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Editorial

Oppose the influx of foreign mining companies

Following the dictates of its imperialist master, the Aquino regime is further opening up the economy to big foreign monopoly capitalists, especially giant mining companies. It is doing everything to facilitate foreign investments while preparing to amend the reactionary constitution in order to dismantle all legal barriers to the entry of foreign capital.

The Aquino regime boasts of doubling foreign investments in mining to \$2.8 billion this year. To make the influx of foreign mining companies palatable to the people, the regime is peddling a flurry of lies about the so-called benefits of mining.

Aquino government officials claim that widespread foreign mining can contribute a lot to economic growth and relieve severe unemployment.

According to studies, however, mining has contributed an average of only 1.6% to the Gross Domestic Product. Mining companies pay in taxes only the equivalent of 5% of their total mineral haul from the country. They contribute less than 1% to overall employment, and whatever jobs they create are hazardous and temporary in nature.

Compared to these minuscule "contributions," what the country loses is incalculable. In the past three and a half decades, foreign min-

ing companies siphoned out P1.5 trillion worth of Philippine mineral resources, including gold, nickel, copper, chromite and magnetite.

In addition, they are allowed to remit all of their profits to their home countries under the Mining Act of 1995.

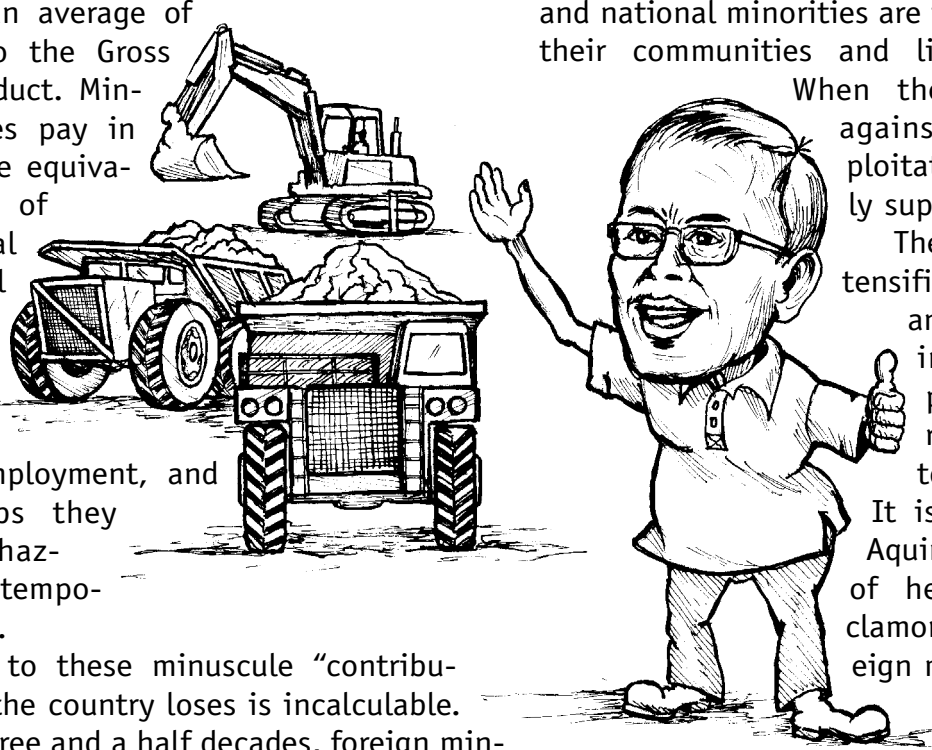
Foreign mining operations in the Philippines have not contributed to the long-term development of the domestic economy. They have not gone beyond mere extraction. While these companies earn billions, the mineral resources they extract are exported as inputs to the industrialization of foreign economies, and are permanently lost to the country. They deprive the Philippines of many minerals needed for national industrialization and the building of basic local industries.

The entry of mining operations is invariably accompanied by militarization and the suppression of democratic rights. The lands of farmers and national minorities are forcibly occupied, and their communities and livelihoods destroyed.

When the victims stand up against plunder and exploitation, they are violently suppressed.

The Aquino regime's intensified efforts to invite and allow foreign mining companies to plunder the country's resources is a big blow to the Filipino people. It is perfectly clear that Aquino has no plans at all of heeding the people's clamor to put a stop to foreign mining operations.

The Filipino people must in-



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tensify their efforts to resist the entry and plunderous operations of foreign mining companies. They must strengthen their unity and rise up in militant mass struggles. They must thoroughly oppose the Aquino regime's moves to dismantle all obstacles to the entry of foreign mining companies. They must resist the

plunder of the Philippines' national patrimony and the extraction of superprofits from the country's wealth.

This once more brings to the fore the correctness of the policy of the people's democratic government to ban all enterprises, including big foreign mining and logging firms, that engage

in the large-scale plunder of natural resources, landgrabbing and the destruction of the environment. The New People's Army will continue to enforce this policy and carry out the necessary measures to support the people's clamor to expel foreign mining companies from their land. **AB**

The US' sinister plan for Philippine mining

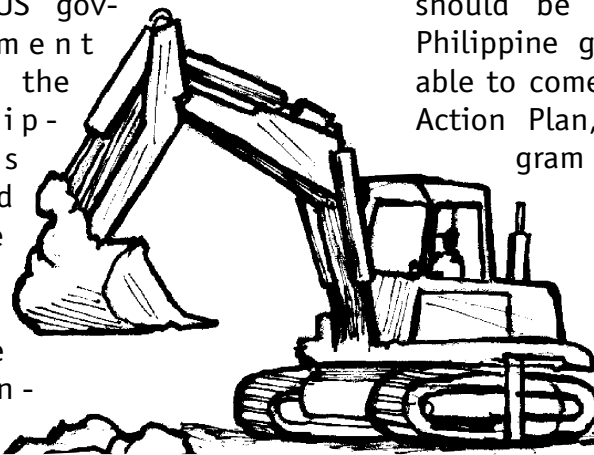
The steps being taken by the puppet Philippine government to attract foreign mining investments all fall within the framework of US imperialist designs. This is evident in secret reports from the US embassy in Manila disclosed by wikileaks.org.

The reports show how much the US covets the Philippines' mineral resources. The US was further encouraged to open mining enterprises in the Philippines after the Supreme Court upheld in 2004 the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 that allows foreigners 100% ownership of companies engaged in the widespread exploration and production of minerals, oil and gas.

The reports reveal that in a meeting on August 2-6, 2005 of the United States Geographical Survey (USGS) with Philippine government officials, the USGS called for an inventory of

Philippine mineral reserves using modern technology. Then Department of Environment and Natural Resources secretary Mike Defensor endorsed the idea and promised

the US government that the Philippines would come up with the counter-



part funds needed for the \$4 million project.

The US wants a detailed survey of Philippine mineral resources in order to identify areas where mining should be conducted. The USGS estimates that the Philippines has more than US\$840 billion worth of untapped mineral resources and that up to a third of Philippine territory is rich in mineral deposits such as copper, gold, nickel and chromium. By identifying the areas where mining should be concentrated, the Philippine government will be able to come up with a Mineral Action Plan, including a program for attracting foreign investments.

The US embassy reports also indicate the need to prepare plans on how to address possible

obstacles. It mentioned opposition by environmental activists and the Catholic church and mining's negative image due to disasters such as that which transpired in Marinduque Island in 1996. It also cited the issue of ancestral lands in mining areas, some of which have connections to the revolutionary movement and the Bangsamoro struggle.

The US specifically cited the resolution of "security issues" as the key to paving the way for the alleged growth and development of investments in mining. **AB**



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angbayan@yahoo.com

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100,000 sign petition vs Xstrata-SMI

Up to a hundred thousand people signed a petition against plans by the foreign-owned Xstrata and its subsidiary Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI) to conduct widespread mining in South Cotabato, Kidapawan, North Cotabato and Digos, Davao del Sur.

SMI's operations which will cover 20,000 hectares is expected to destroy four river systems in the affected areas. Aside from the huge water supply needed in mining operations, farmers and fisherfolk fear the resulting contamination of water resources.

SMI's operations will also affect irrigation systems in the area and eventually, agricultural production.

Meanwhile, a bill has been filed in Congress demanding an end to the framework of operations of mining in the country which only serves the interest of foreign companies. The bill envisions a mining industry that serves the goals of national industrialization, agricultural modernization, environmental sustainability and respect for human rights.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño, who authored the bill said that export orientation and foreign domination in the mining industry should be put to an end. Thus, the billions of pesos earned through mining can be used to propel the development of the local economy and improve social services.

Casiño also assailed the lack of transparency of foreign companies with respect

to their real incomes. He cited a 2007 report by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau stating that the gross production value of metallic mining was at ₱81.4 billion but total metallic exports that same year was at ₱112.015 billion. This means that the

mining companies failed to report up to ₱30 billion in production. Casiño called on the government to impose a moratorium on the approval of new mining applications for as long as the country's mining laws have not been changed. **AB**

Activists assail mining conference

National minorities allied with Kalipunan ng Mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KAMP) as well as environmental activists assailed the Philippine Mining Congress, a conference of local and foreign mining companies held on September 11-13.

The protesters picketed the Sofitel Plaza Hotel in Pasay City to oppose continuing destructive mining operations in areas of national minorities.

Up to a million hectares of Philippine territory have been sold by the government for the benefit of mining operations, and 60% of these are ancestral lands. The Philippine Mining Congress aims to attract more foreign investments in the industry in accordance with the Aquino regime's program to promote foreign mining operations. The protesters demanded the abrogation of the Mining Act of 1995, calling it a destructive and plunderous law. **AB**

Nationwide transport strike, slams oil price hikes

The nationwide transport strike on September 19 to oppose incessant oil price hikes was a success. The protest action was led by Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (PISTON).

According to PISTON secretary-general George San Mateo, several sectors supported their protest action and transportation was largely paralyzed nationwide. This proves that drivers supported the call for the junk-



ing of the Oil Deregulation Law, the removal of the 12% Value Added Tax on oil and the implementation of a major rollback in the prices of petroleum products.

The drivers were also not deterred from launching the transport strike despite threats from Malacañang that their franchises will be suspended if they joined the protest. Neither did the 5,000 security forces deployed by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the Philippine National Police and the Armed Force of the Philippines succeed in intimidating them. A dialogue between Benigno Aquino III and representatives of transport groups on September 15 was a failure because Aquino was not able to lay down concrete measures to stop continued oil price hikes and impose sanctions on the oil giants for the suffering they have caused the people.

In Metro Manila, an estimated 70% of jeepney and FX routes

in strategic cities in the region was paralyzed. The strikers put up protest centers in Cubao, Philcoa, Commonwealth Avenue and Kamias and Kalayaan Roads in Quezon City; España Avenue and Sta. Mesa in Manila; Monumento in Caloo-can; Alabang Viaduct in Mun-tinlupa; Sucat in Parañaque; San Joaquin and Pasig Market in Pasig City; and Angono in Rizal. The drivers began to mass up early that day to encourage fellow drivers not to ply their routes. Workers, students, urban poor, women and other sectors joined the protest.

In other regions, transportation was paralyzed by an average of 60-100% in various towns and cities. In Masbate, transportation was 100% paralyzed; in Cagayan de Oro, 98%; Butuan City, 95%; and Davao City, 92%. Transportation in Calamba, Sta. Rosa and San Pedro (Laguna); Imus, Rosario, Bacoor, Gen. Mariano Alvarez and Dasmariñas City (Cavite); and in Digos City, Va-

lencia City and General Santos City was 90% paralyzed. In Tiaong, Quezon and Iligan City, it was 80% paralyzed; and in Malaybalay, Bukidnon and Marbel City, it was 60% paralyzed. Aside from jeepney drivers, drivers of buses, tricycles, minicabs and *habal-habal* (passenger motorcycles) also joined the protest. Classes were suspended and offices were closed in a number of places because of the transport strike.

Various other protest actions were also launched in places like Cebu where drivers barricaded the Petron oil depot in Mandaue City. Activists in Baguio City launched a noise barrage while those in Kalibo, Aklan and in the cities of Santiago, Iloilo, Bacolod and Koronanadal held rallies.

PISTON is ready to launch another transport strike if the regime does not take any action on their demands and oil companies continue with their greed. **AB**

Townfolk demand pullout of abusive soldiers from Compostela Valley

Residents of Pantukan town in Compostela Valley are demanding the pullout of abusive soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) from their areas because of the dangers posed by their presence to their lives and livelihoods. The residents grew more determined to get the soldiers of the 71st IB out of their town after a drunken soldier killed seven-year old Sunshine Jabinez at midnight of September 3. Sunshine was a pupil at the Biasong Elementary School.

Sunshine was killed by PFC Baltazar M. Ramos after he went berserk at a videoke bar in Barangay Biasong, Pantukan. Ramos was a member of the Peace and Development Team (PDT) of the 10th ID. He indiscriminately fired his weapon at the nearby houses, including

the Jabinez family's hut where Sunshine was sleeping.

Ramos had earlier

been picking fights at the videoke bar, according to a report from KARAPATAN-Southern Mindanao Region. He had entered the kitchen, accosted a civilian, picked up a bottle and hit the civilian with it.

Sunshine was rushed to the Pantukan District Hospital where she was declared dead on



arrival, said Edessa Sandra A. Campos, advocacy officer of the Children's Rehabilitation Center-Southern Mindanao Region.

Campos condemned the deployment of the military in civilian communities. She said that the soldiers were not really for peace and development, especially since they posed a big danger to the residents, particularly the children. Campos also condemned the AFP's use of children as guides in pursuing the New People's Army.

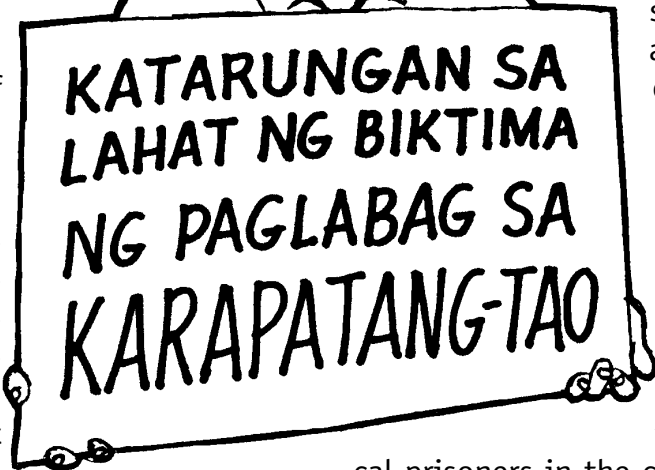
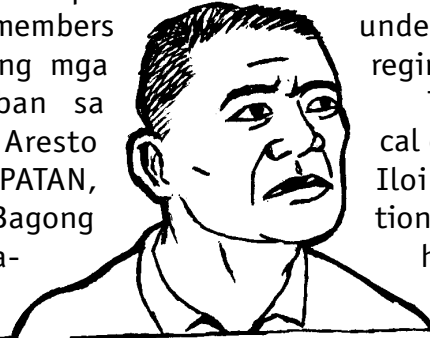
KARAPATAN-SMR called for an investigation of the officers responsible for the massive deployment of the military in civilian areas. It also demanded compliance with agreements that protect human rights such as the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Republic Act 7610 or the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act. AB

Political detainees launch nationwide protest

Political detainees nationwide went on a hunger strike on September 13-21 to demand their unconditional release. Democratic and progressive organizations joined their protest action which was timed to coincide with the 39th anniversary of the declaration of martial law.

The hunger strike was held from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. political prisoners were illegally arrested and detained under the Aquino regime.

On the first day, members of the Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA), KARAPATAN, GABRIELA and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) picketed in front of Camp Crame in Quezon City. SELDA secretary-general Angeline Ipong said that up to 77



The eight political detainees at the Iloilo Rehabilitation Center are also holding a

hunger strike as part of the coordinated protest to demand the release of all political

prisoners in the country.

This is the second hunger strike to be held by the political detainees. In July, they fasted for four days before Aquino's second State of the Nation Address (SONA). Since then, only five out of 353 political detainees then have been released despite the Aquino regime's pledge that they would all be freed before the formal peace negotiations then scheduled for July.

Said KARAPATAN chair Marie Hilao-Enriquez, the political prisoners should have long been released, especially the ailing, elderly, women and detainees covered by the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees. AB

Military abducts Agta youth

The military abducted an Agta youth from his house in Burdeos town in Polillo Island, northern Quezon. According to an account from the Agta tribe, on August 23, armed men who claimed to be members of the New People's Army (NPA) seized Rogemer "Demer" Morada, 25. Morada was a former NPA fighter.

The armed men did not have name tags or name cloths but the Agta believe that they were government soldiers.

Fr. Pete Montallana of the Prelature of Infanta reported Morada's disappearance to the media. After a few weeks, 202nd Infantry Brigade chief Col. Aurelio Baladad was compelled to admit on September 9 that the military had custody of the Agta youth, but he claimed that Morada voluntarily went with the soldiers. The military has not surfaced Morada to date.

Baladad was the same officer involved in the illegal arrest and detention of health workers who were later known as the Morong 43. AB



SAF-PNP brutality in Antipolo City

Six village watchmen (*barangay tanod*) of Antipolo City became victims of abuse by elements of the Special Action Force of the Philippine National Police (SAF-PNP).

On September 14, elements of the SAF-PNP detained six village watchmen of Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City. This occurred at around 3 a.m. when the village watchmen went to the barangay's Sitio San Josef to respond to a hold-up that had taken place. They also wanted to investigate the shooting they heard between 11:30 p.m. and 2 a.m.

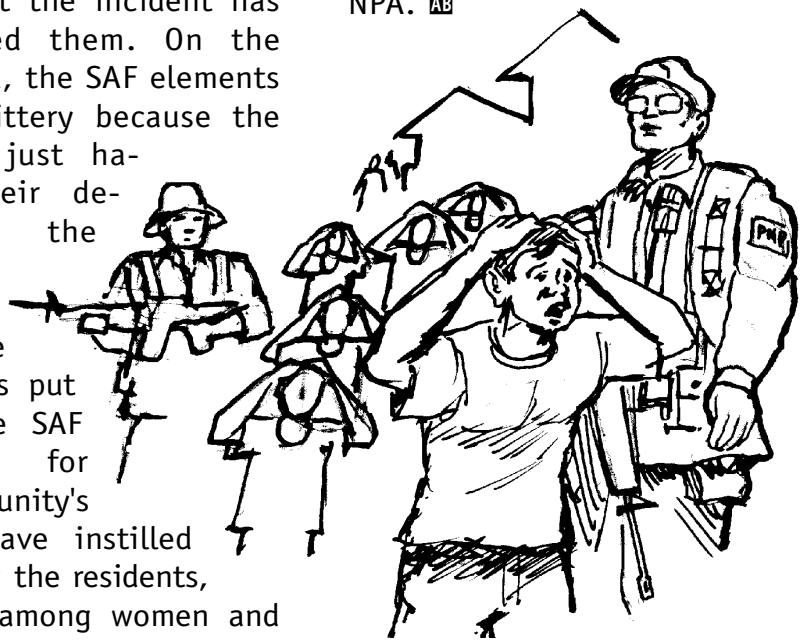
When the village watchmen reached the detachment manned by about 20 elements of the PNP Special Action Force, they were not let in. Instead, they were detained on suspicion of being members of the New People's Army (NPA). The watchmen denied the accusation and proved that they were legitimate vil-

lage watchmen. But they were ordered to lie flat on the ground. The policemen then indiscriminately fired their weapons. None of the village watchmen were injured and they were eventually released, but the incident has traumatized them. On the other hand, the SAF elements were so jittery because the NPA had just harassed their detachment the night before.

The checkpoints put up by the SAF ostensibly for the community's security have instilled fear among the residents, especially among women and

children.

The residents have also complained about the SAF's continuing combat operations since many of them, especially farmers, have been threatened and harassed on suspicion that they were NPA supporters. As a result, they have stopped going to their farms and charcoal pits. They also said there were incidents where the SAF would indiscriminately shoot at anyone they fancied and later declare the victims as NPA. **AB**



Lumad woman shot by military

A Lumad woman was wounded in the chest when she was arbitrarily shot by soldiers. Bebit Kalinaw Enriquez was about to draw water from the river in a mountainous part of Sitio Panaytayon, Barangay Mahaba, Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte when she was seen by soldiers from the 30th IB who were conducting a military operation. Frightened, Enriquez rushed to a nearby hut owned by her uncle Datu Rabnat Kalinawan, where she was pursued and shot by the soldiers.

Her relatives had planned on bringing her to a hospital but they were stopped from doing so by another group of soldiers. Instead, she was brought to Barangay Puting Bato and from there, to a Philippine Army hospital. The military falsely claimed that she was a member of the New People's Army wounded in an encounter. After a few days, the 4th Infantry Division came up with still another lie. It claimed that Mrs. Enriquez was not wounded by gunshots from soldiers but by an explosive detonated by the NPA.

Meanwhile, clan members and fellow villagers looked for Enriquez's relatives Datu Rabnat, his wife Elsa, his sons Toto, Warli-

to and Benny and Benny's wife Victoria for five days before finding them in the place where they were stopped by the military.

This crime was committed amid a massive 15-day military operation by the 4th ID in the Caraga region. From August 30 to September 14, the military went on a rampage in Butuan City and in the towns of Cabadbaran, RTR, Santiago, Tubay and Kitcharao in Agusan del Norte; and in the upland barangays of Alegria, Gigaquit and Claver in Surigao del Norte. The 29th and 36th IB also conducted separate operations in Surigao del Sur in the same period. **AB**



Pulang Diwata Command launches counter-attacks on military

Units under the Pulang Diwata Command (New People's Army-Northeastern Mindanao Region) launched a counter-attack on August 31-September 7 against advancing troops from the Philippine Army's 4th Division. The enemy suffered an undetermined number of casualties during the 15-day onslaught while two Red fighters valiantly offered their lives.

September 7. Four fascist troopers were wounded when Red fighters closed in on a group of soldiers having a drinking session at the barangay center in Camamonan, Gagaquit, Surigao del Norte and shot at them.

September 5. A soldier was wounded when Red guerrillas from Front 16 sniped a military unit in the center of Sitio Zapanta, Barangay Bangayan, Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte. The guerrillas conducted the harassment operation after villagers left the soldiers who occupied their houses.

September 4. A soldier under the 29th IB was killed when an NPA member from Front 19 sniped a group of troopers led by a Lieutenant

Orcullo at KM 23, Sitio Magkahunaw, Janipaan, San Agustin, Surigao del Norte. Two platoons under the 29th IB who were then conducting operations in the area withdrew as a result.

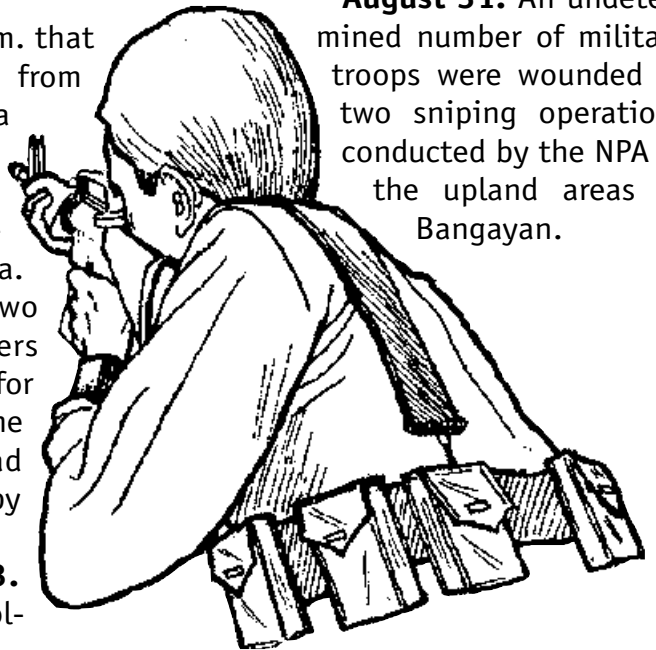
At around 10 a.m. that day, Red fighters from Front 16 harassed a Philippine Army column in a mountainous area in Mahaba, Sitio Zapanta. An hour later, two MG-520 helicopters bombed the area for 30 minutes, but the Red fighters had long been gone by then.

September 3. Two men from a col-

umn of the Scout Ranger Company were wounded when they were sniped by guerrillas from Front 16 at 6:16 a.m. in Sitio Umaw, Barangay Camamonan.

September 2. Several soldiers from the 42nd Division Reconnaissance Company were wounded when an NPA team from Front 16 mounted an ambush at around 8 a.m. in the Mahaba mountains in Zapanta, Bangayan. In retaliation, two MG-520 helicopter gunships bombed the area for almost an hour. That afternoon, another NPA team attacked a Philippine Army column in Sitio Kamalig, Puting Bato, Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte.

August 31. An undetermined number of military troops were wounded in two sniping operations conducted by the NPA in the upland areas of Bangayan. AB



Albay detachment chief ambushed

A team from the Santos Binamera Command (New People's Army-Albay) executed the orders of the People's Court to mete capital punishment on Cpl. Richard Guiriba Narito in Barangay Maninila, Camalig, Albay on September 7. Corporal Narito was the commander of the notorious Taploccon Detachment of the 2nd IB in Camalig town. NPA Red fighters ambushed Corporal Narito and two other elements of the 2nd IB who were aboard two motorcycles. Seized

from them was an M16 rifle.

According to Santos Binamera Command spokesperson Florante Orobias, Corporal Narito was the mastermind in a series of crimes and abuses against the people. His most serious crimes involved the brutal killing in January 2010 of Vicente Moradillo and Ananias Cardiente Jr. whose bodies were also burnt; the murders of Danilo Balala (February 2011) and Salvador Mancera (January 2011); and the robberies committed against a Mister Armenta (2011), Anselma Murillo and Lourdes Lotino (2010).

The victims of Corporal Narito's group who had long been seeking justice rejoiced upon hearing of the NPA's successful operation. AB



3 soldiers killed in NPA ambush on 75th IB

Three soldiers were killed when Red fighters of the Conrado Heredia Command (CHC) ambushed 75th IB troopers conducting a military operation in Sitio Pamian, Barangay Bugac, Lingig, Surigao del Sur on September 6. The AFP operation was aimed at rescuing Mayor Henry Dano and his two military escorts, who are in NPA custody.

The ambush was a punitive measure against the 75th IB troops who serve as private armies of landlords and compradors. They pose as meek lambs implementing programs for "peace and development" under Oplan Bayanihan. These programs are now being used as fronts for rescue operations for the three detainees.

CHC spokesperson Ka Roel Agustin II said that the fascist troops of the 75th and 67th IB and the 2nd Scout Ranger Battalion continue to scour Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur, Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental to look for Dano and his group.

The AFP obviously has not heeded the call to stop military operations in order to ensure the safety of the detainees and expedite the judicial proceedings they are undergoing in the people's court. AB



Trooper killed in ambush

A soldier was killed when a commando team from the 1st Pulang Bagani Company (PBC) of the NPA Merardo Arce Command ambushed elements of the 69th IB conducting patrols in Purok 7, Paradise Embac, Paquibato District, Davao City on September 17.

Leoncio "Ka Parago" Pitao, spokesperson of the 1st PBC said the ambush gave justice to victims of terrorism, torture and other human rights violations committed by the military against the peasants, especially women and children studying in Paquibato District.

Residents of Paquibato District have long been complaining about the 69th IB's encampments near schools and houses of civilians. AB

NPA harasses SAF-PNP detachment

Red fighters of the Narciso Antazo Aramil Command (NAAC) conducted a harassment operation against the Special Action Force of the Philippine National Police (SAF-PNP) on the night of September 13. The harassment operation was conducted on the SAF-PNP detachment in Sitio San Josef, Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City, Rizal, which was just a few kilometers away from the camp of the notorious 16th IB and detachments of the 59th IB.

While the Red fighters were firing, not a single element of the SAF-PNP inside the detachment was able to return fire. The guerrillas had long been gone before anyone from the police shot back.

Two policemen from the SAF-PNP were wounded in the harassment operation, said NAAC spokesperson Ka Macario Liwanag. AB

New puppet regime in Libya

The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) strongly condemned the brutal military campaign of the US, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and their puppet armed forces against the Libyan people.

Foreign troops in conspiracy with local armed elements seized Tripoli City after a seven-month bloody campaign of bombings by air and naval forces of the US, UK, France, Italy and other NATO members. The US poured in at least \$1 billion to overthrow

the Gaddafi government. Up to 20,000 bombs were dropped from the sky, targeting the regime's main military facilities. Also targeted were houses, mosques, civilian infrastructure such as power and water facilities, hospitals, schools and daycare cen-

ters that resulted in deaths and injuries to thousands of Libyans.

Simultaneously, there were attacks conducted by anti-Gaddafi armed forces trained by the Central Intelligence Agency. These forces were recruited by the CIA from the most treasonous elements of Libyan society, among them warlords, pro-monarchy forces and fundamentalist Muslim groups with connections to the CIA and the terrorist al-Qaeda.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International raised serious concerns about continuing violations of human rights where even political prisoners were being shot by forces unleashed by the imperialists. There have also been reports that civilians sympathetic to Gaddafi were being maltreated and robbed by mercenaries.

The brutal military campaign was supported by a coordinated psywar campaign by the biggest international media corporations in order to justify the military intervention and aggression against the sovereignty of Libya and the Libyan people. Under US direction, the puppet and mercenary anti-Gaddafi forces were described in the

mass media as “democratic forces.”

According to ILPS chair Jose Maria Sison, there are three reasons why the imperialists have inflicted such cruel punishment on the Gaddafi regime. First, Ghaddafi refused plans to establish the US African Command military base in Libya. Second, he threatened to revoke the concessions he had granted to the imperialists in 2003, including allowing foreign companies to enter the country after the widespread privatization of state-owned enterprises. Third, Gaddafi had also planned on replacing the US dollar with the golden dinar in transactions concerning Libyan oil in the face of the severe crisis of the capitalist system.

In 2003, at the height of the imperialist aggression against Iraq, the Gaddafi regime decided to engage the US and NATO. It implemented policies that were in accordance with neoliberal globalization. Multinational corporations were granted many privileges. Corruption became rampant among the regime's officials and even among Gaddafi's relatives. The prices of prime commodities rose and unemployment slowly grew among the youth despite the relatively high standard of living enjoyed by Libya compared to other countries.

Gaddafi also cooperated with the US and other NATO forces in military and intelligence affairs regarding the US' campaign

against “terrorism.” From these cooperative relations, the imperialists were able to gain much information from Gaddafi government officials, and exercise influence over them. These same officials were recruited to join forces against Gaddafi and his relatives. It comes as no surprise that these officials are now sitting in the National Transition Council (NTC) formed by the US.

Libya is now being transformed into a semicolony of the US, UK, France and Italy through the NTC and its leader Mustafa Abdul Jalil. It will not be long before imperialist forces and their puppets take position in Libya in the guise of UN “peacekeeping forces.” Even before the seizure of Tripoli, their agents, advisers and “special forces” were already all over Libya to guide their puppets. The Libyan constitution will be replaced with one that serves the economic, political, military and cultural interests of the imperialists. Libya will be compelled to accept the establishment of the US African Command's military base in the country. It will end up becoming a detachment of US imperialism just like Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and others.

The ILPS called on the Libyan people and their anti-imperialist and democratic forces to take advantage of the favorable political conditions in order to gain strength and rise above the fighting between anti-Gaddafi and pro-Gaddafi forces. The massive distribution of arms to the people is favorable to the establishment of a revolutionary party of the working class and the advance of a movement for national liberation in Libya.





Capitalism's widespread destructiveness in the midst of crisis

Tens of thousands of foreclosed houses in the US are being demolished by banks despite the fact that millions of Americans do not have homes.

Taking the lead in ordering the bulldozing of homes in the US is the Bank of America Corp., the biggest home financing firm. It plans to tear down 40,000 houses, mainly in Ohio and in the cities of Detroit and Chicago. Other banks and financial institutions that plan to raze foreclosed homes are Wells Fargo & Co., Citigroup Inc., JP Morgan Chase & Co., and Fannie Mae.

More and more homes are being foreclosed due to the severity of the economic crisis in the US. As of June, 1,679,125 or one in 77 houses have either been foreclosed or were in various stages of foreclosure proceedings. Because of the sheer number of foreclosed houses, home financing firms have been anxious that depressed prices would further lead them to bankruptcy. Construction companies and manufacturers of housing equipment have also been dogged by the same concerns.

The biggest American banks had turned bankrupt these past several years after home mortgaging papers in their possession became worthless due to so many unpaid debts.

Instead of selling the foreclosed houses at low prices, the big capitalist owners of banks and home financing companies chose to tear them down in order to protect their profits. Based on the banks' calculations, they would incur greater losses if they sell the houses at bargain basement prices or wait until prices go up. By razing the foreclosed houses, they would be saving on maintenance costs and market prices will be raised anew.

The US government had used trillions of dollars of taxpayers' money to bail out these companies, which now plan to invest again in housing. But first, they have to reduce the supply of houses to raise prices and amass profits.

Destructive capitalist system. The destruction of homes as a way of resolving the crisis of overproduction is not new to the capitalist system. It is intrinsic to capitalism to destroy productive forces and social products during times of crisis. During the Great Depression in the 1930s, tons of products were destroyed to reduce oversupply that re-

sulted in depressed market prices.

Despite the widespread hunger that claimed the lives of seven million people, big capitalists got rid of rock-bottom priced food products by burning them or throwing them to the sea. More than ten million hectares of crops that were ready for harvest were also run down by tractors.

In 2009, the US government also implemented a \$3 billion program called "cash for clunkers" where car owners were encouraged to trade in their old vehicles for new ones. Old vehicles that were still in good condition were wrecked to prevent them from being resold. This was done to reduce the supply of cars and push up their prices. The scheme nonetheless failed to resolve the oversupply of automobiles.

3.5 million Americans without homes. There are up to 3.5 million Americans without decent homes due to the high cost of housing and worsening poverty. Comprising 49% of the total number of people without homes, African-Americans form the bulk of those unable to afford housing.

Tent cities have sprung up in various urban areas in the past several years, swarming with thousands of people.

The US government gives low priority to providing American citizens decent housing. In 2011, it allotted a mere \$2.1 billion in assistance to Americans without homes—a drop in the bucket compared to the \$290 billion overall budget for Housing and Urban Development (most of which ended up in the pockets of capitalists in the construction business). The amount is dwarfed even more by the US budget for its interventionist wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya and its counterinsurgency operations in countries like the Philippines. **AB**





Copper miners strike in Indonesia, Peru

More than 10,000 workers of American-owned Freeport McMoran Copper and Gold Inc. began to strike on September 15 in mining areas in Indonesia and Peru. It was the start of a planned month-long work stoppage to press for higher pay based on international wage standards.

Freeport workers receive only up to \$3 per hour. They now want a five-fold hike but management's counter-offer was a 22% raise spread over the next two years.

In Indonesia, strikers have already paralyzed the operations of the Grasberg mine in Papua province, as well as the nearby seaport.

Freeport McMoran is the biggest foreign mining company in Indonesia, controlling 90% of mining operations in the country. Its mining area in Grasberg also has the world's biggest gold deposits.

With Freeport McMoran also being the third biggest copper producer worldwide, the month-long strike is sure to affect the global supply of this metal.

An eight-day strike in the Grasberg mine last July affected the mine's entire operation.

In Peru, the strike is being waged by the workers of Cerro Verde, where Freeport McMoran holds the majority share. Cerro Verde, which operates in the city of Arequipa is one of the country's biggest copper producers.

Workers in Freeport McMoran's other mining areas in Bolivia and Chile have also struck this year for higher wages. AB

Workers assail Honda layoffs

WORKERS of Honda Cars Philippines strongly assailed management plans to lay off its workers. According to the Lakas ng Manggagawang Nagkakaisa sa Honda-Kilusang Mayo Uno (LMNH-KMU), the real reason behind management's plan to reduce the workforce by 30% is to bust the union.

LMNH-KMU belied management's claims that Honda has too many workers. It cited Honda's practice of taking in young workers as apprentices who are still in training but are immediately fielded in the assembly plant as part of the regular workforce. They do not receive wages and are paid only a very small allowance. This scheme by Honda Cars is a form of labor contractualization, said the union.

Toll fee hike is on

DESPITE strong protests, the Aquino regime has given the go-signal for the imposition of the 12% Value Added Tax (VAT) on expressway toll fees starting October 1.

The regime cited its need for more income to justify the decision to impose the expressway tax, contrary to an election campaign promise by Aquino. The Taxpayer's Unity Versus Toll-hike in South Luzon Expressway (TUTOL SLEX), however, is strongly opposed to the additional taxation, saying this will be an added burden to the people. Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño has filed a bill in Congress exempting tollways from the VAT. Eighty-one congressmen have also signed a resolution against the VAT on toll.

Meanwhile, the fare hikes in the Metro and Light Rail Transit systems have been postponed for next year due to stiff opposition from various sectors, including 11 senators.

Progressives condemn US-GPH joint exercises

PROGRESSIVE groups roundly condemned a recently held joint military exercise of US and Philippines troops. The exercise dubbed Balance Piston 11-3 was held on September 2-13 at the 6th ID's Camp Siongco in Datu Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

According to KAWAGIB Moro Human Rights, joint exercises are actually being used as cover for the constant presence of US troops in Mindanao, the construction of US bases and facilities in Zamboanga, Jolo and Tawi Tawi and the participation of US soldiers in combat operations. KAWAGIB demanded the junking of the Visiting Forces Agreement because it is being used to justify permanent US military presence.

Meanwhile, KAWAGIB also assailed the violations of human rights resulting from the presence of American troops. It cited complaints from residents of Awang town about the continued firing by American and Filipino soldiers in the area.

Students take action against budget cuts in education

THOUSANDS of students at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) walked out of their classrooms on September 20 accompanied by their teachers and school officials to protest cuts in the PUP budget for 2012. The walkout is part of a weeklong nationwide protest action to oppose budget cuts for state universities and colleges next year.

The PUP students called their protest action "We Strike Back." Joined by PUP president Dr. Dante Guevarra and a num-

ber of professors and university employees, they assailed the Aquino government for slashing P569.8 million from the budgets of 50 state universities and colleges nationwide. They said that this shows the regime's insensitivity to their needs. The PUP, in particular, will be receiving only P737 million instead of the P2 billion allocation it requested.

A series of protest actions has also been launched at the University of the Philippines (UP) campuses in Diliman and Manila. Bigger protest actions

have been set for September 21-23 in both campuses. On September 23, students from UP will be marching to Mendiola along with students from other schools in Metro Manila.

Meanwhile, blackboards in public schools nationwide remained clean on September 16 when teachers declared a "chalk holiday" to demand a higher chalk allowance. Up to 100,000 out of 500,000 public school teachers joined the protest by refraining from using chalk for a day.