

'No specific terrorist threats to PHL'

By **Ross Acosta**
Reporter

THE National Police and the Armed Forces said on Wednesday there were no specific terrorist threats in the country despite a travel advisory issued by the US Embassy in Manila warning its citizens of possible terrorist attacks in the country.

At the same time, military and police authorities clarified that the advisory was issued by American authorities in all countries—not only in the Philippines—where there are Americans, apparently to protect US nationals against possible reprisals by followers of terrorist leader Osama bin Laden, who was killed recently in Pakistan by US special forces.

Director General Raul Bacalso, National Police chief, said the advisory issued by the US Embassy on Wednesday was similar to previous warnings issued to Americans in the country.

"There is nothing [new]...it is the same [kind of] travel advisory that has been issued by other countries previously. They all warned their citizens, but there are no specific threats," Bacalso said.

"Still, I have already ordered the different regions to really step up security measures. I issued the order in

relation to the opening of classes, and it was made even before the issuance of the [US] travel advisory," he added.

The US Embassy warned Americans of a terrorist attack, not only in Mindanao but even in Metro Manila. It did not give specific details.

The military, through spokesman Commo. Miguel Rodriguez, said the advisory was a part of the embassy's effort to protect Americans in the aftermath of the killing of world's No. 1 terrorist Osama bin Laden.

Rodriguez said the advisory was issued by US officials in all countries where there are Americans.

"The US travel advisory is part of their protection to US citizens worldwide as they are primary targets of retaliation in relation to bin Laden's death. It was not issued in the Philippines alone," he said.

"It may induce a negative impact on tourism, but it's nice to note that in spite of the advisory, we see a lot of Americans enjoying their stay in the Philippines, especially in Cebu, Bohol, Ilocos, Palawan and other tourist areas," Rodriguez said.

Bacalso said the National Police has not monitored specific threats in "certain areas" by a "certain group or certain activity."

Bacalso confirmed the existence

See "Terror," A2



THE organizers and sponsors of this year's Asia CEO Awards pose for a photo at the launching held at the Desfil Hotel in Makati City on Wednesday. **ROY DOMINGO**

BIR fails to achieve May collection goal

THE Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), the government's biggest

two-thirds of the government's revenue, was not able to reach its target,

American Express signs as title sponsor of Asia CEO Awards

EXECUTIVES of American Express Co. (AmEx) said they see the Philippines as an "exciting" market and that's why they decided to be the title sponsor of the Asia CEO Awards.

Ashutosh Agrawal, head of commercial cards for Asia, told reporters the company noted an annual double-digit growth in card issuance in the

market for us and we're seeing steady growth in consumer spending," Agrawal said after a press conference in Makati City launching this year's Asia CEO Awards.

Rebecca Bustamante of the awards organizer Claire Associates Inc. said AmEx's sponsorship signals the globalization of the awards that began

the leadership talent and the increasing economic strength of the Philippines, Bustamante said.

Agrawal said AmEx will continue "to put trust" in Banco de Oro Unibank Inc., the company's sole merchant acquirer and issuer in the Philippines.

"The sponsorship demonstrates our long-term commitment to increas-

According to AmEx's 2010 annual report, its total billed business in Asia Pacific grew 22 percent.

BDO card issuing business head Ophelia Camina said during the press conference that the bank's "outlook continues to be positive" for the Philippines.

"As the corporate sector grows rap-