Philippines's vow of exacting justice for the cowardly and brutal massacre.

Last July 28, combined forces of the Sorsogon Police Public Safety Coy (SPPSC), 96th Military Intelligence and Combat Operatives (MICO)-PA, 31st IBPA and 22nd IBPA raided the temporary resting place of the two NPA members in Sitio Namoro, Brgy. Trece Martirez, Casiguran, Sorsogon. Ka Carlo was able to maneuver but left his short firearm. He was caught and murdered. Ka Billy and the two civilian witnesses were also caught and murdered. According to the residents and the fact-finding missions launched, there were no other NPA units in the area, and no encounter took place, disproving the PNP-AFP's claim that they fought with 30 NPA elements.

This is a clear violation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). The two NPA members were already caught, unarmed and thus, in no capacity to fight back, and should have been treated as hors de combat or outside the fight, with the basic right to life. Their murder, along with the murders of the 2 civilian witnesses, is a violation and evidence of the cowardice and brutality of the AFP and PNP. Nothing good can be expected from those who fight without principle, more so when they are egged on by their rabid President to kill, instead of arresting, the NPA.

Ka Carlo is known by the masses and comrades as a humble revolutionary cadre. A former teacher by profession, he loved discussions, even with other prisoners when he was incarcerated. Often called "Pay Carlo" (Father Carlo) by the masses and comrades whom he lived with and guided, his small frame hid the fact that he was one of the pillars of the movement in Sorsogon.

The rabid dogs of the AFP and PNP are mistaken in thinking that this will weaken the revolutionary movement. If they know their enemy, then they should know that each death and murder of a revolutionary, especially one as cowardly and brutal as the Casiguran 4 massacre, recruits more fighters for the NPA, and adds fervor and fire to the struggle of the revolutionary forces.

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The Philippines open to 'fresh perspectives' from ADF in fight against IS in Marawi

From SBS (Aug 3): The Philippines open to 'fresh perspectives' from ADF in fight against IS in Marawi



Philippine Marines soldiers firing mortar rounds towards enemy positions on July 22, 2017 in Marawi, southern Philippines. (Getty Images AsiaPac)

The Philippines Defence Secretary says any gains his country makes against IS will also benefit Australia.

The Philippines government says it is open to learning from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to aid its fight against IS in Marawi.

"We are always open to learning the best military practices around the world so that we can incorporate them in our own doctrines." Defence Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana told SBS World News from Manila.

"Australia would be able to provide us fresh perspectives drawn from its own operations across the globe."

IS rebels in the southern city of Marawi continue to hold out against Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's forces since first claiming the city earlier in the year.

The Defence Secretary said the need to defeat IS in the region was vital.

Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.



“Our collective victory on this front will also benefit Australia and the rest of the world as a single foothold of IS in this region will surely affect other countries,” he said.

Secretary Lorenzana did not confirm whether the Philippines had officially requested Australian soldiers to help train its forces, but said the two countries already shared military bonds.

“The Status of Visiting Forces Agreement between both governments enables the ADF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to regularly conduct joint exercises and training in order to increase interoperability, familiarisation and goodwill.”

When Marawi, a once-little known city in the southern Philippines, was overrun by militants allied to IS in May, it brought the spectre of radical Islamist insurgency to Australia’s doorstep.

Australia recently sent two AP-3C Orion surveillance aircraft to support the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

“The regional threat from terrorism, in particular from Daesh and foreign fighters, is a direct threat to Australia and our interests.” Australian Defence Minister Marise Payne said when announcing the deployment.

Secretary Lorenzana said the Philippines is open to international support.

“We welcome any technical assistance that our allies can provide while the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the process of developing its own capabilities.” he said.

Fighting in Marawi, The Philippines explained

“Australia can share vital information and intelligence, provide technical assistance to our operating units, and combat the spread of violent extremism by helping the Philippine government target its root causes - poverty and underdevelopment that breed social injustice.”

Approximately 300 Australian soldiers have been deployed to Iraq to train and advise the Iraqi military in the fight against IS.

The ADF is also mentoring its counterparts in Afghanistan.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop is due to visit Manila over the weekend to meet with government officials.

Gov't socio-economic intervention needed to win war vs insurgency — Solcom chief

NAGA CITY, Aug. 5 -- Army Lt. Gen. Ferdinand Quidilla, Southern Luzon commanding general, on Friday urged national as well as local government officials and policy makers to look into the needs of impoverished people living in insurgency-prone areas across the country.

Quidilla said "Communism is alive" and furthered that the communist insurgency would continue if national and local government authorities would fail to formulate policies and deliver the needed services to various "conflict-prone areas."

He said, "I call on national and local government policy makers that if we are really serious in helping end the communist insurgency in the countryside, they must consider the existing conflict prone place in formulating their plans and delivering their services and activities."

At the start of the two-day summit on Thursday, Quidilla said conflict-prone areas called Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs) by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), are places where insurgency thrives because of poverty, ignorance and lack of government services and other socioeconomic issues are being exploited by the communist insurgents to agitate the villagers especially those living in far-flung areas. The military official, who announced his retirement this month, said, "I shall soon leave the service, what I would like to point out is that these conflict prone areas in the Southern Luzon areas were the same places that we know when I was still a lieutenant."

GIDAs or conflict-prone areas under SolCom that still need government attention are: Quezon province - Gumaca, Lopez, Gen. Luna and Catanauan and Tagkawayan; Batangas -- Nasugbo, Lian, Calaca, Lemery, Taysan, San Juan, Gen. Nakar and Majayjay; Rizal -- Paluan, Abra de Ilog, Bongabong, Rizal, San Jose and Mansalay;

Bicol -- Lagonoy, Garchitorina, Pasacao, Libmanan, Lupi in Camarines Sur; Gigmoto, Baras, San Andres in Catanduanes; Guinobatan, Jovellar, Pioduran, Libon, Oas, Daraga; Camarines Norte: Labo; Sorsogon: Barcelona, Gubat, Irosin, Juban and Magallanes; Masbate San Jacinto, Monreal, Mobo, Placer, Esperanza. Quidilla, while presenting the grim situation on the war against insurgency, also laid down the Solcom achievement during his one-year term of office including: reducing the NPA strength by 106 rebels, of whom 30 were killed during encounters with military troops; 22 suspected NPA rebels captured and 54 alleged NPA rebels surrendered; Dismantling of NPA camps in 58 villages in Southern Luzon area; and recovery of 54 high powered firearms.

He noted that following intense combat operation, the AFP declared the provinces of Quezon and Oriental Mindoro as conflict manageable areas and are ready for further socio-economic development.

Quidilla, however, said that during various engagement with the communist rebels, the command lost 10 soldiers, 37 personnel were wounded in action and three high powered firearms were lost.

The Solcom chief said "in spite of our operational success, the enemy (NPAs) are still there, communism is still alive".

"We can say that the actual damage of this enemy action is minimal but the impact of this seen in a bigger perspective, is profound," he said. (Mar Arguelles/PNA)

Maute fighters slacken resistance

MANILA, Aug. 5 -- Remnants of the Maute terrorist group, now pocketed in two villages in Marawi City, have slackened resistance, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said Saturday.

Padilla based the assessment on reports from ground commanders who claimed that volume of return fire from the terrorists have considerably slackened compared to the first days of the campaign.

"They are still fighting back but their return fire is much lower compared to the early days of the campaign," Padilla said in Filipino.

This is indicative that the lawless elements are running low on ammunition and other supplies.

In the same vein, ground commanders placed the number of remaining Maute Group terrorists to around "40 to 60".

Death toll in the Marawi armed conflict reached 522 terrorists, 119 government troops and 45 civilians. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)#BangonMarawi