



EDITORIAL

Manifest the people's anger and power

Without a doubt, Duterte is the Philippine's national bully. Plated in armor, he acts as if he is invincible.

He controls his armed minions who never fail to comply with all his orders. Tens of thousands of have been killed and millions are terrorized. He controls the people's money. He has congress in his pockets and holds the court by their necks. Whoever stands in the way is squashed and arbitrarily linked to drugs. Whoever makes a stand is a communist ally.

The whole country is under his tyranny. The entire people suffer. There are no jobs and no land to till. Wages remain low while prices continue to soar. The Dutertes get richer, along with their syndicates, favored oligarchs and foreign capitalist partners. Debt is mounting for money-making projects. These do not benefit the people, yet they are made to shoulder payments.

But behind Duterte's arrogance,

he is in fact shaking in his shoes. Drunk with tyranny, he desperately clings to power. He is utterly afraid of falling off his throne. He mortally fears being held accountable for his innumerable crimes and abuses against the people. He is haunted by nightmares of being imprisoned and dying behind bars.

Duterte's biggest fear is for millions of the oppressed and exploited, the impoverished and hungry, those overburdened by crisis, the famished, the grieving mothers, children unable to go school, in short, the masses of peasants and Filipino workers, to unite and rise up. He dreads of being overthrown the same way the people overthrew Marcos and Estrada.

To prevent this from coming to fruition, Duterte is relentlessly


"Manifest..." continued on page 2

NPA offensives in Quezon and Kalinga

NO LESS THAN seven tactical offensives were launched by the New People's Army (NPA) in the provinces of Quezon and Kalinga this past weeks. This resulted in 12 casualties on the side of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

NPA-Quezon (Apolonio Mendoza Command) successively conducted five armed actions from June 11 to 26. Three of these were ambush operations against the 80th and 85th IB wherein three soldiers were killed and six others were wounded.

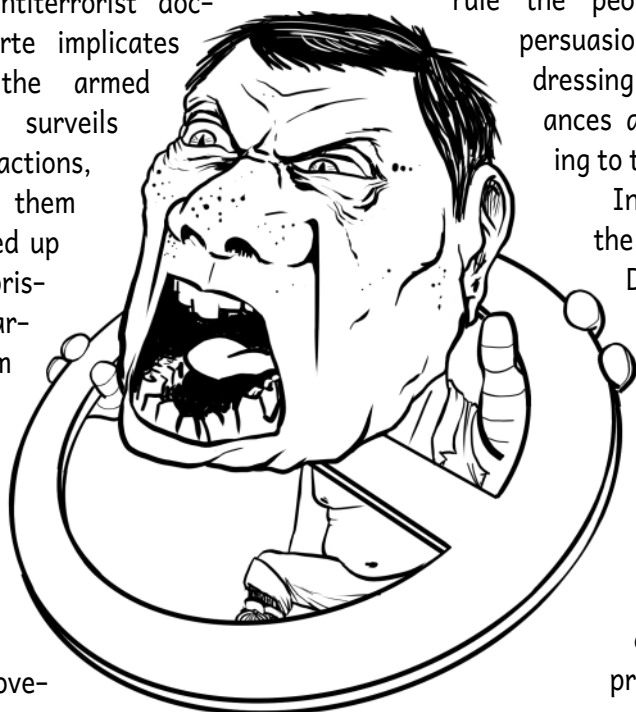
Another soldier was wounded in a harassment operation by the same NPA unit last June 11 in Lopez, Quezon. Soldiers occupying Barangay Malabahay, Macalelon were also sniped last June 26.

Meanwhile, one soldier was killed and another was wounded in a harassment operation of the NPA-Kalinga (Lejo Cawilan Command) against the 50th IB 

"Manifest..." from page 1

suppressing, oppressing, threatening and inflicting violence against patriotic and democratic forces. He targets activists, unionists and organizers in different sectors, even advocates of human rights, media workers and lawyers.

Using the obsolete anticommunist and antiterrorist doctrine, Duterte implicates them in the armed movement, surveils their actions, charges them with trumped up cases, imprisonments and targets them for assassination. Duterte aims to silence the national democratic mass move-



ment that is at the forefront and core of the Filipino people's resistance.

Duterte's use of the full state power to suppress the people shows that the ruling system is weak, in a state of decay and suffers from deep political and economic crises. It shows that Duterte is unable to

rule the people through persuasion by addressing their grievances and responding to their needs.

In the eyes of the public, Duterte has lost all moral right to lead after three years of mass murder, continued proliferation

of illegal drugs, failed promises to end contractualization, preventing wage increases, bogus land reform, rural hunger and poverty, oppression and military abuses, national treachery, sell out of the country's rights and patrimony, subservience to foreign powers, while he gorges and enriches himself through crime and plundering billions of pesos of the people's money.

Duterte makes up for his loss of moral right and standing to lead by using power derived from pure fascist state violence. Until he is confronted by a bigger force, he will continue to flaunt his power believing he can rule eternally by using fear and terrorism.





The Filipino people's own history teaches that the ambition of dictators to rule forever is a mere fantasy. Duterte is a fool if he believes there is no power bigger than his. As the Filipino people exhibited in 1986 and 2001, tyrants and dictators are no match to a united people!

It is high time to end Duterte's reign. The people will undergo more untold suffering should he continue for three more years. The people must again manifest their power. This power is derived from patriotic and democratic unity. From the factories and schools, cities and rural communities, millions must fill the streets in the cities and town centers. They must shatter their fear and, together, demand justice and freedom from tyranny and terrorism.

The New People's Army must exert all-out effort to seize the initiative to mount tactical offensives against Duterte's military forces, police and armed agents who sow terrorist violence against the people.

Let the march of the toiling masses and all freedom and democracy-loving people resound across the archipelago. Shake up the US-Duterte regime. Rouse the entire nation.

AB

| | |
|--|---|
|  <p>Vol. L No. 13 July 7, 2019</p> <hr/> <p>Ang Bayan is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray and English.</p> <p>Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news items. Readers are encouraged to send feedback and recommendations for improving our newspaper.</p> <p> instagram.com/progressiveviews</p> <p> @prwc_info</p> <p> cppinformationbureau@gmail.com</p> | <h2 style="text-align: center;">Contents</h2> <p>Editorial: Manifest the people's anger and power 1</p> <p>NPA offensives in Quezon and Kalinga 1</p> <p>Impeachment gains ground 3</p> <p>"Fil-Am Friendship Day" 3</p> <p>National debt balloons 3</p> <p>DOJ junks case vs. Sagay 9 lawyer 3</p> <p>Pepmaco & NutriAsia strikes 4</p> <p>Top 10 worst countries for workers 5</p> <p>UNCHR investigation 5</p> <p>Barricade vs. Oceanagold 5</p> <p>"Resist together!" 6</p> <p>HR report: 2nd quarter 6</p> <p>1 killed, 13 arrested 7</p> <p>Esperon the mercenary 8</p> <p>Global production slowdown 9</p> <p>Trump's anti-immigrant policy 10</p> <p>US sanctions vs. Venezuela & Iran 10</p> <p>ILPS' 6th International Assembly 10</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Ang Bayan is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p> | |

Impeachment gains ground

GROUNDS TO OUST Rodrigo Duterte from the presidency through impeachment strengthen as a result of his approval for China to fish in the country's maritime territory.

Duterte declared that he had a "verbal agreement" with Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to China in 2016. They supposedly agreed to allow Chinese fishermen to cast net on Philippine waters.

With Duterte's "verbal" agreement, he has again exhibited abuse of power and prerogative. This is a clear violation of the 1987 constitution and a strong basis to impeach him. He cites the "agreement" as excuse for his inability to prohibit China from exploiting Philippine marine resources and his failure to carry out the mandate of the 1987 constitution to protect Philippine resources within its exclusive economic zone.

This early, Chinese fishing vessels are quickly depleting resources in Recto Bank because of their modern equipments, compared to the inferior types of fishing boats used by Filipinos.

China and Vietnam, provides subsidy for their fishermen to sail at the South China Sea. **AB**

On the 73rd year of Fil-Am Friendship Day

End decades of yoke

MORE THAN SEVEN decades had passed since the Philippines was "granted" independence by the US. Up to the present, the country remains under US economic, political, military and cultural domination. This must be ended for the people to completely break away from US subservience.

For more than 73 years, the US imperialists have perpetuated semicolonial rule in the country through successive puppet governments--from Roxas to Duterte, which invariably carried out policy impositions securing US imperialist interests in the country. The Armed Forces of the Philippines was created and serves as its principal pillar. Under US imperialist rule, the Philippine economy failed to develop its productive capacity and remain under the yoke of American big corporations, banks and US-controlled financial institutions.

The people's social conditions have worsened at an unprecedented pace since the 1990s under so-called "globalization" which pushed for dismantling of policies protecting national industries, privatization of state assets, foreign ownership and corporatization of key utilities, deregulation of labor and environmental standards, and other

oppressive measures.

The AFP continues to be trained, indoctrinated, funded and armed by the US government. American military advisers and hundreds of troops are encamped in the country, direct counter-revolutionary operations and often deploy their troops and equipment in the field.

Protest at the embassy

National democratic organizations protested in front of the US embassy on July 4 to belie the so-called friendship between the US and the Philippines. They assailed the permanent and intensifying US intervention in the country. They likewise condemned the continuing use of US-made bombs by the AFP in ravaging Filipino communities and ancestral lands.

A similar action was held by Bayan-Panay at the Plazoleta Gay, Iloilo City. **AB**

National debt balloons to P7.9 trillion

THE OUTSTANDING public debt of the Philippines increased by P1.9 trillion since the loan addict Duterte came to power. Last May, the debt peaked at P7.9 trillion, which is higher by 32% than the P6 trillion debt reported in July 2016. This is also 1.7% higher than the P7.8 trillion debt reported in April 2019. This is already the highest debt recorded in the country's history.

As a result, the net debt per capita of every Filipino increased by 27%, from P58,064 in July 2016 to P73,672 last May. This drastic increase is a consequence of the Duterte regime's excessive borrowings to fund its grandiose infrastructure program which it expects to temporarily boost the economy. **AB**

DOJ junks case against Sagay 9 lawyer

THE DEPARTMENT OF Justice junked the kidnapping case against Atty. Katherine Panguban, head of the Women and Children's Committee of the National Union of People's Lawyers, last June 28. The decision was based on the testimony of the mother and the minor who said that they went with Panguban.

The minor who is the sole witness to the Sagay 9 massacre on October 20, 2018 in Hacienda Nene, Sagay City, Negros Occidental. The police detained the minor and put him under the custody of the City Social Welfare and Development without the consent of her mother. **AB**

Violence and the toxic condition at Pepmaco

MORE THAN 200 workers of Peerless Products Manufacturing Corporation (Pepmaco) were beaten with truncheons, hosed down, and stoned by 20 goons while they were sleeping at their camp in front of the factory in Calamba, Laguna last June 28, 1:00 a.m.

The attack was perpetrated to disperse the striking workers and their picketline. Twelve workers were seriously wounded. The goons also demolished the workers' hut and properties, including the food they stored, and stole their personal belongings.

Pepmaco is a soap and shampoo manufacturing company that produces Champion, Hana and Calla. It is owned by capitalist Simeon Tiu. From 2013 to 2016, Tiu partnered with Lion Corporation, the biggest manufacturer of toothpastes in Japan that produces Systema which is also distributed by Pepmaco. Pepmaco workers also produce surfactant chemicals which are supplied to transnational companies Procter and Gamble at ACS, and are exported to other countries.

Struggles of the PWU

Pepmaco workers started their protests last year. They founded the Pepmaco Workers Union (PWU-NAFLU-KMU) in January 2018 and launched a campaign against widespread contractualization, low wages, lack of benefits and unsafe working conditions. Their struggle intensified as they mounted their

strike last June 4.

The company illegally terminated 64 workers, including union leaders, since the campaign was launched.

In September 2018, an investigation by the Department of Labor and Employment reported that Pepmaco is extensively implementing contractualization in the form of job outsourcing. To avoid its legal obligations and lower its labor costs, the company is indirectly employing its workers through third-party manpower agencies such as Luxor Manpower, VMS and JER Human Resources Corp.

Cheap wages, toxic condition

Of its 500 workers, 400 are agency-hired contractuels and 50 are directly-hired contractuels. Meanwhile, only 50 workers are regular, mostly supervisors and chemical engineers who do not directly participate in production.

Majority of the workers have been working for PEPMACO for 10-15 years, but have remained underpaid contractuels. They are compensated with a measly P373-P400 daily wage. This amount only

increases as they are forced to do overtime work for four hours every-day.

A research conducted by the union exposed that 15 workers are capable of producing P2.3 million worth of soap within a span of 12 hours. Of this value, only P13,000 is collectively received by the workers as compensation.

They also have no benefits. Even their contributions to the SSS, PhilHealth and Pag-ibig are not remitted by the company. Pregnant workers are forced to resign.

On top of this, it was also exposed that the company is violating occupational health and safety standards. In its factories, toxic chemicals used for producing soap are handled with bare hands and inhaled by the workers as they are not provided with any safety gear. As a result, workers commonly suffer from skin injuries, itchy and red eyes, and breathing difficulty. The factory also has no clinic, signages and fire exit. AB



NutriAsia workers mount strike in Laguna

MEMBERS OF THE Kilusan ng Abanteng Seksyon ng Anakpawis sa NutriAsia (KASAPINA-OLALIA-KMU) mounted their strike in front of the factory in Cabuyao City, Laguna in the early morning of July 6. Hundreds of workers locked three factory gates to stop its operation and block the movement of its products.

In retaliation, goons and police elements violently dispersed the picket. The police even used a backhoe to destroy the gates. Seventeen workers were arrested, including a woman, while several others were wounded.

The workers launched the strike

to condemn the company for refusing to implement, since last year, the DOLE order stating that they should be regularized. At present, more than 1,000 are working as contractuels in its factory in Cabuyao. Workers also complain of low wages and inhumane working

conditions.

The widespread implementation of contractualization in NutriAsia was first exposed when its workers in Bulacan mounted their strike last year. NutriAsia is the largest catsup, sauce, and cooking oil manufacturing company in the country. The company is owned by bourgeois comprador Joselito Dee Campos Jr., son of Joselito Yao Campos Sr., who is a notorious crony of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. AB

Philippines, one of the worst countries for workers

Last October 2018, Rodrigo Duterte ordered police elements to "shoot" farm workers who would conduct land occupation. "If they resist violently, shoot them," he said. "I do not care if they die."

Duterte mentioned this few hours before the massacre of nine farm workers in Hacienda Nene, Sagay City in Negros Island. Unsurprisingly, a report by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) last June cited the case in Sagay as a basis for ranking the Philippines as one of the 10 worst countries for working people.

For three consecutive years, the Philippines was figured in the top 10 countries tagged as "worst countries for workers." Along with the Philippines in this year's list are Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Bangladesh which have the worst records of labor rights violations. According to its research, among the most violated labor rights are the right to strike (happens in 85% of countries which were surveyed), right to collective bargaining (80%), right to establish or join a trade union (74%), right to civil liberties and right to trade union activities. Countries violently suppressing strikes and filing criminal charges against striking workers are increasing in number.

In Asia-Pacific, all countries violate the right to collective bargaining. In the Philippines, the reactionary state legislates laws to ensure suppression of workers' rights. Apart from this, human rights group Karapatan has documented 20 killings of workers and cases of arbitrary arrest and detention of unionists and labor organizers. Dispersal of strikes, pickets and protests, threat and harassment, Red-tagging and assault against the workers are also prevalent.

AB



28 countries push for "war on drugs" investigation

TWENTY-EIGHT COUNTRIES supported a resolution filed at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) last July 4 to push the council to pursue the investigation on the escalating number of killings in the Philippines under the "war on drugs." The UNHRC is expected to decide upon the resolution before its session closes on July 12. Signatories are mostly European countries.

If approved, High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet will write a report on the human rights situation in the Philippines. The draft resolution also included the call for governments to cooperate with the United Nations offices by opening their respective country for visits and refraining from perpetrating acts of intimidation or retaliation.

The draft resolution was submitted few days after the death of a three-year old girl in a police operation last June 29. On that day, the police raided the house of Renato Ulpina, father of the child, in Rodriguez, Rizal. They shattered the windows of the house and fired shots at it while the Ulpina family was inside.

The police even reasoned out that casualties are unavoidable in such operations, contrary to the duty of the state to the safety of innocent people, especially minors. Reports indicate that more than 50 minors have been killed in similar operations.

AB

Barricade against Oceanagold

RESIDENTS OF SITIO Camgat, Barangay Didipio, Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya re-mounted their barricade last June 6 to stop and condemn the mining operation of Oceanagold Philippines Inc., a large Australian company engaged in gold and copper open pit mining, which continued despite the expiration of its contract.

The barricade was mounted along Oceanagold's access road and is guarded by 50 to 100 residents 24 hours a day. The residents said that their barricade will continue until mining operations are permanently suspended. No company truck was allowed to pass the barricade since July 1. Before this, the provincial government of Nueva Vizcaya already issued an order restraining the 12,000-hectare operation of the company.

The mining company is notorious for destroying the environment, displacement of and violence against peasants and indigenous peoples. Since the start of its operations in 1994, hectares of forests were denuded and rivers were polluted, resulting in the depletion of potable water for residents. Two mining workers were killed in accidents due to unsafe working conditions.

In a related news, members of the Kalikasan People's Network Alliance for the Environment trooped to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau on July 2 in support of the residents' resistance.

AB

LGBT community urges, "Resist together!"

"RESIST TOGETHER!" This was the theme and call of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders (LGBT) and their supporters in their rally last June 28 in Manila. The mobilization was mounted in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York City in 1969 and the first Pride March in the country which was organized by the Progay organization in 1994.

The protest was spearheaded by Bahaghari and was participated in by peasant and religious groups, among others. Their primary demands were for equal rights, regardless of class, gender and race, and for their civil right to marriage. They also called an end to contracturalization, attacks of peasants in the countryside, and for national sovereignty.

Bahaghari was inspired by the uprising of activists in Stonewall.

After the riots, new gay organizations were founded and these condemned not only gender discrimination but also racism. These organizations actively supported national liberation movements in semicolonies.

The annual march is not only a celebration of the LGBT community's past victories but is also a continuation of their protest. The rainbow flag is a symbol of the LGBT community.

Prof. Jose Ma. Sison, in a statement, expressed his solidarity to Pride March participants. He said that the theme which highlights the importance of the collective action of LGBTs, is timely and appropriate inasmuch as the people are confronted by an anti-gay and misogynist regime.

It is important to recognize the collective struggle of the LGBT for their rights as a community and as part of the oppressed classes. This is to resist the exploitation of the power of LGBTs by oppressive governments and states.

In the past, it is noticeable that such celebrations were exploited for commercial purposes. AB

Human rights report for the 2nd quarter of 2019

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 second quarter of year 2019.

BASED ON THE initial tally of *Ang Bayan*, there have been at least 191 victims (or two per day) of various types of human rights violations from April 1 to June 31.

On average, a victim was killed and three others were arrested every five days. In addition to this, at least one was subjected to threat, harassment or intimidation per day.

Killings, frustrated killings and torture. In the past three months, there have been at least 19 civilian victims of political killings across the country. Ten were killed in Luzon, six in Visayas and five in Mindanao. Majority were killed in Bicol (10 victims). Meanwhile, *Ang Bayan* also recorded three cases of frustrated killings and one torture.

Illegal arrests and arbitrary detention. There have been at least 63 victims of illegal arrests and detention during the same period. Forty-four were arrested in Luzon,

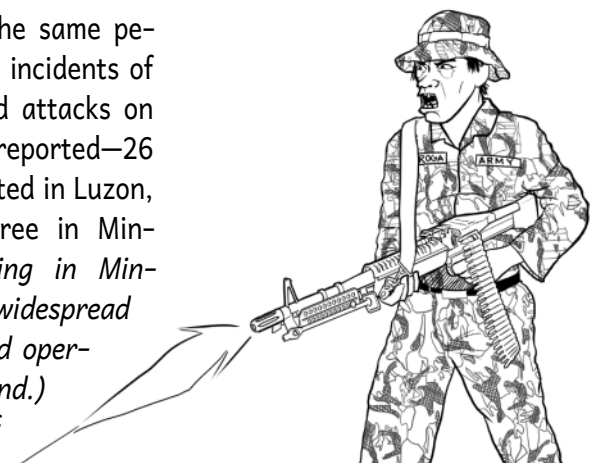
15 in Visayas and seven in Mindanao. The highest number of cases were recorded in Negros (14) and Bicol (13). Meanwhile, a civilian was also abducted and has yet to be surfaced by state agents.

Bombing, strafing and militarization. At least five incidents of indiscriminate bombings and strafing were reported in the same period. On top of this, 39 incidents of military occupation and attacks on communities were also reported—26 of which were perpetrated in Luzon, 10 in Visayas and three in Mindanao. (*Note: Reporting in Mindanao is low due to widespread military harassment and operations across the island.*) The highest number of

militarization incidents reported were in Southern Tagalog (18), Negros and Bicol (8 each).

Forcible evacuation. These attacks have resulted in the evacuation of about 3,530 individuals. The highest number of evacuees (2,000) were recorded in the Negros Island due to relentless military attacks in various communities.

Threat, harassment and intimidation. Among the victims were 99 individuals subjected to threat, harassment and intimidation. Majority of the victims are from Eastern Visayas (63) and Bicol (24). AB



1 killed, 13 arrested in Negros

Joint forces of the Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and paramilitaries continue to sow terror in the Negros island using Memorandum Order No. 32 and Joint AFP-PNP Campaign Plan Kapanatagan of Rodrigo Duterte. In just three days, human rights groups reported 13 cases of illegal arrests and a killing in the island.

On June 27, unidentified assailants gunned down Lito Itao, auditor of the Guihulngan City Habal-habal United Operators and Drivers Association and chief barangay police of Buenavista. Itao is the 67th victims of extrajudicial killing in Negros under Duterte.

From June 26 to 27, successive arrests were perpetrated by joint forces of the 62nd IB and PNP in various communities in Negros Occidental under the guise of Synchronized Enhanced Management of Police Operations (SEMPO).

The attacks began on June 26 at midnight and ended on June 27 at 3:00 a.m. Arrested in these operations were couple Francisco and Kapid Alabangan in Barangay Mansalanao, La Castellana; Jorex Escapalao in Hacienda Raymunda, Barangay Kapitan Ramon, Silay City; UCCP Pastor Jimmy Teves and peasants Jodito Montecino, Eliseo Andres, JP Romana, Rodrigo Medes and Roger Sabanal in Barangay Buenavista, Himamaylan.

On June 28, state elements also arrested farmers Rea Casido, Teodor Casido, Danny Casido and Venancio Cadeliña in Barangay Lamogong, Manjuyod. They were all accused of being members and supporters of the New People's Army.

Five armed men also abducted Arnaldo Namu in his house at Barangay Mansalanao, La Castellana, on June 27, 12 a.m.

Since June 17, soldiers of the 62nd IB have been occupying barangays Mansalanao, Camandag, Manghanoy and Sag-ang in the town of La Castellana. The military is also occupying Barangay Macagahay in the town of Moises Padilla

and Barangay Planas in Guihulngan City.

Meanwhile, more than 2,000 residents of barangays Bantolinao, Salvacion, Candabong, Butong and Lamogong in Manjuyod evacuated on June 23 due to relentless military operations in their communities. Residents heard gunshots in the evening of Hunyo 22, wherein one civilian was reported killed.

In Camarines Sur, Albert Caballero Villarete was gunned down on July 2 while aboard his motorcycle on the way to Barangay Sta. Cruz, Caramoan. The gunman was identified as Randy Santilezes, a CAFGU member under the command of the 83rd IB.

Villarete was known for his progressive stance and his participation in anti-fascist mobilizations in the area.

Meanwhile, on June 29, joint forces of the 4th IB and PNP mercilessly killed Prente "Lolo Printis" Gutierrez, an 80-year old farmer from Sitio Cambiswer 1, Barangay Poblacion, Calintaan, Occidental Mindoro. Gutierrez was a known leader of the local church of Calintaan. The AFP and PNP made it appear that the victim was an NPA member despite his age. Lt. Col. Alexander Arbolado of the 4th IB at PCpt. Ariel Roldan led the operation.

Before this, forces of the 203rd Brigade, 4th IB, 76th IB and PNP Oriental Mindoro besieged Mangyan communities in Panaytayan, Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro. Up to the present, the military continues to bar the entry of aid for the residents. On July 3, residents of Barangay San Cristobal, Victoria,

Oriental Mindoro reported that a drone was flown twice by the 203rd IBde in their community. Their community was also aerielly bombed five times by the same unit.

In Quezon, the 85th IB illegally arrested farmer Crispin Gonzales and construction worker Albert Julita in Barangay San Francisco B, Lopez on June 23. On July 3, the elements of the same unit mauled and abducted Rico Quidor and another peasant from Vista Hermosa, Macalelon.

Meanwhile, relentless military operations continue to sow terror in communities in the towns of Catanauan, General Luna, Lopez and Macalelon. According to residents, their houses are ransacked by the military.

In Bukidnon, the PNP arrested Jun Guianaonao, chairperson of KASAMA-Bukidnon and Ronnie Estonzo on June 19 in Valencia City.

The Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Gitnang Luzon (AMGL)-Nueva Ecija reported last June that forces of the 69th IB, 91st IB and 84th IB have occupied Barangay Putlan in the town of Caranggalan; 32 barangays in Guimba; and Barangay San Antonio in Cuyapo.

In Cagayan de Oro and Cebu, Red-tagging of activists, lawyers and human rights defenders continue unabated. Among the latest cases are threats and harassment against Beverly Musni and Dr. Phoebe Zoe Sanchez this June. **AB**



Esperon, goon of fascist presidents

Karapatan vehemently lambasted National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. for filing a perjury case against the organization, along with Gabriela and the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, after the Court of Appeals dismissed the groups' petition for writs of amparo and habeas data. Karapatan said that the filing of a case by Esperon proves that the Duterte regime is hell-bent in silencing its critics.

Esperon's attacks against progressive organizations is not new. From the Arroyo regime up to the present, he continues to serve as a fanatical goon of fascist presidents.

Gloria's minion

Esperon is known for being former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's rabid follower. He led the Presidential Security Group in 2002-2003 before being assigned to the Special Operations Command. In the 2004 elections, he played a big role in the electoral fraud, particular in Mindanao, which led to Arroyo's victory. Esperon used his rank in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to bribe military commanders, or relieve those who are controlled by the opposing candidate.

As a reward, Arroyo promoted him as the commanding officer of the Philippine Army. Afterwards, he was given an extended term as AFP Chief of Staff, where he became involved in corruption cases, including the repair of three Philippine Navy patrol boats which was overpriced by P800 million.

Esperon held key positions in the AFP at the time of the brutal campaigns Oplan Bantay Laya 1 and 2. Under Arroyo's rule from 2001-2010, more than 1,300 cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances were recorded. Esperon is accountable for a considerable portion of this—as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (2003), Philippine Army chief (2004) and AFP Chief of Staff (2006-2008). During this period, inveterate fas-

cists Jovito Palparan and Eduardo Año ran amok.

Aside from this, 32 cases of torture were slapped against Esperon in 2001 as commander of the 103rd Infantry Brigade in Basilan.

US agent

From the time Esperon became AFP Chief of Staff until serving as Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process under the Arroyo regime, he had constant private meetings with former US ambassador Kristie Kenney. In these meetings, Esperon reported the political situation in the country—from coup attempts, extrajudicial killings of activists, war against the revolutionary movement and the Bangsamoro, and so on.

It is also during these meetings where the US directed the AFP, particularly with regards to "counterinsurgency." Even before the US State Department released its Counterinsurgency Guide of 2009, Kenney along with US embassy officials already have for a number of times pressed for the sustained "war against terror," "upholding democracy," addressing "public perception on government corruption," and other components of "counterinsurgency."

Esperon would bring along the

US COIN Guide's atrocities and deceit when he became director general of the National Security Council of the Duterte government. Using COIN Guide, he pushed for the formation of the National Task Force (NTF) to "end local communist armed conflict" and served as Duterte's right-hand in its implementation. Part of the NTF is the "whole-of-nation approach" or subsuming civilian agencies of the government under the AFP's command, intensifying psywar and the corresponding escalation of armed suppression of the people's resistance.

Corrupt and opportunist

Upon returning to government, Esperon became involved in bureaucrat capitalist corruption. His role in businessman Dennis Uy's bagging of the contract for the country's third telecommunications company was exposed. Esperon was part of the committee which oversaw the selection of Uy's company.

This is not a surprise since Esperon is a long-time "consultant" of Uy's other company, Phoenix Petroleum. In 2010, Uy was slapped with a case of oil smuggling which was discarded by Duterte. It was revealed that Esperon received favors from Uy, including using the latter's private plane.

Also, at the height of the operations of Janet Lim Napoles, the "pork barrel queen," she and Esperon were business partners in a company believed to be dummies for pork barrel funds. AB



Global production slowdown

The G20 conference, annual meeting of imperialist and capitalist countries, was held in Osaka Japan during the last week of June. This was conducted amid the stagnation of the global capitalist system and the intensifying trade war between the US and China.

The meeting culminated without arriving at a clear plan on boosting the deteriorating world economy and providing a solution to the decline in industrial production amid overproduction of basic commodities.

The trade war was not resolved as well. In a separate meeting, US President Donald Trump, and Chinese President Xi Jinping only agreed to call a truce and restart trade negotiations. This came after Trump's declaration that he will impose additional tariff on Chinese products worth \$300 billion.

Thus, contradictions will further intensify between imperialist countries while the rest of the world is further buried in crisis.

“Slowbalization”

On April 2019, the World Bank issued a report stating the the growth of the world economy is "slowing down." This was dubbed as "slowbalization" by bourgeois economists to highlight that globalization has already reached its limits since 2008. Actually, this only depicts the stagnation of the capitalist system.

The 3.9% world economic growth projection for 2018 and the first half of 2019 was not reached. From 4% in 2017, the growth rate decreased to 3.6% in 2018 and is expected to reach 3.3% this year. It is expected to increase but not exceed 3.6% in 2020.

Among the reasons cited by the World Bank are the deterioration of the Chinese economy due to the implementation of needed finance policies in shadow banking, its trade war with the US, slowing trade and investment activity within the European Union, and the overall decline

in demand especially in Asia.

Except in the US, industrial production has generally slowed down, especially of capital goods. Trade rates declined sharply especially after US imposition of high tariffs on Chinese products.

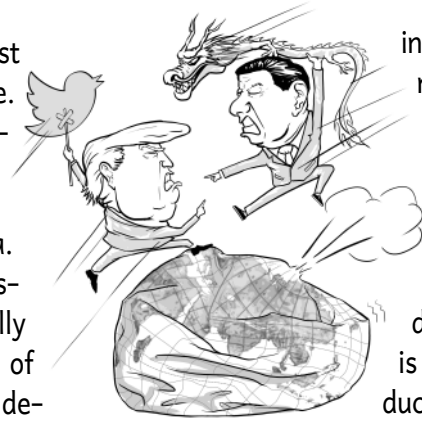
Overproduction

Decline in production results in the falling of prices of basic commodities such as oil, basic metals and food—commodities that have long been overproduced.

From \$81/barrel last October 2018 (highest in four year), the price of crude oil fell to \$61/barrel by January this year. Its price has temporarily increased in October 2018 due to the US restriction of oil importation from Iran, but rapidly fell down again due to overproduction of oil in the US, and the non-compliance of other countries to the US-imposed sanction against Iran.

Only Valenzuela suffered a decline in production due to the US' heavy sanctions and political intervention. There are also surplus supplies of natural gas and carbon due to low demand and the relatively cheaper price of oil.

In terms of basic metal production, there is an overproduction of iron, copper, aluminum, nickel and cobalt. The price of iron only rose because of mining accidents and tragedies which disrupt supply. In terms of nickel production, the Philippines was among the countries that recorded an overproduction last year. Local production declined in 2017-2018 after due to then Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez's issuance of a ban on open-pit mining



in the Caraga region. China is the largest consumer of basic metals.

In terms of food production, there is an overproduction of grain products (rice, wheat and soy among others) in the US and Russia wherein a large subsidies are allocated for the agriculture sector.

Slowdown in capitalist centers

Economic growth slowed down in big capitalist centers. In the US, the government attributed the slow down to government underspending due to several delays in the enactment of the national budget.

Behind these delays is the Democrat Party's (rival of Trump's Republican Party) refusal to allocate funds for the construction of a border wall between US and Mexico. Trump promised to build the wall to purportedly prevent the illegal migration of Mexicans and other nationalities.

In Europe, the economy of the United Kingdom continues to experience investment and business uncertainty prior to exiting the European Union, with or without a Brexit agreement. In Germany, consumption of and demand for exports declined. In June, the US threatened to impose tariffs on German cars, the country's main export. In France, the economy stagnated after the people, through "Yellow Vest" protests, were able to prevent the proposed imposition of taxes on oil.

Meanwhile, Japan continues to experience recession despite recording a low 1% increase in its GDP due to fiscal measures implemented by its government.

AB

Trump's extremely oppressive anti-immigrant policy

DONALD TRUMP's anti-immigration policy provoked the ire of the people after a harrowing photo of El Salvadoran father and daughter who drowned on June 4 while crossing the Rio Grande circulated on mass media. The victims were identified as Oscar, 25, and Valeria Martinez, 3. They attempted to cross from Mexico into Texas in the US through the said river to seek for asylum and employment.

The death of the victims is only one of the tragedies suffered by immigrants due to Trump's implementation of a more stringent immigration process.

Among the mechanisms used to suppress immigrants is Trump's family separation policy. Although formally announced on April 2018, Trump started implementing this policy as early as 2017. Under this policy, illegal immigrants are separately detained from their children. Parents are detained in federal prisons for up

to six months while their children are placed in detention centers supervised by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

It was immediately exposed that the said policy has no mechanism to reunite the families that it had separated. Separations are deliberately and often undocumented by federal agents to make it difficult for parents to find their children after detention. Because of this, it took some parents a month before locating their children. In some cases, chil-

dren are deported first without their parents knowing. This strategy is dubbed by Trump as "zero tolerance." He is using family separation as a deterrent to other foreigners considering to seek asylum and a decent life in the US.

Following broad criticism, Trump was compelled to sign an order waiving the effectivity of the policy in June 2018. Despite this, however, the anti-immigrant policy continues to be implemented. In a report last May, the Trump regime acknowledged that 1,712 migrant children may have been separated from their parents since the policy was junked. Last month, a detention center for children in Clint, Texas was exposed to be without adequate food and sanitation facilities. AB

US imposes sanctions against Venezuela & Iran

IN ITS LATEST attempt to suppress its rival countries, the US imperialist government once again imposed sanctions against Venezuela and Iran.

On June 28, the US government froze all of Nicolas "Nicolosito" Maduro Guerra's assets and barred all American firms and citizens from doing business with him. This measure was carried out after the failed US-backed coup attempt of the opposition against Maduro last January-February. Nicolosito is President Nicolas Maduro's son.

Earlier, on June 25, the US also froze all US assets of Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, Iran's supreme leader, and of Mohammad Javad Zarif, head of Iran's Foreign Ministry. Iran vehemently condemned this suppressive measure of the US. AB

ILPS holds its 6th International Assembly

The International League of Peoples' Struggle held its 6th assembly in Hongkong last June 23-26.

The league remains to be the widest, most significant and most militant formation of anti-imperialist organizations. The assembly carried the theme: "Win a bright socialist future for humanity! Unite the people to fight against imperialist plunder, war, racism and fascism!"

Four hundred delegates from 44 countries and territories attended the assembly, surpassing the record of past assemblies. They conducted the assembly in the midst of worsening poverty, joblessness, the rise of fascist regimes and leaders in the world and intensifying distress of the people.

Officials noted advancements in expansion work particularly in Africa and Asia. A number of organizations were reached and local chapters were founded in these regions. The league also spearheaded the founding of the global network People Over Profit and the Resist US War campaign move-

ment.

In the past years, the league led its membership and local chapters in campaigns including the struggles against the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), ASEAN, APEC and NATO. ILPS stood in solidarity with the people in their call to prohibit Donald Trump from visiting their countries.

In unity with Filipino peasants, it conducted the global day of action for land, food and justice in 2015. Member organizations of ILPS from across the world participated in the campaign. The league also participated in the campaign against the IMF-World Bank.

ILPS extended its full support to the people of Venezuela and Palestine amid relentless attacks of the US and the US-backed Zionists in Israel. It also supported the "Yellow Vest Movement" against oppressive taxes proposed by the Macron government in France. AB