

# Duterte admits existence of EJK, claims not state-sponsored

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MANILA - President Rodrigo Duterte on Sunday admitted the existence of extra-judicial killings, but was quick to say that the state has nothing to do with them.

Speaking before thousands of Filipinos at the Indoor Stadium of the Hassanal Bolkiah National Sports Complex at Bandar Seri Begawan in Brunei, the Philippine president denied any state participation in the killings of criminals. "Alam mo, huwag tayo magbolahan, 'yung iba talaga diyan pinatay talaga -- salvage. 'Yan ang tinatawag na salvage o extra-judicial killing. I will not say there was none, meron," Duterte said on the first day of his **state visit** to the oil-rich Southeast Asian nation.

(Let us not fool ourselves. Some of those killed, they were murdered -- that's what you call salvage. That's what is called extrajudicial killing. I will not say there was none. There is.)

"Pero kung sabihin mo na state-sponsored killing, order ko na patayin 'yan, kalokohan 'yan," he added.

(But if you say those were state-sponsored killings, that I ordered them dead, that's crazy.)

The Duterte administration has been receiving flak from international observers due to its alleged involvement in extra-judicial executions.

Among the President's most vocal critics was UN Special Rapporteur Agnes Callamard, who in August **called out** Duterte for endorsing the killing of drug suspects, describing the new President's statements as a "license to kill."

The Palace announced that the government has formally **invited** the UN rapporteur to investigate the thousands of killings during Duterte's war on crime.