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## Ecija cops solve ex-ABC prexy's slay in 48 hours

**By Steve A. Gosulco**

**CABANATUAN CITY** – Police solved within 48 hours the murder of a former Association of Barangay Captains president, who was slain by four men after he stepped out of a parish church in Barangay Poblacion, San Isidro town Saturday night.

Killed was Rodolfo “Liding” Lopez, 52, of barangay Pulo, a former ex-officio member of the Sangguniang Pambalawigan and a political coordinator of incumbent 4th

district Rep. Rody Antonio at the Kampl-Bagong Lakas ng Nueva Ecija coalition of the Josesos.

He was attacked after hearing Mass at the San Isidro Parish church with his family at 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

Lopez sustained four gunshot wounds and was declared dead-on-arrival at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Gapan City.

Before he died, Lopez told a vital witness, whose name was withheld for security reasons, his former driver was the triggerman.

A massive manhunt has been launched by a joint task force from the

Provincial police, the National Bureau of Investigation and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, according to provincial police director Senior Supt. Napoleon C. Taas.

The suspects' names were temporarily withheld, Taas said.

Police cracked the case within 48 hours after four witnesses came forward and positively identified the four gunmen.

He said the witnesses were initially hesitant to surface but finally came out knowing that the police were conducting a swift and impartial investigation.

Probers are looking at all possible angles for the attack, including politics and personal grudge.

Taas said they will also invite incumbent barangay captain Cherry dela Cruz, of Pulo to seek her help in their investigation. Dela Cruz reportedly had a rift with the victim.

He said murder charges are now being readied against the four suspects, who remain at large at press time yesterday.

Meanwhile, Taas called on other witnesses to come forward or text the provincial police at 0917-382-9009 for any information on the whereabouts of the wanted suspects.