

## NPA raids mining company

RED FIGHTERS UNDER Comval-Davao Gulf Subregional Command of the New People's Army-Southern Mindanao Region raided RAM Aggregates, Inc., a nickel mining company in Barangay Puntalinao, Banay-banay, Davao Oriental last January 4.

A Garand rifle with sniper scope, one M79 grenade launcher, 2 shotguns, 2 pistols and hundreds of ammunitions, and other military equipment were confiscated from the raid. The Red fighters paralyzed mining equipment including six backhoes, a bulldozer and a dumptruck.

The punitive action is in accordance with the policy of Communist Party of the Philippines to protect the environment from destructive large-scale mining and from companies affiliated with foreign investors that plunder the country's natural resources while exploiting workers and peasants.

Alongside this, the 1st Pulang Bagani Battalion launched a punitive action against Sumitomo Fruits Corp., and Highland Banana Corporation in Barangay Tamayong, Calinan District, Davao City last January 13, 8 a.m. Three boom sprayer trucks were paralyzed by the Red army. AB



EDITORIAL

## End the US-Duterte regime's martial law in Mindanao

**T**he blood of the people of Mindanao flows under the US-Duterte regime's martial law and all-out war against the revolutionary movement. In 2017, majority of the 126 victims of killings by the fascist military and paramilitary hail from Mindanao. Most of the victims are Lumads and peasants who are active in the struggle against land grabbing and for their rights.

Duterte's reign in Mindanao is that of open terror in the form of direct attacks against civilians and their communities, Palparan-like killings, all-out destruction of the people's livelihood and properties and widespread repression, illegal arrests and detentions.

Cases of human rights abuses which can be considered as crimes against humanity continue to rise. Among the most recent are the massacre of eight Lumads in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato and attempted burn-

ing of two small-scale miners in Masara, Compostela Valley. The months-long AFP bombing and occupation of Marawi City which left 3,000 people dead, an indefinite number missing and the P100 billion-worth destruction of an entire city can also be considered a crime against humanity.

Aside from Marawi, the AFP likewise displaced thousands of people in the provinces of Lanao, Maguindanao and other Moro areas, as well as in the provinces of Surigao, Davao,

Cotabato, Bukidnon, Agusan, Compostela Valley and Misamis. AFP militarization, bombings and shellings, use of modern arms from the US such as war planes and drones, are widespread. Food blockades are imposed in order to starve evacuees and aid workers, while officials of local government units and that of local agencies are harassed.

In the island's cities, threats, intimidation and outright attacks against civil rights and freedoms are the norm. Martial law gave local governments the authority to suppress the open mass movement and implement dictatorial decrees and measures such as checkpoints and arbitrary searches. Workers on strike are attacked and their unions dismantled.

Nobody is safe from the Duterte family's vindictive and gangster repression. They openly threaten, curse and belittle anyone who dare criticize their fascist actions and corruption, including journalists who refuse to kowtow to them.

Duterte attacks his fellow bureaucrats, even former friends and

cronies, if they go against bureaucrats who are more useful to him. He also pounces on entrepreneurs who are in direct competition with his cronies and allies. Using the 10th ID, he has targeted more than a hundred businesses and individuals on the excuse that they finance and aid the revolutionary movement.

From the latter part of 2017, Duterte has intensified his all-out war in Mindanao. These past months, he has deployed two new battalions in the island's priority regions. He has also deployed additional battalions from Luzon to reinforce existing formations, the latest in Caraga. This region, as well as other priority provinces, are areas where resistance against mining, commercial plantation and other foreign plunder is strongest.

The regime launches widespread military operations, in combination with bombings and drone flights, in target communities to force residents to evacuate. They ravage these communities to compel residents to "surrender" and present them as "NPA surrenderees." They intensified






the "logbook" system, where residents are obliged to report to barangay officials and the police their visitors or whoever is new in their barrio. Checkpoints are strictly enforced and those without identification are immediately treated as criminals or terrorists.

Duterte will not readily end martial law in Mindanao. No less than his minion in the Department of National Defense Delfin Lorenzana has said that martial law is needed beyond 2018 since the AFP will not be able to defeat the NPA within the year. This is in contradiction to the AFP's delusion to cut the NPA "by half" in the middle of the year.

US imperialism supports martial law in Mindanao. It gave them an extraordinary opportunity to directly intervene and command AFP combat operations after their special operations base in Zamboanga was closed in 2015. This January 20, the US made public the new "named operation" for Duterte's "war against terrorism" dubbed "Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines" to replace its Operation Enduring Freedom. In exchange of funds and arms the US will spend on the mission, Duterte displaced hundreds of thousands of Moros in Marawi City to give way to US interests and military bases. Under martial law, around 300 US soldiers have permanently operated in the country to lead AFP operations in Mindanao.

In this light, it is imperative that the people not only in Mindanao but in the entire country is made aware and mobilized against martial law in Mindanao. In reality, Duterte's reign of terror prevails nationwide despite the declaration covering only Mindanao. Killings and repression are widespread in Luzon and Visayas. The national capital has the most number of extrajudicial killings under the "anti-drug war."

There is an urgent need for national-democratic organizations to broaden and strengthen the people's movement against state terrorism and fascism. One of their foremost

 <p>Vol. XLIX No. 2   Enero 21, 2018</p> <hr/> <p><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray and English.</p> <p><i>Ang Bayan</i> welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news items. Readers are encouraged to send feedback and recommendations for improving our newspaper.</p> <p> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/prwc.official">instagram.com/prwc.official</a></p> <p> <a href="https://twitter.com/prwc_info">@prwc_info</a></p> <p> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/cppinfo">fb.com/cppinfo</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:cppinformationbureau@gmail.com">cppinformationbureau@gmail.com</a></p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Contents</h2> <hr/> <p><b>Editorial:</b> End the US-Duterte regime's martial law in Mindanao 1</p> <p><b>2nd Editorial:</b> Stand for press freedom 4</p> <p>Mining company punished 1</p> <p>Four petitions against martial law 3</p> <p>ML for comprador and foreign interest 3</p> <p>Gag on press freedom opposed 5</p> <p>The railroading of Duterte's cha-cha 6</p> <p>Duterte's TRAIN hits the people 7</p> <p>Militarization worsens 8</p> <p>Farms for the people's war 9</p> <p>Indian Red fighters' punitive actions 10</p> <p>Protests against TRAIN and Cha-Cha 11</p> <p>Resurgence of protests in Greece 12</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	

calls must be to end martial law in Mindanao.

In the countryside, where the regime's attacks are most vicious, measures must be taken to prevent the people from moving in different directions and fall into passivity. Propaganda work must be strengthened to expose abuses and violations of their rights. It is only correct that their struggles are brought into international courts and institutions to hold Duterte and the AFP responsible.

An alliance to end martial law in Mindanao must be organized. It can be composed of Mindanaoans based in Manila and elsewhere, together with church people, lawyers, students and other democratic sectors.

Inside Mindanao, anti-fascist mass struggles must be strengthened. These should be combined with struggles for decent living and social welfare.

Most of all, the New People's Army should deal stronger blows to the AFP to defend the people who are relentlessly victimized. They should launch tactical offensives all over Mindanao to avoid enemy concentration in one or a few provinces and force the AFP to overstretch itself. AB

### Four petitions filed against martial law

THIS JANUARY, FOUR petitions were filed with the Supreme Court to oppose martial law extension in Mindanao. These were filed by Albay Representative Edcel Lagman, the Makabayan bloc and National Union of People's Lawyers, former Commission on Human Rights commissioner Loretta Ann Rosales and Christian Monsod, former chairperson of the Commission on Elections.

All petitions argue that extending martial law in Mindanao is without basis.

Prior to this, Arleen Alonzo, campaign officer of the Alliance for Genuine Development, refuted CHR-12 Director Erlan Deluvio's statement that the massacre in Barangay Ned, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato is the first human rights violation under martial law. In fact, Karapatan-Socskargen has recorded 13 cases of extrajudicial killings in the region during this period. In addition to these are bombings that have forced 200 Lumad families to evacuate from Lake Sebu, Malapatan and Sultan Kudarat, including in Carmen, Magpet and Makilala in Cotabato last November 2017. AB

## Mindanao martial law for comprador and foreign interest

ONE OF THE objectives of extending martial law in Mindanao is for Duterte to railroad of infrastructure projects under his Build, Build, Build program. These projects, which will be funded by loans from imperialist countries and institutions and awarded to his most favored compradors and bureaucrats in Mindanao. This is part of his payoff in return for their support to his terrorist rule.

Majority of the infrastructure projects in Mindanao are roads, bridges, airports, seaports, and train system. These are included in the Mindanao Development Corridor which aims to "facilitate" investments in the island. In particular, this will ease the transportation of agricultural products of commercial plantations to be exported to other countries. A part of this project is the Mindanao Logistic Infrastructure Network that will be funded by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The road system will go across Cagayan de Oro, Butuan, Surigao, General Santos, and Davao. Lumad, Moro, and settlers' communities covered by the project will be displaced.

Meanwhile, the 280-kilometer road-widening in Zamboanga Penin-

sula will result to the dislocation of residents from at least 6 barangays. In a sector of the project, more than

400 families in barangays Sto. Niño, Poblacion, New Dapitan, Farmington, Situbo, and Sandayong will be evicted from their lands. Included in the affected residents are Lumads from Subanen and Kolibugan tribes. Almost 32,000 square meters of cropland will be destroyed.

Other big projects are the Transport and Logistic Master Plan

*...continued on page 4*



# Stand for press freedom

The Communist Party of the Philippines and the entire revolutionary movement stand with the people in defense of press freedom and against the fascist US-Duterte regime's repression. The people know that suppression of press freedom is part of Rodrigo Duterte's plan in building his fascist dictatorship.

He aims to promote his own propaganda machine, led by his buffoon of a spokesperson, which does nothing but worship him, promote his anti-people programs and justify his fascist schemes.

Duterte first suppressed press freedom when he declared martial law in Mindanao. When he laid siege in Marawi, the AFP strictly controlled media coverage of ongoing battles to cover up widespread killings and looting of his soldiers.

Instead, his paid propagandists churned out "heroic" exploits of soldiers, Duterte's frequent trips and praise for Marawi troops and even travel shows by entertainers and politicians in the war zone, to put a positive spin to the war.



In targeting news sources critical of his regime, Duterte aims to ...continued on page 5

*"Mindanao martial law"... from page 3*

that will "modernize" the public transportation in Davao City, the Regional Development Project in South Central Mindanao, the Mindanao River Basin Flood Control Project, and Duterte's flagship project Mindanao Rails.

## "Global Factory"

The projects for building and expanding roads, airports, and sea-ports were a longtime plan of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As a part of the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), ADB pours funds in return for complete liberalization of the local economy to foreign capital. Under this plan, Mindanao was identified as having huge potential in supplying raw materials, in agro-processing, fishery products, petrochemical, forestry and wood processing, and tourism. This will transform the island into a "regional food basket" as part of the "global factory" neoliberal scheme.

Three big international financing agencies provide loans for big projects in Mindanao. The USAID, JICA, and ADB will share in funding

three sections of Mindanao Development Corridor. For its part, the World Bank will fund the Reconstruction and Development Program which is part of the Bangsamoro Development Plan. For the big-ticket projects alone, the Philippines will have to borrow up to \$213.2 billion. Loan payments will be shouldered by the people in terms of higher costs of services and long-term debt-servicing by the government.

Some of the companies of compradors and bureaucrats that will be awarded contracts are Tagum Agricultural Development Company (Tadeco) of the Floirendo, RDEX Food International Phils. Inc., Unifrutti, Sumifru, Dole, Del Monte, Dennis Uy's Udenna Corp. which has already invested \$200 million for rubber plantation, and Enrique Razon Jr.'s International Container Terminal Services, Inc.

## Vultures feast on Marawi

The regime opened Marawi City to foreign and local compradors after destroying the city and blocking the return of the residents. To secure the biggest kickbacks, the regime approved the submission of "unsolicited

proposals" or proposed projects and businesses from big companies according to their interests.

One of the unsolicited proposals is from Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, Japan's second largest financial institution, that will build an export-processing zone for food-processing in the city.

Proposals were also submitted by Manuel Pangilinan for the reconstruction of power and water infrastructures and the Amai Pakpak Medical Center. The Ayalas presented to build another hospital. PLDT/Smart, Aboitiz Group, Jollibee Foods Corp., Pepsi Cola Philippines, FF Cruz, Meralco, Coca Cola, World Vision, Cebuana Lhuiller, San Miguel Corp., LBC, and SM also submitted their proposals.

Aside from these, the regime received \$23 million from China and \$2 million from Japan for reconstruction and rehabilitation. The ADB had already given \$5.22 million. Still, US has the largest "aid" of P1.06 billion.

To attract more investors, the Board of Investments will exempt taxes from the total income of the companies from key infrastructure projects.

AB

"Mindanao martial law"... from page 3

silence the media in the entire country. Through this, he wishes to deny the medium to the voices of the harshest critics of his rule from progressive and democratic sectors to be heard.

Numerous sectors and institutions have already condemned the insanity of his wars of death and destruction. Human rights defenders and families of the victims of his anti-drug war, all-out war and martial law have all tirelessly exposed and denounced him. His regime's pro-foreign and anti-people schemes have all been met with protests.

Likewise, he wants to hide the growth of the revolutionary movement, especially its army, to make it appear that the AFP is achieving its delusional wish to defeat the NPA this year. At the same time, he wants

to hide his weak control over the AFP which is now riddled with infighting over funds for corruption. He also wants to deflect exposés of his children and most trusted aide's big cases of corruption and smuggling.

Silencing the media is an integral part of Duterte's plan for a fascist dictatorship. This is in line with killings, intimidation, corruption and constitutional change. Duterte even plans to permanently limit press freedom in the new constitution.

It is imperative to condemn and fight the regime's attack on press freedom—a basic civil right—under this framework. The people should bolster efforts to expose their real conditions. They should persevere, especially the progressive and alternative media, in rapidly disseminating news and information of widespread human rights violations,

bombings and militarization in the countryside and repression in the cities. They should not flinch from denouncing and holding the regime responsible for all its crimes and rottenness. They should expose the biggest corruption cases, especially that of his family, cronies, friends and closest compradors and landlords.

Like his idol Marcos, Duterte will be hated by the people for the unprecedented hardships his policies engender. He is mistaken if he thinks he can silence the media and the people and prevent the broadening of the movement against him. Instead, his measures will push more groups to come together, whatever the orientation and ideology, to fight his rule and overthrow him. Whatever differences among them will become secondary in the face of the relentless attacks on their rights and freedoms. **AB**

## Groups resist gag on press freedom

LAST JANUARY 11, the US-Duterte regime revoked the registration of online newspaper Rappler, an opponent of Duterte's paid propagandists and frequent publisher of news unfavorable to the regime. Even before this, Duterte has unleashed all-around attacks and threats on organizations and mass media corporations, as well as journalists censuring his leadership.

Last July 2017, the regime had suppressed the newspaper Philippine Daily Inquirer when one of Duterte's favorite cronies, Ramon Ang, bought the majority of controlling shares of the newspaper. For months, the Inquirer has been publishing reports on Duterte's hidden wealth, as well as his brutal "war against drugs." After attacking Rappler, he threatened to file plunder charges against Inquirer's former owner. On the other hand, Ang is in partnership with the government and other bourgeois compradors in managing CNN-Philippines, which is set to dismiss at least 60 journalists and media workers this year.

Following his control of the Inquirer, Congress refused the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the

Philippines' (CBCP) application to renew its franchise for another 25 years last October 2017. The said franchise covers 54 radio and television stations being run by the Catholic Church. Duterte likewise threatened to block ABS-CBN's franchise after its exploration expires in 2020. During one of his rants, he scolded the station for supposedly putting him in a bad light in news broadcasts regarding the war in Marawi. In exchange for a settlement, Duterte is blackmailing the station to air news favorable to his push for "federal-

ism."

It was also reported that Manny Pangilinan will shut down in March his online newspaper Interaksyon, a keen publisher of news against Duterte. Pangilinan, one of the regime's favored bourgeois compradors, is also Ang's business partner in Inquirer.

The National Telecommunications Commission likewise threatened closure of around 30 radio stations in Davao Region allegedly for violating communications and broadcasting regulations. The impending station closures was announced by the NTC Region 11 during a press forum organized by the AFP and PNP last January 17.

Even before the attacks on mass media corporations, members of the progressive media were already being targeted. Cases include



the illegal arrest of Northern Dispatch journalist Sherwin de Vera last December 2017. Likewise, Radyo ni Juan Network broadcast journalists Mario Maximo "Dodong" Solis and Kath Cortez received death threats after criticizing the Duterte family's corruption. The military likewise harassed and accused Manila Today's Ariel Jebulan as a terrorist while he was reporting on the AFP's siege of Marawi.

Under Duterte, attacks on mass media corporations are not limited to legal machinations by government agencies. Individual journalists are also targets of attacks. The Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility reported that under Duterte's rule, no less than six jour-

nalists were killed. Aside from this, ten cases of harassments (including online attacks) were recorded, as well as eight frustrated killings and three death threats, and three filings of libel charges and one arrest on libel.

According to Prof. Luis Teodoro of ALTERMIDYA, a national network of alternative media outfits, the cancellation of Rappler's registration poses a "serious danger to press freedom and freedom of expression, and was made amid such glaring indications of rising dictatorship." Teodoro likewise questioned the motive behind the cancellation based on supposed foreign ownership of Rappler, whereas the administration is pushing for 100%

foreign ownership of public utilities and mass media through charter change. According to him, ALTERMIDYA is always supportive of the constitutional ban on foreign ownership of media, but will oppose its use to silence the press. The professor said further that the cancellation can only be interpreted as part of a scheme to silence critical media and to instill fear among media practitioners committed to reporting the truth in behalf of transparency in the current regime, and to hold it to account.

Last January 19, up to 350 journalists, bloggers and media workers joined the #BlackFriday-ForPressFreedom held at the Boy Scout Circle in Quezon City. **AB**

## The railroading of Duterte's cha-cha

**D**espite strong opposition and criticism from the minority bloc in Congress, Duterte's super majority railroaded the passage of House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 last January 16. The said resolution allows Congress to convene the lower and upper house into a constituent assembly to discuss and prepare charter change or amendment to the 1987 Constitution.

According to Rep. Antonio Tinio of ACT Teachers Partylist, this Congress is a joke. During the session, the House leadership abruptly ended interpellations, the period of debate was disregarded and the presiding officer decided to call for a vote to be able to railroad the adoption of the resolution. There were still many representatives who wanted to interpellate when the process was stopped.

Recently, House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez expressed certainty to pass the new constitution on May 2018. The proposed Federal Constitution of PDP-Laban and Bicameral Resolution No. 8 intend to constitute a federal government, consolidate and extend Duterte's control and open the economy to foreign ownership.

Prof. Jose Ma. Sison, chief political consultant of the NDFP, said in a statement that Duterte's shift to federalism aims to concentrate

powers in his hands as a fascist dictator, to prolong his rule and serve his imperialist masters and fellow oligarchs and warlords through the transitional and regular provisions of a sham constitution.

Charter change is used as cover up for their scheme of suppressing groups opposed to Duterte's fascist reign. Moves include the removal of the position of the vice president and abolition of the Supreme Court's power to determine "grave abuse of discretion" in government actions and

policies. Duterte and all officials in power will be able to rule absolutely during the 10-year transition period.

According to Bayan Muna's recent statement, the new Constitution shall effectively allow Duterte to arbitrarily overhaul the entire judiciary and appoint new justices.

Officials of independent commissions such as the Commission on Elections, Commission on Audit and Civil Service Commission shall be forced to vacate their positions in a year and give the president power to appoint replacements.

This will also exempt the president, senators, congressmen, Supreme Court justices and heads of independent commissions from paying income taxes.

Senators immediately rejected Alvarez' HCR No. 9. According to



Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III, the Senate already agreed to form a separate constituent assembly. For some senators, con-ass is "dead" without the Senate, mainly because it is rushed and monopolized by the House of Representatives and PDP-Laban.

However, Supreme Court justices expressed different opinions on the process of revising the constitution and its contents.

While former Senate President Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr. supports federalism, he strongly opposes possible "no-el" scenario in 2019 and the attempt to extend the

term of Duterte's supermajority.

Former Supreme Court chief justices Hilario Davide Jr. and Reynato Puno also told congressmen not to rush cha-cha. At a joint Senate hearing on the proposed charter change, Puno said he is in favor of a constitutional convention (con-con) even though it would be costly for the government.

He also suggested a "hybrid con-con" that would consist of a 25-man team elected and non-elected individuals who will study and review the constitution. Puno also warned that if not scrutinized carefully, federalism may further

empower political dynasties in the country.

Bagong Alyansang Makabayan likened Duterte's cha-cha to previous attempts to push for constitutional amendments. Just as they strongly opposed charter change schemes of the Ramos, Estrada and Arroyo regimes, the group will also defy Duterte's cha-cha. Bayan also called upon the Filipino people, senators and congressmen to junk cha-cha and resist the return of a pro-imperialist fascist dictatorship. The group held a protest action in front of the House of Representatives last January 17. AB

## Duterte's TRAIN hits the people

At the start of the year, an additional burden of soaring prices of basic commodities and utilities was imposed on the people by Duterte and his puppets.

Under the newly-signed tax reform law or Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN), prices of powdered juice increased up to ₱10/liter, ₱7/liter for gasoline, ₱3/liter on diesel, ₱12 every 11 kg-tank of LPG and ₱50-₱100 for every metric ton of coal, causing energy rate hikes of almost ₱11/kwh.

For ordinary jeepney drivers who consume 30 liters of diesel everyday, their daily cost for oil will increase up to ₱100.

The surge in prices of petroleum products will also mean price hikes on food, agricultural products, medicines, fare and water and energy rates.

Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas already warned of a possible surge of rice prices from ₱58 to ₱60. Energy rates of MERALCO will also increase to ₱10.4272/kwh upon the implementation of TRAIN. This means ₱2,085 energy fee for a family who consumes an average of 200kwh per month. Transport groups also filed petitions for a fare hike up to ₱4.

Prices of goods and services will further increase in the next three

years, aside from the weekly increase of prices of petroleum products due to deregulation.

Despite all these, the Department of Finance (DOF) and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) kept finding excuses to defend TRAIN. According to DOF, effects of TRAIN on prices will be very minimal and its impact on inflation is still "manageable" for 2018. The DTI even insisted that consumers

should go to stores who sell below suggested retail prices. The DOF will also distribute P200 per month to 10 million poor families in the country through the Department of Social Welfare and Development supposedly to ease TRAIN's impact on the poor.

The Duterte government also boasted that 6.8 million middle to lower-middle income-earning families will be exempted from paying income taxes. In fact, rich and big corporations are the biggest gainers from the income tax reform. Based on IBON Foundation's computation, the richest 10% in the country who

### PRICE SURGE UNDER TRAIN LAW

At the start of the year, an additional burden of soaring prices of basic commodities and utilities was imposed on the people by Duterte and his puppets.



FARE	+P4
MEAT	+P3/kg
JUICE	+P7



67% or 15.2M families will have to endure price hikes of basic commodities and services.



earns an average of ₱104,170 every month will benefit tax exemptions of up to ₱90,793 annually. On the other hand, an average of ₱600-₱2,000 every year will be deducted from the salaries of 60% poor Filipinos. Even the regime's ₱200 subsidy every month will not solve the widespread unemployment and lack of livelihood in the country.

The Duterte government expects to collect more than ₱1.3 trillion from TRAIN to fund its grand infrastructure program which is mainly

concentrated in the National Capital Region, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog. Also, Duterte's projects are not infrastructures which millions of poor Filipinos need for their livelihoods and welfare, such as irrigation, milling factories, and post-harvest facilities, public schools, public hospitals, and mass housing. Instead, the Duterte administration's flagship projects are mostly big-ticket transportation infrastructure eyed by oligarchs—the Ayala, Cojuangco and Pangilinan and their

foreign business partners, such as roads, bridges, fly-overs, railways, seaports, and airports.

IBON also added that instead of taxing the poor, Duterte should go after billionaires and corporations not paying corporate taxes. Government can also implement progressive taxation by raising direct taxes on the richest such as personal income tax and corporate income tax, while reducing taxes on consumer products and repealing the value added tax. AB

## Militarization in the countryside worsens

**W**hile the repression of the US-Duterte regime aggravates in the metropolis, killings, militarization, and repression continue in the countryside.

**Killings.** Last January 20, James Flores, 33, resident of Purok Cadena, Barangay Mankilam, Tagum City, Davao del Norte, was killed by a suspected military agent. He was a member of Pederasyon sa tanang Asosasyon sa mga Mag-uuma ug Lumad sa Agusan ug Davao.

On January 15, the lifeless body of Aaron Notarte was found in a funeral home in Trento, Agusan del Sur. Soldiers from the 75th IB brought Notarte's body and claimed that he was an NPA killed in an encounter in Area 69, Barangay Imelda, Bunawan, Agusan del Sur. Notarte was a chainsaw operator. He was riding a motorcycle on the way home when he encountered operating troops of the 75th IB. Two bullets were found on his body, as well as marks of beating. Notarte's ₱10,000 was also missing.

**Militarization.** In Surigao del Sur, nine Lumad schools under TRIFPSS and ALCADDEV, along with 14 communities, were subjected to continuous military operations by the 75th IB. Last January 7, military operations started at 2 a.m. from Km. 6 to Km. 14 of Neptune, Diatagon, Lianga. Two trucks of military troops launched operations and set up a checkpoint in the area. The

following day, military troops were seen in Sitio Han-ayan, Diatagon and nearby Sitio Magkahunao, Buhisan, San Agustin. According to the residents, explosions and gunshots were heard near Sitio Magkahunao from January 8-13. Drones were also sighted at midnight of January 16 and afternoon of January 13. The said military operations will give way to the entry of carbon mining in Andap Valley, the ancestral land of the Manobos.

**Davao del Norte.** Lumads from Kapalong continue to suffer harassment. According to Datu Mentroso Malibayo, chairperson of the Lumad organization Kadrayawan, soldiers and Alamara paramilitaries are blocking the entry of food supply to remote communities since December 23.

The food blockade affected 200 Lumad families from sitios Muling, Mangkay, Lunloluno, Kamumunuan, Bugton Lubi, and Kapatagan in Barangay Gupitan, Kapalong. Alamara members prevent the residents from entering Sitio Patil which serves as access to other communities.

**Quezon.** Last January 15, residents of Barangay Jongo, Lopez and nearby areas grew restive due to military operations by the 85th IB. The fact finding mission of KARAP-

ATAN-ST investigating the militarization last January 17 was harassed by the soldiers.

**Batangas.** The 730th Combat Group of the Philippine Air Force and the PNP Public Safety Company launched military operations last January 13 in Sitio Sales, Barangay Poooc in Balayan, and in barangays Kalantas and Coral ni Lopez in Calaca, alarming the residents in the area.

**Harassment and illegal arrests.** Last January 9, at around 3 a.m., joint forces from the 15th IB, 39th IB and Magpet PNP arrested farmer-activists Jarold Adiaton, 29, and Jane Solis, 26, residents of Barangay Balite, Magpet, North Cotabato, and members of Balite Farmers Association (BFA). On the same day and area, Datu Maylan Andas, 59, member of Manobo Aromanen Pasakkaday Association (MAPA) and a resident of Sitio Tungao, Barangay Tempuran was illegally arrested while feeding his chickens. BFA is a local organization of farmers based in Magpet and under Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas-North Cotabato while MAPA is a municipal-wide organization of Lumads and under Apo Sandawa Lumadnung Panaghiusa sa Cotabato (ASLPC).

Last January 8, the house of couple Ronel, 29, and Jingky Asay, 33, were fired upon by suspected



military agents at 8:00 p.m. in Barangay Bangayan, Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte. The Asays are members of Kayapan-Amihan, a Mamanwa organization in the barangay. The 29th IB is active in military operations in the area and are encamped 2 kilometers away from Asay's house. Ronel was previously harassed because of his links to Kayapan-Amihan.

In Negros, suspected military agents continue to harass the family of Elisa Badayos, chairperson of Karapatan-Central Visayas, who was killed last November 2017. On January 10, at 6 a.m., while Badayos' niece Cheska Condes was boarding a taxi, a piece of paper was given to her by a man containing a threat to her life if she continues joining rallies.

Last January 16, farmers Filjun Celeste Arpajo, 30, and Venjie Catampo, 28, residents of Purok Mahayahay, Barangay Marayag, Lupon, Davao Oriental, were forcibly taken by suspected soldiers. According to the residents, the two were brought and forced to guide the soldiers in their operations in the area. Both are still under the military's custody. **AB**

## Farms for the people's war

**F**ood blockades imposed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines in militarized areas is a feature of the total war currently being launched by the US-Duterte regime. This method, long-instilled to the AFP by US troops, aims to cut off food supply to communities suspected of supporting units of the New People's Army.

In some guerrilla fronts in Mindanao, the masses have effectively overcome the soldiers' deprivation of food to their communities. Aside from providing food for each family, farms are now able to subsidize additional necessities of the communities. In fact, during a major military operation by the enemy which lasted out for almost a year, the masses had more than enough food despite the imposed food blockade. In other areas where residents were forcibly evacuated, the people returned to their communities to crops available for harvest.

This is a result of a lengthy process spearheaded by Party committees, the people's army and the communities during the early years of the current decade. The campaign started with the leading committees' resolve that production must be directed to sustaining the people's war.

In order to achieve this, one of the targets is to establish a self-sustaining economy cultivated in by all communities and barrios where the people's army operates.

According to Ka Che, a member of one of the committees undertaking the campaign, education is the initial stage. "The people's political consciousness must first be raised

in order for them to grasp the relevance of participating in the campaign to develop the economy," she said.

Starting the campaign was not easy. "When we arrived in the area, residents were not yet organized into communities. Households were few and far between, and of course, so were their farms." This is a result of the people growing accustomed to relocating their farms after harvest time. Likewise, because of the AFP's fierce military operations, families are pushed to flee and look for safer locations. The comrades had to go house-to-house, including

the remote ones, and convince each family to gather and build the community.

"When the communities were built, we found out that many families were living in the area. After organizing them and holding educational meetings, committees concerned with the campaign's implementation were subsequently formed, alongside other barrio revolutionary committees," added Ka Che. Meanwhile, the comrades continue to reach out to other families and encourage them to join the communities.

Another challenge is the masses' miserable condition that greeted the comrades. The previous crops could not even sustain the families' food necessities. "Before, *nami* (a wild root crop) is the peo-



ple's staple food," Ka Che recalls. "Basic household needs are also insufficient, that is why at the start, the NPA units put aside a portion of their subsistence budgets in order to contribute to purchasing farm tools, clothes and even salt for the residents."

Painstaking accounting was the comrades' next step. With the help of the committees, a consultation with each family was conducted wherein household consumption was calculated in relation to the size of farms and volume of crops yielded for every planting season. "How large is the family? How much food is spent by each member every month? How much added land is needed to be tilled to provide for the family? These are the issues discussed during the consultations," Ka Che said. Throughout the whole campaign, the people's army participates in planning, obtaining saplings, and working in the farms.

Types of crops to be grown were also agreed upon: short-term crops and long-term ones. "After three months, maize and sweet potato may already be harvested. In addition to these, the households also set an increase in growing cassava, banana, gabi and vegetables. Growing upland rice is also regular," shared Ka Che. Aside from these, which are considered as "crops for consumption," "crops for finance" are likewise grown such as abaca and coffee, from where the families will source money to buy household necessities such as soap, salt and others.

Because the communities were already built, each of the families' farms are just nearby. Gathering the houses has indeed helped in the fast development of production. Sharing seedlings and saplings among families is no longer difficult, as well as with other communities, which are only one to three hours apart by trekking. *Hunglos* is now also being practiced by the

communities. Each group is made up of five families and collectively work on their groupmates' farms in rotation, similar to the masses' *bayanihan* in different parts of the country.

Communities are likewise breaking away from the old practice of pausing planting seasons. Instead, added Ka Che, planting is no longer limited to once per year. "It is continuous. After harvest, they immediately clear the farms in order to start off with the next crop." Part of the committees' tasks is the regular assessment of the campaign's progress.

When the communities' production became sufficient to sustain their food necessities and more, the comrades started off with distributing animals such as fowls, goats and pigs. These will supplement the families' other needs such as their children's schooling, and household consumables. When the animals reproduce, the young are distributed to other families and communities.

Meanwhile, Ka Menang, who joins in implementing the campaign in another area, said that it is now almost a year since they started cultivating a ricefield to augment existing production. Ka Menang recalls with amusement their sacrifices when they kicked off with the ricefield project. "Sourcing water for irrigation is not a problem, she said. "But because of scarcity in

farm implements, more labor force is needed to flatten the soil, construct dikes, and others." When communities do not yet have carabaos, three people had to pull the plow in order to till the farm. "The comrades and the communities really strived to set up ricefields because these farms yield twice as the upland rice farms do," clarifies Ka Menang.

Because the development of the communities' production is within the context of the people's war, attacks of the AFP on their farms are also taken into account. Operating troops burn huts where seedlings and harvested crops are kept, leading the farmers to build these in secret areas within the communities. Due to the volume of rootcrops planted, soldiers fail to uproot and destroy all crops. "This is why we consider sweet potato and gabi as not only typhoon-resilient crops, but soldier-resistant as well," Ka Menang said.

Comrades are optimistic that production in the communities will further advance. Currently, communal farms are being initiated, again as additional support for food. In these, five families will allocate one hectare for their communal farming. These will further strengthen the unity of residents in the area, from formerly scattered households, towards being organized communities farming amidst the intensifying people's war. **AB**

### **Indian Red fighters launch punitive actions**

IN INDIA, in West Singhbhum District, Jharkhand, Red fighters of the Communist Party of India-Maoist launched punitive actions against KD Construction last January 8. They set ablaze four tractors and another heavy equipment being used in the canal project.

Companies constructing roads in Lanjigarh, Kalahandi District were also raided last January 9. Four tractors and a cement mixer were burned by the Red fighters.

The punitive actions were launched to fight anti-people and anti-environment projects such as the PMGSY (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana) which will displace families, destroy the environment and people's livelihood of many Indians.

# Protests against TRAIN and cha-cha

National-democratic organizations continue to hold protests in different parts of the country against charter change, TRAIN, press repression, widespread killings, and other human rights violations.

**Anti-TRAIN and cha-cha.** Bayan-Metro Manila, Gabriela, KMU, and Kadamay held a "payday protest" and "tax revolt" against the regime's new tax law or Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN). The protest was held in Trabajo Market in Manila last January 15. The groups went around the markets to compare the current prices of commodities from last year and determine what can be bought with ₱70, the average food expenditure for a family in the National Capital Region. Similar protests were held in Muñoz, Quezon City, Bagong Silang, and Sta. Quiteria Church, Caloocan, and Plaza Salamanca in Manila.

Last January 15, fisherfolks and farmers under Pamalakaya and KMP marched to Congress to press for the repeal of TRAIN which will result in additional expenses in the agriculture sector.

In other parts of the country, students from the University of the Philippines-Miagao in Panay held a protest last January 17 to condemn TRAIN and press freedom repression, and Duterte's cha-cha.

On January 18, Kadamay and KMU led the condemnation of TRAIN in Davao City. According to Francis Ruba, Kadamay spokesperson, the average income of 15 million workers in the region who earn ₱250 per day will go down because of the price hikes in basic goods.

Joining the celebration of Ati-atihan in Aklan, Bayan-Aklan launched Sadsad as a form of commemoration of Sto. Niño festival and as a protest against TRAIN and cha-cha. According to Kim-Sin F. Tugna, Bayan-Aklan officer-in-charge, the Ati-atihan celebration should not be unconnected to the tyrannical state of the country.

Bayan-Southern Tagalog also held a protest against TRAIN in Barangay Pulo, Cabuyao, Laguna, last January 16. According to the group, 60% or 13.7 million families in the region will descend to poverty because of the price hikes of basic commodities.

In Panay on January 10, Bayan-Panay joined the resistance to TRAIN. According to the group, the people should unite and join the mobilizations to protest the new and unacceptable burden to the people. SCRAP TRAIN Network-Panay was formed, led by Elmer Forro.

**Teachers' Protest.** Alliance of Concerned Teachers-NCR picketed last January 12 in front of the Department of Budget and Management office in Manila to push for their salary increase.

On January 6, Duterte announced that he will increase public teachers' salaries after the 29%-100% pay hike of soldiers and police. But Duterte's promise was opposed by the secretary of the Department of Budget and Management, Benjamin Diokno. According to him, increase in teachers' salaries would cost ₱500-trillion and this is not the priority. Diokno added that Duterte's infrastructure program Build, Build, Build is more important. In response to this, teachers declared Diokno as "Teachers' Enemy No. 1."

**Workers' actions.** Representatives from ACME Hardware, Far East Marketing, Leyte Home Depot, and Leyte Lumber Yard, and its workers led by Katiguban han mga Trabahador ngan Hornal ha mga Bodega han Tacloban (Katrabaho-KMU) failed to reach an agreement in a dialogue conducted last January 19. According to Napoleon Escalona, Katrabaho-KMU spokesperson, "this

only shows that these big businesses are a bane to workers. We only want ₱0.50 increase which is not even enough because of the ever-increasing costs of basic commodities especially with Duterte's TRAIN." The management and workers will again meet on January 24.

Before the dialogue, 55 workers from the warehouses trooped to the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) last January 12 to drumbeat their demand of additional ₱0.50 per cement sack they carry. They also called for SSS and PhilHealth benefits.

Last January 11, the Samahan ng Manggagawa sa Harbour Centre (SMHC) trooped to the DOLE office in Intramuros, Manila to protest the incorrect 13th month pay they received. "The Christmas and New Year of contractual workers were not happy because of what the agency did to us. Where can you find a 13th month pay of only ₱1,000 to ₱4,000," said SMHC president Eldefonso Bello. According to the workers' estimate, their 13th month pay should be from ₱6,000 to ₱10,000. Wilma Indimni, a contractual worker, received a mere ₱481.72, which is only equivalent to her daily wage.

On January 3, members of Ate-neo Employees and Workers Union (AEWU) launched a protest in Ate-neo de Manila University in Quezon City following a disagreement in the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between them and the Ateneo administration. Their series of protests is for the assertion of salary increase. The AEWU filed a Notice of Strike last December 21.

**Defending schools.** Save Our Schools (SOS) Network held a protest last January 10 in front of Kapitan Tomas Monteverde Sr. Elementary School in Davao City in time for the visit of Secretary Leonor Briones of Department of Education. Briones cancelled her

visit instead.

According to Rius Valle, SOS Network spokesperson, they held the protest to push for the release of permits of Lumad schools. He added that a total of 14 permits are still pending for two to four years despite having complied with the department's requirements.

**Anti-fascism.** Farmers picketed in front of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) headquarters last January 19 to condemn the killing of more than 100 peasants since Duterte held power. "What is the use of high survey ratings of the president if he continues to exploit the peasants and Lumad," asked Antonio Flores, chairperson of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

On January 10, Karapatan, Hustisya, and Desaparecidos held a rally in front of the Department of Interior and Local Government to condemn the appointment of former AFP Chief General Eduardo Año as the agency's secretary. According to the group, he will be the chief enforcer of the brutal anti-drugs campaign, arrests and crackdown of activists under the Duterte regime.

**Anti-mining.** On January 11, environmental group Panalipdan-Southern Mindanao (PSM) held a protest against the planned sale of gold and mineral resources of Mt. Diwalwal by the Philippine Mining Development

Corporation (PMDC) to an Australian company. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority agreed with PMDC to declare the 8,100-hectare Diwalwal Mineral Reservation as an area for the mining industry.

"If the PMDC plan pushes through, communities of small-scale miners will be dislocated," according to PSM spokesperson Kim Gargar. PMDC is a government-owned corporation.

**For welfare.** On January 9, Bayan-Panay with Panay Consumers' Alliance (PCA) picketed in front of Iloilo City Hall to fight its plan on the privatization of Metro Iloilo Water District or MIWD.

"Water is a basic right. It is the government's obligation to ensure the fast delivery of cheap and clean water to the people," said PCA spokesperson Lucy Francisco in a statement. The MIWD infrastructure project worth ₱12.35 billion was awarded to Metro Pacific Investments Corp (MPIC). MPIC is owned by Manuel V. Pangilinan.

"This is privatization: the supply, transmission, distribution, and management of MIWD will be given to the private company who will gain more in exchange for the people's grave suffering. Within 10 years, the price of water from Maynilad increased to 357.6% while Manila Water at 414.4%," Francisco added. AB

## Resurgence of protests in Greece

UP TO 9,000 individuals joined protests in Greece after their parliament proposed an amendment to a law providing protection to their right to strike and to negotiate.

According to the biggest federation of unions in the country, the proposed bill which was demanded by the country's creditors, deals a killing blow to workers, pensioners and the unemployed.

Part of the proposed amendment sets a higher requirement for strike votes. The proposed bill also requires a 50% strike vote among union members from previously required 1/3 vote.

According to the unions, this will affect 99% of future strikes. This eliminates the workers' only defense, much more after putting the collective bargaining to a halt.

Fifty general strikes have been held since the Greek economic crisis in 2010.