

News Release
Ref. Nancy S. Cabug
Regional Coordinator
KARAPATAN-Bikol

PCPR regnl coordinator shot dead

LEGAZPI CITY – A gun man shot to death Joel B. Baclao, 40, regional coordinator of the Promotion of Church Peoples Response (PCPR)-Bikol Chapter outside his house in Purok 6. Barangay Lacag, Daraga, Albay Wednesday night, November 10.

Baclao's wife Rowena told KARAPATAN-Bikol that at around 8:00 o'clock, while they were watching the television in their house together with their neighbors, her husband went outside to find out why the dogs were barking. "Sinabihan ko siya na huwag nang lumayo dahil madilim (I told him not to go far because it is dark)", she said.

Shortly, Rowena followed Baclao in the yard. When she was about six meters away from him, suddenly she saw a spark and heard a gun fire coming from the dark.. "I heard Joel said "ugh!" and saw him fell on the ground. I cried for help but our relatives who were then inside our house were shocked", she added.

She said the assailant used a rifle and shot Baclao at a close range. Baclao, died on the spot. He sustained four gunshot wounds.

As coordinator of Andurog-Bikol, a disaster relief program of the United Council of Churches of the Philippines (UCCP), Baclao was active in fact finding and relief missions.

For working for peace and justice and serving the poor and the oppressed, Baclao had experienced harassments from the elements of the Philippine Army.

During the peace caravan launched by the progressive partylist last May, a government soldier in the 42nd Infantry Brigade in Bgy. Mabalod-balod, Tigaon, Camarines Sur nearly shot Baclao while he was driving his motorcycle.

Last September 26, he reported to the office of KARAPATAN-Bikol that a platoon size of soldiers tried to enter his house and that his children were frightened upon seeing them.

A week before he was killed, Baclao told his friends that a barriomate of his had warned him to be extra careful because a Cafgu member was overheard telling some people in their town that Baclao is one of those in the "listahan" of the military.

Baclao and Rowena have two young children, Ryan, 8 and Jun-Jun, 6.