

ANG

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Editorial

Intensify mass struggles against repression

The Communist Party of the Philippines salutes the Filipino people as they give their all in defending their human rights in the face of the US-Aquino regime's relentless Oplan Bayanihan campaign of suppression. The courage shown by the toiling masses, especially the peasantry and minority peoples in confronting the brutality of operating troops of the AFP is truly praiseworthy.

Of particular note is the struggle of the peasants and Lumad people of Mindanao to defend their human rights. Their militancy and determination are the correct response to brutal military operations, in order to defeat the AFP's attempts to in-

timidate and silence them to submission and retreat and pave the way for the plunder of the natural resources found in their uplands and plains.

Those who joined the almost month-long protest action dubbed Manilakbayan ng Mindanao 2014 displayed commendable

bravery and heroism. From Mindanao to the Visayas, from the Bicol region to Southern Tagalog, and from Mendiola to Liwasang Bonifacio in the national capital, about 300 Lumad leaders and representatives exposed and assailed the wanton trampling of their human rights and the destruction of the fruits of their efforts and struggle.

Manilakbayan, which began on November 13 in Davao City is the culmination of the struggle of the people of Mindanao to defend their rights, natural resources, land and livelihood



against months of intensified military operations in the island.

In particular, the *lakbayanis* bared and condemned the onslaught of Oplan Bayanihan in the vast countryside of Mindanao. They defended their schools, livelihoods, culture and other rights as minorities.

Manilakbayan informed the broad masses about their opposition to the intensifying militarization of their communities and the grave violations of their human rights since the first quarter of the year. Among these are the extrajudicial killings of Lumad leaders, the military encampments in schools and community centers, forced evacuations, bombings, beatings and intimidation.

Human rights violations have grown more severe since the US-Aquino regime deployed more than half of the AFP's forces to Mindanao. There are now 55 battalions comprising 50,000 soldiers currently in Mindanao, augmented by paramilitary groups formed and armed by the AFP.

In 2014 alone, at least 39 Lumad communities involving 4,735 individuals have been affected by forced evacuations spurred by AFP operations.

Of the 221 documented killings under the Aquino regime, 77 victims or almost 35% are from Mindanao; and of the 23 cases of forced disappearances, nine or 39% took place in Mindanao. Most of the victims are Lumad defending their ancestral lands.

To stop them from speaking out against militarization, 500 mass leaders and members of Lumad organizations have been slapped with trumped-up criminal cases.

Aside from calling for the pullout of military troops from their communities and demanding a stop to military abuses,

they likewise exposed how mercenary AFP troops have been protecting the imperialists and comprador bourgeoisie who have been seizing their lands and plundering the island's natural wealth. They bared the reactionary military's brutal repression of those who dare defy them.

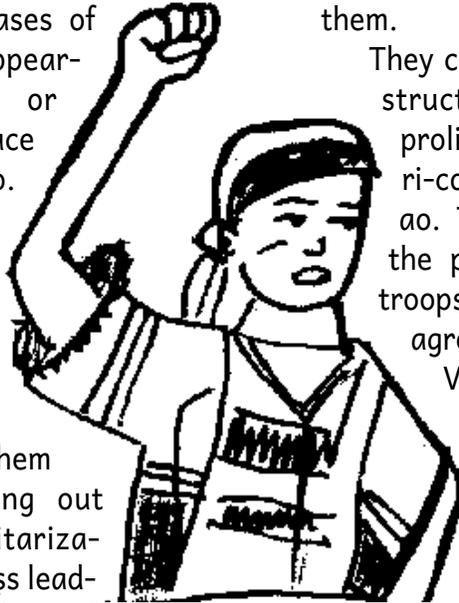
They called for a stop to destructive mining and the proliferation of foreign agri-corporations in Mindanao. They also condemned the presence of American troops in the country and agreements such as the VFA and EDCA that allow their presence.

Through Manilakbayan, it has become starkly clear that imperialist plunder, the trampling of the nation's sovereignty, widespread landgrabbing, relentless militarization and wanton fascist repression pervade all areas of the country, from Luzon to Mindanao.

Manilakbayan has clearly shown the heights that democratic people's struggles could reach due to the tight unity and coordinated actions of the broad masses of the people.

Let us propagate the victories of Manilakbayan throughout the archipelago. In the face of the AFP's intensifying violence and brutality, mass struggles have been erupting to oppose the AFP's suppression campaign. Bigger struggles will surely be launched in the face of the US-Aquino regime's worsening brutality.

Other forms of mass struggles that comprehensively expose and resist the puppet, corrupt, brutal and antipeople US-Aquino regime must be developed and unleashed step by step.



	
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From Mindanao to Mendiola

After more a week of travel, Manilakbayan ng Mindanao 2014 reached Manila on November 21.

Manilakbayan comprises more than 300 mass leaders, victims of human rights violations, Lumad rights advocates, peasants, workers, women and children, and church people from Mindanao. Led by PANALIPDAN and KALUMARAN which represent 18 Lumad tribes, their theme was "Food and Peace in MindaNOW."

On November 24, they arrived at Mendiola, conducted common tribal rituals and set up a "kanlungan" (camp). Their efforts included making a *kodaw* for Aquino with five knots and a piece of red cloth. The *kodaw* is a rattan pole used by the tribes to symbolically send a message to a person they want to talk to. The knots symbolize the five-day reprieve they have given Aquino to address their grievances. They attached a red ribbon in the *kodaw* to symbolize the blood of the victims of state terrorism.

Part of their rituals led by the *datus* involved the slaughter of a pig and a chicken. They also conducted "pamaas," a ritual where the blood of a chicken offered in sacrifice is smeared on the palms of participants to symbolize their solidarity.

The Mendiola rally was one of Manilakbayan's major activities. Starting off from Davao City on November 13, Manilakbayan's more than 300-strong delegation coming from various Lumad groups traveled to Leyte, Samar, Bicol, Southern Tagalog.

At every step of their journey, the Manilak-

bayan participants were warmly welcomed by people who were in solidarity with their struggle. They were met at Leyte on November 16 by Yolanda survivors and victims of the Aquino regime's neglect. They day after, they were met at Sorsogon City and accompanied to the cities of Legazpi and Naga where a torch parade was held at Plaza Trece Martires.

In the next five days, residents of Southern Tagalog welcomed the travelers and expressed their solidarity by launching rallies and other activities, the highlight of which was a demonstration in front of Camp Guillermo Nakar in Lucena City, the headquarters of the Southern Luzon Command (Solcom). The current Solcom chief, Gen. Ricardo Visaya, formerly headed the 10th ID which is responsible for the acts of repression in Southern Mindanao.

Other highlights were the Grand Welcome at Calamba Crossing on November 19, the

Blood Compact between Mindanao and Southern Tagalog and "Duyog Kaon sa Kabus" (The Poor



Sharing a Meal) in San Pablo City. Up to a thousand people from the region joined the rallies and cultural presentations. Manilakbayan likewise held rallies and marches in Sta. Rosa, Laguna; Cavite; Alabang, Muntinlupa; and Las Piñas before proceeding to Baclaran Church on November 23.

In Metro Manila, they rallied at the offices of greedy mining corporations like Toronto Ventures Incorporated (TVI) in Makati and Nickel Asia Corporation (NAC) in Taguig. They also rallied at the office of Glencore Xstrata and Apex Mining.

They also joined rallies at Camp Aguinaldo and the Department of Justice to assail human rights violations under the Aquino regime. They demanded the pullout of soldiers from their respective communities. They dialogued with the Department of Education and demanded the abrogation of Memorandum No. 221 (2013) which the AFP has been using as a license to enter schools in violation of children's rights.

They also supported calls for the release of political prisoners and joined a rally in front of Benigno Aquino III's house at Times St., Quezon City which was violently dispersed by the police. They were among the 10,000 people who rallied to commemorate the 151st birth anniversary of Andres Bonifacio on November 30.

The campaign will peak during International Human Rights Day on December 10. The lakbayanis are set to return to Mindanao on December 12.

Manilakbayan from Mindanao was last held in 2012. **AB**

Peasant slain; 2 abducted in Agusan del Sur

Two brothers forced by soldiers to serve as guides in their military operations failed to return home and remain missing to date. The soldiers likewise killed a third brother.

Philip Poloyapoy, 31, and his brothers Pelems, 22 and Fil John, 24 told their mother Julia on November 1 that they would be going to their hut at the family farm, about two kilometers from their house in Bagong Silang, Bayugan 3, Rosario, Agusan del Sur. Fil John said he was going back for some clothes he had left at the hut, while Pelems said he would be going there to retrieve his cellphone charger. But none of them was able to come back home. One of Julia's neighbors said she had seen the three brothers on the road with soldiers from the 75th IB.

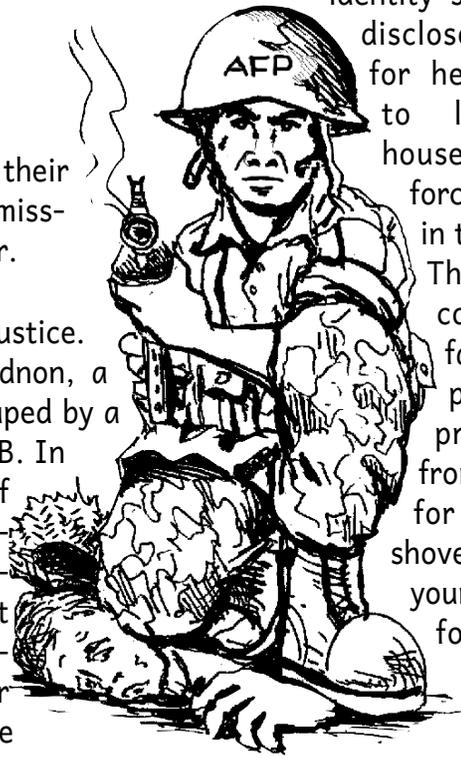
On November 2, at around 9 a.m., Julia's family heard shots from the direction of their farm. They again heard shots at around 12 noon. By 5 p.m., neighbors told Julia that Fil John was among the dead being brought back by soldiers to Barangay Consuelo in the neighboring town of Bunawan. Fil John sustained two gunshot wounds to the chest. News reports said there had been an encounter between the 75th IB and the New People's Army (NPA). The military claimed that Fil John was an "NPA platoon leader."

Nothing came out of the Poloyapoy family's attempts to inquire about Fil John's death from the military and look for Philip and Pelems at the 75th IB detachment with the assistance of local government officials.

The Poloyapoys have joined the Manilakbayan 2014 delegation to bare what their family

has suffered and seek justice.

Meanwhile, in Bukidnon, a 16-year old girl was raped by a soldier from the 84th IB. In a picket-rally in front of the AFP Eastern Mindanao Command on November 25, Girlie (not her real name) recounted that on November 17, a soldier whose



identity she did not disclose, waited for her husband to leave the house before forcing himself in to rape her. The soldier covered her face with a pillow to prevent her from shouting for help and shoved aside her young son before proceeding to rape her.

Military abuses go on unabated in Masbate

Abusive military operations by the 93rd Division Reconnaissance Company and the 9th IB continue without let-up in Ticao island, Masbate.

In a statement, NDF-Masbate spokesperson Ka Val Silang said operations by soldiers that have been going on for more than a month in Sitio Guiwanon, Barangay Danao, San Jacinto town and other villages and sub-villages in Ticao have already resulted in several abuses of civilians' human rights. Ticao is one of three islands comprising Masbate province.

One of the latest military abuses involved the shooting by soldiers of Barangay Kagawad Maritess Espenilla, 48; Melisa Dominguiano, 15; and Michael Lignes, 38 on November 24. The victims, all residents of Barangay Danao, were sprayed with gunfire while making copra in Sitio Guiwanon and were seriously wounded. The military, which perpetrated the shooting two days after a successful NPA harassment operation on the 93rd DRC that resulted in three soldiers killed and three wounded, has deviously pinned the blame on Red fighters.

Meanwhile, the NDF-Masbate denied news reports about the arrest of an NPA leader in the province. It said Ybonni Victor, a resident of Aroroy, Masbate has never been a leader or member of the NPA. In fact, he is a member of a group funded by military agents. The NDF-Masbate added that the bogus arrest was merely a scheme by the military to discredit the revolutionary movement in the area.

AB

KM celebrates its 50th year

Some 300 members of Kabataang Makabayan (KM) launched a lightning rally on November 30 to celebrate their organization's 50th year.

They marched from Quiapo to Morayta in Manila, waving KM flags and bearing streamers calling on the youth to join the people's war. KM chapters also held various activities like cultural presentations and painting slogans on walls and putting up posters with revolutionary slogans.

According to KM spokesperson Ma. Laya Guerrero, KM has played a historic role in the Philippine revolution, serving as a wellspring of good cadres and fighters of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA). Guerrero added that KM has also played a major role in advancing the democratic mass movement and the armed struggle. Tremendous sacrifices had also been made by its members who lost their lives fighting to advance the people's welfare.

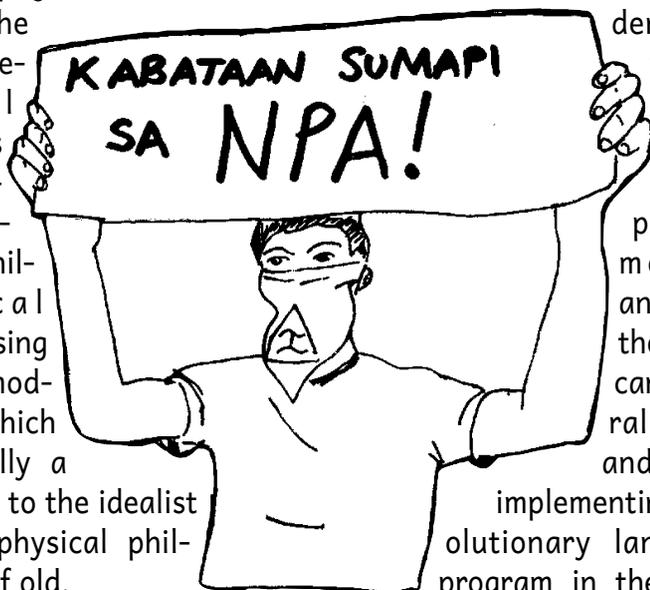
Meanwhile, in a statement, the CPP relayed to KM its expectation and that of all revolutionary forces that the revolutionary youth organization would do all it can to achieve big advances in the coming years.

The CPP said a massive political and ideological offensive is being launched by US imperialism and its cohorts to derail the people's attention from their basic problems and destroy their unity. The youth and the people are bombarded by pro-imperialist propaganda using the media and the internet.

The CPP stressed that the KM and the youth-student mass movement are expected to be at the forefront of a political, ideological and cultural resistance

to counter the imperialist bombardment in the universities, in the commercial big media, in social media and other cultural and propaganda agencies. They must advance a national democratic propaganda offensive to counter the ideas of neoliberal theories and various anti-Marxist philosophical trends posing as "postmodern" but which are actually a throwback to the idealist and metaphysical philosophies of old.

The CPP added that



the KM must assiduously conduct studies and research on theory, history and concrete conditions.

KM members must likewise exert great effort in studying basic and advanced communist writings, as well as key documents and publications of the CPP and other revolutionary organizations.

The KM and the mass movement of students and youth are expected to link up with the peasant movement and mobilize the youth to carry out rural service and help in implementing the revolutionary land reform program in the guerrilla zones.

AB

151st Bonifacio anniversary

With "Diwa ni Bonifacio, Tunay na Pagbabago!" (Genuine social change is the essence of Bonifacio's legacy) as theme, thousands of members of progressive organizations marched from Mendiola Bridge to Liwasang Bonifacio on November 30. At Liwasang Bonifacio, they joined Manilakbayan participants who had been camping out at the plaza for days.

Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) demanded that Aquino step down because his administration is fraught with anomalies and corruption and is subservient to US imperialist dictates. BAYAN was among the complainants in an impeachment case against Benigno Aquino III that was thrown out by the Lower House which is controlled by Aquino clowns and cronies. Meanwhile, their struggle in the Supreme Court to abrogate the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) continues.

The rallyists likewise assailed the Aquino regime's revival of the pork barrel system in the national budget despite a Supreme Court decision declaring that such allocations are unconstitutional.

AB

Workers, employees demand P16,000 minimum pay

Members of All Workers Unity, an alliance of workers and employees in various parts of the country walked out of their workplaces on November 20 to call for a P16,000-national minimum wage.

In Metro Manila, private sector workers picketed the Department of Labor and Employment, while employees of national agencies like the National Housing Authority, Department of Agriculture, Department of Social Welfare and Development, National Printing Office, Sandiganbayan and the Quezon City Court of Tax Appeals walked out of their offices. Joining the walkout were employees of the Senate in Pasay City, and the Metro Manila Development Authority in Makati City.

Mass actions were also held in the cities of Baguio, San Pablo, Calamba, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cebu, Davao and Cotabato.

The call for a national minimum wage is a historic struggle that aims to reverse the policy of "regionalization" that has been in force for close to three decades. Regionalization calls for the setting of various levels of minimum wages.

There are, at present,

1,000 different wage levels. This policy divides and weakens the workers' voice and further depresses wages.

Grossly inadequate wages

Of the total number of workers deemed as employed, only 57% (or 22 million) receive wages and salaries. The rest are unpaid family workers. Among the wage and salary earners, 46% receive amounts lower than the designated minimum, while 25% receive the minimum wage.

A worker in Metro Manila typically receives only P497 daily; while those in other regions receive P349. As of August 2014, a family in the National Capital Region (NCR) needed P1,087 per day to live decently. Despite increases in the nominal wage (P238 in 2000 to P400 in 2010), there has been no significant

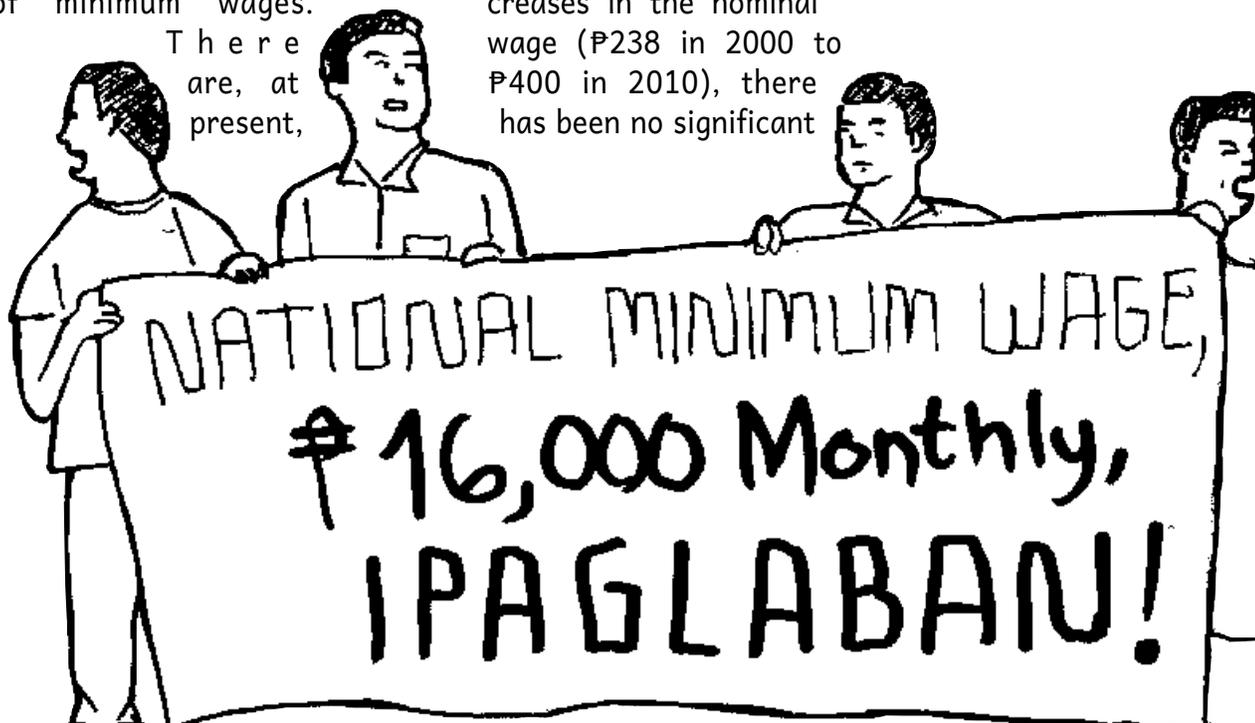
increase in the real wage in both instances.

From 2010 to 2013, the real value of workers' wages rose by a mere 3%. But the incomes of the country's Top 1000 Corporations rose by 34% and those of the Philippines' 40 wealthiest individuals, by 137%.

The demand for a P16,000-national minimum wage is actually a demand for only half of the P32,580 needed by a family of six per month to live decently. The P16,000 monthly minimum is equivalent to an additional P169 only per day to the current minimum. It comprises only 17% of the average net income of businesses employing 20 workers or more. AB

Monthly expenses of a family of six on the P16,000-minimum

Food	6,000
Fare	1,300
Rent	3,000
Water	600
Electricity	800
LPG	750
Cellphone load	300
Soap etc.	350
Education	1,500
Health	1,500



Expose the snail-paced and inadequate oil price rollbacks

The prices of petroleum products have been on a downward spiral for the past several weeks. But the price rollbacks have not been commensurate to the rate and extent by which crude oil prices have been plummeting in the international market.

For every minute that the prices of diesel, gasoline, LPG, kerosene and other petroleum products are not reduced correctly, the oil company giants are able to amass millions of pesos from the ordinary consumers of these products.

Diesel is currently priced at ₱34-35 per liter, lower by about 18% compared to its price in June. Gasoline prices were also reduced by 15% in the same period.

Their prices, however, should have gone down by a much higher percentage, considering the steep rate by which crude oil prices have fallen in the international market. By the end of November, the price of crude oil had plunged to \$70 per barrel (in the Dubai market) or 35% compared to its price of \$108 per barrel in June. At this rate, diesel should be priced at ₱30/liter and gasoline at ₱30/liter in the first week of December.

The Filipino people must thoroughly demand an immediate and rapid rollback in the prices of petroleum products. They must resist overpricing by corporate giants who enjoy monopoly control over the oil industry and the retail of petroleum products.

They must likewise demand significant reductions in the prices of basic commodities as well as train, LRT, shipping, plane, bus and other transport fare.

Workers and rank and file employees must fight for immediate salary and wage hikes as their reasonable share in the windfall due to companies' lower costs of production and operation.

Why are oil prices on a downward slide?

Reduced oil prices are an indication of the intensifying crisis of the world capitalist system. Oil prices have been on a downward spiral in the face of fierce rivalries among big oil producers for control over shrinking markets.

In October, the US shale oil

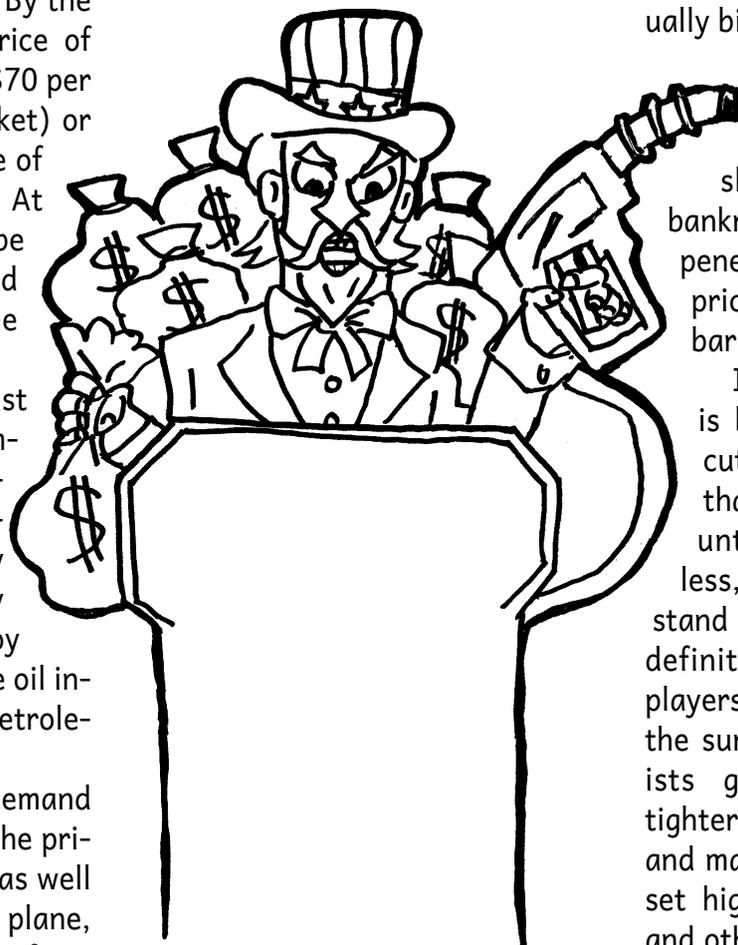
industry produced up to nine million barrels of oil, up from 6.4 million in 2012 and 7.3 million in 2013. This is the highest production rate in the US since the 1980s. Shale oil production enjoyed a revival after the development of cheaper technology and the easing up of regulations.

Shale oil is deposited in layers of shale stone and is extracted by pumping liquid chemicals into the ground to force it out.

The shale oil industry already controls half of the US market. To seize a bigger share of the US market, Saudi Arabia offered cheap crude for sale on October 1. Crude oil prices have been further depressed by an oversupply of 700,000 to two million barrels per day. The oversupply has been spurred by the sluggish growth of the Chinese, German and Japanese economies and the continuing recession in the US.

Despite the oversupply, Saudi Arabia has pushed for continually bigger crude oil production with the aim of reducing oil prices to rates that would cause US shale producers to go bankrupt. The same thing happened in 1985 when crude oil prices plunged to \$12 per barrel.

It is this competition that is behind the current price cutbacks. Experts estimate that the trend would last until mid-2015. Nonetheless, it is necessary to understand that the competition will definitely push a number of players out of the game, with the surviving monopoly capitalists gaining more strength, tighter control over production and markets and more power to set higher prices for crude oil and other petroleum products.



Jennifer's killing and other crimes by US troops under the VFA

The recent killing of Jennifer Laude is only one in a long list of crimes and abuses by American troops under the Visiting Forces Agreement.

Because of the VFA, American soldiers involved in various heinous crimes and other violations of local law are able to go scot-free. Like many cases in the past, the American soldier suspected of having killed Laude remains under the authority of the US military and has not been subjected to an independent investigation by the local police.

Crimes against individuals

1) The rape by Lance Corporal Daniel Smith of then 28-year old "Nicole" as three other American soldiers (Lance Corporals Dominic Duplantis and Keith Silkwood and Staff Sergeant Chad Carpentier) cheered him on in Olongapo City on November 1, 2005. Smith was convicted in December 2006 and sentenced to 40 years' imprisonment. The US government refused to cede custody over Smith during the entire trial. Even after his conviction, US Embassy personnel took custody of Smith and "imprisoned" him within embassy grounds. In 2009, Smith was flown to the US after the Court of Appeals reversed his earlier conviction.

2) The mauling by Master Sergeant Steve Saunders of DZRH reporter Henry Araneta in early 2007 at a restaurant in Maguindanao. Saunders was armed despite the election gun ban in force at that time.

3) The beating in March 2000 of taxi driver Marcelo Batestil in Cebu City by three American soldiers. The perpetrators were

flown back to the US immediately after the incident.

Crimes within camps and/or during "joint exercises" and "humanitarian missions"

1) The death of Bizma Juhan, 50, a resident of Indanan, Sulu after she was hit by shrapnel from an M203 during live fire exercises by American soldiers in September 2006.

2) The shooting by American soldiers of Arsid Baharun on June 21, 2004 while the latter was walking in a farm that Americans were using as a firing range in Zamboanga City. To silence them, the US paid the Baharun family ₱50,000.

3) The death in August 2004 of Sardiya Abu Calderon, 54, who suffered a heart attack when a helicopter bearing American and Filipino soldiers suddenly landed at her farm in Manarapan, North Cotabato.

4) The death of Gregan Cardeño inside the barracks occupied by US troops in Camp Ranao, Marawi City on February 2, 2010. Cardeño served as a translator for the US soldiers. The US and the AFP claimed that Cardeño committed suicide but his family refused to believe this. Capt. Javier Ignacio, a friend of the Cardeños, helped in investigating his death. On March 5, Ignacio was killed by motorcycle-riding gunmen while he was on his way to the police station to give a formal statement on

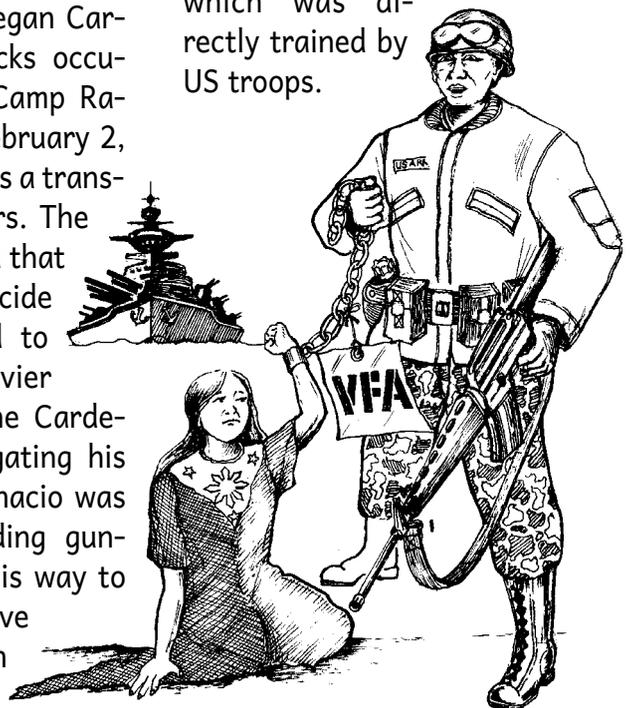
the case.

5) Intimidation and disturbance by American soldiers led by Master Sergeant Ronburg, at the Panamao District Hospital in Sulu on November 20, 2007. The American soldiers imposed a curfew in the area and threatened to shoot anyone found within the hospital premises after 6 p.m. The restrictions were imposed for a month while the American troops were in the vicinity and set up camp beside the hospital.

Killings of civilians in combat and intelligence operations with the AFP

1) Indiscriminate bombings in Barangay Tee, Datu Piang, Maguindanao on September 8, 2008 where at least six civilians were killed.

2) Indiscriminate shooting by joint AFP and US military forces in Ipil, Maimbung, Sulu that resulted in the massacre of eight civilians, including two children and a pregnant woman on February 4, 2008. Sandrawina Wahid, the widow of Ibnol Wahid, one of the victims, saw American soldiers on the ship where the bodies of those who were killed were brought, including her husband. The attacking troops were from the Light Reaction Company which was directly trained by US troops.



3) Bombing incidents at Butian Marsh, Maguindanao in January 2005 and November 2004 that resulted in yet undetermined numbers of civilian casualties.

4) A raid on an alleged Abu Sayyaf camp in Barangay Sipangkot, Umapoy Island, Tawi-tawi on May 25, 2004 that resulted in the death of brothers Ulong, Jumadil and Ibrahim Malla. Witnesses said that at least four American soldiers were with the soldiers and policemen who conducted the operations.

5) Shooting by American soldier Sgt. Reggie Lane of Buyong-buyong Isnijal in Barangay Kanas, Tuburan, Sulu on July 25, 2002. Dr. Julius Cesar Aguila, the doctor who treated Isnijal, confirmed that Sergeant Lane was one of the soldiers who brought Isnijal to the hospital. Dr. Aguila personally knew Lane because they had met during medical missions conducted by American soldiers in Lamitan, Basilan. Isnijal died at the hospital. In 2004, Dr. Aguila was killed, with the motive and the killer still unknown to date.

Other crimes

1) The destruction by the USS Guardian in 2013 of the Tubbataha Reef, a protected area in the Sulu Sea. More than 2,300 square meters of coral reef was destroyed, with experts estimating that it would take at least 250 years for the reef to revert to its former state.

2) The dumping of toxic chemicals into Subic Bay by the MT Glenn Guardian in 2012. AB

NPA-NCMR launches 28 military actions

More than 30 elements of the 4th ID and the Philippine National Police (PNP) were killed and more than ten wounded in 28 military actions launched by the New People's Army (NPA) in Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon provinces and in the western portions of Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur in November. A Red fighter valiantly lost his life in the same period.

On November 15-22, the NPA launched eleven harassment operations against the 8th IB, 58th IB, two Scout Ranger companies, Airborne, CAFGU and paramilitary groups. The AFP suffered up to 20 casualties in a series of firefights where the enemy feigned courage due to the "artillery support" it received from howitzers that fired 22 shells. The enemy's artillery attacks spurred more than 300 residents from the sub-villages of Lakbangan, Impadiding and Calhaan in Barangay Minalwang, Claveria, Misamis Oriental to evacuate.

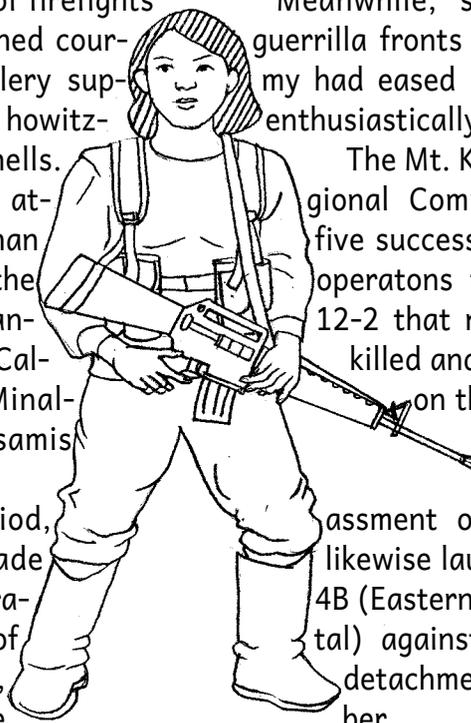
In the same period, the 402nd Brigade launched military operations in 14 barrios of San Luis and La Paz, Agusan del Sur. The

Western Agusan Norte-Agusan Sur Subregional Command has responded with eight military actions since November 9, inflicting casualties of seven dead and five wounded on the enemy.

Meanwhile, subregions and guerrilla fronts where the enemy had eased its stranglehold enthusiastically lent support.

The Mt. Kitanglad Subregional Command launched five successive harassment operations from November 12-2 that resulted in four killed and eight wounded on the enemy side.

Three successive harassment operations were likewise launched by Front 4B (Eastern Misamis Oriental) against three CAFGU detachments in November. AB



CPP to Miriam: Take a stand against the EDCA

THE CPP encouraged Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago to take a stand against the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) after the senator initiated an investigation into the agreement. The CPP hailed Santiago's initiative to open the investigation through the foreign affairs committee which she chairs.

The first Senate hearing on December 1 featured leaders of progressive organizations and parties who asserted that the agreement violated the nation's sovereignty. They likewise belied the "benefits" of the agreement being claimed by officials of the US-Aquino regime.

At the hearing, Senator Santiago declared that the EDCA was a basing agreement for US troops and that it violated the constitution which only allows foreign military bases with the concurrence of 2/3 of the Senate. Santiago added that Aquino may be charged for entering into an agreement that violates the constitution. AB

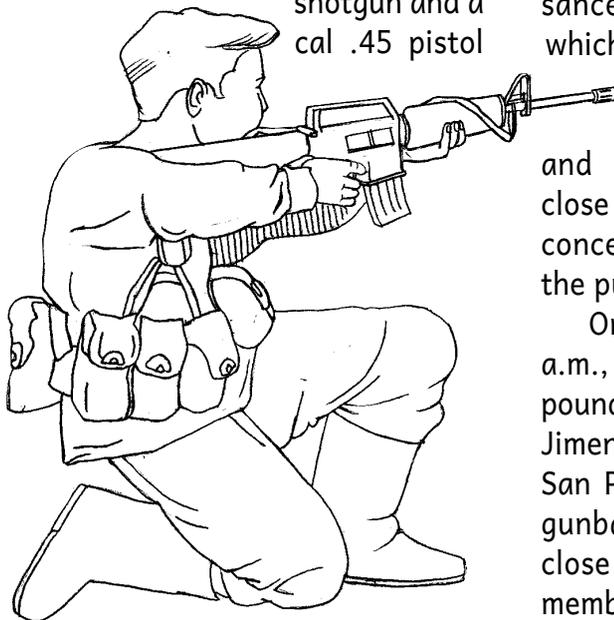
NPA seizes 19 firearms in Masbate

The New People's Army seized 19 firearms of various caliber in a series of tactical offensives launched in November in Masbate against the 93rd DRC, 9th IB, paramilitary groups and bad elements using their weapons against the people and the revolutionary movement. Three soldiers were likewise killed and three others wounded in these gunbattles. The tactical offensives were launched by the Jose Rapsing Command (JRC-NPA) in Burias and Ticao islands.

In Burias, the NPA raided the house of the despotic Ballesteros family in Barangay Mabiton, Claveria on November 9 and confiscated an M16, four cal .45 pistols, a SAS12, a shotgun, two cal .38 revolvers, a cal .22 rifle,

a cal .32 pistol and two cal .22 revolvers.

On November 19, at 6:30 a.m., the NPA raided the house of barangay captain and drug lord Benny Capinig in Boca Engano, Claveria and seized a shotgun and a cal .45 pistol



from him.

On November 22, at 8:30 a.m., three military elements were killed and three others wounded in harassment operations by an NPA team on the 60-man 93rd Division Reconnaissance Company and 9th IB, which had been occupying Sitio Guiwanon, Barangay Danao, San Jacinto town and neighboring villages for close to a month. The military concealed its casualties from the public.

On November 24, at 5:15 a.m., the NPA raided the compound of despotic rancher Nonie Jimenez in Barangay Macahoy, San Pascual in Burias island. A gunbattle ensued that lasted close to ten minutes when a member of Jimenez's private army fought back, even as his companions were surrendering to the NPA.

The comrades seized an M16 with scope, a vest with 11 magazines and ammunition, an M14 with scope and a vest with 15 magazines full of ammunition, a shotgun with 25 rounds, three hand-held radios, a cal .22 rifle with scope, two magazines and ammunition, a cal .38 revolver, a hammock, a backpack, two pairs of combat shoes and two pairs of military uniforms.

Meanwhile, three soldiers from the 81st IB were seriously wounded in an ambush by the Alfredo Cesar Command (NPA-Ilocos Sur) on the fascist troops on the night of November 10 in Barangay Bugbuga, Sta. Cruz town. It was a punitive action for the 81st IB troops' continuing repressiveness, intimidation, deception and sexual abuses, especially of minors and married women. Sta. Cruz town has been militarized since 2012. AB

NPA seizes 4 firearms in Camarines Sur

The New People's Army (NPA) and people's militia confiscated four firearms in an ambush launched in Camarines Sur in November. Three enemy elements were likewise killed and two others wounded.

On November 15, the Norben Gruta Command (NPA-West Camarines Sur) and members of the people's militia ambushed nine elements of the 22nd IB in Barangay Tinalmod, Pasacao town. Seized from the ambushed enemy forces were a carbine, two magazines for an M14 rifle, seven magazines for a carbine and a grenade. The enemy suffered two killed and two wounded.

The ambush was conducted at around 10:15 a.m. while the squad from the 22nd IB was traveling on foot to pursue the Red fighters who had punished CAFGU element Victorino Abejoro earlier that day. The firefight lasted almost 30 minutes. The scene of the fighting was quite near the 22nd IB detachment in Barangay Tinalmod. But the soldiers at the detachment merely fired several rounds without leaving their camp. The ambushed soldiers, on the other hand, scampered away.

Abejoro was punished because of his counterrevolutionary activities and the 1996 killing of Bernardo and Remedios Gata and their relative Vicente Gata, all residents of Barangay Salvacion, Pasacao. Seized from Abejoro was an M16 (single shot), four rocket-propelled grenades and two cal .38 revolvers. AB

Anti-racism protests erupt anew in the US

Protests by thousands of African-American residents of Ferguson, Missouri and New York City, USA have erupted since November 24 due to grand juries' refusal to indict policemen responsible for killings African-Americans.

In Ferguson, a grand jury failed to indict policeman Darren Wilson who shot and killed Michael Brown, an 18-year old African-American on August 9. In New York City, a grand jury likewise decided not to file charges against policeman Daniel Pantaleo who killed Eric Garner on July 17.

Brown was shot by Wilson six times in the process of arresting him for jaywalking. Witnesses said Brown ran away from Wilson, but was shot when he stopped to surrender. This is contrary to Wilson's claims that Brown had attempted to grab his gun from him.

Meanwhile, Garner, 43, died after Pantaleo held him in a chokehold on suspicion that he was selling cigarettes without a license. Garner complained several times that he couldn't breathe, but the policeman ignored him. In both instances, there was no basis to suspect the victims of having committed a crime.

In Ferguson, residents, most of whom are black, immediately protested the brutality of the white-dominated police force. They condemned the racial profiling they had long been subjected to and the lack of interest by Ferguson's local government to address this. Police violently dispersed the protesters using tear gas, rubber bullets, smoke bombs and flash grenades. Hundreds were brutally arrested, including reporters from the national and international media covering the protests.

In some instances, the residents armed themselves with molotovs and rocks to fight the po-

lice's repeated attacks on their protests. On August 16, the governor of Missouri declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew in Ferguson. Instead of subsiding, clashes have intensified between the residents and the police.

In New York, thousands marched to condemn the grand jury's refusal to charge Pantaleo despite the autopsy reports which showed that Garner was killed by his chokehold. The New York and Ferguson communities united under the slogan "Black lives matter."

Even before the protests in New York erupted, the Ferguson protests had already enjoyed support from various parts of the US, especially from fellow minorities in American society. BAYAN-USA and Anakbayan-USA both expressed support, as well as the

International League of People's Struggle, in seeking justice for Mike Brown and other minority peoples in the US victimized by discrimination and state brutality. They launched two nights of protests in Manhattan, New York.

Brown and Garner's cases are but the latest in a long list of killings of African-Americans where their white killers remain unpunished. One of the most notorious cases of this nature was the killing by George Zimmerman of Trayvin Martin, 17, in Florida in 2012. Zimmerman was charged but acquitted after a year despite the strong evidence against him.

The ILPS said Brown's killing (and those of other African-Americans) and the US judicial system's condonation of such crimes are manifestations of state terrorism and white supremacy-based racism.

African-Americans suffer the most among people of color in the US. One out of every three African-Americans is in prison. Statistics show that one African-American is killed by the police every 28 hours. They are indiscriminately beaten and shot without provocation, especially the youth.

2015 national budget still full of "pork"

THE Senate has approved the ₱2.6-trillion national budget for 2015, including various "insertions" and "hidden" allocations that are in essence, "pork barrel" funds.

Based on a study conducted by anti-"pork barrel" groups, the "pork" is hidden in the DPWH's Local Infrastructure Program (₱18.37 billion); the DSWD's Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Service (₱3.64 billion); the CHED's Tulong Dunong Program for SUCs (₱2.46 billion); the DOH's Assistance to Indigent Patients (₱1.76 billion); the DOLE's Government Internship Program at Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers [TUPAD] Project (₱611.7 million); and TESDA's Special Training for Employment Program (₱543.3 million).

These are essentially "pork barrel" funds because they comprise "projects" endorsed or supported by congressmen, senators and local officials and favor contractors connected to these officials. The insertion of these projects forms part of the system of political patronage that enables Aquino to obtain the support of other politicians. **AB**