

PRESS RELEASE

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GOVT' TO INSTALL CCTV CAMERAS TO HEIGHTEN SURVEILLANCE EFFORTS VS. BOMBINGS

Secretary Ronnie Puno of the Department of the Interior and Local Government said yesterday the Philippine National Police (PNP) has been tasked to install more than 200 close-circuit television cameras (CCTVs) in strategic areas in Metro Manila such as shopping malls, movie theaters and transport terminals as part of the government's heightened surveillance efforts to safeguard the public against terrorist bombings.

Puno said that the PNP will also increase the number of checkpoints, deploy more canine sniffers and will intensify its intelligence gathering activities to prevent bombing incidents similar to what happened recently in two luxury hotels in Indonesia, which killed several people.

Top officials of the PNP, Puno said, have also met with the security officers of hotels, malls and other commercial establishments to coordinate measures aimed at ensuring public safety,

"We will be putting up within 24 hours from now, probably, CCTVs around what we call soft targets like: hotels, malls, theaters, and possibly, even terminals," Puno said in the weekly "Kapihan sa Sulo" at the Sulo Hotel.. "The PNP in Metro Manila has something like more than 200 CCTVS already that we can position in different areas."

Puno, who has been tasked by the President to coordinate the anti-terrorism efforts of the PNP and the DILG, said he met Friday with the command group of the PNP to map out these new security measures.

"The PNP and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) are going to be up to the challenge of keeping our people safe not just between now and President's State of the Nation Address (SONA) but thereafter," Puno said. .

As for the Sulu hostage crisis which ended with the safe release of Italian Red Cross volunteer Eugenio Vagni just recently, Puno said that insofar as the DILG is concerned, there is still no investigation being conducted on those involved in securing the Vagni's freedom, such as Vice Governor Lady Ann Sahildullah.

“From what I’ve seen, some things look unorthodox, but I have yet to see the basis for an investigation, so for now there is no probe insofar as the DILG is concerned,” Puno said.

He, however, noted that this is without prejudice to any planned move by other government offices, such as the Department of Justice and the Office of the Ombudsman, from proceeding with their respective investigations into the circumstances surrounding Vagni’s release.