



Christians murdered and harassed in the Philippines

July 2019

Christians involved in seeking social justice in the Philippines continue to be targeted for murder and harassment in the Philippines, often at the hands of police or the military.

Neptali Morada was gunned down at around 7:30 am on Monday, 17 June, in Barangay San Isidro, Naga City, Camarines Sur. He was riding his motorcycle from Naga City to the provincial capital in Pili, Camarines Sur, when he was shot by unidentified men aboard a white pick-up truck.

Prior to his murder, fabricated charges were filed against him. He was also subjected to surveillance and had experienced vilification and harassment for his social justice and political activities.

Neptali worked as a staff member of former Camarines Sur vice governor Ato Peña. He was a former regional head of the political party Bayan Muna, and also served as Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) campaign committee head in Camarines Sur.

Neptali was the brother of a United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) pastor and a former chairperson of the League of Christian Youth in the Philippines (1996-1998). He was a member of the Iglesia Unida Ekyumenikal (United Ecumenical Church). The UCCP is a partner church of the Uniting Church in Australia.

The National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) stated that "Nep was raised in the ecumenical family, he is one of our own, who exemplified his life in serving Christ by serving the people, especially the least of the least."



The NCCP went on to state:

Poverty and social inequalities are the ones which should be eliminated and not those who show genuine compassion for the vulnerable and downtrodden.

We call on to the faith community to exercise our prophetic role and remember what God has told us, "Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the cause of orphans. Fight for the rights of widows." Isaiah 1:17

We appeal to the faithful to pray and seek justice for our slain human rights defenders. Let us continue to raise our voices: to STOP THE KILLINGS, and an END to IMPUNITY! Justice for Nep Morada and all victims of extrajudicial killings!

On 26 June soldiers of the 62nd infantry battalion arrested Pastor Jimmy Teves (pictured, handcuffed holding a Bible), a UCCP pastor who has been serving 17 local UCCP churches in Himamaylan, Negros. The soldiers also arrested farmers Jodito Montecino, Eliseo Andres, JP Romana, Rodrigo Medes, and Roger Sabanal, who are members of the UCCP, the Catholic Church and the Iglesia Filipina Independiente church. They have been subjected to trumped up charges of murder and attempted murder.



What you can do

Write polite and respectful letters to:

Senator the Hon Marise Payne
Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6100
Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Salutation: Dear Minister

Points to make in your letter:

- Express deep concern at the murder of Neptali Morada in the Philippines on 17 June 2019.
- Ask that the Australian Government urge that the Philippines Administration set up an independent investigation into the murder to bring those responsible to justice.
- Express concern at the arrests of Pastor Jimmy Teves, and farmers Jodito Montecino, Eliseo Andres, JP Romana, Rodrigo Medes, and Roger Sabanal in the Philippines on 26 June who have been subjected to trumped up charges of murder and attempted murder.
- Ask that the Australian Government seek their immediate release.
- Ask that the Australian Government urge the Philippines Administration end harassment of human rights defenders.

Also write to:

Her Excellency Mrs Ma. Hellen BARBER DE LA VEGA
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Philippines
Embassy of the Philippines
1 Moonah Place
Yarralumla, ACT 2600

Salutation: Your Excellency

E-mail: cbrpe@philembassy.org.au

Points to make in your letter or e-mail:

- Express deep concern at the murder of Neptali Morada in the Philippines on 17 June 2019.
- Ask what progress has been made into bringing those responsible to justice.
- Express concern at the arrests of Pastor Jimmy Teves, and farmers Jodito Montecino, Eliseo Andres, JP Romana, Rodrigo Medes, and Roger Sabanal in the Philippines on 26 June who have been subjected to trumped up charges of murder and attempted murder.
- Ask that they be immediately and conditionally released.
- Ask that the Philippines Administration ensure there is an end to the harassment of human rights defenders.