

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE PLEASE
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Reference: Mr. Ferdinand R. Gaité,
COURAGE National President,
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COURAGE LEADER SHOT DEAD BY MOTORCYCLE RIDING MEN

At about 5:30 p.m. yesterday afternoon, an unidentified assailant, reportedly riding in tandem in a motorcycle, shot dead Carlo "Caloy" Rodriguez, 41 years old, President of Nagkakaisang Lakas ng Manggagawa ng Calamba Water District (NLM-CWD) and an officer of COURAGE Southern Tagalog Region.

In a report, the leader was said to have come from a meeting with fellow union leaders at the Water District and was about to go home. He was riding his own motorcycle when he was shot four times, twice at the back, one on the arms and another on the neck by men also on a motorcycle, apparently making sure he was really dead, in front of the Coca Cola Plant near the stop light at the intersection in Halang, Calamba, Laguna.

"We strongly believe that the killing is politically motivated. Caloy as known to his peers and fellow members of COURAGE does not have any enemy. He was a genuine union leader and a good public servant," Ferdinand Gaité, COURAGE National President said. The slain leader was also at the forefront of the campaign on various concerns of state workers in the Southern Luzon. Among the recent activities that he organized in relation to his advocacies are the Southern Luzon-wide forum on government employees' issues and the assembly of WATER-Southern Luzon.

Before the unfortunate event, Rodriguez was set to attend the 9th Congress of COURAGE which will be held on December 6-10 in Baguio City. "*Malaking kawalan para sa amin si Caloy. Isa siya sa mga tunay na lingkod bayan na nakikibaka hindi lamang para sa interes ng mga kawani kundi pati ng iba pang aping sektor ng lipunan,*" Gaité added.

COURAGE claimed that this is not the first extra-judicial killing (EJK) incident in their ranks. Pax Diaz, Sammy Dote, Dominador de Luna and Prof. Jose Maria Cui of all of Region 8 and Albert Terredano of COURAGE Abra were also victims of EJK under the previous regime. Gaité believed that COURAGE's uncompromising and militant stance on national issues such as corruption make their members a target of EJK and other forms of political harassment. COURAGE was included in the 'Know thy Enemy' video released by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) during the Arroyo administration. #

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