

'Phl can build own ships to boost military capability'

By PAOLO ROMERO

The Philippines can develop its own shipbuilding industry to ensure the military will have the capability to secure the country

and its territorial waters from piracy, terrorism and encroachment, Sen. Richard Gordon said yesterday.

Gordon noted some global giants in shipbuilding - like

Hanjin Heavy Industries in Subic, Zambales - have set up huge shipyards in various parts of the country in recognition of Filipinos' skills.

"We are an archipelagic

country; we should be able to build ships. We should have ships made in the Philippines - in Cebu, in Hanjin in Subic," the senator said in a statement.

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"We should really make an effort to strengthen our military, because we are facing both internal and external threats. At the same time, we should consistently assert our national territory, which includes Scarborough Shoal and Benham Rise, in no uncertain terms," he said.

He said the recent launching by Hanjin of the first-

ever Subic-made 20,600-TEU (twenty-foot equivalent unit) class container vessel shows that Filipinos have the talent to build ships.