

# Philippines: Ex-hit squad leader 'Carapali Lualhati' now a congressman

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A former leader of an armed group that broke away from the Communist Party of the Philippines is now a member of Congress as the representative of a farmer and fisherfolk party-list.

Abang Lingkod party-list Rep. Joseph Stephen Paduano on Wednesday took his oath as the House of Representatives' 290<sup>th</sup> member before House Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr.

Paduano, alias Carapali Lualhati, was one of the leaders of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB).

According to an article published by Sunstar Online last year, Paduano resigned from RPA-ABB after he decided to become the first nominee of Abang Lingkod in the party-list elections.

Abang Lingkod's victory in the polls was only affirmed in November last year after the Supreme Court struck down the Commission on Election's decision to disqualify the group for allegedly using digitally altered photographs to prove that it represents a marginalized sector.

In a decision, the Supreme Court en banc said Abang Lingkod, a group representing farmers and fisherfolk, should not have been barred from running in last May's party-list elections simply because it used altered photos to prove its "track record."

Abang Lingkod's name was still included in the ballots for the May 13 midterm elections despite being disqualified by the poll body earlier last year due to a status quo ante order issued by the SC in favor of Abang Lingkod and other disqualified party-list groups.

The party-list appealed its case before the Supreme Court after the Comelec issued a decision on May 10 affirming its disqualification.

The group garnered 260,000 votes in the May 2013 elections, qualifying it for a seat in the House of Representatives.—NB, GMA News

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**P.S.**

\* GMA News, May 28, 2014 7:16pm:

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/363099/news/nation/ex-hit-squad-leader-carapali-lualhati-now-a-congressman>