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Editorial

Work for changes under the Duterte regime

In a few days, Rodrigo Duterte will be installed as the new chief of the reactionary state. The entire people are set to watch his every step. He is awaited to deliver his promises of big changes the moment he wields presidential powers.

Over the years that Duterte became a friend of the national democratic movement, he cooperated not only once to advance the people's welfare, stood against and opposed foreign intervention and expressed belief that the armed conflict can only be resolved by addressing its root causes.

As such, the people are positive as they keep watch over Duterte, especially his first days and weeks in power.

In his first days, the release of political prisoners and resumption of peace talks is anticipated. Further, Lumad evacuees expect that he will immediately order the withdrawal of AFP troops from their communities to allow them to return home and live in peace.

He is also expected to fulfill his promise to end contractualization as well as other similar flexible labor schemes. They also expect the new president to heed the clamor of workers for wage increases and for a national minimum wage especially in the face of insufficient income and deterioration of the living standards of the toiling masses.

The people, especially the peasant masses, are vigilantly awaiting Duterte's steps to fulfill his

promise to distribute the coco levy funds to small coconut farmers. They will welcome the immediate fulfillment of the promise to provide free irrigation especially in the face of El Niño and threats of La Niña in some places. Immediate steps towards correcting land distribution in Hacienda Luisita are expected to be prioritized.

Also anticipated are Duterte's steps to fulfill his promise to oppose destructive mining in the Philippines.

Immediate steps are also expected to raise the conditions of survivors of super typhoon Yolanda and the Aquino regime's abandonment. Also awaiting social care and support are victims of past storms and natural calamities, as well as victims of militarization in various parts of the country.

The people will await Duterte's steps to prioritize social spending in order to allot more state funds to

provide free modern health, education and housing services.

Also expected is Duterte's support and cooperation with progressive forces to charge, detain, prosecute and punish Benigno Aquino III and his cohorts in big cases of plunder in the DAP and anomalous PPP contracts.

The Filipino people will extend all-out support to Duterte's steps to remove and punish drug syndicates, illegal gambling and other criminal syndicates being run by high officials of the police, military and bureaucracy.

Patriotic forces will also take steps to oppose the increasing presence of US military troops which are seemingly guarding and threatening against possible steps which the Duterte regime might make upholding Philippine national sovereignty.

The 70th anniversary of false independence and establishment of the semicolonial and semifeudal system will be marked on July 4. The people must demand the abrogation of the unequal military treaties including the EDCA, VFA, MLSA and the MDT and dismantling of facilities and bases set up by the US inside five AFP camps. They seek Duterte's all-out support for this clamor.

The national democratic movement is ready to cooperate



with Duterte through peace talks in order to forge a united program for change. The NDFP is ready to present a socio-economic program as initial outline for negotiations and basis to build a united plan aiming to achieve substantial changes in the next years to pursue a just and lasting peace.

It is also ready to cooperate with Duterte's appointed officials recommended by the NDFP, as well as with other progressives who will carry out measures that serve the democratic interests and welfare of the people.

Duterte's positive steps to address the grievances and demands of the people and the speed with which these are carried out will surely help strengthen the willingness of the national democratic movement to unite and work with his regime.

On the other hand, it will help the Duterte regime if it will actively work with the progressive and revolutionary forces.

The Filipino people must be mobilized vigorously in order to

amplify the demand for national and democratic changes and show willingness to unite and support the measures that favor the people.

Forging a united agenda for change is part of the efforts to engage the incoming regime. Mobilize the broadest possible number of forces and display their unity behind this agenda.

Build the broadest united front and work together to bring tens or a hundred thousand people in assemblies and demonstrations to uphold all-out the demands of various sectors and show the unity of the entire people.

The strong voice of people in struggle will be one of the important factors in fortifying Duterte's unity with the people and advancing the interests of ordinary people. This may boost Duterte's willingness to strengthen his alliance with the national democratic movement in order to advance substantial changes and shake the foundations of the ruling system. AB

Peace talks to be held in July

Formal peace negotiations between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) are set to resume on the third week of July. These will be held in Norway which serves as the Third-Party Facilitator. This was agreed upon by the incoming GPH peace panel and the NDFP during the preliminary talks last June 14-15 in Oslo, Norway.

In a joint statement, both parties likewise agreed to discuss in July the following:

- 1) affirmation of previously signed agreements;
- 2) accelerated process for negotiations, including the timeline for the completion of the remaining substantive agenda for the talks: socio-economic reforms; political and constitutional reforms; and end of hostilities and disposition of forces;
- 3) reconstitution of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) list;
- 4) amnesty proclamation for the release of all detained political prisoners, subject to concurrence by Congress; and
- 5) mode of interim ceasefire.

Also, the GPH panel will recommend to incoming President Rodrigo Duterte the immediate release of NDFP consultants and other JASIG-protected persons in accordance with the JASIG to enable them to participate in the peace negotiations, as well as the immediate release of prisoners based on humanitarian grounds.

Meanwhile, the alliance Pilgrims for Peace stated that the US should not intervene in the peace negotiations. It said that the continued listing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and Jose Maria Sison as "terrorists" impedes efforts to revive



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peace negotiations.

In this regard, Duterte's incoming Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza said that the GPH panel may ask the US to remove Prof. Jose Maria Sison's name from its "terrorist" list in order to "hasten the healing of old wounds due to ideological differences."

At the start of the preliminary talks, both parties expressed gratitude to the Royal Norwegian Government (RNG) for acting as host to the talks. For her part, Ambassador Elisabeth Slåtsum said that the RNG remains committed to the peace negotiations as third-party facilitator.

Together with Dureza were incoming GPH panel members Silvestre Bello III and Hernani Braganza. Representing the NDFP were Luis Jalandoni, Juliet de Lima, Fidel Agcaoili, Coni Ledesma, and Chief Political Consultant Jose Maria Sison. They were joined by other peace consultants and legal advisers.

This June, church people and other peace advocates held a rally in Manila in support of peace negotiations. They were joined by newly released political detainees Rosanna Cabusao and Isidro de Lima. AB

Militarization of Lumad communities continues

Attacks from the military and their paramilitary groups against civilians continue unabated in the final days of the US-Aquino regime. This May-June, more than 45 Higaonon families in Misamis Oriental and 100 Talaandig families in Agusan del Sur were forced to abandon their communities due to intense militarization. Harassment in Lumad schools also persists.

In Misamis Oriental, more than 200 Higaonons trekked to the Lagonlong Municipal Gym from Sitio Camansi, Barangay Bangkay, Lagonlong last June 5 due to the military's threats and harassment. During that day, 58th IB soldiers conducted house-to-house surveys purportedly for the incoming Duterte regime. According to Nenita Helogon, Tagtabolon secretary-general, this violates the agreement the military signed last year which forbade soldiers conducting operations in the name of "peace and development" from entering their communities. Because of the violation, residents decided to evacuate to the town center to distance themselves from the soldiers. But the soldiers followed them, set up tents and a sound system, launched a program and encamped in the gym. They even put out a donation box

supposedly for the Lumads.

In Agusan del Sur, about 486 individuals evacuated from the three communities of Barangay Zellovia and a sitio of Barangay Binicalan in San Luis on May 13 to flee from a paramilitary group headed by the Bocalas brothers. Since 2015, this group has killed four Talaandigs. The latest among them was Datu Mansulbadan Lalian, Talaandig supreme datu, whom the brothers killed in April.

Meanwhile, two Lumad schools suspended classes on June 7 after soldiers harassed their teachers and students. Elements of the 46th IB entered a Salugpongan school in Kidaraan, Special Barangay Mascared-Antipan ni Mabini, Compostela Valley. They threatened the teachers, wrote down their names and took their pictures. On the same day, soldiers from the 39th IB stopped teachers, students and local government officials on their way to their school in Sitio Lamgawil, Barangay Datalbiao in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat. The said school is being run by the Center for Lumad Advocacy and Services.

In related news, a peasant's house in Sitio Cebole, Kapatagan, Laak in Compostela Valley was fired upon by elements of the Charlie Company of the 60th IB, around 4:30 a.m. on June 2. To cover up its violation, the AFP declared the incident as a legitimate encounter between its soldiers and NPA forces of Guerilla Front 33, Southern Mindanao Regional Command. Brothers Randy and Aladin Rosquites were able to get out of the house safely. According to their mother, the whole barrio knows that they have an NPA relative and this is probably why the military hates them. This is no excuse, however, to harass, and more so, to shoot civilians. AB

2 policemen killed in partisan operations in Sorsogon

TWO ELEMENTS of the Police Public Safety Company were killed in BHB sparrow operations in Barangay Zone 8, Bulan, Sorsogon around 4:30 p.m. on June 3. PO3 Teddy Sacupon and PO2 Efren Villamor Jr., both intelligence operatives, were collecting their share from an illegal cockfight when they were ambushed. Killed with them were an informer named "Hemo" who acted as their collector. The police spokesperson admitted that they were on an intelligence mission, although they were also involved in illegal activities on the side.

Meanwhile, a unit of the South-Central Bukidnon Subregional Command encountered a paramilitary group in Sitio Tagikan, Barangay Indalasa, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, on June 5. The Red fighters met paramilitary leaders Ricky "Mankolobi" Bocalas and Jojo "Manlumakad" Bocalas, in a stream that resulted in the death of the two brothers. A .45 calibre pistol and a KG-9 sub-machine gun were recovered from the two.

The Bocalas brothers are notorious for sowing terror together with the military in extrajudicial killings that resulted in widespread evacuations of Lumads from their communities. *(See related article above.)* AB

Promote anti-imperialist nationalism

The Filipino people must revisit their history and promote nationalism on the basis of their united resistance against colonialism and neocolonialism.

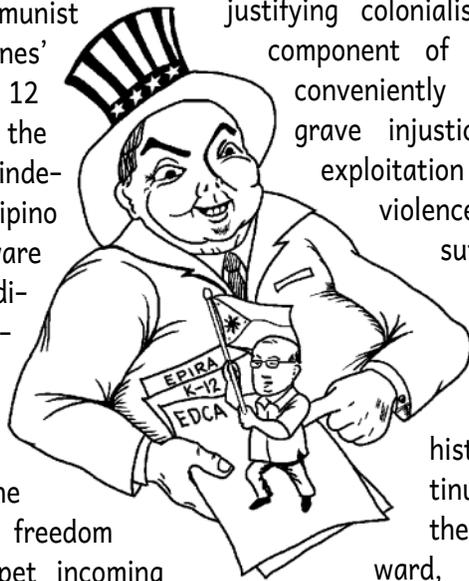
This was the Communist Party of the Philippines' message in its June 12 statement concerning the frustrated Philippine independence. "The Filipino people are keenly aware of the favorable conditions and broad possibilities for promoting anti-US imperialist Philippine nationalism and advancing the struggle for national freedom with the non-US-puppet incoming Duterte regime," said the CPP.

The Filipino people can support Duterte in his call to rewrite the history of Mindanao from the point-of-view of the people's resistance against their subjugators and colonizers in order to highlight the courage and heroism of the Moro people and Lumads of Mindanao in their resistance against Spanish and US colonizers, and to expose and erase all the lies promoted by the US imperialists through their miseducation of the Filipinos from the early days of US colonialism to the present.

History books written under the auspices of and funding from US agencies have invariably downplayed the brutality of the US war to subjugate and ravage the country where 1.4 million Filipinos were killed in massacres, tortures and widespread impoverishment and disease in the Philippine-American War.

The Filipino people must vigorously oppose efforts by certain academics and bourgeois historians who seek to redefine Filipino nationalism as a product of colonialism and not as a tool in their struggle against colonialism.

These historians serve the interests of the US imperialists by



justifying colonialism as a mere component of "globalization," conveniently omitting the grave injustice, oppression, exploitation and plunder, violence and abuses suffered by the Filipino people. They also seek to obscure the historical continuum between the present backward, agrarian and non-industrial system and the past history of colonial rule which shaped the social and economic system in accordance with monopoly capitalist interests.

They prefer to stress the simple encounter of western and eastern cultures that create different local cultures, or "cultural hybridity", to

supposedly modernize the teaching of history in the service of globalization. This denigrates the lessons from peoples' struggles against colonization by imperialist powers that forged the people's unity as a nation.

Neoliberal cultural offensive

The rise of the neoliberal cultural offensive in the 1970s slowly eroded popular disapproval to commodification of culture. This was replaced by the concept that "cultural industry" must mediate between "culture" and the "market", and serve as a possible motive force in socio-economic development. Among the measures later instituted in this era was the implementation of Intellectual Property Rights on written works, music and even ideas, effectively transforming these into valuable and highly profitable commodities.

It was made to appear that the market for this so-called cultural

Military tortures, kills 2 NPAs

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of the Philippines and the entire revolutionary movement condemns the AFP's arbitrary killing of two hors de combat Red fighters in Davao City last June 9. According to Rubi del Mundo, NDF-Southern Mindanao Region spokesperson, this crime is the latest in the campaign of the reviled US-Aquino regime during its last days in power.

On June 9, members of the 1st Pulang Bagani Battalion encountered elements from the 72nd IB in Sitio Palangag, Barangay Lumiad, Paquibato District in Davao City. The encounter resulted in the death of Red fighter Mary Jane Quimbo (Ka Jane) and the capture of two others, Joel Biliran (Ka Will) and Elenita Garing (Ka Milo).

According to the residents, they saw soldiers dragging along Ka Will and Ka Milo in Lumiad before they were killed and dumped into a ditch. Their bodies bore torture marks and it is believed that the soldiers raped Ka Milo.

This crime is the latest in the long list of war crimes the AFP committed in the area. On June 14, 2015, soldiers of the 69th IB killed Datu Ruben Enlog, Randy Carnasa and Oligario Quino in what is now known as Paquibato Massacre. A week later, soldiers arbitrarily killed Leoncio Pitao (Ka Parago) and his medic, Vanessa Limpag (Ka Kyle). In addition, the AFP's extrajudicial killings of civilians continue. Among them are Marjun Baruel whom soldiers killed on May 19, Paul Saludaga on May 21, Johnny Basilisico on June 6 and Maria Cayag on June 8.

AB

industry is divorced from its basis in the larger military-industrial complex and monopoly capitalism, not just a reflection of the latter. It is as if individuals can solve social problems by lifestyle changes or responsible consumption.

The cultural offensive advances parallel to economic and political-military offensives, led by the US in its ambition for full spectrum dominance. This is invented and disseminated 24/7 with the most technologically powerful media systems that the world has ever known and with the capacity to manufacture so-called realities that fit the goals of imperialist domination.

The freedom to rake profits without government regulation becomes acceptable packaged as "free trade" or neoliberalism. The concept of globalization is invented and espoused as an instrument for equal opportunities between all countries while monopolies dump capital, products and services on underdeveloped countries. "War on terror" is broadcast to justify US intervention in different countries, and its wars of aggression and colonization as champion of "anti-terror."

With denationalization of the economy came the erosion of the nationalism of the 1960s. Cultural values such as extreme individualism, the dream of getting rich by selling one's talents to big corporations, and consumerism devoid of any sense of responsibility to the

long-term needs of society at large, were developed and disseminated. There is also the obsession with fantasy and digital games, covert or overt racism, imitation of elite lifestyles and "imported" products, and glamorization of war, specifically the use of high-tech weapons.

This includes measures to obscure the US special forces' brutality by re-imaging them as saviors and helpers in their rescue operations and mercy missions. Likewise, Oplan Bayanihan was expanded in scope and given more funds, to package it as a campaign for peace and conceal its true nature as a war of suppression against the people.

If not countered and eventually defeated, such cultural offensive will produce a slew of petty-bourgeois subcultures that will numb the masses of working people.

This will create obstacles towards the development of their nationalist, revolutionary or socialist consciousness. The nationalist, progressive and revolutionary mass movements must advance anti-imperialist nationalism as a counter-offensive to this neoliberal offensive. According to the CPP, "The burgeoning alliance with the Duterte regime can also see cooperation in the field of promoting nationalism with a clear anti-imperialist content, not the shallow "national pride" being promoted by the corporate media. AB

Liberalization and denationalization

(This is the third in the series of articles on neoliberalism. Previously discussed include the history of neoliberalism in the Philippines and the series of laws and orders implementing neoliberal privatization and deregulation in the country.)



The local economy is one of the aspects in Philippine social system which never became independent from foreign control.

Since the beginning, all its aspects have been under US imperialism's control. Under the neoliberal policy regime, US has tightened its control on all the local economy's sectors and subsectors, both as a dumping ground for excess capital and products, and source of raw materials.

Trade liberalization

After the initial lowering of import tariffs under the Marcos dictatorship, trade liberalization took off under Corazon Aquino. From 1986 to 1989, import restrictions on 1,332 product lines were scrapped.

Under the US-Ramos regime, the Senate ratified the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in 1994 and the Philippines became a member of the World Trade Organization the following year. Under the GATT, qualitative restrictions on the importation of agricultural

products were scrapped and low tariffs were imposed instead. Also, Ramos lowered all tariffs to 5% in a series of executive orders from 1996 to 2003. He boasted then that the Philippines was ahead of the GATT schedule for lowering or scrapping tariffs.

By 2004, Philippine tariffs and other taxes were among the lowest in Asia. But it was also during this time that GATT implementation came to a standstill due to most countries' refusal to honor its provisions. Upon US instigation, the

Philippines entered into various unequal agreements for further trade liberalization.

Among these are the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Free Trade Area and related bilateral agreements with China, New Zealand, Australia, India, Japan and South Korea. In 2008, the Arroyo regime signed an agreement with Japan (Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement). In 2015, the second Aquino regime embarked on negotiations for a European Union-Philippines Free Trade Agreement. The Trans-Pacific Partnership is the latest of these agreements.

Also under Aquino, the reactionary state pushed for the opening of the remaining protected economic sectors. One after the other, it enacted laws which dismantled restrictions alongside its attempts to amend the 1987 constitution's economic

provisions. It enacted the Fair Competition Law which aimed to open the telecommunications sector, local food trade and other sectors it deemed “monopolized.”

It also amended the Cabotage Law to allow foreign ships to dock and control trade in local ports. It abolished foreign restrictions on owning credit, investment and other finance companies. It also scrapped restrictions on foreigners to work in pharmaceuticals and other jobs in the health sector, criminology, forestry and law.

Denationalization of natural riches and resources

Denationalization laws, policies and measures or the abandonment of national patrimony and allowing foreign plunder of natural resources are specific to neocolonies.

In 1987, the first Aquino regime amended the Omnibus Investment Code to open up the local market to foreign investments by offering favorable incentives. Among these are tax holidays for years and the right to repatriate 100% of their earnings.



In 1991, the Foreign Investment Act was enacted to allow 100% foreign ownership of all enterprises, except those in the three “negative lists.” In 1996, Ramos scrapped the Foreign Investment List C, which barred foreign investors from sectors with sufficient enterprises to meet local demand. Also in 1994, the Foreign Bank Liberalization Law was passed to allow foreign bank operations in the country. This law was amended in the following years (General Banking Law in 2000 and Foreign Bank Liberalization Act in 2014) to widen its scope. In 2013, the Rural Bank Act of 1992 was amended to allow foreign ownership of rural banks. One of incentives to foreign

investors is the right to repossess land used as loan collateral.

It was also in the 1990s that the Exports Development Act, Further Liberalization of Foreign Investments Act—laws which established the Philippine Export Zone Authority and other foreign enclaves—were enacted. These gave foreign investors and their local cohorts the freedom to exploit cheap and docile labor, as well as tax exemptions.

One of the worst laws which opened the country's resources to foreign plunder is the Mining Act of 1995. This law gave foreign investors the right to fully own mining companies, prolonged use of large tracts of land and tax-free repatriation of their profits. Due to fierce opposition, the law was delayed while the Supreme Court deliberated on its constitutionality. On January 2003, it decided against the law but flip-flopped in December. In 2012, Aquino signed Executive Order 79 which prohibited local governments from banning open-pit mining and other destructive mining operations. **AB**

DepEd downplays dropout rate in highschool

KABATAAN PARTYLIST (KPL) and other youth groups belied the Department of Education's statement declaring a 90% senior high school enrollment rate in its first year of implementation. KPL said that DepEd downplayed the original number of students expected to enter Grade 11. From 2.5 million, they reduced it to 1.5 million to cover up the huge bulk of students who will not enroll after four years in highschool.

Prior to this, Sec. Armin Luistro of DepEd also boasted the resumption of classes last June 13 as the “best thus far”. According to Luistro, enrollment for Grade 11 has reached 1,039,047 students or 90% of students expected to enroll in SHS.

Even Leonor Briones, incoming secretary of DepEd, praised the K-12 program. She claimed that the dropout rate for SHS is lower than the number of highschool graduates who did not proceed to college.

However, reports of DepEd's regional offices are contrary to Luistro's statement. According to DepEd-Central Luzon, more than 42,000 students did not enroll for SHS due to additional financial burdens. In Western

Visayas, 42% or 27,277 did not enroll from the expected 64,548 who finished Grade 10 (junior highschool). Moreover, more than 50% in CAMANAVA (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela) did not pursue Grade 11.

At the same time, thousands complained of insufficient number of teachers, congested classrooms, lack of materials and thousands of late enrollees all over the country. DepEd - Central Visayas also said that in prioritizing the fulfillment of K-12 requirements, they overlooked other problems in the education system.

KPL also lambasted DepEd for its insistence on implementing additional two years in high school while basic problems of the education system still exist. Based on DepEd reports to Congress, around 20,000 to 28,000 new classrooms are needed every year. But in 2014, only 66,800 were built from the 113,000 classroom backlog. Classrooms required for SHS were not included in the data.

Around 60,000 to 80,000 additional teachers and 60 million new textbooks which contain K-12 curriculum are also needed.

K-12 AND DROPOUTS

25 MILLION

students will go back to school



2.5 M

finished junior high school



++ 1 MILLION

did not enroll senior high school

VOUCHER SYSTEM

P19.8 BILLION allocated by DepEd to guarantee profit of private schools

NUMBER OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN NCR

181 public schools

574 private schools



WHO URGED US TO IMPLEMENT K-12 PROGRAM



UNITED STATES



THE WORLD BANK



EUROPEAN UNION



INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

In Metro Manila, only 181 public schools offer SHS, while 574 private schools were given permits to implement the program.

Led by Anakbayan and League of Filipino Students (LFS), a national day of protest was launched on the first day of classes to demand that the foreign-imposed K-12 be scrapped and assert the creation of jobs inside the country.

Similar protest actions were also held in Baguio, Iloilo, Laguna and Cagayan de Oro.

"This chaos is just starting. K-12 will create millions of unemployed and will aggravate problems of the educational system and the entire society," said Charisse Bañez of LFS.

LFS also remarked that

DepEd's implementation of special procedures such as setting up "senior high school desks," extending the enrollment deadline for SHS and child-finding activities already proved the failure of the K-12 program.

The increasing commercialization of education continues to hinder Filipino youth, especially the poor, from going to school. Last week, the current regime allowed 1,232 private schools in elementary and highschool, along with 304 state colleges and universities to increase their tuition and other fees.

K-12 also worsens the flawed orientation of our education system focused on developing skilled workers to serve foreign and capitalist interests.

AB

Groups denounce US facility construction in CDO

UP TO 2,500 marched in Cagayan de Oro City on June 4 to oppose the planned construction of a US military base in Lumbia Airport. The said airport is one of the five facilities the puppet Aquino regime offered for US use under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. Bayan-Northern Mindanao (NM) led the rally, together with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), Gabriela and the League of Filipino Students.

Rallyists held the protest on the occasion of the 116th anniversary of the Battle in Makahambus Hill on June 4, 1900 between Filipino and US soldiers. Makahambus Hill is not far from the Lumbia Airport. According to Bayan-NM's Wildon Baron, the construction of US facilities near the place is an insult to Filipinos who fought against US colonialism.

They are demanding the halt of EDCA's implementation in the whole country, not just the construction of facilities in Lumbia, added UCCP's Bishop Beamboy Labuntoy. The presence of military bases in the Philippines is a symbol of the US continuing domination of the country, he said.

Demolitions plague the poor

After the elections' customary deferment of government's demolitions of communities in order to secure votes, demolitions, violence and evictions of the urban poor have resumed.

In Quezon City, the local government headed by Mayor Herbert Bautista violently demolished two urban poor communities to give way to private investors in the city.

In Barangay Culiati last June 14, policemen tore down the barricade put up by residents of Secret Garden compound along Luzon Avenue, enabling the demolition team to raze the homes of the urban poor. Residents barricaded the place with large pieces of wood and even tricycles, and fearlessly fought the advancing police and demolition team.

Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay), a national center and alliance for urban poor concerns and campaigns, said that the demolition was illegal because there was no court order, no writ of execution, and no relocation for the urban poor. Kadamay also reported that several residents sustained injuries and some were brought to the hospital.

Also on June 16, houses on Apollo Street, Barangay Tandang Sora were demolished. No less than five residents, including a pregnant woman, were wounded in the demolition.

Kadamay has previously pointed to the Quezon City Development Plan as the framework for the demolitions. Mayor Bautista aims to transform the city to be more commercial and profit-oriented, to the detriment of all urban poor. Kadamay said that the "Zero ISF" (Informal Settler Families) policy is blatantly discriminatory and dan-

gerous towards 1.3 million urban poor which comprises 42% of Quezon City population. Under the US-Aquino regime, 18 leaders from Kadamay have been killed.

Kadamay has long condemned the demolitions as violations of their rights to livelihood and decent homes.

Other attacks against the poor

Meanwhile, threats to the livelihood of the poor in other parts of the National Capital Region continue. In Caloocan City, residents of Brgy. 162 Sta. Quiteria set up a barricade last June 14 against impending demolition. The residents assert that they have been living in the area for many years and that the claimants to the land could not present proper documents. Also, the local government of Caloocan refuses to acknowledge the documents submitted by the residents. An estimated 13 houses will be demolished, with 25 families or 65 individuals in danger of losing their homes.

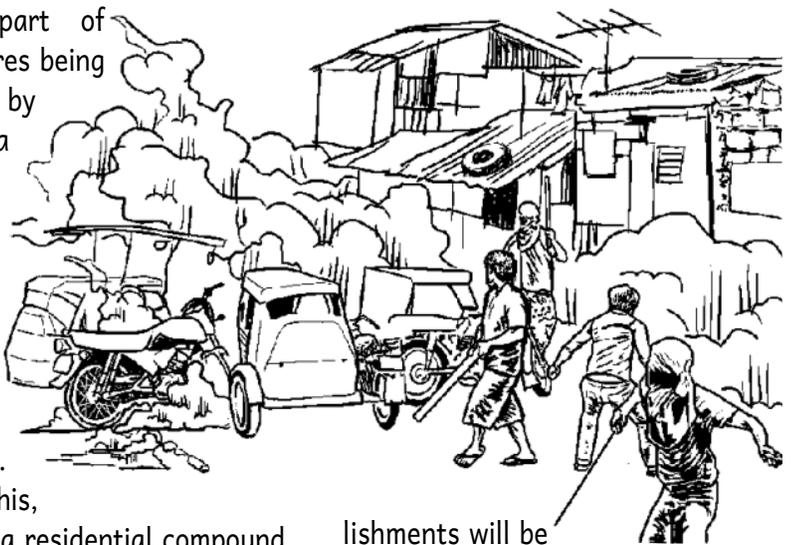
Attacks on homes continue at Pangarap Village, Caloocan City

which is part of 7,008 hectares being taken over by the Araneta family.

Without warning, Araneta's men demolished a residence last May 21.

Following this, on June 11, a residential compound was also razed to the ground. At 1:00 a.m., Araneta's men disrupted the residents and gathered them in a house at gunpoint. They were also robbed of belongings.

In Mandaluyong City, more than 25,000 families are in danger of losing their homes to the proposed Welfareville Development Project. Of the 110-hectare public land, 50 hectares are residential, while the rest hold offices of government agencies and institutions. This Public-Private Partnership under the Aquino government plans to privatize the government property where commercial estab-



lishments will be built.

Also, more than 10 million people living along the shores of Laguna Lake will lose their homes and livelihood with the resumption of the Laguna Lakeshore Expressway Dike Project. Forty percent of food supply to Metro Manila will likewise be affected by the economic dislocation of fisherfolk in the lake. Mark Villar, the incoming secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways, announced the bidding for the megadike project, wherein a company owned by the Villar family is one of those intending to secure the contract. **AB**

Closure of Fabella Hospital blocked

Fabella Memorial Hospital's planned closure was successfully stopped last June 9 by the hospital's workers and its patients after two weeks of protests.

Save Fabella Hospital Movement gained the support of multi-sectoral organizations in launching the protests. Mothers and their children, as well as residents from nearby communities, likewise joined the protests.

A day before the scheduled demolition, various types of protests were done inside and outside Fabella. Employees, health workers and students launched a snake protest along the hospital's corridors, and hung a "Save Fabella" banner. Outside, a die-in protest was held, while Benigno Aquino, Health Secretary Janette Garin and Fabella Hospital Director Esmeraldo Ilem were symbolically ousted for being "enemies of pregnant women." A People's Barricade was also held, as well as cultural presentations, and an overnight vigil.

Incoming DSWD Secretary Judy Taguiwalo joined the People's Barricade. Taguiwalo pointed out that basic

social services should not be profit-oriented. "The government must always be at the service of its people," she added. Also, the SFHM sent a letter to incoming president Rodrigo Duterte asking the latter to stop the hospital's demolition.

The Alliance of Health Workers maintained that Fabella should be modernized and repaired on-site, without interrupting the hospital's services to some 100 mothers giving birth at Fabella everyday. The group also assailed the failure to spend the allotted P16M budget since 2010 for the hospital's repairs and procurement of new equipment.

Nonetheless, the struggle to keep Fabella Hospital remains, as the hospital's management is determined to close the facility. Last June 10, the Fabella management declared that it shall proceed with the hospital's transfer to its "satellite hospital" inside the Lung Center of the Philippines compound in Quezon City. Also, patients will purportedly be referred to the Philippine General Hospital, San Lazaro Hospital and Jose Reyes Memorial

Hospital pending the completion of Fabella's permanent site.

But according to Dr. Gene Nisperos of Save Fabella Hospital Movement, the said "satellite hospital" is a private hospital built in 2007 during the first attempt to transfer Fabella to be part of the medical tourism complex under the Philippine Center for Specialized Healthcare. Nisperos added that the hospitals would not be able to accommodate the number of patients to be displaced with Fabella's closure. "These hospitals have long been there, but the ratio of infants to a single bed at Fabella remains high at four to one," said Nisperos.

Meanwhile, incoming DOH Secretary Paulyn Jean Rosell-Ubial said that what is being implemented at Fabella is "corporatization" and not privatization. According to her, the hospital could generate profit on its own because eventually, government could not sustain funding for health services and facilities.

"Corporatization" has long been exposed as a dis-



guised privatization scheme, with the ultimate purpose of facilitating public-private partnership. As experienced by hospitals transformed into "corporations," poor patients could not afford the hospitals' services and facilities because these are driven to profit-generation. Thus, rich patients and those who can afford to pay are favored over the poor. Also,

directors of said hospitals complain that government lacks subsidy for the poor. Among those transformed into corporations are the Philippine Heart Center, the National Kidney Institute, and the Philippine Children's Medical Center.

With Fabella's planned privatization, this means higher costs of health services for women and infants, and the threat of job loss for around 1,300 of the hospital's employees. Several doctors have already received their notices of job termination. AB

Mining in Nueva Vizcaya opposed anew

RESIDENTS OF Sitio Camgat, Barangay Didipio, Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya set up a barricade last June 15 to stop drilling operations by Oceana Gold Philippines Inc. (OGPI), an Australian large-scale mining company, in its expansion of operations in the area.

The barricade was led by Didipio Earth Savers' Multi-Purpose Association (DESAMA) and Samahang Pangkarapatan ng Katutubong Manggagawa at Magsasaka Inc. (SAPAKKMMI). They demanded that OGPI stop its drilling operations because chemicals used in the operations destroy their system of potable water and pollute the rivers. Six neighboring villages of Didipio, and others more in nearby towns, are in danger of being affected.

According to SAPAKKMMI president Ernesto Bobola, they do not want a repeat of OGPI's damages last 2012. That year, when the company started operations in Sitio Magasin in Didipio, sources of potable water in the area dried up. This forced residents to evacuate.

The residents reiterated their opposition to OGPI's entry. A Barangay Resolution was passed on 2012 to prevent OGPI from expanding its operations. Even the local government of Nueva Vizcaya declared a no-mining zone under EO 79. But in spite of this, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau extended OGPI's mining permit until 2021, targetting 15,000 hectares in the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino.

OGPI has so far mined 900 hectares. An estimated 47.6 million tons of gold deposits lie underneath OGPI's

targetted areas.

Likewise, SAPAKKMMI vehemently criticized OGPI's claim of being the "Most Environmentally Responsible Mining Company" last May 5. This is a big lie, says Bobola, for the reason that OGPI is responsible for the pollution of the whole river system of Didipio. The company leaked toxic chemicals from its tailings pond to Didipio's connecting rivers. As a result, farmlands were destroyed and cattle in the area perished. Also, residents developed illnesses. Two villages were likewise submerged in water to serve as the company's tailings pond.

OGPI is listed among the ten worst mining companies that the group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment is asking Rodrigo Duterte to shut down and expel. One of Duterte's promises is the punishment of large-scale destructive mining companies. Nine other companies are Taganito Mining Corporation in Surigao del Norte, DMCI Nickel Mine in Zambales, Citinickel in Palawan, Philex Mining in Benguet, Golden Summit Mining Corporation in Isabela, Sagitarrius Mines Inc. in South Cotabato, Lepanto-Goldfields in Benguet, Filminera Resources in Masbate, and Nickel Asia in Eastern Samar.

These companies are the worst in environmental destruction, eviction of peasants and indigenous peoples from their lands, and brutalities against those in opposition. In 2010, one of these companies, Taganito, was punished by the New People's Army. AB

Imperialist intervention and crisis in Venezuela

Towards the end of May, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro extended his emergency powers amid continuing grave economic and political crisis, widespread mass unrest and inciting actions to overthrow the anti-imperialist government.

Grave crisis in Venezuela

The people and government of Venezuela have long been suffering from intense economic and social crisis. US imperialism is taking advantage of the situation in the country. It is inciting the capitalists, landlords, military, police and bureaucratic officials. They are frenzied in the desire to overthrow the government that defends Chavismo, or anti-imperialism and nationalism that upholds the interests of the Venezuelan masses under the banner of socialism.

The crisis in Venezuela is a direct result of the fall in international market prices of oil which comprise 95% of the country's exports and principal source of income. Venezuela has the second biggest oil reserves in the world (after Canada).

Until early 2014, the price of crude oil was at \$115-120 per barrel. This plummeted to \$23 per barrel in early 2016. The cost of oil production in Venezuela is \$20 per

barrel. As a result, the country's income dropped.

Venezuela's dollar reserves were halved from \$24 billion in the early part of 2015 to \$12.7 billion by May. In the face of dollar scarcity, Venezuela's overall imports dropped by 18.7% and are expected to drop further by 40% this year.

There is grave shortage in food,

medicine and other necessities. Up to 70% of Venezuela's food requirement is imported. It is common to see state groceries with empty shelves.

The lack of supply was made worse by the deliberate slowdown or halt in production by private enterprises in the hope of destabilizing the Maduro regime. This is also further exploited by private capitalist hoarders who keep commodity supplies and release them only in the blackmarket.

As a result, prices of commodities are skyrocketing. For instance, the state-regulated price of a kilo of maize is set at \$0.02, but private marketeers sell it at \$2.00 because of supply shortages. Hyperinflation (very high inflation) occurred at 68% in 2014 and 180% last year. Food and alcohol prices are worse. Because of



Global condemnation of mass shooting in Orlando

PEOPLES FROM ALL over the world condemned the mass shooting last June 12 in Orlando, Florida in the USA which resulted in the death of 50 people and the wounding of 58 others. The shooting is considered the worst attack by a single perpetrator and the gravest violence against the LGBTQ community in US history. The crime took place in a nightclub frequented by members of the LGBTQ community. The perpetrator, Omar Mateen, 29, an American born in New York to parents from Afghanistan, was also killed in the incident.

US imperialism and its media promptly labeled the incident as a "terrorist attack" and blamed the ISIS, since the perpetrator identified himself as a member of the group and due to his race and religion. But they fail to

mention the capitalist and patriarchal culture which gave rise to the strong tide of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. In the US, almost 70% of homicide victims in 2013 are transgenders of color. This is despite the professed advocacy by some parts of the state for same-sex marriage and the repeal of some discriminatory laws.

Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are irrational fears and hatred for members of the LGBTQ community and those who refuse to be confined to gender categories of the reactionary system. This fear and hatred result in discrimination and brutal crimes, like the heinous killing of Filipina transgender Jennifer Laude by American soldier Joseph Scott Pemberton in 2014. **AB**

such shortages, long queues in state stores have become commonplace. In the past year, there have been 100 cases of looting and spontaneous demonstrations.

The situation is made worse by the drought brought about by El Niño. The capacity of hydroelectric dams have fallen and there is now widespread shortage in electricity. Because of this, the government set a two-day workweek for public institutions.

Imperialist agitation

US imperialism never tires of inciting unrest in Venezuela with the aim of overthrowing the anti-imperialist government and ending the policy of nationalization and reform for social benefit. The US is emboldened to remove Maduro after its agents succeeded in removing Maduro-ally Dilma Rousseff of Brazil last May through impeachment that was regarded as a coup in essence.

In over more than a decade, US imperialism has persisted in intervening in Venezuela and other countries in Latin America which form the Bolivarian block (the principle of patriotism and anti-imperialism inspired by revolutionary hero Simon Bolivar).

In 2002, the US overthrew anti-imperialist Hugo Chavez through a coup d'etat but he was immediately reinstated due to the Venezuelan peoples' widespread uprising.

In 2014, also upon US goading, anti-Maduro parties launched violent demonstrations. However, all these failed to generate broad support from the Venezuelan people.

In December 2015, for the first time in a decade, oppositionists representing the capitalists and landlords won a majority in the National Assembly. They are threatening to reverse the policies and laws that have been operating for over more than one decade of nationalization and democratic reform.

At the same time, US agents and

Strengths and weaknesses of Chavismo

THE GROWING strength and militant resistance of the Venezuelan people against imperialist intervention and defense of the Maduro government is a manifestation of their support for the system established under Chavez where the state caters to the welfare and interests of the common people.

For a decade (2002-2013), the Venezuelan people enjoyed free health services and free education up to college level. Widespread construction of free housing was carried out. The state controlled the markets and regulated prices to ensure that food and medicine are within the people's reach.

On the other hand, the current crisis in Venezuela is also a reflection of the shortcomings and limitations of the policies and programs of the anti-imperialist Chavez government.

The limits of the Chavismo program are clear in its failure to break away from Venezuela's reliance on oil exports and its neglect to develop other aspects of the economy. The anti-imperialist state failed to plan the economy, including food production, because a large part of the means of production remained in the hands of the big capitalists.

While an avowed socialist, Chavez only achieved anti-imperialist and radical reforms in order to allocate the country's wealth to raise the Venezuelan masses from poverty and suffering. The main oil company was nationalized, as well as the biggest paper factory, the telecommunications industry and others. However, the bigger part of the economy remained private including food production.

Together with the policy of addressing the people's welfare, it also carried out mass organizing and mobilization. Soviet-type communes of poor people were established and given governmental powers, including deciding on programs in the localities that are given state funds. These served to consolidate the anti-imperialist government. AB

US-supported organizations and mass media supported the call for a referendum to remove Maduro legally. Again, these attempts have failed to gather sufficient number of signatures.

The Venezuelan people are dismayed over the failure of the Maduro government to decisively resolve the crisis and suppress the capitalist sabotage of the economy and people's welfare. The Maduro government has failed to mobilize the Venezuelan people and has instead relied on using the bureaucracy, military and police to defend itself.

Since 2014, it has made concessions to the capitalists including liberalization in currency exchange, removal of oil price subsidies, setting-up Special Economic Zones to

attract foreign investments, opening up large tracts of land for mining and others.

Last March and May, Maduro assumed powers to expropriate factories which are being paralyzed by capitalists and transfer these to the control of communes (political mass organizations). At the same time, however, it gave the IMF assurances that it will fully pay the country's debt on time.

Despite the people's dismay with the Maduro regime and the grave crisis, the anti-Maduro forces have failed to generate a strong mass force. Through their independent organizations, the people are carrying out large demonstrations opposing US intervention and upholding Chavismo. AB