



TFDP-Mindanao

# URGENT ACTION

Case: Summary Execution (with report of arrest)

- Victims: 1. Rogelio Vaflor, 26, married;  
2. Jaime Vaflor, 21, married;  
3. Felipe Gantalao, 49, married;

All resident-farmers of barangay (village) San Antonio, municipality of Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur.

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Three resident-farmers of barangay (village) San Antonio, municipality of Tukuran, Zamboanga del Sur were summarily executed in broad day light by elements of the Scout Rangers of the Philippine Army on September 16. The victims were Rogelio Vaflor, 26; Jaime Vaflor, 21 and Felipe Gantalao, 49, all married.

The Vaflor brothers were first arrested by the soldiers after a hooded civilian who was with them identified Rogelio and Jaime as alleged members of the New People's Army (NPA). Witnesses who executed sworn statements said the soldiers picked up the Vaflor brothers at 9:30 in the morning that day while they were working on a farm together with other residents, in a "hunlos" (collective farming). They were then brought to an isolated area in the barangay, hands tied, interrogated and severely manhandled.

While the questioning lasted for almost five hours, the brothers were continually beaten to make them admit the allegations of the soldiers, despite intercession from the relatives of the victims and San Antonio barangay captain Claudio Behante which were all ignored.

Galantao, the third victim, who was also related to the Vaflor brothers, was held when soldiers saw him ran towards the direction of the Vaflor residence after hearing the series of gunfiring that commenced at about two o'clock in the afternoon. When a soldier asked why he ran, he explained that he wanted to make sure his family is safe. He was then brought to where the other two victims were shot to death.

An autopsy done on the corpses three days after revealed that the three died of irreversible shock and massive internal hemorrhages due to the grave torture inflicted on them.

It was further noted in the post-mortem examination that Jaime Vaflor's penis was amputated and the skin on the left side of his abdomen appeared to have been sliced off. His brother Rogelio's nose was torn off its place, and Gantalao, on the other hand, was found with a sunken eyeball as if it was hit with a hard object and his right forearm was slightly bent at the middle portion. All of them were riddled with bullets.

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TFDP-Mindanao, 19 Acacia Street, Matina, Davao City. P.O. Box 195. Tel. No. 7-11-79

Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) is a human rights organization established by the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines. TFDP believes in the inviolable dignity of the human person and his/her basic inalienable rights to life; to freedom and to the means necessary and suitable for the proper development of life. TFDP, therefore, strives to live up to the imperative of "action on behalf of justice... appear as a constitutive dimensions of the preaching of the Gospel of the Church mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from the very oppressive situation" (1971 Synod of Bishops Statement).

In protest to the brutal killing of the three, San Antonio residents numbering about 500 staged a funeral march around the municipality despite the heavy rains that fell on September 17.

The municipal government of Tukuran likewise responded by calling its Peace and Order Council (POC) to a "confrontation conference" inviting the local military authorities to shed light on the incident. However, the dialogue did not prosper as Col. Antonio Nally, the military representative, declined to give any comment as he reportedly wanted to confront the witnesses first.

As of the present, the families were filing charges against the soldiers responsible for the heinous crime.

Documents available:

1. Post mortem Examination Report
2. Sworn statements/affidavits of the following:
  - Claudio Behante
  - Perpetua Egay vda, de Gantalao
  - Ronita Poagas vda. de Vaflor
  - Estelita Gabutan Boter
  - Jose Tatoy
3. News clipping

Recommended Action:

Send letters or telegrams:

1. expressing concern about the deaths of Rogelio and Jaime Vaflor and Felipe Gantalao who were first arrested and then summarily executed on September 16 by elements of the Scout Rangers under the First Infantry "Tabak" Division of the Philippine Army based in Zamboanga del Sur.
2. requesting the authorities that a full and impartial investigation be undertaken into the case and that all appropriate military and police personnel be ordered to cooperate fully with investigators.
3. asking that effective steps be taken to ensure the safety of all witnesses to the incident.

Send Appeals to:

1. President Corazon Aquino  
Malacañang Palace, Manila  
Philippines
2. Secretary Fidel Ramos  
Department of National Defense  
Camp Crame, Quezon City  
Philippines
3. Gen. Renato de Villa  
AFP Chief of Staff  
Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City  
Philippines
4. Brig. General Gumerindo Yap  
Division Commanding General  
First Infantry "Tabak" Division, Philippine Army  
Pulacan, Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur  
Mindanao, Philippines
5. Lt. Col. Pedro Montaffo  
PC-INP Provincial Commander  
Camp Abelon, Pagadian City  
Mindanao, Philippines