



## EDITORIAL

# Crush the monster Duterte

**T**he Duterte regime is now set on surpassing all previous reactionary regimes in terms of corruption, abuses, oppression and treachery in just a span of four years. Under his tyrannical reign, vast amounts of wealth and power have been accumulated by the monster Duterte, as well as by his bureaucrat capitalist minions, bourgeois compradors and their imperialist monsters.

While those in power fatten themselves, the Filipino people wallow in intolerable hardship and sacrifices. The lives of the people—workers, peasants, the semiproletariat, petty-bourgeoisies and national bourgeoisie—have nosedived since 2016. Policies dictated by foreign big capitalists and banks have brought misery and agony. The toiling masses suffer the most. They are oppressed by widespread unemployment, low wages and income, landlessness, rising prices, onerous taxes, homelessness, disease and the decrepit state of health and social services.

A few accumulate wealth while the entire economy is prostrate and

unable to recover. While the country drowns in an ocean of debt, profits of big bourgeoisie compradors and big foreign capitalists soar. The exploiters and plunderers are insatiable; even as the country lie wasted with its backward agricultural production and without much needed industries.

Philippine national sovereignty continue to erode as its rights are surrendered in the face of heightened plunder and military maneuvers by rival imperialists US and China. In exchange for the promise of a few billion dollars loans, bribes and personal and political favors, Duterte has surrendered the Philippine's sea and

land territory, allowed China to plunder marine resources and deny Filipinos their fishing grounds. In exchange for continuing military and political support, Duterte ended peace negotiations and promised to crush the revolutionary movement. He took back his threat to terminate the Visiting Forces Agreement and continue to pursue the anti-people counterinsurgency campaign.

On top of the suffering people, the monster Duterte seats on his throne. Under his four year reign, the country has suffered from the crime and corruption of the ruling bureaucrat capitalists. They have pocketed people's funds and made money from government infrastructure contracts. They have favored the oligarchs who know how to "go along" while aggravate those who refuse to bow to their evil power. Duterte has surrounded himself with favored military of-

ficers to guard against his rivals.

In the past four years, he has destroyed the country with a relentless terrorist war against the poor and oppressed. Tens of thousands have been murdered in his fake "war on drugs" to force syndicates to kneel and obey. Tens of thousands were ravaged by the war of destruction and military occupation of Marawi City and the continuing war against the Moro people. All over, people are being intimidated and bulldozed, and their democratic rights suppressed in the war against the people in the name of anti-communism. He successfully implemented Mindanao martial law, Memorandum Order 32 and Executive Order 70 to impose military rule over the people.

By signing the "Anti-Terror Law," Duterte has crowned himself dictator. He now holds the power to

use the full terrorist might of the state to intimidate, suppress and crush any critic or rival. Through this law, Duterte has claimed powers beyond the limits set by the 1987 constitution. This law tramples on basic civil and political rights.

Duterte has busied himself with his scheme to impose a fascist dictatorship while the entire people face the Covid-19 pandemic. The failed militarist response of his government to threats on public

health has resulted in continuing and accelerating spread of the virus across the country. After failing to respond promptly, prepare and strengthen the health system, Duterte imposed his military lockdown to control the entire population as his leading solution to the pandemic and as dress rehearsal for restrictions under his new fascist normal.

Duterte wasted the people's sacrifices and hardship as he failed to take measures for mass testing and extensive contact-tracing, strengthening laboratories and free treatment of Covid-19 patients. Instead, he plundered billions of pesos in anomalous purchases of over-priced equipment, caused widespread hunger and devastated people's lives. It is now crystal clear that Duterte is the biggest threat to their health and safety amid the pandemic.

In the face of widespread sufferings and repression, the people's anger against Duterte are boiling over. They strongly seek to crush the monster and end his evil rule. They are determined to end Duterte's reign as soon as possible and make him pay for all his crimes against the people and against humanity.

The time to be quiet and timid is over. The people are overcoming their fear and gathering courage to collectively act and resist. They are becoming even more undaunted in speaking up and asserting their demand for Duterte's resignation or ouster. A broad front of various democratic forces are now linking arms against his tyranny. While greater powers and wealth are gobbled up by the monster, the more he becomes isolated from the people. However cruel and powerful, the ogre is no match to the



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power of a united people.

The Party urges all democratic classes, sectors and groups to rise up, organize and build the broadest unity to fight for their rights, resist state terrorism, corruption, oppression and treachery of the Duterte regime. They must mount street marches and demonstrations in large numbers and wage different forms of resistance in order to gather the people's strength and power to

change the course of history.

In the face of worsening terrorism of the reactionary state, the New People's Army (NPA) must defend the people against the terrorist attacks against their rights. While the NPA prioritizes extending health and economic services to the people amid the Covid-19 pandemic, its units must also address the people's aspirations for justice and punish the fascist terrorists and make them pay for their crimes

against the people.

The unprecedented sufferings of the people under the Duterte regime manifests the chronic crisis of the moribund system in the Philippines. It underscores the need to wage national democratic revolution in order to end the rotten semicolonial and semifeudal system, achieve national freedom and people's democracy, and establish a free, progressive and prosperous future.

AB



## Anti-Terror Act of 2020

Among the starkest anti-democratic

and anti-people provisions of the

Overly vague definition of terrorism. According to the law, it is terrorism to "intimidate the general public," "create an atmosphere of fear," "provoke or influence by intimidation the government," "seriously destabilize the fundamental political, economic, or social structures" and others.

Those convicted of the crime of terrorism will suffer life imprisonment without benefit of parole.

### **"Terrorism" includes any act, regardless whether it has been committed or is still being planned:**

Any act "intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to any person," "cause extensive damage or destruction to a government or public facility or private property" or "destruction of critical infrastructure." (life)

"Threat to commit terrorism" (12 years)

"Planning, training, preparing and facilitating the commission of terrorism" including "making documents." (life)

"Conspiracy to commit terrorism" (life)

"Proposal to commit terrorism" (12 years)

"Inciting to commit terrorism" by means of speeches, writings or emblems (12 years)

SECTION 25

gives authority to soon-to-be-formed Anti-Terrorism Council to declare as terrorist any individual, organization or association, local or foreign, freeze their property, without judicial notice or process.

SECTION 29

allows the warrantless arrest of individuals on mere suspicion that a "crime of terrorism" will be committed. The provision also allows extending detention of a suspect without judicial order, or without charges filed before the court, from the 36 hour maximum set by the constitution, to 14-24 days.

# IATF fails to counter Covid-19

The Philippines is far from eradicating the Covid-19 pandemic after four months under the Bayanihan to Heal as One or the Bayanihan Act. Infected cases are still on the rise. In July 6, the country registered 46,000 positive cases. This did not include the 8,000 positive cases awaiting validation from the Department of Health.

Duterte and his generals in the Inter-Agency Task Force for Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) utterly failed in controlling the spread of the virus. The data they are propagating is incomplete, riddled with errors, late and thus is useless in mapping the pandemic. Testing is still limited at 14,000/day, not even half of its target of 30,000/day last May. Contact tracing is still slow. When cases rose in Cebu, Duterte responded with more military and police troops instead of additional funds and medical workers.

Worse, the IATF exported the virus to many provinces when it carelessly ordered the return of stranded individuals from Metro Manila without proper or over-delayed test results to ensure that they are not virus carriers. The IATF also did nothing to prepare hospitals and quarantine facilities to accommodate them in the provinces. In July, eight new virus hotspots emerged due to Metro Manila and Cebu imported cases.

Up to now, aid for those who lost their livelihoods remains meager. Out of the P3-trillion funds that Duterte amassed through the Bayanihan Act, only 31.5 families have benefited from the first tranche of aid as of June 29. Only ₱186 billion out of ₱272 billion have been distributed to local governments. Half or only ₱14 billion of the ₱30 billion health funds have been utilized.

Only 3.1 million workers received aid, even as approximately 7 million have lost their jobs, temporarily or permanently, because of the lockdown. In a survey last May, 5.4% of the workforce or 4.1 million workers have been stranded in different parts of the country, with Metro Manila hosting the highest number (490,000). Many of them are suffering due to the IATF's arbitrary imposition of ever-changing travel policies. They endure miserable conditions as they no longer have money, aid, shelter, food and prospects for livelihood and employment.

The country is still under different levels of lockdown. The Philippines has implemented the longest and most violent lockdown

in the world. It continues to lock-down the people but has eased restrictions to favor several businesses, agencies and sectors.

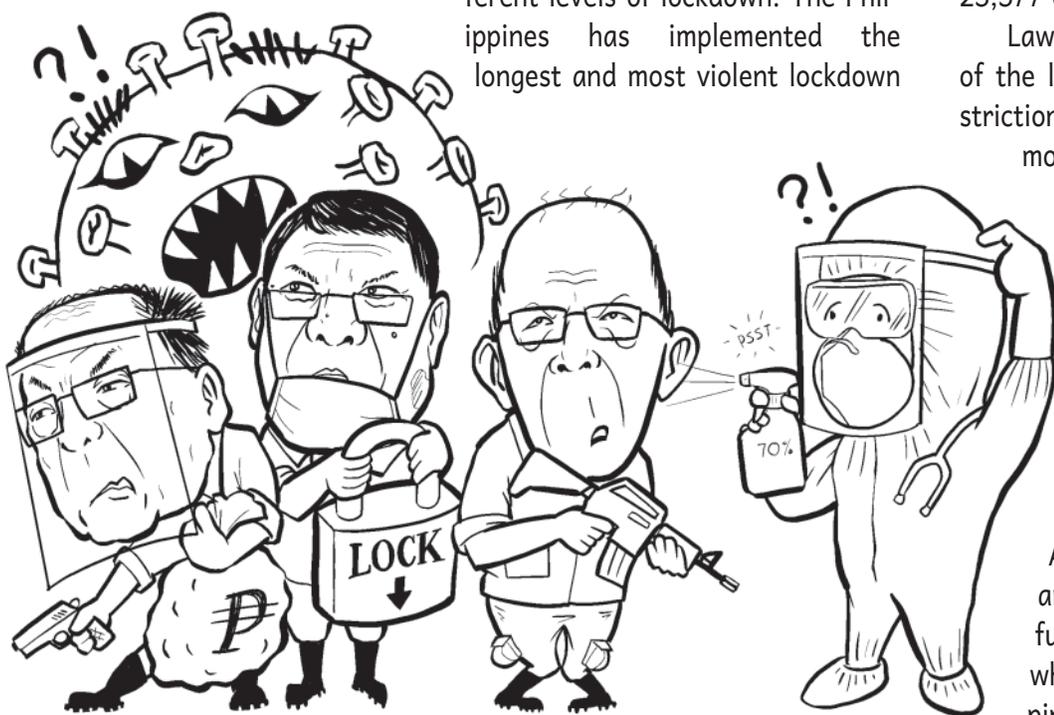
Movement in all levels of quarantines is still restricted to workers in "essential business and services." It insured the continued operations of foreign companies in BPOs, gambling, construction, manufacturing and large malls.

Public transportation is still limited even though many have been ordered back to work. This July, only 8 for every 100 traditional jeepneys in Metro Manila were allowed to ply their routes. This is despite studies showing that these jeepneys are safer than buses, vans and modern jeepneys which are enclosed, and thus more likely to spread the virus.

Citizens aged 21 and below are still locked-up in their houses. They comprise the majority of the 30 million who are denied their right to education and jobs due to the changing and anti-poor state policies on education and school openings.

From March 7 to May 31, the police troops have arrested at least 188,348 individuals due to "quarantine violations." More than 57,700 were slapped with cases and 23,377 were ordered to pay fines.

Lawyers questioned the legality of the lockdown, especially the restrictions on businesses, travel and movement of the people. According to them, these restrictions contradict constitutional provisions which state that such are not allowed unless put into law. It is also erroneous to assume that these are covered by the Bayanihan Act. Restrictions on travel and gatherings and curfew further lost any legal basis when the Bayanihan Act expired on June 24.



## "Activists, not terrorists"

**A**round 1,500 activists converged at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City last July 4, a day after Rodrigo Duterte signed the Republic Act 11479 called the anti-terror bill law. The Movement Against Tyranny and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan spearheaded the protest along with other national democratic organizations.

The rallyists stood in solidarity with other groups who oppose the law, including leaders of the traditional opposition. Protest actions were also mounted in Bacolod City, Cavite, Laguna and Cagayan. Filipino migrants also protested in Hong Kong and in front of the Philippine Embassy in Washington D.C., US.

Duterte signed the bill into law despite being broadly criticized by the people.

Relatedly, four petitions were filed before the Supreme Court by progressive lawmakers, lawyers and academics to junk the law. The law is set to take effect on July 19.

Meanwhile, journalists protested on July 3 in Quezon City in support of the call for the ABS-CBN's renewal of franchise. The rallyists marched to the office of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR). The Congress is set to issue

its decision regarding the renewal on July 7.

Earlier, Kilusang Mayo uno led a protest in front of the CHR to mark Duterte's fourth year in power last June 30. They conducted a die-in protest to symbolize the death of basic rights and jobs under his regime. The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas also protested in front the Department of Agriculture in Quezon City to express their rage against the agency's failure to aid farmers. They also criticized the agency's corruption, noting the procurement of overpriced fertilizers which it distributed to farmers as aid during the pandemic. **AB**

## NPA strikes at newly deployed battalions

**T**he New People's Army (NPA)-Eastern Samar (Sergio Lobina Command) foiled the attack of the newly deployed 78th IB in Barangay Balingasag, Oras last June 26. Red fighters were able to seize two R4 rifles from the soldiers during the encounter. Reports that 10 soldiers were killed during the encounter are yet to be confirmed. The said battalion operated in Leyte prior to the deployment.

The NPA-Western Samar (Arnulfo Ortiz Command) also sniped operating troopers of the 19th IB at Sitio Galutan, Hagbay, San Jose de Buan last July 1. The battalion was newly deployed in the area from North Cotabato. The said unit was dubbed a "massacre battalion" for its long and bloody record of human rights abuses during the Arroyo regime. The unit is also notorious for sowing terror in Leyte. Its crimes include the massacre of eight farmers in Palo, and the massacre in Kananga where scientist Prof. Leonard Co was killed.

Meanwhile, the NPA-Albay harassed operating police troops in Barangay San Isidro, Jovellar in the early morning of June 23. The attack was a response to Joint Task Force Bicolandia's SEMPO-like at-

tacks in the province. A police troop was killed while three others were wounded. Earlier on July 2, the NPA-Sorsogon harassed the camp of 31st IB at Sitio Cabugaan, Barangay San Isidro, Bulan.

In Negros Occidental, an element of the 62nd IB was killed in an ambush by the NPA at Sitio Compound, Barangay Luz, Guihulngan City on July 2, 5 p.m. A .45 caliber pistol was siezed from the soldier. His unit is conducting psywar operations under the guise of Community Support Program (CSP) in villages across Central Negros suspected as NPA bastions.

In Antique, the NPA blasted troopers of the 61st IB aboard two military vehicles in Barangay Igbagacay, Hamtic on July 2 at midnight. Four soldiers were killed while two others were wounded. **AB**

### State forces arrest 31 rallyists

THIRTY-ONE RALLYISTS protesting Duterte's terror law were arrested in two separate incidents these past weeks.

Police troops violently arrested 20 members of LGBT (lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders) and their supporters who were protesting in Mendiola, Manila on July 26 to mark the Pride Month and criticize the Duterte regime's tyranny. The protest was spearheaded by Bahaghari. The victims were arbitrarily detained for four days.

On July 4, 11 activists were also arrested in Cabuyao, Laguna for mounting a protest action a day after Rodrigo Duterte signed the Anti-Terror Bill into law. Joint elements of the 2nd ID in full battle gear and the PNP-Cabuyao apprehended and arrested the activists immediately after the protest. They were brought to a precinct and detained for three days.

## 50 militias finish military training in Samar

**F**ifty members of the people's militia finished the basic political-military course in a guerrilla zone in Samar last April. They comprised the majority of the 82 trainees. The other 32 are regular Red fighters.

The militia members who underwent the 7-day training are residents of five barrios. They had six instructors. The training was safely conducted through joint efforts by the instructors and trainees, as well as the nearby Kabataang Makaba-

yan chapter.

During the course of the training, many trainees were seen to have potential to become military cadres. The people's determination to wage the people's war was apparent in the large number of

militia participants. Some of them, however, exhibited weaknesses in performing training drills and following regulations.

The instructors worked in close coordination with each other. As in all courses, they were able to iron out glitches by conducting daily assessments while preparing lessons for the next day. The Giving out unified commands during exercises and trainings was one of these areas.

The training is part of the efforts of the regional operational command of the New People's Army to raise the capacity of full-time and part-time Red fighters in war. This is part of the preparations for launching more tactical offensives in response to the Duterte regime's intensified counterrevolutionary war. AB



## Solidarity amid hardships and pandemic

**T**ravel restrictions which Duterte arbitrarily imposed in the name of fighting the pandemic is having a huge impact on the lives of farmers. Among those affected are farmers in Bicol who are yet to recover from the devastation wrought by the typhoon Tisoy last year. To help them get by, revolutionary peasant organizations in the area launched various initiative in their respective barangays.

With the help of units of the New People's Army, the farmers of barangay consolidated their "grutuls" or mutual aid groups in production. Due to the restrictions, farmers could not easily sell their produce. Although some are able to sneak through checkpoints to sell their produce, their produce are bought at extremely low prices. Each sack of dried palay and rice are only sold for ₱600 and ₱1,500, respectively. To make ends meet, the mutual aid groups planted crops which grow quickly for their consumption.

In Barangay Narra, the local Party branch in the village organized a relief operation wherein 700

families received a rice aid of 5 kilos each. The peasant organization also conducted a feeding program. Simultaneously, the Party branch members also distributed leaflets to educate residents about Covid-19.

In Barangay Lawaan, the residents launched their information campaign on Covid-19 through cultural presentations. The farmers produced several short plays, songs, raps, dances and jingles about the current health situation. They utilize these during the conduct of medical trainings, mass clinics and meetings.

In all areas, the Red army is striving to improve residents'

knowledge on alternative medicine such as acupuncture and medicinal herbs to enable them to care for their health and avoid Covid-19 infections among other diseases.

The activities were conducted amid the AFP's sustained combat operation in their communities. Because of their determination and full support to the people's army, they ensured the secrecy of their activities by organizing meetings and passing information to the NPA. AB



# 8 farmers killed in 8 eight days

**E**ight farmers were successively killed by armed state agents in a span of just eight days. All of the victims were maliciously tagged as members of or related to the New People's Army (NPA).

State agents killed Jose Jerry Catalogo, an official of the National Federation of Sugar Workers, at around 5:00 a.m. last June 23 in Barangay Paitan, Escalante City, Negros Occidental. The victim was tending to his carabao outside his house when he was gunned down. Catalogo was reportedly subjected to surveillance prior to the killing.

In Northern Samar, the 20th IB strafed the house of farmer Zaldy Meraya in Palapag, Northern Samar on June 20. Meraya and his companion Bebe Tobino were killed during the incident. His daughter, Jolina Calot, a member of the League of Filipino Students, wife and other child were wounded.

In Albay, suspected police agents killed activists Elder Moina and Jose Arthur Clemente in Barangay San Isidro, Jovellar on June 24. The victims reportedly received death threats earlier.

In Masbate, police troopers killed Rogen Orcales Languido,

Danny Boy Tibay Pepito, Sr., and the latter's son who was a minor, in Barangay Mahayahay, Placer on June 17. The police ransacked the victims' houses and stole a cell-phone.

**Arrests.** Police elements arrested seven Lumads in Barangay Blanco, Balingasag, Misamis Oriental on June 26. The victims are members of the Kalumbay Lumad Organization which oppose plunderous mining, logging and ecotourism operations in Mt. Balatukan.

In Negros Oriental, the 62nd IB arrested four residents in Barangay Luz, Guihulngan City on July 4. Soldiers mauled the victims and accused them of participating in an NPA offensive last July 2.

**Coercion.** Elements of

the 4th MBLT and 18th SFC coerced two minor Palaw'an to serve as guides during their 3-week combat operation in Palawan last month. The operation covered six barangays in the towns of Brooke's Point, Rizal and Bataraza. The soldiers imposed a blockade in the community and prohibited residents from going to their farms.

In Barangay Aribungos, Brooke's Point, soldiers ransacked the houses and destroyed the crops of residents. Ten Palaw'an families were forced to evacuate from their community due to the operation. **AB**



## 9 UN rapporteurs oppose terror bill

NINE SPECIAL COMMITTEES and rapporteurs of the United Nations (UN) wrote to Rodrigo Duterte on June 29 to express their expert opinion and opposition to the Anti-Terror Bill (now the Anti-Terror Law). They said that the law violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The special rapporteurs particularly noted that the provisions of the law which violate the universal right against arbitrary arrest and detention, freedom of speech and expression, and the right to peaceful assembly. They said that its definition of terrorism is too broad and vague. This directly contradicts claims by officials of the regime who said that the definition is "compliant" to international laws.

The UN officials also criticized provisions which give the executive branch authorities accorded to the courts, disregard due process, violate the right to privacy, and put arbitrary limitations to humanitarian activities suspected of aiding "terrorists."

## Mother and 2-day old child brought back to jail

POLITICAL DETAINEE Reina Mae Nasino and her newborn child were cruelly brought back to the Manila City Jail Female Dorm last July 2, two days after giving birth. The newborn is underweight and needs continued medical attention.

Nasino was among the leaders of progressive organizations who were arrested in Tondo, Manila and slapped with trumped-up charges in November 2019.

Until today, the Supreme Court has not acted upon the petition filed by relatives and supporters of elderly, sick and pregnant political prisoners. The court reasoned out that the judge who is handling the could not travel from Visayas due to the lockdown.

# Focused military operations in Leyte

The 802nd Bde has used various ways to make it appear that it has ended the New People's Army (NPA) in Leyte. It has launched successive focused military operations from March to April. Simultaneously, it has spread disinformation such as fake operations, encounters and surrenders.

The 78th IB mounted operations in at least 11 barrios in the towns of Mahaplag and Abuyog in Leyte, and Sogod and Bontoc in Southern Leyte. Soldiers also occupied Pandan, Maligaya, and Sta. Cruz in Mahaplag, Pinamanagan in Abuyog, Kahupian and Pancho Villa in Sogod, and Ulisihan in Bontoc under the Retooled Community Support Program (RCSP). They intimidated peasant leaders and summoned them to surrender in their camp. They closely monitored the farmers' movements, even when going to their farms.

The soldiers put up irksome

checkpoints along the highways of Hilongos, Mahaplag and Sogod under the guise of the campaign against Covid-19. They threatened to shoot anyone who are infected with the virus.

In the Third District of Leyte, more than 100 soldiers from the 93rd IB operated in the barangays of Monterico, San Vicente and Manlilinao in Ormoc, and Bulak in Matag-ob for more than a week. In other parts of Ormoc, AFP and PNP troops joined forces to launch combat operations in the barrios of Biliboy, Donghol, Mahayag, Boroc and Hugpat from the last week of

February to the first week of March. They also put up checkpoints along the boundary of Ormoc and Kananga.

The soldiers serve as security forces for an ecotourism project in the area owned by the Leyte Rep. Vicente Veloso. The planned resort is set to encompass areas from Matag-ob to Merida and will displace residents.

The 802nd IBde also staged the fake surrender of residents in Carigara through the E-CLIP program. Earlier in February, the unit also boasted about the fake surrender of 262 "former rebels" in San Isidro and Calubian Brigade officials certainly pocketed a huge portion of the ₱6,258,000-aid supposedly intended for the "surrenderees." AB

## Human rights violations report

BASED ON THE tally of *Ang Bayan*, there have been at least 24,638 (or 135 per day) victims of various human rights violations from January 1 to June 30 this year. The figure excludes the tens of thousands of civilians whose rights were arbitrarily violated for purportedly violating lockdown protocols imposed during the pandemic.

Within six months, 46 activists and civilians fell victim to political killings, while 425 others arrested and detained. Majority of those killed (32) and arrested (280) are farmers. Fourteen of the victims were killed in Bicol, while 140 were arrested in North Central Mindanao Region.

Since March 15, *Ang Bayan* monitored various forms of military attacks in at least 625 barangays, 247 towns and cities, and 54 provinces across the country. The attacks were perpetrated simultaneous to the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic. At least 17 cases of bombing, strafing at artillery shelling were reported during the said period, 15 of which were perpetrated in Mindanao. These attacks resulted in the forcible evacuation of at least 15,768 civilians. Majority of the evacuees are from Western Mindanao (11,810).

The intense offensive against the people during the first half of 2020 is a direct result of the regime's counterinsurgency campaign which is led by its armed agents and the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC)

## Human rights violations (January-June 2020)

Political Killing	<b>46</b>
Frustrated Killing	<b>21</b>
Arrest and Detention	<b>425</b>
Threat, Harassment, Intimidation	<b>3,292</b>
Evacuation	<b>17,193</b>
Destruction of Property	<b>72</b>
Illegal search and seizure	<b>46</b>

## Military attacks on communities during Covid-19 pandemic) (March 15-July 2020)

Barangay	<b>625</b>
Town/City	<b>247</b>
Province	<b>54</b>
<b>13</b>	Bombing and/or strafing
<b>4</b>	Artillery shelling

## Expect more atrocities from the butcher 901st IBde in Caraga

Caraganons are bound to suffer more atrocities and human rights violations with the transfer of the butcher 901st IBde, under the command of Brig. Gen. Gabriel Viray, to the 4th ID. The deployment was announced by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on Tuesday, which was made in line with Duterte's target to "decimate" the New People's Army by 2022. The brigade is set to operate in Surigao del Norte and neighboring provinces.

In a statement, the 4th ID commander Maj. Gen. Andres C. Centino ordered the newly deployed 901st IBde to "defeat the NPA" in the area which it preposterously claimed to be "on the verge of irreversible collapse." This was the same mantra used by past regimes when the 901st IBde was previously assigned to operate in Cotabato, Albay and Catanduanes where the

brigade has failed to crush the people's army. The 901st IBde is known for targeting civilians and sowing fascist terror, especially against peasants and activists, to silence them and suppress their struggles.

With its deployment in the Caraga region, the butcher brigade is set to perpetrate more and worse crimes against the people.

The 901st IBde's starkest crimes include the successive killings of six farmers in Albay in January 2010. Two of its victims were decapitated, one was burned and another's neck was slashed.

Earlier this year in Cotabato, the 901st IBde orchestrated several fake mass surrender ceremonies to line up the pockets of its officials and conjure the illusion that the military is winning the war against the NPA in Southern Mindanao. In March, the brigade staged the fake mass surrender of at least 28 civilians who were presented to have "received" a total of ₱3.7 million. AB

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## History of Black slavery

Massive protests of the Black Lives Matter movement continue to gain traction across the US for more than a month already. The protests seek to advance not only the rights and welfare of Black Americans but also to rectify the centuries-long oppression and exploitation against them in the US.

Africans first arrived in the northern part of the American continent as slaves. Although Africans were traded as slaves in the continent as early the 16th century, August 1619 was marked as the beginning of Black slavery. This was when a ship carrying 20 African slaves arrived in Jamestown. US was then still a territory of Britain (UK).

Slavery was legalized in 1641. Slaves were made to work in tobacco, rice, sugarcane and indigo plantations, among others. For the first time in 1654, a court in the US issued a ruling allowing a landlord master to enslave an African. The lifelong ownership of slaves was first legalized in 1654. Slaves

suffered an inhumane life and brutal punishments including whipping, death by hanging, mutilation and rape, among others.

At the end of 1700s, 3.2 million Black slaves were made to work in cotton plantations. By 1860, two-thirds of the entire global supply of cotton was produced by slaves. This was from which modern manufacturing was born.

The movement against slavery gained ground during the second civil war in 1861. Slavery was officially ended in June 19, 1865, but forms of discrimination and racism against Black people persist.

It took 99 years since the end



of slavery for the US government to recognize racial equality in 1964. This was a result by massive movements in the 1950s and 1960s for civil rights, as well as the emergence of revolutionary organizations of Black people.

After more than half a century, however, discrimination, oppression and exploitation against Black people continue unabated. Massive protests by Black people erupt periodically. The "Black Lives Matter" protests which continue until today is the broadest and most sustained in previous decades.

## **Inter-imperialist tensions escalate in SCS**

Tensions are escalating as China and the US have set on intensifying their aggressions in the South China Sea (SCS). China launched a series of war games near the Paracel Islands from July 1-5 in an attempt to display its imperialist might. The Paracel Islands is a territory being claimed by Vietnam. A day earlier, the USS Gabrielle Giffords sailed in the area.

Simultaneously, the US also displayed its force by launching its own war games in the area. The US dubbed the said military exercise "the biggest of its kind." The said war games participated in by the USS Nimitz at USS Ronald Reagan, which are both considered as "floating military bases," as well as bomber planes which have flown to the area from US airports since July 4. Earlier, the two warships, along with the USS Theodore Roosevelt were seen in the eastern part of the Philippines. The USS Theodore Roosevelt remains in this area as the US continues to display its force in the SCS. The US conducts these war games under the guise of defending "freedom of navigation" to win the support of countries which oppose Chinese military aggression.

These aggressive actions are part of the US and China's positioning of equipment and troops to pursue their respective strategic interests in the Asia-Pacific region.

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## **Comrade Zia, beacon of the proletariat in Afghanistan**

The Communist Party of the Philippines extended its condolences to the proletariat and people of Afghanistan over the death of Comrade Zia, chairman of the Communist (Maoist) Party of Afghanistan (CMPA). He was 68.

Comrade Zia played a key role in resisting the American-led imperialist invasion and occupation of Afghanistan in 2001. After three years, he organized the Unity Congress which united three Maoist movements in Afghanistan and led to the founding of the CMPA. Comrade Zia was twice unanimously elected as its chairperson.

For nearly two decades, Comrade Zia helped shape and sharpen the ideological and political line of the CMPA. He has written hundreds of revolutionary and theoretical articles on various issues facing the CMPA and the international communist movement.

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## **10,000 converge at CPI-Maoist base**

ABOUT 10,000 INDIVIDUALS converged and participated in an assembly organized by the Communist Party of India (CPI)-Maoist in Bastar, Chhattisgarh State on June 18. The assembly was held for three days. The Party reported about unities and victories it has achieved.

The assembly was opened by Nambala Keshav Rao, the new Party secretary general, along with commanders and officials of the People's Liberation Army. He discussed about the successful offensives by the people's army in the area and displayed the weapons they were able to seize in the past months. The assembly also reviewed the campaigns plans and offensives of the Party in the area.

Approximately 300 fighters of the CPI-Maoist and 500 militias ensured the security of the assembly.

## **Red salute to NDFP consultant Jaime Soledad**

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of the Philippines offers its Red salute to Comrade Jaime Soledad (aka Ka Mike, Ka Jordan and Ka Fred) for his selfless service to the toiling masses and the revolutionary movement. Ka Jaime succumbed to cancer on May 13 at the age of 70.

Ka Jaime last served as a peace consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) from 2016 to 2017. During the 1970s, Ka Jaime served as one of the cadres who led in founding and advancing the revolutionary movement in Leyte. He served as a writer and Waray and Bisaya translator for Ang Bayan from 2005 to 2009. He was illegally arrested in 2009 and was released in 2016 to participate in the peace negotiations. He also served as the spokesperson of the National Democratic Front-Eastern Visayas during the regime of Corazon Aquino.

Ka Jaime was one of the students who went to the countryside in the 1970s and sowed the seeds of the armed revolution. He was a student at the University of the Philippines before he was deployed in Leyte. He abandoned the UP Vanguard, the organization of ROTC cadets in the university, and joined the New People's Army.