

*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

11 June 2017

**Sunday**

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

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**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER**

BALANCED NEWS • FREEDOM VIEW

**TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JUNE 11, 2017 | SUNDAY**

**LOW PRESSURE AREA**  
105 KM NORTHWEST OF  
CORON, PALAWAN  
(As of 5:00 AM - June 10, 2017)

**PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)**

<b>SUNRISE</b>  5:26 AM	<b>SUNSET</b>  6:25 PM
<b>MOONRISE</b>  7:48 PM	<b>MOONSET</b>  8:40 AM
<b>FULL MOON</b>  JUN 9 9:10 PM	<b>LAST QUARTER</b>  JUN 17 7:31 PM
<b>LOW TIDE</b>  6:56 PM 0.03 Meter	<b>HIGH TIDE</b>  10:25 AM 1.15 Meter

**MANILA SOUTH HARBOR**

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

Cloudy skies with rain showers and/or thunderstorms

	JUNE 12	JUNE 13	JUNE 12	JUNE 13	JUNE 12	JUNE 13		
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	 25 - 34 °C	 26 - 35 °C	<b>TAGAYTAY</b>	 21 - 30 °C	 21 - 30 °C	<b>TACLOBAN</b>	 25 - 31 °C	 25 - 31 °C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	 25 - 35 °C	 25 - 37 °C	<b>LEGAZPI</b>	 27 - 33 °C	 27 - 33 °C	<b>CAGAYAN DE ORO</b>	 25 - 32 °C	 24 - 32 °C
<b>LADAG</b>	 25 - 33 °C	 25 - 33 °C	<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b>	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 33 °C	<b>METRO DAVAO</b>	 25 - 32 °C	 25 - 31 °C
<b>BAGUIO</b>	 17 - 25 °C	 17 - 26 °C	<b>ILOILO/BACLOD</b>	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 33 °C	<b>ZAMBOANGA</b>	 25 - 33 °C	 25 - 33 °C
<b>SBMA/CLARK</b>	 26 - 33 °C	 26 - 33 °C	<b>METRO CEBU</b>	 26 - 32 °C	 26 - 33 °C			

**DZRH NEWS TELEVISION**

MONDAY - FRIDAY  
**11 AM & 5 PM**

**PILIPINAS HD**

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

WEEKENDS  
**6 AM**

June 2017



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# BLOODIEST DAY: 13 MARINES DEAD

STORY BY ALLAN NAWAL AND GEOFFREY MAITEM

Thirteen Marines were killed in hostilities in Marawi City on Friday in what was the biggest single-day toll on the government side since fighting began nearly three weeks ago between troops and Islamic State-linked Abu Sayyaf and Maute group terrorists. The fresh casualties on Friday brought to 58 the number of government troops killed in the fighting.

## FROM A1

By Allan Nawal  
and Jeffrey Maitem  
@Team\_Inquirer

MARAWI—Thirteen Philippine Marines have been killed in fresh gun battles with Islamist militants who have overrun parts of southern Marawi City, a military spokesperson said on Saturday, in a dramatic surge in the toll from nearly three weeks of fighting.

Philippine troops are struggling to dislodge hundreds of fighters, who rampaged through the mainly Muslim city of Marawi on May 23 flying black flags of the Islamic State (IS) group, and have used bombproof tunnels, antitank weapons and human shields to fortify their positions.

Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera said the military was verifying the number of troops wounded in Friday's ferocious, sometimes house-to-house gun battles with the militants.

we are saddened with the result ... we have fatalities on the government side. We have incurred 13 killed in action," Herrera said at a news conference in Marawi.

But military spokesperson Col. Edgard Arevalo, in Manila, said 40 other soldiers were wounded in a "raging close quarter combat."

The fresh casualties brought to 58 the number of government troops killed in the fighting. At least 138 militants and 20 civilians have also been killed, the government said.

## Valiant soldier

The militants have so far withstood more than two weeks of air and ground assaults by security forces, although the military said they occupy only around 10 percent of the city.

"This temporary setback has not diminished our resolve a bit," Arevalo said. "It instead primed up our determination to continue our prudent advances to neutralize the enemy, save the innocent lives trapped in the fight, and set the conditions

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for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi."

Among those killed was 1st Lt. Frederick Savellano, a native of Antipolo City, who just days earlier led his team in recovering P52 million in cash allegedly left behind by the terrorists.

"He was very courageous and a very professional soldier. It's said he was killed," Herrera said, adding that while he believed the enemy side also suffered casualties he was not certain about the number.

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez, chief of the Western Mindanao Command, said that apart from the 13 soldiers who perished, 40 others were wounded in "close quarter combat" in the village of Madaya in Marawi.

"Initial reports indicate that the fierce firefight ensued when the Marines assaulted the reported enemy position at around 3:30 a.m. and firefight continued up to around 3 p.m.

of the same day," Galvez said.

"We salute the enormous display of heroism and raw courage of these fallen Marines in the course of the fight to clear Marawi of the remaining members of the Maute-Isis group," he said, using the other name of the IS.

#### US help

The United States said it has been providing the Filipino military with technical assistance to end the siege, but said their role was confined to providing technical assistance. It did not elaborate, but Herrera said the Americans' participation "is limited to intelligence sharing."

The seizure of Marawi by hundreds of fighters who have sworn allegiance to the IS, including dozens from neighboring countries and the Middle East, has fueled concern that the ultraradical group is gaining a foothold in Southeast Asia. The militants, believed to num-

ber in their hundreds, have occupied Marawi since May 23.

A US P-3 Orion surveillance plane was seen flying over the town on Friday, according to local media reports.

The assistance comes after months of strain between the two longtime allies that was stoked by President Duterte's hostility toward Washington and his pledges to throw US troops out of the country. He has declared martial law in Mindanao, the south-

ern third of the Philippines and home to a decades-long Muslim separatist rebellion.

Washington deployed special forces soldiers to Mindanao in 2002 to train and advise Philippine units fighting Abu Sayyaf militants in a program that once involved 1,200 Americans. It was discontinued in 2015 but a small presence remained for logistics and technical support.

The United States and the Philippines have been allies for decades. Their relationship provided Washington with a strategic foothold in Asia, and offered Manila a shield against China's assertiveness in the region.

On Saturday, the military said it was validating reports that two Maute brothers leading the enemy have been slain. "We are still awaiting confirmation. We are still validating those reports but there are strong indications," Herrera said.



Police question a family on board a motorcycle at a checkpoint in Marawi City on Saturday. —REUTERS

ber in their hundreds, have occupied Marawi since May 23.

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months of strain between the two longtime allies that was stoked by President Duterte's hostility toward Washington and his pledges to throw US troops out of the country. He has declared martial law in Mindanao, the south-

Their mother, Ominta Komato Maute, alias Farhana, was arrested on Friday near the town of Masiu in Lanao del Sur, along with two wounded fighters and several women companions. The arrest came days after her husband, Cayamora Maute, was arrested trying to enter Davao earlier in the week.

Recovered from Farhana's group were explosives. She was allegedly on a mission to procure firearms as they prepare to escape the fighting.

Fighting erupted when the military and police monitored Abu Sayyaf leader Isnlon Hapilon, the acknowledged IS leader here, in Marawi. But they were surprised when they were met by dozens of Maute terrorists, who were backed up by foreign fighters from Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia.

The terrorists razed buildings and sacked a local Catholic Church, kidnapping its priest and dozens of other parishioners. The priest is believed to be still alive and has aired an appeal for the government to end its airstrikes, saying that the men holding them were prepared to die for their cause.

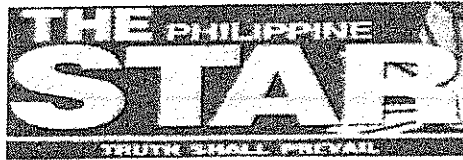
—WITH REPORTS FROM EDWIN FERNANDEZ, AP AND REUTERS INQ

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Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Se

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# Gov't allots P10 B for Marawi rehab

By ALEXIS ROMERO

The government will allocate P10 billion for the rebuilding of Marawi City, which has been ravaged after continuing clashes between government troops and the Islamic State-inspired Maute terror group.

The Department of National Defense (DND) will lead the "Bangon Marawi" recovery effort, which aims to bring back to normal the situation in the strife-torn city as soon as possible, according to presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella.

"The EO (executive order) for 'Bangon Marawi' is awaiting President Duterte's signature," Abella told state-run radio station *Radyo Pilipinas* yesterday.

"The proposed package amounting to P10 billion, as promised by the President, will be a multi-agency effort," Abella added.

The Palace official did not say where the administration would source the funds for the program.

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A US P3 Orion surveillance aircraft is seen flying over Marawi City last Friday as Air Force helicopters and bombers continue to conduct air strikes.

AP/WIDEWORLD

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“The rebuilding would take a minimum of six months and may begin after clearing the city, which should take at least one to two weeks,” Abella said. Security forces have been trying to clear Marawi of Maute militants since May 23, the day President Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao. Government troops sought to flush out the Maute group from the city last week but failed to do so because of the presence of trapped civilians and the continued resistance.

of the terrorists.

On Thursday, the military said the Maute terrorists have control over three villages and expressed optimism that the entire city would be retaken by the government by Monday in time for the commemoration of Independence Day.

Yesterday, the Armed Forces of the Philippines said 13 soldiers were killed and 51 others were wounded in fresh offensives against the IS-linked terrorists on Friday night.

While officials are upbeat that the Marawi crisis would soon be over, the leaders of the terrorist group, Maute brothers Omar and Abdullah and Isnilon Hapilon, remain at large.

A total of 138 terrorists, 58 government troopers and 21 civilians have died since fighting in Marawi City erupted last month.

Earlier, the DND said the Marawi central business district would have to undergo a “more detailed clearing” to ensure the safety of the people.

Among the agencies that will join the rebuilding efforts are the trade, education, social welfare, public works, energy and information and communications technology departments. Military engineering brigades will undertake the rebuilding projects under the supervision of an undersecretary.

“We assure the people of Marawi that the government will do everything to ensure normalcy and to deliver services to support their aspirations for a comfortable life,” Abella said.

Despite the Marawi crisis, Abella claimed that the Philippines’ economic prospects remain bright.

“The economic pace should pick up even more with the Philippine Development Plan and public investment plan promulgated by EO 27 signed by the President last June 1,” Abella said.

Duterte has tasked Cabinet Secretary Leoncio Evasco to monitor the progress of the infrastructure projects, which are expected to be funded by tax reforms and foreign investments.

### One-time cash aid

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will provide a one-time cash aid of P1,000 to each family displaced by the Marawi conflict.

DSWD Secretary Judy Taguiwalo said since a majority of the Marawi residents are Muslim, the agency deemed it necessary to provide them with financial assistance so they could buy their food for Ramadan.

“They can use the assistance to buy fruits because they are

breaking their fast,” she said.

Taguiwalo said the provision of cash grant was suggested by representatives from Lanao to allow Muslim evacuees to observe Ramadan even if they are staying in evacuation centers.

“We can provide P1,000 for each family. We will process the distribution properly to ensure that all evacuees will receive the assistance,” she said.

“This cash assistance is just one-time as we continuously provide them with food supplies. But we are preparing the provision of additional assistance once they go back to Marawi, such as tents which they can use as temporary shelter,” she added.

As of Friday, the armed conflict has displaced a total of 50,327 families or 245,341 people in 27 barangays in Marawi and 13 barangays in Marantao, Lanao del Sur.

Of the number, 4,244 families or 20,627 individuals are staying in 63 evacuation centers, while 44,999 families or 219,339 individuals are staying with their relatives in Regions 7, 10, 12, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and Negros Island Region.

The DSWD said it has allocated more than P56 million worth of food and non-food items for the displaced residents.

Another P60 million was

downloaded to the responding DSWD offices as fund augmentation.

Taguiwalo cited the efforts of private organizations, humanitarian groups and individuals as well as local government units (LGUs) outside Mindanao for extending aid to the affected families in Marawi.

“While the DSWD continues to provide aid as the principal disaster response agency of the government, private organizations and LGUs are also extending assistance. We thank them for their help during this difficult situation,” she said.

### Leni meets with ARMM execs

Vice President Leni Robredo met with ARMM officials to plan the relief and response operations as well as rehabilitation efforts in Marawi City.

The meeting was held at the Office of the Vice President (OVP) in Quezon City on Friday.

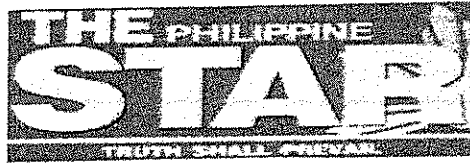
Representatives of various organizations that are part of the OVP’s Angat Buhay program, an initiative aimed at addressing poverty and other issues faced by Filipinos, attended the meeting.

Robredo earlier mobilized a team to help in providing assistance to residents displaced by the Marawi crisis. — **With Sheila Crisostomo, Janvic Mateo**

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## 13 Marines killed in Marawi fighting

By JAIME LAUDE

Thirteen Marines have been killed in 14 hours of gunbattle with Maute militants in Marawi City since Friday, officials said yesterday.

Lt. Col. Jo-Ar Herrera, the Army's 1st Infantry Battalion spokesman, said 40 other troops were wounded in the firefight.

"We are saddened with the result... we have fatalities on the government side. We have incurred 13 killed in action," Herrera said at a news conference in Marawi.

He said about 30-40 militants used civilians as human shields, making it hard for troops to operate, and also positioned themselves in the city's many mosques.

The Marines were con-

ducting a house-to-house search for militants allied with the Islamic State group who are still occupying parts of Marawi when the battle erupted Friday night in Barangay Lilot Madaya in the city's Bangolo district.

The fresh casualties brought to 58 the number of government troops killed in the fighting, he said.

At least 138 militants and 20 civilians have also been killed.

Herrera said they are validating reports that the brothers Omar and Abdul-lah leading the Maute group were killed during the battle to control Marawi.

"We are still awaiting confirmation. We are still validating those reports but there are strong indications," he said.

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

Page: 1

# US joins battle vs Maute

By **REUTERS, AARON B. RECUENCO, and CAMCER ORDONEZ**

**A**merican special forces are helping the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to end a siege of Marawi City by the Islamic State (IS)-linked Maute Group militants, a US embassy spokesperson in Manila said Saturday.

"They are not fighting. They are just providing technical support," said Lt. Col. Jo-Ar Herrera, the spokesman of the Army's 1st Infantry Division, confirming the US embassy report.

The seizure of Marawi by hundreds of fighters who have sworn allegiance to Islamic State, including dozens from neighboring countries and the Middle East, has fueled concern that the ultra-radical group is gaining a foothold in Southeast Asia.

"At the request of the government of the Philippines, US special operations forces are assisting the AFP with ongoing operations in Marawi that help AFP commanders on the ground

in their fight against Maute and ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) militants," the US embassy spokesperson said.

Until now there had been no confirmation that the Philippines had sought US assistance in the battle for Marawi City on the island of Mindanao, which is in its third week.

The spokesperson gave no details of the US involvement. A US P3 Orion surveillance plane was seen flying over the town on Friday, but there has been no evidence that the United States has put troops on the ground there.

The assistance comes after months of strain between the two long-time allies that was stoked by President Duterte's hostility toward Washington and his pledges to throw US troops out of the country.

Washington deployed special forces soldiers to Mindanao in 2002 to train and advise Philippine units fighting Abu Sayyaf militants in a program that once involved 1,200 Americans.

It was discontinued in 2015 but a small presence remained for logistics and technical support.

The United States and the Philippines have been allies for decades. Their relationship provided Washington with a strategic foothold in Asia, and offered Manila a shield against China's assertiveness in the region.

## 13 Marines slain, 40 wounded

As fighting between government forces and the Maute terrorists continues, Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief military information officer, bared that 13 more Marine commandos, including a junior officer who led the operation that ▶ **6**

A radio report said among those killed was Army 1Lt. Frederick Sabillano, the commander of the group that discovered the P52-million cash hidden in one of the hideouts of the Maute gunmen earlier this week.

Reports also said the militants laid down heavy fire on the troops with RPGs and snipers while detonating IEDs along the expected route of the government attack.

For two weeks, the government forces have been trying to flush out the Maute militants entrenched in the buildings and houses in the city's commercial district.

The militants have so far withstood more than two weeks of air and ground assaults by security forces, although the military said they occupy only around 10 percent of the city.

"We draw inspiration and pride from the heroism of our troops engaged in the conflict in Marawi," Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Public Affairs Office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said.

Arevalo said the Marines were able to fight back and inflicted heavy casualties on the gunmen.

"This temporary setback has not diminished our resolve a bit. It instead primed up our determination to continue our prudent advances to neutralize the enemy, save innocent lives trapped in the fighting and set the conditions for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi," Arevalo said.

The heavy clashes Friday came when government troops are racing against time to clear the city of the Maute gunmen for the scheduled flag-raising ceremony tomorrow, Independence Day.

AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Resituto Padilla said most of Marawi

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## 13 Marines

From Page 3

City has been cleared of the Maute gunmen and the flag-raising ceremonies on Monday will push through.

The military said the aim was to end the siege by Monday and raise the Philippine flag as a symbol that Marawi is not part of the Islamic State.

"As long as we sustain the fight, as long as we are able to destroy the elements of the local terrorist group, we can reach that," Herrera said of the June 12 target.

President Duterte imposed martial law across the entire region of Mindanao within hours after the fighting broke out in Marawi in the bid to quickly crush the Islamic State-inspired Maute group. — With Roel Pareño, Lino dela Cruz, Gerry Lee Gorit, AFP, AP, Reuters

## US joins battle vs Maute ◀1

led to the confiscation of ₱79 million cash and checks, were killed in the continuing gun battle to retake Marawi City from the terrorists.

Arevalo, chief military information officer, said the big casualties stemmed from a major engagement that lasted for 14 hours in Barangay Liot Madaya on Friday. He said 40 other soldiers were wounded in the same clash.

The marines were also able to inflict heavy casualties on the ISIS-inspired Maute gunmen, led by Isnilon Hapilon and Omar and Abdullah Maute, according to Arevalo.

Lt. Col. Herrera said the military was validating reports that the two Maute brothers were killed in the battle for control of Marawi.

"We are still awaiting confirmation," Herrera told a news conference in Marawi City. "We are still validating those reports but there are strong indications."

"Initial reports indicate that the fierce firefight ensued when the Marines assaulted the reported enemy position at around 3:30 a.m. and the firefight continued until 5 p.m.," said Arevalo.

### Wedding plans

One of those killed was Marines 1Lt. Frederick Savellano who was the one who led the assault on a Maute stronghold where some ₱79 million worth of cash and checks were seized.

The 29-year-old Savellano is a registered nurse who joined the Philippine Marines several years ago via the Naval Officer Candidate Course (NOCC).

A graduate of the United States Marine Officer Basic Course, Savellano was the company commander of 37th Marine Company, Marine Battalion Landing Team (MBLT) 7, and from

### NOCC Class 21.

Savellano's death came as shock to relatives, friends, and fellow soldiers as he was reportedly set to wed later this year his fiancée, who is also an officer from the MBLT 2.

It was not immediately clear how many Maute gunmen were killed during that clash since the fighting has resumed, according to Arevalo.

"We salute this enormous display of heroism and raw courage of these fallen Marines in the course of the fight to clear Marawi of the remaining members of the Maute-ISIS Group," said Arevalo.

### Battle for Mapandi Bridge

Also last Friday, at least 16 soldiers were wounded in a fresh firefight when government troops tried to retake Mapandi Bridge in Barangay Mapandi from the Maute Group. The bridge leads to the city proper.

The wounded Marine troopers were transported from Marawi to a medical facility in Iligan City on board military trucks.

On that same day, fighters jets bombed Marawi City's conflict zone anew, specifically Barangay Bangolo, one of the three remaining villages under the control of the Maute Group.

### Maute matriarch arrested

At the heat of the Marawi fight, authorities arrested the matriarch of the Maute brothers late Friday in Barangay Tamboro Cormatan in Masiu, Lanao del Sur while trying to evade police and military cordon, police said.

The Maute matriarch – Orminta Romato Maute, also known as "Farhana" – was with seven other women when she was arrested, said Chief Superintendent Rueben Sindac, Autonomous

Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) police director.

Another report said the group had with them two wounded individuals believed to be relatives of the elder Maute.

Sindac said the Maute matriarch and her companions were on board a Toyota Revo and were in transit when arrested by police. Seized from the suspects were assorted firearms and ammunition.

Authorities had been tracking her down after reports said she was purchasing vehicles and weapons while planning their exit out of Lanao del Sur.

The Maute matriarch was allegedly helping his two sons, Abdullah and Omarkhayyam, in their operations, fighting government forces in Marawi City since May 23 when law enforcers tried to arrest Hapilon. Irate Maranaos have vowed to help hunt down Hapilon and his cohorts, saying their volunteerism is "not only for the money but principally in retaliation to his importation of war (in this city) that made lives more difficult in our community."

Among the volunteering Maranaos is a retired police senior superintendent whose family was forced to flee to Iligan City and learned lately that his residential house was one of those badly destroyed in the aftermath of the siege.

The Maute brothers' father, Engr. Cayamora Maute, was apprehended Tuesday morning at a checkpoint in Sirawan, Toril, Davao City, alongside with three members of his Cotabato City-based second family.

The arrested parents had reared and sent their sons Omar and Abdullah to Islamic schools in the Middle East where they purportedly absorbed the philosophy of kital, an orthodox Arabian belief allowing killing in ideological stride.

The captured matriarch's niece, Rasmia, is married to former Marawi City mayor Sultan Fahad "Pre" Salic, who was arrested by security forces at a police checkpoint in Misamis Oriental last Wednesday.

Ex-mayor Salic and his elder

brother, Omar "Solitario" Ali, also a former three-term mayor of Marawi, are among 185 people ordered arrested by the Department of National Defense for alleged involvement in the siege. (With reports from Francis T. Wakefield and Aii G. Macabalang)

|| June 2017

The Manila Times

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13 MARINES KILLED IN 14-HR CLASH WITH TERRORISTS

# US backs fight vs Maute

**M**ARAWI CITY: United States special forces are providing support to the Philippine military battling to dislodge Islamist militants in a southern city, the US embassy said Saturday, as 13 Filipino Marines were killed in fresh fighting.

The announcement of US help in the embattled southern region comes after President Rodrigo Duterte has sought to reduce the Philippines' reliance on the United States and build much closer ties with China and Russia.

Philippine troops are struggling to defeat hundreds of fighters, who rampaged through Marawi on May 23 flying black flags of the Islamic State group, and have used bomb-proof tunnels, anti-tank weapons and civilians as human shields to fortify their positions.

Friday's ferocious, street-to-street gunbattles with

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### 14-hour battle

the militants saw 13 troops killed in a dramatic surge in the toll from the conflict.

The military confirmed on Saturday the deaths of 13 members of the Philippine Marine Corps during a 14-hour gun battle with the Maute group in Marawi City.

It was among the heaviest fighting in the standoff, according to Agence France-Presse journalists in Marawi, with the air force supporting ground troops with sustained bombing runs that battered the city.

Col. Edgard Arevalo, public affairs chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said the encounter between government troops and the IS-backed Maute group took place in the vicinity of Lilot Madaya village.

As the fighting intensified, the US embassy in Manila said American forces were providing assistance to the Filipino troops, although it declined to give details for security reasons.

Aside from the 13 marines killed in action, Arevalo, disclosed that 40 other government forces were wounded while battling the remaining terrorists occupying several areas in the Muslim-majority city.

"At the request of the government of the Philippines, US special operations forces are assisting the [Philippine military] with ongoing operations in Marawi," the embassy said in a statement.

"Initial reports indicate that the fierce firefight ensued when the Marines assaulted the reported enemy position at around 3:30 a.m. and firefight continued up to around 5 p.m. of the same day," he said in a statement.

Army 1st Infantry Division spokesman Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera confirmed the US help, adding that the special forces were not fighting, but "providing technical support."

"We are unable to receive additional details yet as fighting resumed," Arevalo continued.

He said Friday's deaths brought the number of government troops killed in the conflict to 58.

Arevalo, also a Marine, said the fallen troops showed "heroism and raw courage."

"There were intense firefights, house-to-house gun battles," said Herrera at a news conference in Marawi.

"This temporary setback has not diminished our resolve a bit. It instead primed up our determination to continue our prudent advances to neutralize the enemy, save the innocent lives trapped in the fight, and set the conditions for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi," he said.

"We are saddened with the result... we have fatalities on the government side," he said.

In a news briefing, Herrera, spokesman for the army's 1st Infantry Division, denied that the Maute attacked the Marines at their positions. Herrera said the Marines were on the offensive position, launching an attack against the Maute on Friday.

At least 20 civilians and around 138 militants have also been killed, the government said.

Troops tried to take out a machine gun and sniper nest of the terrorists, which were positioned on tall buildings in the village, said Herrera.

The insurgents have so far withstood more than two weeks of air and ground assaults by security forces, with about 2,000 people believed to be trapped in militant-held areas although the military said this amounts to only around 10 percent of the city.

He said the AFP was still assessing the operation against the local terror group.

Herrera said the militants' tactics was making it harder for security forces to carry out attacks without causing civilian casualties and hurting religious sensitivities.

On Friday, AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla Jr. said in a news briefing the military would be commemorating Independence Day in the whole city of Marawi by waving the flag, as instructed by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año.

"The local terrorist groups are using the mosque, they are entrenched there. They also used civilians as human shields... we are very precise in our operations to avoid collateral damage."

He did not say which key officials would be present.

President Duterte said the militant attack was part of a wider plot by IS to establish a base in the southern region of Mindanao, and declared martial law there to quell the threat.

Padilla said the military was rooting for an end to the clashes "hopefully soon."

The US Embassy said Washington would "continue to work with the Philippines to address shared threats to the peace and security of our countries, including on counterterrorism

**AFP AND DEMPSEY REYES**

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CH

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and.

|| June 2017

The Manila Times

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## Police condemn NPA attack on Benguet mining site

**CAMP DANGWA, La Trinidad, Benguet:** Cordillera police condemned the treacherous attack by New People's Army (NPA) guerillas of the Lepanto Mine site in Mankayan, Benguet on Wednesday night.

NPA rebels attacked the dam area of Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corp. (LCMC), burning the chemical and mineral laboratory owned by Xian Jinrui Lianlungang, located at Cabatuan, Colabo, Mankayan.

The harassment resulted in a firefight between rebels and troopers from the Philippine Army's 54th Infantry Battalion that wounded Private Class Arthur Bag-ay. A stray bullet hit heavy equipment operator Jerson Guisguiswoang Awini.

The NPAs also detonated explosives destroying a newly constructed community police precinct, a backhoe owned by Barangay Chairman Ambino Padawi and a floating machine for processing copper owned by businessman Jian Lianlungang.

A lime mixing plant and a bulldozer owned by Flores Construction were also blasted.

Two unexploded explosive devices left in a bulldozer and a backhoe did not explode, the Cordillera police said.

The NPAs' Chadli Molintas Command and the Benguet-based Jennifer Carino Command claimed responsibility for the attack supposedly as a punitive action against the mining firm and government forces allegedly "protecting mining firms."

LCMC officials have not issued any statement regarding the attack.

Cordillera police director, Chief Supt. Elmo Sarona, called the attack "a desperate move of the terrorist organization to get rid of the AFP troops that have been very effective in countering the NPA/PPP/NDF activities in the mining area."

Meanwhile, the police assured that security measures are being implemented to ensure the safety of all potential targets including government vital installations, power lines, private companies and threatened municipal police stations to ensure that they are adequately manned by security personnel.

Makayan Mayor Materno Luspian called on the NPA to stop the atrocities where properties and lives are placed at risk. He also appealed to the rebel leaders to lay down their weapons and talk to government forces to ensure peace and order in the community.

**THOM PICAÑA**

|| June 2017

The Manila Times

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### NEW ARMY RECRUIT DIES WHILE TRAINING IN ISABELA

**BAGUIO CITY**—A candidate soldier undergoing training at Camp Melchor F. Dela Cruz (CMFDC) in Isabela died of heat exhaustion on Thursday night. Capt. Jefferson Somera, spokesman of the Philippine Army's 5th Infantry Division, said Jackson Lataon Manallog, 25, of Barangay Masipit, Cagayan, Isabela joined the traditional opening ceremony on Thursday morning. However, camp physician Lt. Col. Ignacio Limbol said Manallog passed out while undergoing physical exercises at about 11:40 p.m. but was transferred to Isabela District General Hospital when he began to have a seizure and his vital signs declined. He died of cardio-respiratory arrest secondary to heat exhaustion at around 10 p.m.

THOM PICANA



// June 2017

THE TRIP  
1984  
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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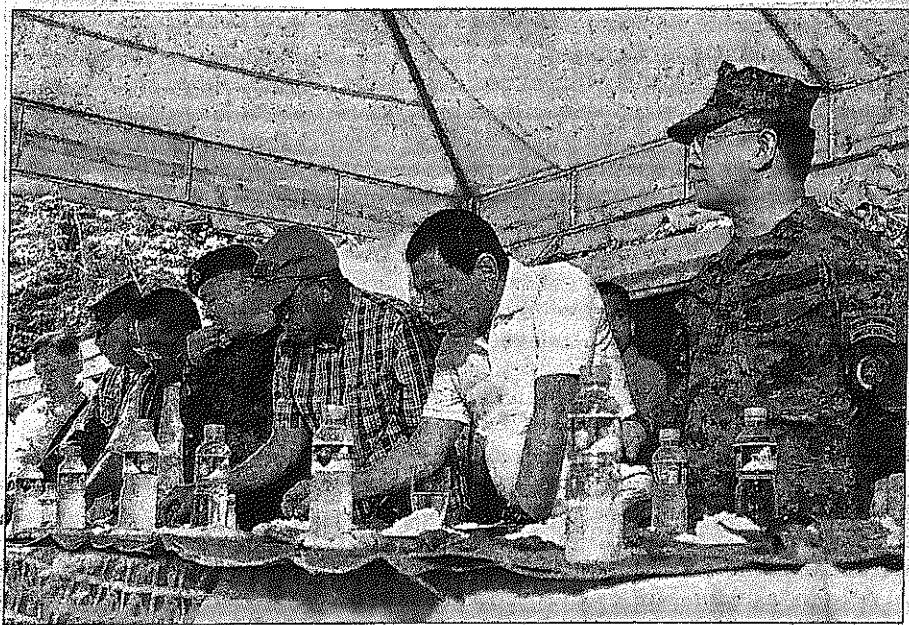
• **6 NPA camps fall  
in Kalinga, but...**

CAMP BADO DANGWA, Benguet/  
BAGUIO CITY — As police condemned  
recent New People's Army (NPA)  
attacks in Benguet — the bombing  
of mining equipment and the  
wounding of a soldier and a civilian  
last Wednesday — the military  
announced yesterday that troops  
have taken over six NPA camps in  
Kalinga. Last Wednesday, the NPA's  
Oradil Montas Command attacked  
the chemical and mineral laboratory  
owned by Xian Jinru Lianliugang in  
Sitio Cabatuan, Barangay Colalo,  
Mankayan. They blasted a backhoe  
and a flotation machine used in  
processing copper. On the same day,  
police and security guards of the  
Dam 5 Gate at the quarry area also in  
Benguet came under fire from rebels.  
Wounded were Private First Class  
Arthur Bagay, 38, and mine worker  
Jerson Guisguiswoang Awini, 26. Lt.  
Colonel Gulliver Señeres, commander  
of the army's 50th Infantry Battalion,  
said six NPA camps in Baibalan and  
Pinukpuk towns in Kalinga have  
been overrun by the military and that  
contraband and materials for making  
explosives have been seized. (Zaldy C.  
Comanda and Larry P. Fabian)

|| June 2017



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**President Duterte and Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana join military officers in a boodle fight at Camp Iranun in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao on Friday.**

June 2017

PHILIPPINE DAILY  
**INQUIRER**

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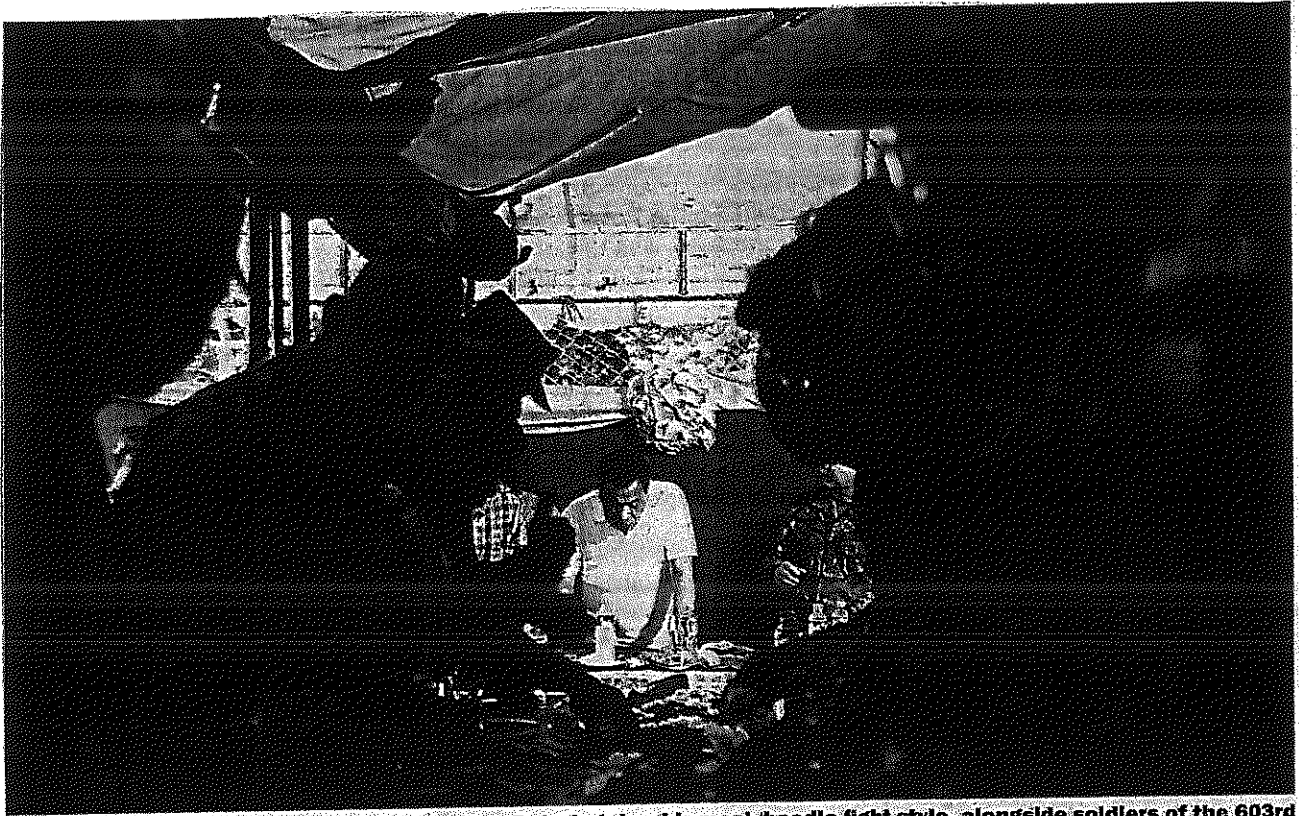


Medics help a Marine wounded in fierce clashes with Moro terrorists in Marawi City on Friday. —RICHEL V. UMEL

June 2017

1904 1988  
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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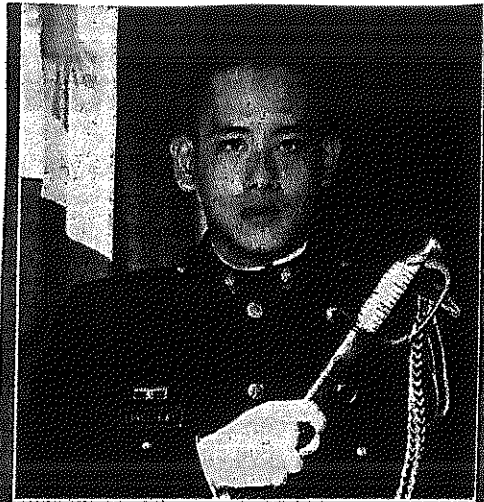
**ONE WITH THE TROOPS** – President Rodrigo Roa Duterte takes his meal, boodle fight-style, alongside soldiers of the 603rd Brigade, Sixth Infantry Division at Camp Iranun in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao Friday. (Malacañang Photo)

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(1) June 2017

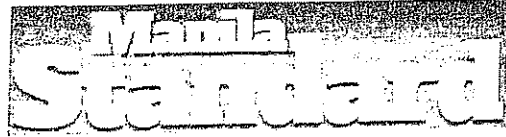
MANILA BULLETIN  
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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**HERO OF MARAWI** – First Lt. John Frederick S. Savellano was one of 13 Marine commandos who were killed in Friday's fierce fighting in Marawi City. Savellano had led the team that recovered P 79 million in cash and checks from the terrorist group's stronghold earlier this week. Main photo shows a United States P-3 Orion surveillance aircraft flying over the war-torn city, Friday. (Reuters)

11 June 2017



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**STREETS OF MARAWI.** Soldiers aboard their vehicles navigate a street in Marawi on June 10, 2017. United States special forces are providing support to Philippine troops battling to dislodge Islamist militants in the city, the US Embassy said. **AFP**

|| June 2017

# Manila Standard

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**BRAVE HEART.** President Rodrigo Roa Duterte pins a medal on one of the outstanding personnel of the Army's 603rd Brigade during a visit to a military camp in Mindanao on June 9, 2017. **Presidential Photo**

June 2017



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COUNTERTERRORISM CAMPAIGN

# US FORCES JOIN PHILIPPINE TROOPS TO END SIEGE IN MARAWI

MANILA—US special forces are helping the Armed Forces of the Philippines to end the siege of Marawi City by militants allied to the Islamic State, a US Embassy spokesperson in Manila said on Saturday.

The seizure of Marawi by hundreds of fighters who have sworn allegiance to the IS, including dozens from neighboring countries and the Middle East, has fueled concern that the ultraradical group is gaining a foothold in Southeast Asia.

"At the request of the government of the Philippines, US special operations forces are assisting the AFP with ongoing operations in Marawi that help AFP commanders on the ground in their fight against Maute and

ASG (Abu Sayyaf group) militants," the US Embassy said.

Until now there had been no confirmation that the Philippines had sought US assistance in the battle for Marawi City on the island of Mindanao, which is in its third week.

### Intelligence sharing

Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera confirmed the US assistance but said no American troops were relegated to information gathering. "Yes, we can confirm their presence, but their participation is limited to intelligence sharing," Herrera said, without elaborating.

A US P-3 Orion surveillance plane was seen flying over the town on Friday, but there has been no evidence that the US has



A United States P-3 Orion surveillance aircraft is seen flying over Marawi City on Friday as government troops continue their assault against insurgents from the Maute group, who has taken over large parts of the city. —REUTERS

put troops on the ground there,

"For security reasons, we are not able to discuss specific technical details of a US support for ongoing AFP operations," the

embassy said.

"Speaking generally, US special operations forces have been providing support and assistance in response to Philippine

government requests for many years," it added.

### Routine consultations

The embassy said American officials "routinely consult" with Filipino counterparts at senior levels to support the government's counterterrorism efforts. "The United States is a proud ally of the Philippines, and we will continue to work with the Philippines to address shared threats to the peace and security of our countries, including counterterrorism issues," it said.

The assistance comes after months of strain between the two longtime allies that was stoked by President Duterte's hostility toward Washington, and his pledges to throw US troops out of the country.

Washington deployed special forces soldiers to Mindanao in 2002 to train and advise soldiers fighting Abu Sayyaf militants in a program that once involved 1,200 Americans. It was halted in 2015, but a small presence remained for logistics and technical support.

The two nations have been allies for decades. The relationship provided Washington with a strategic foothold in Asia, and offered Manila a shield against China's assertiveness in the region.

But Mr. Duterte, since assuming power last year, has openly scorned the alliance, seeing it as an obstacle to a rapprochement with China, and has repeatedly lambasted Washington for treating his country as a lackey. —REUTERS



June 2017



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# Palace ready to give info on martial law to SC

**By Leila B. Salaverria and Julie M. Aurelio**  
@Team\_Inquirer

Malacañang is ready to provide the Supreme Court the information it needs to understand President Duterte's declaration of martial law in Mindanao, presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said on Saturday.

Abella reiterated the chief executive's vow to abide by the tribunal's ruling as the high court scheduled oral arguments on the three petitions against the declaration.

"We stand ready to provide information to the High

Court—as we did for Congress—on the factual basis for martial law and writ suspension," Abella said.

Abella said the information will help the court appreciate the necessity of martial law "to combat and neutralize the threat to public safety and national security posed by terrorists."

The terrorists, he said, are "seeking to supplant government authority in Marawi at the instigation and with support from a brutal foreign entity, the [IS]."

As of Friday, there are three petitions questioning the validity of the declaration and the SC

has ordered their consolidation into one case.

The first petition was filed by independent congressmen, led by Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman.

The second was filed by a group of women from Marawi City represented by the Alternative Law Groups Inc. led by former elections commissioner Christian Monsof.

The third group is represented by the National Union of People's Lawyers.

"It is necessary and proper, without giving due course to the petition, to consolidate [these cases], with G.R. No. 231658 [the petition filed by

Lagman's group], the SC said in an order dated June 10.

The high court also directed the petitioners and the Solicitor General to attend the preliminary conference on June 12 at 2 p.m., ahead of the oral arguments on June 13, 14 and 15.

## Consolidated comment

Solicitor General Jose Calida was also ordered to file a consolidated comment not later than noon of June 12.

The three petitions assail Mr. Duterte's Proclamation No. 216, which imposed military rule and suspended the writ of habeas corpus in Mindanao fol-

lowing the Marawi City siege.

While Abella reiterated the Duterte administration will comply with the court's ruling, he declined to comment on Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez' declaration that he will defy judicial interference on congressional prerogatives.

"We defer to the other co-equal branches of government involved in the petition. We will reserve comment on this matter, except to repeat the President's statement yesterday that he will follow the Supreme Court's decision," he said.

Meanwhile, Abella called on people to shun "petty politics"

and not to use the situation for their personal ends, in order not to foster division.

He said there is now a need for unity to ensure a brighter future for the country as the economy continues to boom despite the turmoil in certain areas.

"Let us be united. It should be the time to set aside petty politics and personal agenda," he said.

Abella made the statement days after Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre drew flak for trying to implicate members of the political opposition in the Marawi siege. INQ

June 2017

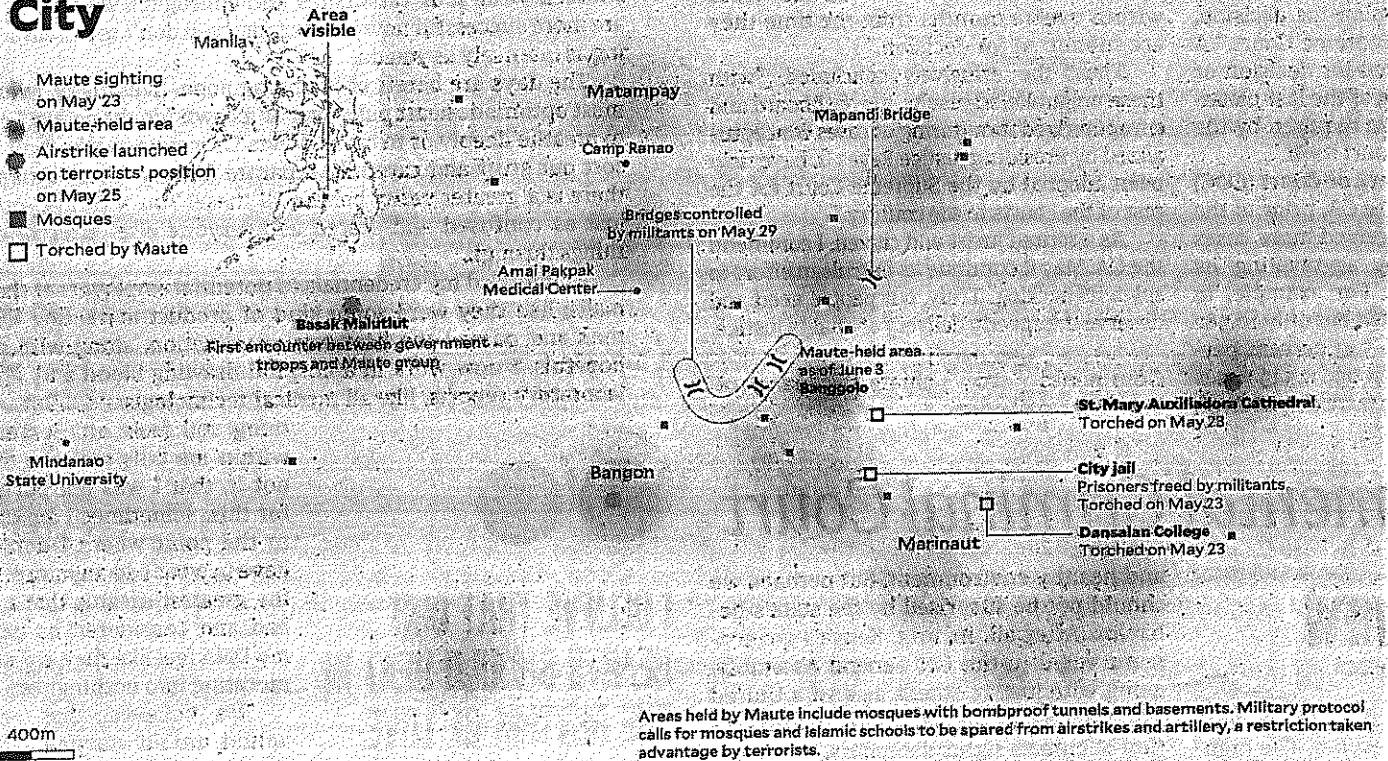


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# From siege to battle

The convergence of terrorists and government forces in Marawi City has resulted in military operations in the toughest of settings: urban fighting. Terrorism has been confronted by military valor and spectacular acts of solidarity by Moros and Christians in the city. The cost has been high, in lives and property, as the situation evolved from clash, to siege, to battle.

## Marawi City



23

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### The Marawi plotters

The Maute group has aligned themselves with the Islamic State (IS) Jihadist group in Syria and Iraq. President Duterte himself linked the group to IS.



**Isnilon Hapilon**  
Senior leader of Abu Sayyaf and IS emir, or top leader, in the Philippines

**Reward money:**  
P17.4 million from PH government  
\$5 million (P246 million) from US government

Prior to the siege of Marawi, the Maute group has been blamed for several terrorist attacks in 2016.

**February** - Attack at a military detachment in Butig town, Lanao del Sur, leaving 24 rebels and two soldiers dead

**Sept. 2** - Night market bombing in President Duterte's hometown of Davao City, killing 15 people and injuring 70 others

**Nov. 28** - Plot to detonate a bomb near the US Embassy

**Dec. 28** - Two explosions injuring 32 people in Hilongos, Leyte



**Abdullah Maute**  
Leader of Maute group

**Reward money:**  
P5 million

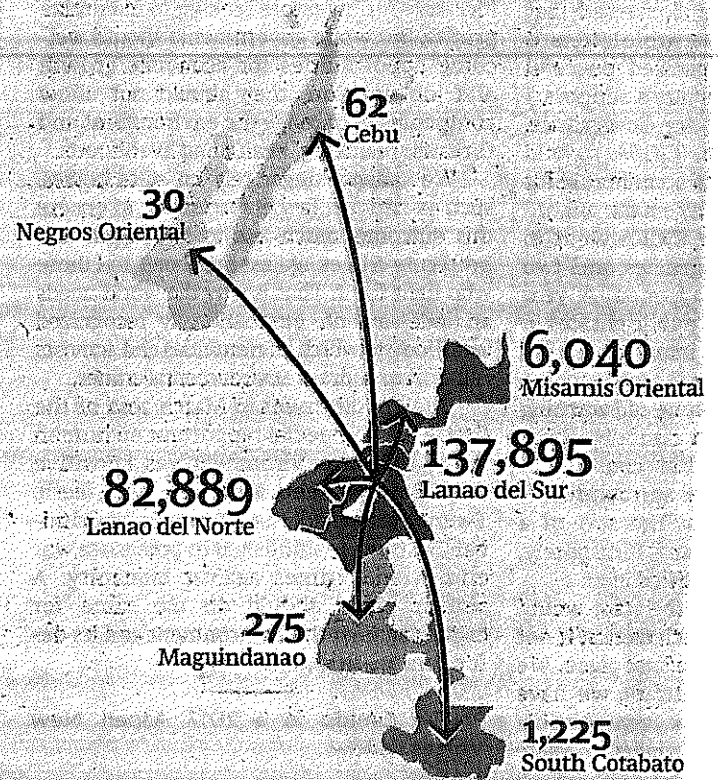


**Omarkhayam Maute**  
Abdullah's younger brother and coleader of Maute group

**Reward money:**  
P5 million

### The evacuees' trail

As of June 7, 7 p.m.



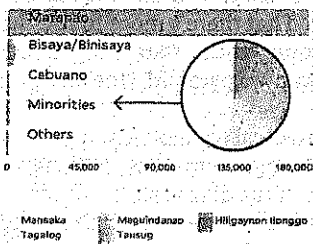
### Marawi City profile

Capital of Lanao del Sur

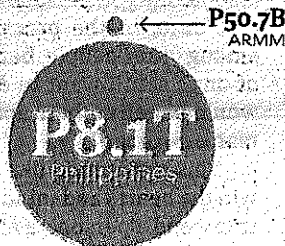
Marawi City, which is part of Lanao del Sur's first legislative district, is the most populous city in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

**201,785**  
2015 population

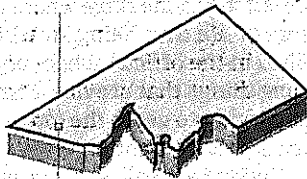
**MARAWI POPULATION BY ETHNICITY, 2010**



**GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT, 2016**



**87.55/km²**  
Land area



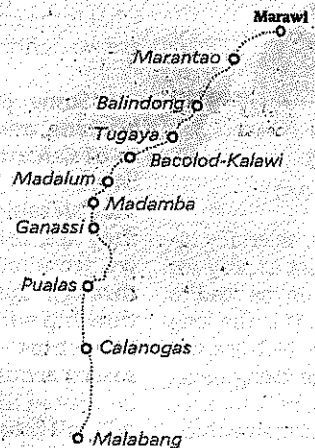
**2,305 people/km²**  
Population density, 2015

### Department of Social Welfare and Development Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center Report No. 31:

Figures are constantly changing due to ongoing data validation and continuous evacuation of remaining affected residents. Figures might have already increased but cannot be validated yet due to the ongoing fighting between the government forces and rebel groups.

### Peace corridor

Civil society groups, religious leaders, the government and the MILF have been instrumental in negotiating a safe passage for hundreds of civilians during ceasefires.



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## Events in Marawi

Gunfight ensues after the military raids an apartment reportedly used as a rendezvous site by the Maute group.

**May 23**

Terrorists holds hostage Marawi parish priest Fr. Teresito Suganob and 200 others.

President Duterte signs Proclamation No. 216, declaring martial law in all of Mindanao for a period of 60 days.

Military seizes a cell phone with an undated video showing Isnilon Hapilon and Maute leaders plotting the attack on Marawi.

**May 24**

The Department of National Defense issues a guidance to its bureaus and the Armed Forces of the Philippines on the proper implementation of martial law.

**May 25**

Armored personnel carriers roll into the city.

Seven students are rescued after being trapped inside the dorm at Mindanao State University.

**May 27**

Mr. Duterte appeals to Moro separatists and communist rebels to join the government's fight against the terrorists.

Government cancels peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines after the latter orders the New People's Army to step up attacks on government forces implementing martial law.

**May 28**

Military says about 40-50 Maute terrorists remain in the city and have been provided support by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, acting as martial law administrator, issues Arrest Order No. 1 for 100 people for rebellion.

**May 30**

Mr. Duterte signs General Order No. 1 that implements Proclamation No. 216.

Gen. Eduardo Año, AFP chief of staff, says 70 percent of the city has been reclaimed by the military.

**May 31**

Military says it has killed 89 terrorists and has cleared almost 90 percent of the city.

**June 1**

The International Committee of the Red Cross says an estimated 3,700 people are still trapped in Marawi.

Communist negotiators offer a ceasefire and deployment of guerrillas against local terrorists.

**June 3**

About 200-300 militants contained at Barangay Banggolo. Lorenzana says the government believes the gunmen are being backed by the IS because of the manner by which they fight.

**June 4**

The government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) open a peace corridor for those displaced by the conflict.

Airstrikes on terrorist positions resumes after a 4-hour humanitarian ceasefire for the evacuation of 134 civilians is marred by terrorist sniper fire.

**June 5**

Lorenzana orders arrest of 185 people for rebellion charges through Arrest Order No. 2.

**June 6**

Maute patriarch Cayamora Maute is arrested at a checkpoint in Davao City.

Marines find bundles of bank notes and checks worth P79 million inside a house at Barangay Saduc during a clearing operation.

**June 7**

Military defends airstrikes, saying "judicious use of force" is needed to meet "stiffer resistance" from the terrorists.

**June 9**

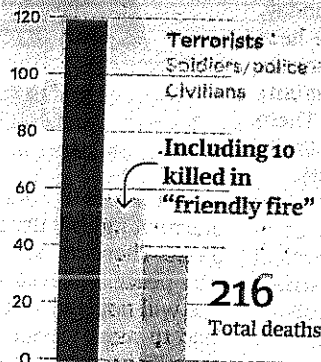
Mr. Duterte backtracks in allowing Moro separatists and communist rebels to fight alongside government troops against IS terrorists.

**June 10**

Military confirms that US forces have provided technical support but have no boots on the ground.

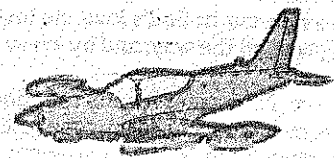
### Death toll

Estimates for terrorists and civilians (as of June 7); soldiers/police (as of June 10)



### A case of "friendly fire"

A converted SIAI-Marchetti SF-260 Jet was on a bombing run over Maute positions on May 31 when a bomb hit Army troops and killed 10 soldiers and wounded seven others.



Among the slain gunmen are eight foreign militants including a Chechen, a Yemeni and several Malaysian and Indonesian fighters. Among the largest military casualties are 13 Marines killed on Friday.

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WAR AND PEACE

# GOV'T TO SET ASIDE P10B TO REBUILD WAR-TORN ISLAMIC CITY

**By Leila B. Salaverria**  
@LeilasINQ

The government would set aside P10 billion to rebuild war-torn Marawi City after Islamic State (IS)-linked terrorists who besieged the city were wiped out or driven away, Malacañang said on Saturday.

The “Bangon Marawi” recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation program will be led by the Department of National Defense and will involve the Departments of Public Works and

Highways, Education, Social Welfare and Development, Energy, and Trade and Industry, said presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella.

“We assure you that the President is deeply concerned for the city, the region and the island’s well-being and is very hands-on to ensure that normalcy will be restored at the soonest possible time and serve people’s aspirations for a comfortable life for all,” Abella said on state-owned Radyo ng Bayan.

An executive order to be is-

sued by President Duterte would set aside the funds and assign the agencies that would be mobilized for the rebuilding of the Islamic city.

It is being reviewed by the Office of the Executive Secretary, according to Abella.

Large swaths of the city of more than 200,000 have been destroyed or severely damaged by gun battles, airstrikes and shelling since May 23 when Abu Sayyaf and Maute group fighters started their siege in what the military said was an attempt

to turn Marawi into a *wilayat*, or a province, of the IS.

The attacks prompted the President to declare martial law in the whole of Mindanao.

Reconstruction efforts would begin after fighting stops and the military clears the city to ensure it is safe for residents and workers.

The clearing operation would take about two weeks, and reconstruction and rehabilitation work would run for at least six months, Abella said.

“Bangon Marawi will be undertaken by the engineering

brigade of the Armed Forces of the Philippines under the auspices of the to be named undersecretary, with the expressed purpose of bringing back residents and normal everyday life as soon as possible,” Abella said.

AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla earlier said the military was preparing the units that could assist in rebuilding Marawi.

“We want to tell our countrymen in Marawi that we will not leave Marawi just like

that,” Padilla said.

The fighting has killed 58 soldiers and police, 21 civilians and 138 terrorists as of Saturday. Nearly all of Marawi’s residents have fled the gun battles to nearby towns and cities with hardly any of their belongings.

Pictures and videos of parts of the devastated city showed bombed out and burnt buildings, pockmarked with bullet holes while concrete rubble littered the streets—scenes similar to the IS battlegrounds in the Middle East. INQ

11 June 2017



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# Marawi evacuees safe, but longing for home

**By Allan Nawal**  
@anawalINQ

**BALOI, LANA O DEL NORTE**— Sarah, a 50-year-old widow, shed a tear while counting the days she and her family have spent at the evacuation center here since Islamic State-linked terrorists laid siege to their home in Marawi City.

"We're now into our 16th day here," she said on Wednesday as she sat on the floor of the Gumampong Ali Cultural Center, where 990 others who left their villages in Marawi City are staying. "And things have not gotten any better."

Sarah, who did not want to give her family name, said she and her five children shared a small space, "not even two meters long and wide," inside the

"This could kill me—the dust, the humidity—but where could we possibly go?" the single mother of 10 said. "How we wish this situation is over now so we can go home already."

Sarah said their situation could possibly be better if the bombing of Marawi City and the military operations were terminated altogether.

"That's why we are appealing to President Duterte to lift martial law already," she said of the President's declaration placing Mindanao under military rule after terror groups attacked Marawi on May 23.

Sarah said she was making the same appeal to the Maute and Abu Sayyaf gunmen "to leave Marawi."

"Leave us alone in peace," she said.

makeshift evacuation center.

Local officials admitted that the space was tight as the cultural center covers a floor area of only 1,800 square meters.

"We have the same situation in eight other evacuation centers here," said Vice Mayor Mustapha Ali.

But Ali pointed out that none of the evacuees starved because the local government had surplus supply of food and water.

"We received many donations and we gave it all to the evacuees," he said.

Sarah agreed that, at least for now, supplies were adequate, pointing to a sack beside her that contained rice, canned goods and instant noodle packs. But what worried her was the situation in the evacuation center.

"It's not conducive at all. We

"We do not have anything to do with you (Maute and Abu Sayyaf) but we are suffering because of what you did. You attacked Marawi at the height of Ramadan and it's partly because of you why [Marawi is] now in ruins," she said.

Mangoda Dimacaling, 35, of Barangay Saduc, said they were living peacefully until the gunmen sowed chaos in their city last month.

"I saw neighbors stumbling as they tried to locate family members. There was hysteria everywhere," Dimacaling said.

The father of three said he was tending his small store when the clashes became serious.

"I did not bother about my wares anymore. My family was what mattered to me," he said, recounting how he dashed home

may have lots of food here but we still want to go home. We may have a small house there, but I prefer it over where we are staying now," she said of her home in Sitio Bliss in Barangay Papandayan, Marawi.

Although no one among her children had contracted any diseases, she said they could fall ill anytime unless their situation improved.

"We also need to deal with the trauma that has caught our children. They cry when they hear banging sounds or the sound of metal hitting the ground. A simple yell would also make them fidgety," she said.

## Appeal aired

Mila, 40, said conditions in the evacuation center had worsened her bouts with asthma.

"in just a matter of minutes."

Without even checking if he had money in his pocket, Dimacaling said he packed his family into a neighbor's vehicle and ended up at the Gumampong Ali Cultural Center here, some 18 kilometers from Marawi.

Mila said her anger at the Maute group could not be measured. She recounted how her children had to carry her because it would have killed her if she walked on her own during their journey through the hills.

"We walked barefoot for the whole day and the whole night. We didn't have food, we didn't have water. All we were thinking of was to be safe. We cannot use the roads because fighting was everywhere and bullets could hit us," Mila said. INQ

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## Maute matriarch captured in Lanao del Sur

By EDITH REGALADO and JOHN UNSON

The matriarch of the Maute group was arrested in Masiu town, about 34 kilometers from Marawi City in Lanao del Sur, as she was trying to escape along with two wounded men and seven

women Friday afternoon.

Omintia Romato, also known as Farhana, is the first wife of Cayamora Maute and mother of brothers Omar and Abdullah who led more than 200 people in seizing Marawi City on May 23.

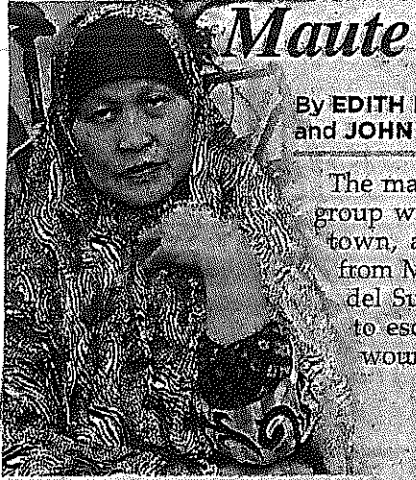
She is believed to be the heart of the Islamic State (IS)-inspired Maute group, having directed

its movement and operations and taking care of finances and international networking.

Farhana and Cayamora, who was arrested earlier by government forces, are said to be the masterminds behind the Maute operations.

Civilians reported Romato's

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Ominta 'Farhana' Romato-Maute, mother of wanted Maute founders Omar and Abdullah, is seen in detention following her arrest in Masiu, Lanao del Sur on Friday night.

presence in Barangays Unda Dayawan and Tamboro Cormatan, both in Masiu town, after she was seen buying vehicles and firearms days before the attempted getaway. Her reported safehouse is in Dayawan but she was arrested in Tamboro Cormatan.

An M-14 rifle, four rifle grenades, two improvised explosive devices and an undetermined amount of cash bundled with Landbank money bands were recovered from the vehicle that she and her group used to try to escape.

Malacañang welcomed the arrest, calling it an "important development."

"We believe that this is an important development, especially in the matters regarding the Maute terrorist group," said presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella over government station Radyo Pilipinas.

The attack by the Maute group in Marawi led to the displacement of thousands of families and the death of dozens of civilians, government forces and terrorists. Government promised to put an end to the destruction tomorrow, when the country observes its Independence Day.

Earlier, Romato reportedly tried to call President Duterte to talk about peace and negotiate a ceasefire following the heavy bombardment and fighting in Marawi City.

But the President flumbed down her overture, saying the government has lost too many soldiers and policemen in the Marawi attack.

In a pep talk with members of the 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade based in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat on Thursday, the President said some suggested that he talk with Romato.

"I said 'No, I will not.' Do not fool me with those talks. Not anymore," Duterte told soldiers as he pointed out the number of soldiers and policemen that were killed in three weeks of clashes.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) said a raid in Romato's residence in Marawi sometime in December last year also yielded explosives.

Romato is said to be a fiercely astute businesswoman and politician. She reportedly manages several business interests, including renting out several buildings in Quezon City and other key cities in the country.

She is also said to have administered the Maute-owned houses in Iligan, Cotabato and Davao cities.

Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, Armed Forces Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) deputy commander, said that Romato "has so many houses" that if Cayamora is consid-

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ered a "big fish" in the Maute group, Romato is an even bigger fish.

"Romato is the mastermind of the Maute group, the couple have all the money. It is important that she should also be arrested," Gapay said, pointing out that the woman is included in the most wanted gallery circulated throughout the country.

As a politician, Romato was said to have once served as assemblywoman of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Intelligence information indicated that Romato and Cayamora went out of Marawi City in a convoy some-

time last week. Romato then proceeded to Iligan City while Cayamora went to Cotabato City passing by the Lanao provinces before proceeding to Davao City where he was

arrested.

"The search for Romato has really been intensified because of the role she plays in the overall operation of

the Maute group," Gapay told The STAR. – With Alexis Romero, Cecille Suerte Felipe, Gerry Lee Gorit, Lino dela Cruz

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## Interfaith rally to call for lifting of Mindanao ML

By GHIO ONG

Over 100 former and current lawmakers, religious leaders and activists will once again call for the lifting of martial law in Mindanao and for the respect of human rights through an interfaith rally slated in Manila tomorrow, Independence Day.

A unity statement released yesterday said the signatories would gather at the Andres Borifacio Shrine located beside the Manila City Hall from 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. tomorrow for a National Day of Prayer and Action for Peace and Human Rights "to show our opposition to martial law in Mindanao and possibly other parts of the country."

"A regime that trades Filipinos'

human rights for vague, ever-moving law and order goals can only add fuel to armed rebellions and set back efforts to address the roots of the conflict," the statement said.

Martial law, according to the signatories, will further embolden law enforcers and state-sponsored vigilantes and para-military groups to commit even more extrajudicial killings and curtail civil and political rights.

The signatories also called for the halt of aerial bombings of Marawi City, now under siege by Islamic State (IS)-inspired Maute group.

"It is the poor that bear the brunt of these wars. It is the poor that are killed. It is their rights that are violated. It is their communities that

are subject to aerial bombings and abuses during military and police operations," they noted.

They also called for the continuation of the peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Moro National Liberation Front.

Among the signatories are former senators Rene Saguisag and Wigberto Tanada, members of the House of Representatives' so-called Makabayan bloc, Manila auxiliary bishop Broderick Pabillo, National Council of Churches in the Philippines secretary-general Rex Reyes Jr., militant groups like Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and National Union of People's Lawyers

(NUPL), and artists like Mae "Juana Change" Paner and Maria Isabel Lopez.

### Petition vs martial law

In a related development, Mindanao activists, together with human rights advocates, filed a petition before the Supreme Court (SC) against martial law Friday afternoon.

The petition covers the entire Mindanao as the groups alleged there were no incidents similar to what is happening in Marawi that are simultaneously occurring in the 33 cities and 422 municipalities of the region.

The petitioners include six local Mindanao leaders, namely, Lumad leader Eufemia Campos Cullamat; peasant leader Virgilio Lincuna of

the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas; Ateliana Hijos of Gabriela; and trade union leaders Roland Cobrado, Carl Anthony Olalo and Roy Jim Balanghig of the Shin Sun Tropical Fruits Inc. whose picket line was broken up by the police last June 2 after martial law was declared.

They were joined by leaders of various human rights and activist organizations and party-list groups: Bagong Alyansang Makabayan secretary-general Renato Reyes, Karapatan secretary-general Cristina Palabay, Samahan ng Ex-Detenido Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto chairperson Marie Enriquez, ACT Teachers party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio, Kabataan party-list Rep. Sarah Jane Elago and Gabriela deputy secretary-general Jovita Montes, among others.

They are represented by the NUPL through lawyers Neri Colmenares, Edre Olalia, Julian Oliva, Ephraim Cortez, Ma. Cristina Yambot, Maneeke Sarza, Josalee Deinla and Katherine Panguban.

Respondents in the petition include President Duterte, Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen. Eduardo Año and Philippine National Police Director-General Ronald dela Rosa.

Petitioners argue that the imposition of Proclamation No. 216 in the entire Mindanao is unwarranted, unjustifiable and out of proportion to the threat posed by the Maute and Abu Sayaff groups because aside from the violence in Marawi, respondents failed to prove sufficient factual basis that rebellion is simultaneously occurring in other parts of the island.

The first such petition from Mindanao also asked the high court to allow their lawyers to participate in the oral arguments set on June 13-15 at 10 a.m. at the New Session Hall, New Supreme Court Building.

#### **4 women from Marawi**

Meanwhile, the SC yesterday also allowed four women from Marawi – Norkaya Mohamad, Sittie Nur Dyhanna Mohamad, Noraisah Sani and Zahria Muti-Mapandi – to join the militant group of petitioners in the oral arguments after assessing that their petitions appeared to be sufficient in form and substance.

The respondents in their complaint are Medialdea, Lorenzana, Año, Dela Rosa, Interior and Local Government officer-in-charge Catalino Cuy and National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr.

The petitions of the Mindanao militant group and the four Marawi women would be consolidated with the petition filed last Monday by seven opposition congressmen led by Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman.

#### **60 days not enough**

Meanwhile, Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri believes that the 60-day martial law in Mindanao may not be enough to neutralize the Maute terror group.

In Bacolod City on Friday, he disclosed that martial law could even be extended, as he expressed support for doing such temporarily only in Marawi City.

The senator, however, stressed that he opposes expanding martial law to the Visayas and Luzon, since there is no compelling reason to do so.

– With Rhodina Villanueva, Evelyn Macairan, Gilbert Bayoran

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# Muslim Filipinos reject Maute's ideologies — expert

MANILA (PNA) – The extremism ideologies being espoused by the ISIS-inspired Maute Group does not sit well with the Muslim Filipinos, who have grown up in the peaceful and just teachings of traditional Islam.

This was bared by Dr. Rohan Gunaratna, a Singaporean analyst on security affairs during PTV-4's Countering Violent Extremism Forum Friday.

"You can see that when (the Maute Group) went to (attack) Marawi City, the (residents) there were shocked by ISIS. They did not follow ISIS. So I believe that ISIS is trying to force their ideology and their doctrine and their methods of operation in the Philippines and there is a lot of resistance from the Filipino Muslims," he noted.

The Maute Group and ISIS ideologies are based on Wahabism, which is defined as an ultra-conservative form of Islam that calls for the harsh and stringent teachings of the Koran and justifies punishments for those who don't adhere to them.

During their May 23 attack, videos circulating in the Internet showed Maute Group terrorists pillaging and vandalizing churches, executing police officers, and generally creating mayhem.

Aside from the videos, there are reports claiming that these lawless elements segregated Christians and executed them regardless of age and sex.

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# 'Bangon Marawi' EO now awaiting Duterte's signature

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

**T**he Executive Order (EO) that will set into motion the ₱10-billion rehabilitation program of Marawi City is now awaiting President Duterte's signature, Malacañang said Saturday.

The "Bangon Marawi" program will provide for the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war-torn city which has been under siege since May 23 by the combined Maute and Abu Sayyaf groups.

During the Mindanao Hour press briefing yesterday over Radyo ng Bayan, Presidential Spokesperson Er-

Social Welfare and Development, Energy, and Information and Communications Technology, among others. It will be headed by the Department of National Defense (DND).

According to Abella, the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation of Marawi City will take a minimum of six months after the liberation of the city from terrorist groups.

"It should take a minimum of six months and may begin after clearing the city, which should take about at least one to two weeks," he said.

Abella said that the DND was chosen to spearhead the reconstruction and the rehabilitation program

nesso Abella said the draft EO for the "Bangon Marawi" program is now with the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES).

"Bangon Marawi" will be undertaken by the Engineering Brigade of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) under the auspices of an Undersecretary with the expressed purpose of bringing back residents and normal everyday life as soon as possible," Abella said.

According to the Palace official, the program will be a multi-agency effort which will include the departments of Trade and Industry, Education, Public Works and Highways.

because it had an engineering battalion at its disposal.

"Yung kanilang (Their) engineering battalion may be readily dispersed in order to implement whatever plans that the other agencies may have-may have agreed upon," he said.

"They [also] have the wherewithal in order to implement the rehabilitation plan, which the President wants to be done as soon as possible," he added.

He said the agencies involved will also be working closely with National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

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# MILF leader hits Marawi siege plotters, calls them 'misguided'

By ALI G. MACABALANG

MARAWI CITY – Moro Islamic Liberation Front's (MILF) feisty Commander Abdullah "Bravo" Macapaar has denounced the perpetrators of the bloody siege in this city and called them "misguided" for wrongfully pursuing jihad (holy war) at the expense of innocent civilians in this country's central Islamic community.

Speaking in vernacular through a video-recorded footage on Thursday, Macapaar asked the leaders of combined Maute and Abu Sayyaf radical groups to pull out of this city while there is still "something left for displaced residents to start with for [their] recovery."

More than 200 people including militants, state troops and civilians were killed, over 180,000 residents displaced and several buildings burned or shuttered in this city since the hostilities began on May 23 with Islamic State-inspired guerrillas occupying vital places here.

All such "regrettable" havocs happened as a result of the "wrong" interpretation and enforcement of jihad by militants and their leaders, Macapaar said.

"I appeal to you, our younger brethren, to leave our place (Marawi City) along with your followers," he said.

Macapaar was referring to Lanao Sur-based brothers Abdullah and Omar Maute, and Alim Owaida (known in person as Ustaz Omam Abdulnajib, as well as Isnilon Hapilon, the Abu Sayyaf leader and ISIS-anointed "emir" for Southeast Asia.

"We cannot blame anyone for this (malady) but you, our younger counterparts," Macapaar said.

In his 17-minute video footage,

Macapaar admitted having been contacted before and after May 23 by the Marawi siege plotters for him and his followers to join forces with them.

"You (plotters) tried to get our support and even threatened to pull the triggers at us in the long run without hesitation if we refuse," Macapaar said. "But we said, in reply, we are ready to fight in defense of righteousness, our position."

He also made a pitch against some elected Muslim leaders for "giving wrong information" to the President and other authorities about his previous disciplinary actions against city residents involved in illegal drugs and other organized crimes.

The supposed "wrong" tip prompted President Duterte to almost order a military offensive against Macapaar's group early this year.

Macapaar, who heads the MILF's Western Mindanao Command covering the two Lanao provinces, has gained media mileage in his past combat operations that peaked in the bloody attacks of some towns in Lanao del Norte following the botched signing of the government-MILF's memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain (MOA-AD) in 2008.

Macapaar, now in his mid-40s, started to fight for Bangsamoro self-determination at the age of 5 following the "slaughter" of his kin by soldiers and Catholic militias in the dark days of Marcos' martial rule, according to foreign wires reports that described him as the "most powerful" MILF fighter in Lanao region.

In his Thursday video message, he asked the public to rally the opening of "peace corridors" by the joint government-MILF workers for the retrieval of trapped residents and smooth delivery of relief goods to

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# House support for Marawi rehab seen

By **BEN R. ROSARIO**

**T**o demonstrate solidarity with the government's bid to rebuild Marawi City, the House of Representatives should be expected to support measures that would seek to finance the swift rehabilitation of the war-torn city.

Quezon City Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo made this assurance as he proposed the establishment of a rehabilitation fund and program for

the immediate and long-term rehabilitation of Marawi City.

He aired confidence that congressmen will act immediately on a bill to finance the program, especially if President Duterte certifies the bill an urgent administration measure.

"Even as fighting between government forces and rebel-terrorist groups continue to rage in Marawi City, government should already consider drawing up a rehabilitation program and seeking congressional approval

for a special rehabilitation fund," Castelo said.

Castelo, chairman of the House Committee on Metro Manila Development, called on Duterte to form a team that will be tasked to assess the damage to Marawi City's public infrastructure.

The team, Castelo said, should also be ready to determine the initial budgetary requirement for the rebuilding process, saying assistance to owners of private residences and

establishments should be included in the program.

The team may be composed of key officials from the Office of the President, all relevant departments, Mindanao Development Authority, and the local governments of Marawi City and Lanao del Sur, Castelo said.

"To address immediate rehabilitation needs for 2017, Malacañang may have to submit to Congress when it resumes session a supplemental budget bill," he added.

Castelo said an initial rehab plan and budget estimates can be made between now and the resumption of Congress session in July.

"The President can certify the bill urgent so that Congress may pass it in 30 days," he said.

"We have to act fast on this so that we can rebuild at once the homes of Marawi residents, provide employment and livelihood and bring their life back to normal as soon as the fighting is over," Castelo added.

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## Maute matriarch, 9 others arrested

**MARAWI CITY:** The mother of key leaders of the jihadist Maute or Islamic State (IS)-Ranao group was arrested by authorities on Friday evening in the town of Masiu, Lanao del Sur, a few kilometers away from this battle-ravaged city, officials said.

Omintia "Farhana" Romato Maute, mother of Omar Romato Maute and Abdullah Romato Maute, leaders of the Maute group, was attempting to leave the province when intercepted around 7:15 p.m., said Chief Supt. Reuben Theodore Sindac, regional police director of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

"Farhana was said to be buying vehicles and firearms for their escape outside Lanao del Sur province," Sindac said.

He said two unidentified wounded Maute members and seven unidentified female personalities, who were with Farhana aboard a gray Toyota Revo, were also arrested by police in the village of Kormetañ in Masiu.

Authorities seized from the suspects several high-powered firearms and improvised explosives.

Masiu is among 39 towns of Lanao del Sur's first district, more or less 30 kilometers away from Marawi City. It is next to Butig, the hometown of the Maute clan

➤ **Arrested A2**

that the terrorists briefly took over last year.

A police report, quoting a reliable source, said Farhana was hiding in Dayawan village together with the two Maute members.

The arrest of the suspects came as fighting in Marawi reached its 18th day. The military, backed by the policemen, is attempting to contain the Maute men by June 12 or Independence Day.

"The government is serious in its fight to end the cultists' terror attack in Marawi and preempt their atrocious plans in the entire nation," Sindac said.

The Maute matriarch was ex-

pected to be brought to Cagayan de Oro City and then to Manila.

Farhana's husband, Cayamora Maute, was earlier arrested in Davao City and then transferred in Taguig City for security reasons. The couple has been charged by the Department of National Defense with rebellion in connection with the Marawi siege.

Earlier arrested for rebellion were Nasser Dilangalen in Cotabato City and former Marawi mayor Fahad "Pre" Salic in Misamis Oriental and several other suspects, all said to be supporters of the Maute group.

Intelligence authorities said the Maute matriarch was under surveillance for years for financing the terror group, including purchasing vehicles under her name. MOH

**SAADUDDIN AND  
DEMPSEY REYES**

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# 'REDS, VS MAUTE DON'T FIT' MNLF JOINING ARMY

By John Paolo Bencito

**C**OMMUNIST and Moro fighters no longer fit into the picture of joining government troops in the fight against the ISIS-inspired terrorists in the country's south, President Rodrigo Duterte said as he retracted his earlier calls for secessionist groups to join his war against terror.

In a speech before soldiers in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao on Friday, Duterte said that there will be problematic scenarios should he continue with his offer for rebels to join government troops.

"Nag-offer ang NPA, nakikipaglabanan sa gobyerno, sama-sama. Sabi ko, 'ina baka lahat ng tama ng sundalo ko sa likod. Wala sa harap [The NPA offered but they're also fighting the government. I said, it might turn out that my soldiers will just be shot at the back]," Duterte said.

"It's not because I do not trust them but it simply does not fit into the picture," he added.

Aside from communists guerillas, Duterte likewise



turned down MNLF founding chairperson Nur Misuari offer for his “able-bodied” troops to fight with the government when they talked last week.

“Si Nur promised to send also 2,000 of the MNLF soldiers. *Sabi ko, huwag kasi pagdating doon maghalo-halo tayo. Hindi lahat tayo nakakaintindi lahat ng—ang Tausug naman kung marunong kang mag-Bisaya, maintidhan mo ‘yan. Magdahan-dahan lang salita* [I refused because when you’re there, you’re going to sow confusion, because they’re mostly Tausugs. It’s okay if you’re a Visayan because you’re going to understand each other],” he said. Duterte instead asked for understanding and patience.

“*Sabi ko, huwag na. Kasi marami na tayo, hindi tayo magkaintindihan. Baka tayo-tayo na ang barilan doon. Sabi ko, ‘Hayaan mo lang ako. Just give us your understanding and be patient. We will restore order in this country [No more. We’re too many. It will only lead to confusion and we might hit each other. Just let me be].’*” he added.

In what is seen as an unprecedented move, Duterte in his visit to Jolo, Sulu last May 31 made an appeal to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Moro National Liberation Front, and the CPP’s New People’s Army to join the government to fight the common enemy.

While the government had successfully crafted a deal with the MILF that led into the creation of two “peace corridors” encircling Lake Lanao, which allowed humanitarian assistance pass through war-

tom Lanao del Sur province, talks with the CPP’s armed wing, the New People’s Army were likely unattainable after the Defense Department shut down the aid and called them to surrender first and enlist for military service first before they can help in the government offensive against ISIS-linked Maute group.

“*Hindi kami open dyan dahil in fact we brand them as terrorists eh [We’re not okay with them because we brand them as terrorists].*” Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said when asked about the GPP-NPA’s offer of military assistance.

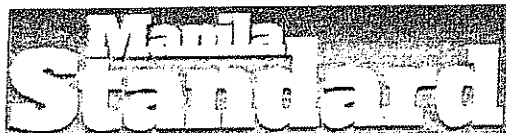
“*Kung pumunta sila rito na may mga armas sila, we will ask them to surrender kasi hindi naman sila pwedeng makialam dito so huwag na silang makialam dito. We are trying to convince the NPAs to surrender [Even if they join us and they bring their guns, we will ask them to surrender because they just can not meddle here].*” he added.

Lorenzana said there is only one Armed Forces and one police force tasked to enforce the law in the country.

“*Tutulong dito? There is only one armed forces saka one police force dito sa bansa. Ngayon kung pupunta sila dito at armado sila, ibig sabihin we are recognizing them as another armed force. Hindi pwede yun. Isa lang. Dapat isa lang,*” Lorenzana said.

“*Until such time that they are integrated into the armed forces, hindi sila pwedeng makialam,*” he added.

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## DU30 WON'T TALK WITH EX-MARAWI CITY MAYOR

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte expressed no plans of talking to former Marawi City Mayor Solitario Ali, who has been ordered arrested along with his brother for supporting rebellion and being spies of Maute group and Abu Sayyaf group.

Speaking to troops at Sultan Kudarat town in Maguindanao, Duterte said that the former Marawi mayor tried to talk to him but instead referred him to Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza, asking him first to clear his name.

"Solitario called me up," Duterte said. "Son of a bitch, what's up with you? Are you a friend of the government or are we foes? I said: 'Lorenzana wants you arrested. Son of a bitch, I will really have you killed.'"

Solitario is the brother of former Marawi City mayor Sultan Fahad "Pre" Salic, who was arrested by security forces at a police checkpoint in Misamis Oriental last Wednesday.

Fahad is married to Rasmia, niece of the captured Maute matriarch Ominta Romato "Farhana" Maute whose sons were involved in the armed skirmishes in the country's south.

Duterte told Solitario not to show himself to government forces because he would really be nabbed and he might be killed.

If Solitario would be able to clear his name and show he had no hand in the Marawi incident, that would be the only time he would talk to him, the President said.

The Salic brothers were among 230 individuals ordered for arrest by the Department of National Defense for alleged involvement in already three-week siege. **John Paolo Bencito**

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## MAUTE BRODS KILLED? MOM ARRESTED

By John Paolo Bencito

FOUNDING leaders of Maute terrorist group fighting the government forces, Omar and Mhade Maute, may have been killed in the ongoing military offensives in Marawi City, the Army said Saturday.

The news was relayed by Lt.

Col. Jo-Ar Herrera, Joint Task Force Marawi spokesperson, during a news conference Saturday afternoon.

"We are validating this information but that is the report," Herrera said.

Mhade was the one arguing with Abdulah Maute in a video

that showed planning to invade Marawi City.

To date, a total of 58 government forces have been killed in the operation against the ISIS-linked Maute. The latest were 13 members of Philippine Marines, Herrera said.

One of the fatalities was a Marine company commander of the Ma-

rine unit that recovered P52 million cash and firearms of Maute.

Twelve other Marines were killed during Friday's skirmishes, Herrera said.

"We are on the offensive mode, we are constantly moving toward the position of enemies,

*Turn to A2*

unfortunately we incurred several casualties, we are doing our best to re-strategize," he said.

"The enemy has strong defensive positions, maximize presence of high structure buildings and civilian hostages used as human shields," he added.

"We are making adjustments in our offensives," he said, adding that air strikes were effective in the operations.

"We hit the logistical hubs, several command and control and communications and snipers' nest of Maute," Herrera said.

"We have so many head ways, we are close to their exact positions, *lumalakas ang firefight*," the official said.

Reports of the Maute brothers of being possibly killed came after the news that their mother, Ominta Romata "Farhana" Maute, was arrested Friday afternoon in Masiu, Lanao del Sur, authorities said.

Farhana, who reportedly acts as a financier to her sons, was nabbed together with two injured militants and seven unidentified women was arrested after their vehicle was intercepted at Barangay Kormatan in Maslu

town, Chief Supt. Reuben Theodore Sindac, regional police director of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao said.

"Two days ago, information was received from our [asset] that suspect was hiding in barangay Dayawan, Masiu, Lanao del Sur together with wounded members of Maute and it was revealed that Farhana was buying vehicles and firearms in the area to be used for their escape outside Lanao del Sur province," the report said.

On June 7, President Rodrigo Duterte said the Maute brothers' mother tried to speak to him but he refused.

Sindac said the Maute matriarch's group tried to hide at nearby Barangay Dayawan, also in Masiu, where they brought a vehicle and guns before they tried to exit from Lanao del Sur.

Ominta, along with his husband Cayamora who was earlier nabbed by the police, reared and sent their sons Omar and Abdullah to Islamic schools in the Middle East where they purportedly absorbed the philosophy of *klital*, an orthodox Arabian belief allowing killing in ideological stride. **With PNA**

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# BABE'S EYE VIEW

BABE ROMUALDEZ

## A soldier's heroic act

Twenty days since the siege of Marawi by terrorist extremists, soldiers continue to conduct air strikes and scour the city to flush out members of the Maute group and cohorts of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon. While government troops have taken control of most of the city and are set to hoist the Philippine flag as the country celebrates Independence Day tomorrow, 45 of our troops have also sacrificed their lives to fight the terrorist scourge.



One of the fallen is Army Private First Class Dhan Ryan Bayot, whose astonishing story of courage is starting to go viral. The 24-year-old soldier was part of a 51st Infantry Battalion team stationed at a detachment in barangay Lilod in Marawi that also served as additional security for a local government official, whose house was located above the detachment.

Bayot's team was attacked on the second day of the siege, with accounts alleging that the private security men of the local executive "sympathetic" with Maute terrorists helped in the assault. The team radioed for reinforcements but none could get through because the only passage was heavily entrenched with the enemy.

Finding himself alone several hours later with his comrades dead, the young man radioed his commanding officer, gave his grid coordinates and made this startling request: "Bombahin na lang niyo ang location ko, Sir! (Just bomb my location, Sir!)"

Bayot knew what was coming - but he would also take down as many of the enemies as he could. If he was taken alive, he would probably be tortured and even decapitated. President Rodrigo Duterte understood this very well when he told the soldiers, "Do not surrender to the enemy... do not give them the opportunity to mistreat you... use you as target practice and treat you like a pig only to be executed later."

On May 28, the remains of Bayot and his comrades were finally retrieved by government troops that included his father, Sgt. Larry Bayot of the 1st Infantry Battalion. Sgt. Bayot said the terrain made it difficult to mount a rescue, and it took four units to finally retrieve the body of his son, whose face was already unrecognizable as it must have been repeatedly bashed in, with slashes on his neck indicating that the terrorists must have attempted to behead him.

The story of PFC Dhan Ryan Bayot is just one example of the kind of courage and heroism displayed by our soldiers as they fight to defend our beloved country from murdering, vicious barbarians who think nothing about burning churches and schools and killing innocent civilians to establish a reign of terror. Many of these young soldiers joined the service out of great need, some even becoming "gofers" like what Manny Pacquiao did for officials when he was hoping to become a soldier long before he became "the champ."

There are admittedly a few bad eggs but a large majority of our soldiers are imbued with remarkable fervor and loyalty for our country, enduring hardships especially during operations to search for rebels and terrorists. They would forge streams or rivers and walk for miles with their socks already adhering to their skin, subsisting on sardines or dried fish and other food that could be packed lightly. Rest would be in mosquito-infested jungles, protected only by their poncho if it rains.

Many of us often forget the kind of sacrifices they make and take their service for granted - and sometimes, I find myself getting angry at those who mock and ridicule our armed forces and look down on our soldiers. They get very little pay, and the hazard and combat pay they receive for risking life and limb is laughable. Just recently, images of a Philippine Army Cadillac Gage V-150 with a "D-I-Y" wooden armor has elicited jeers from several online sites, underscoring the pitiful condition of a lot of our military equipment.

But in fairness to both former president Noynoy Aquino and President Duterte, they have budgeted more funds for our armed forces and gradually equipped our soldiers with necessary materiel and hardware to achieve minimum credible defense posture. There is no doubt that our number one ally - the United States - has been very instrumental in training our soldiers in many aspects of warfare and even on humanitarian assistance and disaster response. (Just recently, the Joint US Military Assistance Group delivered grenade launchers, sniper rifles and an unmanned aerial vehicle system consisting of three drones to help the AFP in its anti-terrorist efforts.)

It is the sacrifice and bravery of soldiers like Bayot and others that should be acknowledged and appreciated, putting their lives on the line for all of us. The same goes for members of the Philippine National Police - like the SAF 44 who lost their lives in Mamasapano trying to capture Malaysian bomb maker Zulkifli Abd Hir alias Marwan.

The men and women in uniform who serve our country deserve our respect. Very often, I am brought to tears when I remember the words of Douglas McArthur: "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." Those words should remind us that we should never let the memory of our brave soldiers who died for our country fade away.

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Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre who accused Senator Bam Aquino of involvement in the terrorist siege of Marawi City should be careful with his words. If he in fact received highly classified information, then he should have kept it for himself instead of blurring it out to media. No one can really blame Senator Bam Aquino for demanding a public apology. Aguirre's unsubstantiated accusation is an assault on the senator's integrity.

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# POSTSCRIPT

FEDERICO D. PASCUAL Jr.

## SC need not wait 30 days to decide

WHATEVER we call the armed conflict tearing apart Marawi City – be it rebellion or lawlessness, terrorism, insurrection, revolt or an uprising – it is an ugly WAR taking innocent Filipino lives as government troops battle Maute marauders.



The Supreme Court has been asked to rule if the bloody conflict in Marawi is a rebellion that justifies President Rodrigo Duterte's imposing martial law in Mindanao. He gave assurance Friday that he would abide by any SC ruling.

Terminology is important to lawyers. But to those caught in the crossfire, whether the Revised Penal Code calls it rebellion or something else, the experience is a horrible war – and war is hell.

The carnage should stop before it takes more lives and reduce to rubble that beautiful Muslim city beside scenic Lake Lanao. Stopping the fighting now on its third week, alas, is easier said than done.

While the Constitution gives the Supreme Court 30 days to rule if there is factual basis for the Commander-in-Chief's proclamation of martial law not only in Marawi but in the entire Mindanao, the tribunal need not wait that long.

In fact, giving the architects of martial law more time possibly to tailor the "facts" to the questioned decree – Proclamation No. 216 – will not be fair and just. But the greater reason for a speedy resolution is to help ease tension and open doors to peace.

President Duterte claims to have factual reasons for his proclamation, so he should be able to submit them quickly. Martial law being not without precedents, the SC justices, aided by their researchers and *amici curiae*, can render an opinion either way in less than 30 days.

### • Psychology of the hunt – pressure

BEING outlaws with a demonstrated violent streak, the Maute warriors can be expected to keep fighting whatever ruling is handed down by the Supreme Court.

Our guess is that the terrorists' fiercely holding their increasingly untenable position indicates that the Maute brothers Omar and Abdullah, as well as terrorist leader Isnilon Hapilon whom they have been protecting, are still in Marawi, cornered and hungry and possibly wounded.

One logical move is to cauterize the malignant Maute cells, to prevent their slipping out of a tightening cordon. As their resistance drags on, they could run out of food, water, rest and sleep, munitions and tactical options.

It is good that government forces and the Commander-in-Chief have shown toughness. President Duterte's having been challenged must have hardened his resolve to wipe out the Mautes and whatever armed groups would attempt to help them.

With or without martial law, with or without the terrorists being "inspired" by the savage Islamic State, the President seems to have gained support in and outside Mindanao for his iron-fisted pursuit of the Maute outlaws.

Assuring the nation that he has no plan of perpetuating himself in power, Duterte said Friday: "You know these fools, they were trying to think that we in government are trying to perpetuate ourself in power... I'm the second president to declare martial law. I am not proud of it. I am not happy because it indicates something, that there is trouble."

The psychology of the hunt is relentless pressure on the quarry. While state forces can keep chasing, fighting and replenishing their ranks, the cornered outlaws cannot rest and relax.

We note that until now, three weeks into the intense fighting, we have not heard of related or major diversionary clashes outside Marawi. Is the Maute group lacking in allies or sympathizers? Or are we talking too soon?

A most depressing news that we hope would never break is that the Maute stragglers had "slipped through the military cordon" with the help of civilian supporters or rebel groups. May Allah not allow that!

### • Arrest of rebellion suspects begins

WITH the delay in the resolution of the martial law petitions, the defense department has gone ahead issuing arrest orders, an action normally performed by the regular courts that Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno said must continue to function in Mindanao.

Under Section 18, Article VII, of the Constitution, the suspension under martial law of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus applies only to cases of invasion and rebellion, and that persons so arrested must be released if no such charges are filed in three days.

With the warlike situation in Marawi having worsened, some quarters are beginning to be resigned to the government's mailed-fist handling of security threats. This has been disquieting to others.

Without the Supreme Court rendering a quick decision, the public mind could be conditioned into condoning warrantless arrests and indefinite detention of suspects – as the Commander-in-Chief had told the troops in Mindanao they could do under martial law.

The defense department announced the other day that it had issued arrest orders against 310 suspected members, supporters, spies and couriers of four terrorist organizations in Mindanao. We did not notice anybody howling in protest.

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The suspects are allegedly involved in killings, kidnappings and bombings aimed at setting up an Islamic state in Marawi, acts that constitute the crime of rebellion under Article 134 of the Revised Penal Code. They include members of the Maute group, Abu Sayyaf, Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, and the Maguid group.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, martial law administrator, directed the armed forces, the Philippine National Police, Philippine Coast Guard, National Bureau of Investigation, and the Bureau of Immigration to carry out his arrest orders.

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

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The Manila Times

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## AFP, NPA and MNLF: The possible secular convergence to fight ISIS

THE bloody wages of the almost 40 years spent by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to quell the communist insurgency need no retelling.

The longest-running leftist insurgency in the world may not be the record-holder on body count, carnage and mayhem but the toll on lives and property has been substantial. The drag on the economy, the scar on the national psyche, the towns on the peripheries that can't be integrated into the functioning part of modern society because they host the bloody skirmishes, have set back the nation's growth aspirations for at least a quarter of a generation.

The toll on the young during the First Quarter Storm and the first few years of martial law alone had deprived the country of some of the best and the brightest minds – and the most politically committed.

Who can forget these immortal lines? "Where have all the young men gone? Into graveyards everyone."

The battles with the MNLF, which was the "baptism of fire" of the young Greg Honasan and his just-out-of-the-PMA contemporaries in the early 70s, was also as bloody as hell. The young army officers and their enlisted men fought in a no-man's land, or at the very least in unfamiliar territory, with no rules of engagement except two things: kill or be killed.

Looking back, it was hard to



SUNDAY STORIES

MARLEN V. RONQUILLO

dismiss the veracity of the stories that went with the fighting – that both sides collected enemy scalps in post-skirmish stress. Who would not after surviving the hostile marshes of Muslim Mindanao?

The state's efforts to reach out and talk peace, efforts that vested the insurgents and the secessionists bargaining power and leverage, have all failed despite the government's pliability and tolerance. On the grounds that there is hardly a meeting ground, a point of happy intersection, a condition wherein the rebels can lay down their arms without giving away their reason for being. With the Left, it is seizure of state power and the building of a society anchored on its Marxist ideals. With the Muslim secessionists, it is balkanizing the country so they can take away and govern Mindanao in a secular (MNLF), or on a semi-religious version (MLF).

The contradictions (a Marxist formulation) are so intrinsic and fundamental that many have given up on the peace talks, or regard peace talks as exercises in utter futility. There are no compelling reasons for a genuine peace accord, now and

never. The Left wants to seize state power to put in place an alternative governing system. The secessionists want Mindanao, which is more than a third of the entire country. There can be no meeting point.

So why is the government seriously talking about collaborating with the NPA, the army of the Revolutionary Left and the MNLF, the original secessionist army, in the fight against the local affiliates of the ISIS?

The ISIS and its affiliates do not fight for territory to simply govern that territory according to a defined system of governance. If they can't build a caliphate, it would be, on the very minimum, a theocracy. Life would simply revert to life during the Dark Age, with the dark and punitive version of the Muslim faith, an aberration of peaceful Islam – as the law.

An ISIS-led rule will do a scorch-earth evisceration of the Left and the secular Muslims and Muslims who are not fundamentalists enough. The Left and the secular Muslims fully realize the numbing cold-bloodedness of the fundamentalists. And that these are people you can't reason out. The Taliban rule of parts of Afghanistan would be considered "enlightenment" if compared to the kind of fundamentalism that the ISIS aspires for.

A society where women do not have the value of stray animals is an ISIS-led society and if that were

not terrifying enough, just imagine a society that will take your basic freedoms, your smart phones, your educational system and your right to vote and your right to travel.

The Left and the secular Muslims sure have governing versions that differ from liberal democracies. Their views on how institutions should function, or on what undergirding ideologies should guide and direct the strategic decisions are divergent. But the motivation to uplift man and science, culture and growth, are defined and detailed and fully accepted. The differences are on the strategies on how to go about building a progressive, just and fair societies. Or, at least, their versions of that.

ISIS aims to run society and institutions and belief systems to the ground and this is anathema to mainstream liberal democracies, to secular Muslim societies and to the Marxist ideals.

The fear of ISIS and what ISIS will do to societies it enslave are enough motivations for a temporary coalition, the possible convergence of three armed forces – the mainstream AFP, the NPA of the Left and what fighters are left of Nur's original MNLF.

The fears are well grounded and well-founded.

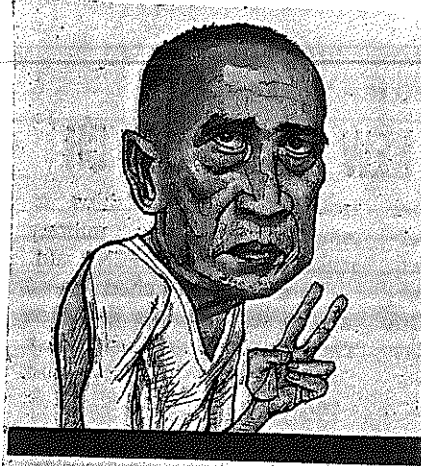
If ISIS wins, nothing will be left of the Left's dream of building a Marxist society and secular Muslims' dream of building a secular and progressive Muslim Mindanao.



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#### **Cayamora Maute**

While his sons were holed up in war-torn Marawi after days of firefight, he was traveling in a van from Cotabato City to Tagum City for medical treatment along with his second wife, daughter and a driver for hire. Everything was smooth until they reached a checkpoint in Sirawan, Davao, where soldiers recognized him as the father of Omarkhayam and Abdullah Maute, who had allied with Islamic-State group regional leader Isnilon Hapilon to lay siege to Marawi. Seized from the van were P363,000 in cash and a gun. He looked ill and harmless, flashing a peace sign to journalists at a police headquarters. On Friday, police arrested Ominta Romato Maute alias Farhana, the matriarch of the Maute clan, at a checkpoint in Masiu, Lanao del Sur. Two wounded men were also arrested.

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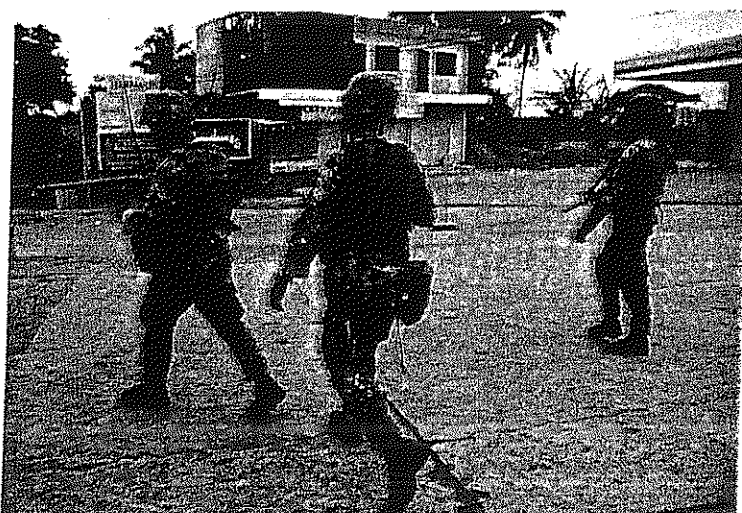
## ONLINE NEWS

### 11 JUNE 2017

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## Army says no US troops in Marawi, but Moro group scores PHL's subservience to US

From the often pro-CPP online publication the Davao Today (Jun 10): Army says no US troops in Marawi, but Moro group scores PHL's subservience to US



*IN DANGER.* Ground forces involved in the continuing military offensives against the ISIS-linked Maute group and Abu Sayyaf in Marawi are also in danger of being hit by the so-called "friendly" fire or airstrikes. On Wednesday, 11 soldiers were killed while 10 others were wounded when a bomb dropped from an air force plane landed into their position. (Alexander D. Lopez/davaotoday.com photo)

MARAWI CITY, Philippines — An official of the Philippine Army explained that the assistance given by the US troops in the fight versus the local terrorists are limited to exchanges of intelligence, training and technical support.

Lt. Col. Joar Herrera said the US troops assisting the soldiers in Marawi are not participating in combat operations.

"US counterparts facilitate the exchanges of intelligence, provide training and of course the technical support," Herrera said.

He added: "They are not fighting, they are just providing technical support."

Reporters covering the Marawi siege has captured on video a US P3 Orion surveillance plane flying here Friday, but Herrera refused to comment on the purpose of the said activity.

However, a Moro organization condemns the presence of US troops in Marawi.

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Jerome Succor Aba, national chairperson of Suara Bangsamoro, said unless the Philippines ends "subservience" to the "US War on Terror", problems of terrorism in Mindanao, like the Maute and ASG will continue.

Aba said these local terrorist groups "were created by the US to justify military intervention in the country."

"The Philippines' subservience to US causes us trouble aside from violating the country's sovereignty. It is the US which brings terrorism here like the US-CIA that created ISIS and which is now linked to the Maute group and the ASG," Aba said.

Aba said "the role of US in Marawi is not new as the US troops have been to Camp Ranao where Gregan Cardeño, a Filipino who worked as an interpreter for the US, was found dead."

In a report by Reuters, it quoted a US embassy spokesperson saying that US special forces are helping the Armed Forces of the Philippines in its fight in Marawi City.

The Reuters report quoted the spokesperson as saying: "At the request of the government of the Philippines, U.S. special operations forces are assisting the AFP with ongoing operations in Marawi that help AFP commanders on the ground in their fight against Maute and ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) militants."

Asked whether the assistance of the US was made upon the request of the Philippine government, Herrera said the two countries already have existing agreements on military assistance.

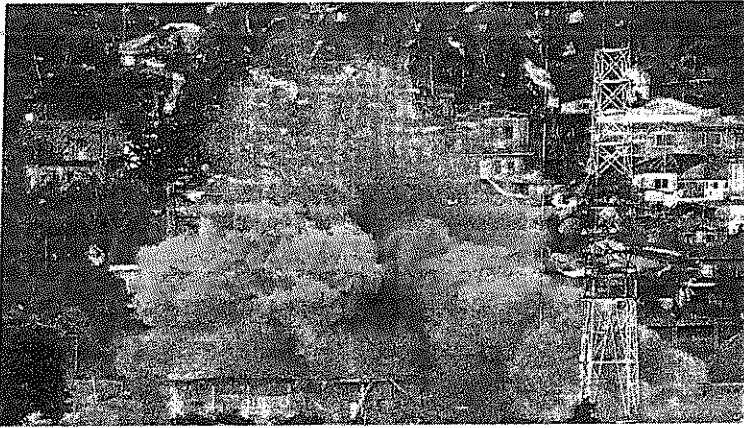
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## US Special Forces Helping Philippines Fight Militants in Marawi

From the Voice of America (Jun 10): US Special Forces Helping Philippines Fight Militants in Marawi



*Debris flies as Philippine Air Force fighter jets bomb suspected locations of Muslim militants as fighting continues in Marawi city, southern Philippines, June 9, 2017.*

**U.S. special forces are helping the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to end a siege of the southern town of Marawi by militants allied to Islamic State, a U.S. embassy spokesperson in Manila told Reuters Saturday.**

The seizure of Marawi by hundreds of fighters who have sworn allegiance to Islamic State, including dozens from neighboring countries and the Middle East, has fueled concern that the ultra-radical group is gaining a foothold in Southeast Asia.

**"At the request of the government of the Philippines, U.S. special operations forces are assisting the AFP with ongoing operations in Marawi that help AFP commanders on the ground in their fight against Maute and ASG militants,"** the spokesperson said. ASG stands for the Abu Sayyaf militant group.

**The Philippine military Saturday confirmed that U.S. special forces were assisting local troops to end a siege of the southern town of Marawi by militants allied to Islamic State, but said they were only providing technical support.**

**"They are not fighting. They are just providing technical support,"** military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Jo-Ar Herrera told a news conference.

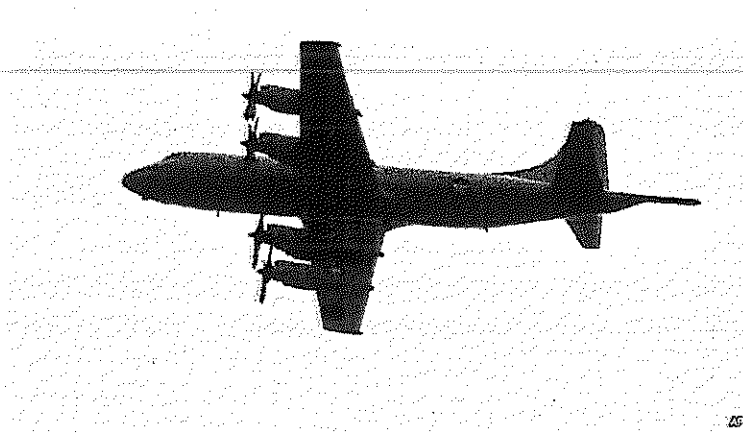
No evidence of troops on ground

**Until now there had been no confirmation that the Philippines had sought U.S. assistance in the battle for Marawi City on the island of Mindanao, which is in its third week.**

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The spokesperson gave no details of the U.S. involvement. A U.S. P3 Orion surveillance plane was seen flying over the town Friday, but there has been no evidence that the United States has put troops on the ground there.



*A U.S. P3 Orion surveillance plane flies over Marawi city, southern Philippines as Philippine Air Force helicopters and bombers continue air strikes, June 9, 2017.*

The assistance comes after months of strain between the two long-time allies that was stoked by Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte's hostility towards Washington and his pledges to throw U.S. troops out of the country.

#### **Special forces deployed in 2002**

Washington deployed special forces soldiers to Mindanao in 2002 to train and advise Philippine units fighting Abu Sayyaf militants in a program that once involved 1,200 Americans.

It was discontinued in 2015 but a small presence remained for logistics and technical support.

The United States and the Philippines have been allies for decades. Their relationship provided Washington with a strategic foothold in Asia, and offered Manila a shield against China's assertiveness in the region.

But Duterte has openly scorned the alliance, seeing it as an obstacle to a rapprochement with China, and has repeatedly lambasted Washington for treating his country as a lackey.

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## **Military confirming reports Maute brothers killed in firefight**

ABS-CBN (Jun 10): Military confirming reports Maute brothers killed in firefight

The military is confirming reports that Maute brothers Omar and Madie were killed in clashes between government troops and Islamic State-linked terrorists in Marawi City.

Philippine Army 1st Infantry Division spokesperson Lt. Col. Jo-Ar Herrera on Saturday said there were "strong indications" that Omar and Madie, two of several Maute siblings tagged in terror activities, were killed in government offensives.

"There are reports that Omar and Madie were killed in the operations. We are still validating this report but there are strong indications that they [were] killed," he said in a press briefing.

Herrera, however, did not say when the terrorists were killed and in which specific operation. Firefights between government troops and terror groups are now into its third week.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Eduardo Año previously said President Rodrigo Duterte earlier offered a P5 million reward for the arrest of Omar and another Maute sibling Abdullah.

The reported death of the two extremists comes following the arrest of the Maute family's matriarch, Ominta Romato "Farhana" Maute, on Friday afternoon.

Farhana and two other injured Maute group members were arrested after their vehicle was intercepted in Brgy. Kormatan, Masiu town, ARMM Regional Police Director Reuben Theodore Sindac said.

Sources said Farhana, mother of the terror leaders, was the group's courier, financier, and link to foreign terror groups.

Herrera said Farhana has been transported away from Marawi City to a "safe place," and is now currently undergoing investigation.

He also confirmed that Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon was still in Marawi City.

Clashes had erupted between state forces and terror groups on May 23 following an attempt to arrest the terror leader, said to be the anointed ISIS chief in Southeast Asia.

The military earlier released a video of Hapilon and cohorts plotting attacks around Marawi City days before the siege began.

The Maute's patriarch, Cayamora Maute, was also apprehended Tuesday morning at a checkpoint in Sirawan, Toril, Davao City.

Government troops have killed more than 100 terrorists since firefights began.

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