

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 871



Introduced by

BAYAN MUNA Representatives EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE and FERDINAND R. GAITE,
GABRIELA Women's Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS,
ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCE L. CASTRO,
and KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND AGRARIAN
REFORM TO CONDUCT A JOINT INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON
THE ILLEGAL MASS ARREST OF SIX FARMERS UNDER THE SAMAHAN NG
MGA MAGSASAKA SA CORAL NI LOPEZ (SAMACOLO) ON MAY 9, 2020
IN BRGY. CORAL NI LOPEZ, CALACA, BATANGAS BY THE COMBINED
ELEMENTS OF PHILIPPINES NATIONAL POLICE, PHILIPPINES AIR FORCE
AND PHILIPPINE ARMY

WHEREAS, on May 9, 2020, seventeen (17) government vehicles and two (2) army trucks loaded with combined forces of the Philippine National Police, Philippine Air Force and the Philippine army went in the Barangay Coral ni Lopez, Calaca, Batangas early Sunday morning to serve a search warrant issued by Executive Judge Cynthia Marino-Ricablanca of the Regional Trial Court of Sta. Cruz, Laguna against members and leader of the Samahan ng mga Magsasaka sa Coral ni Lopez (SAMACOLO) in Calaca Town, Province of Batangas;

WHEREAS, the search warrant which was conducted in the said barangay at around midnight of May 10 resulted to the illegal mass arrest of Virgilio Vidal, Marcelo Vidal, July Julongbayan, Brgy Councilor Leovino Julongbayan, Doroteo Bautista and Roilan Tenorio. The said raid was a reminiscent of Negros province's Oplan Sauron and the Synchronized Enhanced Managing of Police Operations (SEMPO) where the operation was characterized by sweeping mass raid of a community using a questionable warrant targeting members of progressive mass organizations;

WHEREAS, the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade Commander, Col. Alex Rillera claimed that it was an operation against illegal firearms by the Batangas police; the army was there to provide support and security in the periphery. But according to the initial report, the arresting team forcibly entered the houses and planted guns, ammunition, and explosives in the residences of the then arrested farmers and peasant leaders;

WHEREAS, the arrested individuals known as the Calaca 6 are active leaders in resisting land grabbing in Coral ni Lopez. SAMACOLO has been fighting for the residents' right to own the land they till since the 1980s and there is a pending threat of cancellation of Certificate of Land

1 Ownership Awards (CLOAs) since 2007. Before the illegal mass arrest, SAMACOLO facilitated
2 the distribution of cash assistance from the DOLE-BWSC to field sugar workers yesterday. Before
3 this, peasant leader Lamberto Asinas was also illegally arrested in Barangay Bunducan, Nasugbu
4 Batangas last April 16, 2020;

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6 **WHEREAS**, the community has been enduring military operations and daily harassment from
7 army and air force personnel since December 2015. The soldiers also previously accused
8 SAMACOLO members as "farmers by day but armed at night." The farmers, who are holders of
9 Certificates of Land Ownership Awards (CLOAs) and beneficiaries of the government's land
10 reform program, were also told by the military that their names are listed in the Order of Battle, a
11 military hit list. Residents of Barangay Coral ni Lopez are also strongly protesting the heightened
12 military presence in their community. Apart from Calaca town, nearby towns such as Balayan,
13 Calatagan, and Nasugbu are also under intense militarization as six (6) army battalions have been
14 deployed there since 2013 and have been launching military operations in agricultural areas where
15 there are land disputes and farmers struggles against land-use conversions;

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17 **WHEREAS**, the intensifying police and military operation Suaron / SEMPO – style is making
18 the lives of poor and landless peasants in the province more difficult as the lockdown forced work
19 stoppage both in the industry and agricultural industry affecting thousands of workers and farm
20 workers, exposing them to further hunger and poverty. The government is stepping up its anti-
21 insurgency campaign thru the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict
22 (NTF-ELCAC) which serve as its witch hunter department created by Executive Order 70 against
23 progressive mass organizations, critics and ordinary masses of workers, peasants, indigenous
24 people, small fisherfolk, urban poor and other rural poor asserting their rights by organizing their
25 ranks;


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28 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the
29 Committee on Human Rights and Agrarian Reform to conduct a joint inquiry, in aid of legislation,
30 on the illegal mass arrest of six farmers under the Samahan ng mga Magsasaka sa Coral ni Lopez
31 (SAMACOLO), on May 9, 2020, in Brgy. Coral ni Lopez, Calaca, Province of Batangas by the
32 combined elements of Philippine National Police, Philippine Air Force and Philippine Army;

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12 REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT
13 *Bayan Muna Partylist*
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18 REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
19 *Bayan Muna Partylist*
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24 REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE
25 *Bayan Muna Partylist*
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30 REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS
31 *GABRIELA Women's Party*
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REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Partylist


REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist