

3 killed in Zambo Sur pre-election violence

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Three persons were killed while two others, including a police official, were wounded during a six-hour shootout between policemen and a group of armed men in Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur last Saturday.

A police report said that the three were suspects in the murder of Arapoc Matas, a candidate for barangay chairman at Lower Sang-an, Labangan municipality.

Matas was killed at Purok 2, Barangay Noboran, Labangan last Saturday.

Police immediately responded to the incident and launched pursuit operations which led to the six-hour exchange of gunfire between authorities and the suspects in Barangay Dipaya.

The fatalities were identified as Butchoy Abdul of Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur; Bakar Inok of Barangay Lower Sang-an and Salik Tabina of Barangay Bulanit.

Police recovered firearms of various caliber from the suspects' possession.

Two persons, identified as Police Sr Insp. Aiko R. Tesoro, Deputy Chief of the Zamboanga del Sur Provincial Police Office Intelligence Branch, and Arnaiz Alam Kabaro, a resident, were wounded during the incident.

Police recovered one unit M4 from Kabaro's possession. Tesoro suffered a slight wound on his right arm and was rushed to Hofileña hospital in Pagadian City and later transferred to Ozamis City hospital for further treatment while Kabaro is presently confined at the Zamboanga del Sur Medical Center.

The police also held two persons for questioning.

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They were identified as Cabili Alam, the former municipal councilor and currently the officer In charge of the Integrated Bus Terminal of Labangan Municipality and his son Amrai Alam Y Yusop, incumbent Barangay Kagawad of Lower Sang-an, Labangan who is also running for re-election.

According to the police Matas was shot several times using an M16 rifle, caliber 45 pistols, and caliber 9mm by seven gun men, at 3:30pm last Saturday.

The police said Matas sustained several gunshot wounds in different parts of his body that resulted to his instantaneous death. (Ely Dumaboc)