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Apec-US

AMERICANS TAKE NO CHANCES WITH CLINTON'S SECURITY

By: Abdul Muin Majid

MANILA, Nov 19 (Bernama) -- The United States government does not take chances when it comes to the security of President Bill Clinton.

Reports today said American security agencies have flown in enough personnel, equipment and firepower to "stage a small military operation".

Just one US Air Force Galaxy C-5 cargo plane, the biggest aircraft in the American fleet, yesterday unloaded two Sea Stallion helicopters, close to 100 security and maintenance personnel and at least 15 crates believed to contain state-of-the art weaponry at the Ninoy Aquino Airport here.

Clinton will arrive on Sunday to attend the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) meeting in Manila and Subic.

During Clinton's last visit to the Philippines a few years ago, US cargo planes brought in 11 limousines, a number of helicopters, US marines and Secret Service agents to provide security.

Philippine Armed Forces spokesman Major Gen Victor Garcia was reported to have said that more troops had been sent to Subic, a former American naval base north of here, to thwart any attempts to sabotage the Apec summit.

The troops are to block a planned 3,000-vehicle demonstration this weekend.

However, diplomats said it would be hard for anti-Apec demonstrators to get anywhere near the 18 Apec leaders as stringent security measures had been put in place.

The leaders who will attend the summit include Indonesian President Suharto, Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah and Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. -- BERNAMA

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