

Newspaper	The Sun
Date	12/3/2013

# 'Don't cause KL-Manila rift'

> Claims of military brutality against Filipinos  
unsubstantiated, says Zahid

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*the Sun - 12/3/2013*

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Allegations that the Malaysian armed forces are hunting and killing Filipinos in Lahat Datu, Sabah are unsubstantiated, said Defence Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi yesterday.

He said that those responsible for such claims should not try to create a rift between Malaysia and the Philippines.

"The Philippine Foreign Ministry said these are militant intruders, but not terrorists. To me, armed intruders are like terrorists. However, I leave it to the media to figure out what to call them," he told a press conference at the Islamic International University Malaysia (IIUM), where he had officiated the ground-breaking ceremony of the Military Forces Fund Board residential college.

"I would like to have peace in Sabah as soon as possible. However, the militants who encroached

into Sabah have yet to respond to the prime minister's order for unconditional surrender," said Zahid.

He said because of the conflict in Sabah, the production of palm oil in Felda Sahabat has been reduced, but he was confident it would return to normal.

"The situation is under control. Although the intruders have spread themselves out, I would say we still have the upper hand. And we have assistance from the Philippines," said Zahid.

The residential college building will employ the concept of the IIUM Perpetual Endowment Property Fund.

This means the construction will be funded by donations, and rental collected from residents of the hostel will be used to initiate scholarships.

The five-story building will consist of 16 units of student apartments with four individual rooms in each. There will also be two units on the ground floor to facilitate students with disabilities.