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Editorial

The struggle at Philippine Air Lines and the struggle of the Philippine working class

The workers of Philippine Air Lines (PAL) are justified in struggling to the hilt against plans to terminate almost 3,000 regular workers of the company and replace them with contractual agency workers. The struggle against this outsourcing scheme is widespread and fully supported by the working class and the toiling masses.

It is not only the livelihood of PAL workers and their families that is at stake in this struggle. Big capitalists will grow more emboldened to engage in outsourcing, especially with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) upholding PAL's plans.

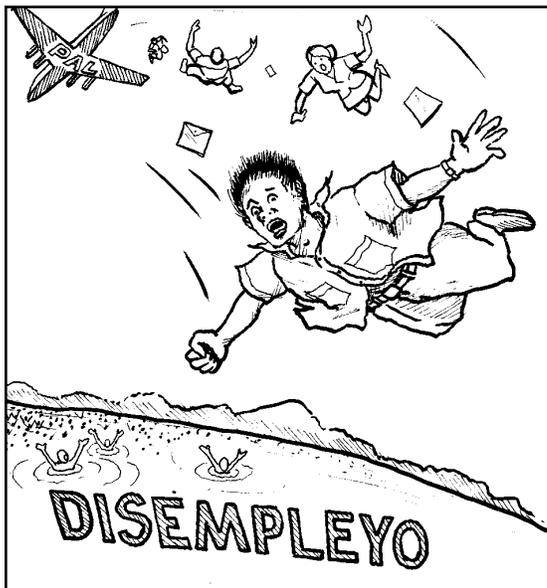
This struggle is in line with the workers' struggle against labor "flexibilization" which imperialists have been enforcing since the 1990s. The exploitation of Filipino workers has worsened in the past two decades through various forms of labor "flexi-

bilization" such as casualization and contractualization and through the currently expanding system of outsourcing.

These systems, which have become standard practice are enforced through gross deception, coercion and intimidation. Forcible retirement, among other means, is resorted to in order to boot out regular workers and replace them.

From 15% in the early 1990s, almost 80% of the country's workers are now casuals and contractuels. Such a practice has become widespread, mainly among big comprador capitalists like PAL owner Lucio Tan. In 1999, Tan got rid of 5,000 out of PAL's 12,500 workers and replaced them with contractuels from a conspiring agency. If his latest scheme to replace another 3,000 workers succeeds, up to 70% of PAL's work force will have been outsourced.

Outsourcing is also being enforced in other enterprises owned by Lucio Tan. At the Victorias Milling Corporation, where Lucio Tan is majority



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owner, practically the entire work force has been outsourced. At Fortune Tobacco, there are plans to boot out 2,400 workers and replace them with contractals.

There are now more contractals compared to regular workers in more than 70% of Philippine enterprises. This is the case in some of the biggest companies like San Miguel Corporation (96%), SM Shoemart (94%), Dole Philippines (77%) and PLDT (60%). ABS-CBN was recently in the news when it terminated 100 contractual workers that it employed through its own agency, the ABS-CBN Internal Job Market. Almost 100% of those employed by the much-vaunted call centers (which account for the biggest number of jobs outsourced by foreign companies) are contractual, as well as in fastfood chains like Jollibee.

The widespread employment of contractual workers enables capitalists to intensify exploita-

tion and increase their super-profits. Contractuals receive far lower wages compared to regular workers doing the same jobs. In most cases, the contractals are given wages that are even lower than the legal minimum. They are deprived of the rights and benefits enjoyed by regular workers.

Capitalists actually have very few obligations, if any, to contractual workers. The practice of requiring contractals to work more than eight hours a day or during holidays without overtime pay is widespread. So is the no work-no pay policy and the deprivation of medical and other benefits. Many contractual workers are likewise employed without written contracts and can thus be made to perform work heavier than they expected and in many cases, even illegal acts. They can be terminated for the slightest infraction and without being given a chance to defend their side.

The low wages received by



contractuals further pull down the value of labor in the Philippines. In the face of widespread unemployment and their desperation to land whatever jobs are available, contractual workers are forced to accept the measly wages and oppressive work conditions attendant to their temporary employment.

Crippling unions or nipping them in the bud are among the main objectives of imperialists and their big comprador capitalist co-conspirators in enforcing widespread labor "flexibilization." Although illegal, most labor contracts contain provisions prohibiting workers from engaging in union activities. Contractual workers' limited employment periods also prevent them from unionizing.

The contractualization of labor has already dealt a severe blow on the unionization of workers. After almost two dec-

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ades of labor “flexibilization,” only about 5% of workers are organized into unions (from 15% in 1995). Moreover, only up to 200,000 workers (less than 1% of the labor force) are covered by Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA).

With labor “flexibilization” widespread and labor unions rendered inutile, Filipino workers are subjected to the gravest forms of exploitation and their rights violated unrelentingly.

Many of the victories won by the working class through the struggles it waged in the last century are being trampled on, violated and reversed. A huge percentage of the masses of workers have been reduced to semi-proletarian status in the last two decades.

The degradation of the Philippine working class has been made possible by the puppet Philippine government, upon the dictates of its imperialist

master. The National Employment Plan that was drafted way back during Corazon Aquino's administration openly encouraged contractualization purportedly as a means of raising business competitiveness. The plan has been further buttressed by other orders issued by subsequent governments that encouraged and allowed various forms of labor “flexibilization.”

These are among the key policies being pushed by imperi-

Brewing strike at PAL

The PAL Employees Association (PALEA) filed its second notice of strike against management on November 5. It was PALEA's response to the company's tactic of approaching union members one by one to coerce them into accepting its offer of separation pay in exchange for agreeing to be fired and be rehired as contractual employees or be replaced by contractual workers.

It was also the union's response to DOLE's decision to uphold the company's plans of firing almost 3,000 regular workers and replacing them with contractuales as part of a cost-cutting measure.

The cost-cutting plans will involve the outsourcing of so-called non-core company operations. These operations are undertaken by the airport services department which has 2,000 workers, inflight catering service which employs 1,000 workers and the reservation call center which has 172 workers.

The workers in these departments have service records ranging from seven to 30 years.

PAL also plans to sell the company's medical and information technology units and contract its operations to another agency.

As a consolation, the company claims that the terminated workers may be hired by the agencies to be contracted by PAL: ePLDT (for its call center), SkyKitchen (for catering) and SkyServices (for airport services). Nonetheless, the workers are set to lose their job security and will be obliged to receive lower wages, lose many of their benefits and be in danger of termination any time.

PAL has offered a ₱2.5 billion “retirement package” for the workers it plans to fire. It is a very small amount compared to the ₱3.87 billion PAL will be saving annually in employing contractual workers who will be paid lower wages and receive

none of the usual benefits.

In 2000, PAL fired the workers in its maintenance and engineering department which it sold to Lufthansa Technik Philippines.

PAL is invoking the need for cost-cutting measures ostensibly to save the company and its remaining jobs. But the real motive behind these moves is PAL's desire to shortchange its employees, bust their union and avoid entering into another collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

PAL's owner Lucio Tan used the “company is losing” line to impose a ten-year moratorium on the CBA in 1998, a move upheld by DOLE. The moratorium ended in 2008, but the company continues to refuse to negotiate for a new CBA.

Flight attendants and cabin crew had been poised to strike in October until Benigno Aquino III ordered DOLE to assume jurisdiction over the labor dispute.

AB

alism under the “free market” globalization framework. They are being enforced as adjuncts to the policies of liberalization, denationalization, privatization and deregulation. The goal is to eradicate measures that protect the national economy and give free rein to foreign monopoly capitalists to invest their surplus capital, dump their surplus goods, extract national wealth and resources and exploit cheap labor in the semicolonies.

Through labor “flexibilization,” semicolonies are made to compete with each other in offering the cheapest and most docile workers in order to attract foreign big capitalist investors. Contractualization is now being undertaken on a

global scale, with parts of monopoly capitalist production outsourced to lower-paid contractual workers in semicolonies. The proliferation of call centers in the Philippines is part of this phenomenon.

The struggle against labor contractualization and various forms of “flexibilization” is among the major struggles of the working class in the country. We must forge the broad unity of the Filipino people to resist and put a stop to the oppressive and exploitative system of contractualization. Just as the PAL workers are now doing, all unions and organizations of workers and the toiling masses must assail the growing practice of outsourcing and contractuali-

zation in various industries and companies and oppose imperialist and puppet government policies that advocate them.

We must also persevere in organizing workers—both regulars and contractals—into unions and other organizations or movements in their workplaces, in agencies that supply contractals or in communities. These organizations must defend workers' rights, which includes demanding higher wages and the regularization of employment.

It is crucial for the toiling masses, all progressive forces and the entire Filipino people to unite with and support the difficult struggle of the working class against labor “flexibiliza-

Looming strike at Lepanto

Members of the Lepanto Employees Union-National Federation of Labor Unions-Kilusang Mayo Uno and Lepanto Security Union (LSU) filed a notice of strike with the National Conciliation and Mediation Board after Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company fired 140 of its workers. The two unions accused the company of union busting and unfair labor practices.

Among those laid off were seven officials and 116 members of the two unions and other regular workers. The company claimed that it fired the workers because they were inefficient. It was actually a company tactic to cripple the unions and weaken the workers' position in impending negotiations for a collective bargaining agreement with the company. The company plans to replace them with contractual workers.

The workers are also complaining about unpaid back wages (now amounting to P542 million) and the company's failure to remit their contributions to the Social Security System and PAG-IBIG, thus denying them their rightful benefits. **AB**

Strike at Advan, Bureau of Customs

Workers of Bluestar Manufacturing and Marketing Corporation (BMMC) in Tuguegarao, Muntinlupa City held a four-day strike beginning at 5:00 a.m. on November 15. The picket line was manned by 108 workers or nearly half of the company's work force. BMMC manufactures Advan Shoes and Rainboots.

The strike compelled the BMMC management to recognize the union, comply with their CBA and address complaints of sexual harassment and other unfair labor practices. The workers had also gone on strike in 2008 over the same issues.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Customs Employees Association (BOCEA) has threatened to go on strike to protest unpaid overtime of Bureau of Customs employees at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. BOCEA said that the bureau owes its employees some P500 million covering the past 14 months. **AB**

tion" and other neoliberal economic policies. They must forge and widen the path of struggle for decent jobs, living wages and workers' rights, and mobilize even the unemployed toiling masses as well as other democratic sectors that are sup-

portive of the workers' interests. The struggle for decent work and higher wages is closely linked to the demand and struggle for genuine land reform and national industrialization and for a self-reliant and progressive economy. Thus, the

revolutionary forces, working class leaders and national democratic activists must do their all to arouse the broad masses and lead them towards the path of revolutionary struggle and the attainment of fundamental social change. **AB**

Students to strike over budget cuts

Youth and students have begun a series of mass actions to oppose mounting budget cuts in state colleges and universities (SCU). Progressive organizations launched the "November strike" to express to the Aquino regime their anger over the enormous reductions in the SCU budget.

Students of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City kicked off their protest action by signing a manifesto expressing their opposition to the ₱1.39 billion budget cut, the biggest in the university's history. Students, teachers and employees joined the manifesto signing. They also held a rally as the university's Board of Regents met on November 19 to challenge the next UP president to join them in the fight against the reduced budget. The selection of the next president was moved to December 3. Students of the different UP campuses are set to go on strike on November 25-26.

Students in Cebu City also held a mass action at the office of the Commission on Higher Education-Cebu on November 9. They expressed disappointment that the budget allocation for educa-

tion does not even meet half of the standard set by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The UNESCO states that governments should allocate at least 6% of their gross domestic product to education. The current education budget of the Philippines is below 3% of the GDP.

Students of the University of the Philippines-Visayas held a picket on November 11 at their campus in Miag-ao, Iloilo to demand a bigger budget for the UP. Students of UP-Manila

also held a picket on November

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wearing short shorts to symbolize the shrinking education budget. The education budget cut was also the main issue tackled by students in a mass action in Mendiola on November 17 to observe International Students Day.

At the Sta. Mesa, Manila campus of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), over 2,000 students held a mass action with the support of teachers, employees and even the president of the university to protest the reduction of PUP's budget to just ₱672 million instead of the needed ₱2 billion. They also opposed the ₱23.4 million cut from the budget for the maintenance of classrooms, buildings and other university facilities. The mass action formed part of the widespread protest movement against SCU budget cuts nationwide. Another protest action was held at the PUP the following day with some 3,000 students, teachers, employees and janitors participating. They announced a PUP system-wide strike next week.

Students, teachers, employees, SCU officials and their supporters are set to launch a big mass action on December 1 to coincide with Congress' bicameral meeting to discuss the ed-



Military kills renowned scientist in Leyte

A well-known scientist and two members of his team were killed by the military in Leyte while a union leader and a peasant activist were gunned down in Southern Tagalog in November.

November 15. Elements of the 19th IB shot and killed Leonardo Co, a noted plant taxonomist, and his team members Policarpio Balute and Roniño Gibe. Two more of their companions were able to escape while three student interns remain missing.

Co's eight-man team had been scouring the forested area of Sitio Upper Malihao, Barangay Lim-ao, Kananga, Leyte to collect specimen seedlings of endangered trees as part of a reforestation project of the Energy Development Corp. (EDC).

Government soldiers opened fire on Co's team without bothering to ascertain who they were. The soldiers kept on shooting for over 15 minutes and even used a grenade launcher at them. This was despite the fact that the team's activities had been coordinated with the military since the area is under the jurisdiction of a special CAGU unit and is close to the detachment of a unit under the 19th IB. The area is also regularly patrolled by the battalion.

To cover up the crime, the military claimed that the 19th IB was responding to a report from the EDC that NPA guerrillas had been sighted in the area. Co and his companions were pur-

portedly caught in the crossfire as the soldiers shot it out with the Red fighters.

The EDC denied relaying such a report to the military. According to the survivors, they saw no other armed group in the area and said all the shots came from the position of the soldiers.

November 12. Armed men aboard a motorcycle gunned down a union leader in Laguna. Carlos Rodriguez, 41, had just come from a union leaders' meeting and was on his way home when he was shot by his assailants in Barangay Halang, Calamba. He sustained four gunshot wounds—two in the back, one in the arm and another in the neck. Rodriguez led the Nagkakaisang Lakas ng Manggagawa ng Calamba Water District and was an officer of COURAGE.

Rodriguez is the 22nd victim of extrajudicial killing under the Aquino administration. He actively advanced workers' rights in Southern Luzon, organizing a forum on government employees' issues as well as a coalition of water district employees in Southern Tagalog and Bicol.

The human rights watchdog Karapatan roundly condemned Rodriguez's murder. Karapatan said that there has been an av-

erage of one activist killed every week under the new regime.

November 7. Two armed men on a motorcycle stopped and killed Ireneo Rodriguez, 38, a member of Samahan ng mga Magbubukid sa Batangas (SAM-BAT), in Barangay Caybunga, Balayan, Batangas. Rodriguez is a resident of Barangay Coral ni Lopez, Calaca, Batangas.

August to the present. A soldier raped a 15-year old girl in Sorsogon. "Chona," not her real name, was raped seven times by Pfc. Hamandre Flores, a soldier of the 49th IB and anchorman of the military's radio program Radio PADABA. The victim's mother recounted that they approached Flores when they found out that he was from Isabela to ask him to help them find an uncle of "Chona" who molested her. The uncle was reportedly hiding in Isabela.

But when they went to the 49th IB camp in Juban, Sorsogon, Flores ordered the girl's mother and sister to buy food. When he was alone with the girl, he raped her at gunpoint. He told her not to tell anybody or he would kill her and her family. Chona was raped a second time when the soldier went to the victim's house and had a drink with her father. Flores later forcibly took her to the camp and again raped her several times.

Now that a rape case has been filed against Flores, the military is claiming that the girl was a prostitute and her mother had been pimping for her. **AB**

Comrade Remedios Daoag (1955-2010)

Model revolutionary

Comrade Remedios Daoag (Ka RD) was a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines Regional Committee in Cagayan Valley. She was killed in an accident in September while she was on her way to a guerrilla front in Cagayan province. The entire revolutionary movement salutes Ka RD, a great hero of the revolution.

Ka RD had faced and overcome many hardships in the service of the people and the revolution. She struggled with the feudal culture in the countryside that discriminates

against women. She persevered under difficult conditions during martial law and when she was captured by the enemy. She hurdled such diseases as tuberculosis and malaria and the pain of



her failing knees. What she missed in formal education, she made up for by studying the works of the great communist

CPP honors Leonardo Co

The CPP honored Leonardo Co for his great contribution to the classification of local plant species and their medical benefits. Since the 1980s until his death in the hands of the military, Co led the compilation of data for the first authoritative manual of indigenous medicinal plants in the Philippines. This compilation serves as an invaluable reference for revolutionary and progressive health workers in providing training and services to the masses, especially in the countryside.

Co was one of the founders of Community Health, Education, Services and Training in the Cordillera Region (Chestcore) in 1981. This organization conducted valuable work among the national minorities in Cordillera and other places and in systematizing the knowledge of the masses in the region about medicinal plants for basic health care. It was able to document 122 medicinal plants in the region complete with their scientific and common names, descriptions, illustrations and their nutritional and medicinal values. AB

Aquino: The biggest pimp of foreign capitalists

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) called Benigno Aquino III the “biggest pimp” for foreign capitalist interests. The CPP made the statement after the launch of the “Public-Private Partnership” (PPP) at the Marriot Hotel in Pasay City on November 18 where Aquino assured 500 managers of multinational corporations that his government will honor contractually agreed fees and that they can continue gaining superprofits from their businesses in the country. With such a policy, nothing can get in the way of rampant corruption, abuse and plunder in the country.

While Aquino was pimping the country to foreign managers, members of Bayan Muna denounced him in a protest action outside the hotel. A streamer with the message “Philippines not for sale!” seized by the Pasay City Police from the protesters clearly expressed the opposition to Aquino's program. Aquino now bears the monicker “Privatization King.” The bankrupt government hopes to earn \$3.4 million from foreign capitalist investments in railway, road and airport projects in the country.

The activists said that the Aquino regime's PPP stands for nothing but “Private-Public Plunder” because it will only gobble up the country's remaining businesses and natural resources at the Filipino people's expense and further jack up the country's colossal foreign debt. AB

thinkers and using theory to guide her practice.

Ka RD grew up as a poor settler. Her clan looked for land to till elsewhere after they and other Yogad minorities were driven out of their ancestral land in Echague, Isabela. They eventually settled in Dibay, Minuri, Jones, Isabela where Ka RD's family opened a swidden farm.

Ka RD became an activist in her village. She joined the New People's Army (NPA) in 1972, escaping from the Yogad tradition of arranged marriages.

Trained to be a medic, she immediately had her hands full when malaria downed most of Coy B from 1972 to 1973. Their team of medics was not spared. After regaining some of her strength, Ka RD helped in gathering food and medicinal herbs for the patients. She was one of the most active guerrillas in Coy B. She became closer to the masses because of her diligence in providing medical treatment to the villagers through acupuncture and other means.

Amid the military's sustained campaigns of suppression in the Forest Region of Isabela, and the NPA's failure to quickly break out of the enemy encirclement from the start of martial rule in September 1972 up to 1976, Coy B suffered many difficulties. For almost a year, the guerrillas had nothing to eat but bananas, taro and cassava. They trekked through the forest without mass support. Ka RD nonetheless remained strong and persevered. Her baby died during the so-called Long March

from Isabela to Cagayan in 1975 when the NPA finally broke through the enemy's cordon.

She was appointed to the Regional Education Bureau in 1976 and was one of those who disseminated a prototype basic Party course drafted by the region before the official Basic Party Course (BPC) was completed by the CPP's national education bureau.

She became a member of the secretariat of a district committee in Cagayan in 1978. That same year, she was captured by the enemy after giving birth. The military kept her in a MIG safe house for more than a year. She returned to the movement in 1980.

When she was assigned again to Isabela in 1983, she became secretary of a guerrilla front committee. In 1995, she was elected to the secretariat of the Isabela - Nueva Vizcaya - Quirino supraprovincial committee. She continued her term as guerrilla front committee secretary after being elected to the Executive Committee of the Regional Committee in the 1999 conference.

Ka RD was steeled in comprehensive leadership in the Party. She not only studied the military situation thoroughly, she also joined tactical offensives. She led successful antifascist and antifeudal mass campaigns, including the region's first successful municipal-level agrarian revolution campaign. Subsequent municipal agrarian struggles in the region drew lessons from that campaign.

Ka RD documented assessments, summings up and social

investigations. In the meetings of her collective, she sharply corrected mistaken notions about basic ideological, political and organizational principles. She also learned to use the computer in documentation and encryption. She was again assigned to the Regional Education Bureau in 2005 and translated the BPC and other Filipino writings to Iloko.

She was creative. She composed the songs "Ilaban Nagbannugan" (Fight for the fruits of our labor), "DRB Itandudo" (Uphold the people's democratic revolution) at "Panag-Adal Kasasaad" (Studying history). She gently corrected comrades who wrongly pronounced the lyrics of songs, whether in Pilipino or Iloko. She wrote poetry which were read during NPA programs.

Even when she was already a high-ranking cadre, she never shied away from manual work. She was active in kitchen tasks, dug wells and gathered firewood, among others.

She had a severe bout of depression but stayed in the organization, worked according to her capacity and returned to the countryside when she recovered. Despite the difficulties she encountered, she overcame her emotions and instead strove to unite the comrades and articulate their views.

Ka RD is a model for mothers and wives. She bore the sacrifice of being separated from her three children whom she loved so much in order to wage revolution. She was a partner to her husband who was a fellow revolutionary.

She is a paragon of perseverance. Despite not finishing bourgeois elementary education, she opened her mind and painstakingly applied herself to learning.

She is a model for young women. She opposed the feudal culture in the countryside and devoted the vibrancy of her youth in the service of the people. She raised her brothers' and sisters' consciousness and recruited them into the revolution. She is also a model for aging revolutionaries. She never gave up despite her failing knees, and used her revolutionary ideals as her walking stick.

She is a model for the oppressed. She struggled against the three basic problems of the Filipino people until she breathed her last. AB

Drivers stage protest

PEDICAB ang *kuliglig* (motorized pedicab) drivers launched a protest action in Manila on November 15 to oppose a move to prohibit them from plying the streets. They were supported by the Anakbayan and Kabataan parties.

The Alyansa ng Nagkakaisang Pedicab at Kuliglig Drivers (ALNAPEDIKU) said Manila mayor Alfredo Lim's order to bar their vehicles is unjust because it would deprive thousands of drivers of their jobs. They demanded the junking of Executive Orders 16 and 17 prohibiting *kuliglig* and pedicab drivers from plying Manila's main streets and highways, especially since they have permits from local governments.

They said that the *kuliglig* is helpful because of its affordable fare. They added that riding it was a way to prevent people from being victimized by criminals, especially at night, since they wouldn't have to walk. They said they were prepared to bring their appeal to Benigno Aquino III himself.

Up to 8,000 pedicab and *kuliglig* drivers will be unemployed once the orders take effect by December 1.

Unified call: Free the Morong 43!

Calls are mounting from various sectors in the country and overseas to free the 43 health workers arrested on February 6 in Morong, Rizal. The Morong 43's supporters are also pressing for the immediate release of two of the prisoners who recently gave birth while in detention as well as Dr. Alexis Montes, an ailing 60-year old physician who was tortured by their military captors. All have raised the common view that the continued incarceration of the innocent health workers who were falsely accused of participating in a bomb-making seminar is a violation of human rights.

Benigno Aquino III has stubbornly refused to order their release despite Justice Secretary Leila de Lima's conclusion that their arrest was illegal. Aquino prefers to leave the matter to the courts.

Broadening international support. Last November 12, the International Federation of Medical Students Association of Brazil (IFMSA-Brazil) demanded the release of the Morong 43.

The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) has also adopted a resolution calling for the health workers' release even as it denounced the irregularity of their arrest and detention and the torture and inhumane treatment inflicted on them by the military. It said that the workers must be freed on humanitarian as well legal and moral grounds. AMARC is a worldwide organization of community radio operators in over 110 nations.

Delegates from nine countries attending the International Conference on Solidarity, Defense and Struggle for Freedom of Political Prisoners in the World held last October 22-24 in Copenhagen, Denmark also joined calls for the release of the 43 health workers. They likewise urged the Aquino regime to put a stop to extrajudicial killings.

The HALDANE Society of Socialist Lawyers and their colleagues in the International Association of Democratic Lawyers had earlier urged Aquino to release the Morong 43. Officers of HALDANE attended the Fifth Conference of Lawyers of the Asia-Pacific held in Manila and visited the detained health workers last September 20. AB

NDF-Negros denounces AFP's lies

The National Democratic Front (NDF) in Negros has strongly belied the accusations of 303rd Infantry Brigade chief Col. Jonas Sumagaysay that the New People's Army (NPA) used barriofolk, teachers and students as human shields to elude military reinforcements after ambushing forces of the 1st Scout Ranger Company in Sitio Odiongan, Barangay Tabun-ac, Toboso, Negros Occidental.

Red fighters of the Roselyn "Jean" Pelle Command (RPC) ambushed the military unit last October 21 after receiving reports that an enemy column had entered the perimeter of Sitio Odiongan where the RPC was temporarily encamped. The ambush left two soldiers dead and five others wounded. After seven minutes of gunfire and maneuvers, the guerrillas were able

to withdraw, using a route prepared beforehand by the NPA and far from the village center and school. On the otherhand, the enemy casualties were taken by helicopter towards Cebu.

NDF-Negros spokesperson Frank Fernandez said the RPC had long been monitoring the massive and sustained military campaigns launched in the area by the 303rd Brigade, 62nd IB,

1st Scout Ranger Company (1st SRC), and PNP 6th Regional Public Safety Management Battalion. The military had also tapped the Revolutionary Proletarian Army (RPA) bandit group to serve as its paramilitary force.

Comrade Frank said Sumagaysay conjured up stunning imaginary accounts of the armed encounter to destroy the prestige of the revolutionary movement and cover up the AFP's losses and blunders in both the political and military fields. He said the AFP-Visayas Central Command failed in its target of reducing and weakening the NPA and the revolutionary movement in Negros.

He said NPA forces in Negros island have continued to grow and gain more strength. From January to October 2010, they were able to launch 25 tactical offensives against Philippine Army, PNP and paramilitary forces serving hacienda owners and comprador businessmen, seizing more than 50 high-caliber firearms and wiping out 20 Philippine Army soldiers.

The military has also had to contend with the people's intensifying political struggle against militarization. After the exposé of the 62nd IB's crimes such as the killing of Bayan Muna leader Benjamin Bayles in Himamaylan City, the battalion was deployed back to the 3rd ID in Camp Jamindan, Capiz. Military officers involved in extrajudicial killings and other violations of human rights were also replaced. **AB**

NPA seizes 7 firearms in Davao del Sur

New People's Army (NPA) unit under the Valentin Palamine Regional Operational Command (VPROC-NPA) seized two automatic rifles, a 9 mm pistol and four shotguns after attacking a CAFGU and CVO unit in the early morning of November 12 in Barangay Upper Bala, Magsaysay, Davao del Sur. No casualties were reported on either side.

VPROC-NPA spokesperson Ka Dencio Madrigal said the Red fighters disarmed the paramilitary forces to prevent the 39th IB from using them as instruments in their brutal attacks on communities and to ensure that peace and order will continue to prevail in the NPA's areas of operation in Far South Mindanao Region (FSMR).

Madrigal said the 39th IB had begun assaulting communities in the middle of this year to pave the way for the aggressive expansion of multinational corporations such as Dole Stanfilco. Many farmers will be deprived of their livelihood if foreign companies put under their full control vast tracts of land for their banana and pineapple plantations, Madrigal added. **AB**

Progressives commemorate 6th anniversary of Hacienda Luisita Massacre

A caravan of around 40 vehicles took off from the Quezon City Memorial Circle to Tarlac City last November 17 to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the Hacienda Luisita Massacre. In Manila, the Kilusang Mayo Uno also held a related protest action at Mendiola Bridge.

The caravan was organized by the Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (UMA), KMP and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan. These groups urged the Senate and the Lower House to conduct another investigation of the massacre that took place in the 6,435-hectare hacienda.

Seven people were killed and

more than a hundred were wounded when Philippine Army, PNP and paramilitary forces opened fire at rallyists in front of one of the hacienda's gates on November 16, 2004. Several other protesters and their allies were also gunned down after the incident.

The families of the victims

filed criminal charges at the Office of the Ombudsman in 2004. Among those charged were former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; then Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas; Jose "Peping" Cojuangco; and Benigno Aquino III (now the country's president). The Ombudsman dismissed the charges in 2005.

Calls for justice coming from the victims' families, residents and allies have been mounting in the face of maneuvers by Hacienda Luisita's owners and foreign investors who want to protect their stake over the land. None of the military and police elements involved in the bloodbath has been held to account. **AB**

Agusan del Sur folk oppose illegal mining and logging

More than 2,000 residents of San Francisco, Agusan del Sur launched a rally and a caravan last November 13 to denounce and oppose illegal mining and logging in the province.

They demanded a stop to logging and mining operations in their areas, especially those which have been declared as protected watershed areas by the local water company.

Lumad groups, church people, water company employees, members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) in the province and other environmentalist groups also took part in the protest action. **AB**

New AFP operational plan no different from the old one—CPP

The new internal security operational plan (oplan) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is but a replica of Oplan Bantay Laya. This was the reaction of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) to the AFP's statement last November 20 that its new opplan will take into consideration human rights.

The Party cited the recent killing of the country's foremost botanist Leonardo Co and his two companions to show how the AFP continues to evade responsibility despite proof of its wrongdoing. The CPP said that the AFP is unable to look at itself in the mirror and allow itself to undertake fundamental reforms. Thus, claims of AFP generals about refining the military's rules of engagement and paying attention to human rights are all empty rhetoric, said the CPP.

The CPP also questioned why it is the AFP that will be mobilizing the local government, civilian agencies and NGOs in implementing its opplan. It turns out, said the CPP, that counterinsurgency slogans such as "good governance," "winning the peace" and "holistic approach" are there only to sugar-coat the AFP's paramount thrust of relying on sheer fascist methods to crush the people's armed revolution. **AB**

Protest action rocks G20 meeting

Tens of thousands of Koreans led by the 600,000-strong Korean Confederation of Trade Unions launched a protest action last November 7 to coincide with the G20 meeting in Seoul, South Korea.

Around 40,000 unionists, students and activists held a march-rally in Seoul. The protest was also attended by activists from other countries who managed to slip through a tight security cordon. Hundreds of foreign activists, including those from the Philippines were barred at the airport and immediately put on the next plane

back to their respective countries.

The protesters called for alternative solutions to the world economic crisis and other global problems. They denounced the pending "free trade" agreement between South Korea and the US.

They also decried the government's anti-democratic move

of banning foreign activists from taking part in the protest action. Among those turned away were Sonny Africa, chief researcher of Ibon Foundation; Paul Quintos, also an Ibon Foundation staff; Roger Soluta, secretary-general of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU); and nationalist artist and singer Jess Santiago.

To protect 25 heads of state, IMF and World Bank officials and a number of billionaire businessmen who attended the G20 meeting, the Seoul government mobilized around 45,000 armored riot police and raised the alert level of its entire armed forces. It also used pepper spray to forcibly disperse the demonstrators.

The protest action in Seoul was just one of the activities lined up for the People's Week of Collective Action against the G20 which was launched on November 7-13. Protesters commemorated the 40th death anniversary of Jeon Tae-il, a 22-year-old textile worker who killed himself on November 13, 1970 to dramatize his protest against slave wages, the lack of labor benefits and the miserable working conditions in sweatshops as well as the reactionary Korean government's apathy to all this.

Bigger fonts, longer paper

In response to the suggestions of readers of *Ang Bayan* from different parts of the country, some changes in the paper's layout are now being made.

Notice that starting with this issue, fonts have been enlarged to 12 from the original 11 points for easier reading.

Other changes are now under study in order to make the paper not just more readable but also more presentable. Starting with the special issue on the 42nd anniversary of the Party on December 26, *Ang Bayan* will be laid out on long-size paper (8.5" x 13") from the present 8.5" x 11". We urge that pertinent organs and units consider this in preparing materials for reproduction.

We also request your continuing suggestions for the improvement of *Ang Bayan*.

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