



The US Army Will Not Conduct Typhon Live-Fire Exercises in the Philippines

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The United States Army will not conduct a live-fire operation of its medium-range missile system, known as Typhon, during exercises in the Philippines this spring, according to the service commander in charge of US Army operations in the Pacific.

“We do not plan to conduct live fire in the Philippines at this time,” said Maj. Gen. Jeffrey VanAntwerp, deputy chief of staff for operations, plans, and training at the US Army Pacific, to reporters during a press briefing on Thursday.

The news comes almost a year after the Army's 1st Multi-Domain Task Force transported a Typhon launcher to Luzon, Philippines, as part of that year's Salaknib exercise — marking the first time the new capability, considered vital for the US Army's strategy in the Indo-Pacific, had been deployed. The missile system traveled more than 8,000 miles from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, aboard a C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft in a 15-hour flight.

Since then, Typhon has remained in the country, drawing the ire of China, which criticized the move and warned it could destabilize the region. Authorities have yet to fire the missile system in the Philippines.

It is unclear how long Typhon will remain in the Philippines or if it will be moved elsewhere in the Pacific theater.

In response to a question about where the system might be headed, VanAntwerp said, “We are making plans, but I have to defer to the [Office of the Secretary of Defense].”

The system built by Lockheed Martin, consisting of a vertical launch system using Standard Missile-6 and Tomahawk missiles built by the Navy's Raytheon, can hit targets in the range of 500 to 2,000 kilometers. The complete system features a battery operations center, four launchers, prime movers, and modified trailers.

The missile system is capable of sinking ships, striking long-range land targets, and is “mobile and survivable,” VanAntwerp said.

As part of this year's Salaknib and Balikatan military exercises between the US and the Philippines, the Philippine Navy plans to fire C-Star, Spike Non-Line-of-Sight, and Mistral missiles. The country's armed forces will not fire their supersonic medium-range cruise missile Brahmos, which has a higher cost per shot.

The presence of Typhon in the Philippines has prompted other countries in the Pacific region to inquire about the possibility of hosting the weapon system, a US defense official recently told Defense News.

The Army knew Typhon would have a strong deterrent effect, but did not expect it to be as significant as observed over the past year, the official said, particularly in unsettling China.

The biggest challenge now is transporting the capability throughout the Pacific — if the desire is to rotate it among countries — due to the high costs of moving the equipment, the official said.

Meanwhile, the Army's 3rd MDTF, based in Hawaii, is in the process of soon receiving its Typhon battery, which the service certified at JBLM.

“We are constantly looking for opportunities to exercise capabilities like that forward in the theater,” said Col. Michael Rose, commander of the 3rd MDTF, recently. “We learn tremendous

lessons by bringing capabilities into the theater.”

Rose said the Army expects Typhon to support Operation Pathways, a series of exercises throughout the year designed to strengthen cooperation with regional allies and deter China.

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