

Two Chinese kidnapped in Philippines: military
By Philippines news
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ZAMBOANGA (AFP) - Two Chinese men have been kidnapped in the Philippines the military said Tuesday, becoming the latest victims to be abducted in the country's troubled south.

Six armed men marched the pair, known locally as James Lou and Jampong Linyuan Kai, out of their house on Mindanao island and into a van waiting outside late Monday, said local military spokesman Captain Albert Caber.

The two Guangdong natives had lived in the town of Kabasalan for almost two years, buying manganese ore from local miners, said Caber, quoting local authorities.

"The kidnapers must have noticed they had a lot of money so they thought it was a good idea to abduct them," Caber said.

Police found the suspects' van abandoned and on fire a short while later, but the two victims and their kidnapers had disappeared.

Caber said he believed the gunmen may have destroyed the vehicle to cover their tracks.

There has been no ransom demand nor has anyone claimed responsibility, but Caber said the crime was likely the work of former Muslim guerrilla-turned-bandit leader Waning Abdulsalam.

"It looks like his group and they are the main gang operating in the area," Caber added.

A spokesman for the Chinese embassy in Manila told AFP it was trying to confirm the kidnapping.

Islamic extremists and former Muslim rebels in the southern Philippines have often resorted to kidnappings to raise money, targeting both locals and foreigners, who are perceived to be wealthier.

An Australian man seized in December 2011 and two European birdwatchers abducted in February are among at least five other foreigners still believed to be in the hands of kidnapers in the Mindanao region.

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