



# PRESS RELEASE

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## Inter-agency facilities begin construction in Batanes



*Defense Secretary Voltaire T. Gazmin (second to the left) led the lowering of the time capsule during the groundbreaking ceremony for the inter-agency facilities to be constructed in Mahatao, Batanes.*

Defense Secretary Voltaire T. Gazmin, Batanes Representative Henedina Razon-Abad and Vice Governor Ronald A. Aguto led the groundbreaking ceremony for an inter-agency building and a detachment of the Philippine Navy (PN) in Mahatao, Batanes on March 17, 2016.

The project, initiated and proposed by Representative Razon-Abad in 2014, is included in the 2016 GAA budget of the Philippine Navy and amounts to Php166.519M. The detachment will include a naval logistics facility, wharf and beaching areas, small craft facility, and communications and electronics facilities, among others.

“We envision a naval base that shall have accessible naval installations which could provide logistics, training and others support services in the conduct of prompt and sustained fleet and marine operation,” Secretary Gazmin said in his speech.

Aside from the Philippine Navy, the inter-agency building will also be utilized by the Philippine Coast Guard, and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Department of Agriculture.

With the establishment of the facility, the Philippine Navy aims to improve the existing capability and infrastructures of the current Mahatao Boat Shelter to be utilized for training exercises, combat, and humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HADR) operations.

“This place is chosen as the most strategic area as testified by historical facts during World War II. It has also naturally protected and safer harbor spaces for our naval vessels, considering that the province of Batanes has been the frequent route of storms and typhoons, especially during the rainy season,” added Secretary Gazmin.

PN Flag Officer in Command VADM Caesar C Taccad; Undersecretary for Finance Installation and Materiel Fernando I. Manalo; Undersecretary for Civil, Veterans and Retiree Affairs Jesus C. Millan; former Air Force Commanding General and Ivatan Jeffrey F. Delgado also attended the ceremony.

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