

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



TEAM ARMY

Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

02 July 2017

Sunday

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

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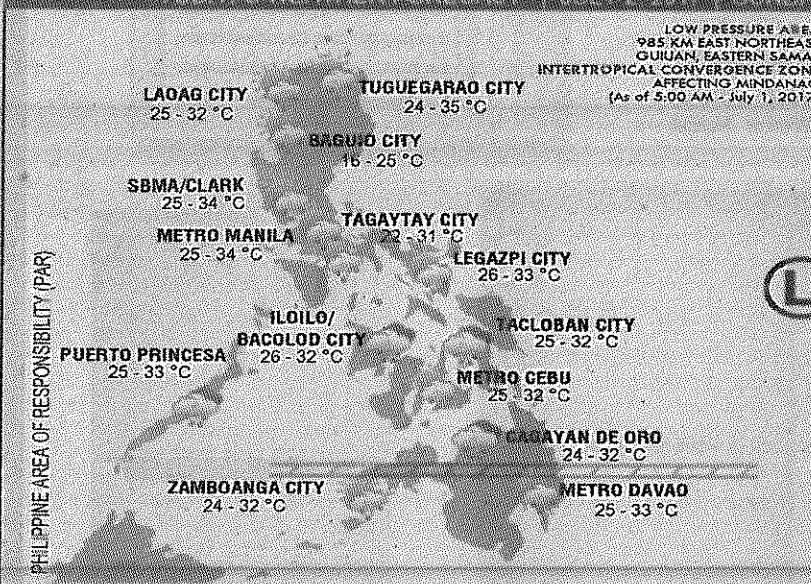




BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JULY 2, 2017 | SUNDAY

LOW PRESSURE AREA
985 KM EAST NORTHEAST
GUIUAN, EASTERN SAMAR
INTERTROPICAL CONVERGENCE ZONE
AFFECTING MINDANAO
(As of 5:00 AM - July 1, 2017)



PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

SUNRISE	SUNSET
5:31 AM	6:29 PM
MOONRISE	MOONSET
12:55 PM	12:23 AM
FIRST QUARTER	FULL MOON
JUL 1 8:51 AM	JUL 9 9:10 PM
LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
MANILA SOUTH 10:56 PM 0.30 Meter	HARBOR 6:02 AM 0.73 Meter

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

Cloudy skies with rainshowers and/or thunderstorms

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

DZRH NEWS MONDAY - FRIDAY
11 AM & 5 PM

PILIPINAS 11

AIR 21
SAGOT SA PROBLA MO!

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

02 July 2017

The Manila Times

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No talks with terrorists

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

THERE will be no compromise with terrorists, President Rodrigo Duterte said on Saturday, as he vowed to extinguish the Islamic State (IS)-linked Maute fighters who have occupied Marawi City for more than a month.

In remarks during the celebration of the 50th founding anniversary of Davao del Norte province, the President said government forces would not leave Marawi City "until the last terrorist is executed."

"So every time I read the casualties, parang [it's like] it's very unsettling, 'di ko malaman kung anong gawin ko [I don't

► Terrorists A2

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■ TERRORISTS FROM A1

No talks with terrorists

know what to do], but I cannot stop the fighting because I will never, never, never compromise with terrorism," he said.

The President said he would never allow the country to be destroyed by terrorists.

"Terrorism, I cannot accept it. You are living witnesses to what is unfolding in the Middle East. There's no redeeming values I know...Why would we allow you to destroy our country like that?" Duterte said.

"My only consoling issue there is that I have to do it because it is my constitutional duty to preserve and defend the Filipino people," he added.

Duterte made the statement a few days after Abdullah Maute, one of the two brothers leading the terrorist Maute group, reportedly offered to release a Catholic priest, in exchange for the freedom of his parents and relatives who are under the government's custody.

Last week, Assistant Secretary Dickson Hermoso of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process said eight Muslim

religious leaders were able to talk with Abdullah Maute, discussing the possibility of the IS-linked terrorists laying down arms.

The Palace, however, clarified that the meeting was not sanctioned by the government.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines earlier said the priest being held captive by the Maute group in Marawi City was still alive.

Fr. Chito Suganob, vicar general of the prelature of Marawi, was kidnapped by the Maute gunmen as they laid siege to the city.

Government forces later arrested Cayamora and Farhana Maute, parents of brothers Omar and Abdullah, and alleged supporters and financiers of the Marawi attack.

The attack on Marawi City last May 23 forced the President to declare martial law over Mindanao and suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, allowing warrantless arrests.

The five-week battle in Marawi City has so far claimed the lives of 51 civilians, 317 terrorists, and 82 government troops.

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Phi, US hold naval patrols in Sulu Sea

By JANVIC MATEO

The navies of the Philippines and the United States yesterday held a joint naval patrol in the Sulu Sea amid rising international concern about Islamist militancy and piracy in the region.

The joint patrols came as government forces fighting Maute militants in Marawi City were blocking potential escape routes of the terrorists in waters around Mindanao.

Philippine Navy frigate *BRP Ramon Alcaraz* joined US Navy littoral combat ship *USS Coronado* in patrolling the Sulu Sea where numerous pirate attacks on commercial shipping have been made since 2015.

The naval patrols were held at the invitation of the Philippine government, the US embassy said in a statement.

"Our at-sea operations with the Philippine Navy demonstrate our commitment to the alliance and to deter piracy and illegal activities," US Rear Admiral Don Gabrielson said in a statement issued by the US embassy.

deter piracy and illegal activities," US Rear Admiral Don Gabrielson said in a statement issued by the US embassy.

"The Philippine sailors also exchanged best practices with their US counterparts in visit, board, search and seizure techniques and information sharing," it added.

"The patrol strengthened maritime security cooperation between the US and Philippine navies and

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Phi, US

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respond to piracy and transnational criminal activity at sea," the embassy said.

"It further demonstrates US commitment to the security of the Philippines and enduring US interest in promoting stability and prosperity in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region," it pointed out.

Prior to the joint patrol, the *USS Coronado* completed a maritime training activity with the Philippine Navy near Cebu, the embassy said.

The exercise, the embassy stressed, provided opportunities to sharpen tactical skills in maritime security operations.

There are international fears fighters sympathetic to Islamic State (IS) will cross maritime borders between Malaysia and Indonesia to join the Maute gunmen who seized Marawi City five weeks ago.

About 300 militants, 82 security forces and 44 civilians have been killed in the fighting.

President Duterte does not allow joint patrols with the US in the disputed South China Sea to avoid damaging its relations with China, which claims the sea as its own.

But he welcomes cooperation in Mindanao due to increased militant activity. Two weeks ago, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines held joint naval patrols in southern waters.

New levels of insecurity

Militants, pirates, drug traffickers, gunrunners have been taking advantage of the lawless waters between Borneo and the southern Philippines to sow terror, escape pursuers or move their contraband.

But as an Islamic State faction burst on the scene in recent weeks, this corner of Southeast Asia plumbed new levels of insecurity.

The mostly Muslim countries of Indonesia and Malaysia, and those with sizeable Muslim minorities like the Philippines, have been on high alert for fighters returning home from IS frontlines in Syria and Iraq.

So when dozens of Malaysians, Indonesians, Arabs and Chechens showed up in Marawi City fighting alongside Maute terrorists, a nightmare scenario suddenly took shape.

The danger of global jihadis establishing a base in the Philippines, running satellite cells to launch attacks across Southeast Asia, made governments in the region realize just how vulnerable they could be.

"It's easy to jump from Marawi to Indonesia and we must all beware of sleeper cells being activated in Indonesia," Gen. Gatot Nurmantyo, Indonesia's military chief, said on Monday.

According to the general, there are IS sleeper cells in almost all of Indonesia's 34 provinces.

Indonesia has called for a

conference with the Philippines and Malaysia to discuss events in Marawi, where the Philippine military, backed by US special forces, are still battling after more than five weeks to retake the town from fighters led by the Maute brothers.

So far, IS-inspired attacks have been relatively small-scale in Indonesia, the country with the world's largest Muslim population. But they have become more frequent. Last month, suicide bombers killed three police officers at a Jakarta bus station.

Malaysia, meanwhile, has used draconian security laws to detain scores of suspected militants and IS sympathizers.

Joint surveillance

Next week, the three countries, with Singapore's assistance, will begin joint air surveillance over the Sulu Sea, using reconnaissance planes and drones, and enhance joint

naval patrols.

Their navies planned joint patrols last year after a spate of kidnappings by Abu Sayyaf, a well established militant group that has declared support for IS.

But there are plenty of gaps to fill.

"We don't have communications via radio at this point. We conduct patrols in our own territory. We have not discussed exchanging personnel," said First Admiral Ferial Fachroni, commander of Indonesia's Tarakan naval base in North Kalimantan.

He said joint operations would begin this month. Situated on Borneo's northeast coast, Tarakan is the nearest Indonesian naval base to kidnapers' hunting grounds in the Celebes and Sulu Seas.

Keeping tabs on hundreds of merchant ships, fishing boats and ferries plying routes between the islands, deciding when and who to stop and search will be a tall order even for three navies working together.

The archipelagos' heavily forested coves and inlets provide excellent cover for any fast vessel looking to escape closer scrutiny.

"The Sulu Sea area has always had sporadic incidents like kidnappings of tourists before, but starting last year and this year, it has really gone up," Noel Chung, the Kuala Lumpur-based Asia head of the International Maritime Bureau, said.

"They started off with tugboats and went on to merchant ships, so they're targeting big ships out at sea. It's different from years ago when the attacks were more localized."

Chung saw comparisons with the Gulf of Aden, where Somali pirates operate, but the difference is that the Sulu Sea is not a major trading route so the international community is disinclined to invest in providing security.

Experts say the number of vessels needed to police the seas and costs incurred would

be prohibitive.

Weak link

Despite the long history of militancy and banditry in the area, it has taken the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia a long time to pool resources.

Largely dormant territorial disputes, mutual mistrust and limited capabilities have all played a part retarding closer cooperation.

But seeing the black flags of IS raised in Mindanao could have shocked the region's governments into moving from cooperation to actual collaboration.

"There are still some lingering trust issues but now there is also an understanding of the consequences if they don't develop this collaboration," said Singapore-based security analyst Rohan Gunaratna.

Beyond enhancing air and sea patrols, the countries' security agencies need to coordinate better and act faster on shared intelligence.

A Malaysian government official said that while information was shared on militant suspects, there was some frustration over a perceived lack of follow up in the Philippines.

"One of the challenges is tracking militants once they're in the southern Philippines. Only the Philippine Army can confront them on land," the Malaysian official said, declining to be identified because of the sensitivity of the issue.

Philippine officials said security agencies are "doing everything" to address the surge in militancy in Muslim-majority areas of the mostly Catholic country.

"This is a holistic effort, not only in the military but in the government," armed forces chief Gen. Eduardo Año told reporters last week.

Describing the Philippines as a "weak link," regional terrorism expert Sidney Jones criticized a lack of cooperation between its police, military and intelligence agency. – Edith Regalado, Roel Pareño, Reuters

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Manila
Standard

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RODY REMINDS REDS ON CEASEFIRE VOW

By John Paolo Bencito and Florante S. Solmerin

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday appealed to communist rebels to make good their vow for a ceasefire and stop their tactical offensives against government forces.

"Can you just stop fighting for a while because your leaders in Europe said that there will be a ceasefire," the President said in a speech at Tagum City.

Duterte said that state forces are still fighting extremist forces in Mindanao, reiterating that there

will never be any "political, social, economic space for you communists if it is terrorism that prevails."

On Friday, the Communist Party of the Philippines called on its armed wing, the New People's Army, 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."

Describing Duterte's first year as being marked by "worsening crisis, death and destruction," the CPP said that this only gave the rebels "no other choice but to intensify tactical offensives nationwide."

In the same speech, the President told the communists not to give him "a double face."

"We used to talk, we were friends but that was the time when I was mayor. I was not then burdened with the responsibility of running the country," he said.

"But now, the situation has al-

ready changed. [*Kapag kinalaban mo ang pulis ko, kinalaban mo ang sundalo magkalaban talaga tayo. Magbarilan tayo,*] [If you attack my policemen and my soldiers then we're enemies. Let's fight each other]," he added.

In a related development, an intelligence report obtained by the **Manila Standard** had indicated that the legal communist fronts have stepped up their campaigns on social issues to arouse and organize farmers and stakeholders of development projects perceived to be anti-people in several identified areas in the country.

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RODY...
Focus 21

The report said these fronts and the NPA will capitalize on issues of alleged military abuses under martial law in Mindanao and landlessness and development aggression against farmers, indigenous peoples and urban dwellers.

Issues on political prisoners and human rights violations are other forms of tactics used by legal fronts to rally public support, the military said.

The warning against plans of tactical offensives of the NPA was divulged Friday in Davao City by Malacanang through Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella.

Abella did not give details about the NPA's plans but nevertheless urged government forces and the public for vigilance following the CCP statement.

Abella said such posturing was just another challenge for the government how it handles the sincerity of the rebel movement to talk peace.

In the report, the intelligence sector identified areas of concerns based on their threat assessments as Davao region, Caraga region and Palawan.

Particularly in Palawan, the NPA will allegedly conduct "tactical offensives" through arson and raids against economic establishments "to threaten targets to comply with their extortion demands."

The report said legal fronts are using land issues to attract and recruit from the peasant sector to become Red fighters.

"Considering the abundant natural resources in the province, [these fronts] will persist to oppose developmental projects to continuously deny the people from the government/private institution's social services which are the root causes of insurgency," it said.

The report said the NPA is yet to launch a major attack in the province.

In Davao region, the military was closely monitoring movements of the NPA especially in the hinterlands of Davao City and Compostela Valley.

Based on a threat assessment, the Southern Mindanao Regional Committee has ordered all its fighters to launch tactical offensives against government forces and government and private business installations particularly in Davao City's Marilog, Calinan and Paquibato districts.

In Compostela Valley, the areas of immediate concerns are Mabini, Pantukan, Maragusan, Maco, and Laak.

The military said the NPA will employ guerrilla tactics such as ambushes, improvised explosive device attacks, and sparrow-like attack against individual targets.

It said the rebels have in their plan of arson and raids economic targets such as Sumifru, Banana Highland Corp., Coca-Cola, and Cowboy Trucking Service, all in Davao City. In Compostela Valley, the targets are Dole Philippines, Apex Mining Corp., ANFLO/TADECO, and Sumifru.

In Caraga region, the military said the NPA's primary targets are military and police detachments in Agusan del Sur especially in San Lusi, Talacogon and Lapaz; in Agusan del Norte are Butuan City, Nasipit, Carmen, and Kitcharao; and in Surigao del Norte are Alegria and Gigaquit.

The targets are agri-plantations, construction companies, mining firms, businessmen, and moneyed individuals.

Also included in the plan was the abduction of military and police personnel, and government officials.

Malacanang called on the public to be alert and on the lookout against the reported planned attacks.

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

"We also appeal to everyone to share information with authorities on suspicious persons and activities in their communities. *Sabi nga po nila*, if we can work together, we can prevent these extortion-related activities," he said.

Abella, meanwhile, provided the updates on the government's operations in Marawi, saying that civilians killed are at 39 or lower than what was previously reported.

"According to Scene of the Crime—SOCO report's correction, *yung ni-report po na*, for the previous 17 cadavers recovered 17 days ago is actually *po*, actually 12 *lang po pala* upon full examination. So *yung* verified are only 12 cadavers," he said.

Meanwhile, Abella said civilians rescued are at 1,713. Terrorists killed, meanwhile, are at 317 while government casualties are at 82.

In the same radio briefing, the Palace official dispelled allegations made by Senator Risa Hontiveros that President Rodrigo Duterte's first year in office is allegedly a year of misogyny.

With PNA

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Marawi evacuees may watch Pacquiao-Horn fight

Evacuees and government troops in war-torn Marawi City will be able to watch live the much anticipated World Boxing Organization (WBO) welterweight title bout between Sen. Manny Pacquiao and Australian challenger Jeff Horn in Brisbane, Australia, courtesy of the provincial government.

Lanao del Sur 1st District Assemblyman Zia Alonto Adiong of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao said Vice Gov. Bombit Adiong has installed a cable link at the provincial capitol for today's live airing of the Pacquiao-Horn fight.

The live feed will be open to all the evacuees who have sought shelter in the capitol building due to the on-going fighting between government forces and the Maute terror group that attacked the city last May 23.

"We will have a live telecast of the fight of Sen. Pacquiao on July 2 at the Capitol Compound to make our *bakwits* (evacuees) happy," Adiong said.

Muslims and Christians nationwide idolize Pacquiao, and each time he has a bout the whole nation stands still to watch the fights.

Government forces as well as the provincial government have declared the capitol compound a safe zone that is now an evacuation center that has

given shelter to hundreds of families displaced by the fighting.

While some soldiers deployed to crush the Maute terrorists might be able to watch the live streaming of the fight, most troopers would not be able to view the fight on live TV.

"We still don't know. But I believe our soldiers have no time for that since it is already a luxury for them if they can have a brief sleep. Those in our rear could not even take a bath, how much more for those who are on the frontline," an officer of the Joint Task Force Marawi said.

The Army would also sponsor the live broadcast of the Pacquiao-Horn fight in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City and other military camps nationwide.

Lt. Col Ray Tiongson, Army spokesman, said the free live telecasts in Fort Bonifacio will be held at the Army officers clubhouse, at the gymnasium and at the Army general hospital.

"This will give our retired and active Army officers and enlisted personnel, civilian employees and our wounded soldiers the chance to watch the title bout," Tiongson.

Pacquiao is an Army reserve officer with the rank of lieutenant colonel. – Jaime Laude, Evelyn Macairan, Robertzon Ramirez

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Army to provide free showing of 'Pacman' bout

Troops assigned to Army headquarters in Taguig City will be able to watch Filipino boxing icon, Sen. Manny "Pacman" Pacquiao, go head-to-head with Australian challenger Jeff Horn today.

Free viewing will take place at the Army Gym and Army Officers'

Club said Lt. Col. Ray Tiongson, Philippine Army spokesman.

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 on April 27, 2006.

PNA

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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PACMAN SUPPORTERS

PACQUIAO FIGHT SEEN TO BRING CHEER TO DISPLACED MARAWI RESIDENTS

By Allan Nawal
and Richel Umel
@Team Inquirer

MARAWI CITY—Even in this difficult time, evacuees and fans of boxing superstar Sen. Manny Pacquiao will not be missing his highly anticipated match against virtually unknown Australian slugger Jeff Horn on Sunday.

Pacquiao, who announced his “retirement” from boxing in April after defeating American boxer Timothy Bradley by unanimous decision, would be facing Horn at Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane today.

And his fans here, including evacuees staying at the social hall of the provincial capitol, would be able to catch the live telecast after Lanao del Sur Vice Gov. Mamintal Adiong Jr. ordered the installation of cable television, said Zia Alonto Adiong, spokesperson of the local crisis management committee.

“We would like to make them happy even for a moment only,” Adiong said, adding that he counts himself as a fan.

Maranaos were among Pacquiao’s biggest fans and among the 15.2 million voters who sent the boxing legend to the Senate during last year’s elections.

Bombay Lininding, an evacuee from Montcado Colony here, said he had not missed any of Pacquiao’s fight.

“I would even stop taking passengers during his fights,” said Lininding, a tricycle driver.

Lininding said Pacquiao, a reserved military officer, still

packed a killer punch even at 38.

The 29-year-old Horn—who never fought outside of Australia—was considered “unheralded” as he lacked any signature victory defining his career.

He goes against Pacquiao, an explosive ring veteran who parlayed his fame into a successful career in entertainment and politics. Sunday’s match is believed to be a warm-up bout for Pacquiao, who has reportedly set his sights on a rematch with fellow ring legend Floyd Mayweather, who had once beaten him.

No free viewing

But even then, Suncorp Stadium was expected to pack an excess of 50,000 fans for the fight dubbed the biggest in Australian boxing history.

As for soldier-fans, Lt. Col. Jo-Ar Herrera said those who were assigned inside the provincial capitol here might be able to watch the live telecast inside the social hall.

But for those out in the field or assigned at the military headquarters just across the capitol compound, there will be no free live viewing for them, he said.

A military officer said the free viewing for the soldiers outside of the capitol might not really happen as they had more important things to do.

“I believe our troops have no more time for that. It is luxury enough that they get sleep, even how short it is. We can’t even take a decent bath most of the time here at the rear, how much more for those who are on the front line,” the officer said.

The military has been battling the Maute group and its allies since May 23. As the fight dragged on, 82 soldiers had already been killed. The Maute group, which suffered 303 deaths since, was also being blamed for the deaths of 44 civilians here.

In Iligan City, Vice Mayor Jemar Vera Cruz said the security situation in the city might not be conducive for a large crowd gathering, which was why they have not thought of sponsoring a live view of the fight.

Hundreds of displaced Marawi residents had sought refuge in Iligan since the outbreak of violence, forcing officials to place the city on high alert status.

There would also be no government-sponsored viewing in Cotabato City—where security concerns were also high.

Pacquiao fans elsewhere, however, would have a chance to view the fight live.

In Digos City, Mayor Joseph Peñas said the free viewing would be at Almen dras gymnasium.

In Sultan Kudarat town in Maguindanao, Mayor Shameem Mastura said the local government also sponsored free viewing.

In Buluan, Maguindanao, Gov. Esmel Mangudadatu—a big Pacquiao fan himself—said the provincial government would sponsor a free live viewing event. — WITH REPORTS FROM WILLIAMOR MAGBANUA, CHARLIE SEÑASE, EDWIN FERNANDEZ, ELDIE AGUIRRE, FRINSTON LIM AND JIGGER JERUSALEM INQ

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The Manila Times

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258 Abu Sayyaf members 'neutralized'

SHARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao: The military campaign launched by task forces of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) since January has resulted in the deaths of 94 hard-core members of the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group, apprehension of 66 more, surrender of 98, and recovery of 148 firearms.

Two of the Abu Sayyaf members surrendered to the Joint Task Force Basilan under Colonel Juvymax Uy last Thursday, according to Capt. Jo-ann Petinglay, Westmincom spokesman.

Petinglay said Serham Hasim Akkalun and Hapid Madjakin,

both Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf members, surrendered to the elements of the 13th Special Forces Company based in Barangay Guinanta, Albarka, Basilan.

"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," said Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez, Jr., Westmincom chief.

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

Akkalun and Madjakin turned over an M1 Garand rifle and a clip with four rounds of ammunition.

They went through a debriefing conducted by Joint Task Force Basilan soldiers, and were turned over to the police for legal procedures.

The military said Akkalun twice escaped from the Bureau of Jail

Management and Penology in Basilan, on December 13, 2009 and on January 27, 2015.

Madjakin told soldiers he was 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. With the surrender of the bandits and the seizure of their strongholds, we are confident that our offensives on the ground are effective," said Colonel Uy.

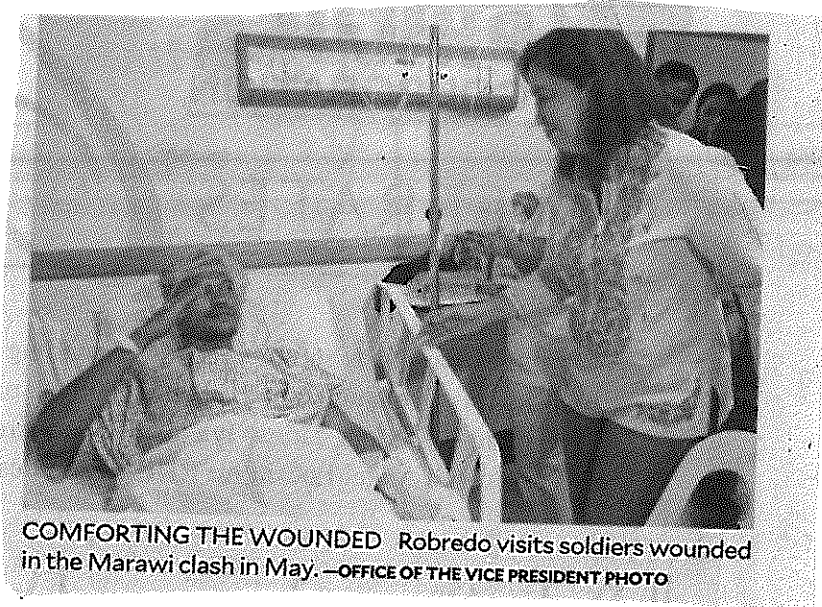
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COMFORTING THE WOUNDED Robredo visits soldiers wounded in the Marawi clash in May. —OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT PHOTO

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Abu bandit, 2 militiamen slain in Basilan clash

ZAMBOANGA CITY – An Abu Sayyaf bandit and two militiamen were killed in a clash in Tuburan, Basilan on Friday.

Col. Juvymax Uy, Joint Task Force Basilan commander, said government troops and members of the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team were patrolling Sitio Bohe Kirey in Barangay Dugaa at about 11 a.m. when they encountered the bandits.

The names of the fatalities were not immediately available.

Uy said the bandits were

believed to be holding five Vietnamese sailors taken from the cargo vessel *M/V Royal 16* that was hijacked near Sibagu island in November. One of the sailors, Hoang Vo, was rescued last month.

Uy said the bandits were responsible for the spate of hijackings off Basilan.

Another group of Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sulu took six other Vietnamese sailors from *M/V Giang Hai* in the waters of Tawi-Tawi in February.

Uy said operations to rescue the remaining hostages are ongoing. – Roel Pareño

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3 die in Basilan clash

An Abu Sayyaf bandit and two government militia were killed in a firefight in the hinterlands of Basilan province, a military official disclosed yesterday. Col. Juvymax Uy, Joint Task Force Basilan commander, said the firefight ensued shortly before 11 a.m. Friday in Sitio Bohe Kirey, Barangay Dugaa, Tuburan municipality. Uy said troops backed by Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) members were on security patrol when they clashed with around 20 Abu Sayyaf bandits. He said the firefight lasted for about 20 minutes that resulted to the death of an Abu Sayyaf follower identified as Hassan Apino and two BPAT members, whose identities were not immediately available. He said the rest of the bandits fled to different directions and are being pursued by the troops. He said the bandit group that figured in the firefight were involved in November 10, 2016 hijacking of the Vietnamese Bulk Carrier, *M/V Royal 16*, in the Basilan water. The Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf bandits are still holding captive five Vietnamese sailors, who were among the six victims seized during the November 10, 2016 hijacking. One of the six Vietnamese sailors escaped last month at the height of military air strike. The bulk carrier was traveling to Davao City when the Abu Sayyaf bandits, aboard on a speed boat, hijacked the vessel.

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Pahina. 3

Sundalo dedo sa kabaro

Patay ang isang sundalo makaraang baril ng kanyang kasamahang sundalo sa loob mismo ng kanilang kampo sa 5th Infantry Division-Philippine Army headquarters sa Gamu, Isabela kamakalawa ng umaga.

Hindi muna pinangalanan ang dalawang sundalo na may ranggong Sergeant at Master Sergeant na sangkot sa insidente dahil na rin sa pakiusap ng kani-kanilang mga kaanak.

Ayon kay 5th Infantry Division spokesperson Capt. Jefferson Somera, binawian ng buhay habang isinusugod sa Camp Melchor F. dela Cruz Station Hospital ang biktimg sarhento bunsod ng tinamong dalawang tama ng bala ng baril sa dibdib.

Habang ang bumaril na master sergeant ay kasalukuyang nakakulong sa loob ng kampo at nakatakdang kasuhan sa naturang insidente habang inimbestigahan pa ang puno't dulo ng pang-

yayari.

Ang dalawa ay pawang kasapi ng Military Intelligence Battalion na nakabase sa 5th Infantry Division.

Lumalabas sa imbestigasyon, nagkaroon muna umano ng mainitang pagtatalo ang suspek at biktima bago nangyari ang pamamaril sa mismong loob ng kanilang quarters.

Ikinalungkot naman ni Maj. Gen. Paul T. Atal, ang commander ng SID at maging ng buong hanay nito sa pangyayari. "Kami ay nakikiramay sa pamilya ng nasawi nating kasamahan. Mag-sasagawa tayo ng masusing imbestigasyon kasama ang PNP Gamu, ukol dito at upang mapanagot ang suspek," ani Atal.

Kasabay nito, nanawagan si Atal sa mga commander na palaging mag-sagawa ng counselling sa kanilang mga nasasakupan upang maiwasan ang mga katulad na pangyayari sa hinaharap. (JG Tumbado)

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Pahina. 2

Sundalo tinodas ng kasamahan

Patay ang isang sundalo matapos na pagbabarilin ng sarili nitong kasamahan nang magkapikunan sa isang simpleng biruan sa kanilang himpilan sa Camp Melchor dela Cruz sa bayan ng Gamu, Isabela kamakalawa.

Kinilala ang nasawing biktima na si Sergeant Ronald Oriero, 34 anyos ng Quezon, Isabela. Ang biktima ay nagawa pang

maisugod sa pagamutan pero idineklara na itong dead-on-arrival sanhi ng mga tinamong tama ng bala sa katawan.

Sumuko naman matapos ang krimen si Master Sergeant Romulo Sanglay, nasa hustong gulang ng Gattaran, Cagayan. Ang suspek at ang biktima ay kapwa kasapi ng Military Intelligence Battalion.

Ayon kay Captain Jefferson Somera, Spokesman ng Army's 5th Infantry Division (ID), ang insidente ay naganap bandang alas-11 ng tanghali sa loob ng quarter ng mga sundalo sa nasabing himpilan na matatagpuan sa Brgy Upi, Gamu ng lalawigan.

Lumilitaw naman sa imbestigasyon na nagbibiruan ang dalawa nang magkapikunan ang mga ito na humantong sa pamaril gamit ang inisyu ritong armas at pagkasawi ng biktima. Itinurnover na sa pulisya ang suspek. -Joy Cantos-

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AFP may use Chinese weapons in Marawi

There is a chance the weapons and ammunition donated by China would be used in the ongoing efforts to clear Marawi City of the remaining Maute Group terrorists, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, has said.

"Our troops will have no difficulty in using these weapons as their operation is really very simple," Padilla said in Filipino, adding that the assault and sniper rifles donated by the Chinese government are similar to the

ones being used by the military.

He said the weapons and ammunition are being inventoried before they are distributed to the field.

"We need to record them. These are thousands but they come by lot numbers and there are records, so it's not going to be long before we are able to ship them out (to Marawi City)," Padilla said.

The arms and ammunition arrived at the Harrison Landing Zone in Clark Freeport, on board an Ilyushin IL-76 military plane

Wednesday.

They consist of 3,000 rifles with 5 million ammunition, and 90 long-range sniper rifles with 800,000 rounds.

The weapons were formally turned over by Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua to President Rodrigo Duterte on June 28.

Duterte earlier said the firearms donation was one of the defense cooperation matters he discussed with Chinese President Xi Jin Ping during his visit to China last October. **(PNA)**

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Manila Standard

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'JIHADISTS' NEXT TARGET: ASEAN'

TERRORISM is entrenched in Southeast Asia and will only worsen as Islamic State's fortunes fade and foreign fighters skilled in bomb making and hijacking return from the Middle East, Singapore's defense minister said.

"When we talk about endemic threats we usually refer to threats

like dengue or tuberculosis, which means that it's here to stay, that despite years of effort you can't eradicate it," Ng Eng Hen told reporters ahead of the country's armed forces day on July 1.

"The problem will now come to Asean," Ng said, referring to the 10 states that make up the Asso-

ciation of Southeast Asian Nations. "Singapore is a target."

Ng cited the siege of Marawi, a city in the southern Philippines, where soldiers have been battling Islamic State-linked militants for more than a month. Terrorist camps discovered in Marawi turned up large amounts of mon-

increased as Islamic State continues to lose ground in the Middle East, raising concerns it will metastasize and grow more potent in other places.

"Whatever the reasons, there is now if you like the terrorist core that is a magnet in our region that will pull terrorists to this region and say we want to establish an ISIS-like caliphate," Ng said. "Tens, if not hundreds, if not thousands of foreign fighters will have the skills to make improvised explosives, to have the skills for hijacking, to have the skills for kidnapping."

"They are just using religion as a false front, but they are basically criminals."

Speaking on June 28 in Brisbane, US Pacific Command chief Harry Harris also warned the weakening of Islamic State in the Middle East and North Africa would lead some fighters to return to Asia.

"These terrorists are using combat tactics that we've seen in the Middle East to kill in the city of Marawi in Mindanao—the first time ISIS-inspired forces have banded together

to fight on this kind of scale in this region," Admiral Harris said. He described Marawi as a "wake-up call for every nation in the Indo-Asia-Pacific."

Philippine military chief of staff Eduardo Año said last week there were around 40 foreign fighters in Marawi, including some from Indonesia and Malaysia.

Ng said even if the Philippine military could contain the Marawi attack—and he said he had faith it would—the danger from extremists won't dissipate.

"The threat of terrorism, the skills of terrorists, the networks, have gone from wholesale to retail and that is why we are seeing more lone wolf attacks and small cells."

More training

Southeast Asia is home to about 15 percent of the world's 1.57 billion Muslims. As well as the Marawi violence in the southern Philippines—where President Rodrigo Duterte has declared martial law—the Indonesian capital of Jakarta was also struck recently by twin suicide bombings that killed three police officers.

Bloomberg

ey, weapons caches and fighters recruited from outside the Philippines, he said.

Southeast Asian governments have for years highlighted the risk from returning fighters alongside those radicalized at home via the Internet. Those warnings have

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The Manila Times

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Govt to build shelters for Marawi residents

THE Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) is set to build temporary shelters and evacuation centers for residents of the war-torn city of Marawi once government troops end fighting with terrorists from the Islamic State-linked Maute group.

In a statement on Saturday, acting DILG chief Catalino Cuy said the initiative would benefit Marawi residents who had lost their homes because of the armed conflict.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) earlier disclosed that it had deployed military engineering units for the rehabilitation, reconstruction and rebuilding of the city.

Cuy said the DILG had met with officials of the first district

■ MARAWI FROM A1

Govt to build

of Lanao del Sur, the AFP, and the Philippine National Police, as well as regional and field personnel of the department to discuss the plan.

The government is identifying evacuees who will be recipients of the temporary shelters or housed in evacuation centers in Marawi to be built by the DILG.

"[These] temporary shelters will be available for those who actually have their houses destroyed [by the conflict]," said Cuy.

In a text message, Epimaco Densing 3rd, DILG assistant secretary for plans and programs, confirmed that the temporary shelters would be given to those evacuees with "permanently destroyed" houses.

"As to how many, we will only be able to determine after Marawi is declared free of terrorists and the residents start to return to the city," Densing told The Manila Times.

The budget will be within the P20 billion announced by the Palace, he said.

Evacuees are still housed in various evacuation camps in Iligan City and neighboring towns and cities.

Cuy said the evacuees in Iligan City had "swelled to a massive extent," and their transfer to shelters or evacuation centers in Marawi would be prioritized.

DEMPSEY REYES

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The Manila Times

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Resumption of classes in Marawi still uncertain

THE Department of Education (DepEd) is still unsure when classes will resume in Marawi City due to the ongoing fighting between government troops and the Maute Group.

"There's no definite date yet for the opening of classes in Marawi City. (Education) Secretary Leonor Briones said that we will coordinate first with the Department of National Defense and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to know if the place is already safe," Tonisito Umali, DepEd assistant secretary for legal and legislative affairs, told *The Manila Times* on Saturday.

Umali earlier said that the opening of classes in public elementary and high schools in Marawi City may be moved this month because of damages to property brought about by fighting in the city.

He said classes in Marawi City will resume after clearing operations to ensure the safety of returning students and teachers.

DepEd records show that more than 20,000 students from Marawi City have been displaced by the conflict there that began on May 23.

The same records also show that 15,115 students from Marawi City had transferred to other schools in various regions nationwide. Of this number, 7,028 displaced students are in different evacuation centers.

"We have already tracked 10,423 out of 22,000 Marawi displaced learners and most of them are in Iligan City and Lanao del Norte province," Umali said.

"We've convinced our displaced Marawi learners to enroll in all of our schools or in schools nearest to them, and also we set up temporary learning spaces in evacuation centers, but that's the exemption rather than the rule because we want them to return to our regular schools for them to really feel that sense of normalcy," he added.

DepEd data, meanwhile, show that at least 175 of the 1,411 teachers in different schools in Marawi City remain unaccounted for. DepEd has said that it continues to track down teachers who have not yet reported to the school division.

Umali also asked for donations for the repair and rehabilitation of damaged schools in Marawi City.

At least seven schools with 137 classrooms were damaged by the continuing firefights in the city.

"There are 69 public schools in Marawi City that we need to look after or whether they are damaged in any way, and make sure that they are safe once classes resume in the city," Umali said.

Among the damaged schools are Raya Madaya Elementary School, Raya Madaya II Primary School, Dansalan Primary School, Mambuai Elementary School, Mamintal Disomangcop Central Elementary School, Banggolo Elementary School and Marawi Central Elementary Pilot School.

DepEd is also asking for assistance from the public and private sectors for displaced students in the conflict-torn city particularly those staying in the evacuation centers.

"Any help that would be given will definitely be welcomed," Umali said.

Umali said the evacuees' immediate needs include learners' kits, teachers' kits, hygiene and sanitation kits, some cleaning materials, chairs and tents.

"Those who want to donate can send their donations directly to the Iligan City National High School or either sends it to the DepEd central office in Pasig City and to our regional offices nationwide," he said.

NEIL A. ALCOBER

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No IS spillover threat, says AFP

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said the feared spillover of the Islamic State (IS)-inspired incursion in Marawi City has been prevented with nearby regions in Eastern Mindanao shielded from any terrorist threat.

All areas under the Eastern Mindanao Command (EMC) remain safe from any diversionary retaliatory attack by local terrorist groups as martial law in the region entered its 38th day, the AFP said yesterday.

"After 38 days of martial law, the EMC under the leadership of Lt. Gen. (Leonardo) Guerrero, who is also the Martial Implementor in EMC, has continuously

prevented the spillover and spread of the Marawi crisis in its AOR (area-of-operations)," spokesperson of the EMC martial law implementor, Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, said in a statement.

The conflict in Marawi City began when government security forces attempted to arrest Abu Sayyaf Group leader Isnilon Hapilon, tagged as the ISIS "Emir" in Southeast Asia, last May 23.

An estimated 303 Maute group terrorists have so far been killed, along with 82 soldiers and police officers and 44 civilians, in the clashes that have entered the seventh week.

Gapay said the EMC has

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shielded Eastern Mindanao by preventing terrorists from leaking into the area.

"So far, EMC remains generally peaceful, safe and secure. This is largely attributed to the tighter security measures being implemented by the Command. As of today (Friday), 17,494 checkpoint operations have been conducted, wherein the EMC has apprehended 31 violators, and confiscated 15 firearms and 11 illegal drugs," he said.

Curfews have been imposed in 129 cities and municipalities in coordination with local government units.

Some 1,742 security/vicinity patrols have also been made to secure vital installations, critical infrastructure and places of convergence, such as churches, malls and mosques, Gapay said.

This is complemented by 54 maritime patrols as part of maritime law enforcement operations and intelligence coverage of threat groups.

"Likewise, the Martial Law Special Action Group has been activated to effect arrest included in the arrest order issued by the Martial Law Administrator. As of

No IS spillover threat, says AFP

today, 16 terrorist supporters have already been arrested in Davao City, Cagayan de Oro City and General Santos City, and more than 5,900 community information collection networks have been established," he said.

Body needs full-backing

A visiting US-based Filipino-American lawyer, meanwhile, called on Filipinos to rally behind the government's war on terror, warning that if left unchecked, the tentacles of terrorism will engulf the entire Asia-Pacific region.

During the weekly Balitaan sa Rembrandt Forum in Quezon City on Friday, Atty. Arnedo Valera, executive director of the Migrant Heritage Commission (MHC) based in Washington, DC, said all Filipinos – both Christians and Muslims – must give their unconditional support to President Duterte's all-out war against the Maute terror group that has been laying siege to Marawi City for more than a month now.

The forum was hosted by journalist Eric San Juan. Valera warned that "the threat, if left unchecked, is certain to engulf the Asia-Pacific region, and worsen the threats of terrorism in the rest of

the world."

He defended President Duterte's action to declare martial law in Mindanao for 60 days last May 23 when some 500 Maute militants attacked Marawi City while Duterte was in Moscow for an official visit.

The President had to cut short his visit and return to Manila immediately to attend to the national security problem.

Valera said Duterte's declaration of martial law in the entire Mindanao region following the siege in Marawi City is in accordance with the 1987 Constitution.

The fighting in Marawi, now on its 39th day, has so far killed 308 Maute terrorists, along with 82 soldiers and police officers and 44 civilians.

Earlier, Valera asked Filipinos "to pray for our military troops in Mindanao and their families, as well as the civilian families, and those engaged in providing humanitarian services".

"Likewise, join me in a prayer for President Rodrigo Duterte and all government officials," he said.

Valera stressed the importance of prayer "for Divine protection to the Filipino troops fighting against

rebellion and terrorism in Marawi City, and to bless their mission that it may lead at last to enduring peace, and prosperity to the entire region".

He also asked God to "keep the soldiers safe from harm and bring them safely back to their families", as well as for strength and increased faith for the families of the troops, as well as the civilian families, as they go through their ordeal.

Chinese arms ready

There is also a chance the weapons and ammunition donated by China would be used in the ongoing efforts to clear Marawi City of the remaining Maute Group terrorists, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, has said.

"Our troops will have no difficulty in using these weapons as their operation is really very simple," Padilla said in Filipino, adding that the assault and sniper rifles donated by the Chinese government are similar to the ones being used by the military.

He said the weapons and ammunition are being inventoried before they are distributed to the field.

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'ARMS FROM CHINA MAY BE USED IN MARAWI'

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"We need to record them. These are thousands but they come by lot

numbers and there are records, so it's not going to be long before we are able to ship them out [to Marawi City]," Padilla said.

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sniper rifles with 800,000 rounds.

The weapons were formally turned over by Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua to President Rodrigo Duterte on June 28.

Duterte earlier said the firearms donation was one of the defense cooperation matters he discussed with Chinese President Xi Jin Ping during his visit to China last October. **PNA**

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'MINDANAO TO GET EQUAL SHARE OF PH'S WEALTH'

By John Paolo Bencito

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday vowed to give an equal share of the country's wealth to Mindanao, as long as they remain committed to his war on drugs, corruption, criminality and terrorism.

"Rest assured that the government will do everything to give an equal share of resources to Mindanao, including Davao del Norte. Use the money to uplift the people and realize your great potential," Duterte said in a speech in Tagum City.

The President, who campaigned on a promise to transform the country into a federal government, insisted this was the key to bringing peace in conflict-ridden Mindanao.

"All I ask in return is that you remain committed to the war on drugs, corruption, criminality and terrorism. You must be steadfast and united against these ills that threaten our existence and our way of life," he added.

In the same speech, Duterte said fighting in Marawi City would not stop despite the rising number of soldiers killed in the ongoing conflict.

"I cannot stop the fighting because I will never, never compromise with the terrorists," Duterte said, adding that it would continue "until the last terrorist is executed."

"If there is one person in this republic and this country who is really traveling with a heavy heart it's me, because I ordered the Armed Forces and the police to go there and fight and perhaps to die," he said.

"My only consoling issue there is I have to do it because it is my constitutional duty to preserve and defend the Filipino people."

As of June 29, the death toll in the ongoing Marawi City siege has risen to 429. Of the total number of fatalities, 303 were members of the Maute group.

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Duterte: No compromise with Maute terrorists

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

Deeply saddened by the death of soldiers in the battle of Marawi City, President Duterte yesterday vowed he would give no quarter to Maute extremists.

"I will never, never compromise with the terrorists," Duterte told the audience at the 50th founding anniversary of Davao del Norte.

Duterte deplored how the Maute terrorists have "corrupted" Islam.

The President mentioned the two mainstream rebel groups, Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front that, he said, were fighting for ideology and rights of Muslims in Mindanao.

"They (Maute group) have no ideology. They have corrupted Islam.

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Duterte had shown his compassionate side, having to deal with sorrow over learning about the rising death toll of soldiers and civilians. The massive destruction had also taken a toll on the war-torn city.

"So every time I read the casualties, it's very unsettling. I do not know what I will do, but I cannot stop the fighting because I will never, never, never compromise with terrorism," he said.

Duterte also said he is not happy with the way the government has suffered casualties during the conflict.

"I am today with a heavy heart because by the time I reach home, there is a briefer which reveals the narratives,"

he told the crowd.

"It's a sort of a journal like the police but it's thick, it's a narrative of today's events that's happening in Marawi and I get to read the so many soldiers and police who are dying," Duterte added.

Duterte said he just needed to face the fact that he needed to implement stronger measures for a greater responsibility – which is to preserve the Filipino and defend the Republic.

"I have this guilt feelings but this is my job. My only consoling issue there is that I have to do it because it is my constitutional duty to preserve and defend the Filipino people," he said.

"If there is one person in this Republic, in this country who is really traveling with a heavy heart, it's me because I

ordered the Armed Forces and the police to go there and fight and perhaps, to die," he said.

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You gain nothing from their nationalism," Duterte said.

"We will not go out there until the last terrorist is executed," he added.

Duterte said he was disheartened over why his fellow Maranaos allowed the Maute group to take hold of Marawi City.

He said the Mautes were able to stockpile their weapons in preparation for their bid to establish an Islamic State caliphate in Mindanao.

"Sometimes I cry for the soldiers who died fighting these terrorists. I am the command-

er-in-chief," he said.

"I am also angry for my compatriot Maranaos... why did you allow the terrorists to come in?" he asked.

Duterte stressed the fighting in Marawi will continue until the last Maute gunman is taken out.

In his speech that followed in Davao del Sur last night, the 72-year-old Chief Executive also revealed he has been praying that the war will end soon.

He said he felt "more in shame" for sending soldiers to the war that caused the loss of precious lives.

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MNLF forms task force against kidnapping, terrorism

By **NONOY E. LACSON**

PASIL, Indanan, Sulu – Top military and national government officials including dignitaries from the Office of the Prime Minister of Malaysia formally witnessed yesterday the launch of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) Task Force Anti-Kidnapping and Anti-Terrorism here.

MNLF Chair Yusop Jikiri announced the formation of the task force, which will be composed on a battalion of MNLF combatants drawn from the rank and file of the Bangsamoro Army.

“They are all former MNLF combatants who are supposed to be in their retirement but still committed to serve the MNLF, especially in promoting peace,” Jikiri said.

Jikiri said that the creation of the task force was an initiative of the new leadership of the MNLF Central Committee and was presented, discussed and approved by the military and the political office of the Duterte Administration.

It was also discussed with the Armed

Forces of the Philippines, Western Mindanao Command (AFP-WestMinCom) Commander Carlito Galvez, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon and Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza.

Emphasizing further that “there was nothing to hide regarding the task and functions of the MNLF Task Forces whose aim is to help the government, the military, the local government units and our people, the residents of the community, in the common drive against kidnapping and terrorism.”

He accused the “bandits and terrorists of abusing the lives and livelihood of our people, and besmirching the good name of Islam and the Muslims by their misguidance, banditry and terroristic activities.”

“The MNLF wants to clear its communities of all criminal elements and we don’t want these bandits and terrorists to use MNLF areas as their hideouts or bases. As we also don’t want them to seek any assistance from the residents to enhance their evil objectives. This is precisely the reason why the MNLF had organized you - our task force,” Jikiri told the crowd.

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Duterte to communists: Let's stop fighting for a while

B. ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS and YAS D. OCAMPO

President Duterte has asked the communist rebels in Mindanao, if it is possible, to stop engaging the government forces until the crisis in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, is over.

In his speech during the 50th founding anniversary of Davao del Norte in Tagum City Saturday afternoon, Duterte said he wants to talk to the communists as he understands what they are fighting for.

"I can understand you, that is why I have not declared any overt action against you. I want to talk to you because I know na ang inyo (that yours) was just a rising nationalism," Duterte said.

The President's call for the rebels to stop attacking soldiers and police officers comes amid the heavy fighting in Marawi City, more than one month after Duterte declared martial law in the entire island of Mindanao.

"I have to do it because it is my constitutional duty to preserve and defend the Filipino people. Wala akong magawa dyan. Lalo na sa mga sundalo, if there is

one person in this republic who is really traveling with a heavy heart, it's me. Because I ordered the AFP and police to go there and fight and perhaps to die," President Duterte.

He also noted the earlier declaration of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front's (CPP-NPA-NDF) for the CPP to intensify its operations against the government forces which they retracted later on.

"Can you just stop fighting for a while? Kasi ang sabi ng mga leader niyo sa Europe (Because your leaders in Europe said) there will be a cease-fire," he said.

"Una, sabi ng leader niyo (First your leaders said) you are to engage government forces tapos (but then) they realized now, at this very late day, na wala kayong makukuha dyan sa terorista (that you'll gain nothing from the terrorists)," he added.

In a statement, the CPP had earlier criticized the Duterte administration for a lack of a direct order to cease offensives.

"More than a week after (Labor Secretary Silvestre) Bello's statement, the people have not seen nor heard of a Duterte order 'not to undertake offensives' against the NPA," the CPP said in a statement dated June 30.

"On the contrary, his defense secretary and military commanders have repeatedly declared that the AFP will conduct 'pursuit' operations against the NPA. Duterte has neither rescinded his government's 'all-out war' policy and 'flatten the hills' command against the NPA. The AFP's war of suppression in Mindanao has worsened since the imposition of martial law more than a month ago," the CPP said.

Meanwhile, Malacañang also warned the public against the NPA's supposed planned attacks on people-oriented programs and infrastructure projects as these are extortion-related.

"We wish to forewarn the public of reported planned attacks of the NPA on people-oriented programs and infrastructure projects and request the citizenry of Mindanao and everyone else in the country to be on the alert and on the lookout." Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said over Radyo

Pilipinas.

“We also appeal to everyone to share information with authorities on suspicious persons and activities in their communities. Sabi nga po nila (Like what they say), if we can work together, we can prevent these extortion-related activities,” he added.

Talk to communists

Duterte, in his speech in Tagum City, also said that he would be willing to talk to the communists but warned them against giving him a double-face.

He also said he will not go soft on them if they fire at the government forces who are patrolling around Mindanao.

“We used to talk, we were friends, but that was during the time when I was mayor. I was not then burdened with the responsibility of running this country,” Duterte said.

“Eh, ngayon iba na ang sitwasyon. Kaya pag kinalaban mo ‘yung pulis ko, binaril mo ‘yung sundalo, magkalaban talaga tayo (But the situation is different now. So if you stand up against my police, fire at my soldiers, then we will really fight),” he warned.

The President also reiterated his earlier statement that he will not buy the communists’ excuse that they fired upon government troops because they have supposedly entered their territory.

“Would you kindly stop fighting? Ang problema sa inyong mga komunista (The problem with you communists), you don’t want my soldiers [there],” he said.

“Ako nag-utos sa kanila (I sent them there) because they have to patrol and control every inch of the territory. Don’t give me that sh*t that my soldiers entered your territory – that’s bullsh*t. I’m the President and I would never allow that proposition,” he added.

“Though we are not there all the time, we cannot guard every inch of this republic, but I must insist that I own the republic in behalf of the Filipino people – every inch of the way,” he continued.

Don’t engage with terrorists

Duterte also warned the communists against joining the terrorists or else they will not have a place in the country.

“There will never be a political, social, or economic space for you communists if it is terrorism that prevails the day. Wala kayong makuha diyan na nationalism (You will not gain nationalism there),” Duterte said.

“The terrorists, walang ideology ‘yan (there’s not ideology there). It is far distant from Islam which they have corrupted to kill people in the name of God,” he added.

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

PH holds joint patrol with US to deter Islamist militants

By **REUTERS**
and **CHARISSA L. ATIENZA**

The United States (US) and Philippine navies held a joint naval patrol on Saturday in dangerous Sulu Sea, amid rising international concern about Islamist militancy and piracy in the region.

US Navy littoral combat ship USS Coronado joined Philippine Navy frigate, BRP Alcaraz, in patrolling the Sulu Sea where numerous pirate attacks on commercial shipping have been made since 2015. A group of Filipino navy sailors embarked on USS Coronado and joined their counterparts to **16**

PH holds joint patrol...

◀1

coordinate communications and movements between the two ships.

The US embassy said the joint patrol strengthened maritime security cooperation between the US and Philippine navies and enhanced both navies' ability to respond to piracy and transnational criminal activity at sea.

"Our at-sea operations with the Philippine Navy demonstrate our commitment to the alliance and deter piracy and illegal activities," US Rear Admiral Don Gabrielson, Task Force 73 commander, said in a statement issued by the US embassy in Manila.

"These patrols enhance regional peace and stability," Gabrielson added.

"It further demonstrates US commitment to the security of the Philippines and enduring US interest in promoting stability and prosperity in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region," the US embassy said.

During the operation, the Filipino navies exchanged best practices with their US counterparts in visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) techniques, and information sharing.

There are international fears fighters sympathetic to Islamic State will cross maritime borders between Malaysia and Indonesia to join the Maute Group rebels who seized Marawi City in Lanao del Sur five weeks ago.

About 300 militants, 82 security forces, and 44 civilians have been killed in the fighting.

Prior to the Sulu Sea patrol, USS Coronado completed the Maritime Training Activity Sama Sama with the Philippine Navy in Cebu aimed at sharpening tactical skills in maritime security operations.

The US embassy noted that Washington and Manila continue to work together on a number of initiatives and conduct regular military exchanges through routine participation in bilateral and multilateral exercises such as Balikatan, the Maritime Training Activity Sama Sama, Southeast Asian Cooperation and Training (SEACAT), the Rim of the Pacific exercise (RIMPAC), the Asian Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM-Plus) and other bilateral subject matter expert exchanges.

The naval patrols were held at the invitation of the Philippine government, the US embassy said. President Duterte does not allow joint patrols with the United States in the disputed South China Sea to avoid damaging its relations with China, which claims the sea as its own.

But he welcomes cooperation in the south due to increased militant activity. Two weeks ago, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines held joint naval patrols in southern waters.

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MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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GMA backs Duterte on martial law

By BEN R. ROSARIO

Former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo yesterday declared her strong support to the martial law declaration of President Rodrigo Duterte, saying that Filipinos must continue to trust him.

Speaking at the 52nd induction ceremonies of officers of the Inner Wheel Clubs of the Philippines, Arroyo did not

interpose any objection to alleged plans of Duterte to extend the 60-day martial law period which is due to expire on July 22.

She said that as chief executive, Duterte has information that he cannot share to others, thus, trust in his decisions is of utmost importance.

"I'd like to use this opportunity to stand four-square behind President Duterte's declaration of martial law" ▶4

GMA backs Duterte...

◀1

law in Mindanao," Arroyo declared as she addressed women civic leaders of the country.

"I've been president, and being president, you have information that others will not have," she said.

The former chief executive added: "They help you make a decision but you cannot share all the information with others."

Arroyo has been supportive of Duterte's past and current decisions except the proposed restoration of the death penalty.

The three-term Pampanga solon rejected the death penalty bill when presented for third and final reading at the House of Representatives, which cost her deputy speakership post.

In two separate press statements issued a day before Duterte's first anniversary as president, Arroyo lauded the former Davao City mayor for demonstrating "awesome leadership" and for his "sustained efforts" in boosting the morale of soldiers and policemen fighting the ISIS-linked Maute terrorists in Marawi City.

"So it is important that we just trust the President, because he knows what you don't know and he knows what he's doing so let us all support the martial law declaration of Duterte in Mindanao," Arroyo told the Inner Wheel officers.

Arroyo's call for support to the Duterte leadership came as the 60-day martial law declaration is set to expire on July 22.

'Build, Build, Build'

As an economist, the former President also lauded the Duterte administration's P3.6-trillion "Build, Build, Build" infrastructure flagship initiative was commendable and is a "step in the right direction towards sustaining our robust economic growth."

"But more than his accomplishments of the technical work as president, what President Duterte has done is to inspire and unite the Filipino people towards his goal of effecting real change for the country," she stated.

Help Marawi residents

Arroyo called on Filipinos to continue extending help to Marawi City residents, especially those who have been displaced as a result of the Maute attack in their city.

She cited the Inner Wheel Clubs

led by national president Gloria Golez for bringing help to those displaced by the conflict.

"It will take long time to rebuild the beautiful city of Marawi. The people of Marawi will need the whole country in rebuilding their broken lives," the lawmaker said.

She recalled growing up in her grandmother's farm in nearby Iligan City and as a child, she and her cousins often visited Marawi City, which they then called "Dansalan."

Arroyo said Marawi City and Iligan City were very "pluralistic and diverse

societies where men and women, boys and girls of different faiths" lived together in peace.

'Inherited a battlefield'

"But by the time I became president, I inherited a battlefield in Mindanao. The rebellion had gained ground led by the MILF in 1972 and while there was a peace agreement in 1996 the MILF continued the rebellion. When I became president it got all complicated because of the ascendance of international terrorism and the latest warfare after 911," she recalled.

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The Manila Times

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Arroyo favors extending martial law in Mindanao

FORMER president and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is in favor of extending martial law in Mindanao, if President Rodrigo Duterte asks for it.

On Saturday, Arroyo answered in the affirmative when asked if she was in favor of an extension beyond the maximum 60 days under the Constitution, which will require congressional approval.

"If he asks for it, yes," Arroyo, referring to Duterte, told reporters in an interview after her keynote speech before the Inner Wheel Clubs of the Philippines in Makati City.

Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao after the Islamic State-linked Maute group attacked Marawi City on May 23.

► Mindanao A2

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■ MINDANAO FROM A1

Arroyo favors extending martial law

Duterte's martial law, under Proclamation 216, is being questioned before the Supreme Court, following the decision of the Senate and the House of Representatives not to convene in joint session to discuss the declaration.

Opposition lawmakers opposing military rule also argued before the tribunal that there was no basis to place the entire Mindanao under martial law, as the attack was confined to Marawi City in Lanao del Sur province.

Moreover, they claimed there was no invasion or rebellion endangering public safety that could justify Proclamation 216, which also suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus and effectively allowed warrantless arrests.

The Supreme Court en banc will vote on July 4 on petitions seeking to junk President Duterte's martial law declaration.

The vote will be ahead of the 30-day period within which the high court must decide on petitions against the martial law declaration, which falls on July 5; as well as the end of the maximum 60-day duration of martial law under the 1987 Constitution, which falls on July 22.

'Four-square behind Duterte'

In her speech, Arroyo expressed support for the President's declaration of martial law in Mindanao.

"The war in Marawi carries with it the issue of the declaration of martial law in Mindanao. And I'd like to use this opportunity to stand four-square behind President Duterte's declaration of martial law in Mindanao," Arroyo said.

"I've been president...and being a president...you have information that others do not have. They help you make a decision but you cannot share all the information with others. So therefore it is important that we just trust the President because he knows what we don't know and he knows what he's doing. So let us all support the martial law of President Duterte in Mindanao," she added.

In late 2009, then President Arroyo declared martial law in Maguindanao province following a massacre there that left 58 civilians, including 32 journalists, dead.

The victims were slain on their way to the Commission on Elections office in Shariff Aguak for the filing of the certificate of candidacy of then-Buluan vice mayor Esmael Mangudadatu,

who was running against the powerful Ampatuan clan in the 2010 gubernatorial election.

Arroyo lifted martial law after eight days and upon the Cabinet's recommendation.

In the same speech on Saturday, Arroyo said Duterte "has shown awesome leadership and resolve" in the programs that he aimed to do.

"In the first year that he just completed yesterday, he instituted bold reforms against illegal drugs and corruption. And speaking as an economist, I'd like to add that his 'Build, Build, Build' initiative is commendable and is a step in the right direction towards sustaining our robust economic growth. You know our economic growth today is one of the best in the world. So 'Build, Build, Build' will sustain that," she said.

"But beyond his accomplishments of the technical work as President, one thing that the President has done is to inspire and unite the Filipino people towards his goal of effecting real change in the country — *pagbabago* [change]. So let's all wish him the best as he begins his second year and the best of health for the rest of his term as he fulfills his mandate for the nation and for the people," Arroyo said.

REINA TOLENTINO

02 July 2017



Pahina. 2

Pagbubukas ng klase sa Marawi wala pang katiyakan

Dahilan hindi pa tapos ang giyera sa pagitan ng tropang gobyerno at ng mga teroristang Maute-Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) wala pang katiyakan kung kailan muling magbubukas ang klase sa lungsod ng Marawi.

Ayon kay Education Assistant Secretary for Legal and Legislative Affairs Tonisito Umali, ipinag-utos ni Education Secretary Leonor Briones na makipag-ugnayan muna sila sa Department of

National Defense (DND) at Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) upang matukoy kung ligtas na ba o hindi ang Marawi City bago magdesisyon kung papapasukin na sa klase ang mga estudyante doon.

Kumpiyansa naman ang opisyal na matutuloy na maisasaayos na ang kaguluhan at maibabalik ang kapayapaan sa Marawi City upang maitakda na nila ang class opening sa lungsod ngayong buwan.

Inaasahang maitatakda kaagad ang pagbabalik

klase ng mga estudyante matapos ang clearing operations sa Marawi City at kung tiyak na ang kaligtasan ng mga guro at mga mag-aaral.

Batay sa data ng DepEd, mahigit 20,000 estudyante ng Marawi City ang displaced simula nang pumutok ang kaguluhan noong Mayo 23. Nasa 15, 115 na sa mga estudyante ang lumipat na ng paaralan ngunit 7, 028 pa rin sa kanila ang nananatiling nasa evacuation centers at di nakakapasok sa eskwela. *Mer Layson-*

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Not quite crushed

A six-month deadline to “crush” the Abu Sayyaf lapsed yesterday with the military continuing its offensive against the bandit group. One measure of success would have been the recovery of hostages held for several months now by the bandits.

As of yesterday, however, 26 hostages – 11 Vietnamese, seven Indonesians, seven Filipinos and a Dutch man – were still being held by the Abu Sayyaf, most likely in Sulu. And military forces were still hunting down Abu Sayyaf commander Isnilon Hapilon, said to be the designated “emir” of the Islamic State in the

EDITORIAL

Philippines, who reportedly led the Maute attack on Marawi City.

No one seriously expected the six-month deadline to be met; it was meant chiefly to boost military efforts to neutralize the Abu Sayyaf. Assessing the results of the offensive in Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi since the start of the year, the Armed Forces of the Philippines reported yesterday that 94 Abu Sayyaf fighters including at least four key commanders had been killed. Another 66 bandits were apprehended,

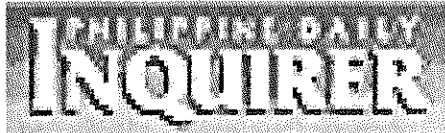
98 surrendered and 148 firearms were recovered. Among those killed, the AFP said, were the brothers who ran the bandits’ cross-border kidnapping operations.

Previous presidents had also vowed to crush the Abu Sayyaf, but the group proved to be a multi-headed monster. Its founding chieftains, the brothers Abdurajak Abubakar and Khadaffy Janjalani, were quickly replaced by new commanders, who continued the group’s pillaging of villages, torching of churches and schools, attacks on government forces, and lucrative kidnapping for ransom.

Now the bandits appear to have teamed up with the Maute terrorists to pursue an objective of the Islamic State to set up a caliphate that includes Mindanao. With IS being driven out of its strongholds in Iraq’s Mosul city and in Syria, security experts say the group is eyeing a base in the southern Philippines. This raises the stakes in neutralizing both the Mautes and the Abu Sayyaf. Regardless of any deadline, the AFP must confront this threat with urgency.

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Unity and solidarity amid crisis

Some readers noted the “softness” of my last two columns which dis-coursed, as objectively as possible, on the raging issue of martial law and the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, without blaming, faulting, or pointing a finger at anyone.

Support for military. Specifically, though I opined on June 18 that martial law was validly declared and the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus was validly suspended by the President at least in Marawi City, if not in the whole of Mindanao, I nonetheless thought that the petitioners, led by Rep. Edcel Lagman, did the nation a favor for giving the Supreme Court the precious opportunity to issue a “win-win decision” by laying down guidelines on how martial law may be proclaimed and implemented, and how the privilege may be suspended and implemented in parts of or in the entirety of the country in the future.

And though I opined on June 25 that the Supreme Court could find the review of the declaration of martial law and suspension of the privilege undertaken by Congress via separate, not joint, sessions to be less than a faithful observance of the letter and spirit of the Constitution, I nonetheless wrote that the Court need not find fault with anyone (neither the leaders of Congress nor the petitioners represented by former solicitor general Florin Hilbay) and merely issue guidelines on how Congress should pass upon such proclamations and suspensions prospectively as future guides.

By so doing, I was hoping to avoid divisive bickering and to focus on how to support our military in its campaign to end the Marawi siege and on how to assist in the



WITH DUE RESPECT

ARTEMIO V. PANGANIBAN

relief and rehabilitation of over 200,000 innocent victims of the armed conflict.

I thought we should no longer fret over divisive legalisms but concentrate instead on how to help end what the CNN described as “the deadliest urban fighting in the Philippines” with (as of July 1) 422 people (militants, soldiers and civilians) that authorities reported as having been killed, the dislocation and separation of families, and the devastation of homes and livelihood in the conflict areas.

Beyond politics and religion. Laudably, Vice President Leni Robredo, head of the Liberal Party, led the opposition in echoing the need for unity and solidarity during her visit last week to the Marawi evacuees at the Al Markhazie Islamic Institute in Lanao del Norte, unequivocally declaring:

“More than at any other time in our country today, this is the time we need to show that we are one.” Significantly, she praised the military’s effort “to do everything to finish the problem against the Maute group.”

Crossing religious lines, Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle meditated early on: “We ask

ourselves, ‘Why are humans capable of hurting other fellow human beings?’ We grieve for you, for all Filipinos, and for everyone in the world whose lives are destroyed because of violence.”

Anxious for the safety of Fr. Teresito “Chito” Suganob (vicar general of the Marawi prelature) and about 200 other civilians who were kidnapped and held hostage by the rebels, Archbishop Socrates B. Villegas, president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, pleaded, “As the government forces ensure that the law is upheld, we beg of them to make the safety of the hostages a primordial consideration.”

Muslim, Protestant, ecumenical and other religious groups aired similar calls.

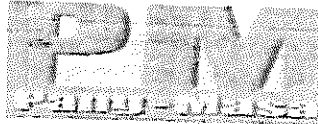
Rehabilitation and peace process. I hope the leaders of the legislature and local government units will follow suit and settle as quickly as possible the seething intramural in Ilocos Norte. Already, it has taken its toll on the work of Congress, the judiciary and the provincial board.

While the siege of Marawi may be ended soon, there is still relief and rehabilitation to follow. Rebuilding homes, curing illnesses, reuniting families, healing psychological grief, and reeducating radicalized young people will overwhelm government and private-sector resources.

Truly, unity and solidarity will be indispensable even after the shooting is over. They are also essential in the pursuit of a comprehensive peace process with the moderate Moro groups and with the National Democratic Front.

Comments to chiefjusticepanganiban@hotmail.com

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Pahina. 4



Araw na lang

ITO na ang ayaw nating marinig na balita. Nadiskubre ng mga militar ang 17 bangkay ng mga sibilyan sa isang lugar na dating kontrolado ng Maute. Lima sa kanila ay pinugutan ng ulo. Kumpirmasyon na ito sa mga unang ipinahayag ng mga nakatakas na sibilyan. Kaya hindi pa masasabi kung wala nang madiskubre pang mga bangkay, habang unti-unting nababawi ng militar ang mga lugar sa Marawi. Ang pangamba ay baka masama ang sinapit ng maraming hindi nakatakas na sibilyan, partikular mga Kristyano.

Kaya walang anumang negosasyon ang dapat maganap sa pagitan ng gobyerno at Maute. Ang ka-

lupitan na ginawa ng Maute sa mga sibilyan ay hindi mapapatawad. Ang malawak na pagkasira ng Marawi ay hindi mapapatawad. Ang kailangang gawin sa Maute ay durugin nang husto para hindi na makapaghasik ng lagim saan man sa bansa.

May nakuhang video rin ang militar kung saan kinunan ng mga terorista ang pagpatay sa mga sibilyan. Ang hinala ay ipadadala ito sa ISIS, para magpakitang-gilas, ika nga. Para ipakita na ganito rin sila kalupit sa Pilipinas. May paniniwala na nais ng ISIS magtayo ng base sa timog-silangang Asya, dahil natatalo na nang husto sa gitnang silangan. Ang pag-atake nga sa Marawi ay tila "testing" ng kakayanan ng mga manlalaban na kaalyado ng ISIS kung kayang tapatan ang militar ng bansa. Sa totoo lang, walang nag-akala na aabot ng limang linggo ang labanan.

Araw na lang daw ang binibilang, ayon kay Pres. Rodrigo Duterte. Tuluyang matatalo na raw ang Maute at magiging malaya na ang Marawi, para masimulan na rin ang malawakang rehabilitasyon ng nasirang siyudad. Higit 400 na ang pangkalahatang bilang ng mga namatay na sa krisis. Umamoy 303 ang napatay na mga

(Sundan sa pahina 5)

K KA LANG?...

Mula pahina 4

terorista. Umabot naman sa 75 bayaning sundalo at pulis naman ang namatay, at 44 na sibilyan ang kumpirmadong patay. Pero habang unti-unting nababawi ang siyudad, baka kung ano pang mga karumaldumal na kalupitan na ginawa ng Maute ang madiskubre. Kung araw na lang daw ang binibilang, sana huwag nang madagdagan ang bilang ng mga sibilyang pinatay na walang saysay.

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EDITORIAL

Rewarding cops, soldiers

THERE'S now a move in the Senate to institutionalize all assistance to members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) who are killed or hurt in line of duty.

Spearheading the move is Senator Francis "Chiz" Escudero of Sorsogon. He called on his colleagues to establish a P20-billion trust fund for slain and wounded military and police officers and men.

Escudero's Senate Bill No. 1491, otherwise known as the "Comprehensive Social Benefit Program of the Government," seeks to institutionalize the P20-billion trust fund for AFP and PNP personnel.

Under the proposed legislation, the trust fund will be established and developed by the Department of National Defense (DND) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Escudero said the trust fund will cover the necessities and basic needs of the families and dependents of military and police personnel who are killed or wounded in legitimate operations.

AFP and PNP officers and men deserve nothing less than a reasonable and tangible recognition of their dedication and commitment to the country, according to the Bicolano senator.

The trust fund will be used to finance five types of assistance: full scholarship, financial, shelter, health and medical care, and cost of living.

Of course, the biggest chunk of the P20-billion trust fund will go to the education of children of military and police officers and men killed in action.

And we agree with the senator that the gallantry, bravery and heroism of soldiers and policemen in making the ultimate sacrifice for the flag, freedom and democracy can never be understated.

Escudero deserves the support of all sectors of Philippine society as he orchestrates the passage of the bill rewarding those who put their lives on the line in the service of our country and people.

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ONLINE NEWS

02 JULY 2017

www.pna.gov.ph

Weapons from China might be used in Marawi ops: AFP

July 1, 2017, 9:16 am

MANILA, July 1 -- There is a chance the weapons and ammunition donated by China would be used in the ongoing efforts to clear Marawi City of the remaining Maute Group terrorists, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, has said.

"Our troops will have no difficulty in using these weapons as their operation is really very simple," Padilla said in Filipino, adding that the assault and sniper rifles donated by the Chinese government are similar to the ones being used by the military.

He said the weapons and ammunition are being inventoried before they are distributed to the field.

"We need to record them. These are thousands but they come by lot numbers and there are records, so it's not going to be long before we are able to ship them out (to Marawi City)," Padilla said.

The arms and ammunition arrived at the Harrison Landing Zone in Clark Freeport, on board an Ilyushin IL-76 military plane Wednesday.

They consist of 3,000 rifles with 5 million ammunition, and 90 long-range sniper rifles with 800,000 rounds.

The weapons were formally turned over by Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua to President Rodrigo Duterte on June 28.

Duterte earlier said the firearms donation was one of the defense cooperation matters he discussed with Chinese President Xi Jin Ping during his visit to China last October. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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

www.pna.gov.ph

E. Mindanao still safe from terror attacks: AFP

July 1, 2017, 8:24 am

MANILA, July 1 -- The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has assured that all areas under the Eastern Mindanao Command (EMC) remain safe from any diversionary retaliatory attack by local terrorist groups as martial law in the region entered its 38th day.

"After 38 days of martial law, the EMC under the leadership of Lt. Gen. (Leonardo) Guerrero, who is also the Martial Implementor in EMC, has continuously prevented the spillover and spread of the Marawi crisis in its AOR (area-of-operations)," spokesperson of the EMC martial law implementor, Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, said in a statement Friday.

The conflict in Marawi City began when government security forces attempted to arrest Abu Sayyaf Group leader Isnihan Hapilon, tagged as the ISIS "Emir" in Southeast Asia, last May 23.

An estimated 303 Maute Group terrorists have so far been killed, along with 82 soldiers and police officers and 44 civilians, in the clashes that have entered the seventh week.

Gapay said the EMC has shielded Eastern Mindanao by preventing terrorists from leaking into the area.

"So far, EMC remains generally peaceful, safe and secure. This is largely attributed to the tighter security measures being implemented by the Command. As of today (Friday), 17,494 checkpoint operations have been conducted, wherein the EMC has apprehended 31 violators, and confiscated 15 firearms and 11 illegal drugs," he said.

Curfews have been imposed in 129 cities and municipalities in coordination with local government units.

Some 1,742 security/vicinity patrols have also been made to secure vital installations, critical infrastructure and places of convergence, such as churches, malls and mosques, Gapay said.

This is complemented by 54 maritime patrols as part of maritime law enforcement operations and intelligence coverage of threat groups.

"Likewise, the Martial Law Special Action Group has been activated to effect arrest included in the arrest order issued by the Martial Law Administrator. As of today, 16 terrorist supporters have already been arrested in Davao City, Cagayan de Oro City and General Santos City, and more than 5,900 community information collection networks have been established," he said. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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

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www.pna.gov.ph

Fil-Am lawyer to Pinoys: Rally behind govt war on terror in Marawi

By Ben Cal July 1, 2017, 10:37 am

MANILA, July 1 -- A visiting US-based Filipino-American lawyer has called on all freedom-loving Filipinos to rally behind the government's war on terror, warning that if left unchecked, the tentacles of terrorism will engulf the entire Asia-Pacific region.

During the weekly Balitaan sa Rembrandt Forum in Quezon City on Friday, Atty. Arnedo Valera, executive director of the Migrant Heritage Commission (MHC) based in Washington, DC, said all Filipinos -- both Christians and Muslims -- must give their unconditional support to President Rodrigo Duterte's all-out war against the Maute terror group that has been laying siege to Marawi City for more than a month now.

The forum was hosted by journalist Eric San Juan. Valera warned that "the threat, if left unchecked, is certain to engulf the Asia-Pacific region, and worsen the threats of terrorism in the rest of the world."

He defended President Duterte's action to declare martial law in Mindanao for 60 days last May 23 when some 500 Maute militants attacked Marawi City while Duterte was in Moscow for an official visit.

The President had to cut short his visit and return to Manila immediately to attend to the national security problem.

Valera said Duterte's declaration of martial law in the entire Mindanao region following the siege in Marawi City is in accordance with the 1987 Constitution.

The fighting in Marawi, now on its 39th day, has so far killed 303 Maute terrorists, along with 82 soldiers and police officers and 44 civilians.

Earlier, Valera asked Filipinos "to pray for our military troops in Mindanao and their families, as well as the civilian families, and those engaged in providing humanitarian services".

"Likewise, join me in a prayer for President Rodrigo Duterte and all government officials," he said.

Valera stressed the importance of prayer "for Divine protection to the Filipino troops fighting against rebellion and terrorism in Marawi City, and to bless their mission that it may lead at last to enduring peace, and prosperity to the entire region".

He also asked God to "keep the soldiers safe from harm and bring them safely back to their families", as well as for strength and increased faith for the families of the troops, as well as the civilian families, as they go through their ordeal. (PNA)

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

www.pna.gov.ph

Palace warns public vs NPA's planned attacks

July 1, 2017, 2:49 pm

MANILA, July 1 -- Malacañang on Saturday reiterated its call to the public to be alert and on the lookout against the reported planned attacks of the New People's Army (NPA).

In his Mindanao Hour briefing over Radyo Pilipinas (formerly Radyo ng Bayan), Presidential Spokesperson Ernesto Abella said the NPA's planned attacks on people-oriented programs and infrastructure projects are extortion-related. "We wish to forewarn the public of reported planned attacks of the NPA on people-oriented programs and infrastructure projects and request the citizenry of Mindanao and everyone else in the country to be on the alert and on the lookout," Abella said.

"We also appeal to everyone to share information with authorities on suspicious persons and activities in their communities. Sabi nga po nila (As they say), if we can work together, we can prevent these extortion-related activities."

"Para po sa perspective ng militar, ang mga gawain po na mga planned attacks na ito ng mga NPA are all extortion-related (For the military, these planned attacks by the NPA are all extortion-related)," he added.

Abella meanwhile provided updates on the government's operations in Marawi, saying that civilians killed are at 39, lower than what was previously reported.

"According to Scene of the Crime, SOCO, report's correction, 'yung ni-report po na (what was reported), for the previous 17 cadavers recovered 17 days ago is actually 12 lang po pala (only) upon full examination. So 'yung verified are only 12 cadavers," he said.

Meanwhile, Abella put the civilians rescued at 1,713, terrorists killed at 317, and government casualties at 82.

In the same radio briefing, the Palace official dispelled allegations made by Senator Risa Hontiveros that President Rodrigo Duterte's first year in office was a year of misogyny.

Abella reiterated the Duterte administration's commitment for women's rights, which he said, extends to action initiated by the President when he was still mayor of Davao City. "We hope that Senator Hontiveros should judge the President not by the word that he says, but for what he stands for, saka po 'yung talagang tinatayuan niya," Abella said.

Abella noted that among the projects and programs made by then Mayor Duterte for women are the local version of the Reproductive Health Bill in Davao City; the passage of the Women's Code by the Davao City Council in 1997; as well as the creation of the Davao City's Council for Women, which enables the monitoring of reports of violence against women in 182 barangays in the city.

He also said it was under Duterte's watch as mayor of Davao when the Women and Children Protection Unit was established at the Southern Philippines Medical Center to provide psychological support, as well as the Davao's version of 911 for emergencies.

"If only the Senator would really look and not just make comments based on prejudgments and knee-jerk reactions, I would say that... we would be in a better place," Abella said. (PND/PNA)

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