



EDITORIAL

Expose and oppose Duterte's rotten and oppressive congress

The competition of bureaucrat-capitalists vying for positions escalated quickly after the elections. No less than four expressed their intention to become the Speaker of the House of Representatives. In the Senate, senators are involved in armtwisting to get hold of powerful committees.

Even as they compete against each other, these politicians and parties actually unite with Duterte's agenda and dictates. In fact, they are all part of Duterte's supermajority in both Houses. Two are members of PDP-Laban—Lord Allan Velasco of Marinduque and former Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez. The two other contenders are Nacionalista Party's (NP) Alan Peter Cayetano of Taguig City who was Duterte's running mate in 2016, and Lakas-CMD's Martin Romualdez of Leyte who is a first cousin of Imee Marcos. As of today, neither of the four

none has a clear chance of getting a majority vote.

In the senate, rumors that Cynthia Villar of NP will be replacing its president Vicente Sotto abound. She is supported by they new senators from the Hugpong ng Pagbabago (HNP) who threatened to establish a "new majority" in the Senate if Sotto fails to give them chairmanships of their desired committees. HNP, Sotto's allied Party, is led by Duterte's daughter Sara.

Despite seeming rivalries, Du-

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Court issues writs of Amparo & habeas data

THE SUPREME COURT issued writs of amparo and habeas data in favor of Karapatan, Gabriela and Rural Missionaries of the Philippines last May 24. As per the writs, state agencies are obliged to cease from persecuting the groups until accusations against the latter are proved and justified.

The petition was filed by the said groups after being subjected to continuous attacks by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) which tagged them as "front organizations" of the CPP. The groups asserted that the successive killings, filing of trumped-up charges, harassment and intimidation against their members are a result of AFP's Red-tagging campaign.

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terte's dominance over the new Senate and Congress is evident. A number of ambitious politicians seeking to get his endorsement pledged to advance his agenda. Foremost of which is his bogus federalism through charter change which has been stuck in Senate. This is in conjunction with other measures for intensified state fascism, including proposals to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility, implement mandatory military training of students, and amend the Human Security Act.

These politicians are completely silent over Duterte's bloodlust, corruption and subservience to foreign powers. On the one hand, they prove that they are all one and the same in essence. On the other hand, their submissiveness exposes the cruelty of the ruling clique. Duterte controls the whole state machinery—from intelligence to tax agencies—and he has no qualms of using it to suppress even his own allies. He is ensuring that no group, even within his clique, will be able to

come up with the numbers or strength to challenge his control over the state.

This rivalry is said to be a competition of big businesses as well. The Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) is a bloc that is allied with bourgeois comprador Eduardo Cojuangco. The National Unity Party (NUP) is headed by Ronaldo Puno and its operations funded by Enrique Razon. NP is currently dominated by the Villar family.

The rivalry of these crooked politicians revolves around issues of monopolization of fat government contracts, acquiring franchises of public utilities, shutting down proposals that are detrimental to their businesses and the creation of laws that favor their interests.


Duterte is making it appear that the competition for the Congress leadership is "free-for-all." In truth, however, no competition for the House Speakership and the Senate Presidency have been resolved without the intervention of the incumbent president. As in the past, Duterte will decide in favor of

the representative who can give him the most benefit, as well as the said congressman's degree of closeness to him and his family. He wont hesitate to replace any ally who fails to serve his interest.

The rivalry and competition in congress is a reflection of the rotten ruling political system in the Philippines. The congress of the reactionary state is dominated by bureaucrat-capitalists. In particular, the 18th Congress that is set to open will certainly support and advance Duterte's fascism and corruption, as well as his oppressive and treasonous agenda.

Duterte's congress must be assiduously exposed and opposed. The people must arduously resist and convey their firm dissent primarily against Duterte's plan to overhaul the 1987 constitution to pave the way for reinforcing his dictatorial rule.

The opening of congress in the coming weeks must be met with militant and broad protests to convey the nation's readiness to resist any of its plans that will oppress, suppress and assail the interests of the Filipino people. AB





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A writ of amparo is a protection order issued by the Supreme Court for groups being persecuted by the state. A writ of habeas data, on the other hand, obligates state agencies to turn over and destroy all information of the military and police against the groups.

This is a slap on the face of the AFP. However, the final order is yet to be issued by the court after hearing the petition. The first hearing will be held on June 18.

This Supreme Court ruling for a writ of amparo and habeas data is the second for the month of May. On May 3, it also favored the petition of the National Union of Peo

"Writ...", continued on page 2

Fed up with lies

EVEN DELFIN LORENZANA, a lackey of the US, got fed up with Rodrigo Duterte's lies and treating the people stupid. On May 29, he openly contradicted Duterte's duplicitous claim for several months now that legitimate organizations, the political opposition, journalists, lawyers and even television personalities are conspiring with the revolutionary movement to oust him.

Lorenzana said that the ouster plot is fake as nothing is heard about it in the military. Lorenzana downplayed the ouster plot to refute news that there are rifts within the military and police.

The statement came few weeks after two ouster matrices implicating several personalities in the conspiracy were deceptively peddled by Sal Panelo, Duterte's spokesperson. Panelo and Duterte used the matrices during the elections to vilify the opposition. The first matrix was a response to a video where Peter Joemel Advincula, alias Bikoy, accused Duterte, his henchmen and family as biggest protectors of drug syndicates. Few weeks after surfacing, Advincula contradicted his earlier statements saying that he only made the accusations as directed by

the political opposition.

The clamor of the people to oust the Duterte regime—that is notorious for corruption, widespread killings and treason—is undeniably broad. To counter this, the regime is making it appear that aboveground organizations are conniving with the armed movement to illegalize their legitimate demands and condemnation of abuses perpetrated by the regime.

Prof. Jose Ma. Sison has since laid down the requisites to ousting the incumbent president. Among these are the support of the political opposition and military at the time when Duterte is completely isolated. However, this isolation will primarily be brought about by the strong push of the mass movement and rifts among the reactionaries. AB

"Writ..." from page 2

ple's Lawyers. AFP representative did not show up at the Court of Appeals hearing of the petition last June 6.

Meanwhile, the Lower House passed a bill that will give protection to human rights defenders on its third reading last June 6.. One hundred eighty-three voted in favor of the bill.

Representative of the Makabayan bloc and Rep. Edcel Lagman stood as the proponents of the bill. It will enforce the protection of human rights defenders against harassment and rights violations. If enacted, a Human Rights Defenders Protection Committee will be constituted and spearheaded by the Commissioner of the Commission on Human Rights and six other members that will be nominated by the organization.

Karapatan recorded 697 cases of extrajudicial killings of human rights defenders from 2001 to 2018. AB

Distressing "Kapanatagan"

THE ARMED FORCES of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Benjamin Madrigal Jr. and Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Oscar Albayalde signed last January 10 the Joint the AFP-PNP Campaign Plan "Kapanatagan" 2019-2022 to strengthen coordination and cooperation between military and police forces in its counterinsurgency and suppression campaigns.

Its declared objective is to "defeat all threats to national security." "Kapanatagan" (stability) is anchored on Rodrigo Duterte's Executive Order 70 which established the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict.

Under "Kapanatagan," regional Joint Peace and Security Coordination Committees, composed of the AFP, PNP, local government units and civilian agencies, will be created. The AFP has full control over the operational funds of "Kapanatagan." It also has direct command over the PNP, with local gov-

ernment authorities having almost no power over the police forces under their jurisdiction. In the National Capital Region, this was named Implementation Plan "Kalasag."

The military will spearhead the attacks on those it accuses as "communists" and organizations tagged as "communist fronts" both in the countryside and urban centers. The police on the other hand will serve as supporting forces in AFP combat operations. Aside from this, the PNP will spearhead arrests, planting of evidence and filing of trumped-up charges against

targeted individuals.

Oplan Sauron, which was implemented in Negros in December 2018-January 2019, was implemented under Kapanatagan. Similar tactics are being employed in other parts of the country.

In Masbate, the NPA reported on May 31 the rampage of "Kapanatagan" in barangays Dalipe, Panan-awan, RM Magbalon, Guiom, Taberna, Cabayugan, Calumpang and Iraya in the town of Cawayan. The 2nd IB and PNP-Masbate scoured the said areas and coerced village heads to sign agreements prohibiting residents from joining rallies. Military and police forces ransacked houses and stole personal belongings, including 80 canvans of palay, domestic animals and the residents' P11,000-savings. AB

The two-year martial law is bane to the people

The people of Mindanao have been living in terror and poverty for two months now since Rodrigo Duterte declared martial law in the island.. Nobody believes anymore that the imposition aims to foil the terrorism threat of the Maute group. This has long been exposed as one of schemes to establish an unrestrained and perpetual fascist dictatorship across the country.

The imposition of martial law on Mayo 23, 2017 is among Duterte's gravest abuse of power. His bombing of Marawi City for five months, resulting in the death of hundreds of individuals and the destruction of P18-billion worth of properties, can be considered as a crime against humanity. This case, along with extrajudicial killings committed under his drug war, can be filed at international courts.

The plight of the Maranaos

Up to the present, 100,000 Marawi residents who were displaced when the AFP attacked the city are still without decent housing. A report by the International Committee of the Red Cross issued last May indicate that most evacuees are still in evacuation centers, temporary settlements or in houses of relatives in Mindanao, Visayas and even Luzon. Around 50,000 are not allowed to return nor temporarily visit the center of the city called Ground Zero which was hardest hit by AFP bombings.

Many evacuees are suffering from hunger, diseases and depression. Since last year, food aid sup-

port from humanitarian institutions has been decreasing. Financial aid is very minimal. It was reported on May that the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD) only shelled out P10,000 from the P36.92-million donation fund it was able to solicit for the evacuees. The OCD is deliberately make it difficult for evacuees to apply for aid by requiring them to present documents that they lost along with their other properties and homes.

In addition, the request of Marawi residents to find their relatives were in vain. Up to the present, many are still waiting for DNA results that will identify cadavers buried in mass graves. Academics estimate that around 2,000-2,500 were killed when Marawi was besieged, a number which is far from the regime's 1,200 estimate.

Marawi residents are enraged that they were deliberately disregarded in the rehabilitation plan and that it was turned over to foreign companies and their comprador counterparts. They are fed up with the very slow rehabilitation process amid the haste of con-

structing a military camp at the city center. They were further enraged with Duterte's accusation that the city is a "drug den" and his statement that wealthy Maranaos should shoulder the cost themselves to rebuild the city.

Hundred thousand abuses

Karapatan documented 800,000 victims of human rights violations in Mindanao since the declaration of martial law. Among the victims are 93 murdered activists, 136 victims of attempted killing, 1,400 of illegal arrests and detention, 29,000 of threat, harassment and intimidation, and 423,500 of forcible evacuation from communities. Karapatan also recorded 4,428 incidents of military occupation and use of civilian infrastructures.

Brutal crimes were perpetrated during the second year of martial law. This includes the massacre of seven youths in Patikul by AFP troopers and two bombing incidents in Catholic churches in Jolo, both in Sulu. The AFP is using the "war on terrorism" as pretext to intensify militarization of Moro communities. This resulted in more Moro evacuees. In the first quarter of this year alone, relentless military evacuation resulted in the evacuation of 16,300 residents.

Simultaneous with attacks on Moro communities were relentless attacks against Lumad and peasant communities. Lumad schools, which were particularly targeted by the AFP, sustained a number of attacks. In the past two years, the fascist regime closed down 79 schools with around 2,782 teachers and students. Three students were killed by soldiers and paramilitary elements. Remaining schools are in constant danger and survive only with the help of communities and support from various sectors.

Court convicts union organizer

Unjust and condemnable. This was Karapatan's reaction to the conviction of unionist Marklen Maojo B. Maga by the San Mateo Rizal Regional Trial Court Branch 76 based on a trumped-up charge of illegal possession of firearms last June 3. Maoj's family was extremely dismayed with the conviction.

Maga, who is currently detained in the Metro Manila District Jail 4 in Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig City, faces eight years of imprisonment. He is set to be transferred to the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa. He was also charged with a fabricated murder case in Agusan del Norte, a place he has never been to before.

Maga, an organizer of Piston, was arrested on February 22, 2018 near his house in San Mateo, Rizal.

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ADB loans: Further consolidation of foreign control over K-12 implementation

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is further consolidating its control over the implementation of the K-12 program. This May, the ADB and the Duterte regime signed the Secondary Education Support Program, a \$300-million loan agreement which particularly aims to "refine" the K-12 curriculum based on capitalist demands. The ADB is using the loan agreement to impose its recommendations and programs for the implementation of the K-12 program from 2019 to 2023.

Since the enactment of K-12 in 2013 based on the recommendations of the (WB), the ADB and the WB has aggressively directed and controlled its implementation.

The Secondary Education Support Program, is essentially a continuation of the \$300-million Senior High School (SHS) Support Program (2014-2020) loan agreement.

The program links loan disbursement to the Philippine government's compliance with ADB's pre-identified results. This includes the restructuring of the SHS curriculum, along with the Technical Vocational and Livelihood track, to increase graduates' marketability in the local and global labor markets.

It targets to increase the study of Mathematics, Science and English to improve the score of SHS students in the National Achievement Test and the *national certificate assessment* for those taking up technical and vocational courses.

It particularly aims to refine specialization trainings that will equip students with skills on *agri-fishery*, *culinary arts*, *information technology*, *welding* and *maritime services* among others. These courses are in demand in Japan, Canada, countries in the Middle East and the US.

In addition, trainings will be conducted for public teachers assigned to teach these specializations.

The loan compels the government to appropriate \$1.55 billion in

2019-2023 (from \$1.52 in 2014-2019) for the Education Service Contracting and the SHS Voucher System to subsidize the enrollment of students who cannot be accommodated in public schools. The said programs were designed based on the principles of public-private partnership (PPP) in the education sector. The former loan also aimed to gradually increase enrollment in private high schools from 20% in 2012 to 40% this 2019.

In addition, the new loan compels the government to appropriate \$2.92 billion for the construction of education facilities—including classrooms, laboratories and workshops—under PPP contracts. This is more than double the \$1.42 billion appropriation it required under the earlier loan agreement.

Training using government funds

The new reforms which purportedly aim to enhance the competency of graduates only actually aim to satisfy the demands of foreign corporations to exploit labor-

ers further. Private companies will not even have to spend to train them anymore. At present, only local fast-food companies (including Jollibee and Chowking among others) and local governments hire SHS graduates. Even before the implementation of the SHS program, they already hire 18-year old high school graduates.

The Filipino people, through the budget appropriated for secondary education, will shoulder the training of cheap laborers who will eventually be hired by foreign companies. In the past two years, billions of funds were appropriated for the program. In 2018, more than P7.1 billion was appropriated for the implementation of the program and the construction of public high schools, while P20 billion was appropriated as subsidy for the enrollment of private school students who cannot be accommodated in public schools. A large chunk of the budget for public high schools are allocated for technical-vocational trainings.

This is on top of the more than P100,000/student that is spent by parents for the additional two years of SHS in public schools, and more than P200,000/student in private schools.

"ADB..." continued on page 6



Medals and promotion for fascism

DUTERTE REWARDED his henchmen in the Armed Forces of the Philippines with medals and promotion. Last June 5, the Commission on Appointments (CA) confirmed the promotion of 50 military officials spearheading militarization and the perpetration of abuses in the countryside. These promotions are an epitome of injustice, said the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. The hands of his mercenaries in the military are drenched in blood and each medal awarded to them further mocks the killing of national minorities and peasants.

Among those confirmed by the CA were Lt. Gen. Felimon T. Santos, commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command, which sows terror and perpetrates human rights abuses in the regions of Davao and Caraga until today. Maj. Gen. Gilbert Gapay was also promoted. He is the commander of the Southern Luzon Command which attacked peasant and Mangyan communities in Mindoro and Dumagat communities in Quezon. It conducted bombings in Mindoro which resulted in the forcible evacuation of around 1,000 Mangyans.

Also promoted were Col. Jonathan Gayas, a psywar official of the 3rd ID and Brig. Gen. Alberto Deso-

yo of the 303rd IBde, both based in Negros. The two are responsible for the relentless militarization and the perpetration of tortures and massacres in the island.

Meanwhile, retired Col. Allen Capuyan was appointed as chair of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples last May 27. Earlier, Capuyan was also appointed as the Executive Director of the *national secretariat* of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict.

AFP battalion and brigade officials who spearhead intelligence and psywar operations and forced surrender campaign against civilians were also promoted. AB

"ADB..," from page 5

Cheap but unmarketable

The first batch of Grade 12 students under the K-12 program graduated in 2018. More than 1.25 million young Filipinos graduated and expected to be immediately hired. Thirty-nine percent of the students graduated under the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood track.

Contrary to the promise of the program, even employers from the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) expressed that they doubt that the graduates are ready for employment.

The PCCI said that an 80-hour work immersion is insufficient to prepare the graduates for employment. Similarly, only two out of ten employers are willing to hire SHS graduates.

At present, two batches of Grade 12 students graduated under the said curriculum. This June, about three million students are expected to enroll in SHS. AB

TRAIN: Regressive taxation

EVEN AGENCIES of the reactionary government cannot deny the adverse effect of the TRAIN law on the economy. A research by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies published on December 2018 indicate that the imposition of new taxes have adversely affected the manufacturing sector and worsened the plight of the poorest Filipino families.

The research indicates that lower manufacturing output and employment generation in the sector is a long-term effect of the new taxes levied on carbon and petroleum used as fuel for production and the transportation of products. Small and medium-scale businesses are most affected by this as they are least capable of renting large trucks to transport their products. In another research, the agency stressed that the poorest

families now pay more out of their incomes as a result of the new taxes levied on sugar-sweetened beverages.

Both studies validate the longstanding position of Ibon Foundation that the taxation policy implemented under the TRAIN law is regressive. This means that it imposes a higher tax burden on the poorest than those from higher income deciles. This is despite the tax exemption for individuals earn-

ing P250,000 annually. Many already criticized this deceptive scheme, as the personal tax exemption was implemented along with the imposition of taxes on food and transportation.

IBON said that the income of the highest earning 40% grew while that of the toiling masses shrank under the first year implementation of TRAIN law. The income of those earning P25,000 and above monthly increased by P1,000-P33,000 over the the year, while those of the poorest 60% with wages that are just sufficient or lower than the budgetary requirement for their daily needs are cut by P800-P4,000. AB

Police disperses picket in front of CHEd

POLICE FORCES violently dispersed the protest mounted by students in front of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on May 30. The group condemned the Supreme Court decision which favors CHEd Memo No. 20.

Daryl Babaydo, national president of the College Editors' Guild of the Philippines criticized CHEd Commissioner Prospero de Vera's statement lauding the Supreme Court decision recognizing the constitutionality of CHEd Memo No. 20 which removes Filipino and Panitikan (Literature) from the college curriculum. Babaydo said that the approval of the said memo will only worsen the commercialized and colonial orientation of the educational system in the country.

Rep. Sarah Elago of Kabataan Partylist also criticized the hypocrisy of the Duterte administration. Aside from the memo, the regime is also railroading the enactment of the mandatory Reserved Officers Training Corps (ROTC) in senior high school. "The two-facedness of the regime is detestable: it claims to promote "nationalism" through the implementation of mandatory ROTC but seeks the removal of the study of our language," added Elago.

Meanwhile, various youth groups and teachers converged in Mendiola on June 3, coinciding with the opening of classes, to hold the US-Duterte regime accountable over the worsening state of education in the country.

"We condemn Duterte's attacks not only on the youth's right to education, but also on the attack on our identity, sovereignty and rights. The youth and people will again have to shoulder higher tuition and other school fees, and suffer from the continuing K-12 program and reforms such as mandatory ROTC and CHEd Memorandum No. 20," said Raoul Manuel, national spokesperson of the National Union of Students of the Philippines.

"Through the attack on our language, the Duterte regime seeks to detach the Filipino youth from their rich history and real identity and kill critical consciousness," said Kara Lenina Taggaoa of the League of Filipino Students.

The Kabataan Partylist called on the Filipino youth to resist the attacks on education and other democratic rights.

"We must give our all to defend the nation from the onslaught of tyranny. We must defend our national language and identity from erasure, our sovereignty from foreign intervention and market dominance, and our education from further commercialization and disenfranchisement. We continue to march and safeguard our rights and future!" ended Elago. AB



Duterte railroads fascist laws

THE DUTERTE REGIME is railroading the enactment of more repressive amendments to the Human Security Act (HSA) or the Anti-Terror Law, and Mandatory ROTC for senior high school students before the 17th Congress closes. The bill on Mandatory Military Service is also being prepared for the opening of the Duterte-dominated 18th Congress.

The amendments to the HSA aim to obscure the definition of terrorism. Suspicion alone can justify surveillance, arrest and detention for two weeks. By expanding the definition, even rallies and strikes can be considered terrorism. Democratic sectors stood up against such provisions since 2007.

Meanwhile, the ROTC is being railroaded to strengthen military domination in various social aspects, including education. The course will instill militarism among the youth to make them docile.

Duterte is railroading the enactment of these bills so that he can immediately use these to suppress the impoverished and enraged people, and wield his power to establish his dictatorship.

Anti-endo. Workers from the Zagu Foods Corporation launched a protest last June 6 in front of the company office in Barangay Kapitolyo, Pasig City. The workers are demanding an end to the "Endo" (end-of-contract) scheme and the company's failure to compensate them with benefits. The company has also successfully harassed their union. AB

Soldiers arrest 4 farmers in Mindoro

Soldiers illegally arrested four farmers at Sitio Pusog, Barangay Brigada, Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro on May 23. Soldiers blindfolded and interrogated Raul Ibañez, Nonoy Obsegha, Boy Militar and Diego Panas. Ibañez and Obsegha were taken to the military camp in Barangay Burgos.

In Laguna, Christopher Esabia was shot dead by members of the Philippine National Police (PNP)-Calabarzon in Barangay Palma 2, Alaminos on May 26. Esabia was a member of the NPA-Rizal in 2004. He has long cut ties with the NPA.

Violent demolition. Joint forces of the PNP and Philippine Marines violently demolished houses in Sitio Racat, Barangay Rapuli, Sta. Ana, Cagayan last April 24. Sixteen residents were arrested, many of whom are women.

Residents have lived in the area for 30 years. Their lands were stolen by Cadilland Inc., a real estate developer. A demolition was attempted earlier in April but was frustrated by the residents' unity.

After only a five-day warning from the DENR, six poor farmers' houses were illegally demolished at Sitio Laguis, Sindun Bayabo, Ilagan City on May 29.

Representatives of the DPWH, DENR and the City Engineering Department promised to stop the demolition so a dialogue between the residents and the governor can be

conducted. On the next day, 10 houses and the farmers' cornfields were destroyed.

In Bukidnon, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) arrested four members of the Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay)-Bukidnon. Randy Montillano, Jessel Montillano, Christine Ara Montillano and Wilfredo Darap were arrested at around 9 a.m. based on a warrant for trumped-up charges of frustrated murder dated April 14, 2018.

PEPMACO layoffs. Twenty workers and the PEPMACO Workers' Union leader were illegally laid off last June 3. Two of the workers were warned after participating in an assembly against the company. Last June 4, the PEPMACO union submitted a strike notice.

Harassment against workers intensified after organizing their union last January. Thirty-seven workers and four union leaders have been dismissed successively.

Meanwhile, workers of IQOR Bacolod have long endured inhumane 10-hour workdays. Last May

29, they filed a complaint at the DOLE-Region VI Bacolod with the assistance of the BPO Industry Employees' Network (BIEN) Bacolod.

Last June 2, unidentified armed men shot dead Dennis Sequena while he was in a meeting with fellow workers in Barangay Bunga, Tanza, Cavite. Sequena was Partido Manggagawa's provincial vice president.

In Butuan City, suspected AFP elements shot-dead Esther Betonio last June 2, 6:20 p.m., at Sitio Landing, Barangay Tungao. Betonio, who was riding a motorcycle driven by her husband, was on her way home from fetching water when the suspects approached and shot her. Her husband survived.

Betonio was a member of the Unyon sa Mag-uuma sa Agusan del Norte (UMAN) and has long been accused by the military of being an NPA member and was coerced to surrender. She was an efficient leader in their area.

An investigation by the NPA-Agusan del Norte indicate that the suspects retreated directly to the military camp in Lower Olave after committing the crime.

On the next day, Eddie Versoza, another UMAN member, was shot-dead at around 6 p.m. in the same barrio. AB

State forces sow Sauron-like terrorism nationwide

SAURON-LIKE OPERATIONS, wherein soldiers and police swarm entire barangays and intimidate, suppress and harass residents, are prevalent across the country.

Soldiers of the 2nd IB and Military Intelligence Company and police forces occupied eight barangays in Masbate since the last week of May. (See details on page 3.) In Barangay Dalipe, 11 residents were illegally arrested.

In North Cotabato, 73rd IB elements occupied houses at Sitio Bantaa, Barangay Bagumbayan, Magpet on May 28.

In Davao Oriental, 67th IB troopers encamped in houses and a

church in barangays Binbondo and Mahan-ub, Baganga on May 27-29.

In an assembly, parents expressed their alarm and fear as they were coerced by soldiers to sign documents prohibiting them from enrolling their children in the community school. Soldiers threatened to withhold their 4Ps benefits if they fail to comply.

Meanwhile, on May 18, the paramilitary group Alamara, along with soldiers in plainclothes, attacked the

UCCP Haran in Davao City where Lumads from Talaingod, Davao del Norte, temporarily evacuated.

They forcibly took with them 31 individuals, herded them onto a truck and announced that they "escaped." Pasaka, a peasant group, fear that the military will intimidate the 31 and then use them against their fellow evacuees.

In Negros Oriental, soldiers illegally arrested Jiesel Castin of Anakbayan-Negros on May 24 in Siaton. The military has not surfaced Castin and made it appear that he "surrendered." AB

CDO journalists resist Red-tagging

THE NATIONAL UNION of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) lauded the bravery of the Cagayan de Oro Press Club members who took down a streamer tagging the NUJP and other groups as “terrorists” last May 28. The streamer was hung at the fence of the Press Freedom Monument in Vicente de Lara Park, Cagayan de Oro where members of the media celebrated the Press Freedom Week. They burned the streamer as a sign of protest.

In a related news, the Iloilo City Council junked Police Director Lt. Col. Martin Defensor’s proposal to declare the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army as “persona non grata” in Iloilo City. No councilor approved the proposal.

City Council Floor Leader Plaridel Nava said that he does not understand why the police insists on declaring the CPP and NPA as “terrorist organizations” when there are no laws declaring these as such. AB

CPI-Maoist launches series of armed actions

THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION Guerrilla Army (PLGA) led by the Communist Party of India (Maoist) launched a series of armed actions from May until the first week of June. This came after the killings of Ramko Narote, a CPI-Maoist member and Shilpa Dhurva, a guerrilla, on April 27 in Gundurwahi.

The police and military sustained an estimated 79 casualties in these attacks. The armed encounters ensued in Gadchirolli, in the region of Jarkhand, in Maharashtra, and Chhattisgarh.

Among those attacked by the PLGA were soldiers of the 209th Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (COBRA), a team that specializes on anti-Maoist operations.

Forty PLGA fighters attacked and controlled the Timurpalli district of Malkangiri in Odisha on May 19. The PLGA overran the office of the local government. The actions were launched in opposition to the anti-minority activities conducted and fake encounters peddled by the soldiers in the area.

In Gadchirolli, the PLGA blasted a production equipment and two warehouses on May 20, paralyzing the production in the district.

These actions prove the determination of the PLGA and CPI-Maoist to continuously carry the people's war in India forward. AB

Trump's impeachment gains ground

CALLS TO impeach US President Trump are intensifying. This followed the release last May 30 of the Office of the Legal Counsel's (OLC) report on its investigation regarding Russia's intervention in the 2016 presidential elections.

The report detailed the widespread and systematic social media campaign for Trump by Russian company Internet Research Agency and its close links with Trump's specialists and spokespersons. The report also revealed the attacks by Russian hackers against Trump's opponent Hillary Clinton and the disclosure of sensitive and harmful information used by Trump's team during the campaign.

Although the report failed to prove the conspiracy between Trump and Russia, it detailed the series of meetings between Trump's campaign officers and individuals from the Russian government during the campaign. Among those who attended meetings frequently was Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner. Kushner is a "special adviser" to the Trump administration. During the OLC's 2-year investigation, Trump's men also repeatedly misled

and blocked the investigation.

With the publication of the report, OLC chief Robert Mueller said that the only reason why no case has been filed against Trump is because the constitution prohibits the trial of an incumbent president.

However, many believe that the report may be used as evidence in an impeachment.

The OLC released the report in March this year but was blocked by

Trump's lawyers. This was submitted to the US Congress in April and its redacted version was made public only in May. On the day the report was made public, Trump denied the allegation that he cooperated with a foreign government in order to win, and said that he knows nothing of Russia's intervention. AB



Discussions on the Philippine revolution in France

LAST MAY 25, the Juenes Révolutionnaires (Revolutionary Youth) in France conducted a study meeting on the Filipino revolution being led by the Communist Party of the Philippines. Local revolutionary and anti-fascist organizations attended. They discussed the liberation movement in the Philippines, particularly the people's armed struggle.

A discussion on the people's war in India and the Philippines was also conducted on April 19 as part of the commemoration of the Week against Imperialism.

In addition to expressing their solidarity, the participants demanded the immediate release of Prof. GN Saibaba and all other political prisoners in India and across the globe. They also demanded an end to "Green Hunt," a genocide operation in India. AB

Brexit and the crisis that plagues the UK

Theresa May tearfully announced her resignation as the United Kingdom's prime minister last May 24 after failing to come up with a Brexit agreement thrice. The UK was supposed to withdraw from the European Union last March but failed to do so after UK ministers failed to pass May's Brexit plan.

What is Brexit?

Brexit is a shorter form of Britain + exit, a term used for the UK's withdrawal from the European Union economic bloc. David Cameron came up with the concept in 2013 to resolve the question on the European Union's advantages for Britain. Cameron believed the referendum will solve the intense anti-Europe stance of some members of his Conservative Party, and thus ease his presidency in a country that is plagued by an economic crisis.

The Britons are left with two options—to remain or withdraw from the EU.

Cameron was overly confident that the "remain" option would win. Contrarily, the "leave" option prevailed in the national referendum held on June 23, 2016. The win was

attributed to the people's reaction to the crisis affecting their jobs and austerity measures which have been adversely affecting the country for decades. Far-right parties exploited this sentiment to blame the crisis on UK's loose policies on migrants.

What is the Brexit agreement?

May's Brexit plan includes provisions on relations of businesses in the UK and other EU countries; on the rights of its people in other EU countries and vice versa; and on its relation with Northern Ireland which serves as passageway for both products and people from the UK and the EU. The agreement also indicates that the UK will pay its 39 billion euro (\$50 billion) loan to the EU. Accompanying the agreement is a statement for UK's future relations with the EU in the fields of trade, defense and security.

UK ministers failed to pass this agreement thrice. Among the points of contention were the arrangements with Northern

Ireland which serve as the border between the UK and EU. The call for "No-deal" Brexit, or UK's withdrawal from the EU without agreeing to anything and without paying a €39 billion fine, is growing. If this materializes, UK will lose its trade privileges with EU countries.

As of now, nothing is certain about Brexit, making businesses and the people extremely anxious.

Worsening crisis

The new UK prime minister will face worsening political and economic crisis, with or without a Brexit agreement. For now, the economy is estimated to grow only by 4% up to 9% in the next 15 years.

Although the final date for Brexit has been set on October 15, some companies have already relocated their operations to other countries, including Airbus which employs 14,000 workers and supports around 100,000 other jobs. Sony has also been relocated to Singapore and P&Q is also set to leave.

As some foreign investors are backing out, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders reported in April that the industry only produced 70,971 vehicles which is lower compared to the 127,970 produced during the same month last year. Around 44.5% of these are Jaguar, Land Rover, BMW and Peugeot cars.

The Britons also fear that there might be a food and medical supply shortage without a proper Brexit agreement.

