



EDITORIAL

Resist the threat of martial law in campuses

The Duterte fascist regime has evil plans. Rodrigo Duterte and his minions wish to impose tyrannical rule on universities because of their deep resentment against students and teachers openly opposing the fascist regime.

Over the past weeks, Bato dela Rosa, Duterte's loyal attack dog, has been using his senate position to bark at youth activists and teachers. Dela Rosa mounted rubbish shows to clamp down on youth and teachers organizations. The AFP resorted to fear-mongering when it claimed school shootings might not be prevented if they are barred from entering campuses.

Fascist agents insist on revoking the 1982 Soto-Enrile agreement. This agreement is one of the important legacy of the students in their fight against the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship to uphold

democracy and make campus academic freedom flourish. Stemming from it is the 1989 University of the Philippines-Department of National Defense agreement which sets similar prohibitions against entry into campus of AFP and PNP personnel.

The ultimate aim of dela Rosa and officers of the AFP and PNP is to remove all hindrances against beefing-up campus presence of police and soldiers who they claim also have the "right" to "indoctrinate" the students. In hundreds of schools, the AFP and PNP are already conducting indoctrination campaigns in the form of "youth

"Resist..." continued on page 2

NPA-MisOr seizes 4 AK47 rifles

WITHIN JUST FIVE minutes and without firing a shot, a unit of the New People's Army was able to raid a plunderous energy plant in Misamis Oriental on August 19 in the morning.

Confiscated from the guards of the AY 76 Security Agency deployed at the Minergy Power Corporation (MPC) in Barangay Quezon Heights, Balingasag town, were four AK 47 rifles, 200 bullets and several handheld radios.

The MPC is a 165-MW coal power plant located along the Macajalar Bay. The plant dumps its toxic chemical wastes in the said bay. Consequently, residents reported to the NPA that they have acquired several complications such as asthma, dizziness and sore eyes since the plant operations went full blast in September 2017.

The city council of Misamis Oriental also conducted an inves-

"AK47..." continued on page 3

"Hadlangan...", mula sa pahina 1

leadership fora," "information drives," "trainings," or "immunization" against the "communist disease" and fight "communist infiltration" in schools.

They label activist organizations as "fronts" of the Communist Party. The AFP and PNP teach that all criticism against the ruling regime and system is a result of "communist agitation." Their fascist ideology insists on obscuring the reality of oppression and exploitation and absence of national freedom which are the root of the people's armed and unarmed resistance.

The AFP now wants universities to be put under military rule and serve as platform for propagating its fascist ideology. At the most basic, the presence of armed state agents is incongruent with university academic freedom. It is a purveyor of threat and intimidation against students, teachers, scientists and researchers. Intellectual thinking cannot flourish if the academe is under the armed threat

of the state. Duterte aspires to bring back the time of Marcos when the academe served as the official broadcaster of the "new society" line. He wants these to be guarded by his armed agents and be ruled over by mercenary intellectuals.

Fascism goes against the liberal tradition of academic freedom. To fascists, there should be no room for thoughts or views that do not mirror or uphold the dogma or doctrine of the ruling regime. Expressing or supporting the patriotic or democratic interests of the people or criticizing the current system and administration is equated with subversion or supporting armed revolution.

If the AFP and PNP will be allowed to freely enter campuses, surveillance and restrictions against students and teachers will be heightened by the Duterte regime's fascist agents. Their presence will intimidate the youth from joining organizations, assembling or speaking up against Duterte. This will result in the suppression of

students' and teachers' democratic rights. In other words, it will ultimately redound to imposing martial law on campuses.

All these measures by the AFP and PNP are being carried out in line with the counterinsurgency doctrine now dominating the Duterte regime's policies. It is the implementation of the "whole of nation approach" which has no other aim but to put the whole nation under military control. The military now wants to control even ideological, cultural, economic and service agencies and make these serve counterinsurgency aims to the detriment of the interests and needs of the people. Those who refuse to support the AFP are under pain of being accused of "sympathizing with the communists." Beyond "national defense" and "peace and order," the AFP and PNP are now intervening in all other aspects of civil society.

Everyone must clearly understand that the threat of campus martial law is tightly bound with martial law in Mindanao and undeclared martial law in Negros, Samar, Bicol and the entire country. This is being pushed by the fascists behind widespread military abuses and violations of human rights, repression of opposition forces, suppression of strikes, suppression of peasant struggles and other forms of repression. This is also in line with the proposal to bring back the Anti-Subversion Law (which criminalizes membership in the Party) and amend the Human Security Act to make it a sharper weapon for the suppression of democratic expression and action.

The Duterte regime aims to silence the students and teachers who are among the most active in expressing criticism and opposition to fascism. The Duterte regime wants to silence and beat down activists to do away with hindrances in imposing more oppressive policies such as additional taxes, pork barrel, and foreign loans, Duterte's

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Editorial: Resist the threat of campus martial law	1																																				
NPA-MisOr seizes 4 AK47 rifles	1																																				
Offensives in Bicol	3																																				
Scheme to suppress the youth	4																																				
Bukidnon FMOs	5																																				
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"Resist..." from page 2

national treachery and kowtowing to China and the US, the "charter change" scheme and other anti-people measures.

However, Duterte, the AFP and the PNP are bound to fail in their attempt to suppress academic freedom and impose martial law in campuses. This plan has been met with stiff resistance and widespread protests of students and teachers in big universities over the past days. If Duterte pushes with this plan, it will surely be met by students and teachers with bigger and wider opposition, academic discourse and debate, and protests on streets across the country.

Above all, these acts of suppression will fail to stop the students and teachers from supporting and joining the armed struggle. Because of Duterte's fascist suppression, even more are being roused to support or become members of the New People's Army which truly represents the patriotic and democratic interests of the people. AB

"AK47..." from page 1

tigation into the infraction but has not acted on it, said Nicolas Marino, spokesperson of the NPA-Misamis Oriental. The MPC is owned Pampanga-based bureaucrat capitalists Nepomucenos. The company was awarded a permit to construct and operate its plant during the Ramos regime. It is the sole power supplier in Cagayan de Oro City and at the Phividec Industrial Estate in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental.

Meanwhile, Ka Malem Mabini, spokesperson of the NPA-North Central Mindanao Region (NCOMR), belied the baseless arrogant claim of the fascist president Rodrigo Duterte that it has already paralyzed the operations of the NPA in the region.

In reality, 13 tactical offensives were mounted by the NPA-NCOMR against troopers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) from July 28 to August 9, he added. More than 30 AFP troopers were killed while about 20 others were wounded.

On August 9, the NPA-NCOMR attacked 65th IB troopers operating at Sitio Kibulag, Barangay Bagoaingod, Tagoloan 2, in the boundary of Bukidnon and Lanao del Sur. A soldier was killed while four others were wounded. Earlier, 8th IB troopers were ambushed at Sitio Mahan-ao, Barangay Bulonay, Impasugong, Bukidnon. The soldiers were killed in action.



Another soldier of the 26th IB was killed while another was wounded when the NPA-Agusan del Sur ambushed at Kilometer 30, Barangay Mahayahay, San Luis, Agusan del Sur on August 5.

In Cagayan de Oro City, four soldiers of the 65th IB were killed while eight others were wounded in a tactical offensive mounted by the NPA-Misamis Oriental on July 30 in Barangay Pigsagan.

On July 28, the NPA-Agusan del Norte harassed 23rd IB troopers at Sitio Hinandayan, Barangay Camagong in Nasipit. Five soldiers were killed and five others were wounded.

On the other hand, the revolutionary movement paid its highest tributes to Jenos Bade (Ka Bebs) and Edmar Laruya (Ka Lenon), Red fighters who offered their lives for the success of the said armed action.

In Northern Samar, several NPA units were able to successfully mount successive offensives against the military troopers responsible for the killing of civilians, strafing their residences and harassing a barangay captain.

The NPA-Northern Samar reported that no less than four soldiers of the 20th IB were killed in action.

On August 11, Red fighters harassed 20th IB troopers in Gook, Catubig. On the same day, a CAFGU was wounded in a harassment operation conducted by the NPA against their detachment in Barangay Poponton, Las Navas. AB

Armed actions against all-out war in Bicol

MORE THAN 20 coordinated military actions were mounted by the New People's Army (NPA)-Bicol across the region on August 19-21. These include the ambush against Philippine National Police operatives in Barangay Alegria, Pio V. Corpuz, Masbate, wherein seven were wounded. Enemy camps in Sorsogon and Legazpi City were also harassed.

Earlier, 33 soldiers were killed while 21 others were wounded in offensives by the NPA-Bicol from March-June this year. Fifteen of those killed and 12 of those wounded are troopers of the 2nd IB who were hit in during a demolition operation conducted by the NPA-Masbate on April 29, June 2 and June 9 in barangays Progreso and Cawayan, San Fernando, and Barangay Malinta, Masbate City.

In the same province, two harassment operations were mounted on May 22 in Barangay Banahao, Dimasalang and in Barangay Casabangan, Pio V. Corpuz. The headquarters of the 2nd IB in Barangay Bacolod, Milagros, and Barangay Armenia, Uson were also harassed on June 10 and 12, respectively. On June 12, NPA also burned down a detachment being constructed by the PNP Special Action Force in Barangay Daraga, Placer, Masbate.

In Camarines Sur, nine troops of the 22nd IB were wounded in an ambush and harassment operation simultaneously conducted by the NPA-West Camarines Sur (Norben Gruta Command) against a military detachment at Sitio Dinumpilan, Barangay Malinao, Libmanan. A soldier and three CAFGU elements were wounded in action. Wounded soldiers who surrendered were given first aid by NPA medics. AB

Desperate scheme to suppress the youth

The Duterte regime, through its jester, Sen. Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa, is again desperately attempting to silence the youth by conducting a Senate hearing regarding minor activists who allegedly went missing.

Sen. dela Rosa rode on familial issues between parents and their activist daughters to vilify the progressive and critical stand of the youth and their organizations.

He became a laughing stock when Alicia Lucena of Anakbayan and Lory Caalaman of Kabataan Partylist, activists whom he alleged to be missing, appeared on a press conference and belied his claims. They stated that they are neither missing nor are they minors. They urged the police and military to stop using their parents to vilify their organizations and implement anti-youth policies.

As expected, the regime's militarist henchmen used the issue as a pretext to justify the ramming through of amendments to the Human Security Act, and the revival of the anti-subversion law.

The Philippine National Police also proposed to revoke an agreement signed by the Department of National Defense which prohibits military presence in campuses. In a relentless attempt to intimidate activists, the Department of Justice is summoning leaders of progressive youth organizations by issuing them subpoenas.

This is the regime's second attempt to silence the youth. On October 2018, it concocted a "Red October" fairytale which maliciously linked the progressive youth movement to the armed movement of the New People's Army. This targeted to threaten the youth and illegalize their legitimate and critical stance. This violates the youth's right to free expression and to organize.

The youth as a force for change

Activism and the radical mindset of the youth is a force for change, progress, social justice and democracy. The Duterte regime is afraid of the united

ranks of youth who are critical of his regime.

In history, youth activists were the most audacious in the struggle against the Marcos dictatorship and martial law. They were at the forefront of the historic First Quarter Storm (1970), Diliman Commune (1971), student uprisings in the late 1970s until the early 1980s against tuition fee increases, protests for the revival of students rights in camps, and the massive demonstrations in 1983-1986 which led to the ouster of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

University students were also at the forefront of the campaign to dismantle US military bases and revoke the Military Bases Agreement in 1991; and against the membership of the Philippines in the General Agreement on Tariffs (GATT) and Trade in 1994 and policies for all-out privatization and liberalization of the economy under the Ramos regime. They stood in firm solidarity with the toiling masses in opposing the GATT-WTO when world leaders converged in the country on the occasion of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in the Philippines in 1996.

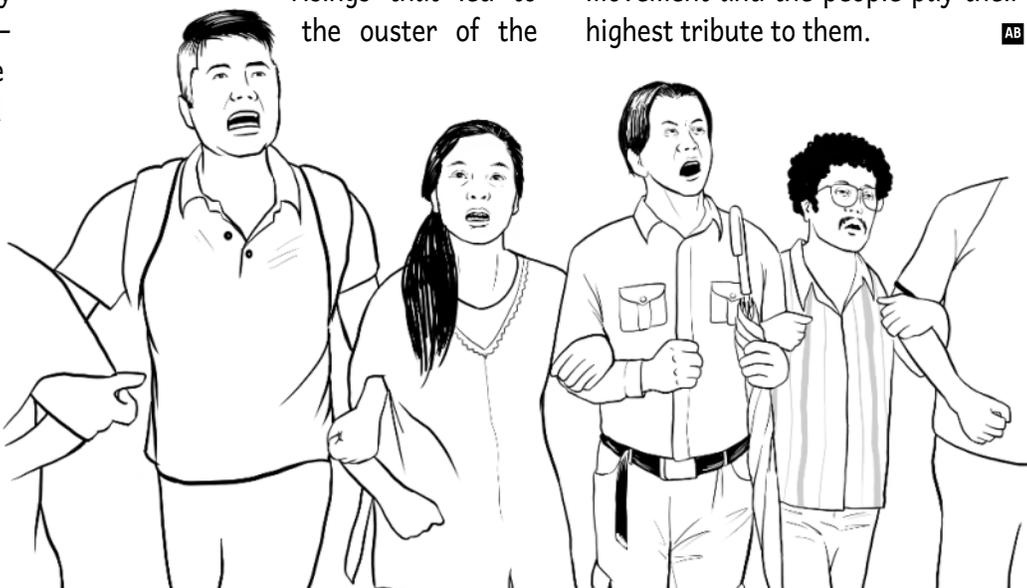
Their participation in broad uprisings that led to the ouster of the

Estrada regime is also notable. Similarly, scores of youth also participated and led the protests against pork barrel which culminated to the Million People's March during the Aquino regime in 2013. The protest movement of the student-youth against education budget cuts are also memorable.

In 2017, the youth was able to push for the enactment of free education in state universities and colleges. They continued to push for academic freedom, including the right to organize and join organizations, and the right to free press and expression.

They stand in solidarity with workers and farmers in strikes, pickets and communities. They continue to fight for the interest of the Filipino people despite threats and intimidation by the Duterte regime. Some are being threatened and harassed, while other youth leaders were slapped with trumped up charges.

The participation of students and youth in the armed revolution cannot be denied. From the Katipunan to the New People's army, majority of revolutionary troops of the people are from the youth. Many revolutionary martyrs offered their lives during the prime of their youth. They are exemplars of a life led in selfless service for the people. The revolutionary movement and the people pay their highest tribute to them. AB



Nature and objectives of the AFP's FMOs in Bukidnon

The Armed Forces of the Philippines launched no less than 13 campaigns of focused military operations, or one every month, in the province of Bukidnon from March 2018 to January 2019.

This was the principal shape of the AFP's attempt to encircle and "decimate" units of the New People's Army (NPA) in the province before the end of 2018. Midyear 2018, on August 7, the AFP declared it as "conflict manageable" and "ready for projects."

Battalions of the 403rd IBde under the 4th ID scour the mountains of Bukidnon. Five battalions (8th IB, 88th IB, 1st Special Forces Battalion, 65th IB and 58th IB) operate in the central and western parts of the province, its boundaries with Misamis Oriental and Agusan del Sur, and its boundary with Lanao del Sur. The 43rd Division

Reconnaissance Company supports its operations. In early 2019, the 1003rd IBde of the 10th ID announced that it will once again operate in barrios and communities in Bukidnon's borders with Davao, although combat operations of the 89th IB and 16th IB have been recorded in the area since 2017.

In addition, Scout Ranger, Special Forces and CAFGU graduates use the province as training ground, particularly the Pantaron Range which cuts through six provinces (Misamis Oriental, Bukidnon, Agusan del Sur, Agusan del Norte, Davao del



Norte and Davao del Sur) and serve as the backbone of Mindanao.

Nature of FMOs

An FMO is conducted for six days to two weeks, and launched after long periods of intelligence, psywar and Community Operations for Peace and Development (COPD) operations in barrios. Actual combat operations involve 150-400 troops

"FMOs...", continued on page 6

Groups oppose campus militarization

The youth can never be silenced. They will continue to advocate freedom and the right to free expression and to organize. In the face of the Duterte regime's systematic and relentless attacks against the sector, they once again showed their unity and firm stand last August 20.

Thousands of students and their teachers protested in and outside universities to oppose the scheme to militarize campuses. This came after the Philippine National Police's proposal to revoke the agreement prohibiting military and police presence in campuses. Academic communities are aware that the presence of security forces will result in widespread surveillance and suppression of students, teachers and employees especially those who are critical of the regime.

In reality, police and military elements have maintained their presence in campuses across the country. They are using so-called trainings and student conferences to freely conduct psywar operations (now dubbed "information opera-

tions") in campuses. This is on top of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) that they are desperately lobbying for, and is being used by state security forces to conduct fora and trainings in schools. Even secondary schools are not safe from military presence.

In condemnation, more than 7,000 mobilized during the "UP Day of Walkout and Action" in all units of the University of the Philippines across the country. Spearheaded by the Office of the Student regent and UP Rise against Tyranny and Dictatorship (UPRise), the student-youth, along with university officials, teachers, employees and organizations united to defend academic freedom and the right to organize.

Similar protests were mounted at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. The Alliance of Concerned Teachers and professors of the Ateneo de Manila University, University of Santo Tomas, Far Eastern University, UP Diliman and UP Manila conducted a press conference in solidarity with the day of action.

To oppose the scheme, the Makabayan bloc filed House Resolution 223 at the Lower House on August 12 to demand the reactionary state to recognize and uphold the Safe Schools Declaration. This declaration, which was drafted by governments across the world in May 2015 in Oslo, Norway, designates schools as safe zones in times of armed encounters.

This also upholds the continuing relevance of education in times of war and the implementation of concrete measures to oppose the military-use of schools. As of August 2019, 95 countries declared support for this declaration. AB

"FMOs..." from page 5

and are directed at the brigade up to the division level.

In combat maneuvers, columns converge from different areas to assist each other. In an FMO last December 2018, no less than 20 enemy columns were mobilized. The main force came from an unlikely staging point (a few-day trek through a difficult terrain). The troops hiked through trails believed as sites favorable to the NPA. They conceal themselves for up to two weeks while encircling the target area.

The AFP employed this style in its encirclement campaign in the boundary of Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental and Agusan del Sur. Up to 400 troopers scoured the jungles between two barangays (Barangay Minalwang of Claveria, Misamis Oriental and Barangay Hagpa of Impasug-ong, Bukidnon) for two weeks. A few weeks prior, the main force had started trekking from Barangay Salog in Esperanza, Agusan del Sur.

In brigade-level operations, the AFP dumps three to four columns (150 troopers) in the target area. In division-level operations, where some of the columns start outside the province, five columns with 2-3 sections are mobilized. Each column is headed by a lieutenant.

Prior to the actual encirclement, the AFP mobilize spies who penetrate targeted barrios. They are usually disguised as ambulant vendors who sell various products. The AFP also deploys its paramilitaries to look for traces and other marks in forests. The AFP uses information from captured Red fighters to pinpoint the location of tactical bases or encampments of NPA units.

Surveillance aircrafts and drones are flown overhead few weeks prior and during the height of combat operations. It has been reported that a small manned-plane (Cessna), two types of white medium-altitude drones (similar to the US Reaper or Predator) and smaller drones (similar to ScanEagles) were employed.

The Reaper-type drone is believed to be owned and directly operated by the US military that is stationed in the country.

In areas where ground troops cannot easily maneuver, they are supported from the air using two kinds of attack helicopters (MG-520 and AugustaWestland 109E) from the Tactical Operations Wing (Group 10) of the Eastern Mindanao Command based in Cagayan de Oro. A UH-1H (Huey) helicopter is also utilized to drop food supplies, medicine and troop reinforcements. During encounters, enemy troops are supported by artillery fire and 105mm howitzers.

Military troops use Harris radio for encrypted communications. Coordination between troopers is tight, from platoons to sections. Their tactical operations bases are set-up in plains (but are sometimes positioned in higher terrains to serve as observer posts) and serve as medical stations where their wounded are provided first aid. In a campaign last December, for example, a helicopter landing zone was cleared next to the operational center perched at the highest point of target area.

Expenses reach millions

If calculated, the AFP spends up to more than P10 million every two weeks for its troops, bullets, and mortar shells in its FMOs in the province. This excludes expenses for other items such as rifles, machine guns, telescopes, radios, backpacks, uniforms and boots; operational equipment such as base radios, generators, tool kits and others; medical supplies and equipment such as medicines and ambulances; transportations costs using six-by-six trucks (a minimum of 20 are used per FMO).

At the minimum, the AFP spends P3-million worth of bullets per operation. An M16 and M14 bullet costs P25 each, while a Squad Automatic Weapon bullet costs P35 each. In one of its encirclement

campaigns in 2018, 13 encounters ensued between its soldiers and NPA units (both defensives and offensives). Meanwhile, each mortar costs P10,000.

Millions are also spent for aerial combat support, bombings and strafing operations, which usually hit small farms and surrounding forests. US Air Force calculations in 2013 indicate that the costs per flight hour of a Huey and a medium-altitude drone are \$13,634 (P681,700 at the exchange of P50=\$1) and \$3,624-\$4,762 (or P181,200 to P238,100), respectively. At least 82 personnel are needed to operate and analyze data generated by these drones. Meanwhile, an attack helicopter rocket can cost P1,500 (Warhead M151) to P3,500 (Warhead M282) each. (Note: An MG-520 can launch up to seven rockets per sortie.)

In addition to these are expenses for the delivery of food supply, medical support, evacuation of dead and wounded soldiers, and setting up command centers, among others.

Encirclement operations "for development"

Encirclement campaigns are launched in the mountains of and other areas in Bukidnon to pave way for the construction of infrastructure projects such as big dams and energy plants and commercial plantations. These aim to "clear" such areas of NPA presence so that companies can enter and evict residents. These areas are agricultural lands and ancestral lands Lumad communities are situated.

In March 2019, the AFP, together with Cabinet Officer for Regional Development and Security for Region 10 Martin Andanar, inaugurated the Convergence Areas for Peace and Development (CAPDev) in Iba, Cabanglasan. This program is in line with the "whole-of-nation approach" bandied around by the National Task Force to

"FMOs..." continued on page 7

End Local Communist Armed Conflict. The Mindanao PeaceDev Coordinating Group administers the CAPDev, a group dominated by officials of the 1st, 4th and 10th ID, and the 403rd IBde and 2nd Mechanized IBde, together with regional offices of the Philippine National Police, Department of Interior and Local Government, and National Economic and Development Authority.

CAPDev covers the following ranges in the province: Mt. Saldab and Kalabugao plains in Impasug-ong, Pantaron Range and Umayam Complex in Cabanglasan and San Fernando, Kitanglad in Sumilao and Baungon, Kalatungan between Talakag and Pangantucan and the West Bukidnon plains. These areas have long been targeted for energy projects and commercial plantations of big bourgeois compradors and their foreign cohorts.

In 2018, no less than 41 energy plants, mostly in large rivers (hydro), were reportedly being planned, under development or already operating in the province. Biggest of these is the planned Pulangi Dam V (250MW) in Kitaotao. The dam is estimated to submerge 40,000 hectares of ancestral and agricultural lands, as well as forests in the borders of Bukidnon and North Cotabato. These projects also include two hydropower plants in the Tagoloan River in Santiago, Manolo Fortich which are operated by Hedcor Bukidnon of the bourgeois-comprador Aboitiz family.

The Kalabugao plains, particularly, have long been auctioned by the reactionary state to foreign developers as an area for the expansion of their commercial plantation. Bukidnon hosts large pineapple and banana plantations owned by Del Monte, DavCo and Dole. These plantations cover whole communities in Manolo Fortich, Sumilao, Impasug-ong, Libona, Lantapan, Maramag and Quezon. Del Monte plans to expand its op-

Offensives against FMOs in Bukidnon

ANG BAYAN REPORTS indicate that the New People's Army-North Central Mindanao Region (NPA-NCMR) was able to launch 30 armed actions amid the AFP's focused military operations (FMOs) in Bukidnon (March 2018-January 2019). Twenty of these are direct blows against FMO troops.

Most notable of these were the 14 armed actions (13 offensives and a defensive) mounted by the NPA on December 2018 against FMOs in the triboundary of Bukidnon, Agusan del Sur and Misamis Oriental. NPA units reported that 17 soldiers were killed while two others were wounded during these operations.

Meanwhile, four armed actions were mounted by the NPA against 300 soldiers operating in neighboring areas of Malaybalay City, Impasug-ong and Manolo Fortich on August 2018. A soldier was killed while another was wounded. The 1st Special Forces Battalion, 8th IB and 43rd Division Reconnaissance Company conducted its operation from August 8-20 in an attempt to decimate an NPA unit.

On the first day of the encirclement operation of the 8th IB on July 19, 2018, they were ambushed Red fighters in Barangay Busdi, Malaybalay City. Meanwhile, on the last day of the 12th Scout Ranger Company's FMO in Barangay Lumintao, Quezon on July 2018, seven of its troops were killed and six others were wounded after being ambushed by the NPA.

In sum, the NPA has dealt two platoons of casualties on the AFP during the said period. At least 40 were killed while 16 others were wounded. The NPA was also able to mount a punitive action against Dole Philippines on January 2019.

FMOs are not a hindrance to limit NPA armed actions. Intelligence operations and planning have to be efficiently conducted to deal blows against the enemy at a particular time.

erations in Talakag.

Also, the Pantaron, Kitanglad and Kalatungan ranges are covered by the bogus National Greening Program. The reactionary state has long opened the forests therein to plunder by mining and logging corporations.

The province is also expected to receive of millions of funds for infrastructure projects. These include the airport project in Don Carlos which has destroyed hundreds of hectares of ricefields. The Mindanao Road Sector Project will also cut across the province and hit farms and displace hundreds of peasants. The latter project costs P25.3 billion, most of which will be loaned from the Asian Development Bank.

Planned road and bridge projects will be constructed not to benefit ordinary people but only to

ease transportation of products from the province to ports and factories. For instance, a road was constructed in Alae, Manolo Fortich to cut short transport time of products from commercial plantations in Bukidnon to the Mindanao Container Terminal in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. Meanwhile, two other road projects, the Laak-San Fernando and Mactan-Miaray, are being actively opposed by Lumads as these will cut across their communities.

The mountains of Bukidnon are not merely the ancestral lands of tribes in the province but are also the source of their livelihood. Two large rivers (Pulangi and Tagoloan) originate here and supply water and irrigation to the entire province. These also serve as Mindanao's watershed and supplies 25% of the island's energy needs. **AB**

Human rights violations in Bukidnon

The list of the AFP's crimes against the people further expanded as it placed Bukidnon under focused military operations. In 2018, more than five were killed while many other civilians were arrested. This year, 13 were reported killed while hundreds of villages are scoured by soldiers.

Among the most recent cases is the killing of Jeffrey Bayot, a Lumad peasant, last August 11 in Barangay Bongbungon, Quezon who was on his way home.

Two days before the incident, two 88th IB troopers in plainclothes fired upon Alex Lacay and Renard Burgos at Sitio Pag-asa, Barangay Salawagan, Quezon. Alex Lacay died on the spot while Burgos was able to escape. Both farmers were members of Kaugalingaong Sistema Igpasindog to Lumadnong Ogpaan (Kasilo), a Lumad group defending their right to their ancestral lands.

Also killed this year were Guillermo Casas, Liovogildo Palma and Joel Anino in San Fernando. Meanwhile, Datu Kaylo Bontulan was slain during a military airstrike in Kitaotao.

Last July, Datu Mario Agsab was shot inside his home at Sitio Mainaga, Barangay Iba, Cabaanglasan. The suspects were identified as Sammy Diwangan, member of Alamara and Emboy Gayao, a CAFGU member under the 8th IB. Agsab was a member of Pigyayunungan, a Lumad organization.

Threat and harassment

Harassment and the spreading of malicious propaganda by the Duterte regime against human rights defenders and the people also continue unabated.

Last August 8 and 9, members of PNP went to a school in Manolo Fortich where Kristin Lim's children are studying. They asked the parents who were waiting outside the school about Lim's whereabouts. Before this, elements of the 1st Special Forces Battalion went to

Lim's residence in Barangay Damilag, Manolo Fortich. She was a former station manager of Radyo Lumad.

Elements of 1st SFB also conducted an anti-communist forum in the barangay hall of Damilag last August 7. Before the forum, soldiers roamed around the community and alleged that the community has already been "infiltrated by communism."

Last August 2-4, the AFP gathered youth leaders in Quezon, under the guise of a Youth Leadership Summit, to propagate lies against the revolutionary movement. A similar event was also held at the Bukidnon State University in its opening of classes.

Persona-non-grata and militarization

Various barangays in Quezon were coerced by the military to issue persona-non-grata declarations against the NPA. Simultaneously, 300 civilians, alleged as members of revolutionary organizations, were forced to surrender as NPA supporters.

Residents of Barangay Merangeran in Quezon, barangays Lumbayao, Banlag and Dagat Kidavao in Valencia City were made to pledge their loyalty to the reac-

tionary government last July 28.

Meanwhile, 30 families from Barangay Tugaya, Valencia City evacuated in their barangay hall after troops of the 403rd Brigade strafed their houses last June 22. Last March, 1,600 troopers of the 60th IB, 56th IB, 57th IB, 58th IB, Scout Rangers and 43rd Division Reconnaissance Company besieged communities in the towns of Cabaanglasan and San Fernando. Before the siege, the communities were aerially bombed, mortared and strafed.

On February 2019, the AFP boasted that about 27 barangays have already issued their respective "persona-non-grata" declarations against the NPA. From 2017 to 2018, about 295 civilians have been coerced to surrender either as NPA supporters or members.

Military troops continue to occupy civilian infrastructures inside their communities. Since March, elements of the 8th IB are occupying Barangay Bontongon in Impasug-ong and barangays Manalog and Kibalabag in Malaybalay City.

This August, 8th IB forces attacked Sitio Bendum, Barangay Busdi in the same town.

Aside from these, human rights groups were able to document seven cases of illegal arrests this year. One of the starkest cases was the arrest of 2 minors in Sitio Sanggiapo, Barangay Sinuda, Kitaotao by elements of the 8th IB last February 18. AB



200 Caramoan residents evacuate

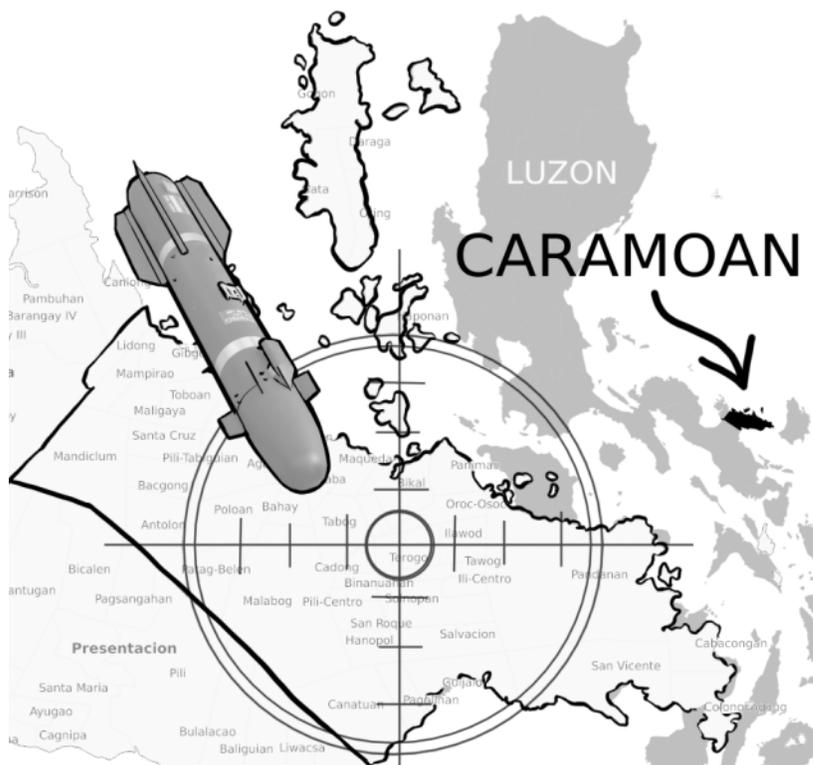
The Philippine Air Force's aerial bombardment and strafing of communities in Barangay Lidong, Caramoan, Camarines Sur last August 13 resulted in the evacuation of more than 200 individuals.

To justify the attack, the fascists made it appear that there had been an encounter between the 83rd IB and Red fighters in the area. This claim was, however, belied by National Democratic Front-Bicol spokesperson Ka Ma. Roja Banua.

Last August 14, 18 families were reported to have evacuated from the towns of Lopez, Macalelon, Catanauan and Agdangan in Quezon Province. The farmers were demanding an increase in the farm-gate prices of copra and whole coconut. They were summoned to a military camp and coerced to surrender as NPA members.

More than 100 soldiers of the 26th IB encamped in residents' houses, clinic, and corn mills in a Lumad community at Sityo Simowao, Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur last August 16. The residents opposed the occupation as this engenders fear and disrupts the harvest season. Lumads from Tubod, Bolhoon, San Miguel also reported that their community has been occupied by the military since August 17.

Elements of the 20th IB reentered Barangay Capotoan in Las Navas town, Northern Samar on August 12. They segregated 143 men and women from their children. They



were then interrogated and threatened to be killed. Seven other residents were isolated, detained for a few hours, and were separately interrogated and threatened. Soldiers continue to occupy civilian infrastructures in the community.

Abduction in Samar. Elements of the 43rd IB abducted Nario Lagrimas, a farmer and resident of E. Duran, Bobon, Northern Samar, along with his companion last August 8. His companion was released a few hours later, but Lagrimas is still missing up to the present.

Harassment in Mindanao. Men armed with high-powered rifles looked for Pedro Arnado, national officer of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, in his residence in Davao City on August 20.

In Cagayan de Oro City, two elements of the 1st SFB in plainclothes went to the residence of Kadamay-Northern Mindanao Chairperson Francisco "Iko" Pagayaman, 63, in Barangay Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City and asked for his whereabouts.

Illegal detention. Despite the dismissal on July 30 of the illegal possession of firearms and explosives charge against Alexander and Winona Birondo, staff of the NDFP negotiating panel, the couple are yet to be released by the police. They were arrested without a warrant by the police last July 23 in Barangay Maribio, San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City and were subsequently detained at Camp Caringal. Both are suffering from diabetes. AB

Gina Lopez passes away

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of the Philippines (CPP) considers Regina "Gina" Lopez "a true friend of the Filipino people." This was stated by CPP in its message of condolence to her family and friends. Lopez passed away at the age of 65 on August 19 due to cancer.

Lopez served as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) from 2016 to 2017. During her short stint, she did her very best to defend the envi-

ronment and the people whose lives depend on it. She joined the people in opposing big mining and logging operations which plunder mountains, poison rivers and destroy the land.

She audaciously banned open-pit mining and suspended the operation permits of scores of companies.

When Lopez was relieved of her position, Duterte immediately allowed the suspended mining and logging companies to resume their operations, and revoked policies that defend the people and environment. AB

Police disperses Pepmaco picketline anew

FOR THE SECOND time, police officers violently dispersed the picketline of striking Pepmaco workers in Calamba, Laguna on August 19 at 11:30 a.m. Eighteen workers, including six women, were arbitrarily arrested and detained.

Police operatives perpetrated the dispersal while officials of the Pepmaco Workers' Union were negotiating at the office of the National Conciliation and Mediation Board for the regularization of workers.

The arrest violates the Department of Justice Memorandum Circular 016 which prohibits the arbitrary arrest of striking workers.

The first dispersal took place on June 28 wherein 12 workers were wounded. The strike was mounted on June 4 to demand workers' regularization and the management's compliance to safety standards.

The 18 workers were subsequently released on August 20. Despite the harassment of the Pepmaco management, workers continue to stand firm and pledged to reestablish their picketline. **AB**



FFM in Isabel

KARAPATAN SPEARHEADED A fact-finding mission (FFM) on August 8-10 in San Mariano, Isabel after a spate of human rights violations was reported in the province.

The investigation disclosed that five companies of the 95th and 86th IB have been deployed across 15 barangays in San Mariano, as well as four barangays in Benito Soliven and three in Ilagan City. The military intensified their operations and surveillance in the said areas under the pretext of conducting so-called development programs. Cases including sexual harassment, encampment in civilian infrastructures, indiscriminate firing, and illegal arrest and detention were documented during the investigation.

Starkest among these was the strafing of the house of peasant leader at Sitio Disiguit, Gangalan, San Mariano by the 95th IB last July. His wife, two children and two-year old grandson were in the house when the incident happened. **AB**

P113.7M-worth of undistributed DepEd books

THE ACT TEACHERS Partylist condemned the Department of Education (DepEd) over its failure to distribute textbooks worth P113.7 million. The group also questioned the anomalous contracts it entered for the procurement of P254-million worth of error-filled textbooks.

"Teachers have been repeatedly told to learn financial literacy whenever they demand a substantial increase in their meager salaries only to find out that the education agency itself has been inefficient and delinquent with the use of its funds," said ACT Teachers Rep. France Castro. Teachers often complain that they would have to shell out from their own pockets to provide their students with handouts.

To make this worse, the Duterte regime continues to cut the budget for the procurement of textbooks and other learning materials. From P3.04 billion in 2017, the allocation decreased to P2.99 billion in 2018 and P1.84 billion this year. **AB**

Policemen kill 3, detain hundreds in Baseco

UPON THE DIRECTIVE of Manila Mayor Isko Moreno to clean Baseco Compound, which he claims to be a haven of illegal drugs, hundreds of police officers attacked the community last August 11.

Baseco is an urban poor community along Manila Bay. Thousands of its residents were targeted to be displaced since March to pave way for the Manila Bay reclamation which covers 200 hectares of Baseco.

Using its bogus anti-drug campaign as pretext, PNP forces round up 700-1000 residents along the shoreline of Baseco. Around 21 persons were arrested while three others were killed after allegedly attempting to "fight back."

The same operations were carried out in the early morning of August 11 in Antipolo City. Police and soldiers of the 2nd ID rounded up 80 individuals at the covered court of Sitio Tanglaw, Barangay San Isidro, whom they claimed to be included in their watchlist. At gunpoint, they were made to lie facedown and coerced to undergo drug testing. Houses were also searched and cellphones were confiscated without presenting any warrant.

The AFP and PNP's excessive use of force in these "anti-drug" operations was vehemently condemned by various groups. According to Karapatan, these operations eventually result in the indiscriminate violation of human rights under the regime's continuing bloody war on drugs.

From July 2016 to May 2019, more than 6,600 have been killed by the PNP based its official report on its so-called war on drugs. On the other hand, more than 27,000 have fallen victim to extrajudicial killings perpetrated by death squads in the same period. **AB**

Day of Mourning for Negros

THE DEFEND NEGROS #StopTheAttacks Network mounted the "National Day of Mourning and Protest" on August 20 to condemn the widespread killings and other attacks against civilians in Negros.

It spearheaded the protest of hundreds of individuals in various parts of the country including Metro Manila, Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Sorsogon, Masbate, Laguna, Iloilo, Dumaguete, Cebu, Bacolod and the Negros Island. Migrants conducted similar protest actions in the US, Australia and Hongkong to stand in solidarity with the call to stop the killings.

Since Duterte assumed office, 226 farmers have been killed—90 of whom were from Negros. The latest victim is Joshua Philip Partosa, 20, Grade 11 student of Bolocboloc High School who was

gunned down by four men on August 15.

Partosa and his two siblings were on their way to school at Purok 2, Barangay Bolocboloc, Sibulan, Negros Oriental when they were strafed by the perpetrators. Partosa was then shot thrice at close-range and stabbed in the neck. The police claims that Partosa was involved in a recent string of stabbing incidents in Dumaguete City. This was, however, belied by his father. On the same day, Fernando Toreno, former councilman of Barangay Kumaliskis, Don Salvador Benedicto was also killed. AB

Duterte proposes mass Dengvaxia vaccination

AFTER THE DEPARTMENT of Health (DOH) declared a state of epidemic on August 6 due to increasing dengue cases in the country, Rodrigo Duterte immediately proposed to revive the anomalous Dengvaxia vaccination program for Filipino children which is believed to have killed about 26 from April 2016-February 2018.

Doctors and health workers groups opposed the recent push for vaccination. They said that the regime should prioritize preventive measure against dengue. Dengvaxia will not put a stop to the dengue epidemic as it will take a couple or several years for it to take effect.

They added that the anti-dengue campaign will be effective only if local government units will prioritize their implementation of measures which have already been set. A sufficient budget allocation for health services is also vital, including wages for health workers at the barangay level and community doctors who serve in rural poor communities in the hinterlands.

During the second week of August, the Philippines recorded the highest cases of dengue in South-

east Asia. Around 620 patients died due to the disease which could have been prevented as early as January when the outbreak started. The announcement of the DOH of its prevention plan already came too late.

Early on, health workers and doctors have opposed the mass Dengvaxia vaccination program as the said vaccine was still in trial stage. No one has been held accountable for the said anomaly. More than 870,000 children have been experimented on by Sanofi Pasteur. The pharmaceutical company is notorious for its criminal record of bribing doctors and governments, and violating ethical standards to facilitate their procurement of medicines that are being manufactured by the company. AB

New US military facility

THE RECENT AGREEMENT to construct a new facility for the "war against terrorism" further strengthens the US' hold of the Philippine military and police.

The agreement for the construction of a training center at the Philippine National Police Academy in Silang, Cavite was signed on August 15 by US Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission John Law and Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Oscar Albayalde. The US allocated a P520-million budget for its construction and operation.

The said facility will serve as an additional base of the US military. This is in addition to their base in Marawi City and in other camps of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) as stated in the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

The construction of the facility serves the aim of the US to direct and control "counterterrorism" operations in the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries. PNP and AFP troopers will be trained in the said facility along with other US-allied forces from other Southeast Asian countries. They will be indoctrinated to identify and fight "terrorists" as declared by the US. These forces will operate as an extension of the US military.

The five newly formed battalions of the PNP Special Action Force (SAF) will be the first to undergo training in this facility as promised by Albayalde. In 2004, it can be recalled that the US military also secretly trained two SAF companies in Zamboanga City, that were subsequently deployed to operate in Mamasapano, Maguindanao wherein 44 operatives were killed in action. AB

Hongkong protests against extradition

Millions of Hongkong citizens are mounting successive demonstrations to show their stand against the Carrie Lam administration's scheme to railroad amendments to the extradition law. This bill aims to allow suspects to be sent to China for trial. Massive protests have been mounted since June.

Residents assert that bill violates the autonomy of Hongkong which is considered a special administrative region of China. They demand to uphold the one country, two systems policy which gives Hongkong autonomy and a separate legal system to China.

The protests escalated on August 11 wherein more than two million participated. The protests started out peacefully despite police provocations. The protests escalated again on August 18, wherein more than 1.7 million marched along the major roads of

Hongkong.

The protest is already on its 11th week. During this period, scores of protesters were arrested, including those wounded and are being treated in hospitals. They were slapped with criminal charges, and in order to extend their sentences, the protests were labelled as "riots."

Hongkong residents are enraged with the administration's obstinacy and refusal to dialogue or compromise. Although the bill has been declared "dead," there has not been any move to fully withdraw it from future legislation.

The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) said that the movement against extradition law is democratic and involves a broad alliance of organizations with different levels of political awareness and readiness.

Although the protest actions remain centered on opposing extradition, basic issues confronting the people such as the lack of decent jobs and housing, low wages, long working hours, high costs of commodities and others are also laid down during demonstrations.

The ILPS urged Hongkong residents to persist in their struggle while, at same time, standing guard against foreign powers such as the US, that are riding on the issue to instigate the separation of Hong Kong from China. AB

Alarming forest fire in Amazon

THE AMAZON FOREST has been on fire for two weeks already this August. This year, about 72,843 cases of forest fires have been recorded in the country, half of which were in the Amazon. Reports by the National Institute for Space Research of Brazil indicate that incidents of forest fires have increased by 84% compared to the previous year.

The Amazon forest covers a 550 million-hectare land area, which is 20 times larger than that of the entire Philippines. It is the largest forest in the world and covers nine countries. The biggest chunk of forests are located in Brazil. It serves as habitat to 10% of flora and fauna species in the planet and supplies 20% of earth's oxygen. Likewise, the Amazon aids in mitigating global warming and serves as ancestral lands to more than 400 tribes.

Aside from the forest fires, the

Amazon is drastically deteriorating due to the entry of mining, dam, road and other projects in the area.

Brazil Pres. Jair Bolsonaro has repeatedly emboldened loggers, ranchers and farmers to expand their operations and dominate the Amazon. Similarly, he cut the budget for environmental protection by \$23 million. Conduct of forest inspections in the Amazon has also decreased by 70%. He also issued an executive order which transferred the authority of indigenous people's

to regulate the Amazon to the state.

His son Flavio, a senator in Brazil, has also pushed for a legislation that would relieve farmers of the obligation of maintaining 20-80% tree cover on their land.

The deterioration of forests is mainly due to the expansion of infrastructure projects such as roads and hydroelectric plants. Among the most affected areas include the state of Para which was destroyed through the construction of the BR-163 highway which connects the Amazon and the Belo Monte dam. In 2017, the Brazilian government proposed to construct more than 40 hydroelectric dams by the end of 2022. In general, the Amazon has already been deforested by 15%. AB