

## Breaking News / Regions

http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/regions/view\_article.php?article\_id=130573

# 21 Vietnamese 'poachers' escape, leave behind 2 companions

By Redempto Anda  
Southern Luzon Bureau

Posted date: April 15, 2008

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, Philippines -- Twenty-one crewmen of a Vietnamese fishing vessel caught allegedly illegally fishing off Palawan's southern tip of Balabac town escaped detention but left two of their companions in the custody of police.

Municipal officials of Balabac led by Vice Mayor Haji Rudy Mohamad Ain reported that they apprehended the fishing vessel Quang Mei Sunday morning while fishing within Philippine waters between Mangsee and Lorbocan Islands.

Report said that while two of the vessel's occupants were being investigated Monday night by the Balabac police at the local station, their companions decided to make a run for it while their guards were away and sailed off on their fishing vessel under cover of darkness and heavy rains.

The two Vietnamese nationals under investigation, including boat captain Dang The, had remained in police custody and were brought to Puerto Princesa City to face charges of illegal entry and poaching.

Confiscated from the Vietnamese nationals were assorted fish and an endangered species of sea turtle.

Western Command Chief Ruperto Rico Borromeo, chair of the provincial committee on illegal entrants, said they were scheduled to bring the Vietnamese from Balabac to Puerto Princesa City when they learned about the escape.

"We received the request last night and we were preparing to bring them to Puerto Princesa when we learned today they had escaped," Borromeo said Tuesday.

Municipal officials narrated that the Vietnamese were having supper when their two local police guards decided to go back to the station to change clothes as they had gotten wet because of heavy rains.

Taking advantage, the Vietnamese then sailed away on their own vessel.

The Balabac police reportedly tried to pursue the fleeing Vietnamese using a small borrowed fishing boat but were turned back by the high waves.

[^ Back to top](#)