



# The Philippines Security Report

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Section 800 - Intelligence

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## The Philippines Report

Over the summer months Allmode Intelligence will be issuing a number of 'Security Reports' that will cover the regions of Southeast Asia. They will outline security based information on different locations across these regions. The purpose of these reports are to aid vessels and their crews with up to date information that will help them build better knowledge of an area and thus improve their situational awareness.

Situational Awareness (SA) is all about having the information you need to make effective decisions. There will always be occasions when people are required to make critical choices – sometimes at a fast pace – and the vast majority of errors that can occur are as a direct result of failure in situational awareness.

For the majority of vessels and crew visiting Southeast Asia, it will be a very familiar sight, however for some it may be their first time and often, as with many locations across the globe, looks can be deceiving and can lull people into a false sense of security.

Intelligence is more than information and news gathering. It is the process by which information is collated, verified, analysed and used to respond effectively to time critical information. Current, historical and creditable intelligence not only tells you what the risks are but projects possible hot spots of criminal activity.

At Allmode we do not outsource intelligence but gain real time situational awareness and speed of reporting by continually developing our product, and getting the time critical information out to our teams and clients. These reports will look into areas such as crime, corruption and political issues within certain areas and offer advice on how to stay safe and in some cases advice on areas to avoid. It will also offer advice on any relevant health advisories to be aware of and travel information for those wishing to travel and tour certain areas or regions.

## The Philippines Overview



Typhoon season in the Philippines begins in June and ends in November. This is also the wet season with tropical storms, flooding and landslides.

In 2013, the Philippines experienced 24 typhoons.

In February 2013, heavy rains from the storm Shanshan caused flooding in the southern Philippines that killed four people and left two others missing.

In August 2013, Typhoon Utor, known in the Philippines as Typhoon Labuyo, struck the country. Tens of thousands of people became homeless. There were two confirmed deaths and several other people were missing.

On 8 November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan hit the Visayas region of the Philippines resulting in a large number of casualties and considerable damage. Over 16 million people were affected by the storm. There were about 6,000 deaths and over 27,000 people got injured.

In June 2014, according to the country's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, about 94 people were killed. They were hit by falling trees, collapsed structures or flying debris, drowned or were killed in landslides. 350,000 people were evacuated.

Some areas of the Philippines are at risk to earthquakes. They are: Surigao Del Sur, La Union, Benguet, Pangasinan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Ifugao, Davao Oriental, Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Ecija.

On 15 October 2013, an earthquake hit Bohol in Central Visayas region causing much damage in Cebu and Bohol provinces. According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction

and Management Council (NDRRMC), 222 people died, 976 were injured and more than 73,000 houses were damaged or destroyed.

The top ten provinces prone to shallow landslides caused by earthquakes include: Ifugao, Lanao Del Sur, Sarangani, Benguet, Mountain Province, Bukidnon, Aurora, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental and Rizal.

There are 53 active volcanoes in the Philippines. They can erupt unexpectedly, without warning. The risk of lava flows increases after heavy rainfall. The most known volcanoes in the Philippines are Mount Pinatubo, Mount Mayon and the Taal volcano on the northern island Luzon. In May 2013, the Mayon volcano erupted, killing five climbers and injuring eight other people.

The provinces most vulnerable to volcanic eruptions are: Camiguin, Sulu, Biliran, Albay, Bataan, Sorsogon, South Cotabato, Laguna, Camarines Sur and Batanes.

There is a high threat of kidnapping in the Philippines, particularly in the south, including coastal and island tourist resorts and dive sites as well as in remote locations in the Sulu Sea and along the Zamboanga Peninsula.

In 2013, 50 kidnapping cases, including those perpetrated by organized crime groups, terrorist groups and other individuals, were recorded.

For the first two months of 2014, there were six cases of kidnapping – four of them happened in Mindanao.

Kidnap-for-ransom gangs operate particularly in the Sulu Archipelago. According to media reports and government figures, kidnappings in the Philippines nearly doubled in 2013 and there were more than 20 kidnap-for-ransom cases. The coastal and island resorts in the southern Philippines are frequented by kidnappers and pirates.

It is advised not to travel to eastern Mindanao (including the provinces of Bukidnon, Camiguin, Misamis Oriental, Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte and Surigao del Sur) as they are regions with very high levels of violent crime and the high threat of terrorist attack and kidnapping.

Other not recommended parts of the Philippines are central and western Mindanao (including the provinces of Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Cotabato City, North Cotabato, South Cotabato, Sarangani, Misamis Occidental, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao and the Sulu Archipelago and surrounding waters).

Abu Sayyaf has been responsible for numerous tourist abductions over the past few years. Some figures suggest the group has collected over \$35 million in ransom fees.

Most kidnappings in Manila and areas north of Mindanao are of criminal nature. Criminals' targets are local business people and individuals. These criminal groups frequently require a ransom within a brief period of days or weeks. Victims often return to their families after the ransom has been paid.

Numerous locals and foreigners have been kidnapped in central and western Mindanao, including in the Zamboanga Peninsula and the Sulu Archipelago. In December 2011, an Australian citizen was kidnapped in Zamboanga Sibugay. Other recent kidnappings in the Zamboanga Peninsula and Sulu Archipelago have involved Philippine nationals and citizens

of European countries, the United States, China, Korea, Malaysia, India and Japan, among others. Kidnap victims are sometimes held in captivity for long periods of time before being released. Others have been killed by their captors. Recent kidnapping events are as follows:

- On 3 August 2014, two Muslim women, Nursalyn Alih (26) and Shekinah Hope Hamsain, were kidnapped by three gunmen in the village of Kaunayan in Patikul while they were riding a motorcycle. Two of the criminals were Ramsid Sali and Injie. One of the victims, Nursalyn Alih, was freed on 4 August 2014 at Sitio Kantitap in the village of Danag. The fate of the other woman is unknown.
- On 17 July 2014, four workers of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Agustino Sicangco and his wife Nurhati, Robert Saputalo and Lerma Jurah, were kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf in Patikul, Sulu. The Sicangcos were freed after their family had paid a ransom of P200,000. Jurah was released on 18 July and Saputalo on 23 July.
- On 5 July 2014, the Abu Sayyaf bandits captured a plumber Linggayan (50) and a co-worker, Joselito Gonzales in Sitio Baunoh in the boundary of Timbangan and Kan Islam villages in Indanan town. Linggayan was freed on 28 July after paying P500,000. Unfortunately, Gonzales was killed.
- On 31 March 2014, the kidnapers stopped a passenger jeep with teachers on the way to Isabela and seized Benita Latonio (60), the school principal of Manggal Elementary School in Sumisip. She was released on 3 April 2014 by suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits.
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- On 5 March 2014, an elementary school teacher Alrashid Jahang was kidnapped in Patikul, Sulu. He was released the next day.
- On 3 March 2014, Moh. Zaher Nain (11), Almalyh Abuhail (17), Alyza Farah Karanain (8) and Saddam Amlih (24) were kidnapped in front of a tailoring shop along Gen. Arola Street in Barangay Alat in Jolo. Senior Supt. Abraham Orbito, Sulu police director informed that the victims had been on the way to the Notre Dame of Jolo when seven armed men dressed in Tabligh attire attacked them. They were released on 13 March 2014.
- On 20 February 2014, filmmakers Nadjoua and Linda Bansil, kidnapped in Sulu in June 2013, escaped from their captors and were recovered by Philippine Marines. They had gone to Jolo to shoot a documentary about poor coffee farmers. According to the police, they were abducted by members of the Abu Sayyaf Group led by Ninok Saparri. The kidnapers demanded a ransom of P50 million, but they probably reduced it to a smaller amount.
- In February 2014, a local water district worker Bonifacio Salinas, an Engineer of the Jolo Mainland Water District, and his wife Claire were kidnapped in Jolo, Sulu. At least five unidentified armed men, believed to be members of the Abu Sayyaf group, dragged the couple to a Tamaraw van. Mrs Claire was freed in March 2014 and Bonifacio was released on 19 April 2014.

Kidnap for ransom groups in Jolo have become more and more frequent. Most of the hostages kidnapped in Semporna in the east coast of Sabah end up in Jolo island, in Sulu province in southern Philippines. The latest victims captured from Semporna are a tourist from Shanghai, Gao Huayuan (29), and a Filipina resort worker Marcy Dayawan (40). They were kidnapped by Filipino gunmen from Singamata Reef Resort on April 3.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, human trafficking is a modern form of slavery, which involves the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat, use of force or other forms of coercion, for the purpose of exploitation”. As stated in the 2013 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, Filipino human trafficking victims were identified in more than 37 countries on five continents. Nevertheless, trafficking of people within a country is also a serious problem. People are trafficked from rural to urban areas, such as Manila, Cebu, the city of Angeles, cities in Mindanao, Boracay, Olongapo, Puerto Galera, and Surigao.

The statistics published on 31 July 2014 by the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking show that in the period from January to 25 July, 16 people were convicted of human trafficking.

Another problem is child sex tourism. Sex tourists come from Northeast Asia, Australia, Europe and North America to have sexual contact with children. Child prostitution in the Philippines occurs in five types of places: ‘casas’, i.e. brothels; bars with sex shows; restaurants and karaoke bars; in the streets and in shopping malls. As reported by non-governmental organizations, there may be 60,000 to 100,000 children forced into prostitution in the Philippines.

Armed clashes between rival clans and other armed groups often take place in central and western Mindanao. They usually cause many deaths and injuries. There have been armed clashes, bombings and kidnappings in Zamboanga. Most threatened areas are places where people gather, such as hotels, shopping centres, restaurants and educational and government facilities in and around Zamboanga City.

Clashes between the military and insurgent groups occur also in the Sulu archipelago including Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Jolo. Recent events are as follows:

- On 17 July 2014, seven soldiers were killed and thirteen others were wounded in two clashes with suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sulu.
- On 15 July 2014, at least 13 communist New People's Army rebels and one soldier were killed in a series of clashes in Agusan del Sur.
- On 11 April 2014, at least five suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf group and two soldiers were killed in clashes that took place at the boundary of Tipo-Tipo and Unkaya Pukan towns in Basilan. Military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Ramon Zagala said the clash resulted from a military operation to capture Abu Sayyaf commander Puruji Indama. Indama has been blamed for holding foreigners for ransom in the southern Philippines over the years and is known for beheading and mutilating victims.
- In April 2014, a Muslim extremist was killed in fighting between soldiers and Abu Sayyaf rebels in the southern Philippines, a day after 12 people died in a similar shootout. On 11 April 2014, government forces began an operation in Basilan island to capture two top leaders of the Al-Qaeda-linked group accused of beheadings and kidnappings. Seven Abu Sayyaf fighters, two soldiers and three members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front fighting on the side of the Philippine military were killed.

- On 27 January 2014, around 23 people from the militant groups and illegal settlers were hurt, three policemen and three members of the demolition group were injured in the clashes between the Quezon City police and illegal settlers on Agham Road. The police threw tear gas at illegal settlers and members of militants groups. They answered with soda bottles, rocks, "pillboxes", and fences. Around 250 families in Sitio San Roque were affected by the demolition of their houses. The illegal settlers have been told to leave their homes since last year.

In 2013, clashes between militants and the security forces in Zamboanga City resulted in a large number of deaths and destruction. Other attacks have happened in urban areas, such as Cotabato City and Cagayan de Oro.

Avoid large gatherings, demonstrations, protests, public and political events that may become violent. Stay up to date with the current news regarding the situation in the Philippines.

Travellers visiting the Philippines need to realise that the level of serious and violent crime is very high in this country. This is partly caused by widespread gun ownership. Frequent gunfights between police and criminals often result in many deaths and injuries. If you notice such an incident, you should leave the area straightaway.

Beware of drugs. Having even a small amount of 'soft drugs' can end in jail. Penalties for drug offences are strict. The Philippines is an identified source of methamphetamine for Guam and a transit point from Africa to Southeast Asia. Production, trafficking, and consumption of illegal drugs are common. The most serious problem is trafficking and abuse of methamphetamine.

In big cities street crime and robberies are very common, especially in crowded areas, such as shopping malls and public places. Moreover, travellers can become victims of pickpockets, bag snatchers and scams.

There have also been reports of confidence games (con games), pick pocketing, Internet scams, and credit/ATM card fraud. ATM card readers can have a special electronic device that records information that is then used for unauthorised purchases. If you see something suspicious, it is better to leave such a machine. Do not lose sight of your card and select safe places.

Traffic in the Philippines is dense, chaotic and unpredictable. You should avoid driving off the national highways and paved roads, especially at night, as it is quite dangerous. Remember that the roads are very crowded and the drivers are not too disciplined.

As far as taxis are concerned, it is safer to use taxis sourced from hotels than the ones on the street. You also need to remember about a few safety rules. It is better to use taxis from a reputable company. Do not select a taxi when another passenger is inside. Ask the driver to use the meter and if he does not agree to do that, just look for another vehicle. While using the taxi in the city, lock the doors.

Avoid travel on public buses, light rail and jeepneys where the possibility of crime is quite high. There have been armed hold-ups – some of them have led to fatalities.

It is highly recommended not to carry original documents with you, but to make two photocopies of your passport, tickets, IDs, etc. and leave one copy in a secure place. Do not take too much money with you. Also, be careful with jewellery and other valuable items as they attract potential thieves. It is better not to look too wealthy and to avoid using your phone on the streets as it can be snatched.

Drink spiking is also possible so do not accept drinks from strangers. Talk to people who you really trust, you need to ask for directions or you have stayed for enough time in the country. Never go anywhere with a stranger and in the event of being threatened, call the police or other security personnel.

The geographical composition of the Philippines, spread out over 7,107 islands, make it difficult for the central government to maintain a presence in all areas. Terrorist attacks, including bombings, are possible in the Philippines, also in places visited by foreigners, such as airports, hotels, shopping malls, public transport and places of worship. Attacks can occur before and after religious celebrations.

Most common terrorist groups in the Philippines include New People's Army (NPA), a military extension of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), founded by Jose Maria Sison in 1969, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). Although the framework peace agreement signed in 2013 is supposed to end the 40-year insurgency in the south of the country, extreme elements within the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), are still a security threat. A group of the MILF, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), has been responsible for a number of attacks on the Philippine military and security services over the last year.

In 2013, separatist and terrorist groups increased their activities and confrontations with Philippine security forces, with bombings, attacks on civilians and political leaders as well as battles with security forces.

In September 2013, elements of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) occupied parts of the city of Zamboanga and entered a battle with security forces which ruined large parts of the city. The Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) is still active in Cotabato City as well as in the Maguindanao, North Cotabato, and Sultan Kudarat provinces.

On 5 August 2013, a bomb exploded in Cotabato City when a car with a city administrator Cynthia Guiani-Sayadi was passing by. She was not hurt, but one of her police bodyguards was killed. At least 33 people were wounded. In June 2014, travellers were warned not to go to Davao City and other parts of Mindanao due to a high threat of terrorism.

In June 2014, Abu Sayyaf group killed a soldier with gunfire and six other soldiers by firing mortar shells. The military fought back killing 10 Abu Sayyaf militants.

All incidents of crime should be reported to the Philippine National Police (PNP). Stay calm and polite to get appropriate response.

The major ports and harbours in the Philippines include:

- **The Batangas Port** – 110 kilometres south of Metro Manila; its total land area is 150 hectares; it is a strategic and modern port that serves as a complementary gateway for the ports of Manila; the port is connected with the major highways; the cargo terminal has two cargo berths: the foreign one (185 metres long) and the multi-purpose one (230 metres long). The terminal is perfect for general and bulk cargoes. The Batangas Port serves as the primary entry-point for imported Completely Built Units (CBUs) for the major car brands in the country
- **The Cagayan de Oro Port** – in Cagayan de Oro City; its exact location is at 08°32'5" North and 124°40' East in the Northern Coast of Mindanao; a highway links Cagayan de Oro with Iligan, Butuan and Davao; it serves as the entry and exit point of goods and passengers for the City of Cagayan de Oro and the provinces of Misamis Oriental, Bukidnon, Camiguin, Agusan del Norte and Davao; the depth of safe anchorage is 60 fathoms, which is about 400 meters from the shore; the port's total area is 24 hectares; the port serves 14 domestic and four foreign shipping lines; it is

surrounded by the new tourist destination, MacArthur Memorial Marker, on the north and the shores of Barangay Lapasan on the southeast; the port offers thirteen berthing spaces; some of its facilities include: two transit sheds, passenger terminals, open storage areas, water hydrants, container freight station and standby generator.

- **The Port of Davao** – situated on Mindanao; one of the Philippines major seaports alongside Manila, Subic, Cebu, Zamboanga and others; the port is the most important in Mindanao island and also has the most busiest international container port in Visayas and Mindanao; SASA Wharf is one of the largest and busiest piers in the port area; the Port of Davao is dominated by Container Cargo, Raw Materials, Bulk Cargo, General Cargo and Passenger traffic.
- **The Port of Iligan** – located along the northern central coastal areas of Mindanao facing the Iligan Bay; it serves the port users and passengers coming from the hinterlands of the provinces of Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, and parts of the provinces of Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur, and the Cities of Iligan and Marawi; it is designed to service as a multipurpose port facility to handle cargoes and passenger traffic; it offers two shipping lines transporting cargoes and passengers; vessels can drop anchor at the Anchorage North of Baseport Iligan and Anchorage South of Iligan City.
- **The Port of Manila** – situated in the Port Area and Tondo area of Manila, Philippines facing the Manila Bay; the largest and most important international shipping gateway to the country; the Port of Manila is managed by the Philippine Ports Authority and consists of 3 major facilities: Manila North Harbour, Manila South Harbour and the Manila International Container Terminal.
- **The Port of Zamboanga** – on the island of Mindanao, in one of the fastest growing zones in Mindanao, Zamboanga; the port consists of a number of ports, contained by the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority (Zamboecozone); vessels enter the port from the west at the Caldera Bay, from the south at Isabela Channel and from the east at Tictaoan Channel; the port is a centre for sardine exports to the United States, Europe, the Middle and Far East; 25 shipping lines operate via the port; it has 19 docks, 12 of which are privately owned; the largest dock has capacity for up to 20 vessels; due to the steep bank, strong currents and hard, uneven bottom, there are no good anchorages off Zamboanga; vessels can anchor anywhere southward of the wharf; its facilities include, among others, 8 Reefer Facilities, Container Yard, Container Freight Station and 6 Major Berthing Locations.

## Manila



The City of Manila is the capital of the Philippines. It is one of the biggest and busiest cities in the country, situated on the east coast of the Manila Bay in the South China Sea and surrounded by fertile plains. It occupies an area of 33,55 km and is one of the most populated cities in the country (over 14 million people). Manila is the country's economic, educational, industrial, commercial and cultural centre.

Manila has hot, humid weather throughout a year. As it lies near the equator, the temperature is seldom below 20°C and above 38°C. It is a bit cooler between November and February and the hottest month is May. The rainy season is between June and October and this is when there are heavy, short downpours. The driest period is between December and May. Sea breezes bring some relief from heat and humidity. The most popular time to visit Manila is between January and May.

Manila is situated on the ocean, which is why its inhabitants are more vulnerable to tropical storms.

Rivers and canals in Manila are among the dirtiest in the world. This is because people throw their rubbish there. One of the reasons of the city floods is that the sewers are all blocked with plastic bags and other trash.

Avoid ice and tap water. Do not drink any kind of shakes or eat any kind of desserts with ice (halo-halo) from any restaurant.

According to a study conducted by the Manila Police District (MPD) strategy and operations review unit, the crime rate in Manila in June 2014 went down by more than 50 percent from the same period last year. The study showed 611 crimes were reported in June 2014 compared to 1,546 cases in June 2013. It is quite significant as crime rates usually go up when classes open in June. Moreover, it was also noted that the total number of crimes reported for the first five months of 2014 reached 7,987 cases compared to 8,101 during the same period last year. It can result from increasing police visibility, particularly foot patrol teams near schools and places of convergence.

Despite that, travellers should know a few things associated with crime and safety risks in this region of the Philippines.

Criminal gangs that drug and rob or assault tourists are active in Manila, including the Makati central business district, and in provincial resort towns.

Pickpocketing is a serious issue in Manila. Be careful while using the Manila transit system as you can become a victim of pickpockets and snatchers there. Pickpocket gangs operate in the LRT (light rail transit) and MRT (mass rapid transit). Keeping a wallet in the back pocket is not a good idea. It is better to carry a smaller amount of cash with you and hide it in a safe place.

Be prepared that many drivers in Manila have a bad attitude and do not want to use meters. If they agree, you need to pay some peso and the amount of money indicated by the meter.

Avoid areas of Manila where there are no security guards or police officers. Criminal gangs come to Manila to get easy money by robbing students and tourists there.

It is better not to have backpacks in the city as they are a target for pickpockets. Moreover, avoid putting your wallet in your pocket and leave your valuables in the hotel. While walking south on Adriatico Street, you will get to a slum area where there are many pedicab drivers. It is not a safe place so do not walk in this area at night.

Do not leave your valuables unattended for even a minute as when you come back you can find out they are gone. Thieves are just waiting for such occasions.

Koreans are the biggest expatriate community in the Philippines. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 88,000 Koreans were living in the Philippines in 2012. The Philippine Department of Tourism said more than 1.16 million Koreans entered the country last year.

In 2013, 12 Koreans were shot or stabbed to death. Nevertheless, no suspects have been taken into custody. As Professor Kim Dong-yeob at Busan University of Foreign Studies said, "It is highly possible that there are Koreans behind these crimes".

Some most recent crimes include:

- In August 2014, a liaison officer of the Marikina City Traffic Management Office, Enrico Pascual, was shot dead by an unidentified suspect along 3rd Street in Barangay Sto. Niño when he was going to work. Another woman, Jovel Vidal, was shot dead by a man on a motorcycle in Muntinlupa after visiting her live-in partner, Roberto Rabo, at the New Bilibid Prison.
- On 10 August 2014, a construction worker, Oliver Miradores (24), was stabbed to death by his co-worker, Rogito Legato (18) along Lualhati Street in Tondo, Manila. They had an argument on 8 August 2014 and they met again two days later. Legato had a kitchen knife with him. He then escaped.
- On 4 August 2014, two unidentified suspected robbers were killed in a shootout with policemen in Intramuros, Manila. Police Officers 1, Ricardo Lo and Vernon Guererro of the MPD Tactical Motorcycle Rider, noticed two men on a motorcycle with a folded plate. They asked the men about the plate and then the driver crossed the red light. During the chase, the back rider drew a gun and fired at the policemen. In an exchange of gunfire the the two suspects died.
- On 28 July 2014, a group of three men hit a Korean businessman's car with a taxi in the centre of Manila. They dragged him out of the car to kidnap him, but he fell and hit his head. He was taken to hospital, but he died. The criminals captured his wife

and demanded a ransom of \$11,500. Nevertheless, when they found out her husband was dead, they released her.

- On 26 July 2014, at least one person (an 18-year-old student) died and three others were hurt in a hazing incident at a condominium in Manila. They were probably fetched by unidentified people at a fast food restaurant along Taft Avenue and then brought to an unknown location.
- On 14 June 2014, American Ana Camuel Lightfoot (34) was robbed in Manila when she was riding a van along Singalong street Manila with her husband, Damon. A man in a police uniform signalled them to stop. He claimed to be a police officer stationed in Camp Crame.
- On 29 May 2014, a Chinese businessman, Jayson Chua (43), was killed in an ambush in Manila when he was going home from Makati City. Chua sustained several gunshot wounds in his head and body. According to his relatives, he had been receiving death threats.
- On 3 March 2014, a female Korean student, Lee (21), was kidnapped. She took a taxi in Pasay City in Metro Manila to visit her friend and went missing. The kidnappers demanded a large ransom, but did not want to confirm the woman's safety. She was discovered dead in Manila on 8 April 2014.

## Mindanao



Mindanao is the second largest island in the Philippines, called the “Land of Promise” and the eighth most populated island in the world. Mindanao is situated in the southern part of the Philippines and surrounded by the Sulu Sea in the west, the Philippine Sea in the east and the Celebes Sea in the south. Its area is 94,630 square kilometres, which makes it the second largest island after Luzon.

In most parts of Mindanao the weather is hot and humid all year round.

Mindanao is mountainous and is home to Mt. Apo, the highest mountain in the country. The country is also located along the typhoon belt of the Western Pacific and is struck by numerous typhoons.

Since Typhoon Sendong struck the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan and parts of Bukidnon in December 2011, eight more typhoons have struck Mindanao:

- Typhoon Domeng, in April 2014
- Typhoon Caloy, in March 2014
- Typhoon Basyang, in February 2014, across the Visayas and the Caraga region, 6 people dead
- Typhoon Agaton, in January 2014, around 40 people killed
- Typhoon Zoraida, on 12 November 2013
- Typhoon Pablo, on 4 December 2012, killed more than 1000 people
- Typhoon Yolanda, on 8 November 2013, struck Eastern Visayas Region; about 6,000 dead and over 27,000 injured
- Typhoon Quinta, on 26 December 2012, hit Western Visayas Region; it left 15 dead, including 13 in Iloilo and one each in Aklan and Capiz provinces.

In February 2014, Chief Superintendent Lyndel Desquitado, deputy regional director for administration in Police Regional Office in Northern Mindanao (PRO-10) announced that crime rate in Northern Mindanao had gone up in the last two years – from 30,000 to 70,000 crime incidents.

In May 2014, Davao City Police Office (DCPO) director Sr. Supt. Vicente D. Danao Jr. said crime incidents had increased by almost 45 percent in the first quarter of 2014 as compared to the same period last year. They recorded an average of 58 crime incidents committed daily during the first three months of the year, whereas in 2013 there were 32 such crime incidents. Danao pointed out that from January to March 2014, they recorded 4,114 crime incidents (2,673 index crimes and 1,441 non-index ones). 1,608 incidents were solved and 1,694 were cleared. The most common crime incident was crime against property (more than 1,000 cases). According to Danao, increased theft and robbery incidents result, among others, from poverty as due to recent disasters (Typhoon Pablo, Typhoon Yolanda and the fire incident in Boulevard in Davao City), many people are unemployed.

Mindanao is a highly armed island. Despite a ban on guns, a lot of people, including the civilian security guards, carry weapons in public places.

The threat of kidnapping is higher in the southern Philippines, particularly in central and western Mindanao, where terrorists and kidnap-for-ransom gangs targeting foreigners can operate across a wide area.

The PNP Anti-Kidnapping Group (AKG) is responsible for kidnapping investigations. AKG officials report that kidnapping incidents in Mindanao are mostly committed by Muslim individuals/groups that are members or allies of terrorist organizations, such as ASG, MILF, and the Lawless MILF Group (LMG). Kidnappings prevail in western Mindanao, especially in the Autonomous Region Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) area/provinces, the Zamboanga Peninsula, and in Cotabato-Central Mindanao region, specifically in the provinces of South and North Cotabato, Sarangani, Sultan Kudarat, and in the Chartered Cities of Zamboanga, General Santos City, Cotabato, Iligan, and Cagayan de Oro.

On 12 July 2014, a girl (4) was kidnapped by two men on a motorbike while she was playing outside her house in Linamon town in Lanao del Norte province. The girl was released after her family had paid a ransom of P19,000. The kidnapers, residents of Iligan City, were identified by their first names – Musa and Camal.

On 18 June 2014, a public school teacher, Ashlaine Pangadir, and her husband, Zacaria Pangadir, were kidnapped by a group of gunmen driving Tamaraw FX in Barangay Poblacion, Pantao Ragat. One of the suspects, Madid Umbra alias Mactan was arrested on 19 June 2014.

On 28 May 2014, a businesswoman Sugar Diane Esperanza Buenviaje, kidnapped by suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits in Tawi-Tawi in February 2014, was released.

On 22 May 2014, a Chinese businesswoman, Dina Eraham (45), and her daughter, Yahong Tan (19), were seized by at least ten gunmen in camouflage uniforms and bonnet masks at the Dalby's videoke house along I. Magno Extension Street, Barangay Port Area in Isabela.

On 1 April 2014, Michael Kho (27) was kidnapped by the gunmen at his father's gasoline station in Barangay Poblacion, Siocon. He was taken to KIA Sportage recovered later in Barangay Latabon, Siocon. He was released on 6 April 2014. One of the six gunmen, Omar Wahab alias Binday (25), was arrested.

On 4 March 2014, Arsina Nanoh (20), the vice mayor of Hadji Muhtamad, Basilan, was seized at a shopping mall along La Purisima Street, Zamboanga City. Her husband reported they had been leaving the mall when she received a call from a friend asking her to return there. When he went inside to find her, he could not locate her and informed the police. She was freed a day later.

On 27 February 2014, Stephen Tan (19), an engineering student at the Southern Mindanao College in Pagadian City was captured in front of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation office along Cabrera Street. The gunmen forced the victim to board a sports utility vehicle and drove eastward. The police official said the suspects were carrying high-powered firearms. He managed to escape a day later.

On 19 February 2014, Sabrina Ikbala Voon (28), a dealer of cosmetic products, was seized by six gunmen at Calle Pohoc in Barangay Mercedes. The gunmen seized Voon and forced her to board a van when she tried to help her son and mother. The victim was released four months later, in June 2014.

On 27 January 2014, Rudy Luna, a public school official was kidnapped by eight kidnapers in Kumalarang, Zamboanga del Sur. His wife, Tessie, managed to escape. They are supervisors of Diplo Central Elementary School. The incident took place a day after police and military forces arrested in separate operations 10 suspects in the kidnap-slay of Edmund Corpuz (31), a son of a businessman in Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur. He was captured on 27 November 2013 when collecting his nephew from a school in Pagadian City.

On 11 January 2014, Alexa dela Cruz (5) was kidnapped at Sitio Masanang, Barangay Poblacion in Payao. She was safely recovered on 11 February 2014. Senior Insp. Danilo Pailden, Payao municipal police chief said no ransom was paid.

Minority Muslim groups in the southern Philippines, known as Moros, have fought for self-determination for more than 40 years. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), the conflict has left tens of thousands of people dead.

On 27 March 2014, the Philippine government and the largest Muslim rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), signed a peace deal to end four decades of armed conflict in Mindanao. The MILF want to set up an autonomous region, "Bangsamoro", in the south of the country before President Benigno Aquino resign in 2016. As a result, the Muslim-dominated area would get greater political powers and more control over its resources. The agreement guarantees rights of both Muslims and non-Muslims.

The deal does not guarantee peace as a breakaway faction of MILF, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM), has announced to continue fighting. Moreover, the powerful clans who control some areas in the region can see the agreement as a threat to their political influence.

Travellers should be aware of this situation, follow the news and try to avoid going to places where there is a risk of being involved in a fight.

Some most recent crimes include:

On 11 August 2014, Rizza Saguindan (27) was found dead in her house in Barangay Lumbia, in Cagayan de Oro City. She was stabbed 20 times in the back. Her mobile phone and tablet computer were stolen.

On 28 July 2014, fourteen women and seven men were killed and eight others were wounded after an ambush by suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits led by Idang Susukan and Sibih Pisi in Sulu.

On 22 July 2014, a meat inspector Lina Baloryo Amora was shot dead by the men in helmets in Bangkal district, in Davao City. The suspects then escaped. The motive remains unknown – it could be a grudge or it may be related to the suspected role of Amora's son in a gang-rape.

On 16 July 2014, a five-year-old daughter of businessman Farley Sy's sister-in-law Cheryl was snatched by four masked men from the businessman's house in Palao, Iligan City. They tied up the girl's mother and her niece and then covered their mouths with duct tape. After that, they escaped with the girl and took mobile phones, a tablet, and some money

On 24 June 2014, a tattooed man was shot dead by two masked men on a motorcycle near Cogon market in Cagayan de Oro City.

On 14 June 2014, a retired police officer, Richard Bugtoan, was attacked and killed by the gunmen on a motorcycle along Mariano Badelles St., near Bonifacio Drive, in Iligan City.

On 20 May 2014, an assistant city prosecutor, Saipal Alawi, was shot dead along Sarimanok highway in Marawi City. His driver was wounded and taken to the medical centre.

On 29 April 2014, Juminie de Asis (36) was shot dead and a bystander Pablo Hawil (52) was injured by the gunmen on a motorcycle near the corner of 8th Street, Nazareth and Hayes streets, in Cagayan de Oro. Asis died as a result of a gunshot wound to the head and six more to the body.

On 25 April 2014, a Chinese miner, Qiang Hu Liu (36), and his Filipino partner, Rizzel Telin dela Cruz (22), were shot dead by the gunmen on a motorcycle in Barangay Bugas-Bugas, Placer, Surigao del Norte. The victims' driver, Arianne Zamora, survived.

On 2 March 2014, two gunmen on a motorcycle killed Jessie Lacia (29) in Purok 3-A, Barangay Gusa, Cagayan de Oro when he went out to check the men on a motorcycle parked outside. According to the police, the incident could be related to drugs.

On 11 February 2014, a man was found dead in Upper Macasandig, in Cagayan de Oro, probably being another victim of summary execution. The victim had brown complexion and a tattoo on the back and the right hand. The police stated he had been tied up with a plastic wire, masking tapes were plastered on his mouth and eyes and his head was covered with a red shirt.

On 1 January 2014, five unidentified men snatched a 15-year old teenager near Cogon market when she was waiting for a motorela coming back from the Northern Mindanao Medical Centre where one of her cousins was and raped her.

On 31 December 2013, six people were killed and six others, including two children, were injured during a New Year's Eve party when an improvised bomb exploded at Zone 6, Barangay Tumahubong, Sumisip town in Basilan. Five of the victims were identified as Rey Limbin, Elbert Gomoba, Kitarul Kaddik, Leniebel Cisneros and Lourdes Ablong. Three of the injured were identified as Rining Dingcong, Janice Dingcong and Jesa Dingcong.

On 23 September 2013, the members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) attacked Mlang village in North Cotabato. They took over 20 civilians hostages at Malingaw Elementary School. Two people were killed and more than 2,000 were displaced.

On 16 September 2013, two improvised explosive devices (IEDs) exploded in cinemas at two different malls in Davao City. Five people were injured.

On 9 September 2013, about 250 members of MNLF seized several villages and many hostages throughout Zamboanga City. It lasted three weeks. Dozens of Philippines Security Forces (PSF) members and 180 MNLF were killed.

On 5 August 2013, a vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) exploded near the centre of Cotabato City when the Cotabato City Mayor's SUV approached.. The Mayor was not in the vehicle, but the City Administrator was. Eight people were killed and thirty-four were injured A large fire damaged several buildings and vehicles nearby.

On 26 July 2013, Khalifa Islamiyah Mindanao (KIM) – one of the small violent extremist groups in Mindanao called the Black Flag Movement – was blamed for conducting an IED attack in Cagayan de Oro (CDO) at the Kyla's Bistro in the Limketkai Commercial Center. Six people were killed and over forty were injured. Most of them were medical practitioners and pharmaceutical sales representatives in CDO for a national medical convention.

On 4 February 2013, an IED placed on a parked motorcycle exploded in front of a restaurant at Tubod Lanao del Norte. Five people (Judith Padilla Gomez, Pamela Dalman, Cherrie Molina, Peter dela Vega and Saipuden Biucay) were seriously injured and taken to hospital.

On 21 January 2013, an IED attached to a bicycle exploded at downtown Iligan City. 10 people were injured

## Luzon



Luzon is the largest island in the Philippines with an area of about 105,000 square kilometres. It is located in the northern part of the archipelago. The island is quite mountainous, with Mount Pulag – the third highest mountain in the country. Luzon contains most of its active volcanoes, i.e. Mount Pinatubo, Mayon, and Taal Volcano. It is surrounded by the Philippine Sea (east), Sibuyan Sea (south) and the South China Sea (west). To the north, the Luzon Strait separates the island from Taiwan.

Luzon's population amounts to about 49,000, which makes it the fourth most populated island in the world. This is where the largest percentage of the country's population as well as most of the more progressive cities and town is concentrated. Apart from Filipinos, as a result of recent migrations, Hindus, Moros and Chinese populations are present in urban areas. Moreover, there are also Spanish people, Americans, Japanese people and Koreans. Most Americans inhabit Angeles City and Olongapo City.

Major regional languages are Tagalog, Ilocano, Kapampangan, Bicol and Pangasinense. Nevertheless, many inhabitants also speak English.

The major religion in Luzon is Christianity, although there are also Protestantism, the Philippine Independent Church and Iglesia ni Cristo (Church of Christ) as well as the communities of Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims in Metro Manila and other Provinces of Luzon.

Lowland areas of North Luzon have the monsoon climate, which means a long dry season (November-May) and a shorter wet season (June-October). The best months are December and January when the temperature is around 20 degrees Celsius. It is extremely hot between April and. Typhoons begin in July, but usually occur on the northeast and Batanes. The rains are most intense in August and September.

As far as the highlands are concerned, the rains can appear in a mountainous region called the Cordillera any time of the year, but they are most intense between May and September. This is when landslides often occur. It is quite cold between November and February.

In Central Luzon, it is usually dry between November and April. The rest of the year is wet. The northeast monsoon (amihan) runs from October to January and brings moderated and light rains. The period between May and September is characterised by the southwest

monsoon (habagat). The hottest month is May, with the temperature of 29,7 degrees Celsius, whereas the coldest time is February – 25,1 degrees Celsius.

Luzon is home to the country's capital, Manila, which makes it the economic and political centre. Industry is concentrated in and around the urban areas of Metro Manila. In the other regions of the island agriculture prevails. Other sectors include livestock raising, tourism, mining and fishing.

According to the statistics released by 3rd Regional Highway Patrol Unit (3RHPU) during the anti-hijacking summit held on 26 February 2014, the authorities recorded 32 hijacking cases in Pampanga. In 2012, there were only seven such incidents. For example, on 18 February 2014, a container van with 28 tons of imported wheat was hijacked by five unidentified armed men nearby Mexico town. Anti-hijacking measures have been taken to prevent similar incidents, among others, 142 anti-hijacking checkpoints established along truck routes with the personnel of the Regional Public Safety Battalion 3, Provincial Public Safety Companies and 3RHPU and pass cards issued to all drivers of cargo trucks.

Crimes ranging from murder to drugs, white slavery, and kidnapping occur in Luzon.

On 12 August 2014, the police arrested Central Luzon's three most wanted persons accused of rape, trafficking in persons and serious physical injuries. The criminals are: Abner Doldolan of Barangay Poblacion, Botolan, Zambales (rape), Jay Briones Lastimado, alias Jaya (human trafficking) and Rommel Malfore Banua (theft and serious physical injuries).

On 12 August 2014, a businessman Antonio Lee Cruz (39) was shot dead by his rival in the scrap trade after an argument at the victim's office in BumJin Compound, Barangay Duale, Limay, Bataan.

On 6 August 2014, an Indian trader, Harjit Singh, was stabbed several times by his compatriot, Surindher Singh, after an argument at the suspect's residence in Barangay Sta. Cruz, Porac town. The victim visited Surindher to remind him of his loan.

On 5 August 2014, Rolando Maulen (49) was killed and Roderick Celestino (33) was injured in his shop when they were shot by motorcycle-riding-criminals (MRCs) in City of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan. According to the police, Maulen was linked to an illegal drugs syndicate in City of San Jose del Monte (CSJDM).

At the beginning of August 2014, a staff house of the Church of God in Paniqui, Tarlac occupied by foreign missionaries: James Bontrager (25), American; Markus Tovstiga (26), Canadian; Marga Janzen (22), Mexican and Sarah Beth Boeurs (19), American was robbed by the thieves who stole valuables and money.

On 31 July 2014, a butcher Reynaldo de los Reyes (38) was shot dead and his companion Jomar Luciano (31) injured during a kidnapping attempt at Barangay Sto. Domingo. They were waiting on the motorcycle for their friend when unidentified armed men dragged them to a car. Reyes was shot to the chest while trying to escape. Luciano managed to jump out of the car.

On 30 July 2014, a businessman and his wife, Andy (41) and Leah Tan-Esteban (36), were shot dead by unidentified gunmen at Barangay F.E. Marcos, San Jose City.

At the end of July 2014, Jayson Ronggap Nacion (32) was shot twice by Aries Galang when he was going home at Barangay Telapayong, Arayat town. The suspect invited him for a drink. There were also two unidentified persons. The victim survived.

In the middle of July 2014, two people were shot by motorcycle-riding-criminals (MRCs) in the City of San Fernando and Mabalacat City. One of the victims was identified as Rosvic

Mamaradlo (19). He was going home with his friend when he was wounded in different parts of the body.

On 9 July 2014, a Chinese woman (44) was held up and wounded by the driver of a taxi in Quezon City. He tried to take her bag and when she refused, she was hit on the head. She was then taken to hospital.

On 5 July 2014, Jessa Ivy Cabillada Belgado (18) from Magalang was murdered, probably raped and then left in a dumpsite at Barangay San Antonio, Arayat. She left for work on her motorcycle but did not return home. The attacker stole the motorbike and her mobile phone. She was the fifth victim recovered by authorities in the province within two weeks. The four others were found in Mexico town.

On 1 July 2014, two passengers of a Baguio City-bound bus, Carlos Almoite (68) and Jecson Ibañez (25), Almoite's son-in-law, were shot dead by a former security guard, Reynald dela Cruz (35), who tried to rob the earnings from the conductor along MacArthur Highway, Barangay Mabini, Moncada, Tarlac. Reynante Arciaga (47) was injured.

At the weekend, 20-22 June 2014, the Women and Children Protection Desk of the Angeles City Police Office (ACPO) rescued three women made to sniff illegal drugs by their Korean friends: Moon Hyo Baek (45), Yun Mook Park (42) and Byoung Woong (43) inside a hotel room at Barangay Balibago. They met the victims at a coffee shop and invited them for a dinner. They were then sexually molested by their Korean partners and forced to sniff shabu.

On 19 June 2014, an auto mechanic Wilfredo Alvarez (48) was shot dead and his nephew Aries (18) was hurt by an unidentified gunman at Barangay Mahipon, Gapan City. The suspect escaped on a motorcycle.

On 17 June 2014, a housemaid Elsa Napingkit (18) stabbed her employer, Jocelyn Garcia (46), to death and then robbed her of money, jewellery and ATM cards in a village at Diamond St., Tagle's Ville Subdivision, San Jose. The suspect managed to escape.

On 21 May 2014, Ramon de Guzman (49) was shot by an unidentified gunman when he was sleeping in his room Barangay San Nicolas, Gapan City.

On 9 May 2014, Delia Muñoz (48) returned to her family after a few weeks in captivity. She was kidnapped by unidentified armed men, probably members of a kidnap-for-ransom gang operating in Central Luzon and nearby Metro Manila areas. She was released after paying a ransom of P10 million.

At the weekend, 9-11 May 2014, a civilian employee applicant Marlon Moroña (25) was shot dead by unidentified armed men at Purok 8, Barangay Telapayong, Arayat town.

At the weekend, 25-27 April 2014, a civilian employee Henry Simpauco (47) was shot dead by unidentified armed men Cromwelle Cayanán, 19 when he was watching television show in the garage of his residence at Barangay Sto. Niño. The suspects escaped on a motorcycle.

On 22 April 2014, two American tourists, Jonathan George Haberski (37) and Zach Kyle Williamson (34), were attacked by motorcycle-riding-suspects (MRS), Cromwelle Cayanán (19) and Antonio Manarang (31). The victims left a hardware shop at Jake Gonzales Boulevard when the suspects appeared and grabbed Haberski's necklace (P70,000) that was later recovered. The suspects then escaped on their motorcycle, but the victims chased and caught them.

On 14 April 2014, a Chinese tourist Pan Sy (39) was seriously injured when a snatcher stabbed him at Jesus Street, Barangay San Nicolas. Sy was walking home his wife Min Fang Lee (37) and Reiven Tan (27) when the man attacked him and robbed him of his

pouch. The victim chased the attacker and recovered the stolen item. The snatcher then escaped on a bicycle.

On 24 March 2014, a retired bus driver Teodorico de la Cruz Jr. (44) was shot dead by a gunman when he was waiting for somebody on his motorcycle at Barangay Road of San Jose. After shooting the victim, the suspect walked away.

On 13 March 2014, a member of the communist New People's Army (NPA) in the 1980s, Renato Saddoy, alias Ka Leroy (49), was shot dead (18 gunshot wounds) by four unidentified gunmen in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija. After leaving the NPA, he became a farmer and was a member of a farmer's group, the Alab Katipunan (AK).

At the weekend, 21-23 February 2014, five unidentified men armed with knives and handguns boarded a Five Star Bus driven by Rodanet Villano (32). They robbed the passengers of all valuables and money, stabbed the bus conductor and drove away in Toyota Innova.

On 18 February 2014, a Korean businessman Hur Tae Suk (65) was shot dead by motorcycle-riding-suspects at Barangay Anunas. He died of multiple gunshot wounds. He was walking to Fields Avenue with three other Koreans when the incident happened. His compatriots ran away and left the victim. The suspect also escaped.

On 8 February 2014, Roberto De Cecco (62) was caught when he was installing copying gadgets in an ATM of Security Bank along MacArthur Highway, Barangay Balibago. Two other suspects, Romanian tourists – Gyorgy Sandor Varro and Marian Grama – escaped.

In January 2014, as a result of an argument, a farm caretaker Edmar Butucan was hacked to death by his co-worker and best friend Ryan Dangilan (24) at the Double K Farm in Barangay Cabaritan, in Santo Domingo, Ilocos Sur.

In January 2014, in Dinalupihan, the police caught three drug pushers: Florante Arellano, Marvin Soliman and Marilou Flores. They were in possession of 12 sachets of 'shabu' (methamphetamine).

On 7 January 2014, a girl (13), identified as 'Ella', was found bloody in Sitio Nalvo, Barangay Dagup. She suffered from lip and tongue wounds as well as hematoma localised in different parts of the body. She was taken to hospital.

On 7 January 2014, a gunman, Alvin Magdatu Escovilla (34), a construction worker, stopped a delivery van driven by Romnick V. Arguelles (24), dragged the driver out of his seat and drove away towards Batangas province. It happened on the national road in Barangay Talisay, Tiaong town.

On 6 January 2014, thieves ransacked the Budget Lane Supermarket in Barangay Cuta, in Batangas City.

On 6 January 2014, three Indian nationals were attacked by unidentified gunmen in Camarines Sur in Bicol. One of the victims, Navjot Singh (26) was killed, the two others – Lakhwinder Singh (33) and Paramit Singh (34) – were seriously wounded.

On 4 January 2014, a businessman Jaymart Regala (22) was kidnapped in the City of San Fernando, in the province of Pampanga. Two masked men with pistols entered the victim's Universal Travel Tours office at Sam's Building in Barangay San Agustin and dragged him to a Mitsubishi Montero.

On 1 January 2014, a team of operatives from the Regional Intelligence Group, the Anti-Kidnapping Group and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group arrested the first member of the 'Acetylene Gang' Requinio Bulanit Dacmeg, Jr, alias "Ricky" (36) at the Saint

Theodore Hospital. He was wounded in the back in a shootout with the police. A week later, they caught Randy Damitan Pelkeng (37) and James Batungan Yayak (44).

In December 2013, a girl (14) was kidnapped at a resort in Tayabas City, in Quezon province. As Sr. Supt. Ronaldo Genaro Ylagan, Quezon PPO director said, she was kept at the house of Gina Flores for 12 days and then sold for sex. Charges of human trafficking were filed against four people.

In August 2013, a farmer Federido Reyes (66) was murdered by unidentified suspect in Barangay Sta. Barbara, Iba, Zambales. He was shot in the head and immediately died. His body was found by his son, Reyes, who informed the police about his father's argument with Prudencio Camoyong about the supply of irrigation water. Reyes heard Camoyong threatened his father of harm.

## The Visayan Islands



The Visayan Islands, also known as the Visayas, are a group of islands in central Philippines, located between Mindanao and Luzon. It consists of several islands (Panay, Negros, Cebu, Bohol, Leyte, Samar and Masbate), surrounding the Visayan Sea. The Visayan Islands group is divided into three geographical areas: Eastern Visayas, Western Visayas, and Central Visayas whose total area is about 61,000 square kilometres. It consists of 16 provinces.

Most of the Visayan Islands are characterised by high mountains. Samar and Masbate are hilly. Panay has eastern plains where sugarcane and rice are farmed. Negros has western plains on which sugarcane is grown.

In Western Visayas a combination of humid and moist prevails. Higher amounts of rainfall are between June and November (about 15 rainy days per month). Hot months are March and April, whereas cold months include January, February and December.

Central Visayas has no definite climate. It has a short dry season from March to May and the rest of the year is relatively wet.

There are two types of climate in Eastern Visayas. Type II climate (Samar Island and the eastern part of Leyte Island) without a dry season and a lot of rain from November to January. Type IV (the western half of Leyte island and some parts of Northern Samar) has an even distribution of rainfall throughout a year and a short dry season from February to May.

Three major Visayan languages are Cebuano (the mother tongue of about one-fifth of the Philippines' population), Hiligaynon and Waray-Waray. English, an official language, is more and more popular and is preferred as the second language particularly among urbanized Visayans.

In August 2014, the Police Regional Office 7 (PRO-7) reported a 25.5-percent decrease in the crime rate in Central Visayas in the first half of this year, compared to the corresponding period last year. According to Rex Derilo, Regional Intelligence Division deputy chief, there

were 29,553 recorded crime incidents in the region from January to June 2014, whereas last year there were 39,649 incidents. 16,598 were index crimes (crimes against persons such as murder, homicide, physical injury, and rape, and crimes against property such as robbery, theft, carjacking or carjacking, and cattle rustling) and 13,355 were non-index crimes (violations of special laws, such as illegal logging or local ordinances). The decrease is mainly a result of the implementation of the Police Integrated Patrol System (PIPS) that includes random and simultaneous checkpoints and saturation drives as well as establishing police visibility in crime-prone areas, such as foot patrol.

On 11 August 2014, a lending collector Marlon Sumbong (28) was stabbed in Barangay Tabucan, Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo. His wallet was stolen but his mobile was found near his body. When the attack happened, the victim was probably going to Barangay P.D. Monfort.

On 11 August 2014, Vic-lestie Anguit (22) and Lorilyn Adang (22) were robbed of P17,500 cash and a mobile phone by three men at an ukay-ukay in Barangay North Fundidor, Molo district. The robbers then escaped on a motorcycle.

On 30 July 2014, unidentified thieves broke into the house of a barangay councilman, Danilo Lanza (48), in Barangay Aguinaldo, La Paz district. They stole P1,200.

On 22 July 2014, a former member of the Philippine Marines Jose Seguerra (58) was shot dead in Pototan, Iloilo. The suspect, Seguerra's friend Crispin Hipolito, escaped after the incident.

On 22 July 2014, Japanese national Ryota Kamegai (26) was robbed of his camera (P25,000) and wallet worth P40,000 with P3,000 inside. It happened on a jeepney.

On 7 July 2014, a village watchman Eddie Navajas (34) the robber broke into his house in Barangay Tabuc Suba, La Paz district and stole an eight-gigabyte flash drive, a calculator, a two-gigabyte memory card, P200 and his brother's two cellphones, a silver bracelet, gold earring and P5,000. The robber then escaped through the window.

On 2 July 2014, two motorists snatched a bag (with P800,000) of a pawnshop employee Leizyl Jativa (35) in Brgy. Velasco, Lemery, Iloilo when she was riding on a motorcycle driven by her brother-in-law, Jestoni Jativa (25). The snatchers kicked them from behind, took the bag when the victims fell on the ground and rode away.

At the beginning of July 2014, Julie Marie Billeza (31) was robbed of her bag (with documents and some money) on Jalandoni Street, City Proper. The thief then escaped.

At the beginning of July 2014, a student of Western Institute of Technology in La Paz district, Diomarie Palma (17), was robbed of his Samsung Galaxy Duos mobile phone at a computer shop near the school. He charged his mobile phone at the computer shop and went out to buy candies. When he returned to the computer shop, his phone was gone.

On 30 June 2014, Christian Bob Depalubos (25) of Brgy. Divinagracia, La Paz district became a victim of a snatcher who robbed his backpack and stole his wallet (with ATM cards), Alcatel mobile phone, Social Security System identification card (ID), PhilHealth ID, driver's license, and receipts for his motorcycle.

On 22 June 2014, a former member of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit, Jovito Velasco (55), was shot to death in Brgy. Mansalanao, La Castellana town when he and his wife, Angelica (unhurt), were going home on a tricycle. He tried to escape but the suspects caught him. Angelica identified one suspect as a member of the New People's Army.

On 12 May 2014, a former member of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Avelino Penalver (60), shot his neighbour, Jessie Mendoza (30), in Brgy. Guinacas, Pototan town and escaped. According to the police, Mendoza and brother Jay-R were playing cards with

Penalver and the suspect's son when they had an argument. The suspect and his son left but then the son came back and attacked Mendoza. Later his father appeared and shot the victim.

On 14 May 2014, Rommel Canja (21) was found dead in Brgy. Canabajan. He had many bullet and stab wounds on different parts of his body. The criminals escaped on his motorcycle.

## Cebu



Cebu, also known as the Queen City of the South, is the largest and oldest city of the Philippines, one of the country's top business and tourist destinations.

The main touristic areas are the islands of Mactan, Bantayan, Badian, Malapascua and Camotes with exclusive resorts and hotels luxury. There are smaller resorts in fishing villages in the South and North, such as Moalboal. The highland areas, in turn, are rich in spectacular views of the mountains and seas.

Crime volume under Cebu City Police Office (CCPO) rose to 6,126 cases this year from 5,451 cases last year. According to CCPO director Senior Superintendent Noli Romana, reports on street crimes in the city significantly declined despite the increase in crime volume. He said the crime volume increased as it now includes traffic-related incidents, particularly vehicular accidents that result in property damage.

In August 2014, the Regional Investigation and Detection Management Section of the Police Regional Office-7 Crimes reported that crimes involving loose firearms increased in Cebu City. The Cebu City Police Office recorded 213 crimes such crimes in the first period this year compared to 152 crimes in the corresponding period last year.

Visitors should be aware that kidnappings in Cebu have been on the increase in recent years. Although they are rather rare, some popular tourist resorts have been targeted.

Bombing threats in urban areas have also occurred. It is highly recommended to keep up to date and find out about potential dangers in areas you want to visit, to avoid going to distant places and to inform your family or friends of your plans.

Some areas in Cebu City are recommended to be avoided by tourists, particularly at night. The Carbon market area in the centre of the city is a place where pickpocketing and robbery can occur. Caution should also be taken around the main port area – tourists are mobbed by cab drivers and the pickpockets usually take advantage of this situation. Mandaue and Lapu Lapu are known for their gang activity. Most crimes involve only Filipino, but foreigners do become victims too. In the centre of Cebu City, there's Mango Avenue where most clubs are situated, which is why the area gets very crowded and to stealing. Keep your valuables secure when at a party.

Tourists can also become victims of pickpocketing and personal theft because criminals often appear in crowded places and areas popular with tourists. It is better to leave your valuables and important documents in the hotel safe or room. To prevent a dangerous situation, avoid displaying too much wealth not to attract thieves and do not walk down the street with your mobile.

Armed robberies are quite common. Two men on a motorcycle usually approach a pedestrian and demand his/her wallet and mobile phone. They often wear a motorcycle helmet not to be identified.

Taxis are one of Cebu's main means of transport. Nearly all of the taxis in Cebu have meters. Nevertheless, it sometimes happens that taxi drivers want you to pay more than the meter shows or refuse to use the meter. It is recommended to avoid such taxis and if they do not want to agree to turn on the meter or they change the way to increase the meter, it is better to leave the vehicle and find another one. If the driver is nice, you can tip 10-20 pesos, and a bit more if he loads or unloads your bags.

Private taxis are not the ones travellers should use. They charge even 5-10 times the price. If you call a metered taxi to collect you at one of the remote resorts on Mactan Island, you will probably pay more than you should as drivers manipulate the meter.

Another way to travel around the city is via jeepneys. They have specific routes assigned to them and stick to that route only. These routes are marked by number plus letter (e.g. 03B, 03G, 13C, 04L). Jeepneys are generally safe, but in rush hour it tends to get crammed and stuffy. To use a jeepney, call the driver by waving your arm. To leave, say "Para" loudly. If the driver does not hear you, he will not stop.

To move around the island you can use the services of a couple of bus operators (e.g. Ceres or Sunrays). They leave from Cebu South Bus Terminal. Prices are quite cheap. You can buy tickets from a conductor inside the bus who comes to you when you get in.

Some most recent incidents:

- On 15 August 2014, a bus dispatcher, Lino Calago (32), was shot dead by unidentified criminals in barangay Bitoon, Dumanjug, Cebu.
- On 12 August 2014, Paterno Aliñabon (46) was riding home on a motorcycle (habal-habal) when he was shot dead by six men in Barangay Jolomaynon, Dalaguete town. The habal-habal driver, Andrew Heredia, was injured. The incident could be related to the victim's work as a barangay tanod.
- On 4 August 2014, a 22-year-old woman was raped by Kenyan Eliud Kimplimo Leilei (23) in his house in Barangay Banilad, GMA Cebu's Bexmae Jumao. The suspect was arrested the next day as the victim reported the incident.
- On 18 June 2014, a sales agent Cada Dolanta and a truck driver Renato Alcantara were robbed of their sales (P25,000) and then were locked inside the delivery van in Borbon town, northern Cebu. The suspects escaped.
- On 12 June 2014, Richard L. King (57), the owner of Crown Regency Group of Hotels, was shot dead inside the Vital C Building on Sobrecary St. in Davao City. The gunman then escaped on a motorcycle.
- On 22 May 2014, three Koreans Young Mi An, Ho An and Kim Soonok were stabbed in a restaurant in Lapu-Lapu City in Cebu province.

- On 19 April 2014, a British dive shop owner in Malapascua, Tony Gilchrist (35), was shot dead by a security guard, Melchor Alciso Jr., who previously worked for him. The suspect was arrested.
- On 31 March 2014, a former inmate of the Cebu Provincial Detention Center (CPDRC), Fabian Debuayan, was shot dead by two unidentified motorcyclists in Dalaguete town when he was riding home with his son Loreto on a tricycle. Loreto suffered the back injury.
- On 18 February 2014, a Cebu lawyer Noel Archival (52) and his friend Candido Miñoza, were shot dead in Dalaguete town when they were riding in SUV. Archival's driver, Alejandro Jayme and Paulo Cortez were wounded.

## Arrival/Departure Procedures

Yachts arriving in the Philippines must first report to the Coast Guard.

Yachts must initially proceed to an official Port of Entry to check in – overnight stops en route to a Port of Entry is tolerated but not encouraged.

Yachts, particularly those with animals aboard – to notify the quarantine officer, must try to give 24 hours advance notice of arrival at the Port of Entry.

### Customs

Firearms and ammunition must be declared on arrival. Prohibited items include pornographic material, narcotics and internationally prohibited drugs, unless accompanied by a medical prescription.

As far as pets are concerned, yachts with animals on board are required to contact the Animal Quarantine office in Manila for clearance documentation and a permit.

Yachts may remain in the Philippines for 1 year – crew's visa extensions apply.

Yachts must clear in at a designated port of entry before the crew may go ashore anywhere. The Port Authorities/Coast Guard must be notified immediately upon entry. It is best to arrive on a weekday, but even then your VHF call may not be answered. Try calling the Port Office by cell phone.

### Immigration

A visa is not required for stays of up to 21 days, except for the citizens of Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Bangladesh, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, CIS, Croatia, Cuba, East Timor, Egypt, Estonia, Georgia, India, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Korea, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Macedonia, Nauru, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Yemen.

For stays longer than 21 days, you must get a visa in advance or request an extension to 59 days (3030PHP) before it expires. Extension after expiry will attract a penalty (1000PHP). Further 30 (4300PHP) or 60 (4800PHP) day extensions may be requested repeatedly for up to 16 months for most nationalities, then the visitor must exit and return. The validity of the visa starts from the date one checks in at the first port of entry. It is advised to obtain a 60-day visa in advance and an extension of this visa for a further 60 days can be obtained (4800PHP) from the Immigration office in Cebu, Manila, and Olongapo.

When applying for a visa from a Philippines consulate, there are the following requirements:

- passport with 6 months validity (several colour copies are appreciated)
- application form and photograph (signed on the reverse)
- an itinerary and intended port of entry into the Philippines
- full details of the vessel.

For extensions, a passport valid for 6 months (several colour copies are appreciated) are required. The 21 day visa obtained upon arrival does not require photographs.

## Health Advisory

First of all, while planning to travel to a foreign country, it is of ultimate importance to have appropriate travel insurance so that you do not have to pay for any medical assistance in case you need it. When choosing the insurance, take into account the country you are going to, your general health condition, the length of your stay, activities you are going to do there and also possible dangers and threats.

The standard of medical facilities in the Philippines is satisfactory in most important cities, but quite limited in provincial regions and remote islands. Major private hospitals, especially in Metro Manila, are well equipped and internationally accredited. In most cases you have to pay before you receive medical assistance or treatment.

According to the World Health Organisation, about 47,000 cases of measles (36,493 suspected cases and 10,676 confirmed cases) and 77 measles deaths were reported in the Philippines between 1 January and 20 June 2014. In August 2014, 22 US travellers who returned from the Philippines have become sick with measles. Most of them were unvaccinated. It is highly recommended to vaccinate against measles. Travellers who notice any symptoms of measles should consult a doctor. Measles is spread through coughing and sneezing, and is one of the most contagious infections. The initial symptoms can include a runny nose, watery eyes, swollen eyelids, sneezing, sensitivity to light, high fever, tiredness, irritability, aches and pains, dry cough and loss of appetite. Two to four days after the initial symptoms the measles rash appears and lasts about a week.

Malaria is a disease caused by parasite called Plasmodium. It is transmitted by the bite of a mosquito vector, Anopheles. The disease usually occurs in the rural and hard-to-reach areas such as in the hills, mountains and coastal areas. Disease transmission is usually higher during the rainy season.

At the 2014 Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network (APMEN) VI in Makati, the Philippines joined other countries in the region to work towards the elimination of malaria. As the Health Chief noted, the number of cases went down from 46,342 cases in 2005 to 7,720 in 2013. Deaths were 150 in 2005 to 12 to last year. Of 53 endemic provinces, 27 have been declared malaria-free. They include Cavite, Batangas, Marinduque, Catanduanes, Albay, Masbate, Sorsogon, Camarines Sur, Iloilo, Aklan, Capiz, Guimaras, Bohol, Cebu, Siquijor, Western Samar, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Northern Leyte, Southern Leyte, Biliran, Camiguin, Surigao Del Norte, Benguet, Romblon, Batanes, and Dinagat Islands.

On 11 December 2013, there were 10,326 reported cases of dengue fever in Davao region. The worst affected was Davao City with 6314 cases. In August 2014, the Department of Health reported more than 3,000 cases of dengue fever in the southern Philippine region of Caraga. More than 12 people have already died. According to the Regional Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit, the number of dengue cases is still rising since early this month in the region. Agusan del Sur has the largest number of cases (752) after Butuan (732). Dengue fever is transmitted through the bites of a particular mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, which causes hemorrhagic fever. The virus is characterized by high fever, rash, headache and muscle and joint pains. It is advised to use insect repellents, wear long, loose fitting and light coloured clothes.

Water-borne, food-borne and parasitic diseases are also possible. It is advised to boil drinking water or drink bottled water. Besides, avoid ice cubes and raw and undercooked food. Swimming in fresh water can result in some water-borne diseases, such as bilharzia (schistosomiasis) and leptospirosis. Schistosomiasis is caused by parasites that live in fresh

water (rivers or lakes). The symptoms include fever, muscle aches, skin rash and cough. Leptospirosis is a bacterial infection usually acquired through rodent bites, direct contact with infected animals or cuts and open wounds exposed to contaminated flood water. In October 2013, there were more than 600 recorded cases of leptospirosis in Metro Manila. According to the Department of Health (DOH) data, the 5 worst-hit areas in the Philippines included: Metro Manila – 663 cases, Central Luzon – 375 cases, Western Visayas – 248 cases, CaLaBaRZon – 195 cases and Davao region – 140 cases.

## Maritime News

13 August 2014, at least seven Chinese were rescued after their fishing vessel caught fire and sank off Tawi-Tawi province in Mindanao.

4 August 2014, a passenger vessel, "Super Shuttle Ferry", got stranded off Bohol for several hours due to big waves. The vessel was on the way to Cebu City from Cagayan de Oro City. There were 118 passengers and 60 crew members.

25 June 2014, Batangas Bay, Anchorage 'A', Philippines – two robbers boarded the vessel from their small boats. The crew noticed that the anchor house cover plate with securing butterfly bolts and nuts and rope lashing had been removed. Three pairs of fire hoses and nozzles were missing.

22 July 2014, a boat captain Elmer Escalicas (39) was killed in a fight with his chief engineer Juanito Desamparado while sailing off Iloilo. The incident occurred on the Skipboat-1. According to the Coast Guard, Escalicas wanted to attack Desamparado with a knife, but Desamparado defended himself and hit Escalicas on the head with a wooden chair.

3 June 2014, Manila Anchorage Area, Philippines – nine armed robbers boarded an anchored general cargo ship. They took hostage all crew members, stole ship's cash, crew cash and personal items. They managed to escaped. No member of the crew was injured.

In April 2014, two German tourists – Stefan Viktor Okonek (71) and Herike Diesen (55) – were taken from their yacht at Rio Tubbataha. Their yacht, MV Catherine, was found in waters off Bataraza, Palawan. It was confirmed that they had been kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf militants and were being held "unharmed" by the Al-Qaeda linked gunmen in the jungle in the southern Philippines.

In August 2013, a passenger ferry, MV St. Thomas Aquinas, with 715 passengers and 116 crew, sank after it had collided with a cargo ship, Sulpicio Express Siete, in Talisay, in the Cebu province of the Philippines. At least 32 people died and over 600 were rescued.

On 16 August 2014, at least 24 people died and hundreds were rescued in sea waters off Cebu province when the passenger ship MV St. Thomas Aquinas collided with the cargo ship MV Sulpicio Express 7. 572 passengers were rescued.

26 July 2013, outside breakwater of South Harbour, Manila, Philippines – the deck watchman observed some footprints on the vessel's forecastle. The general alarm was activated and the incident was reported to VTMS Manila and the PCG Special Operating Unit conducted barrier.

22 July 2013, approximately 4 nm off MICT Breakwater, North Harbour, Manila, Philippines – the security patrol noticed the broken padlocks of several rooms on their deck and four unidentified persons onboard. The duty officer was informed and they checked the forecastle. The robbers escaped via the hawse pipe. The incident was reported to VTMS Manila and PSC Manila.

16 July 2013, Bauan anchorage area, Batangas City, Philippines – a number of men boarded the barge to do hot works (gas cutting of steel structures). The master of Jaya Mermaid 3 noticed the boarding had been unauthorised, he reported the activities of the robbers to VTMS Batangas. The robbers were arrested and their motorbanca and cutting equipment were confiscated.

10 July 2013, Manila Bay Anchorage, Philippines – three robbers boarded the container ship using hooks. The robbers put one inflatable life raft and one torchlight onto a red/maroon motorbanca and immediately fled in an unknown direction. The incident lasted about 15 to 25 min. and was reported to VTMS Manila and personnel from Port State Control (PSC) Manila and Maritime Police boarded the vessel for investigation.

31 January 2013, Manila South Quarantine Anchorage, Philippines – three robbers in a boat boarded an anchored general cargo ship. The crew saw the robbers and raised alarm. The robbers escaped with stolen ship stores. The incident was reported to VTMS and Coast Guard.

## Allmode Summary and Advice

The 2nd edition of the Indonesian Report concentrated on the news on Thailand. This edition focuses on the Philippines and aims is to help create better Situational Awareness (SA) and highlight the risk of visiting a particular location.

The Philippines is often chosen as a holiday destination by tourists from all over the world. According to the data provided by A/D Cards and Shipping Manifests, there were 2,433,428 international visitors in the first half of 2014, growing at 2.22% compared to the corresponding period in 2013 – 2,380,593 arrivals. In June 2014, there were 372,293 visitors (+0.87%) relative to the 369,073 the previous year.

The report shows that to have a good time and stay safe, tourists need to remember they are in a foreign country they do not know, and take some precautions. Common sense and good situational awareness are the most important. Stay alert and maintain awareness of your surroundings. Criminals target people who do not care about safety and feel too certain.

The basic advice is not to show or carry too much money in public spaces, avoid displaying expensive jewellery and be careful while choosing the means of transport to move around the country. Moreover, secure your credit card and use it in safe places.

It is recommended to avoid travelling on ferries, which are often overloaded, do not have necessary lifesaving equipment, are not appropriately maintained and have incomplete passenger lists. Besides, storms can develop quickly.

Besides, be aware that there is a high level of piracy and armed robbery against ships in and around Philippine waters and maritime rescue services in the Philippines may be limited.

# Security Awareness Training

## Are your crew compliant with the mandatory STCW 95 modules?

STCW Regulation VI/6 became mandatory on 1st January 2014. This regulation requires all seafarers on ships subject to the ISPS Code to have received security related training and instruction relevant to their assigned duties on-board.

- **Proficiency in Security Awareness**

ALL seafarers who **do not** have specific security-related duties on board are required to hold a Proficiency in Security Awareness Certificate ([PSA](#)) and will need to take an approved course approx. 4 hours in length.

- **Proficiency in Designated Security Duties**

All seafarers with **designated** security duties stipulated in the ship security plan will be required to hold a certificate of Proficiency in Designated Security Duties ([PDSD](#)) and will need to take an approved course approximately 10 hours in length.

**Are your Crew prepared?**

**New STCW 95** – proficiency in security awareness & for seafarers with designated security duties.

**Course Topics:**

- Reporting a security incident
- Security threat procedures
- Enhancement of maritime security through heightened awareness
- Recognition of security risks and threats
- Maintaining security awareness and vigilance
- Maintaining conditions set out in a Ship Security Plan.
- Vessel Security Inspections
- Security equipment and systems.

On 1st January 2014, security training required for seafarers will change.

STCW Regulation VI/6 will enter into force. This regulation requires all seafarers on ships subject to the ISPS Code to have received security related training and instruction relevant to their assigned duties on-board.

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- Security Equipment and Systems Introduction

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