

ANG

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Editorial

Rouse the people in their millions for the armed revolution

The Filipino people eagerly await the 43rd anniversary of the New People's Army (NPA) on March 29. Amid the darkness of widespread hunger and poverty, exploitation and oppression, the NPA and the armed revolution are beacons of hope leading to a future where freedom, progress and justice abide.

The US-Aquino regime's much-vaunted "road of righteousness" is nothing but an empty slogan leading to an ever wider chasm between the ruling classes and the oppressed, to intensified exploitation and graver suffering and poverty for the people.

Under Aquino, the policies of liberalization, deregulation, privatization and denationalization have condemned the Philippine semicolonial and semifeudal system to a crisis unprecedented in severity in more than half a century. Land-grabbing is rampant. Unemployment is rife. Wages are pegged at extremely low levels. Oil and food prices and the cost of basic services are on a continually upward spiral. Social service budgets are suffering cutbacks. And op-

pressively higher taxes are being imposed.

The US-Aquino regime turns a blind eye to the abject conditions of the Filipino people. On the other hand, it is completely subservient to US imperialism and is beside itself advancing the interests of big foreign companies. It gives the oil giants free rein to raise prices, and big mining companies and plantations the liberty to seize land and plunder the country's resources.

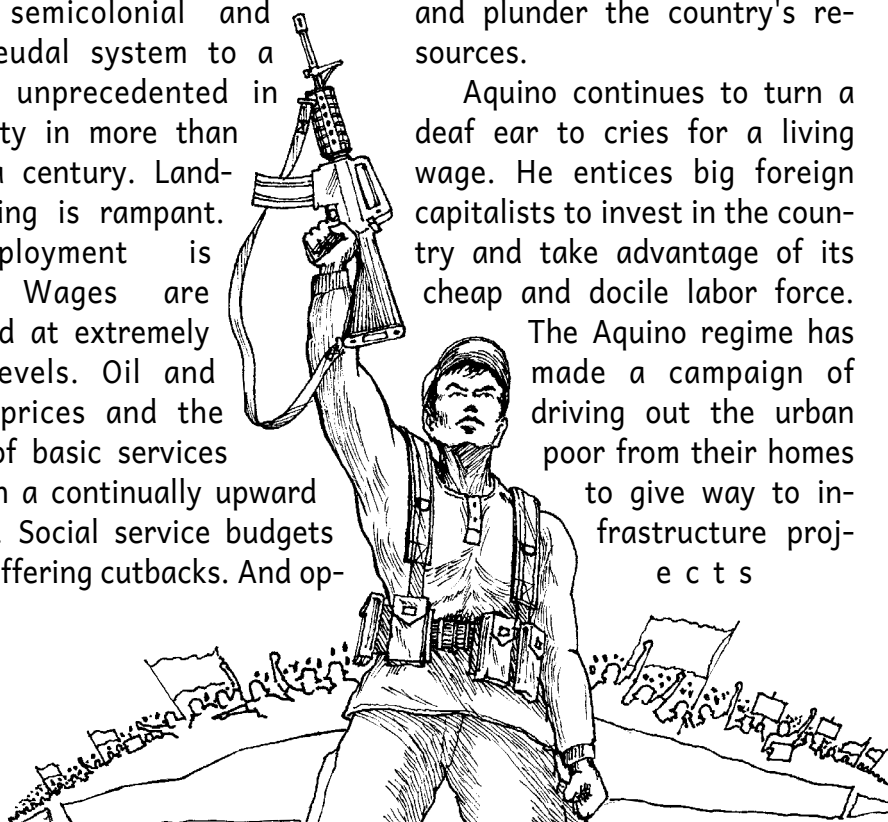
Aquino continues to turn a deaf ear to cries for a living wage. He entices big foreign capitalists to invest in the country and take advantage of its cheap and docile labor force.

The Aquino regime has made a campaign of driving out the urban poor from their homes to give way to infrastructure projects

for Aquino's big bourgeois comprador friends. He wields the full force of the police, the military and paramilitary groups to suppress the people's democratic movement.

The Filipino people are at the deepest end of their suffering in the face of the poverty wrought by the policies being foisted by the US-Aquino regime. They have risen up through mass struggles and protest actions to air their collective opposition to the laws and policies enforced by the Aquino government. Their seething anger is akin to a volcano ready to erupt and spew forth a powerful force that will put an end to the exploitative and oppressive system.

Conditions are exceedingly favorable for advancing the armed revolution in the Philip-



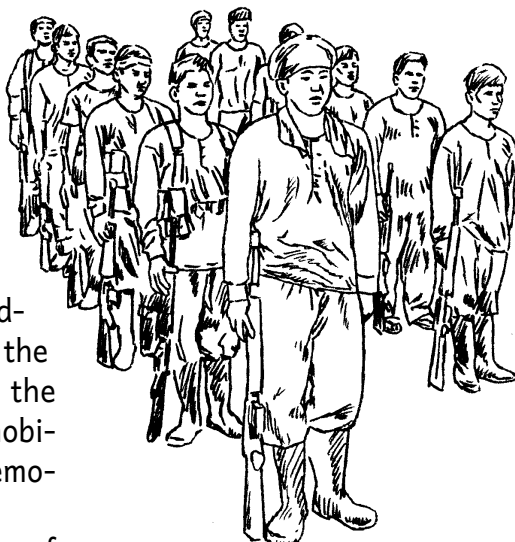
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piners in a major way. It is the duty of the members and cadres of the Party and all revolutionary forces to seize all opportunities to rouse the people's anger against the ruling regime and the system it administers. Big advances in the armed revolution rely on the widespread arousal and mobilization of the people in democratic mass struggles.

We must kindle the fires of agrarian struggles in the vast countryside. We must arouse and mobilize the peasant masses and farm workers and advance agrarian revolution to a higher and broader level.

We must spark the flames of mass struggles in the urban areas, arousing and mobilizing the workers, urban poor, students, rank and file employees and other democratic sectors to join powerful mass struggles against the antipeople and pro-imperialist policies of the ruling regime. We must carry forward anti-imperialist, antifeudal and antifascist struggles.



tories attained in advancing the people's war, especially in carrying forward agrarian revolution and building the new democratic government in the countryside. Let us steel our resolve to surpass all the previous victories of the past four decades of revolutionary struggle.

From the broad mass movement, we must gather broad support for the NPA and people's war. We must undertake the mass recruitment of new Red fighters, especially among the ranks of the youth. Let us expand the people's militia and self-defense units for the training en masse of new Red fighters.

The New People's Army is determined to continuously intensify the armed struggle nationwide. In accordance with the Party's call, the NPA will continuously launch more and bigger tactical offensives against the armed forces of the reactionary state. The NPA will continuously train its fighters and officers to raise the capabilities of the people's army in battle.

The NPA continues to strengthen its capability to launch both annihilative and punitive operations against the enemy. It targets the seizure of an ever bigger number of firearms from the hands of the enemy to put them in the hands of Red fighters. The NPA must seize thousands more weapons to arm the thousands among the people's ranks desiring to become Red fighters.

The Filipino people are determined to advance the people's war. Despite the darkness of their plight under the ruling system, their revolutionary movement faces a bright future.

AB

Let us rouse the patriotism and democratic consciousness of the people. Let us advance a broad movement to study history and promote the scientific and revolutionary method of thinking. Let us expand several times over and continuously consolidate the revolutionary mass organizations. Let the Party deepen its roots among the masses.

Let us reach out to the people in their millions and rouse them to advance the armed revolution and people's war to a higher stage. Let us hail the vic-

 <p>Vol. XLIII No. 6 March 21, 2012</p> <p>Ang Bayan is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray and English editions. It is available for downloading at the Philippine Revolution Web Central located at: www.philippinerevolution.net Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news. Readers are likewise enjoined to send in their comments and suggestions for the betterment of our publication. You can reach us by email at: angbayan@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Contents</p> <p>Editorial: Rouse millions for armed revolution 1</p> <p>Nationwide protests vs. oil price hikes 3</p> <p>Oil firms' overpricing 4</p> <p>Armed intervention in the name of "disaster preparedness" 4</p> <p>NPA: Stop logging in Isabela 5</p> <p>End violence against children 6</p> <p>Military buses in Eastern Visayas 7</p> <p>No happiness in Coke 8</p> <p>Giant strike in India 8</p> <p>News 9</p>
<p>Ang Bayan is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	

Nationwide protests against oil price hikes

Progressive organizations launched successful protests on March 15 to oppose continued oil price hikes and demand that the Aquino regime address this issue. The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN), Koalisyon ng Progresibong mga Manggagawa at Mamamayan (KPMMA), Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), Pagkakaisa ng Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (PISTON) and other groups led various forms of protest in different parts of the country.

The protest actions were launched in the face of incessant hikes in the prices of petroleum products which have risen by more than P5 per liter since the start of the year. A liter of diesel now sells for up to P50 while an 11-kilogram cylinder of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) now retails at close to P1,000.

The protesters demanded a rollback of up to P9 per liter in the prices of all petroleum products. They likewise demanded the removal of the 12% Value Added Tax (VAT) which accounts for P6 in the price per liter of diesel and P7 in gasoline. They also called for the abrogation of the Oil Deregulation Law which has given the oil companies free rein to determine petroleum prices. The Aquino

regime refused outright to heed the protesters' demands, (see *related article*)

In Metro Manila, progressive groups gathered early in the day in various areas. At 9 a.m., PISTON and its allied organizations launched a transport caravan from Elliptical Road in Quezon City up to the offices of Petron, Shell and Chevron in Makati City. Noise barrages were also held in 30 protest centers, among them Cubao, Philcoa, Batasan Hills, Roosevelt and North Avenue in Quezon City; España, Delpan, Sta. Mesa and Mendiola in Manila; and Monumento in Caloocan.

Youth protesters launched a parody called "Noynoying," where they gave blank stares and did nothing, to symbolize Noynoy Aquino's inutility in the face of unbridled increases in the prices of petroleum products.

Protest actions and caravans were also held in other areas across the country. Mass actions were launched in the cities of Baguio and Dagupan. In Laguna and Cavite, a transport caravan led by STARTER-PISTON was joined by a hundred vehicles that went to several areas in the two provinces. Students at the University of the Philippines-Los Baños also set up protest centers in Sta.

Cruz and Victoria towns in Laguna. Some 100 drivers likewise launched a caravan from Bacalaran, Parañaque to Imus, Cavite to express solidarity with the nationwide protest.

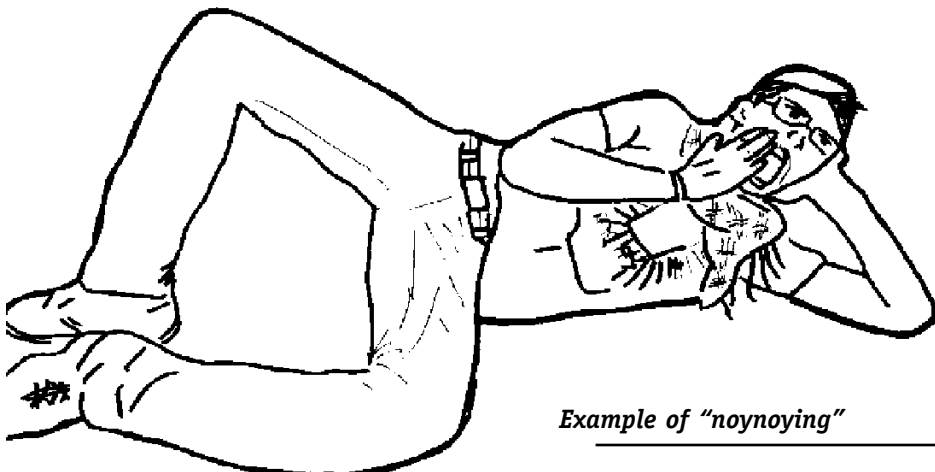
In Bicol, the Concerned Drivers and Operators for Reform (CONDOR-PISTON) led a transport strike on March 11 that paralyzed 91% of transportation in Albay and Sorsogon and 80% in Masbate. Rallyists in Naga City did "planking" in the major streets.

Some 30 jeepneys and taxis held a caravan from Mandurriao District to Bonifacio Drive in Iloilo City while BAYAN led another rally at Banga Crossing in Kalibo, Aklan. In Bacolod City, hundreds of members of the United Negros Drivers and Operators Center (UNDOC) and BAYAN-Negros marched from the Sacred Heart Shrine to the Fountain of Justice at Bacolod's old city hall.

In Cebu City, members of BAYAN-Central Visayas and other groups launched a protest action at the office of the Department of Energy-Region 7. Slamming the soaring prices of commodities due to uncontrolled oil price hikes, they said that the removal of the VAT on oil will give temporary relief to drivers and the rest of the people.

In Cagayan de Oro, some 20 drivers' associations joined a two-hour transport caravan.

In Davao City, members of TRANSMISSION-PISTON and other groups trooped to the Petron and Chevron oil depots and pelted these with paint bombs. They also threw paint bombs at an image of Benigno Aquino III, assailing him for his government's inability to thwart the oil price hikes. Protest actions were likewise held in the cities of Surigao, Butuan and Gen. Santos. AB



Example of "noynoying"

Oil firms rake in P147 M daily from overpricing

Oil companies amass an extra P147 million daily from the overpricing of diesel alone, according to a study by Ibon Foundation. This finding is based on observations that diesel prices in the Philippines rise 20-22% faster compared to the fuel's price levels in the international market. It is estimated that diesel is overpriced by as much as P8.61 per liter and gasoline by P16.33 per liter. Studies show that the actual overprice may be much higher, since the oil companies refuse to open their books of accounts to the public.

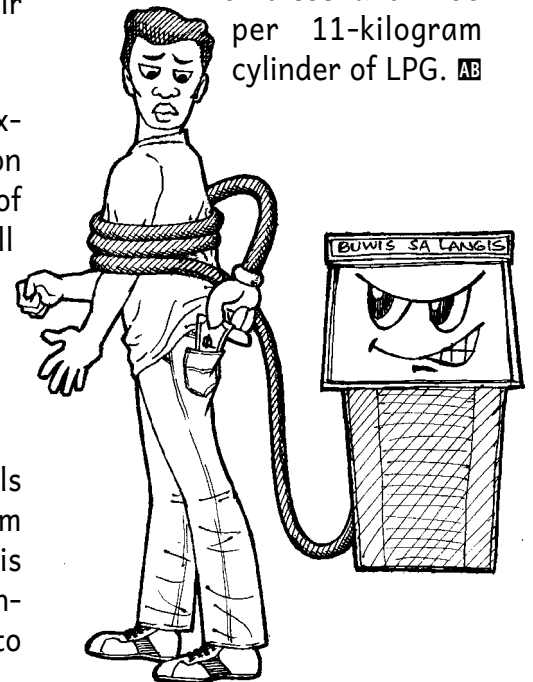
Oil companies are able to overprice their products due to the continued existence of the Oil Deregulation Law. Progressive legislators have been pushing for the passage of the Downstream Oil Industry Regulation Act which calls for the formation of a Petroleum Regulatory Council that will control oil prices and oversee a price stabilization fund. It also calls for the government to repurchase

Petron to conduct local exploration and oil production and influence local prices of petroleum products. The bill likewise calls on the government to purchase wholesale the country's oil needs.

P26 M daily oil taxes

The Aquino regime hauls in up to P26 million daily from the taxes imposed on oil. This is the reason why the government stubbornly refuses to

remove the tax on petroleum products despite the people's widespread clamor. A huge burden will be lifted from the people's shoulders with the removal of the P7 tax per liter on gasoline, P6 per liter on diesel and P100 per 11-kilogram cylinder of LPG. **AB**



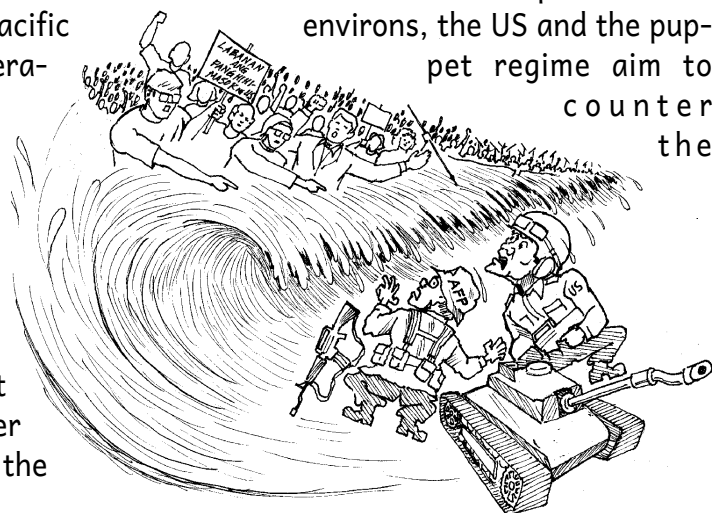
US armed intervention in the name of "disaster preparedness"

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) strongly condemned plans by US and Philippine military forces to conduct military exercises in the heart of Luzon in April. The CPP assailed, in particular, the use of "disaster preparedness" as a cover to justify the exercises and the entry of interventionist American troops in the Philippines.

The exercises come on the heels of Operation Pacific Angel 12-1 launched in Bicol on March 5-10. The operation which was led by the 13th US Air Force was likewise held on the pretext of "disaster preparedness." Alongside medical and dental missions, US military and AFP forces conducted surveillance and espionage operations, using drones to map the region's terrain.

The upcoming exercises will be no different from Operation Pacific Angel 12-1. The official line is that it is being done to prepare for a possibly major disaster should an earthquake result from movements in the

West Valley fault line, which runs along Bulacan; Rodriguez, Rizal; Quezon City; Marikina; Pasig; Taguig; Muntinlupa; San Pedro and Sta. Rosa, Laguna; and Carmona, Cavite. The US invokes "disaster preparedness" to enable it to conduct intelligence operations in the National Capital Region and nearby provinces. In launching "humanitarian activities" at the heart of the metropolis and its environs, the US and the puppet regime aim to counter the



people's strong opposition to US intervention and US presence in the country.

The US has long been invoking various issues such as calamities, human rights violations and protection of minorities to obscure its intervention in countries where there are strong anti-US forces. No less than the US Army Field Manual on Counterinsurgency issued in 2006 states that humanitarian assistance or civil-military operations by US forces always have military or political motivations. At all times, "disaster relief" operations target armed factions, movements or governments. In the case of hard targets, the US resorts to using its allies in the United Nations to justify its armed intervention.

In 1992, for instance, the US invoked the widespread famine in Somalia as a pretext to send in 20,000 American troops to intervene in the civil war then raging in the country. Under the cloak of the United Nations Operations for Somalia, the US claimed that its troops were in the country to distribute food and other basic needs to the people who had been suffering from almost a year-long drought. In fact, American troops were engaged in almost daily clashes with armed groups with strong anti-US sentiments. They bombed civilian communities and committed other human rights violations. In their ten-month stay using "disaster relief operations" as cover, up to 10,000 Somali civilians were

killed by the US interventionist troops.

In 2004, the US rode on the tragedy wrought by a huge tsunami to enable its armed forces to penetrate Aceh, Indonesia, which then strongly assailed the US "anti-terrorist war" for arbitrarily targeting Muslims.

The US also used "disaster relief" as a pretext to force Burma's anti-US government in 2008 to open the country's air space and sea coasts in the most calamity-stricken areas to US fighter planes and warships.

After a strong earthquake in Haiti in 2010, the US prioritized sending in 20,000 troops to the country on top of the 12,500 troops already in Haiti, instead of sending funds and material assistance. **AB**

NPA calls for stop to logging in Isabela

The New People's Army (NPA) attacked on February 29 a sawmill involved in destructive logging operations in the forests of Isabela.

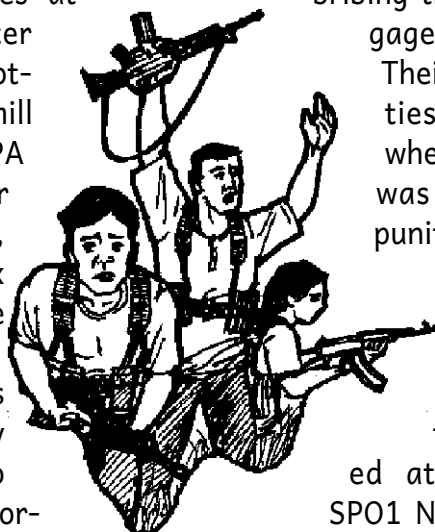
In a statement, the Benito Tesorio Command (NPA-Isabela) said Red fighters attacked the Alliance Sawmill Company in Barangay Usol, Jones at around 5 p.m. After confiscating two shotguns from the sawmill guards, the NPA burned two power generators, a loader, an Elf truck, two six by six trucks and the diesel station.

The sawmill is owned by Sammy Ong of Monte Alto Timber Resources Corporation (MATRC), Mayor Edgar Go of San Mariano and

Vice Mayor Letty Sebastian of Jones.

The owners have been encouraging, hoodwinking and bribing the locals to engage in logging. Their logging activities stopped only when their sawmill was subjected to punitive action.

While the raid on the sawmill was ongoing, Red fighters arrested at a checkpoint SPO1 Noriel Sabbaluca Ualat and PO2 Rodel Guerero Bedana, both elements of the



Isabela Provincial Police Intelligence Unit. The two intelligence agents are known to regularly extort money from the sawmill. Seized from them were a cal .45 pistol and a 9 mm Beretta, their cellphones and documents of intelligence value.

Since January 2010, Ong has been dispatching various persons on his payroll to negotiate with the revolutionary movement. Ong is a Chinese businessman who has long had a lumber business in Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija and has connections with the biggest politicians and contractors in Isabela. He enjoys the protection of the Jones-PNP and the 5th ID.

Ong and his cohorts have been offering huge amounts to the revolutionary movement to allow them to engage in logging. The revolutionary movement has spurned all their offers. **AB**

Brains behind Fr. Tentorio slay killed in ambush

A notorious military asset identified as one of the brains behind the murder of Fr. Fausto "Pops" Tentorio was killed in an ambush by the New People's Army (NPA) at the public market in Kidapawan, North Cotabato on March 7.

Patrick Wineger was an active combatant and asset of the AFP, and was armed with a cal .45 pistol when ambushed. He armed the Lumad to sow violence in North Cotabato. He organized the bandit Bagani, Alamara and Mansandong groups into anti-NPA fanatics. These fanatics extort from small businessmen and residents and harass and kill innocent civilians.

Wineger was identified as one of the masterminds behind Fr. Tentorio's killing. The perpetrators were his men in the Bagani bandit group. After the killing, the leaders of the Bagani group in Barangay Dalag, Arakan immediately reported to Wineger.

Before Fr. Tentorio's murder, Wineger maliciously branded the priest as an NPA supporter in a "peace rally" at the North Cotabato Provincial Capitol organized by the 6th ID. He slammed Fr. Tentorio and his parish in Arakan as a big obstacle to the operations of the AFP's Oplan Bayanihan in North Cotabato and surrounding areas.

In a statement, NPA-Southern Mindanao political director Ka Simon Santiago said the Wineger family had been enriching itself and accumulating land since 1970. They own a rubber plantation along the border of Makilala, North Cotabato and Kidapawan City. As Wineger colluded with the fascist military, he was able to penetrate the Lumad tribes and communities. He terrorized and cajoled them into fighting non-Lumad settlers and used this conflict to seize and occupy ancestral lands for the interests of big capitalist mining and other businesses. AB

Stop state violence against children

The Aquino government must put a stop to continuing state violence against children wrought by the Armed Forces of the Philippines' (AFP) Oplan Bayanihan. The demand was aired by advocates of the rights of children victimized by the state's counter-revolutionary campaign. This year alone, five children have already been killed in military operations in the countryside. The latest victim was 7-year old Rudelyn Aguirre, from Tapaz, Capiz, said the Children's Rehabilitation Center (CRC).

Rudelyn was killed on March 11 when a grenade exploded as she was playing in their yard in Barangay Tacayan. Her sister, 4-year old Roda, was seriously injured. The grenade is suspected to have come from elements of the 61st IB whose detachment is located in the upland portion of the barangay.

The victims' grandfather Julian Aguirre said he was inside their house when he heard a loud explosion. The sound had come from the upland area. Rudelyn sustained wounds in her left eye, neck, abdomen and

both calves, causing her instantaneous death. Roda was seriously wounded in the chest and rushed to a hospital in Calinog, Iloilo.

To cover up their involvement in the crime, 3rd Infantry Division chief Maj. Gen. Jose Mabanta immediately issued a statement accusing the New People's Army (NPA) of responsibility for the explosion. He also accused the Aguirre family of being NPA members and claimed that their house was a land mine factory.

Nonetheless, all the evi-

dence and testimony from villagers point to the 61st IB's responsibility for the bloody incident. KARAPATAN-Panay assailed the military for feigning innocence, saying the AFP has been covering up its own acts of violence by blaming everything on the NPA.

Before this bloody incident, four children have been reported killed in separate military operations in Laguna and Camarines Norte, according to CRC head Jacqueline Ruiz. Child victims of military operations suffer from severe emotional trauma, become socially withdrawn and the normal run of their lives disrupted.

Since Benigno Aquino III came to power, the CRC has recorded seven killings, 17 frustrated killings, two cases of rape, ten attacks on schools and eight cases where minors were maliciously accused of being "child soldiers."

On February 25, two children were killed with their fa-

ther in Labo, Caramines Norte when soldiers indiscriminately opened fire at the house of the Mancera family where a lone NPA member was resting.

On February 16, a 15-year old boy and his adult companion were shot to death in Magdalena, Laguna after they were accused of being rebels.

Meanwhile, 36-year old Jimmy Liguyon was gunned down in his house in Barangay Dao, San Fernando, Bukidnon by members of a paramilitary group run by the 8th IB. Liguyon was the vice president of the Kaugalingong Sistema sa Igpasasindog to Lumadnong Ogpaan (KASILO), a Lumad organization based in Bukidnon. KASILO defends ancestral lands and the environment against large-scale mining and other commercial operations. Liguyon was also the barangay captain of Dao.

Witnesses said Liguyon was shot by Aldy Salusad, son of Ben Salusad who chairs the San Fernando Matigsalug Tribal Datus (SANMATRIDA), a paramilitary group.

Since 2009, SANMATRIDA has been campaigning in favor of the entry of big mining companies in the area. After shooting Liguyon at close range, Salusad warned that he would also kill anyone who would stand in the way of the agreements entered into by SANMATRIDA. Salusad is also a member of the New Indigenous People's Army for Reform (NIPAR), another paramilitary group under the 8th IB.

Liguyon had long been against SANMATRIDA's attempts to sell their ancestral lands to foreign companies. As far back as 2011, he had already been threatened by SANMATRIDA that he would be killed if he continued to oppose mining in the area. AB

Military violence in Eastern Visayas

Large-scale militarization under Oplan Bayanihan in the guise of “peace and development” operations have wrought grave human rights violations and economic dislocation to the people of Eastern Visayas. The Philippine Army 8th Infantry Division began its military operations on February 27.

On March 4, at around midnight, soldiers of the 87th IB abducted village councilman Artemio Labong and his son Ruel, 21, in Barangtay Pagsanjan, Paranas, Samar. Artemio was first interrogated and tortured in his house in front of his 12-year old daughter before he was taken away by the troopers. Despite the 8th ID's claims that the soldiers were there on a mission of “peace and development,” the troopers were in full combat gear.

Helicopters have been circling the villages daily allegedly because an NPA camp had just been raided nearby. This, and the fear of being the next victim of abduction have been terrorizing the local residents.

The situation has caused peasants to stop going to their fields. The resulting economic dislocation has forced them to ask the Paranas local government to provide them with daily food rations.

Meanwhile, in Barangay E. Duran, Bobon, Northern Samar, 20th IB troopers arrested and interrogated a resident at around 8 p.m. of the same evening because of suspicion that he was an NPA supporter. But the soldiers were forced to release him after his fellow villagers trooped to the military camp where he was being held.

The soldiers have been posted outside the village. Nonetheless, they have been interrogating and intimidating residents leaving the barrio and have forbidden them from tending to their farms.

Five truckloads of soldiers from the 19th IB have also been occupying the barangay hall, chapel and day care center of Libertad village in Ormoc City. As a result, classes at the day care center had to be suspended from March 9-12. The soldiers have also been going from house to house and interrogating the residents in the guise of conducting a census. The terrified residents have likewise stopped their farming activities. AB



No happiness in Coke

The workers' union at Coca-Cola Philippines strongly assailed attacks by the company on their union rights. The company has refused to negotiate with the workers for higher wages and a new collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Instead, the company has been propagating the so-called 3P scheme as a basis for raising the wages of workers in close to 45 unions in Coca-Cola Philippines' parent company, San Miguel Corporation. Under 3P, instead of granting an across-the-board wage increase, an individual worker's wage will be raised based on his or her presence, performance and participation. The evaluation will be conducted every two months and anyone who does not pass will be automatically terminated.

Coke also claims to be doing a review to determine what jobs are "essential" or "non-essential." The union believes that this is a precursor to the massive layoff of regular workers and their replacement by contractuels.

Through this scheme, Coke is systematically killing the workers' union. It has been manipulating labor policies to avoid negotiating with the union and granting a wage increase, and to effect a massive layoff. Contrary to its much-vaunted public image, there is no happiness with Coke. AB

Giant strike in India

Tens of millions of Indian workers launched a 24-hour strike on February 28 to demand that government respect their labor rights and to oppose hikes in the prices of commodities. It was the 14th general strike launched by the Indian people since the liberalization of the local economy in 1991. Other estimates put the number of participants in the strike at up to a hundred million, surpassing the giant anti-privatization strike of 2010.

The entire transportation system nationwide was paralyzed, with seaports, airports, trains and buses stopping all operations. Banks and post offices were closed for the day, as were telephone services, markets and other retail outlets, mines, energy plants and automobile factories. The strike shook the centers of 14 of the country's 28 states.

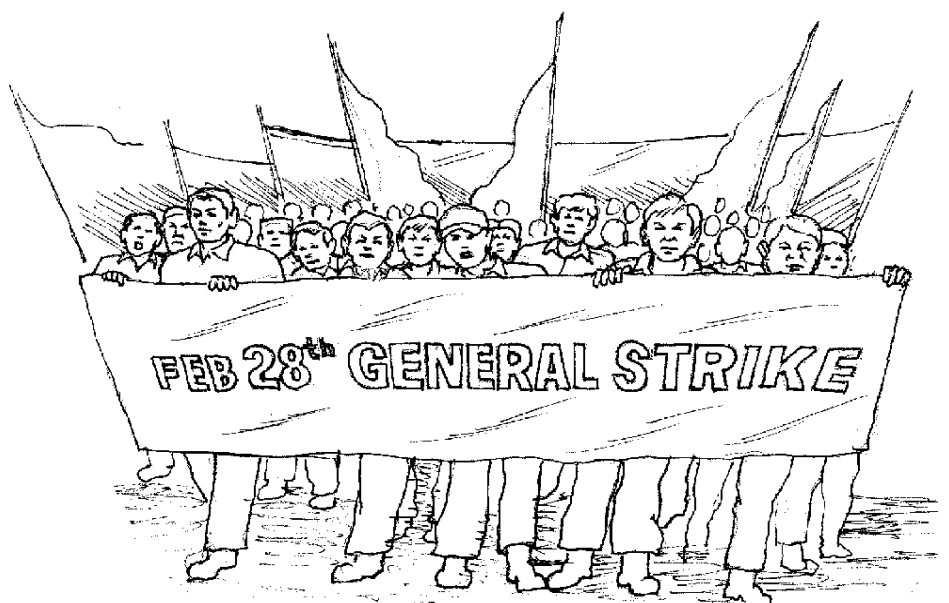
Among the workers' demands are the creation of a national social security fund, a higher minimum wage and its broader application, equal rights and protection for both casual and permanent workers, an end to attacks on unions, lower costs of goods and services, a stop to the sale of state-owned companies and an end to corruption in government.

Even before the nationwide strike, Indian workers had already been launching a series of mass actions. Among these were the two-day occupation of the Hyundai plant and strikes led by

employees of Air India, telecommunications companies and coal mines to resist the government's privatization plans.

There is a terribly wide gap between the rich and the poor in India. Out of a population of more than a billion, almost half or 410 million live in poverty. On the other hand, only 55 billionaires control almost \$250 billion (equivalent to more than 60% of the Philippine economy).

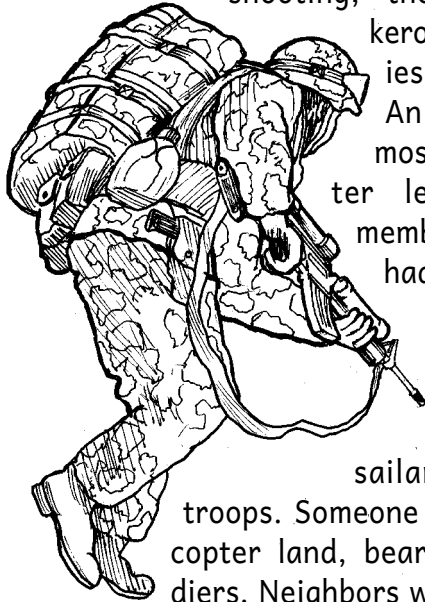
Ordinary workers receive only 500 rupees or \$43 per month and work for ten to 18 hours per day. According to government statistics, the unemployment rate stands at more than 10%, with ever growing numbers of casual workers. Some 60 to 100 million youth in India are also victims of bonded labor, a system where their services are used to pay off their parents' debts. Soaring prices of goods are an added burden to the Indian people. The official inflation rate is 12%. AB



US troops massacre 16 Afghan civilians

Sixteen innocent civilians, including nine children and three women were massacred by US troops on March 8 in Afghanistan. The incident occurred in Panjwai district in Kandahar province. Six others were seriously wounded. The incident was a reaction by US-led NATO forces to a series of military defeats.

It was about 3 a.m. when US troops barged into a house occupied by three families and arbitrarily opened fire at the sleeping victims. After the shooting, the troops poured



kerosene on the bodies and burned them. An Afghan farmer almost lost his mind after learning that 11 members of his family had been murdered.

Based on the testimony of the surviving victims, the assailants were US troops. Someone had heard a helicopter land, bearing some 20 soldiers. Neighbors were roused by the

sound of gunfire coming from different directions. They also heard laughter from the drunken US soldiers.

US military officials, however, claim that the killings were an accident and not the result of their military operations. The perpetrator was allegedly a sergeant who had gone berserk and slipped out of a military camp alone, and walked for more than two kilometers before entering the area.

Before the incident, NATO and US forces had been suffering a series of defeats in the hands of the Taliban. On March 6, six British soldiers on patrol were killed in Kandahar when their vehicle was hit by a bomb. On the same day, nine elements of the Afghan Local Police were also killed in a surprise attack by Taliban forces on their checkpoint in Char Chino district, Oruzgan province, in southern Afghanistan.

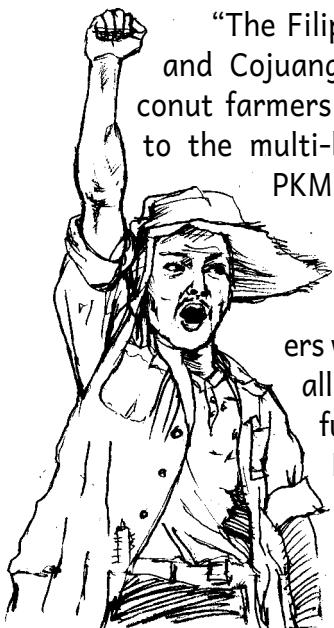
On February 25, two high-ranking NATO officials were killed when an Afghan soldier shot them right inside the Ministry of Interior building in Kabul. On February 21-25, four US soldiers were killed by Afghan policemen and soldiers in separate incidents in southern and eastern Afghanistan after US troops burned copies of the Koran in Bagram Base on February 21. **AB**

PKM warns Aquino, Danding

THE Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Magbubukid (PKM) warned Benigno Aquino III and his uncle Eduardo “Danding” Cojuangco Jr. that they would face the collective wrath of small coconut farmers once they use the more than P50-billion coconut levy fund for the “conditional cash transfer” program.

“The Filipino peasantry will frustrate Aquino and Cojuangco’s maneuvers to deny small coconut farmers their legitimate and rightful claims to the multi-billion peso coco levy funds,” said PKM chair Andres Agtalon. The PKM is an allied organization of the National Democratic Front.

Even as the small coconut farmers wage struggles to demand control over all assets bought using the coco levy funds, they may cooperate with the New People’s Army in the guerrilla bases to take over and run oil mills owned and controlled by Cojuangco and the Aquino government.



Rights groups file anti-demolition suit at UN

THE Philippine Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Watch filed a case on March 14 at the office of UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing Raquel Rolnik.

The case cited more than 50 incidents of violent demolitions of houses in Metro Manila under the US-Aquino regime. Among those affected are 19 communities and more than 16,000 families. As a result, thousands of homes and jobs have been lost, millions of pesos worth of livelihoods destroyed and many children forced to stop their schooling.

The latest cases involved the demolition of an urban poor community in Barangay Corazon de Jesus in San Juan City and several shanties along the railroad tracks of the Philippine National Railways.

ILPS condemns killing of Mexican activist

THE International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) condemned the killing in January of Benjamin Vazquez Sanchez, a local activist fighting destructive foreign mining in Mexico. He was gunned down by hired goons of Minera Cuzcatlan, a local subsidiary of the Canadian-owned Fortuna Silver. Two other local activists—Andres Sanchez Vazquez and Rosalinda Dionisio—were wounded in the shooting.

Bernardo Sanchez Vazquez was the president of Coordinadro de Pueblos Unidos del Valle de Ocotlan (COPUVO), a mass organization fighting Minera Cuzcalan's open-pit mining operations in Ocatlan Valley, Oaxaca, Mexico. According to COPUVO, the company's operations

have caused widespread environmental destruction. Among those already affected by the operations are the area's watershed and the residents' sources of water. Minera Cuzcatlan has likewise been responsible for several human rights violations since its entry in 2006.

COPUVO is part of the Oaxacan Collective in Defense of the Land, a collective of indigenous organizations resisting foreign projects and operations that exploit Mexico's natural resources to the detriment of its people. In the past ten years, up to 24,000 mining concessions have been granted by the Mexican government to foreign companies.
