



EDITORIAL

## Resist US military domination and Chinese intrusions

Events over the past several weeks reveal the country's dismal state of non-independence and the necessity to struggle for national sovereignty. The country was turned into a virtual playground where big power bullies showed off their military and economic might, while the US-Duterte regime displayed slavishness and inability to uphold the country's patrimony and sovereignty.

On the one hand, China emplaced hundreds of fishing vessels believed to be carrying armed troops around the Spratly Islands. They practically took over the fishing grounds and other resources in areas which form part of the Philippine maritime territory. In addition, they continue to ravage coral reefs in incessant land reclamation operations to build military facilities and fortify their military presence.

On the other hand, in a more

direct and arrogant display of military superiority, 3,500 American troops swaggered into the country, welcomed by grovelers in the AFP. They brandished weapons such as nuclear warships, jet fighters and amphibious assault vehicles in line with the April 1-12 Balikatan exercises. Using the exercises as cover, the US military turned the country into a launchpad to sail its USS Wasp and fly F-35Bs in the vicinity of the Panatag Shoal traumatizing

*"Resist..." continued at page 2*

## NPA offensives result in 31 AFP casualties

TWENTY FOUR soldiers were killed when the New People's Army (NPA)-Negros ambushed a unit of the 62nd IB in April 1 at Barangay Quintin Remo, Moises Padilla, Negros Oriental. On April 9, the NPA bombed the same enemy unit in Sitio Asaran, Barangay Buenavista, Himamaylan City. Seven soldiers were wounded.

**Compostela Valley.** The NPA ambushed troopers of the 71st IB in Sitio Bagong Silang, Barangay Teresa, Maco last April 3 at 6:45 a.m. Four soldiers were confirmed killed. Among the wounded was the unit's commander 1Lt. Serwin E. Matas. Prior to this, three elements of the 66th IB were killed in March 30, 9:30 a.m., in Sityo Dasuran, Barangay Golden Valley in Mabini. After these battles, AFP

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Filipino fishermen. This show of force aims to strengthen its military foothold in the country, and assert its hegemony in the South China Sea and the entire Pacific region.

Compared to China, the US mounts bigger and more aggressive interventionist military operations behind what it calls "freedom of navigation operations" and military treaties with the Philippines.

Big power saber-rattling increases the threat of war in the Pacific and undermines Philippine national sovereignty. These form part of the heightening struggle for military and economic superiority between the big powers. Both sides are interested only in advancing their competing aims to control trade routes, sources of raw material, cheap labor, spheres of investment, export markets, and military outposts.

The self-serving Duterte regime has acted servile and kowtowed to both sides. Seeking to further his bureaucrat capitalist and fascist in-

terests, he has betrayed the country's patrimony and sovereignty.

Duterte has given up the country's maritime territory which is recognized even under the UN Convention on the Law of the Seas. He has also entered into onerous loan agreements and government contracts under which the country's patrimony has been turned into collateral, in exchange for fat kickbacks for Duterte and his cronies.

On the other hand, with the collusion of Duterte and the AFP, US military forces are exercising all-out power. He has allowed the US to use the Philippines as base for its Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines. He has allowed the US to build secret facilities and stockpile weapons within AFP camps, mount more and more war exercises, set up radars and conduct drone surveillance, sail their warships across Philippine seas and dock them

in civilian ports, and train and have operational control over AFP units. The Philippines remains bound to unequal military agreements. In exchange, the US has extended military assistance to Duterte's all-out war supplying it with rifles, artillery, refurbished helicopters, drones, and other equipment.

These big power bullies profess friendship and alliance with the Filipino people. In fact, they only in pursue their own strategic geopolitical interests. China claims using its military might to make other countries grow. It merely covets the country's mineral resources to feed its industries. It makes large amounts of loans to export surplus capital and make other countries buy its surplus steel.

The US claims "ironclad commitment to defend the Philippines" against "Chinese aggression." In fact, it is the US that has long held the country in its clutches. The US maintains military dominance

in the country to defend its own ultranational interests, not Philippine sovereignty.

US imperialism is not a friend, rather an enemy. It has long subjugated the country through a century of colonialism and neocolonialism, employing armed aggression and suppression. It has imposed trade agreements and economic policies which force dependence on imports, debt and foreign investments. Big American corporations have plundered and devoured the country's forests and natural resources, grabbed vast agricultural tracts, exploited cheap labor, and siphoned super profits. It has stunted the economy, prevented it from industrializing and kept it as an exporter of cheap raw materials and semimanufactures.

Relative to the US imperialists, which have long plundered and devastated the Philippines, China is





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a late-comer, scraping the bottom of the country's wealth.

The country remains under US imperialist domination. The ruling state in the Philippines is a client-state of the US, with the US-trained and -indoctrinated Philippine military serving as its strongest pillar. Duterte is its current chieftain. Armed with US-supplied weapons, the fascist regime employs and directs state violence against the Filipino people and all their patriotic and democratic forces.

These forces, including the Communist Party of the Philippines, stand firmly and militantly for the cause of national and social liberation. They demand foremost an end to US imperialist domination and condemn the subservience of the Philippine government. They clamor for the abrogation of US-RP military treaties and US military interventionism and seek to free the country from its economic and political clutches.

As patriots, they also condemn China's bullying, military presence and occupation of Philippine maritime territory in the South China Sea and despoliation of sea resources and denounce the failure of the Duterte regime to carry out the necessary diplomatic and political steps to assert the country's rights. They oppose as well the onerous loans and anomalous overpriced infrastructure contracts with China.

While denouncing China's intrusions and economic oppression, they do not lose sight of the bigger enemy and reserve the stronger condemnation to US imperialism whose military forces continue to maintain a foothold on Philippine soil, who control and arm the Philippine neocolonial state and which pose as the biggest impediment to the Filipino people's aspiration for national and social liberation. **AB**

## STAND-OFF IN PHILIPPINE SOVEREIGN SEAS

**China:** From January to March, 275 Chinese fishing vessels suspected as Chinese Coast guard surveillance ships were spotted near Pag-asa Island (international name: Thitu Island). Some reports said that these ships carried Chinese paramilitaries named "Little Blue Men."

Pag-asa Island is the biggest island in the Spratly Group of Islands which is located 285 nautical miles from Palawan.

**US:** US war vessels were spotted near Panatag Shoal (Scarbor-

ough) three times during the same period. In January, USS Hopper launched so-called freedom of navigation operations near the island. In April, US Airforce A-10 Warthog patrolled the area. The USS Wasp had the biggest presence, with its 10 F-35Bs, believed to be the most advanced US fighter planes, four Ospreys and two attack helicopters. It has a 1,000 crew and carries 1,600 Marines for its amphibious vehicles. Before Filipino fishermen divulged its presence in the area on

April 9, it secretly carried out plane and helicopter

flights and landings near the shoal.

The USS Wasp is part of the 35th Balikatan exercises which was launched last April 1-12. (For additional details, read related article in Ang Bayan, April 7, 2019.)

Panatag Shoal or Bajo de Masinloc is 35-40 nautical miles from Masinloc, Zambales.



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units relentlessly shelled and bombed the area.

**Masbate.** Two police personnel were sanctioned in separate partisan operations by the NPA in Barangay TR Yangco, Dimasalang and Barangay Bugang, Pio V. Corpuz. The NPA-Masbate said that the two were active in "counterinsurgency" and anti-people operations. A caliber .45 and 9mm pistol were seized from them.

**Samar.** Two soldiers were killed after the NPA fired at the 543rd Engineering Construction Battalion along the road connecting barangays San Antonio, Aguinaldo and San Isidro in Las Navas, Northern Samar. The operation was carried

out in April 15, at 11:20 a.m. while the soldiers were inspecting a road project under PAMANA.

IN ORIENTAL MINDORO, the NPA arrested Peter Delos Santos, Rocky Bueta and Remando Malupa in Barangay Malu, Bansud in April 5. Using their positions in the village, they arbitrarily arrest civilians suspected of having ties with the revolutionary movement. They also spy on the NPA's activities in the area. Confiscated from them were a pistol, ammunition and two radios. Delos Santos and Bueta were released while Malupa remains under the NPA's custody as a prisoner-of-war. **AB**

## US and China, out now!

MORE THAN 500 residents of Batangas converged in front of the provincial capitol on March 29 to oppose and condemn Balikatan 2019 which was then scheduled to be launched in their communities. More than 7,500 Filipino and American troops participated in Balikatan 2019 which was launched in various areas in Luzon.

This exercise is a bane to the people and only results in human rights violations. Residents of Barangay San Diego, Lian reported that helicopters were frequently sighted flying overhead which disturb the community. Residents of Barangay Sto. Domingo, Batangas City also complained about the operations of US and AFP troops in their communities.

Military and surveillance operations (under the guise of conducting census) were heightened by joint forces of the PNP and 1st IB in the towns of Nasugbu, San Juan and Rosario. Soldiers deployed in five coastal barangays in Lian used barangay halls as their camps and detachments.

Meanwhile, hundreds of rallyists converged in front of the Chinese Embassy in Makati City on April 9, Day of Valor, to condemn Chinese intervention in the country and its imposition of unequal agreements. The Pilipinong Nagkakaisa para sa Soberanya (P1NAS) spearheaded the protest and criticized China for conducting reclamation activities and erecting infrastructures at the West Philippine Sea.

The group also condemned the reactionary government for entering into unequal loan agreements with China for the Chico River Pump Irrigation Project and Laiban Kaliwa-Kanan Dam.

Similar protest actions were mounted in Cebu, Davao and Iloilo City on the same day.

## 54 AFP casualties in Sultan Kudarat

THE MARINE BATTALION Landing Team (MBLT)-2 and the 33rd IB suffered at least 54 casualties in five offensives by the New People's Army (NPA) in Sultan Kudarat from January 22-March 10.

In March 10, the NPA ambushed soldiers of the 33rd IB operating in the mountains of Daguma. The soldiers were aboard a truck when they were demolished in Barangay Titulok, Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat. Twenty three AFP elements were wounded.

The ambush is part of the series of tactical offensives launched by the NPA-Sultan Kudarat to combat the enemy's campaign in the Daguma mountain range. The MBLT-2 and 33rd IB serve as guards of DM Consunji Incorporated who grab Lumad ancestral lands for its plantations and mining operations.

The NPA started off the series of offensives in January 22 with a harassment operation against a Marine detachment in Maat, Barangay Sangay, Kalamansig where two soldiers were wounded.

This was followed with an ambush in January 24 against Marines aboard two trucks along the highway in Sitio Kabukbukan, Barangay Kipungot, Palimbang. The enemy convoy was demolished resulting to severe damage on one of the trucks. Another truck fell into a ravine after its driver lost control. No less than 20 soldiers were killed, along with some wounded.

The following day, another ambush was carried out in neighboring Barangay Paril of the same town. Two soldiers were killed and two more were wounded after the NPA exploded a bomb under the truck carrying them.

In February 3, the NPA ambushed an enemy column in Kiblis community in Barangay Hinalaan, Kalamansig where five soldiers were wounded.

## Chico dam project violates sovereignty

THE CHICO RIVER Pump Irrigation Project in Kalinga is faced with increasing opposition after grave violations of the nation's sovereignty and patriotism were exposed.

The Duterte regime surrendered the country's mineral resources as collateral in exchange of a \$62 million loan for the said project from China. Whatever dispute that may arise from the project will be filed and decided not in Philippine courts but in a court established by China for its foreign projects. Moreover, the project was given to Chinese contractors and workers, instead of Filipinos. The Duterte regime also agreed to keep quiet about the details of the contract which was signed in April 2018.

Aside from these, China imposed a very high annual interest of 2% in contrast with the standard 0.25%-0.75% in loans from other countries. Additional charges such as the \$186,260 "management fee" and annual 0.3% "commitment fee" will also be paid. The "commitment fee" is imposed to ensure that China keeps on profiting from the construction during future project delays or suspension, which usually happen with big dam projects.

China also loaned \$211 million for the Kaliwa Dam in Quezon, with almost similar conditions.

The dam is set to be constructed in the ancestral land of the Igorot people in Pinukpuk, Kalinga. Residents were taken aback at the arrival of heavy equipment and personnel of the contractor China CAMC Engineering Co. Ltd.. Quarters for the Chinese workers were built and dredging was started by the contractor despite the absence of consent from the Igorot community, in violation of their right to self-determination.

AB

# The Igorots' revolutionary struggle

If not for the hard and spirited struggles waged by the national minorities with the help of the people's army to protect the ancestral land, the Cordillera would have long been gone.

Thus declared Simon Naogsan (Ka Filiw), Cordillera People's Democratic Front (CPDF) spokesperson, on the undeniable role of the New People's Army (NPA) in the Igorot people's struggle for self-determination and democracy, and national liberation.

In his March 21 statement, Ka Filiw acknowledged the NPA's painstaking mass work, social investigation and study of the particular situation of various tribes in Cordillera. In the latter part of the 70s, the revolutionary movement had already taken root in the six provinces of the Cordillera. Documents tracing the national oppression in Cordillera—the particularity of their struggle—were published.

The Chico Dam and Cellophil struggles were among the first to break the tyranny of the Marcos dictatorship. These struggles, together with the succeeding mass struggles reaching the border of Ilocos Sur, strengthened the resolve of the Igorot people to defend their ancestral land and mineral resources.

Most of the mass struggles were anti-mining, reclaiming of ancestral lands and against the destruction of the socio-political system of the Igorot people.

The revolutionary armed struggle of the Igorot people had taken its peak with the founding of the CPDF in 1989. The CPDF is the concrete form of the Igorot people's revolutionary struggle. This is the alliance of all democratic sectors and classes in the region, and serves as the united front or NDF in the Cordillera.

The CPDF was key to the establishment of the first organs of political power up to the far-flung parts of Cordillera. With the formation of the Council of Leaders up to the

municipal level, genuine democratic political power was placed in the hands of the people for the first time. This was met with intense violence by the reactionary state supported by imperialist countries with big mining interests in the mountains of the region.

The Igorot people face the challenge to carry on with the fight against destructive mining and dam and energy projects in the Cordillera. Alongside this is the intense militarization and psywar to suppress the struggle of the communities and destroy their unity. Igorot peasants and youth are coerced into enlisting as soldiers and paramilitaries, and tribal socio-political systems such as the *dap-ay* and *bodong* are being corrupted and



used in "counterinsurgency."

The fake autonomy being pushed by politicians in Cordillera also pose a challenge. Meanwhile, agricultural backwardness prevails, made even worse by government neglect. Indigenous culture and traditions are commercialized, and decadent culture is propagated to erode the militant tradition of the Cordillera people. AB

## Traders undercharge Cordillera farmers

DURING THE FIRST quarter of 2019, farmgate prices of vegetables dropped in various trading posts in Cordillera. Traders set prices of cabbage and carrots at P1/kilo purportedly due to oversupply.

These vegetable farmers (also called gardeners in Cordillera) who have already been battered by monsoons and typhoons Rosita and Ompong are already suffering huge losses and are mired in debts.

Despite low farmgate prices, vegetables prices in public markets continue to rise. Average prices of vegetables are at P65/kilo in big cities like Manila. This is because big vegetable traders and financiers who act as middlemen control vegetable prices in markets. These traders, in cahoots with other traders, buy farmers' crops at very low prices, then overcharge the same products. Because of this, vegetable prices in public markets remain high.

All the government can offer is crop-insurance which the farmers pay for. Those who don't have insurance can borrow P25,000 to sustain their daily needs. But farmers maintain that such amount, and even the P35,000 offered by Department of Agriculture, is insufficient as it only covers 1/4 of the capital needed to cultivate an hectare of vegetable farm.

This also doesn't resolve the main issue of oversupply brought about by excessive importation. Prices of vegetables drop as foreign products swamp the market and compete with local vegetables. Through the all-out liberalization policy on agriculture by the Duterte regime, foreign big capitalists can freely enter the Philippine economy without paying taxes. Using big local traders, they sell vegetables according to their prices. AB

# Rampaging state terrorism in the first quarter of the year

*This report was culled from Ang Bayan's reportage of human rights violations perpetrated by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police and other armed agents of the US-Duterte regime across the country in the first quarter of year 2019.*

Based on the initial tally of *Ang Bayan*, there have been at least 772 victims (or nine per day) of various types of human rights violations from January 1 to March 31. This figure excludes the tens of thousands of individuals who evacuated due to sustained military operations and campaigns in their respective communities across the country.

On average, a victim was killed every three days while three others were illegally arrested. In addition to this, at least seven were subjected to threats, harassment and intimidation per day.

The intense first quarter offensive against the people is a direct result of the extensive implementation of the National Internal Security Program (NISP) and Oplan Kapayapaan by the regime.

**Killings, frustrated killings and torture.** In the past three months, there have been at least 32 civilian victims of political killings across the country. Nine (28%) were killed in Luzon, 16 (50%) in Visayas and seven (38%) in Mindanao. Meanwhile, *Ang Bayan* also recorded five cases each of frustrated killings and torture.

Although the total number of victims of killings this first quarter of 2019 is equivalent to a fourth of the total

number of victims (106) in 2018, it is important to note that the number of victims in the Negros Island was high. As in the previous year, the region recorded the highest number of victims of killings. In Negros Oriental alone, 15 peasants were killed under SEMPO (Synchronized Enhanced Managing of Police Operations) or Oplan Sauron, the regime's suppression campaign in the island.

**Illegal arrests and arbitrary detention.** There have been at least 65 victims of illegal arrests and illegal detention in the past three months. Twenty two (34%) were

*"Rampaging..." continued at page 7*



## Fascist propaganda, an element of all-out war

IN LINE WITH its intensified attacks against the people and revolutionary movement, the Duterte regime has intensified fascist propaganda against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), New People's Army (NPA) and all revolutionary forces, as well as legal democratic forces.

The regime's fascist propaganda drive seeks to prepare and shape public opinion to justify its suppression of the toiling masses' legitimate struggles. This campaign particularly aims to depict the CPP and NPA as "terrorist organizations." Open and legal progressive institutions and mass organizations are brazenly tagged as "communist fronts."

Among the salient features of this campaign are as follows: churning out fake news of AFP-NPA encounters to cover-up widespread

incidents of murder of peasants, who are then reported as NPA members; accusing Lumad schools as "NPA training schools" to stop their operations; parading civilians as NPA surrenderees; coercion by the AFP of local government units to issue "persona non grata" resolutions against the NPA; etc.

The AFP directly subsumed local government units from barangay to provincial levels in an attempt to deny the revolutionary movement its mass bases. Almost everyday,

Duterte and his henchmen are peddling lies and slanderous statements against the CPP, NPA and all revolutionary forces. The AFP is utilizing both traditional and social media as platforms for its propaganda, while controlling the flow of information from areas that are being attacked by its troops. It also subjects journalists to threats and harassment to prevent them from exposing the abuses perpetrated by the military and police.

The AFP is also utilizing sustained peace and development operations (PDT or COPDs) to sow disinformation and threaten the people, and to stifle their struggles and make them passive.

AB

arrested in Luzon, 18 (28%) in Visayas and 25 (38%) in Mindanao.

The highest number of cases of illegal arrests were recorded in the Northern Mindanao Region or NMR (14 victims), Negros Island (11) and Davao Region (8). Among the starkest cases was the illegal arrest of two children, a minor and four members of the Misamis Oriental Farmers' Association by elements of the 65th IB and PNP-CIDG on January 13.

**Bombing, strafing and militarization.** At least six incidents of indiscriminate bombings and strafing were reported by Ang Bayan in the same period. On top of this, 42 incidents of military occupation and attacks on communities were also reported across the country—one of which was perpetrated in Luzon, 23 (55%) in Visayas and 18 (43%) in Mindanao.

The highest number of militarization incidents reported were in Negros (13), NMR (12) and Eastern Visayas (9). The brutal military operations which are being mounted across Negros and Eastern Visayas are a result of Duterte's Memorandum Order 32 which effectively imposed de facto martial law and directly deployed additional battalions in the said regions.

**Forcible evacuation.** These relentless military operations have resulted in the evacuation of about 19,936 individuals from various communities across the country. The highest number of evacuees (16,300) were recorded in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao due to the military's indiscriminate aerial bombardment and strafing in Maguindanao and Sulu. About 1,614, evacuated in Eastern Visayas, 900 and 831 in NMR and Caraga, respectively.

**Threat, harassment and intimidation.** Among the victims were 646 individuals subjected to threats, harassment and intimidation. Majority of the victims were from Negros (452) and Davao Region

## 3rd IB operation kills Manobo leader



DATU KAYLO BONTULAN, Manobo leader and official of Pasaka and Salugpungan, was killed by elements of the 3rd IB who indiscriminately bombed and strafed Barangay Kipilas, Kitaotao, Bukidnon on April 7. Datu Kaylo visited the area to check on the situation of Manobo evacuees from Talaingod. He was a known leader of Talaingod who has long participated in struggles in defense of Lumad ancestral lands.

Meanwhile, seven civilians were illegally arrested by state forces this April in Iloilo, Bulacan and Cagayan Valley.

In Iloilo, 61st IB elements arrested Remy Diaz, a member of Tumdak Panay, in Barangay Masaroy, Calinog on April 16, at 12 a.m. The victim was then presented as an NPA member. Barangay officials who attempted to rescue the victim were threatened by the soldiers with gunshots.

In Bulacan, elements of the 48th IB abducted John Griefen Arlegui and Reynaldo Remias, Kadamay community organizers in Pandi, last April 13 at noon. They were accosted while mounting posters of Bayan Muna and senatorial candidate Neri Colmenares along Angat-Pandi Road. A day after, the victims were found under the custody of CIDG Malolos and were charged with fabricated cases of illegal possession of firearms.

In Cagayan, police operatives arrested Ariel Madriaga, Felix Madriaga, Jovito Madriaga and Adrian Panturgo in Barangay Dafunganay, Amulung on April 15, at around 5 a.m. Prior to the arrest, at around 3 a.m., unidentified gunmen surrounded the houses of the victims. The perpetrators then ransacked the houses and planted several rifles, ammunition and bombs as evidence against the victims.

Meanwhile, a campaign group of Bayan Muna headed for Abatan, Bauko, Mt. Province, was held at a military checkpoint. The soldiers took pictures of the group's vehicle and members and illegally searched their personal belongings. They were also accused of hiding firearms. AB

## Metro Manila to experience rotational brownouts

METRO MANILA RESIDENTS are set to experience rotational brownouts even as water supply problems are yet to be resolved. This is due to the simultaneous shutting down of 20 power plants which supply electricity to Luzon.

The simultaneous shutdown during summer is a way for independent power producers (IPP) to control power supply and raise prices. The IPPs, in cahoots with distribution companies like Meralco, pass the increase to their consumers. This arrangement is made possible due to the deregulation of the energy sector where production and pricing of electricity is passed on to private companies.

Meralco and its IPP cohorts are using the brownouts to push for the construction of new energy plants. Manuel Pangilinan, Meralco's chief executive, even threatened more brownouts if these are not built. It will take at least \$30 billion to build the said plants in the next years. Like in the past, the expense will be passed to the people in the form of higher electricity bills.

# AFP uses fake encounters to cover-up crimes

In an attempt to hide its growing crimes against the people, the AFP continues to weave lies while declaring those murdered and arrested civilians as members of the New People's Army.

In Masbate, the AFP announced that there was an encounter between the NPA and 2nd IB, 9th ID and PNP in Barangay Buri, Mandaon last April 8. This is to cover-up the murder of their asset led by a Rolando Bajera Epil. Epil and his group were former NPA fighters who have long surrendered to the AFP.

According to the NPA-Masbate, there was no NPA unit present in the area during that time. In fact, only the 2nd IB and PNP-RMG were present in the vicinity along with Epil and six of his co-members. In this fake encounter, the military killed Epil and three of his companions.

Epil and his group have long been protected by the 2nd IB and elements of private armed group controlled by Sgt. Rico Amaro, a notorious military intelligence officer. Amaro is involved in numerous crimes against the people, including the murder of Randy Masamoc, last December 2018.

The 31st IB and Sorsogon Police Provincial Office also faked an encounter in Barangay Lajong, Juban, Sorsogon last April 1 to cover up the AFP and PNP's salvaging of Michael Ismer, a civilian accused to be a member of NPA.

In a statement by the NPA-Sorsogon, there was no NPA unit present in the area at that period. From the NPA's investigation, Ismer left his residence in Magallanes to attend to something important. On April 1, he was seen alighting from a white vehicle followed by a police mobile in Barangay Lajong. He was immediately shot to death by the men from the white vehicle. The police immediately retrieved his body and presented him as Red fighter killed in an encounter.

Meanwhile, police forces in San Remigio, Antique spread lies that

they foiled NPA-Panay's attack on their police station on March 31. This was belied by the Red fighters, who said that the PNP is using the lie as an excuse to further militarize civilian communities and to make it appear that the NPA is weakening.

Before this, on March 17, the AFP and PNP also announced a fake encounter in Barangay Mulangang, Igaras, Iloilo. Soldiers of the 61st IB strafed the village. After this, three farmers were arrested and presented as members of the NPA. The 61st IB also did the same when they arrested a Tumanduk in Barangay Masaroy, Calinog on April 16.

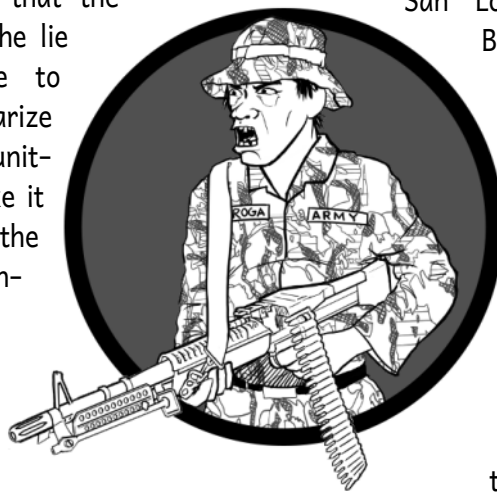
NPA-Camarines Norte contradicted the AFP's statement that there was an encounter between the PNP and NPA fighters in Barangay Tuaca, Basud in March

3. The NPA unit added that there was no encounter between the NPA and PNP, but instead was an encounter between police forces and armed syndicate supported by the military and involved in extortion activities in Mercedes, San Vicente,

San Lorenzo, Daet and Basud towns. Killed in this armed action was Jonathan Brondia, a member of the syndicate. Brondia had long been coming in and out of 22nd IB detachment in Barangay Guinatungan, San

Lorenzo. Based on the NPA's investigation, Brondia was killed to cover up his syndicate's connection to the military. Residents have long complained the presence of the said syndicate which used the NPA for their criminal and anti-social activities.

Prior to this, AFP and PNP-MI-MAROPA also faked an encounter to cover up the murder of Roland Sibulan, a farmer in Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro last March 1. (Read related article in Ang Bayan, April 7, 2019). AB



## AFP misencounters

TWO MISENCOUNTERS between AFP units rampaging in peasant communities were reported recently.

Last April 10, at 3:00 a.m., two columns of the Bravo Coy of 85th IB clashed in Sitio Labrahan, Barangay Butanguiad in San Francisco, Quezon. One column of the said unit wore civilian clothing to imitate Red fighters while the other column wore military uniforms. A soldier was killed while many were wounded.

To cover-up the fiasco, the 85th IB claimed that an encounter between their troops and NPA occurred. AFP troops also presented the killed soldier as a Red fighter despite being identified otherwise in a funeral home in San Francisco.

Meanwhile, more than 20 elements of Marine Battalion Landing Team-2 were killed by their own mortars while maneuvering against the Red fighters last February 5 in Kapuyan Blag, Barangay Datu Wasay, Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat.



# Exploitation heightens as wealth increases

**W**ealth of the biggest bourgeois compradors in the Philippines have ballooned in the last few years. In 2018, the combined wealth of the top 10 richest individuals in the country reached up to \$55.3 billion. This is because of the intensified anti-worker practices and brutal suppression of their struggles, as well as higher prices of their goods and services due to the US-Duterte regime's persistence in carrying out pro-foreign and pro-capitalists policies.

In the last 11 years, Henry Sy Sr. was considered the biggest bourgeois comprador, with a value of \$18.3 billion. Between 2016 and 2017 alone, his family's wealth increased by 31%, from \$13.7 billion to \$18 billion. When Sy died, he was replaced by Manuel Villar, with a value of \$5.5 billion. Even so, if the wealth of the richest Sy children are combined, their wealth still reaches \$6.5 billion, higher than Villar.

Following Sy and Villar, the richest Filipino individuals include John Gokongwei, Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Lucio Tan, Tony Tan Caktiong, Ramon Ang, Andrew Tan, Eduardo Cojuangco, Enrique Razon and Isidro Consunji. Manuel Pangilinan is not on the list, but he presides over the country's biggest comprador businesses.

## Close ties to foreign capital

While the wealth of the big compradors increase, their companies' ties to foreign banks and businesses also tighten.

Jollibee Foods Corporation (JFC) of the Tan Caktiong family is an example. The company went on a acquisition spree of fast food chains and restaurants in Southeast Asia, China, US and Mexico this past years. Using foreign loans and capital, JFC bought fastfood chain Smashburger in the US, Tortas Frontera in Mexico and Superfoods in Vietnam. JFC also bought Yonghe King (a noodle foodchain) and Hong Zhuang Yuan (congee foodchain) from its Chinese associates.

Like JFC, SM Malls and Lucio Tan's real estate companies also have extensive interests in China.

Meanwhile, Manuel Pangilinan's

PLDT bought foreign internet and telecommunication companies. These include Phunware in the US and Paywhere and Appcard in Singapore. Pangilinan's internet companies already have close ties with US companies like WhatsApp, Viber, Netflix and Google TV. Recently, the Ayala family acquired the C-Con Group, a German company which manufactures car parts.

## The wealthier, the more miserly and brutal

These compradors rake in millions mainly through shortchanging their workers and/or grabbing resources and lands from the poor and farmers. Their companies are considered the worst employers in the country.

In the case of the Sy family, their billions mainly come from their SM Malls. Almost all workers in these malls are contractuels, receive low wages and are not paid overtime and night differentials. They are made to work for eight hours straight without sitting breaks. The cheapskate Sys even

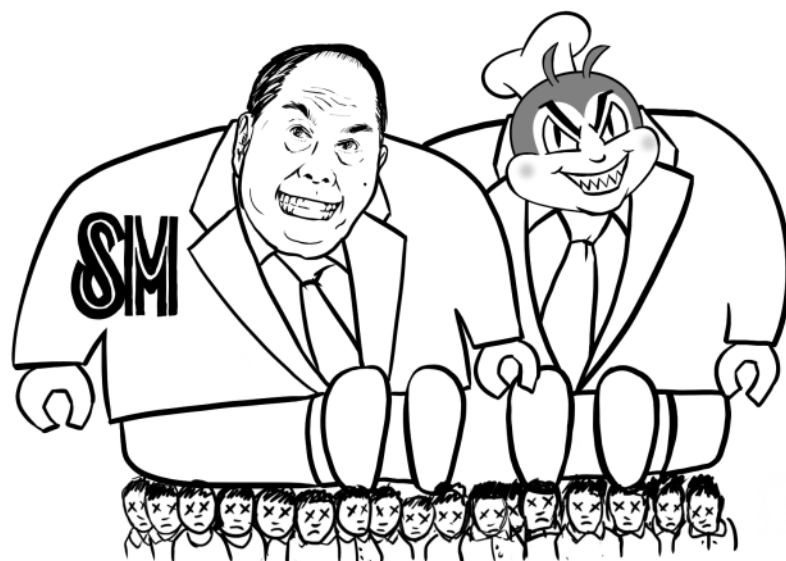
make them pay for their own uniforms.

Comprador companies not only pay miserable wages, they are also the most repressive employers. Last year, JFC laid off 400 contractuels after they demanded that they be regularized.

In 2017, Ramon Ang's San Miguel Corporation (SMC) made the news when the homes of hundreds of urban poor families in Manggahan Floodway were demolished to give way to its infrastructure project in Pasig City. This year, fisherfolks in Bulacan are set to be displaced to give way to SMC's airport project.

Also known for being evil are companies of the Consunji family which use soldiers and paramilitaries to attack and drive away Lumads and peasants from the mountains of Daguma in Far South Mindanao. After denuding Daguma, the Consunjis now want the land for plantation and to mine coal found in the area.

Companies run by Manuel Pangilinan are among the biggest, and thus, the most miserly and repressive in the country. In 2018, PLDT, the country's biggest telecommunications company, laid off 8,000 contractual workers after they insisted on being regularized. The termination was the biggest single lay-off in recent years. **AB**



## Bloated bureaucrats

THE DUTERTE FAMILY'S unexplained wealth once again made the news after a report analyzing their declared Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth when they served as local officials was made public. According to the said report, Rodrigo Duterte's wealth increased by P28.5 million from 1998 to 2017. Sara Duterte's wealth, meanwhile, increased by P44.8 million and Paolo Duterte by P22.7 million from 2007 to 2017.

Meanwhile, Manuel Villar became the richest Filipino this year. This is after his wealth rose from \$1.6 billion to \$5.5 billion due supposedly to the 1,300% in profits of his funeral services company, Golden Bria, for the first quarter of the year. Alongside this, his wife Senator Cynthia Villar is the richest senator. His son Mark Villar serves as the secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways. The Villar family is a political dynasty in Las Pinas City and is the known owner of the biggest housing companies.

## Drug syndicates inside the bureaucracy

RODRIGO DUTERTE APPOINTED a retired colonel who is in cahoots both with drug and electoral syndicates as executive director of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict last March 25.

Ret. Col. Allen Arat Capuyan is known for his role in the P6.4 billion shabu smuggling case in the Bureau of Customs (BoC) last 2017. He was then the chief security officer of the Manila International Airport Authority. He was identified by Mark Taguba, a BoC personnel who was involved in the scam, as part of the influential Davao Group whom druglords pay to have their shipments exempted from inspections. The group includes Duterte's son Paolo and son-in-law Manases Carpio.

In 2011, Capuyan's name already surfaced as the chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines who received and burned the "Hello Garci" tapes of the 2004 elections. The tape contained the negotiation between Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the presidentiable, and Virgilio Garcillano, Commission on Elections commissioner, for an additional one million votes for Arroyo.

Another individual, a certain Michael Yang, a Chinese businessman and Duterte's close advisor on Chinese issues, was identified as an associate in the widescale production and sale of shabu in Mindanao and Luzon.

In a report submitted by then PSSupt. Eduardo Acierto, Yang and his associates Johnson Chua and Allan Lim were directly implicated in the smuggling and selling of drugs mainly in Mindanao. According to Acierto's report, Yang and Lim supervise shabu distribution inside the country and in nearby countries using their BoC contacts while Chua takes care of their laboratories. Lim and Yang get as much as P50,000 per kilo of shabu, according to Acierto. This syndicate uses their legitimate businesses as a cover for their illegal transactions.

Capuyan and Yang are just a few of the personalities in Duterte's ambit who have direct links to drug syndicates. He gives them the freedom to plunder and exploit the nation, in exchange for their money, loyalty and support to his dictatorial ambitions.

## Justice for Negros 14!

VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS condemned the massacre of 14 peasants in Negros last March 30 by state forces. They held programs and protests within and outside the country to demand justice.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), Malaya Movement and International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) spearheaded the International Day of Protest last April 10. Hundreds of peasants, human rights defenders and their supporters marched from Morayta to Mendiola in Manila to hold the Duterte regime responsible for the widespread peasant killings.

The ICHRP launched similar protests in 18 centers in the US, Canada, Australia, Britain, Belgium, The Netherlands, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Hongkong, Senegal and Sri Lanka.

Prior to this, peasants and Bayan members protested in front of Camp Crame, Quezon City, while youth and students protested in UP Diliman, General Santos at Manila City on April 2. The following day, protests were also held in Davao, Iloilo and Cebu City.

The alliance "Stop the Attacks! Defend Life and Rights!" was founded in Cebu City on April 10. Among its speakers was the Most Rev. Gerardo Alminaza, D.D., a bishop in San Carlos City in Negros Occidental.

Meanwhile, a concert of unity and struggle billed "Fight Sauron" was organized by the Sama-samang Artista para sa Kilusang Agraryo (SAKA) and Concerned Artists of the Philippines in Kamuning, Quezon City last April 12.



## The People's Calvary

THE KALIPUNAN NG Damayang Mahihirap (KADAMAY) and Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) spearheaded the protest of hundreds of progressives at Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila on April 12. The protest action dubbed as the "Kalbaryo ng Mamamayan" (People's Calvary) depicts issues that are shouldered by the people under the US-Duterte regime.

Among the highlights of the protest were demands for justice over the Negros 14 massacre and to junk the TRAIN law, and the people's resistance against Duterte's ambition to establish a fascist dictatorship. Similar protests, dubbed as "Kalbaryo sang Pumuluyong Pilipino 2019" were mounted in Iloilo City and Kabankalan City on April 11.

On April 17, members of Anakpawis held a picket in front of Camp Crame in Quezon City. They compared the cross to the widespread killings and the onerous TRAIN law which are currently shouldered by and impoverishing the people.

In Bukidnon, hundreds of Lumads and peasants launched the "Kampuhan sa Kabus batok sa Balaod Militar" (Camp of the poor against Martial Law) on April 9 in Valencia City. They intended to proceed Cagayan de Oro City where other Lumads and peasants, who were evicted from their communities due to militarization, are currently encamped. They were blocked at a checkpoint in Manolo Fortich and were barred from proceeding to their target.

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**Filipino migrants protest in US.** In Washington DC, the Malaya movement led a die-in protest in the US Senate led at least 300 individuals in condemning the Duterte regime's killing campaign and demand a stop to the provision of US military aid to the reactionary government of the Philippines.

The Duterte regime received \$184.5 million in military aid in 2018 and is expecting to receive an additional \$108 million this year.

**Sumifru workers' victory.** Workers under the NAMAUFU-NA-FLU-KMU won their labor case for the reinstatement of more than 665 workers who were illegally terminated by the management of Sumifru Philippines in Compostela, Compostella Valley. However, the management did not recognize and implement the labor order issued by the National Labor Relations Commis-

sion on March 25 to reinstate the workers. On April 12, the workers protested in front of the headquarters of Sumifru to demand its compliance with the said order.

**Nexperia workers' protest.** Workers of Procter & Gamble and members of WALR-Nexperia-LIGA protested in front of the Light Industry and Science Park Gate 1 in Calamba City, Laguna on April 2 to demand the compliance of Nexperia with the order issued by the Department of Labor and Employment for the regularization of its 182 workers, as previously agreed upon by LIGA and the management.

**Drivers' protest.** PISTON spearheaded a picket protest of jeepney drivers and operators in Cubao last April 8 to condemn the continuous surge in the price of oil and other commodities.

## Foxconn to dismiss 100,000 workers

FOXCONN TECHNOLOGY, one of the world's biggest manufacturing companies, is planning to dismiss 100,000 workers in China and other parts of the world. Last year, it already fired 30,000 workers in its Zhengzhou factory.

Foxconn is one of the biggest contract producers of iPhones for Apple. Due to stiff competition, Apple announced that sales in China fell for the first time in two decades last year. More than 20% of its sales is in China.

More than half of Foxconn's profits come from producing iPhones. Due to Apple's weak sales, Foxconn's plans to put up big factories in Brazil, the Maharashtra in India and Pennsylvania and Wisconsin in US did not materialize.