

Statement on Boy Ocmen's assassination

Akbayan leader's murder is treacherous, incomprehensible

Wednesday 28 May 2003, by [Akbayan](#) (Date first published: 28 May 2003).

Press Statement

28 May, 2003

Contact Person: Perci Cendaña (433-6933, 433-6831, 0917-9969298)

Akbayan condemns in the strongest terms the abduction and killing yesterday of one of our local leaders in Agusan del Norte. Florante 'Boy' Ocmen Sr., 52, was shot in the head after being held hostage by rebel forces purportedly belonging to the New People's Army.

A farmer, Mr. Ocmen or 'Nong Boy as he is fondly called, is the Section Chairman of Akbayan at the municipal level. He is a local leader for Pandayan para sa Sosyalistang Pilipinas, a political formation identified with Akbayan. He was a Baranggay Captain of Brgy. Cuyago, in Jabonga, Agusan del Norte and a peace-loving citizen.

Based on initial reports, NPA forces apparently went to the Sitio to burn down equipment belonging to Pascual Construction Corp., for its alleged refusal to pay the salary of its workers. The contractor was undertaking a road-widening project in the area.

Having learned about the incident, 'Nong Boy went to the site which was under his jurisdiction as baranggay captain. There, he chanced upon the armed men who perpetrated the attack. For still unknown reasons, the NPAs took 'Nong Boy, along with a certain Hong Wang one of the Chinese nationals working in the project. Nong Boy was hog-tied and was taken on-board the company pick-up driven by Mr. Wang and they were taken to another Sitio where only Mr. Wang was released. 'Nong Boy pleaded with the NPAs to spare him as his wife was in the hospital but he was still brought along anyway, even if against his will. 'Nong Boy was held in captivity overnight.

At around 7am yesterday, villagers in Sitio Tagbuaya heard gunshots fired from the direction of the mountain. This prompted the military to go to the area where 'Nong.Boy' s body was found. According to 'Nong Boy's son, Tata, his father's head was blown out. It was also discovered that his body bore possible signs of torture. His fingernails appeared to have been pulled out His body had bruises and burnt marks.

Akbayan demands that the perpetrators of this crime be brought to Justice by immediately surrendering them to police authorities. The killing of an unarmed civilian like 'Nong Boy raises questions, which a Response Team will try to answer when it leaves for Agusan del Norte this week. The Team will ascertain the motive, and will come up with a set of recommendations based on findings related to the case.