

ANG

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Editorial

## Further invigorate mass struggles against the US-Aquino regime

Last week's protest actions against the relentless increases in the prices of gasoline and other petroleum products have brought to the fore the growing protest movement against the antipeople and pro-imperialist policies being implemented by the Aquino regime. Tens of thousands of people joined street demonstrations in major cities nationwide.

The breadth and intensity of these demonstrations in the country's major urban areas reflect the depth and strength of the people's anger against the policies and systems being implemented by the Aquino regime. They signal not only the worsening social crisis but more so, the growing number of people who have been taking a stand against the increasingly heavier burdens being wrought by this crisis.

The continuing mass actions by the people against rising oil prices are part of the mass struggles that have steadily been gaining strength since last year. Just a few months after Aquino took power, he stoked the people's anger with the nearly simultaneous imposition of policies that added to their burdens and worsened their poverty and suffering. The people's hopes for change with the new government were instantly dashed when Aquino showed that he had no plans at all of addressing the people's demands.

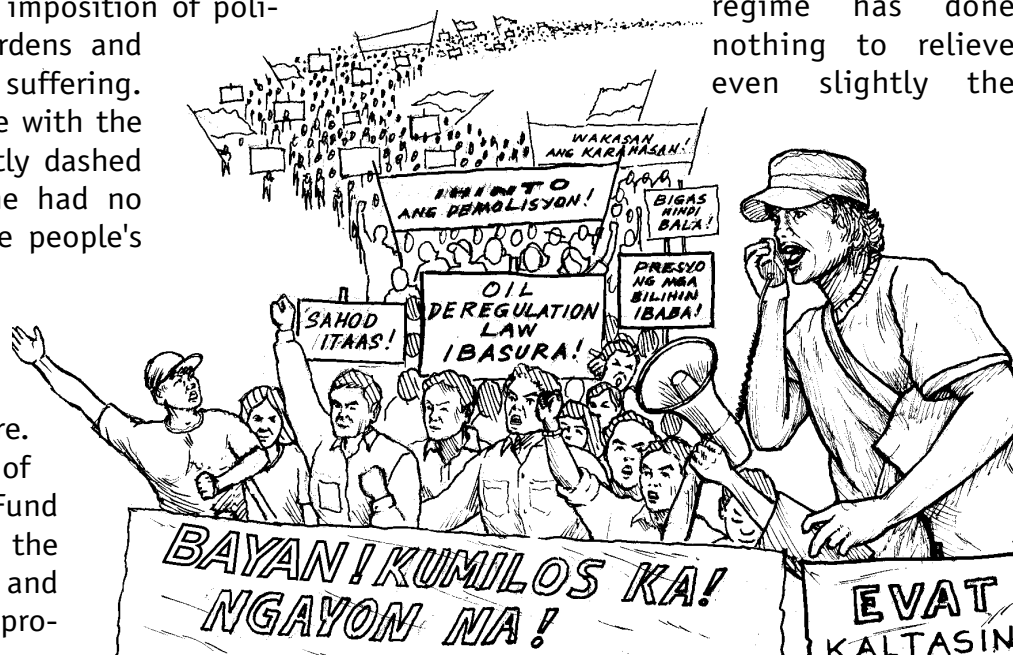
Just a few months after taking the seat of power, Aquino showed everyone who his real "bosses" were. Kowtowing to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, he slashed the budgets for education, health and other services and approved pro-

posals to raise toll fees in exressways and fares in Metro Manila's public train system.

These issues starkly demonstrated Aquino's lopsided priorities in favor of cronies and fellow big businessmen and their objective of raking in profits.

He also clearly demonstrated his utter lack of concern for the people's welfare and their desire to rise above their abject poverty. Worse, he even bought an expensive race car "for relaxation". This underscored how strikingly different and alienated he was from ordinary people whose impoverishment makes the task of meeting their families' daily needs an arduous struggle.

The prices of gasoline and other petroleum products have been rising on an almost weekly basis for more than three months now, spurring hikes in the prices of food and other basic commodities. Already inadequate wages and salaries of workers, rank and file employees and ordinary folk have become even more insufficient. In spite of this, the Aquino regime has done nothing to relieve even slightly the



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people's hunger and suffering. It gave oil companies free rein to raise their prices, especially since every price increase gives the government a windfall in tax collections.

Aquino turns a blind eye to the people's true situation and turns a deaf ear to their cries and grievances. He has taken pains to justify his shunting aside of the workers' demand for higher wages. He mocks the people by saying that prices have not really been rising that fast in a desperate attempt to rationalize his objections to the demand for a ₱125 increase in the daily wage.

Doctored surveys are even now unable to obscure Aquino's rapidly dwindling popularity. Amid the intensifying crisis of the ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system, the reactionary US-Aquino regime's inutility, incompetence, puppetry and fascism are rapidly unfolding.

The vigorous protest actions of the past few months are signs of a bigger storm of mass struggles in the coming months and years. Aquino can no longer rest easily on his throne in the remaining years of his term amid the rapidly erupting struggles of an angered people.

Conditions are exceedingly favorable for the expansion and

intensification severalfold of the revolutionary mass movement in the countryside and cities. There are a myriad issues that can raise the people's consciousness about the basic problems and the rottenness of the prevailing system. The US-Aquino regime's refusal to address the people's grievances and resolve their problems teach them the need to tread the path of struggle.

There is basis for the workers' movement and the movement of the toiling masses to gain vigor and surge forward. There is a strong cry for decent wages and permanent employment as against widespread joblessness and labor flexibilization, for higher wages and lower prices, for housing and other social services.

In their respective factories and communities, the toiling masses are confronted with a mass of problems that drives them to organize and take action. They must be reached, aroused, organized and mobilized. They must be united through various forms of organizations, unions or associations and linked through alliances and movements. Their day to day issues must be linked to the struggles of their sector and the entire people. Their struggle must be focused against the rul-

ing US-Aquino regime.

The youth and students can play a key role in the qualitative invigoration of the democratic mass movement. The youth and student movement has been intensifying since last year, with the growing momentum of struggles against tuition fee hikes and measures taken by the US-Aquino regime to slash the budget for education and other social spending.

There should be continued efforts to expand political education to raise the consciousness of the youth and students on society's problems and their roots. There must be active efforts to counter various tendencies towards petty bourgeois thinking that are being propagated among their ranks in order to block their involvement in social issues.

The youth must be mobilized in a powerful movement to "serve the people" involving tens of thousands of them trooping to factories and communities in the cities and villages in the countryside in order to learn from and to help in arousing and mobilizing the toiling masses. They must consciously become involved in molding public opinion through the internet, cellphones, the mass media and other means.

A broad anti-Aquino united front is emerging based on the strength of the movement of democratic sectors. There is growing involvement from more and more personalities and groups from the middle strata who are disgruntled with the continually worsening social crisis and the ruling regime's failure to present solutions to the people's problems. It will not be long before Aquino pays dearly for his inutile, corrupt, antipeople, fascist and puppet rule. It will not be long before he is swept away and swallowed by the giant wave of people's struggles.

AB



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# Coordinated protests against oil price hikes

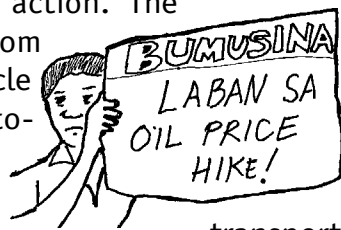
Drivers in Metro Manila launched a caravan to protest the successive oil price hikes. The caravan was accompanied by transport strikes and demonstrations in other cities nationwide.

The Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Opereytor Nationwide (PISTON) led the "Transport Caravan" dubbed the National Day of Action Against Oil Price Hikes. It was held on March 31 and joined by 3,000 protesters and 200 jeeps and FX taxis. Progressive organizations and congressmen also participated in the mass action. The caravan took off from the Quezon City Circle and proceeded towards the University of Sto. Tomas in Manila before the protesters marched to Mendiola.

PISTON secretary-general George San Mateo strongly criticized the fact that oil prices had risen ten times since January. San Mateo charged that the big foreign oil cartels have been raking in almost P370 million

daily because oil prices have been overpriced by P7.50 per liter. Since the Oil Deregulation Law (ODL) took effect in 1998, oil prices have risen by 653%. They demanded that Aquino junk the ODL because it was the cause of runaway oil prices. They also demanded the abrogation of the expanded value-added tax imposed on petroleum products.

Other cities in the country were practically paralyzed when drivers launched transport strikes. In Angeles City, the transport strike effected almost 100% parolization, with more than 20,000 drivers joining it. Fourteen jeepney organizations and 208 tricycle drivers' associations participated in the protest action. In Davao City, 94% of more than 10,000



drivers stopped plying their routes.

According to the Transport in Mindanao for Solidarity, Independence and Nationalism (TRANSMISSION), they successfully paralyzed transportation in a number of the island's cities. Up to 100% joined the transport strike in the cities of Iligan and Valencia, 98% in Cagayan de Oro, and 80% in Malaybalay; 95% in Butuan City; and 90% in Gingoog City. Jeepney, taxi, tricycle, bus and even *habal-habal* (passenger motorcycles) drivers joined the strike.

In Bacolod City, drivers under the United Negros Drivers Operators Center (UNDOC) rallied in solidarity with the caravan. They demanded that the Department of Energy remove the P5 being slapped on the price per liter of petroleum products, resulting in prices higher than those in Metro Manila. In Roxas City, the Hugpong Transport conducted a noise barrage at around 3 p.m. Drivers in Sorsogon and Legazpi City also launched a protest action in preparation for the huge mass actions slated for April 13.

## PAL workers determined to strike

Workers of Philippine Air Lines once more declared their decision to push through with their strike after the lapse of the mandatory prohibition period imposed during ongoing hearings by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) on their dispute with management.

They are strongly opposed to the outsourcing of 3,000 workers to Air Philippines, which is also owned by Lucio Tan. Prior to this, the majority of PAL workers had already voted in favor of the strike.

The Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) expressed its solidarity with the PAL workers and their decision to strike. The KMU also assailed the Aquino regime for conspiring with Lucio Tan. Aquino's meddling in PAL com-

prises blatant intervention in order to preempt the planned labor stoppage and implement antiworker policies like the contractualization scheme, said the KMU.

The KMU also expressed concern about the leadership of Gerry Rivera and the Partido ng Manggagawa over the Philippine Air Lines Employees Association (PALEA). The progressive labor center said that Rivera was endangering the workers' interests.

A labor leader, said the KMU, should not announce when a strike will be held. The KMU also cited Rivera's other errors in dealing with the labor tensions at PAL, such as calling on Aquino for assistance and praising the latter for his decision to intervene.

Said the KMU, such intervention may create havoc in the workers' struggle. It cited Rivera's record of conniving with the former Estrada regime in 1998, when a 10-year moratorium on a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) was imposed. This gave Tan the opportunity to earn millions while PAL workers' wages were pegged at a low level, said the KMU. **AB**



# NPA-Mindanao takes the lead in armed struggle

Partial reports received by *Ang Bayan (AB)* show that Mindanao has been taking the lead in advancing the armed revolutionary struggle in the country.

Their efforts paid off due to their strict adherence to the call to "Rely on the masses, wage antifeudal struggles, daringly launch tactical offensives and fulfill our fighting tasks!"

From only 39 guerrilla fronts in 2009, the island now has 44 guerrilla fronts, with almost half of them company-strength. More platoons and companies have also been formed. Under strict guidance from the Communist Party of the Philippines, NPA units enjoy widespread mass support and continue to achieve victories.

In 2010 alone, the NPA was able to launch 200 tactical offensives, seize 200 high-powered firearms and annihilate the equivalent of a battalion-size enemy force (about 300). In the first quarter of 2011, it was able to launch more than 50 tactical offensives, seize 40 firearms (22 of them high-powered rifles),

kill the equivalent of a company-size enemy force and wound about 50 enemy troops.

Said NDF-Mindanao spokesperson Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos, the NPA was able to contribute a 10% increase in the number of villages it operates in, in Mindanao. The organized masses under various revolutionary mass organizations also grew by 12%. Organs of political power were set up, and various types of alliances were organized, expanded and consolidated.

As a true people's army, it has made major contributions to the struggle for genuine agrarian reform. Hundreds of thousands of people have benefited from the reduction of rent for land and farming equipment; the reduction of usurious rates; higher wages for farm workers; and campaigns waged to promote health, culture, literacy and other services. It protected

the environment against indiscriminate logging, mining and the destructive operations of agribusiness plantations.

As fighters for a just and lasting peace, it demonstrated its high level of discipline and political consciousness by strictly abiding by the 25-day ceasefire from December 16, 2010 to January 3, 2011 and from February 15 to February 21, 2011."

The ceasefire was brazenly violated by the US-Aquino regime's security forces. But despite the 42 incidents of provocative violations by mercenary forces in Mindanao, the NPA fighters exercised humility in bearing arms in compliance with the ceasefire and in creating the most favorable conditions for the peace talks between the GPH and the NDFP, added Ka Oris.

Meanwhile, according to official reports from the Secretariat of the Southern Tagalog Regional Committee, the NPA Mt. Amandewin Command under the Leyte Party Committee in Eastern Visayas and the Panay Party Committee, not only were they able to defeat the vicious Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL I and

## Congress approves Gutierrez's ouster

Congress voted 212 to 46 on March 22 to impeach Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez. The report of Congress' Committee on Justice has been transmitted to the Senate, which will be acting as a court to try Gutierrez. At least two-thirds or 16 votes will be needed in the Senate to punish Gutierrez and remove her from office.

A number of the cases against Gutierrez were filed by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) way back in August 2010. Led by its secretary-general Renato Reyes, BAYAN charged Gutierrez for her inaction on the P1 billion fertilizer fund scam, the P6.9 million Euro Generals scandal and the

anomalous P1.3 billion contract involving Mega Pacific. Gutierrez disregarded the Supreme Court's decision nullifying the contract entered into by Mega Pacific Corporation and Commission on Elections chair Benjamin Abalos.

In the final report submitted by Congress' justice committee

to the Senate, among the other cases filed against Gutierrez was her failure to charge Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo for their involvement in the anomalous Philippine National Broadband deal. She likewise delayed investigation on the death of Ensign Philip Pestaño, who was killed to prevent him from exposing anomalies in the Philippine Navy. The report also cited the ombudsman's low conviction rate.

The Senate will try Gutierrez once it resumes its sessions in May. AB



II), they are now preparing to advance and raise the protracted people's war to a new and higher level in the next five years.

In Southern Tagalog, the NPA was able to launch 43 tactical offensives, killing at least 69

enemy forces and wounding 34. It seized 55 firearms.

In Leyte, 40 enemy forces were killed and 12 were wounded in tactical offensives launched from March 2010 to March 2011. **AB**

## NPA military actions in Laguna, Batangas and Capiz

**B**ack to back tactical offensives were launched in March by forces of the New People's Army Nilo Hatol Command (NHC-NPA) in Laguna in response to the people's longstanding demand to punish landgrabbers and those who blatantly violate the rights of workers, peasants and the people in general. It was also in celebration of the NPA's 42nd founding anniversary.

The NHC-NPA raided on March 24 a poultry farm owned by brothers Manuel and Rodrigo Co in Sitio Saksak, Barangay Juan Santiago, Sta. Maria, Laguna, seizing 18 shotguns and five VHF radios from security guards. They also earlier raided the compound of the Dole Philippines-Banana Plantations, Inc. in Magdalena, Laguna, confiscating a shotgun and a pistol.

These companies were raided because of their violations of the policies of the People's Democratic Government (PDC) on the protection of the environment, the rights of employees as well as other rules and policies of the PDC.

These tactical offensives also belie claims by the AFP-PNP that they have significantly weakened the revolutionary movement in Laguna province.

In Batangas, a squad-size mass work unit under the Edgardo Dagli Command courageously fought it out on March 23 with a regular platoon of the 730th Combat Group under the Philippine Air Force (PAF) that attempted to annihilate it. The PAF unit was

based in Sitio Palico, Barangay Biliran, Nasugbu, Batangas.

Edgardo Dagli Command spokesperson Apolinario Matienza said that the encounter took place at 4 a.m. Instead of being annihilated, the NPA squad was even able to inflict casualties on the enemy, killing one and wounding nine others.

Aside from the forces that directly encircled the NPA, battalion-size assault forces of the PAF encircled the entirety of Mount Batulao and nearby villages at the foot of the mountain. But with the NPA deeply rooted among the masses and with several victories in agrarian revolution and armed struggle, the masses embrace and cherish their beloved army. The comrades were able to escape the enemy encirclement without incurring any casualties.

In Capiz, an NPA unit under the Jose Percival Estocada Jr. Command arrested Cpl. Joebert Glindro, alias Mino, in Barangay Artuz, Tapaz, Capiz. He was killed while resisting arrest and attempting to escape, said Ka Jurie Guerrero, spokesperson of the

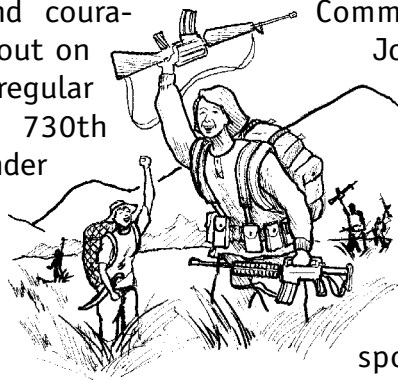
Jose Percival Estocada Jr. Command.

Mino was an active, notorious and vicious operative of the Military Intelligence Battalion of the 3rd Infantry Division of the Philippine Army. He had a long list of murder cases and violations of human rights against the people and the revolutionary movement.

Among Mino's biggest crimes were the abduction of Renante Lerona, a political detainee who had already been acquitted by the Regional Trial Court in Mambusao in 1997; the abduction of Balis Castor, a civilian youth from Katipunan, Tapaz, Capiz, on August 18, 2007; a raid on an NPA unit in Barangay Bagong Baryo, Tapaz, Capiz on July 4, 2001 that resulted in the death of Ka Merlan; the raid and killing of Enrico Lerona or Ka Radin of Mambusao in 1990; and the active surveillance and sabotage of the activities of revolutionary organizations and even open progressive organizations, their leaders and ordinary civilians suspected of being NPA supporters.

Mino was in charge of setting up and directing intelligence networks in the villages within Panay's central front, especially in the municipalities of Tapaz, Jamindan and Mambusao in Capiz province.

Seized from him was a cal .45 pistol, a cal .38 revolver, three grenades as well as magazines and ammunition. Also seized were a cellphone, a list of his assets, their cellphone numbers and IDs in the Philippine Army. **AB**





# Punish the 39th IB!

**R**elatives, friends and supporters of two victims of extrajudicial killing in Davao del Sur showed tremendous courage in their refusal to be cowed by the military's terrorism.

More than 500 people joined a funeral march on March 9 for Rody Dejos, 50 and his son Rody Rick, 26.

The elder Dejos was the vice chairman of the Zone One Farmers Association (ZOFA), which is affiliated with the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. He was also a leader of the B'laan tribe. Rody Rick was a member of ZOFA.

At around 4 p.m. of February 27, Rody's wife Mercy found the two victims dead and bathed in their own blood at their house in Sitio Malusing, Barangay Zone 1, Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur. Mrs. Dejos had just arrived from the town center where she had sold their crops. The victims' fingers and hands were smashed with a hammer and their bodies were bruised. They had been stabbed and shot.

The Dejos' relatives and friends had no other suspect. The killings were the handiwork of the vicious 39th IB.

The 39th IB began using Zone 1's barangay hall as a detachment in June 2010 and started calling for mass meetings where they ordered persons accused of supporting the New People's Army (NPA) to report to the military to "clear their names." First on their list was Rody Dejos. He refused, however, to report to the detachment, saying

that the military would never listen to his side, anyway.

It was then that the intense harassment began. In June 2010, Rody Rick was interrogated by a certain "Boyong," a member of the Barangay Defense System (BDS) formed by the military. He was asked about his brother-in-law who was alleged to be an NPA member. His interrogator trained his gun at Rody Rick's head and took a picture of him without his consent. In December 2010, a known military agent and BDS member threatened Rody Dejos for organizing ZOFA and ordered him to dissolve it. The Dejoses were also constantly accused of being involved whenever firefights between the AFP and NPA occurred in the vicinity.

The Dejoses continued with their involvement in ZOFA despite the threats. Like other progressive peasant organizations in other provinces, ZOFA is fighting for the peasantry's right to land. Eighty percent (80%) of farmers in Southern Mindanao are landless, according to the reactionary government's own statistics.

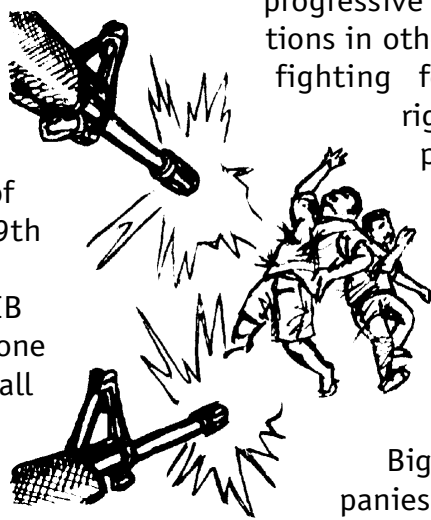
Big agribusiness companies such as San Miguel Corporation, Coco Davao Inc., Franklin Baker Co. and GSL Food Industries also have a strong presence in the region and are involved in landgrabbing. It is their interests that are being protected by Oplan Bayanihan, to the detriment of the peasantry.

The peasants have been fighting for land at the cost of their lives. Karapatan has reported that six out of the nine victims of human rights violations so far this year are farmers. Three of these six victims were murdered.

In the case of the Dejoses, the 39th IB was not content with summarily executing them. Soldiers harassed and blocked their funeral march. The military had the gall to attend a memorial meeting for the slain father and son, pretending to be sincere in condoling with the bereaved family, as if it had nothing to do with the gruesome killing. The 39th IB even sent flowers to the family. Rody Dejos' daughter Marilyn promptly smashed the bouquet against the ground and burned it. The mourners at the funeral march defiantly demanded punishment for the 39th IB.

The military's pretenses ended soon enough when 39th IB chief Lt. Col. Oliver Artuz threatened to slap charges of illegal assembly against leaders of progressive organizations for holding a funeral march for the Dejoses. "The 39th IB is desperately trying to shift the people's attention away from its responsibility for killing the Dejoses. The people of Sta. Cruz have spoken and pointed to them as the perpetrators."

The Aquino regime and Oplan Bayanihan are also rapidly being stripped of pretensions regarding their so-called human rights advocacy. With the killing of Rody and Rody Rick Dejos, there are now 40 victims of extrajudicial killings within Aquino's eight months in office. Twelve (12) of them were killed by armed agents of the state in January and February, under the regime's new oplan. **AB**



# Unionist, journalist latest victims of summary execution

A union leader in Cavite and a radio broadcaster in Metro Manila became victims of extrajudicial killing in March. In the countryside, military abuses and brutality go on without letup under Oplan Bayanihan.

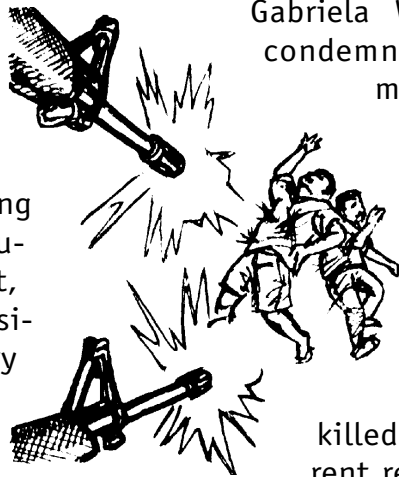
**March 26.** A security guard employed by the National Housing Authority (NHA) shot at residents of Sitio San Roque, Barangay North Triangle in Quezon City after he and other guards were driven away for setting up camp in the community. In a cruel twist, the police charged residents with illegal entry and detained eight of them when they reported the shooting incident to the PNP.

Local residents have been waging an intense struggle after a violent demolition in their community in September 2010. The Quezon City government has long been trying to evict residents of Sitio San Roque to give way to the Quezon City Central Business District project.

**March 24.** An unknown assailant killed broadcaster Marlina "Len" Flores-Sumera, 45. Sumera, who co-anchors "Arangkada 1530" over dzME was on her way to work and about to board a jeepney near her home along Solonian Street, Maysilo, Malabon City when she was shot in the nape. The killer took her handbag and cellphone to make it appear that his motive was robbery. In fact, Sumera was one of the fiercest critics of the Malabon City government's road-widening project. She was also the president of the neighborhood association in

one of the communities affected by the project. BAYAN-National Capital Region and Gabriela Women's Party condemned Sumera's murder. She is the first woman journalist killed under Benigno Aquino III's regime. Four journalists have been killed under the current regime.

**March 16.** Staff members of the Center for Lumad Advocacy and Services (CLANS) have been forced to temporarily abandon their projects in Upper Suyan, Malapatan, Sarangani after suffering systematic harassment from elements of the 73rd IB. The harassment has stepped up since November, when not only CLANS staff but pupils, their parents and community leaders were interrogated, harassed, maligned and mocked. A ten-year old pupil of a school being run by CLANS for Lumad children was forced by 73rd IB soldiers to wear a machine gun belt and carry an M16 rifle, after which his picture was taken. The photo was sent to the local media with the caption



"NPA child warrior on his way to school in (Sitio) Dlumay, (Upper Suyan)." A B'laan family was also ordered to exhume the remains of a pastor-relative who had died of a lingering illness. The military claimed that the pastor was an NPA guerrilla killed in a gun-battle.

On February 18, a Sgt. Jake Geron and a Pfc. Cabawbaw interrogated CLANS program director Maricel Salem, asking her about the organization's staff, programs and funding. She was being pressured into admitting that CLANS was anti-government because of its support for the struggle for ancestral land, environmental protection and the like. Her life was also threatened because the school that CLANS had set up was accused of being anti-government.

The intense harassment has forced CLANS to suspend its school and even its micro hydro project. The 73rd IB guards San Miguel Corporation's future mining sites, where CLANS' projects are also located.

**March 10.** A young girl was shot in the shoulder after elements of the 9th IB arbitrarily strafed the house of civilian Balodoy Amaro in Sitio Balinsasayaw, Barangay Sta. Fe, Mandaon, Masbate. The victim is Amaro's daughter. The family's pig was killed in the shooting. The 9th IB claims that the victim was hit in the crossfire between the military and the NPA. She was, in fact, hit in the military's first volley of fire.

**March 8.** Unknown assailants killed union leader



Celito Baccay, 31, at Governor's Drive, Langkaan Village, Dasmariñas, Cavite. Baccay, a board member of the Maeno-Giken Workers Organization (MAGIKWO) was shot at around 10 p.m. while riding his motorcycle on his way home. He died at 10:45 p.m. while undergoing treatment at the De La Salle University Medical Center in the same town.

Prior to this, Baccay had a series of heated arguments with Maeno-Giken's human resource manager Annaliza Mel-

chor and the company's vice president for operations Gart Dennis Melchor because of the union leader's defense of fellow workers who were being harassed. The harassment had intensified after the workers organized the union at Maeno-Giken in August 2010.

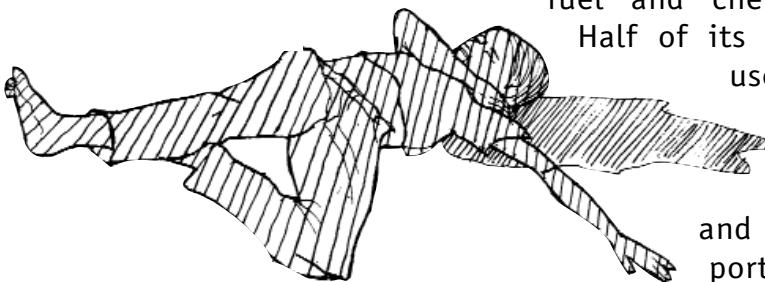
Maeno-Giken Inc., a Japanese company, has a plant at the First Cavite Industrial Estate in Dasmariñas town. It manufactures structural steel and parts for heavy equipment such as container cranes and fuel and chemical tanks.

Half of its products are used by locally based Japanese companies and half is exported to Japan.

The company is owned by Shinichiro Maeno.

**February 10.** Two 17-year old youths from Barangay Huknan, Giporlos, Eastern Samar were interrogated and threatened by elements of the 14th IB.

The victims were on their way to their farm to gather copra when they were accosted by soldiers of the 14th IB Bravo Coy. The military tried to extract information from them about the whereabouts of the NPA. Before the soldiers left, they stole the victims' bolos and took their pictures. The military threatened to abduct them if they reported the incident, especially to officials of Barangay Huknan. The terrified minors quickly went home. AB



## Morong 43 files case against Arroyo et al

Six members of the Morong 43 filed a civil case at the Quezon City Trial Court against the former regime of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and a number of military and police officers.

The case was filed by Drs. Merry Mia Clamor and Alexis Montes, nurse Gary Liberal as well as Teresa Quinawayan, Reynaldo Macabenta and Mercy Castro against Arroyo and ten others. The charges stem from the Morong 43's illegal arrest, torture and detention for nearly ten months. The complainants are asking for P15 million in damages for lost and damaged property and for the violation of their human rights. Among those charged were then National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, then AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Victor Ibrado and former Philippine Army chief Delfin Bangit, former 2nd Infantry Division chief Maj. Jorge

Segovia, Col. Aurelio Baladad, Lt. Cols. Cristobal Zaragosa and Jaime Abawag, Maj. Manuel Tabion and Supts. Matton Balolong and Allan Nubleza.

Accompanying them in filing the case were the groups Free the 43 Alliance, National Union of People's Lawyers (NUP-L), Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees laban sa Detensyon at para sa Amnestiya (SELDA) and Karapatan.

This is just the first of many cases to be filed against Arroyo now that she is no longer president and immune from suit, said Atty. Edre Olalia, one of the Morong 43's lawyers. Arroyo has one of the worst human rights records



and is implicated in killings, abduction and illegal detention along with her AFP and PNP officers.

The 43 health workers were arrested on February 6, 2010 in Morong, Rizal. They were accused of being members of the New People's Army (NPA). They were then conducting a health training seminar when they were illegally arrested and brought to the 2nd ID headquarters in Tanay, Rizal. They were later transferred to Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig, Metro Manila. AB



# Prison diary, 10 March 2011

*The following are excerpts from the diary of Comrade Alan Jazmines, a consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines peace negotiating panel. He was illegally arrested on February 14 in Bulacan on the basis of 13 trumped-up criminal cases. He is one of the detainees currently incarcerated at the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame.*

**L**ate last night, an abusive and rotten police official emphasized what the PNP thinks of human rights and how detainees here at the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame should be put in their "proper place".

Yesterday's Camp Duty Officer (CDO) drunk with liquor and power started banging at the gates of several cell blocks at 11 p.m., barged into individual cells, belted out abusive and arrogant words, ordered the detainees to be roused from their sleep, and made them fall in line for a "headcount".

Even the female detainees were not spared. Against the advice of more decent subordinate guards that the privacy of the female detainees has to be respected especially as they were already asleep and were clad only in flimsy clothes for sleeping, the police official barged into the cells of the female detainees and ordered them to get up from their beds and present them-

selves in front of him.

In a vain effort to hide his identity, the police officer removed his nameplate from his uniform. But many of the detainees know him as Police Chief Inspector (PCI) Eco.

His abuses reached their heights when he entered Cell Block Alpha at 11:30 p.m.

Detainees are allowed to lock their cells from the inside right after the guards padlock the cells from the outside. This is to prevent guards from entering the cells without just reason, abusing the detainees and stealing the detainees' personal possessions when the latter are already asleep. Prevented from immediately entering detainee Rizal Ali's cell no. 8 because it

was also padlocked from the inside, the abusive police officer ordered the detainee's own padlock to be opened and while hurling invectives, confiscated the padlock and barged into Ali's cell.

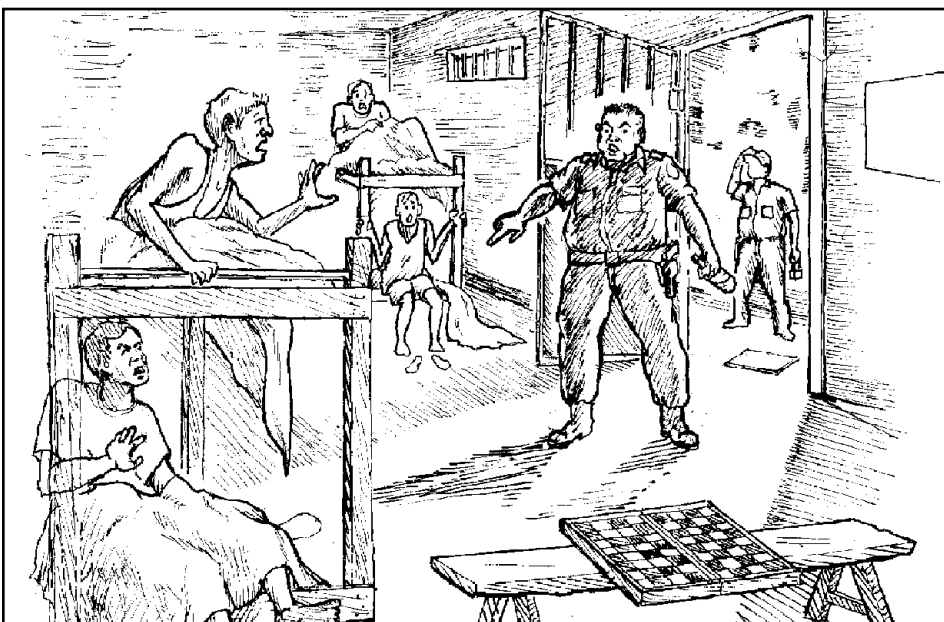
Also after barging into detainee Mauwiya Musabpi's cell no. 7 and seeing a tube of toothpaste lying around, the abusive police officer confiscated it, claiming that it might be used to make improvised bombs. Mauwiya protested the confiscation, saying that the toothpaste was part of the package of goods given to him and a number of other detainees by a human rights organization. Mauwiya outrightly complained "This is a human rights violation." The arrogant officer in turn shouted "What human rights? There is no such thing as human rights as far as we are concerned!"

In the next cell no. 6, the abusive officer also confiscated detainee Gilbert Soliman's small nail cutter.

And using his cellphone camera, the atrocious police officer also took pictures of some detainees including Ed Sarmiento, in order to terrorize them.

As soon as their cell gates were opened this morning, detainees in Cell Block Alpha wrote a collective letter of complaint addressed to the Chief of the PNP Custodial Center detailing the atrocities and abuses they underwent in the hands of PCI Eco the night before.

Last night's abuses at our detention center comprise but a tiny speck of many and worse abuses being committed against police and military detainees, especially political detainees in this country. It shows how rotten, abusive and unmindful of human rights the prisons and the police and military establishments are in the country. **AB**





# The US will fail to bring Libya to its knees

**U**S imperialism and its co-conspirators among the world's most powerful countries are failing in their objective of overthrowing Moammar Gaddafi's regime, setting up a puppet government, occupying Libya and seizing its oil resources.

On April 2, the US quietly withdrew almost all the fighter planes and warships it had dispatched against Libya, thus reducing the coalition's arsenal for its operations by 80%. This significantly reduced its ability to support the armed anti-Gaddafi rebels and defend rebel-held cities. This also gave the

Gaddafi government the chance to repair its damaged centers of defense and launch an all-out offensive against the rebel groups.

The Gaddafi government remains intact on the whole. After days of bombings by the imperialist coalition, 80% of the Libyan armed forces' structure

and command remain intact, along with its arsenal of tanks and missiles. Contrary to the US' expectations, no mass defections of soldiers and officers from the Gaddafi government's army took place.

Although they remain strong in Benghazi, the armed rebels are generally on the losing end in their objective of toppling the Gaddafi government. This is despite the cover provided them by the US and other imperialists to enable them to regroup and regain strength in their city stronghold. Aware of their weakened capabilities, the rebels recently proposed a ceasefire. The imperialist coun-

## AFP: The most corrupt agency

**T**he Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is now known as the most corrupt agency of government in the face of the many revelations of anomalies involving the military. This view was reflected in a Pulse Asia survey conducted between February 24 and March 6 where almost half (49%) of respondents pointed to the AFP as the government's most corrupt entity. Coming second to the AFP was the Philippine National Police, which garnered a vote of 26.6%.

The AFP and PNP "bested" other agencies long considered as snakepits of corruption—the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), which came in third; the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), the Land Transportation Commission, the Commission on Audit (CoA) and the Bureau of Customs (BoC).

In another survey conducted from November 2010 to February 2011 by the Hongkong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC), the AFP came out having the blackest image in the eyes of foreign businessmen. On a scale of 0 to 10, the AFP received a score of 9.25, placing it at the top of Philippine institutions viewed as most corrupt. The AFP was

followed by the BIR and the PNP.

Testimonies by former AFP budget officer Lt. Col. George Rabusa before the Justice Committee of Congress and the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee in February exposed corruption in the highest echelons of the AFP. Rabusa disclosed that AFP Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes pocketed P150 million, while his successors Diomedio Villanueva and Roy Cimatú received P160 million and P80 million, respectively. The amounts were given in accordance with the practice of providing "welcome" and "sendoff gifts" to AFP chiefs at the beginning and end of their terms.

Rabusa added that his boss then, AFP Comptroller Gen. Car-

los Garcia ordered him to set aside P5 million every month for the chief of staff. Fund conversion was rife among AFP branches or services, a fact confirmed recently by Lt. Col. Romeo Mateo, a former budget officer of the Civil-Military Operations Staff, and other witnesses.

Reyes committed suicide on February 8 due to Rabusa's testimony. The two other chiefs of staff he implicated have been vainly washing their hands of any involvement in corruption. General Cimatú, for one, was tongue-tied when confronted with the titles to two mansions in Iloilo City—one registered in his name and the other in the name of his wife Fe, who is a native of San Jose, Antique. Another former AFP comptroller, Gen. Jose Ligot feigned inability to remember or recognize houses in the US owned by him and his wife when shown photographs of such, and neither could he remember if his wife ever informed him of her pleasure trips abroad with Gen. Angelo Reyes' wife Teresita, using AFP funds. AB

tries also helped the anti-Gaddafi forces sell up to \$100 million worth of oil in an attempt to raise resources.

France began the bombings on March 17 to cripple the country's air defenses. The coalition launched up to 600 bombing raids focused on ground troops and military installations.

Libya fearlessly confronted the US' military aggression even as it quelled the armed anti-Gaddafi forces. In the first days of the bombings, Gaddafi announced that he would arm more than a million people in preparation for an attack by foreign troops. Thousands of people mobilized to surround and defend civilian infrastructure from the bombings, including radar stations, energy plants and water sources. They also defended Tripoli's airports, suspected military headquarters and even Gaddafi's house which was bombed by the US in 1986.

The bombings have caused significant damage to civilian infrastructure and areas in Libya. Among those damaged were a number of specialized hospitals in Tripoli. Doctors in these hospitals reported the deaths of a number of patients due to the destruction of their facilities and some of the hospital buildings. Sixty-four civilians were reportedly killed and 150 wounded in the bombings from March 19 to 20, prompting the Arab League to demand a stop to the air raids.

Even before the bombings,

the US, UK and France had already been calling openly for the ouster of the Gaddafi regime, alleging acts of brutality, massacres and other grave violations of human rights.

Embargos on Libya have also been imposed at the instigation of the US' Obama regime. UN Resolution 1973 grants the Security Council the right to intervene in Libya's internal politics to "protect civilians" using all "necessary means." These measures are excessive compared to the stance taken by the US and other imperialist countries in the face of the widespread suppression of democratic rights in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen and Saudi Arabia which are all ruled by imperialist puppets.

The US claims that the UN is acting as one in waging a war against Libya, but in fact, half of the Security Council refused to sign the resolution. When it became clear that the

US-inspired war of aggression was going nowhere, countries like Russia, China, Brazil and India became even more vocal with their objections. The attacks on Libya have been likened by Russian prime minister Vladimir Putin to the crusades of old.

The US has been directly intervening in Libya. Even before the UN had adopted Resolution 1973, special operatives and spies from the US, UK and other imperialist countries had already been sent to Libya. A team of operatives from MI6, the UK's spy agency was captured inside the country on March 17. The US has also declared that the Central Intelligence Agency was engaged in special operations inside Libya.

The war of aggression against Libya aims to destroy a government that refuses to bow down to the imperialist powers. The US has long wanted to overthrow the Gaddafi government for its refusal to allow foreign companies to fully control the oil industry. In 2009, Gaddafi threatened to nationalize the country's entire oil industry.

The Obama regime's "humanitarian intervention" is no different from the Bush regime's "war against terror." Although invoking different pretexts, they have one objective: to impose US imperialist power through armed aggression. Like the "war against terror," "humanitarian intervention" is a thinly veiled war of aggression that tramples on the sovereignty and integrity of independent nations. The war of aggression waged by the US and its allies against Libya is no different from the wars of aggression against Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Serbia and other countries. 