

## 15 AFP and PNP casualties in Bicol, ST

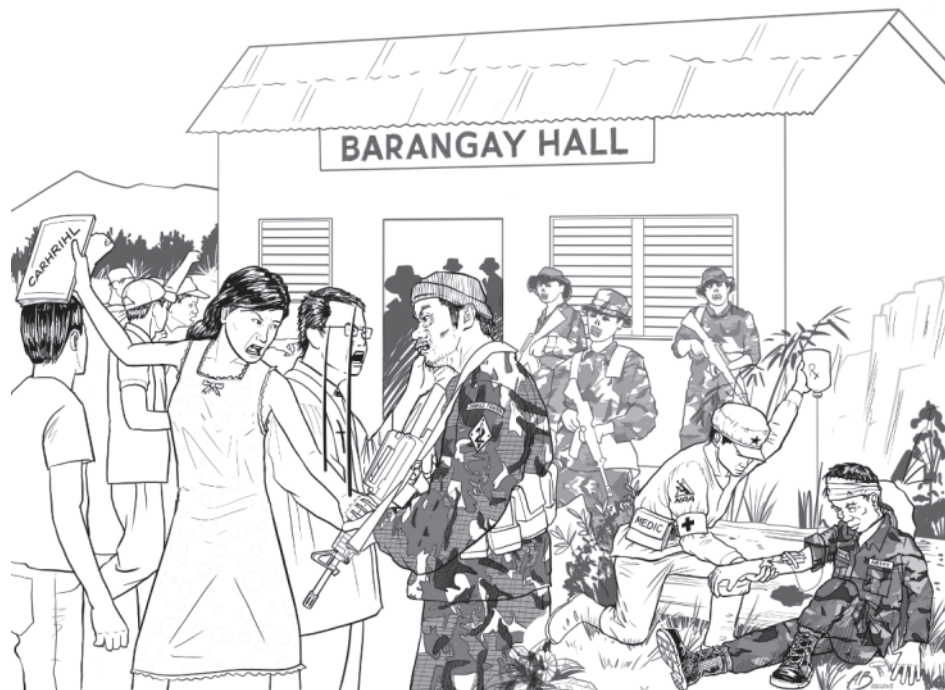
ELEVEN SOLDIERS AND police personnel were killed and wounded from successful harassment and sniping operations by the New People's Army (NPA) in different provinces of Bicol and Southern Tagalog during the past few weeks.

In Batangas, the NPA-Batangas (Eduardo Dagli Command or EDC) successfully harassed the 59th IB camp in Barangay Balsa, San Juan, Batangas last March 14 at 3:00 a.m. Eight were killed while more were wounded and transported from the barrio aboard private vehicles.

Since the military camp was constructed in Barangay Balsa last August 2017, the said troopers have been serving as security forces for the planned geothermal project and large-scale privatization of San Juan's coastline. Prior to this, CAGU elements and officers of the 730th Combat Group of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) were involved in robberies and in a frustrated rape case in the villages.

In west Batangas, successive harassment operations were also launched against the CAGU detachment in Barangay Aga, Nasugbu on March 3, and a sniping operation against PAF troopers conducting operations in Barangay Patugo, Balayan last March 10. Two soldiers

...continued on page 3



### EDITORIAL

## Defend human rights against state terrorism

**T**he Communist Party of the Philippines joins the Filipino people, local and international human rights organizations and peace advocates, in marking the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).

The Party reaffirms its commitment to uphold the provisions of the CARHRIHL and to undertake its responsibilities specified therein. To mark the 20th anniversary of the agreement, all units of the NPA will take refresher courses and make use of the opportunity to review their practice.

Since 1998, study of the CARHRIHL has been part of the basic curriculum of the education program of Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA), as well as all revolutionary mass organizations. To the NPA, the CARHRIHL is considered an elaboration of the more

fundamental Three Main Rules of Discipline and Eight Points of Attention which define the revolutionary moral standards for all Red fighters.

It is timely to celebrate the CARHRIHL in the face of the US-Duterte regime's attempts to slander and repress the revolutionary movement and its supporters by declaring the CPP and the NPA as terrorists. The CPP and the NPA's strict adherence to the CARHRIHL, as well as international rules of war and important protocols, prove that the revolutionary forces are far from being terrorists.

This is in contrast to the practices of the US-Duterte regime, which even boasts of its violations of basic human rights and international rules of war in its campaigns of suppression. Rodrigo Duterte has repeatedly proven, by word and deed, that his regime is the number one terrorist in the country.

The CARHRIHL gives the Filipino people an additional layer of legal protection as they advance their democratic causes. The CARHRIHL also provides them with further reference to defend and advance their rights in the socio-economic, political and cultural spheres.

Promoting the CARHRIHL has become doubly significant as President Duterte of the GRP has declared open contempt for human rights. In November 2017, Duterte proclaimed the termination of peace negotiations with the NDFP and has flouted all previous agreements, including the CARHRIHL.



As commander-in-chief, he has ordered his troops to completely disregard human rights and ignore summons or pleadings of any local or international human rights officer. He has expressed his disdain for human rights and consider these as impediments to progress. He brazenly advocates dictatorship and military rule. He has imposed martial law in Mindanao, completely setting aside human rights.

He imposed martial law in Mindanao and pulverized Marawi City to give way to US commercial and military interest and his bourgeois comprador cohorts.

He ordered the AFP to use all its air assets to "flatten the hills" and "bomb the Lumad schools." Rural communities are threatened with the image of becoming mini-Marawis. He has called on peasants and minority peoples to leave their homes to make way for plantations, mines and military reservations. He incites brutality and cruelty by ordering his men to "shoot the vagina" of women fighters of the NPA and encouraging soldiers to "bring the heads of NPA members in iced buckets" to earn their P25,000 reward.

The Oplan Kapayapaan war of suppression, the war against the Moros and the "war on drugs" are utterly barbaric. More than half a million people have been uprooted from their homes, surpassing all post-Marcos regimes. State forces have perpetrated the extrajudicial killing of close to a hundred peasant leaders, more than 20 unionists and scores of other social activists.

This list of fascist crimes grows longer on a daily basis as AFP troops occupy rural civilian communities in the name of "peace" with the aim of intimidating and silencing the resistance of peasants and minority peoples.


In the face of all brutalities being committed by the AFP under the US-Duterte regime, there is utmost urgency to demand respect for human rights and observance of international humanitarian law. The Filipino people demand justice for all the fascist crimes perpetrated by the AFP over the years.

Towards this end, the Filipino people can use the CARHRIHL to bolster their position and demands. Amid the bloody fascism and murderous frenzy of the US-Duterte regime, they must demand the GRP to comply with the CARHRIHL and hold Duterte and all of his officials responsible for grave violations of human rights as stipulated in the agreement. AB

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# Oplan Kapayapaan's violation of the CARHRIHL

The CARHRIHL is a historic agreement between the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. It was forged in the peace negotiations which started in 1992. It is aptly the first agreement because it establishes the guidelines in the civil war or armed conflict up until the socio-economic and political roots are resolved in succeeding debates, negotiations and agreements.

However, since the former US-Estrada regime signed the agreement, it has never been enforced or even respected. Succeeding regimes trashed the CARHRIHL in their campaigns of suppression, from the US-Arroyo's brutal Oplan Bantay Laya, up to the US-Aquino regime's Oplan Bayanihan.

Since Duterte became president, he has committed numerous crimes against the people, the most heinous of which is the siege of Marawi City. He is reviled and hated by the Moro people. Up to the present, hundreds of thousands of victims remain in evacuation centers. They yearn to return to their destroyed homes but it is clear that big compradors will beat them in occupying their own land. The regime has no intention of heeding their demand for justice. The victims themselves are mobilizing to make the regime accountable.

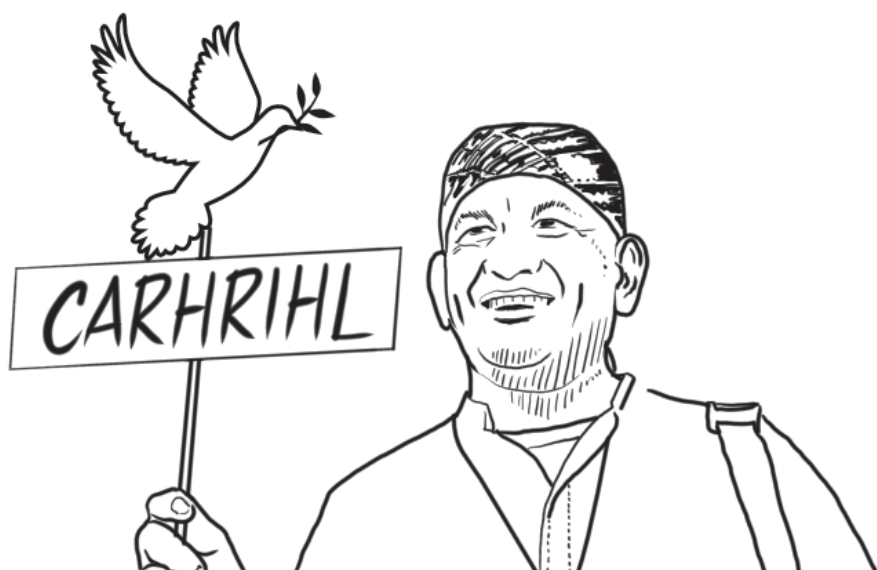
The regime also violated the

indigenous and Moro people's right to self-determination. Those opposed to destructive mining and plantations are killed. Lumad homes and schools are torched. Indigenous peoples accused of being NPA members are coerced to surrender. State armed forces occupy and sow terror in civilian communities.

Under Oplan Kapayapaan, the AFP-PNP-CAFGU and the regime's death squads are on a killing spree, targeting activists and members of national democratic mass organizations. Human rights workers are also targeted for assassinations. The regime also attacks the right to free speech in the attempt to bury exposés of its corruption.

The following are some of the important provisions in the agreement which the regime outrightly violate:

- The right to life, especially against summary executions (salvagings), involuntary disappear-



"15 AFP..." continued from page 1

were killed and a number were wounded from these consecutive military actions.

**Camarines Sur.** Two consecutive sniping operations were successfully launched by the NPA-West Camarines (Norben Gruta Command or NGC) this March.

Paramilitary Jaime San Juan was killed by an NGC sniper from a distance of 200 meters. San Juan is an active member of the 22nd IB-CAA (CAFGU Active Auxillary). The operation occurred on March 10 at 10:10 a.m. in Barangay Mabini, Del Gallego.

Meanwhile, 22nd IB-CAA elements Christian dela Peña and Derick Ramos were wounded in another sniping operation by the NGC on March 12, at 7:35 a.m. targeting the detachment in Barangay Casay, Lupi.

**Mindoro.** The NPA-Mindoro (Lucio de Guzman Command or LdGC) attacked the CAFGU detachment in Barangay Morente, Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro on Women's Day.

According to the LdGC, this operation serves as punishment to those involved in anti-social activities against poor women and children in Mangyan communities targeted by AFP military operations.

**Sorsogon.** Six harassment operations were launched by the NPA-Sorsogon (Celso Minguez Command) starting from February 27 against elements of the PNP RPSB, 22nd IB-CAFGU and 31st IB. The latest was the harassment operation against the 22nd IB-CAFGU detachment in Barangay Banwang Daan, Matnog at 11 a.m. wherein two were wounded on the side of the enemy.

ances, massacres and indiscriminate bombardments of communities, and the right not to be subjected to campaigns of incitement to violence against one's person

- The right to liberty, particularly against unwarranted and unjustified arrest and detention and to effectively avail of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus

- The right not to be subjected to physical or mental torture, solitary confinement, rape and sexual abuse, and other inhuman, cruel or degrading treatment, detention and punishment

- The right to substantive and procedural due process, to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, and against self-incrimination

- The right to equal protection of the law and against any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, belief, age, physical condition or civil status and against any incitement to such discrimination

- The right to free speech, press, association and assembly, and to seek redress of grievances

- The right not to be subjected to forced evacuations, food and other forms of economic blockades and indiscriminate bombings, shellings, strafing, gunfire and the use of landmines

- The existing rights of the minority communities in the Philippines to autonomy, to their ancestral lands and the natural resources in these lands, to engage in and benefit from affirmative action, to their participation and representation in the economic, political and social life and institutions, and to cultural and all round development AB

## Deceit and threats for dislocation and fake surrenders

This March, the AFP boasted that more than 4,000 Red Fighters have surrendered since Rodrigo Duterte came into power. The majority of these are supposed members of "underground mass organizations" who want to avail of the state's programs. The AFP used widespread suppression, deception and intimidation to force the surrenderees to subject themselves to the Comprehensive Local Integration Program, its fake surrender program. They are compelled to participate in meetings and seminars, and join in fake mass organizations which are copied from revolutionary associations in the countryside.

In Agusan del Sur, 16 members of the "Red Bagani Wild Dogs, a paramilitary group involved in heinous crimes against the people, are on the list. It included Calpito Egua, the leader of the group which killed Emerito Samarca, Alcadev executive director, and two other Lumad leaders in Lianga, Surigao del Sur on September 2015. Also on the list are three more members of his family, two Tejeros and two Bocalesees who all have arrest warrants for the murder of the three leaders. By including them in the list of surrenderees, the AFP effectively cleared their records and junked the cases filed against them.

In different parts of the country, AFP units gather residents in supposed revolutionary bases. They are made to sign blank sheets of paper and have their pictures taken as "surrenderees." The latest case involved a teacher and two members of the Misfi Academy in Barangay Salvacion, Trento in Agusan del Sur on March 12. According to their statement, soldiers from the 25th IB called them, together with 70 other civilians, to the Trento municipal hall. There, they were made to sign a blank sheet of paper supposedly for an

attendance check. The soldiers also coerced them to speak on video that they "voluntarily surrendered, thanks to the 25th IB." When they refused, they were threatened with detention.

There are also areas where AFP elements pose as Red fighters to deceive the residents and trap them into admitting that they have relatives or acquaintances in the NPA. In Surigao del Norte, there have been reports of the AFP using doppelgangers of ex-NPA commanders and ex-members of the people's militia to encourage civilians to surrender. In Northern Samar, a peasant leader was threatened with liquidation in the same manner as the drug killings, when she refused to pretend to be a surrenderee. In Masbate, villagefolks are forced to attend assemblies for fear of retaliation from the military. (*Read the details on page 10.*)

Cases of intimidation and deception of civilians for the surrender program are numerous and persistent. The AFP and Malacañang can't hide this fact behind all their shows and statements. The people are aware that this is part of the regime's all-out war against them and the revolutionary movement. AB

## Advocates commemorate CARHRIHL's 20th year

Peace advocates commemorated last March 16 the 20th year since the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) and called on the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines to uphold the agreement and act on the 7,000 complaints of human rights and international humanitarian law violations.

Since the establishment of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) on June 2004 until March 14, 2018, almost 4,886 complaints have been filed against the GRP while 2,012 have been against the NDFP.

In a forum launched at St. Scholastica's College, Manila, various groups called on Rodrigo Duterte to focus on the adherence to the principles of human rights and international humanitarian law. At this time, Duterte's administration appears to be more concerned about pulling out of the International Criminal Court and declaring more than 600 persons as terrorists under the Human Security Act.

The CARHRIHL is a landmark agreement which seals the first of

the four substantive agenda laid out by the two Parties: human rights and international humanitarian law; socioeconomic reforms; political and constitutional reforms; and end of hostilities and disposition of forces. It has led to accelerated negotiations on the remaining items, in consecutive order, albeit haltingly and with great difficulty.

The head of the NDFP peace panel, Fidel Agcaoili, sent a message to the commemoration activity while no GRP representative showed up.

Agcaoili highlighted, among many violations of CARHRIHL by the GRP, its petition to proscribe the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army as terrorist organizations. He also

slammed continuing detention and illegal arrests of NDFP consultants based on fabricated charges.

Agcaoili welcomed the call for the full implementation of CARHRIHL and the resumption of peace negotiations.

In solidarity with the event, students from Kabataan Partylist led the Black Friday protest held in front of Ateneo de Manila, Katipunan Ave., Quezon City.

Organizations and human rights advocates all over the country joined the rally condemning Duterte's fascist rule and his looming dictatorship. Wearing black shirts, the group marched from Ateneo to UP Diliman in Quezon City.

In solidarity, students from University of the East also held a candle lighting protest. A thousand candles were lit by students in memory of those who were killed by Duterte's all-out-war.

A similar program was also organized by students in UP Baguio. AB

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## Malicious and slanderous terror listing

In the petition filed by the Department of Justice (DOJ) with the Manila Regional Trial Court last February 22, around 650 individuals were accused of being members of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army. The list forms part of the DOJ's appeal to declare the CPP and the NPA as "terrorist organizations" following Rodrigo Duterte's earlier declaration.

The list is spiteful and defamatory. Not an ounce of basis was laid in accusing hundreds of individuals. Many of those identified are leaders and members of progressive organizations active in fighting Duterte's tyrannical rule. Also included are consultants of the National Democratic Front of Philippines for the peace process, indigenous community leaders along with elderly Lumad leaders,

human rights advocates and women leaders. The list also names more than 180 aliases to stand in for all those who will be accused in the future.

Aside from these, a number of individuals who are already dead were counted in the list, along with desaparecidos from past regimes. More than ten political prisoners were also listed. Also, names of some individuals were duplicated,

and seven members of paramilitaries (whose names were also listed in a list of NPA "surrenderees"), were even included.

The DOJ petition was besieged with criticisms within and outside the country. According to Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, this is a clear attack and a vengeful act by the Duterte administration against critics of his anti-people policies. Former Bayan Muna representative Satur Ocampo, whose name also appears on the list, declared the DOJ's petition as absurd, arbitrary, malicious, and dangerous. Ocampo said that the petition exposed the listed individual to police and mil-

itary surveillance, harassment and other forms of threat.

Karapatan's Cristina Palabay added that the list publicly legitimizes and makes normalizes government in suppressing dissent and decimating those it regards as enemies.

Meanwhile, the United Nations (UN) came to the defense of Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, currently a UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and former Secretary General of the Cordillera People's Alliance. Tauli-Corpuz is one of those being accused by the DOJ. UN High Commissioner For Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein also said that Duterte "needs to submit himself to some sort of psychiatric examination...".

Bayan-USA as well as Aliansi Gerakan Reforma Agraria (Alliance of Agrarian Reform Movements) of Indonesia, also joined in denouncing the DOJ's list, while US-based Human Rights Watch said that the list is a virtual "hit list."

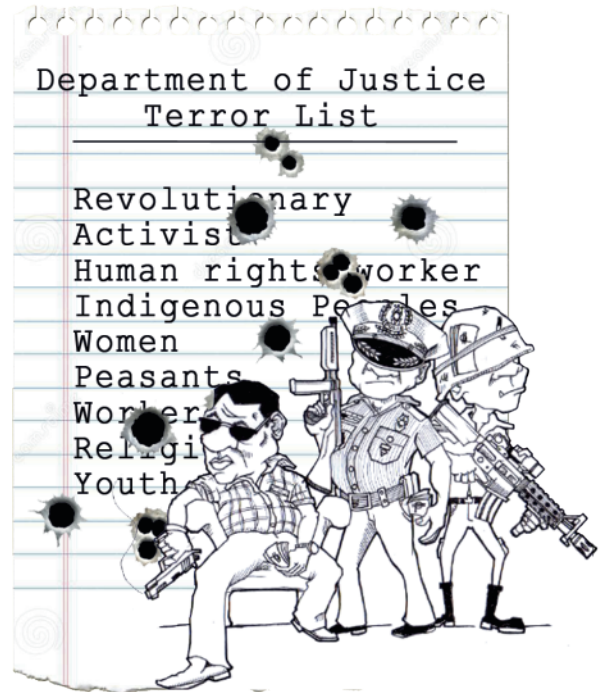
In a statement, CPP founding

chairperson Prof. Jose Maria Sison said that Duterte is engaged in a wild anti-communist witchhunt under the guise of "anti-terrorism" in order to silence all critics and opposition to his cruel and corrupt regime, and complete his fascist dictatorship. "Duterte is truly the No. 1 terrorist in the Philippines," he said.

In *Ang Bayan's* special issue last March 11, the CPP firmly said that Duterte has no moral or political right to accuse the Party and the NPA of terrorism. The CPP maintains that the petition does not contain an iota of proof that the revolutionary acts of the NPA are acts of terrorism. There is a vast ocean of difference between a people waging an armed revolution and unleashing terrorist violence against the people.

Instead, the CPP points to Duterte's "anti-drug war," as well as his

"all-out war" and martial law in Mindanao are the ones causing "widespread fear and panic among the people." Because of his reign of terror and tyranny, more than half a million people were forced to leave their homes to pave the way for military reservations, plantations and mining operations. AB



### Duterte's crimes against humanity

SINCE DUTERTE CAME into power, his armed security forces have been relentless in violating international humanitarian law and rules of war. Among the most notorious of his crimes currently filed for investigation by the International Criminal Court is the murder of more than 13,000 civilians in his "anti-drug war."

Also prominent is his nonstop and genocidal bombing of Marawi City which resulted in the destruction of properties, deaths of thousands of civilians and the disappearance of many more. This is apart from the individual cases of assassination, bombardment and dislocation of civilians under his "total war" against the people's resistance. Included in his most distinct crimes are the following:

- The nine-day torture and frustrated murder through scorching of two activists on December 6, 2017 in Maco, Compostela Valley by elements of the 71st IB under the command of Lt. Col. Esteyven Ducusin
- The massacre of eight Lumad residents of Lake Sebu, South Cotabato on December 3, 2017 by elements

of the 33rd IB under the command of Lt. Col. Harold Cabunoc, and the 27th IB under the command of Lt. Col. Benjamin Leander

- The raid and shelling of an NPA mass clinic on December 16, 2017 in Catubig, Northern Samar by the 20th IB led by Lt. Col. George Domingo
- The four and a half hours of aerial bombardment and shelling of barangays in President Roxas, North Cotabato and Damulog, Bukidnon on May 25, 2017 combined with operations of the 39th and 72nd IB.
- The aerial bombardment of barangays outside Batangas City on September 24, 2017 by the 730th Combat Group of the Philippine Air Force and by the 202nd IBde
- The murder of 19-year old Lumad student Obillo Bay-ao by CAFGU elements on September 5, 2017 in Talaingod, Davao del Norte
- The murder of Makinit Gayuran, a pregnant Lumad, and the wounding of five minors on June 31, 2017 resulting from the indiscriminate firing by the 8th IB's paramilitary led by Butsoy Salusad.

# AFP to use US-bought drones against the people

Last March 13, Department of National Defense Sec. Delfin Lorenzana accepted from the US imperialists six Insitu ScanEagle 2 unmanned aerial systems (AUS) which Duterte have been boasting about since last year.

The Philippines took a loan under the US Foreign Military Financing (FMF) worth \$13.46 million to finance the acquisition. The FMF is a program where the US extend loans to allied countries to buy their excess or obsolete war materiel.

This is part of the US support to Duterte's counterinsurgency campaign and fascist rule, which is also in line with its new mission in the country, the Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines.

The US first used the ScanEagle to intervene in wars in west Asian countries in 2007. The drone supposedly can stay up in the air for 16 hours at 10,000 feet, take high resolution videos and pictures and track mobile targets. It is also capable of pinpointing electronic signals, glare from electronic gadgets and thermal imaging.

In Duterte's statement last July 2017, the said drones will be used in its war against "terrorism." The regime has used this war to pour funds to modernize the AFP's war arsenal.

The truth is that these drones are going to be used in Duterte's destruction and terror campaign in communities he deems as bases of the revolutionary movement, as well as Moro communities. The drones will intensify Duterte's order to the AFP to "flatten the hills." He will use his terror listing of the Communist Party of the Philip-

ppines and the New People's Army to attack the people who are resisting his regime.

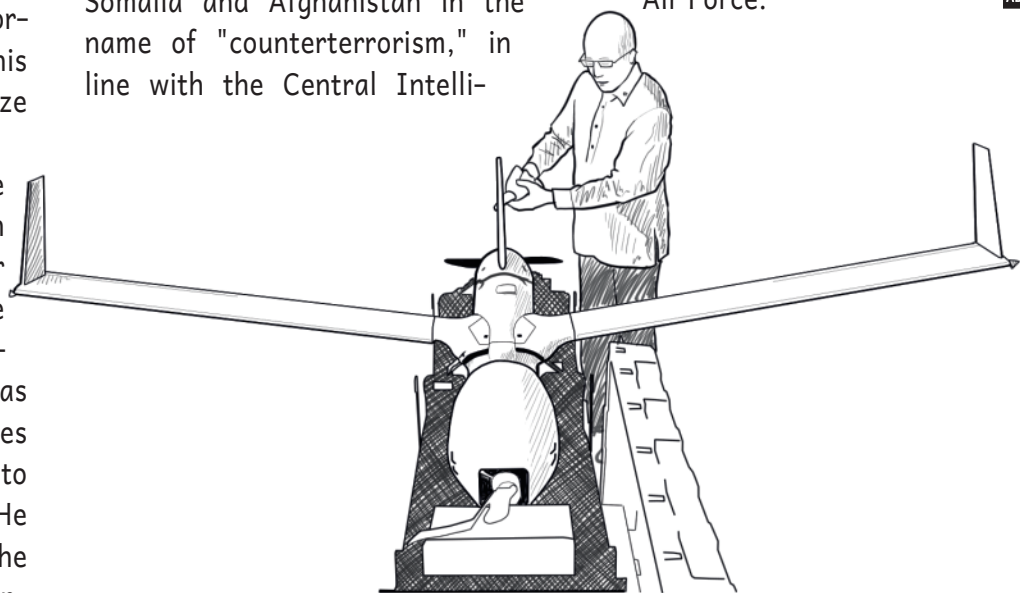
The US will also intensify its intervention in the country through training the AFP in operating the drones. This military assistance is in exchange of the Philippines entering into unequal agreements such as the EDCA and VFA which gives the US extraterritorial rights anywhere in the country and position their weapons in to-be-constructed bases and facilities inside AFP camps. According to US reports, around 107 US soldiers have been doing surveillance in the provinces of Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-tawi. It is also readying its base in Marawi City.

The US has a long record of violating rules of war in using drones against civilians. It has used drones as reinforcements in dropping bombs in civilian communities in Yemen, Pakistan, Somalia and Afghanistan in the name of "counterterrorism," in line with the Central Intelli-

gence Agency and Pentagon policy to shoot anything that moves. Around 6,000 civilians in various parts of the world have been victimized by US drones. Recently, this has happened in Marawi. Using US drones, the AFP was supposedly able to pinpoint the location of the Maute group and Isnilon Hapilon. But it dropped hundreds of bombs to reduce the city to rubble which resulted to the evacuation of hundreds of civilians, something which Duterte would like to replicate across the country. Even before the drones became operational, he has relentlessly targeted activists and the masses. He has killed or forced peasants to surrender as NPA members, as well as bombed their communities.

At the moment, the AFP have around 13 drones. Aside from the ScanEagle, it has acquired some RQ-11B Raven, Raptor, Knight Falcon, Predator and Hermes 900. The ScanEagle have been turned over to the 300th Air Intelligence and Security Wing of Philippine Air Force.

AB



# Fascist steps towards a full dictatorship

Fascist measures are continuously being imposed by the regime in order to pave the way for Rodrigo Duterte's dictatorial ambitions. Duterte and his minions consecutively pushed for Republic Act 10973 which gives subpoena powers to the Philippine National Police (PNP), and the Senate Bill 1738 which aims to enforce a national identification (ID) system.

Both SB 1738 and RA 10973 were sponsored by Duterte's ally Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a former officer of the Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police (PC-INP) and chief of the PNP. He is notorious for being a Marcos lackey, as well as a torturer.

Senate hearings on SB 1738 were rushed starting March 12 and was signed on March 19. The bill is the Senate's counterpart to the Congress' House Bill 6221 which have been passed on September last year. (Read in *Ang Bayan* September 7, 2017)

Prior to this, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon, Jr. said outright last March 8 that the Duterte government will implement the national ID system this year with or without an enacted law.

Similar to its counterpart in Congress, the Senate bill for the national ID system contains not only the basic information (name, date of birth, height, weight, others) and biometrics (digital recording of fingerprints, iris, voice and facial image exception code), but also the individual's private information.

Meanwhile, Duterte signed RA 10973 granting the PNP chief as well as the chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) the power to subpoena individuals and evidences. This circumvents the judiciary's exclusive right to issue warrants for testimonies and documents.

In 1975, subpoena powers were also given by then dictator Ferdinand Marcos to the former PC-INP and Criminal Investigation Service (CIDG's precursor). This is

in line with the Arrest, Search and Seizure Order (ASSO), the Presidential Commitment Order (PCO) and Presidential Detention Action which gave the president or the Defense Secretary the power to arrest or detain. This resulted in the widespread arrests, tortures and killings of suspected enemies of his government.

The national ID system and the PNP's power to subpoena were met with widespread condemnation from various groups and personalities. According to the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, RA 10973 is among the piecemeal legislations imposed by the Duterte government to complete a dictatorship in the entire country without a formal declaration of martial law. Karapatan on the other hand lambasted Duterte's minions in pushing for and supporting the said laws. These lawmakers legitimize suppression of groups and individuals critical of the Duterte regime.

Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate likewise said that under the proposed national ID system violates the country's sovereignty. The congressman revealed that the data that is to be used for the national ID system would be deposited with the US company UniSys. Zarate said that the Philippine Statistics Authority entered into a questionable contract worth P1.6 billion which gives the foreign company control over

the national registry system from March 2017 until 2029.

Lawyers of the National Union of People's Lawyers (NUPL) and the Center for International Law (CenterLaw) expressed their criticism of the PNP's subpoena powers. According to the said groups, RA 10973 utterly violates the people's right to life and liberty, the right against unreasonable searches and seizures, and the rights of the accused under arrest.

Former senator Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. also firmly opposed the legislation and said that the power to issue subpoena should remain solely with the judiciary. Pimentel said that this is the reason such authority was retracted from the PC-INP when they crafted the law to replace the PC-INP with the PNP in 1991.

The CPP has earlier denounced the national ID system as an additional weapon of the repressive US-Duterte regime for mass surveillance and widespread suppression of the people's dissent, as well as for silencing his political rivals. Such a system has long been proposed by the AFP and PNP and US military and security advisers to facilitate mass surveillance through the centralization of the collection and storage (or databasing) of personal information. AB





# Compradors squabble over Boracay

Duterte announced at a gathering in Davao city last February 9 his plan to close down Boracay because of the supposed pollution produced by the resorts in the island and the local government officials' failure to strictly implement laws on sanitation in the area. He likened the island to a large cesspool and threatened to close it down for a year. He immediately ordered the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to clean Boracay within six months.

Duterte's allies in the senate immediately complied with his orders. On March 2, Sen. Cynthia Villar, chairperson of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, led the investigation. She immediately called for a public hearing in Boracay and conducted an inspection of commercial structures in the island. She eagerly checked the resorts' facilities and Boracay Island Water Company.

Villar insisted that the DENR should only penalize those who violated regulations on sanitation in the area and not the entire island. Using 'bad publicity' as an excuse, Villar failed to disclose her family's hotel and condominium businesses which are under their corporation Costa de la Vista, currently managed by her husband, Manny Villar. Construction and resort development are still ongoing.

As a result of their investigation, 800 resorts in Boracay are currently facing charges of various violations.

Duterte and his cronies viciously use environmental destruction and lack of sanitation in Boracay to pave way for their personal interests, the interest of big bourgeois comprador and of foreign corporations.

Last December 7, 2017, Duterte met with business tycoon Dr. Lui Che Woo, billionaire owner of Galaxy Entertainment Group Limited from Hong Kong, and rep-

resentatives from Leisure Resorts World Corporation to discuss their plan to construct a \$300-500 million worth resort and casino complex in Boracay supposedly as part of strengthening relationship between China and Philippines. The said resort and casino is set to cover 28 hectares of Barangay Manoc-manoc.

Leisure Resorts World Corporation's owner is Negros Occidental Rep. Alfredo Benitez, who supported Duterte during 2016 elections. Benitez is also a member of PDP-Laban and the leader of the Visayan Bloc in House of Representatives.

DoubleDragon Properties Corporation also plans to construct its Hotel101 Resort in Boracay New-coast owned by Global-Estate Resorts Incorporated, a partner of Megaworld Corporation. Hotel 101 will be the largest hotel in the country. Its owners Edgar Sia II and Tony Tan Caktiong (owner of Jollibee) both supported Duterte last elections.

After these, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) announced a moratorium on construction of additional casinos in the country and will only allow those companies

who have submitted their applications last January including the new casino owned by Duterte's friend and suspected dummy Dennis Uy in Clark, Pampanga.

The real objective of Boracay's closure is to give way to the projects of private corporations, affecting 90,000 workers and about 1,000 homes and structures as identified by the DENR.

It is the residents of Boracay who are suffering from the squabble among foreign and big businesses. More than a month since their orchestrated investigation, the inter-agency task force of DENR, DOT and DILG is yet to present a clear program for those affected workers and residents in the island. Duterte's real intentions behind Boracay closure has been slowly exposed.

The fact is, the island has long been controlled by a few foreign and private interests. Since 2000, more than 2,000 Ati natives have been displaced to accommodate businesses and private corporations in the island. Until today, Ati people continue their struggle to reclaim their ancestral lands and their call for justice for their leader, Dexter Condez who was murdered in February 2013. AB



# Worsening AFP attacks

Upon orders of their commander-in-chief Rodrigo Duterte, threats and killings perpetrated by the military persist across the country. Duterte's recent statement that he is prepared to answer for his soldiers gives license to the AFP to sow terror and fear in schools, workplaces and communities, especially in the countryside.

Eight teachers of Salupongan Ta Tanu Igkanogon Community Learning Center, along with their four children and 12 students, were blocked by members of the paramilitary Alamara last March 19 in Sitio Igang, Barangay Palma Gil, Talaingod, Davao del Norte. The victims were on their way to Sitio Nasilaban, Barangay Palma Gil to prepare for the moving up ceremony or recognition program of their students on March 22.

According to the teachers, after being held by the Alamara, troops from 67th IB arrived in the area and searched their things. Military troopers also took pictures of the group which included two infants. They were detained for more than an hour before they were allowed to proceed to Sitio Nasilaban.

Nineteen college students from Tandag City were also illegally detained by eight elements of 16th Special Forces of the AFP and two PNP elements in Barangay Tina, San Miguel, Surigao del Sur last March 18. They attended the graduation program of Hayon Community Learning Center, a lumad school operated by TRIFPSS in Barangay Libas Sud, San Miguel.

The students were ordered to alight from their passenger multicabs, show their identification cards and write their names and contact numbers in a logbook. They refused to be photographed by the military. When the students asked why they were being held, a military in civilian clothes threatened to kick them. They underwent interrogation for almost two hours. Members of PNP also threatened the students that they will forward their names to National Bureau of Investigation.

and that if they joined the same activity again, they will be blacklisted and will not be able to find jobs.

On March 12, Jocelyn Zamora, a Lumad teacher in MISFI academy, along with PCTA members Jacquelyn Casilong and Jeffrey Catalino, were forced to sign as NPA surrenderers in Barangay Salvacion, Trento, Agusan del Sur. They were 'invited' by the 25th IB to the Trento municipal hall. There they saw more than 100 soldiers and 70 people, mostly residents of Trento, signing up sheets of paper while elements of AFP took pictures and videos. Local officials were reportedly prohibited from entering their municipal hall. They were forced to write their personal information and their names in an attendance sheet. They were also ordered to write down information about MISFI's activities and source of funds. The AFP also questioned Zamora's capability to teach as she did not pass licensure exams.

Because Zamora refused to be photographed holding the papers she signed, the soldiers instead forced her to join other residents in a filmed video saying they voluntarily surrendered and are thankful to the 25th IB. They were forced to follow orders as the soldiers threatened further detention.

Meanwhile, elements of 8th and 88th IB attacked peasant communities who are members of Buffalo-Tamaraw-Limus (BTL) in Musuan, Maramag, Bukidnon last March 6. According to Ronilo Menente, member of BTL, soldiers asked for their leaders and their names. They were even accused as NPA supporters.

For two consecutive days, state forces and police officers were seen in UP Cebu under the guise of withdrawing money from the Landbank ATM inside the campus. Last March 14, three uniformed and armed police officers and one in civilian clothes were seen in UP. They stayed in UP for about 20 minutes.

Last March 9, PNP officers conducted a survey in UP Manila, entitled "The Role of Social Media to Student of University of the Philippines on Violent Extremism and Insurgency." Its purpose is to spread fear among students and gather information.

Four barangays in Guimba, Nueva Ecija were occupied by 69th IB troopers from Fort Magsaysay. These are the neighboring barangays Manggang Marikit, Yuson, Bagong Barrio and San Agustin. Nine military elements were deployed in each village and occupy the barangay hall.

Residents were alarmed with the intensified militarization because the same thing had happened during Ret. Gen. Jovito Palparan's reign which resulted to terror, killings and threats in the area.

Serious damage on livelihood and properties were caused by the attack of state troopers 2nd IB, 5th RPSB, PPSC, RIU and MICO in the barrios of Talisay, Lahong, Altavista and Buenavista, in the town of San Fernando, Ticao, Masbate last March 15.

According to the residents, state forces arrived in their community like paid thugs, damaging and looting their properties. Among the properties stolen were six motorized bancas, two fishing nets, a banca, three sacks of rice, four pigs, 49 chickens, 10 goats, seven bolos and five generators.

...continued on page 11

# Ka Bendoy, Bicol's martyr

Elements of the PNP Regional Office 5 and the 9th ID killed without mercy Alfredo "Ka Bendoy" Merilos, 56, on March 15 at Camella Heights Subd., Barangay Cararayan, Naga City. Merilos, a leader of the revolutionary movement in Bicol, was undergoing treatment when he was killed.

Civilian Liz Ocampo, who was Merilos' friend and a former OFW, was also killed. Ocampo owns the residence where the incident happened.

A civilian witness who was able to escape said that the three of them were having a chat at about 9 p.m. inside the Ocampo residence when two unarmed men who did not identify themselves forcefully entered. Ocampo was shot by one of the men when she resisted and caught the attention of her neighbors. In the middle of the commotion, the said witness managed to sneak out. Merilos was last seen sitting inside the house.

This is in contrast to the AFP and PNP's statement that Merilos and his group engaged in a firefight while being served a warrant of arrest. The killers of Merilos and Ocampo did not carry with them any warrant. In statements to the media, military and police spokespersons said that they were supposedly targeting a Joey Fajardo.

State forces also presented firearms and explosives as fake evidences, but concealed to the public the fact that they pocketed Ocampo's jewelry and savings, as well as funds of the revolutionary movement intended for Merilos' heart ailment, hypertension and

diabetes.

In a tribute, the NPA and NDF in Bicol honored his selfless service to the revolution of more than three decades. Ka Bendoy started being curious about activism during his high school years, at a time when the country was caught in political and economic unrest under martial law.

He became active in fighting for students' rights while taking up Mechanical Engineering at Bicol University. This activism set aflame his lifelong crusade to push for every oppressed class' democratic rights and to take part in building a society that is free from exploitation and oppression. After graduation, and despite prospects of high salaries, Ka Bendoy chose to work full time as an organizer in schools and urban communities. After a few years, in 1985, he left for the countryside to serve as a Red fighter. In the face of intense military operations and the grueling challenge of correcting deepseated practices, Ka Bendoy developed into a Party cadre capable of a strong political and military leadership, under the guidance of the Party and through self-criticism and collective criticism.

He became part of the Regional Instruction Bureau from 1986-

1990, where he shared to the readers of Silyab (the Party's regional publication) the Party's stand through comical cartoons. From 1991-1997, he took on the crucial task of leading various armed propaganda units in Sorsogon and Camarines Sur as their political guide. He served as secretary of a guerrilla front in 1997 and eventually became a regular member of the regional Party committee in 1998. From 2005-2012, he took up the post of Provincial Party Committee head of Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte and was elected as a regular member of the Regional Party Executive Committee in 2007. In 2015 he was elected as a member of the Secretariat of Regional Party Executive Committee, and by 2016, he was a delegate at the 2nd Party National Congress where he was elected as a regular member of the Party Central Committee.

His extensive experience in Party building, troop leadership and immersing one's self in the basic masses' needs and aspirations made him a veritable fountain of practical guides for the next generation of Party cadres. Ka Bendoy will be remembered as the comrade, tall in height, who tells funny stories and has amusing antics which makes him approachable. At the same time, he is known as tough in certain situations, especially with regards to Party policies. AB

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*"Worsening,..." continued from page 10*

The operation was led by 2nd IB commander Lt. Col. Oliver F. Gabun. Residents attended the meeting called by the said commander in Barangay Talisay out of fear of retaliation. While in the meeting, military and police forces looted the residents' farm animals and properties.

Meanwhile, on March 16, Jerry Adolfo, leader of Sangandaan-Panghulo-Polo JODA was killed along M.H. Del Pilar, Tugatog, Malabon City. The suspect sat behind the driver and shot him in front of the passengers.

Last March 7, Fe de los Santos, 63, was also killed after she was

shot by elements of 85th IB in her home in Lopez, Quezon. She sustained six gunshot wounds to the stomach. The victim was brought to the hospital but died the next day. Nanay Fe is the mother of accused NPA-Quezon Red commander under the Apolonio Mendoza Command. AB

# Women march against Duterte's tyrannical rule

Thousands of women marched in different parts of the country to commemorate the 110th year of International Working Women's Day. Gabriela, a progressive women's group, vowed to fight Duterte's looming dictatorship. The group called his regime the most violent, anti-women and pro-imperialist president in the history of the country.

The women carried an effigy tagged as "Mad Dog-ong" depicting the persisting Duterte's persistent attacks on his critics and women.

Women protesters and supporters gathered in Liwasang Bonifacio then marched to Chino Roces Bridge near Malacañang Palace. According to Gabriela, Duterte's promise of change benefits only a few.

The group also noted the growing number of unemployed workers under Duterte's regime. Last 2017, the number of unemployed numbered 2.44 million, according to Center for Women's Resources. The Alliance of Concerned Teachers also slammed the salary increase of police and military forces, while leaving behind government employees. Former Department of Social Welfare and Development secretary Judy Taguiwalo also exposed the huge number of contractual employees in the government bureaucracy.

Attendees also saluted the thousands of urban poor who occupied idle housing units in Pandi, Bulacan. Majority of those who led the campaign are women. Kadamay also invited their fellow homeless to join the movement Occupy Pabahay and fight for their right for decent and affordable housing.

Meanwhile, the Pandi delegation was blocked by police forces. At least 28 jeepneys were barred from attending the protest in Manila. Spikes were scattered by the road to stop their vehicles and drivers' licenses were confiscated.

Despite this, some of their members were still able to join the event.

Women's groups also criticized TRAIN, the newly approved tax reform law, which resulted to rising costs of basic commodities.

Gabriela-Southern Tagalog held the same program at Crossing, Calamba, Laguna, which was attended by hundreds of women. During the celebration, groups highlighted the issue of women workers who continuously experience discrimination inside their workplaces.

A caravan led by women's groups and their supporters was also held from Jaro District, Iloilo to the University of the Philippines-Visayas. The event was centered on the worsening abuse cases of women, and the rising costs of goods and basic services.

In Davao City, various groups led by Gabriela marched to condemn the ongoing impunity on crimes committed against women under Duterte's martial law in Mindanao and the worsening economic conditions brought by TRAIN law.

The 110th International Women's Day commemoration last March 8 was attended by thousands of women and various sectors of society. After gathering in Liwasang Bonifacio, the groups proceeded to Mendiola and held a program to drumbeat their call to oppose the oppressive and fascist US-Duterte regime.

Groups also held Women's Day rallies in Tuguegarao, Baguio,

Sorsogon, Legazpi, Bacolod, Cebu, Roxas, Butuan and General Santos.

The Red Detachment of Women-Panay also commemorated Women's Day. The Red Detachment is comprised of local militia units and full-time members of NPA. As part of their program, a platoon of women Red fighters danced to the tune of One Billion Rising theme.

In a statement by NDFP-Mindanao, they paid tribute to the struggles and perseverance of Russian proletarian women who banded together to support the general strikes and armed uprising that sparked the beginning of the 1917 Revolution which later on evolved into the great October revolution.

NDFP-Mindanao also honored the women of the Philippine revolution who offered their lives to the advancement of the people's war—women cadres, commanders, NPA Red fighters and women mass leaders who have devoted their time, strength and intellect in organizing and mobilizing farmers and workers for the victory of the national democratic revolution.

Patnubay de Guia, spokesperson of NDFP-Southern Tagalog, condemned the series of abuses committed under Duterte's macho-fascist regime. De Guia also slammed Duterte's statement ordering state forces to "shoot women Red fighters in the vagina so they would be useless" which blatantly allows AFP and PNP units to commit more and grave abuses against the people.

NDFP consultants Concha Araneta and Loida Magpatoc, and NPA units in different areas also expressed solidarity.

AB

# Protests against tyranny

**I**ntensifying and widening protests were held in response to the US-Duterte regime's anti-people policies and the increasing number of human rights violations.

## **#NoToJeepneyPhaseout**

Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (Piston) staged on March 19 its fourth transport strike in opposition to the Duterte regime's jeepney "modernization" scheme.

According to Piston, their protests will continue until the regime outlines a reasonable program to upgrade jeepneys.

Strikes were staged in Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna, Bulacan and Rizal. They repeated the demand to junk the purported modernization program which plans to replace old-model jeepneys with vehicles compliant with Euro-4 emission standards.

Alsa Jeep (Alliance Against the Phaseout of Jeeps) also joined the strike. The group staged a die-in protest along España Boulevard, Manila as a support to the strike.

According to Piston National Chairperson George San Mateo, their group opposes the Department of Transportation's modernization program because this will result to the loss of livelihood of thousands of operators and drivers.

"Also, the Land Bank of the Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines allocated only P3 billion for loans to jeepney operators and drivers," said San Mateo.

This means that the banks will lend to only 2,000 drivers. According to data from the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, there are more than 200,000 jeepneys in the country.

Drivers and operators also fear that they will be debt-ridden once the modernization program becomes implemented since each unit

costs P1.6 million. Around 500,000 drivers, 300,000 small-scale operators and their families who rely on the jeepneys are also set to lose their livelihoods.

In Manila, the routes Tayuman-Lardizabal, Novaliches, and Tayuman-España were 100% paralyzed; Cubao and Monumento routes were 75% paralyzed, while Balic-Balic, España, Sangandaan, Las Piñas and Alabang routes were 90% paralyzed.

Meanwhile, Starter-Piston declared that 95% of Laguna routes were paralyzed. Drivers belonging to the Solidarity of Transport Alliance in Northern Mindanao (Starex) also participated in the strike. According to the group, 70% of Cagayan de Oro City routes were paralyzed. Starex-Piston declared that they will stage more protests until the government heeds their demands.

Meanwhile, San Mateo called Malacañang's suspension of classes last March 20 until Friday supposedly due to the continuing transport strike as "fake news." Piston reiterated that their strike was only on Monday, March 19. The group condemned Malacañang's announcement of malicious information in order to confuse the people. This is also part of the regime's scheme to make irrelevant the demands of drivers and operators against the phaseout of jeepneys.

## **23rd year of Flor Contemplacion's execution commemorated**

On March 17, a global day of action was held by members of Migrante International to commemorate the 23rd year of Flor Contemplacion's execution. Migrante

led the protest in Mendiola, Manila. They brought along with them photos of dead OFWs who were victims of abusive employers.

The protesters also called Duterte "Bugaw King" (King of Pimps). Under his administration, the country's labor force is offered to the foreign market. The group said that the conditions of OFWs have worsened.

Under the labor-export policy, Duterte has facilitated the trade of a huge number of the country's unemployed to foreign nations looking for cheap and docile labor. His deployment ban to Kuwait and the Middle East, according to Migrante, only aims to deflect and weaken the migrants' growing anger knowing that they will only be sold to foreign employers.

Members of the Nagkakaisang Pilipino sa France also joined the global day of action, as well as Migrante-Hong Kong, who held a picket outside the Philippine Consulate General in the area.

## **Protests against the bogus Free Tuition**

On March 19, the House Committee on Higher and Technical Education conducted a hearing on two resolutions filed by Kabataan Partylist: the evaluation of P8 billion-worth Free Tuition law and on the immediate cancellation of tuition and other fees and reimbursement of collected fees for the second semester of 2017-2018.

Next on the agenda was the discussion on the Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR) of the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act, but purportedly due to time constraints, the hearing was suspended. According to the students, to maximize time, they requested Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Officer-in-Charge Prospero

De Vera to answer their queries on the reimbursement of collected fees from the student. The CHED refused to respond and instead adjourned the hearing.

On March 15, students called for genuinely free education in commemoration of Kristel Tejada's fifth death anniversary. They staged a rally in front of CHED to voice out their dismay on the delay in releasing the IRR for the Universal Access to Quality Education Act of 2017, and the continuing commercialization of education in the country.

### **Workers' protests**

Workers' groups and unions under the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) launched a coordinated protest last March 15. The workers picketed in front of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) office in Intramuros, Manila. Last February 7, Duterte promised that he will sign on March 15 an executive order that will end all forms of contractualization but this did not happen.

According to Ed Cubelo, chairperson of KMU-Metro Manila, Duterte prolongs the oppression of millions of workers. He said that if Duterte will not stop endo (end of contract), he will face endo.

Workers of Toyota in Manila Bay also staged a protest to make the company liable for the illegal dismissal of 237 workers in 2001. The workers protested at the office of Toyota Motors Philippines in Sta. Rosa, Laguna where they lit torches. The protest was led by Liga ng Manggagawa-ST.

Workers from Harbour Centre also joined the protest.

Workers' groups also staged protest actions in Bacolod City. The workers marched from Rizal Elementary School towards the DOLE office in Bacolod City. The protest called on Duterte to end all forms of contractualization.

On March 14, around 100 members of Gabay ng Unyon sa Telekomunikasyon ng mga Superbisor (GUTS)-PLDT led by KMU picketed in front of the company's

office in Welcome Rotonda, Quezon City. The group condemned PLDT's continuing policy of contractualization and outsourcing. According to the workers, the company failed to regularize its contractual workers in accordance with DOLE orders.

### **Other protests**

On March 13, KMU members protested in front of Camp Crame in Quezon City to condemn the PNP's subpoena powers which grants the police the authority to make mass arrests of union members and activists who oppose the regime.

In commemoration of the International Day of Action for Rivers and Against Large Dams, Katribu led a protest in front of the Chinese embassy in Makati last March 15 to oppose the construction of mega dams under the Duterte-China agreement.

China's Official Development Aid (ODA) will fund Duterte's renewed plans to construct mega dams in ancestral lands under his "Build, Build, Build." AB

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## **Month of solidarity with the Philippine revolution**

LAST MARCH 13, Jugendwiderstand (Youth Resistance-MLM), a revolutionary youth organization in Germany, launched the Month of Solidarity with the people's war in the Philippines.

Seminars and other solidarity activities will be held in the towns of Stuttgart, Nuremberg, Weserbergland, Magdeburg and Berlin. In these activities, organizers will report the current situation of the people's war and the revolutionary movement in the Philippines, as well as the recent experience of their members who integrated in a revolutionary base in the country. The Month of Solidarity is part of the objective to develop solidarity

between activists in Europe, and the Filipino people and their revolutionary forces.

In an appreciation statement by Prof. Joma Sison, founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, he conveyed warmest greetings to Jugendwiderstand in their support to the struggles of the Filipino people for national and social liberation. This initiative, said Sison, is very important to make the Philippine revolution more known to

the people in Europe. Solidarity and support for the Philippine revolution can also serve to inspire the people of the world to intensify their resistance against imperialism and all reaction.

As the Philippine revolution advances, it serves as a beacon to inspire revolutionaries in Europe, encouraging them to wage various forms of struggle, exchange experiences and lessons with Filipino revolutionaries and cooperate in building international solidarity and revolutionary movements of the people. AB