Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 1449

Introduced by
BAYAN MUNA Representatives EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE and FERDINAND R. GAITE,
GABRIELA Women's Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS,
ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCIS L. CASTRO,
and KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

RESOLUTION
URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN
INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE KILLING OF NINE (9)
TUMANDOK INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S LEADERS AND THE ARREST OF
EIGHTEEN (18) OTHERS DURING SYNCHRONIZED OPERATIONS OF
POLICE AND MILITARY FORCES IN CAPIZ AND ILOILO

WHEREAS, on December 30, 2020, local media outlets reported that nine (9) leaders of the
Tumandok tribe were killed and at least eighteen (18) other Tumandok were arrested after
synchronized military and police operations in Calinog, Iloilo and Tapaz, Capiz. The Synchronized
Managing of Police Operations (SMPO) was reportedly carried out by Philippine
National Police (PNP) Regional Office 6, PNP-CIDG, 12th Infantry Battalion Philippine Army,
and Tapaz Municipal Police to serve search warrants for illegal possession of firearms and
explosives;

WHEREAS, the nine (9) Tumandok leaders killed were the following:
1. Eliseo Gayas, Jr. of Brgy. Aglinah, Tapaz, Capiz
2. Mauro Diaz of Brgy. Tacayan, Tapaz
3. Arcelito Katipunan of Brgy. Acuna, Tapaz
4. Mario Aguirre of Brgy. Lahug, Tapaz
5. Roy Giganto, barangay kagawad and former punong barangay of Brgy. Lahug, Tapaz,
and Chairperson of indigenous people's organization Tumandok nga Mangunguma nga
Nagepangapin sa Duta kag Kabuhi (TUMANDUK)
7. Dalson Catamin, Punong Barangay of Nayawan, Tapaz
8. Reynaldo Katipunan of Barangay Lahug, a Barangay Council Member
9. Rolando Diaz, Sr. of Barangay Nayawan, Tapaz

WHEREAS, eighteen (18) Tumandok indigenous people were also arrested. Seven (7) were
from different barangays in Calinog, Iloilo and ten (10) were from Tapaz, Capiz. There were
identified as the following:
1. Marilyn Castor Chiva of Brgy. Alibunan, Calinog, Iloilo
2. Luisito Bautista, Chief Tanod of Brgy. Garangan, Calinog, Iloilo from whom a 45-caliber
pistol and 2 hand grenades were allegedly recovered.

3. Glen Legario, from whom a 45-caliber pistol and 2 rifle grenades were allegedly recovered.

4. Wilsc Chiva, 60 years old.


7. Rolando Caro Catamin, 21 years old, of Brgy. Roosevelt, Tapaz.


10. Rolando Caspillo, 56 years old, of Brgy. Tacayan, Tapaz.

11. Aileen Catamin of Brgy. Tacayan, Tapaz, former TUMANDUK Secretary General, former Tacayan Barangay Captain, and a current municipal government employee.

12. Glen Legario.


15. Lauriano Castor.

16. Rodolfo Diaz.

17. Ferdinand Caspillo.

18. Carlos Diaz.

WHEREAS, according to the family of Aileen Catamin, one of the eighteen (18) arrested, Aileen was reportedly tied, tortured, and carried by armed operatives. Her family suspect that Aileen was also tortured while inside the Tapaz Police Station due to the wounds on her body which bear signs of torture.

WHEREAS, Marevic Aguirre, one of those arrested, was last seen by witnesses being taken by military forces in a helicopter. Marevic is still missing. Also missing is Raul Catamin from Duao Sur, Tapaz, Capiz. According to his family, Catamin was also subject to a Search Warrant and operations by the police and military in the early morning of December 30, 2020.

WHEREAS, according to Police Lieutenant Colonel Gervacio Balmaceda, CIDG Region 6 Chief, the troops served search warrants to 22 persons in Tapaz, Capiz and 3 in Calinog, Iloilo. Said to be “high value personalities” of the Communist Party of the Philippines and were allegedly in possession of firearms and explosives. The families of those arrested and killed deny these allegations.

WHEREAS, according to human rights group Karapatan, family members of Elio Gayas, Jr. were reportedly told by police to go out of their house. After which, armed operatives entered their home and killed Elio Gayas, Jr. with four gunshots. Meanwhile, armed operatives forcibly entered the homes of Mario Aguirre and Roy Giganto and shot them dead inside their home while they were lying down asleep, in the presence of their families. In an interview with the media, the wives of Giganto and Katipunan, who were present during the operations, stated that police and military officers forcibly entered their homes at around 4 AM and “planted” the firearms allegedly recovered in their homes.

WHEREAS, in an interview with local media outlet Bombo Radyo Iloilo, Julie Catamin, the barangay captain of Roosevelt, Tapaz, Capiz stated that police and military officials did not coordinate with the barangay in serving the search warrants. She further stated that those named in the search warrant were residents in the barangay and were not members of the New People’s Army (NPA) as the military and police alleged.
WHEREAS, the nine (9) Tumandok people killed were well-known indigenous leaders in their respective barangays. They were consistent in opposing militarization and rights violations in their communities. They were also active in the resistance against land grabbing and the construction of the Jaraan Mega Dam in Calinog, Iloilo threatening to inundate ancestral lands and displace thousands of indigenous peoples and peasants. For these reasons, they were red-tagged by the military, prior to the series of arrests and killings;

WHEREAS, the Tumandok nga Manganguma nga Nagapangapin sa Duta kag Kabuhii (TUMANDUK) is an organization of Tumandok indigenous people in Panay which has for years, been in the forefront of the resistance against the construction of the Jaraan River Multipurpose Project – Stage II (JRMP II) in Calinog, Iloilo. The indigenous peoples are reportedly being forced to accept Php 50,000 per hectare for holders of a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT), and less for those without a title. Tumandok farmers in Aliibunan, Agegalaga, Samuroy, and Barangan villages in Calinog, Iloilo are threatened with the construction of the P11.2 B megadam. Their resistance has reportedly delayed the construction for several years;

WHEREAS, according to Pamanggas, an alliance of farmers’ organizations in Panay, those arrested were previously red-tagged by the military and were being pressured to surrender. Of those who were red-tagged, a few were reportedly called to report to the 12th IBPA and were interviewed by the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) in order to “clear” their names;

WHEREAS, according to Karapatan, just last month, a community leader from Brgy. Lahug sought the help of the Commission on Human Rights because residents were reportedly threatened by the Philippine Army and the PNP deployed in their barangay. Residents were tagged as members of the NPA and were forced to sign papers to clear their names. The residents refused to sign the papers. As a result, they were reportedly threatened with soldiers saying they could be charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act and that what happened in Negros and Samar could happen to them;

WHEREAS, the mass killings and mass arrests in Panay is reminiscent of the SEMPO in Guihulungan City, Negros Oriental that led to the killing of six (6) individuals and the arrest of (15) others on December 26, 2018 under then PRO 7 Director PGen. Debold Sinas. It is also similar to simultaneous police operations in Negros Oriental to serve search warrants against alleged rebels which left fourteen (14) people dead on March 30, 2019. Rights groups assert that those killed were leaders of local peasant organizations;

WHEREAS, activists and rights groups have condemned this seeming pattern of arrests and killings wherein police serve search warrants against activists in the wee hours of the morning, allegedly recovering firearms and explosives in the area, or killing suspected rebels who allegedly fought back. This seeming modus operandi of police planting evidence against suspects has been called out several times by progressive groups;

WHEREAS, the planting of evidence by police was also noted by the United Nations in a June 2020 report on police anti-drug operations in the Philippines. According to the report, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) “identified seven handguns with unique serial numbers. Each handgun appeared in at least two separate crime scenes, while two of them re-appeared in five different crime scenes. The pattern suggests planting of evidence by police officers and casts doubt on the self-defence narrative, implying that the victims were likely unarmed at the time of [the] killing”;

WHEREAS, the recent mass arrests and mass killings of indigenous farmers in Panay, in the middle of a pandemic no less, is highly alarming. Their deaths add to the already long list of farmers extrajudicially killed under this administration. According to peasant organization Kilusang
Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, there have been more than 300 farmer victims of extrajudicial killings under the Duterte administration;

WHEREAS, this mass killings and arrests of indigenous peoples in Panay, in the middle of a pandemic no less, is highly condemnable, and has no place in society. The brazen killing of the poor and marginalized indigenous peoples is an indicator of the state of human rights in the country as well as the raging impunity that seems to reign over our land. It is imperative for members of Congress, as representatives of our people, to defend the rights of our people and check on excesses and violations committed against them. Laws and rules should serve the interest of our people, and should not be weaponized to suppress their rights and oppress them;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the killing of nine (9) Tumandok indigenous people’s leaders and the arrest of eighteen (18) others during synchronized operations of police and military forces in Capiz and Iloilo.

Adopted,

REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. ARLENIS D. BROSAS
Gabriela Women’s Party

REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist

REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. FRANCIS L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Partylist