



EDITORIAL

Celebrate five centuries of armed resistance

At dawn of April 27, 2021, let us mark the 500th year of the Battle of Mactan, the first victory in the Filipino people's long and continuing history of armed resistance for national freedom. Let us salute Datu Lapulapu and the thousands who stood and vanquished the foreign armed oppressors led by Ferdinand Magellan.

The Battle of Mactan is a stark symbol of the valiant stand and resistance of indigenous Filipinos. They chose to bear arms and defend instead of bowing and paying tributes to a foreign king. They used their superiority in numbers and mastery of their land and sea to render useless their enemy's firepower and frustrate the attempted occupation.

Through armed resistance, Lapulapu defended their land against the Spanish forces and such traitors as Humabon and Zula. Although Spain would later colonize the Philippines, the valor displayed by

Lapulapu will forever serve as inspiration to the following generation of Filipinos who rose up in arms to fight for freedom against foreign aggressors.

At various stages of foreign colonial rule, Filipinos took up arms and fought oppression and exploitation. They resisted the land grabbing, payment of tributes, seizure of crops, forced labor and cruel punishments. They produced heroes such as Lakandula, Rajah Sulayman, Palaris, Diego and Gabriela Silang, Francisco Dagohoy and thousands of others. They all were imbued with the indubitable

spirit of Lapulapu and his aspiration to be free from foreign powers.

From the hundreds of revolts in more than three centuries of Spanish colonialism, Filipinos in time rose as one under the red banner of the Katipunan led by Andres Bonifacio. They waged widespread guerrilla warfare against the colonial Spanish forces and liberated the nation from foreign control. Just as there were Humabons who bowed to Magellan, there was Aguinaldo and the rich ilustrados who betrayed the nation and bowed to the colonial forces of America who forcibly took away the country's freedom.

From Batangas to Balangiga in Samar and other parts of the country, Filipinos rose with their guns and daggers. Filipinos fought valiantly even if they were brutally

suppressed by the US forces using their superior weapons. More than a million Filipinos died in the course of armed anti-colonial resistance and as a result of widespread hunger and disease during the war of pacification in the first years of the 1900s.

The Filipino people's armed struggle will resurge under the leadership of the old Communist Party of the Philippines established in 1930. The PKP established the Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon (Hukbalahap, or the Anti-Japanese People's Army) in 1942 that waged guerrilla warfare against the Japanese colonial forces. As in the past armed revolts, the Hukbalahap was principally a peasant army that spread in the countryside and established organs of governance in the entire Central Luzon and deployed units in Manila, Southern Luzon up to Panay and other places.

The old Party and Hukbalahap persevered in armed resistance

against fascist Japan even after the US-led forces surrendered and American troops withdrew in 1942. The US military forces returned in 1945 to reimpose their colonial rule through bombings, treacherous attacks against the Huk and relentless counter guerrilla operations. Because of the errors of leaders of the old Party who collaborated with the enemy, the Hukbalahap (later the Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan or People's Liberation Army) was led to the path of defeat or surrender to the US puppet regime.

The New People's Army established in 1969 took up the cudgels of Lapulapu and continued the Filipino people's armed struggle for national and social liberation. Led by the Party reestablished in 1968 under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the NPA has brought the armed struggle to a new level and strength never reached before in the nation's history. It is carrying forward the peo-

ple's democratic revolution under proletarian leadership, bringing the Katipunan's old democratic revolution to a higher stage.

The Filipino people's armed struggle has spread nationwide. It follows the strategic line of protracted people's war to systematically strengthen the people's army, overcome in time the bigger and stronger US-supported Armed Forces of the Philippines, and overthrow the class rule of the imperialists, the big bourgeois compradors and big landlord class.

Like the NPA, all the Filipino armed revolutions in the past were vilified by the oppressors. They were called "bandits" or "insurrectos." Surely, if Lapulapu or others who took up arms and rose were alive today, they too will be branded "terrorists" by those who fear and oppose the armed people.

The Filipino people's desire for national liberation which incited successive generations over past centuries to bear arms remain the key objective that continues to rouse them to continue the march along the road of armed resistance. In fighting the imperialist giant and all its tentacles, the Filipino people and their Red fighters draw inspiration from the armed valor of Lapulapu and their victory at the Battle of Mactan. Filled with the spirit of armed heroism of all past heroes, the NPA and all forces of the people's democratic revolution are ever determined to carry forward the struggle to attain genuine national freedom and democracy. **AB**



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The Battle of Mactan

The Battle of Mactan on April 27, 1521 marked the first organized struggle of Filipinos against foreign colonizers. Datu Lapulapu and the indigenous warriors bravely faced and defeated the Spaniards led by Ferdinand Magellan who had superior weapons.

In the early 1600s during the early stage of capitalism, several empires such as that of Spain, Portugal and Britain were competing with each other to establish their colonies, expand their trade activities, and advance their political and economic dominance across the globe.

Under this circumstance, the Portuguese Magellan proposed to King Charles I to lead an expedition to discover the Spice Islands, a group of islands which is now known as Mollucas and is a part of Indonesia. Spices which can be found in the island such as pepper, cinnamon, turmeric, ginger and other spices used as food condiments or aromatics were very valuable to Europe. After receiving approval, Magellan set sail in August 1519 with five ships and a crew of about 250 men.

It took them two years before discovering any land. On March 17, 1521, the starving voyagers landed in the island of Homonhon in Samar where they met some indigenous leaders. The latter were awed by the foreign fleet which was armed with 12 cannons and muskets which fire "thunder and lightning," 50 crossbows, swords, axes and metal armors. In the name of "friendship," they were baptized as Christians and were made to bend their knee before the authority of Spain and were obliged to pay tribute and taxes.

Using divide and conquer as strategy, Magellan ordered Rajah Humabon, the leader of Cebu, to make everyone bow to his power. On April 26, 1521, Humabon and another chieftain named Zula suggested Magellan to use their

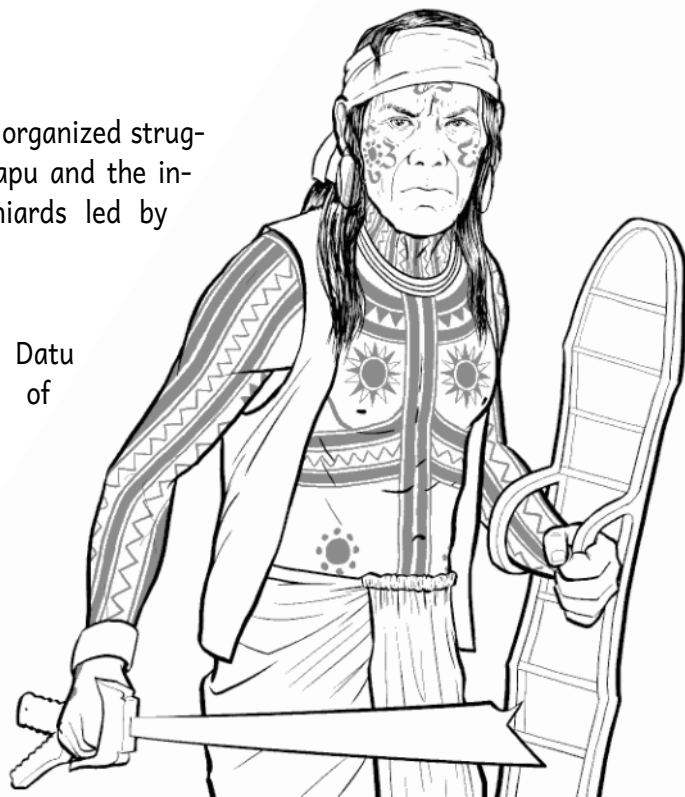
warriors to force Datu Lapulapu, leader of Mactan, to submit.

At midnight on April 26, Magellan and his soldiers left for Mactan along with Italian chronicler Antonio Pigafetta. They arrived in Mactan three hours before dawn. Magellan did not wish to fight then, but sent a message to Lapulapu through indigenous emissaries to compel them to be baptized, recognize the King of Spain as their sovereign, or wait to see how their lances would wound them.

Lapulapu was not intimidated and said they had lances of bamboo and stakes hardened with fire. They asked the Spaniards not to proceed to attack at once and wait until morning. The vainglorious Magellan consented to Lapulapu's request.

Magellan was not a wise commander. He belittled the indigenous people's determination to fight back and not be conquered by the colonizers. He also failed to analyze the characteristics of the island wherein there were many protruding rocks and corals near the shore which prevented the fleet from approaching nearer. Magellan and his men leaped into thigh-high waters and walked through water before they could reach the shore of Mactan. Upon reaching land, they saw Lapulapu's warriors formed in three divisions. Pigafetta estimated that Lapulapu had about 1,500 fighters.

The indigenous people charged



down upon the foreigners with loud cries. From a distance, Magellan's men fired their muskets and crossbows.

Magellan ordered his men to burn the indigenous people's houses to terrify them. However, this only roused them to greater fury. Using their bows, they fired poison arrows at the foreigners and charged.

They attacked the Spaniards on their flanks and front. They hurled their spears and fired their arrows targeting the bare legs of the Spaniards. They focused their attacks on Magellan until his arm and leg were wounded. When Magellan fell face downward towards the water and died, the Spaniards fled and retreated aboard their ships.

Meanwhile along the shores of Mactan, Lapulapu and his men shouted in victory. According to Pigafetta's notes, 12 of them were killed (eight Europeans including Magellan, and four of Humabon's men). The surviving Spaniards fled Cebu and continued to sail until they reached the Spice Islands. They returned to Spain in 1522 with only two ships led by Captain Juan Elcano.

AB

The masses' united struggle against RCSP in Samar

The relentless Retooled Community Support Program (RCSP) operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in a town in Western Samar which has now lasted more than a year has failed to break the firm unity of the peasant masses and their support to the revolution. The said town is part of a guerrilla front which the 8th ID has touted to have "decimated."

During this time, soldiers repeatedly summoned farmers in a military camp to force them to "surrender" and serve the reactionary army as assets or spies. They were coerced to lie, and pretend to have "come down from the mountains due to difficulties," or admit that they are "members" of the people's militia, local Party branch or committees of local chapters of the Pambansang Katipunan ng Magbubukid.

In a barrio, residents collectively decided to disobey the summons of the military to express their opposition to the harassment against them. Afterwards, policemen and soldiers in plainclothes repeatedly entered the community to

identify residents who disobey their orders.

Villagers complained that they could no longer go to their farms over fears of police and military surveillance. Hunger caused by the military operation is worse than what they experienced during the lockdown.

To monitor the operations of the military and police, villagefolk scheduled to guard their community round the clock. They also implemented a logbook system to list down the names of all individuals who enter their community. Tree logs were also placed along the road to prevent the entry of vehicles and motorcycle which the military and police use to enter their community. AB

NPA-Lanao expresses solidarity with Moros for Ramadan

THE NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY (NPA)-Lanao stood in solidarity with the Moro people as they started to observe the holy month of Ramadan. In solidarity, the Red fighters also fasted on April 12, the first day of Ramadan. This is the fourth Ramadan since the Duterte regime ravaged Marawi and evicted its residents. Until today, Moros have yet to return to their communities and just rely on the aid of international agencies. The conditions in evacuations continue to worsen by the day due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Amid the grave hardships suffered by the Moro people, they are further driven away from their communities by the Duterte regimes. Among them are 1,500 families from Barangay Pusaw, Sharif Saydona Mustafa and 600 families from Barangay Kitango, Datu Saudi Ampataun who were forced to evacuate due to the

military's indiscriminate bombing and strafing in their communities. They join other evacuees who suffer difficulties in commemorating Ramadan this year.

The NPA-Lanao called on the Moro people to continue to aspire for a liberated society where their rights to self-determination will be respected.

NPA-Negros seizes 3 short firearms

TWO INTELLIGENCE AGENTS of the 15th IB were killed in an ambush by the New People's Army (NPA)-Southwest Negros (Armando Sumayang Jr. Command) at Sitio Cambaga, Yaoyao, Cauayan, Negros Occidental on April 3. A .45 calibre pistol, isang 9mm Glock, and intelligence documents were confiscated from them. In the afternoon, four 15th IB troopers were killed in an encounter with the NPA.

On April 13, another pistol was seized from an active agent of the 7th Intelligence Service Unit in Barangay Consing, E.B. Magalona, Negros Occidental.

A day earlier, the NPA-North Negros torched three backhoes used in destructive quarrying in Barangay E. Lopez, Silay City. The quarrying operation has caused massive flooding in the area as well as environmental destruction. These are owned by Mayor Mark Andrew Golez of Silay City and cost about ₱16.6 million.

HEROES OF KALINGA. The revolutionary movement in Kalinga paid tribute to Rudy Daguitan (Ka Pinpin) and Nora Miguel (Ka Lanie), veteran Red fighters in the province, who were slain in an encounter last March 15 in Barangay Gawaan, Balbalan. Ka Pinpin was a military cadre while Ka Kabue was a medic. They were both steeled by challenges since the Second Great Rectification Movement and the re-strengthening of the revolutionary movement in the province. Agbiag dagiti bannuar ti umili!

Just aid and wage increase now!

The Kilusang Mayo Uno, along with its affiliate unions and other labor organizations, launched a series of protest last April 16 to drumbeat their demand for a ₱10,000-aid for all who lost their jobs during the pandemic and a ₱100-wage increase for all workers and farm workers. On the same day, workers conducted a noise barrage in Mendiola, Manila to demand the implementation of a ₱750-national daily minimum wage. On April 19, more than 100 members of the 10K Ayuda Network marched in Quezon City in conjunction with the filing of petition for the distribution of ₱10,000-aid to 18 million families for two months. A protest action was also mounted in Davao City on April 9.

On April 15, the Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura filed a petition at the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for a ₱100-wage increase for 10.3 million farm workers. The petition was filed despite the agency's junking of the earlier demand of the Defend Jobs Philippines' insisting that an across-the-board wage increase is beyond its authority.

The ₱1,000-aid from the ₱23 billion allocated by the Duterte

regime when it implemented a two-week enhanced community quarantine in the National Capital Region and four other provinces is only equivalent two a two-day salary in the National Capital Region (NCR). This is way lower than the ₱420-billion aid package under the Bayanihan 3 which was proposed in Congress, and even lower than ₱1.5 trillion aid package suggested by Ibon Foundation for decent aid to more and more families who have



suffered from the extremely long lockdown.

In a research by the Economic Policy Research Institute last December 2020 in NCR, almost all urban poor families (19 out of 20) said that they experienced job or income loss last year. Only more than half (65%) said that they were able to receive financial aid. Majority (92%) of these families said that they have at least one family member who is vulnerable to Covid-19 infection (elderly, pregnant, babies, sick or disabled.)

Given that urban poor families loss 30% of their income and that not all have been able to receive aid, the institute estimated that national poverty headcount ratio (those who live on \$1.90 or ₱90 per day) to have doubled to 32.8% in 2020 from 16.8% in 2018.

Among those who suffered hardships are the millions who lost their jobs and income. Around 12 million workers were unemployed or underemployed last February. This excludes millions of workers dropped from the labor force survey during the same period.

Most of those reemployed when the economy was reopened are in occupations with low wages and that are contractual or informal. According to Ibon Foundation, 48% or 923,000 of the 1.9 million workers who were reemployed in February are part-time workers (with less than 40 working hours), while 23% of them were categorized as employed but furloughed.

₱100 wage increase, big help to workers

A ₱100-INCREASE in daily wages will significantly help workers, especially those who work in industries and services considered essential amid the pandemic. Majority of them face job insecurity, are compensated below the legislated minimum wages, and work under "no work, no pay" arrangement.

These workers include Andrea who is employed in a restaurant which opens or closes depending on the level of lockdown. She has been working as a contractual employee for a year now with a daily wage pegged at ₱336.

Bob, who works for an agency outsourced by an internet service provider, also favors this proposal as he only receives ₱400 daily.

Mon, a delivery rider who earns up to ₱500 per day, said that this should even be increased to ₱200. He said that this is not impossible especially during the pandemic when many depend on their services.

Although receiving a daily wage of ₱1,300 per day, call center agent Karla said that she is in favor of the ₱100-wage increase. She said that it is appropriate to implement this to ensure that workers are able to live decently.

State forces kill 2 civilians, arrest 6 others in Negros

The police and military's reign of terror continue unabated at three sitios in Barangay Nagbinlod, Sta. Catalina, Negros Oriental. On March 29, six civilians were arrested including a 2-year old child, and two were killed in the area. As in previous attacks on civilians, evidences of firearms were planted in the houses of the victims to make it appear that they are members of the New People's Army (NPA).

At Sitio Balog, the military killed Fredo Binangkil and Julito Solano and made it appear that they were killed in an encounter. In sitios Payawpayawan and Bayog, state forces arrested couple Marites and Benjie Saingga along with their 2-year old child, Wilmar Jiminez and two other farmers.

Simultaneously, the police raided the house of Nene Solano, leader of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas-Negros Oriental. His father-in-law was mauled.

Bombing. The AFP dropped six bombs last April 6 in Barangay Kasapa II, La Paz, Agusan del Sur terrorizing residents. The forested area of the barangay was also repeatedly strafed. The 60th IB and 26th IB has been scouring communities along the boundaries of La Paz, Loreto and San Luis in Agusan del Sur, and Kapalong, Davao del Norte since February.

Killing. Jesus Pason Jr., tricycle driver and a resident of Basurahan, Barangay Mambulay, Silay City, Negros Occidental was gunned down last April 17. He was a member of the Pasil Homeowners Association, Inc. and Kadamay-Negros.

Arrest. In Eastern Samar, the 52nd IB arrested Erwin Ramirez Mortal and Pablito Lapesora Libanan during the last week of February and were accused of being NPA members. Both farmers are residents of Casapa, Barangay Dinigpian, Dolores.

In Bohol, state forces arrested Oscar Balonga, chairperson of the Bongbong Farmers Association, last April 7. He is currently detained at the Trinidad Police Station.

Abuction. Agents of the NTF-ELCAC abducted Alicia Lucena and Sofia Bangayan, members of Anakbayan, after being summoned by officials of Barangay 483 in

Maynila at the barangay hall to purportedly undergo randomized swab testing last April 19. Bangayan was immediately released while the whereabouts of Lucena remain unknown to her lawyer and friends. Lucena was among those previously identified by the NTF-ELCAC to have been "kidnapped" by Kabataan Party List and Makabayan to vilify activists. She is the daughter of NTF-ELCAC agent and Hands Off Our Children spokesperson Relissa Lucena.

Red-tagging. Volunteers of the "community pantry" in Maginhawa, Quezon City and Pandacan, Manila were forced to temporarily stop their operations last April 20 after their initiatives were red-tagged by the police.

The community pantry is a form of mutual aid among residents which receives food items and gives them to those in need.

This initiative was launched last April 15 and was followed by 300 other initiatives across the country.

Earlier, employees of the Senate and Supreme Court, as well as the Alliance of Health Workers were also red-tagged by the NTF-ELCAC.

AB

Bonus and salary increase for billionaires

AMID WIDESPREAD UNEMPLOYMENT and income loss suffered by businesses, top executives of big companies raised their own income by millions of pesos by in the form of bonuses and salary increases in 2020.

Six executives of GMA 7, including Felipe Gozon and Gilberto Duavit, received ₱259 million in bonuses in 2020, 43% higher than what they received in 2019. This is on top of the 37% salary increase which they received during the same period.

Similarly, the salary of Manuel Pangilinan and four other officials

of PLDT increased by 12%. The said company operates Smart Telecommunications. Its officers collectively received an additional P1 million in bonuses in 2020.

On the other hand, Globe Telecommunications head Ernest Cu and four other executives earned ₱295 million in salaries and bonuses

in 2020 from ₱277 million in 2019.

Meanwhile, 17 billionaires were listed in the Forbes' list of richest individuals in the world. They include Manuel Villar (352nd richest) who was recorded to have the highest net worth in the country, followed by Enrique Razon, Lucio Tan, Andrew Tan, Sy siblings, Ramon Ang, Lance Gokongwei, Roberto Ongpin, Ricardo Po and Edgar Sia. Amazon chief Jeff Bezos remains the richest individual globally. AB

Intense exploitation of coconut farmers

In contrast to the hardships of coconut farmers, big landlords, traders and monopolistic corporations continue to fatten their pockets. Amid the pandemic, the exploitation of coconut farmers has further intensified.

In December 2020, a tenant family based in a barrio of Camarines Sur which tends a four-hectare coconut farm earned a measly ₱4,900. Of the 661 kilos of copra which they processed, 20% (which is valued at around ₱3,960 at a price of ₱30 per kilo) was not purchased by the trader. Despite how well the copra was processed, traders still impose *resiko* or the percentage arbitrarily shaved off from the price of the product due to moisture content.

The whole family participated in the production to minimize their expenses. After deducting transportation costs to their gross income for 529 kilos of copra (₱15,870), the family was left with ₱14,700. Under the *tersyuhan* system, two-thirds of the said income will go to the landlord, while while the farmer gets only one-third (₱4,900). This is equivalent to ₱109 per day which the farmer has to stretch over the next 45 days for his family of eight.

Due to successive typhoons which hit the said barrios during the last quarter of 2020, the income of coconut farmers further shrank. They were able to survive by planting vegetables and asserting their right to forego land rent payment for two copra processing seasons.

While farmers went hungry, traders accumulated huge profits from the copra they bought. According to the Philippine Coconut Authority, the farmgate price of copra significantly decreased from ₱54 per kilo in January 2017 to ₱13.39 per kilo in January 2019. In some areas, farmgate prices went for as low as ₱12 per kilo. In 2020,

the average farmgate price of copra was only ₱18.75 per kilo. Lowest of which was in Eastern Visayas (₱14). Although the price in Bicol increased to ₱30, the income of a coconut farmer is actually low due to *resikada*. Traders make around P8.45 profit for every kilo of cheap copra when these are sold to factories, who in turn further jack up prices when they sell to the export market.

Local plants primarily supply copra to large foreign companies which manufacture food and other consumer goods. These plants include those which are under the Coconut Industry Investment Fund-Oil Mills Group which was funded during the Marcos dictatorship using the taxes of coconut farmers. These plants initially process copra into coconut oil or other products.

From January to October 2020, the Philippines exported a total of 1.4 million metric tons of copra. Due to the pandemic, this is lower by 21% from 1.8 million metric tons during the same period in 2019. The Philippines is the leading exporter of copra (64%) globally.

Processed food products and sanitation products that are copra-based became in demand since the lockdown. This includes products by Nestlé and Cargill (food manufacturing multinationals), and Procter and Gamble (P&G) which source their raw materials from the Philippines and two other countries in Asia.

Profits of Nestlé, Cargill and



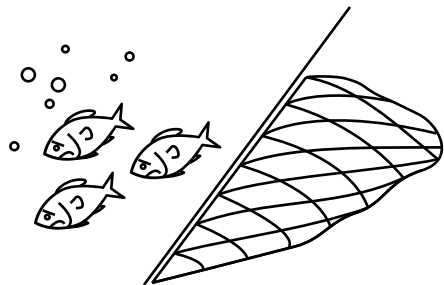
P&G increased during the pandemic. Among all food manufacturing companies globally, Nestlé recorded an income of \$13 billion in 2020 which was the biggest during the said year, higher by 2.8% than in 2019. The highest income of the corporation was from its sales of Purina, which manufactures animal feeds using the byproduct of processed copra.

Cargill on the other hand recorded an income of \$3 billion during the same year from \$2.56 billion before the pandemic. P&G, the biggest multinational company which produces personal care products (soaps, shampoos, toothpastes) recorded an income of \$12.76 billion in 2020 from \$3.63 billion in the previous year.

Millions of dollars in profit was accumulated by Philippine-based companies which produce coconut oil. These include the Peter Paul Philippines Corporation and Primex Coco Products, which are among the biggest processors and exporters of coconut products globally, and recorded \$13.8 million in sales in 2020.

—IN—SHORT

240 tons of fish



are **poached daily** by **Chinese**

within the sovereign seas of the Philippines in the **West Philippine Sea.**

₱15,000 AND ₱5,000

monthly allowance and hazard pay

for health workers are yet to be distributed until today.



₱152.9 billion

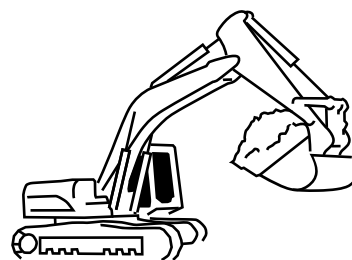
amount allocated for the **pension of retired soldiers and police** in the **2021 national budget.**

This is the **third biggest item in the budget**, next to funds allocated to local government units and automatic appropriations for debt servicing.

Each vial of Remdesivir costs

₱15,000-₱29,000

This is 20-40 times higher than its price in India (₱715-₱910) which has the capacity to manufacture medicines. Remdesivir is one of the medicines given to treat patients with Covid-19.



100

new mining contracts

are set to be approved after Duterte issued **EO 130** which **ended the moratorium on the opening of new mines** to protect the environment.



online petition launched by health workers on April 15 signed by at least **60,000** individuals **within 5 days.**

Miguel Díaz-Canel

president of Cuba, was elected on April 2020 by the **8th Congress** of the **Communist Party of Cuba** as First Secretary to replace Raul Castro.

MAYO I

DAY WHEN US AND NATO COMBAT TROOPS ARE SCHEDULED TO RETURN

from **Afghanistan** after the US' **20-year failed war** in the country.

IMF-World Bank, landgrabber and environmental plunderer

Progressive organizations went online last April 11 to protest the opening of the Spring Meeting of the International Monetary Fund-World Bank (IMF-WB). In this meeting, leaders of the IMF-WB and delegates discussed the issues of Covid-19, debt and climate change. As in the past, the IMF-WB claimed to be an "environmental champion" by announcing its plans to "forgive" the debt of poor countries in exchange for implementing "green investments." In truth, these projects are only a continuation of the neoliberal agenda railroaded by the institution across the world. Such projects are being used to pave way for large-scale grabbing and use conversion of forests and farm lands to the detriment of the environment and the people who depend on these for their livelihood.

The IMF-WB utilizes both capital investments and loans to countries and corporations to facilitate land acquisition. According to a research by International Development Association, IMF-WB directly funded at least 14 large land deals of various companies covering at least 900,000 hectares and provided securities financing to over 700,000 more in Africa, Latin America, South and South East Asia.

Worst of these concessions were funded by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), an agency of the WB which invests directly in private companies. Among the projects it funded was the bauxite mining operation of Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinée (CBG) in

Papua New Guinea. The IFC loaned the company \$200 million (₱9.6 billion at an exchange rate of \$1=₱48) in 2016 for expansion of its operations which resulted in the eviction of 150,000 Guineans from their ancestral lands and the poisoning of a river which serves as residents primary source of drinking water. It funded a similar project in Myanmar which resulted in the eviction of 16,000 farmers and Karen minorities from 23 communities.

In over 30 countries, the IFC actively funds various landgrabbing concessions through its local intermediaries such as banks and private equities.

In the Philippines, the WB is currently pushing for the implemen-

tation of the Support to Parcelization of Lands for Individual Titles, a program which will divide collective land titles to railroad land acquisition by foreign companies which target to establish "mega farms" or plantations in the country. The said program covers around 1.4 million hectares of agricultural land cultivated by around one million farmers. Last year, the country received a \$370-million loan (₱17.8 billion) from the WB for the said program.

Anti-environment

The WB is making it appear that it allocates "climate funds" to supposedly protect the environment and combat climate change. However, it was exposed that around 70% of the programs that it funded are power generation projects including megadams and coal-powered power plants in 12 countries. These projects are notorious for forcibly evicting entire communities and destroying the environment

Data by World Bank in 2015 indicate that the Philippines received the biggest investments (\$4.9 billion or ₱235.2 billion) for such projects, followed by South Africa, Chile and Malaysia. Across the globe, it allocated the highest funds (\$1.2 billion or ₱57.6 billion) to the San Buenaventura Power Plant in Mauban, Quezon. Additionally, \$937 million (₱45 billion) was allocated to the Therma Visayas Power Plant in Toledo City, Cebu. Both are coal-fired powerplants.

This March, the WB revised its climate policy to purportedly mitigate climate change. However, many criticized this as it has not included the commitment to stop funding power generation projects which utilize fossil fuel and coal. **AB**



Hate crimes against Asian-Americans escalate

Hate crimes against Asian-Americans in the US are escalating. Hate crimes pertain to crimes committed on the basis of a particular skin color, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, age or gender. One of such case is that of a 65-year old Filipina who was kicked in the head in New York. On the same day, a male Asian-American was found unconscious in the city's subway. According to the New York police, hate crimes in the city rose from 2 to 28 in 2020. For the first few months of 2021 alone, it rose to 30.



Stop AAPI Hate, a non-governmental organization, recorded 3,800 hate incidents against Asian-American in 2020. One of the most recent is the shooting in three Asian-American businesses in Atlanta last March 17. Six, out of eight, shot were Asian-American women.

The real number of hate incidents is higher as most of these, like intimidation, cursing and discrimination, are not reported by Asian-Americans. Many hate crimes are also reported as ordinary crimes.

Many blame previous US president Donald Trump's statements as

the cause for the rise in Asian-American hate crimes. When the pandemic first hit, Trump renamed Covid-19 as the "China virus," "Wuhan virus" and even "Kung flu" which fanned the flames of the extant xenophobia of some sections of the American society against Asian-Americans.

Xenophobia against Asian-Americans is rooted in decades of discrimination in the health system against Asians, particularly the Chinese. Between 1910-1940, the US outrightly banned the entry of Chinese workers into the US as they

supposedly are carriers of diseases. This was compounded by the view that these foreign workers were "stealing" jobs in the country. In the following years, this was made worse by the myth that all Asian-Americans are "hard-working, meek at smart or good in maths" which make them serious competition in scoring limited jobs.

At present, there are around 20 million Asian-Americans in the US. The largest group are of Chinese descent, followed by Filipinos and Indians. Other groups are Vietnamese, Korean and Japanese. **AB**

"Do not rely on the US to defend the Philippines"—CPP

The Philippines should not rely on the US to defend the West Philippine Sea against Chinese encroachment. This was the Party's statement on the opening of the 10-day Balikatan 2020 last April 13.

The annual US and Philippine army joint exercises are currently being held in various parts of Luzon with fewer participants (736 Filipino soldiers and 225 American) compared to previous iterations.

The US is making it appear that through Balikatan, the Philippines can count on the US in its fight

against China's invasion of the Philippine seas through its militia vessels, Coast Guard, and big fishing vessels.

In fact, Balikatan is one the US key activities to train the AFP as support its units in its overseas operations, particularly in the Asia-Pacific. As in the past, the Balikatan

will demonstrate and reinforce US control over the doctrine and operations of the AFP. It will intensify its counterinsurgency operations which victimizes the Filipino people.

"The Balikatan this year is made more contemptuous in the face of the AFP's war of suppression in the countryside," according to the Party. In contrast, the AFP's long reliance on the US army has made it incapable of defending the nation's territory on its own. **AB**