



EDITORIAL

## Struggle all-out to end tyranny and advance the revolution

**I**n the days to come, the Filipino people will face a critical battle to defend their historical judgement against tyranny and dictatorship. Democracy- and freedom-loving people are called upon to unite and take to the streets to manifest their determination to stop the return of the Marcoses to power and prevent the extension of Duterte's reign.

The anti-tyranny movement has gained much ground over the past few months in connection with the Robredo-Pangilinan presidential and vice presidential campaign. This served as an opportunity to shatter the fear and silence imposed by Duterte's six year terrorism. It is now determined to frustrate schemes to steal the elections to install the Marcos-Duterte tandem to power.

The upcoming elections do not present a level field since the system of counting favors the candi-

date of the ruling regime. Duterte's minions in the Commission on Elections have prepared and are now in control of the automated vote counting, a massive system of vote-shaving and vote-padding favoring the tyrant's candidate. There is also the reported pre-shading of ballots in exchange for money. The fraud is in the machines themselves that are programmed to shave and pad votes depending on the percentage set by the election controllers. This has taken away the people's right to count their votes, denying them the

means to cross-check and verify the machine count.

Duterte and candidate Marcos are doing everything to make the upcoming elections seem clean. Questionable surveys make it appear that Marcos has an "insurmountable lead" over Robredo despite the clearly overwhelming current of the anti-tyranny and anti-Marcos-Duterte movement over past weeks of nationwide rallies of hundreds of thousands of people. Despite his clear bias, Duterte claims he is not supporting any candidate to evade charges of stealing the elections for Marcos. Marcos declares he might get cheated even if he and Duterte are, in fact, in control of the fraud machinery.

To frustrate this plan, the

democratic forces must show irrefutably the people's rejection of the Marcoses and Dutertes. In the coming days before the elections, on the night of counting and beyond, the people in their millions must march and demonstrate to manifest who really won the elections. They must be vigilant, expose and denounce all forms of cheating and mobilize the people to block attempts to undermine their will.

If the Marcos-Duterte camp forces their way through cheating despite the people's clear judgement, the political pitched battle may last several days or weeks. During these days, the broadness and strength of unity of all democratic forces and their capability to mobilize millions will be one of the key factors in tilting the balance, not only to assert who really won the elections, but possibly to swiftly end Duterte's tyrannical rule. Also important factors are the intervention of US and Chinese imperialists, especially of the US, which has had a decisive word in the politics of accommodation among the rival factions of the ruling classes.

In the event that Marcos prevails, the people must resist attempts to reverse the people's historical judgement against the

Marcos dictatorship and martial law declared 50 years ago. Persevere to recover all of the wealth stolen by Imelda and the Marcoses during the period of unequalled plunder, thievery, oppression and suppression of the people under the 1972-1986 dictatorial rule. Oppose the continuing policy of state terrorism using Duterte's machinery of tyranny.

In the event that Robredo prevails on the crest of the anti-tyranny movement, she will confront the challenge of dismantling the tyranny, including abolishing the NTF-Elcac, releasing political prisoners, ending red-tagging and criminalizing activists and critics, ending militarization in rural villages, and the relentless aerial bombing drive. She will face demands to address the roots of the civil war through peace negotiations, which contradicts the desire of military officers who favor war and purchasing arms. She will also face the challenge of defending the Philippine seas against Chinese incursions, and defend the country's sovereignty against US military intervention.

Whoever prevails in this battle, the Filipino people must persevere in strengthening and broadening their anti-fascist and anti-tyranny united front. They must demand the imme-



diately incarceration and prosecution of Duterte for his innumerable crimes and military and police abuses under his tyrannical reign.

The people must also tirelessly push their demand for urgent measures to alleviate their conditions: substantial wage increases, pulling down the prices of fuel, food and basic necessities, free medical service especially amid the pandemic, jobs, return of jeepney operations, safe opening of schools, ending land grabbing, reducing the tax burden, stopping the destructive and anomalous infrastructure projects, and others.

In the final analysis, the 2022 elections is still a contest among the rival factions of the ruling classes to choose who will administer the ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system and head the neocolonial state. It is good, however, that it has become a field for the people to advance their anti-tyranny movement and their struggle for freedom and democracy.

The broad political movement of the masses are fertile ground for the Party and revolutionary forces to intensify their task of arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people to advance the people's national democratic aspirations. All Party cadres and branches must double their efforts to unite with the broad anti-tyranny movement and guide the masses towards the path of revolutionary change.

AB

 <p>Vol LIII No. 9   May 7, 2022</p> <hr/> <p>Ang Bayan is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray, English and Spanish. Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news items. Readers are encouraged to send feedback and recommendations for improving our newspaper.</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Contents</h2> <p><b>Editorial:</b> Struggle all-out to end the tyranny and advance the revolution 1  May One 2022 3  Fight for press freedom 3  For Ka Delio, the fight continues 4  Armas releases Golden issue 4  AFP hunts down children in Negros 5  Protests 5  Marawi compensation law, too little, too late 6  NPA offensives in Surigao and Agusan 6  Free de lima, all political prisoners 6  In short 7  The stinky truth about canned tuna 8  How much for a government position? 8  Boycott and oppose Elbit company 9</p>
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# May One 2022: Job security, wage increase and union rights

Raising their clamor for a living wage, job security, benefits and rights in workplaces, millions of workers marched across the world in commemoration of Labor Day last May 1.

Filipino workers underscored the urgency of enacting a law setting a ₱750 daily minimum wage especially in the face of rising prices of goods and services. They also called for sufficient jobs and an end to contractualization.

Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City was the point of convergence for around 16,000 workers who attended the activity led by the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan. The rallyists kicked off the commemoration with a program outside the coliseum where senatorial candidates Elmer Labog and Neri Colmenares addressed the crowd.

The KMU said that the Filipino people face great challenges this year: the worsening exploitation and oppression amid threats of a Marcos return and the Duterte family's cling to power. A few days earlier, the group formally endorsed the candidacy of Vice President Leni Robredo as president and Sen. Kiko Pangilinan as vice president. The tandem was the activity's main guest. To recall, Araneta Coliseum was where KMU was founded in May 1, 1980 under the US-Marcos dictatorship.

Meanwhile, workers also marched in the streets of Baguio City, Legazpi City, and Naga City. In Calamba, Laguna, various groups converged to demand an end to the harassment of workers in the region.

Protests and programs were also held by supporters of the Leni-Kiko tandem in Pasig City. National democratic forces led protests in Pampanga, Rizal, Cavite and Aklan, as well as in the cities of Roxas, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cebu and Davao. Filipinos in Australia also held mass actions.

Overseas, no less than 700,000 marched in Havana, Cuba to honor the Cuban workers and strengthen the defense of the national sovereignty against US aggression and intervention.

In South Korea, the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions led the May One commemoration. Their demand: Labor rights without discrimination, decent jobs for all and an end to inequality.

The Centre of India Trade Unions, meanwhile, condemned the Modi regime's whipping up of discrimination in the ranks of workers. They also called for the protection



and unity of workers.

In Thailand, Thai and Burmese workers marched together in Siam district and called for wage increases.

Hundreds gathered in New York, USA to criticize the government's anti-immigrant policies. Newly-formed unions of Starbucks and Walmart joined the protest. There were also mass actions in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, Washington D.C. and in other parts of the US.

Tens of thousands of workers in France also marched to challenge Pres. Emmanuel Macron. It has only been a week since Macron was elected president for the second time.

Meanwhile, protests by workers in Turkey highlighted their continuing calls for wage increases. Unions started negotiations last year for wages to be increased this year.

In Sri Lanka, the Occupy Galle Face movement which started in April 9 continues with its aim of ousting the president Gotabaya Rajapakasa.

There were also mass actions in Ecuador, Portugal, Germany, Belgium, Ireland, different parts of the United Kingdom, Cambodia, Iran, Russia, Dominican Republic, Panama, Pakistan, Chile, Spain and other countries.

In Bolivia, the government and the unions jointly announced the increase in the national minimum wage for all workers in the country. AB

## Fight for press freedom

ON INTERNATIONAL PRESS Freedom Day last May 3, Filipino journalists vowed to fight for press freedom in the country especially during the election period. This is amid fears of possible attacks against members of the media from the Marcos-Duterte camp during the campaign period.

Amid relentless attempts to question their credibility, and threats and harassment usually after critical reports, they vowed to be more determined to uphold democracy and strengthen their solidarity. They said they will continue to pursue the coalitions established such as for fact-checking and against disinformation and alliances for solidarity and mutual support.

Meanwhile, journalists marked the second year of the ABS-CBN shutdown last May 5.

# To a veteran of the anti-dictatorship struggle, the fight goes on

Comrade Delio is closely watching the 2022 elections and the candidacy of Ferdinand Marcos Jr, son of the dictator. He is gratified by the momentum of the opposition which has not backed down despite the monstrous machinery of disinformation of the dictator's family to revise history and return to Malacañang.

Ka Delio is more than 70 years old. He has a wife and child, and a grandchild as well. He is among the veterans of the New People's Army (NPA) who lived through the Marcos dictatorship and the successive reactionary regimes.

Many among his contemporaries have been martyred or have retired. Retired or not, the fighting spirit remains active in people like Ka Delio who until now are fighting for the Filipino people's aspiration for a free, democratic and progressive society.

Based on his experience, the armed democratic revolution is not a straight path.

In the 1960s he became part of the student movement for reform as a member of a social democratic

group influenced by clerico fascists. When the First Quarter Storm of 1970 erupted, he sought to link up with the national democratic movement.

He first joined the Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (Association of Democratic Youth) and later the Kabataang Makabayan (Patriotic Youth) when Marcos suspended the writ of habeas corpus in 1971.

He became more convinced to join the revolutionary movement when he read Prof. Jose Maria Sison's book *Struggle for National Democracy*. It was given to him by a former classmate from a Manila university.

He and other fellow activists were in the stage of planning to conduct social investigation to open a



guerrilla front in the Visayas when martial law was declared. Although they had no military experience like the "Tarlac-trained" or "Isabela-trained" cadres, they were forced to move to the countryside to start armed struggle. Their only guide was Chairman Mao's words: We are like seeds that emerge, take root and grow wherever we are blown to.

Ka Delio was tasked by the Party to open a guerrilla zone in the latter part of October 1972, a few weeks after martial law was imposed. People were terrorized by martial law and surrendered almost all their weapons which they use to defend themselves against thieves and bandits. Still, not all were intimidated by the psywar tactic of the Marcos dictatorship. There were a few undaunted ones who did not surrender their arms. They gave their weapons to Ka Delio's group as seed for the emerging armed revolution.

The people's army in this part of the Visayas started with two hand-made revolvers. A .45 caliber pistol and four grenades were added later. From zero experience, the "barefoot soldiers" as they learned to launch a war from their waging war.

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## Armas releases Ulos Golden Issue

The golden issue of Ulos (December 2018 and March 2019), the cultural journal of the national-democratic movement, was released by Armas (Artista at Manunulat ng Sambayanan) under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Philippines (Marxism-Leninism-Maoism). Armas gladly offers the anthology for the 50th anniversary of the glorious party of the proletariat and its leading armed organization, the New People's Army.

Symbolizing 50 years of life and death struggles, the golden issue featured 50 select poems, songs, essays, stories and other narratives, and artworks by known writers and artists like Eman Lacaba, Romulo Sandoval, Kris Montañez, Jose Maria Sison, Alan Jazmines, Wilfredo Gacosta, Servando Magbanua, Kerima Lorena Tariman, Mayamor, Alice Guillermo, Neil Doloricon, Parts Bagani, Silvia Madiaga and other Party cadres, Red commanders and fighters and mass organizers. A copy can be downloaded from the Philippine Revolution Web Central ([www.cpp-ph](http://www.cpp-ph)).

Meanwhile, the Ulos Editorial Board is calling for literary pieces and artwork contributions for Ulos 2022. These can be sent to [information.bureau@cpp.ph](mailto:information.bureau@cpp.ph).

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## AFP hunts down two children in Negros

More than 100 elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines laid siege on the sub-villages of Malikoliko and Cunalom in Barangay Carabalan and Sitio Tigbao in Barangay Buenavista, Himamaylan City, Negros Occidental last April 22. They were in search for a 2-month old infant and a 2-year old child whom they claimed to be children of Red fighters. Four houses in Sityo Malikoliko were ransacked by 30 soldiers in search of the children.

Soldiers threatened the children's grandmother, along with seven other residents. At the same time, the butchers cordoned off the community, prohibiting residents to leave or go to their farms. A total of 42 individuals were driven away—14 women and 21 children. They included relatives of siblings Jayson and Arnulfo Sabanal who were killed last March.

**Killing.** Troopers of the 48th IB indiscriminately fired upon five farmers in Barangay Talisay, San Isidro, Davao Oriental last April 23. Two were instantly killed while three were arrested and later presented as members of the New People's Army (NPA). The NDF-Southern Mindanao vehemently belied this, saying that no Red fighter or NPA unit was in the area at that time. Residents also countered the AFP statements.

In Sorsogon, soldiers of the 31st IB killed Alvin Orpiada, Randy Radana and Christopher Nimo in Sityo Small, Barangay Sta. Cruz, Donsol in the early morning hours of May 2. The military presented the victims as NPA members who were killed in a firefight.

In South Cotabato last April 27, state agents killed Eugene Latrella, a member of Bayan Muna and council member of Barangay Veterans, Surallah. He was killed while driving his motorcycle along the road in Barangay Sinolon, T'boli.

**Blockade.** Elements of the PNP-SAF, 68th IB, 4th IB and 67th IB imposed blockades on the towns of Calintaan and Rizal in Occidental Mindoro from April 26-27 under the guise of pursuit operations against a unit of the NPA. Farmers were prohibited from bringing food to their farms. AB

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From a single village, Ka Delio and his group expanded. But the enemy immediately detected their presence and launched the first "nip-in-the-bud" military operation against a small and very weak NPA unit. One night in March 1973, Philippine Constabulary troops raided a hut where fighters were sleeping. They also raided the house of Ka Ponso, a peasant and partime fighter.

They failed to crush even this small NPA unit. In desperation, the enemy abducted Ka Ponso's 4-year old son to force him to surrender. The soldiers kept the child hostage for a year.

At the most basic, there is no fundamental difference in facing the enemy then and now, according to Ka Delio. From the strategic point of view, they are paper tigers. But in the tactical view, they really devour people. They are soldiers of the ruling classes paid to kill the oppressed and exploited classes who are determined to rise and fight for their rights and welfare.

What is the secret to Ka Delio's long life? None other but the masses and the masses alone. When the masses are roused and organized, the enemy, despite their numbers, are like searching for a needle in the haystack. Ka Delio remains active and secure from the enemy because of the cooperation of the masses and comrades. AB



**38th Cordillera Day in Baguio City.** With the theme "Onward with new politics, unite for land and life!" the peoples of the Cordilleras commemorated the 38th Cordillera Day from April 24 to May 3. On the last day of activities, activists and supporters gathered at the University of Cordillera in Baguio City. They pledged to frustrate the attempts of the Marcos family to return to Malacañang and the Duterte family's scheme to cling to power.

**Alay Lakad against mining in Cagayan.** More than 1,000 fishermen and residents of Aparri, Cagayan held an "Alay Lakad" (march for a cause) against black sand mining in the province last April 22. They said that mining operations in the area poses a big danger to the environment and their livelihood. Residents who joined the activity came from the towns of Aparri, Gattaran, Ballesteros, Buguey, Gonzaga and Sta. Ana. The local government falsely claims the blacksand mining as a mere river dredging.

**Noise barrage in Manila.** Democratic organizations mounted a coordinated noise barrages last April 29 in various parts of Metro Manila to drumbeat the demands of workers and opposition to fraud in the upcoming elections. Noise barrage activities were held in Tondo and Taft Avenue in Manila; Maysapang, Taguig; Monumento, South Caloocan, Commonwealth Avenue and Welcome Rotonda, Quezon City.

**Bike for the environment.** More than 300 cyclists rode last April 24 to push for a pro-environment agenda amid the elections. The activity was held as the world commemorated Earth Day 2022. The cyclists rode from Bonifacio Shrine in Manila to Bantayog ng mga Bayani in Quezon City. A similar activity was held in Davao City.

## On the Marawi Compensation Law: Too little, too late

On April 13, Rodrigo Duterte signed into law RA 11696 or the "Marawi Siege Victims Compensation Act of 2022." The law provides for an agency to be formed to process the distribution of compensation or payment for damages to the victims of the regime's bombardment which destroyed Marawi City in 2017. However, the law was unclear as to the amount that each victim will receive. Neither are there funds under the current national budget and payments will have to wait until 2023.

The Marawi Advocacy Accompaniment (MAA), a group of Meranaw leaders and Moro organizations, acknowledged the enactment of RA 11696. But it said that compensation must be accompanied by guarantees of the evacuees' basic needs and the implementation of their safe and dignified return to the city. The group criticized the turtle-paced rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi.

Task Force Bangon Marawi boasted that the city's rehabilitation will be 95% complete in June or before Duterte leaves his post. In truth, majority of the residents are still prohibited to return to the city, despite compliance with required documents. Residents of Barangay Padian were also banned from returning, despite having land titles, because of the planned reclamation in Lake Lanao. The Bangsamoro Transition Authority's excuse is that "the titles have no value because this is now owned by the government."

May 23 marks the sixth year when the Duterte regime attacked and flattened Marawi City. AB

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## NPA mounts successive armed actions in Surigao and Agusan

Units of the New People's Army (NPA) in Northeastern Mindanao Region mounted five armed actions over the past weeks.

The NPA-Surigao del Norte paralyzed a dump truck and a payloader owned by a quarry company in Magtiaco River, Barangay San Pedro, Alegria, Surigao del Norte last April 19. Damages were estimated at around ₱5.7 million.

The NPA unit meted the sanction against the said quarry operation owned by Alegria councilor Ruel Jalasan for causing environmental destruction and disrupting the river flow resulting in floods in surrounding communities. The company also does not properly compensate their workers.

In Lianga, Surigao del Sur, NPA snipers hit a unit of 3rd Special Forces Battalion last April 27. The following day, the NPA disarmed a San Miguel town mayoral candidate for using armed goons to threaten voters. Red fighters confiscated from Rolmar "Mamal" Basalan's residence in Purok 1, Barangay Siagao an M16 rifle, three calibre .45 pistols, seven radios, magazines and ammunition.

Last April 30, NPA-Surigao del Sur fired at troops of the 36th IB operating in Barangay Nurcia, Lanuza. Two enemy casualties were reported.

On the same day, NPA-Agusan del Norte mounted a harassment operation against a counterinsurgency unit of the police's Special Action Force in Purok Santol, Barangay Los Angeles, Butuan City. AB

## Free de Lima and all political prisoners

Human rights groups called for the immediate release of Sen. Leila de Lima after two key witnesses, Roland "Kerwin" Espinosa and Rafael Ragos, withdrew their testimonies which implicated the senator in the illegal drug trade. They also called for the release of others like her who have been incarcerated on trumped up criminal charges.

In his signed media statement last April 28, Espinosa admitted that his testimony against de Lima given during two Senate investigations in 2016 are all false. It was a result of harassment, intimidation and serious threats against his and his family's lives.

On May 2, Rafael Ragos, former officer-in-charge of the Bureau of Corrections, likewise said that there was no truth that de Lima was involved in the drug trade inside the New Bilibid Prison. In front of the press, Ragos divulged that he was coerced by then Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II to testify against de Lima. He said Aguirre interrogated, forced and threatened him to admit to things which did not happen.

These latest developments only proved that the case against de Lima is political vendetta as she has been critical of the Duterte regime's war on drugs, critics of the said war said. People responsible for her unjust detention and violations of her rights should be made accountable, they said.

Meanwhile, Rodrigo Duterte admitted that his promise to solve the drug problem within six months of his term was nothing but "campaign hubris."



# Marie Hilao-Enriquez



**veteran of the struggle against martial law,** renowned defender of human rights, and one of the founders of Karapatan, passed away last April 24 at the age of 68 due to illness.

# 4.4%

mere increase in the regional gross domestic product in the **National Capital Region** in 2021, lower than the 5.7% increase in the national GDP, as a result of repeated imposition of paralyzing lockdowns over the past 2 years.

Source: Philippine Statistics Office

# 16

administrative cases filed by various groups and individuals against **Lorraine Badoy-Partosa**, NTF-Elcac spokesperson, known as the principal red-tagger of the Duterte regime



## Day of Palestinian Prisoners

marked last April 17 to protest the illegal and unjust detention of Palestinians by Israel.

**Over 500 of 4,450 currently imprisoned Palestinians do not have cases against them and detained indefinitely.**

# ₱12.3 B

**additional borrowings of the Duterte regime** from Japanese banks purportedly to address the Covid-19 pandemic.



**At end of March, the overall Philippine public debt stood at ₱12.8 trillion.**

Source: Department of Finance

# 1

(only) of **22 major US companies** promised to pay living wages during the first year of the pandemic actually fulfilled its pledge to pay living wages.

Source: Brookings Institute

# 19

of 427 victims of extrajudicial killings under the Duterte regime's counterinsurgency campaign were workers.

**9 of them were unionists.**

Source: Karapatan



## #FactsFirstPH

among the many initiatives of **media workers and institutions to fight widespread disinformation** mainly by the Marcos-Duterte tandem to revise history, discredit their rivals and red-tag various opposition forces

# The stinky truth about canned tuna

Working in a tuna cannery in General Santos City is no joke. According to the workers here, working conditions are so bad that they feel like their skins are being "peeled off." The canned tuna stewing in an oven have it better, they said. They are overworked but receive paltry wages and benefits.

General Santos City is considered as the Philippines' tuna capital due to the abundance of tuna from its seas. In 2020, it produced 254,779 metric tons of different kinds of tuna. This made up 26.12% of the entire 975,205 MT of all commercial fishes in the country.

There are currently seven tuna canneries in the city. The biggest operations belong to Century Tuna Corporation of the Po family. (Last year, the Pos amassed a wealth of \$1.45 billion and was the 16th in the list of the country's wealthiest families and individuals.)

The seven canneries employ around 25,000 workers. These have a combined capacity to process 950 MT a day. Almost the entirety (90%) of their products are exported to the US, Germany, Japan, and in other countries in Europe, Asia and South America.

In 2020, the local tuna industry exported 134,412 tons of tuna

worth \$480.90 million (₱23.74 billion). Canned tuna consisted the bulk of the exports at 88,547 MT with a worth of \$344.406 million (₱17.0028 billion.)

Tuna canneries here mainly use skipjacks (a tuna variety) supplied by large local and foreign commercial ships. Manufacturing goes through eight stages: storage; butchering/precooking); skinning; picking/loining; quality control and segregation into "classes" of tuna; filling/vegetable tuna; seamer/sealing of cans; and retort/baking the cans in a large oven.

Every stage, except for machine butchering, are done manually. Machines are only later used for stamping dates, cleaning and labeling cans.

Every factory has its own quota and incentive system designed to squeeze the highest surplus value from the workers. Supervisors set the quotas and receive cash incentives if their team makes the quota.



Smaller incentives are given to workers when they overstretch their bodies to produce beyond their quotas.

There are frequent work-related accidents such as wounds from bones or burns from handling hot pre-cooked fish.

Workers frequently work at 12-hour rotations especially when tuna supply is high. They work standing and handle hot fish almost the entire time and under the strict watch of their supervisors.

A great number of workers in these canneries are from various provinces in Mindanao and the Visayas. The majority (85%) are women who are employed by labor

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## How much for a government position?

In the past, funds always pour in during election period. According to the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, presidential candidates spent a total of ₱1.91 billion in 2016. Among them: Sen. Grace Poe who spent ₱510.8 million, ex-Interior Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II (₱487.3 million), ex-Vice President Jejomar "Jojo" Binay (₱463.4 million), ex-Davao City Mayor Rodrigo R. Duterte (₱371.5 million), and the late Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago (₱74.7 million). These amounts were only based on their formal reports and did not include funds spent by allies and unnamed supporters.

In the upcoming elections, the Ibon Foundation estimates that a presidential candidate will spend an average of ₱3 billion each, vice-presidential candidates will spend ₱1 billion and senatoriables, ₱350 million each.

Aside from them, the following will probably spend the according funds: For those running for Congress, ₱15 million; for governor, ₱15

million; vice-governor, ₱7.5 million; Board member, ₱1 million; mayor, ₱3 million; vice mayor, ₱1.5 million; councilor, ₱100,000.

All in all, election spending can reach up to ₱76.56 billion for 54,292 government positions. On top of this is the Commission on Elections' ₱26.9-billion election budget.

Aside from the funds directly channeled to people in the form of

vote buying, candidates spend money for advertisements, both in traditional and social media. A big amount is also spent on mammoth campaign rallies and the engaged service, transportation and accommodation sectors.

In the past, electoral spending contributed 1% to the gross domestic product. According to experts, it might be lower this year, since the country is coming from a 2-year economic slump due to the Duterte regime's failed Covid-19 pandemic response. Also, stimulus from the election spending will be temporary, according to Ibon. It will not spur the economy this year, and might even cause inflation at the end of the year.

AB

# Boycott and oppose Elbit company



The Palestinian people will commemorate on May 15 the 74th year of Nakba or the Catastrophe in which hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were violently expelled from their land to clear the way for establishing the state of Israel. Since then, Israel's brutal occupation and genocide against the Palestinian people have grown worse despite international agreements protecting their most basic rights.

Israel's attacks include building a wall in 2002 to drive away Palestinians inside the West Bank and Jerusalem.

In 2004, the International Court of Justice declared the West Bank wall as illegal. It obliged all governments adhering to the Fourth Geneva Convention to "ensure Israel's compliance" with international humanitarian law. It forbade governments from providing any assistance that "could maintain the situation created by the wall."

It was in this context that in 2005, the Boycott, Divest, and Sanction (BDS) movement was initiated against Israel and companies supporting its violent occupation. One of its major campaigns is Divest Elbit Systems. In this campaign, Palestinians and their supporters in various countries demanded the companies, institutions, and governments withdraw their investments from Elbit Systems and stop buying its weapons and military technology.

Since 2009, this movement has successfully forced large banks and institutions to divest from the company.

## Why Elbit Systems?

Despite the ICJ ruling, Israel continued to build walls to evict Palestinians from their lands. In 2013, it built a wall along the border of Golan Heights and Syria. In 2017, it fenced off the Gaza Strip effectively imprisoning millions of Palestinians in what has been called the "largest open prison in the world." Israel equipped this fence with high towers, checkpoints, and a strict surveillance system. It is constantly monitored by soldiers and military-technology.

The construction and maintenance of these walls have primarily benefitted the Elbit Systems which supplies technology for sophisticated monitoring such as image recognition and biometrics and maintains extensive and intrusive-databases. It has developed armed robots that patrol the ground and drones in the air.

Elbit Systems Ltd is Israel's largest military company. In 2021, the Transnational Institute listed it among 23 international companies profiting from human rights abuses of migrants and refugees around the

world.

It is best known for creating electronic military equipment and surveillance systems, mainly unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or drones. It employs 12,700 workers in Israel and manages a comprehensive global network of more than 80 subsidiaries and related corporations. It has a US-based special division of unmanned aerial system that developed the Hermes 450 as an attack drone. This drone has been used by the Israel Defense Force to repeatedly bomb Palestinian territories, specifically Gaza.

## Elbit in the Philippines

Prodded by the US, the Philippine government has patronized weapons and technology from Israel and the Elbit Systems. The equipment and military vehicles it buys from Elbit are all used in the regime's brutal counterinsurgency war which wreck the lives and livelihoods of the people, the forest, and the environment.

In 2019, the Department of Defense signed contracts for "several hundreds" of small UAVs, as well as medium-sized ones such as the Hermes 450 and Hermes 900. These are all flown prior to a bombing spree in the countryside.

In 2021, Elbit-manufactured weapons flooded the country. Among these are the M113A2 81mm Armored Mortar Carrier, 28 Iveco VBTP-MP Guarani APC, Remote Controlled Weapon Station, and 12 Soltam ATMOS 155mm/52cal self-propelled howitzers.

Just last April 21, the Philippine Army reactivated the 1st Tank Battalion in preparation for the arrival this year of 18 Sabrah light tanks and 10 Sabrah 8x8 wheeled light tanks which were ordered from Elbit. The purchase contract is worth \$172 million.

From page 8

agencies and "cooperatives" who have direct contracts with the capitalists.

Contractual workers have contracts lasting five to six months only. Those directly employed are given a yearlong contract. They are contracted to receive the regional ₱326/day, which is not even a third of the living wage. In reality, many receive wages that are 12%-15% less. Having benefits depend on the capitalist. The "no

work, no pay" policy is in place in the canneries.

Harsh disciplinary actions such as suspensions are meted out without due process. Workers are laid off arbitrarily.

Organizing or joining unions is strictly prohibited, according to the workers. They have no representation inside the factories. Because of this, many remain silent for fear of being fired if they complained.

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