

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/philippines-two-journalists-gunned-down-31-07-2013,45003.html>

Asia - Philippines

Double murder

Two journalists gunned down, probably in connection with their work

31 July 2013

Reporters Without Borders is appalled by yesterday's murder of two newspaper columnists in Quezon City, on the northern island of Luzon. **Bonifacio Loreto** and **Richard Kho** of *Aksyon Ngayon Newspaper* were shot by two gunmen who immediately fled.

"It is obvious from the method used that this double murder was premeditated," Reporters Without Borders said. "The two journalists were clearly targeted and were gunned down in cold blood. We urge the police to actively consider the possibility that they were killed in connection with their work. It seems the most likely explanation at this point."

Pascual Fabreag of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit said Loreto and Kho were talking with each other outside a store when they were shot. A 9 mm pistol and .45 calibre bullet casings were found at the scene.

GMA News Online [quoted](#) Kho's daughter, Richelle Ofelia, as saying that the two journalists' recent criticism of corruption involving prominent politicians may have been the motive for the murder.

This was the second shooting involving a journalist in the past month on Luzon Island. **Jaime G. Aquino**, publisher of the local *Northern Star* newspaper, sustained a serious gunshot injury but dodged other shots when three unidentified individuals fired at him on 2 July in Pangasinan province. The police, who arrested two suspects the next day, were reportedly inclined to attribute the shooting to a personal dispute.

Miguelito "Mike" Rueras, a reporter for *dyDD El-Nuevo Bantay Radyo*, was gunned in the central island province of Masbate on 2 June. If the current suspicions are confirmed, yesterday's double murder brings the number of journalists killed in connection with their work in the Philippines to five since the start of the year.

Philippines is ranked 140th out of 179 countries in the [2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

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