

P1M for info on OSG man's slay

Victim handled several high profile court cases

By Armand N. Nocum

MALACAÑANG IS OFFERING A P1 million reward to anyone who can provide information leading to the capture of the killers of Assistant Solicitor General Nestor J. Ballocillo.

Solicitor General Antonio Eduardo Nachura said that the killing of Ballocillo—as well as his son Benedict—may have something to do with the expropriation of the controversial Ninoy Aquino International Airport terminal 3 (Naia 3) and the Milk Code case that the elder Ballocillo was handling.

“President Arroyo ordered the release of a P1 million reward to anyone who could provide reliable information that could shed light on the killing of Ballocillo and his son,” said Nachura.

“The President gave a clear message that she will not condone such a dastardly act. The government will not be cowed into submission by criminal acts like the one committed against the Ballocillos,” he added.

Ballocillo and his son were shot dead by several suspects last Dec. 6 while walking to-

ward a public transport terminal near their house in Barangay San Antonio, Parañaque City.

Nachura, meanwhile, said the OSG would not be deterred from performing its mandate as a government lawyer and as a tribune of the people. The P1 million bounty is in addition to the P200,000 earlier offered by the Southern Police District.

“I asked the Philippine National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation to leave no stone unturned in conducting its investigation. Justice must be served, if only to honor the memory of Ballocillo,” Nachura said.

In linking the Milk Code case to his death, Nachura described Ballocillo as an advocate of “breastfeeding.”

“Nestor came out very strongly in these cases since he is an advocate of breastfeeding. Because of his kindness, humility and deep religiosity he even got the tag *obispo* (bishop). He was a valedictorian in law school. He was my student at the Arellano Law Foundation,” Nachura said.

Ballocillo, he added, also helped in the recovery of hun-

dreds of millions of dollars in the Marcos ill-gotten wealth cases.

Nachura said Ballocillo also successfully litigated the case against Manila Electric Company where the Supreme Court ordered the power firm to refund overcharged fees to consumers.

Ballocillo also handled the international arbitration and expropriation cases involving the Naia terminal 3. The government has taken over the terminal after making an initial payment of P3 billion to the Philippine International Air Transport Corp. consortium which built the facility.

Fraport, a member of the consortium, has gone to the US-based International Court for Settlement of Investment Disputes to ask the court to order the government to pay \$425 million in compensation.

Supt. Ronald Estilles, Parañaque police chief, on the other hand, said they were not discounting the possibility that Ballocillo's murder could be related to the murder of Pasay City Judge Henrick Gingoyon, who was handling the Naia Terminal 3 proceedings when he was killed.