

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 468

Introduced by
ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO,
GABRIELA Women's Party Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS,
and **KABATAAN Party-List Rep. RAOUL DANNIEL A. MANUEL**

RESOLUTION
CONDEMNING IN THE STRONGEST TERMS THE EXTRAJUDICIAL
KILLING OF VETERAN JOURNALIST PERCIVAL MABASA, ALSO
KNOWN AS PERCY LAPID, AND URGING THE MARCOS
ADMINISTRATION TO IMMEDIATELY INVESTIGATE HIS MURDER, TO
HOLD ACCOUNTABLE THOSE RESPONSIBLE, AND TO TAKE
CONCRETE STEPS TO STOP MEDIA KILLINGS AND SUCH OTHER
ATTACKS AGAINST FREE SPEECH AND PRESS FREEDOM

WHEREAS, at around 8:30 in the evening of 3 October 2022, Percival Mabasa, 63, was killed by two unidentified motorcycle-riding assailants near his home in Las Piñas. He was on his way to hold his online radio broadcast at the time of his murder. From the profile of the victim and the way the crime was committed, this attack is apparently an assassination of yet another critical voice and an attack on press freedom as a whole;

WHEREAS, as stated by his family in its statement condemning his murder, this attack is a “deplorable crime; it was committed not only against Percy, his family, and his profession, but against our country, his beloved Philippines, and the truth.” They demanded “that his cowardly assassins be brought to justice”;

WHEREAS, also known as Percy Lapid, is a veteran journalist oft-described as a “hard-hitting radio broadcaster” and “fearless broadcaster and vlogger.” Aside from writing the column *Bulabugin* in tabloid Hataw, Lapid also hosted the radio show

Lapid Fire in DWBL 1242 where he aired commentaries and criticism on controversial actions and policies of the government, such as the bloody drug war under former President Rodrigo Duterte and Senator Ronald dela Rosa, and alleged corruption and abuses involving officials, including online gambling operations and historical distortion about martial law under Ferdinand Marcos, Sr.;

WHEREAS, in the *Lapid Fire* episode before his death, he spoke about the dangers and consequences of red-tagging to the lives and safety of those red-tagged—which include extrajudicial killing—and to free speech in general. He was critical of Duterte, Lorraine Badoy-Partosa, and their red-tagging, and most recently the malicious disinformation and harassment against Manila Judge Marlo Magdoza-Malagar. In 2012, he was among the more than 100 petitioners who assailed the *Cybercrime Prevention Act* and its threats against press freedom;

WHEREAS, Lapid’s strong advocacy and resolute dedication are perhaps best exemplified by his show’s tagline: “Walang preno kung bumatikos. Malalim at makatwirang komentaryo. Mag-ingat ang mga pulitikong gumagawa ng kalokohan at baka matamaan kayo ng [machine gun sound effects] Lapid Fire”;

WHEREAS, the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP) condemned the attack, noting that it shows that “journalism remains a dangerous profession” in what supposedly is a new administration. “That the incident took place in Metro Manila indicates how brazen the perpetrators were, and how authorities have failed to protect journalists as well as ordinary citizens from harm”;

WHEREAS, Lapid is the second journalist killed since Marcos Jr. took office on June 30, after Rey Blanco, also a radio broadcaster, was stabbed to death on September 18 in Mabinay, Negros Oriental;

WHEREAS, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), an independent, non-profit and non-governmental organization that promotes press freedom worldwide, has urged an immediate and decisive action from the Marcos administration. “Philippine authorities must launch a swift and thorough investigation into the killing of radio commentator Percival Mabasa and bring the perpetrators to justice.” Asia program coordinator Beh Lih Yi noted that “The killing of radio journalist Percival Mabasa once again shows the Philippines remains one of the most dangerous places for journalists. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. must end the culture of impunity that surrounds the killing of Filipino journalists. This cannot continue as business as usual”;

WHEREAS, in the CPJ’s 2021 World Impunity Index, the Philippines is the seventh in the list of countries worldwide where journalists are murdered and the perpetrators go free. It wrote to President Marcos in May, saying it must reverse his predecessor administration’s long campaign of intimidation and harassment of the press. “The legitimacy of your administration should be based on independently reported facts that allow for the kind of true public accountability that is the hallmark of strong democracies. The people of the Philippines deserve no less.”

WHEREAS, other international rights monitors as well as foreign organizations and governments have warned of the chilling effect that such attacks impose against free speech and press freedom. They have dared the Philippine government to urgently investigate the killing and to hold accountable those responsible, and, as advised by the Media Freedom Coalition, to create “a safe environment for journalists to carry out their work without fear for their lives and safety”;

WHEREAS, considering the resounding call for justice for Percy Lapid, and for all journalists and citizens to whom Lapid dedicated his life’s work, this attack must not go unresolved like most media killings committed under the past and current administrations. The Marcos administration must lose no time to hale to court not just the perpetrators who held the gun but, more importantly, the masterminds, and make them answer under the law;

WHEREAS, the Marcos administration must also go beyond the empty denial that “there is no government policy of red-tagging” and immediately cease all actions that brand as “terrorist” or criminal any journalist, human rights defender, critic, and citizen with neither basis nor due process. It should take concrete steps to stop the maligning, troll-driven hate, and disinformation peddling—whether committed by public officials or private individuals—against truth-telling, independent journalism, and free speech.

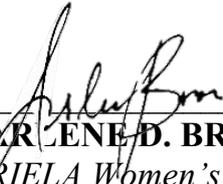
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives condemn in the strongest terms the extrajudicial killing of veteran journalist Percival Mabasa, also known as Percy Lapid;

BE IT LIKEWISE RESOLVED that the House urge the Marcos administration to immediately investigate his murder, to hold accountable those responsible, and to take concrete steps to stop media killings and such other attacks against free speech and press freedom.

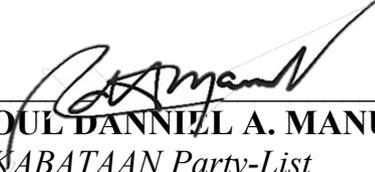
Adopted,



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