

# **Marawi Seige**

### Why in news?

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The city of Marawi has been engulfed by a deadly, ongoing siege since late May.

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#### What is the reason for conflict?

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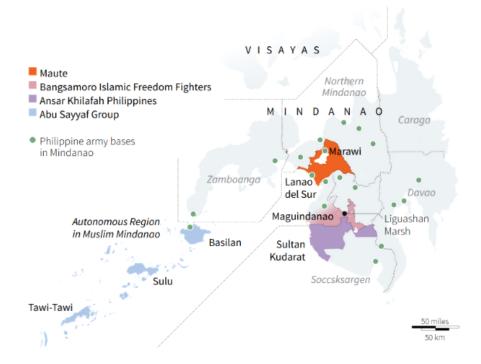
- Marawi City, is the capital and the largest city of the province of Lanao del Sur on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines.
- Marawi siege started in May 2017 when Philippine government security forces began to take on heavily armed militants linked to the Islamic State.
- Militants also include the Maute and Abu Sayyaf Salafi jihadist groups.
- The siege is also aimed to capture or kill Isnilon Hapilon.
- Hapilon is the leader of the Abu Sayyaf Islamist group who was named emir of the "Caliphate" in Southeast Asia by IS head Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in 2016.

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- $\bullet$  Philippine President declared martial law across the island for 60 days.  $\ensuremath{\backslash n}$
- Some blame the political leadership for ignoring the rise of the IS. e.g Philippine President rejected a ceasefire offer from the Maute group.
- This group is on the front lines in the fight against the Philippine military in Marawi.

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### What is the present situation?

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• The death toll is estimated to be above 300.

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• Over 200,000 residents have fled what has effectively become an urban battlefield.

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• U.S' military advisers and intelligence analysts have been deployed to aid Philippines.

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• Rebels still control key areas.

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• Many civilians remain in the area, complicating any planned government assault.

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# What is the significance?

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- $\bullet$  IS jihadist have set Singapore as a target in their publications and videos.  $\ensuremath{\backslash n}$
- Malaysia faced its first IS attack when a grenade injured eight people at a

nightclub near Kuala Lumpur.

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- As the world's largest Muslim-majority country, Indonesia is concerned that IS members could easily infiltrate.
- So the present war has political significance throughout the region and beyond.

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- It is also seen as a move by Mr. Duterte's to divert attention beyond the infamous brutal drug war that his government has waged.
- Nevertheless, now Mr. Duterte is aiming to bring the battle to a quick, decisive end, and if necessary, to resume negotiations with some groups.
- $\bullet$  Tackling the humanitarian crisis created by this conflict depends on these negotiations and on relief efforts.  $\ensuremath{\backslash} n$
- Mindanao has been rocked by armed insurgency for years. So to prevent future crisis the long neglect of Mindanao should be ended.

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**Source: The Hindu** 

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