

ATTACHMENT 13

UPDATED URGENT ACTION ALERT

UA Date: 18 May 2007 (updated UA) | 30 April 2007 (initial UA)

UA Title: Son of Press Freedom Icon Joe Burgos Missing

UA Case: Enforced Disappearance

Victim/s: Jonas Joseph Burgos

- 38 years old, married with one child
- Male
- Resident of Tandang Sora, Quezon City
- Trainor of Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Bulacan (AMB or Peasants Alliance in Bulacan-KMP)

Place of Incident: In Hapag Kainan Restaurant, Ever Gotesco Mall, Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City, Philippines

Date of Incident: 28 April 2007, at around 1:30 in the afternoon

Alleged Perpetrators: 4 to 6 burly armed men and a boyish looking woman believed to be military agents

Account of Incident –

On the night of April 28, 2007, the Burgos family became anxious when Jonas failed to come home. His family sent text messages (SMS or short message system) to his mobile phone the whole night, asking his whereabouts, but they received an answer from his phone only the following day, at 10:46 am, saying "Sensya na, ligo lang" (I'm sorry, was just taking a bath).

The exchange of text messages continued, with Jonas's family trying to find out about his condition, but the answers from Jonas did not make any sense. His family then called him up, and was able to talk to him but his voice sounded like he was drugged and his answers unclear. His family continued to check on him through text messages and by ringing his mobile phone occasionally. His mobile phone was open the whole day of April 29 but he cannot be reached by 6 o'clock in the evening until the morning of April 30.

At 1 o'clock in the afternoon of April 30, the Burgos family held a press conference at News Desk Cafe. Later in the day, witnesses surfaced when they saw the picture of Jonas during the early evening news.

It was learned from the witnesses that Jonas was picked up by four (4) to six (6) burly men and a boyish looking woman while he was eating lunch alone in Hapag Kainan Restaurant at Ever Gotesco Mall, Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City. Hapag Kainan is located at the food court in the basement of Ever Gotesco, and in front of it are numerous stalls selling dry goods. Everything happened in plain view of the shoppers and stall owners. He was squashed in by four of these burly men, two men on both sides. The confrontation lasted for about 20 minutes with Jonas trying to reason out to his abductors. Witnesses say they heard Jonas saying, "Ano yan, Sir? Baril at posas yan ah!" (What's that, Sir? That's a gun and a handcuff!)

At this juncture, Jonas tried to plead to an employee of the restaurant by saying, "Ma'am, aktibista lang po ako." (Ma'am, I'm just an activist.) But the perpetrators introduced themselves as policemen, preventing the employee to intervene.

Jonas was handcuffed and forcibly dragged out of the restaurant. He made a commotion to catch the attention of the people around. He was heard shouting, "Aktibista lang ako! Wala akong kasalanan!" (I'm just an activist! I have not done anything wrong!)

The spectators were prevented to come to his aid because once again the perpetrators introduced themselves as policemen.

Jonas was forcibly made to board a maroon Toyota Revo with plate number TAB-194, traced to a certain Mauro Mudlong, the registered owner. It was later found out that Mudlong's vehicle was not a Toyota Revo, but a 1991 model Isuzu utility van. And that the vehicle had been impounded on June 24, 2006 by the 56th Infantry Battalion Philippine Army (IBPA). It was learned that Mudlong's vehicle that was loaded with illegally-cut forest products was apprehended by Corporal Jose Castro Villena of the 56th IBPA. Corporal Villena turned it over the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), but due to lack of impounding space, the DENR returned the vehicle to the Army troops minus its cargo of illegally-cut timber. The vehicle was inside the 56th IBPA compound since 2004.

Jonas, an agriculture graduate of Benguet State University, had been giving agricultural technology trainings to members of the Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Bulacan (AMB), a chapter of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP, or Peasant Movement of the Philippines) since 1998. AMB and KMP is a militant peasant organization which advances agrarian issues and struggles in Central Luzon. Several leaders and members of AMB were killed or abducted by suspected military/police men in the past years, especially after the Armed Forces of the Philippines had included the group among the so-called "enemies of the state."

Jonas is the son of the late Jose "Joe" Burgos Jr., former publisher and editor of the We Forum and Malaya newspapers, a pioneer of the alternative press during Martial Law, an awarded journalist and known civil libertarian and defender of press freedom until his death in 2003.

The Burgos family and members of Desaparecidos (organization of families of victims of enforced disappearance) have embarked on a fact-finding and search mission since April 30 but Jonas remains missing as of this writing.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Send letters, emails or fax messages calling for:

1. The immediate formation of an independent fact-finding and investigation team composed of representatives from human rights groups, the Church, local government, and the Commission on Human Rights that will look into the enforced disappearance of Jonas Jonas Burgos.
2. The arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators of the crime/s of abduction and enforced disappearance.
3. The immediate and proper indemnification of the victims; and
4. The Philippine Government to be reminded that it is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that it is also a party to all the major Human Rights instruments, thus it is bound to observe all of these instruments' provisions.

You may send your communications to:

H.E. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

President of the Republic

Malacanang Palace ,

JP Laurel St., San Miguel

Manila Philippines

Voice: (+632) 564 1451 to 80

Fax: (+632) 742-1641 / 929-3968

Cell#: (+ 63) 919 898 4622 / (+63) 917 839 8462

E-mail: corres@op.gov.ph / opnet@ops.gov.ph

Jesus D. Dureza
Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
*Office of the Peace Process
7th Floor Agustin Building I
Emerald Avenue
Pasig City 1605
Voice:+63 (2) 636 0701 to 066
Mobile:
Fax:+63 (2) 635 9579

osec@opapp.gov.ph

Department of National Defense
Room 301 DND Building, Camp Emilio Aguinaldo,
E. de los Santos Avenue
Quezon City
Voice:+63(2) 911-9281 / 911-0488
Fax:+63(2) 911 6213
osnd@philonline.com

Hon. Raul M. Gonzalez
Secretary, Department of Justice

Padre Faura St., Manila

Direct Line 521-8344; 5213721
Trunkline 523-84-81 loc.214
Fax: (+632) 521-1614
Email sad@doj.gov.ph, <http://www.doj.gov.ph/contact.html>

Hon. Purificacion Valera Quisumbing

Chairperson, Commission on Human Rights

SAAC Bldg., UP Complex

Commonwealth Avenue

Diliman, Quezon City

Philippines

Fax: (+632) 929 0102

Email: drpvq@chr.gov.ph

Please send us a copy of your email/mail/fax to the said government official to our address below.

URGENT ACTION Prepared by:

KARAPATAN (Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights)-National Office

2/F Erythrina Bldg., # 2 Maaralin corner Matatag Sts., Central District, Diliman, Quezon City 1100
PHILIPPINES

Voice/Fax: (+632) 435 4146

Emails: < karapatan.pid@gmail.com / desap_hr@yahoo.com >

Website: www.karapatan.org