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86th IBPA targets human rights and development workers

The Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA) strongly denounce the listing of civilians – development workers, human rights workers and members and leaders of people’s organizations as “targets” by the 86th IBPA.

During the last week of October, the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA) received a document entitled “MUNICIPALITY OF TINOC (Target Persons) from a concerned element of the Charlie Company of the 86th Battalion (Highlander) of the 5th Infantry (Star) Division, Philippine Army based in Tinoc, Ifugao. The document listed at least 28 civilians as targets in Tinoc. The two-page document bears the logos of the 86th IBPA and the 5th ID and contains six columns listed as rank, name, cp number, organization and remarks/assessment.

The 86th IBPA document listed development workers and members and leaders of people’s organizations as “Supporter ng NPA”; “Nagbibigay ng Pagkain sa NPA”; “Tulugan ng NPA ang Kanilang Bahay”; Imbakan ng Baril”. Jude Baggo, Secretary General of CHRA was listed as number 22 and was classified as “UTAK NG NPA”.

How does the State identify its enemies?

The people listed in the document are active in conducting community-based programs on human rights, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy and socio-economic projects in the communities of Tinoc and its adjacent municipality of Asipulo.

Is addressing the much-needed services for the communities reason for being targeted as an enemy of the State and a target for military operations?

From the time the document was received by the CHRA, the concerned individuals listed were informed and also interviewed on the impact of this incident.

During an interview with some of the listed persons, they expressed that they were experiencing profound stress and anxiety. Mr. Pio Dangew, former Barangay Captain of Gumhang, Tinoc, Ifugao and the present Chairman of the Gumhang Farmers Association for Development (GFDA) stated that he fears for his and his family’s life and security. He cannot sleep for the past weeks. He is startled every time the dog barks or when he hears someone is walking towards their house. Mr. Dangew narrated how most of the time he cannot eat properly. His work routine is disturbed. His wife cried after were informed of the document. To make matters worse, he and his family are constantly harassed by elements of the 86th IBPA in plainclothes because of his involvement with the local farmers association.



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Mr. Gabino Lindawan, an administrative aide III of the Ifugao Provincial Agriculture and Environment and Resources Office (PAENRO), was also listed. He was tortured by elements of the 86th IBPA last July. These elements also destroyed parts of the provincial nursery. Last October 2012, these State security forces even had the temerity to charge Mr. Lindawan of illegal possession of explosives. He also said that these incidents and the Target Persons list made life more difficult for him. Elements of the 86th IBPA constantly make their intimidating presence felt at the provincial nursery. He also observed unidentified men riding motorcycles and passing nearby his residence. Mr. Lindawan finds it difficult to sleep, eat and work.

Mr. Modesto Hanggoy, who was listed as number 01 and accused as “*IMBAKAN NG BARIL*” narrated how since the encampment of the 86th IBPA in Tinoc, he and his family regularly notice elements of the military in plainclothes watching their house. The 86th IBPA constantly visits him in their house asking numerous questions. In one incident, while he was being asked, an unidentified element of the 86th IBPA was video-recording his responses and taking pictures of him. With all these things happening to him and his family, he said that he was being treated like a criminal. Mr. Hanggoy said that he is a law-abiding citizen and did not commit any crime against any person.

The 86th IBPA has been a consistent and notorious violator of human rights in Ifugao and Benguet. They should be investigated and punished because of their violations against the people.

The target list also exposes how the State and the AFP treats its citizens under its Oplan Bayanihan which does not forge solidarity rather tramples human rights of the citizens. If any harm is done against the people on the list, the 86th IBPA should be accountable.#

For reference:

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