

## MAAP Holds Graduation Ceremony for 2nd Batch of Valkereans Class of 2016

Written by Yella Dimes Rico

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The Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) held the Graduation Ceremony for 2nd Batch of Valkereans Class of 2016 at the New Parade Ground of the MAAP campus in Kamaya Point, Alas Asin, Mariveles, Bataan last December 2, 2016.

188 cadets formed the 2nd batch of graduates over the weekend. The first batch of graduates had their Commencement Exercises on May 28. Together, MAAP has produced a total of 336 graduates this year forming the Valkereans Class of 2016.

The Commencement Exercises began with the Graduation Parade which became a prelude to the entrance of the graduates. The NETC Band played the Philippine National Anthem and the Invocation was led by Fr. Arnold Rosal, OSJ.

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Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) President, Dr. Conrado F. Oca took to the stage to give the welcome remarks. Cm. Renante A. Garcia presented the graduating class to MAAP President, VAdm. Eduardo Ma. R. Santos who declared the cadets as graduates and conferred their Bachelor's degree. Cdr. Lawrence P Ato, Jr. of the Philippine Navy read their Commission Orders and led the graduates to their Oath of Office. Dr. Oca, VAdm. Santos and the Guest of Honor then took to the stage for the awarding of diplomas and presentation of awards. C/E Rodolfo D. Apiso then presented the CAMS graduating students to VAdm. Santos who declared them as graduates and conferred them their Masteral Degrees.

MAAP President, VAdm. Eduardo Ma. R. Santos introduced the Guest of Honor, Department of Transportation Undersecretary for Maritime Affairs Felipe A. Judan. Undersecretary Judan began the Commencement Address by sharing his humble beginnings and stressing his points on how to succeed in the maritime industry. He urged the graduates to observe professionalism in any task given to them, to prioritize safety and to give respect to their fellow seafarers.

The Philippines is a major player in the international maritime industry and he reminds the graduates that there are many challenges that the Filipino seafarers are faced with. "More than ever, we are faced with the challenge of keeping up with world standards, and even surpassing it. This goal is the primary moving force why we remain steadfast in our commitment in instilling the culture of safety through the strict implementation of safety regulations and standards across the entire maritime sector." The Undersecretary adds, "Sea trade is the lifeblood of international and domestic commerce, and safety is an essential component in the modernization and regulation of the maritime industry. We cannot afford to lose our competency advantage in supplying the world's fleet of maritime officers."

The celebration concluded with MAAP dignitaries presenting a plaque of appreciation and a memento to Undersecretary Judan and the singing of the Alma Matter song.

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