

Abu Sayyaf frees Filipino a day after 3 Malaysians rescued
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Government troops recover the victim in Basilan, southern Philippines, say no ransom was paid.

MANILA: A local tugboat chief engineer was released by his Abu Sayyaf captors on Monday night in a small town in Basilan in southern Philippines.

This came four days after he and his captain were abducted off the waters of the province, China's Xinhua news agency reported.

Capt Jo-ann Petinglay, spokesperson of the military's Western Mindanao Command, said today that government troops recovered Laurencio Tiro at the shoreline around 10.30pm Monday shortly after his release.

"They (Abu Sayyaf) were pressured by the presence of the military.

"There is no ransom paid (for his release)," said Petinglay when asked what prompted the Abu Sayyaf to release their victim.

Tiro, the chief engineer of Super Shuttle Tug 1, was abducted on Thursday afternoon off Sibago Island in Basilan, along with the tugboat captain, who was rescued by government troops the following day.

The release of Tiro brings the number of kidnap hostages in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf down to 26, 20 of them foreigners.

Tiro's release came a day after the Abu Sayyaf released three Malaysian tugboat crew members in Sulu, who were part of the five crewmen abducted off Sabah, on July 19 last year.

The other two Malaysians were rescued off the waters of Sulu at dawn on Thursday.

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