

ANG

Pahayagan ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas
Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

Bayan

English Edition
Vol. XLIV No. 1
January 7, 2013
www.philippinerevolution.net

Editorial

The future of the peace talks in the remainder of Aquino's term

Deceitful. A predator waiting to pounce. This is what the Government of the Philippines (GPH) has really been like in entering into a ceasefire agreement with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) until January 15.

The NDFP and the GPH agreed to a ceasefire on December 18 in an effort to push forward the peace negotiations. But the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP) have been trampling on the ceasefire by their forward deployment of forces and relentless conduct of operations against the New People's Army (NPA) and the revolutionary people.

The GPH's scoundrelism and exploitativeness become very evident when one recounts

the events since December 17-18.

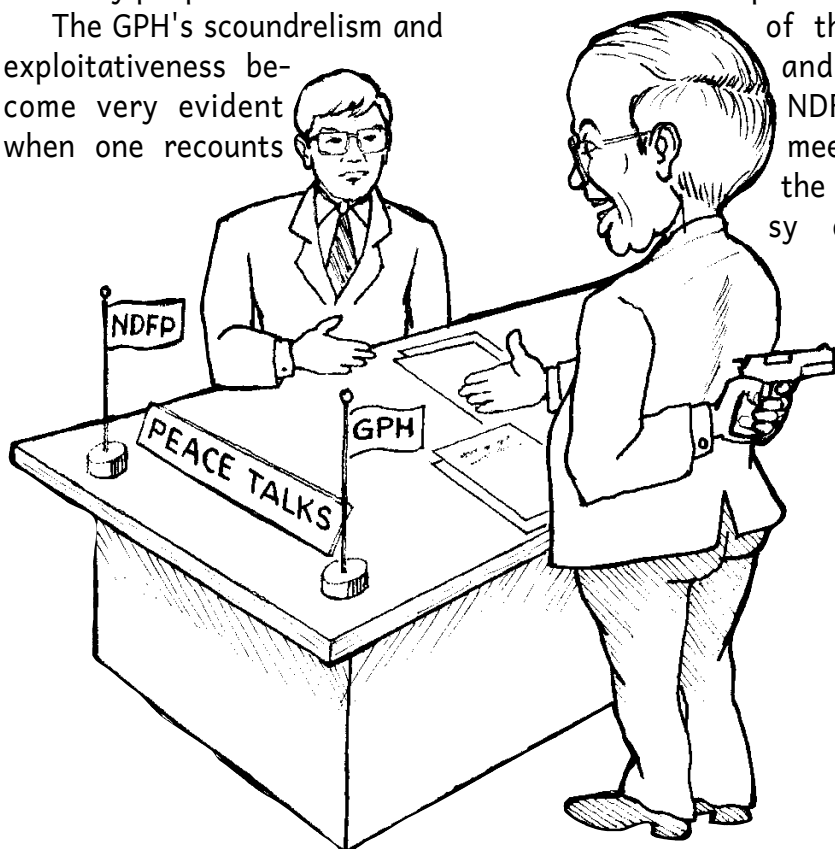
The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) declared a ceasefire on December 20 in support of efforts to jumpstart the long-stalled peace negotiations between the NDFP and the GPH.

In accordance with an agreement arrived at by special representatives of the GPH and the NDFP in a meeting at the embassy of the

Royal Norwegian Government at The Hague, The Netherlands on December 17-18, both parties were to declare reciprocal ceasefires from December 20 to January 15 and undertake a new round of talks in the first days of 2013.

The Party immediately relayed the order for a ceasefire to the NPA.

The GPH had likewise declared its own ceasefire, but only from December 16 to January 2. It therefore needed to issue a formal order to all AFP and PNP units and commands to extend the ceasefire to January 15. But the Aquino regime stubbornly refused up to the last minute to



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issue its own ceasefire extension order. This, despite the CPP and NDFP's reminders through statements and letters to extend the ceasefire, as agreed upon.

The Aquino regime's disregard for the agreement compelled the CPP to rescind its earlier ceasefire order and cut it short to January 2, likewise in accordance with the NDFP's recommendation. This was to avoid putting the NPA at an undue disadvantage.

Benigno Aquino III belatedly issued an order extending the GPH ceasefire only on the afternoon of January 2, fifteen days after this was agreed upon.

The NDFP therefore recommended anew to the CPP to re-extend the ceasefire to January 15, which the Party responded to forthwith.

The CPP's immediate response to the NDFP's ceasefire recommendations shows the Party and the entire revolutionary movement's interest in moving the peace talks forward.

The NDFP and the CPP also

showed in no uncertain terms to the GPH that in the serious conduct of negotiations, both parties must show themselves capable of complying with agreements, respecting their counterparts and undertaking reciprocal actions.

Aquino still has a lot to do to prove that he is indeed serious in conducting peace negotiations.

He must stop using the peace talks merely for the purpose of hoodwinking the revolutionary forces into entering a ceasefire of indefinite duration. He must realize that the CPP and NDFP cannot enter into such a ceasefire which would suppress and weaken the NPA. Doing so would render the peace talks meaningless, transform it into a framework for surrender and preserve and even worsen the basic issues that lie at the roots of the civil war.

He must rectify past violations of signed agreements. He must release the 14 detained NDFP consultants out of respect for the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG).

He must also release the more than 400 political detainees, because their continued incarceration violates the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).

Those who ordered the forced disappearance of NDFP consultants like Leo Velasco, Prudencio Calubid and Rogelio Calubad, among others, must be punished.

Aquino must show seriousness in addressing the basic issues of land reform and national industrialization, whose absence is behind the people's poverty and the country's backwardness and is the root of the raging civil war in the Philippines.

Aquino must show readiness to unite with the Filipino people in defending Philippine national sovereignty instead of catering to US imperialism's every whim.

In the face of the rabidly reactionary, antipeople and fascist character and servility to the US of Aquino and all other presidents of the puppet republic, it is truly unimaginable for them to unite with the revolutionary forces on a program that advocates the people's national and democratic interests. For the past two years, Aquino has paralyzed the peace talks because he has trampled and reneged on the agreements that have been reached.

The revolutionary movement wants to rectify the path along which the peace negotiations are being dragged. But the revolutionary forces also know that this can only happen with the intensification of armed struggle and the invigoration of the democratic mass movement, both of which banner the people's national-democratic aspirations and mobilize the people in their millions.

AB

 <p>Vol. XLIV No. 1 January 7, 2013</p> <p><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray and English editions.</p> <p>It is available for downloading at the Philippine Revolution Web Central located at:</p> <p>www.philippinerevolution.org.</p> <p><i>Ang Bayan</i> welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news. Readers are likewise enjoined to send in their comments and suggestions for the betterment of our publication. You can reach us by email at:</p> <p>angbayan@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Contents</p> <p>Editorial: The peace talks in the remainder of Aquino's term 1</p> <p>AFP, PNP contempt for the ceasefire 3</p> <p>3,000 attend CPP celebration in NSamar 4</p> <p>Decade of victories in Mindanao 5</p> <p>Revolutionary movement in Panay 7</p> <p>Victories in ICR 8</p> <p>ST: Persevering in the revolution 8</p> <p>Punish those responsible for disasters 9</p> <p>Mining destruction unearthed in Negros 10</p> <p>10 civilians maliciously liked to CPP-NPA 11</p> <p>Honing the dagger 12</p> <p>News 13</p>
<p><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	

AFP and PNP's contempt for the ceasefire agreement

Offensive operations and the deployment of armed troops by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against the revolutionary mass base and NPA forces are continuous, widespread and massive despite the synchronized temporary ceasefire between the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the Government of the Philippines (GPH).

The continuous combat operations, positioning of troops, militarization and intensified intelligence operations in the countryside form part of the regime's stepped-up counter-revolutionary offensive this year in line with the Oplan Bayanihan war of suppression.

Following are initial reports culled from various NPA commands:

1. Since December, elements of the 57th and 40th IB have been scouring the villages of Old Balatukan, New Israel and Biangan in Makilala, North Cotabato. The AFP has also mounted two batteries of 105 mm howitzers against the Red fighters of NPA Fronts 51 and 72. The 10th ID has positioned three sections of soldiers in each barangay between Mapula and Barko-barko, Lumiad to Riverside and Pandaitan, all in Paquibato District, Davao City.

2. The 10th ID set up checkpoints along all roads going to Paquibato District to stop visitors wishing to attend assemblies to celebrate the CPP anniversary on December 26.

3. Elements of the 69th and 84th IB continue to terrorize residents of Purok Isled, Barangay Damilag, Calinan District, Davao City to force them to report on the whereabouts of local NPA units.

4. The 74th IB arrested on December 21 five peasants in

Mulanay, Quezon and accused them of being NPA members.

5. Elements of the 302nd Brigade and local police arrested on December 25 Oligario Sebas in his house in Manjuyod, Negros Oriental. The military claims that Sebas is Felimon Mendrez, allegedly a high-ranking official of the revolutionary movement.

6. The PNP-Cagayan Valley arrested on December 28 in Bagumbayan, Tuguegarao City Rene Esmondo Abiva, an officer of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers. The police likewise claims that he is a highly placed official of the revolutionary movement.

7. On January 1, three platoons of the 84th IB entered Barangay Tambobong, Baguio District, Davao City and launched military operations in the area. Along with reinforcements that arrived on January 3, soldiers forced some 125 families to evacuate, ordered work at the plantations to stop and controlled the entry

and exit of rice and other foodstuff in the area.

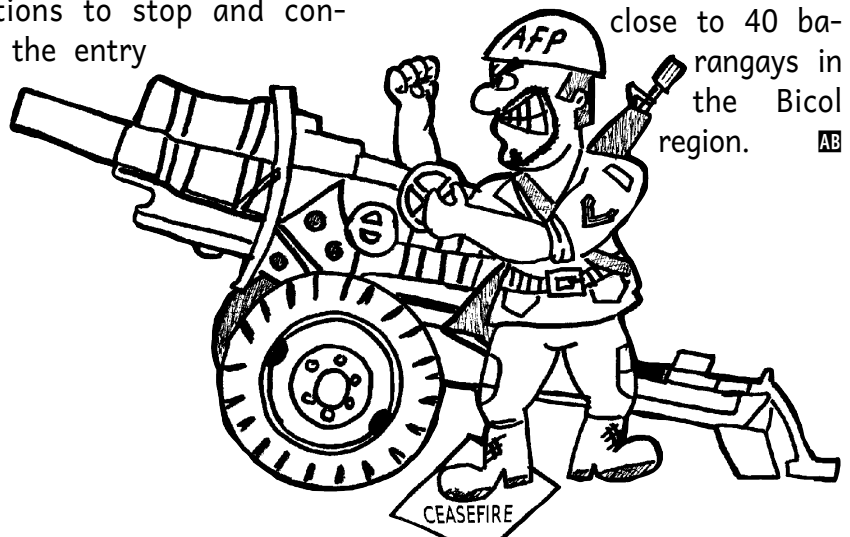
8. Hours after December 16, the start of the ceasefire declared by the Aquino regime, a platoon from the 31st IB secretly entered Barangay Hamorawon, Bulan, Sorsogon. The soldiers combed through the forested uplands for days until they reached the boundaries of Bulan and Irosin towns before returning to their camp.

9. The PNP Regional Public Safety Battalion (formerly the Regional Mobile Group or RMG) conducted combat operations in Barangay Macahoy, San Pascual, Masbate on December 24 and 25. On December 28, the troops raided the house of a peasant family in Barangay Mabini suspected of being active in the revolutionary movement.

10. On December 23, PNP elements and 9th IB troops abducted in Milagros, Masbate City Olalio Gonzaga, 22, of Barangay Bolo, Masbate City and Noel Espinosa, 37, a village watchman from Barangay Miabas, Palanas, Masbate.

11. On January 2, elements of the 2nd IB entered Barangay Sta. Cruz, Donsol, Sorsogon and launched combat operations against the NPA and the revolutionary masses in the area.

12. Intelligence and psywar operations by the AFP's so-called "peace and development teams" go on unabated in close to 40 barangays in the Bicol region. **AB**



3,000 attend Party celebration in Northern Samar

More than 3,000 people gathered on December 26 in a remote area of Northern Samar to celebrate the 44th anniversary of the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

They walked for two days, climbed steep mountains and crossed overflowing rivers to reach the site of the celebration.

The strong rains failed to dampen the joyous occasion. Red fighters under the Rodante Urtal Command ensured the safety of the attendees against attacks by the military and police who were expected to violate the ceasefire and launch operations.

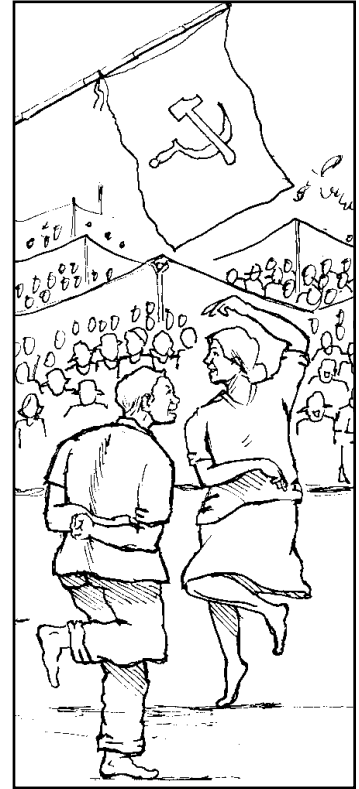
The celebration's theme was "Overcome the obstacles and complete the requisites for advancing towards the strategic stalemate." National Democratic Front-Eastern Visayas spokesperson Fr. Santiago Salas hailed the leading role of the revolutionary forces and masses in Northern Samar in advancing people's war in the region. In

the Eastern Visayas revolutionary leadership's continuing effort to achieve a comprehensive advance, victories have been attained in the fields of armed struggle, Party building and agrarian revolution. Antifeudal struggles continue to be launched in three subregions, one of which has succeeded in launching agrarian revolution at the municipal level.

The Party's membership continues to grow. Since 2010, a number of guerrilla fronts have achieved company-size NPA formations. Others have been able to add more platoons to their guerrilla formations.

Fulltime guerrilla units grew by 13%, even as tactical offensives have ensured that new recruits are armed with high-powered rifles.

In 2012, partial reports in-



dicating that NPA units were able to launch 24 tactical offensives, seize 17 firearms, kill 71 enemy elements and wound 31.

After Fr. Salas' speech, various cultural presentations were staged until the morning of December 27. Among the presentations was the *ismayling*, where two or more persons would outdo each other through impromptu singing. Also featured were skits, dances, poetry reading and other art forms. **AB**

Military actions in Samar in 2012

Fifteen soldiers were killed, at least eight troopers were wounded and two rifles seized in various military actions launched by the New People's Army (NPA) in Samar island in the last quarter of 2012.

December 5. The NPA overcame an attempt by some 40 elements of the 34th IB to encircle it in Barangay Hinogawe, Gamay, Northern Samar. The attempted encirclement formed part of pursuit operations against the NPA unit which conducted attritive actions on November 13. The NPA platoon was temporarily encamped to prepare for consolidation activities in nearby barrios for the coming CPP anniversary. The Red fighters fought bravely until the military retreated. Seven were confirmed killed on the enemy side and an undetermined

number were wounded.

Morning of November 13. Three enemy soldiers were killed and four were wounded when an NPA team opened fire on a section of the 34th IB Alpha Coy conducting operations in Barangay Carawag, Palapag, Northern Samar. The troops formed part of a security force for American soldiers familiarizing themselves with the Woodland area at the foot of Mt. Buboyaon in the guise of doing research on schistosomiasis.

October 21. At around 10:30 a.m., four soldiers were killed and two others were wounded in an ambush by Red fighters under the Efen Martires Command (NPA-Samar) on 43rd IB troops conducting operations in Barangay San Ramon, Gandara, Samar. The NPA seized two

M16s, two backpacks, 23 magazines and more than 500 rounds of ammunition, a cal .38 pistol, two rifle grenades, a grenade and important military documents.

October 5. A soldier was killed and two were wounded when a team under the NPA-Rodante Ur-

tal Command harassed a section under the 34th IB Bravo Coy conducting operations in Barangay Malidong, Gamay town.

The NPA did not suffer a single casualty in all these gunbattles, and was able to make an organized retreat. AB

A decade of triumphs in Mindanao

The revolutionary movement in Mindanao achieved a decade of brilliant victories despite brutal and relentless attacks by Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) and Oplan Bayanihan (OPB) due to the determined and correct leadership of the Communist Party and the wide and strong support and participation of the people. The New People's Army (NPA) continues to seize the initiative, despite its being the priority focus of the AFP amid the declining Moro armed resistance.

Party growth. From the first Party branch organized in 1971, the Communist Party of the Philippines is now widely and deeply rooted among the workers, peasants, Lumad, youth, women and the middle forces in the five regions in almost all provinces in Mindanao. This year alone, Party membership increased by almost 50%.

The Regional Party Committees have been strengthened further to even more effectively direct the war. The regional committees have been making thoroughgoing studies on the balance of forces, the enemy situation and how to wield initiative and flexibility in the ever-changing developments of the war.

The theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism are widely and deeply rooted unlike any other time in the history of the revolutionary movement in Mindanao. Almost all fulltime Party members have completed the basic course, most section committees have taken the intermediate course, and some regional level cadres have finished the advanced course.

This year, there has been a marked increase in the number of local Party branches that have completed the Basic Party Course.

Guerrilla warfare. Guerrilla warfare has become stronger and more widespread based on an ever widening and deepening mass base. In 2007, for instance, the AFP Eastern Mindanao Command was forced to shift its attack from Northeast Mindanao Region (NEMR) to Southern Mindanao Region (SMR) because of the bigger, more frequent tactical offensives in the latter region. The North Central, FarSouth and West Mindanao Regions also launched tactical offensives, so that the enemy's troops were not limited to SMR and NEMR alone. Within SMR and NEMR, tactical offensives were also launched more frequently and on a broader scale. While enemy forces concentrated on two or three regions, the other regions in Mindanao were given the latitude to regain the strength of their forces and reinvigorate their tactical offensives and mass movement.



The enemy's offensive campaigns and operations were met with active defense. The NPA was able to launch more than 100 annihilative military actions in 2012, seizing more than 150 high-powered rifles. Almost 300 attritive actions were also launched, including sniping, harassment and punitive actions. The NPA also figured in 40 defensive actions where the Red fighters were able to seize the initiative from the attacking enemy forces, killing the equivalent of around a battalion of enemy troops, aside from the numerous wounded.

The capability level of the NPA has been elevated in terms

of tactics and technique, coordination and formation, and operating with complicated targets. This has been manifested in the number of large-scale military actions that have been launched during OBL and OPB. Inter-regional tactical offensives have been conducted, such as the raid on the Earthsaver Security Agency in Butuan City; OMC Mining in Rosario, Agusan del Sur; PICOP in Bislig City; and the PNP station in Talacogon, Agusan del Sur. There have also been multiple target operations using company-size and undersize battalion formations, such as the raid on Taganito Mines (TMC) and San Roque Minerals Inc. (SRMI); the raid in Siargao Island; the raid on the PNP station and the ambush in Lingig, Surigao del Sur, among others. The Davao Penal Colony was also successfully raided, garnering at least a hundred high-powered rifles.

The NPA grew by 10% each year. The people's militia and barrio defense units now number by the thousands, both of which serve as direct support and reserve force for the NPA fulltime guerrillas.

Spread across the five regions of Mindanao are the NPA's 44 guerrilla fronts, more than 40% of which are company-size. Nearly 20% of NPA guerrilla forces are center-of-gravity forces of either the region or sub-region.

The organization of the people's army has been strengthened across the island. There now stands a territorial Regional Command of the NPA (ROC) separate and distinct from the Regional Party Committee.

Revolutionary bases have been established and the revolutionary mass movement advanced. Guerrilla bases have

been rapidly expanded and strengthened in the entire island. More municipalities have been covered from the more than 200 towns originally listed the previous year. Hundreds of barrios have also been added to the 2,000 barrios of the same period. Twenty-five percent (25%) of these have been consolidated from the level of Barrio Organizing Committee (OC) to the level of Balangay.

Land reform, which is the main content of the people's democratic revolution as well as the key link to mass work in the countryside has been waged repeatedly in numerous barrios of the island. Hundreds of thousands of farmers and their families have benefited from the different forms and levels of anti-feudal struggles and other mass campaigns.

Cooperativization such as labor exchange, communal farms, consumer and marketing cooperatives continue to be developed and practiced in the peasant associations. Self-reliant war economies are being developed in relatively strong guerrilla bases.

The antifascist and anti-imperialist mass movement has been strengthened. In numerous instances, abuses perpetrated by the operating troops in the countryside have been openly protested and condemned. A series of multisectoral protests has been waged against the direct intervention of US troops in Mindanao and in the entire country. The mass movement against imperialist-owned mines and plantations like Dole-Stanfilco, Del Monte and Sumifru has gained ground. The NPA has conducted punitive measures against these highly destructive imperialist

mining and agribusiness companies.

In general, the correct coordination between armed struggle as the main form and parliamentary struggle as the secondary form has been grasped. This has greatly helped in exposing and fighting enemy attacks against agrarian revolution and the anti-imperialist mass movement. As a result of a wider and more dynamic mass movement in the urban areas and a resurgence of the youth-student movement, many young activists have decided to join the NPA.

Alliances have become broader and stronger. This is concretized in the political and material support given by the religious, teachers and other professionals, including business people. Many from the local reactionary government units and politicians have reached out to the revolutionary movement.

The revolutionary movement in Mindanao has maintained its linkage with the MILF. Despite the Framework Agreement signed by the MILF with the Aquino government, the Party has continued to urge the MILF to be cautious so as not to fall into the trap of the reactionary US-Aquino regime. It has also linked with other legitimate Moro groups that continue to genuinely fight for the Bangsa-moro's right to self-determination.

Using all these victories as stepping stones, the Party and the entire revolutionary movement in Mindanao are ever determined to complete the last substage of the strategic defensive and go on their unstoppable advance towards the next higher stage of the strategic stalemate. **AB**

Revolutionary movement in Panay advances

The AFP's so-called "keyhole tactics" against the revolutionary movement in Panay has failed. In a statement issued on the occasion of the CPP anniversary, the Panay Regional Party Committee said that many of the military forces assigned to the island have been forced to withdraw from their camps because of NPA guerrilla attacks. According to the "keyhole tactics" frame, the AFP deploys battalion- to brigade-size formations against one or two suspected guerrilla fronts to crush the NPA forces in the area.

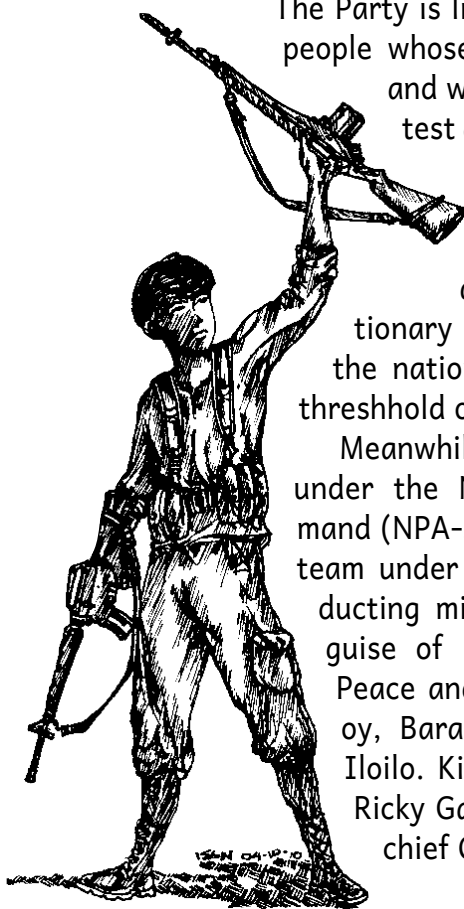
In a quiet admission of the regime's failure to destroy the revolutionary forces in Panay, the entire PNP 6th Special Action Force Battalion has been deployed to augment the 301st Infantry Brigade's strike forces.

This combined force has nonetheless failed to stop the expansion of the revolutionary movement in the island. In fact, mass organizations have been able to expand to populated areas, including the cities.

The membership and cadre core of the Party, NPA and organized forces and the areas of operation expanded by 10-15% last year. This year, the revolutionary movement is targeting a two-fold growth in the Party, organized masses and areas controlled and influenced by the revolutionary movement, up to the urban areas. There are also plans to intensify tactical offensives in the entire island even as antifeudal campaigns such as advancing the right to till, demanding lower interest rates and the like are conducted across the region.

The Party is likewise ready to support the people whose anger has been exploding and who have been launching protest actions in the streets against the deceptive, corrupt and puppet-fascist regime. It will be expanding people's alliances to broaden revolutionary influence and contribute to the nationwide advance towards the threshold of the strategic stalemate.

Meanwhile, on December 18, a unit under the Napoleon Tumagtang Command (NPA-Southern Front) ambushed a team under the 82nd IB that was conducting military operations under the guise of "Community Organizing for Peace and Development" in Sitio Anoy, Barangay Cabalaunan, Miag-ao, Iloilo. Killed in the ambush was Pfc. Ricky Gardose, son of former 6th IB chief Col. Noe Gardose. **AB**



Victories in the Ilocos- Cordillera Region

The revolutionary movement in the Ilocos-Cordillera Region achieved significant gains despite the US-Aquino regime's more vicious counterrevolutionary war and the limitations, weaknesses and errors experienced by the revolutionary forces in the region.

The Regional Party Committee remains intact and able to lead as the regional party organization continues to expand. The guerrilla fronts have been able to persevere in the task of expanding and consolidating the revolutionary mass organizations. The Party and the people's army in the region have learned valuable lessons from having sustained military and political setbacks in the past and have been rectifying their errors.

The New People's Army in the region was able to launch victorious successful offensives, particularly in the second quarter of 2012. Its most outstanding tactical offensive was an ambush on 86th IB troops that killed 11 military forces, including a captain. It also seized four M16 rifles and a Squad Automatic Rifle, and damaged two six-by-six trucks.

The majority of guerrilla front committees have remained intact and have expanded, as have the guerrilla front and forces led by the people's army. This is despite the bigger presence and intensified attacks of six battalions from the 5th and 7th ID supported by six PNP battalions and several CAFGU companies. The revolutionary forces have accomplished their political tasks, including expanding and opening new guerrilla zones. The mass movement in the cities continues to develop and has been able to send cadres and forces to perform

tasks in the countryside and guerrilla fronts.

There are likewise continuing efforts to raise the momentum and achieve better coordination of mass struggles within the guerrilla fronts as well as in the cities and town centers of Cordillera on the issues of defending ancestral lands and resisting destructive and plunderous projects such as

megadams and geothermal plants as well as widespread and large-scale mining.

Peasant struggles have regained the momentum both in the guerrilla zones and white areas of the Ilocos subregion despite the disruptions caused by the enemy on the mass work being conducted by the people's army and the democratic forces. **AB**

Southern Tagalog: Persevering in the revolution

Amid very difficult conditions, the revolution in Southern Tagalog (ST) continues to advance. The Party Regional Committee is determined to lead and advance the revolutionary struggle in various arenas.

The revolutionary movement in the countryside and cities is in a position to continue persevering and overcoming all difficulties amid the hardships and limitations wrought by the stepped-up operations of Oplan Bayanihan and the limitations attendant to the low level of guerrilla warfare in the region.

The region has maintained the same number of guerrilla fronts which are of various sizes. These guerrilla fronts encompass a population of millions in 75 towns and more than 600 barrios where the revolutionary forces operate among a mass base that runs to the hundreds of thousands. The people's army has enough strength to advance wave upon wave and step by step and has more than enough firepower to arm the growing numbers of newly recruited Red fighters.

In the past three years, the New People's Army in ST was able to launch 105 tactical offensives, killing up to 91 enemy elements and wounding 70. This is on top of 33 soldiers killed and 14 wounded in defensive battles where the people's army was able to seize the initiative and gain the upper hand. The NPA confiscated 131 firearms in these gunbattles, including two light machine guns (a K3 and an M60), four grenade launchers

(three M203s and an M79), 66 high-powered rifles, five sub-machine guns/machine pistols, and 54 pistols. In its most outstanding tactical offensives in this period, an NPA platoon wiped out an entire platoon of the 22nd Division Reconnaissance Company in Mindoro in 2010 and guerrilla forces ambushed the SAF-PNP in Rizal also in 2010.

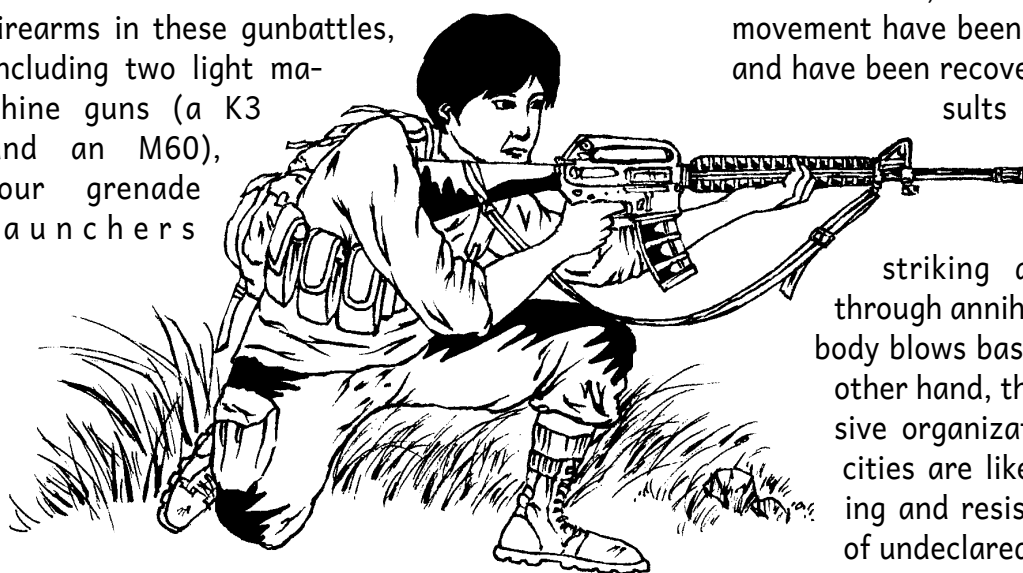
As recently as December 2012, ten tactical offensives were launched in three provinces within the region. The most striking among these were the raid on the police station in Roxas, Palawan and the punitive actions taken against the destructive Citinickel Mining Corporation in Sopronio Española town, Palawan and the Veronica Iñiguez Lee Mines Corporation and Macro Asia in Tagkawayan, Quezon which are both owned by Danding Cojuangco. The NPA seized from these operations high-powered rifles and several pieces of military equipment.

For the past decade or so, the revolutionary forces in the region have succeeded in overcoming the difficulties brought about by the large-scale, sustained and intensified attacks of the fascist forces. Overall, the revolutionary movement in ST has preserved enough of its strength to make a renewed advance from the temporary setbacks and defeats it suffered in certain fields and sectors.

Meanwhile, some sections of the revolutionary movement have been showing moderate advances and have been recovering from the cumulative results of the onslaughts of OBL I

and II and Oplan Bayanihan. The people's army continues to persevere in

striking against the fascist forces through annihilative and attritive head and body blows based on its capabilities. On the other hand, the revolutionary and progressive organizations and movements in the cities are likewise persevering in thwarting and resisting the fascist white terror of undeclared martial law. **AB**



Punish those responsible for disasters

Typhoon Pablo's casualties continue to mount. Up to 1,067 have been killed, 985 of them from the Davao provinces. Many of the dead have yet to be identified. There are growing fears that the body count could go as high as 1,500, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council. More than 800 remain missing, and 2,666 have been injured. Up to 711,682 families have been affected, or 6.244 million individuals. Damage to property is at ₱34.41 billion, surpassing that of typhoon Sendong which hit the country in December 2011.

It is not enough to provide relief goods and rehabilitate the typhoon-struck areas to rebuild homes and lives. The roots of the increasingly devastating calamities that have struck the country one after another in the past two years must be seriously addressed. Justice must be fought for more vigorously and the companies responsible for plundering the environment and natural resources through large-scale commercial logging, destructive mining operations and vast agribusiness plantations must be held accountable. The government, which has connived with these companies must equally be taken to task.

Panalipdan (Defend)-Southern Mindanao, an environmentalist organization has called on the Aquino regime to cancel the logging permits issued in Davao Oriental in order to thwart the further destruction of the forests, which is one of the factors behind climate change.

The government has granted 16 Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA) contracts in the province, covering 82,443.39 hectares in Baganga, Cateel, Caraga and Manay—the towns worst hit by typhoon Pablo. IFMA holders are granted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) the exclusive right to

"develop, manage, protect and utilize a specified area of forest land and forest resources" for 25 years or more. In reality, the IFMA is a logging permit masquerading as a reforestation program. IFMA holders thus become exempt from the government's so-called log ban policy. The biggest IFMA area has been assigned to Matuguina Integrated Wood Products which logs over 27,761 hectares in the towns of Baganga and Caraga. Second is PICOP Resources Incorporated with 14,466 hectares in Baganga and Cateel, and La Fortuna Mahogany Incorporated with 10,873 hectares.

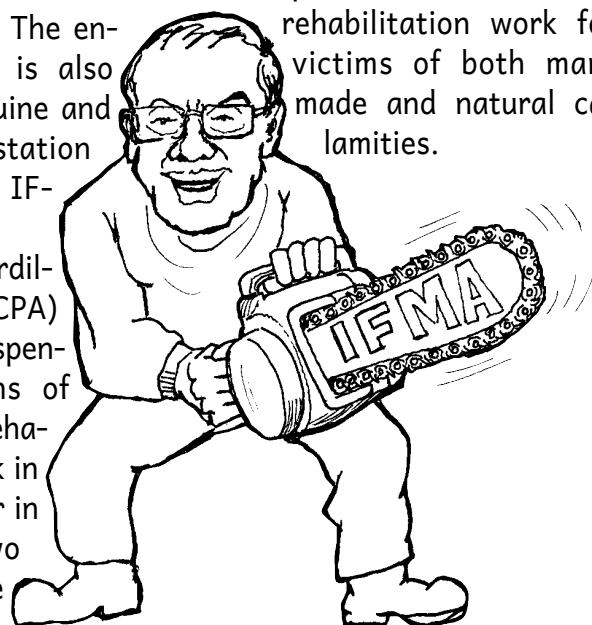
By perpetuating the IFMA, the Aquino regime, in effect, tolerates companies engaged in large-scale logging and absolves them from their accountability to the people and the environment, said Panalipdan. The environmental watchdog is also campaigning for a genuine and comprehensive reforestation program in place of the IFMA.

Meanwhile, the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA) has demanded the suspension of the operations of Philex Mining and the rehabilitation of Balog Creek in Benguet and Agno River in Pangasinan. These two bodies of water have

been poisoned by 20.6 million metric tons of mine tailings that overflowed when the Philex tailings dam in Barangay Padcal, Tuba town was destroyed on August 1, after typhoon Gener. The mine tailings flowed through Balog Creek and Agno River towards the adjacent town of Itogon, finally settling at the San Roque Multi-purpose Dam in Pangasinan. This has resulted in the economic dislocation of residents of Sitio Pangbasan in Barangay Dalupirip, Itogon, Benguet.

Philex rakes in a monthly net income of ₱600 million, and has even bagged *Forbes Asia's* "Best Under A Billion Award." The mining giant must be compelled to bankroll the entire cost of cleaning up Benguet's Balog Creek.

On the part of the revolutionary movement, it continues to mete revolutionary justice and take to account the plunderers of the environment and natural resources. Meanwhile, on its own initiative, the revolutionary movement also continues to develop its capability to lead and engage in timely and comprehensive relief and rehabilitation work for victims of both man-made and natural calamities. **AB**



Fact-finding mission unearths mining destruction in Negros

Large-scale mining has wrought serious damage to the health and livelihood of Negrenses. This was unearthed by an international fact-finding mission launched in various towns of Negros Occidental on November 7-11.

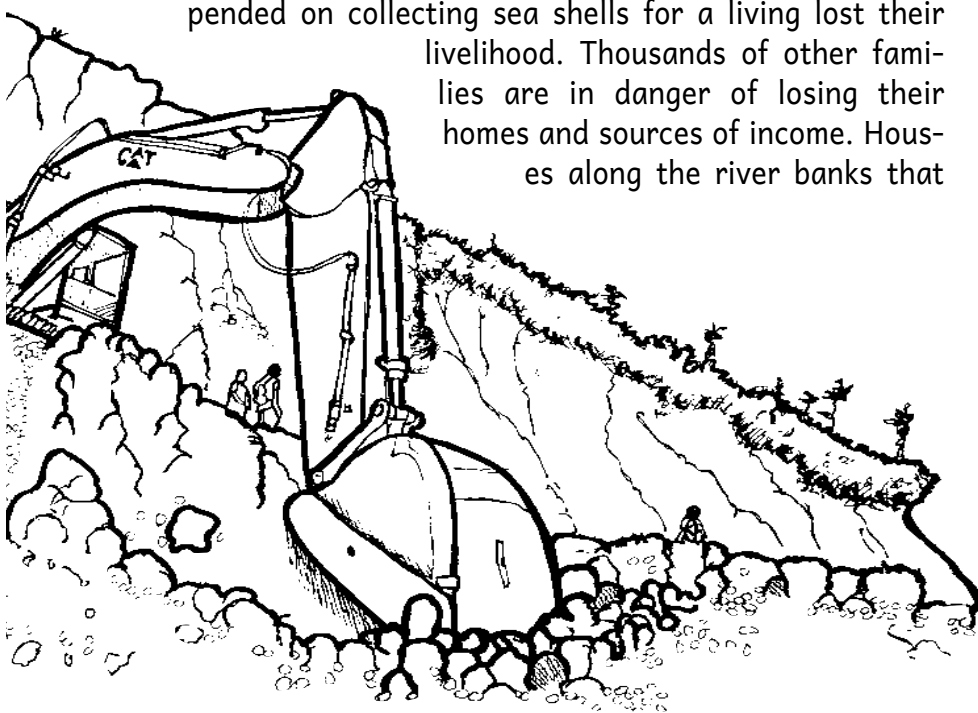
The mission was led by the Asian Peasant Coalition (APC), Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP)-National and KMP-Negros, and Action Solidarite Tiers Monde. Up to 85 people from Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, India, Belgium and the United Kingdom joined the mission, as well as national and local progressive organizations of various sectors.

Up to 380,000 hectares of agricultural land and coastal areas in Negros Occidental have been ceded to mining. Some of the big mining companies in the island are Philex Mining Corporation, MariColet Mines, Philmet Corporation, Vulcan Mining Corporation, Asturias Chemical Industries and Massart Mining and Development Corporation.

According to APC's research, magnetite mining along the coastal areas of Old Sagay, Sagay City is being misrepresented as a dredging project to rehabilitate the Himoga-an and Tan-ao rivers and restore the fish population. The local government has squandered ₱9.9 million on the ASPAC Dredging and Restoration, Inc. to implement a project that is in fact, for mining purposes.

The fact-finding team also discovered that the residents were never consulted before the mining operations were conducted. Promises of employment were also a sham. Only a few relatives or close friends of local officials who were in cahoots with the mining company were given jobs. The locals who were interviewed also disclosed that the mining operations have poisoned their streams and rivers, caused fish kills, destroyed crops and caused floods and landslides. They have also led to cases of human rights violations.

Mangrove forests were cut down and 120 residents were evicted from the Old Sagay coastal area. Fourteen families who depended on collecting sea shells for a living lost their livelihood. Thousands of other families are in danger of losing their homes and sources of income. Houses along the river banks that



were never inundated before are now subject to floods. Houses that have been destroyed by floods could no longer be reconstructed because the victims have been permanently evicted. Fishponds have been dismantled and residents banned from fishing. From a daily income of ₱350, fisherfolk now earn a mere ₱50 daily. Residents have also complained that their skin itched after bathing in the river near a silica mining site in Sherman Hill, Barangay Baviera, Sagay City.

There have been similar complaints due to the operations of Philex Mines in Sipalay. Before its operations started, each farmer in the area could harvest 60 cavans of rice and 30,000 ears of corn per hectare. Today, this has dwindled to 10-15 cavans of rice and 10,000 ears of corn per hectare. Philex's operations have also caused flooding, landslides, crop destruction and poisoning of rivers. Those who bathe in the river, most of whom are children, suffer from swollen, itchy skin and boils. There have been fishkills. Sources of drinking water have also been contaminated.

The fact-finding mission confirmed that elements of the 47th IB have been protecting Philex in Sipalay. On the other hand, CAFGU and RPA-ABB elements have been protecting its mine site in Sagay City. The presence of these armed groups has created a climate of fear among the residents. Even the fact-finding team was harassed by these armed groups. **AB**

10 civilians maliciously linked to CPP-NPA

The Aquino regime has persisted in arresting and slapping trumped-up charges against ordinary civilians and leaders of the democratic mass movement.

December 28. Philippine National Police intelligence operatives arrested Rene Emondo Abiva, 23, an organizer of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers at exactly 4:35 p.m. along Taft St., Bagumbayan, Tuguegarao City. Abiva was accused of being a former member of the New People's Army and of being a member of the White Area Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines in Cagayan Valley. Because he is the husband of Mildred Goyagoy, former leader of KARAPATAN, he has been accused of murder in relation to an NPA ambush on military troops in Ifugao in April 2012.

December 25. Elements of the 302nd Infantry Brigade arrested Oligario Sebas, 65, after mistaking him for "Felimon Mendrez," allegedly a high-ranking official of the CPP-NPA. He was arrested at around 10:30 a.m. in Barangay Tuyod, Manjuyod, Negros Oriental. Sebas was then resting in his house when armed

soldiers in civilian clothes barged in and showed him an arrest warrant for "Felimon Mendez," allegedly a CPP cadre in Central Visayas with a ₱5.25 million bounty for his arrest. Sebas is currently detained at the BJMP District Jail in Bayawan City.

This is the second case of mistaken identity where the military and police have picked up innocent civilians who they claim are among the revolutionary leaders on their wanted list so they could collect millions of pesos in bounty money. In October 2012, security guard Rolly Panesa was arrested, tortured and detained because he was accused of being "Benjamin Mendoza," allegedly a revolutionary leader with a ₱5.6 million bounty on his head.

December 21. Five peasants were arrested by the military at a checkpoint in Mulanay, Quezon and accused of being members of the New People's Army. Three of the victims have been

identified as Dennis Quidor, Eli-seo Lopez and Rodrigo Guevarra. They were accused of conducting surveillance in preparation for an alleged NPA raid on the towns of Mulanay and San Francisco. The CPP has strongly belied the accusation.

December. Trade union leaders from the National Capital Region, Southern Tagalog and Western Visayas have been slapped with various trumped-up charges. In particular, Kilusang Mayo Uno-NCR chair Roy Velez has been accused of multiple murder in relation to an NPA raid in Labo, Camarines Norte on April 29, 2012.

On the other hand, Hermenegildo Marasigan, leader of Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan has been charged with assault and slight physical injuries because of a scuffle that took place during a protest against militarization in Cabuyao, Laguna. Meanwhile, KMU-Negros spokesperson Ronald Ian Evidente has been charged with robbery in connection with an NPA raid on a fishpond in Sagay City in July 2011. Evidente found out about the case only after BAYAN-Negros secretary-general Christian Tuayon was arrested in April 2012 on the same charges. **AB**

Honing the dagger: The dancer is a poet

As poverty and exploitation worsen in the countryside and cities, the people are bound to rise. This was portrayed in the dance-drama *Pitong Sundang* (Seven Daggers) of UP Sinagbayan through a combination of poetry and dance, using both modern and classical styles, shadow and video and symbolic images, color and costumes.

The presentation of *Pitong Sundang* was timed to coincide with the 149th birth anniversary of the revolutionary hero Andres Bonifacio on November 29 and 30 at the University of the Philippines-Diliman.

Woven from poems by poet-political detainees Ericson Acosta and Alan Jazmines, the dance-drama opens with a student dancing happily and unaffected by events around her. But she is time and again jarred by scenes from the Hacienda Luisita massacre, calls from the urban poor, and the killing and attempted murder by the state

of those who have been rising and tirelessly struggling for their rights.

The dancer watches a video of an old peasant, while from the background is heard a narration of Acosta's poem "Sipat" (Aiming). Then, with the poem "Kung Nagsasalita ang Lupa" (If the Land Could Speak), a farmer suddenly appears on stage, tilling the soil and harvesting his crops, but with his every move excruciatingly hard and slow because of pieces of rope tied to his body.

"Sagrada Family" (Holy Family) tells the story behind the farmer's bonds. Along with a bell that peals discordantly, a voice speaking atonally, as if praying the novena, assails the enormous greed of bureaucrats and landlords who sanctimoniously claim to be champions of the people. This is danced by the three plagues—persons wearing masks of ogres or of pestilence.



A new style of dance-drama was the pantomime-like manner of introducing feudalism. Four performers—three as peasants and one as landlord—portray through dance the story of farming that at first, bears bountiful crops. Not long after, however, the landlord seizes and feasts on the fruits of the peasants' labor.

"Dam," a Sinagbayan original, portrays the plunder and destruction by local and foreign businesses of the environment and the livelihoods of national minorities and other sectors. Acosta's "Tala" (Star) speaks clearly of how state fascism rampantly tramples on the rights of ordinary folk, especially those fighting the rotten system. In Jazmines' "Malaki't maliit na piitan" (Prisons big and small), the bitterness of being deprived of freedom while being in a real prison cell is combined with that of being in a bigger prison—a society bereft of justice.

After witnessing these scenes in succession, the student character is convinced that she should join the toiling masses. The fascist military tries to stop her, but they are thwarted by warriors

dressed in red and carrying daggers. The last poem "Gabud" (Grindstone) portrays through dance the sentiments of the oppressed people: sorrow, arousal, rising, resistance, persuasion and invitation, struggle.

Migrants rally in Hongkong

More than 1,000 migrant workers from Southeast Asia rallied in Hongkong on December 18 to commemorate International Migrants' Day and to demand better working conditions and higher wages. The migrants sang songs and shouted slogans in front of various government offices.

According to Eni Lestari, an Indonesian domestic helper in Hongkong and spokesperson of the Asia Migrants Coordinating Body, domestic helpers usually work for more than 20 hours a day. On the other hand, United Filipinos spokesperson Dolores Balladares said the minimum monthly wage rose by only HK\$60 in the last 12 years. The current rate of HK\$3,920 is no longer enough for them to cope with the rising prices of goods and services. The protesters also demanded, among others, that migrant workers be given the right to become permanent residents and enjoy benefits such as free health care. There are 300,000 foreign domestic helpers in Hongkong,

most of them coming from Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International condemned the widespread and customary exploitation of migrant workers in Italy and called on the government to change its immigration policies. Migrant workers are paid an average of 40% less compared to Italians performing the same work.

Because of racism, workers from sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and Asia who are concentrated in the agricultural sector in Latina and Caserta in southern Italy experience more severe exploitation. It cited as example a migrant worker from India who agreed to work seven days a week in exchange for a monthly wage of 700 euros but actually receives only 100 euros. He could not complain to the police because he entered the country illegally. Out of 5.4 million foreigners in Italy, half a million do not have legal documentation.

Danger of nuclear accident grows with dockings of US warships

There is growing danger of a nuclear accident in the country due to the frequent dockings in Subic Bay and other parts of the Philippines of nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed US warships. One example in the submarine USS Bremerton that docked in Subic Bay in late December.

A secret memorandum issued by the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense after the destruction of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant in Japan in March 2011 said that nuclear-powered submarines are extremely vulnerable to core-meltdowns much like what happened in Fukushima that resulted in the release of toxic radiation in the atmosphere.

There have been many accidents involving such vessels, including a fire that hit a US nuclear-powered warship in Japan.

Sin Tax, an added burden to the people—*CPP*

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) assailed the Aquino regime for imposing starting January 1 the so-called Sin Tax that would make the Filipino people's tax burden even heavier. In implementing the Sin Tax, the Aquino regime will be collecting bigger taxes on cigarettes and alcoholic drinks in an attempt to raise ₱248.49 billion more in tax revenues in the next five years.

The CPP belied the regime's claims that the bigger revenue from this tax will accrue to health care. The Party pointed out that the Aquino regime allotted only ₱53.8 billion for public health services in the 2013 budget, a far cry from the ₱530 billion that should be allocated for health services, according to recommendations of international health agencies. Also proof of the Aquino government's lopsided priorities, the health budget for 2013 is only 15% of the ₱333.9 billion allotted for foreign debt service.