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



# Serving the people. Securing the land.

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### NEWS CLIPPINGS

29 October 2017

Sunday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land

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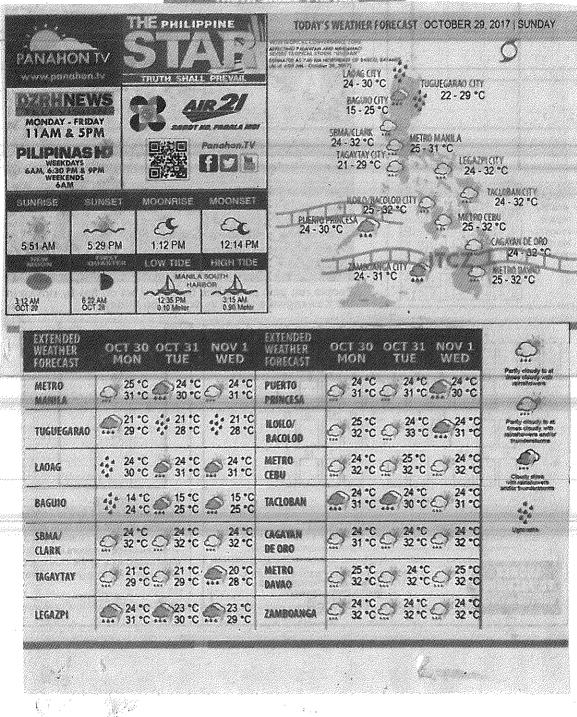
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## North Korea Mattis warns

'Make no mistake – any attack on the US or our allies will be defeated'

EOUL (AFP) – US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis on Saturday warned North Korea of a "massive military response" to any use of nuclear weapons as tensions remain sky-high ahead of President Donald Trump's visit to South Korea

"Make no mistake – any attack on the United States or our allies will be defeated," Mattis, on a trip

### Mattis warns North Korea 41

to Seoul for annual defense talks, said at a joint press conference with his South Korean counterpart Song Young-Moo.

"Any use of nuclear weapons by the North will be met with a massive military response, effective and overwhelming," Mattis said, adding Washington "does not accept a nuclear North Korea."

Pyongyang in recent months has sparked global alarm by conducting a sixth nuclear test and test-launching missiles capable of reaching the US mainland, while Trump and the North's young ruler Kim Jong-Un have traded threats of war and personal insults.

Mattis maintained that diplomacy remained a "preferred course of action" but stressed, "our diplomats are most effective when backed by credible military force."

Mattis did not specify the type of nuclear weapon use that would prompt a military response. Pyongyang's Foreign Minister Ri Yong-Ho said on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly last month that his country could test a nuclear bomb over the Pacific.

Mattis also urged Pyongyang to "harbor no illusion," saying the isolated state is militarily "overmatched" by the US and South Korea – a key ally of Washington that hosts 28,500 US troops.

Mattis' trip comes ahead of Trump's first presidential visit to South Korea next month as part of his Asia tour which also includes Japan, China, Vietnam, and the Philippines. All eyes will be on Trump's message to the North and Kim. Trump is expected to deliver a speech at the South's parliament and to visit an US military base during a November 7-8 trip to Seoul.

Trump's recent remark that "only one thing will work" with the North fuelled concerns of a potential conflict on the divided peninsula where the 1950-53 Korean War had left millions dead.

But Mattis has repeatedly stressed a diplomatic solution to ease tension during his trip to Asia this week, saying Washington was "not rushing to war" and its goal was "not war."

Even some Trump advisers say US military options are limited when Pyongyang could launch an artillery barrage on the South's capital Seoul – only about 50 kilometres from the border and home to 10 million people.

The North is estimated to have some 10,000 artillery pieces and at least 50 short-range missiles stationed along its heavily fortified border with the South.

The country has made significant progress in its atomic and missile technology under Kim, who took power after the death of his father and longtime ruler, Kim Jong-II, in 2011.

Since then he has overseen four of the country's six nuclear tests and hailed its nuclear weapons as a "treasured sword" to protect itself from potential invasion by the "imperialist enemy" the US.

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Rey Leonardo Guerrero

Newly installed Armed Forces chief of staff Lt. Gen. Rev Leonardo Guerrero could have one of the shortest stints as the country's top military official with his impending retirement on Dec. 17. While he vowed to lead with purpose the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as its 49th chief of staff, in fighting terrorism and threats to internal security he said he would try to finish whatever he can during his brief term. His first marching order to the AFP were: Sustain the pressure on the enemies of the state and work closely with government law enforcement agencies. The new AFP chief of staff, a member of Philippine Military Academy Maharlika Class of 1984, was commander of the Davao City-based Eastern Mindanao command. He commanded the Presidential Guard Battalion during the time of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

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### New battalion

MAWAB, Compostela Valley (PNA) -Army Chief Lt. Gen Rolando Bautista, on Friday, led the send-off ceremonies here for troops that will belong to a newlycreated infantry battalion. Bautista sent off the officers and men of the 89th Infantry (Makatao) Battalion at the 10th Infantry Division Headquarters in Tuburan, Mawab, Compostela Valley The newly-created battalion will be based in . Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte and will be under the command of Lt. Col Luciano Caiman, It is the 13th battalion under the 10th ID that will include Task Force Davao and Joint Task Force GenSan, It's creation is aimed to hasten the Army division's mandate of protecting the people and securing the region.

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### **ISSUE BURIED** PMA TIME GAPSULE

FORT DEL PILAR, BAGUIO CITY—The Philippine Military Academy (PMA) is replacing one of its old barracks where former cadet and now Sen. Panfilo Lacson used to stay, and a time capsule honoring that iconic building includes the Oct. 28 edition of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

The Inquirer was chosen as "newspaper of the day" that was put in a canister containing the building plans for the P335-million project that would replace Regis Hall.

Construction of the new four-story building is being financed by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. through the Bloomberry Cultural Foundation Inc.

Lacson and newly installed Armed Forces chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Rey Leonard Guerrero, signed the building plans before they helped bury the time capsule during a groundbreaking ceremony here on Saturday. Lacson and Guerrero were here to grace the recognition rites for the incoming PMA Class of 2021.

Lacson, a member of PMA Class of 1971, was among the first cadets to be billeted at Regis Hall along with those from classes 1969, 1970 and 1972.

Regis Hall was named after the late Lt. Leopoldo Regis, cadet first class captain and class topnotcher on PMA Class of 1951. According to the Academy Scribe, the PMA yearbook, the three-story building had been home to "two cadet companies, the brigade staff room, the cadet guardroom and the club rooms [for] the extracurricular organizations:"

The old Regis Hall is set to be demolished in December. Once completed in October 2018, the replacement barracks will house 17 cadet rooms, 13 study rooms, an armory and club TOOMS.—KARLSTON LAPNITEM INQ 29 October 2017

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# PMA plebes urged: Be selfless soldiers, emulate Marawi heroes

FORT DEL PILAR, BAGUIO CITY—The just-concluded military campaign to retake Marawi City from terrorists is full of stories about bravery and selflessness, which cadets of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) should emulate, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said here on Saturday.

"Officially, we won the battle. But triumph is never without cost," Lacson said when he addressed 246 PMA cadets of Masaligan Class of 2021, who were officially recognized in ites at Borromeo field here.

Heroism and gallantry entail isking one's life as shown by PMA alumni and by soldiers they led during the Marawi conflict, he said.

#### Guest of honor

Lacson, a member of PMA Class of 1971, was the guest of aonor in the rites, which coincided with the 119th Foundation Day celebration of the academy.

He said members of the Masaligan Class of 2021 would need to keep in mind that "defense of every citizen in this country" was their highest duty once they become military officers.

Many soldiers who fought in Marawi went beyond the call of duty to protect innocents and their comrades, among them was Capt. Rommel Sandoval, a Scout Ranger company commander, who died after he shielded one of his men from gunfire during battle.

#### 246 recognized

According to PMA, 300 cadets were appointed to be part of Masaligan class but only 246 were officially recognized. The class is composed of 210 male cadets and 36 female cadets.

Earlier on Friday at Fort Magsaysay in Palayan City, the Army's 7th Infantry Division honored 78 soldiers of the 72nd

Division Reconnaissance Company who served in Marawi.

The soldiers were given a heroes' welcome at the head-quarters here on Friday night

### Rear defender

A Cabanatuan City resident, Lei Ann Cabanlit, was among the families who rushed out to greet the soldiers. Her husband, 1st Lt. Beethoven Cabanlit, left home on June 6 as part of the rear defenders for frontline assault units during the Marawi siege.

Lei, mother of a 2-year-old girl and a 3-month-old boy, said she followed every story about Marawi City. "I was always anxious. I did not know if he would even return," she said.

"In going [to Marawi], their task is to defend the rear. That means they made sure that the soldiers would not be surprised by terrorist reinforcements, which is very important," said Maj. Gen. Felimon Santos, 7th

Infantry Division commanding general.

#### 'Played their role'

"They've played their role, they've played it well," Santos said, adding that the company also manned checkpoints to prevent Maute fighters from moving from their stronghold. The soldiers also helped clear houses.

One soldier was welcomed by his young son, who came wearing a military uniform. He said the Marawi conflict did not dissuade him from encouraging his son's aspiration to join the military.

Santos said the soldiers were entitled to a monthlong vacation

He also honored Pfc. Nesty Tecson of the 7th Infantry Division who was among the 165 soldiers killed in action. Tecson, who was with a group of Scout Rangers, was killed during the final assault. —KARLSTON LAPNITEN AND ARMAND GALANG INQ

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A VIEW TO A KILL Bullet-riddled bedroom of the three-story apartment where slain Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon reportedly stayed before all hell broke loose in Marawi City on May 23.—**JEOFFREY MAITEM** 

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Children welcome soldiers of the 6th Infantry Division who fought in Marawi as they arrived at Camp Siongco in Maguindanao yesterday.

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## Cafgu member killed in pursuit ops against NPAs

By MIKE U. CRISWUNDO

BUTUAN CITY – A militiaman was killed, while a policeman was wounded as government forces pressed pursuit operations against rebels, Saturday, in the far-flung hinterland areas of Tungao and Manila de Bugabos here.

Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) Active Auxiliary (CAA) volunteer Wilber Moises was reported killed in an encounter with the insurgents in the vicinity of Lamosig Creek in Barangay Tungao and Stanpoler, Barangay Manila de Bugahos

Despite the casualty, the government forces composed of the Army's 402nd Infantry (Stingers) Brigade and elements of the 13th Regional Public Safety Battallion pressed on and were supported by gunship helicopters of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) strike wing.

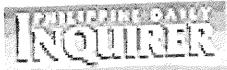
The rebels were believed to from the guerilla-Front Committee 4-A of the NPA North-Central Mindanao Regional Committee. The initial gunbattle with 15 heavily armed NPAs took place at 3 p.m. on Wednesday near Lamosig Creek where the troops of the 23rdInfantry Battallion (23rd IB) managed to push the rebels back into upper Lamosig.

Capt. Regie Go, Civil Military Operations (CMO) officer of the 402nd Brigade said an undetermined number of PO1 Michael Escobio of the 13th Regional Public Safety Battallion (13th RPSB) was wounded in a gunbattle in upper Sitio Stanpoler, Barangay Nonong on October 26. He is now in stable condition.

Chief Supt. Rolando B. Felix, regional director of Northeastern Mindanao Police Regional Office 13, on Saturday, ordered the intensification of police checkpoints and its presence in the southern areas of this region's premier and capital city of Butuan.

"Our troops of the 13th RPSB are currently conducting wide pursuit operations against the fleeing rebels towards the mountainous area of Barangay Manila de Bugabos while all field units in nearby areas already established checkpoints (for possible arrest of some of the fleeing rebels) in close coordination with other law enforcement agencies," the region's police chief added.

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# Firstborn fights for life in hospital as Scout Ranger pa battles militants in Marawi

By Jodee A. Agoncillo @jagoncilloINQ

hile Army Scout Ranger Capt. Monroe Bongyad was battling Islamic State-inspired terrorists on the frontlines in Marawi City, his firstborn was fighting for his life in a hospital several hundred kilometers away.

Even though he was aware of his son's deteriorating condition, the commanding officer of the 7th Scout Ranger Company was not about to leave his men, four of whom had been killed in the fighting.

Bongyad did not want to add to her wife Gina's worries, so he did not tell her and his family that he had been in the thick of the fighting in Marawi since May 23, when Maute group terrorists attacked the city.

"I did not want them to know that I was in Marawi. It would only add to my wife's stress and divide her attention, which my son badly needed," he said.

In the morning, Bongyad would turn off his phone and fight in the main battle area. In the evening, he would call his wife.

All he wanted was to help

end the siege early by defeating the terrorists and then go home to his wife and their baby.

His son, Mon "Gabe" Gabriel, was born prematurely on April 17 and had been in and out of the hospital at least four times because of an abnormality called intestinal malrotation, which happens when a baby's intestines don't form into a coil in the abdomen.

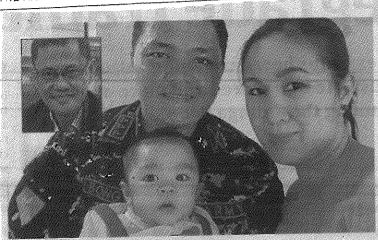
While on paternity leave, the 34-year-old captain and his wife brought their baby from the Northern Samar Hospital in Catarman town to a big hospital in Bicol for a major operation on April 19.

When the baby's heart rate deteriorated he was transferred again to a better-equipped private hospital.

By the second week of May, Bongyad's furlough had ended and he was sent by his commanders to Basilan province and then to Marawi on May 23.

There were times in Marawi, he said, when he would cry while praying for the life of his child. He could not understand why the terrorists had little regard for human life.

"The rebels do not respect rules of engagement. They



HOME AT LAST Army Capt. Monroe Bongyad with his wife, Gina, and son, Gabe. Inset, PCSO general manager Alexander Balutan —contributed PHOTO

killed indiscriminately and even raped locals in front of their parents," Bongyad said.

But his heart remained with his wife and child. Because a captain's salary could only afford so much, he turned to the military for help in transporting his son from one hospital to another.

Twenty days after the operation, Gabe had to be transferred again to Philippine Children's Medical Center in Quezon City. The child had developed postoperation complications.

Bongyad took out a loan to cover part of the expenses, but he could go no further. His wife, a dentist, had stopped working. Because of documentary problems, they could not use their PhilHealth cards.

Their finances virtually zero, the captain remembered one of his former commanders at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) who happens to be the general manager of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO).

During a brief lull in the fighting in Marawi, Bongyad

sent retired Maj. Gen. Alexander Balutan a private message on Facebook last June 19 asking for

"How I wish I were with (my family). But because of the call of duty, I can't be there. My wife also does not know I am here. They think I am in Basilan. I am a bit hard up now, sir ... I will consider this a big debt of gratitude," Bongyad wrote.

Balutan immediately replied to Bongyad, a member of PMA Class of 2007. He granted the captain's request for assistance and said the agency would take care of his son's hospital expenses and doctor's fees.

The former Marine told the Scout Ranger to focus on his

"Your wife and child need a warrior father like you," said Balutan, a 22-year Marine veteran who helped expose irregularities in the 2004 elections.

Home at last after the end of the Marawi crisis to see his son and wife, Bongyad, still in his battle fatigues, attended the PCSO's 83rd anniversary celebration last Thursday at Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City, and thanked the agency for its assistance.

During the affair, he recalled asking Balutan in June how he could repay the PCSO, which reimbursed his son's hospital expenses amounting to more than P300,000.

"Give me the head of Isnilon," Balutan had replied in jest. "No pressure. Keep the faith. Be true to the courage, integrity and loyalty that all of us imbibe in the Philippine Military Academy. See you soon, my man."

Bongyad said he used to think of the PCSO as just the agency that handled lotto.

tickets. I am from the government, but I thought the PCSO is only for the indigents. I did not know they could be as helpful as this," he said.

On Oct. 16, less than four months after he sought Balutan's help, Bongyad broke the good news to the general. He attached a photo of the dead Hapilon to his private

"We may not be the one who got Hapilon and Maute (terrorist leader Omar) but we are happy to say and report that we are part of it. Mission accomplished, sir," part of his message to Balutan read. INQ

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### The Manila Times

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### Military assures security for ARMM infra projects

SHARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao: The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has directed soldiers to guard all multi-million infrastructure projects of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) that are vulnerable to sabotage by Moro militants using poverty and underdevelopment to ignite hatred of President Rodrigo Duterte's administration.

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom) chief said on Saturday said that the move aimed at ensuring completion of on-going projects in remote areas in the ARMM.

"These projects will improve the lives of people generate livelihood, give children easy access to schools and make convenient the delivery of health, education, social welfare and other basic services to them. That is what militants do not want to happen," Galvez said.

The Maute terror group and

its allies, the Abu Sayyaf and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), have been opposed to infrastructure projects. Specially in the remote areas.

ARMM residents said these projects could weaken the influence of these militants especially in the farming communities from where they forcibly collect money for food and other needs.

The militants belonging to the remnants of Maute terrorist group, the Abu Sayyaf Group, and the BIFF are now using the black Islamic State flag as their banners.

Chief Supt. Graciano Mijares, Police Regional Office-ARMM director, said that law enforcement in many far-flung areas is a lot easier now with the new roads and bridges built in the past four years by incumbent ARRM officials.

"Securing on-going infrastructure projects of the ARMM government is a serious concern for us," Mijares said. Drone recordings and a matrix obtained from the Department of Public Works and Highways-ARMM (DPWH-ARMM) showed that in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur alone, the DPWH-ARMM has constructed 24 bridges from 2014 to late 2016.

The 24 bridges, costing P686.1-million, now connects once isolated rural communities to town centers where farmers sell their farm produce that in the past rotted in their barns during rainy days in the absence of all-weather road networks.

The office of ARMM Gov. Mujiv Hataman and the DPWH-ARMM built the bridges through the district engineering offices in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, using allocations from the region's annual infrastructure budget.

Commission on Audit records showed that ARMM spent P211.5-million for the 16 bridges built in Lanao del Sur in the past three years. Eight larger bridges costing P474.5-

million were also built in Maguindanao during the same period.

Galvez said officials of component-units of WestMinCom based in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur where the 24 bridges were constructed have noticed dramatic improvements in the lives of local residents.

"That is something violent religious extremists are trying to prevent from happening," Galvez said.

Soldiers of WestMinCom and the ARMM police tightened security last week in areas where workers are constructing strategic stretches of the P1 billion worth "transcentral road" in Basilan because of threats of attacks by the Abu Sayyaf.

The more than 60-kilometer thoroughfare will traverse the remaining enclaves in Sampinit and Punoh Mahadje areas in Basilan where there are still remnants of the Abu Sayyaf.

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### Majul Gandamra

The five-month-long battle between government troops and the Islamic State-inspired Maute terror group not only ravaged the once bustling city of Marawi, it also tested the grit and strength of spirit of its leaders. Among them is Marawi City Mayor Majul Gandamra, a lawyer, whose rise to become Marawi City's mayor was initially marred by controversy when his closest rival questioned his slim winning margin. But Gandamra, a member of the Liberal Party, is now faced with the task of rebuilding the city. He described the task of cleaning the city of debris—as daunting, not only physically but also emotionally. Barely a year into office and two weeks into the siege, the Marawi City mayor had rallied his people to fight the scourge of the Maute group and Abu Şayyaf. "Allah said evil would never triumph," he said.

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# Military hunts down suspected IS recruiter

By Jeoffrey Maitem @inquirermindanao

MARAWI CITY—Despite their defeat here and the death of their top leaders, including "emir" Isnilon Hapilon and the Maute brothers, Islamic militants are still pursuing their plan to put up a caliphate, the military said.

Col. Romeo Brawner Jr., deputy commander of the Joint Task Group Ranao, said pro-Islamic State (IS) individuals continued to raily support and recruited new fighters for IS by using images of the destruction here to convince them to join.

"There are again efforts to recruit fresh fighters," Brawner said, adding that the recruitment was being done through social media.

been charged with 14 counts of inciting to rebellion or insurrection, while a separate charge for rebellion would also be brought up against her for recruiting fighters for IS.

Brawner said the recruitment was continuing to this day. "Their targets are the youth," he added.

Galvez said Abu Dar was fact among those inside the ching during the early days of the siege. "He was able to escape," he added.

President Duterte had acknowledged that the IS problem in the country did not end with the defeat of the IS-linked militants.

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command, said one of the recruiters, identified only as "Abu Dar," had been spreading on social media photos of the destruction in Marawi wrought by the five-month war to convince people to fight for IS.

He described Abu Dar—whose real name he did not divulge—as an IS recruiter for Lanao del Sur.

"Despite being defeated, IS did not learn its lesson," Galvez said, adding that Abu Dar was now being hunted down,

On Oct. 11, authorities arrested 36-year-old Karen Aisha Hamidon in Taguig City for allegedly recruiting militants into the IS cause.

Hamidon, the alleged wife of

slain Ansar al-Khilafa Philippines head, Mohammad Jaafar Maguid, was believed to be behind the successful recruitment of several Indian nationals to fight for IS in Mindanao.

She reportedly used the social media platform "Telegram" to convince foreign fighters to come to the Philippines.

The National Bureau of Investigation said Hamidon's cellphone yielded about 296 posts promoting the Marawi siege.

On the day of her arrest, the NBI said the suspected IS recruiter posted an invitation to "mujahedeen (holy warriors)" to "Let us go to Marawi in Mindanao to join the war against the Conquerors of the soldiers of Tawagheet (idols)."

Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II said Hamidon had

He had earlier said that aside from the IS group here, militants were also fighting for the establishment of an Islamic

caliphate in Maguindanao.

The Maguindanao situation, he said, was jointly being handled by the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

On Thursday, Mr. Duterte ordered newly installed Armed Forces chief, Gen. Rey Leonardo Guerrero, to organize 10 new Army battalions, which would be tasked to go after remnants of IS group in the country.

Analysts had said that tackling the IS problem with military might alone would not solve the problem.

The MILF itself had admitted that the perceived injustices committed against the Moro people and the inonpassage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law were among things fueling the dissent. INQ

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# Duterte complains of 'bad boy' image

DAVAO CITY—President Duterte on Friday complained that he had emerged as the bad boy in the war on drugs because of what he said was his desire to save the country's youth from the evils of inegal drugs.

Speaking at the 25th anniversary of preschool, Center for Brighter Beginnings here which dozens of children had attended, the President said he wanted only "the good people to roam this Earth."

But because of his fight against illegal drugs, Duterte said he was now being painted as the bad guy.

"Others were saying I am a bad boy because I hurt bad people. Others even say I send (bad people) to heaven, that's why (I am bad)," the President said.

But he said what he was doing was to make sure that children would have a bright future.

"Do you know children why I get angry even on TV? Because those bad people, I don't want them in this world. I want them gone so that nobody will disturb your life anymore," he added.

"I want you to grow in peace. no trouble, no thieves, no kidnappers. Nothing of this sort (of problems)," the President said.

#### One objective

He said the only reason he became President was because of the youth of the land.

"It's my job to protect you and our society. If you see that everything is working, functional, and there are no more problems, it would be OK alof drug addiction," he said. "We can be the generation that ends the opioid epidemic," said Trump.

#### Duterte's pain killer

Deaths in the US have surged from opioids, which include some prescribed painkillers, heroin and synthetic drugs like fentanyl, often sold on the nation's streets.

Mr. Duterte, who had admitted taking fentanyl as pain killer, recounted that the US government then, under President Barack Obama, had investigated his war on drugs.

"I said before when Obama was investigating that one day, to your sorrow. Now look. They just declared. I just listened," he said.

"Now, what? It's my turn to

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ready. We're finished there," Duterte said.

He said his decision to address the drug problem—starting from his stint as mayor—had proven to be correct despite the criticisms hurled against him.

Duterte said even President Donald Trump had recently found how dangerous drug addiction was.

"Before I left, I was viewing CNN. Trump had declared a national emergency because of drugs. I told you so," he said.

Trump declared opioid abuse a national public health emergency and announced new steps to combat what he described as the worst drug crisis in US history.

"It is time to liberate our communities from this scourge

ask, what now? And so, America. It was your idol before. Now look. So what's happening to America? It is in total disorder," he said.

Duterte said he had been saying that time will come the US would realize the need to seriously combat drugs.

"I saw it a long time ago. I was still mayor and I already saw the devastation that it would cause," he said.

Duterte also downplayed criticisms of EJKs, saying he never ordered any criminal to be killed.

"We bleed. I know that killing is unlawful. But my order really to the police is go out and hunt for them. Arrest them if it is still possible," he said. —ALLAN 5



DEFICE OF THE A Rodrigo Duterte -AFP

20 October 2017



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## 'Marawi crisis over but terror threat still high'

By LAWRENCE AGCAOILI

The terror threat remains high in the country despite the recent liberation of Marawi City from militants claiming allegiance to the Middle East-based Islamic State (IS), the research arm of the Fitch Group said in a report.

In its latest political risk analysis titled "End of Marawi siege but terror threat remains," BMI Research said it has maintained a short-

term political risk score of 63.1 out of 100 for the Philippines as the threat of terrorism remains high.

"While the defeat of militants affiliated with the socalled Islamic State in Marawi City is positive for peace and security and marks a setback for terrorism in the region, we are keeping our short-term political risk score for the Philippines at 63.1 out of 100, which sits below the regional average score of 68.9," it said.

BMI Research pointed

out there is likelihood that remnants of the defeated militants might launch retaliatory attacks and some may have already started regrouping in areas around the ruined city.

"We believe that it would be premature to upgrade the Philippines' security score as the Mindanao region remains under martial law and the defeat of the rebel force led by Abu Sayyaf and the Maute is likely to inspire retaliatory attacks in the form of bombings and lone wolf attacks in metro areas, as well as more

kidnapping incidents," it added.

President Duterte declared the liberation of Marawi City last Oct. 17 with the death of terrorist leaders Omarkhayam Maute and Isnilon Hapilon of the Abu Sayyaf Group.

A total of 847 terrorists, 163 government troops and 47 civilians were killed in the siege, which began on May 23, prompting President Duterte to place the entire Mindanao under martial law. More than 500,000 people have been displaced.

"The daunting task of

rebuilding the city given the widespread poverty and lack of resources could also provide a fertile breeding ground for other extremist groups," BMI Research said.

It warned that remnants of the Maute group, the Abu Sayyaf and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) were still in the thousands and that they could link up with foreign fighters to complicate the government's task of eliminating ithadist networks.

The Marawi siege has been regarded as "the most seri-

ous attempt to export violent extremism and radicalism in the Philippines and in the region" by the Philippine government and has stoked broader concerns about the spread of IS and terrorism in Southeast Asia.

The battle for Marawi is also considered the largest campaign that IS has supported outside Syria and Iraq.

"Despite the end of the insurgency, we highlight that the threat of terrorism is still very much present in the Philippines and around the region," it said.

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### More than 2,000 bombs, IEDs recovered in Marawi

**BV JAIME LAUDE** 

Government troops have recovered more than 2,000 pieces of unexploded bombs and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Marawi City while working to restore basic services in the war-devastated city.

Lt. Col. Emmanuel Garcia, commander of the 4th Civil Relations Group of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said the recovered bombs and IEDs were disposed of under military-supervised controlled detonation operations.

The main battle area is still off limits to civilians as soldiers have yet to completely clear the area of booby traps left by the Maute group.

Garcia said even the technicians dis-

patched by a telecommunications firm to fix a damaged cell tower in the main battle area were prevented from proceeding to

"They were prevented from going forces are still clearing the area of IEDs as well as unexploded munitions," he added.

The Maute group linked to the terrorist organization Islamic State attacked and occupied Marawi City last May 23.

The Maute group depended on their stockpile of IEDs to forestall the advance of government forces to their occupied positions, forcing the military leadership to attack them from the air.

The military said more than half of the 165 soldiers who died in the fighting were killed in IED explosions planted by the Maute group.

The Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC) issued an order for the speedy processing of benefits for the soldiers and policemen who died or were injured in the battle in Marawi.

ECC executive director Stella Zipagan-Banawis the government set aside P2.39 million for the solders injured or killed during the five-month fighting in Marawi.

Banawis said of the P2.39 million, P1.75 million is for disability benefits while the remaining P640,000 million is for death benefits.

Meanwhile, Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito called on government agencies involved in the reconstruction of Marawi City to strive to make the war-torn city a model for the rest of the country to follow.

Ejercito, chairman of the Senate cominside as ground, mittee on urban planning, housing and resettlement, said he intends to visit Marawi with Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chairman Eduardo del Rosario and some key urban planning experts in order to assess the scope of the reconstruction effort there.

He said that the rebuilding of Marawi is probably more challenging than the reconstruction effort for the areas hit by Typhoon Yolanda because this time around, all that is left of the area is rubble.

"We want to do it properly this time. We don't want another Yolanda. Marawi could emerge as a model LGU (local government unit)," Ejercito said.

Military leaders yesterday commended and thanked the 225 members of three elite companies of the Army's 6th Infantry Division that fought militants in Marawi

Officials of the 6th ID, led by Major Gen. Arnel dela Vega, took turns thanking the personnel of the division's 61st, 62nd and 63rd Reconnaissance Companies that helped in liberating Marawi City from the Maute group and Abu

The three companies arrived past 10 a.m. at Camp Siongco in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao from Marawi City.

Officials of the three companies said it was difficult fighting terrorists in urban settings, but their men zealously persisted in clearing the areas they were tasked to reclaim from enemies against all odds.

Dela Vega told The STAR six of the soldiers they dispatched to Marawi City Sergeants Vergel dela Cruz and Marlon Hechanova, Private 1st Class Jayson Palma and Privates Alion Iimenez, Ryan Tamonan and Ioshua Gerald Cagud were wounded in encounters with Maute

"Our men are lucky, none of them perished in their combat engagements there. We are thankful to those who prayed for their safety and welfare," he added.

– With Sheila Crisostomo, John Unson

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# War decimates lair of IS 'emir' in Marawi

MARAWI CITY (Reuters) — Prayer mats, checkered scarves, black fatigues, and bullet-ridden walls mark the hideout where the "emir" of the Islamic State in Southeast Asia spent months preparing the most brazen and devastating militant attack in the region.

A four-story house in a quiet alley here was the secret lair of Isnilon Hapilon until late May. After a botched military raid to apprehend him, a thousand-strong rebel alliance held large parts of the city for five months.

Hapilon's death in a military operation elsewhere in this city on Oct. 16 was the catalyst for the end of Philippines' longest and most intense urban battle in recent history.

Security forces moved in on the house on May 23, trying to capture the country's most wanted man, but came under sustained attack from rebels firing rocket-propelled grenades.

A bomb-battered structure, shattered windows, and wall-to-wall holes from machine gun fire tell the story of the feroclous three-day battle that erupted at Hapilon's hideout, and prompted the call to hundreds of fighters to expedite the planned takeover of this city.

Hapilon escaped through a large hole that was blasted out of a rear wall, making his way across a rice field to a mosque next to the vast Lake Lanao. From there, he joined the guerrillas.

Community volunteers showed the house in the now empty, narrow street where the military believes Hapilon had lain low for several months. All other properties were intact and neighbors had fled long ago.

"At the time, no one knew who these people were. People saw them about but there was no reason to suspect anything," said Mohammed Seddick Raki, who lived nearby.

Other volunteers said women and children stayed at the rented house and visitors were frequent. Children's shoes were scattered amid the debris and a woman's robe was hanging from a window.

Inside the house, black shirts, pants, and plaid scarves synonymous with Islamic State were strewn across rooms littered with broken floor tiles and chunks of rock from plasted walls.

Left behind were waterproof boots, a balaclava, medical supplies, and camouflage bags and waistcoats typically used by soldiers to carry rifle magazines.

Coated in a thick layer of dust on floors of every room were pocket-sized copies of the Koran, some with pages stained by water leaked through gaping holes in the roof.

A mosque, about 100 meters behind the house, was the venue for an annual gathering in Marawi of Tablighi Jamaat, a Sunni missionary movement, just days before the fighting erupted.

Military officials say the foreigners who fought in Hapilon's alliance – among them Indonesians, Malaysians, and some from Arab states – had used that event as a cover to slip into Marawi without raising suspicion.

The deputy task force commander in Marawi, Col. Romeo Brawner, said Hapilon evaded security forces because rebels had a network of lookouts and gunmen ready to defend him.

"They put up heavy resistance. They were spread across a large area. They were strategically placed," he said. "They were prepared for it."

Hapilon's escape in the last week of May led to anarchy in the city of about 200,000. Rebels took hostages, set fire to buildings, ransacked churches, broke into the local jail to free inmates, and looted an armory.

The government had insufficient security forces in Marawi to prevent the fighters from fanning out across the city and seizing hundreds of buildings.

Hapilon was wanted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and had a bounty on his head of up to \$5 million (around P300 million). He was killed by Army rangers in a night operation and his body was retrieved from the battle zone in the heart of the city. His identity was confirmed by the FBI's deoxyrlbonucleic acid analysis.

29 October 2017



### Koran, boots, scarves all that remain in Hapilon's lair

MARAWI CITY – Prayer mats, checkered scarves, black fatigues and bullet-ridden walls mark the hideout where the "emir" of Islamic State in Southeast Asia spent months preparing the most brazen and devastating militant attack in the region.

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### **Battle ready**

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The city of Marawi was all but destroyed by government air strikes and shelling that leveled commercial areas and crushed thousands of shops, homes and vehicles.

"No one could have known what would happen," said Mohamed Faisal Mama, a resident in the same Basak Malutlot district where Hapilon was hiding. "No one knew them. They weren't famous then."

- Reuters

21 October 2017



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# Robredo bats for 'one plan for all' for Marawi

By RAYMUND F. ANTONIO

"Leni" Robredo said the government task force should implement "one plan for all" for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Marawi City.

"Para hindi na dodoble iyong tulong, lahat nabibigyan. Mayroong parang division of hindi lang labor pero division of resources (So the assistance won't be doubled. Everybody will be given [assistance]. It's like there is division, not only of labor, but division of resources)," Robredo, a former housing chief, said.

"Ang importante ngayon sa pagtulong, magkaroon ng iisang listahan, iisang inventory, iisang plano (In providing help, it is important to have a single list, inventory, plan)," she added.

The Vice President explained that coordinating with the Task Force Bangon Marawi would be the most effective way of helping people in the war-torn city.

Robredo made the recommendation when she was in San Fernando, Pampanga, recently to attend the 30th anniversary of the Talete King Panyulung Kapampangan Foundation, Inc. (TPKI).

She was the guest of honor and speaker during the anniversary celebration of TKPI, a microfinancing non-profit ecumenical group founded by Catholic priest Eddie Panlilio.

The former Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) chairperson took the occasion to extend her invitation to TKPI to take part in Angat Buhay, her antipoverty program.

"If we partner with TPKI, I think it's an opportunity for us to be able to reach — since TPKI is Central Luzon — the poorest communities in Central Luzon," she said.

Robredo said her office is in coordination with the task force in charge of Marawi rehabilitation to "maximize their limited resources."

The Office of the Vice President is heavily relying on its partnerships with private companies and civic groups to help in rebuilding Marawi.

Just last week, the OVP sent a team headed by Robredo's chief of staff and Undersecretary Boyet Dy to the Lanao del Sur capital to conduct an assessment of how it can contribute to the rehabilitation efforts through AngatBuhay.

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### Navymen back from Malaysia

Nativipersonnel on board & Philopole waishin "BRP Andres Sonitacio in ave armed in the country from nine-day training. and multary exercises with its counterparts in Malaysia Lt. Junor Grace Adeltrude Davata. Naw spokesman, said the training between the two navies last October  $16.2^{\circ}$ , comprised at three physics the Harbor Phase which focused. on conditionion conference and communication; the combined Ships maneuver and tactical maneuver, and the repression and social activities. The Wantime the decision with a liverage of the property blocky sia for both navies, training and the enjancement of their microperability and camaradone. (Altron B. Recuence)

2 October 2017



Pahina.

### **BIHAG NG GIYERA SA MARAWI**

"ANG akong Papa.... Papa...
Papa.." Yan ang paulit-ulit na sinasabi ng batang kasama sa mga bihag ng mga terorista na pinakahuling na-rescue ng ating mga sundalo mula sa main battle area, matapos mapatay ang dalawang leader na sina Isnilon Hapilon at Omar Maute.

Nanikip ang dibdib ko sa eksenang ito nang mapanood ko ito sa television. Parang atubiling sumama ang bata sa mga sumaklolo sa kanilang mga sundalo dahil hinahanap niya angtatay niya. Kaawa-awa ang kondisyon ng mga bihag lalo na ang mga bata, nag-ilyakan, takot na takot at uhaw na uhaw.

Akalain n'yo, limang buwan halos ang itinagal ng gulo mula nang lusubin at kubkubin ng mga Maute ang buong Marawi. Ibig sabihin, limang buwan ding kasama ng mga bihag ang mga teroristang ito?

Ano at paano nga kaya ang naging buhay nila habang nagtatago at nakikipagbakbakan ang mga Mauteng ito sa mga sundalo a kapulisan natin? Saan at paano sila kumukubli kapag grabe ang bakbakan?

Nakapapagod kaya ang araw-araw na takbo rito, takbo roon. Pinapakain din kaya sila at pinaiinom ng tubig? Paano kung may call of nature, saan sila magbabanyo?

Nakatutulog pa kaya sila kung panay ang putukan at ang mga kasama nila ang mga armado? Maligalig dahil sa habang panahon, mga kasama nila ay mga magpapakamatay at pumapatay na mga terorista

Hindi ko nga lubos maisip doon sa isang rescue operation ng mga kasundaluhan natin ay may dalawang buwang sanggol na kasama. Ibig sabihin, doon na ipinanganak si



Baby habang sila'y bihag. Eh, teka, paano siya ipinanganak? Sino ang pumapel na kumadrona, sino ang pumutol ng pusod ni baby? Ano ang ibinalot sa kanya? Ang dami kong tanong na ang tanging makasasagot lamang ay ang ina ni baby at ang mga bihag.

Salamat naman at tuluyan nang nagwakas ang giyera sa Marawi. Limang buwan ding inasam-asam ng mga Maranaw ang panahong ito. Gusto na nilang umuwi, gusto na nilang makabalik sa mga bahay nila.

Pero ang malungkot lang, wala na silang babalikan. Wala na, wasak na ang mga bahay nila dahil sa palitan ng mga putok ng bala at bombing ng mga tauhan ng pamahalaan at ng mga terorista.

Pero huwag silang magalala dahil nangako naman si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na maaayos din ang lahat. Medyo konting pasensya nga lang daw dahil mahaba-haba rin ang panahong gugugulin para sa rehabilitasyon ng Marawi.

Kung gaano kalaki ang pasasalamat ng mga Maranaw sa pagwawakas ng giyera, mas sobra rin ang pasasalamat ng ating mga sundalo at kapulisan.

Dahil sa wakas ay makauuwi na rin sila sa kani-kanilang mga pamilya at sa kanilang mga mother unit.

19 October 2017

### 77 Dine

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E D II T O R I A L

# War for hearts starts

ccounts from Marawi City reveal to faces of resident of the orce idyllic urban center which are those of celebration for the end of the pro-Islamic State (IS) and of frustration among residents who have seen for the first time after evacuating their devastated and looted homes.

The government rehabilitation effort should pay attention to the sense of frustration among the Marawi City residents, since many are blaming the military and the government as a whole for the destruction of their city.

The looting was also being blamed on government soldiers despite the earlier assurances from the military brass that the operations were always conscious of the cultural and religious sensitivities of the Marawi City residents.

Report of city residents returning from evacuation centers indicated that their first reaction was mostly a uniform display of anger at the government in unleashing hell at the pro-IS groups. This is a strange reaction. Did they want the IS influenced groups to control Marawi and be their government? Do they prefer that the military get killed by the terrorists by not fighting them? Have these Marawi residents even watch TV's coverage of Mosul, which the IS controlled the residents and how these IS terrorists killed those residents do as they are told, including killing them?

But without quick action for government such feelings have the possibility of gestating into animosity on which the IS feeds on in getting new recruits.

The estimate is that it could take at most 10 years or the least a decade to get Marawi City back to its feet which would give pro-IS ideologues enough time to win new adherents.

An old man, who sought anonymity, for instance, said their village was not a stronghold of the enemy and that the military had taken over the entire neighborhood as the fighting dragged on.

"People of the world, this shows how our government is bad. Our apartment was torched and everything was stolen," said the man who said he had saved up while working in the oil fields of the Middle East for three decades. He must have been influenced by the IS terrorists in the Middle East.

Footage shot by a military drone, however, showed armed men aboard a truck ransacking one of the homes located on the frontline but some residents believed troops pillaged their homes.

The less skeptical still accuse both the IS and the military of rights violations.

The even blamed President Duterte's decision to bomb Moro (Muslim) communities "that led to death and displacement of More people and destruction of our communities."

The reality for most of the destroyed structures, however, was the apparent tactics of the IS militants of using tunnels to move about the city which left the military no choice but to shell out the bandits from their hiding places.

The military said the IS tunnels connected to the city's drainage system, allowing them to move from one building to another undetected.

To counter this, the military had to blast holes between buildings so troops can prevent going back into the open streets where IS snipers await them.

Unless such methods are used, military commanders are pinned down by snipers.

For instance, in the early period of the five-month war, government troops took two days using conventional tactics to rescue 16 crewmen of two armored vehicles disabled by rocketpropelled grenades (RPG).

The RPG was surrounded by snipers on tall buildings and the militants were attempting to burn them alive by tossing Molotov (firebombs) at their vehicles.

The military added the militants hid in religious places and using hostages as human shields.

Rody had explicitly ordered the military not to desecrate places to the Muslims to avoid a religious lashback in the conflict.

The effort to restore hope among Marawi City residents would have to start with winning back their confidence to the government.

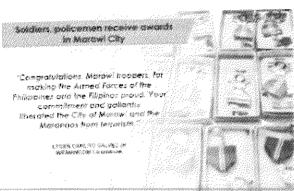
What's at stake is another or a bigger crisis similar to what had just ended

Still, the Marawi residents are being unreasonable. They were saved from the IS terrorists, and yet they blame government for the damaged homes.

### ONLINE NEWS 29 OCTOBER 2017

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## HONORING WARRIORS | Soldiers, Police in Marawi to receive Awards



"The five-month stand-off yielded to the

neutralization of more than 900 terrorists, the rescue of 1,780 hostages, and recovery of more than 800 high-powered firearms and almost 2,000 unexploded ordnances, improvised explosive devices and booby traps of the terrorists.

"Congratulations. Marawi troopers, for making the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Filipinos proud. Your commitment and gallantry liberated the City of Marawi and the Maranaos from terrorism."

LTGEN CARLITO GALVEZ JR,

WESMINCOM Commander

www.dwdd.com.ph

## OPEN FORUM | 33IB talks with former NPA members

Proceed by Alvin Santago or Corpeda 10, 20 or en en est

PRESIDENT QUIRINO, Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat (DWDD) – Lt Col Harold M Cabunoc, the Commanding Officer of 33rd Infantry (Makabayan) Battalion and Cpt Rogelio M Agustin Jr, the commanding officer of Charlie Company, met former New People's Army rebels situated in Bagumbayan town to hear their thoughts and experiences.

The Makabayan Battalion has engaged the people to gain popular support in the ongoing counter-insurgency campaign against the communists. Video editing by Pvt Henrich Burata/MCAG

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### CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS | Com 33IB talks with Community Leaders

Property to the AND SECURE OF THE PROPERTY OF

PRESIDENT QUIRINO, Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat (DWDD) – Lt Col Harold M Cabunoc engaged the people to resolve community issues through the support of their local leaders.

Communist insurgents have exploited the prevailing issues to recruit armed members and community supporters. Photo by Pfc Salbidin Maulana/MCAG



Lt Col Harold M Cabunoc listened to the concerns raised by the people of Sitio Kamanga, Laguilayan village, Isulan, SK. The communist recruiters of Guerilla Front 73 had recruited NPA members among the Manobo tribe using the community problems as tools of agitation. Lt Col Cabunoc coordinated with the village officials to submit a council resolution to the battalion.



Lt Col Harold M Cabunoc presented the council resolution to Gov. Sultan Pax Mangudadatu, requesting an access road, health center, and day care center for the Manobo tribe in Sitio Bulawan, Laguilayan village.

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



Sultan Pax Mangudadatu, the Governor of Sultan Kudarat, reads the resolution and directed the Provincial Engineers Office for the project implementation.



Lt Col Harold M Cabunoc presented the council resolution to Engineer Ed Maaya, the Provincial Engineer of Sultan Kudarat for the implementation of the project.