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# *amnesty international*

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## PHILIPPINES

### *@Jovito Tuldog Evacuee killed by soldiers*

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**Jovito Tuldog**, aged 25, was brutally murdered, apparently by soldiers of the 50th Infantry Battalion (IB) of the Philippine Army (PA), at *Barangay* Calayucay, Pamplona, Cagayan province on 29 September 1993. Jovito Tuldog was an evacuee who had fled the Marag Valley region of northern Luzon, where military counter-insurgency operations have been intensive. When the corpse was recovered by relatives he was found to have been stabbed three times and to bear marks of torture all over his body. He had been shot in the mouth and one side of his face and head were completely blown off. To Amnesty International's knowledge the suspected killers are still at large.

The killing appears to have been entirely arbitrary and to have followed an incident in which 50th IB soldiers threatened and intimidated the victim's father and two others. Early on the morning of 29 September **Santos Alejandro**, **Boy Kuritog** and **Edag Tuldog** left their homes in *Barangay* Calabigan to go fishing. Upon arrival at the river, which lay about one kilometre from the 50th IB military camp, the three used dynamite to cause explosions in the water and catch fish. The three were apprehended by soldiers as they passed through the military camp on their way home. Shouting insults and threats, the soldiers accused them of violating the policies of the "new administration", which, they said, requires the people to inform the military of their movements. The three fishermen explained that they had indeed asked permission to go fishing and said the soldiers knew they would use dynamite as they had been unsuccessful during the previous day's catch. Upon hearing the commotion, relatives and neighbours went immediately to the camp and managed to persuade the soldiers to release the three men. Before the three were allowed to leave the camp, however, the soldiers made one of relatives, a woman, sing for them, and ordered Santos Alejandro to bring them a bottle of wine.

In the evening of the same day, and fearing for the safety of his father, Jovito Tuldog volunteered to take the bottle of wine to the soldiers and he left for the camp at around 6pm. Two hours later villagers living nearby heard cries for help, followed by a gunshot, but were too frightened to investigate. Shortly afterwards, a soldier informed a neighbour that Jovito Tuldog had been shot dead after he attempted to grab a gun from one of the camp guards. The following morning relatives went to the camp and saw the body of the victim, sprawled face down, and covered in blood.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Extrajudicial execution, "disappearance" and other human rights violations in the Philippines have occurred against a background of armed conflict between government and government-backed forces and the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Amnesty International has recorded more than 90 extrajudicial executions by government or government-backed forces in the Philippines since the beginning of 1992. The killing of unarmed civilians, including elderly people, women and children, most commonly occurs in rural areas, where the military are conducting counter-insurgency operations against the NPA.

The government's counter-insurgency strategy has included "clearing" operations, which have forced about one million people to leave their homes in parts of Negros, Mindanao, Mindoro and northern Luzon since 1987. Conditions in many of the evacuation centres have been poor and hundreds of people, many of them children, have died of preventable diseases. People who have attempted to return to their homes after temporary evacuation have often been accused of being rebels or rebel sympathizers; many have been threatened, ill-treated or extrajudicially killed by government and government-backed troops.

While the government of President Ramos, elected in May 1992, has expressed commitment to the protection of human rights, in practice it has done little to ensure that soldiers and paramilitaries are brought under control. Few of the suspected perpetrators of human rights violations are withdrawn from service and no member of the security forces is known to have been convicted for a human rights offence since President Ramos was elected.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION Please send faxes/airmail letters either in English or in your own language:**

- deploring the brutal killing of Jovito Tuldog, reportedly tortured and shot dead by soldiers of the 50th IB PA at *Barangay* Calayucay, Pamplona, Cagayan province on 29 September 1993.
- calling for an immediate investigation into the killing and for the suspected perpetrators to be disarmed, suspended from duty and promptly brought to justice in a civilian court.

- calling for the authorities to halt harassment, intimidation and threats against people forced to leave their homes as a result of military operations.

- urging the government to ensure strict control over all officials authorized to use force and firearms.

**APPEALS TO:**

Brig. Gen. Edgardo Batengga  
Commanding General  
5th Infantry Division Philippine Army  
Camp Opi, Gama, Isabela  
Philippines

Lt. Col. Alexander Aleo  
Commanding Officer  
50th Infantry Battalion Philippine Army  
*Brgy* Bucau, Luna, Kalinga-Apayao  
Philippines

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

Franklin Drilon  
Secretary of Justice  
Department of Justice  
Padre Faura

Sedfrey Ordoñez  
Chairman  
Commission on Human Rights  
Integrated Bar of the

Manila  
Philippines

Philippines Bldg  
Doña Julia Vargas Avenue  
Pasig, Manila  
Philippines

Hon. Renato de Villa  
Secretary of National Defense  
Camp Emilio Aguinaldo  
Quezon City  
Philippines

**KEYWORDS:** EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTION / TORTURE/ILL-TREATMENT / HARASSMENT /  
DISPLACED PEOPLE / FAMILIES / MILITARY / ARMED CONFLICT /

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