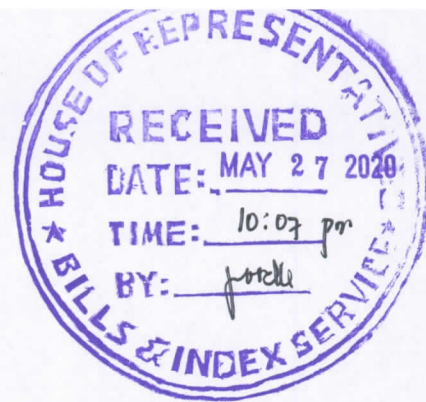


Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 920



Introduced by  
BAYAN MUNA Representatives CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,  
FERDINAND R. GAITE and EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT

RESOLUTION  
URGING THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO INVESTIGATE,  
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLING  
OF PEASANT LEADER JOHN FAROCHILIN  
AND THE ILLEGAL ARRESTS, DETENTION AND TORTURE  
OF CIVILIANS IN PANAY ISLAND COMMITTED BY THE  
61<sup>ST</sup> INFANTRY BATTALION OF THE PHILIPPINE ARMY

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines has not been spared by the catastrophe and continuing distress brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic against which the whole world is struggling to defeat;

**WHEREAS**, to date, the Duterte administration's response is a mere dismal health solution and delivery of socio-economic measures through a highly militarized operation to combat COVID-19. Evidently, the militarist solutions resulted in a massive violation of human rights where arrests and detention for quarantine infractions exceed the targeted number of mass testing necessary to identify and isolate those infected by the deadly virus;

**WHEREAS**, these human rights violations are worse in far-flung areas against activists and innocent civilians as the military continues its counter-insurgency program despite the threat of COVID-19. One such case is the extrajudicial killing of peasant leader, John Farochilin, and the illegal arrest, detention, and torture of 11 civilians in the Panay Island;

**WHEREAS**, Farochilin was shot to death with high-powered firearms by elements of the 61st Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army (IB-PA), led by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Ferdinand Vera in the morning of 18 April 2020. The 50-year-old Farochilin was at his farm in Sitio Anoy, Brgy. Cabalaunan, Miag-ao, Iloilo when the incident happened. He sustained bullet wounds in the head and in the chest;

**WHEREAS**, subsequently, the Philippine Army's 3rd Infantry Division (ID) reported an alleged armed encounter in Sitio Anoy where an unidentified member of the New People's Army (NPA) was killed, thus fabricating and implying that Farochilin was a member of the NPA;

**WHEREAS**, contrary to what the 3rd ID has concocted, Farochilin was not a member of the NPA but the chairman of *Alyansa sang mga Mangunguma sa Miag-ao* (Alliance of Farmers in Miag-ao) and a council member of the *Paghubpong sang Mangunguma sa Panay kag Guimaras* (Pamanggas). He also served as a barangay kagawad of Brgy. Onop, Miag-ao;

**WHEREAS**, Farochilin was a peasant leader who participated in various activities of peasant organizations in Iloilo City to protest the Rice Tariffication Law and pickets to demand for assistance from the Iloilo Provincial Government. His concern for the human rights of his fellow farmer-members constantly brought him to gatherings to present the situation in his locality. Just recently, on 3 March 2020, he attended the round-table meeting at the Commission on Human Rights office in Iloilo City to discuss red-tagging and threats against members of progressive organizations;

**WHEREAS**, Pamanggas, in a public statement, called for justice for Farochilin, who was a good man and a dedicated farmer leader;



1  
2 **WHEREAS**, meanwhile, on the same day, 18 April 2020, 11 other civilians were arrested by elements  
3 of 61<sup>st</sup> IB-PA under the command of the same 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant de Vera;  
4

5 **WHEREAS**, at around 10:00 a.m. that day, eight (8) of those arrested, who are residents of Brgy.  
6 Igpanolong, Sibalom, Antique, namely:  
7

- 8 1) Carlo Sentino, 18,
- 9 2) Darwin Pino, 14,
- 10 3) Kent Samillano, 15,
- 11 4) Keven Salvador, 14,
- 12 5) Russel Morada, 21,
- 13 6) Jefferson Samillano, 18,
- 14 7) Christopher Monsale, 17, and
- 15 8) Joeever Monsale, 19,
- 16

17 went to Sitio Anoy, Brgy. Cabalaunan, Miag-ao, Iloilo, which is reached by crossing a mountainous  
18 border from their place of residence, to gather honey from hornet hives in the forest. They also  
19 frequent Sitio Anoy in the past since they have relatives there;  
20

21 **WHEREAS**, however, on their way back, the said army soldiers arrested them and brought them to  
22 an alleged NPA camp in Sitio Anoy;  
23

24 **WHEREAS**, by this time, Romeo Esmediana, 37, resident of Brgy. Bololacao, Sibalom and two  
25 others namely, Eduardo Esmediana, 16, and Ryan Kervee Aungon, 22, who are both residents of  
26 Brgy. Tordesillas, Sibalom, were also arrested by elements of the 61<sup>st</sup> IB-PA in the mountains of Brgy.  
27 Tordesillas. Earlier that day, when Eduardo failed to look for his mother who went to get cogon grass  
28 from the mountains, he asked Romeo and Aungon to accompany him to look for her, and  
29 subsequently crossed paths with the Philippine Army in the mountains;  
30

31 **WHEREAS**, the 61<sup>st</sup> IB-PA later reported to the media an alleged encounter with members of the  
32 NPA at Sitio Anoy, Brgy. Cabalaunan, where it supposedly has overran an NPA training camp, killed  
33 an NPA member, and captured eight (8) of them;  
34

35 **WHEREAS**, the 11 arrested were then brought to the Army's Camp at Monteclaro in Miag-ao, Iloilo  
36 where they were interrogated and some of them were tortured;  
37

38 **WHEREAS**, the hands of Carlo Sentino were reportedly burned and his fingers sustained boils; his  
39 eyes were hit by finger flicks and he was punched in the abdomen at gunpoint;  
40

41 **WHEREAS**, a bolo was reportedly placed against Russel Morada's neck; he was also punched in the  
42 stomach at gunpoint;  
43

44 **WHEREAS**, the same maltreatment were reportedly done to Joeever Monsale and Jefferson  
45 Samiliano;  
46

47 **WHEREAS**, the next day, 19 April, Scene of the Crime Operatives (SOCO) came to Camp  
48 Monteclaro and conducted paraffin tests on Sentino, Morada, Monsale and Samiliano;  
49

50 **WHEREAS**, on 20 April 2020, Miag-ao Police Station Chief Police Capt. Jovito Bose filed charges  
51 of illegal possession of firearms and explosives at an inquest before the Iloilo Provincial Prosecutor,  
52 against Sentino, Morada, Monsale and Samiliano, as well as against Romeo Esmediana and Aungon.  
53 They were detained at the Miag-ao Municipal Jail. The five minors were turned over to the Sibalom  
54 Department of Social Welfare and Development where they were kept under mandatory quarantine;

55 **WHEREAS**, the respective *Punong Barangays* of the illegally arrested residents attested that all  
56 detainees are civilians and are of good standing in the community. Relatives of some of them went to  
57 the Sibalom Police Station in the afternoon of 18 April, after they went missing;  
58

1 **WHEREAS**, the *Sangguniang Bayan* of Brgy. Igpanolong passed a Resolution declaring and confirming  
2 the identity of the eight individuals arrested, that they are not members of the NPA, that they are of  
3 good moral character, and called for their release. Likewise, residents of Brgy. Igpanolong signed a  
4 Petition for the release of the same arrested residents;  
5

6 **WHEREAS**, as soon as details on the incident were acquired, Karapatan sent out public releases to  
7 expose the real facts of the so-called encounter and facilitated the filing of complaint before the  
8 Commission on Human Rights;  
9

10 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, for the House of Representatives, through its  
11 Committee on Human Rights, to investigate, in aid of legislation, the extrajudicial killing of peasant  
12 leader John Farochilin and the illegal arrest, detention, and torture of civilians in Panay Island  
13 committed by the 61<sup>st</sup> IB of the Philippine Army.  
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16 *Adopted,*  
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24 **REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**  
25 *Bayan Muna Partylist*  
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30 **REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE**  
31 *Bayan Muna Partylist*  
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36 **REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT**  
37 *Bayan Muna Partylist*