

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



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

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OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

# NEWS CLIPPINGS

26 September 2017

Tuesday

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

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

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# BusinessMirror

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**BusinessMirror**  
Daily Edition  
66,000 reads Nationwide

**SEPTEMBER 26, 2017 | TUESDAY**  
**LOW PRESSURE AREA**  
**ESTIMATED AT 50 KM NORTHEAST**  
**OF ILOILO CITY, ILOILO**  
(As of 4:00 PM - September 25, 2017)

**3-DAY EXTENDED FORECAST**

	SEP 27 Wednesday	SEP 28 Thursday	SEP 29 Friday
<b>METRO MANILA</b>	25-32°C	25-32°C	25-32°C
<b>TUGUEGARAO</b>	25-33°C	25-33°C	26-33°C
<b>LADAG</b>	25-32°C	25-32°C	25-32°C
<b>BAGUIO</b>	16-24°C	17-24°C	16-24°C
<b>SBMA/ CLARK</b>	25-32°C	24-32°C	24-32°C
<b>TAGAYTAY</b>	19-29°C	19-28°C	20-29°C
<b>LEGAZPI</b>	25-33°C	25-32°C	25-32°C
<b>PUERTO PRINCESA</b>	25-30°C	25-32°C	25-32°C
<b>ILOILO/ BACOLOD</b>	25-32°C	26-32°C	26-31°C

**3-DAY EXTENDED FORECAST**


	SEP 27 Wednesday	SEP 28 Thursday	SEP 29 Friday
<b>METRO CEBU</b>	25-33°C	25-32°C	25-32°C
<b>TACLOBAN</b>	24-31°C	25-31°C	24-31°C
<b>GAGAYAN DEORO</b>	23-32°C	23-32°C	23-32°C
<b>METRO DAVAO</b>	25-34°C	25-33°C	25-33°C
<b>ZAMBOANGA</b>	24-33°C	24-33°C	24-32°C


SUNRISE	SUNSET	MOONRISE	MOONSET
6:45 AM	6:49 PM	10:36 AM	10:20 PM

NEW MOON	FIRST QUARTER	LOW TIDE	HIGH TIDE
SEP 20 1:30 PM	SEP 28 10:54 AM	8:40 AM 0.23 Meter	1:22 AM 0.97 Meter


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SAGOT NA, PANDA NA!

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# SERENO SEEKS DISMISSAL OF IMPEACHMENT RAP

Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno says allegations against her in the impeachment complaint filed by lawyer Lorenzo Gadon are 'utterly false' and based on 'guesswork.'

By Vince F. Nonato  
and Marc Jayson Cayabyab  
@Team\_Inquirer

Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno has sought the dismissal of the impeachment complaint filed by a lawyer in the House of Representatives against her, cit-

ing its lack of impeachable grounds and "utterly false" allegations.

In a verified answer submitted to the House committee on justice on Monday, Sereno said she could not be held liable for "culpable violation of the Constitution" because the allega-

tions were "guesswork based on newspaper reports" and "hearsay sources."

The House committee on Sept. 13 found the impeachment complaint filed by Lorenzo Gadon sufficient in form and substance, paving the way for the panel to hear the charges

against Sereno, such as her failure to declare her real wealth, buying a luxury car with government funds and making questionable decisions without consulting fellow magistrates.

Sereno said her attorney's fees for handling the government suit against Philippine In-

ternational Air Terminal Co. were properly reflected in her statements of assets liabilities and net worth (SALNs), contrary to Gadon's claims.

She noted that the allegation pertained to supposed acts committed before she joined the judiciary in 2010.

Sereno pointed out that the attorney's fees would not be reflected entirely in her 2010 SALN because these were received between 2004 and 2009.

She explained that of the P30.2 million (\$595,807.60) in fees, she paid P8.67 million in taxes and spent P14.7 **A2**

## FROM A1

million through the years on her house and lot, her Toyota Altis vehicle, various shares of stock, medical and funeral expenses for her mother and her father-in-law, and tithes and offerings.

She denied charging the government an “exorbitant” fee, saying the case involved a \$1-billion claim against the government and her \$80 hourly rate was discounted.

### SC resolution

Sereno denied falsifying any Supreme Court resolution and manipulating the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC), allegations based on issues mostly raised by Associate Justice Teresita J. Leonardo-de Castro.

The alleged violations of the two bodies’ collegial decision-making processes arose from “differences in opinion with respect to the internal processes” and did not imply any violation of the Constitution, Sereno said.

She said it was false to say she acted unilaterally in reviving Regional Court Administration Office 7 (RCAO 7) because the order had already been approved through Supreme Court resolutions. She denied that the full court had issued a resolution scrapping the resolutions that created the office.

The reply stated that it was not unheard of for a Chief Jus-

tice to issue administrative orders because as “head of the entire judiciary,” her “broad administrative powers” had been supported by “long-standing practice and tradition.”

Even if De Castro disagreed with the reopening of RCAO 7, it could not be considered an “impeachable offense.”

### TRO on party-list group

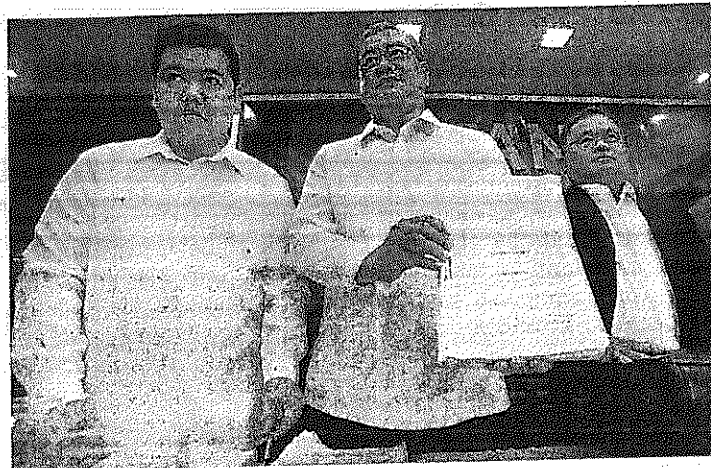
Sereno also denied tampering with De Castro’s draft temporary restraining order (TRO) in the leadership dispute of the Coalition of Associations of Senior Citizens in the Philippines to benefit other party-list groups affected by a Commission on Elections (Comelec) resolution.

Since the TRO was issued while the full court was on summer recess in 2013, Sereno said the order was thus issued under her own authority, taking into consideration De Castro’s “commendatory action.”

She reasoned that upon her evaluation, a Comelec resolution could not be restrained in favor of one group but not the others.

Sereno said there was no violation when it came to the alleged “delay” in the transfer of cases against the Maute group outside Mindanao.

The high court initially found it logical to assign the cases to the Court of Appeals’ Cagayan de Oro station and it took some time to coordinate with the authorities before finally concur-



SERENO’S REPLY Members of Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno’s legal team—Anzen Dy, Dino Tamayo and Alexander Poblador—show to journalists her reply to the impeachment complaint filed by lawyer Lorenzo Gadon. —GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

ring with the Department of Justice’s request, she said.

### JBC manipulation

As to the alleged manipulation of the JBC—the body that vets judicial appointments for the President—Sereno said she was merely expressing concerns regarding the qualification of then Solicitor General Francis Jardeleza to be appointed to the Supreme Court in 2014.

The tribunal in 2014 reinstated Jardeleza to the shortlist, allowing President Benigno Aquino III to appoint him as Supreme Court justice.

Sereno denied she was out to “manipulate” the President’s selection and invoked the JBC’s una-

nimity rule, which requires the vote of all members in including a nominee in the shortlist when his integrity is called into question.

She noted that the Supreme Court, in reinstating Jardeleza to the list, did not even strike down the JBC rule as unconstitutional.

She also said she was “entitled to her own opinion” in questioning Jardeleza’s integrity over his position in the arbitration of the maritime dispute between the Philippines and China.

### Nominees to Sandiganbayan

Jardeleza was not furnished a written statement out of a “good faith desire to keep the matters regarding the objection

to his nomination confidential," the reply stated.

On the "clustering" of nominees adopted for the six simultaneous vacancies at the Sandiganbayan, Sereno denied "manipulating" the process so that the President would have to choose one nominee each from separate lists for the positions.

Sereno said the JBC adopted the system as a collegial body. Even if she was the body's ex-officio chair, she was only entitled to one vote.

Through the reply her legal team submitted to the House justice committee, Sereno appealed to panel members to "administer true political justice, with due regard, not only to the facts and applicable law, but also to the impact of their decision on the future of our democratic system of government and on the delivery of justice through the ongoing reforms."

She cautioned lawmakers that her impeachment on "false and flimsy grounds" would not only inflict injustice on her but would also undermine the independence of the judiciary and the fundamental principle of separation of powers to the detriment of the republic.

"They will usher instability and inflict injustice to the nation," she said.

In a press conference, lawyer Jojo Lacanilao said Sereno would not step down from her post and would fight

the impeachment complaint. "She is resilient, she will stay on," he said.

Others on Sereno's legal team were lawyers Alex Poblador, Anzen Dy, Dino Tamayo, Carlo Cruz, Josalee Deinla and Aldwin Salumbides.

Poblador said the members of the House must "decide on the basis of facts and applicable law, not on the basis of the dictates of their political leaders following some kind of political agenda."

#### **'Open minds'**

He later clarified his remarks. "It's not a statement of fact. It is a statement of possibility, with the hope that all of them still have open minds."

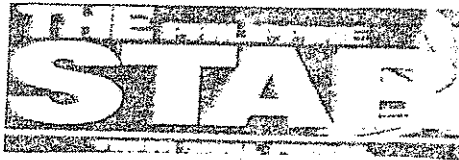
Salumbides said the Chief Justice was living up to her name of being "serene" in the face of the impeachment case against her. "She is unfazed, because she knows in her conscience that she did not do anything wrong," he said.

A vote of one-third of the 293 members of the House will send the articles of impeachment to the Senate, whose members will serve as judges in the trial.

If impeached, Sereno would be the second Chief Justice to suffer such a fate following her predecessor. Renato Corona was impeached in December 2011 and found guilty by the Senate in May 2012 for failing to disclose his real wealth in his SALN. INQ



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# Trader claims paying P92-M bribes to BOC

By PAOLO ROMERO

Broker Mark Taguba, who is among those implicated in the smuggling of P6.4 billion worth of drugs from China last May, claimed yesterday that he gave a total of P92 million in bribes to former Bureau of Customs chief Nicanor Faeldon and other corrupt officials in less than a year that he was doing business at the BOC.

Testifying at the resumption of the inquiry of the Senate Blue Ribbon committee into the reported corrup-

*Faeldon files ethics complaint vs Trillanes. See Page 2.*

tion at the bureau, Taguba made a PowerPoint presentation on calls, text messages and bank statements on his transactions with BOC officials since he began as a "player" or fixer in August last year, until he stopped last June after the drug shipment was seized by Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service operatives in Valenzuela City.

Taguba had estimated that he was pushing 100 shipping containers a week, and paying P27,200 in *tara* or bribe per container to several corrupt



Customs officials would be consolidated with the NBI complaint.

"This will avoid conflicting decisions on the complaints," Reyes told reporters in an interview after the hearing.

In its complaint, the NBI alleged that Chen tapped Li for the processing of the release of the shipment declared as kitchenware, footwear and moldings from the BOC. Li then tapped Dong to look for a customs broker to facilitate the release.

Dong later contracted Taguba, who has been testifying in congressional inquiries about the drug smuggling case, and Marcellana as brokers.

Tatad owns the EMT Trading, which was used by the brokers as importer or consignee for the shipment.

Chen Min and Jhu were identified by Chinese authorities as the real owners of the shipment. Their alleged local contact, Fidel Dee, was arrested by authorities upon receiving the contraband.

Apart from drug charges, Li, Dong and Taguba were also charged with unauthorized practice of customs broker profession under Republic Act 9280 (Customs Broker Act) after it was found that they did not have necessary license from the BOC.

The drug shipment arrived at the BOC last May 17 and was released from port on May 23.

Both Chen and Li denied having any knowledge that there were drugs in the ship-

ment, initially declared as kitchenware, footwear and moldings.

Newly installed BoC commissioner Isidro Lapeña warned officials and employees of the bureau that tara or bribe is illegal.

"I know arithmetic, as I know the correct valuation of goods. If any of you *hindi sumunod sa tamang* (do not follow the right) valuation, you are giving me the reason to do what you don't want to happen to you," Lapeña said at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) yesterday.

He said that now is the time to "rebuild our image, we will fight corruption, improve the services" of the embattled bureau.

"There will be no more tara, no gift policy and no benchmarking. I was also able to talk to stakeholders, that they can pay the right taxes due the government," he added.

Lapeña also said there are promotions forthcoming to some 587 positions in the BOC that need qualified personnel at the Collection District III.

Seniority will be the priority in the promotion, he said, because some employees who have been in the bureau for decades have not been promoted.

Lapeña awarded a plaque of recognition to NAIA BOC district collector Ed Macabeo who is retiring this month after 36 years of service with "honor."

– With Edu Punay, Rudy Santos

## Trader From Page 1

BOC officials.

He paid out a total of about P92 million from August to early June.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who earlier delivered a privilege speech, said Taguba is just one of 44 players at the BOC who all pay tara to release each container they bring in through the country's ports and Faeldon gets a share for each.

Shipments covered by bribes are allowed to pass through the "green lane" or express lane where they are not subjected to inspection.

Lacson also said the tara does not end there, since some shipments already facilitated by the fixers or have passed through the green lane are put on "alert" or issued "stop orders" for which the brokers need to pay more.

But what will pin down Faeldon, Lacson said, was the issuance of special stop orders on shipments that can only be authorized by the office of the BOC commissioner.

In his presentation, Taguba showed some "stop orders" on some of his shipments that he had asked to have lifted using his connections in the BOC.

Estimated cost per container is about P170,000 of which about P60,000 goes to the shipping line; container deposit, P15,000; arrastre P9,235; trucking, P10,000; duties and taxes, P40,000.

The remaining P27,200 is the grease money, divided among various offices including the port collectors, BOC X-ray division, Import Assessment Services, Intelligence Group, Formal Entry Division, Enforcement and Security Service, and the Assessment and Operational Coordinating Group.

"That's what I call double tara or two-face. You imposed tara, it (shipment) was brought to the green lane and processed, and they're imposed tara again by issuing a special stop order," Lacson said.

Meanwhile, three more individuals tagged in the smuggling of the P6.4-billion shabu shipment seized last May yesterday denied criminal charges before the Department of Justice (DOJ).

In preliminary investigation hearing, Customs brokers Taguba and Teejay Marcellana and Filipino-Chinese businessman Chen Ju Long alias Richard Chen all submitted their counter-affidavits denying charges of importation of illegal drugs under Republic Act 9165 (Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act).

They asked investigating Assistant State Prosecutor Aristotle Reyes to dismiss the complaint filed by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for lack of probable cause.

In the hearing last Sept. 18,



Mark Taguba (standing) details alleged anomalies at the Bureau of Customs as Senators Richard Gordon and Panfilo Lacson look on at the Senate yesterday.

GEREMY PINTOLO

two other respondents – Dong Yi Shen alias Kenneth Dong and importer Eirene May Tatad – appeared before the DOJ and also submitted counter-affidavits denying the charges.

Reyes said the rest of the respondents who failed to appear before the DOJ – including Li Guang Feng alias Manny Li and Taiwanese nationals

Chen Min and Jhu Ming Jyun – have lost their opportunity to answer the charges and the complaint against them was considered submitted for resolution.

The prosecutor said similar complaints filed by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency against former commissioner Faeldon and other

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

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# Battle in Marawi: It took one week to cross a street

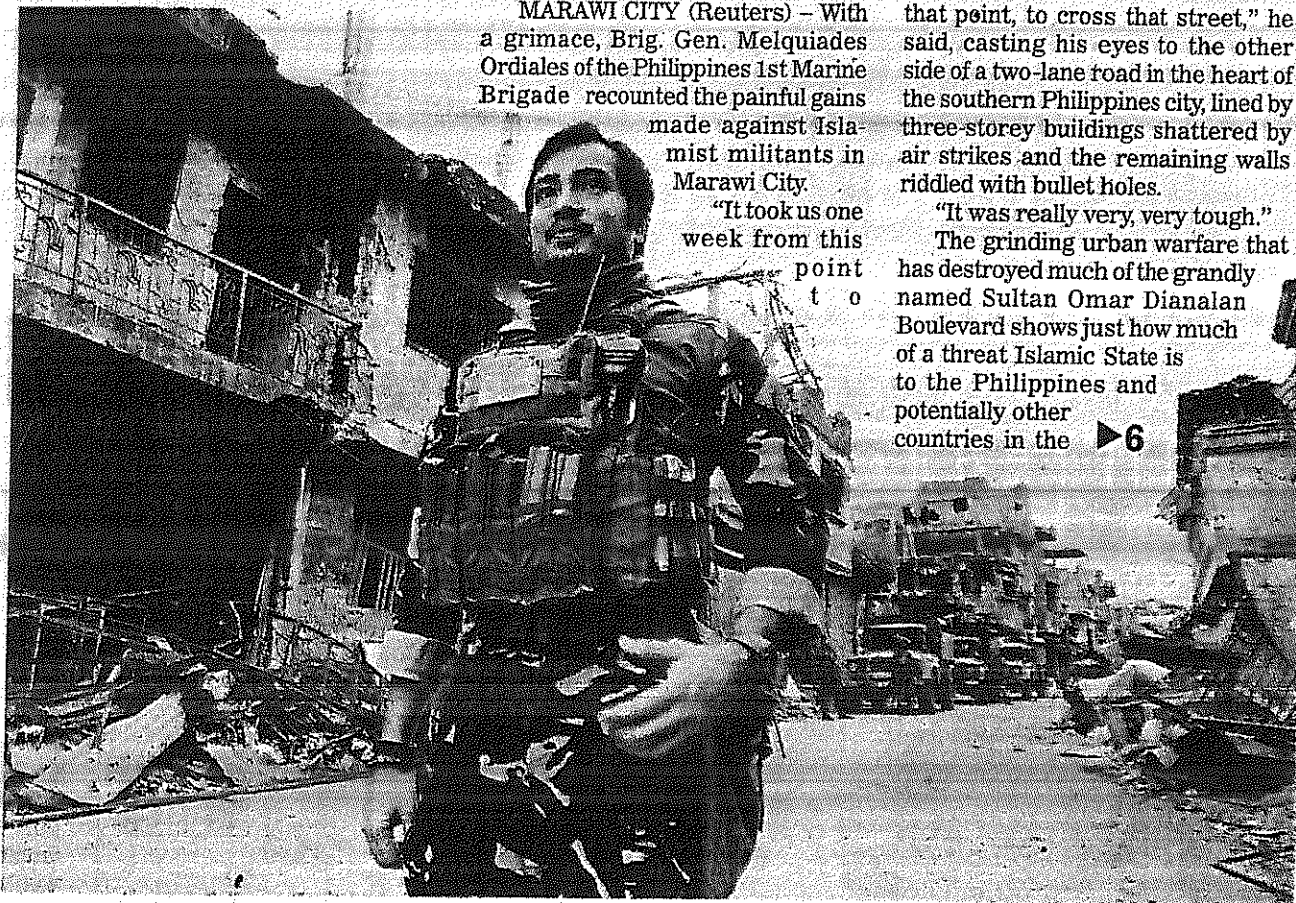
MARAWI CITY (Reuters) – With a grimace, Brig. Gen. Melquiades Ordiales of the Philippines 1st Marine Brigade recounted the painful gains made against Islamist militants in Marawi City.

“It took us one week from this point to

that point, to cross that street,” he said, casting his eyes to the other side of a two-lane road in the heart of the southern Philippines city, lined by three-storey buildings shattered by air strikes and the remaining walls riddled with bullet holes.

“It was really very, very tough.”

The grinding urban warfare that has destroyed much of the grandly named Sultan Omar Dianalan Boulevard shows just how much of a threat Islamic State is to the Philippines and potentially other countries in the ▶ 6



**WAR-SCARRED STREET** – Army Scout Ranger Capt. Arnel Carandang surveys damaged houses and buildings on Sultan Omar Dianalan Boulevard in Marawi City, scene of intense fighting between government forces and Islamist terrorists. (Ranel Ranoco/Reuters)

Southeast Asian region.

But when the fighting started, Philippine authorities were unfazed.

After the Islamic State-backed militants took over large parts of picturesque, lakeside Marawi in May, the country's defense minister, Delfin Lorenzana, predicted the entire conflict would be over in one week.

Now, after four months of intense aerial bombardment and house-by-house battles, Philippine commanders believe they are in the final stages of the operation to oust the rebels from the city.

In the past two weeks, military officials say they have conquered three militant bastions, including a mosque, and restricted about 60 remaining guerrillas to about 10 devastated city blocks in the business district. Patrols have been increased on the lake to prevent the supply of armaments and recruits to the holed-up militants.

Military officers who have skirmished for years with Islamic insurgents in the southern Philippines say the battle in Marawi has been more intense and difficult than earlier encounters.

The Islamic State militants are better armed, with high-powered weapons, night vision goggles, the latest sniper scopes and surveillance drones, said Captain Arnel Carandang, of the Philippines Army First Scout Ranger Battalion.

He said he has served for almost a decade in the remote jungles and mountains of Mindanao, the southern Philippines region that has long been wracked by insurgencies. Now, Carandang says, the military is in unfamiliar urban terrain.

The militants have exploited the battlefield to their advantage and held off Philippines forces despite a 10-to-1 numerical advantage for the government troops.

Borrowing heavily from Islamic State tactics in the Iraqi city of Mosul, they have surrounded themselves with hostages and used snipers and a network of tunnels.

Marawi's underground drainage system and "rat holes" – crevices in the walls of high floors allowing access to adjacent buildings – have enabled the rebels to evade bombs and remain undetected, soldiers at the battlefield said.

"We believe there have been some foreign terrorists that have been directing their operations that's why they are, how do I define this, really good," said Carandang.

"We have seen some cadavers of foreigners. Some are white, some are black and some tall people we guess

are Asians (from outside the Philippines). We have been hearing in their transmissions some English speaking terrorists."

#### Scavenge for food

Hostages – many of them Christians – have been deployed to build improvised explosive devices, scavenge for food and weapons in the heat of battle and fight for the Islamist rebels, according to those who escaped.

"When we were first moved to the mosque, there were more than 200 of us," an escaped hostage, who asked not to be identified for safety reasons, told Reuters last week.

"We gradually became fewer. People would go on errands but they wouldn't come back. They either escaped or died. By the time I left, there were only about 100 of us."

The account could not be verified, but military officials confirmed the man escaped from Marawi in early August.

The hostage said the militants were excited by their successes in Marawi, speaking often of the advantages of urban warfare and talking about some of their next possible targets, including other cities in Mindanao and the Philippines capital Manila.

"They said they could hide well in the cities. They can get civilians to become hostages and it's more difficult in the mountains with only the soldiers," he said.

hundreds of thousands of residents displaced and “emboldened” Islamists, Sinarimbo said.

“They proceeded with the aerial bombing but they didn’t take the city,” Sinarimbo said. “The military lost authority.”

In addition, the devastation of the city will play into militants’ hands, creating resentment and further radicalizing many youngsters, he said.

Marawi residents in evacuation centers or staying with relatives elsewhere are becoming increasingly frustrated, said Adiong, who is a spokesman for the local government’s crisis management authority. Some residents were disappointed and angry that requests for a moratorium on bank loan repayments had not been met, he told Reuters.

Many of the fighters are young recruits, who are fanatical and accomplished fighters, the soldiers said.

“By the way they move and their tactics, you can see they’ve been trained,” said Colonel Jose Maria Cuerdo, deputy commander of the 103rd Brigade fighting in Marawi.

#### Proposal rebuffed

Much of this bloodshed could have been avoided, local political leaders told Reuters.

Naguib Sinarimbo, a Muslim leader who has negotiated between the military and Islamic separatists for years, said he and other elders had urged the armed forces to allow militias and rival Islamist groups to take the lead in ousting the Islamic State militants.

The groups were familiar with Marawi’s terrain and, through family and clan links, could influence many of the fighters to lay down their weapons, they told the armed forces.

The proposal was rebuffed, Sinarimbo said. Air power, the military assured them, was the path to a quick win.

Zia Alonto Adiong, a provincial politician, said the military also had doubts about the loyalty of some of the “political personalities” offering to provide their militias to push out the fighters.

The result was a city in ruins,

Philippines central bank governor Nestor Espenilla told Reuters legislation would be needed for a debt moratorium and was being studied.

Mindanao has long been marred by the decades of Muslim hostility to rule from Manila. After years fighting insurgent groups and then long negotiations, the government signed an agreement in 2014 to give Muslim majority areas in Mindanao autonomy. But the deal has been long delayed.

“This part of the Philippines is fertile ground to plant violent extremism,” Adiong said. “There is a narrative of social injustice that is strong. Young people are fed up with the peace process and nothing concrete or sustainable has developed.”

“[The militants] use this as the basis to entice people, to get support of the local people.”

#### Last stand?

In Marawi, some in the armed forces are hopeful that at least some militants will surrender and hand over between 45 to 50 civilian captives. Carandang, the Scout Rangers captain, however said indications were the rebels are preparing for a bloody final stand.

“We are monitoring the enemy’s transmissions and it’s like during these final days they are being more fanatical,” he said. “Transmissions indicate they are preparing for suicide bombings.”

An unused suicide vest was discovered this month in Marawi’s Grand Mosque, a former stronghold of the militants, government sources told Reuters.

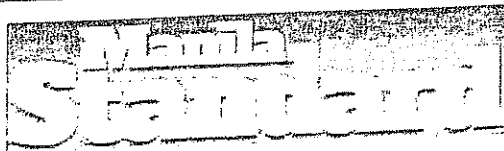
Suicide attacks are rare in the Philippines despite decades of Islamist insurgency.

“That’s the difference between here and Syria and Iraq,” said Ordiales, the marine general. “It’s almost the same war tactics and fighting tactics, the one thing that’s not the same is the human bomb or the suicide bombing.”

“It hasn’t happened, not yet.”



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# Rody mulls over amnesty for Reds

By John Paolo Bencito

**P**RESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte once again floated the idea of declaring a general amnesty to communist rebels, but only if they would surrender and give up their armed struggle against the government.

"For the rebels who simply wanted to topple [the] government, just go down [from the mountains] so there won't be trouble," Duterte said in a speech before Davao-based journalists over the weekend.

"There won't be any harassment. I will not make you account for the people you've killed. If Congress

will just agree with me, [maybe] I will just declare general amnesty," Duterte said.

The President said that history suggests that armed struggle against the government will not succeed.

"You've been there for 50 years... but nothing has happened," Duterte said in a mix of English and Filipino.

"What Sison wants, you will not get," he said, referring to the founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines [CPP], Jose Ma. Sison. "If you fight for 50 years, 100 years, you'll get nothing from the government. Even the people don't want the communists."

Early this month, Duterte said that he is considering

whether to accept the offer of communist rebels for an eventual resumption of the peace talks, but nevertheless said he could not accede to their demand that all political prisoners be released.

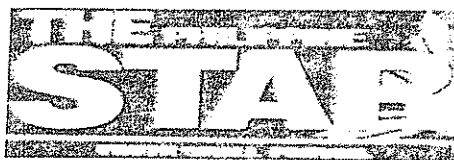
The CPP tagged the Duterte government as "anti-people, pro-imperialist, and fascist" for "embarking

*Next page*

on efforts to undermine the very institutions that serve as a check on his executive powers," including revived threats to declare martial law nationwide and impose a revolutionary government.

Duterte ended the peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front in July following a series of attacks of its armed wing the New People's Army against government forces.

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## Troops clash with NPAs in Batangas

By ED AMOROSO

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna – Hundreds of residents left their houses on Sunday to avoid being caught in the crossfire after government troops clashed with communist guerrillas in Barangay Talumpok Silangan in Batangas City.

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The encounter lasted for about 40 minutes, resulting in the killing of one suspected member of the New People's Army (NPA) while several rebels were wounded, police officials said.

Senior Supt. Randy Peralta, Batangas police director, said government forces reportedly overran yesterday morning a rebel camp on Mt. Banoy in Batangas City.

The evacuees included 365 residents of Sitio Tibig in Barangay Talahib Pandayan near Mt. Banoy and more than 500 residents from Barangay Masagitsit and Banalo of Lobo town. Around 70 others fled to villages in Batangas City.

"The evacuees still remained at the evacuation centers despite the firefight having ended yesterday morning after government troops invaded the encampment of the rebels while clearing operations are ongoing," Peralta told **The STAR**.

Classes in 12 public schools in Batangas City were suspended yesterday due to clashes between troopers and NPA rebels.

Jesus Lorenzo Mateo, Department of Education undersecretary for planning and field operations, said nine elementary schools and three high schools suspended classes.

Mateo said that none of the 12 schools was used as an evacuation center for residents who fled their homes.

Peralta said the encounter started at around 8:50 a.m. at the vicinity of Mt.

Banoy in Barangay Talumpok Silangan where at least 30 NPA guerrillas encountered members of the Air Force and local police.

The Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade reported that elements of the 730th Combat Group of the Air Force and the Batangas police Provincial Public Safety Company were conducting security operations when they encountered the rebels who had set up camp on Mt. Banoy.

Troops also found strings tied around the perimeter of the camp supposedly intended to detonate improvised explosive devices.

Maj. Gen. Rhoderick Parayno, Commander 2nd Infantry Division, said that the NPA were monitored in the area by civilians who helped in the intelligence gathering that led to the discovery of the rebel camp.

Peralta said troops were deployed in the area following reports that rebels had established a makeshift camp on Mt. Banoy.

Seized from the NPA's camp were one M16, three magazines, one hand grenade, different ammunition and other valuable items including documents.

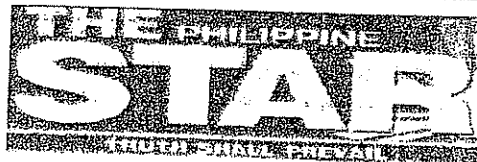
Peralta said a rebel not yet identified was also recovered at the site.

Blocking force from the military at possible enemy exit points was established and all chiefs of police from different police stations were ordered to monitor and visit hospitals in their area where a number of wounded communist rebels fled after the clash, Peralta said.

– With Michael Punongbayan, Rainier Allan Ronda



September 2017



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## 3 Abu bomb experts nabbed in Zamboanga

By ROEL PAREÑO

**ZAMBOANGA CITY** – Government security forces have thwarted possible bomb attacks with the arrest of three suspected Abu Sayyaf bomb experts in this city, officials said yesterday.

One of those arrested, identified as Omar Askali, alias Ayub, is said to be a follower of Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf leader Furuji Indama, according to Col. Leonel Nicolas, chief of Joint Task Force Zamboanga (JTFZ).

Askali was arrested by a joint team of the police and military on Gov. Lim Avenue at around 10:30 a.m. on Saturday.

The suspect yielded a gre-

nade, a mobile phone and two identification cards, Nicolas said.

Follow-up operation conducted by the same team resulted in the arrest of Mukaram Sapie, alias Mukram, and a certain Shayif, in Barangay Taluksangay.

The two suspects were allegedly on a mission to carry out bomb attacks on orders of Indama.

"Intelligence reports showed the group would bomb public places in the city three days from now," Nicolas said, adding Askali is one of Indama's most trusted men.

Nicolas said they are tracking down two improvised explosive devices set to be

planted in the city, based on information provided by Askali.

Police and the military have stepped up security in the city in preparation for the month-long celebration of the Zamboanga Hermosa Festival starting Oct. 1.

### Cotabato bomb plot foiled

Meanwhile, authorities prevented another attempt to bomb selected targets in North Cotabato with the arrest of an alleged leader of the outlawed Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in Midsayap town yesterday.

Muslimin Ladtugan, alias Commander Mus, was placed under the joint custody of the police and military, according

to local officials.

Ladtugan was arrested at his hideout in Barangay Nabalawag at around 8 a.m. by police and military troopers.

Reports said the team recovered from the suspects two rifles, a rocket-propelled grenade, two .45 caliber pistols and bomb paraphernalia.

Residents tipped off the Army's 34th Infantry Battalion about Ladtugan's hideout, according to Lt. Col. Gerry Besana of the Army's 6th Civil-Military Operations Battalion.

The military also received reports that Ladtugan's group has been planning to avenge the death of 27 BIFF men killed in encounters with Moro Islamic Liberation Front fighters.

– With John Unson

21 September 2017

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

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## Army, MILF press offensive vs IS-inspired BIFF

CAMP SIONGCO, Maguindanao (PNA) — The military and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) have pressed their offensive against an Islamic State (IS)-inspired group in Maguindanao's second district.

Early Monday morning, the Army fired artillery shots towards Barangay Muslim in Guindulungan, Maguindanao after black flag-carrying suspected terrorists were seen massing in the village.

Over the weekend, four suspected members of ISIS-inspired Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) were injured when the military launched artillery strikes against a BIFF fac-

tion that tried to attack Army bases in Guindulungan town, according to Capt. Arvin John Encinas.

Speaking for the Sixth Infantry Division, Encinas said the preemptive artillery strike was launched after military units in Guindulungan learned of the suspicious convergence of followers of BIFF leader Imam Bongos, alias Commander Bongos, in a secluded barangay there.

Bongos is a leader of the BIFF faction operating in Maguindanao.

Bongos' men attacked on Saturday dawn the joint personnel of the Army's 37th Infantry Battalion and 6th ID's 64th Division Reconnaissance Company

in Barangay Muslim, Guindulungan, Maguindanao.

Intelligence officials said followers of Bongos tried to harass an Army detachment in Guindulungan, but changed their plan following the military's artillery bombardment.

The MILF's Task Force Ittihad (Unity) had been battling the BIFF Esmael Abdulmalik faction after the latter tried to influence MILF-identified communities in Datu Salibo, Maguindanao.

MILF fighters sent to check on the report in Barangays Tee and Andavit triggered sporadic firefights that have already claimed the lives of at least 40 fighters from both sides.

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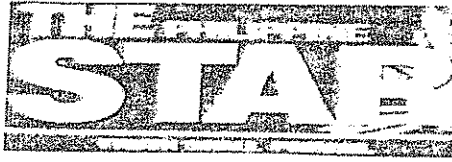
**MANILA BULLETIN**  
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• **CAFGUS repel  
NPA attack**

BUTUAN CITY — Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit Active Auxiliary (CAA) members were able to defend their patrol base in Barangay Payapag, Bacuag, Surigao del Norte which was attacked by an undetermined number of New People's Army (NPA) rebels Saturday afternoon, an initial report reaching the police regional headquarters here on Monday stated. A flash report received here said the CAA Payapag Patrol Base of the Army's Alpha Company of the 30th Infantry Battalion (30th IB) defended their base for 20 minutes until the attacking force of guerrilla-Front Committee 16 of the CPP-NPA Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee retreated. Capt. Francisco Garelo, Jr., 36th IB Civil Military Operations (CMO) officer reported no casualty from the government forces. "The retreating NPA group was believed to be under a certain 'Aka Freca,' the 30th IB CMO officer said. (Mike U. Crismundo)

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Philippine Army vehicles and personnel wait along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City to assist commuters during yesterday's transport strike.

MICHAEL VARGAS

21 September 2017

# INQUIRER

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## NPA flees Batangas City camp after clashes

By Maricar Cinco  
@maricarcincoINQ

SAN PEDRO CITY—The Philippine Army said it had captured a training camp of communist rebels deep in the forests of Batangas City, after gunfights that drove hundreds of families to evacuation centers and forced 15 schools to suspend classes.

Maj. Gen. Rhoderick Parayno, commander of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division, on Monday said more soldiers were being deployed to run after the rebels. Checkpoints had been set up while security in sea ports was tightened around Batangas City.

The clash between members of the New People's Army (NPA) and 730th Combat Group of the Philippine Air Force started around 9 a.m. on Sunday in Mt.

Banoy in the village of Talumpok Silangan, about an hour and a half travel by land from Batangas City.

Col. Arnulfo Burgos, head of the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade, described the encounter site as part of a mountain ridge that "you'll probably ask yourself: 'Were there really people living in there?'"

"But yes, there were," he said.

### Community tip

Parayno said the military learned about the NPA camp from the community.

Residents reported seeing army helicopters and bombings in the upland area on Sunday evening, forcing hundreds of families to leave their homes.

Jerson Sanchez of Batangas City's public information office said 50 families sought shelter

in the the village of Cumba, while 87 families in the village of Talahib Pañdayan.

The city government had also declared a two-day class suspension in 15 elementary and high schools in the villages of Tibig, Cumba, Talahib Pan-

dayan, Talahib Payapa, Sto. Domingo, Maruclap, Conde Itaas, Talumpok Proper, Talumpok Silangan, Haligue Silangan, Haligue Kanluran and Sto. Niño.

Parayno said military planes unleashed three rockets

on Sunday “in the isolated” area of the mountain as rebels were believed to had booby trapped the area with explosives.

**Missing activist**

“They are trying to resurrect their group,” Parayno said of the rebel unit. He said government soldiers found materials for making explosives which were a sign the area was training ground.

The Army reported at least one rebel slain in the gunfight and an undetermined number of rebels wounded.

The lone fatality has yet to be identified and extracted from the clash site as of Monday afternoon.

In a separate interview, Arnold Evangelista of the rights group Karapatan-Batangas said the family of John Ray

Mendoza, a member of activist youth group Anakbayan, feared that their son was the fatality.

Evangelista said Mendoza was in the vicinity of the villages of Cumba and Talahib Pandayan for the past four days for a youth activity.

“He could not be contacted anymore since the encounter,” Evangelista said.

Parayno said government forces clashed with at least 16 communist rebels, led by a certain Jethro Dionisio, believed to be an alias.

“That (number) is already big considering it’s in Batangas,” Burgos replied when asked how the rebel presence warranted an air strike.

The government has repeatedly taunted the NPA for its dwindling force in that part of the region. INQ

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## AFP to send more troops to Marawi

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is sending more soldiers to Marawi City's main battle area as it pushes to end the fight against the Maute group in the next few days or weeks.

Lt. Gen. Cariito Galvez Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), said some 60 to 80

troops would be deployed for the military's continuing offensives and its efforts to rescue the remaining hostages.

"The focus of the operation is still to rescue the remaining hostages," he told reporters yesterday, noting information gathered from rescued hostages could help soldiers carry out effective rescue mission.

He said there are about 40 to 45 hostages still being held captive by the Maute group, which reportedly has lost control of strategic locations like the Bato mosque.

"It will take days, but we can't specify if it's 10 days or maybe two weeks," Galvez said when asked how much time is needed to completely

liberate Marawi City.

The Marawi fighting entered its 126th day yesterday with government troops still fighting to defeat the terrorist group.

Military officials earlier admitted that since the fighting zone has become smaller, soldiers have to operate slowly and more carefully.

– Michael Punongbayan



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## MARAWI WAR

# IT'S OVER IN OCTOBER, SAYS ARMY

MARAWI CITY—The military on Monday said fighting in this ruined Islamic city will be over in a few days or weeks and full-scale rehabilitation will start in October.

Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez, chief of the military's Western Mindanao Command, also briefly presented to media four male hostages rescued last week by soldiers at the frontline here.

Galvez said at least 46 other hostages were still in the area.

He said the city would be liberated from Islamic State (IS)-affiliated criminals in "10 days or two weeks."

"That's our timeline," he said.

Since May 23, at least 670 criminals, 149 soldiers and 47 civilians had been killed, while 1,182 hostages had been rescued. —REPORTS FROM GEOFFREY

MAITEM AND RICHEL V. LIMEL INQ

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# INQUIRER

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## CAPTIVE COP

# REBS TAP YOUTUBE FOR PROOF OF LIFE

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Communist guerrillas tapped a popular video-sharing internet site to show proof of life in the case of a captive police officer.

Members of New People's Army (NPA) uploaded on YouTube a video showing PO1 Bristol Catalan, captured by the guerrillas on Aug. 16, was still alive.

Guerrillas tagged Catalan as a prisoner of war. The police officer was driving his sons to school in the village of Katipunan, Makilalal town, North Cotabato when guerrillas abducted him at gunpoint.

Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesperson of the NPA's Guerrilla Front 53, said Catalan was in good hands.

In the video, Catalan spoke of being treated well by his captors.

He also made an appeal to the military to suspend operations against NPA in North Cotabato while he was still in captivity.

Sanchez accused the police and military of sabotaging efforts to free Catalan by launching offensives against NPA in the province.

Kidapawan Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo had appealed to the guerrillas to free Catalan.

Catalan's two children, who were with him when he was seized, had stopped going to school and showed signs of trauma, according to the bishop.

The rebels did not say what offense Catalan was being accused of.

Gigi, Catalan's wife, said in a radio interview that her anguish over her husband's fate was eased by the video. She, however, repeated a plea for the guerrillas to free her husband, saying the police officer had done nothing wrong against guerrillas.

On Sept. 15, another NPA unit freed a policeman in Lupon, Davao Oriental.

President Duterte thanked the Communist Party of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines "for the humanitarian gesture of releasing a policeman taken hostage." —EDWIN O. FERNANDEZ

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**MANILA BULLETIN**  
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# Troops foil Abu Sayyaf plan to bomb Zamboanga City

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

**G**overnment forces thwarted plans by the Abu Sayyaf under top leader Furuji Indama from bombing Zamboanga City following the arrest of two of their members

over the weekend.

Combined forces of the Joint Task Force (JTF) Zamboanga and the Zamboanga City Police Office launched a counter action against the group of Abu Sayyaf member Omar Askali, alias "Ayub," at Governor Lim Avenue,

Zamboanga City, at around 10:30 a.m. Saturday which led to his arrest.

Army-Colonel Leonel Nicolas, commander of JTF Zamboanga, said intelligence reports revealed that Askali's group was planning to bomb public places in the city three days from Sat-

urday. He said this prompted troops to conduct a joint operation with the police to capture the bandits and preempt their plans.

Nicolas said seized from Askali were a hand grenade, a cellular phone, and two identification cards.

Askali is a trusted follower of Indama. He is trained in manufacturing Improvised Explosive Devices.

Further information disclosed that Mukaram Sapie alias Mukram, and one Shayif were sent by Indama to conduct bombings.

In a follow-up operation, government forces also nabbed Mukram in Barangay Taluksangay. Recovered from Mukram were an IED and a Caliber .45 pistol.

The area was still being searched for another IED since information from Askali revealed that Mukram was keeping two IEDs.

"Our successful offensives were complemented by the intensified conduct of intelligence operations and the strengthened collaboration with the police, thus preempting the bandits from executing their terror plan. I commend the troops of the JTF Zamboanga for a job well done," said Lieutenant General Carlito G. Galvez Jr., commander of the Western Mindanao Command.

Follow-up operations are still ongoing to arrest other members of the group.

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# MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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## Three more Maute hostages rescued; 46 still held captive

By FRANCIS T. WAKEFIELD

**T**he Armed Forces of the Philippines-Western Mindanao Command (AFP-WestMinCom) on Monday confirmed the rescue of three more hostages at the Main Battle Area (MBA) in Marawi City.

Army Col. Romeo Brawner, deputy commander of the Joint Task Force Lanao, said Hadji Abdullah Nicon Rakin Bant, Kiram Datu Dakula Ampatua, and Abdunasser Ergas Mangondaya, all of Marawi City, were rescued sometime last week by government forces currently engaged in a fierce battle with remaining member of the Daesh-inspired Maute Group.

"They were rescued last week and are currently with their families already," Brawner said during an interview.

"We were able to talk to them and they were immediately turned over to local government authorities following

their rescue," he added.

No other details were given or provided by military on how they rescued the three.

AFP Western Mindanao Command (WestMinCom) chief Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez said they are very cautious in giving details, especially on their ongoing operations in order not to jeopardize the lives of the remaining hostages.

He added that questions on how the other hostages were rescued, like Fr. Chito Soganub and Lordvin Acopio, cannot be revealed as this time.

"There are still more or less 46 hostages there. If we will reveal how we rescued them it might compromise the ongoing rescue operations on the others," Galvez said.

"We cannot also reveal what we are doing with the hostages... there's debriefing, there are intricacies which we cannot tell to members of media," Galvez said.

Galvez said there are at least 60 to

80 remaining Maute terrorists inside the MBA.

Aside from liberating Marawi from the hands of the Maute terrorists, Galvez said, the focus of their operation is still to rescue the remaining hostages.

Questions on when the conflict will end could not be answered because of the complexities of their operations, he said.

"We cannot detail the exact date because it's a very complicated operation," Galvez said.

"Yes, because our rescue operations and the situation are very volatile anytime we can conduct a rescue operation so the information they are giving us is very vital," he said.

To prevent the remaining members of the Maute Group from escaping and some of their supporters from entering and aiding them, additional troops will be sent to Marawi City, officials said.

16 September 2017

# MANILA BULLETIN

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## President has yet to talk to Fr. Soganub

By ARGYLL CYRUS B. GEDUCOS

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has yet to meet Catholic priest Father Teresito "Chito" Soganub, one of the hostages in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur rescued last week after being held captive by the Daesh-inspired Maute Group for almost four months.

This was gathered after Duterte expressed his desire to talk to the prelate to know the real situation of the women hostages in the conflict.

According to Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella, the time will come when the President will come face to face with the rescued priest.

"I'm sure in time magkikita po sila. Hindi ko po alam kung kailan exactly but I'm sure in time magkikita po sila (I'm sure they will meet. I just don't know when but I'm sure they will meet)," he said.

While Duterte was in Davao City over the weekend, Soganub was able to officiate a mass in Camp Aguinaldo last Sunday that was attended by about 40 military personnel and civilians. It was the first time that he was able to say mass since he was captured by the terrorists.

"It was a great celebration of life for Father Chito whose personal safety was placed in danger because of the gun battles happening in Marawi City," Abella said.

"The mass is also a thanksgiving for the lives of those who were rescued," he added, noting that a total of 1,730 people have been rescued by government forces so far.

According to the Palace official, Soganub is also praying that he will be able to say mass again at the St. Mary's Cathedral in Marawi City once the fighting is over.

Last week, Duterte said he wanted to

confirm with Soganub reports from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that women hostages were forced into sex slavery and marriage by members of the Maute Group.

"Well I would say that the first questions would be - 'wag na 'yung sa giyera (not about the war anymore) - how the women were treated there,'" Duterte told reporters.

"Kasi lahat ng nakalabas naka-eskapo (Because every woman who was able to escape), they said, nasa (it's in the) newspaper nakuha ko lang 'yun sa inyo media (I only got it from the media), they were being repeatedly raped every night," he added.

"That's a gross violation of the rights of a human being affront on the dignity of women ng Pilipinas (of the Philippines). 'Yan isa sa gusto ko [malaman] (That is one of the things I would like to know) - how was the treatment," he continued.

Joint Task Force Marawi spokesperson Lt. Col. Jo-ar Herrera said last June that seven hostages they were able to rescue shared stories of their captivity which included being raped and being forced to steal from abandoned houses.

"[The] Worst thing [is] there are cases of female hostages forced to marry the Maute local terrorist group. They are

being forced to [be a] sex slave, forced to destroy the dignity of these women," Herrera had said.

"The hostages were tasked to loot houses, establishments [for] ammunition, firearms, cash, [and] gold," he added.

According to Duterte, Soganub's rescue was the result of a special operation and not the result of a backdoor negotiation.

"Father Soganub was not released. He was liberated through a special operation. Ibig sabihin ginapang sila ng mga special forces or rangers (It means the special forces or rangers worked real hard on this)," he said.

According to Duterte, he would not have allowed, or will not allow, a backdoor negotiation to take place.

"Impossible. I will not even agree to look at them [terrorists]. I said - naintindihan niyo ako noon pa (I made myself clear even before that) this will not end until the last terrorist is taken out," Duterte said.

"That is my order to the Armed Forces pati sa Police. Hanggang katapusang tao dun na masama (Until the last evil person there is out)," he added.

The war in Marawi, which started last May 23, 2017, has resulted in to the deaths of 47 civilians as of September 24, 2017.

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**MANILA BULLETIN**  
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## Group calls on Duterte to lift martial law

By **ANTONIO L. COLINA IV**

DAVAO CITY — An independent civilian monitoring group here has said that there is no longer any need for the continued imposition of martial law in Mindanao nearly four months after President Rodrigo R. Duterte placed the entire island under military rule because of the armed intrusion of the Maute Group in Marawi City last May 23.

Ateneo de Davao Law School Dean Manuel Quibod, who was also speaking for the Ateneo Legal Aid Services (ALAS), said in a press conference Monday that, with the armed conflict in Marawi waning, the President needs only to use his "calling out powers" to deal with the remaining Maute Group terrorists.

The Constitution gives the President authority to "suppress lawless violence, invasion or rebellion" under these powers.

Quibod also belongs to a group of lawyers and civil society groups which calls itself Alisto!

He said the group also appealed to "our Dabawenyo President Duterte, not to extend or expand martial law to cover the entire country."

Quibod said that the declaration of martial law has also "impinged on civilian mobility and privacy, and led to the curtailment of other rights."

He said Alisto! was also concerned about the possibility of more "infractions of human rights processes, procedures, and the outright abuse of these rights."

Quibod likewise called on the President to lift Proclamation 216 "sooner than it is expected."

He said that the Alisto!, which is composed of 19 groups, has set up a hotline to receive reports of violations and abuses in the city.

"We have a helpdesk which will answer these calls. The processing will be done because of validation will be made and the documentation. This will be brought to the legal team to make an assessment as well as to those in the ground to validate. Once validated, and there is basis for filing of cases, then we will file cases, that will be on," he said.

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

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# Peace talks with Reds still possible – Dureza

By **MARTIN A. SADONGDONG**

**C**ATARMAN, Northern Samar – Talks between the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) are not yet considered dead, and President Duterte is just waiting for "signals" for him to resume it, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza said yesterday.

Speaking before local government of-

ficials here for the fifth day of the "Peace Buzz: Byaheng Kapayapaan" nationwide caravan, Dureza said he expected "movements" in the coming weeks that could possibly lead to the resumption of the peace talks with the Communist insurgents.

"They (rebel groups) have been fighting us for 50 years already, almost half a century. May nagmutate na nga sa mga NPAs na 'yan, itong mga Maute (these NPAs have already mutated, those Maute terrorists) but we have

to deal with that. We cannot also surrender to them. That's why, back to my question, tapos na ba lahat ang negotiations (are the peace negotiations already dead)? What the president said recently is that, if they are eager to resume, I will also be eager to resume," Dureza said.

"Ibig sabihin nag-aantay siya ng signal. (It means he's waiting for a signal). That's why he said, 'I need to wait for what we call an enabling environment (which is) conducive to peace negotiation. Bakit? Eh papaano nag-uusap tayó tapos nag-gigyera sila doon sa Mindanao. Pwede ba 'yun? (Why? We're talking here but they are out there in Mindanao fighting.) If they already see the message of the President at baka naman tatalima sila (they might obey him), baka (maybe) we may resume peace negotiations. There will be movements within next week or so," he added.

However, Dureza refused to give further details of the "movements" that will happen in the coming days

so as not to jeopardize it.

"We, in OPAPP, while the negotiations are off and the President said cancelled, ang trabaho namin (our job) is to continue finding for ways and means on how to proceed with the peace process. You know very well that peace cannot only be achieved by peace talks (alone). Akala kasing iba wala nang peace talks, wala nang peace negotiations, eh wala nang peace. (Others think there are no peace talks, no peace negotiations, so there's

no peace.) No way. Peace talk is only one way to achieving peace," he explained.

Dureza also assured that things would eventually fall in its right places as the work for peace couldn't be done with a specified date.

"Work for peace cannot be achieved with a timeline. Eh matagal na kami nagsimula hanggang ngayon nadito pa rin ako. We have to do it one step at a time," the OPAPP secretary said.

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The Manila Times

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# Troops foil Sayyaf bomb plot in Zamboanga City

BY JULMUNIR I. JANNARAL

**S**HARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao: Government forces aborted a plan of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) to conduct bombing activities in Zamboanga City with the arrest of one of its bomb makers.

Combined forces of the Joint Task Force Zamboanga (JTFZ) and Zamboanga City Police Office launched an operation against ASG member Omar Askali, alias Ayub, along Gov. Lim Avenue in Zamboanga City at about 10:30 a.m. on Sunday.

"Intelligence reports revealed that the group will bomb public places in the city three days from now. This prompted our troops to conduct a joint operation with the police to capture the bandits and preempt their bomb ploy," Col. Leonel Nicolas, JTF Zamboanga

commander, said.

Recovered from Askali were a hand grenade, a cellular phone and two identification cards.

Askali, a trusted follower of top Basilan leader Furuji Indama, is trained in making improvised explosive devices (IED).

Military information also disclosed that Indama dispatched Mukaram Sapie, alias Mukram, and a certain Shayif to conduct bombing operations within the city.

A follow-up operation on Sunday resulted in the arrest of Mukram in Barangay Taluksan-gay also in Zamboanga City.

Recovered from Mukram was an IED and a .45 caliber pistol.

The area was also being searched for another IED after Ayub revealed that Mukram was keeping two IEDs.

Follow-up operations were still ongoing as of Monday.

"Our successful offensives were complemented by the intensified conduct of intelligence operations and the strengthened collaboration with the police, thus preempting the bandits from executing their terror plan," Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., Western Mindanao Command chief, said.

September 2017

The Manila Times

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# IS may have funded Marawi siege – Palace

MALACANANG is not discounting the possibility that international terror group Islamic State (IS) also funded the attack on Marawi City as part of "multiple streams of income."

In a news conference, Palace spokes-

"Let's put it this way, I suppose there are multiple streams of income coming in [to finance the Maute group]," Abella told reporters.

He also said the drug matrix only proved that local executives, drug syn-

man Ernesto Abella said President Rodrigo Duterte's so-called Lanao Del Sur (LDS) Drug Trade Linked Diagram underscored the ties that bound illegal drugs and criminal and terrorist activities in the country.

dicates, and terror groups were part of a "circuitous loop."

"We should say not just drug money, it's narco-politics. In other words, local politicians, apparently down to the local

► **FundedA2**

level, are all participating in abetting the drug trade which is closely related to – apparently, it's a circuitous loop – government, drugs, [and] terror group," Abella said.

On Friday, Duterte released the diagram containing the names of drug lords and politicians who allegedly funded the Marawi siege.

The President said the matrix was a result of intelligence work in the last three months, when government troops were able to gain access to Marawi.

The Palace official said Duterte had a "plan in mind" against drug suspects who helped finance the Marawi attack.

"We can all trust that the President will – not just the President but the whole force of government – will be exercised in order to make sure that his campaign promises regarding drugs and corruption and crime will be addressed," he added.

Speaking to reporters in Davao City, Duterte claimed the purported IS emir in Southeast Asia, Isnilon Hapilon, and the Maute brothers who led the insurgency in Marawi City were far from "being the main protagonists."

"On the list, it's really those who are in the government," the President said.

Duterte then claimed that slain Ozamiz City Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog was one of those who poured cash on the extremists that occupied Marawi.

Some local officials in Central Mindanao are also financing terrorists, he said, but did not elaborate.

The single-page matrix con-

tained a column on each side. The left named "drug lords," who included a number of incumbent local executives, the right named "drug dealers," and the center contained circles within which were the names of "narco-politicians" and other major players. Arrows showed their supposed connections to each other.

Among those mentioned in the center was the "Parojinog Drug Trade (Ozamiz City)," an obvious reference to the network allegedly run by the late Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog.

Other politicians whose names appeared on the matrix were Mayors Noron Dadayan of Buidiposo Buntong and Hadji Jamal Abdusalam of Mulondo, and Vice Mayor Noridin Adiong of Ditsaan Ramin, all in Lanao del Sur. They were in the "drug lords" column.

Other names in the center were former Marawi mayors Fahad "Pre" Salic and Solitario Omar Ali, who were both arrested soon after the Marawi crisis erupted on May 23, as well as Solitario's son Arafat, the incumbent vice mayor.

The President further tagged at least 19 "drug dealers," including a councilor and several village executives.

"All drug trade in LDS pass to former mayor Pre and Solitario [through] *barangay* (village) chairman Aliodin, and Vice Mayor Arafat and brother[s] Samer and Walid, respectively," the drug matrix read.

"Pre and Solitario authored the kidnapping and liquidation of all drug lords... Arrows indicate the drug trade control relationship," it added.

CATHERINE S. VALENTE

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## One week to cross a street: How IS pinned down Filipino soldiers in Marawi

BY TOM ALLARD

MARAWI CITY. — With a grimace, Brigadier General Melquiades Ordiales of the Philippines 1st Marine Brigade recounted the painful gains made against Islamist militants in Marawi City.

"It took us one week from this point to that point, to cross that street," he said, casting his eyes to the other side of a two-lane road in the heart of the southern Philippines city, lined by three-storey buildings shattered by air strikes and the remaining walls riddled with bullet holes.

"It was really very, very tough."

The grinding urban warfare that has destroyed much of the grandly named Sultan Omar Dianalan Boulevard shows just how much of a threat Islamic State is to the Philippines and potentially other countries in the Southeast Asian region.

But when the fighting started, Philippine authorities were unfazed.

After the Islamic State-backed militants took over large parts of picturesque, lakeside Marawi in May, the country's defence minister, Delfin Lorenzana, predicted the entire conflict would be over in one week.

Now, after four months of in-

tense aerial bombardment and house-by-house battles, Philippine commanders believe they are in the final stages of the operation to oust the rebels from the city.

In the past two weeks, military officials say they have conquered three militant bastions, including a mosque, and restricted about 60 remaining guerrillas to about 10 devastated city blocks in the business district. Patrols have been increased on the lake to prevent the supply of armaments and recruits to the holed-up militants.

Military officers who have skirmished for years with Islamic insurgents in the southern Philippines say the battle in Marawi has been more intense and difficult than earlier encounters.

The Islamic State militants are better armed, with high-powered weapons, night vision goggles, the latest sniper scopes and surveillance drones, said Captain Arnel Carandang, of the Philippines Army First Scout Ranger Battalion.

He said he has served for almost a decade in the remote jungles and mountains of Mindanao, the southern Philippines region that has long been wracked by insurgencies. Now, Carandang says, the military is in unfamiliar urban

terrain.

The militants have exploited the battlefield to their advantage and held off Philippines forces despite a 10-to-1 numerical advantage for the government troops.

Borrowing heavily from Islamic State tactics in the Iraqi city of Mosul, they have surrounded themselves with hostages and used snipers and a network of tunnels.

Marawi's underground drainage system and "rat holes" - crevices in the walls of high floors allowing access to adjacent buildings - have enabled the rebels to evade bombs and remain undetected, soldiers at the battlefield said.

"We believe there have been some foreign terrorists that have been directing their operations that's why they are, how do I define this, really good," said Carandang.

"We have seen some cadavers of foreigners. Some are white, some are black and some tall people we guess are Asians (from outside the Philippines). We have been hearing in their transmissions some English speaking terrorists."

Hostages - many of them Christians - have been deployed to build improvised explosive devices, scavenge for food and weap-

ons in the heat of battle and fight for the Islamist rebels, according to those who escaped.

"When we were first moved to the mosque, there were more than 200 of us," an escaped hostage, who asked not to be identified for safety reasons, told Reuters last week.

"We gradually became fewer. People would go on errands but they wouldn't come back. They either escaped or died. By the time I left, there were only about 100 of us."

The account could not be verified, but military officials confirmed the man escaped from Marawi in early August.

The hostage said the militants were excited by their successes in Marawi, speaking often of the advantages of urban warfare and talking about some of their next possible targets, including other cities in Mindanao and the Philippines capital Manila.

"They said they could hide well in the cities. They can get civilians to become hostages and it's more difficult in the mountains with only the soldiers," he said.

Many of the fighters are young recruits, who are fanatical and accomplished fighters, the soldiers said. — Reuters

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**EDITORIAL**

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**PPPI** Philippine  
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## AFP fighting on two fronts

**T**HE enemies of the state have lately been aggressive and daring, engaging the Armed Forces of the Philippines in urban and semi-urban areas in ways unheard of before.

The first was Marawi City, last May, an attack that persists until today, although many of the fundamentalist and radical Muslim fighters who mounted this siege have either died or escaped.

This battle has already cost the lives of some 145 soldiers, scores of policemen, civilians, and Muslim rebels. In terms of government facilities and private properties lost, official estimates put the figure at P50 billion, the same amount needed to rebuild the city of Marawi. This is on top of the actual military expenses incurred by the AFP in defending the city, probably P3 million a day for 4 months, which the

**‘There are unverified reports of a tactical alliance between these two enemies of the state, something similar to the NPA-MNLF cooperation in the early days of Marcos’ martial law.’**

defense department drew from its fund for contingencies.

While military confrontation in the south was under way, the communist-led New People’s Army (NPA) took the opportunity to strike in areas where it has maintained a strong presence, including northern Luzon, southern Luzon, eastern Visayas and parts of Mindanao.

The communist guerrillas have for sometime now been waiting to flex their military muscles which were rendered temporarily inactive with the National Democratic Front’s ceasefire and peace talks policy.

Now that the peace negotiations in Europe have failed and the legal left has abandoned its critical cooperation with the Duterte administration, NPA fighters have stepped up operations with renewed ferocity.

Reports say hundreds of families in upland villages in Batangas City were forced to flee their homes as skirmishes between government troops and communist guerrillas that began Sunday continued the following day.

The firefight with the NPA was long and intense, so that it became necessary for the Air Force to launch a series of airstrikes in the vicinity of Mt. Banooy in Barangay Talumpok Silangan, Batangas City. The rebels were using “improvised explosive devices” similar to those used by the Maute-Abu Sayyaf groups in the south.

The city officials say some 50 families have sought temporary shelter in barangay Cumba while 87 families were evacuated to barangay Talahib Pandayan. Good roads and new expressways made Batangas City relatively close to Metro Manila and this is the first time that we have heard of a big military operation in the city that resulted in massive displacement of residents.

There are unverified reports of a tactical alliance between these two enemies of the state, something similar to the NPA-MNLF cooperation in the early days of Marcos’ martial law. True or not, the government should be wary of this possibility, as the military’s concentration of personnel and firepower in Marawi necessarily opens up opportunities for the rebels in other areas of the country.

3)

## ONLINE NEWS

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[www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com](http://www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com)

## NPA releases 'proof of life' of captive police officer

From MindaNews (Sep 25): NPA releases 'proof of life' of captive police officer

The New Peoples' Army (NPA) in Southern Mindanao recently released a video footage of a police officer who was abducted last month in a barangay here.

The NPA abducted Police Officer 1 Bristol Catalan, a member of the police in Makilala, North Cotabato last Aug. 16 in Purok 4, Barangay Katipunan, Kidapawan.

The NPA's Mount Apo Sub-Regional Command of the Merardo Arce Command uploaded on YouTube the video of Catalan whom it considered a "prisoner-of-war".

It said the video proves that the captive is still alive.

In the video, Catalan assured his family that he was being treated well by the rebels.

"Ever since I have not seen a Red fighter... That's why (when I was caught) I thought they would ill-treat me. But what I found out, it's far from the truth. I did not receive even a single flick. They treated me well," he said during one of his conversations with the guerrillas.

He appealed to the local government units of Makilala and Kidapawan City to facilitate his speedy release as he called on the Philippine Army and the Philippine National Police to halt their operations.

Catalan's video was uploaded after the release of another NPA captive, SPO2 George Rupinta, on September 15.

On August 16, Catalan was driving a motorcycle to the city proper with his two children when six men who identified themselves as NPA rebels flagged him down in Katipunan.

The rebels seized his service 9mm pistol.

Nothing had been heard about Catalan since.

Bishop Colin Bagaforo of the Diocese of Kidapawan has issued several appeals for Catalan's release. Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesperson of the Regional Operations Command of the NPA in Southern Mindanao, said the intensified operations of the AFP and the PNP have hampered Catalan's release. "The NPA ensures the welfare of POW Catalan in the midst of these offensives but ultimately futile operations. Negotiations with regard to his possible release are being sabotaged by these operations," said Sanchez.

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Catalan's wife Gigi expressed appreciation toward the NPA's gesture to show them 'proof' that her husband is still alive.

"I have sought many times from the group to show us proof that my husband is OK while in captivity. We were glad we saw his face through the YouTube," said Gigi.

She again appealed to the NPA to release her husband as they only rely on him for their daily needs.

"To meet our needs, I worked as rubber tapper. I made it sure my children can go to school. Also, I received help from friends and from LGUs. But we want my husband to be with us," she said.

<http://www.mindanews.com/top-stories/2017/09/npa-releases-proof-of-life-of-captive-police-officer/>



www.dwdd.com.ph

## SALUBUNGAN | AFP officials in Marawi met at bridge retaken from terrorist



**MARAWI CITY, Lanao Del Sur (DWDD)** – For the first time after Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) troops recovered two (2) strategic bridges in Marawi City, AFP officials ceremonially met and marched towards the Main Battle Area.

At 10 o'clock in the morning yesterday, September 24, 2017, Major General Rolando Bautista, Commander of the Joint Task Force Marawi and Maj Gen. Danilo Pamonag, Commander of the Joint Special Operations Task Force Trident met with Brigadier General Melquiades Ordiales, Commander of the Joint Task Group Tiger at the Bayabao Bridge and Masui Bridge.



According to MGen Bautista, the event symbolizes the significant achievements of the AFP and the Philippine National Police (PNP) in their campaign to reclaim the city from the hands of the Daesh-inspired Maute terror Group.

After 125 days of fighting, the siege has claimed the lives of 694 terrorist and 151 soldiers and policemen.

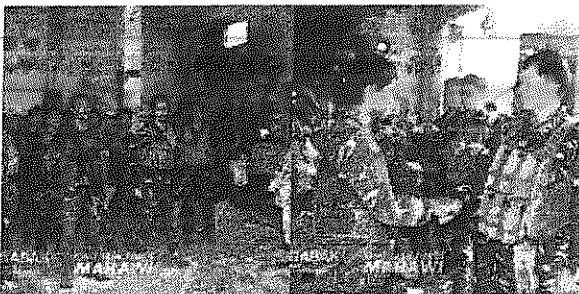
Gen Bautista appealed to the remaining terrorist to surrender while they still have the chance, this after the President Rodrigo Duterte in his message during his fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) visit to Marawi last September 21, that they can see the end of the siege soon. **AES/ALS**

# PROMOTED | JTF Marawi dons ranks to troops of 10IB

Posted by Alvin Santiago on September 27, 2017 10:45 AM



**KAMPO RANAO, Marawi City (DWDD)** – The Joint Task Force Marawi promoted to the next higher rank fifteen (15) Enlisted Personnel from 10th Infantry (Steady On) Battalion of Philippine Army under the 1st Infantry (Tabak) Division in a simple ceremony held inside the battle zone in Barangay Mapandi, Marawi City last September 20, 2017.



Maj. Gen. Rolly Bautista, Commander of JTF Marawi and 1st Infantry (Tabak) Division presided the donning of ranks ceremony for the promotion of the following enlisted personnel:

1. TSg. Erlindo M. Agraviador (Inf) PA
2. SSg. Musappa A. Abdurajan (Inf) PA
3. Sgt. Pindatun M. Asaali (Inf) PA
4. Sgt. Emmanuel S. Arpon (Inf) PA
5. Cpl. Bensar S. Alih (Inf) PA
6. Cpl. Jonathan I. Sagap (Inf) PA
7. Cpl. Richard D. Laguna (FA) PA
8. Cpl. Julito A. Alpanta (Inf) PA
9. Cpl. Frederick M. Ybanez (Inf) PA
10. Cpl. Eldrin P Siano (Inf) PA
11. Cpl. JoJo G. Anlas (Inf) PA
12. Cpl. Joel P Logronio (Inf) PA
13. Cpl. Melvasfar S. Ampo (Inf) PA

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14. Cpl. Jonathan A. Maghinay (Inf) PA
15. Cpl. Zurin V. Matchete 898123 INF

One of the promoted enlisted personnel, Sgt. Emmanuel S. Arpon said: *"Nandito kami sa Marawi nakipaggira kami sa mga maute kaya pursigihin namin na tatapusin namin sila hanggang kaya namin. Sa ating mga kababayan diyari, maraming salamat sa inyung suporta. Binigyan nyo kami ng pagkain dito at tubig. Maraming salamat po dahil magagamit po namin yan sa bawat gabi at araw. Maraming salamat po. Sa aking pagkapromote ng sarhento ay masayang masaya po ako at nadagdag rin yung responsibilidad ko bilang isang bagong napromote. Gagawin ko po ang lahat para mapanindigan ang aking responsibilidad bilang isang senior. Ipapakita ko sa aking mga junior ang mabuting trabaho bilang isang senior nila. Salamat po."*

(We are here in Marawi to fight against the Maute terrorists. We will continue our fight until we accomplish our mission. To our fellow Filipinos, thank you very much for your support. You gave us food and water. Thank very much because we have food and water we can use everyday. I am so happy with my promotion to sergeant. I have new responsibilities as newly promoted officer. I will do my best to fulfill my duty as a senior officer and to show a good example for my subordinates. Thank you).

MSgt. Fernando T. Demesa, Sergeant Major of 10IB said: *"Pagdating ni BatCom (Battalion Commander), naibigay ang ating mga hinaing subalit ang kapalit ay performance. Ang promotion ay karagdagan na mas mabigat na responsibilidad kaya mas lalo natin dapat pagbutihin at pagyamanin. Anomang kakulangan natin sa nagdaan, panahon na ngayon na mas idevelop pa natin at iimprove yun ating performance. Disiplina sa katwiran at kabutihan, ito yung direction natin. Sino man sa atin ang umangat, kasama tayong lahat aangat. Kaya patuloy tayo sa pagpapayo at pagpapa-alala upang maaakay ang mga tropa sa maayos na kaugalian dahil yun ang inaasahan sa atin."*

(When our Battalion Commander came, we got our wishes. But we should deliver performance in return. This promotion means weightier responsibilities with higher levels of work at results. We should not look back on whatever shortcomings we had in the past. This is the time for us to level up and improve our performance. Whoever is promoted to a higher rank, all of us share the glory. We will continue on guiding our troops on right direction for the public good because this is what is expected of us.)

Lt. Col. Ryan Severo, Battalion Commander of 10IB said: *"We are grateful to MGen Rolly Bautista for his inspiration and leadership where the high morale of troops is sustained. This donning of rank further heightens our morale of the 10th Infantry (Steady On) Battalion as we fight for peace against the terrorists here in Marawi City."*

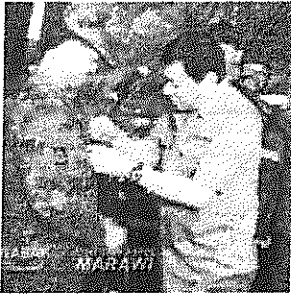
Maj. Gen. Rolly Bautista, Commander of Joint Task Force Marawi and Philippine Army's 1st Infantry (Tabak) Division said: *"The donning of ranks recognizes our troops for their selfless service to the people of Marawi. We will sustain the high morale of our troops who are*

*engaging the terrorists to restore peace. In this final stage of enemy assaults, we will eventually win the war against terrorism in Marawi City." 1ID/TeamTabak/MCAG*

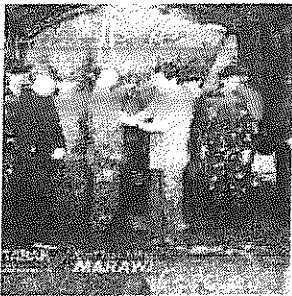
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## PROMOTED | PRRD dons 2-star rank to JTF Marawi commander

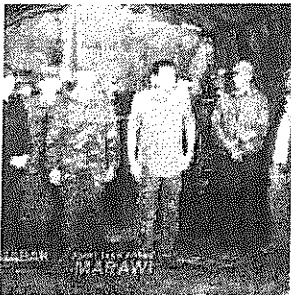
Written by: Alvin Santiago | [View Comments](#) | [Share](#) | [Print](#) | [Email](#)



**KAMPO RANAO, Marawi City (DWDD)** – President Rodrigo Roa Duterte flew to Marawi to preside the donning of two-star general rank to Maj. Gen. Rolando Joselito Bautista, Commander of Joint Task Force Marawi and Philippine Army's 1st Infantry (Tabak) Division in a ceremony held in Kampo Ranao, Marawi City last September 21, 2017.



*(In photo: President Rodrigo Roa Duterte pins the 2-star major general rank to Maj. Gen. Rolando Joselito Bautista, Commander of Joint Task Force Marawi and Philippine Army's 1st Infantry Tabak Division during the ceremony held in Kampo Ranao, Marawi City on September 21, 2017.)*



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MGen. Bautista has been the hands-on ground commander of focused military operations against the Daesh-inspired Maute terrorists group in Marawi City since day 1 of the crisis on May 23, 2017. He has been personally supervising the deployment of troops in the battle zone as well as non-battle military activities in the Marawi periphery.

*"Together with the men and women of your Joint Task Force Marawi and the Philippine Army's 1st Infantry Tabak Division, I am grateful and humbled for this privilege to serve and protect our fellow Filipinos on a higher rank. The presence of our Commander-in-Chief inspires us to provide no less than the highest level of efforts and achieve more in the pursuit of peace and prosperity,"*MGen. Bautista said. **1ID/TeamTabak/MCAG**

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

[www.dwdd.com.ph](http://www.dwdd.com.ph)

## TEMPEST WIND | Phi-US Counter-Terrorism Crisis Response Drill

Alvin Santiago



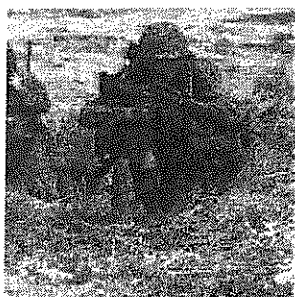
**CAMP GEN EMILIO AGUINALDO, Quezon City (DWDD)** – The Philippines and the United States governments will participate in a bilateral, inter-agency counter-terrorism drill dubbed “Tempest Wind,” which is scheduled to take place next week in the Philippines and Hawaii.

The PH-US Counterterrorism Crisis Response Drill Set was approved by the Mutual Defense Board and Security Engagement Board (MDB-SEB) of both countries in November 2016.



“Tempest Wind” is a whole-of-government activity that will include government agencies involved in crisis management, counter-terrorism, and security operations from both countries.

The drill is designed to provide realistic scenarios on terrorism that will necessitate both high-level engagements and responses on a tactical level.



The Philippine government looks forward to joining “Tempest Wind” with the end in view of learning from the activity and sharing best practices with its counterpart.

This drill will strengthen the Philippine-American bilateral partnership and enhance both governments’ interoperability in crisis situations, especially those involving terrorism. **DND PAS/MCAG 39**

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