Two Abu Sayyaf members were killed and several others were wounded when Marines encountered the followers of Abu Sayyaf leader Radullan Sahiron in Patikul, Sulu yesterday. Reports said the Abu Sayyaf bandits ambushed the soldiers after their military transport truck drove over a land mine.

The military believes that Sahiron's group was behind the ambush-killing of three soldiers, including a junior officer, and the wounding of 11 others in Sulu Monday.

Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza, chief of the Armed Forces Southern Command, said only three soldiers, not eight as previously reported, were killed in the ambush at the Mt. Kawaran complex in Maimbung town.

Braganza said a number of Sahiron's followers were killed as men of the 53rd Infantry Battalion shot it out with the fleeing Abu Sayyaf band.

Reports said the Abu Sayyaf bandits ambushed the soldiers after their military transport truck drove over a land mine.

The military earlier said the blast instantly killed the truck driver, while the junior officer, a certain Lt. Fabia, died before reaching the hospital.