

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



TEAM ARMY

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

13 July 2017

Thursday

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

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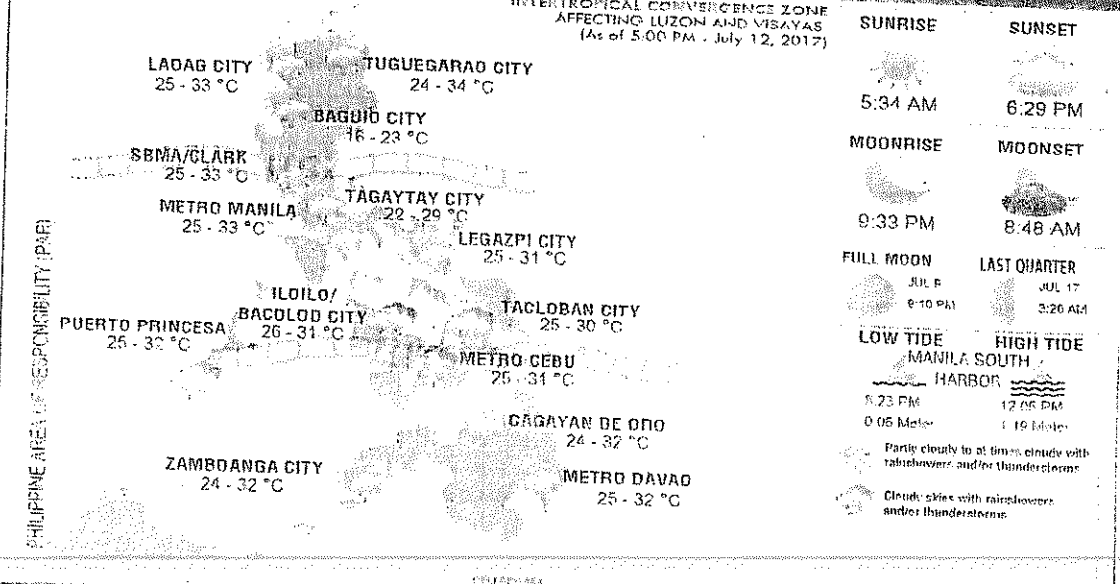
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TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST (MINDANAO) THURSDAY



City	Forecast 1	Forecast 2	Forecast 3	Forecast 4	Forecast 5	Forecast 6
METRO MANILA	25 - 32 °C	25 - 33 °C	21 - 30 °C	22 - 30 °C	25 - 30 °C	25 - 31 °C
TUGUEGARAO	24 - 33 °C	25 - 33 °C	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C
LAOAG	25 - 33 °C	24 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C	25 - 32 °C
BAGUIO	16 - 23 °C	16 - 22 °C	25 - 32 °C	26 - 31 °C	24 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	25 - 33 °C	25 - 33 °C	25 - 32 °C	25 - 31 °C		

DZRH NEWS TELEVISION MONDAY - FRIDAY 11 AM & 5 PM

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

AIR 21 SAGOT NG PADALA NIPT

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IS SNIPERS REMAIN MAJOR HURDLE

More airstrikes as AFP aims for 15-day deadline

By Mario J. Mallari

The military has stepped up efforts to retake Marawi City yesterday with morning airstrikes as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) vowed to do its best to meet President Duterte's latest deadline to finish the Marawi City siege in two weeks.

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From page 1

Military air strikes continued against positions still being held by the Islamic State (IS)-inspired terrorists in Marawi City after a full Tuesday night due to bad weather.

A report said that Philippine Air Force air craft launched morning sorties -targeting areas at downtown Marawi City where terrorist snipers are still putting up pockets of resistance 51 days after laying siege on the Islamic City.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, AFP-Public Affairs Office chief, stressed that the military will try to meet the 15-day period as announced by Mr. Duterte last Tuesday in a speech at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

"The 15 days is a period within which the President hopes the crisis in Marawi to end. The AFP will do its best, as it has been giving its level best to crush the rebellion of the Maute-IS Group," said Arevalo.

"The Commander-in-Chief is aware of the complexities of the ongoing operations because he is being briefed regularly. Your government security forces' resolute desire to accomplish the mission remain undiminished," he added.

The military has failed to meet its June 15 self-imposed deadline to address the siege that started last May 23 when government forces attempted to arrest Isnilon Hapilon, the designated emir or leader of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Southeast Asia.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana also set three deadlines but failed. Lately, he said he hopes that the conflict is over before the President delivers his second state of the nation address (Sona) on July 24.

Lt. Col. Jo-an Herrera, spokesman of Joint Task Force Marawi, said 54 more buildings were cleared of IS-inspired terrorists at the main battle area.

Earlier, the military said that the terrorists were still holed up in some portions of four barangays in downtown Marawi City.

"Yesterday, we cleared 54 buildings," said Herrera, who earlier said that the area being occupied by the terrorists is composed of around 800 buildings.

The military has stressed that the ongoing clearing operations in Marawi City is done house to house, building by building and floor by floor to ensure that all is cleared.

As of yesterday, Herrera said Abdullah Maute is still commanding the IS-inspired terrorists still putting up a fight against advancing government troops.

"Your government security forces' resolute desire to accomplish the mission remain and is undiminished," Arevalo said.

Day 51 in Marawi City operations

As fighting between Maute Group terrorists and military reached its 51st day, an estimated 380 lawless elements were reported killed in the ongoing clearing operations along with 90 government troops, Arevalo said.

He added that this information is as of 6 p.m. of July 11.

Also, the number of civilians executed by the Maute Group terrorists remained at 39 while number of rescued individuals are placed at 1,723.

Arevalo said the number of weapons recovered has been placed at 494.

Fighting broke out in Marawi City after government troops tried to arrest Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon and ISIS 'emir' in Southeast Asia last May 23.

An estimated 300 civilians are still trapped in areas held by Maute Group, AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said citing reports of the Marawi City local government.

"There are estimates (of) about 300 or more who are still unaccounted for," he said.

The unaccounted civilians

include residents who are still hiding in their homes or missing persons who may be hostages of the terrorists, he added.

Padilla said the military is looking at the possibility of recovering or seeing additional remains of civilians killed by the Maute Group terrorists once they overrun the last remaining positions of the lawless elements.

"As of now, we have not gone into the interiors of previously held enemy areas and once we do that we may get the surprise of our lives and find numbers of cadavers left who have been killed by the enemy," he said.

Schooling disrupted

About 22,000 students and 1,411 teachers in Marawi City have been displaced due to the ongoing armed conflict between the Maute group and government forces, a top official of the Department of Education (DepEd), meanwhile, said.

In an interview, DepEd Assistant Secretary and spokesman Tourisjo Umali said as of July 10, 21,457 out of the 22,000 have been tracked down in various areas in the country.

Some of the displaced students enrolled in Region 1 with 34 students.

The highest number of Marawi displaced learners are in Region 10 with an estimated 12,663 students.

DepEd found some of the learners in Lanao del Norte with 4,889 wherein 4,027 are in Iligan City.

In Lanao del Sur, there are about 4,049 students and in Lanao del Sur, 3,206.

For those absorbed in various divisions, he said DepEd has provided interventions such as psychological first aid.

Tents and temporary learning spaces have been set up in areas that can no longer accommodate students in regular rooms.

"We provided learning kits,

Same thing with our teachers we provided them teaching kits, hygiene kits... all the necessary things for them. As much as possible normally, all regions but particularly in region 10," he said.

Out of the 1,411 displaced teachers, DepEd said about 1,284 teaching personnel are from Marawi City.

"We are still trying to track all of them, in the same way we track some as far as Batac. Maybe if they are back to work or they were called where they are or if they are teaching now in other divisions. Kasi wala naman silang habalikan na sa Marawi. Ganun din nag enroll lahat yan yung sinabi kong numero. Yung iba nasa evacuation centers nais munang manatili doon," he said.

Part of the efforts of the department to assist the displaced DepEd workers and students include trying to locate them, especially the teaching and non-teaching personnel.

"Once we locate them we would like to make sure that they are all okay. We try to provide what we can provide them," he said.

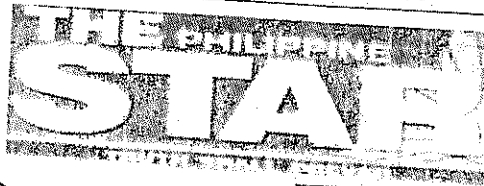
"And we give them provisions or whatever help we can possible provide. Again, trying to make their lives again be the same persons to take care of our children who are also affected, by giving them a sense of normalcy, the way they do," he said.

"We do not want a situation where our teachers and non-teaching personnel tasked to take care of our children are themselves worried about what will happen," he added.

"The policy right now is that we don't want our Marawi displaced learners to wait for the day for Marawi to resume classes before they return to classes," he said.

As of July 11, DepEd records show the displaced learners increased to 23,370 from 21,457. Region 10 has the highest displaced learners with 14,412 from 12,663.

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AFP on Rody's 15 days: We're doing our best

By JAIME LAUDE

The military is doing its best to end the siege of Marawi by Maute militants as soon as possible or within 10 to 15 days as projected by President Duterte.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Public Affairs Office, gave the assurance in response to Duterte's assessment that more time is needed to defeat the militants linked to the Middle East-based Islamic State (IS).

The President made the forecast in remarks at the Philippine Stock Exchange on Tuesday.

"The AFP will do its best, as it has been giving its level best, to crush the rebellion of the Maute-ISIS group," Arevalo said.

He said Duterte has basis for the 15-day forecast as the President has been receiving daily updates and is aware of the complexities of the operations against the terrorists.

For more than a month now,

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security forces have been conducting ground and air operations against the terrorists. The militants began their siege of the country's only Islamic city on May 23.

Despite heavy rain, air offensive continued yesterday. Bad weather slowed down ground operations, however.

The military said the terrorists were down to only 80 fighters holed up mostly in four locations in the city's commercial district.

A total of 381 terrorists, 90 soldier and 39 civilians have been killed since fighting began in May. Government troops have also recovered 461 terrorist firearms and rescued 1,723 civilians trapped in the war zone.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa echoed Duterte's assessment that the conflict in Marawi would be over in 15 days, noting that the President is very much aware of the situation on the ground. "That's a very good assessment coming from the President."

He also said that despite battlefield setbacks, the Maute terror group still

poses a threat in other parts of Mindanao.

The National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), for its part, is also verifying reports on the presence of Maute militants in Luzon, possibly even in Metro Manila.

"We take these information seriously because if they were able to do it in Marawi, they can do it in other places," Dela Rosa told reporters, citing reports the terror group was planning attacks in other parts of Mindanao.

It is for this reason, Dela Rosa said Tuesday, that martial law should be extended in Mindanao.

But he stressed any extension should be within what is allowed under the law. "As I have said, we better not take chances," he said.

Dela Rosa on Tuesday had a closed-door meeting with senators during which he discussed, among other things, terror threats in other parts of Mindanao including Davao, Zamboanga peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Caraga, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and General Santos City.

He said security forces and

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even civilians were always on guard against possible terror attacks.

"They are very much aware that since they are in Mindanao, there is chance of a spill-over of the problem in their area," Dela Rosa said.

Dela Rosa also revealed that three members of the Maute clan held on Tuesday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on suspicion of being terrorists were released yesterday.

"There is no reason to hold them further," said Dela Rosa, referring to Ashary Palawan Maute, Yasser Dumaray Maute and Abdulrahman Maute. The three were about to depart for Malaysia when accosted.

Reports said the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) did not find any evidence linking them to the Marawi siege.

"If we later find out these people are involved in the war in Marawi, then we have a reasonable ground to hold them," Dela Rosa said.

NCRPO Director Oscar Albayalde said he has asked Metro Manila mayors as well as Muslim leaders to cooperate with authorities in efforts to secure the metropolis.

"We do not take anything for granted. We are close-

ly monitoring with our AFP counterparts to verify the information, especially on our intelligence operatives," he said.

Hopeful

Senators are hopeful that President Duterte would be able to end the crisis in Marawi City in 15 days, as this could mean there would be no need to extend the 60-day martial law in Mindanao that expires on July 22.

Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito said while he is generally receptive to extending martial law if Duterte asks Congress for it, it would be better if it would no longer be needed.

Sen. Franklin Drilon from the minority said he is deferring to Duterte on his latest timetable.

"The President is presumed to have access to information which none of us would have, when he says he will finish it in 10 to 15 days, that we will defer to the judgment," Drilon said.

He said he is looking forward to the briefing of security officials to senators to guide them in the event they have to deliberate on a possible request for extension of martial law.

"So if that is where it is, then the decision of Congress will certainly be influenced by this assessment of the President... when he feels he can finish the problem in Marawi," Drilon said.

Meanwhile, a civilian hostage in Marawi who was reportedly able to secretly call his family said Fr. Teresito 'Chito' Suganob was being forced to make explosives by his captors.

"The Maute tasked the priest to collect the explosives and make improvised bomb," a relative of the civilian quoted the latter as saying during a clandestine phone call. The identity of the hostage was not revealed for security reasons. It was not clear how he was able to make a phone call to his family.

The hostage told his wife he could not pinpoint their exact location in Marawi but believed the soldiers were on track because of their constant skirmishes with soldiers.

Friendly fire kills 2 soldiers

Meanwhile, two soldiers were killed while 11 others were wounded when another wayward bomb intended for Maute militants was dropped by a Philippine Air Force (PAF) plane in Marawi yesterday.

Reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo said the incident, the second to happen in more than a month of fighting, occurred around noon.

"Initial report from Marawi indicates that the bomb was 250 meters off target. The impact of the explosion caused the collapse of nearby structures," Col. Edgard Arevalo, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesman said.

He said large pieces of flying debris from heavily reinforced buildings hit the two soldiers, killing them.

Fragments and shrapnel of the exploding bomb also caused injuries to 11 soldiers, whose wounds are all ambulatory in nature, he said. The wounded troopers are now recuperating in a nearby hospital.

"We are saddened by this unfortunate incident. We are attending to the needs of the families of our troops who died or were hurt," Arevalo said.

On May 31, 10 soldiers were killed in a friendly fire involving the PAF's SF260 fixed wing aircraft, one of the PAF planes being used by the AFP in its airstrike operations against the Maute.

- With Roel Pareño, Robertzon Ramirez, Emmanuel Tupas, Paolo Romero

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Malaya
The National Newspaper

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Another 'friendly fire' incident leaves 2 soldiers dead, 11 injured

BY VICTOR REYES

TWO soldiers were killed and 11 others were injured when an airstrike against members of the terrorist Maute Group missed its target and hit government troops instead, a military official said yesterday.

"Initial report from Marawi indicates that the bomb was 250 meters off target. The impact of the explosion caused the collapse of nearby structures," said Armed Forces public affairs chief Col. Edgard Arevalo.

"Large debris from heavily reinforced buildings accidentally hit two of our personnel who succumbed to death in the process," Arevalo said.

He said the incident injured 11 other

soldiers who sustained minor wounds from shrapnel. "All are ambulatory and are recuperating in the nearby hospital," he said.

Arevalo said the military is "saddened by this unfortunate incident," the second accident involving a military aircraft during the ongoing Marawi City armed conflict, which dragged on its 51st day yesterday.

On May 31, a bomb released by an SF-260 aircraft landed at the position of government troops, instead of the Maute members. The incident resulted in the death of 10 soldiers and wounding of seven others.

"We are attending to the needs of the families of our troops who died or were hurt," said Arevalo, referring to the

soldiers who died and who got injured in the latest incident.

"Cognizant units from the AFP have formed a group that is now conducting initial investigations to determine the cause of the mishap and prevent the chances of it recurring," he also said.

Arevalo also said government forces are doing their best to end the continuing rebellion of the Maute Group in the next 15 days, in keeping with an earlier pronouncement of President Duterte.

He said attaining the 15-day period set by the President to end the armed conflict, which broke out last May 23, was "possible."

Duterte on Tuesday said he needs 10-15 more days to end the crisis which dragged on its 51st day yesterday, noting

that the Maute members were not running out of firearms and grenades.

"The President is aware of the complexities of the ongoing operations; that we are continuously gaining ground in the main battle area. We will work along the guidance of the President. We will do our level best to clear the portions of the four remaining barangays within the period," said Arevalo.

Arevalo said the fighting has already left 389 Maute members, 90 soldiers and policemen, and 39 civilians dead. It has also resulted in the recovery of 494 Maute firearms and rescue of 1,723 civilians.

The Philippine National Police re-

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ANOTHER

leased three of the four individuals who were arrested at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay City last Monday afternoon on suspicion of involvement in the continuing rebellion in Marawi City.

The suspects were freed on Tuesday afternoon by the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group due to lack of evidence to link them to the rebellion, PNP chief Director General Ronald Dela Rosa said.

CIDG National Capital Region chief Senior Supt. Wilson Asueta named the three as Ashary Maute, Yasser Maute and Al Nazir Maute, who were intercepted last Monday afternoon by immigration authorities while about to board a flight bound for Malaysia.

Another suspect, Abdulrahman Maute, was also arrested and taken into custody of the NBI because he was among those listed in the Arrest Order No. 2 issued by DND

secretary and Martial Law Administrator Delfin Lorenzana.

PNP Aviation Security Group head Chief Supt. Sheldon Jacaban earlier said Abdulrahman was among those taken into the custody of the CIDG for further investigation and that Al Nazir was the one brought to NBI.

Bureau of Immigration spokesperson Ma. Antonette Mangrobang said it was Abdulrahman who was taken by the NBI for custody. She could not however say if Abdulrahman is still with the NBI as of yesterday.

Dela Rosa said the three suspects released by the CIDG can be re-arrested if investigators are able to gather evidence, in the future, to link them to the rebellion.

On the possibility that the three may leave the country, Dela Rosa said: "Since we have no evidence against them, they can go (out of the country). It's actually up to the Bureau of Immigration, that's their turf already," he said.

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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300 still trapped in Marawi

Two soldiers killed, 11 others wounded by friendly fire

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

At least 300 civilians remain unaccounted for and may still be trapped in war-torn Marawi City, the Armed Forces of the

Philippines (AFP) said Wednesday.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the number is based on the information provided by local government units (LGUs) in the area.

He said those unaccounted for are

either trapped inside war-torn Marawi or being held hostage by the ISIS-inspired Maute Group.

"Unaccounted civilians may include trapped residents who have not yet left their places of abode; they may include

missing persons who may be hostages of the enemy, or may just be around," Padilla said.

Based on records, Padilla said at least 39 civilians have been killed by the Maute Group since the rebellion started

on May 23, 2017. He expects the civilian death toll to increase once government troops enter other parts of the city which the terrorists still control.

"Kung maaalala ninyo nung pang-tatlo o pang-apat na linggong bakbakan, minungkahi natin na maaaring tumaas ang bilang ng mga namatay na civilian pag nakapasok na tayo sa mga ▶ 4

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300 still trapped in Marawi ◀1

teritoryo ng kalaban;... maaaring may natitira pang mga labi ng mga nasawi (If you still recall, on the third and fourth week of fighting we mentioned the possibility that the number of civilians killed could increase once we entered the other areas held by the enemy)," Padilla said.

"We hope to clear the city of the terrorists in the soonest possible (time)," he said.

Padilla said that as of 6 p.m., Tuesday a total of 389 Maute fighters have been killed while 494 firearms had been either seized or recovered.

He also said that 90 government forces have been killed in the battle against the Islamist terrorists, while 1,723 civilians have been rescued by government forces from the war zone.

Meanwhile, AFP-Public Affairs Office (AFP-PAO) chief Colonel Edgard Arevalo Wednesday said that President Duterte's pronouncement that the rebellion in Marawi City could be "over in 15 days" is just "a period within which the Chief Executive hopes the crisis in the city will end."

In a statement, Arevalo assured that the AFP will do its best to crush the rebellion of the Maute-ISIS group

the soonest possible time.

"The Commander-in-Chief is aware of the complexities of the ongoing operations because he is being briefed regularly," Arevalo said.

"We will work along the guidance of the President. We will do our level best to clear the portions of the four remaining barangays within the period," Arevalo said.

Friendly fire

Meanwhile, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said an investigation is now being conducted to determine the circumstances surrounding the death of two soldiers and the wounding of 11 others by a bomb that missed its target during an airstrike in Marawi City at noon Wednesday.

AFP Public Affairs Office (PAO) chief Marine Colonel Edgard Arevalo said initial reports from Marawi indicated that the bomb was 250 meters off target. The impact of the explosion caused the collapse of nearby structures.

"Large debris from heavily reinforced buildings accidentally hit two of our personnel who succumbed to death in the process," Arevalo said in a statement.

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The Manila Times

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Duterte eyes Russian help in war on terror

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE AND DEMPSEY REYES

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte on Wednesday said he expects Russia to help the Philippines in its fight against terror as government forces continue their operations to clear Marawi City of Maute terrorists.

In his speech during the 26th anniversary of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology at Camp Aguinaldo, Duterte said he has sought to reduce the Philippines' reliance on the United States and build much closer ties with China and Russia.

"So I changed a little bit. So I started to — not really separate. Because we have this RP-US pact. So I could not enter into any other military alliances, that would be a violation of the treaty," Duterte said.

"I can always go to other nations for help in fighting terrorism," the President added. "I expect Russia to help us in due time. China has sent it. There will be another shipment of arms in September."

He was referring to the firearms recently donated by the Chinese government. Officials have said that the rifles and ammunition worth 50 million yuan given to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will be used by government troops battling members of the Maute Group that seized parts of Marawi City two months ago.

— AFP/A2

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■ HELP FROM A1

Duterte eyes Russian

China also donated P15 million for the rehabilitation program in Marawi City.

The US earlier revealed that it was providing "technical assistance" to government troops fighting Maute terrorists.

The Palace said the assistance is under the Philippines-US Mutual Defense Treaty, which allows the two countries to support each other if either would be attacked by an external party.

Duterte had repeatedly denounced the US and its supposed interference in Philippine affairs. In a speech in Vietnam in September last year, Duterte said he wanted to stop the Philippine troops' war games with the US.

Flush them out

The President on Tuesday said he needed 15 more days to end the crisis in Marawi City, where state troopers have been battling the Mautes for almost two months.

Military officials said they will do their best to flush out the terrorists within that time.

"The 15 days is a period within which the President hopes the crisis in Marawi to end. The AFP will do its best, as it has been giving its level best, to crush the rebellion of the Maute-ISIS Group," Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the AFP public affairs, said, using another acronym for the IS.

Arevalo noted that Duterte is aware of the "complexities" of the clearing operations because he is briefed regularly.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Ronald de la Rosa echoed Arevalo's statement.

"He (Duterte) is very much aware of the situation. He is being briefed every now and then about the situation and he came up with [the 15-day] assessment," de la Rosa told reporters in a chance interview in Camp Crame.

Long rehab

As government turns its focus to the rehabilitation of Marawi, Health officials said helping residents there get back on their feet will be a long process.

"Rehabilitation will take years. This will not happen in the next few months. This will take years," Assistant Secretary Eric Tayag said

in a TV interview.

Tayag said health officials are monitoring Marawi evacuees for signs of post-traumatic stress disorder, which may lead to depression and anxiety.

"Yung sitwasyon po kasi, pag displaced population, limited yung resources po nila. Overcrowding. Kahit among mam po ng pagkakaplano, at mabigyan sila ng sanitation services, safe water, magkakaroon talaga ng problema [The situation is, if it is a displaced population, there are limited resources for them. Overcrowding. Even if we plan it thoroughly and we provide them of sanitation services, safe water, we will still have

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BusinessMirror

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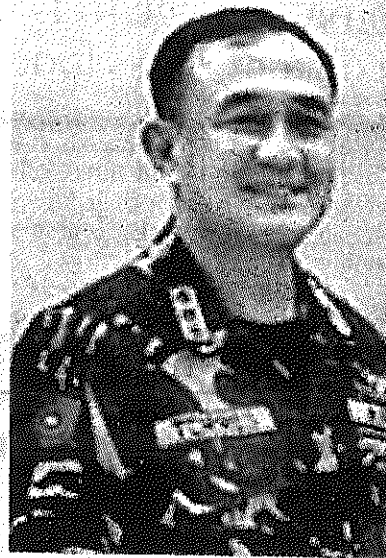
Davao 'good target' of terrorists—1003rd Brigade commander

BY CHA MONFORTE
Correspondent

PHILIPPINE Army 1003rd Brigade commander Col. Ernesto Torres said Davao City and neighboring areas in Davao region are considered “good targets” of Islamic State terrorists, as Davao City is considered the seat of government outside of Metro Manila, being President Duterte’s home city.

“The President is always in Davao City and if terrorists want to shame him, they would naturally take Davao City and the neighboring areas as good targets because they can surely get media mileage from their attack”, said Torres, whose brigade headquarters is based in Barangay New Visayas in Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte. He commands around 1,500 Army troopers securing parts of Davao del Norte and Davao City.

He informed Davao del Norte Sangguniang Panlalawigan his brigade’s security plans and programs during their session on Monday.



TORRES

Asked on the possibility that Islamic terrorists can thrive in the province, Torres replied, “There is a possibility in Davao del Norte, although it is remote.”

He said military forces in the province have been constantly keeping an eye on the migration of internally displaced persons, or the so-called bakwits, from the conflict area of Marawi City and keeping the level of good security of the province right now.

He differentiated the current martial law in Mindanao to Marcos’s martial law, which he reckoned to have a “political purpose”, while the current is addressing a “specific security problem”

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Board Member Alfredo de Veyra III asked how the military could check on the possible penetration of bad elements to Cagwu Active Auxiliaries (CAA) considering the usually nonrigid training with short period associated with their recruitment, Torres said they have mechanism to prevent them entering the CAAs while there is a regular Army officer deployed to lead in every CAA battalion or force organized in an area.

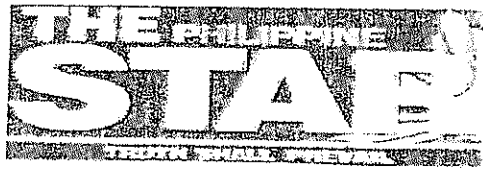
He said there are about 900 Cagwu personnel from 37 detachments scattered in 1003rd Raptor Brigade's area of jurisdiction covering Davao City and Davao del Norte.

He informed the provincial boards his brigade has two Army battalions with around 450 men each, an artillery battery company, an armor company a military intel company, a Civil Military Operation company and a reconnaissance company.

Torres has been in his post yet for two months since he assumed in May 2017.

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8 NPA rebels, soldier killed in ComVal clash

By JAIME LAUDE and EDITH REGALADO

Eight New People's Army (NPA) rebels and a soldier were killed in an encounter in Laak, Compostela Valley yesterday.

Government troops recovered the bodies of the rebels, said to be members of the Pulang Bagan Company 4, as well as five M16 rifles and a machine gun.

The identity of the soldier, who died on the way to the hospital, was withheld pending notification of his family.

Soldiers of the 25th and 60th Infantry Battalions (IB) were patrolling Barangay L. S. Sarmiento when they clashed with around 40 NPA guerrillas at around 8.30 a.m., said Capt. Alexander Cabales, 10th Infantry Division (ID) spokesman.

On Monday, soldiers of the

25th IB overran a rebel camp in Barangay Casoon in Monkayo town.

NPA planning attacks before SONA

Cabales said they received intelligence reports that the NPA is consolidating its fighters in the area to plan major offensives in the Davao region prior to President Duterte's State of the Nation Address on July 24.

"The planned NPA offen-

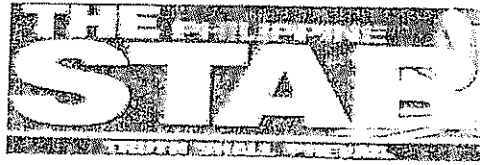
sives...were in compliance with the instruction of top rebel leaders," Cabales said.

On Tuesday, six soldiers were wounded in a landmine attack in Quirino while another group of rebels burned an abandoned Army camp in Masbate.

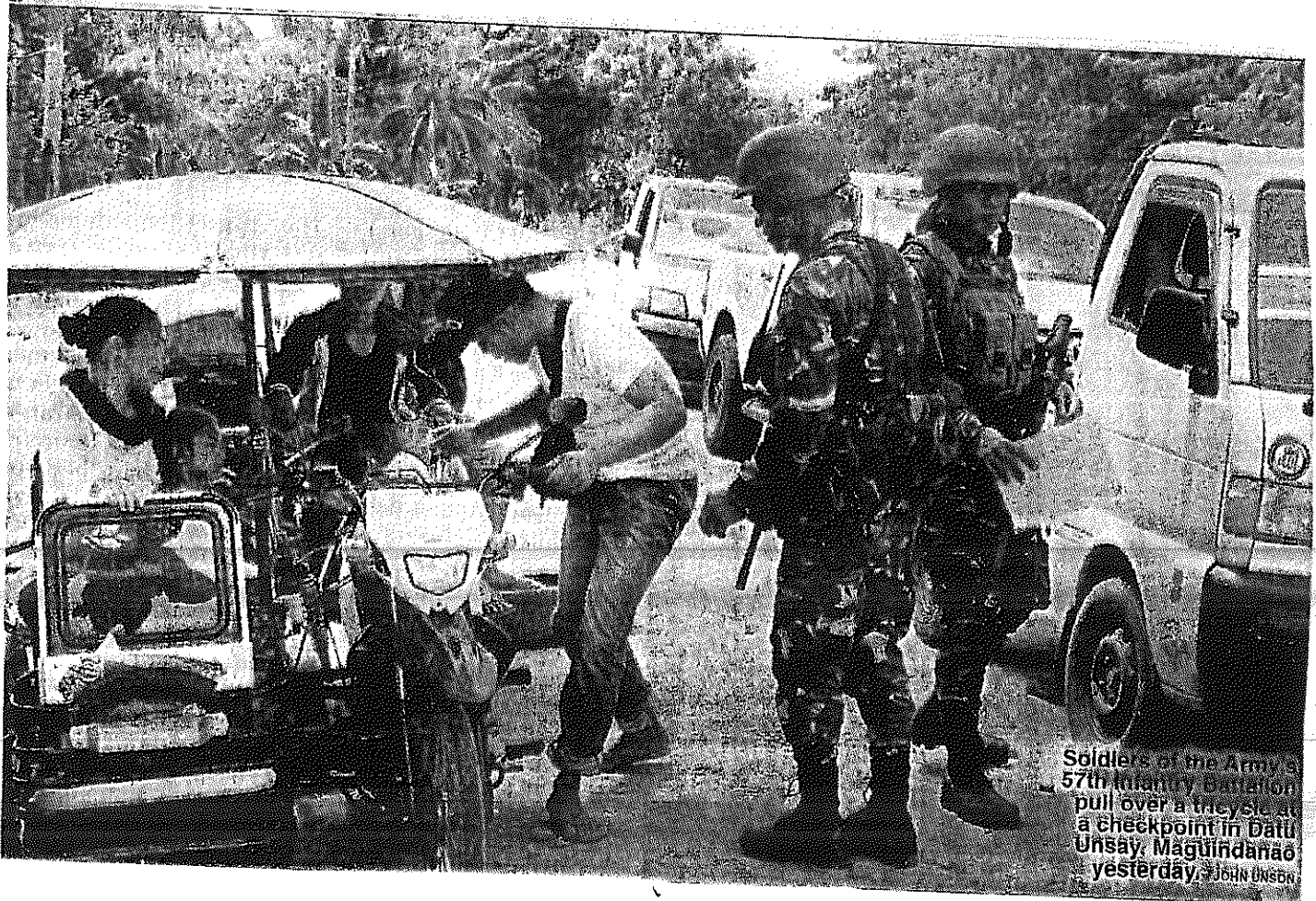
"We will not lower our guard," said Maj. Gen. Noel Clement, 10th ID commander.

Authorities said the atrocities could affect the resumption of the peace talks with communist rebels next month.

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Soldiers foil NPA attack, kill eight in C. Valley

By Francisco Tuyay

SECURITY forces yesterday foiled a plot by the New People's Army to conduct a massive offensive during President Rodrigo Duterte's second State of the Nation Address with the killing of eight insurgents in a fierce fight in Compostela Valley Wednesday morning.

The latest firefight with the local communist also claimed the life of a soldier.

Army Capt. Alexandre Cabales, acting chief of the Army's 10th Infantry Division, said the clash occurred after ground troops encountered a 40-man rebel band at Barangay L.S. Sarmiento, Laak, Compostela Valley at around 8:30 a.m.

Cabales said the NPA group were the same rebel band that troops from the 25th Infantry Battalion had engaged in a clash in Barangay Casoon in Monkayo town which led to the seizure of an NPA camp last July 10.

He said the rebel group was planning to avenge the seizure of the communist camp in Boy Casison through an ambush against military personnel but failed as security forces anticipated the plot.

Prior to the series of encounters, Lt. Col. Ismael Mandanas, commander of 25IB said that they have been receiving reports that the same NPA rebel group will consolidate at Barangay Casoon to conduct tactical offensives prior to President Duterte's State of the Nation Address in compliance to their communist leaders instructions."

Anticipating the NPA attack, combined troops from the 25th Infantry Battalion and 60th Infantry Battalion conducted combat patrol in Barangay Casoon and eventually chanced upon the same rebel group.

An hour-long fighting ensued with the rebel band, after which the insurgents withdrew leaving 8 of their comrades dead.

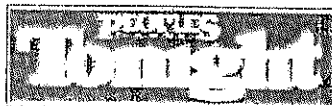
The troops recovered six high-powered firearms consisting of five armalite rifles and an M60 machine gun left by the fleeing rebels.

Major Gen. Noel Clement, commander of the 10th Infantry Division, lauded the bravery of the troops even as he expressed sadness following the death of one of the soldiers, who was not named pending notification of his loved ones.

"We will not lower our guards against any arm threat that can harm the peaceful leaving of our people," Clement said.

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8 Reds, soldier killed in ComVal clash

EIGHT members of New People's Army (NPA) and a soldier were killed in an encounter yesterday morning in Laak, Compostela Valley.

Capt. Alexandre F. Cabales, spokesman of the Army's 10th Infantry Division, said the identities of the fatalities were not yet available as of press time.

Reports said the encounter occurred early morning yesterday at Bgy. LS Sarmiento, Laak town.

Cabales said combined troops from the Army's 25th and 60th Infantry Battalions were on patrol in the area when they encountered some 40 rebels belonging to Secom 3 and PBC 4.

A firefight immediately occurred that resulted in the killing of eight rebels and

one soldier.

The bodies of the slain rebels were recovered by government forces together with six high-powered firearms, including M-16 ArmaLite rifles and M60 machine gun, left by their comrades.

Cabales said during the encounter, a soldier was wounded and was rushed to the hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

It can be recalled that last July 10, elements of Army's 25th IB engaged in a firefight the same rebel group in Bgy. Casoon, Monkayo, Compostela Valley. During the encounter, troops recovered an NPA encampment.

Accordingly, prior to the encounters, 25th IB Commander Lt. Col. Ismael

Mandanas received reports that the rebels will consolidate at Bgy. Casoon and will conduct tactical offensives prior to President Duterte's State of the Nation Address (SONA) in compliance with their communist leaders' instructions.

Maj. Gen. Noel S. Clement, 10ID commander, lauded the bravery of the troops. Clement expressed sorrow while rendering his salute to the fallen soldier for offering the ultimate sacrifice in pursuit of peace for the people.

"We will not lower our guards against any armed threat that can harm the peaceful living of our people," Clement said. **Zaida delos Reyes-Palanca with Genine Kassandra Gatdula (OJT)**

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Pahina. 2

ENCOUNTER: 8 NPA REBELS, 1 SUNDALO PATAY

Patay ang walong miyembro ng mga rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) at isang sundalo matapos na magsagupa sa Brgy. L.S. Sarmiento, Laak, Compostela Valley kahapon ng umaga.

Batay sa ulat ni Army's 10th Infantry Division (ID) Commander Brig. Gen. Noel Clement, bago nangyari ang sagupaan ng dalawang panig dakong alas-8:30 ng gabi ay nagsagawa ng tactical

offensives ang kaniyang mga tauhan nang makatanggap ng report na ang nasabing mga rebelde ay maghahasik ng kaguluhan sa Compostela Valley at iba pang bahagi ng Davao Region upang ipahiya sa

State of the Nation Address (SONA) si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa darating na Hulyo 24.

Dito ay nasabat ang tinatayang 40 armadong rebelde mula sa SECOM 3 ng Pulang Bagani Command 4 na nauwi sa bakbakan ng magkabilang panig.

Tumagal ng halos isang oras ang palitan ng putok na ikinasawi ng walong rebelde at isang sundalo na hindi muna pinangalanan.

Agad namang nagsitakas ang mga rebelde na inabandona ang mga nasawi nilang kasamahan patungo sa direksyon ng kagubatan.

Narekober sa encounter site ang limang M16 armalite rifles at M60 machine gun na gamit ng mga rebelde - Joy Cantos-

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6 soldiers wounded in Quirino land mine blast

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—Six soldiers were wounded in a blast on Tuesday when their convoy hit a land mine in the remote village of Sangbay at Nagtipunan town in Quirino province. A report from the Army's 5th Infantry Division said the soldiers, belonging to the 86th Infantry Battalion, were on their way to their headquarters when their trucks hit the mine. The wounded soldiers were taken to Maddela District Hospital in Barangay Diduyon in Nagtipunan, about 25 kilometers away. Three of them were later transferred to Quirino Province Medical Center in Cabarroguis town. Army officials blamed the New People's Army for the blast, saying the explosive was buried there in retaliation for the Army's seizure of a rebel camp in nearby Barangay Disimungal on July 4: —MELVIN GASCÓN

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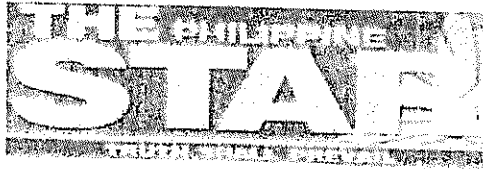
Page: AB

Gov't troops in Bicol pitch in for Marawi evacuees

LEGAZPI CITY—Soldiers from the Bicol region on Tuesday sent a truckload of relief goods to Marawi City to help residents displaced by the fighting between government troops and terrorists in the Lanao del Sur provincial capital. Col. Andrew Costelo, 9th Infantry Division (ID) chief of staff, said the donation consisted of 200 sacks of rice, boxes of canned goods and clothes, and P800,000 raised by soldiers and other donors. Costelo said each soldier in their division gave P150, corresponding to their subsistence allowance for a day. Maj. Gen. Manolito Orense, 9th ID commander, said letters written by students in the region were also sent to evacuees and soldiers in Marawi to boost their morale. —MICHAEL B. JAUCIAN

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Army soldier nabbed for rob try

Police arrested an alleged member of the Philippine Army after he attempted to rob a pizza store in Quezon City on

Monday night.

Ventura Ramirez Jr. was beaten up by crewmembers of Angels Pizza located along Kalayaan Avenue in Barangay Pinyahan before he was turned over to police.

Ramirez is said to be residing at the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

Investigation showed that Ramirez pulled out a handgun and declared a heist as soon as he entered the pizza parlor at around 10:30 p.m. But employees of the store ganged up on the suspect.

"They were able to subdue the suspect," Superintendent Pedro Sanchez, commander of the Kamuning police station 10, said.

Ramirez allegedly yielded a .45-caliber pistol, P1,000 in cash and several identification cards, including one supposedly issued by the Intelligence Service of the AFP.

He is being held by police on charges of attempted robbery.

– Emmanuel Tupas

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The Manila Times

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ASG Vietnamese hostage killed

BY AL JACINTO

ZAMBOANGA CITY: A Vietnamese sailor kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf group was found in a village in Sulu province where security forces clashed with militants.

A bullet-riddled body, believed to be that of MV Royal 16 cargo crew member Tran Khac Dung, was recovered in the village of Buhanginan in Patikul town where army soldiers battled with the Abu

Sayyaf on July 8. It was unknown whether Tran was killed during the fighting.

The report cannot be independently confirmed and the military's Western Mindanao Command did not give any statement whether the recovered cadaver of the militant was actually that of the Vietnamese hostage.

The fighting erupted in Patikul town after two kidnapped Filipino fishermen Reyjim Rocabo, 41, and

Roel Leones, 37, who were freed on July 7 by the Abu Sayyaf, provided information to the military on the location of the militant group and its hostages. The information provided by the 610 led troops to the hideout of Abu Sayyaf commander Almujer Yadah in Patikul.

The battle also killed a soldier and wounded 15 others from the 21st Infantry Battalion.

Rocabo and Leones, crewmembers of FB Ramona 2, were kid-

napped in December 20 last year in the Celebes Sea. Their ship captain, Noel Besconde, was beheaded on April 13 by the Abu Sayyaf after his employer and family failed to pay ransom.

Another crewman, Roy Ramos, was freed in June in Talipao town.

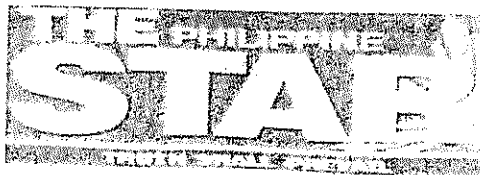
The Abu Sayyaf, which is still holding 16 foreigners and four Filipinos, recently beheaded Vietnamese sailors Hoang Thong and Hoang Va Hai after their govern-

ment and families failed to pay ransom. Their decapitated bodies were recovered in the village of Tumalubong in Sumisip town in Basilan province.

The sailors were kidnapped on November 11 off Basilan along with four others seamen Phang Minh Tuan and Do Trung Hieu and Huang Vo, who was released last month by the Abu Sayyaf in Sumisip town. They are all crew members of the cargo ship MV Royal 16.

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Duterte: I'm ready to die for Marawi

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

President Duterte is ready to die for the liberation of Marawi City from the Islamic State (IS)-inspired Maute terror group as he plans to enter the battle zone anew after two failed attempts in recent weeks.

Duterte said he wanted to personally boost the morale of soldiers in Marawi about one and a half months after he declared martial law and suspended the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus when Maute terrorists attacked the city last May 23.

"Since they said we came here to die, when I get there and they ask me, 'Mayor, why are you here? I will tell them I came here also to die,' he said in English and Filipino during the 26th anniversary celebration of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City yesterday.

The President has been vocal about his intent to penetrate the conflict area, but his security advisers twice prevented him ostensibly due to bad weather.

Duterte also reiterated his call to the military yesterday not to take prisoners,

in Marawi, saying this would be an additional burden on government. Since the conflict has caused massive destruction in Marawi looking for a place to lock up the prisoners would be problematic, he said.

Instead, Duterte told the soldiers, "*patayin mo* (kill them)."

"If you apprehend them, take them into custody. They will have to be detained where they committed the crime of rebellion – that's in Marawi – and they will be tried within the jurisdiction of Marawi, the place of the commission of the offense. *Saan naman ako maglagay ng presohan din* (where will I put a prison there)?" he said.

He said if the terrorists are detained, the other militants would free them when the soldiers leave, "so we don't need prisoners."

Duterte assured the residents of Marawi that the government would not abandon them.

"We will help you, we will help rebuild (Marawi)," he said.

He added that his administration is focused on fighting corruption and helping the poor.

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Sona sends House stirring

By Maricel V. Cruz and Joel E. Zurbano

THE House of Representatives will implement stricter security measures in this year's State of the Nation Address to prevent any possible violence by drug lords and terrorists.

House Sergeant-at-Arms Ronald Detabali, at a news conference, said drug lords who have been affected by President Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs could use the occasion to retaliate and sow terror.

"Definitely we will impose heightened security measures not only because of the current problem on ISIS, but because of the huge achievements of the President especially in the war on drugs and criminality," Detabali said.

Without giving details, Detabali said there would be more security personnel from the Presidential Security Group, Philippine National Police, Armed Forces of the Philippines and House security personnel compared to President Rodrigo Duterte's first Sona last year. *Next page*

Sona...

From A1

As they did last year, House leaders urged lawmakers and guests to do away with the ostentatious and to instead dress simply.

"The Speaker says the Sona is going to be a working day and so officials and employees are advised to wear inexpensive modest clothes. It could be Filipina dress, but not long gown; it could also be business attire," said House Secretary-General Cesar Pareja.

Metro Manila police director Oscar Albayalde said 6,000 men from the National Capital Region Police Office and 2,000 men from the Metro Manila Development Authority will be deployed to ensure peace and order and manage the flow of traffic during the Sona on July 24.

Albayalde said he and other NCRPO officials would discuss security deployment for the Sona with Quezon City Police District chief Supt. Guillermo Eleazar, who is the overall commander of the police forces to be deployed to the Batasan Pambansa complex.

Albayalde said security measures during the Sona would be stricter this year because of some issues such as the martial law in Mindanao and the ongoing armed conflict in Marawi City.

He added the NCRPO will implement security adjustments for this year's Sona upon orders from Malacañang.

The NCRPO chief said they had added 2,000 policemen due to the presence of Islamic State-leaning sympathizers in Metro Manila.

Metro Manila is under heightened alert in light of the threat posed by

members of the extremist Maute group.

The Maute group on May 23 attacked Marawi City resulting in the declaration of martial law in Mindanao.

Albayalde's office recently received information that a document was being circulated through social media that a series of bombings would be launched anytime in the National Capital Region.

That memo, dated June 16, spoke of a series of terror attacks planned by the extremist Maute group in Manila, Makati and Quezon City.

Last year, protesters were allowed to conduct rallies during Duterte's first Sona.

Albayalde also said officials of the Commission on Human Rights would meet with anti-riot policemen days before the Sona.

During the Metro Manila Council meeting, MMDA chairman Danilo Lim said the traffic enforcers will manage the crowd and vehicular flow during the event.

Lim also advised motorists to take alternate routes since traffic flow is expected to be heavy due to protesters.

Authorities earlier said three lanes on the northbound of Commonwealth Avenue will be allotted for protesters this year.

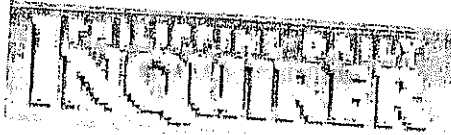
In 2016 Sona, two lanes were allotted to protesters but they also occupied another lane and snarled the traffic flow on the major thoroughfare. Plastic barriers will also be installed near the Batasan Complex.

The MMDA's Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program, commonly known as the "number-coding," will remain in effect.

Emergency personnel will also be on standby, including fire trucks and ambulances.

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Palace: Martial law extension depends on AFP

By Philip C. Tubeza
@pctubezaINQ

Malacañang said on Wednesday President Duterte would wait for the military's full report and security assessment before deciding on whether to ask Congress to extend martial law in Mindanao.

Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella assured the nation that Mr. Duterte's decision would be for the national interest, law and order, and the safety of the entire country.

"The President has repeatedly stressed that the Philippines abides by the rule of law, and extending martial law would be based solely on the assessment and recommenda-

tion of the military and the police," Abella said.

Philippine National Police chief Director General Ronald dela Rosa has already recommended an extension.

The reports from Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff Gen. Eduardo Año on the situation in Marawi and Mindanao would have to be considered before Mr. Duterte "initiates any action" on any proposal to extend martial law and continue the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, Abella said.

"We assure all our citizens that the primordial consideration of our Commander in Chief is the national interest,"

Abella said.

"He is also for the immediate restoration of the rule of law, peace, order, and the overall safety and well-being of our citizens not only in Marawi but in the whole of country," he added.

Dela Rosa said on Tuesday he had recommended an extension of martial law to senators.

He did not specify the extension period, saying only that it should be "within the legal framework."

"I'm [thinking] the maximum [period] that it could be extended because the situation there is still dangerous," Dela Rosa said.

"We are just on the implementing side," he said. "That's

policy... It's up to the senators if it's five years, two years, six months or six days."

The President declared martial law in Mindanao on May 23 after Maute and Abu Sayyaf terrorists laid siege to Marawi City.

More than 500 people have been killed in nearly two months of fighting between the Islamic State-inspired gunmen and government forces.

The 60-day martial law period expires on July 22, two days before the President's State of the Nation Address.

Under the constitution, any extension of martial law would have to be approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives. INQ

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Malaya
The National Newspaper

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6 in 10 Pinoys oppose martial law beyond Mindanao

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

AT LEAST six out of 10 residents from Luzon and the Visayas opposed the idea of extending martial law outside Mindanao, even if majority of Filipinos supported its imposition in Mindanao last month, the June 23 to 26 survey of the Social Weather Stations (SWS) showed.

The survey, involving 1,200 respondents nationwide, showed that 63 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that the President “should also declare martial law in the Visayas,” while 23 percent agreed. This means a net agreement rating of -40.

Opposition to the proposed extension of martial law in the Visayas was highest among respondents from Visayas (79 percent disagree, 15 percent agree) and Metro Manila (71 percent disagree, 20 percent agree) while close to a majority of respondents from Mindanao agreed to its expansion (43 percent agree, 38 percent disagree).

The SWS results also showed that 67 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that Duterte “should also declare martial law in Luzon” while 20 percent agreed. This resulted in a net agreement score of -47.

Opposition to the proposed extension of martial law in Luzon was highest among respondents from Metro Manila (79 percent disagree, 13 percent agree) and in Luzon (76 percent disagree, 13 percent agree). Many respondents from Mindanao agreed to its expansion (40 percent agree, 38 percent disagree).

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said Malacañang acknowledges the sentiments of the public but reassured that the decision on whether to expand the coverage of martial law outside of Mindanao or extend its imposition “would depend on the situation on the ground as assessed and recommended by military and police authorities.”

The SWS survey also showed that 57 percent favored the imposition of martial law in Mindanao. Around 29 percent said “it should have been declared only for Marawi City and the province of Lanao del Sur” and 11 percent said “it should have been declared only for Marawi City, the province of Lanao de Sur and nearby provinces.” Two percent said they were undecided.

Abella said the support of the majority for martial law validates the Filipinos’ approval of the performance of the President during the last quarter where he garnered a “very good” +66 satisfaction rating.

He said the positive public response is also indicative indicates that the public believed that there was “factual and legal basis” for the imposition of martial law in Mindanao last May 23.

Abella said public interest along with the recommendations of the military and the police would be the main considerations of President Duterte in deciding whether to extend the imple-

6 IN 10

mentation of martial law.

PNP Director General Ronald dela Rosa has said he favors the

extension of martial law, which is set to lapse on July 22.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Regino Padilla said: “We have stated our position that the AFP will

conduct an assessment on the need to extend or not ML (martial law)

“That assessment will then recommend our position for the commander-in-chief’s perusal

and approval. Let us wait for that. Whatever the commander-in-chief’s decision is, the AFP will be ready to comply and implement,” Padilla also said. -- *With Victor Reyes*

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Duterte to wait for full ML report before deciding on extension – Palace



ABELLA

By Ted Tuvera

Malacañang yesterday said President Rodrigo Duterte is "waiting for the full report" of the military and other security agencies involved before he initiates any action on the proposal to extend martial law in Mindanao.

Citing all cities in the region are "under threat," Philippine National Police chief Director General Ronald de la Rosa earlier in the day said he would personally recommend that martial law in Mindanao be extended to the "maximum period" which the law allows.

But presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella stressed the President abides by the law, and that he would lift martial law if both the military and the police say so.

"The Palace is waiting for the full report of the Secretary of National Defense and Martial Law Administrator and AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) Chief of Staff, the Martial Law Implementor, before President Duterte initiates any action for the proposal of an extension of martial law and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus," he said.

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Duterte to wait for full ML report before deciding on extension – Palace

From page 1

Mr. Duterte signed Proclamation 216 placing the entire Mindanao under martial law for a 60-day period to supposedly contain the Islamic State (IS)-inspired attack in Marawi City.

De la Rosa said they "assessed that all the major cities in Mindanao are under threat," referring to earlier photos and videos of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon and alleged members of Maute group apparently planning the attack on Marawi City.

According to him, the information should not be dismissed hastily.

"We take this information seriously because they did it to Marawi, they can also do it in other places. As I have said, we better not take chances," de la Rosa stressed.

The PNP chief the other day also said he is likely to recommend the extension of martial law, but not for a five-year period as earlier suggested by Speaker Pantalon Alvarez.

The PNP chief, who claims to have already made agreements with AFP chief Gen Eduardo Año, said he'd rather have another 60-day martial law period once the incumbent one lapses.

Abella, however, assured that whatever Mr. Duterte's decision would be on martial law, national interest is "always first on his consideration.

"We assure all our citizens that the primordial consideration of our Commander-in-Chief is the national interest. He is also for the immediate restoration of the rule of law, peace, order, and the overall safety and well-being of our citizens not only in Marawi but in the whole of country," he added.

House on heightened alert

The House of Representatives, meanwhile, is on heightened alert for possible terror attack now and in the coming days leading to Mr. Duterte's second State of the Nation Address (Sona). House Sergeant-at-arms Ronald Detabali yesterday said.

He noted that drug lords and IS-inspired Maute group may cause trouble during the Sona of the President on July 24.

Detabali, at a press conference, said drug lords who have been affected by the President's anti-narcotics campaign could use the occasion to retaliate and sow terror.

"Definitely we will impose heightened security measures not only because of the current problem on IS, but because of the huge achievements of the President especially on war on drugs and criminality," he told reporters after receiving intelligence reports.

"The drug lords have already lost men and money, they are just going to pay some fools who would volunteer to stir chaos, they are going to do that," Detabali stressed.

Without giving details, Detabali said there would be more security personnel from the Presidential Security Group (PSG), PNP, AFP and House security personnel during the Sona.

Gerry Baldo

17 July 2017

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Palace welcomes positive response to martial law

By ARGYLE CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

Malacañang yesterday welcomed the result of the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey showing a majority of Filipinos support the declaration of martial law in Mindanao to prevent the Marawi rebellion from spreading.

In a nationwide survey conducted from June 23-26 with 1,200 respondents, 57 percent of the respondents agreed that President Duterte was right in declaring martial law in Mindanao.

Twenty-nine percent said martial law should have been declared only in Lanao del Sur where Marawi is ▶4

located while 11 percent said martial law should also be declared in nearby provinces aside from Lanao del Sur.

Of the respondents, 64 percent of those polled from Mindanao said the declaration was a "right decision." Fifty-eight percent of Metro Manilans likewise agreed it was the right move and so did respondents from the Visayas (57 percent) and the rest of Luzon (53 percent).

The same sentiment was found among Filipinos in urban (58 percent) and rural (56 percent) areas.

Despite the figures, ACT Teachers Rep. Antonio Tinio said the "support for martial law in Mindanao is not solid and unanimous."

Factual, legal basis

Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella, in a statement, said the Filipinos understand that the situation in Marawi City was critical enough for the declaration of martial law and the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus in entire Mindanao.

"The positive public response indicates that they believe the factual and legal basis of the proclamation of martial law for Mindanao," Abella said yesterday.

Abella was referring to the Maute Group's attempt to remove allegiance from the government and to deprive the Chief Executive of his powers to enforce the laws and maintain public order and safety.

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"Hence, the need for the call of martial law, in case of invasion or rebellion, when the public safety requires it, as provided by the Constitution," he added.

The Palace official also said the survey results validate the public's "very good" satisfaction rating of Duterte.

Duterte marked his first year in office with a "very good rating" and highest satisfaction rating he has so far received.

The second quarter SWS survey conducted from June 23 to 26, showed 78 percent of Filipinos are satisfied with Duterte's performance. Duterte enjoyed an "excellent" +73 rating in Visayas; "very good" +58 rating in Luzon; but suffered a 12-point downgrade to a +75 rating in his bailiwick -- Mindanao.

No to expanded ML

Abella likewise took note of the sentiment in the survey where majority of the Filipinos object to an expanded martial law in the Visayas and Luzon.

Based on the survey, 63 percent disagreed that Duterte should expand martial law (ML) to Visayas, while 67 percent disagreed the President expand his declaration to Luzon.

"As to the same survey showing that majority, except in Mindanao, opposes expanding martial law in Luzon and in the Visayas, it is noteworthy to mention that all these would depend on the situation on the ground as assessed

and recommended by military and police authorities," Abella said.

Voting 11-3-1, the Supreme Court (SC) last week upheld Duterte's Proclamation No. 216 placing Mindanao under martial law.

The 60-day declaration would lapse on July 22 but the President hinted he would not lift his proclamation before his State-of-the-Nation Address which will be on July 24.

Lorenzana report

Abella said the President is still waiting for the recommendation of Defense Secretary and Martial Law Administrator Delfin Lorenzana before deciding to either extend or lift his declaration of martial law in Mindanao.

"The President has repeatedly stressed that the Philippines abides by the Rule of Law, and extending martial law would be based solely on the assessment and recommendation of the military and the police," Abella stressed.

But he assured the public that the President will take the national interest in highest consideration when he decides.

"We assure all our citizens that the primordial consideration of our Commander in Chief is the national interest. He is also for the immediate restoration of the rule of law, peace, order, and the overall safety and well-being of our citizens not only in Marawi but in the whole of country," he said. (With reports from Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz and Eilson A. Quismorio)

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MANILA BULLETIN

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AFP to wounded soldiers: The nation is behind you

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana assured soldiers wounded in protracted skirmishes with ISIS-inspired Maute terrorist group members of full support from the Filipino people and the national government.

Lorenzana aired the message to the wounded-in-action (WIA) soldiers who are currently recuperating at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center (AFPMC) in V. Luna Road, Quezon City during his visit on Tuesday.

"Magpapakatatag kayong lahat! Ang buong bansa ay nagdarasal para sa inyong kaligtasan at para sa kapanatagan ng inyong pamilya (Be firm all of you. The whole nation is praying for your safety and for the contentment of your family)," Lorenzana said.

The Defense Chief acknowledged the bravery of Filipino soldiers, who have proven their gallantry in action in conflict-affected areas such as Marawi City.

"We are almost there at the moment of our success so please do not lose hope," he added.

Lorenzana was joined by members of a socio-civic group from Mindanao, the Damers and Clarions of Cotabato (DCC), an organization composed of graduates from Notre Dame in Cotabato. It was first organized in Manila in 2010 and now has around 2000 members.

Led by their President, Mrs. Nitz Sodusta, DCC members manifested their concrete support to soldiers by giving care packages to 150 patients who are currently recuperating in the hospital.

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'LUMAD' FLEE AS SOLDIERS RETURN TO SURIGAO VILLAGES

By **Chris Panganiban**
and **Jaymee T. Gamil**
@Team_Inquirer

LIANGA, SURIGAO DEL SUR— Less than a year after their return to their villages, more than 2,000 Manobo *lumad* (indigenous peoples) from nine hinterland villages in three towns had to flee their homes again as soldiers occupied their communities last week, the human rights group Karapatan said.

United Church of Christ in the Philippines Bishop Modesto Villasanta, chair of Karapatan in Surigao del Sur province, said 2,043 lumad villagers fled after noting a helicopter hovering around their villages last week.

The lumad residents now staying at Simowao Tribal Community School in Sitio Emerald in the village of Diatagon here are the same people who left the community in Sitio Hanaya and stayed for a year in Tarag City after the killing of educator Emerito Samarca and lumad leader Dionel Campos on

Sept. 1, 2015.

Residents blamed the paramilitary group Magahat-Bagani for the murder of Samarca and Campos. The group, they said, was targeting suspected communist leaders and sympathizers.

The lumad returned to their villages in September 2016 after the military left their community.

"Now, amid martial law and continuing militarization, these indigenous communities are again threatened by military operation," Karapatan said in a statement.

Karapatan said after President Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao on May 23, a

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“Lumad” residents who fled their villages arrive in Sitio Emerald in Lianga town in Surigao del Sur province. —CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

checkpoint was put up in front of the military detachment in Barangay Diatagon where residents and visitors were required to show identification cards or write their names in a logbook.

Villagers also noted increased presence of soldiers in the area after the President declared martial law following the siege of Marawi City by Islamic State-inspired terrorists.

But Col. Franco Nemesio Gacal, commanding officer of the 402nd Army Brigade based in Tandag City, told reporters that the military helicopter just passed by Han-ayan since

the area was part of its usual route.

According to Gacal, the Army patrol base in Diatagon has been operating for a long time. He said checking people passing through the area was “standard operating procedure.”

Residents first reported seeing soldiers in a detachment in Barangay St. Christine in Lianga on July 2. More soldiers arrived on July 3 in Barangay Libas Sud in San Miguel.

On July 4, another group of soldiers was posted in Barangay Bolhoon in San Miguel. On the same day, residents of Diatagon and Panukmoan vil-

lages said they saw soldiers in farming areas in their communities, prompting them to leave.

Karapatan said military aircraft flew over the communities on July 5 and July 6, prompting lumad residents in Diatagon to evacuate to a school outside their village.

Classes in alternative lumad schools were also disrupted, affecting 800 students and 43 volunteer teachers.

“We have yet to recover from being displaced, and now we are again forced to evacuate,” said resident Josephine Pagalan, INQ.

15 July 2017



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'Friendly fire' kills 2 soldiers

By John Paolo Bencito

TWO soldiers were killed and 11 others were wounded in another military air strike that struck Marawi City on Wednesday, the second reported incident of friendly fire amid efforts to flush out Islamic State-inspired terrorists in the besieged city.

This is the second time that soldiers died in a "friendly fire" following the botched bombing run that accidentally killed 10 government troops last month.

"Investigation is being conducted to determine the circumstances surrounding an incident where an ordinance missed its target during an airstrike conducted at about 12 noon of 12 July 2017," Colonel Edgard Arevalo, chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Public Affairs Office, said in a statement.

"Initial report from Marawi indicates that the bomb was 250 meters off target. The impact of the explosion caused the collapse of nearby structures," he added.

Large debris from the heavily reinforced buildings accidentally hit two soldiers, who died immediately while 11 others sustained minor shrapnel wounds and are now recuperating in the nearby hospital.

The military vowed to immediately investigate the mishap.

"We are saddened by this unfortunate incident. We are attending to the needs of the families of our troops who died or were hurt," Arevalo said.

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2 dead in Marawi airstrike

Two soldiers were killed while 11 others were injured when a bomb during an airstrike missed its target and exploded near their position in Marawi City at noon yesterday.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines said that it is now investigating the incident.

AFP Public Affairs Office chief Marine Col. Edgard Arevalo said initial report from Marawi indicated that the bomb was 250 meters off target and the impact of the explosion caused the collapse of nearby structures.

"Large debris from heavily reinforced buildings accidentally hit two of our personnel who succumbed to death in the process," Arevalo said.

The wounded soldiers are now recuperating in a nearby hospital.

"We are saddened by this unfortunate incident. We are attending to the needs of the families of our troops who died or were hurt," Arevalo said.

"Cognizant units from the AFP have formed a group that is now conducting initial investigations to determine the cause of the mishap and prevent the chances of it reoccurring," he added.

It was the second time that an airstrike in Marawi killed government security forces. The first was June 1 when 11 soldiers were killed.

(Francis T. Wakefield)

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POLICE FILES

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Military airstrike sablay uli: 2 sundalo patay, 11 sugatan

PATAY ang dalawang sundalo, habang sugatan ang 11 na iba pa makaraang muling sumablay ang airstrike ng militar kahapon.

Batay sa report ni Bombo Laurence Geralde, aksidenteng tumama sa lokasyon ng ground troops ang bombang ibabagsak sana sa kinaroroonan ng mga miyembro ng Maute-ISIS group.

Sinasabing mga tauhan ng Philippine Army ang nag-o-operate sa bahaging iyon ng Marawi nang pumalva ang airstrike.

Inilarawan naman ni Marine Col. Edgard Areval, AFP public information chief, na "misfire" ang nangyari nang tumama ang inihulog na bomba sa lugar ng inga tropa ng pamahalaan.

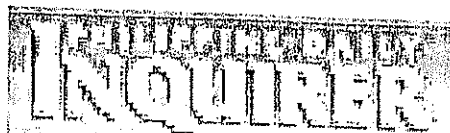
Nabagsakan umano ng debris ang mga sundalong nasawi, habang nagtamo naman ng shrapnel ang mga sugatan.

Bumuo na rin daw ng grupo ang AFP na siyang magsasagawa ng kaululang imbestigasyon sa nasabing pangyayari.

Kung maalala noong Hunyo 1, umaabot naman sa 11 mga sundalo rin ang nasawi habang pito ang sugatan sa nangyari ring friendly fire sa Marawi.

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BATTLE FOR MARAWI

2 SOLDIERS KILLED IN FRIENDLY FIRE

By Allan Nawal
@inquirermindanao

MARAWI CITY—Two soldiers were killed and 11 others injured when a bomb dropped by a military plane missed its target and exploded near the position of government troops here around noon on Wednesday.

Lt. Col. Jo-Ar Herrera, spokesperson for Task Force Marawi, said an investigation was “being conducted” to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident.

250 meters off-target

“Initial report from Marawi indicates that the bomb was 250 meters off-target,” Herrera said.

“The impact of the explosion caused the collapse of nearby structures. Large debris from heavily reinforced buildings ac-

identally hit two of our personnel, who [died] in the process,” he said.

Eleven other soldiers suffered minor shrapnel injuries, he added.

“We are saddened by this unfortunate incident. We are attending to the needs of the families of our troops who died or were hurt,” Herrera said.

He said the military had formed a group to investigate the accident, determine its cause and make recommendations to prevent similar incidents from happening.

It was the second time that soldiers were the ones hit by government bombs during fighting with terrorists in Marawi City.

On May 31, 11 soldiers perished when a bomb intended for the Maute group landed on an area occupied by soldiers. INQ

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POLICE FILES

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Miyembro ng NPA ang Kadamay

- Ang pabahay na nakalaan para sa pulis at sundalo na nagsasakripisyo ng buhay ay di dapat ibigay sa mga makakaliwang sakit lang ng ulo at pabigat sa gobyerno. Imbes na magpasalamat nagawa pang magbanta ng grupong Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay) na aangkinin rin nila ang mga housing projects na para sa mga sundalo, kapulisan at bumbero sa Bustos Bulacan. Ang lakas ng loob ng taga pagsalita ng Kadamay na si Gloria Arellano, na nagsabi na sila kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na ookupahin nila ang 3,000 kabahayan sa Bocaue at 877 bahay sa Bustos.

Ang tigas ng mukha nyo magtrabaho kayo. Hindi kasalanan ng gobyerno ang paghihirap nyo. Mas marami pa nga kayong bisyo kesa sa mga naghihirap magtrabaho ng tama at marangal. Alagad nga talaga kayo CPP-NDF-NPA! - Jersan R. Arguilles, Mindoro

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Pahina. 2

8 kapwa sundalo nabagsakan ng bomba **AFP, SABLAY NA NAMAN**

PATAY ang dalawang sundalo, habang sugatan ang anim na iba pa, makaraang muling sumablay ang air strike, kahapon.

Batay sa ulat ni Bombo Lawrence Gerald, aksidenteng tumama sa lokasyon ng ground troops ang bombang ibabagsak sana sa kinaronan ng mga miyembro

ng Maute-ISIS.

Sinasabing mga tauhan ng Philippine Army ang nag-o-operate sa bahaging iyon ng Marawi nang pumalya ang air strike.

Patuloy pa ang umbestigasyon sa insidente kasabay ang pagkilala sa mga biktima ng musfire.

Matatandaang, 11 sun-

dalo ang nasawi habang pito ang nasugatan matapos sumablay ang ibinagsak na bomba ng SIA Marchetti SF 260 bomber plane ng Philippine Air Force (PAF) sa air strike operations laban sa Maute-ISIS noong Mayo 31

(BRT)

13 July 2017



Pahina. 2

TURKISH TERRORISTS NASA PINAS

Ibinulgar ni Turkish Ambassador Esra Cankour na isang grupo ng teroristang Turkish ang nagtatago na sa Pilipinas na siyang nasa likod ng pambubuyo sa maibigong kudeta sa kanilang bansa.

Kaya naman ay nagsasagawa ngayon ng masusing beripikasyon ang AFP at pinakilos na ang kanilang intelligence operatives upang iberipika ang sinabi ni Cankour na nagkakat na ang Fetullah Gulen Movement, isang grupo ng mga kinatatatagang terorista sa Turkey sa 50 bansa kabilang ang Pilipinas.

Sa pagbubulgar ni Cankour na naging aktibo sa bansa sa pamamagitan ng isang madrasah school sa Zamboanga na nagbukas noong 1977 at dalawa pang eskuwelahan sa Metro Manila.

Ayon naman kay AFP Spokesman Brig Gen. Restituto Padilla na kailangan muna ang alamang mabuti ang impormasyong ibinulgar ni Cankour. -Joy Santos-

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BusinessMirror

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Guidelines on expensive military, police pensions likely out by end of year

THE proposal bringing the country's military, police, coast and jail guards, as well as firemen pension, under the ambit of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) should be completed by year-end.

Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III said on Wednesday he has asked the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to provide the Department of Finance (DOF) with an updated list of personnel, since the latest record the government has was still dated 2010.

"We will complete the study maybe by the end of the year. Then, we will present that, obviously, to the Cabinet and then if required, which I think it is, has to be legislated," Dominguez told financial reporters.

National Treasurer Rosalia V. de Leon also confirmed the review on military pensions is under thorough evaluation.

"We are looking into the guidelines, in terms of how much [increase in pension rates can be implemented]," de Leon said.

This developed even as the military continues to liquidate the assets of the pension fund known as the Armed Forces

of the Philippines—Retirement and Separation Benefit System (AFP-RSBS) and refund the contribution of military personnel.

The AFP-RSBS was deactivated in 2007 by then-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the fund having failed long before to deliver its mandate to take care of the retirement benefits of its members.

Based on data from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), the government needs to fund the pension needs of 210,816 retirees coming from the military, police, coast guard and fire bureau, totaling an estimated P73.9 billion.

This represents a 4.08-percent expansion from estimated pension of some P71 billion as of 2016.

In April this year, the DOF and the DBM bared a plan to create a retirement fund for soldiers, through the GSIS, finally to address the increasing pension cost of soldiers serving the military.

Dominguez said this was a priority measure that needs to go through legislation quickly.

"That is a political decision, one that will have to be legislated. But we have to fix it," he said.

In February Budget Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno said addressing the cost of military pension through the annual budget was unsustainable and that the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council also agreed there should be a review of the pension system for military personnel and for policemen.

The Cabinet-level Development Budget Coordination Committee earlier said the pension requirement of military personnel as of end-2016 amounted to P71 billion and that this could more than double in eight years to P187.9 billion.

In the 2017 General Appropriations Act, the government sought a budget of P3.35 trillion of which P110 billion was allotted the PNP and another P137.2 billion for the Department of National Defense with P137.2 billion.

Last September, President Duterte signed an executive order (EO) increasing the combat duty and incentive pay of the AFP and the PNP.

Under the EO, the combat-duty pay of the enlisted personnel of the AFP and the PNP was raised to a fixed rate of P3,000 per month, from only P500 in the case of the AFP and only P340 a month for the PNP. *Rea Cu*

13 July 2017

The Manila Times

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Phoenix Petroleum bares mutual fund for soldiers

DAVAO-BASED independent oil firm Phoenix Petroleum Philippines, Inc. (Phoenix Petroleum) said it will earmark P100 million for the creation of a mutual fund to benefit soldiers, policemen and their families as the company marked its 10th listing anniversary on Tuesday.

"Our listing 10 years ago fueled the company's expansion from Davao City to the rest of the Philippines," Phoenix Petroleum President and Chief Executive Officer Dennis Uy said.

The mutual fund, called LIFE, is envisioned to offer continuous and substantial financial security to soldiers and their families through sound investment practices and guidance programs.

"Business should not only be about making revenues but about changing lives," Uy said.

"The LIFE Fund is our commitment of support to our military and police, who protect and defend us with their lives. Without their efforts to keep the peace, we will not be here celebrating milestones in our companies," the Davao businessman said.

"I hope our success inspires other businessmen to go public. For to be a publicly listed firm is to have the natural discipline to practice good governance and transparency, which enables us to access capital, tap new markets, attract talent, grow the business, and generate

more employment," he added.

"We need more entrepreneurs for the country—to create more jobs, to be socially responsible citizens, and to spread the wealth," Uy said.

The initial public offering (IPO) of Phoenix Petroleum on July 11, 2007 marked many firsts for the company as well as the local oil and gas industry.

It was the first company from Davao City to join the PSE and the first oil company to go public after the passage of the Oil Deregulation Law in 2008.

Proceeds from the IPO allowed Phoenix Petroleum to expand its retail network outside Mindanao: build the largest storage capacity among independent oil companies; and become a trusted supplier of commercial and retail customers.

From its first five stations in Mindanao in 2005, Phoenix Petroleum now has more than 500 stations nationwide and is the leading independent and fastest-growing oil company in the Philippines.

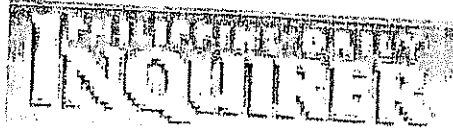
The company has moved to acquire the liquefied petroleum gas business of Petronas Dagangan Berhad in the Philippines.

Phoenix Petroleum also opened its ninth oil terminal in Consolacion, Cebu recently to better serve the growing demand of the shipping, transportation and construction sectors and other industries in the Visayas.

VOLTAIRE PALAÑA

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AFP: HOW DO YOU RECOVER P105M FROM DEAD PENSIONERS?

By Vince F. Nonato
@VinceNonatoINQ

The Commission on Audit (COA) has called out the Armed Forces of the Philippines for having yet to recover the excess payment of P105.33 million in benefits to pensioners who have already died.

In its annual audit report for the year 2016, COA said the AFP Finance Center reported having recovered only P127.11 million of the P232.44 million paid to deceased pensioners with no qualified beneficiaries.

This meant only 54.69 percent of the amount was collected, with COA adding that the P105.33-million balance is “yet to be recovered or may no longer be recovered.”

COA cited the military’s “defective pension information system” and “ineffective monitoring system” in keep-

ing track of the real status of pensioners as the cause for the overpayments.

“It appears therefore that these deceased pensioners were not regularly monitored as to their real status and that they were continuously paid although no longer qualified to receive benefits until their deletion from the payroll,” read the COA report.

Auditors said this resulted in the wastage of government funds that should have been used for other valid and urgent claims.

COA urged AFP to strengthen the control and monitoring of pensions funds to minimize undetected payments to deceased and unqualified pensioners.

It also pushed AFP to immediately remit the recovered overpayments to the Bureau of Treasury. INQ

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Air Force shoots down UP

Jet Spiker star dedicates win to colleagues in Marawi

By Marc Anthony Reyes
@marcreyesINQ

Philippine Air Force encountered a brief turbulence in the first set before cruising to a 29-27, 25-16, 25-22 victory over University of the Philippines Wednesday in the Premier Volleyball League Open Conference at Filoil Flying V Centre.

Immediately, top Jet Spiker Iari Yongco dedicated their second win in three games to their colleagues fighting in Marawi for more than a month now.

"We dedicate it to the soldiers in Marawi, we want to show them that we can also fight like them but through volleyball," said the 6-foot Yongco, who holds the rank of Air Woman First Class.

The Lady Maroons were on even terms in the first frame and had a set point ahead of the Jet Spikers, 25-24, after racing



We want to show them that we can also fight like them but through volleyball

IARI YONGCO
Air Woman First Class

from a 22-24 deficit.

But UP soon fell in a rash of errors, including two successive by main gunner Isa Molde.

"I admire them (Lady Maroons), they played good defense and often when we thought we killed the ball, they kept the ball alive," said Yongco

in Filipino.

Yongco finished with 15 points, while getting a lot of help from Jocemer Tapic, Mary Ann Pantino and Joy Cases, who accounted for 12, 11 and 10 points, respectively.

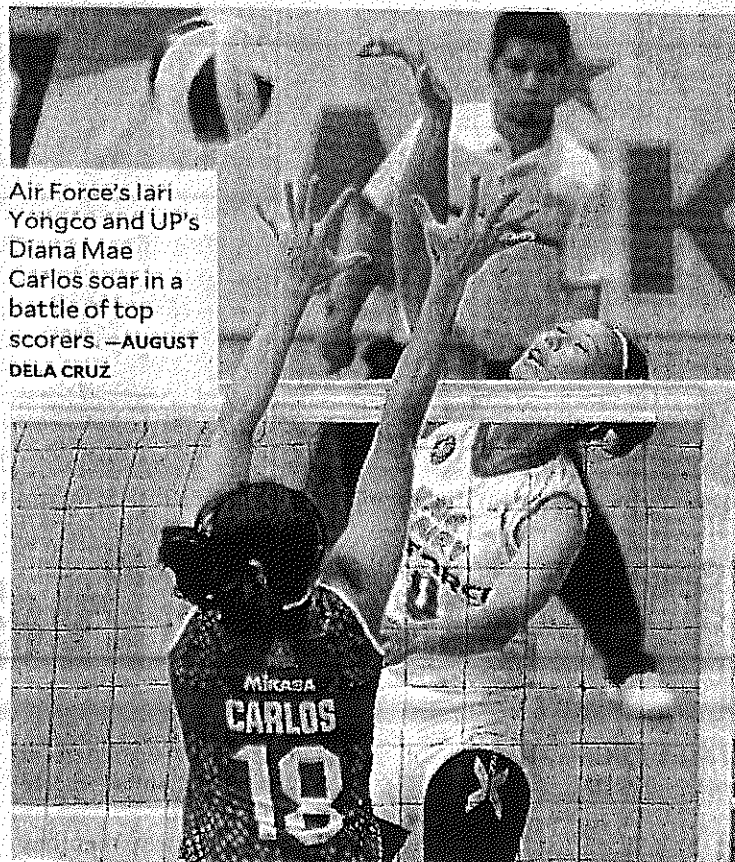
Diane Carlos wound up with 18 points, while Molde had 15 for UP, which absorbed its third defeat in as many games.

The Jet Spikers imposed themselves with 41 attack points against 38 by the Lady Maroons through brilliant setting from veteran Wendy Semana. But it was in defense that Air Force dominated by coming up with 10 kill-blocks compared to three by UP.

In the second game, Adamson hacked out a breakthrough win at the expense of Power Smashers, 25-20, 24-26, 25-19, 25-22. It was the Lady Falcons' first in three matches. The Power Smashers fell to 0-3. INQ

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS - Email add: oaarpa.army2012@gmail.com - Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295



Air Force's Iari Yóngco and UP's Diana Mae Carlos soar in a battle of top scorers. —AUGUST DELA CRUZ

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MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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VOLLEYBALL

Air Force downs UP

Hair Fairy-Air Force survived a fierce opening set before dismantling University of the Philippines (UP), 29-27, 25-16, 25-22, yesterday in the women's division of the Premier Volleyball League Open Conference at The Arena in San Juan City.

The Lady Jet Spikers and the Lady Maroons exchanged a flurry of spikes at the start of the match before a Jocemer Tapic attack and an error from UP gave Air Force the set win.

It proved to be crucial as the Lady Jet Spikers used it to soften the Lady Maroons for the kill with punishing plays that destroyed their net and floor defense, forcing the young collegiate squad to commit mistakes.

It was Air Force's second win in three outings, tying them with BaliPure at joint

second place.

UP, for its part, dropped to its third consecutive loss in as many matches.

Iari Yongco powered the Lady Jet Spikers with 15 points built on 13 kills and two blocks, even as Tapic added 12 points highlighted by two blocks and two aces.

May Ann Pantino fired nine kills to finish with 11 points and Joy Cases had 10 points to also fuel Air Force.

While dominating the attack line, 41-38, Air Force leaned mostly on its defense by posting 10 blocks.

Dianca Carlos and Isa Molde had 18 and 15 points, respectively, for UP but the Lady Maroons couldn't recover from its opening frame setback.

— Kristel Satumbaga

13 July 2017



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POSTSCRIPT

FEDERICO D. PASCUAL Jr.

Price of a 'surgical' bomb for Mautes

IT IS amazing how partisan politics has polluted the air in Manila. The other day I asked on *Twitter* if anybody had information, which I needed, on the unit price of those "surgical" bombs being dropped on rebel lairs in Marawi.



Instead of a simple price tag, I got this impertinent tweet of a reply:

"Cheap whatever the price considering the alternative. Maute wins and gays flung from rooftops." Huh?

It was a good thing a retired AFP officer, sober at 69, emailed me a longer but more factual answer, with the caveat that the correct figures may have changed since he left the service. He said:

"The Armed Forces does not announce the types of bombs being used in Marawi. But many times, what are being referred to as 'bombs' in the media are not bombs but rockets and other small missiles. If the ones used are rockets, then they will not be too expensive.

"An ordinary 'dumb' 250-pound bomb will cost something like \$2,000 to \$3,000 depending on the type and manufacture. Those US-made are more expensive, but practically all arms-manufacturing countries, including the Philippines, produce them. Floro used to make them.

"A 2.75-inch 'Hydra' ground-attack rocket costs a minimum of \$2,500. The cost will depend on its warhead. Air Force trainers pressed into service in Marawi are armed with these rockets. Also the SF 260 light attack planes as well as the MD500 choppers."

I took the opportunity to ask also about armored personnel carriers, such as the V-150, that our resourceful soldiers have converted into gaudy fighting machines clad in layers of cardboard and wooden planks scrawled with graffiti in the jeepney folk tradition.

He explained the seeming incongruity of wood and cardboard being used to protect steel armor:

"The soldiers in the field have discovered that RPG (rifle-propelled grenades) rounds just get embedded in wooden planks instead of exploding. These ammo have contact fuses *na puputok lang pag tumama sa matigas na object* like an armor plate."

With that input from the testing ground, the designers of the V-150 and other armored vehicles may want to go back to the drawing board.

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WOMEN SAY YES TO PEACE TALKS, NO TO MARTIAL LAW

Filipino women have been suffering for decades under a succession of governments who have promised change. Genuine social change, however, never came. Governments came and went, but the same social problems remained—kleptocracy, the plunder of our country's resources, widespread poverty, joblessness, landlessness, low wages.

Women became modern slaves, laboring without end in a futile attempt to ward off hunger and homelessness; suffering the lack of support services for their own basic needs; experiencing grave abuses of their human rights in the hands of men in uniform as they defend their land, their homes and their communities from local and foreign big business; experiencing sexual and other forms of violence against their person.

Women had high hopes when President Duterte came into power, even taking an active role when peace negotiations between the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the government began.

We anticipated the realization of the Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (Caser) as a possible way to peace, a possible avenue for reforms in the fundamental issues of the nation,

which are also the fundamental issues of women: land reform, expanded basic social services, national industrialization, an end to low wages and contractualization.

A sudden turn of events, however, threatens to put these initiatives into the dustbin. The government panel canceled the fifth round of the peace talks. The declaration of martial law in Mindanao worsened the climate of impunity with which the Armed Forces commit human rights abuses against peasant and indigenous communities.

Government response to the Marawi siege has turned severely out of proportion, with ground assaults and indiscriminate aerial bombings causing massive destruction and innumerable loss of lives. It is now a war against terror that has itself sown terror among the people of Marawi. A war gone awry, whose consequences are bound to fall heavily on women's shoulders as they struggle to rebuild what is left of their previous homes and communities.

The entry of US military forces into what should be a purely Philippine military and police operation in Marawi runs counter to the Duterte administration's pronouncement of adopting an independent foreign policy. US intervention threatens to turn our country into another labo-

ratory for a US-defined war, a war with no clear parameters and no clear boundaries.

As if these weren't enough, President Duterte's own callousness, as shown by his seemingly habitual jokes about rape and disrespectful treatment of women, abets his allies' misogynist attitude and the Armed Forces' impunity in violating women's human rights.

Women have had enough!

We demand genuine change. We demand respect and guarantees for women's human rights. We urge the Duterte government to carry out its pronouncements for a truly independent foreign policy.

There can be no real peace without social justice. We call for the resumption of the peace talks and demand a successful conclusion to Caser. End Martial Law Now!

MO. MARY JOHN
MANANZAN, OSB,
Institute of Women's Studies,
CARMENCITA P. KARAGDAG,
Ecumenical Women's Forum,
GERT RANJO-LIBANG,
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INQUIRER

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Moving forward after Marawi

By now it is obvious that our military authorities have not read "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu, the great Chinese general who said: "If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained, you will also suffer defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."

The worst debacle that the Armed Forces of the Philippines has suffered in decades could not have happened in Marawi if the authorities knew the enemy or if our intelligence networks have done their job of monitoring the movement of the jihadists, particularly in their massing of weapons and armed men in the city.

It was this intelligence failure, "of not knowing the enemy," that resulted in a few hundred bandits and terrorists, later identified as fanatics who have sworn allegiance to Daesh or the Islamic State (IS), holding hostage the whole country, rampaging through Marawi and leaving in its wake some 90 soldiers and scores of civilians killed, with hundreds more injured, and the displacement of thousands of families not to mention the massive destruction of the once idyllic and peaceful lakeside city.

Indeed, it was unthinkable for the AFP and the Philippine National Police, with P2.5 billion in intelligence funds, to have failed to detect the entry of the jihadists in a small city like Marawi.

In other words, the Marawi tragedy could have been prevented. There is no doubt about it.

Hence, as soon as the guns are silenced permanently, the Duterte administration must embark on a two-pronged campaign to learn from the lessons of Marawi and to right a wrong so as not to repeat this kind of "preventable" disaster in the future.

But first, our authorities must admit their failure. Only then can we move forward and give justice to those who died and suffered in the city.

The immediate need is, of course, to start a massive rehabilitation and reconstruction effort to restore Marawi to its former self as the bastion of Islamic culture in the country. That the government has earmarked P20 billion as initial funding is a step in the right direction.

COMMENTARY

ALITO L. MALINAO

But parallel to this, a nonpartisan and independent commission should be formed to look into the circumstances and series of events or developments that culminated in the well planned and highly focused attack on Marawi on May 23 that has upended all that the AFP as protector of the Filipino people has stood for.

The proposed commission is not without precedent: There was the Agrava Commission that looked into the assassination of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. in 1983. There was the Davide Commission and later the Feliciano Com-

mission that probed the Oakwood mutiny in 2003, and the Melo Commission that examined political killings in 2006.

Unlike similar commissions in the past, the proposed fact-finding body would be just that: a fact-finding body. It is not aimed at building a case for criminal negligence against anybody or blaming any units of the military and police for what happened; it will deal only with the flaws and inadequacies in our intelligence agencies in their gathering and monitoring operations.

The objective is to plug loopholes in operations and institute needed reforms, such as more coordination, joint undertakings and intense training to fight new challenges to intelligence services, notably the emergence of IS in the country.

It is proposed that among those to be summoned are the top officials of the military, police, Intelligence Service of the AFP, National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, National Counter-Terrorism Action Group, and the different intelligence branches of the major commands, such as the Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard. The officials in terror-plagued areas in Mindanao and experts in counterintelligence, both foreign and local, should also be summoned.

Alito L. Malinao is a veteran journalist (former news editor, Manila Standard) who now teaches journalism at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila. He is the author of the book "Journalism for Filipinos."

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Editorial EDITORIAL Editorial

Walang katumbas na halaga ang buhay ng mga sundalong namatay sa Marawi

SABI nila, karangalan ang mamatay para sa bayan. Ang mga sundalo natin na nakikipagbakbakan para sa bayan, matapang na hinarap ang hamon na mapagtanggol ang Marawi City kahit na buhay pa nila ang posibleng maging kapalit.

Bagama't, nakalulungkot na ilan sa ating mga sundalo ang binawian ng buhay dahil sa bakbakan, pinupuri pa rin natin ang naging ambag nila sa ating bayan at maging sa kasaysayan.

Pero aminin na rin nating ang papuri at simpatya natin ay hindi naman magagawang makabusog o makatulong nang pinansiyal sa pamilyang kanilang naulila.

Kaya ang AFP sisimulan na raw ang pamamahagi ng donasyong nakalap para sa mga pamilya ng mga nasawing sundalo sa bakbakan sa Marawi.

Ayon pa sa tagapagsalita ng AFP, sa susunod na linggo raw ay ipagkakaloob na ang P35,000 na tulong sa bawat pamilya.

Bagama't, hindi mapapantayan ng halagang ito ang kabanihan ng namatay nating mga sundalo, kahit paano ay makatutulong na rin ito sa kanilang mga naiwan, hindi ba?

Sana, magpatuloy din ang pagtulong natin sa kanilang mga naulila na muling makabangon lalung-lalo na 'yung ang inaasahan lang talaga ay ang namatay nilang sundalong kaanak.

Makatarungan lang namang kasabay ng pagbangon ng Marawi ay ang pagbangon din ng pamilya ng mga sundalong naapektuhan ng sigalot sa lugar.

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ONLINE NEWS

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Terrorists dead in 51st day of fighting now at 389

MANILA, July 12 – As fighting between Maute Group terrorists and military reached its 51st day, an estimated 389 lawless elements were reported killed in the ongoing clearing operations along with 90 government troops.

This was bared by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo in a statement Wednesday.

He added that this information is as of 6 p.m. of July 11.

Also, number of civilians executed by the Maute Group terrorists remained at 39 while number of rescued individuals are placed at 1,723.

Arevalo said number of weapons recovered has been placed at 494.

Fighting broke out in Marawi City after government troops tried to arrest Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon and ISIS "emir" in Southeast Asia last May 23. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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Only Pres. Duterte can request extension of martial law — Pimentel

MANILA. July 12 -- Only Pres. Rodrigo Duterte can request for an extension of martial law in Mindanao, Senate Pres. Aquilino Pimentel III said in response to House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez's proposed extension.

Alvarez earlier proposed a five-year martial law to rid Mindanao of not just the Maute Group but other terror groups as well.

"...Ang aking position is extension of martial law must be requested by the president. So, dapat sa kanya manggaling yung idea na kailangan ng extension hindi po galing sa kahit kanino (My position is that the extension of martial law must be requested by the president. The idea to extend it must come from him and not anyone else)," Pimentel told reporters in an interview.

"Siguro ang ginawa lang ni Speaker is pag merong request, he is open up to that period of time. Tinelegraph niya lang yung kanyang personal position (Perhaps what speaker proposed was if there would be a request, he would be open to that period of time. He merely telegraphed his personal position)," he added.

Duterte's declaration of martial law will lapse on July 22.

Pimentel said that a Senate security briefing with the martial law administrator and implementor, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Eduardo Año, respectively, has yet to be scheduled.

He said that it is only after the security briefing that they can decide on the timeframe.

He also clarified that the meeting with some senators, Department of Interior and Local Government officer-in-charge Catalino Cuy and Philippine National Police chief Director General Ronald Dela Rosa on Tuesday was merely a request from Cuy.

"The DILG OIC requested for a briefing. Requested for an opportunity to brief me about Marawi law and order situation," Pimentel said.

"The martial law briefing must be given by the martial law administrator who is the Secretary of National Defense and the martial law implementor who is the AFP Chief of Staff plus the National Security adviser," he added.

Two other senators were also open to the possible extension of martial law but noted that it is best to wait the security briefing before deciding on the timeframe of any extension.

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Sen. Nancy Binay, like Pimentel, said that she would rather wait for the security briefing before giving a timeframe.

Binay said that she wanted to "restrict" the implementation of martial law to Lanao del Sur noting its possible negative effects to tourism.

"Siguro nga tingnan muna natin kung ano yung mangyayari sa security briefing bago siguro natin bigyan ng timeframe yung pagkakaroon ng martial law kasi alam ninyo sa akin ang concern ko talaga bilang chairwoman ng Committee on Tourism, talagang naapektuhan ngayon yung industriya ng turismo pagdating dito sa usapin ng martial law (I think let's see what will happen during the security briefing before we give martial law a timeframe because my concern here as chairwoman of the Committee on Tourism, is that the tourism industry is really being affected)," Binay said.

"Maganda ngang pag-aralan din baka pwedeng i-ano [restrict] hanggang Lanao na lang yung coverage ng martial law (It would be worth reviewing if we can restrict the coverage of martial law to Lanao?)" she added.

Neophyte Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian said that Alvarez's proposed five-year martial law has "no basis".

"Sa akin, walang basis ang five years, dahil we want to get this over as fast as we can at gusto natin na magkaroon ng sense of normality na sa Mindanao at sa buong bansa (To me, five years has no basis because we want to get this over as fast as we can and we want there to be a sense of normality in Mindanao and the whole country)," Gatchalian said.

Gatchalian, chair of the Senate Committee on Economic Affairs, said that a five-year martial law extension could also send a "wrong signal" to potential investors in Mindanao.

He further said that prior to the martial law, there were several investors eyeing Mindanao. A five-year martial law, he said could make investors "hesitate".

The neophyte senator, however, said that he was open to a martial law extension but also stressed that he would wait for updates from the security briefing. (Azer N. Parrocha/PNA)

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At least 300 civilians still trapped in Marawi: AFP

MANILA, July 12 – An estimated 300 civilians are still trapped in areas held by Maute Group in Marawi City where fighting is now on its 51st day.

This was disclosed by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, citing reports of the Marawi City local government.

"There are estimates (of) about 300 or more who are still unaccounted for," he said.

The unaccounted civilians include residents who are still hiding in their homes or missing persons who may be hostages of the terrorists, he added.

Padilla said they are looking at the possibility of recovering or seeing additional remains of civilians killed by the Maute Group terrorists once they overrun the last remaining positions of the lawless elements.

"As of now, we have not gone into the interiors of previously held enemy areas and once we do that we may get the surprise of our lives and find numbers of cadavers left who have been killed by the enemy," he said.

Latest figures of casualties from the Maute Group are placed at 381, civilians at 39 and government troops, 90.

Seized Maute Group firearms are placed at 461 and rescued civilians at 1,723. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)

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GOVERNMENT TROOPS RECLAIM 54 BUILDINGS IN MARAWI

A military spokesperson reports that the government's forces have recouped control over at least 54 establishments in Marawi City that has been occupied by the Islamic State-linked Maute group as the clashes in the city entered its 51st day.

Joint Task Force Marawi spokesperson Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera stated that they are continuously conducting combat clearing operations and that there are still portions of the main area that are being turned into defensive positions.

He said in earlier statements that 800 buildings were yet to be cleared in Marawi, those of which are believed to be where the Maute members and snipers are based. Herrera added that more or less 80 Maute members were in Marawi.

Air strikes have been conducted by the military in the area to flush out the militants occupying the buildings in the city's business district.

Herrera then stated in the interview that Abdullah Maute prevails to in command of the remaining Maute members. However, they are yet to confirm Isnilon Hapilon's location. Hapilon is the appointed 'emir' of ISIS in Asia.

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8 REBELS DEAD, 6 FIREARMS RECOVERED, A SOLDIER KILLED IN COMVAL CLASH

MAWAB, COMPOSTELA VALLEY PROVINCE – Combined troops of 25th and 60th Infantry Battalions encountered a group of 40 NPA rebels belonging to Secom 3 and PBC 4 at Brgy L.S. Sarmiento, Laak, Compostela Valley Province (CVP) on Wednesday morning, July 12. The same troops recovered eight dead bodies of the NPA and six high-powered firearms comprising five M16 armalite rifles and an M60 machine gun left by the fleeing rebels. A soldier whose name is being withheld prior notification of his family was earlier wounded but later expired while en route to the hospital.

Two days before, July 10, the troops of 25IB engaged in firefight the same rebel group in Brgy Casoon, Monkayo, CVP. On this said encounter, said troops siezed an NPA encampment.

Prior to this series of encounters, Ltc Ismael Mandanas, commander of 25IB said that they have been receiving reports that the same NPA rebel group will consolidate at Brgy Casoon to conduct tactical offensives prior to President Duterte's State of the Nation Address (SONA) in compliance with their communist leader's instructions.

Major General Noel S Clement, 10ID commander, lauded the bravery of the troops. Clement expressed sorrow while rendering his salute to the fallen soldier for offering the ultimate sacrifice in pursuit of peace for the people.

"We will not lower our guards against any armed threat that can harm the peaceful living of our people," Clement said.

Troops are still in pursuit of the fleeing NPA rebels. While Army-Police checkpoints were immediately established in the different areas of 10ID.