

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



TEAM ARMY

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NEWS CLIPPINGS

03 July 2017

Monday

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

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BusinessMirror

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BusinessMirror

A broader look at today's business



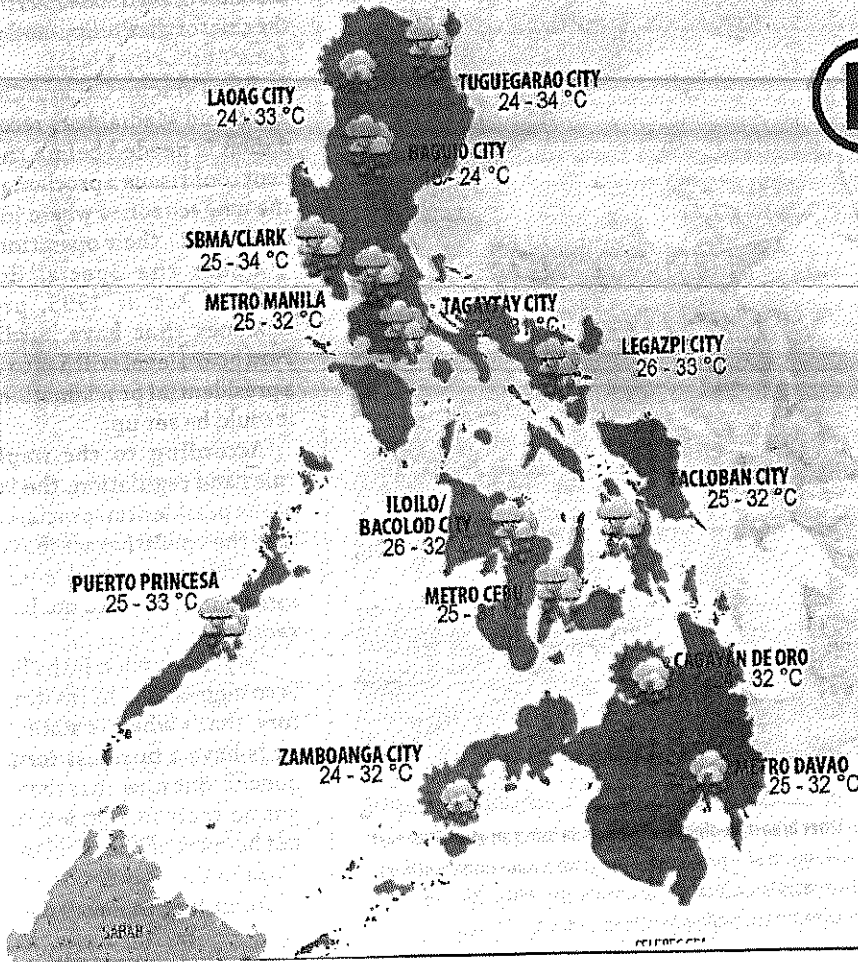
TODAY'S WEATHER

JULY 03, 2017 | MONDAY

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "EMONG"
765 KM EAST OF TUGUEGARAO CITY, CAGAYAN
(As of 5:00 AM - July 2, 2017)

3-DAY EXTENDED FORECAST

	JUL 4 Tuesday	JUL 5 Wednesday	JUL 6 Thursday
METRO MANILA	25-33 °C	25-33 °C	25-33 °C
TUGUEGARAO	24-35 °C	24-35 °C	25-34 °C
LAOAG	24-33 °C	24-32 °C	25-33 °C
BAGUIO	16-24 °C	16-25 °C	16-25 °C
SBMA/CLARK	25-34 °C	25-34 °C	25-33 °C
TAGAYTAY	22-30 °C	22-31 °C	22-30 °C
LEGAZPI	26-33 °C	26-33 °C	26-33 °C
PUERTO PRINCESA	25-33 °C	25-33 °C	26-33 °C
ILOILO/BACOLOD	26-32 °C	26-32 °C	26-32 °C



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**Manila
Standard**

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Martial law critics warned

Rody vows to send oppositors to jail; SC ruling out soon

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte threatened to jail critics of his declaration of martial law in Mindanao, days before the Supreme Court is set to rule on its legality this week.

Duterte declared military rule across the region of Mindanao, home to about 20-million people, in late May to quell what he said was a fast-growing threat from the Islamic State group there.

Duterte has insisted he would

ignore the findings of the Court, which has constitutional oversight, vowing only to listen to recommendations from the Armed Forces.

"It's not dependent on the whim of the Supreme Court. Should I

believe them? When I see the situation is still chaotic and you ask me to lift it? I will arrest you and put you behind bars," Duterte said in a speech before local officials on Saturday.

"We can talk of anything else and make compromises maybe but not when the interest of my country is at stake."

He said he saw no problem in declaring martial law when terrorists were killing and beheading Christians and Muslims alike.

"When is the time to lift martial

law?" he said. "I will ask the military and the police, is it safe now? And then when the chief of staff and the PNP would say, everybody is safe and it's okay now, then I will lift [martial law]," he said.

Government forces are continuing to battle militants occupying the city of Marawi, with aerial bombardment and ferocious street-to-street combat that has left some 400 people dead and forced nearly 400,000 people in the wider area to flee their homes.

Duterte has faced a backlash

from opposition lawmakers, who last month asked the Supreme Court to reject the declaration of martial law, which they have slammed as unconstitutional.

The 1987 Constitution imposes limits on martial law to prevent a repeat of the abuses under dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who was deposed by a famous "People Power" revolution in 1986.

The charter allows the Supreme Court to review the factual basis for proclaiming martial law, which

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Martial...

From A1

is limited to an initial period of 60 days. If a president decides to extend martial law, Congress can review and revoke it.

The Supreme Court is expected to resolve on Tuesday the consolidated petitions seeking to nullify the President's declaration of martial law.

The consolidated petitions seeking to invalidate the President's martial law declaration on the grounds that there is no factual basis for it.

The first of the three petitions was filed June 5 by a group of opposition lawmakers led by Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman. Two similar petitions filed by local Mindanao leaders led by *lumad* leader Eufemia Campos Cullamat and a group of women from Marawi led by Norkaya Mohamad followed shortly afterwards.

This means that the Supreme Court must promulgate its decision by July 5, Wednesday.

A Court insider said some justices have already submitted their opinions, and that the drafts indicated a divided Court.

During oral arguments from

June 13 to 15, the petitioners asked the Court to void the martial law declaration because there was no sufficient factual basis to justify martial law. Information cited in the proclamation, they added, were "false, inaccurate and contrived."

They also alleged that a key element in act of rebellion—culpable purpose of removing allegiance from the Philippines and preventing the President and legislature from exercising their functions—was not present in the attack of the Maute terrorist group in Marawi City last May 23 that triggered martial law proclamation.

Solicitor General Jose Calida, for his part, defended the martial law declaration before the Court.

Calida argued that the attack of Maute group was not just an act of terror, but was a clear rebellion and actually part of a plot to establish an Islamic State in Mindanao.

He said that elements of rebellion—taking up arms against the government and culpable purpose of removing allegiance from the government—were present in the crisis that required the President to use his power of declaring martial law under the Constitution.

The chief state lawyer cited links between Maute and other rebel groups in Mindanao like

the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters and the Abu Sayyaf.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, martial law administrator, and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año, martial law implementor, presented confidential information to the justices to justify the need to declare martial law in closed-door session.

In its memorandum, the Office Of The Solicitor General listed 20 terrorist groups in Mindanao with similar ties with Islamic State—apart from the Maute Group—that have already launched attacks in Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Zamboanga and Davao and its main objective is to remove the whole Mindanao from its allegiance to the Philippine government.

Calida also said there were already 43 violent attacks by the terror cells consisting mostly of improvised explosive devices, harassments and kidnappings

"As the survival of the State hangs in the balance, I implore the Honorable Supreme Court to sustain the constitutionality of Proclamation No. 216, and allow the President to perform his constitutional mandate of protecting the people," he appealed. **Sandy Araneta, Rey E. Requejo, AFP**

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Pain in Brisbane

Horn stuns Pacman; retirement or rematch mulled

By ABAC CORDERO

BRISBANE – Australian challenger Jeff Horn turned “Sunday Bloody Sunday” into one of boxing’s greatest upsets as he shocked Filipino icon Manny Pacquiao to win the WBO

welterweight belt before over 50,000 fans at Suncorp Stadium here.

All three judges had Horn winning the bout, the biggest in Australian boxing history, 117-111, 115-113, 115-113. In the eyes of the judges, it was unanimous.

Pacquiao climbed the ring as the heavy favorite, and sought to score his first knockout win in nearly eight years. Instead, he took a loss, his seventh against 59 wins and two draws.

It was his fourth defeat in his last nine fights. And it’s one that should remain at the

back of his mind, and raise questions on whether or not it’s time to call it a day.

Unless there’s a change of plan, Pacquiao will fly home to General Santos City today.

Neither boxer went down, and while Pacquiao was rocked a few times by Horn’s

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uppercuts and big rights, it was Horn who seemed on the verge of going down in the ninth.

Pacquiao’s trainer, Freddie Roach, had told reporters here a few days ago that if Pacquiao won the fight but struggled, he may have to ask his favorite boxer if it’s time to step down.

Michael Koncz, ring adviser, said if Pacquiao failed to be impressive against Horn or was unable to score a knockout, they would have to talk about retirement.

Everything is now up in the air. Nothing is definite as of Sunday here in cold Brisbane although inside the ring, just moments after the bloody war, there were early

talks of a rematch.

It was stipulated in the contract that if Horn won, Pacquiao would get a rematch.

“Yeah, that’s fine,” said Horn, his voice filling the entire stadium that had never seen a crowd this big.

“Absolutely. No problem,” said Pacquiao.

After weighing in at 146, Pacquiao had planned to climb the ring no heavier than 156 while Horn, who was at 147 on the scales, looked like a middleweight during the fight.

Pacquiao had trouble dealing with Horn’s size, and landing the shots he wanted to land.

Horn stepped out of the ring at the Suncorp Stadium packed with

50,052 fans like he'd been in a bar brawl. But he smiled as he wore the belt over his right shoulder.

The former schoolteacher was cut at the corner of his right eye in the second round although it was not clear if a blow or an accidental clash of heads had caused it.

In the succeeding rounds, Horn traded heavy blows with Pacquiao, who himself bled profusely from cuts on both sides of the head, due to accidental headbutts in the sixth and eighth rounds.

In the closing rounds, it had become a bloody contest between the two fighters.

Horn graced the post-fight press conference with his right eye almost shut, and bruises around his white

Australian face.

The WBO belt sat in front of him and his trainer/manager as they fielded questions from the international press.

"It feels amazing, I feel tired but I feel like a winner," said the new world champion, a massive underdog against the eight-division world champion and senator from the Philippines.

"We wanted to upset his rhythm. I'm happy I won the fight," said Horn, now 17-0-1 with 11 knockouts.

"He was tough," said Pacquiao, who skipped the traditional post-fight press conference due for medical reasons, needing stitches on both cuts.

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Pain in Brisbane From Page 24

While Horn controlled the fight early on, Pacquiao, an aging superstar, bounced back in the second half, and had the Australian in deep trouble in the ninth round.

Pacquiao landed his best shots in that round but also missed

wildly as he went for the kill. After the bell, Horn went back to his corner looking like he was ready to quit.

But he said that was never part of the plan.

"No way," said Horn.

Horn, who had very few

people believing he could win the fight, started strong and threw his weight inside the ring against the same fighter who used to beat up bigger opponents.

It worked well for the 29-year-old Horn.

He's now a world champion.

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**MANILA BULLETIN**
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Abus leaving their stronghold in Sulu

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

INDANAN, Sulu — Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) members and their leaders have started to flee Sinuman Complex in Patikul, Sulu, the main stronghold of the ASG in the province, as military offensives led by the Joint Task Force Sulu (JTF Sulu) continued relentlessly. Brigadier General Cirilito Sobejana, JTF Sulu ► **14**

commander, said yesterday that military forces have gained considerable ground and continue to close in on the ASG stronghold in Sulu.

Sobejana said “there are about 400 of them,” citing experts’ estimates that there are 200 armed ASG members fighting the government and another 200 supporting them in the entire province.

Sobejana said his latest information is that the ASG fighters and some of their leaders were leaving the complex to avoid the military operations in the area. “We received information and we monitored that they are moving out of the complex,” he said.

He said the military in the province will continue to conduct operations against the ASG in the complex to flush out the ASG in the area and free the kidnapped victims they are still holding.

While the JTF Sulu commander said the Sinuman complex in Patikul remained an Abu Sayyaf stronghold, he considers the flight of its members and leaders an indication of losing popular support from the masses.

He said it indicated that the Abu Sayyaf fighters were running short of logistics and finances while some of their people are already weary and want to surrender to the government.

Military is winning

General Eduardo Año, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff, confirmed yesterday that the military is doing well in its fight against the Abu Sayyaf and even the Maute Group, despite strong resistance from the terrorist groups.

To date, 519 terrorists –178 Abu Sayyaf and 317 Maute-ISIS Group members – have been neutralized from January 1 until June 30, Año said.

Government troops also recovered a total of 548 firearms – a significant reduction of their strength and capabilities.

“We have prevented or minimize piracy and kidnappings. The desperation of the Maute-ASG to claim recognition as an ISIS state prompted them to stage the rebellion and occupy Marawi City,” Año said.

Año said these acts have derailed their objective to defeat them based on their timeline.

He said while the Marawi siege caused by Maute-ISIS is catastrophic,

painstaking and destructive, the AFP with its gallant soldiers will ensure to destroy the entire group in one decisive major battle.

“We will not be pressured nor bounded by timelines. I will not talk about deadlines. Our job as ordered by our Commander in Chief is to finish the Maute ISIS group and clear Marawi in order to pave for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi so that normalcy is restored at the soonest possible time with minimum loss of lives, both soldiers and civilians,” said the military chief.

“We will do this with highest dignity and code of conduct of the professional soldier, and respect for human rights for our country, for the people and for our soldier-heroes who ultimately gave their lives for this cause,” he added.

Islamic state?

Meanwhile, President Duterte has nothing against the establishment of an Islamic province in the country if it would promote “participatory democracy.”

The President, however, put his foot down with the caliphate planned by Islamic State-linked militants in Marawi City, saying he would never forgive and compromise with these “brutal and cruel” terrorists.

“Wala akong problema sa (I have no problem with an) Islamic state or province. I can understand it, because we are a mixed here and I would like it to happen,” the President said during the 50th anniversary rites of Davao del Sur last Saturday.

Duterte said when he was mayor of Davao City, he had designated deputy mayors to represent the different communities because it was “good to be a participatory democracy.”

But in the face of the security threat in Marawi, the President insisted: “I will never, never, never talk to the terrorists and there will never be forgiving there.”

While he is saddened by the death and destruction from the fighting in Marawi, the President said the war would continue “until (the) last terrorist is taken out.”

“Hindi talaga ako papayag (I will not allow it) because it is a brutal and cruel organization. And to think that what will happen to us if we allow them to overwhelm,” he said. (With a report from Genalyn D. Kabling)

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ASG slowly leaving stronghold in Sulu

By **NONOE E. LACSON**

PASIL, Indanan, Sulu – Members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and their leaders have reportedly started to flee Sinuman Complex in Patikul, Sulu, the main stronghold of the ASG in the province as Joint Task Force Sulu (JTF-Sulu) went a notch higher in their attacks.

Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, Commander of the Joint Task Force Sulu yesterday said as of their estimate, there are about 400 members including their supporters in the entire Sulu province and that half of them or about 200 are armed and fighting the government.

Despite the huge number, Sobejana said they are now constantly crumbling and it will just be a matter of time before they get to exterminate the group in the area.

Sobejana however declined to set any timetable when to complete the military operations against the ASG in the province even though President Rodrigo Duterte initially

wanted it to be completed in six months' time.

"Actually it's very hard for us to set a timetable when to complete the operations against the ASG in the province. But the president wanted it to complete in six months. But we in the ground are having difficulty to comply because of the terrain and area is so wide," Sobejana explained.

Meantime, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff General Eduardo Ano Sunday said that the military is doing well in its fight against terror groups specially the Abu Sayyaf and Maute Group despite strong resistance from them.

In a statement, Ano said to date 519 terrorists (including 178 Abu Sayyaf and 317 Maute-Isis Group members, have been neutralized from January 1 until June 30, 2017.

Government troops also recovered a total of 548 firearms – a significant reduction of their strength and capabilities.

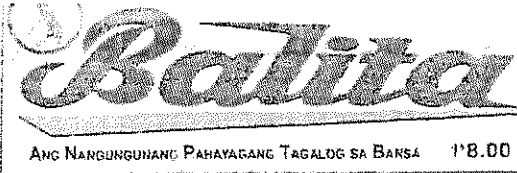
"We have prevented or minimize piracy and kidnappings. The desperation of the Maute-ASG to claim recognition as an ISIS state prompted them to stage the rebellion and occupy Marawi City," Ano said.

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He said while the Marawi siege caused by Maute-ISIS is catastrophic, painstaking and destructive, the AFP with its gallant soldiers will ensure to destroy the entire group in one decisive major battle.

"We will not be pressured nor bounded by timelines. I will not talk about deadlines. Our job as ordered by our Commander in Chief is to finish the Maute ISIS group and clear Marawi in order to pave for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi so that normalcy is restored at the soonest possible time with minimum loss of lives, both soldiers and civilians," Ano said. **(With a report from Francis T. Wakefield)**

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Abu Sayyaf umiiskyerda na sa Sulu

PASIL, Indanan, Sulu – Napaulat na nagsimula nang lisanin ng mga leader at miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) ang Sinuman Complex sa Patikul, Sulu, ang pangunahing teritoryo ng grupo sa lalawigan, kasunod ng pinaigting pang opensiba ng Joint Task Force Sulu (JTF-Sulu) laban sa mga bandido.

Sinabi kahapon ni Brig. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, commander ng JTF-Sulu, na nakatanggap sila ng mga report na nagsisimula nang lisanin ng Abu Sayyaf ang Sinuman Complex sa Patikul. Aniya, tinatayang nasa 400

pa ang mga miyembro ng Abu Sayyaf sa lugar, kabilang ang mga tagasuporta ng mga bandido sa buong Sulu, at kalahati ng nasabing bilang ang armado at aktibong nakikipagbakbakan sa militar.

“We received information and we monitored that they are moving out of the complex,” ani Sobejana.

Kumpiyansa naman si Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff General Eduardo Año na nasa tamang landas ang militar sa laban nito kontra sa mga teroristang grupo ng Abu Sayyaf at Maute Group.

Ayon kay Año, nasa 519 na terorista na ang na-neutralize ng gobyerno simula noong Enero 1 hanggang Hunyo 30 ngayong taon – 178 sa Abu Sayyaf at 317 sa Maute.

Nakasamsam din ang gobyerno ng may kabuuang 548 armas.

“We have prevented or minimize piracy and kidnappings. The desperation of the Maute-ASG to claim recognition as an ISIS state prompted them to stage the rebellion and occupy Marawi City,” sabi ni Año.

**Nonoy E. Lacson
at Francis T. Wakefield**

3 July 2017

The Manila Times

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Rebel violence hits Negros

BY EUGENE Y. ADIONG

BACOLOD CITY: A series of armed attacks blamed on the communist New People's Army (NPA) hit Negros Occidental in the past few weeks.

The latest victim was Biboy Gayagas, village captain of Barangay Bacong, Bago City, whose game fowl farm was raided by an undetermined number of armed men at 8 a.m. on Saturday.

Senior Insp. Joefer Cabura, Bago City police chief, said Gayagas was shot in the shoulders and

feet and later brought to a private hospital in Bacolod City.

Responding police recovered empty shells of a carbine rifle.

Cabura said Gayagas had received several threats in the past but he refused to disclose details.

City police are running after the suspects

The Bago City incident came two days after armed clashes between government forces and the communist guerrillas ensued in Sitio Agpapatao, Barangay Sandayao, Guihulngan City in Negros Oriental.

Capt. Eduardo Precioso, 303rd Infantry Brigade spokesman, said the encounters took place last Friday night after soldiers of the 79th Infantry Battalion (IB) responded to an information relayed to them by residents in the area about the presence of about 30 rebels, who were recruiting new members.

Precioso added that the 79th IB initially recovered an M14 assault

rifle with ammunition, war materiel and subversive documents at the clash site as they pressed their pursuit operations against the fleeing rebels.

The NPA earlier admitted to killing a sugar planter and his driver in Calatrava town, the burning of an abandoned detachment in Escalante City and the killing of a former Army soldier in Canlaon City in Negros Oriental.

The rebel army is the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, which has been waging a 'people's war' for nearly half a century.

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Panay, Negros folk urged: Shun NPA

By TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY — The Army's 3rd Infantry Division (3ID) is urging rural folk in Panay and Negros Islands to stop supporting the communist New People's Army (NPA).

"Stop believing and supporting the NPA," Major Gen. Jon Aying, 3ID chief, said.

Aying made appeal after the rebel group launched attacks in Panay and Negros in the last two weeks.

On June 18, a truckload of NPA

fighters took over a police station in Maasin town, Iloilo province, handcuffing the officers on duty and taking away their weapons.

Stung by the daylight raid, police officials chided Maasin residents for not warning the station by phone or text message about the approaching rebels. The officials also insinuated that some of the residents may be NPA sympathizers.

The NPA also took responsibility for the June 22 killing of a businessman and a driver in Calatrava, Negros Occidental, for reportedly

refusing to pay the "revolutionary tax" demanded by the rebels.

On June 30, troops from the Army's 79th Infantry Battalion clashed with NPA guerrillas in Sandayao village, Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental, who were allegedly trying to recruit new members.

Aying said the NPA wants to prove it is still a potent force despite the misunderstandings between its leadership and the National Democratic Front (NDF) that is negotiating peace with the Duterte administration.

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Pahina. 2

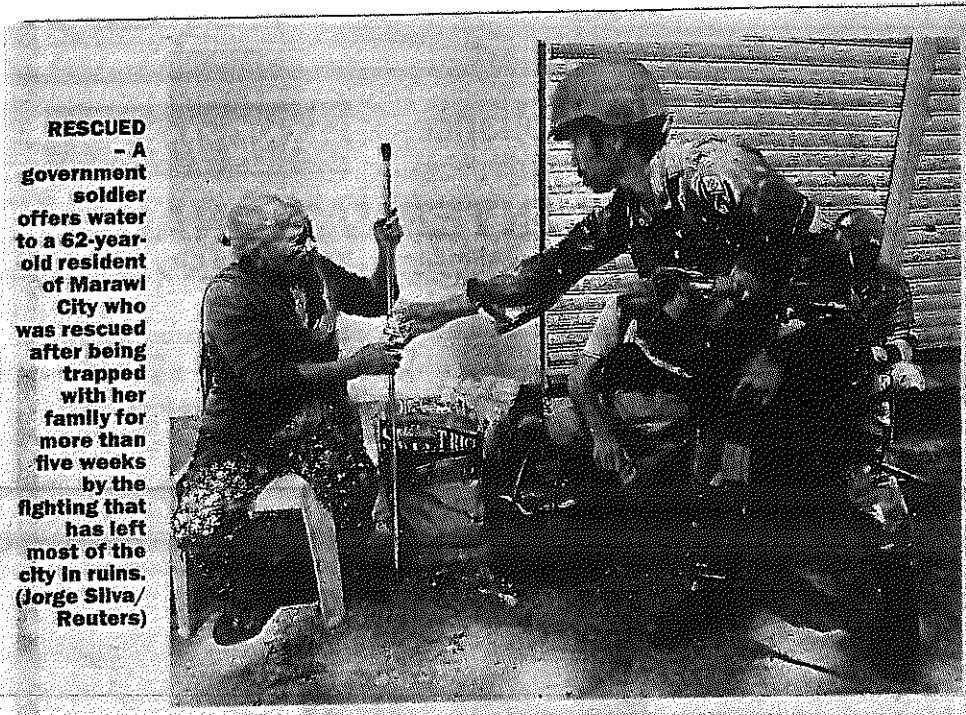


Inayos ng nurse ang dextrose ng isa sa mga sundalo na nanood sa isang special viewing ng Pacquiao-Horn fight kahapon. Ang mga sugatang sundalo na lumaban sa Marawi Kontra Maute ay kasalukuyang ginagamot sa Army hospital sa Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City. (Edd Gumban)

3 July 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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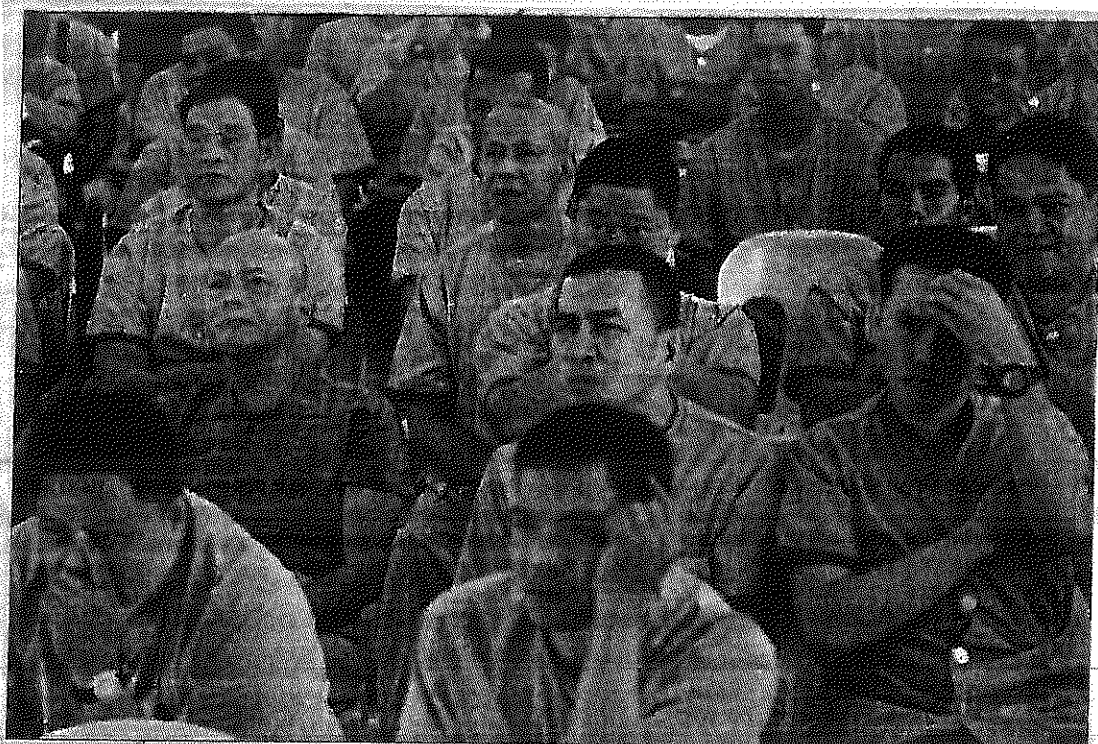


RESCUED
- A government soldier offers water to a 62-year-old resident of Marawi City who was rescued after being trapped with her family for more than five weeks by the fighting that has left most of the city in ruins. (Jorge Silva/Reuters)

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Soldiers wounded in the Marawi siege watch a special viewing of the Pacquiao-Horn bout at the Army Hospital in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City yesterday.

EDD GUMBAN

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The Manila Times

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High Court to rule martial law legal

BY JOMAR CANLAS

THE Supreme Court (SC) is poised to dismiss all petitions questioning the validity of the declaration of martial law in Mindanao as majority of the magistrates believe that Proclamation 216 is constitutional, sources said.

Unimpeachable sources of *The Manila Times* inside the high court said an overwhelming majority of the justices are set to affirm the legality of Proclamation

216 issued by President Rodrigo Duterte on May 23, 2017. The proclamation also suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus in the whole of Mindanao.

Members of the high court will cast their votes during an en banc session on July 4, Tuesday.

Court insiders who asked not to be identified said Associate Justice Mariano del Castillo had circulated a well-crafted

draft decision that cleared Duterte from charges that he abused his discretion when he signed the proclamation.

EXCLUSIVE

One source said that in his 85-page draft decision, Del Castillo said the court "finds sufficient factual basis" for the declaration of martial law in Mindanao.

Several justices have manifested their agreement with Del Castillo's draft

Legal A2

ponencia, while others have submitted their separate concurring and dissenting opinions, among them Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, Justices Antonio Carpio, Diosdado Peralta, Estela Perlas-Bernabe, Bienvenido Reyes and Marvic Leonen.

The source said that 10 to 14 justices are likely to vote to declare martial law legal and constitutional. The only issue of contention is on territorial coverage because some of the magistrates believe that martial rule should be limited in several areas.

So far, only one magistrate had issued a dissenting opinion to the draft decision of Del Castillo.

One of those who want martial law confined to Lanao del Sur and some areas near Marawi City, which was attacked by the Maute Group.

Enough safeguards

In his draft decision, Del Castillo said the 1987 Constitution has enough safeguards to protect the people from possible martial law abuses.

It added that while the high court has the judicial power to review the sufficiency of the factual basis for the declaration of martial law or the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, such power does not extend to the calibration of the President's decision in a given situation.

Thus, the draft decision declared that the high tribunal cannot encroach on the powers of the executive and the legislative whether to revoke or extend the proclamation of martial law.

Some lawmakers led by Rep. Edcel Lagman, Tomasito Villarin, Gary Alejano, Emmanuel Billones and Teddy Brawner Baguilat, Jr. have questioned the martial law declaration, claiming that there was no invasion or rebellion endangering public safety to justify Proclamation 216.

But Del Castillo said the unverified news articles submitted by the

petitioners do not constitute as evidence. In his draft decision, the magistrate said only the President has the vital intelligence and classified information that cloaks him with the power to decide whether to impose martial rule or not.

Another consolidated petition filed by activists and lawmakers representing ACT party-list, Gabriela Women's party-list and Kabataan party-list, and four female Marawi City residents is pending at the SC.

The two petitions asking the court to compel the House of Representatives and Senate to hold a joint session and scrutinized martial law will not be included in Tuesday's voting since the issues are different.

The petitions were filed by former Senator Rene Saguisag, former Commission on Elections chairman Christian Monsod, former Commission on Human Rights chairperson Loretta Ann Rosales, former Philippine Health Insurance Corp. president Alexander Padilla, lawyer Rene Gorospe and Sen. Leila de Lima.

Duterte has threatened to jail critics of martial law.

The President had said that he would ignore the findings of the court, which has constitutional oversight, vowing only to listen to recommendations from the armed forces.

"It's not dependent on the whim of the Supreme Court. Should I believe them? When I see the situation is still chaotic and you ask me to lift it? I will arrest you and put you behind bars," Duterte said in a speech before local officials on Saturday.

"We can talk of anything else and make compromises maybe but not when the interest of my country is at stake," he added.

Government forces continue to battle Maute group terrorists in Marawi. Aerial bombardment and ferocious street-to-street combat has left some 400 people dead and forced nearly 400,000 people to flee their homes. **WITH AFP**

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President threatens to jail martial law critics

By **GENALYN D. KABILING**

Martial law critics could land in jail if they seek its lifting even before the security threat has been nipped in the bud, President

Duterte warned last weekend.

The President made clear that the martial law would be lifted only if the military and the police have decided the country is safe from terror threats.

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President threatens to...

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"I will ask the military and the police, Is this safe now?" And when the Chief of Staff pati 'yung PNP would say, 'Everybody would be safe and it's okay now,' I-lift ko (I will lift it)" he said during the 50th anniversary celebration of Davao del Sur last Saturday.

"Otherwise, it's not dependent on the whim na punta kang Supreme Court, naniwala kaya ako? Tingin ko magulo pa pa-lift mo? Huhulihin kita, ipasok na tuloy dita sa kulungan (if you go to the Supreme Court. Should I believe them? If I think the situation is still chaotic and you ask me to lift it? I will arrest you and put you behind bars)," he said.

Duterte, who placed Mindanao under martial law for 60 days last May 23 to quell lawless violence and rebellion, warned his critics not to put the nation at risk.

"We can talk of anything else and make compromises maybe, but not when the

interest of my country is at stake. Hindi talaga 'yan (That can't be). That is not negotiable," he said.

De Lima cites 'human rights calamity'

Meanwhile, detained Senator Leila de Lima expressed dismay at how many Filipinos remain in a state of denial on the "human rights calamity" happening around the country under the Duterte administration.

"A human rights calamity! That's how the Human Rights Watch assessed Duterte's first year in office," De Lima said in her latest handwritten note.

"So true! How else would an impartial, discerning mind call this unprecedented reign of bloodbath in a land of mostly Catholic, God-fearing and compassionate people," she pointed out.

In a statement last week, the Human Rights Watch said Duterte "unleashed a

human rights calamity" in his first term in office.

The HRW also called the President a "boisterous instigator of an unlawful killing campaign" despite his promise to protect and uphold human rights.

The international human rights body, likewise, slammed Duterte for retaliating against those critical of his administration's brutal campaign against illegal drugs.

De Lima noted that many international observers take serious note of, and are appalled by, the escalating number of victims of summary executions, mostly poor and defenseless, without even factoring in yet the unrecorded, hence, unaccounted incidents of killing, in this regime's grotesque version of social cleansing.

"Quite a number of organizations worldwide has denounced the state of affairs in our country and called for accountability. The United Nations (UN) top human rights official has made an urgent plea for a UN-led inquiry," she recalled. (With a report from Hannah L. Torreagoza)

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Rody warns ML critics of jail time

President Duterte has threatened to jail critics of Proclamation 216 that imposed martial law on Mindanao as a result of the Islamic State (IS)-inspired siege of Marawi City, days before the Supreme Court (SC) is set to rule on its legality this week.

Duterte declared military rule across Mindanao in late May to quell what he said was a fast-growing threat from the Islamic State (IS) whose principles are being carried out by homegrown bandits led by the Maute group.

Mr. Duterte insisted he would ignore the findings of the SC, which has constitutional oversight, vowing only to listen to recommendations from the Armed Forces.

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"It's not dependent on the whim of the Supreme Court. Should I believe them? When I see the situation is still chaotic and you ask me to lift it? I will arrest you and put you behind bars," Duterte said in a speech before Davao del Sur officials late Saturday.

"We can talk of anything else and make compromises maybe but not when the interest of my country is at stake," he added.

Government forces are continuing to battle militants occupying Marawi City, with aerial bombardment and ferocious street-to-street combat that has left some 400 people dead and forced nearly 400,000 people in the wider area to flee their homes.

Mr. Duterte has faced a backlash from opposition lawmakers, who last month asked the SC to reject the declaration of martial law, which they have slammed as unconstitutional.

The charter allows the Supreme Court to review the factual basis for proclaiming martial law, which is limited to an initial period of 60 days. If a president decides to extend martial law, congress can review and revoke it.

Rody, nonetheless, said if there is anybody in the world that's badly hurt about imposing martial law to address the Marawi siege, it would be himself.

In a speech late Saturday night in Digos City, the President reiterated that he feels so bad each night and for every field update in the war-torn Islamic capital city of Lanao del Sur for the past 40 days.

The mere fact that he declared martial law on Mindanao has stayed

on his consciousness, he said.

"It really disturbs me because I declared martial law and I was the one who ordered them to go there to fight and to die. It has a weight in my conscience. It is not really a guilt feeling, but it is almost mine," Mr. Duterte said.

"It feels so heavy to even think about for me because I was the one who ordered them to go there and die," he added.

Rody prays for war's end

The President also said that he fervently keeps on knocking on heaven's doors to end the crisis in Marawi City which has affected thousands of civilians.

"I am always praying that this war will end as fast as it can ever because I do not like people dying," Mr. Duterte said.

"If only you have seen their dreadful situation, especially, the Maranaos, you would really cry and begin praying that this war should stop," he added.

Based on the most recent updates, civilians rescued in Marawi were at 1,713. Terrorists killed, meanwhile, are at 317 while government casualties were 82.

"I will never, never, never talk to the terrorists. And there will never be forgiving there. And that war in Marawi will continue until the last terrorist is taken out," Duterte said in his speech to mark the 50th year of the province.

"I will never agree because it is a brutal and cruel organization, think of what will happen to us if we allow them (IS groups) to overwhelm," the President added.

"I want it (war) done immediately," Duterte said. But he reiterated

previous

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pronouncements that the terrorists had been stockpiling firearms and ammunition allegedly for years.

"We never realized the magnitude of their preparation for their explosives, that they had positioned themselves before the troops got in," he added.

He said he has been telling troops he is "very sorry... but I hope you'd understand that I have this Constitutional duty," that he would be jailed if he does not do his work "and more in shame, because para akong nag-talaw (I'd look like a coward)

"I had to do it because if not, we would have lost Marawi in a matter of days and they would have bragged that they already have an Islamic state," he said.

AFP noted improved peace, order

The country's security situation had greatly improved after President Duterte marked his first year in office, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said.

"The President has exhibited strong political will and directly dealt with the existing threats we are facing. The KFRG (Kidnapping for Ransom Group) Abu Sayyaf Group was a headache that caused national embarrassment with their rampant kidnapping sprees in the high seas and may soon be rendered insignificant because of the decisive military action taken to deal with it," he added.

Padilla was referring to the relentless offensive against the ASG, initiated by AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año shortly after his assumption of command of the 125,000-strong military last

December.

As of June 29, military units in the Western Mindanao has so far neutralized 94 members of the ASG, captured 66 others and caused the surrender of 98 along with the recovery of 148 high-powered weapons.

Operations against the bandits ASG concentrated mainly on the Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

"Under the Duterte Administration, the security situation in the country has been a serious concern that is decisively addressed and has greatly improved," Padilla added.

On the terrorist groups, and among them the Maute Group who has staged attacks in Marawi, the government has confronted it straight and is now being addressed with strong military and police action, he pointed out.

As of this posting, Maute Group casualties has been placed at 303 with 82 government troops and police officers killed along with 44 civilians.

Number of Maute Group weapons captured are placed at 382 and number of civilians rescued from the bandits now at 1,713.

Fighting there started when military and police units tried to arrest Abu Sayyaf leader and ISIS "Emir" in Southeast Asia last May 23.

Padilla also lauded the President for the current peace initiatives with various armed groups as this a significant contributory factor that has supported the security of the country.

"External defense concerns as well have been addressed in a

creative way and resulted to lesser tensions in critical areas," he added.

And on the AFP Modernization, Padilla pointed out that the Duterte Administration has strongly made its position that it will support all the requirements of the military and its capability upgrade program.

"The Commander-in-Chief has manifested his support and proven it many times over," he added.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana earlier said the AFP Modernization Program remains a priority of Mr. Duterte.

This is because the program jibes with the Duterte Administration's plan of having a credible deterrence to secure Philippine territory especially the maritime ones.

And while some projects may be fast-tracked to address criminality, terrorism, and insurgency threats in the southern Philippines, Lorenzana said they will follow the plans laid for the AFP Modernization Program.

"The 15-year modernization program of the AFP will continue as scheduled," Lorenzana stressed.

Some of the equipment acquired in this period include the three Hamilton-class cutters, the latest of which is the BRP Andres Bonifacio (FF-17) who arrived last Dec. 9, six multi-purpose assault craft, 114 armored personnel carriers, three brand-new C-295 medium lift aircraft, three C-130 heavy transports, 12 FA-50PH light-interim fighter aircraft, five utility versions of the AgustaWestland AW-109 helicopters, eight of its attack versions, five landing craft heavies, three multi-purpose attack craft,

and two strategic sealift vessels to name a few.

Plans to acquire modern weapons from other countries like Russia and the People's Republic of China are now in the works as Department of National Defense (DND) officials are coordinating with their counterparts to see what types of equipment can be sourced from these two countries.

To highlight this, last June 28, the People's Republic of China has formally donated 3,000 assault rifles and 90 sniper rifles along with 5.8 millions rounds of ammunition for the above-mentioned weapons.

This is part of the \$14 million weapons grant the Chinese have pledged to the Philippines shortly after the Chief Executive's state visit to China last year.

This includes fast boats, unmanned aerial vehicles, "flexible" rifles which can shoot around corners, sniper rifles and automatic bomb disposal equipment.

Also, defense cooperation between the Philippines and Russia got a bit tighter after defense officials of the two nations signed a Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding on Defense Cooperation last May.

The latter cover the fields of military education, medicine, sports and culture because they are advanced on that, exchange on peacekeeping activities, and counter-terrorism.

"Overall and in these two areas, the President has delivered on his promise and with more improvements to be expected in the remaining five years," Padilla said. **Ted Tuvera, AFP, PNA**

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Año: No more deadline for defeating terror groups

BY VICTOR REYES

THE military is no longer setting a new deadline to defeat the Abu Sayyaf, the Maute, and other terrorist groups after failing to meet a self-imposed June 30 deadline.

“We will not be pressured nor bound by timelines. I will not talk about deadlines,” said AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año who, at the start of the year, announced a six-month deadline for the military to defeat the Abu Sayyaf, the Maute, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, and other terrorist groups.

Nevertheless, Año said the AFP did “well” in the campaign against these groups in the past six months. He said 519 terrorists have been killed or captured, or have surrendered. Of the 519 killed, 178 were Abu Sayyaf members and 317 were from the Maute Group which attacked Marawi City in late May.

Año said the Marawi siege “derailed our objective to defeat them based on our timeline.”

Pressed if these groups can be defeated during his term as Armed Forces chief, Año said it is hard to tell. Año is reaching the mandatory retirement age of 56 in October this year.

“Nothing is constant in the battle field. There are variables and you have to eliminate these variables to ensure the result,” said Año who was named interior secretary by President Duterte last May before the Marawi attack happened.

Capt. Jo-ann Petinglay, spokesman of the AFP’s Western Mindanao Command, said the Abu Sayyaf is “already incapable of instilling terror on the communities like they use to.”

The Abu Sayyaf, whose strength was pegged at about 300 to 400 men at the end of 2016, is still holding nearly 30 kidnap victims, mostly foreigners, in the provinces of Sulu and Basilan.

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'Marawi siege derailed deadline to defeat terror groups'

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN

The fighting in Marawi City derailed the goal of the military to defeat the Abu Sayyaf and other terror groups by June 30.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) admitted the fighting in Marawi had upset its timetable in the campaign against terrorism.

However, the AFP said the battle will be won and significant accomplishments during the last six months showed it is on the right track in the fight against terror groups.

"We have neutralized 519 terrorists (including 178 Abu Sayyaf and 317 Maute) since Jan. 1 until June 30, 2017," AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año said.

Año said the AFP also recovered a total of 548 firearms, which reflects a significant reduction of the enemy's strength and capabilities, and prevented or minimized piracy and kidnappings.

"The desperation of Maute-ASG to claim recognition as an ISIS state prompted them to stage the rebellion and occupy Marawi City. These acts have derailed our objective to defeat them based on our timeline," Año said.

Año though emphasized that while the Marawi siege is catastrophic, painstaking and destructive, the AFP will prevail in the end.

He said the military would not be pressured nor bound by timelines or deadlines, adding President Duterte has given orders to finish off the Maute group and clear Marawi of terrorists to pave the way for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the war-torn city.

"We will do this with highest dignity and code of conduct of the professional soldier; and respect to human rights for our country, for the people and for our soldier heroes who ultimately gave their lives for this cause," Año assured.

– With Ben Serrano

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Maute-infested area getting smaller: AFP

BY VICTOR REYES

THE area being held by Maute Group members in Marawi City is now down to one to two square kilometers, Armed Forces chief Gen. Eduardo Año said yesterday.

Año, who went to the conflict area a few days ago to oversee the conduct of clearing operations, described the area as full of buildings occupied by around 120 to 130 Maute members. He said the area covers four barangays in the city.

He also disclosed that 10 Maute snipers were killed on Saturday as government troops continue efforts to flush out the terrorist group that attacked the city on May 23. The attack prompted President Duterte to declare martial law in the entire Mindanao.

"In terms of size, more or less it's be-

tween one to two square kilometers. But they are full of armed men, positioned in the buildings... their area is getting smaller," said Año.

He also said government forces "will ensure to destroy the entire group in one decisive major battle."

Last week, President Duterte said he sees the armed conflict ending in "a matter of days."

Año agreed but said "we cannot impose a timeline or deadline."

"The fighting there is building to building, house to house, floor to floor. How can you rush given the nature of the fight?" he added.

Año said soldiers could not afford to skip a building in the clearing operations, adding a terrorist could be hiding there and eventually kill civilians and soldiers.

"We have to secure the area building by building and we will do that no matter how long will it take. We are going to do this to ensure that when we declare it (city) as cleared, no one will be killed by sniper fire or IED (explosion) or arson by the Maute," said Año.

Año said the military can finish the job in just two days if it is not going to follow the law and just drop bombs indiscriminately. "But we do not want to do that," he said.

Military officials have earlier said the complexity of the combat environment is delaying the accomplishment of their mission, considering the presence of civilian hostages, trapped civilians, and bombs planted by the Maute.

Año also said the 317 Maute members

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MAUTE

have been killed. Earlier, military figures said the fighting has also resulted in the death of 82 soldiers and policemen and 44 civilians.

Duterte on Saturday night threatened to jail those criticizing his martial law declaration and those who would insist on lifting it while Marawi remains under terror threat.

During the 50th Davao del Sur Day held in Digos City, he reiter-

ated he would lift martial law only if the military and police would tell him it is already safe, that he had no choice but to impose martial law because the situation was critical, and that terrorism has no ideology or any redeeming factor.

The Supreme Court is set to resolve on Tuesday petitions challenging the legality of the declaration of martial law.

A highly-placed source said the three petitions against the declaration is one of the cases that would

be heard by the magistrates during their en banc session.

The petitions were filed by opposition lawmakers led by Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, a group of women from Marawi City, and indigenous peoples groups.

The SC also has yet to resolve two petitions asking the high court to compel the Senate and the House of Representatives to convene jointly and deliberate on the martial law declaration. — *With Jocelyn Montemayor and Ashzel Hachero*

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10 snipers slain, 130 more to go – AFP

By Mario J. Mallari

Ten terrorist snipers were killed last Saturday as government security forces continued to advance on the positions of the Islamic State (IS)-inspired terrorists still putting up pockets of resistance in Marawi City but the military estimates up to 130 snipers still remain to be purged.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff Gen. Eduardo Año said that while the IS-inspired terrorists are now holed up in an estimated one to two square kilometer area in Marawi City, government troops are not leaving any stone unturned in the clearing operations.

As of Saturday, a total of 317 terrorists had been killed in Marawi City since the siege started last May 23.

On the other hand, 44 civilians and 82 government troops also died in the conflict that also displaced more than 300,000 individuals.

Año stressed that the primordial consideration in the ongoing clearing operations is the safety of civilians still trapped in the area and those being held as hostages.

"Yesterday (Saturday) we killed 10 enemy snipers...every day they are reduced but at the cost of very rigorous...effort that we are doing (to ensure) the safety of the civilians and minimizing destruction of properties," said Año.

Año cited the "extra-ordinary bravery" of the soldiers now fighting in Marawi City.

"The gallantry of our soldiers, their bravery is extra ordinary. I cannot compare it with any soldier in the world," said Año. *Turn to page 2*

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120 more Maute snipers

The AFP chief estimated that the Maute-IS terrorists still have around 120 to 130 snipers putting up pockets of resistance in Marawi City.

Año compared the ongoing military operations in Marawi City to the Mosul operation of the Allied Forces against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant which started in 2014 and clearing efforts are still ongoing.

"The battle here (in Marawi) is building by building, house to house, floor to floor, you cannot really hasten it. You cannot leave any building with terrorists, because they will kill civilians and soldiers," said Año.

"So we secure building by building, and we will do that no matter, or how long will it take so that we will be sure that when we say it's cleared, there will be no more civilian fatalities because of the sniper fires, IED

(improvised explosive device) or blaze put up by the Maute," he added.

The AFP chief said that four barangays in Marawi City are still considered problematic areas and now the focused of the ongoing military operations.

"In terms of size more or less between one to two square kilometers...it's getting smaller," said Año.

Joint, Indon-RP patrol starts

Meanwhile, the Philippines and Indonesia will launch on Tuesday the annual combined naval patrols in Davao City as part of the efforts of the two countries to combat terrorism and other maritime issues in southern Philippines.

A formal ceremony is scheduled at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday at the Naval Station Felix Apolinario in Panacan, Davao City.

The Indonesian delegates are expected to arrive today at around 8:30 a.m. at Easa Wharf, Davao City and they will be accorded with

an arrival ceremony by the Naval Forces Eastern Mindanao.

The coordinated patrol will be formally kicking off with a send off ceremony on July 6 at around 8:30 a.m. at Sasa Wharf Davao City.

"The activity is intended to strengthen the security of the Davao Gulf and the common boundary of the two countries in the southern part of the Philippine Archipelago particularly along the Celebes Sea and enhance the interoperability of the two countries in maritime patrol," said Maj. Ezra Balagtey, spokesman of Eastern Mindanao Command.

A medical mission will be conducted by military medical personnel aboard the patrolling vessels in a stopover at Balut Island, Sarangani, Davao Occidental on July 7, 2017 with the participation of the local government unit of the municipality.

The coordinated patrol is expected to culminate on July 12, 2017 in a closing ceremony at Manado, Indonesia.

Hot meals for refugees

Department of Education (DepEd) officials in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) said Muslim school children displaced by armed hostilities in Marawi City are getting hot meals everyday for more than a week now.

Dr. John Magno, Department of Education (DepEd-ARMM) regional secretary, said the meals are courtesy of local and foreign benefactors, including a Christian humanitarian group.

"This feeding project is a common initiative of the Gawad Kalinga, the World Food Programme and DepEd-ARMM," Magno said.

Magno said the initiative was meant to keep war-weary children healthy while they continue studies amid bombings and hostilities back home. The DepEd has put up Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) in public school grounds outside Marawi City.

Magno identified the good Samaritans as the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Vision, an international Christian child welfare and protection organization.

The organizations provide for the daily needs of internally displaced children now housed in several TLS in Iligan City and the towns surrounding the embattled Marawi City.

Magno said the regional government is thankful to the local and foreign benefactors for the food aid to distress children who hurriedly fled with their parents when local terrorists allied with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria attacked the city.

As fighting continues and its end invisible at this time, education officials have designed plans so as not to interrupt public school children's schooling.

Magno eyes the expansion of the feeding program to cover other pupils in other evacuation centers in Lanao del Sur to accommodate

more children.

Ana Zenaida Unte, assistant superintendent of public schools in Marawi City, said the unaccounted public school teachers since the May 23 conflict have been located and reported to their respective stations. The Marawi City schools division has 1,426 teachers.

Unte lauded the teachers, who are also internally displaced persons whose houses were also damaged by the conflict, for reporting for work despite the difficulties and security concerns.

"The dedication of our teachers is no doubt remain the same amid difficulties, they still care for their respective pupils," Unte said.

Magno also announced that the Philippine Public School Teachers Association (PPSTA) has approved a P30,000 cash loan for teachers in Marawi City.

The amount will surely help the beleaguered teachers make both ends meet while also performing their duties.

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Troops kill 10 Maute snipers

By Francisco Tuyay

AT LEAST 10 terrorist snipers were killed as government forces pushed hard against enemy lines, capturing fortified militant positions during the resumption of search and destroy operations against the terrorists still holed up in Marawi City.

Armed Forces chief of staff, Gen. Eduardo Año said the 10 snipers were killed as hundreds of elite troops engaged the terrorist group in its last bastion covering four villages outside of Marawi City the other day.

Año said the slaying of the snipers was the result of painstaking day-to-day operations to decimate the terrorists while eliminating collateral damage to the civilian populace and property.

"We are eliminating them and everyday they are being reduced," Año said. *Next page*

By government count, the latest deaths bring to 317 the number of terrorists killed in 39 days of fighting in Marawi City.

Año said the latest fighting erupted within the two square kilometer portion covering four villages in Marawi City where the terrorists are still holed up in concrete structures they occupied following the attack in May 23.

At present, Año said troops are engaging the enemy in buildings, going from house to house, floor to floor, making it difficult to predict when the terrorists will be wiped out.

"We have to secure all the buildings and we will do that no matter or how long in order to protect the civilians and prevent possible harm to the soldiers," Año said.

He expressed optimism that "it's just matter of days" before the last terrorist falls.

Año estimated the remaining Maute terrorists inside Marawi City fighting government forces at between 120 to 130 militants.

He said the terrorist position is getting smaller and smaller every day.

In Cotabato City, the military advised Maranaos who have "Maute" or "Romato" as a family name to go to the authorities to get clearance that certifies they are not involved in terroristic activities.

The call was aired by Army Col. Jesus Sarsagat, commander of the 603rd Infantry Brigade, following the arrest of nine persons, four of whom have Maute for a family name on Friday morning. Two were minors.

Sarsagat the Maranaos came to Cotabato City from Marugong Lanao del Sur to have an elder family member see doctor. **With PNA**

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Retaking Marawi: Snipers, mortars, bombs

Sprawled on the boarded-up balcony of a two-story house, the barrel of his rifle poked into a hole cut in the wood, an Army sniper calls for quiet before taking his shot.

"Firing," he says evenly, be-

fore the .50 caliber shot rings out, sending tremors through the house. He was firing at a home less than a kilometer away, believed to be a stronghold of Islamist Maute group of militants who have been

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holed up in Marawi City for over five weeks.

A spotter sat next to him, with his scope set into another hole. The two spoke quietly to each other as the sniper took three more shots across the Agus River into the militant-held commercial district of Marawi, now a battleground strewn with debris from ruined buildings.

Scores of bodies are rotting in the area, and the stench mixes with the smell of gunpowder.

Thousands of soldiers are battling to retake Marawi, where gunmen of the Maute group loyal to Islamic State (IS) launched a lightning strike on May 23.

Southern Philippines has been marred for decades by insurgency and banditry. But the intensity of the battle in Marawi and the presence of foreign fighters from Indonesia, Malaysia, Yemen and Chechnya fighting alongside local militants had raised concerns that the region may be becoming a Southeast Asian hub for IS as it loses ground in Iraq and Syria.

As troops poured in to contain the siege, few were expecting a slow, difficult and unfamiliar urban war.

"We are used to insurgencies... but a deployment of this magnitude, this kind of conflict is a challenge for our troops," said Lt Col Christopher Tampus, one of the officers commanding ground operations in Marawi.

He said progress in clearing the city has been hindered by militant fire and booby traps like gas tanks rigged with grenades.

Reduced to rubble

After weeks of military airstrikes and shelling, Marawi, a lakeside city of around 200,000 is now a ghost town, the center of which has been reduced to charred rubble and hollow structures. Build-

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ings in the military-controlled areas of the city are still standing but deserted after residents fled.

Authorities estimate around 100 to 120 fighters, some of them as young as 16 years, remain holed up in the commercial district of the city, down from around 500 at the beginning of the siege.

The militants are holding around 100 hostages, according to the military, who have been forced to act as human shields, take up arms or become sex slaves.

Military aircraft drop bombs on the militant zone almost every day. From the outskirts of the city, mortar teams take aim at what they call "ground zero," the heart of the conflict.

"Mortars are designed to target people and smaller areas than the airstrikes," said mortar specialist Sgt. Jeffery Baybayan, as he jotted down coordinates that come crackling over a radio from an observer closer to the conflict area.

"Hitting targets accurately can be difficult and we're expending rounds without hitting targets. We are concerned about our own troops that are very close to the enemy area," he added, as the mortars exploded in the city, sending up plumes of thick black smoke.

Surrender or die

During the day's battle, Tampus received reports that three civilians, trapped for weeks near the fighting, were trying to escape.

Several soldiers responded to help rescue them - moving to the area in two lines along the sides of streets to avoid sniper fire.

Three civilians - two men and a woman using a walking stick - came out and sat by the side of the street once they were in the military zone.

"The bombs were so frequent coming from both sides," said Jose Locanas, a 53-year-old man trapped

with his wife and friend in his house. "We were caught in the middle."

Troops said they received word from their relatives that the three were trapped and managed to escort them out.

More than 400 people, including over 300 militants, 82 security forces and 44 civilians are known to have died in Marawi.

Some of the bodies of civilians were found decapitated and the military has warned the number of residents killed by militant "atrocities" could rise sharply as troops retake more ground.

Every day, troops make announcements through loudspeakers for the militants to "surrender now or die."

To the trapped civilians, they offer help to get out of the conflict area.

Authorities say they believe the militants are running out of supplies and ammunition, but they say there is no deadline to retake the city.

Tampus said when troops reinforcements come into Marawi, they are initially apprehensive because of the high death toll.

"But once they are here, the discipline kicks in and they are focused," he said.

Humanitarian crisis

The fighting in Marawi has dragged on for over a month as casualties continue to mount. It created in its wake a worsening humanitarian crisis the government has to deal with.

More than 320,000 people or about 69,000 families have been displaced since the fighting between government forces and the Maute group broke out last May 23.

The Department of Health has recorded five more deaths among the evacuees, including children from conflict areas in Marawi.

Health Secretary Paulyn Ubial said death among Marawi evacuees has increased to 32 as of June 29.

Ubial said eight of the casualties were children who died of diarrhea.

"The last death recorded among the evacuees was last June 25," she said.

Except for one who died while in transit, Ubial said all of the 31 died in hospitals.

Ubial said the DOH is verifying if the one who died in transit was the nine-month-old infant wrapped in a bed sheet as televised being carried by its father.

The DOH earlier reported 27 deaths among the evacuees staying at various evacuation centers.

The DOH has sent teams of psychologists to counsel the Marawi evacuees, she said.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) is planning to put up temporary shelters for the evacuees.

DILG officer-in-charge Catalino Cuy said temporary shelters and evacuation centers will be erected as soon as the evacuees return to Marawi after the fighting has officially ended.

"We really hope that we can start the rehabilitation efforts very soon so that Marawi residents will be able to pick up the broken pieces of their lives, stand back on their toes again and rebuild their lives," Cuy said.

Malacañang has ordered shelter agencies to find a way to use their gender and development budgets to provide immediate assistance to the evacuees.

Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco Jr. issued the directive during a meeting of agencies under the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) last June 21.

The meeting sought to start discussions on the government's reconstruction efforts in Marawi.

Evasco has instructed HUDCC shelter agencies to find a way to reallocate up to half of their budgets and all remaining unused funds from previous years to provide for the needs of women in evacuation centers like hygiene kits and psychosocial support services. - Reuters, Alexis Romero, Mayen Jaymalin, Cecille Suerte Felipe, Gerry Lee-Gorit

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Page. 7

AFP gaining ground in fight vs terrorists

Año: 519 neutralized from January to June

By **ZAIDA DE LOS REYES-PALANCA**

THE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is gaining ground in their fight against terrorists despite the ongoing crisis in Marawi City triggered by the invasion of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) inspired Maute Terror Group (MTG).

AFP Chief of Staff General Eduardo Año said the AFP is doing well in their fight against the terror group particularly the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

He said from January to June this year, the AFP neutralized 519 terrorists

including 178 ASG and 317 members of Maute-ISIS group.

"AFP is doing well in our fight against terror groups specially the ASG, we have neutralized 519 terrorists including 178 ASG and 317 Maute-ISIS group members from January until June 30, 2017," Año said.

Año said the intensified operation against the terror group resulted in the recovery of 548 firearms which served as a significant reduction of the terrorists' strength and capabilities.

Año also reported that government troops also prevented and minimized piracy and kidnappings

The Chief of Staff also admitted that the desperation of the Maute-ASG to claim the recognition of ISIS by staging rebellion and invasion of Marawi City derailed the government's objective to defeat them based on their timeline.

However, despite the incident, Año assured the public that the AFP will destroy the entire group in a new decisive major battle.

"While the Marawi siege caused by Maute-ISIS is catastrophic, painstaking and destructive, the AFP with our gallant soldiers will ensure to destroy the entire group in one decisive battle," Año said.

"We will not be pres-

ured nor bound by time-lines. I will not talk about deadlines. Our job as ordered by our Commander in Chief is to finish the Maute-ISIS group and clear Marawi in order to pave for the rehabilitation and construction of Marawi so that normally is restored at the soonest possible time with minimum loss of lives, both soldiers and civilians," he added.

Año said they will fight their enemy with highest dignity and code of conduct of the professional soldier and respect to human rights for the country, people and soldier heroes who ultimately gave their lives in this battle. **With Genine Kasandra Gatdula (OJT)**

3 July 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

Duterte admits bleeding heart for slain troopers, says he's willing to resign 'if necessary'

By GENALYN D. KABILING and ARBYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

Calling himself too old for the roller-coaster ride that comes free with the presidency, President Duterte on Saturday said

he was willing to resign from his post "if necessary"

The President, burdened by the ►14

Duterte admits bleeding...

◀1

raging war against terrorists in Marawi City, said he was already old and has nothing to lose.

He also admitted crying every time he reads the daily report on his desk about the soldiers and policemen who have died while defending Marawi City from the local terrorist Maute group.

"I'm telling you the truth: every time I read it - unsettling masyado (it's very unsettling). Sometimes I cry, mapaluha na lang ako (I can't help it especially) if the numbers are great," he confessed.

Duterte said he has no choice but to carry it all on his shoulders because it is part and parcel of his job as president.

"If necessary, I will resign as President. Matanda na 'ko. 72 (I am old, 72) I will be finished with this job at 77 years old," he said during the 50th anniversary celebration of Davao del Norte last Saturday.

"Matanda na ako, wheelchair: dito na ganda magsalita (I'm old, probably in a wheelchair speaking on this side of the stage)," he said, drawing laughter from the crowd.

"Ano pa man habulin ko sa buhay? (What would I aspire for in life?) I have nothing to lose," said Duterte, who won a six-year term in the May 2016 elections.

The President has expressed sadness over the rising death toll in the Islamic State-sponsored rebellion in Marawi City but insisted the war will continue until the last terrorist is neutralized.

Duterte said he hopes the conflict would be over soon to pave the way for the rebuilding of the war-torn city.

"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.

"I cannot stop the fighting because I will never, never, never compromise with terrorism," he added.

Life is work

As he marked his first year in office, Duterte shared what it's like to be in his shoes — a mountain of work (papers to read, study, and sign), no cheerful adventures and nocturnal life, scrupulous

about "seeing the situation for himself" but no longer like a taxi-driver roaming the streets.

On his latest work schedule, the President admitted that he has given up on "adventures" at night.

The Chief Executive starts his day at 1 p.m. and stays beyond midnight to handle paperwork.

"I work but at one o'clock, after lunch, pagkaligo na ko niyan (after taking a bath) I do not have any nocturnal life - adventures, wala na. Matanda na ako (nothing, I am already old)," he said.

"I usually sign papers, ganon kakapal lalo na kung hindi ako mag-report sa bahay ko diyan sa, by the river (I usually sign papers, that thick especially if I don't report at my house by the river)," he said.

"That's my life. I read documents then I have to study," the former Davao City mayor said.

The President recently had a string of absences from public engagements, triggering speculations he may be ill. Duterte, however, dispelled speculations about his poor health, saying he actually took time to rest and visit military camps without publicity.

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Pahina. 2

MGA ARMAS NA MADE IN CHINA VS. MAUTE — AFP

HINDI maalis ng Armed Forces of the Philippines ang posibilidad na magamit sa operasyon para tapusin ang Maute Terrorist Group sa Marawi City ang mga armas at bala na ibinigay ng China.

Ayon kay AFP Spokesman Brigadier General Restituto Padilla, hindi naman mahihirapan ang mga sundalo na gamitin ang mga armas na gawa ng China da-

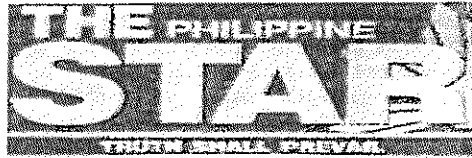
hi napakasimple lang nito at halos tulad ng ginagamit na ng militar.

Sangayon, nagsasagawa na lamang ng imbentaryo ang AFP bago ito ipamahagi sa tropa ng pamahalaan.

Matatandaang, noong Miyerkules dumating ang 3,000 rifles na may limang milyong bala at 90 long-range sniper rifles na may 800,000 rounds.

(Vyne Reyes)

3 July 2017



Page: 1

Loss brings misery to Marawi, troops

Millions of boxing fans in the Philippines, including those displaced by fighting with Islamist militants, walked away in stunned disbelief as boxing legend Manny Pacquiao lost his world title to

Australian Jeff Horn in a major upset yesterday.

Pacquiao, 38, an elected senator, lost to Horn in a surprising unanimous decision.

Residents of war-torn Marawi City had hoped for a res-

pite by watching the 12-round fight in evacuation centers, but their idol's defeat silenced cheers and prompted many to stand up even before the announcement was over.

Turn to Page 10

"We were expecting his hand to be raised as a winner but you cannot always win," provincial government spokesman Zia Alonto Adiong said after helping organize a public viewing in the war-ravaged city.

"Our morale is at its lowest but Pacquiao remains a symbol of resilience. In the same way that he is already a boxing icon, this crisis does not define who we are," he said.

Maute group extremists who went on a rampage in Marawi on May 23 have triggered intense fighting that has killed more than 400 people and forced nearly 400,000 people to flee their homes.

In Manila, soldiers wounded from the clashes in Marawi watched a bloodied Pacquiao from screens set up in a military hospital.

Pacquiao, a reserve lieutenant colonel, had bled profusely from cuts to the head high above both eyes, prompting boos from crowds gathered in gymnasiums in the capital.

"Pacquiao lost, but a battle

is really like that. He is a true soldier because even if he is wounded he keeps attacking the opponent," Armed Forces chief Gen. Eduardo Año told reporters.

Pacquiao's rags-to-riches story, from high school dropout to millionaire world boxing champion in an unprecedented eight weight divisions, is a huge source of pride in the Philippines.

In keeping with tradition, many Filipinos watched Pacquiao's fight, which took place around midday yesterday, in public places, including in restaurants and watering holes.

However, crowds have gradually become thinner as Pacquiao hits the twilight of a glittering career.

"I don't think he lost. He was cheated! He still came out a strong fighter," construction worker Rudy Merano said after watching the fight in a public square in Marikina City.

"But I think Pacquiao should retire and just focus on being senator. He is clearly ageing," he said. –AFP

3 July 2017



Pahina. 2

Mga taga-Marawi, tumutok din sa Pacquiao-Horn

MARAWI CITY - Sa gitna ng bakbakan ay tinutukan pa rin kahapon ng mga taga-Marawi City ang Pacquiao-Horn fight

Ito'y matapos ipagutos ni Lanao del Sur Vice Gov Mamintal Adiong Jr ang installation ng mga cable television sa mga evacuation centers sa lungsod para sa live telecast ng laban sa pagitan nina eight-division world champion Manny Pacquiao at Australian boxer Jeff Horn

Ayon kay Zia Alonto Adiong, tagapagsalita ng local crisis management committee, ito ang kanilang paraan upang mapasaya man lang ang mga bakwit kahit sa pandalian lamang

Nabatid na kabilang ang mga Maranao sa mga taga-suporta ni Pacquiao at kabilang din sa 15.2 milyon na bumoto sa Pinoy ring icon noong halalan

Hindi naman nabigyan ng parehas na pagkaka-

taon ang mga naka-assign sa field o ang mga nasa headquarters ng militar

Sinabi ni Lt. Col Jo-Ar Herrera, wala na raw panahon pa ang mga tropa ng pamahalaan para ma-nood ng laban na tinaguriang "Battle of Brisbane"

Sa katunayan nga raw ay kahit maligo at matulog ng maayos ay hindi na nila magawa dahil sa nagpapatuloy na open-siba laban sa teroristang Maute group (*Rhoderick Beñez*)

3 July 2017



Pahina. 2

Kahit sugatan, sugod pa rin

Pacman lumaban bilang tunay na sundalo - AFP

Ipinakita ni Peoples champ Sen Manny Pacquiao ang kaniyang pagiging tunay na sundalo kahit sa loob ng boxing ring, na kahit sugatan ay sugod pa rin ng sugod sa kalaban.

Ito ang pahayag ni AFP chief of staff General Eduardo Año sa katatapos na Pacquiao-Horn fight.

Ayon kay Gen Año, bagama't natalo sa laban si Pacquiao, proud pa rin ang buong Sandatahang Lakas ng Pilipinas sa senador na isang Army

reservist.
"Natalo si Pacquiao, ganyan talaga yung laban pero nakita niyo naman like a true soldier yan even he is wounded he keeps attacking the opponent," pahayag ni Año na hanggang sa huli hindi anyang umurong si Pacquiao sa kaniyang laban kay Jeff Horn.

Aminado naman ang AFP chief na siya ay nabigla sa naging resulta sa laban dahil kitang-kita naman na ang mga pinapakawatang suntok ni

Pacquiao kay Horn ay kumukonekta.

"Tayo mga Pilipino tinitingnan natin yung laban, makita mo yung mga suntok ni Pacquiao

kumukonek naman," wika ni Año.

No comment naman ang opisyal na dapat ng magretiro sa boxing career niya si Pacquiao.

3 July 2017



Pahina. 4



Salamat sa China, may bago at libreng armas ang AFP at PNP!

DAHIL sa makabagong diplomasya ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ay naging magkaibigang muli ang China at Pilipinas.

Hindi naman talaga magkaaway ang dalawang bansa. bagkus, kadugo pa natin sila dahil kapwa tayo Asyano at naging Pilipino natin ang mga taga-China na pumunta rito noong unang panahon pa.

Nagsimulang gumandang muli ang relasyon ng dalawang bansa nang bumisita ang pangulo sa China noong Oktubre 2016.

Isang malaking tagumpay ang kanyang opisyal na pagdalaw kung saan bongga ang pagtanggap sa kanya ng gobyerno ni Pangulong Xi Jinping.

Naging resulta ng usapan ng dalawang lider ay ang \$24 bilyong investments mula sa China.

Malaking bagay ang ganitong kapital para makagawa tayo ng bagong imprastruktura tulad ng mga tren, airport, tulay at iba pa.

Mapatalago rin ang ating ekonomiya para umangat ang buhay ng mga Pilipino lalo na ang mahihirap.

Tuluy-tuloy na sana ang pag-asenso ng ating bayan nang biglang umatake ang grupong Maute sa Marawi City.

Bayolente ang grupong ito at marami silang malalakas na armas galing sa ilegal na droga at sa pondong pinadadala ng kaalyado nilang terorista, ang ISIS.

Ito ang dahilan kung bakit hanggang ngayon ay hindi pa rin malinis ng AFP ang Marawi.

Alam natin na animo'y napabayaan ang AFP nang dating administrasyon na wala raw pakialam kung namamatay man ang mga sundalo at pulis.

Ngayon lang daw nagsisimulang maayos ang AFP at PNP dahil malakas ang simpatya ni P-Digong sa mga tagapagtanggol ng ating seguridad at kalayaan.

Matapos makita ng China ang problemang hinaharap ng Pilipinas sa laban nila sa mga terorista ay umaksyon kaagad ito.

Nagpadala ito ng mga armas sa Pilipinas para magamit ng AFP at PNP sa pakikipaglaban nito sa

Para sa inyong katanungan, suhestiyon at reaksiyon sumulat sa BANAT ni Bobi Tiglao, BULGAR Bldg., 538 Quezon Ave., Quezon City o mag-email sa banat@bulgar.com.ph

Maute Terrorist Group

'Gratis' o walang bayad ang donasyong mga baril mula China – 3,000 riple kasama ang 5 milyong bala at 90 'long-range sniper rifles' kasama ng 800,000 bala.

Ayon kay Chinese Ambassador Zhao Jianhua unang parte lang ito ng kamilang ibibigay, may pangalawa pa raw na darating sa susunod na mga buwan.

Nagkakahalagang P350 milyon (50 million yuan) ang donasyong ito ng China na ibinigay noong isang linggo sa isang simpleng seremonya sa Clark Airfield sa Pampanga.

Maaalalang dating U.S. Air Force base ang Clark pero matabang na ang pakikitungo sa atin ng mga Amerikano mula nang sinipa natin ang kamilang mga base noong 1991.

Malugod na tinanggap ng mga opisyal ng ating militar at defense ang donasyong mga armas dahil kulang talaga ang ginagamit ng ating mga sundalo at pulis.

Hindi lang kulang, luma pa tulad ng mga M16 na sinabi ni P-Duterte ay maluna na ang pagputok at pag-asinta.

Pmasalamatan ni P-Duterte ang China sa malaking tulong nito sa Pilipinas sa oras ng ating pangangailangan. Senyales ito ng bagong kabanata sa relasyon sa pagitan ng China at Pilipinas, dagdag ni P-Digong.

Ang maganda sa China ay may polisiya ito na 'non-interference' o hindi pakikialam sa internal na mga problema ng isang bansa.

Hindi raw sila tulad ng U.S. at Europa na mahitig makialam at manermon na akala mo ay sila na ang pinakamalims sa lahat.

Bawat tulong daw ng mga imperyalistang ito ay palaging may kakabit na kondisyones na nakaasar.

Ito nga sa isyu ng baril, may order sana ang PNP ng 26,000 baril mula sa U.S. noong Nobyembre pero binara ito ng U.S. State Department dahil daw sa isyu ng 'human rights' sa gitna ng matinding kampanya ng gobyerno laban sa ilegal na droga.

Noong Mayo ay nagsampa rin ng batas sa Senado sa U.S. ang dalawang senador para putulin ang pagbenta ng armas sa Pilipinas.

Huwag na tayong umasa sa U.S. pmaglalaruan lang daw tayo ng mga Kano lalo na raw sa isyu ng South China Sea.

Ang China lang daw ang tanging bansa na makaturulong para matahon tayo mula sa kahirapan. Kaya sana ay tigilan na ang 'anti-China bashing' na pinauso raw noong panahon ni Noynoy Aquino.

Si P-Digong na ang pangulo ngayon at panahon na upang makipagkaibigan tayo sa ating kapitbahay sa Asya.

3 July 2017



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Rody's reliable gut feel

Of the many criticisms hurled against Rody rooted in his imposing martial law over Mindanao, none has been made about his administration being caught with its pants down by the Islamic State (IS)-inspired siege of Marawi City.

He had on so many occasions in his past speeches made known that he may have no other recourse but to impose martial law to respond to the IS threat long before the Marawi City incursion.

In November last year, after the military repulsed a Maute group occupation of an old municipal building in Butig, Lanao del Sur Rody already sounded off about his narrowing options against the IS threat.

"Forget about human rights if the IS enters the country" was Rody's warning then.

Earlier in September, Rody imposed a state of lawless violence covering the entire country after an explosion at the Roxas night market in Davao City that killed 14 individuals which the Maute group was suspected of undertaking.

Rody then already had an appreciation of the problem that later broke into the IS campaign to occupy Marawi City last May.

He then said the problem will persist since weeding out the terrorists is a usual problem from communities which are benefiting from their existence.

The Maute group, similar to the government, employs social assistance schemes such as paying for hospitalization expenses of residents in the community it is targeting to solidify its mass base.

Rody, however, then held back saying that he may opt for the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus which would allow warrantless arrests and the detention of criminals without the need to produce them in court instead of imposing martial to contain the terrorist threat.

His political opponents connected his martial law threat to a desire to perpetuate himself in power which was not the apparent intention since Rody's mention of the need for martial law was always related to the IS threat.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said Rody was worried of the IS threat as early as August last year or one-and-a-half months after Rody assumed the presidency, he told the military to be ready with IS and warned about an IS plague infecting the country.

In his native Bisaya, Rody told the 1st Infantry (Tabak) Division of the Philippine Army in Zamboanga del Sur in August 10 last year that “we're already busy with the problem on drugs and I see a looming problem. I think within three to seven years from now, we will have a problem regarding IS.”

Duterte based his forecast on the entry of Arab IS members in some parts of Mindanao as missionaries whose real purpose is to indoctrinate Muslims of a rigid fundamentalist Islamic belief.

“That's troublesome because similar to communists, when they're done with the place and they see that it's clear, that's when their political officers come in. That's dangerous because they are messing with the mind,” Rody said then.

“There's a problem here on Muslim insurgency and we must arrest them before, not them, our Moro brothers, that they don't get contaminated with the ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) disease,” he added.

Rody also said recently that he had long been informed of the IS threat only that the military underestimated the capability of the terror groups led by the Mautes and Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon in creating havoc in Marawi City.

His critics, thus, sounded like a joke when they presented an argument against martial law in the Supreme Court saying that it was state forces which started the conflict in Marawi City in their attempt to arrest Hapilon.

Thus far, Filipinos are assured as a result of the foresight shown by Rody, a feeling of security which was not around during his amateurish predecessor's term.

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ONLINE NEWS 03 JULY 2017

www.pna.gov.ph

AFP doing well in fight vs terror — Año

The military is doing well in its efforts to neutralize the various terror groups in the country.

This was claimed by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief-of-staff Gen. Eduardo Año in a message Sunday.

"The AFP is doing well in our fight against terror groups specially the ASG. We have neutralized 519 terrorists (including 178 Abu Sayyaf Group and 317 Maute/ISIS Group members) since January 1 until June 30, 2017," he added.

In the same period, military forces has recovered a total of 548 firearms -- a significant reduction of strength and capabilities --- of the above-mentioned lawless elements.

"We have prevented or minimize piracy and kidnappings. The desperation of Maute-ASG to claim recognition as an ISIS state prompted them to stage the rebellion and occupy Marawi City (last May 23)," the AFP chief stressed.

And while these actions have derailed Año's self-imposed deadline to neutralize the ASG and their allies in six months, the military is now focusing on destroying the group in one decisive battle.

The AFP chief, during his assumption-of-command last December, vowed to eliminate the ASG and other allied terror groups within six months.

"These acts have derailed our objective to defeat them based on our timeline. While the Marawi siege caused by Maute-ISIS is catastrophic, painstaking and destructive, the AFP with our gallant soldiers will ensure to destroy the entire group in one decisive major battle," he added.

"We will not be pressured nor bounded by timelines. I will not talk about deadlines. Our job as ordered by our Commander-in-Chief is to finish the Maute-ISIS group and clear Marawi in order to pave for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi so that normalcy is restored at the soonest possible time with minimum loss of lives, both soldiers and civilians," the AFP chief emphasized.

The military will do this with the highest dignity and code of conduct of the professional soldier; and respect to human rights for for country, for the people and for soldier heroes who ultimately gave their lives for this cause, he added. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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

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www.pna.gov.ph

2 PAF Hueys up for maintenance

The Philippine Air Force (PAF) is looking suppliers capable of supplying it with PHP12,340,000 worth of Huey II and Super Huey combat utility helicopter spare parts.

The items are needed for the maintenance of Huey II with tail number 662 and Super Huey helicopter with tail number 122.

Pre-bid conference is scheduled for July 7, 3 p.m. at the PAF Procurement Center Conference Room, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City.

While submission and opening of bids is on July 21, 9 a.m. at the same venue, according to a bid bulletin posted at the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System.

The PAF is known to operate around 40 to 60 units of the Vietnam-era "Huey" helicopters in its fleet. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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www.rappler.com

IN PHOTOS: Injured soldiers cheer for Pacquiao

By Bea Cupin

Senator Manny Pacquiao, world boxing champion, is also a reservist at the Philippine Army with the rank of lieutenant colonel



CHEERING FOR MANNY. Wounded Philippine Army soldiers watch the championship boxing match between Manny Pacquiao and Jeff Horn at the Army Hospital in Taguig on July 2, 2017. All photos by Mary Grace Dela Cerna/Rappler

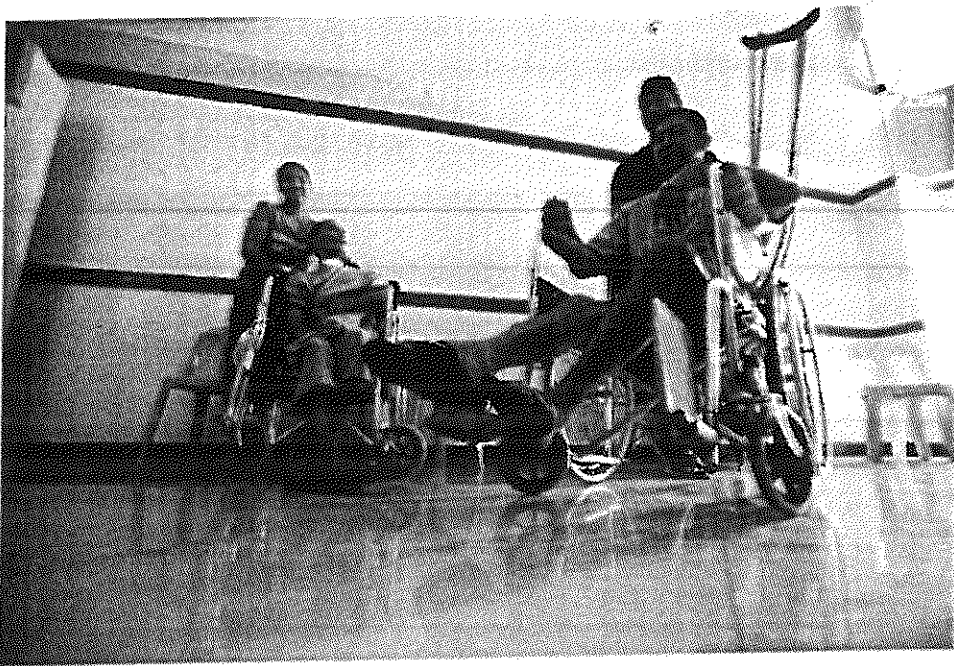
MANILA, Philippines – With every jab, they cheered. With every hit to his body and face, they hissed and booed.

For around an hour, it almost didn't matter what injuries they were nursing, where they had been deployed, or what sort of future awaited them after their hospital stay.

On Sunday, July 2, over a hundred injured soldiers had one mission in mind: cheer for Senator Emmanuel "Manny" Pacquiao, world boxing champion and army reservist.

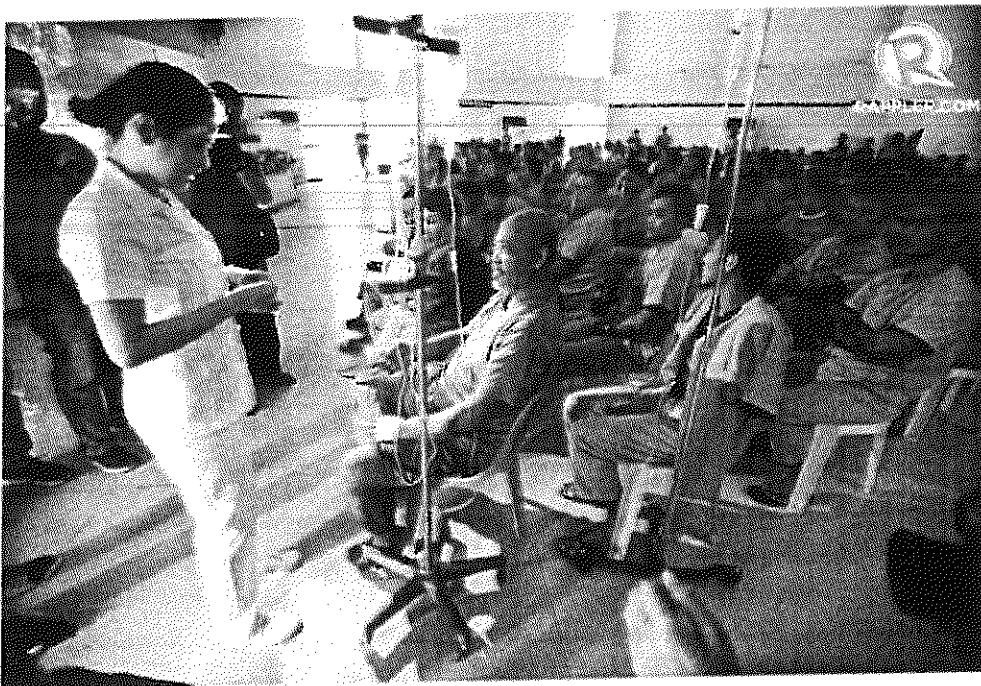
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At the Army General Hospital inside Fort Bonifacio in Taguig, soldiers clad in blue tops, pants, and slippers, went wild in rounds where Pacquiao dominated, and fell silent whenever his opponent, Australian boxer Jeff Horn, showed his might.

In the middle of Filipino fighter Jerwin Ancajas's bout just before the Pacquiao-Horn card, a nurse clad in white entered, medicine and IV fluid in tow. Her patient, another injured soldier, was seated at the front row.



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"I was looking for you in the ward sir. They told me you went here," said the shy nurse, as she found herself surrounded by the harsh flash of television and still cameras.

But whatever energy was in the room during the Pacquiao-Horn card immediately disappeared the moment the Australian was announced the new WBO Welterweight Champion.

The commentator had barely finished saying Horn's name when the men and blue rose from their chairs and purposefully walked back to their wards.

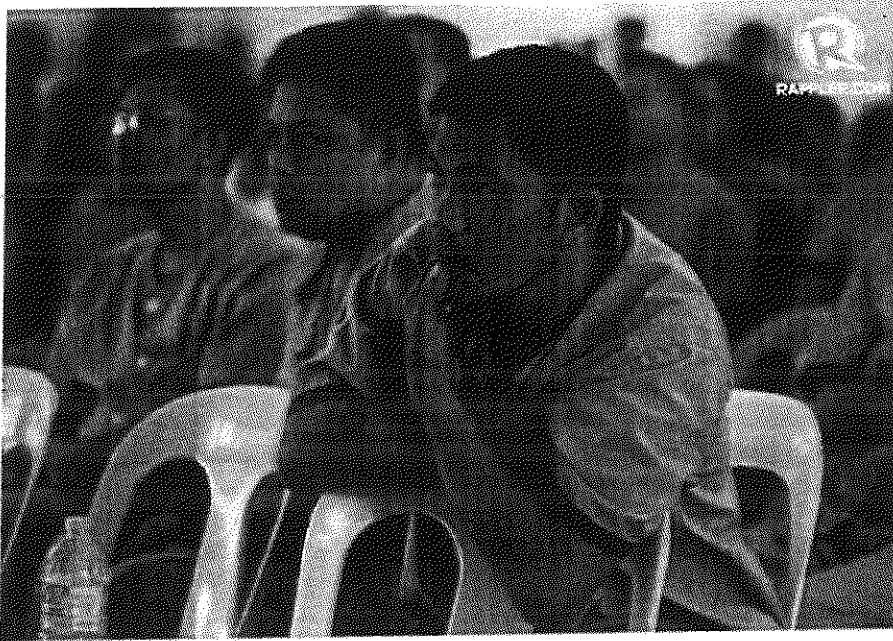


A handful stayed behind, listening to the Army reservist with a rank of lieutenant colonel admit defeat while saying he did his best.

"*Manny pa rin*. (We still support Manny)" a soldier said, his arm around his buddy who was also a patient in the hospital.

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The Pacquiao match – an event that can literally stop both traffic and crime in Metro Manila – comes as soldiers continue to battle local terror groups in Marawi City.

Some of those who watched the boxing match in Fort Bonifacio were among those injured because of the Marawi clashes. Others were injured long before – during earlier operations against the same terror groups the government is fighting in Marawi City. – **Rappler.com**

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