



Fare thee well, Obet Verzola

(November 4, 1952-May 6, 2020)

It is with deep sadness that we at the Center for Empowerment, Innovation, and Training on Renewable Energy (CentRE) share in the heartbreaking loss of friend and colleague, Roberto “Obet” Verzola. Obet passed away Wednesday evening, May 6.

While many of us know Obet as long-time Executive Director of CREST (Center for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technologies) and founding member and Board Director, and Vice President-Internal of the CentRE, he has been a quiet giant for social justice for decades.

He was a social activist since his college days in the 1970s and was a political prisoner for three years (1974-1977) under martial law. Educated and trained as an engineer, he worked closely with social movements and civil society organizations on issues ranging from nuclear power, intellectual property rights, information technology, genetic engineering, environmental issues, farming methods, and election automation. He ran an email service for NGOs for almost a decade (1992-2000), getting an industry award as “Father of Philippine Email”. He founded the Philippine Greens (1996) and authored numerous publications. He worked with environmental and farmers' groups, coordinated the rice farming network SRI-Pilipinas and the Philippine election watchdog HalalangMarangal.

In recent years, Obet was instrumental in founding the CentRE with his usual dedication, passion, selflessness, and idealism driven by a superior intellect and tempered with kindness and humility.

He lived a simple, spiritual life. He did not succumb to COVID-19, but if he were not ailing before his passing, Obet would no doubt have contributed with passion his well-thought analysis and suggestions on how the country can equitably overcome the current crisis.

Obet inspired us all with his gentleness and generosity, and we in the CentRE, in turn, humbly dedicate our work ahead to his memory.

Fare thee well, KaObet.

The CentRE Members

