

AR-HR ALERT: Another peasant killed in Iloilo (Valderrama Estate)

Thursday 13 November 2008, by [Katarungan](#), [Progreso-Pasamaka](#), [RIGHTS Network](#) (Date first published: 13 November 2008).

Dear fellow Agrarian Reform and Human Rights Advocates,

Please find attached the fact sheet of latest killing incident of our farmer in Valderrama Estate in Iloilo city.

We, in Rural Poor Institute for Human and Land Rights Services, Inc. (RIGHTS) Network and Kilusan Para sa Repormang Panakahan at Katarungang Panlipunan (KATARUNGAN) condemns in strongest terms the brutal and killing of our fellow peasant, Jose “Muting” Banca on 9 November 2008.

The killing of Jose Banca, is the fifth case of peasants killed this year alone.

Amidst these AR bloody persecutions, we cry for JUSTICE for all the victims of human rights violations and abuses.

We demand that the government put an end to the misery of poor farmers and ensure the rule of law!.

Also, We call upon our constituency to defend ourselves and our communities against the attack of agrarian violence in rural areas.

Justice for Jose “Muting” Banca! Justice for all peasants killed in the name of genuine agrarian reform!

RIGHTS NETWORK-KATARUNGAN

PROGRESO-PASAMAKA

13 November 2008

FACT SHEET

Victim : JOSE “Muting” BANCA Y ASONG*

Case : MURDER

Age : 32

Civil Status : Single

Perpetrators : Glen Balsomo, Leo Balsomo, Jaylo Balsomo, Edlen dela Cruz [hired seasonal workers of the landowner]

Crime Scene : Sitio Ilaya, Brgy. Magdalo, Banate, Iloilo

Account of the Incident :

On November 9, 2008, at around 7 o'clock in the evening, JOSE "Muting" BANCA Y ASONG and DANTE TANAMAN Y BARBA, both residents of Barangay Magdalo, Banate, Iloilo were having a conversation in front of a store owned by VICENTE BANCA, when GLEN BALSOMO, together with JAYLO BALSOMO—both residents of P.D. Monfort South, Dumangas, Iloilo, and temporary workers of Hacienda Valderama— arrived and invited them for a drinking session at the house of Glen Balsomo.

Jose and Dante refused considering that the house of Glen is more than a kilometre away and it was night time. After a while, Glen and Jaylo returned at the store and insisted for Jose and Dante to come with them, finally the two agreed to go.

When they reached the house of Glen and started to drink whisky, LEO BALSOMO "a.k.a. Gamay" (another brother of Glen) and EDLEN DELA CRUZ (cousin of Glen) joined with them. At around 11:30PM, when Dante goes out of the house to urinate, Leo approached the victim from his rear, and without any provocation, knocked his head with a hard object. Fortunately, he did not lose consciousness and managed to run outside the house to save his life. When he reached the road, Dante heard the voice of Jose, asking for help in Ilonggo dialect: "Dante, buligi ako!" (Dante, help me!). When Dante returned to aid Jose, he saw Glen, Jaylo, Leo and Edlen helping each other, hacking and stabbing the victim.

Dante immediately left the place and proceeded to the house of Vicente to look for help. He informed Vicente Banca that they were physically assaulted by Glen and his brothers and cousin, and that Jose was stabbed and hacked.

At 12:00 o'clock midnight, Dante, together with two brothers and two sisters of Jose went back to the crime scene. When they arrived, they noticed that the house was already deserted. They saw a body lying on the ground across the main door face up, motionless, with half of the body including the face covered by a blanket. When they removed the blanket, they saw Jose full of blood, with multiple hack and stab wounds on different part of his body, his abdomen severely lacerated and his intestines exposed.

They immediately informed Barangay Kagawad Vesper Babiera of Brgy. Zona Sur thru text message who have immediately reported the crime to the PNP of Banate. Soon, the local police arrived and brought the body of Jose Banca to Barotac Viejo District Hospital, but was pronounced DOA by Dr. Tagaro who was the attending physician during that time.

* Jose "Muting" Banca was one of the 72-CLOA-holders of the 99-hectare agricultural lands owned by Danilo Valderama located at barangay Libertad, Banate, Iloilo. In the year 2005, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) awarded a Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) to agrarian

reform beneficiaries (ARBs), but because of the landowner's resistance, the farmers have remained un-installed. Since then, the farmers have been actively campaigning for their installation under the banner Katilingban Multi-purpose Cooperative (KMPC), a local PO-member of Kilusan para sa Repormang Panakahan at Katarungang Panlipunan (KATARUNGAN) and is being assisted by PROGRESO who is a member of Rural Poor Institute for Land and Human Rights Services (RIGHTS Network).

From 2005 to the present, several counts of theft and qualified theft cases were filed against 40 farmers in this landholding. These court cases filed by Valderama are purely malicious with the intent of merely harassing the farmer-beneficiaries. As new owners of the land and the produce thereof, the farmers cannot be accused of stealing of property they own in the first place. However, Valderama has effectively influenced the legal system to prevent the CLOA-holders to gaining control over the lands awarded to them by the government and enjoy the benefit from it.