

Suspected NPA rebels raid ex-mayor's home in Surigao del Norte

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Army and police officials in Caraga suspect that the 20 to 30 armed men, who attacked the home of the former mayor of Placer, Surigao del Norte Wednesday night, are communist rebels.

Col. Erwin Rommel Lamzon, commanding officer of the Philippine Army 30th Infantry Battalion, said the armed men took an undermined amount of cash and personal items from Mayor Chary Mangacop's house in Barangay Bonifacio, Surigao City.

Lamzon said the cash consisted mainly of payroll money for some of Mangacop's workers in a mining operation.

Caraga police regional director Chief Superintendent Reynaldo S. Rafal said six of the armed men entered Mangacop's house while their cohorts served as lookout and surrounded the compound.

Meanwhile, according to the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) in Caraga, Mangacop was having dinner with wife, relatives and household staff when the armed men barged in.

PIA-Caraga said while the armed men searched for the firearms of the mayor, some went to the court yard of the compound and burned two dump trucks, one back hoe and one mini van. The armed men were able to seize four of the mayor's licensed firearms, four hand-held radios and two base radios. No one was harmed during the raid.

The New People's Army has not yet issued statement about or claimed responsibility for the raid. — Ben Serrano/ELR/KBK, GMA News