

ANG

Pahayagan ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas
Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

Bayan

English Edition
Vol. XLV No. 10
May 21, 2014

www.philippinerevolution.net

Editorial

Wage mass struggles and guerrilla warfare to defeat the AFP's campaign of suppression in Mindanao!

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) condemns in the strongest terms possible the intensified war of suppression being carried out by the Aquino regime and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against the peasant masses and Lumad communities, as well as against the Moro people, across the different regions in Mindanao. The aim is to suppress the people's resistance, both their democratic mass struggles and their revolutionary armed movement, in order to pave the way for the entry of big foreign mining, logging and plantation operations in various parts of Mindanao.

The CPP joins the Filipino people in condemning the Aquino regime for squandering billions of pesos for its heightened military campaign in Mindanao while the majority of the people continue to wallow in poverty. At the same time, the Aquino regime adamantly refuses to heed the people's demand for rehabilitation in the areas devastated by super typhoon Pablo in December 2012. Worse, it has allowed mining and logging firms to continue its operations even in the towns which suffered destructive mudflows resulting from widespread denudation.

The CPP also joins the widespread condemnation of the AFP's campaigns of suppression against the people of Talaingod, Davao del Norte. Similar operations have been carried out by the AFP in the towns of Maco, Maragusan and Mabini, all in

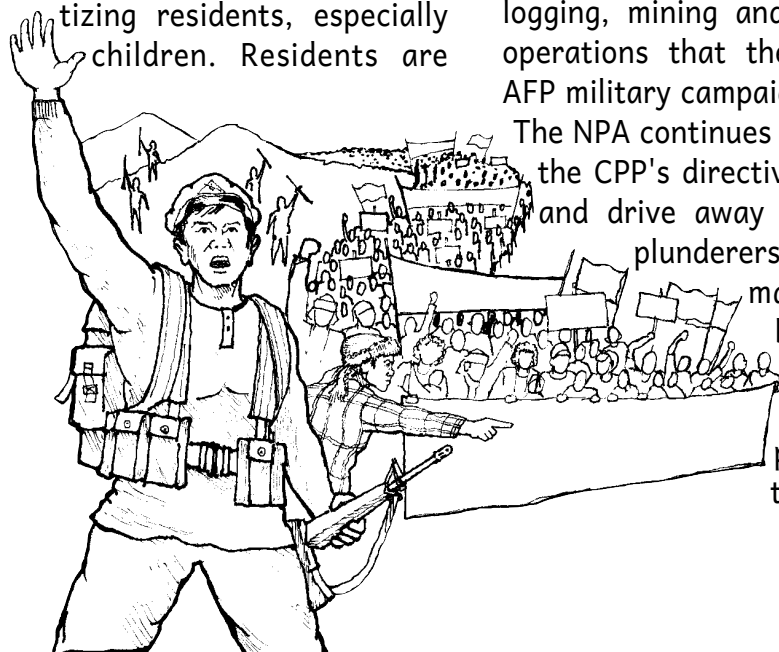
Compostela Valley; in Loreto, Butuan City and Cabadbaran in Agusan del Sur; and other areas. Cases of human rights abuses are rapidly increasing. Military troops make use of schools, day care centers and other village facilities as barracks.

Farms and environs are bombed or shelled, endangering the lives of people and traumatizing residents, especially children. Residents are

accused of being supporters of the NPA and forced to serve as guides for the soldiers in their operations. Communities have been subjected to hamletting. AFP operating troops have imposed food and economic blockades, resulting in grave hardships among the people. Invariably, AFP soldiers have systematically promoted gambling, drug use and other antisocial activities in order to cause divisions among the people. Cases of rape and sexual violations against young women are on the rise.

The people's revolutionary movement is in complete solidarity with the demand to end the destructive and plunderous logging, mining and plantation operations that these abusive AFP military campaigns protect.

The NPA continues to carry out the CPP's directive to punish and drive away the biggest plunderers in order to make available land for land reform and preserve the ances-



tral lands of the Lumad. Recently, the NPA succeeded in disabling large-scale mining equipment of Asia Alston in Agusan del Norte and the Apex Mining Company in Compostela Valley. It has carried out a campaign to put a stop to widespread logging operations in Compostela Valley being run by military officials and bureaucrat capitalists in collaboration with officials of the Aquino regime.

In light of the widespread abuses, grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and the vile aim of the AFP's Oplan Bayanihan brutal campaign of suppression, the Communist Party of the Philippines calls on the Filipino people to unite and demand an immediate end to all offensive military operations and the withdrawal of all operating troops from civilian communities.

The CPP enjoins all peace-loving groups, human rights advocates, lawyers, church and religious workers, student organizations, media associations and progressive people's groups across the Philippines to take up

the cause of the people of Mindanao against the AFP's intensified war of suppression. They should actively look into the situation in Mindanao and help expose the grave abuses and brutalities being committed by the AFP in the course of its war against the people.

The CPP calls on Filipinos abroad to organize and mobilize in order to come to the aid of the people of Mindanao. Solidarity groups of people who hail from Mindanao can be organized to spearhead an international campaign to expose the AFP's war of suppression in their home towns and provinces. They can strive to draw international attention to the situation in Mindanao in order to expose the lies and illusions being peddled by the US-Aquino regime.

The CPP applauds the peasant organizations and Lumad groups, as well as the progressive organizations among the workers, students, urban poor, religious, teachers, environmental advocates, media, government employees and other democratic sectors in Mindanao,


who have stood up and resisted the AFP's all-out war of suppression. They have stood their ground in the face of harassment, threats, abductions and arrests carried out by the AFP against the people.

The CPP also urges the Moro forces to continue waging revolutionary armed resistance in order to frustrate the US-Aquino regime's plan to allow foreign big mining companies to plunder the land and rob the Moro people of their rich natural resources.

The CPP applauds all Red commanders and fighters of the New People's Army in Mindanao for continuing to seize the initiative in waging extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare. They have adeptly frustrated the AFP's sustained and concentrated attacks by employing the tactics of shifting, dispersal and concentration to avoid decisive engagements, luring the enemy deep and launching tactical offensives that they are sure of winning.

Despite its use of a greater number of troops over the past month of operations, the AFP has yet to inflict a decisive blow against any NPA unit. Hundreds of people's militia units are rapidly being mobilized in order to pursue and harass all AFP operating troops. AFP units continue to punch the air and are fast growing tired and wary of the people's army and the people's militias. Their fear of the people and their army, in turn, makes them more desperate and brutal.

The CPP calls on the five regional commands of the New People's Army across Mindanao to continue efforts to intensify the people's war by launching ever more frequent and bigger tactical offensives against the enemy. The large-scale opera-

	
Vol. XLV No. 10 May 21, 2014	
<p><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray and English editions.</p> <p>It is available for downloading at the Philippine Revolution Web Central located at:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.philippinerevolution.org.</p> <p><i>Ang Bayan</i> 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:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">angbayan@yahoo.com</p>	
Contents	<p>Editorial: Resist and defeat the campaign of suppression in Mindanao 1</p> <p>Militarization and terrorism in Mindanao 3</p> <p>In defense of ancestral land 5</p> <p>Aquino's coverup of corruption assailed 6</p> <p>1001st Bde concocts Comval hostage drama 7</p> <p>NPA punishes 67th IB in Davao Oriental 8</p> <p>Balikatan Exercises and EDCA 8</p> <p>NDFP condemns Erecre's illegal arrest 9</p> <p>Tribute to revolutionary mothers 9</p> <p>Andrea Rosal's baby dies 10</p> <p>Workers of NXP Semiconductors stage protest 10</p> <p>Thousands rally in Turkey vs mine tragedy 10</p> <p>Students slam new round of tuition fee hikes 11</p> <p>ILPS condemns abduction of Dr. Saibaba 11</p>
<p><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	

tions of the AFP open innumerable opportunities to carry out tactical offensives against the enemy's weak points. The NPA and units of the people's militias can launch small unit operations without letup in order to take advantage of all opportunities to strike at the enemy and make it bleed from a thousand wounds. At the same time, NPA commanders at the regional and interregional levels can plan out special operations to deal massive head blows with great political impact.

All units of the NPA in Luzon and the Visayas continue to wage extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare in their respective regions and areas of operations. Tactical offensives have been carried out in various provinces over the past month, particularly in Northern Samar, Camarines Norte, Sorsogon, Masbate, Palawan, Batangas, Quezon, Ilocos Sur, Mountain Province and Cagayan.

In the face of the large-scale and brutal war of suppression being waged by the AFP against the people in Mindanao, there is particular urgency to carry out a campaign to launch bigger and more frequent tactical offen-

sives across the country. Such a campaign must be carried out to extend support to the NPA units in Mindanao that are now confronting one of the biggest and longest AFP campaigns of suppression in history. The New People's Army must project its strength and unity against the brutalities and abuses being committed by the AFP in Mindanao.

All Party committees and NPA commands must help counter and derail the AFP's all-out war of suppression in Mindanao. Every NPA regional, subregional and front operations command can contribute to this effort by launching ambushes, raids and other tactical offensives against the weak points of the enemy, including police, army or CAFGU checkpoints, isolated detachments or police stations and detached supply teams.

They can carry out the arrest of enemy officers accused of war crimes or notorious criminals in order to subject them to trial. They can target the destruction of enemy camps, military trucks, helicopters, fuel depots and other supply points through sapper operations and the proper deployment of com-

mand-detonated explosives or incendiary weapons. They can carry out punitive actions against the big plunderers of the environment such as mining, logging and plantation operations. All units of the people's militias must also be mobilized in this effort.

By seizing the initiative in waging people's war and launching bigger and more frequent tactical offensives, the NPA also directly contributes to the Filipino people's campaign to put an end to the much-detested puppet, corrupt, brutal and mendacious Aquino regime.

In carrying out and intensifying extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare across the country, the New People's Army is bound to frustrate the all-out war of suppression of the AFP and the Aquino regime in Mindanao and emerge stronger and more capable of waging and advancing the people's war. With the people's inexhaustible support, the NPA will prove itself unstoppable as it marches forward from the current stage of strategic defensive of the people's war to the next stage of strategic stalemate. **AB**

Intensified militarization and terrorism in Mindanao

There are five divisions currently stationed in Mindanao, comprising 60% of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). These forces are under the AFP Southern Command.

The Southern Command which covers the whole of Mindanao is divided into the Eastmincom and the Westmincom. The Eastmincom is composed of the 4th ID and 10th ID. The 4th ID is mainly trained against the regions of

Northeast Mindanao (NEMR) and Northcentral Mindanao (NCOMR). The 10th ID, on the other hand, covers the Southern Mindanao Region (SMR) and has a brigade in Far South Mindanao (FSMR). The Westmincom comprises the 1st ID

and 6th ID. The 1st ID is in turn divided among the Moro areas and West Mindanao (WMR) while the 6th ID is focused on the Moro areas and FSMR.

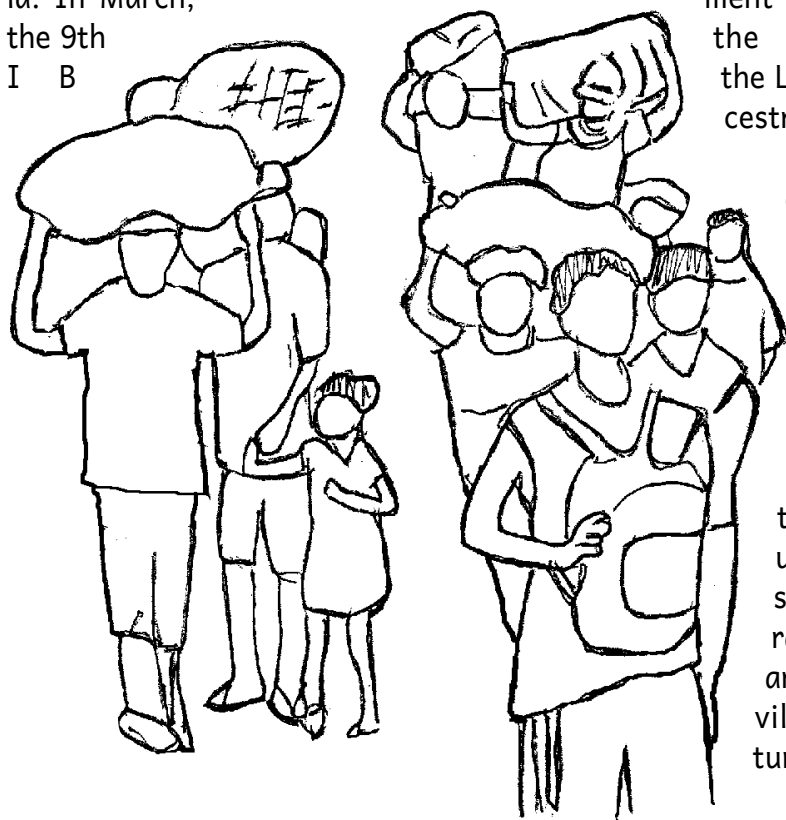
There are up to 30 battalions under the Eastmincom. Currently, there are 15 battalions under the 10th ID; and 13 battalions under the 4th ID. On top of this is the 76th IB which

is now Eastmincom's strike force. Also added to the Eastmincom is the 5th Special Force Battalion.

Aside from this are the naval and air forces, including the 3rd Tactical Operations Wing, the 5th Civil Relations Group, the 5th and 7th Air Reserve Center, the 52nd Engineering Brigade, the 10th and 11th Tactical Operations Group, the 10th, 11th, 12th and 15th Regional Community Defense Group and the Naval Reserve Center in Eastern Mindanao. This is aside from two battalions under the two divisions that are focused on intelligence work.

Apart from the AFP's regular forces, there are various paramilitary groups organized and trained by the 72nd IBPA-Cadre Battalion, including the CAFGU, SCAA, CAA, Investment Defense Force (IDF), Bagani Force in Bukidnon and Agusan del Sur, and the ALAMARA group in Paquibato-Talaingod. The process of pulling out a brigade (701st) from Central Luzon began in 2009-2010. In 2013, the 76th IB was deployed from the Bondoc Peninsula. In March, the 9th IB

I B



and the 68th IB were transferred from Bicol to Compostela Valley. Just this May, a battalion under the 6th ID in Maguindanao was transferred to the 10th ID and deployed to Compostela Valley.

The seven newly added battalions are concentrated in five provinces: Agusan del Sur, North Cotabato, Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte and Bukidnon. They have been positioned at the SMR-NEMR-NCMR tri-boundary.

Of all the regions, SMR is the most militarized. Fourteen full battalions are deployed here, while nine other battalions are positioned along its borders with NEMR, NCMR and FSMR.

The AFP's intensified suppression operations are focused on areas where there are ongoing mining, logging and plantation operations (such as oil palm, banana and pineapple) or that are being targeted for entry by these companies. The goal is to suppress the people's opposition to these companies' operations which are destructive to the environment and cause the seizure of the Lumad's ancestral lands.

Military abuses are widespread, including the militarization of entire communities and the use of schools, barangay halls and other civilian structures as mili-

tary barracks. Soldiers also routinely violate domiciles and steal personal belongings, farm animals and food.

Farms and their environs are increasingly being bombed from the air or targeted by artillery fire, traumatizing residents, especially children. The targeted residents are accused of being NPA supporters, with some forcibly used as guides in AFP operations.

A striking case is the militarization of Talaingod, Davao del Norte. For a month, more than 1,300 residents of Barangay Palma Gil evacuated to Davao City to protest the repression, terrorism and brutality of AFP forces. Like them, the Manobo-Matigsalog tribespeople who fled Dao, San Fernando, Bukidnon to Cagayan de Oro City in September 2013 did so to protest the military terrorism of the 8th IB. In August 2013, up to 325 residents of Loreto, Agusan del Sur evacuated to protest the abuses of the 26th IB.

Extrajudicial killings are also mounting. The latest cases are the killing by the 29th IB of Ricardo "Polon" Tuazon in the upland areas of Butuan City on April 28 and the abduction, torture and slaying on March 24 by 9th IB personnel of Wilmar Bargas, a small miner from Maco, Compostela Valley.

Violations of children's rights are likewise widespread, such as the occupation of schools. In a striking case, soldiers harassed a community school in Side 4, Mangayon, Compostela, Compostela Valley last year. In March, 57th IB elements arrested "Balong," a 14-year old boy from Magpet, North Cotabato, falsely accusing him of being an NPA member. AB

In defense of ancestral land

Various human rights advocacy groups vigorously condemned the violence inflicted on April 23 on members of TINDOGA (Tribal Indigenous Oppressed Group Association) who belong to the Manobo-Pulangihon tribe. At the forefront were church people who, in a solidarity mission conducted on May 5 expressed their unity with TINDOGA members in their struggle for land and life. They documented the incident and provided needed assistance to the minorities, such as medical services.

The Manobo-Pulangihon were arbitrarily shot at by armed goons of Pablo "Poling" Lorenzo as the tribespeople were being installed in a 28-hectare area which forms part of their ancestral land in Quezon, Bukidnon. The area is specifically identified in the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) granted to them. Lorenzo's guards likewise tore down the Manobo's huts. During the violent incident, the minorities were with three nuns from the Medical Mission Sisters (MMS) who were invited by TINDOGA's leader to witness the surveying and installation process.

The TINDOGA members were strafed despite the presence of more than 40 children, aside from elderly tribespeople. Though terrified, the Manobo-Pulangihon still managed to help each other escape from the sector of fire.

The morning before the strafing incident, the group in charge of formally installing the Manobo arrived in the area. They were composed of representatives from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)-Region 10, the Quezon local government, Datu Eladio Lilawan (Quezon Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative) and three policemen from Quezon town. With the elders of three clans, they surveyed the installation area.

The Manobo saw that the area was full of rocks and was neither suitable for agriculture nor for setting up their houses. Thus, Datu Santiano "Andong" Agdahan, TINDOGA's leader, told the NCIP to install them instead on a seven-hectare area they chose, which was outside the 28-hectare area originally assigned to them. The Manobo based their request on an earlier agreement that the installation site should be suitable for planting. After this conversation, the NCIP and local government representatives left and the TINDOGA members began transferring their huts to their chosen area.

By noon, they found out that Pablo Lorenzo's goons were nearby. With Datu Andong immediately sensing the possibility of trouble, he caucused with the sisters and the other tribe members. They decided to form a negotiation team.

Not long after, up to 200 of Lorenzo's men also arrived aboard two trucks, all armed with "ispading" or machetes used to cut sugar cane. The goons armed with rifles approached the Manobo and a man named Jun Zapanta ordered them to leave the area. Bae Liling Agdahan of TINDOGA and the three sisters tried to negotiate. Instead of talking, however, the goons opened fire on the Manobo.

The solidarity mission's documentation report stated that the armed goons trained their guns on 12 members of the tribe, including three minors. Twenty-three huts were demolished, aside from the Manobo's personal belongings, some of which were stolen. This was not the first violent incident against the Manobo involving Lorenzo's goons. Another strafing case in 2010 resulted in injuries to Datu Jessie Dacao of the Villanon clan, which like TINDOGA has also been resisting Lorenzo's seizure of their ancestral land.

The CADT system is also a big swindling operation against national minorities because it limits the scope of their collective right to their ancestral land in favor of big mining, logging and plantation interests. In the particular case of the Manobo-Pulangihon, there are 623 approved CADT covering a mere 70 hectares, purportedly because the rest of their ancestral land is composed of forest reserves. In fact, the rest of the land has long been occupied by Rancho Montalvan which Lorenzo administers and plants to sugar cane and pineapple. Lorenzo is a contract grower for a big pineapple plantation. Both the NCIP and the local government did not lift a finger to protect the Manobo from Lorenzo's brutality.

Meanwhile, the members of TINDOGA are firmly committed to asserting their right to their ancestral land, despite the repression they have suffered. AB

Binodngan tribe ready to defend their ancestral land

The Binodngan, a Kalinga tribe, has a history of taking up arms against foreign companies in the defense of their ancestral land. Thus declared the tribe's elders during a workshop on Cordillera Day last April 24.

The tribe is alarmed at plans by the Philippine National Oil Company and Renewables, its foreign business partner, to build hydropower plants in the municipalities of Balbalan, Lubuagan, Pasil and Tanudan in Kalinga. They have registered their opposition to the project, especially after discovering that the company intends to build tunnels that will destroy their rivers. They condemned Renewables' divisive tactics to sow discord among the members of the tribe by conducting separate consultations to convince the residents in the targeted sitios and barrios. They belied claims by Renewables and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples that the project would not be environmentally destructive. Renewables is a subsidiary of Chevron, an international oil monopoly.

The elders called on all Binodngan not to work for the company to avoid conflict within their tribe. Fellow tribespeople already involved in the project were advised to resign. The elders warned those who refuse to heed their call that they would not be responsible should anything bad happen to them as the tribe defends its land and natural resources. AB

People assail Aquino's coverup of pork barrel corruption

Strained efforts by Benigno Aquino III and his factotums to conceal the list of officials involved in Janet Lim-Napoles' kickback scheme have fueled the people's anger.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) rallied at the Department of Justice (DOJ) on May 15 to assail the Aquino government for continuing to keep the public ignorant about the list submitted by Napoles that is said to contain the names of all officials who transacted with her regarding the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF).

Napoles' list, which was first published in *The Daily Tribune* contains the names of Aquino's key officials led by Sec. Florencio Abad of the Department of Budget, Sec. Proceso Alcala of the Department of Agriculture and Senate Pres. Franklin Drilon, as well as other senators and scores of congressmen, both pro- and anti-Aquino, but all involved in pocketing kickbacks from the PDAF.

Napoles drew up the list and submitted it to Justice Sec. Leila de Lima in early April, after De Lima declared that she was interested in drafting Napoles as a state witness in the government's case against a number of opposition senators. Aquino had meanwhile mentioned in an interview that he had already seen Napoles' list, further underscoring the government's concealment of the roster.

Even if Abad, Alcala and Drilon had already been implicated, however, Aquino has declared that they continue to enjoy his trust and has maintained them in their current positions. In an effort to dismiss the significance of his men's involvement, Aquino stressed that he has seen so many lists already that it was difficult to determine which one to believe.

Aquino's defense and coverup of his officials and congressional allies have further enraged the people and show the extent to which the Aquino bureaucracy is honeycombed with corruption and the hollowness of the regime's "righteous road" slogan.

Makabayan coalition president Satur Ocampo announced that they would be launching sustained mass campaigns and protest actions in the streets that will peak during Aquino's State of the Nation Address (SONA) when Congress resumes session in July.



Partners in corruption

Janet Lim-Napoles has long been partnering with government officials in the business of corruption. She offered projects in the name of bogus non-governmental organizations that served as conduits for the PDAF funds. Only a portion of the funds were actually spent on the projects, with the bulk pocketed by Napoles and her government official-partners in crime. Up to 60% of PDAF funds end up lining the pockets of senators and congressmen.

It is the president who has the power to approve and release PDAF funds. Malacañang wields the PDAF to ensure Congress' support for laws and policies being pushed by the Aquino regime. Massive protests erupted last year after the exposé of the PDAF corruption scandal involving Napoles.

In August, Aquino personally received Napoles' "surrender" inside Malacañang so he could discuss with her his plans of using her to file cases against anti-Aquino politicians. As an accommodation, Napoles was detained in a house within a police camp in Laguna instead of a ordinary jail.

1001st Brigade concocts hostage drama in ComVal

For days, the Aquino government's reactionary officials feasted on the Philippine Army 1001st Brigade's fabricated story that the New People's Army (NPA) had taken scores of miners and their families hostage in Compostela Valley from May 3 to 5.

Teresita Deles of the Office of the Presidential Assistant on the Peace Process and Corazon "Dinky" Soliman of the Department of Social Welfare and Development even joined in the chorus by airing condemnations and appeals to the NPA to stop using civilians as human shields.

In reality, no hostage-taking took place. The 1001st Brigade merely manufactured lies to cover up its mounting battle casualties, its own human rights violations and its protection of foreign destructive mining operations.

According to Ka Daniel Ibarra, spokesperson of the Comval-Davao Gulf Subregional Command, the military forcefully evicted small miners, Lumad and peasants

from the streams and other areas within Apex Mining Company's concession in Maco and threatened that their communities would be bombed. Terrified, the miners had no choice but to abandon their houses and livelihood.

The 1001st Bde expelled the small miners to en-

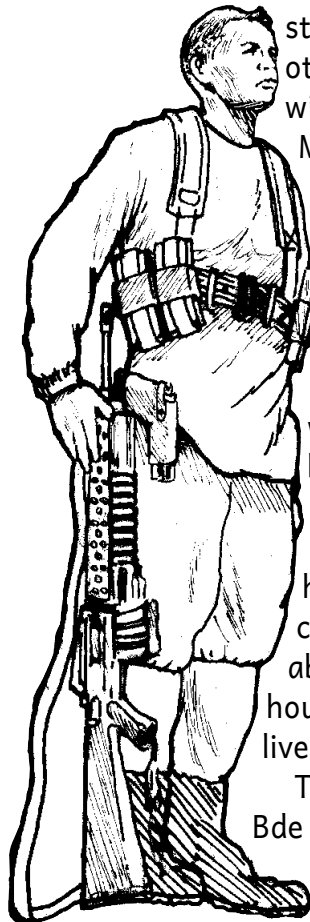
able Apex Mining to operate unencumbered using open-pit mining, which caused massive landslides that killed several people in the area and erased Barangay Mainit from Maco's map in 2012.

On the other hand, Red fighters launched three ambushes on the mining giant's soldier-protectors between April 12 and May 5, killing 23 soldiers and wounding five others from the 71st IB, 9th IB and Division Reconnaissance Company (DRC).

Eleven soldiers were killed in an ambush mounted by Red fighters on patrolling elements of the 71st IB in Sitio Panganasun, Barangay Napnapan, Pantukan. On April 13, Red guerrillas ambushed a DRC unit along the Maco-Maragusan border, killing eight and wounding two fascists. The day before, four troops under the 9th IB were killed and three others wounded when Red fighters waylaid them at the Apex Tenement Complex in Masara, Maco.

Before these offensives, the NPA punished Apex Mining on April 10 for its violations of the laws and policies of the People's Democratic Government against the destruction of the environment and the oppression of the peasant masses and the mining company's own workers in Barangay Masara. The NPA destroyed 18 vehicles and pieces of machinery in five tunnels. (See related article in Ang Bayan's April 21, 2014 issue)

In retaliation, the 1001st Bde poured in 800 troops or two bat-



talions to sow terror and further protect Apex Mining and its owners, among them Enrique Razon (the fourth wealthiest man in the Philippines and a major contributor to Aquino's election campaign), to the detriment of Lumad farmers, small miners and the company's workers. Apex also used hired goons under the Mongoose Security Agency to harass the lowly paid workers who are in danger of losing their jobs under the company's

retrenchment program in June. The military likewise disseminated lists of alleged active leaders targeted for arrest and imprisonment.

Meanwhile, in Paquibato District, three soldiers under the 69th IB were killed and six others were wounded by a command-detonated explosive while they were on patrol in May 17. It was the NPA's fourth attritive action against the 69th IB since January. AB

NPA punishes 67th IB in Davao Oriental

Red fighters under the Comval-Davao East Coast Subregional Command of the New People's Army (NPA) launched a series of military actions against the Philippine Army 67th IB.

Two soldiers were wounded in a sniping operation launched by members of the NPA Front Guerrilla 15 Operations Command in Barangay Binondo, Baganga at 11 a.m. of April 23. Two hours later, four military troops were killed by command-detonated explosives used by an NPA unit in Purok 7 Tanggaan, Barangay Manurigao, New Bataan, Compostela Valley. On May 5, a soldier was killed in a sniping operation launched by an NPA team against a Peace and Development Team (PDT) in Barangay Pagsabangan, New Bataan.

Meanwhile, on May 11, Red fighters from the NPA Guerrilla Front 20 Operations Command burned a bulldozer owned by Cateel mayor Camilo Nuñez in Sitio Yapsay, Taytayan, Cateel, Davao Oriental. The operation was not merely part of the total log ban campaign currently being waged in the entire region by the revolutionary movement but was a punitive measure against Nuñez for his criminal negligence in failing to institute long-term rehabilitation for the victims of typhoon Pablo that devastated the area in 2012. AB

Balikatan Exercises and EDCA

Up to 3,000 American soldiers arrived in the Philippines to join Balikatan Exercise 2014 from May 6-16. It was the 30th in the Balikatan series and the biggest and first to be launched after the Aquino regime and the US government signed the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) on April 28.

More than 4,500 AFP troops joined the Balikatan. Also attending were 60 Australian troops and 25 members of the Hawaii National Guard. Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City and the Western Command in Puerto Princesa, Palawan served as Balikatan's command centers.

The live fire exercises, combat maneuvers and other training were held at the Naval Education and Training Center in San Antonio, Zambales; Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija; Clark Air Base in Angeles City; Crow Valley, Tarlac; and Marine Base in Ternate, Cavite. Up to 700 US and AFP troops also launched a mock attack by land and air in Palanan, Isabela.

The US used the opportunity to project its military might. The USS Tortuga docked at Subic to bring troops and military equipment. Modern weapons like the Osprey; F/A Jet Fighters,

CH-53 transport helicopter; Sikorsky and Cobra attack helicopter; and Hercules cargo aircraft, among others were used in the combat maneuvers.

Using "humanitarian operations" as camouflage, the US military sent 200 American troops to Guinobatan, Albay and Legazpi City from April 21 to May 7, and even to Tacloban City, Cebu City and Bohol. There was much ado in the media about a classroom repaired by the



troops and the provision of a few days' medical and veterinary services. What went unannounced were the American troops' other activities, among them partnering with local troops in the antiguerrilla war and laying down communications and intelligence infrastructure.

To create the impression that the US would stand by the Philippines' side in its territorial assertions versus China, American troops conducted military maneuvers in the South China Sea. In fact, the US has made no commitment to side with the Philippines should an armed confrontation erupt regarding the conflicting claims in the South China Sea.

Meanwhile, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Emmanuel Bautista endorsed three AFP military bases on May 5 for the use of the US in stationing its troops and equipment. Bautista identified them as the naval detachment in Oyster Bay in Palawan; the naval station in San Antonio, Zambales; and the Philippine Army base in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija.

Under the newly signed EDCA, the Philippine government will be providing the US with "Agreed Locations" or areas within AFP military camps that could be used for weapons storage, maintaining sea vessels, landing and launching airplanes and drones, resupplying and as rest and recreation stations for American soldiers. **AB**

NDFP condemns Roy Erecre's illegal arrest

The NDFP Negotiating Panel strongly condemned the illegal arrest and detention of Roy Arboladera Erecre, NDFP-Visayas consultant. He was arrested by a composite force of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Eastern Mindanao Command of the Philippine Army in Barangay Bajada, Davao City on May 7. He is currently detained at the Bohol District Jail in Tagbilaran City. Erecre was seeking treatment for diabetes when arrested. His right to counsel was violated when he was interrogated

without his lawyer present. He now faces several trumped-up cases filed by the military.

Erecre is the holder of NDFP Document of Identification No. ND978243 under the name Vide Alguna. He received a Letter of Acknowledgment as NDF-Visayas consultant on April 20, 2001 from then GRP Negotiating Panel chair Silvestre Bello III. But the AFP ignored Erecre's identification documents.

Erecre's illegal arrest comes on top of the Aquino regime's illegal detention of other NDFP consultants like Benito Tiamzon, Wilma Austria and Alan Jazmines. **AB**

Tribute to revolutionary mothers

Various progressive organizations paid tribute to women political detainees at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City on May 10 on the occasion of the annual observance of "Mother's Day." Mother's Day is a commercial gimmick held every second Sunday of May. But it was imbued with unique relevance with a salute to mothers who are political detainees like Wilma Austria-Tiamzon, Loida Magpatoc and Andrea Rosal.

Wilma and her husband Benito Tiamzon were arrested by the Aquino regime's armed forces on March 22 in Cebu. They are currently detained at Camp Crame with other NDFP peace consultants.

Ka Wilma has two children. Her eldest child, a daughter, was born in 1975 during martial law and taken care of by a peasant family in the area where the couple worked as revolutionaries. Their second child, a son, was born in 1980 and taken care of by Ka Benito's family. Their children grew up far from them because of the ruling state's repression. In spite of this, Ka Wilma and Ka Benito always showed them the warmth of their

love through various means.

In a message, Ka Wilma said that "The future of the people's children hinges on the advancement by the mass of mothers of the Filipino People of their aspirations for nationalism and democracy The people's mothers embrace the entire country as their home and all of the Filipino People's children as theirs."

Like Ka Wilma, Ka Andrea Rosal is also a political detainee arrested in Caloocan City on March 27. Although she was then seven months pregnant, she was kept in a cramped and hot cell at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig and deprived of the necessary medical attention to ensure the health of her unborn child. **AB**

Andrea Rosal's baby dies

Ka Andrea Rosal's child died on May 19, two days after being born at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH). The baby girl who was named Diona Andrea was immediately transferred to the PGH Neonatal Intensive Care Unit when it suffered from hypoxemia, or a deficiency of oxygen in the blood.

It is highly possible that the baby's death was due to the poor conditions suffered by Andrea during her arrest and detention. Andrea was arrested when she was due for a check-up with her doctor. For two months, she was kept in a 5x10 meter cell that she shared with 30 other detainees. Not once was she seen by a doctor. She had already been having uterine contractions for two days before she was brought to hospital.

On the other hand, another detainee, Janet Lim-Napoles, does not have to compete for space in her detention house within a PNP camp and has been given prompt medical attention. **AB**

Workers of NXP Semiconductors wage protest

More than 1,000 workers belonging to the NXP Semiconductors Workers Union launched a protest action on May 13 in front of the Light Industry and Science Park in Cabuyao, Laguna to call for the reinstatement of their 24 union officers who were illegally dismissed by management on May 5.

The workers entered the company compound where they conducted their program. They roundly opposed the termination of their leaders in the middle of negotiations for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The workers are demanding an 8% wage hike and regular status for NXP workers, most of whom are contractual. The 24 labor leaders were fired on the flimsy excuse that they did not report for work during government-declared holidays like Holy Week and May First, even if working during holidays is voluntary.

NXP is the biggest semiconductor company in Southern Tagalog. It makes electronic parts for, among others, Microsoft, Apple, Samsung, Asus, Siemens and Nokia.

Meanwhile, workers of Hoya Glass Disk Philippines protested at the First Philippine Industrial Park on April 30 and at the office of the

National Conciliation and Mediation Board on May 8 and 14. They opposed the company's closure and the termination of 2,600 workers from its factory in Tanauan, Batangas. The union said that the closure was illegal because management forced the workers to sign waivers, documents and checks without clear bases. The company is now reportedly hiring new contractual workers. The closure is clearly a ploy to bust the union and dismiss the company's regular workers.

In related news, workers of Pentagon Steel Corporation picketed the office of the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) on May 17 to protest the permanent injunction order against their picket line at Kaingin Road in Quezon City. The workers confronted NLRC Commissioner Teresita Castillon-Lora and accused her of conniving with Pentagon owner Mario Chan.

Workers of Carina Apparel in Calamba, Laguna, on the other hand, have maintained their picket line. On February 21, up to 3,600 workers were fired after company owner Andrew Sia closed down its factory to avoid a scheduled CBA negotiation between the workers and management. **AB**

Thousands protest Soma Mines tragedy in Turkey

Protest actions erupted in various towns and cities in Turkey days after a coal mining accident in Soma town on May 15 that killed almost 400 workers and injured 80 miners. More than 600 workers were in the mine when a fire broke out.

More than 20,000 rallied in the city of Izmer, the closest metropolis to Soma. Policemen dispersed the demonstration using water cannons. Police likewise used water cannons to break up a

rally of more than a thousand workers that marched towards the Labor Ministry and demonstrated at Kizilay Square, a plaza in the Turkish capital of Ankara. Thousands likewise rallied at Istanbul.

The rallyists assailed the Erdogan government for its negligence and corruption. The demonstrators cited the rapid deterioration of working conditions in mines like Soma which the state rents

out to private companies. The workers demanded the resignation of the government which they accused of killing the workers due to its negligence.

Initial investigations show that most of the victims died from inhaling carbon monoxide from the smoke.

The tragedy at Soma Mines is the second in Turkish mining history. The first occurred in 1992, when 263 miners were killed due to a gas tank explosion near the Black Sea port of Zonguldak. AB

AHW marks 30th anniversary

Hundreds of white-clad health workers marched from España Avenue to Mendiola Bridge in Manila to commemorate the 30th founding anniversary of the Alliance of Health Workers (AHW) and National Health Workers' Day on May 7.

They called on all health workers and the Filipino people to carry on with the tradition of militant struggle began by AHW in 1984. In particular, they expressed their firm opposition to the privatization of public hospitals.

The privatization of health services means opening health services and public hospitals to foreign and local capitalists to run as businesses raking in huge profits. Privatization targets 72 government hospitals like the Philippine Orthopedic Center (POC). This will severely affect not only the job security of health workers in these hospitals but the poor's access to affordable health care. AB

NUSP slams new round of tuition fee hikes

The National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP) vigorously assailed the new round of tuition fee hikes in colleges and universities in the coming school opening. They protested with other groups at the office of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in Diliman, Quezon City on May 15.

The NUSP said up to 353 colleges and universities will be raising fees by 8-15%, among them National University, De la Salle University, University of Sto. Tomas, University of the East Manila and Caloocan, Far Eastern University and National Teachers College. Aside from the tuition fee hikes, there will be added fees such as the development fee, energy fee and sports fee, among others. When lumped together with the

tuition fee hikes, the increase will come to as much as 30%.

The NUSP likewise scored CHED for being an inutile and powerless agency, since its memoranda and school consultations are useless. Most of the schools raising tuition fees did so last year and earlier, added the NUSP.

They asked for the implementation of a moratorium on tuition fee hikes, which students have long been demanding, and a review of policies governing fee increases.

Meanwhile, up to 1,299 private elementary and high schools have been allowed by the Department of Education to raise fees. The majority are in Region 6 (311), Region 1 (246), Region 3 (244), National Capital Region (172) and Region 4A (102).

ILPS condemns abduction of Dr. GN Saibaba by Indian police

The International League of People's Struggle firmly condemned the abduction by the Maharashtra Police of Dr. GN Saibaba, Joint Secretary of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (RDF) in India. Saibaba was seized by policemen in civilian clothes on May 9 while he was on the way home from Daulat Ram College in New Delhi.

Despite being severely handicapped and wheelchair-bound, he was blindfolded and pushed inside a waiting vehicle. According to the RDF-Maharashtra, Dr. Saibaba's arrest was done clandestinely inside the college campus. He was put on a

plane and brought to Gadchiroli in Maharashtra state. He was not allowed a lawyer, and the members of his family do not know his present whereabouts.

Before this violent incident, Maharashtra police had raided the activist leader's house and interrogated him and his family on September 12, 2013 and January 7 this year.

In a related development, policemen abducted Jeevam Chandra, RDF president for Uttarakhand state, on May 5. He was arbitrarily accused of having links with the Maoists and for allegedly calling for a boycott of the elections.