

# War on Drug in Mindanao (Philippines): Mayor killed in police shootout

Sunday 30 October 2016, by [ALLARD Tom](#), [MindaNews](#), [MOGATO Manuel](#) (Date first published: 28 October 2016).

**Datu Saudi-Ampatuan mayor Samsudin Dimaukom, publicly accused by Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte of involvement in the illegal drug trade, was killed on October 28, 2016, along with nine others, by Philippine police at a highway checkpoint in what police describe as an anti-drug operation.**

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*This happened as a new phase of a bloody narcotics crackdown zeroed-in on high profile targets (Reuters).*

*Police version of the incident have been challenged in social media postings (MindaNews).*

*Datu Saudi-Ampatuan is a 4<sup>th</sup> class municipality in the province of Maguindanao, Philippines. According to the 2010 census, it has a population of 20,330 people in 5,134 households (Wikipédia).*

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## Maguindanao mayor, 9 others killed in anti-drugs operation

DAVAO CITY (MindaNews / 28 October) - The mayor of a town in Maguindanao who was on the list of alleged drug personalities read by President Rodrigo Duterte on August 7 was killed along with his nine escorts along the highway in Makilala, North Cotabato early Friday morning in what the police said was a "legitimate anti-drug operation but the subjects opened fire on our troops."

NDBC News' Radyo Bida quoted Supt. Bernard Tayong of the North Cotabato police provincial office as saying the police anti-illegal drug task force was conducting a checkpoint along the highway in Barangay Old Bulatukan in Makilala at around 4:30 a.m. when three vehicles "loaded with heavily armed men ... opened fire on law enforcers prompting authorities to fire back."

Mayor Samsudin Dimaukom of Datu Saudi Ampatuan town and his escorts were rushed to the Makilala Medical Specialist Hospital but were pronounced dead on arrival, the report said. No policeman was reported killed or injured.

Tayong, according to NDBC News said the police received information that Dimaukom's group was to transport huge stocks of shabu to Maguindanao and Cotabato City from Davao.

Dimaukom was the first of five Maguindanao mayors on the list of Duterte who presented himself to the office of Senior Supt. Nickson Muksan, provincial police chief at around 9:30 a.m. on August 7, some seven hours after the President read the list of 163 personalities allegedly involved in the illegal drugs trade.

Accompanied by his wife Anida, the town's vice mayor who was also on Duterte's list, Dimaukom told Muksan they were innocent and were willing to face investigation.

"We are most willing to clear our names, follow the process and let the truth come out at the soonest possible time, we are most willing to cooperate with the President on this issue" Mayor Dimaukom told MindaNews then. The mayors went to PNP chief Ronald dela Rosa the next day.

NDBC News also quoted Supt. Romeo Galgo Jr. of the Police Regional Office 12 as saying what happened in Makilala was a "legitimate anti-drug operation but the subjects opened fire on our troops."

Other versions of the incident have been mentioned in social media postings.

Fr. Eliseo Mercado Jr., OMI, former president of Notre Dame University, told *MindaNews* "it would be best if a special investigative team with a state prosecutor in the lead be sent over to investigate what happened as there are several versions of the report — that the mayor's group opened fire at the police, that the group was allegedly 'ambushed', and that the police allegedly asked them to alight the vehicles and told them to form one line and shot each one at a time."

"There were 10 deaths and people deserve to know the truth," Mercado added.

Maguindanao Governor Esmael "Toto" Mangudadatu could not be reached for comment while ARMM Governor Mujiv Hataman responded to *MindaNews*' query at 11:16 a.m. saying "verifying pa" (still verifying).

President Duterte will be in Cotabato City tomorrow as guest speaker at the launching of the Comprehensive Reform and Development Agenda for ARMM and Other Conflict Areas in Regions 9, 10 and 12 at the Shariff Kabunsuan Cultural Center in the Office of the Regional Government compound.

\* MindaNews. October 28, 2016 7:47 pm:

<http://www.mindanews.com/top-stories/2016/10/maguindanao-mayor-9-others-killed-in-anti-drugs-operation/>

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## **Drug war enters new phase**

(Extracts)

A mayor on Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's wanted list for alleged drugs links was killed along with nine of his guards in a shootout on Friday, police said, as a new phase of a bloody narcotics crackdown zeroed-in on high profile targets. [...]

The killing of Samsudin Dimaukom, a powerful mayor, took place far from his predominantly Muslim

town of Datu Saudi Ampatuan.

It came as police shift tactics in the controversial war on drugs by focusing on politicians, government officials, celebrities and high-ranking army and police suspected of involvement in the trade.

The new plan, called "Project Double Barrel Alpha", was reported exclusively by Reuters on Monday and aims to increase arrests and reduce the bloodshed in a campaign that has claimed more than 2,300 lives since Duterte took office on June 30.

Duterte won a May election on the promises of killing criminals and campaigned under the logo of a clenched fist.

Duterte returned from a visit to Japan late on Thursday and during a news conference waved a thick book he said contained names of officials suspected of drug links. The book contains about 3,000 names.

"I do not want to make this public because it will just make the Filipino cry," he said.

Of those killed in the anti-drugs campaign, more than 1,600 died during police operations, a toll that has drawn international concern about extrajudicial killings. [...]

A recent poll showed public unease over the crackdown, with 94 percent of respondents saying it was important that police take suspects alive.[...]

National police spokesman Dionardo Carlos told Reuters on Thursday the drugs war had been expanded to go beyond poorer areas where low-level peddlers operate.[...]

Since late June, 750,000 drug users had surrendered, some 30,000 suspects were arrested. Of the "high value" targets, 201 had surrendered, 66 were arrested and 14 were killed.[...]

Police would soon receive a large consignment of body armor, Carlos said, adding instructions were being given "to make sure you are not giving (drug suspects) the chance to put your lives in danger".

**Manuel Mogato and Tom Allard** | MANILA  
(Editing by Martin Petty, Robert Birsell)

\* Reuters. WORLD NEWS | Fri Oct 28, 2016 | 10:46am EDT:  
<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-drugs-idUSKCN12S0IP>

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