

Philippines bombing: Two people killed in attack at Cotabato shopping centre on New Year's Eve

From the [Philippine Star](#)

Two people were killed and more than a dozen others wounded when a bomb exploded near the entrance to a shopping centre in the southern Philippines.

Police said they believed the New Year's Eve blast was orchestrated remotely by suspected Muslim militants.



The target appeared to be the entrance of the South Seas Mall in Cotabato City, Major General Cirilito Sobejana said. Children were reportedly among the injured. A second unexploded bomb

was recovered nearby, police said.

The improvised explosive device (IED) used in the attack was packed with concrete nails and jagged metal fragments. The IED was left by a still unidentified person underneath one of the tables near the entrance of the Southseas Mall along Magallanes Street where ambulant vendors sell fireworks. An unexpoded IED was found on the second floor of the mall that responding police and Army bomb experts detonated.

Elena Zombrio, a passerby, said the IED went off in the vendors' section, scattering the merchandise in areas near the mall entrance.

Maj-Gen Sobejana said an initial investigation showed the design of the bomb was similar to those used in the past by local Islamist militants who have pledged allegiance to Isis.

Government forces launched an offensive against militants belonging to a group called Daulah Islamiyah last week and at least seven died in the fighting, Mr Sobejana said.

"This is a part of the retaliation, but the problem is they're victimising innocent civilians," he told reporters.