

Gunmen snatch Fil-Am in Zambo Norte town

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ZAMBOANGA CITY—A Filipino-American was abducted late Wednesday (Sept. 16) in the town of Sirawai, Zamboanga del Norte, authorities said.

Maj. Gen. Generoso Ponio, commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division, said soldiers and policemen are currently pursuing the suspects in the vicinity of Sirawai town.

Ponio quoted Sirawai Mayor Gamar Janihim as saying the abductors could be local bandits.

Brig. Gen. Leonel Nicolas, commander of the Army's 102nd Infantry Brigade, told the Inquirer the victim was identified as Rex Triplet.

A report obtained by the Inquirer from the Zamboanga Peninsula regional police office said that Triplet, 64, was with his wife, Celsa Maani Triplet, 23, when snatched.

The couple was riding a motorcycle being driven by Triplet on the way home to Piacan village when four armed men wearing camouflage uniforms flagged them down.

In the scuffle to snatch Triplet, Celsa managed to escape and sought help from officials of Tapanayan village, the police's report said.

The gunmen took Triplet with them heading for the hinterlands of Tapanayan.

Police involved in the pursuit operation was led by Lt. Roy Malayo, deputy police chief of Sirawai.

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