

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

01 July 2017

Saturday

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

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

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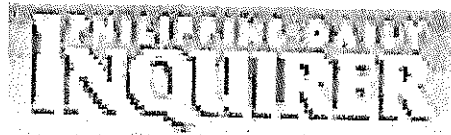
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www.panahon.tv /PanahonTV

BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JULY 1, 2017 | SATURDAY

INTERTROPICAL CONVERGENCE ZONE AFFECTING PAN-DANAO (As of 5:00 PM, June 30, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
6:30 AM	6:29 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
11:17 AM	11:43 PM
NEW MOON	FIRST QUARTER
JUN 24 10:31 AM	JUL 1 8:51 AM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH HARBOR	
10:02 PM	1:56 PM
0.13 Meter	1.03 Meter

Partly cloudy to at times cloudy with rain/showers and/or thunderstorms
Cloudy skies with rain/showers and/or thunderstorms

JUL 1		JUL 2		JUL 3	
METRO MANILA	25 - 33 °C	25 - 32 °C	TAGAYTAY	22 - 31 °C	22 - 31 °C
TUGUEGARAO	25 - 35 °C	25 - 33 °C	LEGAZPI	26 - 33 °C	26 - 32 °C
LAOAG	25 - 32 °C	26 - 32 °C	PUERTO PRINCESA	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C
BAGUIO	16 - 25 °C	17 - 24 °C	ILOILO/BACOLOD	26 - 31 °C	26 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	25 - 33 °C	26 - 32 °C	METRO CEBU	26 - 33 °C	25 - 33 °C
				TACLOBAN	25 - 31 °C
				CAGAYAN DE ORO	24 - 33 °C
				METRO DAVAO	25 - 33 °C
				ZAMBOANGA	24 - 33 °C
				METRO DAVAO	26 - 33 °C

MONDAY - FRIDAY
11AM & 5PM

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

SAGOT NG PABALA MO!

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INQUIRER

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CHINA'S ISLETS READY TO TAKE IN MISSILES

STORY BY AFP AND REUTERS

A US maritime think tank reported on Thursday that three of China's outposts in contested South China Sea reefs are close to being ready for the deployment of military assets, including mobile missile launchers. **A2**

China's islets ready for arms

FROM A1

WASHINGTON—Three of Beijing's outposts on contested South China Sea reefs are close to being ready for the deployment of military assets, including mobile missile launchers, a US think tank reported on Thursday.

Analyzing satellite photographs, the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AmTi) said Beijing's Kagitingan (Fiery Cross) Reef base in the Spratly Islands now has 12 hardened shelters, four more than seen in February, with retractable roofs that can house missile launchers.

At Kagitingan, Zamora (Subi) and Panganiban (Mischief) Reef bases, China has expanded its communications and radar arrays with multiple radar towers on each.

On Panganiban Reef, a very large antenna array was being installed that presumably boosts Beijing's ability to monitor the surroundings, the think tank said, adding that the installation should be of concern to the Philippines due to its proximity to an area claimed by Manila.

In Beijing, Philippine Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano sat down with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi to discuss bilateral issues.

Cayetano expressed appreciation for China's assistance in the current campaign against Islamic State-inspired Maute group in Marawi City. He also expressed the country's commitment to close and more cooperative relationship with China, especially in ensuring peace and stability in the region.

But there was no mention of the South China Sea dispute or of AmTi's report that three of the four artificial islands in the disputed area are ready to be armed with missiles.

A large dome was recently

installed on Kagitingan and another was under construction, indicating a sizable communications or radar system, AmTi said. Two more domes were being built on Panganiban Reef, it said.

A smaller dome has been installed near the missile shelters on Panganiban, "indicating that it could be connected to radars for any missile systems that might be housed there," AmTi said.

New construction of very large underground structures, four at each reef, is underway, which AmTi said are likely designed to house munitions and other essential goods.

"Major construction of military and dual-use infrastructure on the 'Big 3' ... is wrapping up, with the naval, air, radar and defensive facilities that AmTi has tracked for nearly two years largely complete," the think tank said.

"Beijing can now deploy military assets, including combat

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aircraft and mobile missile launchers to the Spratly Islands at any time." Amti said.

Amti, part of the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington, said the air bases on the three islands, and a fourth on

Woody Island in the Paracel Islands, allow Chinese military aircraft to operate over almost the entirety of the South China Sea.

In December, Amti reported that large anti-aircraft guns and other defense systems had been installed on the islands.

China claims nearly all of the South China Sea despite partial counterclaims from Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam.

The United States has criticized China's buildup of military facilities on the artificial islands and is concerned they could be used to restrict free movement through the South China Sea, an important trade route.

Last month, a US Navy warship sailed within 22 kilometers (12 nautical miles) of Panganiban Reef in a so-called freedom of navigation operation, the first such challenge to Beijing's claim to most of

the waterway since US President Donald Trump took office.

Trump has sought China's help in reining in North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, and tension between Washington and Beijing over military installations in the South China Sea could complicate those efforts.

"We oppose China's artificial island construction and their militarization that features in international waters," US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said in Sydney in early June.

China has denied US charges that it was militarizing the sea.

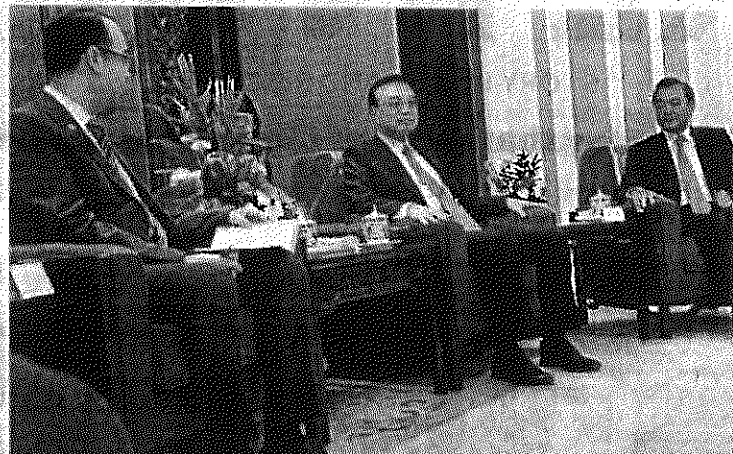
—REPORTS FROM APF AND REUTERS

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Army Core Pu



Foreign Secretary Alan Cayetano in talks with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Friday. —AP

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Satellite images of Panganiban (Mischief) Reef (left) and Kagitingan (Fiery Cross) Reef show military installation ready to receive weapons. —REUTERS

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July 2017

INQUIRER

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WAR ON DRUGS



President Duterte continues to act and talk tough on his favorite subject—drugs.—MALACANANG PHOTO

DIGONG: IT'S MY DUTY TO DESTROY THOSE WHO DESTROY COUNTRY

By Frinston Lim
@flimINQ

DAVAO CITY—President Duterte vowed to continue the war on drugs despite local and international criticism over the way he has been pursuing it.

"It's my duty to destroy people who will destroy my country," he told policemen at their Camp Quintin Mercedo regional headquarters here on Thursday evening.

Mr. Duterte said even threats of sanctions by the European Union (EU) and the United States cannot force the government to yield and stop the fight.

"If they do not want ties, they want to cut trade, fine. We will survive," Mr. Duterte said.

The US had blocked the sale of assault rifles to Philippine security forces for fear they would be used for extrajudicial killings while the EU threatened trade sanctions.

Opposition lawmakers and human rights groups also condemned Mr. Duterte's first year in office as a failure, particularly in fighting drugs and on the issue of human rights.

But the President said he does not care how people rate his one-year performance as chief executive.

"You can rate me good, very good, excellent or very poor, I don't mind," Duterte said.

The President also dared his detractors to file more cases against him before the International Criminal Court (ICC), like Sen. Antonio Trillanes and Magdalo Rep. Gary Alejano who earlier filed cases at the ICC over his bloody war on drugs.

"You file cases against me. Just give me the right to be heard," Duterte said, saying there is no law against threatening drug criminals with death.

"If I tell the world 'Do not destroy the young people of my country,' for heavens' sake, tell me what is wrong with that statement?" the President asked.

He said the government has the right to defend young people from illegal drugs that could destroy their future.

The President bristled as he lambasted the EU for suggesting his iron-fisted method in tackling the drug menace was not working.

"If I make you happy, good. If you're sad because of what I'm doing, sorry," he added.

On the other hand, Mr. Duterte remained grateful to Chinese billionaire Huang Rulun for his donation of a drug rehabilitation facility in Nuéva Ecija.

He said he will not meddle in China's reported investigation of Huang, a billionaire who was removed from his post in the Fujian province purportedly for bribery.

"I [will] not comment on the domestic affairs of China, especially one who has been kind to us," Mr. Duterte said.

He noted that Huang did not ask for anything when he donated a 10,000-bed rehabilitation facility inside Fort Magsaysay in Palayan City.

"He just wanted to be of service to his fellowmen," he said. "I am thankful for his help."

—WITH A REPORT FROM LEILA B. SALAVERRIA, INQ

01 July 2017



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China builds military facilities in Spratlys

WASHINGTON – China has built new military facilities on islands in the South China Sea, a US think tank reported on Thursday, a move that could raise tensions with Washington, which has accused Beijing of militarizing the vital waterway.

The Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI), part of Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies, said new satellite images show missile shelters and radar and communications facilities being built on the Fiery Cross (Kagitingan), Mischief (Panganiban) and Subi (Zamora) reefs in the Spratly Islands.

The report said the building of a large antennae array on Mischief should be of concern to the Philippines. Last year, the United Nations-backed Permanent Arbitration Court had awarded the Philippines sovereign rights over Mischief off Palawan, which the Chinese began occupying in 1993.

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China From Page 1

The US has criticized China's build-up of military facilities on the artificial islands and is concerned they could be used to restrict free movement through the South China Sea, an important trade route.

Last month, a US Navy warship sailed within 12 nautical miles of Mischief Reef in a so-called freedom of navigation operation, the first such challenge to Beijing's claim to most of the waterway since US President Donald Trump took office.

China has denied US charges that it is militarizing the sea, which also is claimed by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Trump has sought China's help in reining in North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, and tension between Washington and Beijing over military installations in the South

China Sea could complicate those efforts.

China has built four new missile shelters on Fiery Cross Reef to go with the eight already on the artificial island, AMTI said. Mischief and Subi each have eight shelters, the think tank said in a previous report.

In February, Reuters reported that China had nearly finished building structures to house long-range surface-to-air missiles on the three islands.

On Mischief Reef, a very large antennae array being installed would presumably boost Beijing's ability to monitor the surroundings, the think tank said.

A large dome recently was installed on Fiery Cross and another is under construction, indicating a sizeable communications or radar system, AMTI said. Two more domes are

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being built at Mischief Reef, it said.

A smaller dome has been installed near the missile shelters on Mischief, "indicating that it could be connected to radars for any missile systems that might be housed there," AMTI said.

"Beijing can now deploy military assets, including combat aircraft and mobile missile launchers, to the Spratly Islands at any time," it said.

'Golden period'

In Manila, Chinese Ambassador Zhao Jianhua said Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano's visit to Beijing is timely as relations between China and the Philippines have entered a "golden period of fast development."

He said the two countries have signed 22 cooperative agreements in less than six months and China has become the Philippines' biggest trading partner for the first time.

"The agenda is very clear, for the

enhancement of relations between China and the Philippines," Zhao said of Cayetano's meeting with Chinese officials.

Cayetano, who left for a four-day official visit to China last Wednesday, has met Chinese leaders, including Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi, according to Zhao.

"I think Secretary Cayetano is doing a very good job and the Chinese side attach great importance to his first official visit to China in his capacity as secretary of foreign affairs," the ambassador said.

"He has very good conversations with his counterpart Wang Yi," he said.

Zhao said the South China Sea issue would likely be tackled during Cayetano's meeting with Chinese leaders.

"I think this will be one of the topics. You know China and the Philippines have already established bilateral channel between the two

ministries of foreign affairs to talk about the South China Sea and related issues, and that China has already been open and we would hope that it would be friendly and candid exchange of views through that bilateral channel," he pointed out.

In July last year, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague invalidated China's claim to almost the entire South China Sea and the West Philippine Sea.

Despite the legal victory, Duterte has chosen to put the ruling on the back burner, saying he would revisit it later in his term.

The arbitral tribunal's decision came three years after the previous Aquino administration turned to the court for help to assert the country's jurisdiction over land features in the West Philippine Sea coveted or already seized by China.

Beijing has vowed not to honor the ruling – **Helén Flores, Reuters**

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01 July 2017

The Manila Times

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MILF attacks NCotabato town

BY JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL

SHARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao: The military has tagged the commander of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) as the one who led the guerrillas that attacked the group of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu) militiamen guarding the remote Barangay Bualan in Pikit, North Cotabato on Thursday.

The guerrillas attacked Sitio Valencia in Barangay Bualan that sent hundreds of villagers in panic and running for their safety.

Capt. Arvin Encinas, spokesman and public affairs chief of the Army's 6th Infantry Division (6ID), said both local of-

ficials and barangay (village) residents have confirmed that it was Abdulrashid Ali, also known as "Command RP," who led the attack.

"This Command RP belongs to the 105th Base Command of the MILF," Encinas said, citing reports by displaced residents.

Ali, a senior MILF commander lost two of his followers during the firefight with the barangay tanod (village watchmen) and local members of the CAFGU in an encounter in the same area early this year, triggered allegedly by an attempt to rob farmers of cattle foraging in open fields.

Sitio Valencia is located near the border of Pikit and Aleosan towns, both in the 1st district of North Cotabato.

Although outnumbered, the village watchmen and CAFGUs confronted Ali's group, forcing them to withdraw carrying three wounded fighters.

Note that there is an existing interim accord between the government and the MILF based on the July 1997 Agreement on General Cessation of Hostilities, binding both to resolve peacefully security issues besetting areas where there is a presence of rebel groups.

Meanwhile, Abu Misri Mama, spokesman of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) has denied their group's involvement in the recent harassment in Pikit.

Encinas added Army units in Pikit and Aleosan are now guarding the conflict-affected village to prevent a repeat of the incident.

The North Cotabato provincial police office also tightened security in areas vulnerable to attacks by the group of Ali and several police teams deployed in the localities accessible for any future incursions by the guerrillas.

July 2017

The Manila Times

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PALACE WARNS OF MORE ATTACKS BY REDS

MALACANANG on Friday warned the public that communist rebels were planning to attack government projects and infrastructure in Mindanao, signaling a deterioration in peace talks.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which had rejected President Rodrigo Duterte's martial

law declaration over Mindanao following the terrorist attack in Marawi City, on Friday issued a critical assessment of the Chief Executive's first year in office.

During the "Mindanao Hour" news briefing in Davao City, Palace spokesman Ernesto Abella said the government had received information that New People's Army

(NPA) rebels were planning to carry out attacks.

"We also wish to forewarn the public of reported planned attacks of the NPA on people-oriented programs and infrastructure projects," Abella told reporters.

"And we request the citizenry of Mindanao and

Attacks A2

ATTACKS FROM A1

Palace warns

everyone else in the country to be on the alert and on the lookout," he added.

The Palace official advised the public to immediately report suspicious-looking persons and unusual activities to authorities.

"We should be vigilant and we should be careful about our surroundings. Let us listen to the directives of local authorities," he said.

The government suspended the fifth round of negotiations with the National Democratic Front (NDF), the CPP's political arm, following the martial law declaration. The CPP had directed its armed wing, the NPA, to intensify offensives against state forces implementing martial law in Mindanao.

The NDF later asked the NPA to refrain from attacking government forces in Mindanao so the latter could focus on clearing Marawi City of Maute terrorists.

The government reciprocated, welcoming the NDF move as a positive development for the peace talks.

But hours later, about 50 NPA members raided a police station in Maasin, Iloilo and took away firearms, a laptop, a base radio, cash and jewelry.

While the attack did not happen in Mindanao, the government labeled it as "opportunistic."

Army troops and NPA rebels have also figured in a series of clashes in the Davao region in the past weeks;

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) claimed that rebels fired upon members of the 67th Infantry Battalion who were conducting patrols in Cateel, Davao Oriental last June 17. The attack led to an hour-long gun battle that left three rebels dead.

Another clash happened on the same day between the 60th Infantry Battalion and NPA guerillas in Pantukan, Compostela Valley. Two rebels were killed and two soldiers were wounded during the firefight.

Duterte's '3 wars'

The CPP hit Duterte as he marked his first year in office, accusing the President of failing to live up to his promise of delivering genuine change in society.

It lashed out at Duterte for using "strongman tactics" and for causing "widespread death and destruction," citing three "wars": a "war against drugs" (Oplan Tokhang and Oplan Double Barrel); an "all-out war of suppression (Oplan Kapayapaan) against the people's

national democratic cause;" and a "war against the Moros marked by the AFP siege and destruction of Marawi City (under the state of martial law in Mindanao)."

"The crisis of the ruling system continues to worsen in the first year under the Duterte regime as it fails to fulfill its promises of change. It has unleashed wars of death and destruction as it adopts ironfisted tactics and fascist methods to secure its rule and serve the interests of the ruling exploitative classes and foreign big capitalists," it said in a statement.

"Amid the ever-worsening socio-economic crisis in the Philippines and the protracted depression of the international capitalist system, the people are left with no choice but to launch ever more vigorous armed and unarmed struggles and rely on their own efforts to advance their national and democratic cause," it added.

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July 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Sarangani gov't eyes training center for former NPA rebels

By **JOSEPH JUBELAG**

ALABEL, Sarangani — The provincial government has allocated funds for the construction of a training center and staff house for New People's Army (NPA) surrenderers, who are preparing to live normal lives in mainstream society.

Governor Steve Solon said the provincial government has already

allocated ₱4 million for the purchase of the site and construction of a building that will house former NPA rebels, who will undergo skills and livelihood training.

Solon said there were about 300 NPA rebels from the province who have surrendered to military authorities and local officials since 2013.

He said the former communist rebels have been enlisted to the

Comprehensive Local Integration Program of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Flor Limpin, DILG provincial director for Sarangani, said local officials wanted to ensure the livelihood of the NPA surrenderers and enable them to sustain the education of their children.

The DILG released, last week, livelihood assistance to six former NPA rebels who yielded to military authorities here. Each of them, three of whom were minors, received ₱65,000 from the DILG.

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Public warned vs NPA attacks

By John Paolo Bencito

MALACAÑANG on Friday warned the public against more attacks in Mindanao by the communist New People's Army after their leaders ordered them to carry out more attacks against the Duterte administration.

"We also wish to forewarn the public of the reported planned attacks of the NPA on people-oriented programs and infrastructure projects and we request the citizenry of Mindanao and everyone else in the country to be on the alert and on the lookout," Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella told reporters in Davao City.

"We also appeal to everyone to share information with the authorities on suspicious persons and activities in their communities.

"We don't have details about the planned attacks except the warning is that we should be vigilant and careful about our surroundings."

On Friday, the Communist Party of the Philippines described Duterte's first year as one of "worsening crisis, death and destruction" and

Next page.

Public...

From A1

called on its fighters to "continue to seize the initiative and carry out more and more tactical offensives nationwide in order to derail and blunt" the "Duterte regime's all-out war," which gave the rebels "no other choice but to intensify tactical offensives nationwide."

"The crisis of the ruling system continues to worsen in the first year under the Duterte regime as it fails to fulfill its promises of change," the CPP said in a statement on Friday.

"It has unleashed wars of death and destruction as it adopts iron-fisted tactics and fascist methods to secure its rule and serve the interests of the ruling exploitative classes and foreign big capitalists"

Over the weekend, Abella said the NPA's recent "serious offensives" cast doubt on the sincerity of the communists to talk peace with the government.

The CPP also denounced the administration's failure to implement "serious policy reform in the social, economic and political fields."

"Rodrigo Duterte has zero to show to buttress his claims of being a Leftist and socialist... He has turned his back on his promise of sweeping changes made during the 2016 elections. He has continued the neo-liberal policies of the past three decades which perpetuates the exploitation and oppression of the people," the group said.

21 July 2017



Pahina. 2

Malacañang nagbabala vs NPA attack!

Nagbabala kahapon ang Malacañang sa publiko sa posibleng mga pag-atake ng New People's Army (NPA).

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella na, inalerto ng Palasyo ang taumbayan matapos makatanggap ng ulat na may mga planong pag-atake ang NPA.

"We wish to forewarn the public of reported planned attacks of the NPA on people-oriented programs and infrastructure projects. We request the citizenry of Mindanao and everyone else in the country to be on the alert and on the lookout," sabi ni Abella.

Anyang dapat ipagbigay-alam kaagad ng publiko sa mga awtoridad kung mayroon silang namo-monitor na aktibidad ng NPA sa kanilang lugar.

"We don't have details about the planned attacks except the warning is that we should be vigilant and careful about our surroundings. Making tayo lalo na sa mga bara-barangay, sa mga further directives ng mga local authorities," sabi pa ni Abella.

Magugunita na inatake ng NPA ang Maasin municipal police station kung saan ay kinuha ng mga rebelde ang mga baril at ilang kagamitan ng pulisya.
(Rudy Andaj)

01 July 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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AFP boosts backdoor security

258 Abu Sayyaf neutralized, 148 firearms seized

By **FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD** and **NONoy E. LACSON**

The Armed Forces of the Philippines-Eastern Mindanao Command (AFP-EastMinCom) on Friday said it has further intensified its border crossing security

with the creation of an inter-agency border security council to prevent terrorist and other transnational crime syndicates from using the country's backdoor as entry point. ►6

AFP boosts backdoor...

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During the inter-agency meeting held at the EastMinCom headquarters at Naval Station Felix Apolinario, Panacan, Davao City, on Wednesday, the attendees discussed and provided inputs on southern border security enhancement.

It was also agreed upon by the group to organize a Border Security Council that would be composed of various agencies involved in maritime, immigration, foreign relations, and other law enforcement agencies; and various local government units.

AFP EastMinCom spokesman Brig. Gen. Gilbert I. Gapay said the Interagency Border Security Council would be a mechanism and venue for member agency in reporting and assessing border security and recommending measures to be undertaken. It also defines the role and task of each

member agency in the effort of securing the border.

Gapay said border crossing stations in Cape San Agustin in Governor Generoso and Balut Island, Sarangani, Davao Occidental are being improved to strengthen the watch and monitoring system of the territorial border in Eastern Mindanao.

On the other hand, the Joint Task Force Haribon is at present profiling various bancas along the Davao Gulf as part of the effort of enhancing the "Bantay Dagat," a community-based coastal security as additional measure of security.

"This will be in coordination with local government units. This will be replicated in all coastal areas in EastMinCom area of responsibility," Gapay said.

Gapay said the creation of an inter-agency border security council is aside

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from the enhanced maritime patrol being conducted by the Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao and the joint maritime patrol with the Philippine Coast Guard in the territorial waters in South Eastern Mindanao.

258 ASG bandits neutralized

Meanwhile, in the ongoing effort to boost security against terrorists and crime syndicates, the AFP-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-WestMinCom) reported that at least 94 hardcore members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) were killed in encounters since January this year, while 66 were arrested, 98 surrendered, and at least 148 firearms of the group seized.

AFP-WestMinCom Commander Lt. Gen. Carlito G. Galvez Jr. said that as the all-out military campaign launched by the Joint Task Forces of the AFP-WestMinCom comes to an end, two more ASG members surrendered Thursday to the Joint Task Force Basi-

lan under Colonel Juvymax Uy.

Galvez identified the two ASG men as Serham Hasim Akkalun and Hapid Madjakin, both Basilan-based. They turned over to government troops an M1 Garand rifle and a clip with four rounds of live ammunition.

The two surrendered to soldiers of the 13th Special Forces Company based in Barangay Guinanta, Albarka, Basilan, at 4p.m. Thursday.

"We welcome those who return to the fold of the law and accord them the opportunity to live normal lives, far from what they have been facing before as combatants who engaged the government forces and who fight for extremism to thrive in Mindanao," Galvez said.

"Rest assured that with all these operational feats, we will not rest on our laurels and will, instead, continue to work hard and integrate the efforts of our soldiers and our stakeholders in sustaining the internal security in Min-

danao and in bringing about the defeat of the Abu Sayyaf," Galvez added.

Akkalun and Madjakin underwent custodial debriefing conducted by the Joint Task Force Basilan soldiers, Uy said.

Both will be turned over to the police today for the legal procedures.

According to Uy, Akkalun disclosed that he twice escaped from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology-Basilan on December 13, 2009 and on January 27, 2015.

Madjakin also revealed that he is an Abu Sayyaf member under the late sub-leader Long Malat.

"On the tactical level, the combat operations of our troops are currently being intensified to pressure the Abu Sayyaf bandits to yield to the government forces," Uy said.

"With the surrender of the bandits and the seizure of their strongholds, we are confident that our offensives on the ground are effective," he added.

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No 'humanitarian crisis' in Marawi

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

MALACAÑANG on Friday denied there is a "humanitarian crisis" in Marawi City after President Rodrigo Duterte sought allies' help in rebuilding the conflict-torn city.

In a news conference, Palace spokesman Ernesto Abella said Duterte welcoming aid from the country's international partners is just "normal for friends" to help each other especially in times of crisis.

"The President's invitation for international partners to aid in rebuilding Marawi is not synonymous to humanitarian crisis. We have said in numerous occasions that we welcome foreign assistance in the Marawi situation, especially in the rehab and reconstruction and recovery phase, especially now that the troops are about to liberate the city from lawless elements," Abella told reporters.

"It is normal for friends and allies to support each other [when

they] need a helping hand. And after all, we have our shared commitment with other countries to combat terrorism and attain sustainable peace," he said.

When asked how long the rehabilitation in Marawi would last, Abella replied that the government was not setting a specific date.

"As to when the recovery and rehabilitation would last, the Bangon Marawi Plan has a short-term and a long-term timeline depending on the activities involved. So we are not giving any specific dates but there is a timeline, we have a short- and a medium-term—a short and medium and long-term timelines," he said.

Duterte, in a speech in Pangasinana on Wednesday invited allies

of the Philippines to help in the rebuilding of Marawi City.

"As our troops wrap up our operations against the remaining terrorists in Marawi, I also welcome our international partners into looking forward to rebuilding the city. This invitation extends to our allies who share with us the principles of goodwill and non-interference in our domestic affairs," the President said.

The United States, China and Australia have extended assistance to the Philippines through intelligence-sharing or monetary aid as government forces continue to battle Islamic State-inspired extremists in Marawi.

In pursuing an "independent" foreign policy, Duterte has said the Philippines will reject foreign help if they come with strings attached.

Amid the Marawi conflict, the Duterte administration has vowed to channel a P20-billion fund for the rehabilitation and recovery program for the war-torn city.

On Friday, Abella reported that the number of civilians killed in Marawi is 44, following the recov-

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ery of 17 decomposing cadavers

He said 303 terrorists were killed while 82 government troops died in the fighting.

A total of 1,713 civilians were rescued, while 382 firearms were recovered, the Palace official added.

'Generally peaceful'

During the same news conference, Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, deputy commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command, said the military had "effectively shielded Eastern Mindanao" from further terrorist attacks.

"So after 38 days of martial law, [the] Eastern Mindanao Command, under the leadership of Lt. Gen. Guerrero, who is also the martial law implementor in Eastern Mindanao, has continuously prevented the spillover or spread of the Marawi crisis in our area of responsibility," Gapay added.

"We have effectively shielded Eastern Mindanao from terrorist attacks and deterred any diversionary, retaliatory or sympathetic attacks by the local

terrorist groups here in Eastern Mindanao," he said.

The military official added, "Eastern Mindanao remains generally peaceful, safe and secure," which he attributed to tightened security measures being implemented by the command.

"We have also denied terrorists from making our area a safe haven, as their safe havens, sanctuaries, and even as transit points. This is largely attributed to the tightened security measures being implemented by the command," Gapay said.

As of Friday, he reported that a total of 17,494 checkpoint operations had been conducted, both fixed and mobile checkpoints.

"We have apprehended 31 violators in these checkpoints. We have also confiscated 15 firearms and even confiscated illegal drugs during these checkpoint operations. So somehow, they also helped in law enforcement," Gapay said.

He added that the military has intensified intelligence coverage of the various threat groups and en-

hanced intelligence fusion among all government agencies.

"We activated martial law special action groups to run after and apprehend, track, apprehend those terrorists and supporters included in the arrest order issued by the martial law administrator," Gapay said.

"And to complement this, we have established more than 5,900 *barangay* intelligence nets or community information collection networks to help us track these terrorists in our area of responsibility," he added.

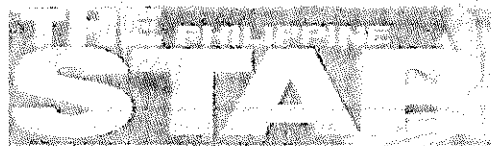
Gapay reported that some 17,224 internally displaced persons and evacuees were accommodated in various cities and key areas in Eastern Mindanao.

"We would like to thank the general public for your continued support and cooperation for the successful implementation of martial law here in our area," he said.

"Your continued vigilance and alertness are instrumental in this success. So let us continue working together to maintain the peace and preserve law and order here in Eastern Mindanao," Gapay added.

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Marawi battle soon over, says Duterte

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – One indication that the Marawi City crisis would soon be over is that there are now fewer enemies that government forces have to contend with after the

drawn out fighting claimed more than 400 lives and displaced over 200,000 people.

That was President Duterte's assessment as he also noted that there is "less resistance and less fighting." The President, however, told re-

porters here at Camp Catitipan last Thursday night that he could not predict exactly when the Marawi crisis would end after the Maute terror group attacked the city last May 23.

"That is something which I cannot really predict. While it indicates a slowing down of the fighting, which ordinarily would indicate also that there is less resistance now, no more fighting," he said.

Duterte said the crisis in Marawi would be over as soon as government forces retake control of the Islamic city.

This will be a matter of days with the way things are evolving now, he added.

"*Hindi tayo matatalo. Manalo tayo diyay* (We will not lose. We will win there). A few more days and we will prevail in Marawi. Do not worry," the President said.

He explained the Maute militants had the upper hand initially with higher vantage positions, resulting in the death of over 70 government forces.

Duterte again apologized and expressed sadness over Marawi's plight.

"I am sorry to everybody *lalo na sa mga* (especially the) *civilians sa Marawi, nadamay sila*. And I said, more than anybody else, *ako 'yung nasasaktan talaga* (I'm hurting). I was the one who ordered to

implement martial law," he added.

Sen. Francis Escudero said that he wants to hear the President announce the end of the Marawi crisis and the lifting of martial law in Mindanao when he delivers his second State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 24.

The 60-day period of martial law shall have lapsed by the time of the SONA.

However, the President and his allies mentioned on several occasions the possibility of extending the 60-day period if needed to fully address the peace and order situation in Mindanao.

Escudero clarified though that he is not in favor of setting deadlines when it comes to ending an armed conflict.

Since it is only the troops on the ground who know the actual situation there, Escudero said he would just leave it up to them to do their work and end the crisis without unnecessarily putting their lives in danger by rushing to meet deadlines.

Once the armed conflict in Marawi is over, Escudero said the government could then focus on the reconstruction of the city.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella denied that the Marawi siege had turned into a humanitarian emergency despite President Duterte's appeal to international allies to help in rebuilding the war-torn city.

"The President's invitation for international partners to aid in rebuilding Marawi is not synonymous to humanitarian crisis," Abella said.

Abella explained that Duterte

was merely stating that he is open to receiving assistance from allies in relation to resolving the conflict and rebuilding Marawi City.

At the United Nations, the body has outlined mechanisms to extend humanitarian assistance to member-countries who might sound the alarm for help. The 193-member body had in the past vowed to provide relief assistance like when the country was beset with the challenges during the Super Typhoon Yolanda tragedy.

In his speech last Wednesday at Clark Freeport, Duterte said he is welcoming international partners who want to help rebuild Marawi City.

He extended his invitation to "allies who share with us the principles of good-will and non-interference in our domestic affairs."

Duterte's Marawi visit rejected

Despite Duterte's desire to visit Marawi City, the Presidential Security Group (PSG) would not allow him to do so, as it is deemed too dangerous.

The President reiterated that he wanted to visit Marawi City but the PSG is against it.

"But you know, I cannot just sit on my ass *diyay sa opisina ko na hirap 'yung tao doon* (in my office while the people suffer)," the President earlier said.

The President was supposed to visit Camp Ranao, the main military camp in Marawi, last month but security officials said many Maute snipers are in the area. – With Christina Mendez, Marvin Sy, John Unson

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Marawi death toll hits 429

By JAIME LAUDE

More than 400 people have been killed in the clashes between government troops and Maute extremists in over a month of fighting in Marawi City.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said seven more soldiers were killed in Marawi in the last two days of fighting, bringing the total to 82 security forces slain since the start of the siege.

The Maute gunmen, on the other hand, were further decimated with 303 militants killed.

Civilian casualties, however, continue to rise as 44 bodies

Turn to Page 2

dragged on for more than a month

Duterte suspected possible corruption in the military and defense establishment as he ordered an investigation into how several high-powered firearms of the government wound up in the hands of Maute extremists.

He said some of the firearms and ammunition used by the militants in the battle of Marawi City were traced to the Department of National Defense (DND)'s Ordnance Division, including some department personnel.

Duterte said some of the high-powered guns included the .50 caliber Barrett sniper rifle.

"It would be good that after this war, if it will end someday, to start looking into where the firearms and ammunition came from," Duterte told the gathering of the Southern

Mindanao Regional Police Office here late Thursday.

He said the firearms and the boxes of ammunition recovered from the Maute were even marked "DND Ordnance."

This developed as police seized thousands of high-powered ammunition stocked inside a warehouse in Cagayan de Oro City yesterday.

Chief Insp. Ariel Philip Pontillas said the ammunition was contained in eight boxes of 6,000 rounds for 5.56mm and 2,000 rounds of 30 caliber.

Pontillas said they received information that the cargo came from Manila a few weeks before the Marawi siege broke out.

Pontillas said a gunrunning syndicate could have brought in the ammunition. – **John Unson, Gerry Lee-Gorit, Edith Regalado**

Marawi death From Page 1

were retrieved from the battleground

Padilla said the number of civilian deaths could go up further since there are a number of bodies yet to be retrieved from the war-torn city.

"Let's not concentrate on the numbers (of casualties) yet, but look at the perspective that the battle is ongoing and how complex it is while the soldiers remain steadfast in their resolve in liberating Marawi," Padilla stressed.

The fighting in Marawi had dragged on for over a month, leaving thousands of families displaced.

President Duterte himself noted the Maute gunmen do not seem to run out of ammunition as the conflict in Marawi

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Deadline to crush Abus lapses; 258 neutralized

By **ROEL PAREÑO**

ZAMBOANGA CITY – At least 258 Abu Sayyaf leaders and members have been neutralized by authorities as the six-month timeline set by President Duterte to crush the bandits lapsed yesterday, a military official said.

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., Western Mindanao Command

chief, said the all-out military campaign launched by the joint task forces of Westmincom within their joint area of operations since January this year resulted in the deaths of 94 hardcore members of the Abu Sayyaf, arrest of 66, surrender of 98, and recovery of 148 firearms.

Galvez said among the noted leaders of the Abu Sayyaf

killed in the relentless military operations were Muamar Askali alias Abu Rami, Alhabisy Misaya and the Mukhtadil brothers, who were operating the cross-border kidnappings.

Duterte ordered the crushing of the Abu Sayyaf following the militants' kidnappings and beheading of hostages.

Galvez said as the deadline lapsed, relentless operations

continued against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi areas.

He said the timeline is just part of the military's measure in achieving the objective to defeat the terrorist group.

The military official said they have to assess their previous operations and adopt a more effective strategy in neutralizing the Abu Sayyaf.

The military has yet to recover at least 26 hostages – 11 Vietnamese, seven Indonesians, a Dutch national and seven Filipinos – who remain in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf.

"Rest assured that with all these operational feats, we will not rest on our laurels and will, instead, continue to work hard and integrate the efforts of our soldiers and our stakeholders

in sustaining the internal security in Mindanao and bringing about the defeat of the Abu Sayyaf," Galvez said.

While trying to crush the Abu Sayyaf, the military also has to deal with the Maute terror group that placed Marawi City under siege since May 23, displacing thousands of residents while some had been killed.

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INQUIRER

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PALACE REMINDER

DUTERTE HAD WARNED OF 'ISIS DISEASE'

By **Leila B. Salaverria**
and **Frinston Lim**
@Team_Inquirer

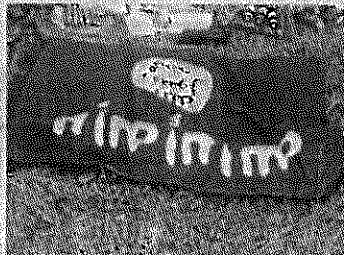
President Duterte had warned of the threat posed by the presence of the Islamic State (IS) in the Philippines as early as August, less than two months into his term, Malacañang said on Friday.

Responding to analysts who said the war on terrorism had taken a backseat to his war on illegal drugs, presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said Mr. Duterte had told the military to be ready to face the "Isis disease."

Extremist groups that have pledged allegiance to IS have laid siege to Marawi, where their battle with government forces has been going on for more than a month.

The attack had prompted Mr. Duterte to place Mindanao under martial law starting May 23.

"Let me remind you that as early as August last year, or one and half months after PRRD assumed the presidency, the President already told the Philippine military to be ready



Islamic State flag recovered in Sinsuat, Maguindanao, last month. —6TH INFANTRY DIVISION

with Isis and warned that the country would be plagued with the Isis disease," Abella said in a press briefing in Davao City.

In a statement sent to reporters in Marawi City on Friday, Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the total number of killed soldiers as of Thursday evening was at 82, up from 71 as of 6 p.m. of June 27.

The number rose to 75 on June 28, and then another seven deaths were reported the following day to bring the death toll to 82.

Eleven soldiers have been reported killed in two days in the fighting in Marawi as

of 6 p.m. on Thursday, according to latest figures from authorities.

According to Abella, the President has been taking a "whole systems approach" in combating extremism.

"At the end of the day, it's really a whole systems approach of government that will look after economics, social injustice, law and order, peace, and also a sense that we all belong to one nation," he said.

Abella said Malacañang welcomes assistance from the country's foreign allies in the rebuilding of Marawi although he denies that there is a humanitarian crisis in the city.

"It is normal for friends and allies to support each other ... And after all, we have our shared commitment with other countries to combat terrorism and attain sustainable peace," Abella said.

On Wednesday, President Duterte invited allies who share the principle of noninterference in domestic affairs to join efforts to rebuild Marawi.

"As our troops wrap up our operation against the remain-

ing terrorists in Marawi, I also welcome our international partners into looking forward to rebuilding this city. This invitation extends to our allies who share with us the principles of goodwill and noninterference in our domestic affairs," Mr. Duterte said at Clark Air Base, Pampanga.

The President has compared the scourge of Islamic extremism to that of Adolf Hitler's Nazi ideology, even as he warned the fight against groups allied with the IS could take years to win.

Mr. Duterte said the drug-fueled rebellion now happening in Marawi was being waged by a "brutal and cruel group" which is "an international insanity."

"There's no telling when will this war would end," he said.

"There's less enemy to contend with, less resistance, less fighting," Mr. Duterte, in a press briefing after meeting with members of the police regional command, said when asked about his earlier statement that fighting in Marawi will soon be over. —WITH JEOFREY MAYER INQ

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The Manila Times

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Govt death toll in Marawi rises to 82

BY DEMPSEY REYES

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said on Friday nearly seven dozen military and police personnel have died amid fighting in Marawi City, adding seven more to the death toll.

Brig Gen. Restituto Padilla Jr., AFP spokesman, said seven more soldiers were killed in the armed conflict in Marawi City, bringing the government death toll to 82 as of 6 p.m. on Thursday.

Padilla declined to go into details, saying only that the battle was still ongoing with Islamic State (IS)-linked Maute group terrorists, and that the incident

was part of the military's "operational matters."

Earlier, the military spokesman said government troops were having difficulties in Marawi's urban terrain.

Aside from the government casualties, at least 303 terrorists have been killed and 382 firearms seized by the military and police.

► MarawiA2

■ MARAWI FROM A1

Govt death toll in Marawi rises

Fighting also claimed the lives of a total of 44 civilians, include the 17 people said to have been executed by the Maute group and whose remains were reported to have been recovered on Wednesday.

The Maute men, along with Abu Sayyaf leader Isnillon Hapilon, led the attack on Marawi City last May 23 in what the government claims was an attempt to turn the Muslim-majority city into an IS province.

The attack forced President Rodrigo Duterte to place Mindanao under martial law.

Last weekend, a unilateral truce was declared by the military in observance of Eid'l Fitr, which marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan, with an eight-man group led by religious leaders going to "ground zero" to negotiate with the Maute to

release the hostages, which include Fr. Teresito "Chito" Suganob.

Based on reports, the terrorists told the negotiators they would free Suganob in exchange for the freedom of the parents of the Maute brothers, Farhana and Cayamora, who were arrested in separate operations by police and military men.

Military officials rejected the offer.

"We wish to reiterate that Government's policy not to negotiate with terrorists remains. Hence, any demands made inside Marawi hold no basis," Padilla said in a statement.

"Let us continue to remind the public that the gravity of the offense of all these terrorists and their supporters is immense and they must all be held ac-

countable for all their actions," Padilla continued.

The Cagayan de Oro City Police Office on Friday held one suspected terrorist identified as Jerusalem Runeje, 29.

Authorities said Runeje admitted to being a member of the Abu Sayyaf group and confirmed that his photograph was among those included in posters of wanted terrorists.

"However, further validation and verification [with] other [intelligence agencies] are still ongoing," a police report said.

Padilla said it would pursue its offensive against the Maute members, amid consultations between national agencies in preparation for the rehabilitation, reconstruction and rebuilding of Marawi City once fighting ends.

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Duterte to declassify info on IS threat, hunt down source of contraband arms

By GENALYN D. KABILING and ARGYL CYRUS R. GEDUCOS

President Duterte intends to declassify military information about the grave security threat posed by the Islamic State (IS) in the country. He likewise vowed to hunt down the source

of the huge cache of weapons used by the militants in attacking Marawi City.

At the same time, the President ordered the formation of a "battalion of snipers" to battle the Islamic **► 6**

Duterte to declassify...



militants in the south using some of the new weapons donated by China to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)

The President said he plans to make public the intelligence data provided by security agencies about the terror group which he described as a "very toxic enemy."

"I'll get some of the materials furnished me by the intelligence. There is nothing sacred there or secrets. I'll open it to the public, for the public to (know), the analysis of the intelligence community of government," Duterte said during a press conference in Davao City last Thursday night.

"Wala akong nakitang sikreto doon [I don't see any secrets there] Not a thing that is not – what's not really known to the public anyway," he said.

Duterte said it was time for the public to "get a firsthand knowledge" of the kind of enemy the government troops are battling in the south.

He said the Islamic State is a "revolution" that is fighting people "for no reason at all."

The group has "no redeeming value" because its only goal is to kill and destroy, according to the President. Its brutality was 100 times more than the threat posed by the communist rebels in the country, he noted.

"It has nothing to do with Islam or Christianity or Judaism. It is an activity that is dedicated to the destruction of mankind. Wala silang gawain (They don't have work) except to destroy and kill and that puts us in a very grave danger," he said.

Duterte acknowledged that the Marawi conflict is now a fight between the government and the ISIS, saying the Maute members were just the "personalities."

"And you can now tell as we start to unravel the situation in Marawi, they have cut the heads of Muslims and Christians alike," he said.

He said the militants were aided by foreign terror suspects, some of whom were killed in the fighting. He said there were four Caucasian men and several Indonesians spotted in Marawi.

Over a month since the conflict broke out on May 23, casualties continue to rise.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said seven more soldiers have been killed, bringing to 82 the death toll

of military men as of Thursday.

The death toll of the Maute Group also rose to 303, the number of civilians killed is now 44

The AFP also reported that civilians rescued have already reached 1,713

Focus on terror

Malacañang denied that President Duterte gave less importance to the threat of the Islamic State (ISIS) in the Philippines particularly in Mindanao.

This came after the Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence, and Terrorism Research claimed that Duterte's "fixation" on the drug war overshadowed the country's war against terrorism.

According to the group, the battle in Marawi City could have been prevented had the government forces "seriously exercised due diligence in gathering reliable and accurate intelligence information while enemy forces were still in [the] inception stage."

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said Duterte has pointed out that the ISIS will come into the Philippines since the early months of his presidency.

"Let me remind you that as early as August last year, one-and-a-half months after PRRD assumed the presidency, the President already told the Philippine military to be ready with ISIS and warned that the country would be plagued with the ISIS disease," he said.

"As early as August last year, nakita na ng Presidente yung mga inherent, yung mga looming dangers dahilan sa presensya ng ilang mga tao na mukhang ang kanila namang dala-dala ay hindi bala kundi bala para sa utak (the President already saw the looming dangers because of the presence of some people who don't carry bullets but bullets to a person's mind)," he said.

"It is [for] indoctrinating people and trying to bring people in their particular ideology which is not Muslim, but it is a radical form of extremism," he added.

Arms supplier

As this developed, the President has called for a probe into the Maute group's weapon stockpile after expressing concern the arsenal included ammunition from Department of National Defense (DND) used to kill and injure government troops in the battlefield in Marawi.

FF. "It would be good that after this war, if it will end someday to start looking into saan itong mga baril pati 'yung mga bala kasi may mga cartons doon marka pa 'yung DND personnel, from DND ordnance [where the weapons, including bullets came from. There were even boxes marked DND personnel, from DND ordnance]," the President said before an assembly of policemen at Camp Quintin Mecerido in Davao City last Thursday night.

"Before I left for Russia, I was already told that there was already amassing per intelligence report but hindi ko akalain na ganon karami ang bala. Saan nila nakuha? [but I did not expect the huge cache of bullets. Where did they get them?]" he said.

The President said the armed group has apparently used illegal drug money to buy more weapons and stockpile them in Marawi for their planned attack. He claimed that militants were behind the manufacturing and sale of illegal drugs in some parts of Mindanao.

"When I had my first command conference sa mga pulis, sa sundalo [with the police, military], as President, we're talking about drugs and I was really hitting the drug issue because it was fueling. Ang gasolina ng mga terorista was drugs [It was fueling the terrorism. Drugs were the fuel of the terrorists]," he said.

"They were producing drugs beyond the normal capacity of all of the addicts in the Philippines can consume. So they were really actually selling and buying guns and everything," he said.

"Do not be afraid, mas may training tayo sa kanila at mas mautak kayo [We have better training than them. We are more intelligent]," he said.

"A few more days and we will prevail in Marawi. Do not worry," he said.

One year into his presidency, the Chief Executive promised to continue to fulfill his duty to protect the country from all kinds of threats - particularly illegal drugs and terrorism.

The President said he does not mind whether the people give him a poor or excellent grade on his leadership in the first 12 months in office.

"You can rate me good, very good, excellent or very poor. And I don't mind. I said, I'll just do my duty," Duterte said in a media interview in Davao City last Thursday night.

"If I make you happy, good. If you are sad about what I'm doing, I'm sorry," he said.

No humanitarian crisis

Meanwhile, the government denied it is facing a humanitarian crisis in the recovery and rehabilitation of the besieged Marawi City in Lanao del Sur when it started accepting aid from other countries.

Abella said it is just normal for friends to help each other especially in times of crisis.

"The President's invitation for international partners to aid the rebuilding is not synonymous with humanitarian crisis," Abella said during the Mindanao Hour press briefing in Davao City Friday morning.

"He has said in numerous occasions that we welcome foreign assistance in the Marawi situation especially in the rehab, reconstruction, and recovery phase," he added.

"It is normal for friends and allies to support each other which need a helping hand and after all, we have our shared commitment with other countries to combat terrorism and attain sustainable peace," he continued.

In his speech in Pampanga on Wednesday, Duterte said his invitation extends to the country's allies who share with the principles of goodwill and non-interference "in our domestic affairs."

Malacañang had earlier said that the ₱20-billion Bangon Marawi program would start as soon as Marawi City is liberated from lawless elements.

However, Abella said there is no telling how long the rehabilitation, recovery, and reconstruction phase would take as it all depends on the activities involved.

Public Works Secretary Mark Villar had earlier said the framework for the Bangon Marawi program is being drawn up.

Only last week, three countries have already extended assistance to the victims of Marawi City and for the rehabilitation of the city.

On June 24, it was reported that the Israeli government has extended assistance to the Marawi conflict victims as it turned over ₱1-million worth of basic equipment, medicines, and supplies to the Philippine Red Cross (PRC).

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said in a statement that Australia is giving \$920,000 (₱34.5 million) worth of food and other supplies to the displaced Marawi citizens.

China has also donated ₱15 million to support relief operations and rehabilitation efforts in Marawi City. (With a report from Francis T. Wakefield)

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Troops neutralized 303 Maute terrorists, ops to continue – AFP

By Mario J. Mallari and Joyce Ann L. Rocamora

Intensified operations against the Islamic State (IS)-inspired terrorists in Marawi City have resulted in the neutralization of more than 300 bandits as government security forces enhanced their existing security measures in Mindanao to thwart any attempt by terrorists and other criminal groups to enter the country via the southern backdoor.

So far, the military said 303 terrorists had been killed since the siege started last May 23.

A total of 71 government troops and 44 civilians also died in the conflict.

The terrorists, numbering around 100 to 120, are still holding more than 100

hostages now being used as human shields.

Capt. Jo-Ann Petinglay, spokesman of the Armed Forces Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom) yesterday said at least 94 members of the Abu Sayyaf were killed, 66 were captured while another 98 surrendered since an all-out military campaign was launched in January.

“Rest assured that with all these operational feats, we will not rest on our laurels and will, instead, continue to work hard and integrate the efforts of our soldiers and our stakeholders in sustaining the internal security in Mindanao and bringing about the defeat of the Abu Sayyaf,” Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez, for his part, said.

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Troops neutralized 303 Maute terrorists, ops to continue – AFP

s a source of national pride

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From page 1

On Thursday night, President Rodrigo Duterte said he's optimistic that the ongoing military offensives against the IS-linked Maute group and Abu Sayyaf will be over "in a matter of days" as the government is "winning the war" in Marawi City.

The Commander-in-Chief added he intends to "look into" how the Maute group got hold of a large supply of guns and ammunition once the situation in Marawi has stabilized.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella, for his part, yesterday pointed out that way before Marawi City was seized by the Maute group, the President had already mentioned a looming problem involving the extremist organization in the Philippines.

"Let me remind you that as early as August last year or one-and-a-half months after PRRD (Mr. Duterte's initials) assumed the presidency, the President already told the Philippine military to be ready with ISIS and warned that the country would be plagued with the ISIS disease," Abella said, in response to critics saying the administration has overlooked terrorism problems in the country due to its focus on illegal drugs.

The President Duterte revealed at the time that Arab ISIS members have entered some parts of Mindanao as missionaries whose real purpose is to indoctrinate into Moros, the convoluted ideals of the international extremist organization.

"That's troublesome because similar to communists, when they're done with the place and they see that it's clear, that's when their political officers come in. That's dangerous because they are messing with the mind. There's a problem here on Muslim insurgency and we must arrest them before, not them, our Moro brothers, that they don't get contaminated with the ISIS disease," Mr. Duterte had said.

Cross-border stations in Mindanao tightened

Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, spokesman for the implementation of martial law of the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom), meanwhile, said the command pushed the creation of a multi-agency council tasked to closely monitor and secure territorial borders within its jurisdiction.

"The Eastern Mindanao Command further intensified the border crossing security to prevent terrorist and other transnational crime syndicates from using the backdoor as entry point with the creation of an inter-agency border security council," he stressed.

The Eastmincom has intensified security operations along its territorial boundaries following the Marawi City siege and the subsequent implementation of martial law in Mindanao to prevent the spillover of the conflict in Eastern Mindanao.

The creation of the council will complement the enhanced maritime patrol being conducted by the Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao and the joint maritime patrol with the Philippine Coast Guard in the territorial waters in South Eastern Mindanao.

Gapay said the council already held its initial meeting on Wednesday at the headquarters of Eastmincom in Panacan, Davao City.

"The inter-agency attendees discussed and provided input in enhancing the southern border security," said Gapay.

"Further it was agreed upon to organize a Border Security Council that will be composed of different agencies involved in maritime, immigration, foreign relations and other law enforcement agencies, and different local government units," he added.

Gapay said the Inter-Agency Border Security Council will be a mechanism and venue for member agency in reporting and assessing border security and recommending measures to be undertaken.

"It also defines the role and task of each member agency in the effort of securing the border," he explained.

Meanwhile, border crossing stations in Cape San Agustin in Governor Generoso and Balut Island, Sarangani, Davao Occidental are being improved to strengthen the watch and monitoring system of the territorial border in Eastern Mindanao.

On the other hand Joint Task Force Haribon is presently profiling the different bancas along the Davao Gulf as part of the effort of enhancing the "Bantay Dagat" a community based coastal security as additional measure of security.

Gapay said in coordination with local government units, the move will be replicated in all coastal areas under the jurisdiction of Eastmincom.

'Bright future' cooperation

Meanwhile, Chinese Ambassador to Manila Zhao Jianhua said he optimistic on the future of the Philippines and the Chinese military forces in fighting against terrorism and extremism in the region as Beijing vowed to continue providing the Philippines with "necessary assistance," a day after it donated thousands of weapons to the country to help its fight against Islamist gunmen.

"To improve our relationship against the background for fighting against terrorism, I think we find it essential for the two militaries of the two countries to go hand in hand in our efforts to defeat terrorism," he said during the 20th anniversary celebration of Hong Kong's return to China at Fairmont Hotel in Makati City.

Given the problem of terrorism threat that "is not simply a domestic affair but is also an international context," the envoy shared that China and the Philippines will face the same kind of problem.

PNA

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Pahina. 2

~~EDRE NG MGA MAUTE SA SULTAN KUDARAT~~

5 MAUTE ARESTADO SA CHECKPOINT

TIKLO ang siyam katao kabilang ang limang may apelyidong Maute sa checkpoint ng militar sa Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, kahapon.

Ayon kay Senior Supt James Allan Logan, hinuli ang mga naturang indibidwal kasama ang dalawang bata dahil nakalagay sa kanilang ID ang apelyidong Maute.

Ang grupong Maute ang naghahasik at patuloy na nakikipagbakbakan ngayon sa tropa ng pamahalaan sa Marawi City.

Ani Logan, sakay ng itim na Toyota Innova (MEX 811) ang naturang siyam na indibidwal na galing ng Cotabato City bago naharang sa checkpoint sa Bgy. Macaguiling sa Sultan Kudarat,

Maguindanao.

Isinasalang na sa pagkuwestiyon ng mga awtoridad ang mga dinakip.

Nabatid pa kay Logan na sinabi umano nina Alimatar Guro Maute, Apok Pili Maute, Mohamad Ali Maute at Saida Guro Maute na nag-trula sila sa ARMM compound para kumuha ng clearance sa National Bureau of

01 July 2017

NGAYON

Pahina. 2

Marawi war patapos na - Digong

Digong binawalan ng AFP sa Marawi visit

Inirekomenda ni AFP spokesman B/Gen. Restituto Padilla na ipagpaliban muna ni Pangulong Duterte ang kanyang pagbisita sa Marawi City dahil sa isyu ng seguridad.

Sinabi ni Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella, aware ang Pangulo sa panganib ng pagpunta sa Marawi at lahat ay ikinokonsidera.

Piano ng Pangulo na magpunta sa Marawi City upang makapiling ang mga biktima ng giyera sa unang taon ng kanyang pagiging chief executive ng bansa.

"There are trips which maybe you'd want to be there and feel safe but there are also places here that which would preclude you from announcing in advance or earlier 'cause it might really jeopardize your life," wika ni Duterte.

Sinabi naman ni Pangulong Duterte, kahit bigyan siya ng gradong good, very good, excellent o very poor kaugnay sa kanyang performance sa unang taon sa pagkapangulo ng bansa, ay wala siyang pakialam.

Ayon kay Duterte, basta gagawin na lamang nito ang kanyang tungkulin sa kanyang makakaya.

Kung masaya daw ang tao sa kanyang ginagawa ay mabuti naman pero kung nalulungkot, humihingi siya ng paumanhin. (Rudy Andal)

Naniniwala si Pangulong Duterte na malapit nang matapos ang Marawi crisis sa loob na lamang ng ilang araw matapos lalong paigtingin ng military ang kanilang operasyon laban sa Maute group.

"The way it is evolving now, I think it will be a matter of days. Before the end of the month, matatapos na yan," pahayag ng Pangulo nang dumalaw ito kamakalawa ng gabi sa Camp Quintin Merecido

sa Davao City

Siniguro rin ng Pangulo na nagtatagumpay ang gobyerno laban sa Maute-ISIS terror group kasabay ang paghingi din niya ng paumanhin sa mga Maranao dahil sa krisis na nalikha sa Marawi City.

"We are winning the war, do not worry. I am sorry to everybody, lalo na sa civilians sa Marawi. Nadamay sila. This is a very cruel and

NI RUDY ANDAL

brutal group" dagdag pa ni Duterte.

Hindi naman masabi ng Pangulo kung kailan matatapos ang giyera sa Marawi City pero may mga indikasyon na malapit na daw itong matapos.

"That is something which I cannot really predict. While it indicates a slowing down of the fighting, which ordinarily would indicate also that there is less resistance

now, no more fighting. And maybe the security forces of the government would be able to control all of the city, territory -- City of Marawi," sabi pa ng Pangulo.

Samantala, sinabi naman ni Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella na, umabot na sa 82 government forces ang nasawi sa bakbakan sa Maute, nasa 303 naman na terorista ang napatay ng mga awtoridad at 445 na silbilyan na ang pinatay ng Maute.

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Pahina. 6

Maute-ISIS nasa Palawan na?

Nabulabog ang mga residente ng Palawan matapos kumalat ang ulat na dumaong sa Brooke's Point at Bataraza lulan ng mga pump boat ang mga armadong kalalakhian na umano'y miyembro ng Maute-ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria).

Kumalat sa text messages at social media ang umano'y pagdating ng mga terorista sa Palawan na umano'y dito naman planong maghasik ng terorismo. Dahil dito isang eskuwelahan sa lugar ang nakansela ang klase matapos na magsiuwian ang mga estudyante sa matinding takot.

Bunsod nito, agad na iniutos ni AFP-Westcom Command Chief Lt. Gen. Raul del Rosario sa security forces na beripikahin ang nasabing ulat subalit lumabas na negatibo ito.

"Our ground troops double check the information that reached us on the alleged presence of armed men in Bataraza and Brooke's Point, but yielded negative result," pahayag ni Captain Cheryl Tindog, Spokesperson ng AFP Westcom.

Nanawagan ang opisyal sa netizens na huwag magpakalat ng mga hindi beripikadong impormasyon sa text messages at social media para hindi ito lumikha ng alarma at pangamba sa publiko. **Joy Cantos**

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Pahina. 2

Hapilon digong maaresto

Nabigo ang security forces na maaresto ang tila may sa palos na si Abu Sayyaf commander Isnilon Hapilon matapos na mapaulat ang presensya nito sa Margosatubig, Zamboanga del Sur kamakalawa ng gabi.

Sa ulat ng Police Regional Office (PRO) 9, dakong alas-10:45 ng gabi nang salakayin ng tatlong team ng mga awtonidad sa pamumuno ni Sr. Supt. Redentor Retusto ang bayan ng Margosatubig.

Ang operasyon ay matapos na mapaulat na nakitang dumating sa lugar noong Hunyo 27 si Hapilon kasama ang mga armado nitong tauhan.

Ang nasabing Emir ng ISIS ay may patong sa ulong \$5M mula sa Amerika at mula naman sa dating P7.4M reward nito ay dinagdagan pa ito ni Pangulong Duterte ng P10M.

Si Hapilon ay sinasabing nakatakas umano sa bakbakan sa lungsod ng Marawi.

Gayunman, matapos halughugin ng mga awtonidad ang lugar ay nabigo itong matagpuan.

Maging ang mga nagpapatrulyang tauhan ng Philippine Navy at Philippine Coast Guard sa baybaying dagat

ng nasabing bayan ay hindi rin umano nakita si Hapilon.

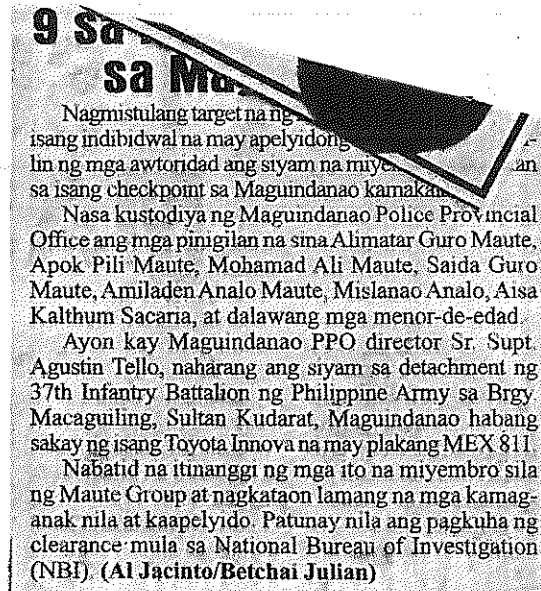
Nagpapatuloy naman ang pagtugis ng security forces kay Hapilon at mga kasamahan nitong Maute matapos na tumakas at abandonahin ang kanilang mga kasamahang terorista sa bakbakan sa Marawi. (Joy Cantos)

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DND to purchase ₱470 M worth of bullets

By **FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD**

The Department of National Defense (DND) will be buying close to ₱470 million worth of bullets to replenish the military's stock of ammunition, following internal armed conflicts in various parts of the country in the past year.

Brigadier General Restituto Padilla, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman, revealed yesterday that

the DND-Government Arsenal plans to acquire ₱468,150,000 worth of 5.56 mm rounds of finished components.

"Ang ginagawa nating acquisition sa DND ay parte lamang ng ating patuloy na pag-aangkat o pag acquire ng mga kinakailangan pampalit sa nawawala nating stocks. So ito ay patuloy na bagay. So meron mang giyera o wala, patuloy pa rin itong gagawin at bibilin natin (The acquisition by the DND is part of our continuing acquisition of the needed replenishment of lost stocks. Regardless if there is war or not, we will continue to do that)," Padilla said.

The AFP is currently locked in a tight battle with the ISIS-linked Maute Group which has laid siege

on Marawi City.

According to the DND, the money to be used to buy the bullets to arm the M-4s and M-16 automatic rifles in the AFP inventory will be sourced from the

General Appropriations Trust Fund.

As of Thursday, a total of 299 Maute fighters have been killed as a result of intense fighting. On the other hand, 71 government soldiers were slain since

fighting broke out last May 23.

When asked for the cost of the Marawi war the AFP already incurred, Padilla said he could not give a definite answer on that question as of now.

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Business groups want gov't to pull out of talks with Reds

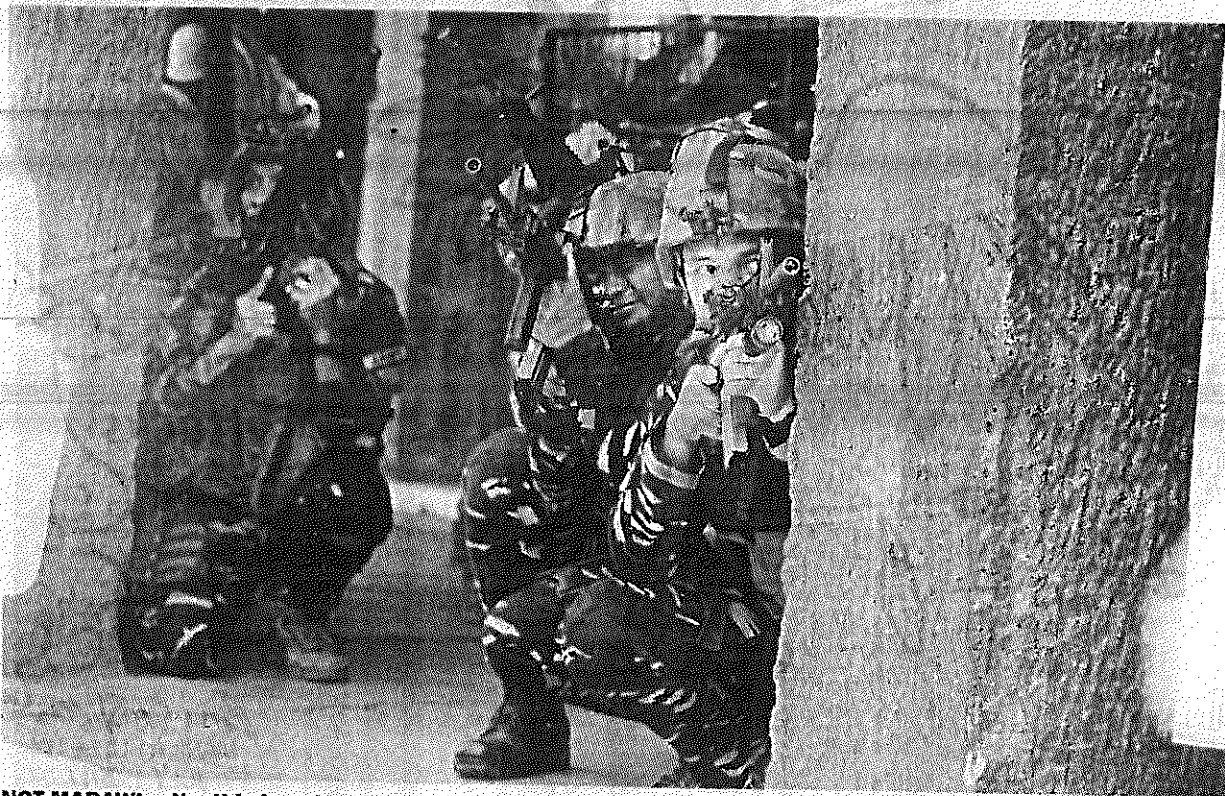
MANILA (PNA) — Besieged by the continuous extortion activities and attacks by communist insurgents on their businesses, two top Mindanao business groups have thrown their support behind Senator Panfilo Lacson's call for the government to pull out of talks with

Communist rebels.

Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (DCCCI) president Ronald Go and Pilipino Banana Growers and Exporters Association (PBGEA) president Alexander Valoria, in a joint statement on Friday, appealed to the government to heed Lacson's call and take into

account the damage inflicted by communist insurgents on Mindanao's businesses.

They also underscored that peace talks should only resume when the Communist rebels, represented by the National Democratic Front (NDF), demonstrates its sincerity in pursuing the peace process.



NOT MARAWI — No, this is not a photo taken in the war-torn city of Marawi, but that of a training exercise of Task Force Davao, which cross-trained with the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team of the Davao City Police Office, in urban assault in Davao City yesterday. (Keith Bacongco)

Valoria said the NDF obviously had no control over its armed unit the New People's Army (NPA), which has continued its attacks not only on government installations, but also on private businesses, especially those operating banana and pineapple plantations in Mindanao.

"We agree with Senator Lacson and join his call for the government to scrap its peace negotiations with the NDF. Unless the NDF and its armed group on the ground can show that it is sincere in pursuing genuine peace, it would be useless and futile to keep on talking," said Valoria.

Go said "Treachery and betrayal have no place on the peace table."

"The continuing atrocities of the NPA prove that there is no central communist leadership that is capable of pursuing genuine peace with the government," he said.

"If that is the case then Senator Lacson is right to advise the government to hold off negotiations with the NDF," he added.

Valoria and Go were referring to Lacson's recent statement urging the Duterte administration to hold off peace talks with the NDF after the NPA attacked a police outpost in Iloilo last June 18.

Last week, a still undetermined number of NPA rebels attacked a police detachment in Brgy. Malitbog, Panabo City, Davao del Norte, killing one policeman.

Lacson said "the first thing to consider before resuming the peace talks with the NDF is an assurance and clear proof that the NPA is still under the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)-NDF control and direction."

Lacson, who chairs the Senate committee on public order, said recent events show that the NDF clearly has no control over the NPA.

As such, Valoria asked the government to reconsider its recent move requiring security personnel guarding their plantations and offices to deposit their high-powered firearms with the Philippine National Police (PNP).

"We are respectfully appealing to authorities to review this recent directive

as we are left at the mercy of the NPA and other lawless elements which, in most cases, are now able to carry out their attacks using high-powered guns," he said.

Go also pointed out that businessmen in Mindanao no longer wanted to add to the security concerns that law enforcement authorities are currently facing in the island in light of the declaration of martial law.

"This is why the business community is requesting the government to at least give us some leeway to allow us to protect our businesses from the NPA and other criminal elements," he said.

Valoria and Go welcomed the recent assurance made by the police leadership in Mindanao that it will take steps to fill the security gap left by the recent directive requiring private entities to deposit their high-powered firearms with the PNP.

Among such measures, Valoria said, was the PNP's move to speed up the training of Special CAFGU Active Auxiliary (SCAA) groups that will be deployed to augment security forces in Mindanao.

Valoria said PBGEA members operate banana and pineapple farms in areas that are infested with NPA insurgents "and it is precisely the presence of our high powered firearms that deter the NPA from attacking us."

"This has been proven in the past. The NPA will laugh at our shotguns and pistols as they can now easily overrun our facilities. Without a chance to defend ourselves, many may see that there is no other choice but to pay the NPAs revolutionary tax," he lamented.

Valoria recalled that just two months ago, NPA guerillas torched some ₱4 million worth of farm equipment at a pineapple plantation owned by Del Monte Philippines in Davao City, less than a week after government negotiators and the NDF agreed on an interim joint ceasefire agreement.

The NPA has resorted to burning equipment and facilities in fruit plantations in Mindanao to force companies to pay them "revolutionary taxes."

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REBEL RAIDERS – Iloilo police officials show pictures of some of the NPA fighters who were charged for taking part in the raid on the Maasin police station last June 18. (Tara Yap)

Maasin police station raiders charged

By TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY — The Iloilo provincial police has brought charges against the New People's Army (NPA) fighters who raided the police station in Maasin town, Iloilo, last June 18.

Senior Supt. Marlon Tayaba, Iloilo police chief, filed charges of robbery in band, serious illegal detention, direct assault upon persons of authority, public disturbance, and violation of Anti-Carnapping Act before the prosecutor's office Thursday.

The group of about 60 rebels stormed

the town's police station, handcuffed nine officers who were on duty and took their firearms.

Only 20 of the rebels have been identified: Joan Fajardo, Chiva Diaz, Joven Ceralvo, Melvin Dayaday, Mary Llyich Bocala, Ronnie Canon, Romeo Esmendiana, Joerey Cordero, an alias "Gamay" Monterio, Karma John Suarez, Leizle Bandiola, an alias "Ruby," an alias "Katkat," Lanie Gardose, Christy Cabales, an alias "Niel," Randy Canoy Garnica, Erver Buencochoillo and Levj John Palencia.

Tayaba said Buencochoillo and Ca-

bales are high-ranking officers of the NPA's Southern and Central Fronts.

Ceralvo is believed to be "Ka Julio Montana" the spokesman for the NPA Coronacio Chiva Waling-Waling Command.

The Police Regional Office considered the NPA raid in Maasin as a malicious threat to the entire Western Visayas.

"Rest assured, the PNP (Philippine National Police) is doing everything in its power to arrest the perpetrators and recover the items they took," said Supt. Gilbert Gorero, PRO spokesman.

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Amid China's build, build, build, Rody non-combative

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Faced with China's version of "build, build, build" in the South China Sea, President Duterte is keeping his "non-combative" stance in dealing with Beijing, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said yesterday.

"We need to reiterate the fact that the President has said – his approach to the situation, to regional geopolitics has always been to come into a mutual understanding and dialogue in order to resolve cases like these," Abella said during the "Mindanao Hour" program held in Davao City.

While the government would rather leave the matter to the Department of National Defense and Department of Foreign Affairs, Abella stressed that Duterte has made his position clear on the issue – to be "non-adversarial" and opt for "peaceful dialogue."

"We need to just go back to the fact

that the President at this stage has been non-combative and non-adversarial, but has approached regional geopolitics from the point of view of dialogue and mutual understanding and mutual support," Abella said.

He was reacting to a report of the

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Amid From Page 1

Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative – part of Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies – that new missile shelters and radar and communication facilities were being built on Kagitingan (Fery Cross), Panganiban (Mischief) and Zamora (Subi) reefs in the Spratlys.

The report said the ongoing installation of a very large antenna array on Panganiban should be of concern to the Philippines due to its proximity to an area claimed by Manila.

The facility would certainly boost Beijing's ability to monitor the surroundings, the report said.

Duterte began cozying up to

China right after assuming the presidency last year, purportedly as part of his pivot to China and "separation" from the US, which has been critical of his bloody war on drugs.

He also described his warming of relations with Beijing as a step toward an independent foreign policy.

On Wednesday, Duterte witnessed the turnover by Beijing of a military package worth about P500 million delivered by cargo aircraft at Clark Freeport.

Chinese Ambassador Zhao Jinhua also donated P5 million in assistance for families of soldiers killed or injured in the government's fight against the Maute group in Marawi City. Beijing also donated P15 million to help in the rebuilding of the war-torn city.

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China builds new military facilities on South China Sea islands

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - China has built new military facilities on islands in the South China Sea, a US think tank reported on Thursday, a move that could raise tensions with Washington, which has accused Beijing of militarizing the vital waterway.

The Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI), part of Washington's Center for Strategic and International

Studies, said new satellite images show missile shelters and radar and communications facilities being built on the Fiery Cross (Kagitingan), Mischief (Pangaiban), and Subi (Zamora) Reefs in the Spratly Islands.

The United States has criticized China's build-up of military facilities on the artificial islands and is concerned they could be used to restrict free move-

ment through the South China Sea, an important trade route.

Last month, a US Navy warship sailed within 12 nautical miles of Mischief Reef in a so-called freedom of navigation operation, the first such challenge to Beijing's claim to most of the waterway since US President Donald Trump took office.

China has denied US charges that

it is militarizing the sea, which also is claimed by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

Trump has sought China's help in reining in North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, and tension between Washington and Beijing over military installations in the South China Sea could complicate those efforts.

China has built four new missile

shelters on Fiery Cross Reef to go with the eight already on the artificial island, AMTI said. Mischief and Subi each have eight shelters, the think tank said in a previous report.

In February, Reuters reported that China had nearly finished building structures to house long-range surface-to-air missiles on the three islands.

On Mischief Reef, a very large antennae array is being installed that presumably boosts Beijing's ability to monitor the surroundings, the think tank said.

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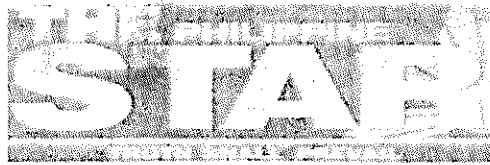
The Manila Times

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MARITIME EXERCISES During the maritime training activity "SamaSama 2017" last week in Zambales, US Marines from the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines, 3d Marine Division helped Philippine Marines to improve their basic urban warfare techniques based on feedback from Philippine military forces in Marawi. These techniques included how to clear rooms, hallways, and multi-level buildings. The bilateral maritime exercise is designed to strengthen cooperation between the nations' armed forces. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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FIRST PERSON

ALEX MAGNO

Waning

Even if these militants are on drugs, as some in the military say, there are real limits to their stamina

The drugs cannot compensate for ammunition running low among the armed men who attacked Marawi over a month ago. They will not compensate for the poor diet these fighters have been on since they began their misadventure. They will not compensate for the smaller area of operation they have been forced into.



The Marawi militants are beginning to resemble their ragged ideological brethren in the cities of Mosul and Raqqa. The vastly reduced ISIS forces in these besieged cities have taken to blowing up ancient mosques and landmarks as a final act of defiance before the unstoppable advance of coalition forces.

What the drugs could do for the militants, if the delusions of their warped ideology is not enough, is the increase in their capacity for brutality. Drugs derange and desensitize. They do that to everyone, armed militants included.

The military tells us to expect a spike in the number of civilian casualties as the areas held by Maute bandits are recovered. True enough, the decayed bodies of civilians apparently executed by the militants have been recovered from the crumbling stronghold. Many of the recovered corpses have been rotting for weeks. How the militants endured the stench we do not know.

The buildings in what used to be the center of commerce of Marawi calls up images of Aleppo. That is how any city will look like if it becomes the scene for urban warfare. In this sort of warfare, the fighting degenerates from house-to-house to room-to-room as our troops clear recovered buildings of snipers and booby traps.

Those poorly informed voices that demanded government forces cease bombing runs do not know how costly it could be for an army trying to recover a city to go about without air support. In a contest of snipers, our advancing troops would have suffered much more casualties without air support. They would have marched into the kill zone for enemy snipers.

Urban warfare makes unequal combatants equal. Each enemy fighter will have to be taken out one by one. See how many Army troopers paid the ultimate price and how many were seriously wounded over the last five weeks.

Carpet-bombing might have been the most feasible way for our troops to recover territory without sacrificing too many soldiers. But that would have required the same amount of callousness to civilian deaths that the militants demonstrated. That would have reduced the heart of Marawi to rubble.

We have an Army well trained in jungle warfare but ill prepared for urban warfare. In the coming period something has to be done to correct that.

There are other lessons to be learned. As the militant force crumbles and city blocks recovered at great cost, we will begin to understand how to better deal with threats posed by extremists. First we will have to understand how the apparently terrorists prepared for this attack.

Our military officers have developed a grudging respect for the enemy force in the course of this long battle. They appear to have prepared well. They carried the right weapons and clearly thought out their tactics. They were willing to die for the insane cause they embraced.

Maybe it is true that the Maute leaders executed their own fighters who wanted to surrender. But that is not the only reason they were able to withstand intense bombardment and a relentless assault without surrendering in droves. It is always difficult to fight a battalion of men ready to die without thought of surrender.

The officers and men of the Japanese Imperial Army were such a lot. They would rather die in a lopsided battle than accept the ignominy of surrender. For this reason, the atomic bomb had to be used to convince them of the futility of further resisting the Allied advance.

President Duterte threatened to carpet bomb the center of Marawi, mosques and all, if the terrorists continued to resist. His military officers on the ground took a more sober view, putting priority on the safety of the civilian hostages. Our Army is a proud institution. They will sooner take casualties than behave like a horde of savages.

Our military is an institution with honor to conserve. Soldiers did not shoot unarmed civilians during the EDSA Revolution. They had little appetite for bombing Marawi indiscriminately. For this reason, our soldiers earned much-deserved respect the past five weeks.

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See how our citizens reacted angrily on social media when members of Gabriela, without specific evidence, accused our soldiers of threatening the women of Marawi with rape. These feeble minded leftists should have first condemned the actual assault on women done by the terrorists.

At any rate, Gabriela now harvests the grapes of our people's wrath for their irresponsible statements, for their propensity to fall back on their traditional ideological posturing. Our soldiers in Marawi have demonstrated remarkable discipline in the course of this battle. Ask the civilians rescued under sniper fire by our brave soldiers.

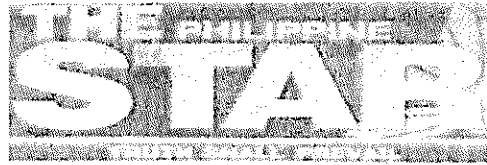
Those who, in the face of an actual terrorist assault on one of our cities, put the onus on government to explain why it declared martial law will now face the interrogation of history. Never mind how the Supreme Court rules on those crazy anti-martial law petitions. Public conviction is formed by the facts on the battleground.

While our President might be prone to making crude remarks at the most critical times, all his actions relating to the Marawi crisis were animated by patriotism.



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Rebuilding Marawi

The battle for Marawi is expected to be over soon, according to the government. The next phase will be the tortuous road to recovery. With much of the city razed by war, and with the lingering threats posed by those who staged the siege, the task can prove to be more challenging than the reconstruction of Tacloban City and other areas devastated by Super Typhoon Yolanda.

In shifting from war to reconstruction, the government may want to take a page from the military's counterinsurgency playbook: "clear, hold, build." Clearing Marawi of Maute and Abu Sayyaf terrorists is still ongoing. Once the AFP considers its mission accomplished, the government must move in and ensure that the victory is sustained. The terrorists must not be allowed to regroup and rebuild their strength for another strike anywhere in the country.

This entails cooperation from the local political leadership all the way down to the grassroots. The military offensive, backed by police commandos, indicated that the Mautes received support from a segment of the Marawi community, which provided funds,

EDITORIAL

guns, ammunition and other supplies to the terrorists. The local supporters might have also had links with fighters of the Islamic State, whose commander in the Philippines, the Abu Sayyaf's Isnilon Hapilon, could have escaped the government offensive in Marawi.

Now that Marawi residents – and the rest of the nation – have seen the atrocities that the Mautes are capable of perpetrating and the suffering inflicted on the city, there should be greater readiness to work with the government in permanently neutralizing this threat.

Residents' cooperation is critical in rebuilding Marawi from the ashes of war. The Mautes and their supporters may try to derail reconstruction work. City residents should be at the heart of efforts to thwart any such attempt.

In Tacloban and other areas ravaged by Yolanda, the mantra was to build back better. This can also be done in Marawi. As President Duterte has vowed, the city will rise again. The sweetest victory, and the best way to reject the Islamic State and its gospel of violence and hatred, is to show that Marawi not only recovers but also becomes a better city.

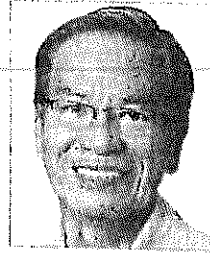
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AT GROUND LEVEL

SATUR C. OCAMPO



Federalism plan affects Moro, NDFP peace talks

President Duterte's oft-repeated avowal is to accomplish before the end of his six-year term, in 2022, a shift in the form of government from the present unitary to a federal system. That accomplished, he has declared, he will volunteer to resign as President.

And he has kept saying that only such a shift to federalism will satisfy the Bangsamoro – the name by which both the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) refer to the Muslim people in southern Philippines – and bring peace in Mindanao as it will correct the historical injustice committed against them.

Now it appears the leaders of both liberation groups don't think along the same line. While not expressing outright opposition to federalism, they have expressed parallel concerns that, under the still not-clearly defined concept and structure of a Federal Republic of the Philippines (or whatever it may be called), the protracted Bangsamoro struggle for their right to self-determination, identity, and institutions may not be given justice.

Both the MILF and MNLF prefer to have the final peace agreements they had separately forged and signed with the GRP implemented ahead of the formation of a federal system of government.

Meantime, in light of the mutually-acknowledged unprecedented progress in the first three rounds of formal negotiations in the GRP-NDFP peace talks under the Duterte government (held in Europe in August and October 2016, and in January 2017), the NDFP has manifested its readiness to support and be a partner in the establishment of a Federal Republic of the Philippines.

However, such support and partnership can be effective, the NDFP emphasizes, if there are guarantees for political and economic sovereignty, people's democracy, respect for human rights, social justice, patriotic culture, independent foreign policy, and an uncompromising fight against foreign dominance, dynasticism, warlordism, and other forms of local reaction.

These guarantees are essential elements of the substantive negotiations on social, economic, political, and constitutional reforms in the GRP-NDFP peace talks.

2014 Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB): These peace accords embody, in general and specific provisions, the essential and, in some aspects, modified modes of exercising their right to self-determination.

Although it's bound by constitutional limitations, both groups are pushing for the passage into law of a revised draft Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), which is essentially derived from the CAB and includes certain parts of the FPA. (The 16th Congress under President Aquino thoroughly overhauled but failed to pass the first BBL, drafted by a Bangsamoro Transition Commission with 8 members from the MILF and 7 from the GRP, all Muslims.)

In November 2016 President Duterte appointed a revived/expanded Bangsamoro Transition Commission (with MNLF members added in January), to work out a new draft BBL. The body recently approved the revised draft, but its presentation to the President set yesterday was postponed indefinitely. After the Office of the President shall have reviewed the draft, Duterte would submit it to Congress for approval.

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But the MILF, according to an authoritative source, found it confusing that President Duterte announced the creation of a Consultative Commission mandated, within six months, to recommend changes in the 1987 Constitution. With its fate still up in the air, the MILF fears, the hoped-for passage of the BBL in toto could be adversely affected by the proposed constitutional changes. After all, the President had assured them last April that the commission would be formed only after the draft BBL's submission to Congress.

It's now a tense waiting game for the Bangsamoro. The diminishing expectation of the MILF is articulated in this remark by Mohagher Iqbal, MILF peace panel chair: "We [had] better secure 10 centavos already in the basket than having to gamble for a peso [that] is still in the wilderness."

The GRP-NDFP peace talks still have to produce concrete results – 10 centavos? – as far as agreement on the substantive issues of social and economic reforms are concerned. Starting in the fourth round of formal negotiations in April, an air of unease and cautiousness has crept into the initial optimism that pervaded the earlier rounds. And the next, or fifth, round, scheduled in May, didn't push through after the GRP panel announced it would not participate. Back-channel talks have succeeded in getting the process back on track, and the fifth round will proceed in August or September.

Thus, if President Duterte envisions the shift to federalism as a means for attaining just and lasting peace not only in Mindanao but in the entire Philippines, he ought to ensure that the peace processes with the Left revolutionary movement and the Bangsamoro liberation movement are completed, with the comprehensive agreements initially palpably implemented to the satisfaction of the people who are the principal beneficiaries. Let's look into each case.

Both the MILF and MNLF are pushing for the implementation of their separate final peace agreements with the GRP: On the part of the MNLF (then led undisputedly by Nur Misuari, who now leads just a faction of it) there's the Final Peace Agreement (FPA) of 1998 and, on the part of the MILF (which broke away from the MNLF in the late 1970s), the

What has soured the atmosphere of the talks is the insistence by the Duterte Cabinet's security cluster on the primacy of a ceasefire – ahead of negotiations and signing of comprehensive agreements on social and economic reforms. The NDFP interprets this as a means to force its "capitulation and pacification" and to scuttle any comprehensive agreement on fundamental reforms beneficial to the people. In that case, it's doubtful if it would still be willing to support Duterte's federalism project.

* * *
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UNRAVELING

Duterte ushers in new dawn of China-Philippines military alliance

By GETSY HOLAQ

THE shaky United States-Philippines military alliance has begun unraveling as China delivered this week the first part of its P590-million military assistance to the Philippines. This is a seismic event largely under-reported in local and Western media, the fact that a former US colony and old ally is now receiving military aid from America's perceived rival, the People's Republic of China.

The choice of location for China's turnover ceremony for its Philippine military aid was heavy with irony - Clark Air Base in Pampanga. The former US Air Force base was part of the Pacific Air Forces Command and was operated by the Americans from 1903 until 1991, when the Philippine Senate voted to reject a renewal of the US bases treaty.

President Rodrigo Duterte was on hand last Wednesday, together with his defense and military officials, to thank China as he received from Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua the "gratis" donation of 3,000 rifles with five million ammunition and 90 long-range sniper rifles with 800,000 rounds. Zhao said this is only the first batch of firearms, with the second one currently being prepared for delivery in several months.

"The donation is not big. But it's big in a sense that it marks a new relationship between our two militaries," Zhao noted. China, he said, is interested in enhancing the two countries' cooperation in this area, including exploring "the possibility of joint training, intelligence sharing, and joint military exercises in the area of fighting terrorism."

The new firearms from China couldn't have come at a better time. The Philippines is fighting a rebellion in Marawi City by a jihadist group al-

lied with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. The Maute Group has a tenacious grip on a city it knows well, buttressed by a huge stockpile of money and weapons that caught by surprise the underfunded and ill-equipped Philippine armed forces.

The first batch of firearms sent by China had a value of 50 million yuan, according to Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana. "These rifles and ammunition are a welcome addition to the existing materiel in the arsenal of the Armed Forces of the Philippines," Lorenzana said, adding that some of the arms will be shared with the Philippine National Police.

In the past, it was the US that was quick to respond to the Philippines' military and security needs. The two countries are bound by a shared history and long-standing military agreements, including the 66-year-old Mutual Defense Pact, and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement signed during the administration of former President Benigno Aquino III, who also filed suit against China in the International Court of Arbitration.

For the conflict in Marawi, the Pentagon said that it provided the AFP with security assistance and technical training, but no troops on the ground. And no free guns either.

Truth be told, the US government through its State Department had actually blocked the sale of some 26,000 assault rifles to the Philippine police force last November, 2016. Senator Ben Cardin (Democrat) opposed the sale because of alleged human rights violations in the country as the Duterte government pursued its tough war against drugs.

This is the same Senator Cardin who six months later would file a bill in the US Senate, together with Senator Marco Rubio (Republican), to cut down arms sales to the Philippines.

The bipartisan team pompously called their proposed law, the "The Philippines Human Rights Accountability and Counternarcotics Act of 2017."

Were the US senators really concerned about the fate of drug addicts and pushers in the Philippines? This is doubtful. More likely, they were playing tit-for-tat politics after President Duterte boldly declared his preference for seeking closer relations with China and Russia.

But the US has misjudged Duterte, who is not so much anti American as pro-Filipino. His desire for an independent foreign policy is anchored on his belief that the Philippines will develop faster if it can choose its own economic partners and allies, and not allow itself to be used again by the US as a pawn in the geopolitical chessboard of Asia.

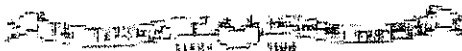
This is now a multipolar world, but the US has yet to accept this. While the US government loves to meddle and butt in on the internal affairs of other countries, China has a policy of non-interference. This is a value it shares with its neighbors in Asia, especially with the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Another difference between the US and China is that the latter is extremely patient and looks at issues over the long term. Its strategic "long view" has served it well. In the news of late is the 20-year anniversary of the 1997 British handover of Hong Kong back to China. Filipinos often forget that the British and the Americans were major imperialists powers who subdued Asian nations, including China and the Philippines.

Duterte's pivot towards its neighbor China was an astute move that will benefit the Philippines economically and help lift up millions of people out of poverty, as China had done successfully in just one generation.



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Not ideal conditions for peace talks

IN the ongoing conflict with the Maute rebels in Marawi City in Lanao del Sur, followed by an attack by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in Pigcawayan, North Cotabato, the national government may have gotten so involved in the fighting with the Islamists in Marawi that it has not had much time to devote to the other problem posed by the other long-standing rebellion, that of the New People's Army (NPA).

The NPA rebellion has raged for nearly five decades in various parts of the country mostly in Central Luzon in the 1970s, spreading to the Bicol region, then to Mindanao where it is most active today. President Duterte moved to solve the NPA problem at the start of his administration in 2016 with a series of peace negotiations hosted by Norway and the Netherlands. The two sides were set to hold their fifth meeting last May, but then the Islamic State-backed Mautes sought to seize Marawi City and President Duterte responded with a declaration of martial law in all of Mindanao.

At the height of the fighting in Marawi City, the President welcomed the support sent by the United States under our Mutual Defense Treaty. He said the major Moro organizations - the Moro Islamic Liberation Force (MILF) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) - would also be welcome to help the government repel the foreign-backed ISIS-linked Maute rebellion. He said the NPA would be similarly welcomed.

The NPA, through its political front, the Nation-

al Democratic Front (NDF), and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), has been involved in the negotiations launched by President Duterte. While it has supported the talks, however, it has continued to carry out attacks in various areas of the country, lately including Zambales, Cagayan, and Iloilo.

Early this week, Malacañang, through presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella, said, "We are disturbed by the recent NPA attacks, considering that their leader in Europe issued a statement condemning the incident in Marawi.... These NPA attacks disrupt the conducive and enabling environment indispensable in peace-making and peace building."

The NDF in Davao City responded through its vice chairman Alan Jasmires, that the NDF stand is that both parties can continue with the negotiations for land reform, national industrialization, protection of the environment, free exercise of the people's economic, social, and cultural rights, and economic sovereignty - "even as the fighting continues."

"These are less than ideal conditions for the holding of peace talks. We would expect more positive, more hopeful, more optimistic, and more open expressions from both sides. Nevertheless, we continue to hope that the peace talks which began with such promise last year will be able to resume soon and ultimately reach agreement that will end a rebellion that has continued intermittently all these years."

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ONLINE NEWS 01 JULY 2017

Army to provide free showing of 'Pacman' bout Sunday

From the Philippine News Agency (Jun 30): **Army to provide free showing of 'Pacman' bout Sunday**

Troops assigned at Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City will get a chance to watch Filipino boxing icon, Sen. Manny "Pacman" Pacquiao, go head-to-head with Australian challenger Jeff Horn Sunday.

Free viewing will take place at the Army Gym and Army Officers' Club, said Lt. Col. Ray Tiongson, Philippine Army spokesperson, on Friday.

Pacquiao will be battling Horn at the Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane, Australia on July 2.

"We expect him (Pacquiao) to be victorious in his fight, We are solid for the boxing champ. He dedicated his fight for our heroes fighting the Maute-ISIS terrorists in Marawi, it boosts our soldiers morale. Win or lose, we will support Manny," the Army official said.

Pacquiao is a reservist with the rank of lieutenant colonel. He first entered in the Army reserve force as a sergeant in April 27, 2006.

<http://www.pna.gov.ph>

Planned GenSan bombings foiled

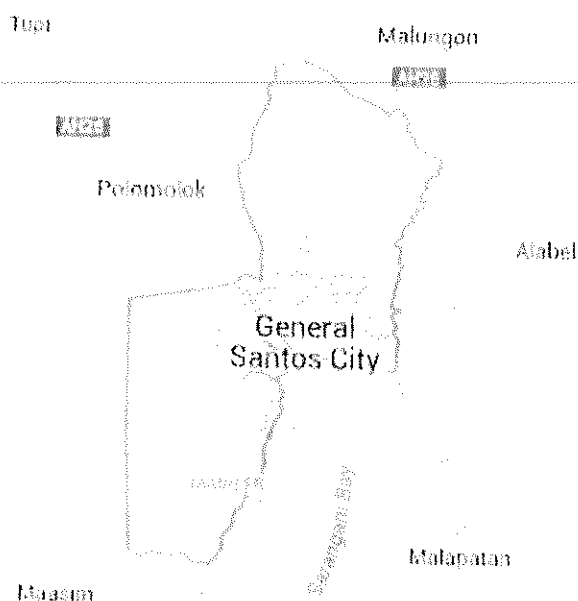
From the Manila Bulletin (Jun 29): **Planned GenSan bombings foiled**

Police have foiled the planned series of bombings in General Santos City following the arrest of a member of an extremist gang who was among those tasked to plot the improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Supt. Romeo Galgo, spokesman of the Northern Mindanao regional police, said **an intense manhunt was already launched against the two companions of the arrested suspect, 20-year-old Abdulazis Mangambit Tungan.**

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General Santos City Map (Photo courtesy of Google Map | Manila Bulletin)

Tungan, a native of Maasin town of Sarangani, is reportedly a member of the Ansar Al-Khalifa Philippines, an extremist group which pledged allegiance with the ISIS (Islamic Stat of Iraq and Syria) along with the Maute Group.

"With his arrest, we were able to thwart their bombing plans, word of which we have been receiving in the past weeks," said Gonda.

The intelligence reports said a terror group was planning bombing activities in General Santos City with the City Hall, churches and malls as targets. Police sources said the intent was to expand the militants' activities beyond Marawi and to shake up Mindanao.

Police intelligence operatives then conducted background check on Ansar Al-Khalifa and found out about one of the very few surviving members of the group identified as Ramram Tungan.

It was recalled that the leader of the Ansar Al-Khalida, Mohammad Jaafar "Tokboy" Maguid, was killed in a police operation early this year.

Maguid, before his death, had been in constant meeting with the Maute brothers allegedly on how to help the ISIS establish a firm footing in Mindanao through a virtual caliphate.

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Maguid's death meant the reduction of the operational capability of the group.

Police then launched a massive search for Tungan who turned out to be included in the list of the persons that the Defense department wanted arrested in connection with the Marawi City attack.

"He was seen standing beside the church of a religious sect, suspiciously uneasy. He attempted to run when his arrest was announced but he was immediately cornered," said Gonda, adding that the arrest occurred on Wednesday morning.

A hand grenade was seized from Tungan and that will be used in the filing of criminal charges against him. Local police investigators are grilling Tungan as to the whereabouts of his two companions.

The entire Mindanao is currently under the state of Martial Law after President Duterte's declaration following the Marawi City attack on May 23. Efforts to purge Maute gunmen in Marawi City are on-going.

<http://news.mb.com.ph>

MILF doubts Maute can establish Islamic State 'province'

From ABS-CBN (Jun 29): MILF doubts Maute can establish Islamic State 'province'

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) played down the Maute group's reported plan to establish a province in Mindanao under an ISIS caliphate, saying its days in Marawi were "numbered."

"We do not see any possibility at this point in time na mag-succeed yung pag create ng 'wilayah' (province) because there has been no caliphate established," MILF chairman Murad Ebrahim told ABS-CBN News.

Omar Maute and his brother Abdullah had been part of the MILF before they embraced violent extremism after studying in Jordan and Egypt.

After returning to the Philippines, the two asked to put up their own group under the MILF, Murad recalled.

"Sabi naman wala namang problema dahil MILF naman kayo. But then after they tried to form a group, nakita namin na iba yung kanilang mga polisiya, iba yung kanilang mga activities," he said. (But then, after they tried to form a group, we saw that their policy was different, their activities were different.)

The brothers are now leading a group of Islamist radicals wreaking havoc in Marawi.

Nearly 400 people have been killed and thousands others evacuated in more a month of intense fighting with ISIS-inspired Maute terrorists.

"Kung hindi sila pumasok dyan, hindi magkakaganyan," Murad said. (That will not have happened if they

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did not enter the city.)

"Even without discussing the ideological aspect, just looking at it from the practical perspective, what good does ISIS bring? If we allow them here, what good will they bring? They will only destroy further."

NEUTRAL GROUND

Marawi had long been considered a "neutral" ground and had been spared destruction despite previous armed conflicts, the MILF leader noted.

The MILF has offered to broker talks between the government and the Maute group to help resolve the Marawi crisis.

The group earlier helped put up "peace corridors" for the rescue of civilians trapped in the gun battle.

Presidential peace adviser Jesus Dureza on Thursday thanked the MILF for its humanitarian assistance, but reiterated the government's position against negotiating with terrorists.

"The president has made a very clear declaration--no negotiations with terrorists, no quarters asked and no quarters given," he told ANC's Early Edition.

<http://news.abs-cbn.com>

2 Abus surrender to military in Basilan

From the Philippine Star (Jun 30): **2 Abus surrender to military in Basilan**



One of the Abu Sayyaf members who surrendered said that he escaped from provincial jail twice. Philstar.com/File photo

Two Abu Sayyaf members, one of them bolted twice from the jail, surrendered to the military forces in Basilan Thursday, according to security officials.

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Col. Juvymax Uy, commander of the Joint Task Force Basilan, said Serham Hasim Akkalun and Hapid Madjakin, both Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf members, yielded about 4 p.m. to the elements of the 13th Special Forces Company in Barangay Guinanta, Albarka town.

The two Abu Sayyaf members also surrendered an M1 Garand rifle and a clip of live ammunition.

During the tactical debriefing, Akkalun said that he bolted from provincial jail twice during the jailbreak incidents on Dec. 13, 2009 and Jan. 27, 2015.

Madjakin, on the other hand, revealed that he is an Abu Sayyaf member under the late sub-leader Long Malat.

The surrender of Akkalun and Madjakin brought the number of Abu Sayyaf surrenderees to 98.

Sixty-six others, on the other hand, were apprehended by security forces since January this year following an all-out military campaign launched by the Joint Task Forces under the Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom).

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., Wesmincom chief, said the relentless campaign against the Abu Sayyaf also resulted to the deaths of 94 members of the Abu Sayyaf group and recovery of 148 firearms.

Galvez welcomed the surrender of the Abu Sayyaf members, who will be provided the opportunity to live normal lives again.

Galvez also said that they will continue their operations and integrate their efforts with different stakeholders to beef up security in Mindanao.

<http://www.philstar.com/nation>

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