

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



TEAM ARMY

Serving the people. Securing the land.

oacpa.army2012@gmail.com
OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEWS CLIPPINGS

24 June 2017

Saturday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land

TABLE OF CONTENTS
24 JUNE 2017

PAGE NR.	TITLE	WRITER	NEWSPAPER
1	Weather	-	PDI p. A8
HEADLINE NEWS			
2-3	Australia sends spy planes to Mindanao	Helena flores	Phil star p.1
4-5	Malaysian financier of Mautes believed slain	Alla Nawal	PDI p. A1
6-7	Australia deploying spy planes	AFP &AP	Mla.Bulletin p.1
ARMY RELATED NEWS			
8	Army official downplays BIFF threat vs. Duterte	PNA	DTribune p.3
9-10	Trooped discover Maute tunnels	Roel Pareño	Phil star p.1
11	Military secures illigan, lanao Norte borders	Al Jacinto	Mla times p. A7
12	BIFF attack not an offshoot of marawi crisis- AFP	Antonio L. Colina IV	Mla.Bulletin p.18
13	CAFGU man killed despite BIFF member's pleading	Keith Bacongco	Tempo p.4
14	Red alert raised in Guimaras	Tara yap	Mla.Bulletin p.17
15	Businessman, drive killed in NPA ambush in Negros Occidental	Mario J. Mallari	DTribune p.2
16	Informer ng military nikida ng NPA rebels	Joy Cantos	PM p.2
17	Biglaang pag-atake muli ng BIFF pinangangambahan	Leo P. Diaz	Balita p. 5
18	Napatay na CAFGU binistay sa harap ng pamilya	Keith Bacongco	Balita p. 5
19	Photo: Alerto lagi	Keith Bacongco	Balita p. 5
20	3 NPA rebels, cop killed in clash	Edith Regalado	Phil star p.11
AFP RELATED NEWS			
21	Año: Isis funded siege of Marawi	AP	Tempo p.2
22	Palace: Martial Law prevent wilayat	Gena lyn. D Kabling	Tempo p.2
23	'Martial law worsened situation in Marawi'	Llanesca T. Pantí	Mla Times p. A2
24	Omar Maute likely dead- military	Dempsey Reyes	Mla Times p. A1
25	Australia sending spy planes to Marawi	Dempsey Reyes/AFP	Mla Times p. A2
26-27	Failure to address Bangsamoro issue invited ISIS into the country- Alonto	Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos	Mla.Bulletin p.1

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

28	Solon accuse gov't troops of threatening to rape women	Charlie V. Manalo	DTribune p. 2
29-31	Key Malaysian Is man believed killed	Mario J. Mallari	DTribune p. 2
32	Aussies join battle vs IS allies in Marawi		DTribune p. 1
33	Malaysian financier believed killed in siege	AP	B.Mirror p. A3
34	Threat of terror attack in manila 'very,very minimal' –ERAP		B.Mirror p. A3
35	Letters of hope' for soldiers, civilians launched	Ali G.Macabalang	Mla.Bulletin p.18
36	Military Pooh-Poohs BIFF threat vd duterte	Julie M. Aurelio	PDI p.A2
37	BIFF target ang davao, minarkahan si Duterte	Vans Fernandez	Police files p. 2
38	Death treat kay Duterte minaliit	Aries Cano	Abante p.2
39	'Kill Duterte ' BIFF desperation vow- AFP	John Paolo Bencito	Mla.Standard p.A1
40	Palace shrugs off BIFF threat vs Duterte	Alexis Romero	Phil.Star p.2
41	All- Morp peace deal eyed	John Paolo Bencito	Mla.Standard p.A1
42	NDF submits list of peace consultants	Jose Rodel Clapano	Phil.Star p.2
43	'Healing should start for displaced Marawi residents'	Jose Rodel Clapano	Phil.Star p.1
44	Omar Maute, Malaysian financier likely killed in siege	AP	Phil.Star p.1
45-46	Martial law in Mindanao a success- Palace	Alexis Romero	Phil.Star p.1
47	BIFF attack not connected to Marawi siege- Palace, military	Edith Regalado	Phil.Star p.10
48	Gov't readying Marawi rehab plan	Frinston Lim	PDI p.A3
49	1 COP, 3 NPA rebels killed in attack	Frinston Lim	PDI p.A5
50-51	Dusty teddy bear, family photos are remnants of life in deserted homes	AFP	PDI p.A15
52-53	Aussie spy planes to join fray	Jeannette I. Andrade	PDI p.A15
54-55	The rise of the Mautes	Reuters	PDI p.A15
56-57	Pigcawayan folk recall attack by BIFF, expect them to return	Keith Bacongco	Mla.Bulletin p.1
EDITORIAL			
58	Martial law conversation with tough Iliganons	John Tria	Mla.Bulletin p.4
59-60	Mindanao aerial bombings spawn humanitarian crisis	Satur C. Ocampo	Phil.Star p.9
61-62	Shattered	Alex Magno	Phil.Star p.8
63-64	The New Martial Law	Tony Laviña	Mla.Standard p.A5

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

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

65-66	In for the long haul	Rod P. Kapunan	Mia.Standard p.A5
67	'Drone war' sa Marawi	Jb Salazon	Abante p. 5
68	Matyagan ang mga terorista	Larry Boy	PM p.3
69	'Sundalo, pinagbatay ng kalabaw ni governor!'	Ben tulfo	PM p.3
SPORTS			
70	AFP, PNP try to seal UNTV title Clash		Phil.Star p.15
71	AFP, PNP out tp set up tittle duel		Tempo p.13
ONLINE NEWS			
72	Wounded troops fighting in Maute group terrorist raring to fight again	Priam F. Nepomuceno	www.pna.gov.ph
73	DND confirms Aussies assistance in Marawi City conflict	Priam F. Nepomuceno	www.pna.gov.ph
74	Public warning AFP:Stop spreading unverified reports		www.retiredanayst.blogspot.com
75	Malaysia tightens border security due to Sayyaf, Maute threats		www.retiredanayst.blogspot.com

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

24 June 2017



Page: AS

www.panahon.tv /PanahonTV

BALANCED NEWS • FEARLESS VIEWS

TODAY'S WEATHER FORECAST | JUNE 24, 2017 | SATURDAY

SOUTHWEST MONSOON AFFECTING WESTERN SECTION OF SOUTHERN LUZON (As of 5:00 PM - June 23, 2017)

PHILIPPINE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (PAR)

LAOAG CITY 26 - 33 °C	TUGUEGARAO CITY 25 - 34 °C
SBMA/CLARK 26 - 34 °C	BAGUIO CITY 17 - 24 °C
METRO MANILA 26 - 34 °C	TAGAYTAY CITY 22 - 31 °C
PUERTO PRINCESA 25 - 31 °C	LEGAZPI CITY 26 - 33 °C
ILOILO/BACOLOD CITY 26 - 32 °C	TACLOBAN CITY 25 - 31 °C
ZAMBOANGA CITY 24 - 32 °C	METRO CEBU 25 - 32 °C
	CAGAYAN DE ORO 24 - 32 °C
	METRO DAVAO 25 - 32 °C

SUNRISE 5:29 AM	SUNSET 6:28 PM
MOONRISE 5:25 AM	MOONSET 6:39 PM
LAST QUARTER JUN 17 7:33 PM	NEW MOON JUN 24 10:31 AM
LOW TIDE 5:45 PM -0.17 Meter	HIGH TIDE 9:20 AM 1.38 Meter

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

	JUNE 23	JUNE 26	JUNE 25	JUNE 26	JUNE 25	JUNE 26
METRO MANILA	25 - 33 °C	25 - 35 °C			25 - 31 °C	26 - 32 °C
TUGUEGARAO	25 - 34 °C	25 - 33 °C			24 - 32 °C	24 - 32 °C
LAOAG	26 - 33 °C	26 - 33 °C			25 - 32 °C	26 - 32 °C
BAGUIO	17 - 24 °C	17 - 23 °C			24 - 31 °C	24 - 32 °C
SBMA/CLARK	25 - 34 °C	26 - 36 °C				
TAGAYTAY	21 - 30 °C	21 - 30 °C				
LEGAZPI	26 - 33 °C	26 - 33 °C				
PUERTO PRINCESA	25 - 32 °C	25 - 33 °C				
ILOILO/BACOLOD	26 - 32 °C	26 - 33 °C				
METRO CEBU	25 - 32 °C	25 - 33 °C				

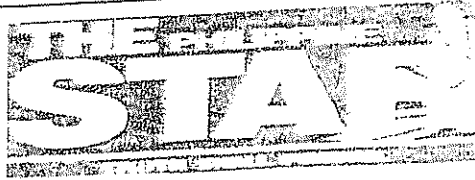
DZRH NEWS MONDAY - FRIDAY
11 AM & 5 PM

PILIPINAS HD

AIR 21
SAGOT KO, PADALA MO!

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

2 June 2017



Page: 1

Australia sends spy planes to Mindanao

By HELEN FLORES

The Australian government has deployed two spy planes in Mindanao to help the Philippine government in its ongoing campaign to liberate Marawi City from the Islamic State (IS)-linked Maute terror group.

Australian Defense Minister Marise Payne, in a statement released by the Australian embassy in Manila, yesterday said the two AP-3C Orion aircraft would provide surveillance support to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in fighting terror.

"I recently spoke with my counterpart Secretary of Defense Delfin Lorenzana about how Australia can assist the Philippines in its fight against extremists. We agreed the best way to defeat terrorism in our region is for us to work together," Payne said.

"The regional threat from terrorism, in particular from Daesh and foreign fighters, is a direct threat to Australia and our interests," she said, referring to the Islamic State by its other name.

Malacañang welcomed Australia's assistance. "As we

previously stated, we would gladly welcome any form of foreign assistance allowed under our Constitution to help suppress the rebellion in Marawi," presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said in a press briefing yesterday in Davao City.

"Our defense officials are in close coordination with their Australian counterparts in the latter's offer of providing surveillance support to the Armed Forces of the Philippines," he added.

AFP Eastern Mindanao Command deputy commander Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay noted that intelligence and reconnaissance capability is crucial in every military operation.

"So having these capabilities, it could be used in any military operation, not just Marawi, but of course in all other operations in Mindanao," Gapay said.

Payne said Australia would continue to work with its partners in Southeast Asia to fight terrorism.

Payne said Australia has an extensive defense cooperation program with the Philippines, which includes counterterror-

ism cooperation.

Australia is the second country to confirm providing military hardware to support Filipino troops battling the Maute militants. The first was the US.

Russia has also expressed willingness to support the Philippines in its fight against extremists.

In an interview with Net 25 on Thursday, Russian Ambassador Igor Khovaev said Moscow is ready to grant any request for assistance from the Duterte government and share its expertise in fighting terrorists.

The battle to retake Marawi - now on its fifth week - has claimed 369 lives, according to official estimates.

The siege of Marawi has also alarmed Southeast Asian nations which fear IS - on a backfoot in Iraq and Syria - is trying to set up a stronghold in the Muslim south of the mainly Roman Catholic Philippines that could threaten the whole region.

Indonesian and Malaysian warships launched joint counterinsurgency maneuvers with Philippine vessels in waters nearby.

The United States has de-

ployed troops near the besieged city, although they are not fighting there, and also provided a P-3 surveillance plane to assist the Philippines in battle.

On Thursday, the military said about 100 militants remain in Marawi, confined to an area of about a square kilometer. That figure is less than the estimated 400 or 500 fighters who seized the city on May 23.

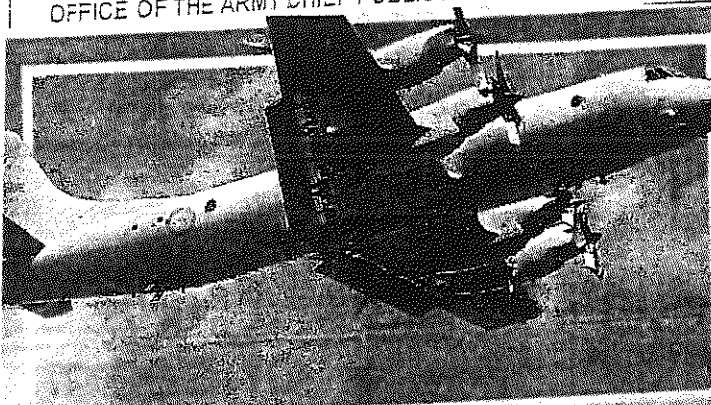
On May 23, President Duterte placed the entire Mindanao under martial law and suspended the writ of habeas corpus in the region after the outbreak of hostilities in Marawi.

Trilateral meet

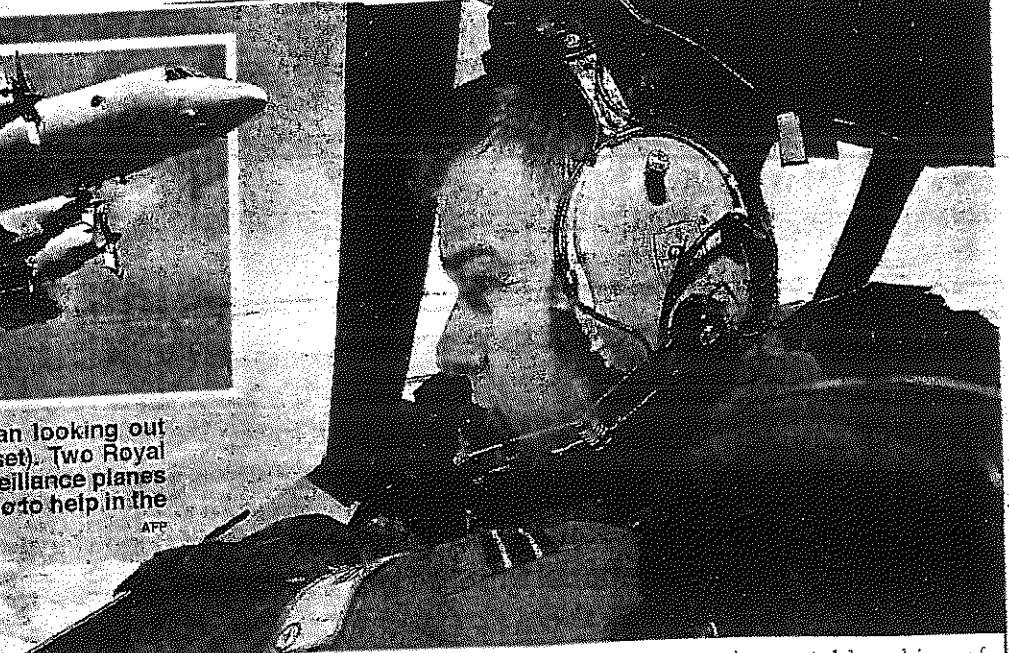
In his Davao City briefing Abella also said the Philippines would vigorously work with Indonesia and Malaysia in preventing IS from setting up bases in the region.

"Foreign military intelligence officials from the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia had a fruitful and productive discussion on a trilateral operation aimed at preventing extremists and terrorists from establishing operational bases in Southeast Asia," Abella said.

"Let us underline that the joint aim, the end game, is prevent the establishment of operational bases in Southern



File photo shows an Australian airman looking out from the cockpit of a AP-3C Orion (inset). Two Royal Australian Air Force AP-3C Orion surveillance planes will start flying missions over Mindanao to help in the fight against Islamic militants.



Asia," he added.

"The three countries have agreed to work together to jointly develop and implement counterterrorism measures and strategies," he added.

The trilateral security meeting happened as Philippine security forces are trying to clear Marawi City of the Maute group. Eight of the militants killed during clashes were foreign fighters from Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Yemen and Chechnya, according to defense officials.

AFP's Gapav, for his part, said there are about 40 foreign terrorists in the Philippines based on latest intelligence reports.

He said security forces have identified the militants, who include Malaysians, Indonesians, Arabs and Pakistanis.

The foreign terrorists, Gapav said, may have slipped into the Philippines through the porous southern backdoor.

"We are not also discounting the possibility that some may have slipped in the country through our airports and seaports. So I guess we have to really tighten and enhance our security measures as far as the immigration is concerned," Gapav said.

"There is really a need to enhance the security of our

southern backdoor... We have to intensify maritime patrols. The recent trilateral agreement is a welcome development because with Malaysia and Indonesia assisting us, the joint patrols there would really enhance (security in) the porous borders in the south," he added.

Some American lawmakers have expressed concerns over Marawi City becoming an IS hub and suggested US troops in the Philippines be given a greater role in the operations in Mindanao.

American soldiers only provide technical assistance like intelligence information to their Philippine counterparts as the Constitution bars foreign troops from joining direct combat operations.

Abella maintained that the Philippine military alone is capable of addressing the threats in Marawi.

"Like the President said, we're quite capable at this stage. We welcome any support, but at this stage we take the lead, along with the regional states around us," he said.

"We have actually shown that we can back the statements of an independent foreign stance," he added.

Meanwhile, militant groups are calling on President Duterte

to stop the aerial bombing of Marawi City, saying it would only worsen the plight of residents and further fuel extremism.

In a statement, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said it rejects "any suggestion that the Marawi crisis will end through the carpet bombing of the city." It said "President Duterte should know better" and look for other ways to end the crisis.

It added Duterte's approach "will not suppress terrorism and will only result in unprecedented destruction."

The group said the people of Marawi themselves were appealing for an end to air strikes on militants holed up in Marawi City.

Members of Bayan and affiliate militant groups like Gabriela and the National Union of Students of the Philippines converged at Plaza Miranda in Quiapo yesterday to protest the bombing of Marawi City and demand the lifting of martial law in Mindanao.

The rallyists later marched to Mendiola where they held programs denouncing martial law as well as the aerial bombing of Marawi. – With Alexis Romero, Edith Regalado, Ghio Ong, Michael Punongbayan

3

24 June 2017



Page: A1

Malaysian financier of Mautes believed slain

A former Malaysian university professor who received training in Afghanistan, Mahmud appeared in a video showing terrorist leaders planning the Marawi siege in a hideout, a sign of his key role in the uprising.

The video, since made available to the press, was seized by Filipino troops in a militant hideout on May 23.

Malaysian security officials have also received information of Mahmud's killing in Marawi and were trying to confirm it.

Two other leaders of the uprising, top Abu Sayyaf fighter Isnilon Hapilon and Maute's brother, Abdullah, were still with other gunmen fighting in Marawi, Año said.

A month ago, about 500 local militants, along with several foreign fighters, stormed into Marawi, a bastion of Islamic faith in the south.

Troops since then have killed about 280 gunmen, re-

By Allan Nawal, Jeffrey Maitem and Richel Umel
@Team_Inquirer

MARAWI—A Malaysian militant who helped lead and finance the siege of Marawi and one of the Maute brothers who carried out the violence are believed to have been killed in the fighting, with the Islamic State (IS)-backed terrorists now constricted in a section of the besieged city after a month of fighting, the military said on Friday.

Gen. Eduardo Año told The Associated Press (AP) by telephone that Malaysian Mahmud bin Ahmad was wounded in the fighting in Marawi last month and reportedly died on June 7 of his wounds.

He said the military had a "general idea" of where the militant was buried, and troops were trying to locate the exact spot with the help of civilians to recover the remains

and validate the intelligence that was received.

A local militant leader, Omarkhayam Maute, is also believed to have been killed in the early days of intense fighting, he said.

Año, citing intelligence shared by foreign counterparts, said Mahmud was suspected of channeling more than P30 million from IS to acquire firearms, food and other supplies for the attack, which began late May.

covered nearly 300 assault firearms and regained control of 85 buildings.

Many of the high rises were used as sniper posts to slow down the advance of government forces, the military said.

At least 69 soldiers and policemen and 26 civilians have also perished in the fighting.

Of the 19 of 96 villages across the lakeside city of 200,000 people that the black flag-waving militants occupied, only four villages remain under their control, the military chief said.

"They are constricted in a very small area. They're pinned down," Año said. He also said three boatloads of gunmen, who tried to join the militants, were blasted by navy gunboats three days ago in Lanao Lake, which borders Marawi.

The gunmen may have either been terrorists repositioning from nearby areas or rebel reinforcements from elsewhere, he said.

Still, the audacious uprising by the heavily armed fighters and their ability to hold on to large sections of a city for weeks had surprised the government and the military, and sparked fears among Southeast Asian governments that IS was seriously moving to gain a foothold in their region.

Australia said on Friday the Philippines had accepted an offer of assistance. Defense Minister Marise Payne said Australia would deploy two AP-3C Orion aircraft to provide surveillance support to the Philippine military.

Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano and his Malaysian and

Indonesian counterparts met in a closed-door conference with top security officials in Manila on Thursday to discuss the Marawi crisis.

They agreed on a plan of action to combat terrorism and rising extremism and deal with the prospects of Asian fighters returning to their region from Syria and Iraq, where IS has been losing territory in a protracted conflict.

Año said that the battle in Marawi was taking longer than usual because the militants were using civilians as human shields and had no qualms destroying an entire city and killing anyone on their path.

"We can just bomb them away or use napalm bomb to burn everything, but then, we will not be any different from them if we do that," he said.

Maute killed?

Army 1st-Division spokesperson, Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera said there were indications that Omarkhayam Maute had been killed "in one of the four conflict areas that we have been talking about," referring to the villages of Lilod, Raya Madaya, Marinaut and Bangolo.

Herrera said they still could not categorically say if Omarkhayam was indeed killed "because we do not have the body."

"We can't say what day he

was killed, what caliber (of firearms) had killed him or where was the cadaver buried. But we have been reporting as early as two weeks ago that he was a fatality. There's a strong indication and we continue to make validations," Herrera said.

As this developed, Herrera said the military continued to seize more areas from the extremists, who are now numbering between 90 to 100 fighters. "We have killed a large number of them so their size had shrunk," he said.

But Herrera maintained the military could not say when the fighting would end.

"We did not establish or say anything on deadlines. Our goal is to continue our combat clearing operations. Our battlefield is very fluid and dynamic. Every day, the location of the enemy changes," he said.

Airstrikes continued on Friday, and soldiers continued their push into the enemy location inside the city. Herrera said the terrorists were now "desperate because their area continues to diminish."

"They continue to use the hostages as human shields and they maximized their use of explosives to slow us down," he said.

Local officials involved

Also on Friday, government security forces recovered about 2 kilograms of "shabu" from the house of a former mayor who was also tagged as a supporter of the Maute gunmen.

Chief Insp. William Santos of Philippine Drug Enforcement Group for Mindanao, told reporters the shabu, with an estimated street value of P10 million, was recovered around 10 a.m. from the house of former

Marawi Mayor Omar Solitaio Ali. Santos said Ali was suspected to be a financier of the Maute group.

Ali's brother, Fahad Salic, also a former mayor of Marawi, was arrested in Misamis Oriental on June 7.

In Pantao Ragat in Lanao del Norte, Mayor Lacson Lantud said he wasn't surprised to learn that his brother, Hata Macabanding Lantud, was arrested in August along with some Maute members.

"Prior to that, he was talking to my wife Eleonor. My wife thought of calling him for a vacation travel to Vigan. But my wife got surprised when he said he was not in Manila but in Butig (Lanao del Sur) and he was in the middle of a firefight between soldiers and the Maute. Lantud told the Inquirer.

He said it remained a puzzle how his brother was convinced to join in the fight.

Lantud said Hata, a graduate of the Philippine School of Business Administration in Manila had just passed the board exam for public accountants then they did not know the reason behind his joining the terrorist group.

"We didn't have any clue that he had been radicalized. Three months before that, we even regularly saw him in Manila and I didn't see any indication. I helped him go through college and I was close to me," Lantud said.

He said that when news came to them that eight Maute members, who were transporting explosives, had been arrested in the village of Nanagun Lumbayanague, Lanao del Sur—they still had no idea that Hata was among them. —WITI
REPORT FROM AP INQ

June 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

Australia deploying spy planes

Malaysian financier of Marawi siege slain – Año

By AFP, AP, FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD, and ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

Australian military spy planes will start flying missions over Mindanao to help in the fight against Islamic

militants terrorizing the area, the government said Friday.

Islamic State-linked Maute Group fighters have been battling troops in

Marawi City since May 23, a conflict that has claimed hundreds of lives.

Australia, which has an extensive defense cooperation program with the Philippines, said two high-tech AP-3C Orion aircraft will provide surveillance

support to the Philippine military.

"The government of the Philippines has accepted an Australian offer of two Australian Defense Force AP-3C Orion aircraft to provide surveillance support to the Armed Forces of the Philippines," said Australian Defense Minister Marise

Payne in an emailed statement.

"The regional threat from terrorism, in particular from Daesh and foreign fighters, is a direct threat to Australia and our interests," Payne added, using an Arabic acronym for IS. "Australia will continue to work with our partners in Southeast ▶ 7

Asia to counter it."

Malaysian financier slain

As this developed, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Año

told The Associated Press that the Islamic State group helped fund the month-long siege of Marawi through a Malaysian militant Mahmud bin Ahmad, who was reportedly killed by troops.

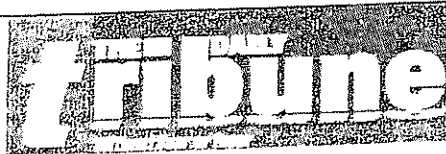
Año said Mahmud reportedly channeled more than \$600,000 from the IS group to acquire firearms, food, and other supplies for the attack in Marawi. Money believed to be from illegal drugs also funded the uprising, he said.

Mahmud was wounded in the fighting last month and reportedly died on June 7. A local militant leader, Omarkhavam Maute, also is believed to have been killed in the early days of intense fighting and troops were looking for their remains to validate the intelligence the military had received.

Troops are seeking the help of villagers to pinpoint the exact spot where Mahmud was reportedly buried, Año said. Malaysian security officials have also received information of Mahmud's killing in Marawi and were trying to confirm it.

Two other rebel leaders, top Filipino militant suspect Isnilon Hapilon and Maute's brother Abdullah, were still fighting in Marawi, he said.

24 June 2017



Page: 3

Army official downplays BIFF threat vs Duterte

DAVAO CITY — An Army official has downplayed the threat of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) on the life of President Duterte, saying the group is desperate and has no ground support.

This was the reaction expressed by Eastern Mindanao Command deputy commander and spokesman on martial law, Brig. Gen. Gilbet Gapay, on the message left by BIFF during their attack in Pigcawayan that their next target is the President.

Gapay said, "That pronouncement of the BIFF is a desperate pronouncement because what happened in Pigcawayan recently was a theoretic retaliation and somehow a diversionary attack resulting from the setbacks."

Gapay said the BIFF was expecting a big result out of the attack of what they want to achieve to gain attention.

Gapay said the BIFF has suffered major setbacks in their supposedly stronghold Maguindanao, specifically the SPMS box, because forces there have also intensified operations against the BIFF. SPMS stands for the four municipalities of Shariff Aguak, Pigcawayan, Mamasapano and Salibo.

According to Gapay, it is not surprising that President Duterte earned enemies like the BIFF because he has demonstrated political will in governance.

During the Mindanao Hour at Lispher Inn, Davao City Friday, Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella underscored the BIFF's lack

of ground support even from Muslim communities.

"The local Muslim community, the Maranaos especially, do not want this. And for whatever reason that they are dealing with this, whether it is personal interest or what, there is no ground support for them.

"I think we need to go back to the fact that really, this is an isolated — these are isolated groups that are brilliant at media manipulation," Abella pointed out. Abella told reporters that the BIFF will not succeed.

According to Gapay, BIFF has been contained to their stronghold because the Armed Forces have also complementary operations outside of Marawi and ongoing operations all over Mindanao addressing various terrorist groups, and one of these is BIFF.

"So what happened there is a retaliatory attack and is not connected with the Marawi operations," Gapay said.

Meanwhile, Abella reported that the number of hostages rescued totaled to 31 while there were 73 trapped civilians also rescued.

The incident also left one soldiers dead, two wounded-in-action from the government side. From the BIFF, six were killed, eight wounded.

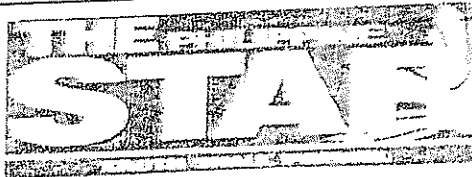
A civilian was wounded during the incident while there were 367 households or 1,707 individuals displaced.

But Gapay vowed the government forces will sustain their operations against the BIFF until they have been decimated.

PNA

8

24 June 2017



Page: 1

Troops discover Maute tunnels

By ROEL PAREÑO

ZAMBOANGA CITY - Government troops continued beating back the Islamic State-inspired Maute militants and uncovered two tunnels described as among the insurgents' last defensive positions in Marawi City.

Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) chief Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. yesterday said troops have successfully breached the remaining defensive positions and discovered the tunnels used by the gunmen as bunker and bomb shelters.

Galvez said the tunnels were later used by the Maute extremists to dump the bodies of their dead comrades.

"There (was this) stench because of the dead bodies... dumped in the tunnels," he said.

Galvez said the discovery

Turn to Page 4

of the tunnels is an indication that the gunmen are getting desperate and their fight is coming to an end.

"Their tipping point is nearing," he said.

With bombproof tunnels, anti-tank weapons hidden in mosques, human shields and familiarity with the terrain, the Maute gunmen are proving a far tougher opponent than the military had expected.

The roughly 10 percent of Marawi held by the militants has many tunnels and basements that can withstand 500-pound (227-kilo) bombs, military spokesman Lt. Colonel Jo-Ar Herrera said earlier.

He said even mosques in the city have tunnels used by the militants to escape bombing runs as well as to store high-powered weapons.

The military air strikes have spared mosques and Islamic schools known as madrassas, a limitation exploited by the militants.

Residents had built reinforced bunkers and tunnels underneath their houses after a 1970 Muslim uprising led to large parts of the city

being razed.

As the fighting in Marawi entered its fifth week, the Maute numbers continued to dwindle against the military's superior firepower.

A month ago, about 500 gunmen led by brothers Omar and Abdullah Maute, along with several foreign fighters, stormed into Marawi City.

The fighting in Marawi forced President Duterte to place the entire Mindanao under martial law.

Troops since then have killed about 280 gunmen, recovered nearly 300 assault firearms and regained control of 85 buildings. Many of the high-rise buildings were used as sniper posts to slow down the advance of government forces, the military said.

At least 69 soldiers and policemen and 26 civilians have also perished in the fighting.

Of the 19 out of 96 villages across the lakeside city of 200,000 people that the black flag-waving militants occupied, only four villages remain under their control, according to Armed Forces chief Gen. Eduardo Año.

"They are constricted in a very small area. They're pinned down," Año said.

He said three boatloads of gunmen who tried to join the Maute militants were blasted by navy gunboats three days ago in Lanao Lake, which borders Marawi.

The gunmen may have either been militants repositioning from nearby areas or rebel reinforcements from elsewhere, he said.

Galvez added the militants were resorting to using their civilian hostages as "dummy" fighters.

"The terrorists are forcing to arm their hostages to make it appear they still have the numbers and at the same time confuse the soldiers in engaging the terrorists," Galvez said.

Galvez gave assurance the troops have been trained to discriminate and distinguish their targets.

Año said the battle in Marawi was taking longer than usual because the militants were using civilians as human shields and had no qualms destroying an entire city and killing anyone in their path.

"We can just bomb them away or use napalm bomb to burn everything, but

then, we will not be any different from them if we do that," he said.

Opposition lawmaker Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman decried the "mounting deaths and destruction in Marawi City," which he said are the result of President Duterte's declaration of martial law and suspension of the writ of habeas corpus.

"Thirty days of martial law in Marawi City and the rest of Mindanao have aggravated the situation in Marawi City to inordinately horrific and miserable proportions," Lagman said.

"All of this horror and misery after the declaration of martial law could have been avoided if the President did not precipitately and unwarrantedly declare martial law and the suspend the writ which gave the armed forces and police authorities the unnecessary impetus to implement military rule with disastrous consequences," he said.

Lagman said the rising number of casualties, extensive damage to private properties and displacement of civilians "were the results of the excessive military offensive through airstrikes and land assaults."

– With AP, Jess Diaz

24 June 2017

The Manila Times

Page: 17

Military secures Iligan, Lanao Norte borders

BY AL JACINTO AND RAUL DINAPO

TUBOD, Lanao del Norte: The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has tightened security measures on all boundaries in Iligan City and Lanao del Norte to avoid a repeat of the Marawi siege. This intervention was the unanimous recommendation of members of the Provincial Peace and Order Council (PPOC)-Lanao del Norte who met recently.

Gov. Imelda Dimaporo, PPOC chairman, said she wants to ensure that the AFP and Philippine National Police (PNP) are on track to pre-empt any possible entry of armed groups out to sow terror in the province.

Dimaporo cited their traumatic experience when Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) members attacked the province in 2008, particularly the coastal towns of Kauswagan and Kolambugan, and invaded the municipal boundaries. The atrocity forced thousands of residents to flee to the nearby cities of Ozamiz and Tangub while

scores of residents were killed and houses and establishments looted.

"The boundaries are considered deathline during conflicts so we need to secure it first and foremost. A lot of the threats we are receiving now are through text and FB messages but [what is] most important is we need to work as one now. We need to secure our province and set aside political perceptions," Dimaporo appealed.

Similarly, Malaysia has tightened its security for fear that Islamic State militants may escape the government offensive and slip into Sabah.

It also included Abu Sayyaf chief, local IS leader Isnilon Hapilon and Abdullah Maute on its wanted list along with other commanders Idang Susukan, Hatib Hajan, Sawadjaan, Majan Sahidjuan and Salvador Muktadil—all implicated in cross-border kidnappings over the years, according to the Malaysian newspaper *The Star*.

It said the tight security was ordered by the Eastern Sabah Security Command under Datuk Wan Abdul Bari Abdul Khalid, who also appealed to Malaysian citizens to stay vigilant and report suspicious persons to authorities.

No armed group

Meanwhile, Mayor Mighty Dimakuta of Tagoloan town denied reports that 300 armed men entered and stayed in his municipality as preparation to invade Iligan.

This, after Iligan City Information Officer Joe Pantoja mentioned in an interview aired recently on GMA-7's "24 Oras," that authorities in Iligan received an intelligence report saying that a suspected group from Marawi is

temporarily staying in Tagoloan and ready to enter the city proper.

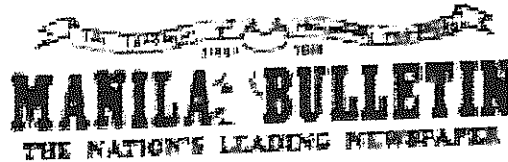
"I want to inform the general public that reports about armed group inside Tagoloan is just hearsay that caused panic to the public. It just added the feeling of animosity. When the Marawi siege started my stakeholders, including security forces, were on top of the situation," Dimakuta said.

He added Tagoloan is in the boundary of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur, divided only by a river but pointed out that there is also a place of the same name in Lanao del Sur.

Tactical Sgt. Jesus Sedeco, platoon leader of 10th Infantry Battalion force assigned in the boundary of Lanao del Norte and Sur, confirmed no sightings of any armed group in the border of Nunungan town located within since they started their round-the-clock operation.

The mobile security forces are composed of 20 AFP members per troop, including members of Barangay Police who are natives of the place and much knowledgeable about the terrain.

24 June 2017



Page: 18

BIFF attack not an offshoot of Marawi crisis – AFP

By ANTONIO L. COLINA IV

DAVAO CITY – The military has maintained that the attack carried out by around 100 members of the terrorist group Bangsamoro Islamic Liberation Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in Pigcawayan, North Cotabato on Wednesday was not related to the ongoing Marawi crisis.

During the Mindanao Hour at the Lispher Inn Friday, Gen. Gilbert Gapay, martial law spokesperson for the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom), downplayed the assault by saying it was a “retaliatory and diversionary” tactic undertaken by the group after suffering from major setbacks during the last two weeks due to the intensified military operations in their stronghold in Maguindanao.

Although the BIFF and Maute group have both pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Gapay said the Pigcawayan

attack was the handiwork of the BIFF alone and has nothing to do with the Maute Group which has been fighting government forces in the besieged city of Marawi for about a month.

He said the attack was intended to create a noise in order to get the attention of the military that they remain to be a “force to reckon with.”

“Almost 100 of them attacked two barangays in Pigcawayan. They are expecting a result in furtherance of what they want to achieve – nagpansin (attention). We’re still here. We are still a force to reckon with but it turned out to be otherwise,” he said.

He said BIFF fighters were “desperate” when they threatened that they will “shoot to kill” President Rodrigo R. Duterte and marked Davao City as the next target of their attack.

“That’s why, nung napahiya sila, before they fled, they destroyed some classrooms and even tore the picture of our president and uttered certain things. That’s a desperate move on their part,” he said.

Office of the President Adviser on Peace Process (OPAPP) assistant secretary Dickon Hermoso said that the members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)

were instrumental in blocking the BIFF fighters and in the successful operations of the military.

Presidential Spokesperson Ernesto Abella said the government considered the attack as the BIFF’s attempt to recover from more than two weeks of setback as a result of the ongoing operations.

Abella said government troops rescued 31 hostages, 73 trapped civilians, recovered one wounded civilian and a cadaver of a victim of the BIFF.

He reported there were two government soldiers wounded and one killed while six were killed on the BIFF side with eight wounded.

The clash on Wednesday displaced 367 families or a total of 1,777 individuals.

Gapay said they received reports that BIFF fighters were engaged “in

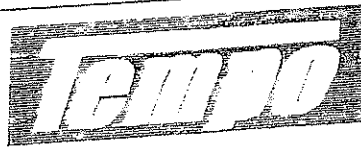
foraging and looting of some civilian houses.”

Police identified the civilian fatalities as Towan Dading Esmael, 61, farmer-resident of Barangay Simsiman, and 33-year-old Abraham Sakilan Cutay, a CAFGU trainee from Barangay Malagakit.

BIFF rebels stormed first the community defense detachments in Barangays Malagakit and Simsiman early morning of Tuesday and then holed out in school buildings when responding government forces fought them for about 11 hours.

A report attributed to the Army’s 6th Infantry Division said the rebels took 31 civilians including six pupils as human shields. The rebels freed the hostages before fleeing to unknown direction, the report said. (With a report from Ali G. Macablang)

24 June 2017



Page. 4

CAFGU man killed despite BIFF member's pleading

PIGCAWAYAN, North Cotabato – Thirty three-year old farmer Abraham Cutay hid his family for safety inside a rice mill upon learning that hundreds of Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) were already in the periphery of Barangay Malagakit last Wednesday.

Early morning that day, Cutay and several other villagers were preparing to evacuate to safer grounds when the armed men started to close in.

Cutay led her wife Gloryjane and three other children to a nearby rice mill believing that the armedmen would not find them.

Unfortunately, his youngest son two-year old Daniel cried when five men armed with high-powered rifle passed by the rice mill.

The armed men caught them and pointed their guns to the Cutay family but the rebels were just after Abraham.

"One of the armed men knew him so he literally shielded my husband and begged not to kill him," Gloryjane recounted in

Ilonggo dialect.

"If you don't kill him now, he would kill you in the future," she quoted one of the armed telling his fellow rebel.

Then one of the five armed men, who was wearing a ski mask and acted as the leader of the group, shot him multiple times in the body and in the knee in front of his wife and children.

Gloryjane added that the person who shot her husband further said that they have been relaying message to him not to join the Cafgu but he did not listen.

Abraham is supposed to graduate from a Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu) on June 26.

When the armed men left, Gloryjane and her children evacuated to the town proper along with hundreds of others.

The body of her husband was recovered the following day when the military recaptured the village as the rebels withdrew to the nearby Liguasan Marsh. **(Keith Bacongco)**

24 June 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 17

Red alert raised in Guimaras

By TARA YAP

stripped the policemen of their firearms before handcuffing them.

Two days later, Army troopers clashed with NPA rebels in Leon town.

On Thursday, a report spread that rebels had swooped into Lambunao town and took hostages at a school there.

Lambunao Mayor Jason Gonzales denied the report, telling Manila Bulletin it

emanated from residents of Barangay Caninguan who claimed seeing two masked men roaming the village.

Gonzales said it could not be determined if the masked men were NPA guerrillas.

Alarmed by the reports, schools in several towns of central Iloilo called off classes during the week.

Calinog Mayor Alex Centena said the town's police station has been barricaded

to thwart a surprise attack. The town's mountainous villages, which border Capiz, have long been identified as an NPA hotbed.

Rep. Arthur Defensor Jr. described the incidents as unfortunate, happening as they did at a time when the Duterte administration was trying to restart peace negotiations with the communist National Democratic Front (NDF).

ILOILO CITY—Guimaras Governor Samuel Gumarin has declared the island province under red alert following a string of security-related incidents in neighboring Iloilo.

In an executive order dated June 22, Gumarin directed government officials of Jordan, Nueva Valencia, Buenavista, San Lorenzo, and Sibunag towns to beef up security.

He also advised the public to be highly vigilant and report suspicious activities and persons to authorities.

Vice Governor John Ed-

ward Gando said Guimaras, being an island province, faces security risks and raising a red alert "is a preemptive measure."

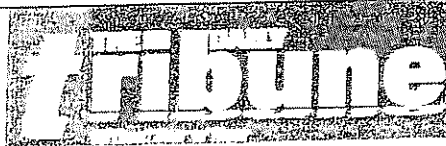
Guimaras is located across Iloilo City, the regional hub of Western Visayas. Its western side faces the Iloilo Strait, a major passageway for cargo and passenger ships.

Last June 18, the Philippine Coast Guard detained and questioned three people that arrived in Iloilo City on a ferry from Mindanao about possible links with the Maute Group.

On Sunday, a truckload of New People's Army (NPA) fighters stormed the police station of Maasin town and

14

24 June 2017



Page: 2

Businessman, driver killed in NPA ambush in Negros Occidental

By Mario J. Mallari

A plantation owner and his driver were killed after being ambushed by New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Negros Occidental province on Thursday.

Killed were Bebing Lumayno, an owner of sugar cane plantation in barangays Bug-ang and Minapasok in Calatrava town, and his driver Danilo Braga.

Report said that the two victims, aboard an Isuzu D-Max pick up truck, were on their way

to Barangay Minapasok at around 6:30 p.m. when they were waylaid by more or less 12 NPA rebels.

The rebels reportedly peppered the vehicle with bullets before leaving the lifeless victims.

Lt. Col. Darell Banez, commanding officer of the Army's 62nd Infantry Battalion (IB), said that responding troops engaged the withdrawing communists into a firefight.

The NPA band is believed to be the Squad 3, Galaxy Platoon under a certain Saggy.

The firefight lasted for about

15 minutes after which the rebels withdrew toward different directions.

Recovered from the scene were one caliber .45 pistol, a hand grenade, NPA flags, war materials and various subversive documents with high intelligence value.

Bañez expressed belief that the killing of Lumayno and Braga was part of the desperate attempts by the NPAs to sow terror and fear to other land owners to force them to give in to their extortion activities.

24

June 2017



Pahina. 9

Informer ng militar nilikida ng NPA rebels

Isa umanong informer ng militar na kinilalang si Bebing Lumayno ang pinagbabaril hanggang sa mapatay ng hindi pa nakikilalang mga kalalakihan na umano ay NPA rebels kamakalawa sa Brgy. Minapasuk, Calatrava, Negros Occidental.

Batay sa ulat, bandang alas-6:50 ng umaga ay bigla na lamang sumulpot sa lugar ang mga armadong kalalakihan at agad na pinagbabaril ang biktima.

Nagresponde ang mga tauhan ni Army's 62nd Infantry Battalion (IB) Commander Lt. Col. Darell Bañez na nakapalitan pa ng putok ang mga rebelde habang tumatakas.

Narekober naman sa lugar ang isang M16 rifle, isang cal. 38 revolver at mga subersibong dokumento. - Joy Cantos-

16

24 June 2017



Page. 5

ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANSA P8.00

Biglaang pag-atake muli ng BIFF pinangangambahan

Nina LEO P. DIAZ at FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

ISULAN, Sultan Kudarat – Saklot pa rin ng matinding takot ang mga residente sa iba't ibang bayan sa Maguindanao at Sultan Kudarat kasunod ng pagsalakay ng Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) sa Barangay Malagakit, Pigcawayan, North Cotabato nitong Miyerkules.

Ayon sa mga residente, batid-nilang nasa paligid-ligid lang ang mga bandido at naghihintay ng tamang pagkakataon para muling sumalakay.

Kinumpirma ng mga residente, na tumangging magpabanggit ng pangalan, na ang pagsalakay ng BIFF sa Pigcawayan ay hindi ang unang insidente sa bahagi nila sa Mindanao.

Anila, nakaranas na rin sila ng panggugulo ng BIFF sa Bgy. Kauran sa Ampatuan,

Maguindanao; sa Bgy. Paitan sa bayan ng Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat; at sa mga barangay ng Bagumbayan at Katiku sa bayan ng President Quirino, Sultan Kudarat.

Ito, anila, ay dahil tagaroon ang karamihan sa mga miyembro ng grupo.

Kaugnay nito, tiniyak naman ng pamunuan ng 1st Mechanized Brigade, sa ilalim ni Col. Besmark Soliba, na may sapat na kahandaan ang militar, gayundin ang mga tauhan ni Sultan Kudarat Police Provincial Office director Senior Supt. Raul Supiter

2 SA BIFF NADAKMA

Samantala, kinumpirma ng Armed Forces of the Philippines-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-WestMinCom) ang pagkakaaresto ng militar sa

dalawang kasaping BIFF sa isang checkpoint sa Maguindanao nitong Miyerkules ng umaga.

Kinilala ang mga nadakip na sina Jahren Mantukay, 23; at Bardurin Limba, 28 anyos.

Naaresto ang dalawa ng 22nd Mechanized Company, 2nd Mechanized Battalion, Mechanized Division sa Bgy. Butilin, Datu Salibo, Maguindanao, bandang 9:20 ng umaga nitong Miyerkules.

Nakumpiskahan umano sina Mantukay at Limba, kapwa taga-Bgy. Shariff Saydona sa Mustapha, Maguindanao, ng dalawang satchet ng hinihinalang shabu.

Nakumpirmang kapwa tauhan ng Special Operations Group ng BIFF, nasa kustodiyana ng Datu Piang Police ang mga suspek.

24

June 2017

Balita

Page. 5

ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BAHSA 1'8.00

Napatay na CAFGU binistay sa harap ng pamilya

NI KEITH BACONGCO

PIGCAWAYAN, North Cotabato- Ikinubli ng 33-anyos na magsasakang si Abraham Cutay ang kanyang pamilya sa loob ng isang rice mill matapos niyang malaman na daan-daang miyembro ng Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) ang sumalakay sa Barangay Malagakit nitong Miyerkules.

Bandang 5:45 ng umaga noon nang maghanda si Cutay at ilan niyang kapitbahay sa paglikas, at pinili niyang itago sa kalapit sa rice mill ang asawa niyang si Gloryjane at tatlo nilang paslit na anak.

Gayunman, napaiyak sa takot ang bunsod niyang si Daniel, dalawang taong gulang, nang lumapit sa kanilang pinagtataguan ang limang lalaking armado ng mahahabang baril.

Nakita sila ng mga armado at tinutukan ng baril ang pamilya, bagamat si Abraham lamang ang gusto ng mga bandido.

"Kilala siya ng isa sa mga armado kaya iniharang nun ang katawan sa asawa ko, nagmakaawa siyang 'wag papatayin," kuwento ni Gloryjane.

Kuwento niya, sinaway ng iba pang bandido ang kakilala nila at sinabi: "Kung 'di mo siya tutuluyan ngayon, baka siya pa ang pumatay sa 'yo balang araw."

Hanggang isa sa limang armado, nakasuot ng ski mask at nagsisilbing lider ng grupo, ang ilang beses na bumaril kay Abraham sa mismong harap ng kanyang asawa at mga paslit na anak.

Dagdag pa ni Gloryjane, nabanggit ng lalaking bumaril kay Abraham na hindi ito nakinig sa kanila nang sabihan nila itong huwag sumali sa Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU).

Magtatapos na sana ang training ni Abraham sa CAFGU sa Lunes, Hunyo 26.

Pag-alis ng mga armado, lumikas si Gloryjane at kanyang mga anak patungo sa kabayanan kasama ng daan-daang iba pang kabarangay nila.

Kinabukasan na nakuha ang labi ni Abraham, matapos na mabawi ng

militar ang Bgy. Malagakit mula sa BIFF.

Nasa 300 miyembro ng BIFF ang sumalakay sa Bgy. Malagakit nitong Miyerkules ng umaga at inatake ang dalawang military outpost bago tinangkang kubkubin ang isang paaralang elementarya.

Sinira rin ng BIFF ang isang kapilyang Katoliko at pinagwawasak ang nasa walong rebuilt roon.

Sa pagtakas ng mga bandido bandang hapon, tinangay nila ang 31 sibilyan bilang human shield na napalaya rin kalaunan.

24 June 2017



Page. 5

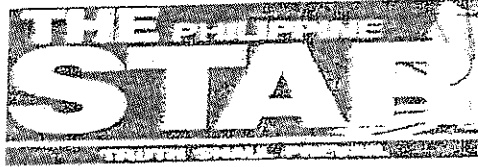
ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANSA P8.00



ALERTO LAGI Armado kahit na nagluluto ang mga sundalo ng 40th Infantry Battalion ng Philippine Army sa ilalim ng kanilang M35 truck na nakaparada sa Bgy. Pagangan, Aleosan, North Cotabato. Bantay-sarado pa rin ng militar ang lalawigan laban sa Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.

KEITH BACONGCO

24 June 2017



Page: 11

3 NPA rebels, cop killed in clash

A policeman and three New People's Army rebels were killed in an encounter in Barangay Malitbog, Panabo City yesterday.

Senior Police Officer 1 Niño Moreno was killed by a sniper fire, said Chief Superintendent Manuel Gaerlan, Southern Mindanao police commander.

The encounter occurred when the rebels tried to attack the Davao del Norte Provincial Public Safety Company in Barangay Malitbog at around 8:13 a.m.

– Edith Regalado

20

24 June 2017



Page. 2

Año: ISIS funded siege of Marawi

MARAWI – The Islamic State group helped fund the month-long siege of this city through a Malaysian militant who was reportedly killed by troops, the Armed Forces chief said yesterday.

Gen. Eduardo Año told the Associated Press that Malaysian Mahmud bin Ahmad reportedly channeled more than ₱30 million or \$600,000 from the IS group to acquire firearms, food, and other supplies for the attack here. Money believed to be from illegal drugs also funded the uprising, he said.

Mahmud was wounded in the fighting last month and reportedly died on June 7. A local militant leader, Omarkhayam Maute, is also believed to have been killed in the early days of intense fighting and troops were looking for their remains to validate the intelligence the military had received.

Troops are seeking the help of residents to pinpoint the exact spot where Mahmud was reportedly buried, Año said. Malaysian security officials have also received information of Mahmud's killing in this city and were trying to confirm it.

Two other rebel leaders, top Filipino militant suspect Isnilon Hapilon and Maute's brother, Abdullah, were still fighting here, he said.

A former Malaysian university professor who became radicalized and received training in Afghanistan, Mahmud appeared in a video showing militant leaders planning the siege here in a hideout, a sign of his key role in the uprising. The AP obtained a copy of the video, which was seized by troops May 23.

A month ago, about 500 local militants, along with several foreign fighters, stormed into Marawi, a bastion of Islamic faith in the south of the predominantly Roman Catho-

lic nation. Troops since then have killed about 280 gunmen, recovered nearly 300 assault firearms, and regained control of 85 buildings. Many of the high rises were used as sniper posts to slow down the advance of government forces, the military said.

At least 69 soldiers and police and 26 civilians have died in the fighting. Only four barangays here remain in the hands of the militants, out of the 19 of 96 villages across this lakeside city of 200,000 people that the black flag-waving militants had occupied.

"They are constricted in a very small area. They're pinned down," Año said. He said that three boatloads of gunmen who tried to join the militants were blasted by navy gunboats three days ago in Lake Lanao, which borders this city.

Año said that the battle was taking longer because the militants were using civilians as human shields.

"We can just bomb them away or use napalm bomb to burn everything, but then, we will not be any different from them if we do that," he said.

The audacious attack by the heavily-armed militants and their ability to hold on to large sections of a city for weeks had surprised the government and sparked fears among Southeast Asian countries that the Islamic State group was seriously moving to gain a foothold in the region.

Powerful clans and warlords, along with insurgencies, have effectively weakened law enforcement in large areas in Mindanao, making it easier for militants to take over an area and hold it, said Sidney Jones, director of the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict in Jakarta, Indonesia. (AP)

24 June 2017



Page 2

Palace: Martial Law prevented wilayat

A month after the declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao, the government is trumpeting its success in preventing the establishment of an Islamic State province in Marawi City.

Government forces have foiled the plot of the Islamic militants to set up an operational base in Marawi as well as thwarted the spillover of terrorism in Eastern Mindanao, according to officials.

"We do not go by ratings but we do say that we have actually preempted the establishment of a wilayat (province)...so the main goal of preventing is actually, has already been, I believe hugely successful," presidential

spokesman Ernesto Abella said during the Mindanao Hour briefing in Davao City yesterday.

Abella said the country has also entered a maritime security alliance with Indonesia and Malaysia "so this will not recur." The three countries earlier agreed to step up border patrols to curb terrorism, piracy, and other transnational crimes in the common seas.

"The three countries have agreed to work together to jointly develop and implement counterterrorism and measures and strategies. Let us underline that their joint aim, the end game is to prevent the establishment

of operational bases in Southeast Asia," Abella said.

Last May 23, the President placed Mindanao under Martial Law for 60 days following the deadly siege of the local armed groups, aided by foreign militants, in Marawi. The martial rule, which authorized the military to conduct warrantless arrests and searches, was aimed to quell lawless violence and rebellion in the South.

To date, Abella said government troops continue to clear Marawi of remnants of the armed terrorists as well as rescue trapped residents, including those held hostage. **(Genelyn D. Kabiling)**

24 June 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A1

Omar Maute likely dead - military

THE military on Friday said there were "strong indications" Omar Maute, one of the leaders of the Islamic State-linked Maute group that attacked Marawi City, died in a firefight with government troops last month.

Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera, spokesman for the military's Joint Task Force Marawi, said the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) was still "validating" Omar's killing amid ongoing clashes.

"We have no confirmation yet, but we have strong indications [that Omar could be dead]," he said in a text message sent to reporters.

Sought for clarification if such "strong indications" meant that Omar was killed, Herrera replied: "Yes but [it is] still for validation."

In a news conference in Marawi City, Herrera said Omar Maute, one of the two Maute brothers who founded the local terrorist group, was likely killed during an encounter with military troops.

On Thursday, AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año said Omar was "more or less" dead, but brother Abdullah was still alive in Marawi City.

Omar and Abdullah led the siege of the Islamic City of Marawi. With them was Abu Sawaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, who had also been reported dead. Fighting in the city

marked its first month on Thursday.

The Maute brothers' parents, Cayamora and Farhana, and other kin were arrested by authorities earlier this month.

Cayamora and Farhana are detained in a Bureau of Jail Management and Penology facility inside Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City.

The fighting in Marawi prompted President Rodrigo Duterte to place the whole island of Mindanao under martial law last May 23.

At least 280 terrorists have been killed by government troops with more than 200 firearms confiscated. On the government side, 69 men have been killed.

Fighting has also claimed the lives of 26 civilians.

DEMPSEY REYES

24 June 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A2

'Martial law worsened situation in Marawi'

BY LLANESCA T. PANTI

MARTIAL law has only worsened the situation in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, said Rep. Edcel Lagman of Albay, one of the petitioners against President Rodrigo Duterte's declaration of military rule and suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus allowing warrantless arrests.

Lagman made the statement a day after Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla Jr. said the armed conflict in Marawi was a "very complicated engagement" that could take longer than expected.

Lagman cited the June 9 report by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) Lanao del Sur chapter that condemned military operations in Marawi. The IBP chapter said searches and seizures by the military have resulted in loss of

valuable personal belongings of civilians while residential and commercial establishments have been laid open to looters all over the besieged city.

IBP Lanao del Sur said it was "utterly shocked, to use a milder term, by the sheer magnitude of wanton disregard of sanctity of domicile, the right against deprivation of property without due process of the law, the right to be sure in one's person, house, papers and effects against unrea-

sonable searches and seizures and the privacy of communication and correspondence of innocent civilians committed by the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police."

Based on the records of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, at least 20,049 families or 100,530 persons have been affected by the armed conflict in Marawi.

There are 25 evacuation centers with 3,026 families or 14,229 persons, and 17,023 families or 86,301 persons are staying with relatives or friends.

Lagman said: "All of this horror and misery could have been avoided if the President did not unwarrantedly declare martial law and suspend the writ, which gave the armed forces and police authorities the unnecessary impetus to implement military rule with disastrous consequences. The extent and gravity of the deaths, damage to properties and displacement of

civilians were the results of the excessive military offensive through airstrikes and land assaults," Lagman said in his statement.

Lagman again rejected the military's claim that the establishment of an Islamic State province in Marawi was the Maute group's main objective, noting that the Marawi clashes were triggered by the military's failed operation to capture Abu Sayyaf terrorist group leader Isnilon Hapilon, who remains at large.

"The declaration of martial law has made the government a purveyor of terrorist propaganda—a propaganda that is baseless since no less than the [IS] has not reliably acknowledged nor confirmed this projected purpose," Lagman said.

Lagman said the Philippines was not among the 10 countries targeted by the IS: Kenya, Somalia, Nigeria, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

23

W June 2017

The Manila Times

Page: A2

Australia sending spy planes to Marawi

"Australia will continue to work with our partners in Southeast Asia to counter it," she said.

In Davao City, Palace spokesman Ernesto Abella said: "[W]e would gladly welcome any form of foreign assistance allowed under our Constitution to help suppress the rebellion in Marawi."

"Our Defense officials are in close coordination with their Australian counterparts in the latter's offer of providing surveillance support to the Armed Forces of the Philippines," he told reporters.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana also welcomed Australia's "technical assistance."

Philippine troops will benefit from Australia's airborne surveillance "any time of the day, thereby improving operations on the ground," he noted.

As soon as the AFP and the Australian military finalize operational details, the AP-3C Orion aircraft "will immediately assist in the ongoing operations" in Marawi City, he added.

"The operation of these aircraft will not require the embedding of ADF personnel with Filipino troops on the ground," he clarified.

Payne recently spoke with her Philippine counterpart, Lorenzana, about how Australia could help and "we agreed the best way to defeat terrorism in our region is for us to work together."

Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, deputy commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command, said intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance capability is important in every military operation.

"So having these capabilities, it could be used in any military operation, not just Marawi, but of course in all other operations in Mindanao," he said.

The IS-affiliated Maute group has been fighting government troops in Marawi City since May 23. The clash prompted President Rodrigo Duterte to declare martial law in Mindanao.

The United States had also offered to help in government forces operations against local terror groups in the region.

The military earlier confirmed the presence of American troops in Marawi but clarified that their participation was limited to the sharing of intelligence.

WITH DEMPSEY REYES
AND AFP

25

24 June 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

Failure to address Bangsamoro issue invited ISIS into the country - Alonto

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

The government's failure to resolve the peace problems in Mindanao has invited the Islamic State (ISIS) into the country, according to Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) chief

Secretary Datu Abdul Khayr Alonto.

During the Mindanao Hour press briefing in Davao City Friday morning, Alonto said: "The tragedy in Marawi City underscores the urgent need to address and resolve the Bangsamoro question," Alonto said.

▶8

Yesterday, June 23, marked the 31st day of the armed conflict in Marawi City, and also the midpoint of the 60-day declaration of martial law and suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus in the entire Mindanao.

"It should now be obvious to all, including government and the people of this country, that the failure to address the Bangsamoro question has invited the invasion of foreign Daesh extremism such as ISIS," he added.

According to Alonto, ISIS feeds on the frustration of the Bangsamoro people towards failed peace processes with mainstream liberation fronts.

Federal government

To resolve the peace problem in Mindanao, he echoed the need for a federal government.

"The Marawi tragedy should propel us now to look at the merits of federalism as proposed by President Duterte," he said.

Alonto said that the need for a constitutional shift from a unitary type of government to a federal one is now already a matter of survival.

"Thus, we have to return to and find focus on the original flagship agenda of the President for system change - the Constitutional shift to federalism," Alonto said.

The Bangsamoro question refers to all lingering concerns, mainly protec-

tion for the welfare of the Bangsamoro people which the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) aimed to settle.

Signing the BBL

Duterte on Tuesday said that he will sign the draft Bangsamoro Basic Law during Eid'l Fitr on Monday June 26, in an attempt to solve the problems in Mindanao.

"The BBL tapos na (is finished). And the MI (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) will give it to me. I will sign it doon sa (on) Eid'l Fitr," Duterte said during an interview in Cagayan de Oro City.

While expressing doubt if the BBL would truly bring peace in Mindanao, Duterte said he would be willing to sign it after a thorough review and then send the formal document to Congress.

"It's time to be candid and to be brutally frank. Ano ba ito (What is this)? Is this a - this document would be the floodgate of peace in the land of Mindanao?" Duterte asked.

"If I find things in order, I will sign it. And wait for the document, the formal one and I'll send it to Congress," he said.

However, the President said he is not mulling to certify the BBL drafted by the Bangsamoro Transition Committee (BTC) as urgent as "we have all the time."

26

Maute's blasphemous act

Alonto also said the ongoing conflict in Marawi is not a religious war.

"This is a war of annexation. They want to annex a wilayah. They want to make Marawi City as the capital of the province of the ISIS," Alonto said.

"This is not a war of religion. In fact it is even blasphemous to refer to these people as Muslims because there is nothing in the Quran that states that you have to fight, and do this, and burn your own house," he added.

With results of the war in Marawi City, Alonto said that they will support the extension of martial law if needed.

"And if they feel that there is a need to extend martial law, then we are asking for it so we can solve this problem," he added.

Appalling consequences

Alonto noted the appalling consequences that the ongoing war has brought in.

"While government is now on the upper hand and the ranks of the Daesh extremists are dwindling, the consequent cost to human lives and property is appalling," he said.

"Marawi City has been emptied of its more than 200,000 plus residents, most of whom are now suffering in evacuation centers and private homes of friends and relatives in nearby towns and cities," he added.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has reported a total of 69

casualties from the government troops and 280 militants killed during the war as of 6 p.m. of June 22, 2017.

Start the social healing

Meanwhile, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Secretary Jesus Dureza yesterday urged the people of Marawi not to allow the crisis in their city to break the bonds of friendship and unity they have painstakingly built among themselves.

The message was for the hundreds of civilians who have been staying for weeks in a gymnasium in Buru-un Lanao del Norte after being displaced by the ongoing armed conflict.

Dureza, accompanied by OPAPP Undersecretaries Nabil Tan and Diosita Andot and Assistant Secretary Dickson Hermoso, led the distribution of assistance packages for the Muslim evacuees to celebrate "Iftar" or breaking of the fast.

The relief packages, which are expected to benefit around 5,797 evacuees, included "moknas" or the traditional prayer garb used by Muslim women, malongs, prayer tents and a variety of food items.

"There are those who want to destroy our relations and turn us against each other. Let us not allow this to happen," Dureza said in Filipino, as the huge crowd of men, women and children gathered at the evacuation site cheered in agreement.

But he stressed that these peace spoilers will never win, as long as the

Filipino people remain united and don't give in to the culture of hatred being espoused by these radical elements.

"If we give in to fear, this means that we have already lost the battle. We should not allow them to win," Dureza said.

He therefore called on the people to be more vigilant, as this would be the key in preventing incidents such as the Marawi crisis from happening again. Dureza cited the residents of Bohol who immediately reported to authorities the suspicious-looking individuals who had set foot on their shores.

As a result, security forces were able to contain the armed group and prevented them from wreaking havoc in the community.

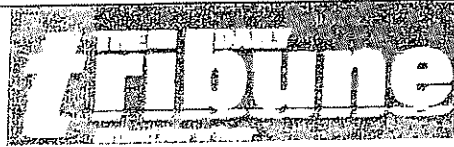
In the meantime, the presidential adviser called on the people of Lanao to work toward rebuilding socio-cultural relationships that were damaged by the armed hostilities.

Dureza explained that this is the reason OPAPP is implementing a series of "social healing" activities that aim to restore trust and respect among the different ethno-religious groups in the affected areas.

"The healing must start with us and it must begin now," he said.

Dureza noted that a key feature of these healing efforts are informal conversations that would be conducted in clusters or small groups to be facilitated by imams, ulamas and other Muslim leaders and volunteers. (With a report by Francis Wakefield)

W June 2017



Page: 2

Solon accuses gov't troops of threatening to rape women

By **Charlie V. Manalo**

Gabriela Rep. Arlene Brosas yesterday raised an alarm over stories on government troops who threatened to rape women if they don't leave Marawi City amid President Duterte's rape joke and with the Mindanao-wide martial law in effect.

"I have personally heard the stories of women who sought refuge in evacuation centers in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur after government troops threatened to rape them, as encouraged by no less than President Duterte in his public remarks," Brosas said at a forum in Quezon City in time for the first month of the martial law declaration.

"These are alarming accounts which prove that the martial law and President's rape remarks have actually emboldened the military to dangle rape threats against women in Marawi City. We fear that there are actual victims of rape and we encourage them to speak out and seek justice," she added.

Brosas visited the evacuation centers as member of the National Interfaith Humanitarian Mission conducted last June 14 to 15. She, together with other human rights advocates, was denied entry to Marawi City by the military.

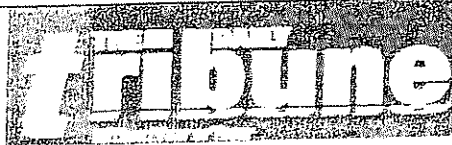
"On top of its rights violations with the non-stop aerial bombardment of Marawi, the military is using rape threats as tool of war, coercion and harassment against women. Any sign of safety is elusive for the women particularly in Marawi City with armed men still on the loose and with soldiers eager to rape them," the Gabriela lawmaker said.

"Women and children are made more vulnerable to harassment and other forms of abuses as they are cramped in evacuation centers with no sufficient facilities and without support services," she added.

Apart from these, the lawmaker said the martial law declaration and the fighting have caused prices to skyrocket in many parts of Mindanao and have disrupted the livelihood of millions of people.

28

W June 2017



Page: 1

Key Malaysian IS man believed killed

By Mario J. Mallari

Two key figures in the Islamic State (IS)-inspired siege on Marawi City, Omarkhayam “Omar” Maute who is one of the Maute brothers who led the terror assault and Malaysia’s most wanted terrorist, university lecturer-turned-militant Mahmud Ahmad, were believed to have been among the casualties in the month-old battle among Islamist militant and government troops.

Turn to page 5

29

From page 1

The *Straits Times* in a report said Mahmud, who helped finance the ongoing siege by extremists in Marawi City, was believed to have been killed in fighting there.

The report said the killing of Mahmoud if confirmed would deal a severe blow to the IS bid to setup a base in Southeast Asia. He was also believed to have been designated as a successor of Isnilon Hapilon, named as head of IS' franchise in Southeast Asia.

Mohd Najib Husen, Mahmud's right-hand man, had been killed earlier. The two Malaysians were identified as the chief recruiters for IS in the region.

Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) deputy commander Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, meanwhile, said in a television interview that government troops are verifying if Omar and Mahmoud were among those killed in the ongoing military operations in Marawi City.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff General Eduardo Año, citing intelligence shared by foreign military counterparts, said Mahmud may have died on June 7, after being wounded in the fighting in Marawi last month.

Año added Mahmud was suspected of channelling more than P30 million from the IS terror group to acquire firearms, food and other supplies for the Marawi City siege.

Mahmud, also known as Abu Handzalah, was said to be among the leaders in the Maute group which is seeking IS recognition in putting up a Southeast Asia caliphate in Mindanao.

Omar with his brother Abdullah formed the Maute group which had led several Islamic group in storming Marawi City a month ago.

Año claimed the military has a general idea of where Mahmud was buried and troops are trying to locate the exact spot with the help of civilians to recover the remains.

Malaysian security officials have also received information of Mahmud's killing in Marawi and were trying to confirm it.

Two other leaders, top Filipino militant suspect Isnilon Hapilon and Maute's brother, Abdullah, were still fighting in Marawi, Año said.

A month ago, about 500 local militants, along with several foreigners, stormed into Marawi City, a bastion of Islamic faith in Mindanao. Troops since then have killed about 280 gunmen, recovered nearly 300 assault firearms and regained control of 85 buildings. Many of the high rises were used as sniper posts to slow down the advance of government forces, the military said.

At least 69 soldiers and police and 26 civilians have also died. Only four Marawi villages remain in the hands of the militants, out of the 19 of 96 villages across the lakeside city of 200,000 people that the militants had occupied.

"They are constricted in a very small area. They're pinned down," Año said.

He added three boatloads of gunmen, who tried to join the militants, were blasted by navy gunboats three days ago in Lake Lanao, which borders Marawi.

The gunmen may have either been militants repositioning from nearby areas or rebel

reinforcements from elsewhere, he said.

Foreign Minister Alan Peter Cayetano and his Malaysian and Indonesian counterparts met in a daylong closed-door meeting with top security officials last Thursday to discuss the Marawi crisis.

They agreed on a plan of action to combat terrorism and rising extremism and deal with the prospects of Asian fighters returning to their region from Syria and Iraq, where the IS group has been losing territory.

Año said that the battle in Marawi was taking longer than usual because the militants were using civilians as human shields and had no qualms destroying an entire city and killing anyone on their path.

"We can just bomb them away or use napalm bomb to burn everything, but then, we will not be any different from them if we do that," he said.

AFP Task Force Marawi spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Jo-Ar Herrera earlier told reporters the military had confirmed information that Maute had died.

IS recruiter

Mahmud was also reported responsible for training and deploying militants to fight in Syria and Iraq. Among those he had recruited was Malaysia's first suicide bomber, Ahmad Tarmimi Maliki.

He himself had received training at an al-Qaeda camp in Afghanistan under Osama bin Laden while studying at Pakistan's Islamabad Islamic University in the late 1990s. He returned to Malaysia to lecture at Universiti Malaya.

After being exposed as a

militant by Malaysian police in 2014, he fled to the Philippines.

"Actually, it's intelligence exchange from our troops and the Malaysian. Our troops are recovering many cadavers of Maute terrorists and we are in the process of verifying the identities of the personalities," Gapay said.

Gapay said the military is coordinating with its Malaysian counterpart regarding Mahmud.

"Our report is that Omar was killed in one of the four conflict areas, Barangays Lilod, Raya Madaya, Marinaut and Bangolo," Herrera said but.

Herrera, however, said he can't categorically say if Omar was indeed killed "because we do not have the body."

"We can't say what day he was killed, how he was killed or where was his cadaver buried. But we have been reporting as early as two weeks ago that he was fatally shot. There's a strong indication and we continue to make validations," Herrera said.

AFP finds P10-M shabu in combat zone

Millions worth of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu was again recovered by government troops from a residence of an ex-Marawi City mayor as clearing operations in the city, where IS-inspired terrorists are still holed up, continue yesterday.

Report said that two kilograms of shabu, with an estimated street value of P10 million, were seized from the house of former Marawi City Mayor Omar Solitario Ali.

Ali is among the more than 300 individuals ordered arrested by martial law administrator Defense

Secretary Delfin Lorenzana in connection to the ongoing siege in Marawi City by IS-inspired terrorists, led by Isnilon Hapilon and the Maute group.

The ex-mayor is allegedly among the financiers of the Maute group. Authorities said that the shabu was discovered at the second floor of the house which was situated about three kilometers from the conflict zone.

Ali is also included in President Duterte's list of government officials allegedly involved in the illegal drugs trade or protectors.

Earlier, government security forces conducting "house to house" clearing operations in Marawi City also discovered 11 kilograms of high-grade shabu with an estimated street value of more than P110 million.

Previously, cash and checks amounting to P79.9 million were also recovered.

High troops morale

Despite injuries sustained in ongoing efforts to liberate Marawi City from the remaining terrorists, Filipino troops wounded in action have high morale and raring to go back into the fight after spending some time in the hospital.

This was bared by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo when asked about the status of troops wounded-in-action.

"Their morale is high notwithstanding the wounds they sustained. They know since the start that this is a reality of the service that they must face. As the old Filipino adage says, '*Ang isang sundalo, habang nasusugatan, lalong tumatapang,*'" he said.

Arevalo said Filipino troops wounded in the month-long conflict, are either refusing to be evacuated to the rear or are yearning to be back to the front lines after sometime in the hospital particularly those who sustained minor injuries.

"And indeed more than half, I was told, were back in action (already)," the military official said.

The AFP has declined to give exact figures for the numbers of soldiers wounded-in-action in the ongoing fighting but sources has placed this to around 300 military personnel.

Fighting with the Maute Group terrorists started shortly after attempts by the military to apprehend Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, a staunch ally of the lawless elements, last May 23.

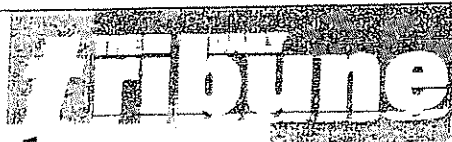
As of this posting, the death toll in the ongoing fight is placed at 268 Maute Group terrorists, 66 soldiers and police officers and 26 civilians.

Meanwhile, cellular sites in Marawi City were activated to provide 15-day free call and short messaging services for soldiers and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the battle-stricken area.

The free cellular service was announced during a joint press conference of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and Globe Telecom in Camp Aguinaldo.

Mr. Ernest Cu, President and CEO of Globe Telecom, announced that all Globe and TM prepaid subscribers in Marawi City will receive a text message from Globe and TM to inform them about the promo.

24 June 2017



Page: 1

Aussies join battle vs IS allies in Marawi

Australian military spy planes will start flying missions over Mindanao to help in the fight against Islamic militants terrorizing the area. Australian Defense Minister Marise Payne said.

Fighters linked to the Islamic State (IS) group have been battling troops for a month around Marawi City in a

conflict that has claimed hundreds of lives.

Canberra, which has an extensive defense cooperation program with Manila, said two high-tech AP-3C Orion aircraft will provide surveillance support to the Philippine military.

"The regional threat from terrorism, in particular from Daesh and foreign fighters, is a direct threat to Australia and our interests," said Payne, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

"Australia will continue to work with our partners in Southeast Asia to counter it," she added.

She recently spoke with her local counterpart, Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, about how Australia could help and "we agreed the best way to defeat terrorism in our region is for us to work together".

Top spy plane

The versatile AP-3C Orions usually patrol maritime borders

and played a prominent role in searching for missing Malaysian Airlines plane MH370, which went down in the remote Indian Ocean off Australia in 2014.

President Duterte declared martial law across Mindanao home to 20 million people, on May 23 immediately after fighters flying the IS flag rampaged through Marawi.

Their assault on the city ignited an unprecedented urban

Turn to page 5

From page 1

war, which Duterte has warned is part of an IS campaign to establish a base in Mindanao. The fighting has left Marawi, the most important Muslim city in the Philippines, largely in ruins.

In a statement, the Australian government said the move is part of its commitment to work with the Philippines in fighting terrorism in the region.

The Australian assistance will be effective for two weeks upon a mutually agreed date by military officials of both countries, Lorenzana said.

"We welcome any technical assistance that our allies can provide while the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is in the process of developing such capabilities," he added.

"With these AP-3Cs from the Australian Defense Force (ADF), our troops can benefit from enhanced airborne surveillance of the area any time of the day thereby improving operations on the ground," the DND chief stressed.

Lorenzana noted that the AP-3C Orion aircraft will immediately assist in the ongoing operations as soon as the AFP and ADF finalize operational details.

The operation of these aircraft will not require the embedding of ADF personnel with Filipino troops on the ground.

"In the fight against global terror, we need to act as a community of nations. Any help and support we can get from our friends and allies will always be welcome," Lorenzana said.

The Australian government had provided food and other supplies valued at \$920,000 to help meet the urgent needs of more than 320,000 displaced people in Marawi City in addition to the package of support for the peace process and education in Mindanao that Australia Foreign Minister Julie Bishop announced during her visit to Manila in March 2017.

Field commander welcomes help the over-all commander of the military forces on the ground battling the Maute group in Marawi City welcomed the pronouncement

of countries to support the Philippines.

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), on Friday said there is a need for all nations to work together to fight a common enemy.

"ISIS is a global menace and scourge of humanity. It should be addressed collectively by all nations and people who believe on the 'world order' of mutual respect, peace, and humanity," Galvez said.

He issued the statement after Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore offered support to end the crisis in Marawi City and address the growing threats of the Islamic State for Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group in Southeast Asia.

Galvez had been overseeing the campaign to flush out members of the ISIS-inspired Maute and Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) members holed up in Marawi City for a month now.

He declined to provide specific details on when this assistance will start to help resolve the month-long crisis in Marawi City.

He earlier confirmed that U.S. forces stationed in this city went to Marawi City to assist the Filipino troops purely on gathering intelligence information.

The two P-3 Orion aircrafts from Australia will provide aerial surveillance and targeting, electronic eavesdropping, and communications assistance to the Philippine military in Marawi City.

The offer of Australia came after top intelligence officials from the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia have agreed to strengthen trilateral cooperation in preventing terrorism and extremism from establishing operational bases in Southeast Asia.

In a statement posted on its social media count, Singapore Minister for Defense Ng Eng Hen said they stand to support the Philippines to end the crisis in Marawi City.

"The threat of terrorism is clear. If either the type of situation in Marawi (in the Philippines) escalates or transports or expands in other areas, we recognize that terrorist elements could entrench there and that could mean many years of trouble for all of us," he said.

32

24 June 2017

BusinessMirror

Page. A3

THE military chief said a Malaysian militant who helped lead and finance the siege in southern Marawi City has been killed in one of the setbacks to the uprising by locals aligned with the Islamic State (IS) group.

Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff, Gen. Eduardo M. Año told The Associated Press on Friday that Malaysian Mahmud bin Ahmad was wounded in the fighting in Marawi last month and died on June 7 of his wounds. A local militant leader, Omar Khayam Maute, also is believed to have been killed in the early days of the violence. Troops are looking for their remains.

Año, citing intelligence shared by foreign counterparts, says Mahmud is suspected of channeling more than P30 million (\$600,000) from the IS group to acquire firearms, food and other supplies for the attack.

On Thursday the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia agreed to closely cooperate to halt the flow of militants, weapons, funds and extremist propaganda across their borders, as they expressed alarm over recent attacks in the region, including a monthlong siege of a southern Philippine city.

Foreign Secretary Alan Peter S. Cayetano and his Indonesian and Malaysian counterparts met in Manila with top security officials to discuss a joint plan of action amid the siege of Marawi city by militants aligned with the IS group that has left at least 369 combatants and civilians dead.

As the IS group loses territory in Syria and Iraq, Southeast Asian governments worry that battle-hardened Asian fighters, including ones from Indonesia and Malaysia, may return to exploit social restiveness, weak law enforcement, a surfeit of illegal arms and raging insurgencies to establish a foothold in the region.

Many worry that the siege in Marawi could draw in the returning jihadis.

"We expect that those who will be displaced there will go to Asia and because of the Marawi uprising, the Philippines is like a magnet," said Año, who took part in the security conference.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi condemned the attack in Marawi and said her government is ready to help.

"Your challenges are Indonesia's challenges and your challenges are also the challenges of the region," she said, adding that the threat of terrorism is imminent and that "no action is not an option".

Malaysia's top diplomat, Anifah Aman, said it's more difficult now for governments to fight militants, who are willing to die and are harnessing technology and social media to spread their messages faster and recruit followers across the world.

"Motivated by a perverse ideology, terrorists today welcome death for others and also for themselves," Anifah said.

Cayetano said the three countries agreed to go beyond a military solution in dealing with extremists who breed in dismal social

Malaysian financier believed killed in siege

conditions. "We take note that drugs, crime, poverty, injustice play a big role in making the ground fertile for recruitment or for radicalizing, especially young people," Cayetano said.

In a joint statement, the three governments expressed "concern over the recent incidents of terrorism and violent extremism in their countries" and said they would plan strategies together to combat them.

They pledged to improve intelligence-sharing about potential threats, stop the flow of militants, funds and weapons, and contain the spread of propaganda on social media.

The countries will also discuss how to cooperate in enhancing military and law-enforcement training and help each other promote religious tolerance and moderation, the statement said.

"What is important is the help of religious leaders so we can bring them back to moderate, mainstream Islam," Año said. Southeast Asian foreign ministers will meet later this year to discuss rising radicalization and violent extremism.

On May 23 about 500 militants, including several Indonesian, Malaysian and other foreigners, stormed the business district of Marawi, a lakeside center of the Islamic faith in the south of the largely Roman Catholic Philippines, taking a priest and others

hostage, occupying buildings and installing Islam State-style black flags.

Of the 276 militants who have been killed, at least three were Malaysians and one came from Indonesia, Año said. He said the arrested in Malaysia last week and some militants suspected to be bound for Marawi illustrated the kind of cross border cooperation needed to protect the region. *AP*

33

24 June 2017

Business Mirror

Page. 02

THREAT OF TERROR ATTACK IN MANILA 'VERY, VERY MINIMAL' - ERAP

MANILA Mayor Joseph "Eráp" Estrada has brushed aside reports circulating in the social media that the radical Islamist Maute group is planning to stage bombings in several areas in Metro Manila, including Manila's Quiapo district.

Speaking on Tuesday at the sidelines of the awarding ceremonies for outstanding educators of Manila - part of the 446th Araw ng Maynila celebrations- Estrada called on the public to practice restraint in reacting to unverified reports they get in the Internet.

"The likelihood of an imminent threat is very, very minimal here in the City of Manila, so there's nothing to worry

about," the Manila mayor assured.

On Monday, a copy of a supposed memorandum from the Station Intelligence Branch (SIB) of the Valenzuela City Police Station revealing the purported plan of the Maute group to bomb several locations in Metro Manila were circulated in Facebook.

The one-page memorandum dated June 16, 2017 and with a subject line "Plan (sic) Bombing in Metro Manila" stated that Maute group led by Marnbang Maute and Abu Hidayat Maute are "planning to conduct bombing (sic) in Trinoma, Quezon City, SM Cubao, Quezon City Circle, certain places in Quiapo and Makati."

Signed by one Chief Insp. Jowilouie Bonaobra Hilario, SIB chief, it directed the Police Community Precinct (PCP) commanders to "please take appropriate

action, initiate counter security measures to prevent government casualty and attacks from the enemy, particularly PNP stations/AFP units and vital installations in your respective AORs."

Hilario has since been relieved pending investigation of the leakage. Manila Police District (MPD) director Chief Supt. Joel Coronel said he, too, came across the document in Facebook.

"The information is yet to be validated and verified. It's just a directive for all PNP personnel to be on alert, to remain vigilant, and also to conduct intelligence operations to validate that information, kung may threat," he explained.

Asked if the memorandum is fake, Coronel said it appeared to be authentic. Nevertheless, the MPD chief reassured that the 4,600-strong

city police force have remained in full alert to conduct possible interdiction and security measures to prevent such terror attacks.

"As directed by Mayor Estrada, we're still on a 24/7 full alert, precisely why we are conducting round-the-clock checkpoint operations, patrol visibility, both mobile and foot patrols, in different areas of Manila," Coronel added.

So as not to cause unnecessary panic, he advised netizens to refrain from posting or re-sharing in social media anything remotely connected to terrorism that has not been independently verified or confirmed as genuine by law enforcement authorities.

"Just remain vigilant and report any suspicious persons, activities, or situations you happen to observe to the police," Coronel said.

34

24 June 2017



Page: 18

'Letters of hope' for soldiers, civilians launched

By **ALIG. MACABALANG**

While there is no certainty in the period of military operations against Islamic militants in Marawi City, people from elsewhere in the country and overseas can reach out to soldiers involved and civilians affected in the brewing strife through the 'letters of hope' campaign initiated by a Metro Manila-based group.

Concerned teachers from the Ayala Alabang-based PAREF Woodrose School launched the drive early this month initially for soldiers and later expanded the coverage to include civilians affected by the crisis, according to officials of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

"Actually, this idea started when a

doctor who visited Marawi City launched a donation drive for garments and thank you notes to soldiers fighting the local terror groups," the ARMM's Bureau of Public Information (BPI) quoted Regional Cabinet Secretary Khal Mambuay-Campong as saying.

The BPI said the expanded "letters of hope" campaign encourages people from other regions of the country and abroad to inspire soldiers as well as evacuees and relief workers with messages through mgzaraneta@gmail.com, an email address of PAREF Woodrose School teacher Rinz Araneta.

The BPI said the messages sent to the email address would then be downloaded to Campong's team for delivery to concerned clientele soldiers and civilians.

Araneta's group has "seen positive impact of the campaign to the soldiers thus expanding the campaign to include civilians, especially those most affected by the crisis," the ARMM media bureau said.

"As our letters make their way to our soldiers, let us also extend the spirit of love and oneness to those civilians who are severely affected by this war – our displaced brothers and sisters," Araneta said.

A total of 51,651 families involving 252,282 individuals have been displaced by the crisis and are now in evacuation centers or staying with their relatives, as of June 15, the BPI said.

"We, the people of Marawi, need the prayers and words of hope," said Campong, who is from the war-torn city.

35

24 June 2017

INQUIRY

Page: A2

TARGET: DAVAO MILITARY POOH-POOHS BIFF THREAT VS DUTERTE

DAVAO CITY—Authorities on Friday downplayed threats by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) to kill President Duterte, saying the rebel group was desperate due to recent setbacks.

Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, deputy commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command, said the BIFF had been pushed back to their stronghold in the marshlands of Maguindanao and could not mount an attack similar in scale to the siege of Marawi City by Islamic State (IS)-linked fighters.

At least six rebels and two civilians were killed and over a thousand villagers fled as BIFF gunmen descended on the villages of Malagakit and Simsiman in Pigcawayan, North Cotabato, on Wednesday. They briefly occupied a school and held residents as human shields, according to the military.

The gunmen had scrawled a threat to kill the President on a blackboard in one of the classrooms in Malagakit before fleeing from government troops. They also threatened to attack Davao City.

'Desperate pronouncement'

Gapay, who is also martial law spokesperson in Mindanao, said the threats were a "desperate pronouncement."

The Pigcawayan attacks were "a retaliation and somehow a diversionary attack resulting from the setbacks" in their stronghold in Maguindanao, specifically the "SPMS box," said Gapay, referring to the adjacent Maguindanao towns of Shariff Aguak, Pagatin, Mamasapano and Shariff Saydona.

Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said BIFF had no "ground support" from the local Muslim population and therefore had no capability to launch attacks outside its bases.

BIFF had pledged allegiance to IS and had also forged a tactical alliance with local terrorists, particularly the Maute group, which is involved in the Marawi siege.

Dickson Hermoso, a member of the government panel in the peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), said the attacks in Pigcawayan would not affect the peace process "because BIFF is not the MILF."

Cardinal Orlando Quevedo, the archbishop of Cotabato, condemned the desecration of the San Jose chapel in Malagakit by BIFF.

"As the leader of the Archdiocese of Cotabato, I condemn in the strongest terms possible the wicked desecration of the Catholic Chapel of Malagakit in the parish of Pigcawayan and most especially of the Sacred Hosts that were kept there for the Catholic faithful," he said. —WITH RE-

PORTS FROM FRINSTON LIM, EDWIN O. FERNANDEZ, WILLIAMOR MAGBANUA, LEILA B. SALAVERRIA AND JULIE M. AURELIO INQ

34

24

June 2017

PUBLIC FILES

Page. 2

BIFF TARGET ANG DAVAO, MINARKAHAN SI DUTERTE!

NAG-IWAN ng mga mensahe ang mga miyembro ng **Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF)** sa simalakay na bayan ng **Pigcawayan sa North Cotabato**.

Nabatid na ilang larawan ni Pangulong Duterte ang sinunog sa labas ng mga classrooms sa ilang paaralan sa Pigcawayan.

Sa isang blackboard naman, isinulat ng bandadong grupo ang mga salitang "Sharia to kill sa namin Davao".

Sa isang ikinatirap na naman, isinulat ng BIFF na kahit saan aniya humingi ng tulong si Duterte, ay

hindi nito magagawang maibos ang kanilang mga miyembro.

Nagbantayan ang grupo na mag-ingat si Duterte dahil isusunod na nila ang pag-atake sa Davao City na hometown ng pangulo.

Samantala, minsan lamang at hindi ikinababala ng Malacañang magiging Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) ang direktang banta ng BIFF laban

kay Pangulong Duterte.

Sinabi ni Gen. Gilbert Gapay, deputy commander ng Eastern Mindanao Command sa Mindanao Hour sa Davao, ang bantayang ito ng BIFF ay maituturing lamang na "desperate pronouncement" o desperadong pahayag.

Ayon kay Gapay, kaya ang kanilang ginawang pag-atake sa Pigcawayan ay diversionary o retaliatory-attack matapos ang natamang major setback sa kanilang "stronghold" sa Maguindanao.

"That pronouncement of the BIFF is a desperate pronouncement," ani Gen. Gapay.

Sa panig naman ni Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella, hindi siya nagpahayag ng anumang pagkakahala sa bantayang ito ng BIFF sa Pangulong Duterte.

Katunayan nga daw ay walang ground support partikular sa Muslim community na nakukuba ang naturang grupo kaya ipaubaya na lamang sa militar ang pagtugon dito.

(Van Fernandez)

Militar at sibilyan sa Davao pinaghahanda sa bantang pagsalakay ng BIFF

HANDA na ang Davao City sa posibleng pagsalakay ng **Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF)**.

Ayon kay Police Regional Office (PRO)-11 Director Manuel Gaerlan, pinaghahandaan na nila kasama ang Davao City Police Office sa pangunguna ni Police Senior Supt. Alexander Tagum na hindi mapasok ng mga masasamang elemento gaya ng BIFF at Maute Group.

Ngunit kahit mahigpit ang pagbabantay ng mga alagad ng batas, nananawagan pa rin ang PRO-11 ng pakipagtulungan ng mga sibilyan upang hindi malusutan ng mga terorista.

Kailangan umano ng agad na ipagbigay-alam ng mga residente ng Davao ang mga bagong dayo sa kanilang lugar.

Binigyang-linaw naman

ng PRO-11 director na hindi nila pinupuntirya ang Muslim community sa Lungsod ng Davao.

Maliban sa mga pulis, nagbabantay din sa lungsod ang mga kasapi ng Task Force Davao (TFD) at Eastern Mindanao Command.

Ang TFD ang siyang nagbabantay sa mga entrance at exit highway ng Davao City, gaya ng Davao-Gensan at Cotabato highway, Davao-Bukidnon at Cagayan de Oro, gayundin ang Davao Butuan highway.

Patil ang karagatan ay mahigpit na ring binabantayan.

Ang Roxas night market blast na ikinasawi ng 15 katao at pagkasugat ng 70 mga biktima na kagawagan umano ng mga Maute ang pinakahuling pananalakay ng mga terorista sa lungsod.

37

24 June 2017



Pahina. 2

Death threat kay Duterte minalilit

Inilarawan ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na isang “desperate pronouncement” ang pagbabanta ng Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) laban kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

“That pronouncement of the BIFF is a desperate pronouncement ano, because what happened in Pigcawayan recently was a theoretic retaliation of... and somehow a diversionary attack resulting from the setbacks, major setbacks they have been experiencing in their stronghold in Maguindanao, specifically the SPMS box, because our forces there have also intensified operations against the BIFF,” paliwanag ni Gen. Gilbert Gapay, deputy commander ng Eastern Mindanao Command sa Mindanao Hour briefing sa Davao kahapon.

Magugunitang iniha-yag ng BIFF na matapos ang pag-atake sa Pigcawayan. Cotabato ay isusunod bilang target si Pangulong Duterte.

Gayunman, magpatupad din umano ang Presidential Security Group (PSG) ng security adjustment at assessment para masiguro ang seguridad ng Pangulo sa gitna ng banta ng BIFF.

Hindi naman nababahalala si Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella sa banta ng BIFF kay Pangulong Duterte dahil wala aniyang ground support partikular sa Muslim community na nakukuha ang naturang grupo. (Aries Cano)

38

24 June 2017



Page: AI

'Kill Duterte' BIFF's desperation vow—AFP

By John Paolo Bencito

THE military on Friday described as a "desperate pronouncement" the threats made by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters to kill President Rodrigo Duterte and ransack his hometown of Davao City.

Following the BIFF's incursions into Pigcawayan, North Cotabato, which triggered clashes with the military and left two

militiamen and a number of the gunmen dead and sent hundreds of residents fleeing, the militants said they will shoot to kill Duterte following the continuing military operations despite Ramadan.

"We will shoot to kill you Duterte, and wherever you ask for help Duterte you can never wipe us out," the group said.

Meanwhile, the military said it might recommend the lifting of President Duterte's martial law

proclamation once government forces liberated all of Marawi City as it expressed confidence it could free it completely before the remaining 30 days of martial law lapsed.

"We see that it won't reach another 30 more days," Western Mindanao Command chief Major General Carlito Galvez said in a radio interview.

"We really see that we can get it and clear everything in Marawi."

But Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella said it would still depend on Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and the military if martial law would be extended before the 60-day constitutional limit was over.

"That will depend on the recommendation of the secretary of National Defense, of the Armed Forces who are the implementors of martial law," Abella told reporters in Davao City. *Next page*

Eastern Mindanao Command deputy commander and martial law spokesman Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay described the BIFF's threat as a "desperate pronouncement" after they were pushed back by the military.

"Desperate because what happened in Pigcawayan recently was somehow a diversionary attack resulting from the major setbacks they have been experiencing in their stronghold in Maguindanao, specifically the SPMS box, because our forces there have intensified their operations against the BIFF," Gapay said.

SPMS box refers to the adjoining towns of Shariff Aguak, Pagatin (Datu Saudi), Mamasapano and Shariff Saydona in Maguindanao, where the BIFF operates.

Abella said the BIFF rebels could not harm Duterte.

"They can't carry out attacks against Duterte," Abella said.

"The local Muslim community, the Maranaos especially, do not want this... These are isolated groups that are brilliant in media manipulation ... but they do not have the necessary support coming from the ground."

Amid the threats, the military said the Presidential Security Group had made some adjustments from time to time to ensure Duterte's safety.

"Every engagement is a different one so it depends on the area of engagement. They have to make adjustments," Gapay said.

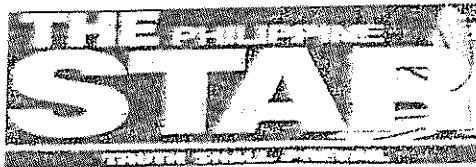
He said the BIFF likely had a "technical alliance" with the Maute group that wreaked havoc in Marawi City.

He insisted that the incident remained isolated and not a spillover as Duterte had earlier warned.

"As far as tactical alliance is concerned, that is very possible and we have seen that in some operations wherein BIFF fighters are sending augmentation to not just Maute but also other local terrorist groups in the country," Gapay said.

39

24 June 2017



Page: 2

Palace shrugs off BIFF threat vs Duterte

By ALEXIS ROMERO and EDITH REGALADO

The Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) has no capability to assassinate President Duterte, Malacañang said yesterday as it laughed off a supposed death threat scribbled on a blackboard at a school in a North Cotabato town raided earlier by militants.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said the BIFF has no support from local residents and is just good at "media manipulation."

"The local Muslim community, the Maranaos especially, do not want this. And for whatever reason that they (BIFF) are dealing with this, whether it is personal interest or what, there is no ground support for them," Abella said at a press briefing yesterday in Davao City.

"I think we need to go back to the fact that these are isolated groups that are brilliant at media manipulation," he added.

But Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, deputy commander of the Armed Forces Eastern Min-

danao Command and spokesman for martial law in Eastmincom, said the Presidential Security Group is making some adjustments in its security arrangement for Duterte, especially with his having declared martial law and ordering offensives against Maute terrorists in Marawi City.

After attacking two barangays in Pigkawayan town in North Cotabato earlier this week, the BIFF threatened to launch its next attack in Davao City, the President's hometown.

"And of course, security

measures are being assessed from time to time for the safety and security of our President. So with a strong political will demonstrated by the President, it really – *sabi nga niya* (he said), *marami siyang kaaway na* – he's making many enemies," Gapay said.

In the Pigkawayan attack on Wednesday, eight BIFF members and one government militiaman were killed.

After driving away the bandits, security forces found torn posters of Duterte as well as a scribbled note on a blackboard threatening the President with

death

Gapay dismissed the BIFF threat against the President as a "desperate pronouncement."

Duterte has not had any public engagement since Wednesday but officials claimed he was just resting and that his private time had nothing to do with the supposed threats.

Maute-BIFF alliance?

While security officials maintained that the Pigkawayan attack was not related to the Marawi siege, Gapay said a tactical alliance between

the BIFF and the Maute group is possible.

Gapay said both the Maute and the BIFF, particularly the Bungos faction, had sworn allegiance to the Middle East-based extremist group Islamic State.

"As far as tactical alliance is concerned, that is very possible and we have seen that in some operations wherein BIFF fighters are sending augmentation to, not just Maute, but also other terrorist, local terrorist groups in the country," the Eastern Mindanao Command deputy chief said.

40

24 June 2017



Page: AI

All-Moro peace deal eyed

By John Paolo Bencito

THE government plans to convene an “All-Moro Convention” to merge its two separate peace agreements and between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Moro National Liberation Front to finally answer the “Bangsamoro question,” which has been the root of the centuries-old conflict in Mindanao, a senior Cabi-

net official said Friday.

Following the ongoing siege of Marawi by the Maute terrorists, Mindanao Development Authority Secretary Abul Kahyr Alonto said the failure to address the Bangsamoro Question “has invited the invasion of foreign Daesh extremism such as ISIS.”

“Towards this end, aware of the two
Next page

conflicting tracts in the separate peace process involving the MILF and the MNLF of brother Nur Misuari, and their concomitant complexities apropos convergence—we are determined immediately to convene, with the official blessings of the President, the All-Moro Convention to expedite inclusivity or the participation of all sectors of the Bangsamoro,” Alonto said.

The former Marawi city mayor and MNLF leader said the convergence of the two separate peace tracts in the Bangsamoro peace accords would be beneficial should the government proceed with its plan to form a federal type of government for Mindanao.

“The All-Moro Convention will prepare the common Moro platform in the form of a proposed consolidated and comprehensive Moro law based on consensus, inclusivity and convergence in line and in preparation for federalism, which the Convention will submit to the Constitutional Commission that will prepare the draft of the new Constitution of the Federal Republic of the Philippines,” Alonto said.

The MILF has finished its draft for its Bangsamoro Basic Law through the Bangsamoro Transition Commission and it is up for Duterte’s signature before being sent to Congress

The administration, meanwhile, is engaging with the MNLF through a separate five-man panel, which has yet to lay down their proposals for the intended Bangsamoro federal region.

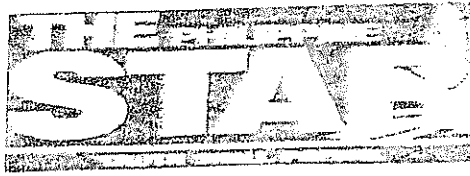
Duterte had earlier said that Misuari was not receptive to joining the MILF-led BTC due to their differences, but had expressed willingness to work with the new government.

Alonto, however, who leads a separate MNLF faction, said the Marawi tragedy should propel Moro groups to look at the merits of federalism as proposed by Duterte, who is trying to address the failed peace process in the previous administrations.

41

24

June 2017



Page: 2

NDF submits list of peace consultants

By JOSE RODEL CLAPANO

The communist National Democratic Front (NDF) has submitted its list of consultants and personalities participating in the peace talks with the Philippine government.

Government peace panel member Angela Librado-Trinidad said the list was submitted and deposited with the Netherlands government facilitating the peace negotiations between the NDF and the Philippine government.

The NDF is representing the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army in the peace talks.

According to Trinidad, the NDF submitted the list in an encrypted USB drive and SD card containing the real names and photographs of the rebels.

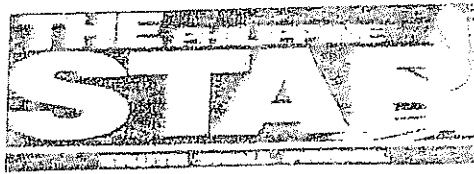
The rebels are still underground and would only surface to participate in the peace talks as consultants and would be free from arrest under the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantee (JASIG).

Trinidad said the rebel leaders who have already surfaced and are participating in the peace negotiations have also been included in the list.

She said the JASIG-covered rebel consultants were issued letters of authority by government panel chair Silvestre Bello III, which they should present to security officials in case they are held or arrested.

Government panel member Hernani Braganza explained the deposit is part of the JASIG verification and process of validating the identities of the rebels who are using aliases.

24 June 2017



Page: 1

'Healing should start for displaced Marawi residents'

Social healing must start now even if the terrorist Maute group still hounds Marawi City, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza said yesterday.

Dureza made the call in front of 5,797 displaced Marawi residents staying in a gymnasium at Bunu-un, Lanao del Norte.

He urged the people of Lanao to work towards rebuilding socio-cultural relationships that

were damaged by the armed hostilities.

"The healing must start with us and it must begin now," Dureza said.

"Let us not allow this crisis to break the bonds of friendship and unity we have painstakingly

built among us. We are all brothers and sisters. Let us all unite. There are those who want to destroy our relations and turn us against each other. Let us not allow this to happen," he added.

Dureza said that troublemakers would never win if the

Filipino people remain united and not give in to the culture of hatred being espoused by radical elements.

"If we give in to fear, this means that we have already lost the battle. We should not allow them to win," he added.

bombardment as a counterterrorism and counter-insurgency method, have steadily increased the total number of IDPs," the group said.

"We foresee this displacement to rise and spread to other areas as the AFP resorts to aerial bombardments which do not discriminate civilians, adversely affect farms and livelihood and by evidence of experience domestically and internationally have not proven effective in decimating terrorist armed groups.

"Martial law has also reinforced, justified and empowered the military mentality of treating massive internal displacement as a collateral of war. This mentality has fueled military bravado to indiscriminately bomb civilian homes and mosques, yet no evidence of effective decimation of terrorist forces have been shown in the crisis," he added.

– Jose Rodel Clapano, Rhodina Villanueva, John Unson, Perseus Echeminada, Rainier Allan Ronda

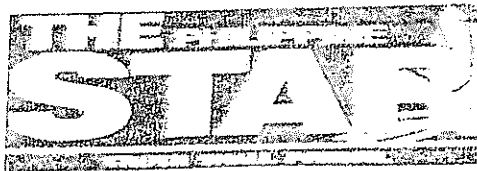
More displaced residents expected

But Kalinaw Mindanao, a national interfaith humanitarian mission, warned it is the military's lack of decisive resolution to end the armed conflict that would cause the rise of the number of displaced residents.

"While the current crisis has not reached proportions similar to the 600,000 IDP (internally displaced persons) situation in 2008, the apparent lack of decisive resolution to end the Marawi siege, the Armed Forces' unbending tack of using airstrikes despite massive destruction of properties and government troops casualties, and the continuing use of aerial

43

25 June 2017



Page: 1

Omar Maute, Malaysian financier likely killed in siege

One of the Maute brothers and a Malaysian financier of the siege in Marawi City are believed to have been killed as the local jihadists aligned with the Islamic State (IS) group have become increasingly constricted after a month of fighting, Armed Forces chief Gen.

Eduardo Año said yesterday.

Año said Malaysian Mahmud bin Ahmad was badly wounded in the fighting in Marawi last month and reportedly died on June 7.

He said the military has a general

Turn to Page 4



Image from an undated video shows Malaysian militant Mahmud bin Ahmad who helped lead and finance the siege in Marawi City. AP

idea where Mahmud was buried and troops are trying to locate the exact spot with the help of civilians to recover the remains and validate the intelligence received.

One of the local militant leaders, Omarkhayam Maute, also is believed to have been killed in the early days of intense fighting, he said.

Año, citing intelligence shared by foreign counterparts, said Mahmud was suspected of channeling more than P30 million to the IS-inspired Maute group to acquire firearms, food and other supplies for the attack.

A former Malaysian university professor who later turned jihadi and received training in Afghanistan, Mahmud appeared in a video showing militant leaders planning the Marawi siege in a hideout, a sign of his key role in the uprising. A copy of the video was seized by Filipino troops in a hideout on May 23.

Malaysian security officials have also received information of Mahmud's killing in Marawi and were trying to confirm it.

Task Force Marawi spokesman Lt. Col. Jo-Ar Herrera stressed they have yet to con-

firm Mahmud's killing.

"No confirmation yet. We received also same unvalidated reports," Herrera said in a text message.

Two other leaders of the uprising, Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon and Maute's brother Abdullah, were still with other gunmen fighting in Marawi, Año added.

The military's Western Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. said they also received reports that Omar Maute and another brother Madi have been killed.

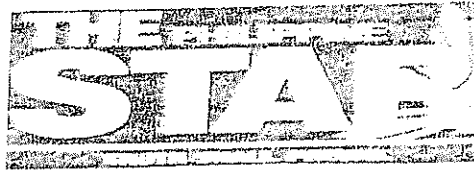
He said the information that the Maute brothers were killed by government troops was "very likely."

Armed Forces Public Affairs Office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo said if Omar was killed during the bombing, it would be difficult for the military to recover his remains and officially confirm his death.

"We are still validating this. We have the report last week, but we could not just confirm this because if indeed he was killed in an airstrike, his body could have been blown to pieces," he said. - AP, Roel Pareño, Jaime Laude.

44

25 June 2017



Page: 1

Martial law in Mindanao a success – Palace

By ALEXIS ROMERO

A month after President Duterte placed Mindanao under martial law, Malacañang claimed that the goal of the military rule has been attained because security forces have foiled an attempt

by the extremist group Islamic State (IS) to establish a province in Marawi City.

Officials, however, still could not say when the President would lift the declaration, which some sectors fear would embolden the military to commit human rights abuses and to

suppress civil liberties.

"We do not go by ratings. But we do say that we have actually preempted the establishment of a *wilayat* (province)... So the main goal of preventing (that) has already been, I believe, hugely successful," presidential spokesman

Ernesto Abella said yesterday in Davao City.

"We have prevented the establishment of this *wilayat*. And we have now entered into agreements... with the neighboring countries so that this will

Turn to Page 10

not recur," he added.

Asked whether martial law would be lifted anytime soon, Abella said: "That will depend on the recommendation of the secretary of National Defense, of the Armed Forces who are the implementors of martial law."

Duterte placed Mindanao under martial law on May 23 after IS-aligned terrorists from the Maute group attacked parts of Marawi City in Lanao del Sur.

Critics question why the entire island was covered by the proclamation, but officials insisted such a move was necessary to prevent a spillover of the conflict.

Armed Forces Eastern Mindanao Command deputy chief Brig. Gen. Gilbert Capay said his unit has not received reports of human rights violations involving soldiers enforcing martial law.

"A month after the declaration of martial law in Mindanao, Eastern Mindanao Command has been steadfast in carrying out its mandate of securing and shielding the area from terrorists' attacks, following the dictum and principles of necessity, proportionality and strict adherence to the rule of law and human rights," he said.

Abella chided critics who claim that the martial law declaration has resulted in abuses like forcible evacuation, indiscriminate bombardment and destruction of properties.

"That is a clear and present danger... I think it is about time that we really just grew up and became more mature and... more politically sophisticated... We're really just more concerned and supportive of one another," he said.

ML extension backed

Capay claimed that the

45

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacp

2) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

military has prevented a spillover of terrorism in other parts of Mindanao because of aggressive security operations, tightened security measures and collaboration with other law enforcement agencies and the public.

"We are continuously engaging different organizations and sectors to explain our efforts in the implementation of martial law, to continuously

"It should now be obvious to all, including government and the people of this country, that the failure to address the Bangsamoro question has invited the invasion of foreign Daesh extremism such as ISIS, which feeds on the frustration of the Bangsamoro people towards failed peace processes," he said.

A total of 280 Maute members, 64 government troopers and 26 civilians have died since fighting erupted last



Students hold a rally near Malacañang in Manila yesterday to mark the first month of President Duterte's declaration of martial law in Mindanao.

EDD GUMBAN

assess and innovate our measures and activities that will enhance its implementation," he added.

Mindanao Development Authority chairman Abdul Khayr Alonto said he is in favor of extending martial law if necessary.

"If this (crisis) will not be resolved, even the extension, if it will be the recommendation of our executive people through our martial law administrator... and if they feel that there is a need to extend martial law, then we are asking for it," Alonto said.

"It must be extended so that we can solve this problem. It will not happen in your city."

Alonto said the Marawi crisis should propel everyone to look into the merits of federalism.

May 23

Peace Assistant Secretary Dickson Hermoso said rescuers have recently recovered 277 trapped civilians in the battle zone, including wounded children, women and the elderly.

Rehab task force

Abella said the government would form a multi-agency task force to discuss rehabilitation plans for strife-torn Marawi.

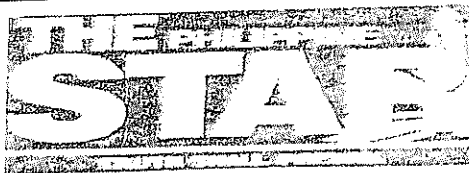
He said the task force would consist of officials from social welfare, education, health, public works, agriculture, defense, interior and local governments and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council. – With Marvin Sy

46
845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF

25

June 2017



Page: 10

BIFF attack not connected to Marawi siege – Palace, military

By EDITH REGALADO

DAVAO CITY – Both Malacañang and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) claimed that the recent attack carried out by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in Pigkawayan, North Cotabato was a desperate attempt to recover from setbacks brought about by ongoing military operations against the rebels.

"The BIFF attack in Pigkawayan, North Cotabato yesterday has been assessed to have no connection to the ongoing Marawi City rebellion. It is seen as the BIFF's attempt to recover from more than two weeks of setbacks from ongoing operations of the Army's 6th Infantry Division," presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said during the Mindanao Hour press briefing here in Davao City yesterday.

Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, Armed Forces Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) deputy commander, likewise said that the attacks were desperate moves by the BIFF be-

cause they feel the pressure of the ongoing operations against them in North Cotabato.

"We have a dedicated military unit that addresses the BIFF and they are separate from those who are tasked to go after the Maute terror group in Marawi City," Gapay said.

Besides, Gapay said the BIFF has long been noted to carry out attacks against small military units and barangays.

Gapay said the BIFF is also known for using villagers or even school children as human shields to cover their escape whenever they flee an area if pushed into a corner.

He explained that although both the BIFF and the Maute group had pledged allegiance to the international terrorist group Islamic State (IS) sometime in 2015, there is no indication that the incident in Barangay Malagkit, Pigkawayan was connected to the ongoing conflict in Marawi City that started last May 23.

The AFP said military units have rescued 31 hostages taken by the BIFF as well as 73 other residents trapped in the area.

The AFP said the clashes in Pigkawayan between troopers and the BIFF have resulted in the death of six rebels, one soldier and one civilian, while eight guerrillas and two other troopers were injured.

Local officials said the recent fighting had displaced 1,707 residents.

Threat to Davao City

Authorities are not ignoring the threats by the BIFF to attack Davao City to avenge the death of several rebels in recent clashes with the military.

The threats were written on blackboards in classrooms and in the barangay hall of Barangay Malagkit in Pigkawayan that was attacked by about 300 BIFF rebels last Wednesday.

"While we doubt the capability of the BIFF to proceed to areas far from central Mindanao to sow terror, our units are not taking chances," Captain Arvin Encinas, public affairs chief of the 6th Infantry Division, told The STAR yesterday.

– With Evelyn Macairan, Janvic Mateo, John Unson

47

24 June 2017

INQUIRER

Page: A3

Gov't readying Marawi rehab plan

By Frinston Lim
@flimINQ

DAVAO CITY—The government is already preparing a comprehensive, multi-year plan to rebuild and rehabilitate war-torn Marawi City, Malacañang said Friday.

“The Duterte administration is now preparing a multi-year, comprehensive Marawi reconstruction plan,” presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said.

At least P10 billion will

come from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) while the rest will be sourced from the national budget, Abella quoted Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno as saying.

Abella said a multi-agency task force will be convened to assess the situation.

Abella said funds from Pagcor will be used for presidential financial assistance while social welfare assistance to Marawi survivors will come from the national budget.

State-owned Land Bank of the Philippines and Development Bank of the Philippines may also open loan facilities for Marawi entrepreneurs, Abella added.

For families of soldiers and policemen killed in the fighting, Abella said the government will provide housing through the National Housing Authority.

The government will also shoulder the education of up to two children of soldiers or policemen killed in Marawi,

Abella said.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has already deployed military engineers and equipment to help in the rehabilitation of Marawi as ordered by AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año.

Military engineering units and personnel will help other government agencies in the proposed rehabilitation once the last Maute Group terrorists are neutralized or driven away.

“They are preparing already,” said military spokes-

person Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla. “There are already engineering personnel in the area. They are readying for the rehab.”

Padilla could not quantify the personnel and equipment so far deployed but estimated at least two engineering battalions would be required.

In the fourth week of the conflict which started May 23, a total of 258 Maute Group terrorists have been killed along with 65 troops and police officers, and 26 civilians. INQ

48

A June 2017

INQUIRER

Page: AS

NPA ASSAULT

1 COP, 3 NPA REBELS KILLED IN ATTACK

By Frinston Lim
@flimINQ

DAVAO CITY—Four people were killed after communist guerrillas attacked a police station in an upland village of Panabo City in Davao del Norte Friday morning, police said.

Southern Mindanao regional police spokesperson Senior Insp. Catherine dela Rey said the dead included a policeman and three New People's Army insurgents.

Dela Rey said an undetermined number of communist rebels assaulted a patrol base of the Davao del Norte provincial public safety company in Barangay Malitbog past 8 a.m.

But police commandos manning the outpost repulsed the attack and forced the attackers to withdraw after almost an hour of fighting.

A joint team of policemen and army troops killed the three rebels in pursuit operations, Rey said.

"However, one hour after the attack, SPO1 Niño Moreño was killed by a (communist) gunman," dela Rey said, adding an investigation into the policeman's death was underway.

Chief Supt. Manuel Gaerlan, Southern Mindanao police chief, commended the policemen for preventing the rebels from overrunning the outpost.

Gaerlan slammed the rebels' attack as "an act of desperation and treachery." INQ

49

24

June 2017

INQUIRER

Page: AK

DUSTY TEDDY BEAR, FAMILY PHOTOS ARE REMNANTS OF LIFE IN DESERTED HOMES

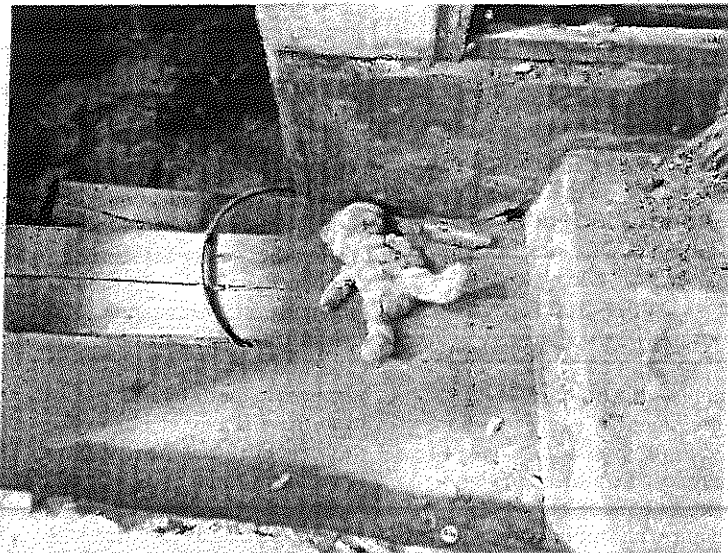
MARAWI—A dusty teddy bear strewn on the floor, family photos on a wall and dried underwear on a clothesline are among the few remnants of life in deserted homes of a Philippine city left in ruins by war.

A dog eats the carcass of a cat on a street littered with rubbish where soldiers patrol, while military planes and helicopters continue the relentless bombing of Islamic State (IS)-backed Abu Sayyaf and Maute gunmen hidden in other homes not far away.

Nearly all of the 200,000 residents of Marawi have fled since hundreds of the gunmen went on a rampage on May 23, triggering a conflict that has destroyed entire districts and left the others vulnerable to looting.

Marawi has long been the Islamic cultural and commercial capital of the mainly Catholic Philippines, its lake and cool mountain air making it a popular summer retreat.

But parts now resemble the



Dusty teddy bear is among the lifeless signs of a city in ruins.

—AFP

war-ravaged Syrian city of Aleppo.

Its residents are left in torment in nearby evacuation centres or friends' homes, waiting for the fighting to end and find out what has become of their homes.

"Maybe there is nothing left.

Our home may have been reduced to ashes. We heard our village was bombed and our house is just made of wood and bamboo," Rasmia Abdullah, 24, told Agence France-Presse (AFP) with watering eyes in a crowded gym close to Marawi.

50

"It's very painful because we were already rebuilding our house after a fire when the war broke out. Now we really have nothing," she said.

The war has also ended all types of business in Marawi, a city renowned for its traders, and locals fear looting has stripped well-off homes that are known to keep vaults of cash, jewelry and heirlooms.

Massive rehabilitation

But the impact is hardest on poor residents such as Abduljah, a mother of three and a banana and rice cake vendor, who fled Marawi with only the clothes on her back and leaving her wares to rot.

"If I could only save the machine I used to make rice cakes, I would do that to make a living. It pains me that the city I grew up in, all I worked for was gone and I don't know how to bring it back," she said.

President Duterte declared martial law in all of Mindanao

immediately after the militants had begun their rampage in Marawi, which he said was part of an effort to establish a local IS caliphate.

Mr. Duterte has deployed the full force of his military to end the uprising, most notably with a US-backed bombing campaign that has flattened entire neighborhoods.

However the militants still hold three of the city's nine districts, according to the government, using hostages as human shields while sheltering in bombproof basements and countering with brutal urban warfare.

No end in sight, yet

Sixty-seven soldiers and police have been killed, according to the military, which estimates that nearly 300 militants have died.

As the fighting continues with no signs of a quick resolution, the government and aid workers are starting to plan for the rehabilitation of the city on a

scale as massive as for the most powerful typhoons that regularly smash the Philippines.

Mr. Duterte has promised to set aside P20 billion for the rehabilitation of Marawi, a process the provincial government expects to take 10 years.

Locals authorities are planning to build tent cities over the next six months.

In schools and gymnasiums being used as evacuation centers, the residents' trauma is compounded by not knowing what has happened to their homes.

Vegetable farmer Amerodin Esmayatin, 35, said his cousins had told him that his house was first looted and later on bombed.

"We were already fleeing for our lives and yet people still took the little we had," Esmayatin said at an evacuation camp, where he and his family of five were staying.

"I can't sleep at night thinking about what happened," he added. **-AFP**

24 June 2017

INQUIRER

Page: 7/15

AUSSIE SPY PLANES TO JOIN FRAY

**By Jeannette I. Andrade
and Leila B. Salaverria**
@Team_Inquirer

The Australian air force would be flying two spy planes over Marawi's battle zones to help troops who have been trying to dislodge Islamic State (IS)-linked fighters from the Islamic city for a month now, officials said on Friday.

"We would gladly welcome any form of foreign assistance allowed under our Constitution to help suppress the rebellion in Marawi," presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said in reaction to Australian Defense Minister Marise Payne's statement of her government's military aid to Manila.

Payne said on Friday that the Philippines had accepted Australia's offer of two AP-3C Orion aircraft from the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

"The regional threat from terrorism, in particular from Daesh and foreign fighters, is a direct threat to Australia and our interests," Payne said in a statement, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

She said that she recently spoke with Defense Secretary

Delfin Lorenzana on how Australia could help in the fight against terrorists.

"We agreed the best way to defeat terrorism in our region is for us to work together," she said.

Australia has an extensive security cooperation program with the Philippines.

The United States, a defense treaty ally of the Philippines, has been flying the same type of aircraft in addition to drones operated by US Special Forces in support of ground troops who have been battling the Abu Sayyaf and Maute groups, and their local and foreign allies since their siege of Marawi began on May 23.

Boost to anti-IS operations

Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, deputy commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command, said the Australian planes would be a boost to the military operations against the IS-linked gunmen.

"In every military operation, the intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance capability is very important," Gapay said in a press briefing in Davao City.

The spy planes could also be used "in all other [military] operations in Mindanao," he added, without elaborating.

Orions are capable of land and maritime surveillance, anti-submarine and antiship warfare, and naval fleet support.

These planes are used by the RAAF in providing support for border protection and fisheries patrols in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

They are often used for maritime search and rescue operations and had been used extensively in the search for a missing Malaysian Airlines jet that crashed in waters off Australia in 2014, according to the RAAF.

Philippine defense officials said the planes would be used for two weeks after the two sides agreed on when they would start the surveillance flights.

They said there would be no need to embed the Australian military personnel who would be involved in the operation with Filipino troops.

In her statement, Payne also said Australia would continue to work with its partners in Southeast Asia to counter terrorism in the region.

The announcement of the Australian military aid came a day after Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano and his

52



An Australian air force pilot of an Orion spy plane scans the ground in this file photo. —AFP

Malaysian and Indonesian counterparts, and their senior military and security officials held talks in Manila on a joint plan of action to halt the flow of militants, weapons, funds and IS propaganda in the region.

“The three countries have agreed to work together to jointly develop and implement

counterterrorism and [other] measures and strategies,” said Abella, who was in Davao with Gapay

“Let us underline that their joint aim—the end game—is to prevent the establishment of operational bases in Southeast Asia,” he said.

The military operations and

the martial law declaration in the whole of Mindanao “have actually preempted the establishment of a *wilayat*,” Abella said, using the Arabic term for province, which the IS had planned to establish in Mindanao as part of its caliphate.

—WITH REPORTS FROM AFP AND REUTERS INQ

53

24 June 2017

INQUIRER

Page: 15

The rise of the Mautes

'They were good people back then,' before they started taking to violence, says former neighbor

MANILA/MARAWI CITY— Before they formed one of the most dreaded militant groups in the Philippines and pledged loyalty to the Islamic State (IS), the Mautes were a wealthy, political family in Mindanao, largely influenced by the matriarch, Farhana.

Soft-spoken and reserved, 60-year-old Farhana Maute owns property in Mindanao and in Manila, and runs a construction business, according to people who know the family and security analysts who have scrutinized its background.

Almost unknown two years ago, the Mautes are now the biggest and most deadly among IS groups in Mindanao, and are at the forefront of a monthlong battle with the military for control of Marawi City, Lanao del Sur province.

Regional governments fear that the brutal urban warfare, in which 360 people have been killed, reflects IS' intention to establish a caliphate in Southeast Asia.

Farhana Maute was related to politicians in her hometown of Butig, near Marawi, and was considered somewhat of a king-maker because of her wealth and influence. And like many clans in the lawless area, the

Mautes maintained a private militia that included Farhana's seven-sons, the analysts said.

When the Mautes got involved in a dispute with Butig Mayor Dimnatang Pansar over the award of civil contracts, it erupted into a brutal clan feud, a clash so common to Mindanao it has its own name, *rido*.

Other militant groups in the region joined the Mautes, and they formed a joint front in Marawi against government troops.

Terrorist imagery

Joseph Franco, a research fellow at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies who has worked with several Philippine military chiefs, said that early last year, the Mautes projected themselves as followers of IS to "spook and coerce the Pansars."

"That tactical use of terrorist imagery took on a life of its own," he said. "Now we have this Maute Group, who call themselves IS Ranao." Ranao is an old name for the Lanao region, where Marawi and Butig are located.

Although known to be a deeply religious Muslim, there was no evidence that Farhana Maute was radicalized, Franco said.



Farhana Maute

"She is only a businesswoman," a former military officer who lives in Marawi told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity. "But her clan was involved in a bitter political dispute with the mayor of Butig. And that probably got her into trouble."

MILF relations

Two of the sons, Omarkhayam and Abdullah, had been educated in the Middle East, but it was uncertain when they morphed from being scions of a wealthy family to becoming hardened Islamists.

Still, Farhana Maute was re-

54



Cayamora Maute

lated to the former military head of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a rebel group that in 2014 signed a peace deal with government. She was deeply influenced by him, said Rommel Banlaoi, a security expert who advises the Philippine police.

"Many Muslims in Mindanao, strictly speaking, they already have what I call embedded radical ideas," he said, adding that the Mautes provided a training camp for associates of the MILF near Butig.

"They were criminals who morphed into militancy," Ban-

laoi said of the Mautes.

Other analysts said at least some of Farhana's wealth would have been diverted to the Maute Group's alleged illicit activities.

It was not possible to seek comment from the Maute family.

Both Farhana and her husband Cayamora, an engineer, were arrested earlier this month in separate parts of Mindanao and it was not immediately clear who their lawyers were.

The sons are believed to be fighting in Marawi.

IS' news agency, Amaq, previously said that its fighters controlled large parts of Marawi, but had not commented specifically on the Maute.

Mohamad Ampuan, a Marawi native who has settled in Manila, said he knew Farhana Maute and several of her sons, and believed they were primarily religious-minded. He said he had not seen any of them since 2010, when he moved north.

Ampuan was speaking in a bazaar selling mobile phones and accessories in the crowded Novaliches, Quezon City, where military intelligence reports have said Farhana or some of her sons owned stalls.

All the stall owners in the

Salam Bazaar are from Marawi, but Ampuan said the family did not own any property there.

"Royal family"

He said Farhana was fluent in Arabic and English and he considered the Mautes a "royal family."

"The Mautes are fighting for Allah," he said. "They want a society faithful to Allah."

Marawi residents and analysts said Farhana had considerable influence on her sons, perhaps more than her husband, Cayamora, who had two other wives.

"She is the central figure, but not in terms of planning and preparing attacks," said Rohan Gunaratna, a regional counter-terrorism expert. "The mother and father are patrons of the group, but fatherless, mother more."

A neighbor, Marawi city councilor Khana-Anuar Marabur Jr., said the Mautes were "good people back then," before they started the current round of violence in Marawi.

He said Farhana was a good mother, and was generous and approachable.

"The father is strong," Marabur said. "He is like the tiger. But someone owns the tiger." —REUTERS

55

24 June 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 1

Pigcawayan folk recall attack by BIFF, expect them to return

By **KEITH BACONGCO**

PIGCAWAYAN, North Cotabato – Farmer Abraham Cutay, 33, hid his family for safety inside a rice mill upon learning that hundreds of Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) were nearing barangay Malagakit on Wednesday, June 21.

It was around 5:45 a.m. as Cutay and other villagers prepared to evacuate to safety. He led his wife Gloryjane and their three children to a nearby rice mill.

Unfortunately, however, his youngest son, two-year-old Daniel, cried as five men armed with high-powered rifles passed by the rice mill. The ► **8** armed men caught them.

“One of the armed men knew him so he shielded my husband and begged the others not to kill him,” Gloryjane recounted in Bongo dialect.

However, she said, one of the armed men told his companions, “If you don’t kill him now, he would kill you in the future.”

Then one of the five armed men, who was wearing a ski mask and appeared to be the leader of the group, shot Cutay several times in the body and in the knee in front of his wife and children.

Gloryjane added that the person who shot her husband further said that they had been relaying a message to him not to join the CAFGU but he did not listen.

Abraham was supposed to graduate from a Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) on June 26.

After the armed men left, Gloryjane and her children evacuated to the town proper along with hundreds of other barangay residents.

The body of her husband was recovered the following day when the military recaptured the village as the

rebels withdrew to the nearby Liguasan Marsh.

Malagakit is one of the villages here located around the sprawling Liguasan Marsh, a known bailiwick of the Moro rebels. The barangay, which is about eight kilometers from the town proper, is one of the gateways to the marshland.

This town is one of the towns of North Cotabato which shares a boundary with Maguindanao province.

An old animosity

The attack on Malagakit on Wednesday was not first time.

Over the years, there have been clashes between the armed villagers and Moro rebels in several villages of this town. The animosity between the Christians and Muslims in this town has been going on for about four decades now.

This town, along with several other towns in the province, is known as one of the origins of the armed Christian group Ilaga, who took up arms against Moro rebels in 1970s. Today remnants of the Ilaga are still actively defending their villages in times of conflict.

Village chief Salvador Almonia recalled that they have been monitoring the movement of the rebels since June 18. For two nights, he said, they were on guard, ready to defend their village should the rebels launch an attack.

On Wednesday, around 300 BIFF fighters attacked their village as well as the Army outpost in the neighboring village of Simsiman.

“I don’t know why they keep on coming here,” the village chief said. But some sources disclosed that the rebels have been hunting him for years already because he was leading the Peacekeeping Action Team defending their village.

56

An official in the provincial government, who declined to be named, said that some of the armed men may have wanted to avenge the arrest of some suspected drug traffickers from Simsiman.

“In the past, the police had been conducting checkpoints here in Malagakit and this led to the arrest of some suspected drug traffickers,” said a source, who asked not to be named for security reasons.

Simsiman is believed to be one of the lairs of drug dealers active in the entire province. Local villagers believe that some of the attackers may have come from Simsiman itself, because some of them knew the houses of the BPAT members.

One of the BPAT members said that some houses of his colleagues were strafed and ransacked after the residents fled.

Almonia belied reports that the BIFF rebels torched the school. They just holed up in the classroom where they also held at least 30 villagers, he

said. The rebels destroyed some school facilities and appliances in the school.

News reports quoted Abu Misri, BIFF spokesman, as saying that they did not take the civilians as hostages. Instead, they held them inside the classrooms so they would not be hit in the crossfire, he said.

The residents were able to get out of the village around 10 p.m. on Wednesday when the rebels withdrew.

Local officials also denied reports that students and teachers were taken as hostages. Schools have not yet opened in the barangay, they said.

The rebels, however, vandalized the walls of a classroom, on which they wrote: “Dapat kay Digong DU30 pugutan ng ulo.” They also burned a picture of President Duterte.

At the barangay center building, the rebels wrote “ISIS” on the walls.

“Buset ka DU30, mag-ingat ka na isusunod namin ang Davao City: ISIS Group,” it was written in chalk on a blackboard.

During the attack, the BIFF bandits also desecrated the Catholic chapel. Eight religious images were either smashed on the floor.

Fr. Dominic Villa, this town's parish priest, said he is saddened by the desecration of the chapel. The rebels have no respect for religion and the place of worship, he said.

As of 10 a.m. of June 23, at least 1,000 persons had yet to return home as the military and police have yet to clear the villages of Malagakit and Simsiman following the BIFF attack of June 21.

Mayor Eliseo Garcesa Jr said some evacuees are eager to return to their homes to be able to work on their farms.

But the mayor said that military has not yet given a timeline on their clearing operations.

Hate and distrust

For about four decades now, there has been deep hate and distrust in the relationship between the Christians and Muslims in this town.

Land conflict is among the most common causes of unrest. Thus, when the villagers in Malagakit fled their homes, they stayed in separate evacuation centers – the Christians staying in the school in the town proper while the Muslims chose to stay in the Muslim-dominated village of Panatan, which is part of Sultan Kudarat town in Maguindanao.

Mayor Garcesa lamented that this new cycle of violence has been going on for years, further polarizing his constituents.

But Gov. Emmyliou Taliño Mendoza assured all of the displaced villagers that they will receive all forms of assistance equally. She said additional police and military have been deployed in Malagakit and Simsiman to secure the area.

"We in the provincial government will provide all your needs while you are still here in the evacuation center. If you have lost your loved ones, farm animals, or your property was destroyed, let us know," the governor said.

Village chief Alimonia said he believes the rebels will come back and this has sown fear among the villagers. "We know that they will come back and harass us. But we are ready to give them a good fight, we will not be cowed," he said.

24 June 2017

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Page: 4

#MINDANAO

Martial Law conversations with tough Iliganons



By JOHN TRIAS

ILIGAN CITY — The draft beer is served on tap at a local pub, while groups of Iligan's millennials have been at their weekly pub quiz since 5 p.m. It is a boisterous and happy crowd, and the waiter deftly snakes through it to bring delectable bar chow to fill the competitors' hungry stomachs.

As 8 o'clock hits, the crowd winds up their drinks and heads for the door. The pub staff makes quick work of the clean up, as even they have to head home soon. After all, the 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew is happening, and none of them want to get caught violating this vital measure covering young and old that they all say is necessary and beneficial. Even 24-hour convenience stores are close. Only necessary travel for emergencies are permitted.

As they prepare to leave, a couple of them explain that since the start of the Marawi siege, about three-fourths of all Marawi residents have descended upon the coastal city, effectively doubling the 300,000 population.

This is clear in the jampacked jeepneys and daytime traffic. Banks have their long lines at tellers and malls and groceries have made a bundle with the increase in shoppers. Hotels are full, and boarding houses and apartments are now scarce.

"About half of the Marawi residents have stayed with relatives, not at the evacuation centers, and the ones with more resources have gone to Manila, Cebu, and Cagayan de Oro," one of them tells me.

Responding to this, some line agencies of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao have set up temporary offices in Iligan to continue their operations and serve their constituents, creating traffic in the immediate area where they set up.

The DSWD recently set up a staging area for relief goods for the evacuees, with trucks and goods ready to take care of the Marawi residents,

who may have to stay in tent cities while the eventual rehabilitation of their home town is underway. Iliganons take their hats off to Secretary Judy Taguiwalo for the quick effort. What turns many off, however, is the talk that some Marawi politicians intend to corner the goods and score political points on the distribution.

Nonetheless, the national governments support is welcome, as the local government of Iligan has valiantly stretched its capabilities to serve the instant increase in residents after the attacks began.

As the night deepens, it is clear that Iligan is ground zero of Mindanao's martial law, where the measures and atmosphere feel like it.

Another resident, a barangay leader in a residential area, tells me that many Marawi residents have sought refuge in their community, and local leaders have been briefed to know all their residents by name, and carefully report new residents coming in so that they can ensure that none of them is actually Maute terrorists.

Even resident cars have been issued stickers to denote their residence. The leader says the vigilance is warranted as a recent incident tells of a new entrant caught with long firearms.

Unexpectedly, Iligan residents like her support these tough measures, saying that were it not for the increased vigilance, violence may have erupted in the city.

They say that Maute and similar groups have been operating as druglords for years, and that their networks are rather extensive at least all over northern Mindanao and the Cotabato area. ISIS may have found a worthy franchisee of their terror, they say, since Maute is well armed and well financed, having also infiltrated local governments where they operate.

The captured tens of millions, and the sudden discovery of shabu labs in Marawi bolster this information

that has been an open secret for too long, obvious in the group's flaunting of fancy SUVs and high powered weapons. Maute, to them, is the kind of drug lord cum terrorist that past governments have failed to check or may have benefitted from, and that these links with them should be thoroughly investigated.

Despite signs obvious to Mindanawons, past governments denied the ISIS presence and downplayed their activities. This probably gave them the cover to expand.

Knowing this, the group probably thought that its network of infiltration within government in place for years will protect them as they started planning their moves last May. To say that the strong government response may have caught them by surprise is an understatement.

They probably thought that like past governments, a quick action like a kidnapping by them would bring government kneeling to negotiate. Not this time. Government is taking the offensive and dictating the pace of action. It is they who have been scattered in the few holdouts left.

Iligan residents say that after a long time, they are happy that the government has finally caught up with these terrorists, and that the police and military have been careful, courteous, and judicious, even refusing to accept the free meals they offer. The local government, police, and military clearly have their support.

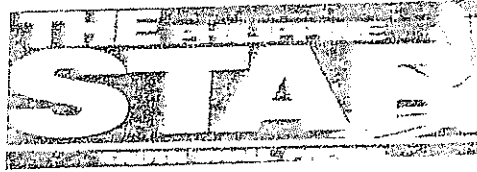
Nonetheless, all residents wish for the violence to end. Along with it, they hope, will go the indifference and the gross disrespect for the law that has been the regions trademark for so long, breeding evils like Maute. They appreciate that when needed, strong government works, and that a tough Iligan citizenry is maturing to protect their otherwise peaceful way of life they know will return.

For reactions: [facebook.com/johntriaspage](https://www.facebook.com/johntriaspage)

58

OFFI

25 June 2017

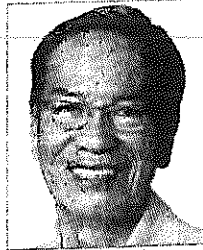


Page: 9

AT GROUND LEVEL

SATUR C. OCAMPO

Mindanao aerial bombings spawn humanitarian crisis



As the “war against terrorists” in Marawi City under martial law conditions in Mindanao enters its fifth week, a grave humanitarian crisis looms. Meantime, conflicting signals from President Duterte and the Armed Forces of the Philippines continue to baffle the public.

On the one hand, the AFP claimed its troops have cornered the terrorists, consisting of the Maute group and the Abu Sayyaf, which US and Philippine officials claim have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State (of Iraq and Syria). “They’re running out of place to run,” bragged the head of Task Force Ranao. “We continue to recover and control strategic areas... and the enemy resistance is waning,” said the Army’s 1st Infantry Division spokesperson, while acknowledging that the leaders of the two groups (the brothers Omarkhayam and Abdullah Maute and Abu Sayyaf’s Isnilon Hapilon) haven’t been killed in the fighting and “are still in the area.”

On the other hand, invoking his big-gear responsibility to the Republic and saying he wouldn’t put soldiers “at high risk,” the President said he would order the “carpet bombing” of Marawi. “I will really destroy everything... and I will take full responsibility for it,” he told reporters in Cagayan de Oro, while military and police commanders met to reassess strategy and operations against the terrorist groups.

Already, aerial bombings have left much of Marawi City in ruins and most of its 200,000 residents have fled to Iligan City and other surrounding areas. Marawi civic leaders, lawyers, human rights and peace advocacy groups, and various humanitarian missions have called for the lifting of martial law and a stop to the bombings, to no avail.

These bombings are “an overkill,” said the National Interfaith Humanitarian Mission (NIHM) which, on June 14-16, interviewed evacuees from Marawi and some areas in Maguindanao, North Cotabato, and Davao del Sur. Along with martial law, it says, the bombings’ grave impact on the human rights and welfare of civilians demonstrates their ineffectiveness and “casts doubt on their appropriateness as a response to a small armed and foreign-affiliated terrorist group.”

And yet, even as the government stepped up air strikes, destroying entire neighborhoods and infrastructure, mission members noted that apparently – according to official statements trying to explain why the fighting in Marawi isn’t over yet – “the number of ISIS-affiliated terrorists have actually increased rather than decreased.”

There was an even more rapid increase in the number of evacuees or internally displaced persons (IDPs). The NIHM recalled that when it called out for participation in and public support for the mission on June 4, the number of evacuees (per the ARMM Bureau of Information) stood at 235,000; two weeks after, the number had increased to 325,294. (On June 22, the Asian Peasant Coalition cited higher NIHM data: “More than 69,055 families or 336,783 individuals are staying in 82 evacuation centers in Lanao del Sur and other provinces.”)

“We foresee this displacement to rise and spread to other areas as the AFP resorts to aerial bombardment which does not discriminate civilians, adversely affects farms and livelihood, and by evidence of experience domestically and internationally, has not proved effective in decimating terrorist and armed groups,” the NIHM warns. The history of internal conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen and other countries has shown that various terrorist groups have arisen and persisted to sow terror in unimaginable ways – despite, or because of, outside instigation and intervention by global powers.

(The CIA, America’s chief spy agency, has a record of training militants who later turned against US imperialism. It is “credited” for having trained mujaheddins – including fighters from Mindanao, who later formed the Abu Sayyaf Group – to fight the Russians in Afghanistan in the 1980s. One of them, Osama bin Laden from Saudi Arabia, later organized the al Qaida that launched the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. The current, more brutal ISIS arose from remnants of al Qaida who had been tortured and held for long periods in US prison camps in Iraq.)

The NIHM acknowledges that it was able to give provisional relief to only 1,222 displaced families, mostly the so-called home-based evacuees (who have moved in with relatives in other towns). It observes that while government and private-sector relief missions have gradually tried to address the humanitarian needs in more than 16 evacuation centers in Lanao del Sur, “the hidden humanitarian crisis” lies in the home-based evacuees, who usually don’t get served by such relief missions.

While the mission lauds local government units in nearby towns for absorbing the influx of *bakwit* and trying to cope with their needs, it points out the lack of suitable infrastructure for temporary shelters, sanitation facilities, and potable water. The dire situation is worsened by the steep rise in prices of prime commodities due to the sudden increase in demand.

59

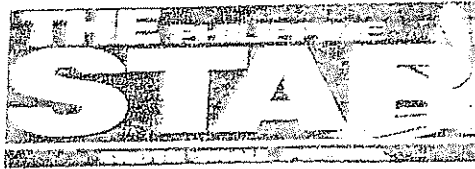
Common chronic diseases already prevalent in pre-evacuation conditions have been aggravated by prolonged displacements in crowded evacuation centers. Besides poor-quality health services, medicines are lacking or unavailable. Another cause for concern is the incidence of post-traumatic stress and anxieties, particularly among the children, with an apparent lack of social workers and trained personnel to handle these cases.

But there are thousands of other evacuees the NIHM found besides those in Lanao del Sur. Counterinsurgency air and artillery attacks in areas of Maguindanao, Davao del Sur and North Cotabato have been causing thousands of families to flee their homes and communities. This is also part of the massive humanitarian crisis in Mindanao, which the local government units are ill prepared to address. National attention needs to be paid to the situation as a whole.

* * *
Email: satur.ocampo@gmail.com
★

60

IT June 2017



Page: 8

FIRST PERSON

ALEX MAGNO

Shattered

Over a month since the fighting began in Marawi City, government forces still encounter stiff resistance from remnants of the extremist group that tried to seize the city.

Although we could still be days away from peace being restored to the streets of this battered city, the conclusion is clear. The Maute group and their ISIS-affiliated allies gambled badly. When the smoke of battle clears well over 300 militant fighters will be dead.

Our security forces have given the extremists no quarters. Ingress and egress to the areas still controlled by the enemy have been tightly sealed. They either surrender or they will be killed.

Most of the fanatics will prefer to die in battle, of course, convinced of the heavenly rewards that await them as martyrs. It is not easy to conduct urban warfare against an irregular forces prepared to die – and probably assisted by narcotics. Many soldiers were cut down by intense sniper fire from buildings still occupied by the terrorists. This battle has been mainly about painstakingly clearing houses one by one, under hostile fire and the threat from booby traps.

The Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), a radical faction that broke away from the MILF, possibly attempted to divert government forces by attacking Pigkawayan town in North Catabato. Government forces quickly quashed this attempt to widen the front and are now chasing after the armed group.

After the last Maute militant is neutralized, this force will be history. It will take many years to reassemble a force of over 400 heavily armed fighters such as the one deployed to occupy Marawi.



If the ISIS wanted Marawi as a ready replacement for Mosul and Raqqa, as a Southeast Asian stronghold where jihadi stragglers could gather, they bet wrong. ISIS will lose Mosul completely in a few days. At Raqqa, the only question left to settle is whether Syrian regime forces or US-supported Kurdish militias will march into the city. That question precipitated a dangerous military confrontation between the US and Russia.

If the armed gangs that pledged allegiance to the ISIS truly wanted to hold Marawi, they needed a vastly larger force. They needed much more arms than they accumulated. They needed to hold on to a much larger piece of territory, preventing the city from being cut off and starved into submission. They simply did not have that.

They likewise did not have an ample funding source, more than what millionaire militants and drug syndicates have delivered. They needed more money for arms and food stocks to bog down government troops from advancing on the city they wanted to capture.

Those who tried to grab Marawi might have imagined taking Iligan as well. This will provide them a port through which much-needed logistics could flow. But even if they succeeded in that, the port could easily be choked off by the navies of the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Cotabato City might be a more manageable target for them, to acquire sea access. But maybe the Maranao extremists do not have much confidence in their Maguindanao brothers to accomplish large tasks. The Pigkawayan incident demonstrates the BIFF's incapacity to think strategically.

The best defense is offense. If we want to quash all jihadi designs for building a Southeast Asian base for their beleaguered caliphate, we must shatter all capability on their part to undertake such adventures as the aborted seizure of Marawi.

Col

The plan to seize Marawi was a crazy one. It was probably conceived by some mogul in Raqqa looking at a map, wishing to secure a second front for the war against the infidels in the face of impending defeat for the ISIS in the desert cities. The plan assumed that our armed forces would pull back the same way the badly trained forces of Baghdad retreated from Mosul when the ISIS struck with lightning speed.

Those who planned this attack failed to bring into their calculations the readiness of our armed forces to fight back and refuse to yield a city to the jihadi. They failed to account for the layers of alliances that figured after the Marawi attack: the trilateral coordination between the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia; the readiness of the US to offer "technical support"; and, now, the active role played by Australia in helping suppress the rebellion.

There are larger strategic considerations in play here. No one wants to see jihadi groups winning a toehold in Mindanao. That toehold could quickly become internationalized. Everyone wants to see the radicalized armed groups crushed decisively in the battle for Marawi.

Meanwhile, a new Bangsamoro Basic Law draft has been completed. Reception for that feat has been surprisingly muted.

The reason for the tepid public reaction is that the MILF, the principal mover of some sort of autonomy for Muslim Mindanao, now appears a major casualty of what happened in Marawi.

The mainstream organization of Maranao and Maguindanao armed groups seems to have lost its prestige as a result of high profile initiatives of more radical jihadi groups. Both the Maute group and the BIFF, as well as the smaller radical factions in the area, trace their roots to the MILF. The mainstream organization proved both unwilling and unable to curtail the shift to a more radical narrative among younger fighters.

If the MILF cannot hold sway over the constituencies it claims to represent, should the ageing leadership of this organization be entrusted with building an autonomous authority that has the allegiance of the types that tried to take Marawi? There are more compelling influences beyond our borders.

★

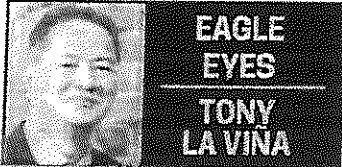
62

24 June 2017



Page: Ac

The new martial law



AT THE resumption of the Supreme Court oral arguments on the declaration of martial law last June 14, Wednesday, Solicitor General Jose Calida argued the case for the government—that President Duterte’s Proclamation No. 216 was constitutional and in conformity with the constitutional requirements.

At the start, Calida gave a short narrative of the events that led to the issuance of this Proclamation placing the entire Mindanao under martial law. He proposed that if there is sufficient factual basis to declare martial law then it cannot be said that the President acted with grave abuse of discretion; that the burden is on the petitioner, not the respondent, to prove that there is insufficient factual basis for such declaration. He argued that the clashes between the Maute Group and the government point to the existence of rebellion which endanger public safety. These attacks by the rebels do not only occur in Marawi but also in other parts of Mindanao, he said.

Justice Mariano del Castillo asked: What is so fearsome about martial law, and why not just invoke the calling-out powers of the President? Calida said that in the President’s judgment martial law was the necessary tool to quell the rebellion. To the question by Del Castillo that the military was caught by surprise by the Maute attack, Calida answered that intelligence gathering is not perfect. He also said that there are linkages among the terror groups all around Mindanao. This warrants the declaration of martial law throughout Mindanao.

Justice Antonio Carpio asked if there is any report that Maute have staged rebellion in other areas of Mindanao. Calida said that the terrorist group had capability to sow terror in other parts of the island. Carpio however that rebellion requires actual rebellion—not merely capability.

Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno said that in declaring martial law, the legal standards must be made known. What are the parameters of the powers in the exercise thereof; that the factual basis must have connection with the necessity. Calida, citing the constitutional provision, stated on the other hand that the Court may only review the factual basis but not the necessity for declaring. The chief justice, however, citing

the constitutional provision, emphasized the phrase “when public safety requires it” which makes necessity, other than factual basis, reviewable by the court.

For his part, Justice Marvic Leonen explained that just possession of the flag with the Arabic script known as the Shebab in itself is not conclusive proof that it belongs to ISIS. In fact, Maute can be a criminal group pretending to be affiliated with ISIS. He said that it is possible that what happened in Marawi is simply “pintakasi” because the firefight was initiated by the military when they tried to arrest Isnilon Hapilon. He asked Calida whether it is possible for ISIS conduit terror group to establish a caliphate in Southern Mindanao, to which the former answered in the affirmative. Leonen, however, mentioned a security expert saying that it is not possible because of ideological disharmony.

According to Justice Leonen, the problem in Marawi must be seen from the lens of the Islamic faith. Leonen then gave a discourse on the different Muslim sects particularly the difference between Sunni and Shia to be able to determine whether the Maute-ISIS are real or mere pretenders. So, according to Leonen, the propaganda of the Maute should be taken with a grain of salt, that is, the government should not take the raising of the ISIS

63

Army

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF P

flag hook line and sinker. He said that the proclamation of martial law may only be a reaction to the government's failure of intelligence. He also draws attention to a name referred to as "boy" and "baby" contained in Arrest Order No. 1 which could mean that any person bearing these names could be arrested. He likewise scrutinized other official documents, including General Order No. 1, issued by the government after the declaration of martial law.

The most telling, and probably the most important exchange in the oral arguments was between the Solicitor General and Justice Carpio. The former asked: What are the powers of the President under martial law vis-à-vis calling-out powers? If my readers recall the first column of this series, I pointed out the distinction between these two commander-in-chief powers in terms of when they can be used. Carpio explained to Calida that martial law in fact does not really confer new powers to the president that he does not yet possess. To the surprise of many, Calida agreed and even described martial law as calling-out powers "with an exclamation point" or "in steroids." He recalled the latter description after Chief Justice Sereno reminded him that steroids have proven to cause long damage to the health of people who abuse them.

This exchange affirmed the proposition that I have been arguing for weeks now, that martial law has been sanitized by the 1987 Constitution. Historically, this was a power granted to the President during the war with the US colonizers using the power against Philippine insurgents in the Philippine-American war early in the 20th century. The 1935 constitutional convention put it in as the delegates anticipated World War II and to counter the threat of communist insurrection. Ferdinand Marcos, however, twisted it and used martial law to establish a dictatorship, pur-

portedly to build a new society but really just to stay in power and for him and his cronies to plunder our economy. The 1987 Constitutional Commission, after debating whether martial law should even be a power granted again to a President, decided to compromise and allowed such power but sanitized so never again would we have a Marcos. Thus, martial law cannot abolish legislative councils, derogate the Bill of Rights, supplant civil courts, and replace local governments.

This is the genius of the framers of the 1987 Constitution: in defanging martial law, it reduced the power and made it equivalent to the calling-out power which allows the President to order the Armed Forces of the Philippines to suppress lawless violence.

Indeed, all the actions of the President and the military to address the Marawi crisis does not require martial law. Martial law's impact, as Calida himself says, is psychological rather than legal. This is not to say it has no impact on real lives: for those in war zones, in urban poor areas, and in rural areas, armed groups always pose a threat to the security of individuals and communities. Martial law enhances that threat and makes the military more intimidating. In Marawi, that might be welcome, but in other places, where there is conflict because of social injustice, martial law can lead to abuse of power.

The new martial law has no legal consequences but it does have real outcomes. The terrorists in Marawi seem to be liking it, basking in the international attention and recognition they are getting. Civilians in Mindanao both welcome and are threatened by it. We will see in the days ahead, especially if it is extended to the whole country, whether this new martial law is good or bad for the country.

Facebook: <https://web.facebook.com/deantonylavs/> Twitter: tonylavs

ride

845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

64

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF

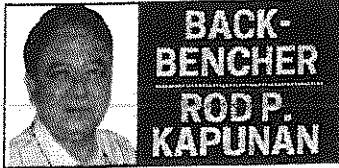
845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

24

June 2017



Page: 15



In for the long haul

WHEN some ingratiating lackeys invited the US Special Forces to help us during the siege of Marawi City, this column made a prediction that the country would be in for a long haul in combating Islamic terrorism. It was not a guess but a dreadful premonition.

Thus, when it came to the knowledge of the terrorists that the US has officially joined the war, that gave the Maute and its ISIS confederates reason to create a diversionary tactic to prolong the conflict and make it more bloody and costly for President Duterte and to our patriotic soldiers.

Evidence has been piling up that the US is engaged in a double-dealing game of openly fighting against Islamic terrorism but covertly supporting it. Notably, US involvement has always been confined to securing the arrest, dead or alive, of terrorists that crossed the red line of kidnapping and killing (beheading) Americans citizens like the costly mission to get Zulkifli bin Hir alias Marwan and Basit Usman in May 2015. Outside of that framework, the US remains open to anybody willing to buy arms.

In fact, it tried to cover up its participation in bagging the two terrorists. Even if our SAF were successful in getting Marwan and Basit, we nonetheless paid a costly price

because 44 of our men were killed. Accordingly, the firefight lasted for ten hours and the *ewan-ko-ba* President just waited for instructions, probably from US officials overseeing the operations. Some say Noynoy was watching the beleaguered SAF desperately holding on to their position in "real time" because US drone in the area was monitoring the fight. Whatever one says, the fact is that 44 SAF members were killed because of the \$5-million bounty for Marwan and \$2 million for Basit.

The decision of Noynoy not to prosecute the killers or even point the blame to the members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front told us that his policy was what the US wanted him to do. Some political analysts are even of the belief that the problem that has spilled over to our country has nothing to do with ideology. Instead it is caused by the need to sustain the sagging US economy considered to be on the verge of collapse. The US is using the historical enmity between Christians and Muslims to fuel a continuing war in what Professor Samuel Huntington called "Clash of Civilization."

The situation now in Marawi City is no different. US participation is without the permission of President Duterte. What is strange is, as soon as it became clear to the terrorists that US Special Forces are present and giving their technical support to our soldiers, they opened a new front. Later they launched an attack in North Cotabato. The attack was initiated by elements of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters.

There is much evidence to support this theory. After the collapse of communist bloc, the merchants of war have to look for another enemy to sustain their business. Fervor and ignorance make many Muslims ideal disposable soldiers. Where there is conflict, Wall Street and the US mili-

tary industrial complex see an opportunity to make money, and money serves to cover the deep crevice caused by increasing foreign debt, continuing erosion in the value of the US dollar, widening trade deficit and an overall decline trade dominance.

The US today is the only country that relies on arms sales to prop-up its receding global economic dominance that unavoidably would require the maintenance of a big and strong armed forces. It is the number-one trader of arms to the leading autocratic and barbaric governments known to openly support international terrorism to advance one fanatical variety of Islam known as Wahhabism. It is paradoxical for while Saudi Arabia is America's number one buyer of arms, the US is spending much to maintain the military superiority of another barbaric state—Israel.

65

In the post-Cold War era, the ideology that was committed to waging “wars for national liberation” was substituted by theocratic ideology led by bigoted religious leaders bent on restoring a caliphate. It is this intensifying religious war of attrition that the US has been exploiting to sustain the need for arms. The only drawback is that both sides are so obfuscated in their hatred that they could no longer see that the US is making profit out of

the lives and blood of their children.

For instance, events in Syria are telling that the US is openly supporting ISIS and Jabhat al Nusra against the government of Bashar al-Assad in Syria. The US downing of a Syrian

Su-22 fighter-bomber on mission to bomb ISIS position in Tabqah is more than enough to remind us of the danger in seeking US assistance. All attempts to prevent Syrian planes from bombing ISIS positions is to write on the wall that US planes will provide air cover to terrorist lairs in Syria and is determined to secure their supply lines.

The US defense that the downing of the Syrian jet was an act of self-defense is preposterous and just crazy. How could the US raise that when it has no right to be there as it was not invited by the legitimate and sovereign Syrian government? The situation has reached a critical level that Russia has to cancel all agreements on military cooperation with the US in Syria.

The same possibility could happen here. The entry of the US gave it a bargaining leverage to derail President Duterte’s much talked-about independent foreign policy. Given this situation, we can conclude that the conflict in Mindanao is an extension of the business of war the US has been promoting—one that pits Muslims against Muslims.

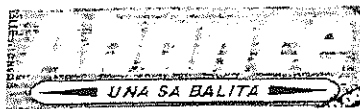
It is a transaction of guns for oil. As trader, the US does not question the religious affiliation of its buyer, but only asks if it has the money. This explains why US arms sales end up as the standard weapons for both the MNLF and MILF. Although the MILF has been fragmented into several factions sporting different names, they remain one and committed to creating an Islamic state dominated by Sunni followers and ideologically guided by those autocrats in Saudi Arabia.

rpkapunon@gmail.com

66

24

June 2017



Pahina. 5

warZone

Ni JB Salarzon

'Drone war' sa Marawi

Ang "warZone" sa Marawi City laban sa grupo ng Maute at Abu Sayyaf ay nagpapakita ng kasalukuyang kapabilidad ng ating Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at Philippine National Police (PNP).

Lahat ay magtatanong kung bakit 11 na sundalo ang patay bukod sa mga sugatan matapos sumablay ang inihulog na bomba. Hindi na rin nakapagtataka kung bakit dumarami ang nasasawing sundalo kahit sabihin nating "di hamak na mas marami ang tumitimbuwang na kalaban.

Batay sa mga lumalabas na ulat, karamihan sa mga nasawi ay mula sa close-quarter battle o malapitang ratratan.

Ang konseptong isinulsulong ng sino mang sandatahan sa ilalim ng programang modernisasyon sa gamit ay hangga't maaari maiwasan ang bilang ng casualty sa warZone.

Wala akong kuwestiyon sa dedikasyon at tapang ng ating mga mandirigmang sundalo dahil handang magbuwis ng buhay ang mga 'yan para sa bayan kahit na maulila

pa ang kanilang pamilya.

Dala ng pangangailangan, nagbigay ng donasyong PIM ang Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) sa Fleet-Marine. Ayon kay PCSO General Manager Alexander "Mandirigma" Balutan, ang naturang halaga ay pinambili ng gamot para sa paunang-lunas ng mga nasusugatang mandirigma sa warZone.

Maniwala kayo o hindi, kasama sa halaga ang pinambili ng isang drone ("eye in the sky") na ginagamit ngayon ng mga mandirigma ng Philippine Marines upang hanapin at puksain ang mga sniper ng kalaban.

Bukod sa paggamit ng "child combatants", gumagamit din ng drone ang mga terorista upang alamin ang posisyon ng mga mandirigma ng AFP. Ito marahil ang dahilan kung bakit patuloy na nalalagasan ng tropa ang AFP.

Bukod sa PIM, nagbigay din ng PSM na pinambili ng gamot at tubig para sa mga biktima ng terorismo. Mismong si Mandirigma ang naghatid ng mga medisina at tubig sa mga evacuation center

sa Marawi at Iligan City.

At sa pamamagitan ng Individual Medical Assistance Program o IMAP, inaayudahan din ng PCSO ang gastusin sa pagkakaospital ang mga biktima gawa ng terorismo ng Maute at Abu Sayyaf.

Sinabi ni Mandirigma na nakakasa na rin ang pangmatagalang ayuda ng PCSO sa mga biktima sa Marawi.

Bago ang Marawi, nangyari na ito sa Zamboanga City noong Setyembre 2013 kung saan pinalusob ni Nur Misuari ng Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) upang pabagsakin ang lokal na pamahalaan at magdeklara ng sarili nitong gobyerno.

Isa ang hangarin ng mga grupo ang pabagsakin at agawin ang kapangyarihan ng lokal na pamahalaan para sa pansarili nilang interes.

Kayo na ang magsabi kung "copycat" ang nangyari sa Zamboanga sa nagaganap ngayon sa Marawi, at anong lugar sa Mindanao ang isusunod na paghahasikan ng lagim ang mga teroristang ito.

Pagkatapos ng digmaan sa Marawi, gaya ng nangyari sa Zamboanga, susulpot muli ang samu't-saring kataunungan at rekomendasyon para sa modernisasyon kagamitan ng AFP at PNP. Sigurado ako niyan!

[Para sa suhestiyon at rekomendasyon, i-email sa jbsalarzon@yahoo.com]

67

24 June 2017



Pahina. 3

Editorial

Matyagan ang mga terorista

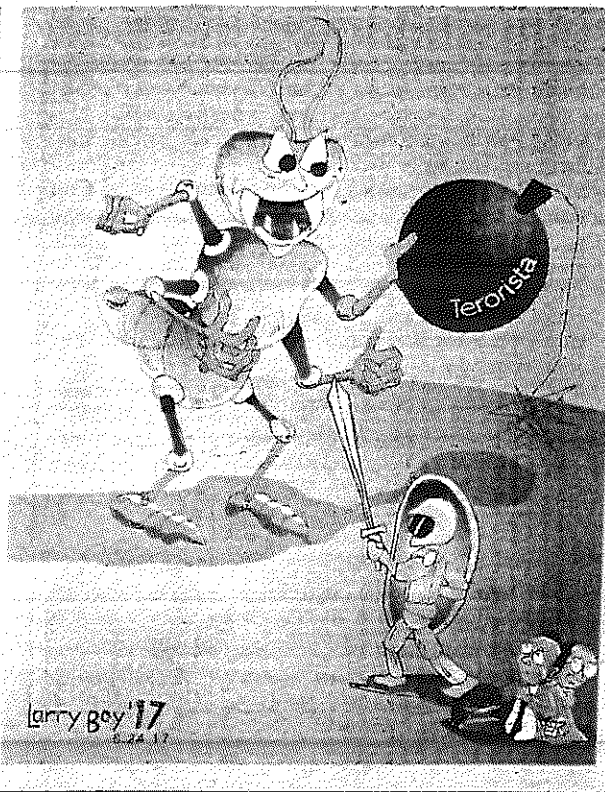
KAHAPON ay eksaktong isang buwan mula nang magsimula ang bakbakan sa Marawi sa pagitan ng government troops at mga teroristang Maute. Ayon sa Armed Forces, nasa 200 Maute fighters na ang kanilang napatay at mayroon pang mahigit 100 na nananatiling lumalaban. Kahapon, sinabi ng tagapagsalita ng AFP na napatay na ang isa sa Maute brother. Ganunman, hindi pa makita ang bangkay nito.

Sinabi pa ng military na desperado na raw ang mga terorista dahil sa sunud-sunod na pagkakahuli sa mga kamag-anak ng Maute brothers. Una nang nahuli ang ama ng Maute at makaraan ang isang linggo, ang ina naman ang nahuli. Marami pang kamag-anak ng Maute ang nahuli habang pasakay ng barko. Ang ilan sa kanila ay halatang

napalaban dahil may mga sugat at mayroon pang putol ang paa. Sabi pa ng military, dahil masyado nang desperado ang mga miyembro ng Maute, marami sa mga ito (mahigit sa 100) ang humahalo sa mga sibilyan na karaniwang nasa evacuation centers at ang iba ay sa mga barangay at nagkukunwaring sibilyan. Humahalo sila para hindi ma-detect ng military. Inaabandona na raw ng mga ito ang kanilang baril at saka nagkukunwaring karaniwang mamamayan.

Ang mamamayan o mga nasa evacuation centers ang dapat na maging mapagmatyag sa kanilang mga kasama. Nararapat na kilalanin nila ang mga nakakasalamuha sa evacuation centers at baka isa sa mga ito teroristang Maute. Maging mapagduda sa mga taong makikita at baka hindi nila nalalaman na sa evacuation center pa magsasagawa ng pagpapasabog. Kamakailan, napaulat na magsasagawa ng panggugulo sa Metro Manila ang Maute na pinabulaanan naman ng Philippine National Police.

Maaring malupig ang mga terorista sa pamamagitan ng pagsasama-sama at pagtutulongan. Huwag hayaan ang mga “uhaw sa dugo” na terorista ang mangibabaw sa bansang ito. Magkaisa para malipol ang mga Maute at iba pang local na terorista.



68

24 June 2017



Pahina. 3



'Sundalo, pinagbantay ng kalabaw ni Governor!'

KATAPANGAN at kagitingan, dalawang salita na maglalarawan sa mga sundalong Pilipino. Handang makipaglaban at makidigma para sa bayang tinubuan. Kahit pa ang kapalit nito ay ang sarili nilang mga buhay.

Habang kasasagan ng pakikipaglaban ng mga sundalo sa mga lokal na teroristang grupo, Mayor Alex Duterte ay nagbanggit sa Facebook tungkol sa bayan ng Kibit, Davao.

Reklamo ng sundalo imbes na ang hanapin ay mga tao.

Reklamo ng sundalo at pinagbantay ng mga kalabaw? Reklamo ng sundalo naman, di malatang! Kung di kasi siya nung! Hindi siya nung-principal. Reklamo ng sundalo, imbes na tinamaan ang mga nangangailangan sa serbisyo!

Hindi pa nakuntento ang mga putok sa buho niyang *commanding officer*, kinasuhan pa ng *indiscriminate firing and scandal* ang kawawang sundalo dahil sa warning shot na ginawa nito. Nagbabantay na nga nang maayos kahit hindi niya ito trabaho: siya pang kinasuhan at tinanggal sa serbisyo.

Nang makapanayam namin ang *commanding officer* ng pobrang sundalo, halos maihi siya sa kanyang karsunsilyo. Natatawa na lang kami ni Tol Erwin at Alex dahil hindi siya makasagot at halatang natatakot.

Kung di ba naman mga pulpol, tong *commanding officer* na 'to, *Magdedeploy* kayo ng sundalo sa lugar na di naman pag-aari ng gobyerno? Tinamaan kayo nang kalabaw.

Baka hindi n'yo nalalaman na malaking insulto ito sa hanay ng mga sundalo. 'Pag ito ay nakarating kay Presidente Duterte, siguradong may kalalagyan kayo.

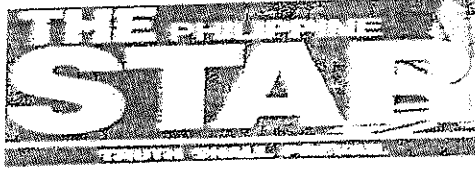
Tapos na ang maliligayang araw n'yo! Idinulog na namin ito sa AFP kaya antayin n'yo na lang na ipatawag kayo.

Si BITAG na ang *nagwa-warning* sa inyo, umayos kayo!

69

24

June 2017



Page: 15

AFF, PNP try to seal UNTV title clash

Games tomorrow
3 p.m. – PNP vs DOJ
5 p.m. – AFF vs Judiciary

Top seed Armed Forces of the Philippines and No. 2 Philippine National Police seek to arrange a title showdown when they take on their respective semifinal rivals in the UNTV Cup Executive Face-Off at the Pasig City Sports Center tomorrow.

The AFF Cavaliers collide with the Department of Justice Boosters at 3 p.m. while the PNP Responders take on the Judiciary Magi at 5 p.m.

For finishing 1-2 in the single-round elims, both AFF and PNP need only to win the opener of their semis series to arrange a title clash.

Led by Gen. Gener del Rosario, Jonathan Abutin, and William Gonzales, the Cavaliers clinched the top seeding after beating the Responders, 94-86, at the close of the elims.

The Cavaliers are also coming off a convincing 82-68 triumph over the Magi last June 11.

Also expected to deliver for the Cavaliers is Gen. Mel Feleciano.

Court Administrator Midas Marquez, on the other hand, is expected to lead the Magi's bid after firing 20 points in the team's 83-68 drubbing of the Senate Sentinels.

The Responders, on the other hand, will again rely on Supt. Oscar Albayalde, Decter Vitug and Anthony Padua.

70

24 June 2017



Page. 13

AFP, PNP out to set up title duel

Games Tomorrow (Pasig City Sports)
3 p.m. - PNP vs DOJ
5 p.m. - AFP vs Judiciary

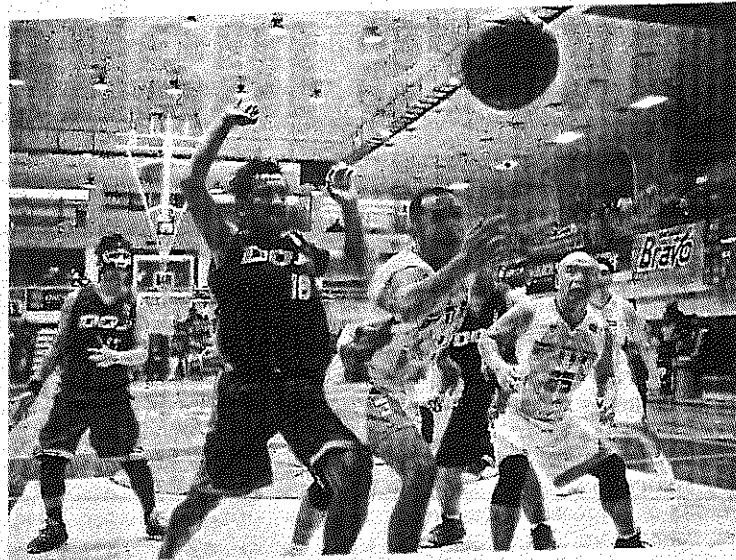
Top seed Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and No. 2 Philippine National Police (PNP) try to forge a title showdown when they clash against their respective semis rivals tomorrow in the UNTV Cup Executive Face-Off at the Pasig City Sports Center.

The AFP Cavaliers collide with the Department of Justice Boosters at 3 p.m. while the PNP Responders take on the Judiciary Magis at 5 p.m.

For finishing 1-2 in the single-round elims, both AFP and PNP need only to win the opener of their semis series to arrange a title clash.

Led by Gen. Gener del Rosario, Jonathan Abutin, and William Gonzales, the Cavaliers clinched the top seeding after beating the Responders, 94-86, at the close of the elims.

Aside from the topping the elims, the Cavaliers are emboldened by their



PNP Responders' PSupt Dexter Vitug SAF (No. 3) fights the loose ball during their game with the DOJ Justice Boosters.

82-68 beating of the Magis last June 11.

Also expected to deliver for the Cavaliers is Gen. Mel Feleciano.

Court Administrator Midas Marquez needs to reproduce his magic the last time if he want to help the Magis force a rubber match.

He fired 20 points in the team's 83-68 drubbing of the Senate Sentinels.

The Responders, on the other hand, will again rely on Supt. Oscar

Albayaalde, Dexter Vitug and Anthony Padua.

The tournament was conceptualized by UNTV president and CEO Daniel Razon for the country's public servants.

Razon said one of the beneficiaries of the league will be the Samahan Ng Mga Dating Professional na Basketbolista ng Pilipinas Foundation - PBA players who played only from 1975 to 1990.

71

ONLINE NEWS

24 JUNE 2017

www.pna.gov.ph

Wounded troops fighting Maute group terrorists raring to fight again

Despite injuries sustained in ongoing efforts to free Marawi City from the remaining Maute Group terrorists, Filipino troops wounded in action have high morale and raring to go back into the fight after spending some time in the hospital.

This was bared by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) public affairs office chief Col. Edgard Arevalo when asked about the status of troops wounded-in-action Friday.

"Their morale is high notwithstanding the wounds they sustained. They know since the start that this is a reality of the service that they must face. As the old Filipino adage says, 'Ang isang sundalo, habang nasusugatan, lalong tumatapang,' he said.

Arevalo said Filipino troops wounded in the month-long conflict, are either refusing to be evacuated to the rear or are yearning to be back to the front lines after sometime in the hospital particularly those who sustained minor injuries.

"And indeed more than half, I was told, were back in action (already)," the military official said.

The AFP has declined to give exact figures for the numbers of soldiers wounded-in-action in the ongoing fighting but sources has placed this to around 300 military personnel.

Fighting with the Maute Group terrorists started shortly after attempts by the military to apprehend Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, a staunch ally of the lawless elements, last May 23.

As of this posting, the death toll in the ongoing fight is placed at 268 Maute Group terrorists, 66 soldiers and police officers and 26 civilians. (Priam F. Nepomuceno)

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

www.pna.gov.ph

DND confirms Aussie assistance in Marawi City conflict

Australia will be providing intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) support to the Philippine military -- in the form of two AP-3C Orion aircraft -- as fighting with the remaining Maute Group remnants in Marawi City reaches its first month anniversary Friday.

This was confirmed by Department of National Defense (DND) Secretary Delfin Lorenzana in a statement. The aircraft will be coming from the Australian Defense Forces (ADF), he added. ISR assistance will be effective for two weeks upon a mutually agreed date by military officials of both countries.

"We welcome any technical assistance that our allies can provide while the Armed Forces of the Philippines is in the process of developing such capabilities," Lorenzana said.

Meanwhile, Australian Defense Minister Marise Payne said the Philippine government has accepted her country's offer of two AP-3C Orion aircraft to provide surveillance support to the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"The regional threat from terrorism, in particular from Daesh and foreign fighters, is a direct threat to Australia and our interests. Australia will continue to work with our partners in South East Asia to counter it," Payne said in a statement.

Australia condemned the attacks by Daesh-inspired groups in Marawi City.

Payne said she and Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana have agreed "the best way to defeat terrorism in our region is for us to work together."

Fighting with the Maute Group terrorists started shortly after the military tried to apprehend Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, a staunch ally of the lawless elements, last May 23.

As of this posting, the death toll in ongoing fighting is placed at 268 Maute Group terrorists, 66 soldiers and police officers and 26 civilians.

"With these AP-3Cs from the ADF, our troops can benefit from enhanced airborne surveillance of the area any time of the day thereby improving operations on the ground," the DND chief stressed.

Lorenzana noted that the AP-3C Orion aircraft will immediately assist in the ongoing operations as soon as the Armed Forces of the Philippines and ADF finalize operational details.

The operation of these aircraft will not require the embedding of ADF personnel with Filipino troops on the ground.

The Philippines and Australia have an extensive Defense Cooperation Program that provides the mechanisms for military support, intelligence sharing, and people to people exchanges.

"In the fight against global terror, we need to act as a community of nations. Any help and support we can get from our friends and allies will always be welcome," Lorenzana said. (Priam F. Nepomuceno with Leslie D. Venzon/PNA)

73

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

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

www.retiredanavst.blogspot.com

Public warning AFP: Stop spreading unverified reports

THE ARMED Forces of the Philippines (AFP) will impose a stricter implementation on communication security procedures to prevent leaking internal reports that may cause public panic.

Speaking during yesterday's AFP-PNP press conference, Brig. Gen. Gilbert Gapay, spokesperson of Martial law in Eastern Mindanao Command (EastMinCom), also urged the public not to spread unverified information.

Gapay said they have been receiving raw reports on threats and plans of terrorists to attacks major cities in Mindanao as diversionary attacks to ease the pressure in Marawi City.

He said each raw report is being verified by their operating unit, and the information will only be disseminated publicly once it is confirmed.

"Maybe along the way, there were some leaks that cause panic to the civilians," Gapay said citing the recent spread of false threat report in Metro Manila.

He said they are reviewing their standard operating procedures to avoid the dissemination of raw and unconfirmed reports coming from their end.

Gapay said government security units, such as AFP and Philippine National Police, have corresponding sanctions to violators of communication security procedures. Those who violated the protocol, he said, will face administrative case and the penalty will be based on the gravity of the offense.

He said that they are reminding their personnel not to post sensitive information on social media, particularly on Facebook, to avoid causing false alarm.

With this, Gapay also urged the public not to spread unverified reports, especially sharing such on Facebook.

"We know some of you have already received such information," Gapay said. "Let's not forward it immediately."

He said some sectors who like to create panic in the city may post such false reports.

As much as possible, Gapay said they want a daily "interaction and forum to inform the public on what's happening."

Gapay asked the public to always be vigilant so law and order will be maintained.

<http://mindanaoexaminer.com>

74

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

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

www.retiredanayst.blogspot.com

Malaysia tightens border security due to Sayyaf, Maute threats

Malaysia tightened its security for fear that ISIS militants fighting security forces in the Philippines may escape the government offensive and slip into Sabah.

It also included Abu Sayyaf chieftain and local ISIS leader Isnifon Hapilon, and jihadist militant Abdullah Maute on its wanted list along with other commanders Idang Susukan, Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan, Maian Sahidjuan and Salvador Muktadil – all implicated in cross-border kidnappings over the years, according to the Malaysian newspaper The Star.

It said the tight security was ordered by the Eastern Sabah Security Command under Datuk Wan Abdul Bari Abdul Khalid, who also appealed to Malaysian citizens to stay vigilant and report suspicious persons to authorities.

Hapilon and Maute were among a group of jihadist leader who occupied Marawi City in southern Philippines on May 23 in an effort to put up an Islamic State province in the restive Muslim region of Mindanao. Some of the jihadist leaders, including Omar Maute and Malaysian Mahmud bin Ahmad had been reported killed in the clashes, although the military is yet to recover their bodies.

Filipino security officials said Malaysian and other foreign militants are fighting the military in Marawi alongside the local ISIS group. They claimed that security forces had killed over 200 militants, including dozens of foreign fighters, but troops recovered just about 45 bodies. At least 62 soldiers and about two dozen civilians were also killed in the violence that gripped the country and forced President Duterte to declare martial law in Mindanao.

The United States also sent a P-3 Orion spy plane to help the local military pinpoint hiding places of militants in Marawi. The military said at least 400 militants are still holed out in the besieged city and that 600 civilians remain trapped in Marawi and this is on top of about 240 people, including a Catholic priest, being held by jihadists. Washington sent a small group of Special Forces soldiers to Marawi to help Filipino army commanders in intelligence gathering.

Australia said it will also deploy a pair of spy planes to help the Philippine government in defeating the local ISIS group. It fears that the radical influence of ISIS poses a serious threat to the security of the South East Asian and Asia-Pacific regions.

<http://mindanaoexaminer.com>

75

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