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Editorial

The GPH is to blame for the stymied peace talks

Formal peace talks between the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the Government of the Philippines (GPH) scheduled on October 31-November 12 in Oslo, Norway have been stymied anew. The reason is the GPH's renewed failure to fulfill its obligations under the Oslo Joint Statements of January and February 2011 to release most if not all of the 17 detained NDFP consultants protected by the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG).

The GPH had promised just last September to comply with this obligation on or before October 10 to enable both parties to prepare for their participation in the peace talks in Oslo.

This pledge was even made by the GPH in front of representatives of the Norwegian government which serves as third party facilitator. Almost two weeks after the deadline, however, the GPH has yet to undertake any moves towards the fulfillment of this obligation. The GPH and the AFP have instead taken the hardline stance of denying the existence of political prisoners and claiming that the persons cited by the NDFP are detainees facing various criminal charges. No less than the GPH negotiating panel chair has declared that the NDFP should not expect the release of any more of its consultants.

The NDFP would have wanted negotiations with the GPH to push through to resolve the roots of the armed conflict and forge agreements on basic social, economic and political reforms in order to pave the way for a just and lasting peace in the Philippines. But the GPH has made it impossible for formal talks to take place on October 31.

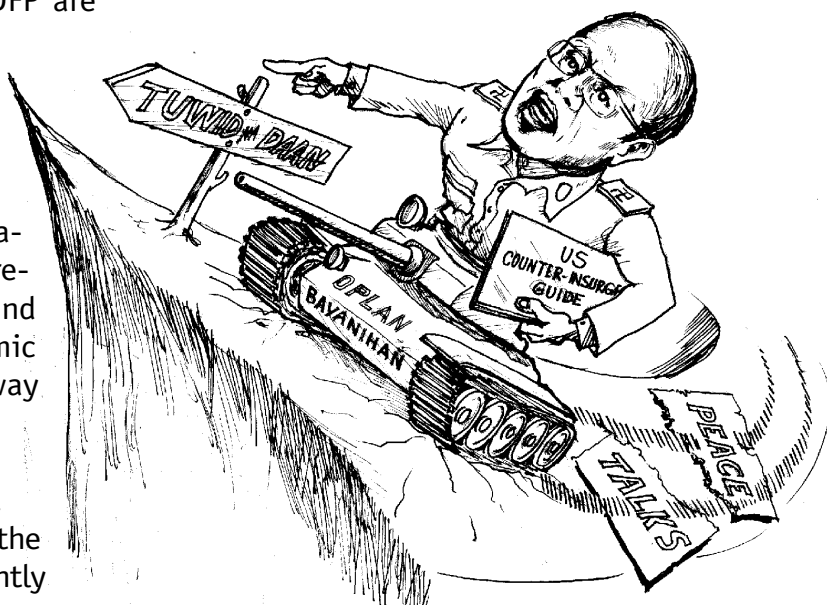
Proof of the NDFP's sincerity to pursue the peace negotiations is its resolve to patiently

wait for the GPH to fulfill its obligations however long it takes. The responsibility and shame for the continued delay of the formal peace negotiations rests firmly on the GPH's shoulders.

The GPH's failure to comply with its obligations shows its lack of interest to pursue negotiations with the NDFP. There is endless prattle about the peace talks on the GPH side but there has been no serious interest to actually engage in negotiations to resolve the people's basic problems which lie at the roots of the raging civil war in the country.

Obviously, the peace talks are relevant to the GPH only if these serve as a tool to pacify and effect the surrender of the armed revolutionary movement. The peace talks therefore serve as adornments to cover up the viciousness of Oplan Bayanihan, a brutal counterrevolutionary campaign designed by US imperialism. The much-vaunted peace advocated by Oplan Bayanihan involves none other than the repression of a people hungry, oppressed and bereft of justice.

The revolutionary movement is fully prepared



This issue's highlights...

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to confront this deceptive tactic of the GPH. It is determined to address the Filipino people's basic demands for social justice and national liberation in the arena of peace negotiations and in the field of mass struggle and armed resistance.

The crisis of the ruling system of big landlords and compradors continues to worsen and fire up the Filipino people's anger and resistance. In the

face of extreme poverty and suffering, the Filipino people are persevering even more to tread the path of revolutionary struggle to resist the onslaught of the ruling classes and their imperialist masters.

Whether the peace negotiations push through or not, the revolutionary movement will continue advancing towards the goal of achieving genuine, just and enduring peace. AB

Italian priest is latest victim of Oplan Bayanihan

The Communist Party of the Philippines joined other groups in strongly condemning the brutal slaying of Fr. Fausto Tentorio, 59, an Italian priest and antimining advocate. Among those who condemned the killing were Rubi del Mundo, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front in Southern Mindanao Region and Mohagher Iqbal, spokesperson of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and head of its peace panel. Del Mundo said that the 6th ID masterminded the killing, while Iqbal added that the MILF had received information from the ground that the perpetrators belonged to a paramilitary group under the AFP.

Fr. Tentorio was killed on October 17 at around 7:30 a.m. inside his parish in Arakan Valley, North Cotabato. A former parish worker who witnessed the heinous crime said that the Italian priest had just gotten into his van when he was approached by a man wearing a helmet who shot him several times. He sustained ten gunshot wounds from a pistol with a silencer. Two of the bullets hit his head. After the bloody incident, the assailant walked away casually and rode a waiting motorcycle driven by another unidentified man.

Three months before the killing, military agents posing as fish vendors frequented Fr. Tentorio's convent. The agents were there almost daily but were suddenly nowhere to be found on the day of the killing. Soldiers of the 57th IB were also asking around last September what Fr. Tentorio's cellphone number was. In 2006, the military raided a medical mission being conducted by Fr. Tentorio on suspicion that he was harboring wounded Red fighters.

Fr. Tentorio's killing spawned condemnation from various religious


groups, local residents, environmentalists and human rights advocates. A picket-rally was launched by Hustisya in front of the office of the Department of Justice (DOJ) in Manila on October 18. Members of the Promotion of Church People's Response held a candle-lighting ceremony at the Quezon City Rotunda to extend their condolences.

Meanwhile, a fact-finding mission will be launched by the Exodus for Justice and Peace. Its members believe that Fr. Tentorio's killing is part of Oplan Bayanihan which targets individuals strongly opposed to the government's mining policy.

Fr. Tentorio was active in helping residents of Kulaman Valley, Sultan Kudarat in their struggles against large-scale mining. He also actively criticized the role of the military as protectors of mining companies. He supported the struggle of Higaonon minorities for their ancestral lands.

Fr. Tentorio had long been receiving death threats from the Bagani Command, a paramilitary group under the 73rd IB. He survived the first attempt on his life in 2003 because of the people's help.

Fr. Tentorio is the third missionary from the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME) killed in Mindanao. The first was Fr. Tullio Favali who was killed on April 11, 1985 in Tulunan, North Cotabato by a paramilitary group led by Norberto Manero. The second was Fr. Salvatore Carzedda who was killed by a man riding a motorcycle on March 20, 1992 in Zamboanga City. AB

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National minority victims of the Aquino regime

Up to nine leaders of national minority groups were killed during Benigno Aquino III's sixteen months in power. Thousands of minority peoples have been forcibly displaced from their communities due to intense militarization and abuse. Many of them suffered harassment, illegal arrest and beatings.

The latest victim of extrajudicial killing among the national minorities was Rabenio Sungit, a leader of the Palaw'an tribe from Quezon, Palawan. Sungit was shot to death in September by two motorcycle-riding men at the public market in Quezon town. Prior to this, soldiers from the Philippine Marines often "visited" the Sungit family home to ask about his activities and whereabouts. He was the second member of the Sungit family to be killed by state forces. In 2005, armed minions of reaction killed his brother Abelino.

The Sungit family has a long history of resisting large-scale mining and fighting for the rights of the national minorities in Palawan. As a result, they have been branded as communists and targeted for harassment.

Earlier, on June 30, paramilitaries killed Arpe Belayong, a Higaonon leader and his son-in-law Soltie "Amang" Daguingan. Belayong's children Michelle, 14 and Longlong, 6 were wounded. The victims were leaders of communities that refused to give up their lands despite the operations of foreign mining companies in Agusan del Sur. In 2010, paramilitary forces killed Belayong's brother Mampaagi also because of his opposition to large-scale mining in their area. **AB**

Intense militarization in San Fernando, Bukidnon

Militarization goes on without letup in the villages of Bunacao, Namnam and Magkalungay in San Fernando, Bukidnon. National minorities in these areas recently reported relentless bombings in Butay mountain near the Pentagon Range which is the source of their food and livelihood. Residents have long been putting up with the abuses of the military and local reactionaries.

Since they started fighting for their rights, the minorities have been accused of being members of the New People's Army and forbidden from joining mass actions. San Fernando Mayor Laurentia Edma connived with the military to organize the Triom Force paramilitary group to suppress residents fighting for their rights. On October 11, the Triom Force killed Kibungkong barangay captain Jimmy Arion after he voiced out his vehement opposition to the group. Triom was also responsible for the murder of Nicomedes de la Peña Sr. and his son Nicomedes de la Peña Jr. on April 27. The De la Peñas are farmers from Barangay Mabuhay. Also killed by Triom for refusing to join the group were Ruben Gatong and Itik Awasan, residents of Kibungkong and Namnam, respectively.

The villagers have been suppressed and terrorized by the soldiers who go to all subvillages to spy on those who join protest actions. The troopers also regularly call meetings and show movies that malign mass actions. They set up a detachment right in front of the elementary school in Namnam despite opposition from the villagers. **AB**

Suppressing farmers in Misamis Oriental

On September 24, the Kalumbay Regional Lumad Organization received a report

from Pangalasag, an organization of Higaonon minorities stating



that they were being harassed by personnel of A Brown Company Inc. (ABCI).

Pangalasag has been opposing ABCI's plans to seize their lands in Opol, Misamis Oriental. ABCI, a foreign company that plants palm trees and sells palm oil plans to open a plantation on lands planted to bananas, coconuts and other crops by the Higaonon. The Higaonon have thus been demanding the cancellation of the ABCI project.

On March 10, ABCI security guards harassed and terrorized seven members of Pangalasag. The minorities were planning to cut down some "bagacay," a variety of bamboo, when they were prevented from doing so by the ABCI guards who entered the area. The farmers stopped and decided to go another way. An hour later, armed men followed them. The men, who said they were from the National Bureau of Investigation suddenly fired at them. The farmers were beaten up, threatened and illegally detained at the Opol Police Station.

They were later transferred to the NBI office in Cagayan de Oro where they were charged with direct assault. **AB**



Farmers launch Lakbayan in Northcentral Mindanao

Three out of four peasants in Northcentral Mindanao do not own land. Tens of thousands of farm workers live in abject poverty. Landlessness has grown worse due to massive landgrabbing by multinational food corporations. Recently, the region has become the center of bloody confrontations between militant farmers and foreign companies in connivance with landlords and the state's armed forces.

These were the issues raised by thousands of peasants who marched from their farms in Valencia, Bukidnon; Luagit, Misamis Oriental; and Gingoog City to Cagayan de Oro City from October 19 to 21.

In Bukidnon, foreign corporations have been conspiring with landlords to seize lands favorable for producing food for local consumption. They either lease or directly purchase the land in order to use it for the commercial production of agricultural products for export.

Almost 80,000 hectares out of a total of 315,164 hectares of agricultural land is planted to pineapple. Some 32,000 hectares are planted to banana. Among the foreign companies that own plantations in this area are Del Monte Philippines Inc. (DMPI), Lapanday Diversified Products Corp., Davao Agriventures Corp. (DAVCO), Mt. Kitanglad Agri-Development Corporation and Southern Fresh Fruits.

Massive landgrabbing has been accompanied by widespread abuses of the farmers' human rights.

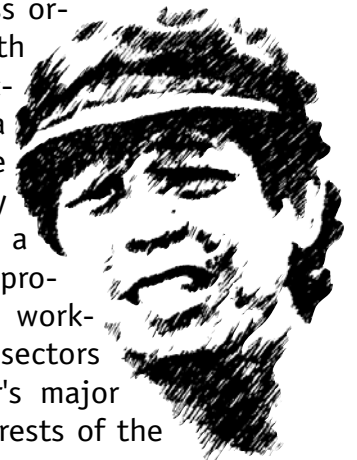
On June 14, security guards and goons of the Central Mindanao University (CMU) opened fire at farmers who had camped out in Dologon, Maramag. Members of Buffalo-Tamaraw-Limus Farmers Association set up a protest camp to stop their eviction from the land they had been tilling for more than three decades. The CMU administration is scheduled to sell the farmers' land to DAVCO which plans to expand its banana and pineapple plantation.

On July 30, security guards of Del Monte Plantation opened fire at farmers in Ocaya Ranch in Kuya, Maramag. The farmers are set to be evicted from their land because their landlord had sold it to Del Monte which plans to expand its pineapple plantation. **AB**

Ka Roger honored and saluted

Accolades and honors have poured in for the late Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal.

The CPP central leadership, units of the New People's Army, the National Democratic Front and the revolutionary mass organizations affiliated with it issued tributes that recognized and hailed Ka Roger for serving as the voice of the revolutionary movement for more than a decade. Organizations of progressive youth, peasants, workers, fisherfolk and other sectors also recognized Ka Roger's major role in defending the interests of the Filipino people.



The CPP Information Bureau issued a press release on October 9 about Ka Roger's death last June 22. The CPP Central Committee simultaneously published a statement through a special issue of *Ang Bayan*, giving Ka Roger a Red salute for a lifetime of selfless service to the people. The Central Committee said that as the bearer of good news about the Philippine revolution, Ka Roger's voice fired up the courage and inspired Red fighters and the struggling people alike. He was also the conduit through which the oppressed and downtrodden thirsting for justice aired their grievances.

The Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee in (STRPC) recognized Ka Roger's huge contributions to the region. In a statement, the STRPC cited Ka Roger's role in establishing and advancing the revolutionary movement in Southern Tagalog. It recalled Ka Roger's role in the region as part of the regional Party leadership and as spokesperson of the Melito Glor Command (MGC) from 1988 to 1992. The STRPC also hailed Ka Roger's major role then in supervising the region's propaganda work, including his pioneering role in Radyo Pakikibaka's broadcasts and in *Kalatas*, the region's revolutionary mass newspaper.

From Southern Tagalog, where Ka Roger hailed, the MGC, the Lucio de Guzman Command (NPA-Mindoro) and the Eduardo Dagli Command (NPA-Batangas) also issued their own statements. So did the Southern Tagalog chapters of the Revolutionary Council of Trade Unions (RCTU-ST), Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Magbubukid (PKM-ST), Artista at

Manunulat ng Sambayanan (AR-MAS-ST), Kabataang Makabayan (KM-ST) and the Liga ng Agham para sa Bayan at UP Los Baños (LAB-UPLB).

A true revolutionary hero of the Filipino people was how National Democratic of the Philippines-Mindanao spokesperson Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos called Ka Roger. He described the period during which Ka Roger served as CPP spokesperson as the most brilliant in the history of revolutionary propaganda that has not been surpassed to date. Ka Oris praised Ka Roger's humility and diligence. He said that the fact that Ka Roger hailed from the peasantry shows that the masses are the true heroes.

Ka Roger ignited a never ending flame in the hearts and minds of urban revolutionaries, said the National Capital Region Party Committee. The urban-based CPP committee said this flame which illuminates the path of revolutionary struggle will put an end to big landlord and big comprador rule.

Simon "Ka Filiw" Naogsan, the spokesperson of the Cordillera Peoples Democratic Front cited valuable lessons in propaganda work from Ka Roger. The two leaders gave a joint press conference in 2005 in Mountain Province where they invited the media to report on the advances of the Philippine revolution. Ka Filiw said he saw how well Ka Roger integrated with the media, the masses and the Red fighters.

Ka Roger's legacy of triumphs and advances are now etched in the hearts and minds of the basic masses, said Ka Simeon Santiago, political director of the New People's Army in Southern Mindanao Region. He said Ka Roger's voice will continue to resonate throughout the country.

Meanwhile, Prof. Jose Ma. Sison, CPP founding chair de-

scribed Ka Roger as an outstanding Filipino patriot, a valiant Red fighter, a lucid communicator and an effective educator and organizer among the toiling masses. NDFP negotiating panel chair Ka Luis Jalandoni said Ka Roger was the undying voice of the revolution and the oppressed and exploited masses.

The Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Magbubukid pictured Ka Roger as a hero of the peasantry. It called on the peasants to advance his revolutionary legacy. On the other hand, the Revolutionary Council of Trade Unions called Ka Roger a clarion of the revolution who raised the people's determination to fight and wage revolution. The Kabataang Makabayan offered a bouquet of red roses to Ka Roger who it described as an idol and inspiration of the revolutionary youth.

The country's political prisoners also hailed Ka Roger. In a statement, Prospero Agudo, Alan Jazmines, Eduardo Sarmiento and Eduardo Serrano cited Ka Roger's vibrant delivery of news about the revolution and his defense of the people's interests.

Progressive leaders and organizations likewise issued their own statements, with BAYAN, Pamalakaya, KMU, Anakbayan, the Antonio Zumel Center for Press Freedom and many others remembering, hailing and honoring Ka Roger. Leaders like Renato Reyes, Carol Araullo, Judy Taguiwalo and Roberto de Castro recognized his contributions to the Filipino people's struggle.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front offered its condolences and hailed Ka Roger as a true hero of those desiring freedom from oppression and exploitation. Revolutionary and progressive organizations from Austria, Australia, India, Belgium and others also condoled with his family, friends and comrades.

News of Ka Roger's death spurred messages of condolence

on the internet. Ka Roger's name became a trending topic on Twitter and various other websites. Reporters like Delfin Mallari and Paul Gutierrez who had close contact with Ka Roger wrote commemoratives. Quite a few poems were written to honor him.

In response to a call by the CPP, all units of the New People's Army nationwide fell in formation at noon of October 15 to salute the former CPP spokesperson and induct him into the Filipino people's Hall of Heroes and Martyrs. In Batangas, Ka Roger's native province, around a hundred Red fighters and peasants gathered to commemorate his revolutionary life.

Simultaneous to the NPA formations, the Kabataang Makabayan and other revolutionary organizations held lightning rallies in various parts of Southern Tagalog; in Sta. Cruz, Manila; in Cubao, Quezon City; in Davao City and other places. Activists who rallied at the US Embassy and Mendiola that day also devoted part of their program to pay tribute to Ka Roger.

In the afternoon of October 15, more than 500 people gathered at the covered court in Ka Roger's home town of Ibaan, Batangas. They were welcomed by the barangay captain of Talibon, where Ka Roger was born. Two of Ka Roger's siblings spoke before the crowd. Short videos of his life and Comrade Joema Sison's message of solidarity were shown. Various sectors also expressed their solidarity and sang revolutionary songs. Prior to this, a mass was celebrated at the Ibaan church. The participants also visited the Rosals' ancestral home.

Led by the NDF Negotiating Panel and its local officials, a big public gathering will be held at the UP Film Center on National Peasants' Day, October 21, to honor Ka Roger. AB

COPD in Northeastern Mindanao is as evil as RSOT

Aside from its deceptive name, there is not an iota of difference between the Community Organizing for Peace and Development (COPD) Teams of Oplan Bayanihan (OPB) and the thoroughly discredited Reengineered Special Operations Teams (RSOT) of Oplan Bantay Laya notoriety.

Based on the experience of Northeastern Mindanao Region (NEMR), OPB still resorts to triad operations where combat, intelligence and COPD operations are conducted simultaneously.

With combat units positioned nearby to drive away the New People's Army (NPA), the COPD teams base themselves at the center of the targeted villages. Just like the RSOT, COPD operations are antipeople to the core. They use the people as human shields, terrorize and inflict physical abuse on the masses, trample on their rights and destroy their unity.

COPD teams occupy civilians' houses and facilities on purpose in order to use the residents as "protective cover" against possible NPA attacks. They usually set up camp in schools, barangay halls, health centers, waiting sheds and other public places.

As soon as the COPD teams

have taken position, they engage in a variety of psywar activities.

Deception. To demonize the NPA and destroy the unity between the people and their army, the COPD schedules viewings of videos like "Huwad na Pangarap" (False Hopes) and "Killing Fields."

A number of COPD troops pose as guerrillas and go to houses of suspected NPA supporters where they ask to spend the night or request assistance in contacting Red fighters. They engage in antipeople activities so they could spread the word that the NPA was responsible.

While the COPD does this in the targeted villages, military spokespersons and officers lose no time in spewing out lies before the mass media against the NPA. The NPA is usually accused of committing human rights violations, recruiting minors and engaging in extortion, banditry

and other terroristic activities. Civilians arrested or killed by the AFP are misrepresented as NPA members.

Meanwhile, the soldiers take pains to portray themselves as meek and gentle lambs by using the resources of the civilian government to deliver some services to the people. The military controls and leads in the distribution of resources from government agencies like the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Department of Health as well as local government units. Soldiers provide vocational training using curricula from TESDA. They conduct medical missions using personnel and medicines from the DOH rural health units. They distribute "Biyaya ni Pnoy" (Blessings from Pnoy) using rice and other resources from the DSWD. This kind of psywar aims to cover up the ruling regime's massive neglect of the people's welfare and interests. The military wants the people to be grateful for the morsels they have received even as social services and facilities are crumbling all around them.

The COPD teams try to win



the people's hearts and minds by engaging in all sorts of shallow rituals like serving as baptismal or wedding sponsors, cleaning public areas in the barrio, playing basketball with the villagers, going on picnics with barangay organizations, wooing village women, sponsoring discos and band concerts and paying for drinking sessions with the menfolk in order to get them to loosen their tongues once they get drunk.

But it doesn't take long for the COPD teams' fangs to show through.

Threats and beatings. Martial law reins in communities where COPD teams operate, with threats or terrorism always forming part of their routine.

Those suspected of actively supporting the revolutionary movement are called to the AFP battalion or company headquarters or to isolated or farflung areas for interrogation and to be intimidated into cooperating with the military.

A census is conducted to ascertain whether there are villagers or family members missing. Most of the time, the missing are accused of having joined the NPA.

Known peasant and Lumad leaders are often "visited" in their homes to harass them. Persons suspected of actively supporting the NPA are constantly monitored.

A scare tactic that is sometimes used against residents is to make them believe that their names have come up in a computer search. They are then ordered to sign a document in order to have their computer records deleted. The documents later become "surrender forms". Sometimes, those with "computer records" are actually ordered to surrender formally.

Villagers lose the right to travel freely once the COPD teams stay in their barangays. The names of everyone entering or leaving the barrio are taken down. Travelers are asked where they are going and what time they would be coming back. Deadlines are set for their return. Those who do not meet the deadline are accused of having gone to an NPA camp.

Food and economic blockades. Each family's consumption of food and other items is listed down, and no one is allowed to purchase more than this limit. All personal effects and purchases are inspected at military checkpoints.

The longer they stay in the communities, the harder it is for COPD operatives to conceal their orientation that is fascist to the core. They indiscriminately fire their weapons at civilians' houses whenever they get drunk. They bomb and shell civilian communities during pursuit operations against the NPA and engage in other activities that instill fear among the people and endanger them.

Destroying the people's unity. The main objective of COPD operations is to destroy the people's revolutionary unity to make the imposition of anti-people policies and projects easier.

This objective becomes evident whenever the military calls for mass meetings to sow discord and intrigues among the people. The villagers are encouraged to identify the leaders of mass organizations and turn in relatives or acquaintances who are with the NPA. The soldiers also insinuate that there is a traitor among the people's ranks and that it would be better if they "come clean" and cooperate with the AFP.

Strengthen the people's unity. The surest way of defeating the COPD and Oplan Bayanihan is to raise the masses' fighting spirit and to firmly hold the politico-military initiative.

The National Democratic Front has called on the people in the region to unite in exposing and opposing the COPD-OPB in order to defeat it. The NDF in NEMR said there is no reason why the people will not be able to overcome Oplan Bayanihan the way they overcame Oplan Bantay Laya.

The NDF-NEMR called on villagers to strengthen their trust in each other and to resist being ensnared by the AFP's tactics of deception that aim to destroy their unity. The people must daringly report violations committed by the fascist military and their minions to the nearest agencies, institutions and human rights advocacy groups.

Should military troops insist on staying in their communities despite the people's opposition, the villagers must stage an organized protest in the town centers. They must expose and oppose the military's use of civilians as human shields. They can approach government and church officials and seek sanctuary with them while they are unable to return to their villages. They can also troop to radio or television stations to heighten awareness about the military's violations of the people's human rights.

The NDF-NEMR called on the people to avoid mingling with the military and to never allow soldiers into their homes in order to avoid being caught in the crossfire in case of encounters. The NDF-NEMR reminded the people that it is a violation of the rules of war and of human rights for the military to stay in civilians' houses and facilities.

The article and artwork are from Lingkawas, the revolutionary mass paper in Northeastern Mindanao Region.



19 soldiers from 50th IB killed in Cervantes, Ilocos Sur

Despite efforts by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to conceal its casualties, it could not hide the fact that it took a severe beating in the hands of the New People's Army (NPA) in a series of gunbattles in Cervantes, Ilocos Sur towards the end of September. According to the latest field reports from the Alfredo Cesar Command (NPA-Ilocos Sur), the enemy suffered up to 19 dead and six wounded.

To conceal the real extent of its casualties, the military transported its dead and wounded using various routes. Nonetheless, the AFP failed to completely hide them from the people.

Local residents reported seeing at least ten dead soldiers under a bridge in the morning of September 25. On the same day, a

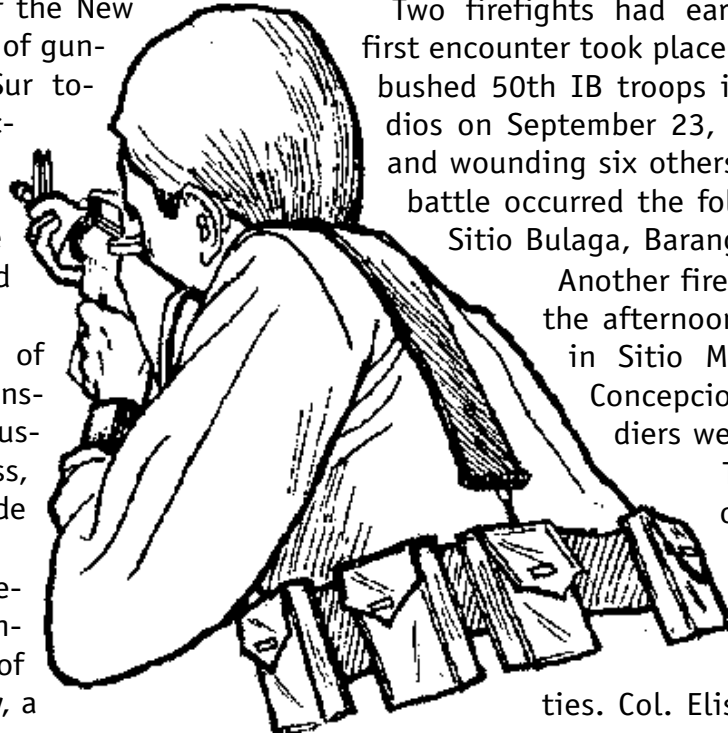
wounded soldier was airlifted by helicopter but later died at the hospital, according to confirmed reports.

Two firefights had earlier occurred. The first encounter took place when the NPA ambushed 50th IB troops in Barangay Remedios on September 23, killing six soldiers and wounding six others. The second gunbattle occurred the following evening in Sitio Bulaga, Barangay Aloling.

Another firefight took place in the afternoon of September 26 in Sitio Maupong, Barangay Concepcion, where two soldiers were killed.

The military came out with laughable and incredible statements regarding its casualties.

Col. Eliseo Posadas, chief



Military operations are a bane on the masses' livelihood

The AFP and the Aquino regime claim that the revolutionary movement obstructs development in the countryside. This is contrary to the experience of 293 peasant families in Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Sur who were forced to evacuate from May to June due to the AFP's COPD operations.

An article in *Lingkawas*, the revolutionary mass newspaper in Northeastern Mindanao Region reported that the evacuees lost an estimated ₱984,000 (or an average of ₱3,358 per family) because of abandoned crops and livestock.

Three major evacuations occurred during this period. The first was on May 26-June 16 in Zapanta, Bangayan, Agusan del Norte. Seventy-five Mamanwa and peasant families fled their

homes due to the 30th IB's COPD operations. The military also blocked motorcycles carrying wood at checkpoints. The locals engage in small-scale logging as a means of livelihood.

The second evacuation occurred on June 20-July 4 in Mahaba, Marihatag, Surigao del Sur where 141 peasant families fled their homes. COPD teams spent close to two months staying at the barangay hall, daycare center,

health center and the office of the Sangguniang Kabataan. The COPD operation was marked by harassment, threats and deception.

The third evacuation, which took place on June 26-July 2 in Janipaan, San Agustin, Surigao del Sur involved 88 Manobo and Mamanwa families. The evacuation was spurred by the illegal arrest by soldiers of the 29th IB-COPD of six copra makers in Upper Janipaan on the first day of the operation. With the copra makers were three children who were also arrested and branded as NPA fighters.

In all three instances, the farmers returned to their homes only after the soldiers pulled out of the communities they had occupied. **AB**



of the 503rd IBde which supervises the 50th IB claimed that their only casualties were a soldier who was wounded in an NPA ambush on September 23 and another trooper who was killed during a gunbattle on September 24.

On the NPA side, two Red fighters—Ka Dindo and Ka Likot—were martyred during the September 24 encounter. Ka Likot's body was peppered with bullets by the soldiers, shattering his skull and chest.

Ka Dindo's body was found only on September 29 because the military prevented his relatives from entering the scene of battle for several days. Due to the persistence of his family and townmates, Cervantes residents and human rights groups, his body was finally retrieved near the encounter site.

The huge number of military casualties has prompted the Northern Luzon Command to pour in more than a battalion-size force in Cervantes town. The soldiers who used to pose as meek lambs suddenly acted like rabid dogs who vented their ire on innocent civilians.

The military does not respect the Cervantes local government and violates the rights of civilians. The troopers have arbitrarily set up checkpoints, positioned themselves in several villages and are terrorizing the peasants.

On the other hand, the NPA's victorious military actions in Cervantes are proof that in the face of vicious attacks by the fascist military, the Red fighters have the capability to defend themselves due to the masses' broad support. AB

NPA releases Mayor Dano, 6 POWs

In compliance with the orders of the Southern Mindanao Regional Party Committee, the New People's Army Conrado Heredia Command released on October 9 Lingig, Surigao del Sur mayor Henry Dano and his two military bodyguards Cpl. Alrey Desamparado and Pfc. Alan Saban of the 4th ID-AFP Intelligence Unit.

In a statement, NDF-Southern Mindanao spokesperson Rubi del Mundo said that the people's court has temporarily suspended processing the case against Dano and his men on condition that they desist from committing any more violations of human rights, international humanitarian law and the policies of the people's democratic government.

The investigations revealed that Dano and his men were directly responsible for crimes against the people, including the murder of a peasant leader. The detainees owned up to their crimes. Their release gives them the opportunity to turn a new leaf and rectify their past errors.

The day before, the NPA had also released four prisoners of war—Jail Inspector Murphy Bomoway Todyog (Badge No. 0-08021); Jail Warden Erico Dacillo Llamasares (Badge No. 0-07022); Special Jail Officer 2 (SJ02) Rogelio Begontes (Badge No. 960187); and Jail Officer 1 (JOI) Rolando Delta Bajoyo, Jr. They were released on humanitarian grounds on orders of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

The four prisoners were disarmed and taken into custody by the Herminio Alfonso Command-Guerrilla Front 53 on July 21. They were part of a unit under the Bureau of Jail Manage-

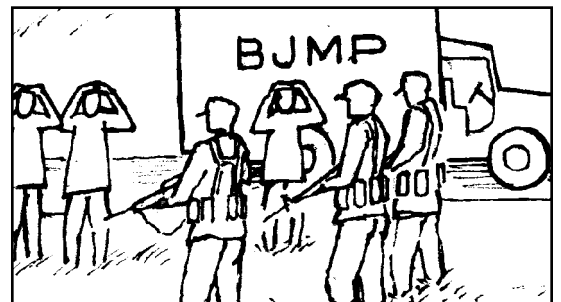
ment and Penology (BJMP) that was ambushed by the NPA in Barangay Sinuda, Kitaotao, Bukidnon to rescue Dennis Rodenas, a prisoner who was being transported to a penal colony in Davao del Norte.

The four BJMP personnel were declared prisoners of war and granted protection as provided for under international rules of war which the New People's Army complies with.

In the more than two months they spent under the Herminio Alfonso Command's custody, the prisoners were treated humanely, a fact attested to by the four captives themselves.

Their release was delayed due to relentless battalion-size military operations unleashed by the 602nd and 403rd Brigades under the AFP Eastern Mindanao Command. These failed "rescue operations" put the prisoners' lives in danger.

Among those who witnessed the release were representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the religious sector, human rights advocates and Atty. Persida Acosta of the Public Attorney's Office (PAO). AB



People resist destructive mining operations in Cagayan Valley

A massive campaign against destructive foreign and corporate mining is underway in Cagayan Valley. The campaign forms part of the struggle for genuine land reform and national industrialization and the defense of the nation's patrimony and economic sovereignty.

Hundreds of thousands of families who have suffered the deleterious effects of mining are now up in arms against these plunderous corporations. In Barangay Dugo, Camalaniugan, 78 families have been forced to evacuate because their houses have sunk below ground level. In Gen. E. Batala, Sapping, also in Camalaniugan town, cracks have appeared in the ground. In Aparri and Camalaniugan, up to 180 houses were swept away due to the swelling of the Cagayan River. In Gonzaga, wells have grown deeper and gone dry and houses shake every time there are mining operations. The river, which used to be waist-deep is now neck-deep. Flash floods have become commonplace especially in coastal communities due to the dumping of mine tailings in the fields. Meanwhile, residents of Purok 7, Barangay Batangan, Gonzaga are being evicted because a mining company has claimed ownership of their land.

The suction effect. Land subsidence has occurred due to the destruction of the water table and the entry of seawater underneath agricultural and residential lands. The cause is a seven-ton magnet that has been positioned under sea water to extract magnetite. Aside from magnetite mining, there are exploration activities for gold in Claveria, gold and pyrex in Bagbao, magnetite sand in Balles-teros and limestone in Gonzaga.

Plans are also afoot to mine coal.

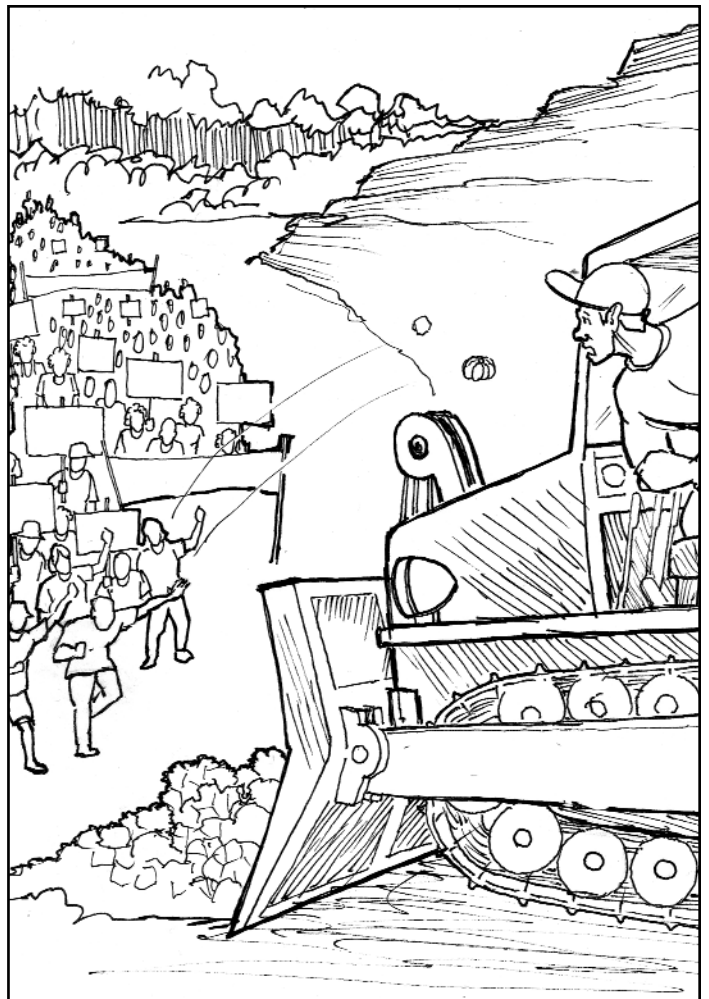
Magnetite mining is being conducted on a 13,843-hectare area along a 16-kilometer stretch that covers all the rivers, beaches and seas in the coastal towns of northern Cagayan. The immediate effect is dislocation in the masses' livelihood due to the loss of shrimp, clams, crabs and other marine life found along the shallow seas. Magnetite mining also poses danger to the people because the resulting floods submerge houses and agricultural lands in rural areas, as well as buildings in the town centers during typhoons or even during strong rains. The damage would be worse during a tsunami.

In Nueva Vizcaya, almost all towns have been covered by mining applications. Aside from the old mining area encompassing Kasibu, Dupax and Quezon towns, the applications have spread to Diadi, Bagabag, Solano and Bayombong. In Isabel, the national and

provincial governments are going ahead with coal mining projects that will be conducted over 64,000 hectares in 24 barrios of four towns, and which will result in the eviction of 10,000 families. Stiff resistance from the residents led to the cessation of coal mining in 2004. Aside from coal, gold is being mined in a 2,391-hectare concession in Dinapigue.

The reactionary state does not recognize farmers' rights to their land in the affected communities. It disregards the national minorities' right to their ancestral lands and tramples on the rights of fisherfolk to their fishing grounds. The people's right to livelihood, housing, health and safety is violated. Even the Cagayan River, which stretches from Nueva Vizcaya to the coast of Cagayan and is the country's longest has suffered damage.

Worsening militarization and military abuses in areas of largescale foreign mining. Oplan Bayanihan primarily targets



farmers and national minorities resisting destructive mining and quarrying operations. Some of the more blatant cases of human rights abuses include the series of killings in Buguey, Cagayan and Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya and growing military presence in the coal-mining areas of Benito Soliven, Isabela. Charges of illegal occupancy, libel and malicious mischief have also been filed against activists. Mass protests in Gonzaga and people's barricades in Kasibu have also been dispersed.

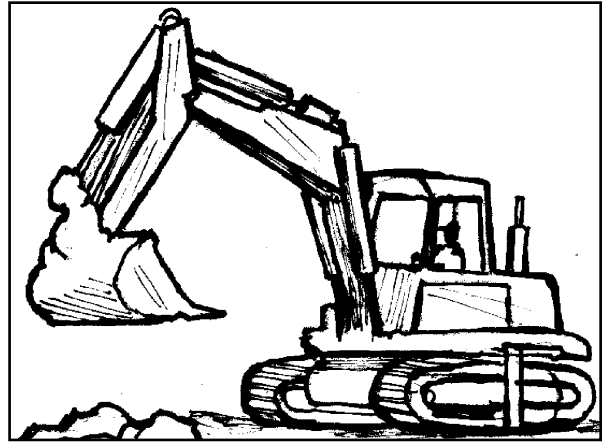
The PNP has been guarding quarry sites at Wangag River in Cagayan and mining sites in Kasibu. The government and foreign mining corporations have also beefed up their security forces. People opposed to mining have had to face a steady stream of trumped-up charges. At the same time, the antipeople Akbayan Party and other reactionary government institutions have stepped up their efforts to derail the people's struggles.

Untapped natural resources. Cagayan Valley is one of the regions with the largest volumes of untapped mineral reserves which include 218 million metric tons of metallic resources and 1.4 billion metric tons of non-metallic resources. The Northern Luzon Agribusiness Quadrangle (NLAQ) which serves as the reactionary government's blueprint for exploiting the region's resources lists the giant mining areas in Didipio, Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya among the 23 priority mining projects in the country. The NLAQ also provides for the exploitation by imperialist companies of the region's energy resources. Among these companies are the Philippine National Oil Company-Energy Corporation (PNOC-EC) and Aragon Coal Resources, Inc. that are engaged in coal mining and the Aragon Power and Energy Corp. which extracts oil and gas at the Cagayan Valley Basin. These companies occupy 748,000 hectares of agricultural land.

There are approved mining and quarrying applications covering 16 towns and one city in Cagayan, more than eight municipalities in Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino and six towns in Isabela. This is apart from a flood of applications for small-scale mining using the names of local businessmen and even barangay officials, but with foreign companies in the background calling the shots. Foreign companies are increasingly resorting to this tack because they find it easier to have their applications approved by local governments and bureaucrats who are also able to cash in on mining.



Progressives assail beefed up security for mining sites



Progressive parties, groups and environmentalists roundly assailed the Aquino regime's orders to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to cooperate with mining companies in the formation of paramilitary forces such as the Special Civilian Armed Auxiliary (SCAA) to protect the firms' operations.

The protesters argued that it is the people in the countryside who need protection against the military which has seriously violated the rights of minority communities. The minorities are victims of landgrabbing, environmental destruction and economic dislocation due to relentless plunder by mining companies.

Aquino's orders which were issued on October 14 were in response to coordinated attacks by the New People's Army on three mining companies in Surigao del Norte on October 3 to punish them for the massive destruction they have caused to the environment and the people's livelihoods. The establishment of the SCAA was begun under the Arroyo regime. The AFP trains the SCAA while their upkeep is shouldered by the mining companies.

The protesters demanded a stop to the deployment of the SCAA because this would lead to worsening human rights abuses. There is a long list of human rights violations committed by paramilitary forces. Human rights advocacy groups fear that such measures will heighten militarization and the dislocation of minority communities.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Army 27th IB has beefed up its forces in Sultan Kudarat and South Cotabato where several big mining companies are operating.

Cheaper Medicines Act cooked up in US Embassy

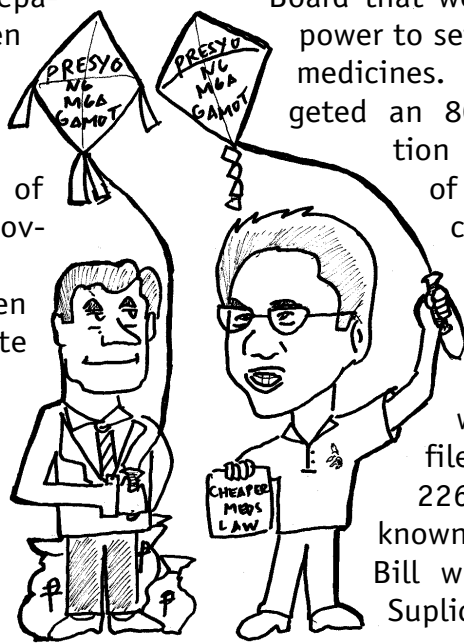
Before the Cheaper Medicines Act of 2008 was signed into law, the US Embassy connived with former Sen. Mar Roxas to water it down. This was revealed in a series of confidential memos from the US Embassy in Manila exposed by Wikileaks.org., an online whistleblower that focuses on disclosing information about government and corporate wrongdoing.

Roxas was reported to have met on May 16, 2006 with Barbara Weisel, US Assistant Trade Representative for Asia-Pacific and Pharmaceuticals Policy. This was followed by a separate meeting between US Embassy economic advisers and Roxas as well as Rep. Junie Cua of Quirino and other government officials. Roxas and Cua then headed the Senate and Congressional trade committees, respectively.

In the face of the high cost of medicines, Rep. Rolex Suplico of Iloilo filed in 2006 the Cheaper Medicines Bill oth-

erwise known as the Suplico Bill, which was refiled in 2007 by Rep. Ferjanel Biron. The bill's most salient provision was the creation of a Drug Regulation Board that would have the power to set the prices of medicines. The bill targeted an 80-90% reduction in the prices of 1,500 medicines listed in the Philippine Drug Formulary.

Meanwhile, Roxas filed Senate Bill 2264 otherwise known as the Roxas Suplico Bill's direct opposite. Roxas' bill was opposed to granting



government the power to set drug prices. Instead, it pushed for the importation of medicines as a way of bringing prices down even as it limited the list of pharmaceuticals that could be imported. It was Roxas' bill that was eventually approved as the Universally Accessible Cheaper and Quality Medicines Act of 2008 or Republic Act No. 9502.

Roxas' version would not have won out in the end were it not for the active intervention of foreign big pharmaceutical companies that spent a billion pesos to buy the congressmen's votes.

In the US officials' discussions with Roxas, they stressed the need to protect the "intellectual property rights" of American corporations. The US was also opposed to widespread drug importation, especially from India, where pharmaceutical products made by the same multinational companies are being sold at prices way below those prevailing in the Philippines. Through their dealings with Roxas, the US was also able to push for limits to drug importations from other countries. AB

Worldwide protest action against the crisis of capitalism

More than 950 demonstrations were launched by two million people on October 15 in 80 countries in Europe, North America, Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and the Asia-Pacific, including the Philippines. The biggest demonstrations were held in countries hit by grave economic and financial crises.

Up to 1,100,000 rallied in 60 towns in Spain. Up to 700,000 demonstrated in Italy; 40,000 in Portugal; more than 60,000 in Greece, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Sweden, Croatia and Slovenia. In the US mainland, more than 50,000 rallied in more than 30 states, while more than 10,000 protested in Canada and Alaska. Up to

100,000 rallied in Santiago, Chile; 15,000 in Israel; and 20,000 in South Africa. More than 15,000 rallied in Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, Hongkong, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia.

"Occupy Wall Street." The worldwide people's protest actions on October 15 were held to express solidarity with Occupy Wall Street, a continuing protest movement in the US against capitalist greed. This movement began on September 17 when more than 150 youth camped out at Zucotti Park which lies at the heart of New York City, the center of large-scale banking in the US.

Information about their protest action spread

over the internet and eventually spurred bigger demonstrations in New York and other US cities. Hundreds of demonstrators have been arrested in the past few weeks. Despite this, the protesters have gained broader support from unions, community organizations, movie actors, human rights advocates, civil rights activists and other groups.

Police brutality has increased, whipped up by the billionaires on Wall Street. The media reported that Goldman Sachs poured in \$4 million as an in-

centive to policemen to monitor the protesters. The most vicious policemen were deployed, as if to confront a horde of criminals. On October 11, policemen attempted to demolish the camp at Zucotti Park.

Global protests. The worldwide coordinated protest actions on October 15 were launched in response to calls to support and emulate the Occupy Wall Street movement. The breadth and intensity of the protests called that day in various parts of the globe mirrored

the breadth and intensity of people's suffering the world over due to the continuing crisis of capitalism.

Calls reverberated worldwide to unite in resisting capitalist greed and the financial system that has caused untold suffering to millions of people around the globe. The protesters manifested their anger against big finance capitalists and corrupt politicians who continue to wallow in luxury in the face of the worsening capitalist crisis. **AB**

19 soldiers killed in Basilan ambush

NINETEEN Special Forces elements were killed in an ambush by Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) fighters in Barangay Cambug, Al-Barka, Basilan on October 18.

Forty-one Special Forces elements were out to attack an MILF encampment when they were ambushed before they could move closer.

The fighting lasted for nine hours. The MILF said its fighters were not numerically superior to the Special Forces but had the advantage of knowing the terrain and being at a better position.

Aside from inflicting huge casualties on the AFP, the MILF also seized four M203s, five ma-

chine guns and 13 M16s from the soldiers.

The MILF condemned the attack by the Special Forces as a violation of its existing ceasefire agreement with the Government of the Philippines. It cited an earlier AFP violation where military forces attacked an MILF position in Payao, Zamboanga Sibugay on October 15. The MILF plans to file a protest with the International Monitoring Team against the AFP's ceasefire violation.

Meanwhile, up to 1,500 civilians in Basilan have already fled their homes as of October 19 because the military has been shelling their communities.

24 Turkish soldiers killed in PKK raid

TWENTY-FOUR Turkish soldiers were killed when fighters from the Kurdistan Workers Party (Parti Karkerani Kurdistan or PKK) attacked various military detachments in Hakkari, Turkey in the night of October 18. This was the biggest casualty incurred by Turkish security forces in the hands of the PKK since 1993.

In retaliation, the Turkish military bombed suspected PKK encampments in northern Iraq and sent commando units to pursue the rebels. It also arrested several civilians suspected of supporting the PKK.

The PKK has long been fighting to establish an autonomous state in Kurdistan, which encompasses eastern Turkey, northern Iraq, northwestern Iran and northern Syria. After a lull of several years, the PKK's guerrilla struggle resumed in 2004.

Turkey has been systematically suppressing the rights of the Kurdish people. Southeastern Turkey where the Kurds are concentrated remains one of the most impoverished regions in the country. Hundreds of thousands of Kurds have also been driven out of their homeland.