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The Cendrawasih Military Command made the announcement at Sentani Airport near Jayapura, Papua, on Tuesday, following the arrest of the third suspect, who had been on the run for two weeks. (Antara Photo)

BY : ROBERT ISIDORUS

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Jakarta. Three soldiers have been arrested for allegedly selling ammunition to a criminal group while stationed in Timika, Papua.

The Cendrawasih Military Command, which oversees Papua and West Papua, made the

announcement at the province's Sentani Airport on Tuesday, following the arrest of the third suspect, who had been on the run.

Cendrawasih Military Command spokesman Lt. Col. Eko Daryanto said the third suspect, only identified by the initials D.A.T., was arrested at a relative's home in Sorong, West Papua, on Sunday before being taken to Sentani. The soldier, with the rank of private, had been evading arrest for about two weeks.

Two others soldiers, identified as privates M. and O., were arrested earlier in Makassar, South Sulawesi, where they are being detained.

Eko said the three soldiers are suspected of having sold ammunition to an armed group during their 11-month deployment in Timika. Suspects M. and O. were transferred to Makassar at the end of their deployment, while D.A.T. moved to Mimika.

Their names came up in a police investigation after three civilians were arrested for illegal possession of ammunition outside a shopping center in Timika.

"The three civilians revealed during the investigation that they had obtained the ammunition from the three members of the military," Eko said.

He added that if found guilty, D.A.T. could face the death penalty, while the other two could get life imprisonment under the 1951 Law on Emergency.