

One of the members of a group of foreigners on a “bird watching” trip in the mountain range of Kitanglad, Bukidnon was wounded in a firefight Friday morning, the military said.

Maj. Christian Uy, the spokesperson of the army’s 4th Infantry Division, said that a group of about seven foreigners were reportedly on a “bird watching” trip in the mountain ranges of Kitanglad when the firefight occurred in the hinterland village of Dalwangan, Bukidnon.

He said it was the second time that the armed group believed members of the communist New People’s Army (NPA) and the government troopers figured in an armed skirmishes in the vicinity of Dalawangan.

“The first was on Feb. 10 in about the same area where a government trooper was killed,” Uy said.

He said that that the group of foreigners was caught in the crossfire during the armed encounter Friday morning.

Uy said that a team from the army’s 4thID were on their way to Malaybalay Friday afternoon to conduct an investigation of the incident.

Village Chief Esperanza Martinez, of Dalwangan, said that the group of foreigners who claimed to be environmentalists were on their way to investigate the presence of the Philippine Eagle in Kitanglad when they were caught in the crossfire.

She said that the guide identified as Carlito Gairamara was wounded and is now undergoing treatment in a hospital in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon while all the foreigners were safe.