

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



**TEAM ARMY**  
Serving the people. Securing the land.

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

# NEWS CLIPPINGS

01 June 2017

Thursday

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

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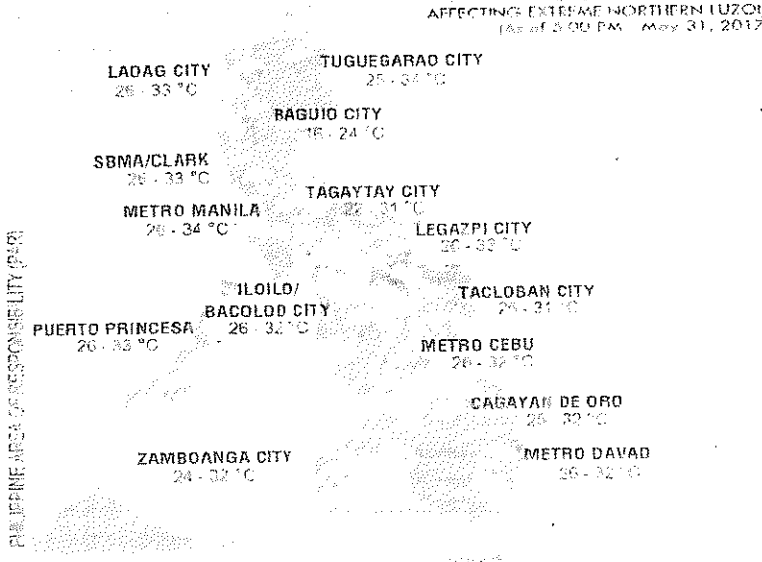


BALANCED NEWS – FEARLESS VIEWS

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TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JUNE 1, 2017 | THURSDAY

SOUTHWEST MONSOON AFFECTING EXTREME NORTHERN LUZON (As of 3:00 PM, May 31, 2017)



PHILIPPINE AREA RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

**SUNRISE** 5:26 AM

**SUNSET** 6:22 PM

**MOONRISE** 11:40 AM

**MOONSET** 11:38 PM

**NEW MOON** MAY 27 3:42 AM

**FIRST QUARTER** JUN 1 8:51 AM

**LOW TIDE** 10:47 PM

**HIGH TIDE** 2:14 AM

MANILA SOUTH HARBOUR

0.93 Meter 1.07 Meter


Partly cloudy to at times overcast with scattered showers and occasional drizzles.

☁️ Cloudy clear with occasional drizzle and light rain.




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	11:00 AM	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	8:00 PM		11:00 AM	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	8:00 PM						
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C		<b>TAGAYTAY</b>	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C		<b>TACLOBAN</b>	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C		<b>LEGAZPI</b>	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C		<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b>	☁️ 26-32°C	☁️ 26-32°C	☁️ 26-32°C	☁️ 26-32°C
<b>LADAG</b>	☁️ 27-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C		<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b>	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C		<b>METRO DAVAO</b>	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C
<b>BAGUIO</b>	☁️ 17-24°C	☁️ 17-24°C	☁️ 17-24°C	☁️ 17-24°C		<b>ILOILO/ BACOLOD</b>	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C		<b>ZAMBOANGA</b>	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C	☁️ 26-33°C
<b>SBMA/ CLARK</b>	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C	☁️ 26-34°C		<b>METRO CEBU</b>	☁️ 26-32°C	☁️ 26-32°C	☁️ 26-32°C						

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SAGOT KO, PADALA RIM!

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# TALKS UNDER WAY TO SAVE HOSTAGES

**AFP says it is tapping civil society organizations for back-channel talks with terrorists**

**By Leila B. Salaverria  
and Nestor P. Burgos Jr.**  
@Team\_Inquirer

The government is trying to save hostages, including Marawi City's vicar general, Fr. Teresito "Chito" Suganob, from Islamic State (IS)-linked terror groups through back-channel talks with the aid of civil so-

ciety organizations, the military said on Wednesday.

Suganob appeared in a video clip, released on a Telegram channel used by IS, appealing to President Duterte for help and asking him to give his enemies what they were asking for.

The Catholic priest said he was being held together with 200 other

captives, including children, in what appeared to be a battle-scarred part of Marawi.

"As I'm making this report and days prior to this, there have also been efforts to reach out through the backdoor for back-channel talks with possible parties who may help," Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, Armed Forces spokesperson, said in a press

briefing in Malacañang.

Suganob was abducted on May 23 after Maute group members linked to IS barged into the Cathedral of Our Lady Help of Christians. Also abducted and held hostage were three church workers and 10 worshipers.

While the government was exploring back-channel

**AG**

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## FROM A1

talks for the release of the hostages being held by the Maute group, Mr. Duterte said on Wednesday that he would not talk to terrorists.

The President issued the statement just days after reports said he was open to a dialogue with the terrorists.

Speaking at the Philippine Navy anniversary in Davao City, the President said he would be holding discussions only with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)—two Moro groups that have signed peace agreements with the government.

"I will not talk to the terrorists. We will maintain our present dialogue with the MI[LF]

and MN[LF] and the traditional mainliner," Mr. Duterte said.

### Saving more lives

Padilla said exploring back channels did not mean the government was negotiating with terrorists.

"We're merely working closely with civil organizations whose objective is to save more lives," he explained.

Troops have cleared almost 90 percent of Marawi, where Maute gunmen have been fending off government troops since a botched raid to capture a veteran rebel leader triggered a militant siege, Padilla said.

He said that bandit leader Isnilon Hapilon, wanted by the US government for involvement in Abu Sayyaf kidnappings and bomb attacks that also targeted Americans in the Philippines,

was believed to be still in Marawi.

Padilla said 960 civilians had been rescued, and an estimated 1,000 residents remained trapped in the city. The dead include 89 militants, 19 civilians and 21 government forces, he said.

### Informal connections

The Armed Forces spokesperson said that Suganob, being a religious leader, may have established ties with other religious leaders in Marawi before the crisis arose.

"These informal connections may be used in these times and these are very important times," Padilla told reporters.

Christians and Muslims have thrived side by side in Marawi through the years and the good relations between

their leaders may come in handy now, he said.

"So there are many religious leaders from the Muslim side who are interested that Fr Chito come out of this alive because they have been working together on many good projects together," said the Armed Forces spokesperson.

The Muslim leaders, he said, should ask those holding Suganob hostage not to harm him because he had helped both Christians and Muslims.

### Relatives relieved

Relatives of Suganob were both relieved and saddened upon seeing the video clip.

"We are happy to see him alive because we have not received any information about him," Rufino Larroza, village chief of Maite Grande at Lam-

bunao town in Iloilo, told the Inquirer.

"It's him," Larroza, a first cousin of Suganob's deceased mother Teresita, said of the man in the video.

Larroza said he and other relatives were praying and hoping for his safety and release. "We hope his fellow priests and the government help in his safe release."

A soldier for 10 years, including three assigned to Marawi, Larroza said he would understand if the President would not order a stop to military operations as appealed by Suganob.

"This would be giving in to the Maute and our soldiers could be endangered," he said.

But Larroza said the government should establish communication lines with those holding the

hostages to have them released.

### Migrants from Iloilo

Suganob's parents migrated to Norala town in South Cotabato where the priest was born. But he maintained close ties with relatives in Iloilo.

Suganob last visited Lambunao, the hometown of his mother Teresita, last November. He celebrated Mass at the burial of an uncle.

"We did not expect this to happen. We are praying that he will be released unharmed," Larroza said.

Lambunao Councilor Arvin Losaria, a cousin of the priest, said Suganob was likable, jolly and known for his sense of humor.

"Every year, he goes home to Lambunao and made it a point to attend family gatherings," Losaria said. —WITH AN AP REPORT INQ

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# ‘Drugs funding IS terror’

## Rody: Writ of habeas corpus may be suspended in Visayas

By EDITH REGALADO and CHRISTINA MENDEZ

**DAVAO CITY – Drug money is fueling terrorist activities in the Philippines.**

President Duterte announced this yesterday, saying that besieged Marawi City is a production base for shabu, with those engaged in the illegal drug trade seeking protection from terror groups.

“*Hinayaan kasi natin ang droga* (We allowed drugs to proliferate), so there was a time and until now that the terrorism activities in the Philippines are funded and fueled by drug money,” Duterte said in a speech during ceremonies marking the 119th anniversary

of the Philippine Navy at Sasa Wharf here yesterday afternoon.

The Chief Executive said that during the first command conference of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), he specifically warned about the terrorist threat posed particularly by Islamic militants.

“I was referring to the contamination of the ISIS, which was slowly creeping into our

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## Drugs From Page 1

shores. And for all, Christians and the Moro, who were into shabu sought sanctuary among the terrorists for protection and to ensure the success of their business," Duterte said.

The situation reached a point, he said, where even Manila was flooded with illegal drugs and drastic measures were needed to stop the scourge.

"Of course, it would cost lives. You cannot fight a war, especially drugs, without losing your men and the enemy," he further said.

Duterte lamented how the government is losing four to five soldiers and

policemen every day.

"In Marawi now, I'm very sad to tell you that we have suffered tremendous losses because we are the invading force and they have been set up there for a long time, waiting for the soldiers of the Republic to come," he said.

"I know that we continue to lose men. I will just have to bite the bullet and fight for our country because this is the only country that we have."

In his message, Duterte also justified his declaration of martial law and suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus in Mindanao following the attack on Marawi last week, saying he did so upon the recommendation of the

military and police leadership after assessing the situation then.

He assured the soldiers of his full support.

"If you would allow me to join you, I'd be happy to lead you to the mouths of hell for after all, we have to die sometime," Duterte said, as he assured the AFP and the PNP that he would prioritize acquiring modern equipment to help them in their battles.

## IS money for lady police officer

The President also revealed details of an ongoing probe on PNP Crime Laboratory deputy regional chief Supt. Maria Cristina Nobleza, who was arrested last April by authorities

for trying to rescue her alleged Abu Sayyaf lover, Renierito Dongon, during intensified operations in Bohol before the Holy Week.

Authorities were able to establish a paper trail on Nobleza, he said, and that the policewoman received a

huge amount of money purportedly to aid in the terror group's activities in the South.

"She was not only in cahoots but she was an active player in the terrorism business. She's the one that was apprehended by the military in Bohol when she tried to extricate the remaining Abu Sayyaf who were on the run at that time."

## No talk with terrorists

Meanwhile, Duterte reiterated that he is not talking with terrorists even if AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla has said that the AFP has allowed backchannel talks for the rescue of Fr. Teresito Suginob, vicar general of the prelature of Marawi and one of those snatched by Maute gunmen during the siege.

"I will not talk to anybody. I will not talk to the terrorists. We will maintain our present dialogue with the MI and MN and the traditional mainliner," Duterte said, referring to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Moro National Liberation Front.

Malacañang revealed yesterday that Duterte had talked with leaders of the MILF to help the government in solving the humanitarian crisis due to the Marawi attacks.

## Habeas corpus writ suspension eyed in Visayas

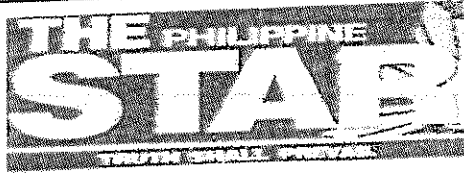
As for extending the scope of martial law in case of a spillover of violence from Mindanao, Duterte, in the same speech, changed his tone on the Visayas, saying he may no longer impose military rule on the islands but instead only suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus because of the continuing threat posed by terrorists.

"If there is maybe a transfer of venue from Mindanao to the Visayas and to make it easy for the Philippines to challenge the new engagements, I will be forced to declare the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, not martial law... so that I can arrest you anytime without a warrant," the President said.

- With Alexis Romero



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## 2 rebels slain in clashes

**BUTUAN CITY** – Two suspected New People's Army rebels were killed in encounters with government troops in Agusan del Sur and Surigao City on Monday.

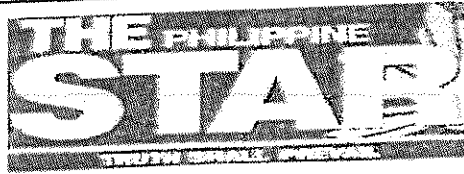
A rebel died in the encounter in Barangay New Tubigon, Sibagat at around 3:30 p.m. and lasted for about 20 minutes, said Capt. Joe Patrick Martinez, 4th Infantry Division spokesman.

Troops recovered an M16 and two AK 47 rifles.

Another rebel died in an encounter with soldiers belonging to the 30th Infantry Battalion in Sitio Brazil, Barangay Mat-i in Surigao City at around 7 p.m.

The military said several other rebels were wounded in the clashes. – Ben Serrano

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## Sayyaf man held at port, 2 others fall in raid

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY – An Abu Sayyaf bandit was arrested for failing to present any identification card upon arrival at a port while two others were collared in a raid in this city on Tuesday.

Coast Guard personnel at the Philippine Ports Authority wharf accosted Kimhar Asusi, alias Abu Kimar, 32, at around 6:05 p.m.

A “no ID, no entry” policy is being implemented at ports, seaports and airports to prevent any terrorist attack amid the siege in Marawi City.

Col. Leonel Nicolas, Joint Task Force Zamboanga commander, said Asusi, a resident of Barangay Bawisan, Parang, Sulu, arrived on a ferry from Jolo.

Nicolas said a fragmentation grenade was recovered from the suspect.

Asusi has a standing warrant of arrest for two counts of kidnapping and serious illegal detention.

The military said Asusi

was with a group of bandits who encountered personnel of the First Scout Ranger Battalion in Sitio Marang, Barangay Buanza, Indanan recently.

Asusi denied the allegations, saying he is only a fisherman who came here to seek medical treatment after he suffered an injury in the face. His family said he could be a victim of mistaken identity.

Meanwhile, Al Hamed Manalas Abdurahman, 37, and his brother Murasidol, 32, were collared during a raid at a subdivision in Barangay Maasin at around 6:40 p.m.

Superintendent Diomarie Albarico, city police officer-in-charge, said the siblings yielded bomb materials, ammunition and gun parts.

The raid was based on a search warrant issued by a local court.

During tactical interrogation, Murasidol, with aliases of Ted Amman Abdurajic and Teddung, said he joined the group of sub-leader Indang Susukan in 2014.

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

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## Rebels strafe CAFGU outpost in Cotabato town

By MALU CADELINA MANAR

KIDAPAWAN CITY – Suspected communist guerrillas riddled with bullets Tuesday night a paramilitary outpost in a village in President Roxas, North Cotabato, the fourth incident since martial law was declared in Mindanao, a military official said.

Lt. Col. Harold Argamosa, commander of the 39th Infantry Battalion of the Army, said the New Peoples' Army (NPA) strafed the detachment of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) in Barangay Labu-o, President Roxas, around 10:15 p.m., Tuesday.

The rebels used high-powered guns, including M203 and M16 rifles, based from the empty shells the police recovered in the area, according to Chief Inspector Romy Castanares, chief of the President Roxas PNP.

Castanares added that before the strafing, the suspects detonated an improvised explosive device (IED) they planted just a few meters away from the CAFGU outpost.

The government suffered no casualties and the rebels failed to snatch the guns issued to CAFGU members assigned in the area. However, the explosion and the brief exchange of gunfire caused the residents to panic, according to Castanares.

"We call this nuisance harassment. Ang pagpapaputok nila ay pataas. At malayo sila," said Argamosa.

The attackers, according to Argamosa, were few in numbers, and that they were not regular troops of the NPAs but belong to what they called 'militia'.

The military official said the attack, which was the fourth in North Cotabato province since martial law was declared on May 22, was part of the NPA's retaliation of the offensives the 39th and 72nd IB launched against them in Barangay Salat, President Roxas.

"The NPAs were surprised at the attack. They did not expect we will conduct military offensives against them. They suffered heavy casualties. There were deaths and injuries on their side,"

said Argamosa.

After the military offensives on May 26, the NPAs launched two roadside bombings in Kidapawan City which wounded four policemen, and shot two K9 handlers of bomb sniffing dogs while manning the national highway in the city.

### Hot pursuit

CAMP BANCASI, Butuan City – Combat maneuvering troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Wednesday widened their massive hot pursuit operations against the fleeing members of the New People's Army (NPA) in the hinterland areas of Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Norte provinces.

Elements of the 3rd Special Forces Battalion (3rd SFB) and 30th Infantry Battalion (30th IB) are hot on the trail of an undetermined number of fleeing heavily armed members of guerilla-Front Committee 21-A of the CPP-NPA Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee.

"Our concern of this massive pursuit operation is to rescue the reported four wounded rebels to give them immediate medical aid and be brought to hospital for medical treatment," said Col. Cristobal Zaragoza, commanding officer of the Army's 401st Infantry (Unity) Brigade.

Elements of the 3rd SFB and 30th IB engaged in a fierce gunfight the NPAs, armed wing of the CPP in separate gunbattles on Tuesday in Barangay New Tubigon, Sibagat, Agusan del Sur and in Sitio Brazil, Barangay Mat-i, an outskirt in Surigao City, Surigao del Norte province.

The operating troops seized high powered weapons and cache of assorted live ammunitions and also killed two NPAs and wounded undetermined number of other rebels in these two separate gunbattles, Col. Zaragoza said.

"Our operating troops also captured documents with high intelligence value," the 401st Brigade commander added, quoting the initial report of the ground Army commander Lt. Col. Rudy Parallag.

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**POLICE FILES**

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### **Detachment ng Army at Caggu sa Cotabato inatake ng NPA**

**COTABATO CITY** – Sinalakay ng mga miyembro ng New People's Army (NPA) ang isang Army at Caggu detachment dakong 10:30 kamakalawa ng gabi sa probinsya ng Cotabato.

Ayon kay Cotabato police provincial director S/Supt. Emmanuel Peralta, inatake ng mga NPA ang Army at Caggu detachment sa Barangay Labuo, President Roxas, North Cotabato.

Agad itong natunugan ng mga sundalo at Caggu na gumanti naman ng putok sa mga rebelde.

Dahil sa dami ng mga NPA gumanti pa ng 105mm owitzers cannon ang militar para pasabugan at itaboy ang mga rebelde.

Tumagal ng halos isang oras ang palitan ng bala sa magkabilang panig dahilang kaya labis ang naramdamang takot ng mga sibilyan.

Umattas ang mga NPA patungo sa liblib na lugar sa bayan ng President Roxas nang matunugan nito ang karagdagang pwersa ng 39th Infantry Battalion Philippine Army.

Walang nasugatan o nasawi sa mga sundalo at Caggu habang hindi matiyak sa mga NPA sa pamumuno ng isang Kumander Paroy sa ilalim nang tinaguriang Guerilla Front Committee 53.

Sa ngayon ay nagpapatuloy pa ang pursuit operation ng militar laban sa mga NPA sa probinsya ng Cotabato.

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# AFP: 89 terrorists killed in fighting

By **Leila B. Salaverria**  
and **Philip C. Tubeza**  
@Team\_Inquirer

Government security forces have killed 89 terrorists during more than a week of fighting in Marawi City but the gunmen are still offering strong resistance with stolen weapons and ammunition, the military said on Wednesday.

Attack helicopters fired rockets repeatedly on Wednesday into the pockets of Marawi where gunmen from the Maute terror group were hiding among trapped residents, according to an Agence France-Presse (AFP) reporter who was following troops searching houses.

The clashes erupted on Tuesday last week when gunmen waving black flags of the Islamic State (IS) group rampaged through the mostly Muslim-populated city in response to a military raid on the hide-out of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, who has a \$5-million price on his head offered by the US government.

Hapilon, who had pledged allegiance to IS, escaped but he was believed to be still in Marawi, Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, spokesperson for the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said on Wednesday.

The siege of Marawi prompted President Duterte to declare martial law in Mindanao for 60 days and suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus on the entire island during the period of military rule.

## Death toll

Eighty-nine terrorists had been killed in the efforts to reclaim the city and find Hapilon, Padilla told reporters.

The count included 42 bodies recovered and 47 deaths confirmed by eyewitnesses.

The dead after more than a week of fighting include 19 civilians and 21 government forces.

Six policemen were "missing in action," the Philippine National Police reported on Wednesday.

Troops have cleared almost 90 percent of Marawi and rescued 960 civilians, but many residents are trapped in the 10 percent of the city that the terrorists control, Padilla said.

Security forces will likely meet increasingly strong resistance there, he added.

Padilla said he did not know how many terrorists remained, but added that there had been chances for the group to take in new members.

"As in previous statements that we have released, the number may have [increased]... because they went to the jail to free [more than a] hundred prisoners. Quite a number of those are definitely with them already," he said.

"And then other than that,

there may have been other sympathizers from other areas who may have made their way into the area earlier [in the fighting] and maybe already in their ranks," he added.

## 30 to 40 gunmen

Another military officer, Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera, spokesperson for the 1st Army Division, said 30 to 40 gunmen were fighting government troops in Banggolo, Rada Madaya and Saka Lidok villages.

Herrera said around 2,000 civilians remained trapped in those villages, but the military was trying to rescue them.

"There might still be around 30 to 40 [remaining gunmen] because the others are ying low, escaping, leaving their firearms behind and mixing with civilians. That's what's happening there," he said.

Herrera's estimate of cleared parts of the city was smaller than Padilla's, placing it at 80 to 85 percent, including Basak Malutlut village, where the fighting started on Tuesday last week after the failed attempt by troops from the 103rd Brigade to arrest Hapilon.

He said the remaining terrorists had occupied vantage points in the three villages from where they could quickly spot approaching government forces.

"They are still fighting and are still using high-powered firearms. The battlefield is very dynamic so we don't have a deadline [for the clearing operations]," he said.

The military on Wednesday deployed for the first time SF-260 close air support planes to back attack helicopters and

ground troops looking to box terrorists into a downtown area. spread “propaganda”

#### Stolen weapons

Padilla said the Maute gunmen had kept up the fight with rifles and ammunition stolen from a police station, a prison and armored police vehicle.

“They were able to get an armored vehicle of the police. Inside, there is a supply of bullets,” Padilla said, adding that the ammunition was among the stolen items the gunmen were using to resist the forces being poured into the area.

The terrorists also reportedly looted a gun store in Basak Malutlut and another in Banggolo as they besieged the city last Tuesday.

Padilla said the terrorists opted for urban warfare because arms were available in the city and homes and shops provided ample supplies of food.

“Yes, indeed, there was planning involved,” he added.

The military has from the outset insisted it has control of the situation, but the slow pace of efforts to retake Marawi has prompted questions about its strategy.

That has been compounded by social media images of smiling fighters with assault rifles posing on the captured, US-made police combat vehicle, dressed in black and wearing headbands typical of IS.

Another picture showed a bearded man at the wheel of a police van flying an IS flag.

The authenticity of the images has not been independently verified and the military has urged the public not to

#### Foreign fighters

As for reports of foreigners fighting alongside Maute terrorists, Padilla said there were indications that some of those killed in the fighting were not Filipinos.

The foreigners looked Asian, he said.

“With the amount of material that has been coming out and being recovered [from] the areas of conflict, there could be, in this collection of documents and other materials, proof that would indicate the existence of these foreign fighters,” he said.

Earlier operations in Mindanao have shown that eight to 12 foreigners have been helping armed groups on the island, he added.

Reuters, quoting a Philippine intelligence source, reported on Tuesday that as many as 40 of the terrorists who overran Marawi last week had recently arrived from overseas, including from countries in the Middle East.

The foreigners included Indonesians, Malaysians, at least one Pakistani, a Saudi Arabian, a Chechen, a Yemeni, an Indian, a Moroccan and one man with a Turkish passport, Reuters quoted the intelligence source as saying. —WITH REPORTS FROM

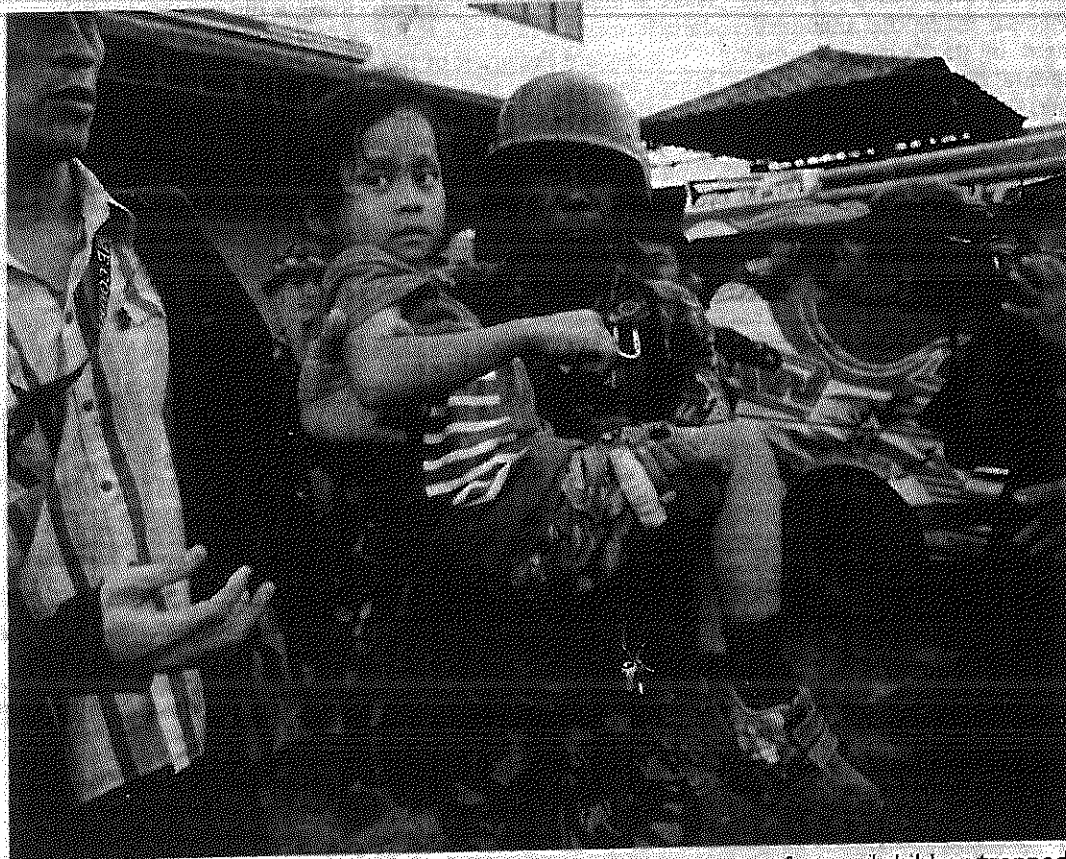
AFP AND REUTERS INQ



WATCH VIDEO: 90% of Marawi City cleared from terrorists, says AFP

<http://Inq.news/AFPonMaute>

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**OUT OF HARM'S WAY** An Army soldier gets out of harm's way one of several children trapped in a house as fighting rages between government security forces and terrorists who have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group in Marawi City. —JEFFREY MAITEM

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# AFP: Almost 90% of Marawi cleared of Maute

By JAIME LAUDE

Troops have cleared almost 90 percent of Marawi City where gunmen of the Maute group have been fending off security forces, military spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said yesterday.

Padilla reiterated the call for the Maute group to surrender while there is still time as troops are preparing to rescue the civilians still trapped in the city.

"We call on the remaining terrorists to surrender while there is an opportunity," Padilla said.

Padilla said 960 civilians have been rescued, and an estimated 1,000 residents remain trapped. The dead include 89

militants, 19 civilians and 21 government forces.

Six policemen were reported still missing since the firefight with the Maute group broke out last week, the Philippine National Police added.

Padilla said eight militants surrendered and they provided what he described as "very valuable intelligence" during questioning.

On the other hand, a video of a Catholic priest taken hostage is being assessed by experts, he added.

Padilla said the video seems authentic, but the Rev. Teresito Suganob appeared to be speaking under duress and the militants are apparently using the video

for propaganda.

Suganob and 14 others were snatched while inside the St. Mary's Church in Marawi City on May 23 in the thick of the gunbattle between government forces and Maute extremists.

In the video, Suganob said he is being held alongside 200 other captives, including children, in what appeared to be a battle-scarred part of Marawi.

"We want to live another day, we want to live another month," Suganob said while standing in front of debris and partially burned buildings. Directing his remarks to President Duterte, Suganob said: "We want to live few years and in your generosity, Mr. President, in your heart, we know you can

make something (happen)."

Marawi Bishop Edwin dela Peña confirmed that it was Suganob in the video.

Padilla said there have been efforts to reach out to parties who may conduct backchannel talks to help free the hostages. He assured the captives' families that the military is doing its best to keep them safe. He did not elaborate.

"As of this time, as I'm making this report and days prior to this, there have also been efforts to reach out through the backdoor for talks with possible parties who may help," Padilla said in a press briefing in Malacañang. – With Alexis Romero, Roel Pareño, Emmanuel Tupas, John Unson, AP



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

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## Maranao leaders urge military to cordon off Maute terrorists

By **ANTONIO L. COLINA IV**

DAVAO CITY – Maranao leader have suggested cordoning off Maute terrorists in Marawi to strave them instead of using aerial bombs to flush them out.

Gapor Randy A. Usman, deputy mayor for Maranao in Davao City appealed to President Rodrigo R. Duterte, Armed Forces chief General Eduardo Año, and National Defense secretary Delfin Lorenzana told a press conference that he is alarmed that the military air strikes may affect the civilians who are either held captive or who refuse to flee their homes in Marawi since the clashes occurred with the terrorists on May 23.

He said the authorities can find other means to contain the Maute terrorists that allegedly pledged allegiance to global terrorist organization Islamic State of Iraq Syria (ISIS) without resorting to air bombing that may kill other civilians.

He recommended that the Maute-infested area be cordoned off "Within two months, they will go hungry," he said.

He said some 40 families have arrived in the city to seek refuge from Marawi that is now under siege for a week.

This Marawi siege forced Duterte to declare martial in Mindanao, who warned he will be "harsh" and it will not be any different from the nine-year martial law, from 1972 to 1981, during former dictator, President Ferdinand Marcos Sr.

President Duterte earlier gave the assurance that he would not allow abuses of human rights.

B/Gen. Gilbert Gapay, martial law spokesperson for Eastern Mindanao Command, said violators of the human rights may be meted with criminal liabilities, which would result in dismissal from service.

He said all their actions will be guided by the rule of law, necessity, and proportionality of response.

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**Malaya**  
The National Newspaper

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# Maute members confined to 4 barangays, says AFP

**BY VICTOR REYES**

THE military yesterday said the armed conflict between government forces and the Maute Group in Marawi City is now confined to four barangays, from a high of 10 in the initial days of the firefight that erupted on Tuesday last week.

On Day 9 of the conflict, government forces continued to flush out remnants of the group.

Casualty figures rose. The Maute suffered 24 more dead, bringing the total to 89. On the government side, there were 21 slain soldiers and policemen (from 19) and 72 injured. As to civilians, there were 19 killed while at least 950 have been rescued during the clearing

operations.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said Monday government was targeting to clear Marawi City of Maute men by today.

Yesterday, national security adviser Hermogenes Esperon said he sees the crisis ending in about one or two weeks.

“Our security forces only need to cross three bridges to take over the heart of the city. That’s what our troops want to hurdle. Once it’s done, all of these will end,” he told reporters after a briefing at the House of Representatives.

Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera, spokesman of the Army’s 10th Infantry Division, said there are 30 to 40 Maute members in the four ba-

barangays -- Bangolo, Lilod Madaya, Raya Madaya 1 and Raya Madaya II. The city has 96 barangays. Initial reports said there were at least 100 Maute men battling government forces.

“The (number of) affected barangays is down to four, from a high of nine to 10 before... This is apparently their last hurrah, they are pinned down in these battle positions that we are clearing,” said Herrera.

On the number of remaining Maute men, he said, “The others laid low, escaped, left their firearms and mixed with the civilians.”

He also said measures are in place to prevent the Maute members from escaping by mixing with

civilians.

Asked when they will be able to clear the city, Herrera said: “The battlefield is very dynamic. We are not putting a deadline... They are still resisting. They have high-powered firearms. They’ve occupied vantage positions so they will see the approaches of government forces. That is what they are doing.”

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, during the Mindanao Hour briefing in Malacañang, said government troops have cleared about 90 percent of the city but said he could not divulge the exact location of the “pockets of resis-

See MAUTE > Page B6

# MAUTE

tance within Marawi."

Army "They (forces on the ground) estimate that they are reaching about 90 percent completely cleared and a little bit more than 10 percent more to go. However, that 10 percent is most likely going to be the area that will be heavily guarded and defended by any of these armed men if they are protecting any individual of high value," he said.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF

## TRAPPED CIVILIANS

Herrera said while troops are continuing with clearing operations, the rescue of trapped civilians is still a priority. "As of now, there are still firefight in areas where they have consolidated."

Herrera said they have information that around 2,000 civilians are "trapped" inside their houses in the conflict areas, based on information gathered by the provincial crisis committee and the military, and distress calls.

Marawi City has some 200,000 residents.

Padilla, in an interview, said the military on Monday started using SF-260 planes in the fight against the Maute, aside from attack helicopters used since last week.

He said the SF-260s are small aircraft with rockets and guns and capable of dropping bombs on enemy positions.

"As we have said, we employ commensurate force against whatever resistance there is in the area. We don't bomb a building just because there is one sniper on top of it. It doesn't work that way," said Padilla.

Padilla said the Maute members are "most likely" using weapons and ammunition they've stolen from police and jail personnel.

"They previously burned the jail, freed prisoners and got what they can use, including weapons and ammunition, to include those in the captured APC (armored personnel carrier) of the PNP," he said.

## STILL PROPAGANDA

Padilla said government troops are continuing with operations despite an appeal from Fr. Chito Suganog, vicar general of the Marawi prelatore, for the military to pull out from the city and cease fire and air strikes and artillery bombardment.

Suganob, who made the appeal in a video that spread through social media last Tuesday, is being held captive by the Maute Group. He said 240 other civilians are be-

ing held with him.

"We are having that (video) authenticated. Granting it's authentic, we cannot subscribe to it because we will just be (giving in) to the propaganda of the enemy," said Padilla.

Herrera said the enemy is good at propaganda. "But as of now, we continue to conduct surgical air strikes in the stronghold of the enemy."

President Duterte is alarmed by the strength of the Maute and intelligence reports suggesting it has teamed up with other extremist groups and has recruited foreign fighters.

"I specifically warned everybody there is more dark cloud ahead of us. I was referring specifically to the contamination of ISIS slowly creeping towards our shores," Duterte told navy personnel in Davao City.

The military believes the Maute group staged the Marawi attack to prove itself to Islamic State and try to win its endorsement as its affiliate in Southeast Asia.

Duterte said he would not allow Islamic State to gain traction in the Philippines and inflict murder on the scale of Syria and Iraq.

He changed his mind on last week's offer of dialogue with Maute and said he "will not talk to the terrorists."

"They are trying to correct the way of living for everybody. They do it by killing people, invoking the name of God and that is a very terrible ideology," he said of Islamic State.

"It does not know anything except to waste human lives."

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said President Duterte has approved the creation of a "peace corridor" that would be jointly implemented by the peace panels of the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, in a bid to fast track rescue and humanitarian operations for civilians affected by the armed conflict.

The corridor will cover 11 areas from Malabang in Lanao del Sur to Marawi City.

Abella said the peace corridor will be a secure space for humanitarian groups to bring wounded and trapped civilians, and goods for the evacuees, among others.

The Department of Education said it has postponed the opening of classes in elementary and high schools in Marawi City by two weeks.

Education Secretary Leonor Briones said the affected schools may have classes on weekends to keep up with the school calendar. - With Wendell Vigilia, Jocelyn Montemayor, Evan Orias and Reuters

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## 8 Maute members yield, give 'valuable' intel – military

**By Mario J. Mallari and Ted Tuvera**

At least eight members of the Maute terror group have surrendered to government troops and provided important information to the military, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) yesterday said.

“What we did get is from the unit of (Marine) Brig. Gen. (Custodio) Parcon, there were eight members holed up in Marawi who surrendered to his forces,” AFP spokesman Brig. Gen.

Restituto Padilla told a press briefing in Malacañang.

“These individuals have been talked to and debriefed and have provided very, very valuable intelligence,” he added.

Government security forces have already secured about 90 percent of Marawi City following more than a week of clashes with Islamist militants who sowed terror in several parts of the city since May 23, the military official stressed.

“Our fighting forces estimate that they are reaching about 90 percent completely cleared and a little bit more than 10 percent more to go,” Padilla said. *Turn to page 3*

## 8 Maute members yield, give 'valuable' intel – military

### From page 1

The AFP official, however, said while only pockets of resistance remain, government forces expect fierce resistance in the remaining places where the militants, who are believed to be holding some civilian hostages, are holding out.

The military believes that the notorious leader of the extremists, Isnilon Hapilon, is still in the area.

"That 10 percent is most likely going to be the area that will be heavily guarded and defended by any of these armed men if they are protecting any individual of high value," Padilla stressed.

"We believe he (Hapilon) is still there and we believe that is why they're putting up a very stiff resistance in the areas that they are still being held up and being cleared," he added.

In the meantime, Padilla said official reports show that there continues to be a very positive development in the area of Marawi.

Official figures released by Malacañang showed that 89 militants were killed in eight days of fighting that also led to the recovery of 91 firearms, 81 of which are high-powered.

The government has lost 21 of its security forces while 19 civilians

were killed.

"The recovery of these high-powered firearms continues to reduce the capability of these armed groups to do the violent activities that they have been doing for quite some time," Padilla pointed out.

He also assured residents who are trapped in the area that security forces are doing everything to avoid any collateral damage that may ensue from the ongoing clashes.

Padilla estimated the number of residents trapped within the areas of fighting to be around 1,000 persons.

"Our rules of engagements have not changed. We put priority on civilian lives and private property. The amount of force that we are using right now in the area is commensurate only to the resistance and the enemy force that we are facing," he said.

So far, the AFP spokesman said the judicious use of military force, which included air strikes, have not killed any civilian.

"We are confident that we have not had any collateral damage in the use of air strike. Based on the reports that we have got, we have not had any collateral damage to that effect on lives. On property, yes; but on lives, none," Padilla stressed.

He also assured the families of

those believed to have been taken hostage by the militants that security forces are doing everything to secure their safe release.

"Our assurance to the families of all those who may still be hostage in the hands of these armed men is the assurance that we are doing all our best to keep them safe, to guarantee their safe release as much as possible, and within the parameters for which we are trying to operate now," Padilla said.

Attack helicopters fired rockets yesterday morning into parts of Marawi that were still controlled by the militants fighting under the black flag of the Islamic State (IS) group.

Members of the Maute group initially took a priest and up to 14 other persons hostage at the start of the crisis.

A video of the priest appeared on social media on Tuesday, in which he repeated the militants' demands to withdraw and said his captors were holding 240 people hostage.

Padilla said the number of people cited in the video as being held hostage could not be verified.

He insisted the release of the footage showed the militants were becoming increasingly desperate and said security forces would not back down.

"They are trapped, they are

contained, they are in areas that they will never come up alive unless they surrender," Padilla said.

The clashes erupted when security forces raided a house to arrest Isnilon Hapilon, a veteran Filipino militant regarded as IS' leader in the Philippines and who is on the US government's list of most-wanted terrorists.

Authorities said they were taken by surprise when dozens of gunmen emerged to protect Hapilon and then went on a rampage through Marawi City.

Hapilon was being protected by members of the local Maute group, a small band of militants who has declared allegiance to IS, according to the government.

Malaysians, Singaporean, Indonesian and other fighters had been involved in the unrest, according to the military.

Hapilon and the two Maute leaders – brothers after whose surname the group is named – were still believed to be in Marawi, Army's 1st Infantry Division (1ID) spokesman Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera told reporters.

He added some 40 IS-inspired terrorists continued to put a fight against nearly 3,000 government troops in Marawi City, apparently ignoring warning by the military to surrender or die.

**PNA and AFP**

01 June 2017



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## FBI CALLED OUT ON FAKE HAPILON NEWS

ISABELA CITY, BASILAN—The FBI is spreading fake news about Abu Sayyaf leader Isnlon Hapilon by claiming that he “graduated from the University of the Philippines (UP) School of Engineering.” UP records show no Isnlon Hapilon on its roster of students, belying the claim of the US government agency, which is offering up to \$5 million for his arrest. It turns out that Hapilon is a high school dropout.

—STORY BY JULIE S. ALIPALA

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### FROM A1

By Julie S. Alipala  
@inquirermindanao

ISABELA CITY, BASILAN—Move over Mocha Uson. Here comes the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

A blogger who was appointed presidential assistant communications secretary, Uson has been repeatedly called out for spreading fake news.

Now, it's the FBI being called out—for claiming that Abu Sayyaf leader Isnlon Hapilon “graduated from the University of the Philippines School of Engineering.”

The US government is offering “up to \$5 million for information leading directly to the apprehension or conviction of Isnlon Toton Hapilon,” whom it accuses, among other things, of murder of an American citizen and of hostage-taking resulting in death.

#### Not in UP records

As information of Hapilon being a UP engineering graduate spread, the University of the Philippines said its records showed no Isnlon Hapilon on its roster of students or graduates.

“Upon verification with the official records of the Office of the University Registrar and the Office of Alumni Affairs, the University of the Philippines can find no record of a former student or alumnus by the name of Isnlon Hapilon,” UP vice president for public affairs Jose Y. Dalisay Jr. said in a statement.

Dalisay said UP was issuing

the clarification “in light of recent news reports identifying Mr. Hapilon as a UP graduate.”

#### High school dropout

It turns out that Hapilon is a high school dropout, according to records from Basilan National High School.

Gov. Mujiv Hataman of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) obtained Hapilon's Secondary Student's Permanent Record following reports that the bandit leader, who is now leading the war in Marawi City against government forces, was a UP engineering student.

“It's not true. I wonder where the US-based intelligence operatives got those information,” Hataman said, referring to social media reports citing FBI data.

Tahira Ismael, a former mayor of Lantawan and madrasah (Islamic school) classmate of Hapilon, said he was shocked by social media reports portraying Hapilon as having studied at UP.

“He performed poorly in academics. Even in Quran reading, trying hard. He found it hard to pronounce Quran in one of the Quran-reading contest in our younger days,” Ismael told the Inquirer in an interview.

He said Hapilon dropped out of Basilan National High School.

#### Born in 1968

“I was a graduating student then. After that, I never heard from him because I left Basilan to study in Manila,” said the former mayor.

Hataman said that based on

**MOST WANTED  
TERRORIST**

**ISNILON TOTONI HAPILON**

Conspiracy to Commit Hostage Taking Resulting in Death, Hostage Taking, Murder of a United States National Outside the United States, Hostage Taking Resulting in Death, Conspiracy to Use and Carry a Firearm During a Crime of Violence, Using and Carrying a Firearm During a Crime of Violence, Aiding and Abetting and Causing an Act to be Done



**DESCRIPTION**

Aliases: Abu Nuzai, Sol, Abu Sam, Ercel, Saahuddin, The Deputy, Deputy Amir  
Date(s) of Birth Used: March 25, 1966  
Hair: Brown  
Height: 5ft  
Build: Slim  
Sex: Male  
Languages: Ilocano, Tagalog, English, Ibanag  
Place of Birth: Bokne, Lantawan, Division: Negros Occidental, Philippines  
Eyes: Brown  
Weight: 130 pounds  
Complexion: Light-skinned  
Citizenship: Filipino  
Scars and Marks: Hapilon has facial birthmarks

**WRONG INFO** An FBI announcement about Isnilon Hapilon contains erroneous information about his academic background.

Hapilon's school records, he was born on March 10, 1968—not March 18, 1966, as reported by the FBI. His mother, Harija Hak, enrolled him at Basilan National High School.

School records showed the six-year elementary education of Hapilon at Maluso Central School, where he got an average grade of 78 percent when he was a sixth grader.

When he was graduating from that school, his report card showed many absences and instances of tardiness. He was then about 12 years old. He was poor in English and Science, but had a fair performance in Mathematics.

Hapilon only reached second year high school. His sophomore

report card showed improvement in his grades—an average of 81. He was in Section Lapu-Lapu.

Hapilon is a native of Bulanza village in Lantawan, but he finished elementary education at Maluso Central School in 1984.

"It was still martial law at that time and what I know, he started to become active in madrasa school," Hataman said.

**Assertive, MNLF**

"Academically, he was struggling. Even in Arabic and Quran, he was quite poor, but he was already assertive. In his elementary days, he was so quiet, occasionally smiling. He had few friends and he spoke less among his few friends then,"

said the ARMM governor.

Hataman said that when Hapilon dropped out of high school, he was reportedly spotted joining the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). He underwent training at Camp Omar in Sumisip town under the leadership of Commander Talib Congo in 1985.

In 1986, Hapilon left Basilan to join the MNLF in Sulu under Commander Ustadz Bashiri. While he was with the rebel group, he took Arabic and madrasa education again.

In 1992, he returned to Basilan and became the spokesperson of Barahama Sali, whose group took several hostages, including Fr. Cirilo Nacorda.

At the height of the military offensive in 1994, Sali's group fled to Sampinit in Basilan, when troops took over the Camp Al Medina in Kapayawan, also in Basilan.

**With Janjalani**

Hapilon joined the group of Abu Sayyaf leader Abdurajak Janjalani in Sampinit. He abandoned his madrasa and Arabic training, and followed Janjalani, who became his immediate religious and Arabic adviser.

Hapilon came from a poor farming family. His father, Hapilon Toton, was a village imam (Islamic priest), while his mother Harija Hak was a housewife. He has five siblings—Nasser, Sahinon, Jubaira, Bohaira and Bakkar.

Ismael said all the Hapilons, including distant relatives, left Basilan in 2000 when there was a crackdown on the Abu Sayyaf. INQ

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**REBEL SECURITY**

# GOV'T, MILF TO SET UP PEACE CORRIDOR FOR MARAWI FOLK

**By Leila B. Salaverria,  
Dona Z. Pazzibugan  
and Inquirer Mindanao  
@Team\_Inquirer**

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) will work with the government in establishing safe zones for residents fleeing fighting in Marawi City.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said on Wednesday about 92,000 residents had been affected by the conflict—more than half of them still trapped in the city.

The “peace corridor” would be handled by the implementing panels of the government and the MILF and would be used to facilitate humanitarian operations for civilians trapped in the conflict zone in Marawi, presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella told reporters on Wednesday.

The agreement to put up the peace corridor was made during a meeting between President Duterte and the MILF on Monday.

Irene Santiago, chair of the government’s implementing panel, would lead the humanitarian missions.

The MILF agreed to help secure the areas that the corridor would traverse.

### Safe space

Santiago said the members of the implementing panels would meet this week to discuss the setting up of the corridor.

“The peace corridor is a secure space where humanitarian groups may evacuate wounded and trapped civilians, and retrieve dead bodies for burial,” she said in a statement.

“The corridor is also a safe space for goods to reach hungry people in the rural areas whose access to Marawi’s markets have been cut off,” she added.

The 1997 peace agreement between the government and the MILF provides for the observance of international humanitarian laws and respect for internationally recognized human rights instruments. The two parties have been engaged in the relief and rehabilitation of conflict zones in Mindanao.

The military on Wednesday outlined procedures for civilians caught in conflict areas in Marawi.



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Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla, Armed Forces spokesperson, noted that some of the residents trapped in the area had been afraid to come out for fear of being caught in the crossfire.

To ensure their safety, when they sense the presence of military forces, they should prepare a white cloth that they should raise in the area where they are located, Padilla said.

When they see the soldiers approaching, they should come out—women and children first—with their hands up. They should stay in the area where they are and only move if asked to do so by the soldiers, he said.

They must follow the soldiers' instructions once they have been told to move forward, he said.

"These procedures are intended to assuage the concerns of civilians in the province, and of our forces who are carefully entering the areas where the enemy forces are located," he said.

#### **Displaced families**

As of Wednesday, the DSWD had documented 92,628 residents from 18,609 families affected by the conflict.

Only a little over a tenth of affected residents, or 13,194 individuals from 2,722 families, are staying in 22 makeshift evacuation sites in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur provinces.

The majority, or 79,434 persons from 15,887 families, have sought shelter in the homes of relatives and friends.

These include 56,555 individuals or 11,311 families still inside Marawi, according to the DSWD.

Ghadzali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, said the group started to help evacuate civilians after MILF chief Murad Ebrahim met with the President in Davao City on Monday night.

"We escorted them out of their homes to nearby towns outside the city," Jaafar said.

—WITH REPORTS FROM EDWIN O. FERNANDEZ AND RYAN D. ROSAURO INQ

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MILF TO SECURE 'PEACE CORRIDOR'

# Govt rules out talks with terrorists

BY CATHERINE S. VALENTE

**T**HE Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Wednesday reiterated the government's position not to negotiate with terrorist groups after a video of a priest appeared on social media, in which he repeated the Maute group's demand to withdraw troops from Marawi City.

In a news conference in Malacañang, AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the video was being used for propaganda and that abducted priest Fr. Teresito "Chito" Suganob was speaking under duress.

Padilla also said he did not know if the number of hostages mentioned by Suganob – about 200 – was correct. 'We're not negotiating with terrorists. There is no

►TalksA2

■ TALKS FROM A1

## No talks with terrorists – AFP

change in the policy. The policy stays firm. It has not and will not change," Padilla told reporters.

"The video may seem to be authentic. But beyond the authenticity and the message of the video, there lies the real reason for coming up with the video, which is propaganda...And we would not want to get into that. The propaganda of the enemy... are indicative of their fighting for survival. They are trapped. They are contained. They are in areas [where] they will never come out alive unless they surrender," he added.

Padilla again urged the terrorists to lay down their weapons and surrender to reduce risk to innocent lives.

"We are appealing to these armed men to come to their senses, lay down their weapons and surrender. In this manner, we will be able to reduce the increasing cost of innocent lives as well as damage to property, and at the same time this further lessens the [number of] crimes they have committed," he said.

In the viral video, Suganob pleaded with the military to stop its offensive against the Maute for the safety of the hostages.

"Mr. President, I was taken as a prisoner of war together with one female professor of the Mindanao

State University, two lady church workers, two male teachers of the Dansalan College Foundation Incorporated, and five female teachers of the Dansalan College Incorporated," Suganob said in the video.

Suganob said he and 200 others, including children and Christian settlers, are being held as "prisoners of war" in the strife-torn Marawi City.

### 90 percent of Marawi 'cleared'

Padilla also said government security forces have cleared 90 percent of Marawi City of the extremist Maute group, more than a week after President Rodrigo Duterte placed Mindanao under martial law.

"However, that 10 percent is most likely going to be the area that will be heavily guarded and defended by any of these armed men, if they are protecting any individual of high value," he said.

Palace spokesman Ernesto Abella said at least 129 individuals have been killed in the continuing clashes in Marawi City, as of Tuesday: 19 civilians, 89 militants, and 21 government troops.

The government was able to rescue 960 trapped residents in the city and recover 91 firearms, he said.



**HELP FROM MORO REBS** President Rodrigo Duterte talks to Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Chairman Al Haj Murad Ebrahim and other MILF officials, including Mohagher Iqbal, Ustadz Khalifa Nando, Ghazali Jaafar and Sammy Al-Mansoor during a meeting in Davao City on Wednesday. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

### 'Peace corridor' OK'd

President Duterte meanwhile approved the creation of a "peace corridor" to hasten rescue and humanitarian operations for civilians trapped in Marawi City, as clashes between government troops and Maute terrorists continued on Wednesday.

This was decided during the President's meeting with leaders of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Davao City on Monday, Abella said during a "Mindanao Hour" news briefing in Malacañang.

Quoting government peace

panel chief Irene Santiago, Abella said Duterte approved the idea of a peace corridor "to ensure the safety of the civilians and the delivery of the needed humanitarian aid for the displaced persons in the ongoing armed conflict in Marawi."

He said Santiago was designated by the President to oversee the humanitarian efforts for displaced civilians in Marawi City.

During Monday's meeting, MILF agreed to help the government secure areas that will be part of the peace corridor, Abella said.

Duterte, in his visit to a military camp in Jolo, Sulu over the weekend, said the MILF and

Moro National Liberation Front were welcomed to join government troops in military offensives against remaining members of the Maute group.

Santiago said both the government and the MILF were "strongly committed to work as partners in finding creative ways to address the root causes of violent conflict in Mindanao at the soonest possible time."

The 21-member Bangsamoro Transition Commission also briefed the President on the developments in the drafting of the Bangsamoro Basic Law, which will allow wider autonomy in Muslim Mindanao. The draft is due in July.

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# Duterte threatens NDFP negotiators with arrest

By Frinston Lim  
@flimINQ

DAVAO CITY—President Duterte, angered by an announcement by communist rebels that they would step up offensives in reaction to his martial law declaration, on Wednesday told their peace negotiators he would order them arrested if they return to the country from the aborted talks in the Netherlands.

"I am warning the leaders whom I have released and who are now talking to the representatives of my government: Do not attempt to come home. I will arrest all of you and throw you to the slammer," he said at the Philippine Navy's 119th anniversary rites.

"I will arrest you and all the elderly [leaders] I will arrest all of you again. And if needed, they will just die there inside the prison," he said.

The President made the threat as Jose Maria Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), proposed to deploy New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas to fight the terror groups that besieged Marawi City.

Mr. Duterte imposed martial law on the entire Mindanao early last week after the Islamic State-inspired Abu Sayyaf and Maute group led by Isnilon Hapilon battled government forces that tried to capture the terrorist leader in his hideout in Marawi. Nearly 130 have been killed in the fighting in the predominantly Muslim city since May 23.

"The NPA have forces near Marawi that can be redeployed. There are also forces in North Cotabato, but they would really have to walk very far," Sison said in the Dutch

city of Noordwijk where the latest round of talks were to be held. He serves as chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) in the talks.

The proposed tactical alliance between the NPA and security forces would have to be discussed with the government peace negotiators and the President himself, Sison said.

"There are operational concerns. They need to discuss the division of areas," Sison said. "It would be difficult to have a free-for-all. It's dangerous."

Sison also proposed "a positive common stand" against the terror groups gripping Marawi.

There would be no need for martial law to continue if the terror groups and their networks would be dealt with, he said.

The scheduled May 27-June 2 fifth round of talks between the government and the NDFP was canceled by the government on Saturday after the CPP ordered the NPA to step up attacks on government forces implementing martial rule.

The CPP issued the directive after Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the NPA would be one of the targets of martial law.

Lorenzana later clarified that the NPA was not a specific target, but warned that rebels engaged in criminal acts "will be dealt with, with or without martial law."

The NDFP later recommended to the CPP to reconsider its order, but because of communication problems this would take time to reach the guerrilla units concerned.

The President's threat to arrest the communist leaders and NDFP negotiators and Sison's proposed tactical alliance against

the terror groups in Marawi came as Lorenzana and left-wing groups continued blaming each other for the stalled talks.

Lorenzana said in a statement on Wednesday the President suspended the peace talks "based not only on my input but the whole government bureaucracy."

"I did not talk to the President about suspending the talks but I discussed it with some of the Cabinet members," he told the Inquirer separately. "I do not know who recommended the suspension."

Lorenzana was reacting to the militant fisherfolk group Pambansa ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas), which blamed him for stalling the talks.

"While I am flattered by Pambansa ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya's assertion that I was to blame for the suspension of the fifth round of talks ... the truth is that my participation in government decision-making is purely recommendatory," Lorenzana said in his statement. "It is the President who makes the final decision."

Lorenzana said Pambansa ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya's "narrow-mindedness" prevented it from seeing that the government's withdrawal from the talks was due to the announced offensives by the NPA.

"To blame someone else is the height of naiveté," he said.

On Monday, Pambansa ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya chair Fernando Hicap called Lorenzana a "highly dangerous" threat to the talks and demanded the resignation of the "peace saboteur and war-mongering secretary."

"We can't expect these peace negotiations to prosper when this anti-peace is in the picture," Hicap said. —WITH REPORTS FROM KARLOS MANLUPIG, PHILIP C. TUBEZA, LEILA B. SALAVERRIA INQ

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MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## President to NPA: Do not disrupt peace in Mindanao

By ARAYIL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

President Duterte has issued a stern warning to local communist rebels in Mindanao against disrupting peace in the island by joining the Islamic State (ISIS) or never return to the Philippines again.

Duterte, in his speech at the 119th Philippine Navy anniversary celebra-

tion, said he has already given so much to the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) just so peace in Mindanao can be achieved.

"If there is a breakdown in the peace and order here because of the participation of the communist in this war against the ISIS, kung gusto niyo

tumulong sa kabila, magpuntahan na kayo lahat (If you want to join them, do it now)," he said in his speech in Davao City Wednesday afternoon.

"But I am warning the leaders whom I have released and who are now talking to the representatives of my government: Do not attempt to come home. I will arrest all of you and throw you to the slammer," he added. ▶5

## President to NPA...

"Pagkukulungin ko kayo at lahat ng matanda aarestuhin ko 'yan uli (I will arrest you all even the elderly whom I have released already). And if needed, they will just die there inside the prison," he continued.

According to Duterte, the communist rebels have been fighting with the Philippine government for 50 years now and he has made leaps in an attempt to finally achieve peace in Mindanao.

"I tried to talk to you, as a matter of fact, ni-release ko halos lahat ng mga preso n'yo (I released almost every prisoners)," he said, adding that he released those who were sick and the elderly.

"Kaya sabi ko, go there and fight again if you want. Pero 'yung mga able-bodied pa nandoon pa sa Muntinlupa (But those who are able-bodied are still in Muntinlupa)," he continued.

Duterte also said that the communist rebels will be marginalized and will eventually become outcasts if ISIS succeeds in taking over Mindanao.

"Kung manalo ba ang ISIS, may papel pa ba kayo sa mundong ito (If ISIS wins, will you still have a role in this world)? You will be marginalized," he said.

"You cannot prevail over the government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP). You can never find a sanctuary

under communist rule. So stop [expletive] [the] government," he added.

The fifth round of the formal peace talks between the CPP and the GRP in the Netherlands has been suspended after the CPP directed the NPA to intensify its attacks against government forces following Duterte's declaration of martial law in Mindanao.

Duterte declared martial law and suspended the privilege of the writ of

habeas corpus in Mindanao for 60 days due to armed conflict in Marawi City which resulted to numerous casualties.

He had earlier urged the NPA to just join the government in fighting the threat of terrorism in Mindanao instead of engaging in a fruitless fight against the government.

As of press time, only the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has expressed willingness and support to Duterte's offer and has set up the "Peace Corridor" in Mindanao.



**RESCUE** – Residents of Barangay Papanadayan, Marawi City, are being rescued by volunteers yesterday amid the ongoing clash between government troops and terrorist group Maute. The residents, afraid to get caught in the crossfire, have decided to stay at their houses during the war. (Mark Balmores)

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**SENATE BRIEFING**  
**LORENZANA**  
**CLARIFIES ML**  
**STATEMENT**

By Philip C. Tubeza  
@pctubeza

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana has told senators the declaration of martial law is imperative to deal with immediately and decisively security concerns in the entire Mindanao region, not just in the besieged city of Marawi.

Lorenzana's office issued the statement on Wednesday after the Senate minority bloc announced following his briefing in an executive session on Monday that he did not recommend that President Duterte proclaim martial law in Marawi in response to a rampage by Maute group and Abu Sayyaf bandits.

"What he said was that the government security forces can contain the situation in Marawi City even without martial law. However, he emphasized that martial law is imperative to once and for all address security concerns in the entire Mindanao immediately and decisively," the statement said.

"The situation currently being dealt with by state security forces goes beyond Marawi," it added.

**Rebellion in South**

Martial law "aims to put an end to the long-running rebellion in various provinces in the south," as shown by incidents in Zamboanga, Davao, Bohol, Lanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Maguindanao, the statement said.

"As the President has repeatedly said, 'If I declare martial law, I will finish all of this.'" it said, referring to threats posed by Islamic State-linked local and foreign terrorist groups whose network covers the entire Mindanao.

Lorenzana, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. and the top brass of the Armed Forces of the Philippines attended the closed-door briefing in the Senate.

"I would like to think they were very supportive and appreciative of what soldiers were doing in the field," Esperon said.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said Lorenzana had told the senators that he was "looking at being able to normalize the situation by Friday, by this week" or to make sure there would no longer be armed elements in Marawi.

Sen. Sherwin Gatchalian said the briefing showed that government troops were battling 500 Maute fighters, backed by "silent supporters" in the area.

During Wednesday's security briefing in the House of Representatives, Lorenzana said Mr. Duterte did not consult him or other members of the Philippine delegation in Russia where the President announced the declaration of martial law in Mindanao, according to Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman.

—WITH REPORTS FROM  
CHRISTINE O. AVENDAÑO AND DJ  
YAP INQ

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## Lorenzana defends need for martial law in Mindanao

By MICHAEL PUNONGBAYAN  
and PAOLO ROMERO

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana has described President Duterte's decision to declare martial law in Mindanao as a necessary move to put an end to all the security problems in the region.

While he did say during an executive session at the Senate that government security forces can contain the situation in Marawi City even without martial rule, he clarified that the statement was made along with another point.

Lorenzana yesterday said he emphasized before senators "that martial law is imperative to once and for all address security concerns in the entire Mindanao immediately and decisively."

"The situation currently being dealt with by state security forces goes beyond

Marawi City. President Duterte's imposition of martial law aims to put an end to the long-running rebellion in various provinces in the south, as evidenced by the incidents that happened in Zamboanga, Davao, Bohol, Lanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Maguindanao," he stressed.

"As the President has repeatedly said, '*Kung magde-declare ako ng martial law, tata-pusin ko nang lahat ito* (If I'm going to declare martial law, I will have to end all these),' referring to threats posed by ISIS-linked local and foreign terrorist groups whose network covers the entire Mindanao," he said.

### Divulging details hit

Meanwhile, senators yesterday hit their colleagues in the minority bloc for divulging sensitive details of the closed-door briefing given to them by security

officials on the situation in Marawi City.

On Tuesday, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, a member of the minority, disclosed that Lorenzana told them during the executive session that the Armed Forces can stabilize the situation in Marawi City without having martial law.

Trillanes also mentioned the same on the floor during the debates on the resolution of the minority bloc calling for a joint session of Congress.

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, however, cautioned Trillanes against divulging more details of the briefing.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, chairman of the Senate committee on public order, said the opposition senators violated internal rules governing executive sessions.

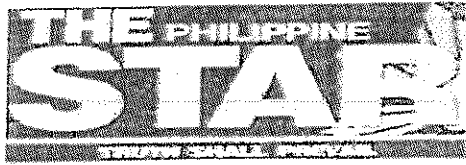
"At worst, if not checked as the majority leader did during our debates yesterday, it could put in jeopardy the lives of

our men and women in uniform," Lacson said.

"For, on top of the information divulged in plenary, they could very well forge ahead to give more information taken up in the executive session bordering on the tactical movements of our soldiers and policemen in Marawi thereby telegraphing their movements," he said. – With Alexis Romero



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## PMA closed to tourists due to Marawi crisis

Fort Del Pilar, BAGUIO CITY – The crisis in Marawi City has prompted the closure of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) to tourists since Tuesday.

Lt. Col. Reynaldo Balido said entry to the camp is restricted until next week.

Balido said military camps are on alert to prevent any terror attack.

Over the weekend, 285 plebes – 245 males and 40

females that will compose Class 2021 – were incorporated into the cadet corps after completing a seven-week training.

It was the second time that the PMA was closed to visitors since last February following the termination of peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front.

– Artemio Dumlaog

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**YOUNG BLOOD**

# When I think of Mindanao

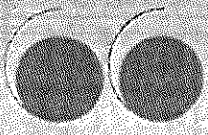
GIA LEANNE LUGA

**W**hen I think of Marawi, I remember my father's military camp, which was perched on top of a hill. I remember hearing voices chanting, praying—like clockwork, five times a day—from the mosques in the town below. I remember seeing Muslim women covered in black from head to toe. I remember thinking, as a young girl, that this land was foreign to me. It offered none of the urban comforts of Cebu City, and the Filipinos who lived there dressed differently, spoke another language, and didn't worship the way I did.

When I think of Mindanao, I remember the many boat rides from Cebu to Cagayan de Oro and the countless land trips from one province to another, which we would make as a family because my father, uncle, and grandfather spent many years of their military careers there. Checkpoints, tanks, guns, camouflage uniforms, and the brave men and women who wore them are all part of my childhood. Somewhere in the middle of listening to my grandfather's tales of Sulu and visiting my father's military camps, I knew that building peace was a lifetime mission—one into which I was born.

When I think of Mindanao, I remember the work of Gawad Kalinga. I remember the chill that I couldn't shake off when we crossed the very highway of the 2009 Maguindanao massacre. I remember feeling goose bumps when we visited the site of a future GK community, in a town next to Mamasapano. This was only months after members of the PNP Special Forces were brutally killed in the 2015 Mamasapano encounter.

I remember visiting Camp Abubakar. I remember not knowing what to say when Noronisa, Monaira, and Haula told me about running for their lives as children, when the government declared an all-out war against the Moro Islamic Lib-



**MINDANAO IS WHERE  
I TRULY UNDERSTOOD  
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SACRIFICING LOVE**

eration Front in 2000. They told me about the explosions and gunshots, about how every time they'd see someone in a camouflage uniform, they didn't know if he was there to protect them or kill them. What does a soldier's daughter say to that?

I don't know. I still don't know. I don't know why wars have to happen, why innocent people have to die, and why there is so much hatred in the world.

But when I think of Mindanao, I also remember the miracles of solidarity that I personally witnessed amid the strongest of calamities and the most deep-seated of conflicts. I remember all the people I've encountered—Muslim, Christian, *Lumad*, Filipinos all. Mindanao is where I truly understood the wealth of our culture and heritage. Mindanao is where I witnessed indefatigable hope and self-sacrificing love.

When you think of Marawi, when you think of Mindanao, I wonder what you think about. I hope you see beyond the limited images provided by the media. When you think you're one with the people of Mindanao, when you lift your placards in protest of martial law, maybe think about what those who live there actually feel. When you think of lashing out from your keyboard at the soldiers or the government or the Muslims or whoever you want to point your finger at, I hope you know that the soldiers are just doing their duty—leaving their families behind and putting their lives on the line just to make sure that the Filipino people sleep soundly at night. Yes, that means Filipinos of all tribes and religions. Even online trolls and keyboard warriors.

Lastly, when you think of Mindanao, I hope you don't think of it as some foreign land, like I did when I was younger. When you think of the Filipinos in Marawi who are caught in the cross-fire, I hope you look beyond religion and *hijab* and the prejudices that are louder and at times deadlier than the gunshots of the battlefield.

I recall Benedict Anderson's "Imagined Communities" (1998), where he says: "Regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die." And at a time when it is more common to point out nationalism's "roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love."

When you think of Mindanao, think about what being Filipino means to you.

Gia Leanne Luga, 29, graduated from the University of the Philippines and worked for Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation. She is currently completing her master's degree in international communication at Macquarie University in Sydney. Among "my big, audacious dreams" she says, "is a poverty-free Philippines where everyone is proud to be Filipino."

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## The many voices of martial law

**W**e cannot pretend otherwise: The nation is sharply divided on the issue of martial law, which President Duterte declared over the whole of Mindanao.

Those who support martial law see it as a logical and commensurate response to a serious threat about which President Duterte has long been warning. In this narrative, enemies of the state have joined forces—drug lords, terrorists, and even the political opposition, and they must be stopped lest they rend our nation asunder. “He knows what he’s doing,” they say of Mr. Duterte. “He’s from Mindanao; why will he harm his own people?”

Those who oppose martial law, on the other hand, see it as a disproportionate response; many fear that it is the next step in the President’s creeping authoritarianism. They cite the precedent of Marcos’ martial law—openly admired by Mr. Duterte even as it was marked by human rights violations. They worry that while the 1987 Constitution has checks and balances against abuses, the institutions tasked to perform them have become inutile and largely subservient.

This debate has taken on an even more divisive turn as some are framing it as a matter between the people of Mindanao and those not from there. “Isn’t it ironic? The people who complain are from Luzon, but martial law is here in Mindanao,” a friend from Davao said, echoing a common refrain in social media. He has a point, but can he speak on behalf of the whole of Mindanao, with all its many voices?

To make sense of people’s attitudes toward martial law, we need to understand where they are coming from. Some people cite



### SECOND OPINION

GIDEON LASCO

the nondeclaration of martial law in Zamboanga City during the 2013 siege as an argument against it, but, as local broadcaster Ronnie Lledo tells me, many in their city actually feel that martial law should have been declared, given what they went through.

For many *lumad* all over Mindanao, perhaps martial law will be seen as “nothing new,” given the longstanding militarization of their homelands. We speak of “Muslims in Mindanao” as if they were one group, but they, too, have diverse sentiments: Many support martial law, but are gravely concerned about collateral damage. Others are bitterly opposed to it, citing the Moro experience during the Marcos regime.

As for the people of Marawi City, martial law is but part of the ongoing crisis. “This is the saddest Ramadan for us,” they cry, as they narrate stories of survival, escape, hunger, fear and suffering, alongside appeals for humanitarian aid. It is a sobering thought that many Filipinos remain in

the crossfire, and that the death toll, civilian and military, continues to rise.

All these are legitimate voices, but theirs are not the only ones. As the death of Senior Insp. Freddie Manuel Solar—who hails from Baguio City—painfully reminds us, the soldiers and police officers in the frontline come from all over the country. Surely their families also have the right to be concerned on whether the fight we’re fighting is just and warranted.

And so does the rest of the nation, including the youth. Omid Siahmard, a UP Manila student from North Cotabato, urged people to stop generalizing their experiences of “feeling safe”—and called for an end to the air strikes, citing the death of a friend’s uncle. Shall we dismiss voices like his? Must we draw lines of legitimacy on the basis of age, region, institution, or religion?

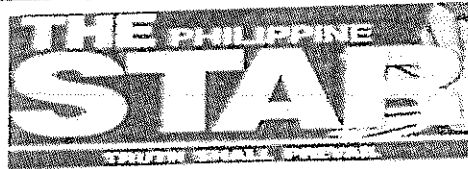
And should we ignore the past? If Digong can invoke the memory of Bud Dajo, should we not invoke the memories of Mallsbong? Or, for that matter, Pata Island and Manili?

Personally, I am worried about where this situation might take us: The President’s recent pronouncements (and jokes) are not very reassuring, and neither is humanity’s track record in handling unconstrained power.

But I worry, too, about the divisiveness that martial law is exacerbating and bringing about—a divisiveness that plays into the terrorists’ goal of undoing our cherished institutions and values. As the emerging narratives from Marawi should remind us, there are many voices out there, and the least we can do is listen, especially to those who are affected the most by this deepening crisis.

Comments to [gideon.lasco@gmail.com](mailto:gideon.lasco@gmail.com)

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## BREAKTHROUGH

ELFREN S. CRUZ

### Roots of Mindanao wars

The following is the full statement issued by De La Salle Philippines President Br. Jose M. Jimenez FSC on the conflict in Marawi. It is entitled *Upholding the Rights of Citizens in a Time of Conflict: An Appeal for a Holistic Response to the Crisis in Marawi*



"In the past days we have witnessed how the lives of our fellow Filipinos in Marawi have been disrupted by the actions of the Maute Group. As many flee the violence that has taken over the city and as many experience displacement, we continue to appeal to civil society to work together with the local church and government agencies to ensure the safety and well being of those affected. In solidarity with those who experience this insecurity, let us ensure the availability of necessary material and social supports to help our affected brethren pass over this period of crisis. As educators, we wish to call special attention to the plight of children and young people, who in this situation of conflict are rendered the most vulnerable.

We denounce the lawless acts that have been committed by the Maute Group against the civilian population of Marawi. The right of people to life and liberty cannot be subordinated to one group's assertion of its political or religious beliefs. The actions of the Maute group run counter to the values of tolerance and dialogue that we wish our young people to learn and live by.

We urge our government leaders to uphold the processes guaranteed by the 1987 Constitution. We believe that the restoration of order in Marawi City can be accomplished by the judicious use of the powers provided by the Constitution and the unwavering commitment to protect and respect the inviolable rights of individuals. The situation of disorder cannot be addressed by an appeal to discord and wanton disregard of the limits imposed on the exercise of the state's power. The prudent use of power by those in authority is a blessing for those who are governed.

The conflict that is now playing out in Marawi City has as well, deep roots in our country's history. As an institution of learning, we are committed to a deeper appreciation of the roots of discontent that have fuelled this conflict. We pledge, to build alongside our civil government, the structures that will allow every Filipino access to resources that are necessary for development. Our development can only be authentic if we all develop together. As an educational institution, we re-commit ourselves to allowing persons and communities to realize their own power for creating good. May the long march towards the peace we long for begin in our hearts today and live on in the actions we shall take in the days ahead.

Fraternally, Br. Jose Mari Jimenez FSC, president, De La Salle Philippines

#### Roots of the conflict

I follow the news to know what is happening. But I read books to understand what's happening. There are many books that can help us understand the roots of the conflict in Mindanao.

*Gallantry in Mindanao* by Ben Cal was published in 2000. In the book's preface, the author, a Filipino newsman, wrote the reason for writing the book: "The outbreak of another war in Mindanao, the second one in my generation, sent my memory chips into a frenzied rewind bringing me back to the first, the one the government fought against the Moro National Liberation Front in the early Seventies."

He was referring to the war in Mindanao, during the martial law regime of Marcos. It was a conflict that resulted in more than 100,000 civilian deaths and 10,000 soldiers and policemen who were killed during the conflict.

Ben Cal narrates the story of the gallantry of the soldiers who fought for the Republic. The most interesting narration, from a historical view is his description of the first clash with the Abu Sayyaf, which was formed in 1989.

On the morning of Friday, January 13, 1995, a nine year old boy reported to an army unit in Mabuso, Basilan that around 150 armed members of the Abu Sayyaf were unloading supplies two kilometers from the camp. Captain Cirilito Sobrejana of the 1st Scout Ranger Company organized a team of 30 Scout Rangers to conduct a surprise attack. The clash in Matarlang, Basilan was the first time the Abu Sayyaf, then led by Janjalani, figured in a gunfight with government forces. Most of the stories in the book sound almost exactly the same as the news reports we are hearing today.

➤ **Muslim in the Philippines** by Adib Majul was published in 1999 – a “must reading” for those who are serious about understanding the conflict in Mindanao. The author is a converted Muslim and views Philippine history from a Muslim perspective.

Among the insights in his book, he says that Islam in the Philippines was part of the Islamization process in the Malay and Indonesian Peninsula. The Spanish attempt to Christianize and subjugate the Muslims in Mindanao was the primary reason for the start of the Moro wars. The Muslims were provoked to rise up and defend their territories.

In order to instill fear, Spanish soldiers destroyed Muslim houses, plantations and beheaded captured local leaders. Women and children were taken as slaves. Muslims from Borneo and the Malay Peninsula have always aided the Muslims in the Philippines in fighting the Spanish invaders.

The conflict in Marawi has deep roots in our history. A necessary step towards peace is to understand the history of all our people including the Muslims in the Philippines.

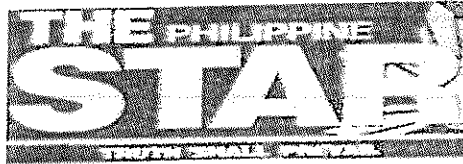
**Creative writing classes for kids/teens and adults**

*Young Writers' Hangout for Kids & Teens* on June 3 (1:30-3pm) with Russell Molina, *Creative Writing Workshop for Adults* with award winning fictionist Susan Lara will be on June 17 (1:30-4:30 pm). All sessions are at Fully Booked Bonifacio High Street. For registration and fee details text 0917-6240196 or email [writethingsph@gmail.com](mailto:writethingsph@gmail.com).

Email: [elfrencruz@gmail.com](mailto:elfrencruz@gmail.com)



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## SHOOTING STRAIGHT

BOBIT S. AVILA

### Maute terrorists victimized mostly Muslims

In last Tuesday's 888 News Weekly Forum at the Marco Polo Plaza Hotel in Cebu City, our guests were Centcom spokesman Col. Medel Aguilar and Muslim Mufti Unstad Najeeb Rasul and the topic was the Maute Terror Group's attack in Marawi City, which is now on its 10th day.



Perhaps after seeing the Facebook photos and news videos of the on-going firefight, many people agree that the declaration of Martial Law was a necessity in Marawi and with the declaration by Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) Jose Maria Sison for the New People's Army (NPA) to step up their attacks against government troops, all the more that the people in the Visayas and Mindanao embraced this call for Martial Law, even if not all of Mindanao is in flames.

We also learned that 17 or the majority of Philippine Senators fully supports Proclamation No. 216 by issuing Proclamation No. 338, which states, "The Senate finds the issuance of Proclamation No. 216 to be satisfactory, constitutional and in accordance with the law. The Senate hereby supports fully Proclamation No. 216 and finds no compelling reason to revoke the same." The Senate also ordered the release of calamity funds for Marawi City.

I had a simple question to the Muslim Mufti Unstad Najeeb Rasul, what's the percentage of the Muslim population in Marawi City? He replied, "It's 95 percent Muslim." Therefore, the multitude of evacuees that we saw on national TV news leaving Marawi for Iligan City are Muslims. This is not to diminish the importance of the news report that Fr. Teresito Suganob, Vicar General of the Prelature of Marawi has been taken hostage, while the Maute terrorists burned the Cathedral in Marawi City. But the fact remains, that the victims of the Maute Terror attack in Marawi City are Muslims!

To date there are already more than a hundred casualties in this still raging war against the Maute terror group in Marawi City. We heard that 62 of this number belong to the Maute Group. But what we need to know is how many more supporters of the Maute Group are there inside Marawi City? Until military intelligence figures this out, I don't think that this firefight would end very soon. Meanwhile, allow me to reprint the statement of the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy about this Muslim crisis.

*"The Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy strongly condemns the violent attacks perpetrated by lawless elements in the Islamic city of Marawi and Lanao del Sur, made more heinous as it occurred as the Muslim faithful are preparing for the holy month of Ramadhan. Any act inciting to terror in the hearts of defenseless civilians, the destruction of places of worship and properties, the murder of innocent men, women, and children irrespective of one's faith are all forbidden and detestable acts according to Islam.*

*Sowing terror through force and violence has always been an invalid means of attaining societal changes, and cannot be justified through faith or religion. The Qur'an says: "If any one slays a person - unless it be as punishment for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would*

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**AVILA** From page 9

be as if he slew all people. And if any one saves a life, it would be as if he saved the lives of all people" (Surah 5, verse 32).

We urge the Philippine Government to ensure that the declaration of Martial Law will not, in any way, compromise the lives of our people and the principles of democracy that we hold dear. PCID believes that the peaceful resolution of the armed conflict in Marawi is needed, through tempered and calibrated responses that will prevent further casualties and damage to property and livelihood.

We ask fellow Filipinos to stay informed based on facts, especially

with the prevalence of unverified information and unsupported theories regarding the crisis. We also ask the media to take extra precautions in their reporting, and to prevent framing the crisis as a binary conflict between Muslims and Christians. We should focus on uniting and working together for just peace and human rights, instead of holding unfair and preemptory judgments that can only lead to a perilous cycle of fear, ignorance, and worse, more violence.

More than ever, preventing violent extremism is needed, so we are urging all sectors to immediately address the worsening issue at its roots. First and foremost, our government officials, particularly the elected leaders, should be accountable for good governance and rule

of law as well as the deterioration of the peace and order condition in conflict affected communities of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. Without good governance and the rule of law, government cannot be effective in improving the socio-economic and political conditions of our people, and the delivery of basic services long denied in the Bangsamoro. As the Muslim ummah enters Ramadhan, we can only pray for wisdom, peace, and understanding. Ms. Amina Rasul President Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy."

\* \* \*

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## FIRST PERSON

ALEX MAGNO

### Imperiled

No question about it: a shadowy alliance of terrorist factions in Mindanao imperils the Republic. These terrorist groups share the common feature of allegiance to the ISIS network. They intend to use Mindanao as a new front for their jihad.



Fighting is still in progress nine days after fighters of this alliance entered Marawi in force. What used to be a proud and prosperous city transformed into a ghost town, its population displaced and its infrastructure in ruins.

Last week, the military spokesman on the ground sounded supremely confident. This matter will be settled in two or three days, he said, while estimating the enemy force to be composed of 30 or 40 men.

It has been nine harrowing days since the fighting began. The latest reports indicate the terrorists are entrenched at the city center, controlling two of the city's three bridges with sniper fire. Over 80 terrorists are reported dead. Probably more than 60 are still battling the most tested units of the AFP and the PNP. A Special Action Force armored personnel carrier was captured by the jihadist fighters.

Meanwhile, a group of about 30 armed men opened fire at a military camp in Zamboanga. They were repelled only after air strikes were called on their positions. Although reports are still sketchy, this seems a diversionary action away from the main Marawi battle zone.

The Zamboanga incident could be a foretaste of more diversionary actions to come. If attacks become more widespread, that should settle the debate with those arguing that martial law be confined to the City of Marawi rather than across all of Mindanao. Martial law powers proved useful in locking down Iligan, preventing the terrorists from spreading the contagion.

There are reports that the terrorist force that entered Marawi included foreign jihadists from Malaysia, Indonesia and probably the Middle East. While these reports have yet to be confirmed, they encouraged the Solicitor General, among others, to take a leap in logic, claiming an "invasion" was in progress.

To be sure, our security officials seriously underestimated the threat posed by what was earlier dismissed simply as the "Maute group." The enemy force in Marawi now appears seriously competent, adequately armed and with more than rudimentary training. They engaged the best units thrown at them - the Marines, the Rangers and the SAF - and still hold some ground.

Journalists covering the fighting on the ground wonder aloud where the terrorists are getting all the ammunition they expend on advancing government forces. After nine days of heavy fighting, they show few signs of running short of bullets.

Military commanders on the ground explain the tenacity of the terrorist force as evidence that their leader, Isnilon Hapilon, remains within the city. Hapilon, a Tausug, appears to have sought sanctuary in Maranao areas both to recuperate from his injuries as well as weave a functioning alliance among several factions who have pledged allegiance to ISIS. The assault on Marawi could not have been possible without such a functioning alliance.

It is also possible that the strong move on Marawi was inspired by some expectation the ISIS factions could realign the jigsaw puzzle of armed factions in the area and get more fighting men committing to their cause. They could have imagined holding on to Marawi and making the city the equivalent of Mosul: a mecca for jihadists from all over Southeast Asia to gather in. It will be the seat of the imaginary caliphate's newest province.

This is a security specter needing to be quashed at the soonest.

The military spokesman on the ground, after being proved wrong on the claim all three bridges have been recovered, now says only 10% of the city remains under terrorist control. But that 10%, it appears, is the center of a sprawling city, a built up area ideal for snipers and a nightmare for the troops sent to recover.

We take the military's word when they say they have sealed all possible exits for the militants. As Sun Tzu pointed out, however, a force with no route to escape will tend to fight to the last man. In which case, we are in for many more days of a grinding and murderous battle.

Fortunately, as we watch horrified at the calamity unfolding in Marawi, we do not have to endure the inanity of politicians grandstanding while an emergency persists. Both chambers of Congress have supported the martial law measure, imperfect as it may be. That takes away the soapbox from those who wish to grandstand.

It is easy to understand why opposition politicians from both chambers want a joint session to deliberate the necessity for martial rule. All the points they raise, including the immediate lifting of martial law, appear exercises in hair-splitting given the vivid news from the front.

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There is nothing fake in the assault on Marawi. It is as real as it gets. The threat posed by extremists has been discussed extensively by security experts. The President responded with shock and awe. He is well within his authority to do so: call out our best fighting units, curtail the movement of possible terrorists with blockades and checkpoints, detain without recourse those suspected to be involved.

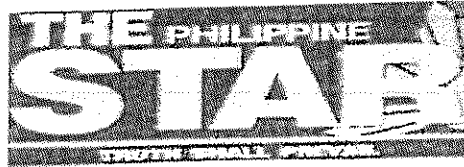
Nor are we being treated to acoustic warfare in Marawi. Scores of soldiers and policemen were killed or wounded in the fighting. They put their lives on the line for the Republic. The most patriotic thing to do now is to support our troops and bring relief to the tens of thousands of displaced civilians.



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## POSTSCRIPT

FEDERICO D. PASCUAL Jr.

### Is martial law key to stopping Maute?

**I**MPOSING martial law in Mindanao was not that crucial to government forces' being able to neutralize the Maute terrorists who wrought havoc on Marawi City last week, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana told senators in a security briefing on Monday.



Lorenzana's assessment was disclosed by some senators after he apprised them of the basis of Proclamation No. 216 of President Rodrigo Duterte placing Mindanao under martial law on May 23, when fighting erupted between Maute and state forces.

After the briefing, Senate minority leader Franklin Drilon told the media that Sen. Antonio Trillanes had asked the defense secretary "Can we contain Maute without martial law?" and that Lorenzana answered, "Yes, we can."

Trillanes recalled: "When asked, the security officials (in the briefing) said *hindi sila'yung nagrekomenda (na magdeklarang martial law)*."

Lorenzana confirmed in effect what *Postscript* noted last week: "The combined might of the armed forces and the police in Mindanao, under competent leadership, should be more than enough to neutralize the Maute marauders – said to be only 100-200 in number.

"It appears that the Maute pillage of Marawi gave President Duterte what he has been looking for – an opening and a justification to carry out his intention to declare martial law in Mindanao, if not in the entire country." See: <http://tinyurl.com/n3utkca>

In fact, resorting to martial law is tacit admission by the Chief Executive of his failure to perform his sworn duty to guard the peace and enforce the law in the absence of invasion or rebellion – the only emergencies that the Constitution lays down as bases for martial law.

Versus Maute, there are around 160,000 men in the armed forces, plus an equal number in the national police. (The numbers follow an unwritten equation balancing military and civilian security forces.) Of the P3.35-trillion national budget, the AFP has P130.6 billion and the PNP P110 billion.

(*Pahabol*: After we wrote this column, Lorenzana clarified that although he admitted telling the senators that the armed forces could deal with Maute fighters in Marawi, it was another situation in the rest of Mindanao. More of his explanation is at the end of this piece.)

#### • Your senators' vote on martial law

**DESPITE** the expert opinion of the defense secretary, 15 of the 23 senators voted "Yes" when Senate Resolution No. 388 saying that the martial law declaration was "satisfactory, constitutional, and in accordance with the law" was put to a vote.

The pro-martial law senators were Koko Pimentel (Senate president), Ralph Recto, Tito Sotto, Sonny Angara, Nancy Binay, JV Ejercito, Win Gatchalian, Richard Gordon, Gringo Honasan, Ping Lacson, Loren Legarda, Manny Pacquiao, Joel Villanueva, Cynthia Villar and Miguel Zubiri.

Eight senators did not sign Resolution-388: Francis Pangilinan, Franklin Drilon, Bam Aquino, Leila de Lima, Risa Hontiveros, Antonio Trillanes, Grace Poe and Francis Escudero. There should be 24 senators, but Allan Cayetano has joined the Cabinet as secretary of foreign affairs.

Using their overwhelming number, senators and congressmen aligned with President Duterte are blocking attempts to convene a joint session to force a vote – in the hope of putting on record how individual lawmakers stood on the issue and why.

Section 18, Article VII, does not require the Congress' approval of an initial 60 days of martial law – it is already being enforced in Mindanao – but allows the legislature by a majority vote of its two chambers convened in joint session to revoke its proclamation.

Revocation is a remote possibility since many lawmakers are beholden to Mr. Duterte and would do everything to be on his side. And as they say, we are all sinners. That makes most principal actors on the political stage vulnerable and are thus forced to be on good behavior.

#### • Battle shifts soon to Supreme Court

**AS WE** see it, the chances are bleak of any citizen petitioner shooting down Duterte's creeping martial law by challenging before the Supreme Court the factual bases of its proclamation.

Such a move looks odd to many of us non-lawyers who have been told that the high court is not a trier of facts. The Constitution itself says, however, that the SC is the proper venue for threshing out the factual bases of martial law. So it must be.

What if the President says that only he holds the verified version of the intelligence used as basis for his martial law proclamation? How can contrary facts be produced?

The situation opens another exciting possibility – that of responsible military officers motivated by duty coming forward with validated intelligence disputing the facts submitted by the Commander-in-Chief.

That is one glorious juncture when the armed forces – designated by the Constitution (Section 3, Article II) as the "protector of the people and the State" – can rise to the occasion and serve the people.

Still another hypothetical occasion when the military may intervene is if the Supreme Court rules against the Commander-in-Chief's proclamation and he refuses to obey Military intervention can take various guises – including withdrawal of loyalty or a coup d'etat.

But this is going ahead of the cataclysmic events unfolding before us.

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• **DND chief clarifies ML remarks**

WHILE Secretary Lorenzana confirmed what he told senators in their briefing, he said that martial law is still "imperative to once and for all address security concerns in the entire Mindanao immediately and decisively."

"The situation currently being dealt with by state security forces goes beyond Marawi City," he said, stressing that the imposition of martial law "aims to end the long-running rebellion in the South, as evidenced by incidents in Zamboanga, Davao, Bohol, Lanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-tawi and Maguindanao."

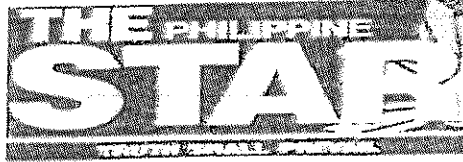
He recalled the President's repeated remarks "*kung magde-declare ako ng martial law, tatapusin ko nang lahat ito*," referring to threats posed by alleged ISIS-linked local and foreign terrorist groups whose network, he said, covers the entire Mindanao.

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**ADVISORY:** *Postscript* archives can be accessed at [www.mamilamail.com](http://www.mamilamail.com). Follow us on Twitter as @FD-Pascual. Email feedback to [fdp333@yahoo.com](mailto:fdp333@yahoo.com)

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## FROM THE STANDS DOMINI M. TORREVILLAS

### Not by bread alone



When she was a newly appointed judge of the Metropolitan Trial Court in Quezon City in the 1980s, Delilah Vidallon-Magtolis dismissed reports of friends about some of her fellow judges' misdeeds as pure character assassination.

Sometime later, when she came face to face with real hard facts, she had to eat her words. "Indeed there are colleagues who should rightfully be called 'Hoodlums in Robes,' as a former President described judges. "The nature of the duties and responsibilities of judges make them susceptible to temptations which are often so strong."

From the MTC then the Regional Trial Court of the same city, up to the Court of Appeals, her judicial career was marked by a strong commitment to truth and justice.

Now retired, Justice Magtolis writes about her experiences in a small volume titled, *Not By Bread Alone*. The book, which Supreme Court Chief Justice Maria Lourdes P. A. Sereno recommends as a "must-read" for newly appointed judges, is meant "to tell all and sundry how to uphold the majesty of the law despite the lure of easy money or get-rich-quick syndrome... Above all, the book is a testimony to how God's grace has sustained me in the endless contest of right against wrong and to live by faith in His provision and perfect plan."

Men, says Justice Magtolis, "should not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from God (Matthew 4:4), as admonished by Jesus Christ when he was tempted by the devil."

Her commitment to keep an unblemished record as a judge has been consistent. For her, friendships were secondary; the lure of money never glittered. She was firm against her staff receiving any gifts. She preferred to live in a simple single-story house rather than buy a mansion with hefty sums offered by people who wanted her to rule favorably on their cases.

One of her biggest challenges was how to maintain independence even when high-ranking officials or even fellow judges called on her to intercede for a party on a case.

Among those who called on her to ask for favorable resolutions on certain cases were a Secretary of Justice, a congressman, and higher judicial officials. Her standard answer was that she will study the case mentioned carefully, but did not promise its resolution. Former colleagues who were promoted to

higher courts never talked to her afterwards when she did not decide the case for which they interceded according to their wishes.

There were cases in which she decided against requests made through notes, that turned out had not come from the Quezon City mayor's and vice-mayor's offices, but were brought to her by intercessors.

"These instances made me steadfast in my desire to continue deciding cases according to the evidence presented before me, and not due to any pressure or 'pakiusap." It was a tougher path to follow, but thankfully, God has always delivered me through," writes Magtolis.

In her time as a trial judge, the sheriffs in most courts, she said, were considered the most corrupt. This is because they are the ones who execute or implement the judgments in the courts, and in so doing, they demand a fee before actually doing their work.

But not so her court sheriff, whom she selected from members of her own church. One time she learned her sheriff had received P3,000 from a client, which he spent to pay for truck rental, three laborers and two policemen who accompanied them to keep order during the execution. There was a leftover of P100, which Judge Magtolis ordered the sheriff to return to the lawyer. "In a short while, the news spread out that I was the only judge who was asking his/her sheriff to account in open court for his expenses in executing judgments."

Some offers would be too delicious to be turned down by people of lesser quality. One pertained to two lots being given her for ruling in favor of a petitioner who claimed that he had acquired a huge tract of land. The judge found out, upon examining documents, that the petitioner was only six years old when he purchased the property. The judge denied the petition.

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Then there was the case of Judge E from the QC RTC offering her P3 million to dismiss cases involving bouncing checks. Judge Magtolis felt insulted and angry and berated her fellow judge. She told him to leave her alone. The judge said, "*Baka lang sakali,*" and left. Judge Magtolis could have bought a house or travelled and live a leisurely life with the P3-million offer. At the time, judges' salary was P13,000 per month and if she retired, her retirement gratuity would not even be half of the P3-million offered.

When she was already in the Court of Appeals, things were no different. The

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## TORREVILLAS From page 9

"offers" were bigger, as the justices decided mostly on cases elevated to them from the lower trial court.

A pain in the neck was a CA colleague who came home from a trip abroad and gifted her with an unusually glittering "*pasa-lubong*" of a set of diamond earrings, ring and necklace. This Justice F had been asking Justice Magtolis to rule favorably on some cases she was interceding for. Among her tactics was to say, "*Ibigay mo to pa-birthday sa akin,*" or "*Pagbigyan mo naman ako, Darling.*" When a fuming Justice Magtolis rushed to Justice F's chambers to return the jewelry, the latter tried to embrace and hug her, saying, "*No more na, Darling.*"

In civil cases, only two of Magtolis' judgments in the entire 23 years that she served in the judiciary were reversed by the Supreme

Court. Her decisions rendered as a first-level court judge were all affirmed when appealed all the way up to the Court of Appeals. On the other hand, she says that of those she rendered as a Regional Trial Court judge, two were not totally affirmed on appeal, one was modified while the other was dismissed due to a procedural technicality and was not resolved on the merits of her judgment.

Magtolis rose from the ranks without the backup of influential people, but due to her hard work and high moral standards. Owing to her fine performance as an RTC judge, she received many awards, notably the Most Outstanding Award given in 1989 by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, and the Cayetano Arellano Award for Judicial Excellence given in 1992 by the Foundation for Judicial Excellence.

In 2005, Magtolis compulsorily retired as Associate Justice of the Court of Appeals and received an Achievement Award for

having disposed of all her assigned cases submitted for decision. Shortly after retirement, she was appointed by the Supreme Court as executive secretary of the Philippine Judicial Academy, the Court's education arm. Later, she took over as chief of the PHILJA Academic Affairs Office.

Lily, as her friends fondly call her, is the daughter of Leon Añonuevo Vidallon, a Protestant pastor, and Dionisia Nambayan Cajapin, a school teacher, both from Cavite. She worked herself through college, earning her BS from Far Eastern University and law degrees from the then Francisco College.

She is happily married to a nice, kind-hearted engineer, Isagani Mirasol Magtolis with whom she has three daughters, Leilani Gail, a physician; Anidelle Joy, an IT expert, and Delilah Grace, a lawyer.

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# MANILA BULLETIN

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## LANDSCAPE

# The Aga Khan in Marawi

By GEMMA CRUZ ARANEYA

**M**Y piece on Marawi elicited the fraternal concern of Mr. Mahmoud S Aziz who read it online. He resides in Canada, it seems, works in a pharmaceutical company and has been to Marawi and the Aga Khan Museum. "I share your sentimentality and sincerely appreciate your thoughts on the situation in Marawi. I am deeply saddened and disturbed at the extremist and violent behavior of a small part of the Muslim population in Mindanao. It appears that none of the Muslims there took heed and learnt from the Aga Khan's speech."

On 24 November 1963, the first anniversary of the opening of the Aga Kahn Museum of Muslim Art, His Highness himself went to Marawi to address local leaders and the student body of the Mindanao State University (MSU). Mr. Aziz was kind enough to send me a copy of that momentous speech, the salient points of which are, as follows:

1. "A man's position in society, wherever he may be, will depend less and less upon his cultural or family heritage and more and more on the power and development of his mind." In every society the Aga Khan had seen, he observed that it is "the intellectual elite which is capturing the outstanding offices, the most interesting work, the best situations. That is bound to be the case so long as the world population continues to increase and we are forced to deepen specialization."

2. "The great Omayyad and Abbaside Khalifates were created through the spread of the message of Islam and the conquering power of the Muslim armies..." But, once the waves of conquest were over and the Muslim religion spread from Arabia to Southern France to China, there

arose the problem of organizing and running the state "The unifying force, which allowed the Khalifates to weld immense empires with peoples of different languages, ethnic origins and culture, was the "administrative machinery."

3. That "administrative machinery" comprised people who were formed in the greatest centers of learning that ever existed — the universities in Damascus and Bagdad, those of Cairo, Tehran, Cordova, and Istanbul. The Muslim universities were producing the best scholars, doctors, astronomers, and philosophers. So, during the reign of those two Khalifates, after the armies withdrew, "it was the power of the intellectual elite which took over and governed, ran and maintained the state."

4. The Aga Khan said that throughout his journeys, "I have been deeply pained to see the lack of initiative which my brother Muslims have shown in educational matters. In some circles there may have been a fear that modern education would tend to lessen the sharpness and deepness of our Faith. I am afraid that I must reject this with vehemence... I am afraid that the torch of intellectual discovery, the attraction of the unknown, the desire for intellectual self-protection has left us. "Today, we need tools that will extend man's knowledge but, generally speaking, these are possessed by the more advanced and essentially Christian areas of the world. "What is the point of undergoing untold misery for political independence, if the result is no better than abject dependence Intellectually and economically on one's old political masters?"

5. Alluding to the MSU, the Aga Khan said, "it is a tool which is being fashioned into an instrument for self-perfection. But, for it to become perfect, the founders, faculty, and

students have to be vigilant. They have to assure that the standards are continually raised, so that this instrument will render you greater service at less cost in time and energy"

6. Those who will leave it (MSU) for further studies should approach the world "with a sharp vengeance — vengeance for the torpor and indifference of the past, vengeance for having temporarily lost their rightful position among the intellectual elite of the country" Let us show the state in which we live that we are determined to become first class citizens, nay leaders, not for the futile glory of leadership, but to help this country become a better place which to live... so our children will be born to brighter horizons."

7. He warned us: "The Saudi Wahhabi/Salafi government has been exporting pernicious extremist Wahhabi/Salafi ideology to the Philippines by establishing and funding their mosques, madrasses and other institutions with the aim of brainwashing and converting the people of Mindanao to their perverted, insidious ideology which is NOT ISLAM!" (Emphasis the Aga Khan's)

8. If the Philippine government does not stop Saudi Arabia from funding mosques, madrassas, schools, and the MILF and other such groups in the Philippines, the Philippines will continue to be subjected to the Wahhabi/Salami extremists

Education, Education, Education — was the core of the Aga Khan's message, echoing Jose Rizal and the other brains of our nation. That was 1963; the women I met in Marawi who had gone to Mecca were wearing gossamer veils of brilliant colors that matched their silk blouses and elegant malongs. There were no black veils then.

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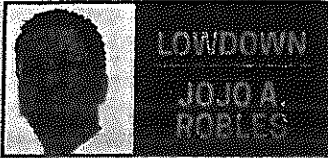


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# Manila Standard

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## Saving Mindanao



souls who have thrived in Mindanao, even if they have mostly been left to themselves.

But I am convinced now that at least part of the reason why Mindanao has never reached its full potential is that people in the north have always given up on the island at the first sign of trouble. And so Mindanaoans, I think, have developed the attitude that if anyone is going to help them, it will have to be themselves.

The current battle between government forces and the Maute terrorists in Marawi has revived the old controversy about who has the best solution to the long-running violence and strife that have given Mindanao a bad name. In social media, in particular, many people have testified that the people and the government in Manila do not really understand the situation in Mindanao and should allow the first Mindanaoan president, Rodrigo Duterte, to do what he thinks is right, since he is from

the island.

Even the Catholic priest who was videotaped after he was captured and held hostage by the IS-inspired Maute terror gang refer-

*“The history of Mindanao is replete with examples of government quitting on it when the going gets rough.”*

enced this in his statement, most likely made under duress, when he asked Duterte to call off the military offensive to retake the besieged city. Father Chito Sug-

anob said Duterte should order government security forces to withdraw from Marawi because he, of all people, should understand its “history.”

And the history of Mindanao is replete with examples of the central government quitting on it when the going gets rough, because the island seems too far away anyway and takes too much money, effort and even lives to keep under control. Perhaps this is the history of Mindanao that Duterte wants to rewrite, because he, of all presidents in recent memory, seems the most determined to resolve once and for all the problems that have beset it almost from the beginning of the Philippine nation.

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Duterte’s immediate predecessor, Noynoy Aquino, for example, was no different from the presidents who went before him. Aquino’s most memorable involvement in Mindanao was supervising the siege of Zamboanga City after a small band



of members of the Moro National Liberation Front arrived and hoisted the MNLF flag.

Aquino decided to bomb the city almost to rubble, a decision that haunts the government still by way of the people of the once-thriving city who still live in temporary shelters years after the siege. Aquino seemed to have lost interest in Zamboanga after making his point that no one should challenge Manila's authority—but then, that president was famous for quickly losing interest in many things that did not really concern him personally or resonate with his own experience as a hacendero's son.

Aquino's own predecessor, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, like Duterte, also declared martial law in Mindanao, albeit in a much-smaller area, the province of Maguindanao. Arroyo made the declaration right after the so-called Maguindanao Massacre, which was really a political dispute gone thoroughly bloody and

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## Saving...

*From A4*

homicidal—and then she and her government went back to Manila-centric concerns once again.

Joseph Estrada gained notoriety in Mindanao for waging his “all-out war” against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Estrada, during his brief reign, made it his business to retake the MILF camps in Maguindanao

and elsewhere, until he got sidetracked by the efforts to remove him from office, which eventually ended up with his impeachment and conviction.

That all three of Duterte's immediate predecessors were from Manila and nearby provinces is not really coincidence. Since the Spanish colonial period and during the American occupation that succeeded it, even foreign invaders seemed to have decided that Mindanao was just

too much trouble to govern, after seeing that their efforts to subjugate the island were not as successful as they were in other parts of the country.

So you can't really blame the people in Mindanao for taking a skeptical attitude towards interventions and incursions by the Manila government on their island over the years. And for actually believing that they finally have a president who not only understands what is going on

but who has the determination to change the way things are.

The skepticism of the Mindanaoans about Manila's efforts to save them and to uplift their lives thus contrasts sharply with their near-absolute faith of that Duterte only can truly fulfill their beloved island's promise. I hope they are correct, because if Duterte cannot fix Mindanao, then perhaps, as some people outside of the island have long believed, it can't be saved at all.

01 June 2017

Manila  
**Standard**

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**DUTY CALLS**  
**FLORENCIO FIANZA**

## Heroism amid terror

AMID the brutality of the fighting in Marawi City, we read about heartwarming stories about the heroism and bravery of people in the face of danger.

The story of that gun shop owner named Farida who is a Muslim and her loyalty to her 13 Christian employees is so extraordinary that even President Duterte should acknowledge it. According to the news, when an armed team from the Maute group threatened to take the Christian employees with them, Farida told them that they have to kill her first before she allows them to take her employees prisoners. If that is not raw courage, I do not know what is. She then spirited her employees to the safety of Iligan City.

There is also the story of Muslims teaching Christians how to answer questions being asked by the Maute group which saved several Christian lives.

It goes to show that the conflict is not about religion but the ruthless ambitions of a few maladjusted elements of society. This is not the first time that an urban center was taken over by rebel groups fighting the government. This also happened in Jolo in 1974 when the MNLF took over the town and had to be retaken by a massive assault by the Armed Forces. Jolo is much smaller than Marawi City and the fighting a lot different. But although a lot bigger, Marawi City was taken over by an armed group numbering that is much smaller in a surprise assault.

Some observers are saying that it was a failure of intelligence on the part of the police and military that the attack was not monitored and detected earlier. We have seen the AFP score many accomplishments against the Maute group and the Abu Sayyaf in the weeks before Marawi City which might have caused the military to misread the intentions of the Maute group.

The battle in Marawi City is also taking longer than previously estimated because the Maute group has resorted to sniping, necessitating house-to-house clearing operations. The AFP in addition is very

**Turn to A5**

## Heroism...

From A4

careful with bombing sorties to avoid collateral damage.

I also suspect that there are more in the Maute group than previously estimated. If the group suffered 65 casualties, and the intensity of the fighting has not diminished much, there are probably more of them although the fighting is now confined in a smaller portion of the city. The military should proceed carefully so as not to allow Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon escape the dragnet if he is in the city. Now is the chance to get him. Who knows, the Maute brothers might also be in the city, allowing the AFP to also neutralize them.

There is therefore a lot hanging on the outcome of the battle. This is not to mention trapping a number of foreign terrorists. Before Marawi City, the fighting with the Maute group and

other rebel factions have been centered in the jungles and remote villages. With Marawi City, the fighting is being widely covered by the media. The brutality of the conflict is therefore now in the living room of everyone with a TV set. Many journalists who cover the fighting often refer to the militants as bandits which is not the appropriate word.

Yes, the two groups operate outside the law but the better term to use to refer to the members of these two groups should be terrorists. The study of social banditry is a bit more complicated. Social banditry is a term more appropriate for outlaws in earlier times in history. Robin Hood, for instance, if he really lived, was a bandit and an outlaw. But he was a noble bandit.

In contrast, there is nothing noble about the Abu Sayyaf and the Maute group. These two groups are plain and simple terrorists

and they should just be called that. The indiscriminate killing of civilians by the Maute group that were shown on TV could not be beneficial to their cause. Thus, the Marawi City takeover may turn everyone against them including the Muslims. Marawi City, after all, is predominantly a Muslim enclave.

President Duterte has asked the MILF, MNLF and the CPP/NPA to join in the fighting. We do not know whether this move was made upon the advice of his military and advisers or his alone but since the fighting is confined to Marawi City and does not seem to be spreading, perhaps the President should just allow the AFP to finish the job of retaking Marawi City. The AFP, after all, is completely capable of doing it. The entry of MILF or MNLF into the fray this late, might not be good for the morale of the troops fighting there. If, however, the fighting spreads throughout Mindanao

in the other important urban centers like Davao City or Cagayan de Oro City, then perhaps this could be revisited and only after careful study. If we consider the current capabilities of the Abu Sayyaf and Maute group, however, the two groups do not have the capabilities to mount simultaneous raids in other big Urban Centers.

We must also remember the case of the MNLF when they took over part of Zamboanga City and burned the place down. Up to now, some people whose houses were destroyed are still waiting for the promised help from the government. Counting the costs of the Marawi fighting will therefore be difficult and tough. War is always costly most especially to non-combatants who suffer the most in trauma and material terms. Waging war is also insane and anyone who says otherwise is doubly insane.

Marawi should be a lesson to us all.

81 June 2017

# THE DAILY tribune

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## Lanao del Sur

**W**ith your timely proclamation of martial law (ML)

over Mindanao, Mr. President, you have shown once again your genuine concern for the welfare of all Filipinos.

We hail your decision to nip in the bud ISIS' (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) masterplan to establish a base of operations in our country. All the anti-ISIS peoples of the world wish you well in your endeavor.

Sadly, a number of your critics in this regard are Filipinos.

They are the Liberal Party Yellows, the commies led by Joma Sison (those holed up at The Hague for peace talks) and their armed New People's Army (NPA) comrades in our countrysides, including all their leftist sympathizers.

With propaganda and their usual rebellious acts of ambush and extortion, they vehemently oppose your determination to reclaim Marawi City from the Maute group.

Former President Fidel Ramos, not surprisingly, is one of your accusers.

But we are not fazed by Manong Eddie's familiar headline-making rhetoric. Do you remember how he brought down President Erap? He had him impeached then replaced by then VP Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo... and look what happened to the country! But he has now grown much older and politically weaker. Just let him do all the innocuous yapping he wants.

Arch critic Sen. Sonny Trillianes says he was not surprised "*dahil matagal (ka nang) kating-kating mag-martial law.*"

Sen. Kiko Pangilinan, whom I recently saw on television holding hands with Sen. Risa Hontiveros, says in effect that helping the poor is more important than saving innocent lives from the merciless onslaughts of head-chopping terrorists. Incidentally, Pangilinan is the "*hari-ng-sablay*" author of the law exempting persons aged 17 and below from criminal liability.

Hontiveros, on the other hand, foretells that gross human rights violations will surely be committed by ML enforcers.

She also teaches that all the rights under due process – like the right to counsel, the right to remain silent, *etc.* – should be accorded to all ISIS flag-bearing terrorists whose means of war are to

### COMMENT

burn down churches and government buildings, pillage, rape, torture and behead people all because they

Christians and Jews. Her late husband, an honorable Armed Forces of the Philippines officer, must be turning in his grave.

Technically speaking, PDU30, you are walking a tightrope. Under the Constitution, martial law may be declared only in cases of rebellion and invasion – situations which are debatable as to whether they are factual or not. However, said basic charter's ML provisions may be deemed outmoded because they were ratified when international terrorism was not yet in vogue, thereby creating an interpretation contrary to your pro-safety convictions.

Be that as it may, Sir, you are presumed to have acted not only in good faith but also judiciously, as the Constitution lodges in your office the exclusive prerogative to proclaim ML. You have promised "harsh implementation of ML," but we are not worried because we see it as an indispensable way of dealing with an incredibly barbaric and foreign-funded enemy of the State. In a sense, these savages may be liberally considered to be foreign invaders. When the national life is on the line, why not?

It's good that a great majority of legislators in both houses have ratified your ML proclamation, relying, as they reportedly did, on your judgment based on intelligence reports. It's also relieving to note that the cited ratification reflects congressional conformity to the will of the people.

Proceed posthaste, Sir. Beat back the flames of a vicious conflagration.

There is no question, however, that the theological ideology of ISIS will not be crushed without a determined worldwide opposition. Here at home, the ISIS epidemic may be said to have started in Lanao del Sur, no thanks to the Maute family, but there is no assurance the contagion has not already quietly spread in other parts of the country.

Beyond the borders of Mindanao, citizens are now scared stiff, not knowing whether a crowded public place will be bombed at the precise time they may there be shopping or taking a stroll. Every person who looks and speaks like a Moro is suspect. Even a friendly neighborhood grocer is now suspect. Your resolute purpose, Sir, to wipe them out with no quarters given is very comforting.

Ronald Roy 85, 5295

01 June 2017



Pahina. 3

## Masuwerte ang Maute na binibigyan pa ng chance para mabuhay

**D**AHIL kontrolado na ng mga awtoridad ang sitwasyon sa Marawi, mukhang masasabi na natin na panalo na tayo sa laban kontra Maute Group.

Kaya ang AFP, bago pa magkadahasan na naman ay binigyan pa rin ng pagkakataon ang mga miyembro ng Maute na kusa na lamang sumuko sa mga awtoridad kaysa naman daw mapasama pa sa bilang ng mga namatay na.

Kumbaga, ang Maute ay mamimili na lamang daw kung mamamatay o susuko na lang.

Sa puntong ito, mukhang mabait pa ang AFP dahil binibigyan pa rin ng pagkakataon ang mga terorista na mailigtas ang kanilang mga sariling buhay sa kabila ng ginawa nilang panggugulo.

At ang mga susukong Maute, makaasa naman daw nang maayos na pagtrato mula sa mga sundalo.

Kunsabagay, mas maganda na ring matapos ang giyera na sumuko na lamang ang lahat ng Maute kaysa magpatuloy o dahasin na ang pagpapatumba sa kanilang grupo dahil kung maayos na lamang silang susuko, mababawasan din ang pinsalang maaaring maidulot ng digmaan sa siyudad.

Kaya ang panawagan natin sa Maute, magsisuko na kayo at nang matapos na ang problema.

Pero kung patuloy kayong magmamatigas at makikipaglaban, siguro, ihanda na ninyo ang inyong mga sarili sa inyong kamatayan.

June 2017



Pahina. 4

### Editorial

## Iligtas ang mga bihag

**A**YON sa Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), 90 percent na ng Marawi City ang kanilang okupado at dalawa hanggang tatlong araw na lamang at lubusan nang maokupa. Matindi ang kanilang babala sa Maute group: Sumuko o mamatay! Nasa ikasiyam na araw na ang labanan sa Marawi, Lanao del Sur at ayon sa AFP, 63 Maute na ang napapatay. Isa sa kanilang hinahabol ay ang lider ng Abu Sayyaf na si Isnilon Hapilon na naglulungga sa Marawi. Kinikilala umano ng ISIS si Hapilon at ito ang kanilang ginu-groom na maging lider ng kanilang grupo sa Mindanao. Nakipag-alyansa si Hapilon sa Maute. Si Hapilon ang sinasabing dumukot kay Father Teresito Suganob at 200 iba pa noong Martes. Sila rin ang sumunog sa simbahan at mga gusali.

Umapela naman si Suganob na itigil ng gobyerno ang opensiba sa Maute base sa isang video clip ang ipinalabas sa Telegram channel ng ISIS at nagmamakaawa si Suganob kay President Duterte. Gusto pa raw nilang mabuhay. Ayon kay Suganob, dinukot siya kasama ng babaing propesora sa Mindanao State University, dalawang babaing nagtatrabaho sa simbahan, dalawang lalaki at limang babaing guro sa Dansalan Foundation College at may 200 karpintero. Gusto pa raw nilang mabuhay kaya umaapela siya na ibigay daw ang hinihiling ng mga kalaban.

Bagama't nakapagdududa kung si Fr. Suganob nga ang nagsasagawa ng apela, mahirap ang sinasabi niyang ibigay ang kahilingan ng Maute. Hindi papayag ang Presidente na pagbigyan ang mga terorista kaya nga ang babala ng AFP sa mga ito ay sumuko o mamatay. Dapat beripikahin ng AFP kung ang pari nga ba ang umaapela o gawagawa lang ng mga terorista.

Ang isang dapat ipursigi ng AFP ay ang mailigtas ang mga bihag. Kung ayon sa kanila ay 90 percent na ang kanilang naokupa, dapat ipagpatuloy pa para matapos na ang mga terorista. Ipakita nila ang kahusayan sa pag-rescue. Gamitin ang lahat nang paraan para lubusang makubkob ang mga terorista. Putulin na ang kanilang hangarin na maghari sa Mindanao.

21 June 2017

**NGAYON**

Pahina. 5



## Unang biktima

MAHIGIT isang linggo na mula nang salakayin ng Maute group ang Marawi City. Bagama't kontrolado na raw ng militar ang siyudad, hindi pa rin lubusang ligtas. Pero malapit na raw, ayon sa AFP. Sa ngayon ay 61 terorista ang napatay, 15 sundalo't pulis at 19 na sibilyan. Marami rin ang nasugatan sa labanan. Mas marami pa ring sundalo at terorista ang namatay sa Zamboanga noong 2013, pero mas maraming sibilyan ang napatay ngayon, karamihan mga biktima ng Maute. Inabot din ng halos tatlong linggo ang bakbakan sa Zamboanga. Sana nga ay matapos na, at hindi na rin madagdagan pa ang bilang ng mga napapatay, partikular sa panig ng gobyerno at mga sibilyan.

May kasabihan na ang unang biktima ng digmaan ay ang katotohanan. Tila ganito na rin ang nagaganap sa Marawi, dahil sa pagkalat ng mga maling impormasyon sa social media. Totoo man o hindi, hindi ito nakakatulong sa sitwasyon. Hindi raw totoo na kalahati ng Marawi ay hawak pa rin ng Maute. Mas mahirap lang ang labanan ngayon dahil kailangang manigurado ng militar na walang nagtatagong mga terorista sa mga bahay-bahay.

Binibilang na rin ang Maute sa ISIS. Sa maging salita, kinikilalang grupong terorista na sila, at hindi lang mga armadong magkakamag-anak. Dapat lang, at ipinakita na hindi sila puwedeng isantabi lang. Ang mahalaga ay malaman kung may direktang suporta ang ISIS sa kanila, sa pamamagitan ng pera at armas. Wala pa naman daw ebidensiya na nakatatanggap ang Maute ng pondo mula sa ibang bansa. Pero malinaw na may mga sandata sila na puwedeng tapatan ang militar, bagay na dapat maimbestigahan.

May mga nagsasabi na ang rehiyon ang sunod na target ng ISIS, lalo na't humihina na sila sa Gitnang Silangan. Hindi malayong mangyari, dahil sa mga grupo na bukod sa kalaban ng bansa, may ideolohiya na puwedeng pagsamantalahan ng ISIS. Kaya mahalaga na madurog na nang husto ang Maute, at hindi pabayaang lumakas muli. Isama na rin ang Abu Sayyaf, dahil may mga ulat na tumutulong ito sa Maute sa pagsalakay sa Marawi.

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## **ONLINE NEWS**

### **(01 JUNE 2017)**

# Maute Group terrorists likely using captured police, jail weapons

May 31, 2017

MANILA, May 31 -- It is very likely that remaining Maute Group terrorists are augmenting their weapons and ammunition from the stocks they captured after overrunning various police and jail facilities in Marawi City last May 23.

This was bared by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla in an interview Wednesday.

"They previously burned the jail, freed prisoners and got what they can use including weapons and ammunition to include those in the captured APC (armored personnel carrier) of the Philippine National Police," he added.

Number of firearms recovered after nine days of fighting are now placed at 91 with 81 high-powered and 10 low-powered.

Padilla said that application of commensurate military power on existing threats and pockets of resistance will continue along with efforts on collaboration/coordination with concerned agencies to ascertain status of victims and hostages and initiate relevant action to rescue and save them. (Priam F. Nepomuceno/PNA)#DEFENDREPUBLIC

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# DND: Martial law in Mindanao necessary

May 31, 2017

MANILA, May 31 -- The Department of National Defense said that President Duterte's imposition of martial law in Mindanao is imperative stressing it is necessary to solve the security concerns in the region once and for all.

During the Mindanao Hour press briefing in Malacanang on Wednesday, May 31, AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla Jr. said that while the government security forces can address the situation in Marawi City without martial rule, martial law is imperative to once and for all address security concerns in the entire Mindanao immediately and decisively.

"The situation currently being dealt with by the state security forces goes beyond Marawi City. President Duterte's imposition of martial law aims to put an end to the long-running rebellion in various provinces in the south," Padilla said quoting the clarificatory statement of Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana.

This is evidenced by the incidents that happened in Zamboanga, Davao, Bohol, Lanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Maguindanao, Padilla said citing the statement.

"As the President has repeatedly said, 'Kung magde-declare ako ng martial law, tatapusin ko nang lahat ito,' referring to the threats posed by ISIS-linked local and foreign terrorist groups whose network covers the entire Mindanao'," he said.

Also during the same press briefing, Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella announced that President Rodrigo Duterte approved the creation of a "peace corridor," in coordination with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to hasten the rescue and the provision of humanitarian assistance to civilians trapped in Marawi City.

"President Duterte approved the creating of a peace corridor to ensure the safety of the civilians and the delivery of the needed humanitarian aid for the displaced persons in the ongoing armed conflict in Marawi, according to Irene Morada Santiago, chairperson of the Government's Implementing Panel," Abella said.

The establishment of a peace corridor was agreed following the meeting with President Duterte, the members of the joint implementing panels, and top officials of the MILF on Monday, Abella said quoting Santiago.

## Evacuees receive government aid

Abella also reported that to date, a total of PHP36,377,610 worth of augmentation assistance has been provided to affected families in ARMM by the Department of Social Welfare and Development through DSWD-Field Office 10 and Field Office 12.

"As of today, there have been 18,609 families or 92,628 persons displaced in Regions X and ARMM. Of which, 2,722 families or 13,194 persons are still staying in 22 evacuation centers and 15,887 families or 79,434 persons are staying outside the centers," he said.

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Both the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department of Energy imposed a price freeze on basic necessities and prime commodities as well as kerosene and LPG in Mindanao.

Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre sent Undersecretary Renante Orceo to Iligan City on May 30 to oversee the creation of Panel of Prosecutors for Maute cases, Abella reported.

Meanwhile, Education Secretary Leonor Briones postponed opening of classes on June 5, 2017 in Marawi and move it to a later date to ensure the safety of children for the school opening.

Recovery of high-powered weapons

Padilla also said there is a very positive development in Marawi especially with the recent recovery of numerous high-powered firearms used by the terrorists.

"The recovery of these high-powered firearms continues to reduce the capability of these armed groups to do the violent activities that they have been doing for quite some time," Padilla said.

The AFP has so far rescued 960 individuals from the conflict zone, he said, advising those residents who are still trapped to raise a white flag or cloth in order for soldiers to bring them to safety.

The Armed forces will continue to work with all the NGOs and CSOs in the area to facilitate the entry of much needed humanitarian help in areas where evacuees are staying and in areas where IDPs are located, Padilla said.

The AFP official also made an assurance that the Armed forces will continue to abide by all the established rules and protocols in the ongoing conflict in Marawi City. (PND/PNA)

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JF

# Gov't forces secure 90% of Marawi City — AFP

May 31, 2017

MANILA, May 31 — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Wednesday said that government forces have already secured about 90 percent of Marawi City following more than a week of clashes with Islamist militants who sowed terror in several parts of the city since May 23.

"Our fighting forces estimate that they are reaching about 90 percent completely cleared and a little bit more than 10 percent more to go," AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said during the Mindanao Hour press briefing in Malacañang.

Mindanao Hour, launched last Monday, seeks to provide regular authoritative updates on what is happening on the ground in Marawi City and relevant regions in Mindanao that aims to provide the public with carefully vetted news from authoritative sources.

The AFP official said however that though only pockets of resistance remain, government forces expect fierce resistance in the remaining places where the militants, who are believed to be holding some civilian hostages, are holding out.

The military believes that the notorious leader of the extremists, Isnilon Hapilon, is still in the area.

"That 10 percent is most likely going to be the area that will be heavily guarded and defended by any of these armed men if they are protecting any individual of high value," Padilla said.

"We believe he (Hapilon) is still there and we believe that is why they're putting up a very stiff resistance in the areas that they are still being held up and being cleared," he added.

In the meantime, Padilla said that official reports show that there continues to be a very positive development in the area of Marawi.

Official figures released by Malacañang showed that 89 militants were killed in eight days of fighting that also led to the recovery of 91 firearms, 81 of which are high-powered.

On the other hand, the government has lost 21 of its security forces while 19 civilians were killed.

"The recovery of these high-powered firearms continues to reduce the capability of these armed groups to do the violent activities that they have been doing for quite some time," Padilla pointed out.

He also confirmed that eight members of the Maute terror group holed out in Marawi have surrendered to the AFP.

"These individuals have been talked to and debriefed and have provided very, very valuable intelligence," the military spokesman said.

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In the meantime, Padilla assured residents who are trapped in the area that security forces are doing everything to avoid any collateral damage that may ensue from the ongoing clashes.

He estimated the number of residents trapped within the areas of fighting to be around 1,000 persons.

"Our rules of engagements have not changed. We put priority on civilian lives and private property. The amount of force that we are using right now in the area is commensurate only to the resistance and the enemy force that we are facing," he said.

So far, the AFP spokesman said that the judicious use of military force, which included airstrikes, have not killed any civilian.

"We are confident that we have not had any collateral damage in the use of airstrike. Based on the reports that we have got, we have not had any collateral damage to that effect on lives. On property, yes; but on lives, none," Padilla said.

He also assured the families of those believed to have been taken hostage by the militants that security forces are doing everything to secure their safe release.

"Our assurance to the families of all those who may still be hostage in the hands of these armed men is the assurance that we are doing all our best to keep them safe, to guarantee their safe release as much as possible, and within the parameters for which we are trying to operate now," Padilla said. (Cielito M. Reganit/PNA)#DefendRepublic

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# Twitter account bashing Uson not AFP's, officials say

May 31, 2017

MANILA, May 31 -- Tweets made by the "@AltTeamAFP" do not reflect the official stand and sentiments of the military organization.

This was disclosed by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla when sought for comments regarding the account's post last May 29 where it scored Presidential Communications Operations Office Assistant Secretary Mocha Uson for uploading photos of Honduran police.

Rappler on Tuesday reported the "unofficial" AFP Twitter account has called out Uson over such post.

The same post, which was later deleted, was used by some individuals and groups to bash Uson.

"AltTeamAFP is not a recognized, official and legit Twitter account of the AFP. It does not reflect the official stand of the organization nor the sentiments of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and civilian personnel," said Padilla in a text message to the Philippine News Agency Wednesday.

Padilla also cautioned the public to be wary of this "malicious account and refer only to the official website of the AFP and social media account of the AFP for factual news and updates regarding your Armed Forces."

The military's official Twitter account is @TeamAFP while its official FB page is <http://facebook.com/armedforcesofthephilippines>

The same sentiment was echoed by AFP public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo.

"The AFP has nothing to do with the operations and the contents of the said account. Hence, the views expressed therein should not and cannot be attributed to the AFP," he said. (PNA)

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