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Editorial

Resist the EDCA!

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and all the revolutionary forces of the Filipino people are one in condemning the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) signed by officials of the US and Philippine governments on April 28.

Aquino concealed the details of the negotiations and the terms of the agreement and fast-tracked its signing so he could present it as a gift to his visiting imperialist master Barack Obama.

The EDCA is a brazen violation of Philippine national sovereignty. Through the EDCA, the US will be enjoying unhampered rights to station an unlimited number of troops,

military contractors, warships, jetfighters, weapons and other military equipment in so-called Agreed Locations without paying rent. The US military will also be allowed to use any sea-

port, airport and road in the Philippines that it may need.

The EDCA is a US basing agreement, contrary to the US' insistent claims that it has no plans of establishing military bases. In fact, the US military will be allowed to build whatever facilities it may need and engage in all types of operations and activities within the locations allotted to them in areas inside AFP camps.

The EDCA formalizes the basing since 2003 of the 700-strong US Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) within its exclusive headquarters inside Camp Navarro in Zamboanga City. These headquarters being used by American soldiers are supposedly under AFP jurisdiction, but Philippine military officials are never given access to their area.

The EDCA further strengthens US military presence in the country. US claims that its soldiers are present only on a rotational basis in the Philippines are contradicted by the fact that US troops are permanently present on Philippine land or territorial waters with the constant ingress and egress of some 3,000-4,000 personnel and vehicles "on rotation."

To court the Filipino people's support, Aquino



claims that the EDCA will strengthen Philippine capability to defend its territories in the South China Sea. In fact, US "assistance" to the AFP has been limited to enhancing the latter's capability to accommodate the US' large sea vessels and other military equipment.

Aquino has been boasting that the US will be on the Philippines' side should a shooting war erupt with China, but Obama made no such promise in the speeches he delivered during his visit. Claims that "the US would defend the Philippines" are pure hogwash. Even when the Philippines was still a fullblown US colony, the US did not "defend" the country when Japanese forces invaded it in 1941.

In reality, the US has been maintaining its presence in the South China Sea, not to help the Philippines defend its territorial waters, but to secure the transit of US surplus products, project US power and curtail China's rise as a military power.

The US and the Philippines

have different national interests. The US military will act in accordance with US national interest, and not to defend Philippine national interest.

In signing the agreement, the Aquino regime has surrendered Philippine national interest by further binding Philippine foreign policy to US foreign policy. The EDCA further reinforces the international status of the Philippines as a mere pawn of the US military. By signing the EDCA, the Aquino regime further reduces the Philippines' ability to independently craft diplomatic and economic relations that would be more in line with its national interest.

Claims by Aquino's economic officials and local big business that military ties with the US are crucial to Philippine economic growth are also a big lie. On the contrary, more than a century of serving US military interests has perpetuated economic backwardness and foreign debt and capital dependence and subjected the country to foreign economic plunder.

It is the US government and military that benefit from the EDCA. It serves the US government's strategic "Asia pivot" plan declared in 2011 which involves the deployment of up to 60% of US overseas naval and other military forces to the Asia-Pacific region. The Obama government's plan to increase US economic and military presence in the region is crucial in its effort to overcome the prolonged economic recession which began in 2008.

The Filipino people will derive no benefit from the EDCA. It is a further mockery of Philippine national independence and perpetuates the status of the Philippines as a US semicolon.

The Filipino people must stand up and raise high the banner of national freedom. They must vigorously oppose the EDCA and demand its abrogation. They must also demand the abrogation of the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty and the 1998 Visiting Forces Agreement and the pullout of all US troops from the Philippines.

The Aquino regime's signing of the EDCA has stirred the patriotism of broad sectors of Philippine society and opens a new chapter in the historic struggle against US military domination in the Philippines.

The struggle against the EDCA must be carried out in line with the overall struggle to achieve national and social liberation. Only by overthrowing the US puppets that perpetuate US neocolonial rule can the Philippines effectively assert national independence, defend its land and territorial waters, advance an independent foreign policy and achieve economic modernization, genuine democracy and social justice. **AB**

																																			
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EDCA is lopsided in favor of the US

Aquino's officials have been dishing out lies to make the EDCA palatable to the Filipino people. The EDCA's actual content—revealed only the day after it was signed—shows that it is grossly lopsided in favor of US interests and against those of the Philippines.

According to the EDCA, US military forces will be allowed to use the so-called Agreed Locations rent-free.

The following are some of EDCA's more significant provisions that show how much it is stacked in favor of the US and how it brazenly violates Philippine national sovereignty:

1. The EDCA is a US military basing agreement. Contrary to US pronouncements that it has no plans of establishing military bases in the Philippines, the EDCA allows the US military to use "Agreed Locations" for all types of military base activities.

Article III, Section 1 states that the US may conduct "training; transit; support and related activities; refuelling of aircraft; bunkering of vessels; temporary maintenance of vehicles, vessels and aircraft; temporary accommodation of personnel; communications; prepositioning of equipment, supplies and materiel; deploying forces and materiel; and other such activities as the Parties may agree."

The US may also build facilities needed to house troops and store weapons and equipment.

2. The EDCA will allow the US to use roads, airports and seaports and other civilian facilities anytime and anywhere in the Philippines. Article III, Section 2 states that "when requested, the Designated Authority of the Philippines shall assist in facilitating transit or temporary access by United States forces to public land and

facilities (including roads, ports and airfields), including those owned or controlled by local governments, and to other land and facilities." The term "temporary" can be broadly interpreted to mean allowing the use by US forces of the small airstrip in Guiuan, Eastern Samar for as long as six months.

3. The EDCA grants the US military full control over the Agreed Locations. Contrary to public claims that the "locations" will remain under Philippine authority, the EDCA states that it is within the prerogative of the US military if it would allow Philippine government officials access but only for as long as this is consistent with "operational safety and security requirements." (Article III, Section 5)

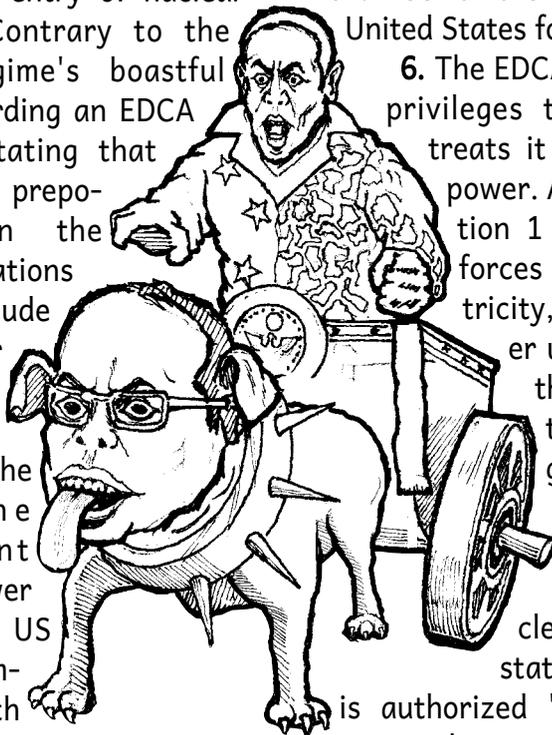
4. There are no guarantees against the entry of nuclear weapons. Contrary to the Aquino regime's boastful claims regarding an EDCA provision stating that US weapons prepositioned in the Agreed Locations will not include nuclear weapons (Article IV, Section 6), the Philippine government has no power to ensure US military compliance with this prescrip-

tion. In fact, Article IV, Section 4 states that US forces and contractors will be "given unimpeded access to Agreed Locations for all matters relating to the prepositioning and storage of defense equipment, supplies, and materiel."

Historically, the US was able to station nuclear weapons in the Philippines in the 1970s. The US has yet to disclose how many weapons were stored and where they were hidden.

5. The Philippines will not benefit from the EDCA. Contrary to claims that the facilities or structures to be built by the US will automatically become Philippine property, the EDCA stipulates that the US can demand payment for them. Article V, Section 2 states that "The Parties or the Designated Authorities shall consult regarding the terms of return of any Agreed Locations, including possible compensation for improvements or construction." On top of this, the Philippines will not be given the opportunity to use the facilities and equipment to be brought in by the US. Article IV, Section 3 states that "The prepositioned materiel of United States forces shall be for the exclusive use of United States forces."

6. The EDCA grants special privileges to the US and treats it as a sovereign power. Article VII, Section 1 states that US forces may use electricity, water and other utilities and pay the same fees as the Philippine government, and will be exempt from taxes. Also, Article VII, Section 2 states that the US is authorized "to operate its own telecommunication sys-



tems" and that "Use of the radio spectrum shall be free of cost to the United States."

7. The EDCA allows the US to purchase or use services wherever it wants. There is no basis for claims by Aquino officials that basing by US forces will be favorable to local business. Article VIII, Section 1 states that the US may contract for any

materiel, supplies, equipment, and services (including construction) to be furnished or undertaken in the territory of the Philippines without restriction as to choice of contractor, supplier, or person. Section 2 provides that US forces shall strive to use Philippine products or services if this is in accordance with US laws and regulations. **AB**

Obama confronted with flurry of protests

Various progressive organizations staged protest actions during US President Barack Obama's two-day visit to the country on April 28-29. They roundly assailed Obama's arrival and the Aquino regime's puppetry, its treachery and auctioning off of the country's sovereignty.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) led the mass action in Mendiola, Manila on April 28 where a 13-foot effigy was burned showing Obama riding a chariot being drawn by Aquino who is portrayed as a dog.

Various groups launched mass actions before Obama's arrival. Members of BAYAN-Southern Tagalog spent the night in Quiapo, Manila before proceeding to Liwasang Bonifacio along with other organizations. The day after, before Obama's departure, they launched another protest near the US Embassy but they were violently dispersed by the police.

Protests were also held in the cities of Baguio, Legazpi, Iloilo, Cebu, Tacloban, General Santos, Cagayan de Oro and Davao. Migrant Filipinos likewise rallied in the US, The Netherlands, Canada, Austria and Hongkong.

The protesters roundly opposed the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) that would pave the way for the establishment of US military bases in the Philippines. (See related article) The agreement serves US plans of strengthening its pres-

ence in, and domination of, the Asia-Pacific.

Meanwhile, mass actions were likewise launched in Japan, South Korea and Malaysia, countries Obama visited before the Philippines.

In Japan, a number of groups rallied on April 23 against the scheduled meetings between the US and Japan. The protesters strongly opposed attempts to reinterpret the Japanese constitution, plans to establish a new US military base in Okinawa and US intervention in the country's military affairs. The Japanese constitution explicitly prohibits Japan from militarizing in the name of "defense," but the US has long been goading the government to circumvent this provision to enable the Japanese military to play a bigger role as a US proxy in the Asia-Pacific.

Farmers' and workers' groups also protested the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) because it would abolish tariffs imposed by Japan on US agricultural products and even vehicles.

The protesters are vehemently against the agreement, saying it would spell the demise of their sectors and the economy. Almost 44% of public opinion in Japan is opposed to the TPPA.

In South Korea, protesters condemned US attempts to whip up war between South Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). They also challenged South Korea and the US to reach a consensus on reviving negotiations with the DPRK to reduce nuclear arms in the Korean Peninsula.

Protesters rallied in front of the US Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on April 27 to oppose the signing by the Malaysian government of the TPPA. The protesters also assailed US intervention in the Malaysian economy. Earlier, Muslims rallied in Kuala Lumpur against Obama's militarist attacks on Muslims in the Middle East. They carried placards saying "US is axis of evil" and "Reject

Obama, No. 1 World Terrorist." **AB**



OBAMA NOT WELCOME!

Workers assail Aquino puppetry to US

Filipino workers assailed the US-Aquino regime for its puppetry to US imperialism in a huge rally marking the 128th year of International Workers' Day in Mendiola, Manila on May 1. The protesting workers burned an effigy of Aquino showing him as a robot "made in the USA" as a symbol of their anger towards the regime.

Thousands of workers joined a protest action led by the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) and other progressive groups. They gathered at the Welcome Rotunda and other areas in Manila before marching to Liwasang Bonifacio and Mendiola.

Protest actions were likewise held in the cities of Baguio, Angeles, Calamba, Legazpi, Sorsogon, Iloilo, Roxas, Bacolod, Cebu, Davao and Cagayan de Oro; and in Kalibo, Aklan.

The KMU charged that workers have derived nothing under the Aquino regime, which continues to implement contractualization policies while refusing to grant wage hikes in its four years in power. As a result, the number of unemployed and underemployed continues to grow, now comprising about 50% of the labor force. Workers have been further condemned to poverty because of policies like the two-

tiered wage system, high-priced fees and contributions to the SSS, Philhealth and the like and the impending abolition of the minimum wage.

The KMU also slammed the dialogue called by Aquino in Malacañang and his refusal to heed the workers' longstanding demand for higher wages, among others. The progressive labor center also lambasted the Aquino regime for constantly kowtowing to the dictates of big foreign and local capitalists to peg wages at low levels and suppress the rights of workers.

The KMU also condemned the Alliance of Progressive Labor-Sentro which led the bogus dialogue and presented the workers' purported demands even if it knew what the regime's response would be. **AB**

May First in Asia and Europe

Workers and peoples in various parts of the globe also commemorated May First. Hundreds of thousands of workers marched in Europe against their governments' austerity policies, while workers in Asia called for higher wages and better working conditions. Mass actions were also held in the US, Canada, Latin America, the Middle East and Australia.

Asia

In Indonesia, up to 100,000 rallied in Jakarta to celebrate the declaration of May First as a national holiday for the first time ever. Among those who joined the celebration were workers from heavy industry, public corporation workers, government employees, journalists and non-regular workers. They used the occasion to air their grievances and demand higher wages, recognition for their right to unionize and the regularization of contractual workers.

In Bangladesh, thousands of

workers, mostly from garments factories poured out into the streets. They demanded justice for more than a thousand workers who perished when a building housing several textile factories collapsed in 2013.

In Malaysia, 50,000 people gathered at Dataran Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur and various parts of the country to protest the Malaysian government's imposition of a new levy called the "goods and service tax" (GST), a form of value-added tax. The new tax is expected to result in higher prices of goods and services. Last year, the Malaysian

government abolished subsidies for oil and electricity, which led to higher expenditures. The demonstrators charged that the funds raised through the GST would only end up in the pockets of cronies of the ruling clique.

In Taiwan, up to 10,000 protested in Taipei to call for a wage hike and assail labor contractualization.

In Cambodia, policemen violently dispersed a gathering of more than a thousand workers in Phnom Penh, injuring five workers. The state banned rallies after several strikes and demonstrations were launched for higher wages and against widespread poll fraud during last year's elections.

Mass actions were also held in South Korea, Hongkong and Singapore.

European Union

In Turkey, rallies erupted in

its capital Istanbul and various other areas in the country despite a prohibition by the ruling regime on Labor Day commemorations. Istanbul was paralyzed by a huge people's gathering, as were the cities of Ankara and Izmir. The demonstrators condemned the growing fascism of the state led by Recep Tayyip Erdogan and its refusal to recognize the rights and uphold the welfare of workers and the people. Thousands massed up at Taksim Square, the site of a big protest action last year. An estimated 100,000 persons joined the demonstrations. In response, the state sent 20,000 policemen to various cities and another 20,000 to Taksim Square to disperse the rally. Up to 90 rallyists were injured and 300 arrested.

In Greece, the General Confederation of Workers (GFW) led a 15,000-strong rally in Athens to condemn the state's antiworker policies. The workers said that the current regime has reversed victories won by the workers' movement in close to a hundred years of struggle with its austerity measures that re-

sulted in massive job terminations and wage reductions in 2010. Last year, up to 34 strikes were led by the GFW against such policies. The country currently has a 27% unemployment rate.

In Switzerland, 14,000 people rallied to demand a raise in the minimum wage.

In France, up to 210,000 workers, including 65,000 in Paris, rallied to call on the current regime to address growing unemployment and stop the de-

terioration of real wages.

Thousands also rallied in Italy, where workers denounced rising unemployment rates and the government's austerity policies. In Turin, one of the country's main cities, policemen violently dispersed a demonstration and arrested a number of rallyists. The country suffers from a 13% unemployment rate.

Similar rallies were held in Spain, Germany, Sweden, Armenia and Ukraine. **AB**



Antimining protests launched

Various mass actions and activities against foreign destructive mining were launched by national minorities and antimining activists on the occasion of Cordillera Day on April 24-25 and the 44th year of Earth Day on April 22. The centralized commemoration of Cordillera Day was held in Guinaang, Pasil, Kalinga and Earth Day-related protest actions were launched in Davao City, General Santos City and Surigao City.

The theme of the 30th celebration of Cordillera Day was "Resist Imperialist Plunder of our Lands and Resources! Assert our Right to Self-Determination!" Issues on destructive mining and other antipeople projects, the seizure of ances-

tral lands and the violation of the human rights of minority peoples in the region were discussed during the gathering.

Aside from the representatives of various Cordilleran tribes, the celebration was also attended by other national mi-

norities in the Philippines and guests from Canada, Ecuador and Panama.

In Mindanao, up to 8,000 people joined protest actions in Surigao City led by CARAGA Watch, a broad antimining alliance. The alliance condemned large-scale mining by 15 foreign companies in the region. They asked for an audience with the Mines and Geosciences Bureau chief of Region 13 to demand redress for their grievances.

The most prominent issue concerned the noxious fumes being spewed by the Japanese-owned Taganito High Pressure

Acid Leaching (THPAL) plant which has distressed surrounding communities. On the whole, Caraga WATCH said it was alarmed by the deforestation and flooding caused by large-scale mining.

Meanwhile, residents of Talaingod, Davao del Norte rallied at the regional offices of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR). The mass action was led by the Salugpungan 'Ta Tanu Igkanugon or Unity for the Defense of Ancestral Lands.

They condemned the US-Aquino regime for allowing five mining companies to plunder their area. These companies are Kinimi Copper Exploration & Mining Corp., Pacific Heights Resources, Inc., McWealth Mining Corp., Geoffrey T. Yenco and One Compostela Valley Minerals, Inc. They pose dangers to the people's livelihoods and communities because of their destruction of the land, crops, livestock and the environment.

Salugpungan also bared that the implementation of mining laws has always come in tandem with intense militarization which has been a bane to their lives. Military operations have always been launched in areas with antipeople projects such as mining in order to suppress opposition.

In General Santos City, antimining activists held a consultation attended by Lumad from various tribes and their advocates. **AB**

NPA seizes 5 firearms in Agusan del Norte

Red fighters from the New People's Army (NPA) Front 21 in Northeast Mindanao Region (NEMR) confiscated five firearms from the foreign-owned Alston Mining Company in Tubay, Agusan del Norte on April 5. National Democratic Front-NEMR spokesperson Ka Maria Malaya said the operation was conducted to punish the company for landgrabbing and environmental destruction.

The arms haul consisted of two cal .45 pistols, two .38 revolvers and a shotgun. Aside from the firearms, the Red guerrillas also seized a laptop and 16 VHF radios. The NPA burned two back hoes, two bulldozers, three dumptrucks, a motorcycle and the company office.

After this, a soldier from the 3rd Special Forces Battalion was killed in a sniping operation launched by members of NPA Front 21 in Sitio Lusong, Barangay Puting Bato, Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte on April 27. After two and a half hours, two other soldiers were wounded in an NPA sniping operation at the Cabadbaran River, in front of Sitio Lusong. **AB**

10 soldiers killed; 12 wounded in NPA ambushes in Davao City

The 10th ID-Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) of the AFP has failed to conceal the rising number of casualties suffered by its troops even as it has intensified its psywar and combat operations in the uplands of Davao.

In the latest battle reports from April 26 to May 1, fascist troops suffered ten dead and 12 wounded, according to Ka Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesperson of the Merardo Arce Command of the NPA-Southern Mindanao Regional Operations Command.

On May 1, at around 8 a.m., NPA Red fighters ambushed a platoon under the 69th IB in Sitio Bintuin, Barangay Fatima, Paquibato District in Davao City. The Philippine Army unit had planned on encircling an NPA team, but failed.

After a 30-minute firefight, two soldiers lay dead and four others were wounded. Another soldier was wounded in an ensuing gunbattle at 3 p.m. that day, also in Barangay Fatima.

Fighting first erupted at 3 p.m. of April 26 when the people's militia used command-detonated explosives against a truckload of soldiers at Km. 3, Barangay Fatima, wounding two soldiers.

The day after, at around 7 a.m., combined forces of the NPA and people's militia ambushed a platoon under the 84th IB in Sitio Sled, Barangay Dalagdag, killing five troopers and wounding eight others. The firefight occurred a mere 150 meters from the 84th IB's patrol base.

The NPA ambushed the 84th IB anew on April 30, at around 7 a.m. in Sitio Sled, with the enemy suffering three dead and six wounded. **AB**

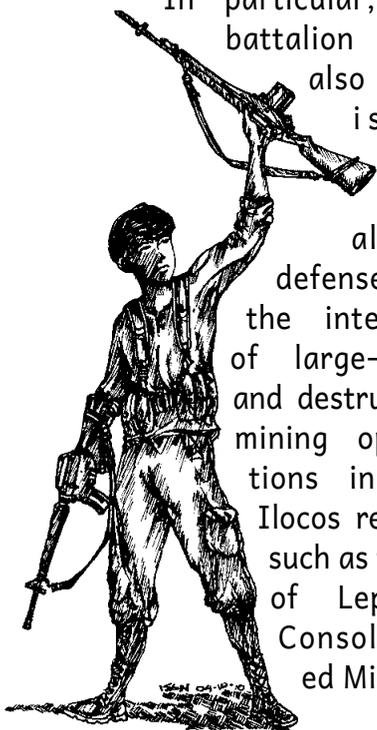
NPA ambushes 50th IB in Ilocos Sur

Red fighters under the Alfredo Cesar Command (New People's Army-Ilocos Sur) launched back-to-back ambushes on the 50th IB on May 1 and 2. All in all, seven soldiers were killed and at least eight were wounded in these ambushes.

Three 50th IB troopers were killed while two others were wounded in an NPA ambush in Barangay Remedios, Cervantes, about a kilometer away from the battalion's headquarters. The day after, the NPA ambushed military reinforcements in Barangay Malideg, in the adjacent town of Quirino, killing four soldiers and seriously wounding at least six troopers.

According to Ka Armando Silva, spokesperson of the Alfredo Cesar Command, the two victorious ambushes form part of the NPA's punitive actions to give justice to the countless victims of the 50th IB's human rights violations.

In particular, the battalion was also punished for its all-out defense of the interests of large-scale and destructive mining operations in the Ilocos region, such as those of Lepanto Consolidated Mining.



NPA arrests soldier protecting illegal logging in Davao del Norte

Guerrillas under the Comval-North Davao-South Agusan Subregional Command arrested another AFP element protecting illegal loggers.

Captured on the morning of May 3 in Barangay Floria, Kapalong, Davao del Norte was Cpl. Rogelio Rosales of the 60th IB Bravo Coy. Rosales was then making arrangements for the transfer to logs to a plywood factory when he was arrested. A sachet of shabu was also taken from him.

Rosales is one of a group of soldiers protecting TANGGO, a big logging syndicate operating in Trento, Agusan del Sur; Laak, Compostela Valley; and Kapalong, Davao del Norte. They clandestinely transport the logs along the highway at night and bring them to the TPPMC Cuambugan plywood plant. Diosdado Wamilda, a retired policeman, transacts with the plant, and another business partner, Nonoy Magandam, buys logs from Trento.

The NPA implements the total logging ban policy to protect the remaining forests, campaign for reforestation, put a stop to large-scale logging and secure the masses' livelihood through sustainable communal farming.

Recently, the NPA confiscated logs in Sitio Patel, Barangay Gupitan, Kapalong and in Barangay Datu Davao and Barangay Balwarte, Laak.

AB

9 soldiers killed, 4 wounded in harassment operations in NSamar

At least nine soldiers of the 63rd IB were killed and four troopers wounded in a series of harassment operations by the Rodante Urtal Command of the New People's Army (RUC-NPA) in Northern Samar on April 9-12.

Two soldiers from the battalion's Bravo Coy were killed and two others wounded in an NPA sniping operation at around 7 a.m. on April 9 in Barangay Cagmanaba, Mondragon. On the same day, the RUC harassed 63rd IB troops at around 9 p.m. in Barangay Flormina in the same town.

The day after, another soldier was killed and two others wounded when the RUC opened fire at elements of the 63rd IB who were on their way back to their camp in Barangay San Isidro, also in Mondragon town. The troopers had just beaten up a farmer who lived in the village.

On April 10, the enemy sustained an undetermined number of casualties in an NPA harassment operation on the 63rd IB in Barangay McKinley, Catarman. The Red fighters were able to retreat safely even if the enemy used helicopters to pursue them.

On March 21, seven enemy soldiers were killed in a misencounters among elements of the 87th IB after the latter's troops attacked five Red fighters in Barangay Bulwan, Calbiga, Samar.

AB

Yolanda victims rally

Some 1,000 farmers rallied on April 28 in Calbiga town while 640 peasants staged a protest action in Pinabacdao town, both in Samar province. These were the first rallies in these areas since the butcher Gen. Jovito Palparan's onslaught in 2005.

The farmers assailed the Aquino regime's lack of assistance. They were further angered by the intensifying militarization of their communities despite the people's suffering due to supertyphoon Yolanda.

The peasants demanded immediate action on 1) a comprehensive plan for relief and rehabilitation (such as the provision of seeds, farming equipment, irrigation, and water sources); 2) the implementation of a "cash for work" program paying ₱260/day for two weeks for every family; 3) a demand for assistance from the DSWD in Pinabacdao in the form of 25 kilos of rice every two weeks for every family, without the need to present a "green card"; and 4) a demand for the local government to request assistance from the provincial government.

One of the demands immediately implemented after the dialogue was the "cash for work" program.

Aside from these demands, the rallyists called on the municipal council to issue a resolution supporting the demand for ₱40,000 in cash assistance to every family victimized by typhoon Yolanda. AB

Rehabilitation movement advances in Panay's guerrilla fronts

Despite the US-Aquino regime's criminal negligence, a rehabilitation movement from the effects of supertyphoon Yolanda's devastation is vigorously advancing in Panay. The key to its advance is the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines in the region to unite and mobilize the victims in areas where revolutionary power operates or enjoys influence.

Simultaneously, the revolutionary forces and people continue to thwart the military operations of the 82nd and 61st IB and the Regional Public Safety Battalion of PNP-6. These reactionary fascist troops' objective is to pursue units of the New People's Army (NPA) assisting the people, surveil and disrupt the people's rehabilitation activities and launch psywar campaigns.

Mutual assistance teams or *dagyaw*. Tay Jose is the leader of a mutual assistance team or "dagyaw" that was organized in a guerrilla front in Capiz. His team, which has ten members, solicited construction materials, including a chainsaw donated by an organization.

Tay Jose's group agreed that the various teams would take turns in using the chainsaw every ten days. There are ten groups all in all in their sitio, with members ranging from seven to ten. Up to 80 people were organized into *dagyaw*. Because the chainsaw is owned by their group, they charge only ₱2.50 per board foot of coconut lumber sawn (other chainsaw owners charge ₱7.00). Out of the ₱2.50, ₱1.50 goes to the operator and ₱1.00 goes to the maintenance of the chainsaw.

They also received other material assistance like galvanized iron sheets, nails and wire for

constructing houses. Almost 100% of the houses were destroyed in Tay Jose's area, but now, almost all of the houses have been rebuilt. Nonetheless, the people's *dagyaw* continues.

Meanwhile, women's teams launched campaigns to look for seeds for planting. Friendly groups gave the farmers the needed seeds to enable them to plant vegetable gardens both in their communal plot and their backyards.

Other mass movements. At the same time, they have been demanding that the government make good on DILG Sec. Mar Roxas' promise to give ₱15,000 in assistance to every family whose house was damaged and ₱30,000 to families who lost their homes. Almost half a year has gone by, but the assistance has yet to come. The organized peasants form part of continuing mass mobilizations by progressive organizations to advance this demand.

They also actively attend various meetings, fora and seminars on the peasant situation and peasant exploitation, and on environmental problems and calamities. They likewise join seminars and trainings on collective disaster preparedness.

The farmers are also currently preparing to launch an anti-usury campaign. They plan to demand from corn production

financiers that their loans or at least the interest be cancelled due to the destruction of their crops. Their team is also asserting their right to collectively till idle lands as part of their efforts to rise up and rely on their organized strength.

Such actions have also been taking place even in villages outside Panay's guerrilla fronts.

Interbarangay Conference of Party Branches.

To plan out how to organize the people for various activities and campaigns in a massive rehabilitation movement, a Conference of Local Party

Branches (LPB) was held in March under the leadership of the Section Committee.

The LPB conference agreed that the various barangays would cooperate to raise construction materials and equipment and seeds both for food and durable crops. They also talked about coordinating with allied organization from other areas.

(Excerpted from "100 Days after Yolanda" published in the March-April 2014 issue of Dababada, the revolutionary mass paper in Panay).

Peasant leader killed; 2 civilians abducted

A peasant leader was killed in Pampanga while an ordinary peasant who was bird-hunting in Butuan City was shot to death. Two civilians were abducted by combined military and police forces in Masbate and Koronadal City. In Negros, two peasant activists were shot at by goons of a despotic landlord.

Pampanga. Nemesio "Melon" Barcia was gunned down as he was on the way home aboard his owner-type jeep on the night of May 2 in Dolores, Porac town. Barcia was with his wife Maria during the shooting. They were both brought to a nearby hospital but Barcia failed to reach the medical facility alive. His wife sustained minor injuries.

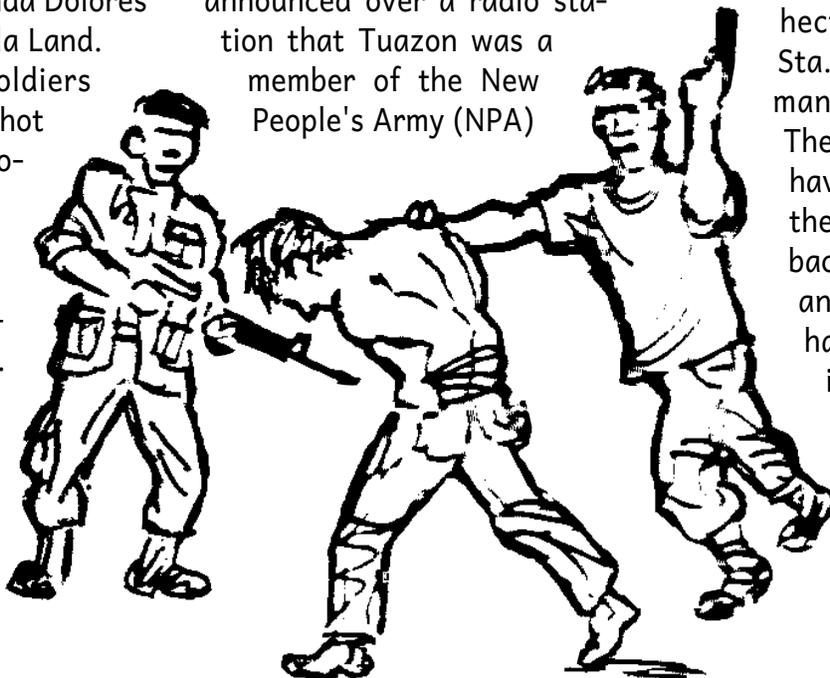
Barcia, 54, is one of the leaders of the struggle in the 2,000-hectare Hacienda Dolores being claimed by Ayala Land.

Butuan City. Soldiers under the 29th IB shot and killed Ricardo "Polon" Tuazon on April 27 in Nakabdong mountain, Sitio Dogyaman, Barangay Anticala, Butuan City. He was then bird-hunting with his son Junior and Jesan Aparelya, another civilian. They were chanced upon by soldiers conducting mil-

itary operations who had come from San Antonio, Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte.

The fascist troops just suddenly opened fire on the elder Tuazon. His two companions were able to flee to their sitio and recount the bloody incident. Tuazon's relatives went to the site of the shooting and found his body.

The day after, on April 28, the Philippine Army spokesman announced over a radio station that Tuazon was a member of the New People's Army (NPA)



killed by soldiers conducting military operations in the uplands of Butuan City.

Negros. Two peasants were wounded when they were shot by goons employed by Pablito "Jean" Sola Jr. as they worked their farm in Kabankalan City on the morning of May 3. The goons are elements of the RPA-ABB.

The victims Rey Bustamante, 20, and Albert Francisco, 17, were pursued by their assailants even as they ran for their lives. Bustamante is still in hospital while Francisco sustained wounds in his arms. They are both members of Paghiliusa sang Mangunguma kag Mamumugon sa Uma sa Barangay Camansi (PAMACA), the local chapter of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP-Negbros).

PAMACA members have been collectively tilling a 133-hectare lot in Hacienda Sta. Isabel, Barangay Camansi, Kabankalan City. The hacienda lands should have been distributed to the beneficiaries as far back as 2000, but Sola Jr. and his son John Paul have been able to thwart it.

When the shooting occurred, the elder and younger Sola were seen only 200 meters away with their goons.

In 2000, Sola's goons burned down three houses and destroyed 14 others. Last year, the Solas' farm animals trampled on the farmers' corn and vegetable crops.

Tampakan, South Cotabato.

Twenty military agents abducted antimining activist Romeo "Ging" Rivera, 53, on May 2 and detained him at the PNP station in Digos City. The AFP Eastern Mindanao Command insists that he is "Felix Armodia," allegedly a high-ranking leader of the revolutionary movement in the region.

Rivera is actually a member of the antimining group Tampakan Panalipdan (Defend Tampakan). Panalipdan is strongly opposed to large-scale operations of foreign mining giant Xstrata-Sagittarius Mines Inc. in Tampakan, South Cotabato.

AFP agents forced their way into Rivera's house in Barangay San Roque, Tampakan. He was blindfolded, handcuffed and beaten up by his captors. The day after, the AFP surfaced him as "Felix Armodia."

Masbate. Combined forces of the PNP Regional Public Safety Battalion and the Philippine Army abducted, beat up and stabbed Molong Carreon at 8 p.m. of April 22 in Barangay Li-ong, San Fernando.

Carreon, 50, and another peasant were dragged like carabaos and brought to a dark area of their village, where they were being forced to admit to being NPA members. When Carreon denied the accusation, he was beaten up and stabbed at the base of his neck, with the other end of the knife exiting his

shoulder.

Samar. Elements of the 87th IB desecrated the remains of Jimboy "Ka Axel" Lungcop, a Red fighter who was killed in a raid on their camp in Baranay Antol, Calbiga on March 20. Ka Axel's lifeless body was peppered with bullets, shattering his face, exposing his entrails and breaking the bones in his hands and knees. The soldiers also hurriedly buried him in a doubled up position to conceal their crime.

Meanwhile, on March 24, the 87th IB staved at three farmers in Barangays Biri and Daligan, both in Calbiga.

On March 27, 87th IB troops stole rice crops, even ordering the owner to haul the rice to their camp at the "tree park" also in Calbiga town. **AB**

Fascists in Talaingod driven away

Evacuees from Talaingod, Davao del Norte succeeded in driving out forces of the 1003rd Infantry Brigade from their communities.

This was after up to 1,300 Manobo minorities from Talaingod who fled their homes to protest the militarization of their areas stayed for almost a month in Davao City. They assailed the bombings, terrorism of residents and their forcible use as guides in military operations, aside from other abuses. Since April 4, they have been staying at the grounds of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in Davao City.

Aboard vehicles offered by the Davao City government, the Talaingod residents traveled back to their communities and homes on May 1 and 2. The

evacuees decided to return to their communities after the soldiers pulled out, in accordance with an agreement arrived at during a dialogue on April 29. The AFP also agreed that no military escorts would accompany the residents on their way home.

The dialogue organized by Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte and held at the Grand Men Seng Hotel was joined by representatives of Talaingod residents, Davao del

Norte Gov. Rodolfo del Rosario, Talaingod Mayor Basilio Libayao and Maj. Gen. Ariel Bernardo, 10th ID chief. The five-hour dialogue was closely monitored by various humanitarian organizations supporting the evacuees.

The AFP officers promised to pull out their troops from the sitios of Bayabas, Sazo, Pongpong, Nasilaban, Dulyan, Nalubas, Bagang, Lasakan, Sambolongan and Bogni in Barangay



Palma Gil. The military was forced to make this pledge due to strong protests from the Lumad and the widespread support the Talaingod residents received from progressive organizations and individuals. Nonetheless, in an interview after the dialogue, General Bernardo said that they were only "temporarily" withdrawing from the 11 sitios.

The military forces' pledge to pull out was a victory for the Salugpungan 'Ta Tanu Igkanugon,

PASAKA (Confederation of Lumad Organizations in Southern Mindanao) and their supporters. Salugpungan leader Datu Dolomon Dawsay and Teody Mansumoy-at, a teacher at the Lumad school in Barangay Palma Gil expressed their happiness at the outcome. Nonetheless, the Talaingod residents will remain vigilant. Said Datu Dawsay, we will continue to defend our ancestral lands, culture and peaceful life in Talaingod. **AB**

Speculation worsens landlessness

After 26 years of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program's (CARP) implementation, not a single hacienda has been broken up and distributed to the farmers. Agrarian cases or demands for genuine land reform continue to mount in the face of the relentless concentration of land in the hands of big landlords and big comprador bourgeoisie or "developers."

This phenomenon has been most striking in the CALABARZON (Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon) region, where vast haciendas owned by infamously wealthy clans like the Roxases, Ayalas, Zobels, Yulos, Puyats and Reyeses abound. In the past decade, land speculation has also intensified in the provinces of Batangas, Cavite and Laguna, where big developers in partnership with big landlords like Ayala Land, Fil-Estate (owned by Robert Sobrepeñas and Andrew Tan), Henry Sy's Manila Southcoast Development Corp. (MSDC) and First Pacific Co. Ltd. of Hongkong managed by Manny Pangilinan do business. (See *related article*)

Government agencies connive with landlords and developers by reclassifying lands in order to exempt them from CARP coverage. In the case of Lucas Farms in Rizal, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) issued a certification claiming that there were no farmers in the area to make it appear that no one would be adversely affected by land-use conversion. The entire

town of Nasugbu, Batangas, on the other hand, was declared a "special tourism zone" in 2007, paving the way for a frenzy of land-use conversions within vast estates in the municipality. Productive farms were forcibly converted into tourist areas, all in the name of development.

Hacienda Looc

In 1993, Henry Sy in partnership with Gouco Land (which had been embroiled in the PEA-Amari land scam) became interested in Hacienda Looc. Sy formed the Manila Southcoast Development Corp. where his company SM Investment Corp. had 65% control. Since 1995, MSDC has partnered with Fil-Estate Properties to build an "ecotourism" project called Harbortown Golf and Country Club in 1,269 hectares of Hacienda Looc.

Hacienda Looc was foreclosed by the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) in 1973 when its original owner Magdalena Dolor failed to pay her debts. Under Marcos' bogus land reform edict, 831 peasants

farming 1,282 hectares in the hacienda were granted Emancipation Patents (EP). In 1987, however, the land was confiscated from the DBP and transferred to the Asset Privatization Trust (APT) which was in charge of selling government property.

In 1990, management of the hacienda was shifted to the DAR, ostensibly to oversee land distribution, this time under CARP. Twenty-five Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) were given out, covering 3,981 hectares. Twenty of the CLOAs were collective in nature, and one was not. At the same time, the US Agency for International Development was commissioned to conduct a study on the feasibility of building an Agro-Tourism Complex in the area. On the basis of the study's findings, the APT began bidding out the project in 1993. Henry Sy's company clinched the project for ₱215 million, after which he formed the MSDC and partnered with Fil-Estate.

The move resulted in the widespread cancellation of EPs and CLOAs, baring CARP's uselessness. The ongoing struggle of the peasants at Hacienda Looc began in 1995 when MSDC and Fil-Estate started to include the entire hacienda in the ecotourism project. This is owing to the APT's ridiculous claim that the farmers themselves had declared that the land where their farms were located were non-agricultural.

Repression against the peasants has since mounted. On top of security companies hired by Fil-Estate and MSDC such as Warbirds and Centinal, the two real estate firms enjoy the protection of private armies and the Philippine National Police, leading to several acts of violence against the peasants and fisherfolk in the area.

It is obvious in Hacienda Looc's case how landlords (in this instance, the reactionary government itself) and big comprador bourgeoisie like Sy, Tan and Sobrepeñas connive to advance their own interests and deprive the peasantry of their right to land. Land is more and more being used as a financial instrument in business transactions, encouraging speculation and landgrabbing. **AB**

NPA punishes construction company in Hacienda Looc

THE Edgardo Dagli Command (New People's Army-Batangas) meted punishment on May 2 on Toreja Construction, which is building a road going through an eco-tourism project owned by Henry Sy and the Virata clan in Hacienda Looc, Nasugbu, Batangas. The NPA destroyed two bulldozers, three backhoes, a grader, a road roller, a payload-er and a water tanker.

The punitive measure was aimed at registering the people's firm opposition to Sy's project which has massively destroyed farmlands and caused widespread human rights violations. Farmers' huts have been burned, their crops destroyed and seized, and their charcoal supply and wood for house construction forcibly taken by Sy and Virata's security guards.

Roxas-Pangilinan connivance in Hacienda Roxas

Manny Pangilinan of First Pacific Co. Ltd. and the Roxas clan through its Roxas Holdings Inc. (RHI) have collaborated in a plan that would pave the way for the land-use conversion of 34% of Hacienda Roxas in Nasugbu, Batangas.

The Samahan ng mga Magbubukid sa Batangas (Sambat) and the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) have expressed alarm over the widespread land-use conversion in Nasugbu targeting productive agricultural lands that should long have been distributed to the farmers whose toil is responsible for the hacienda lands' productivity.

The two peasant organizations are concerned over the expected intensification of speculation and land-use conversion that will mean the eviction of peasants from Hacienda Roxas. The vast estate's 5,000-hectare land area encompasses nine barangays, and is twice as large as Makati City. As early as 2000, the Roxas family had already filed an application for the hacienda's exemption from CARP coverage.

Said KMP Secretary-General Antonio Flores, with First Pacific gaining control over 34% of RHI, we have added proof of CARP's failure. **AB**

Residents resist new demolition in Tondo

More than a hundred families lost their homes after their community was demolished on April 22 in the name of "road widening." Up to a hundred policemen and a 300-strong demolition team were sent to the area to raze the urban poor community and stop the residents from resisting.

The demolition was conducted to pave the way for the P14.5-billion "modernization" of North Harbor Manila. An estimated 400 other families are set to be affected by the road-widening project in five barangays of Tondo.

The Samahang Magkakapitbahay sa Road 10, Tondo, Manila asserts that the demolition was illegal. They have refused to be brought to a relocation site in Trece Martires, Cavite because it is far from their sources of livelihood. Most of them eke out a living as vendors, drivers and pier hands. Instead, they have asked the local government for in-city relocation.

The modernization of North Harbor, the country's biggest and foremost seaport, is a project of Harbour Centre Port Terminal Inc. (HCPTI) owned by Reghis Romero and San Miguel/Petron Corporation owned by Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, an uncle of President Aquino. **AB**

Massive strike waged in China

More than 40,000 workers of a giant shoe company at the Guabo Industrial Complex in Guangdong, China struck from April 5 to 24. They condemned the non-payment of their benefits by Yue Yuen Industrial Holdings Ltd. and their severe exploitation in the hands of the company. The strike was one of the biggest in that country.

Yue Yuen's factory at Guabo Industrial Complex employs 60,000 workers. The company has shoe-making contracts with multinational giants like Nike, Adidas, Puma, Converse, New Balance, Reebok, Salomon, Jordan and Timberland. It has factories in Mexico, the US, Indonesia, Vietnam and other Asian countries. In 2013, it produced 300 million pairs of shoes and raked in more than \$434.8 million.

Yue Yuen's workers have long been complaining about the non-payment of their benefits and their very low wages. According to their workers' contracts, the company is obligated to contribute 10-20% for each worker's social insurance and housing fund as its counterpart in dues directly deducted from the workers' wages. For a long time, the company has been remitting less than 10% and has not been factoring in the workers' overtime pay in its computations.

Many of the workers are contractual, even if they have been working in the factory for years. The company has thus been able to avoid its obligation to remit a certain percentage as its counterpart in the funds being deducted from the workers. There have also been numerous cases where workers had been deceived into signing bogus contracts.

The strike first erupted on

April 5 when 600 workers rallied in front of Yue Yuen's gates. The workers bared how they have been swindled by the company and called for a strike. They stood their ground even after the management threatened to fire them. On April 8, the management began negotiating with the rallyists, but five days passed without a single issue being resolved.

Thus, on April 14, the workers waged a massive work stoppage affecting the entire factory. The day after, the company promised to remit the balance in the workers' social insurance and housing fund starting May 1. But because the company failed to address their other demands, the workers continued their strike. Hundreds of policemen were sent to the complex in an attempt to break the work stoppage.

The strike spread to Yue Yuen's other factories. On April 21, up to 2,000 workers struck in its Jiangxi plant, prompting the Ministry of Labor and Social Security to declare that Yue Yuen was remiss and order it to institute changes in company policy. AB

Implement the Supreme Court decision on HLI!

Members of the Alyansa ng mga Manggagawang Bukid sa Asyenda Luisita (Ambala) and their supporters rallied in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) office in Quezon City on April 24 to condemn DAR and the Cojuangco-Aquino clan's continuing connivance to prevent genuine land distribution in Hacienda Luisita. The rally was held to mark the second anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision ordering the distribution of the vast estate's land to its farm workers. The peasants rallied for half a day at the DAR grounds, but not a single official came out to meet with them.

The farmers assailed the Cojuangcos' landgrabbing and their use of violence and legal maneuvers through their company, the Tarlac Development Corp. (Tadeco) to violate the Supreme Court order. Instead of distributing the land, Tadeco has even illegally reduced the area classified as agricultural land by 500 hectares through land-use conversion. This is on top of the 80.5 hectares allotted by Tadeco for the construction of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway. Tadeco has also been forcefully annexing areas already being tilled by the peasants, even if these are on the land distribution coverage listing.

The Cojuangcos have also refused to abide by the Supreme Court's order to pay the peasants ₱1.33 billion in compensation from the proceeds of HLI's sale of portions of the estate. AB