

EDITORIAL

The revolting stench of bureaucrat capitalism under Marcos

The derailment of the impeachment proceedings against Sara Duterte is a blatant silencing of the people's strong clamor to hold her accountable for the anomalous use of hundreds of millions of pesos in public funds and other serious cases of corruption and abuse of power.

The entire Supreme Court and the majority of the Senate, including most of Marcos' allies, decided against the people's desire to hold corrupt officials and those who have abused the secret funds of the reactionary government.

This action saw how the influence and interests of various bureaucratic-capitalist political factions prevailed. The dismissal of the impeachment complaint reflects the intensifying political maneuvering and conflicts, as well as collusion and accommodation among different factions of the ruling class.

This is just the latest in the series of confrontations between the

Marcoses and Dutertes. This deep-seated conflict among the worst fascists and plunderers, along with various factions of the reactionary ruling class, is sure to flare up against in different forms and ways, especially as they now all look towards the 2028 elections.

With their legal acrobatics and toying with the reactionary government's own laws and processes, the Supreme Court and Senate thwarted the people's desire to hold Sara Duterte accountable for corruption. The people eagerly awaited the opportunity for her actions involving the misuse of ₱612.5 million as vice president

and then secretary of the Department of Education to be scrutinized publicly. More than that, they anticipated the trial to inspect and reveal the corrupt practices of the entire ruling reactionary government.

The Filipino people are aware that Duterte's misuse of public funds merely reflects the worse and broader corruption within the entire ruling reactionary government. The call for her to be held accountable and punished is just part of the demand to hold to account all officials who indulge in power.

Gross corruption and government thievery under her father, Rodrigo Duterte, are now being surpassed by the brazen plundering under Ferdinand Marcos Jr—the current king of all thieves in



government. The tens of billions of pesos pocketed by Duterte are now overshadowed by the hundreds of billions being siphoned off by Marcos through the Maharlika Investment Fund, "confidential and intelligence funds," various infrastructure projects, and the recovered stolen wealth of his family.

The people suffer immensely due to the severe corruption of the highest officials in the government. Among the consequences are the recent widespread flooding, rising prices of rice and other commodities, rising fees for deteriorating public services, the state's refusal to mandate wage increases, land grabbing and land-use conversion, environmental destruction, as well as barefaced election fraud, serious human rights violations, and fascist violence.

They collude or partner with big businessmen, foreign capitalists, and banks that benefit from government contracts. They receive kickbacks and bribes, along with other privileges from their power or influence. Bureaucratic capitalists use their power to favor their interests, as well as those of their relatives, friends, or allies.

They enact and implement laws

or programs that favor large foreign capitalist investors. Infrastructure projects—roads, bridges, and even "flood control projects"—are favorites of the Marcos regime, as well as previous bureaucratic capitalist regimes, where they typically pocket at least 10% of the project cost.

In a recent speech by Marcos in Congress, he pretended to be angry with the failed flood control projects, to dodge the people's demand for accountability. The truth is, Marcos himself carefully reviewed each of one these projects to ensure that not one would fail to contribute to his ever-growing plunder. Marcos is angry at those who insert projects into the budget without first ensuring their percentage contribution.

These issues intensify the Filipino people's desire to hold accountable and punish the bureaucratic capitalists who oppress and cause their aggravation. Amid the insoluble economic crisis of the ruling system in the Philippines, they have become more brazen, insatiable and relentless in their use of power for personal aggrandizement, while they impose increasingly onerous taxes and fees


on the people. The ever increasing Philippine debt is shouldered by the people.

Regardless of the legal justifications, the Supreme Court and Senate's defense of Sara Duterte against impeachment is, at its core, a defense of bureaucratic-capitalism and the entire rotten semicolonial and semifeudal system. This further intensifies the people's desire to end the ruling system built on the foundations of corruption and the few's indulgence in wealth. The stench of the decaying ruling system is increasingly unbearable.

By dismissing the impeachment, the Marcos regime and all its minions have galvanized the broad sectors and groups that previously remained quiet and on the sidelines to speak out and engage in the people's struggle. Many church people, lawyers, teachers, doctors, nurses, small professionals, and others have been stirred to express their grievances against corruption and abuse of power. They must link and unite their voices with the louder cries and struggles of the basic and democratic classes for living wages, lower prices of goods and services, genuine land reform, regular employment, fishing rights, free housing, adequate education budgets, and more.

While strengthening the people's united voice to denounce the derailment of the impeachment proceedings against Sara Duterte, the Filipino people must amplify their outcry against imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism—the three-headed monster that strangles and gradually kills the people.

As they take to the streets to express the strongest protest, they must also tread the path to the countryside to expand and strengthen the armed struggle of the New People's Army. Only through revolutionary struggle can the rotten system be completely crushed and genuine people's democracy be established.




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People hold the puppet, fascist, and corrupt Marcos regime to account

Thousands of Filipinos took to the streets on July 28 in Metro Manila and the provinces, as well as overseas, to expose the people's real situation under three years of Marcos' rule. These demonstrations, held annually as a counterpoint to the incumbent president's State of the Nation Address (SONA), were dubbed as the SONA of Accountability.

Led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), various sectors and groups marched on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City towards the House of Representatives in Batasan Hills. As in the past, thousands of police blocked the march forcing groups to hold their program a few kilometers from the Batasan.

According to Bayan, the SONA of Accountability is the people's legitimate and democratic response to the US-Marcos regime's exploitation and oppression.

The demonstration highlighted the regime's incompetence in addressing the effects of recent successive typhoons and monsoon winds that caused heavy rains and flood. They also condemned state institutions, such as the Supreme Court, for imposing various obstacles which derailed the impeachment trial against vice president Sara Duterte.

The protest also condemned the Marcos regime for further consolidating its political power in recent years through subservience to imperialist US dictates in the economy, foreign policy, and national security. They also denounced the continuing repressive policies such as the Anti-Terrorism Law, the National Task Force-Elcac and the National Action Plan for

Unity, Peace and Development, as well as the former Duterte regime's "war on drugs".

National-democratic groups from Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon also participated in the demonstration.

Before the SONA itself, organizations launched protests before various Marcos regime agencies to demand accountability for their utter disregard and rotten services.

Meanwhile, almost 1,000 people participated in a mass action in Iloilo City. Rallies were also held in Naga City in Camarines Sur, Roxas City in Capiz, Kalibo in Aklan, Bacolod City, Cebu City, Tacloban City, and Davao City. Meanwhile, a forum was held in Baguio City on July 27.

Overseas, demonstrations were launched in Hong Kong, South Korea, New Zealand, Australia, US states, Canada, Netherlands, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Most of the activities took place before Philippine consulates to raise their grievances with the government.

Meaningless SONA

As expected, Marcos' speech contained no substantial report or policies that should improve the Philippine situation. Marcos merely mentioned cosmetic projects, bragged about ₱20/kilo rice being sold in only a few stores, among others.

For the people, Marcos' declaration against corruption is meaningless, especially since his billions in confidential funds remain in place. Added to this is his move to stop the progress of the impeachment case against Duterte.

Marcos falsely criticized government officials for the slow implementation of flood control projects supposedly because of corruption.

In reality, beyond corruption-riddled projects, Marcos is the main disaster because he allows destructive quarrying, dredging, mining, and reclamation projects by the bureaucrat-capitalists' big businesses.

The projects he mentioned for health, education, and other social services are all hollow. He left out many important issues, including the long-standing demands for higher workers' wages, land for farmers, and others. AB



No more guerrilla groups?

AMONG OTHERS, FERDINAND Marcos Jr boasted in his SONA declaration that "no guerrilla groups remain in the country." This is an utter lie and outright deception, as the New People's Army (NPA) and the revolutionary movement continue to thrive and enjoy deep and broad support from the people in the countryside.

According to the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), since 2017 when the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) implemented its intensified and brutal extermination campaign, NPA guerrilla units have been reorganized and redeployed to further deepen and widen their roots among the people. The Party said a new generation of young Red fighters steadily rises among workers, peasants, and petty-bourgeois intellectuals.

The NPA's Red fighters carry forward the armed revolution with even more resolute determination to carry out the rectification movement called for by the Party to strengthen the armed struggle in the countryside.

In addition, Marcos' own actions directly contradict his statements that no guerrilla groups remain in the country. Despite repeated announcements that the AFP will now focus on "external defense," majority of its combat battalions remain deployed against the NPA's guerrilla fronts nationwide. In fact, even the AFP continues to report numerous encounters with NPA units in the provinces in recent months.

Party chief information officer Marco Valbuena said this grand declaration by Marcos will explode in his face. Despite all the lethal firepower the US is providing the Marcos regime, it has failed and will fail to stop the steady regrowth and expansion of the NPA who remain deeply rooted among the people.

"The puppet, fascist and corrupt Marcos regime continues to make the grounds for armed resistance more fertile," Valbuena said.

Additionally, the CPP said that Marcos' declaration is tantamount to ending the prospects for talking peace with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

"He and the National Task Force (NTF)-Elcac officials stubbornly refuse to recognize and address the roots of armed conflict," Valbuena stated.



7 8th IB soldiers killed in clash with NPA-Bukidnon

THE NEW PEOPLE'S Army-Bukidnon reported this August the result of one of its unit's clash with 8th IB elements at Sitio Tubigon, Barangay Busdi, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon on July 1. The encounter killed at least seven soldiers of the 8th IB.

The damage prompted the 8th IB to fire artillery on July 1 and July 2 to retaliate against the masses supporting the army. No unit of the NPA-Bukidnon was hit, but this terrorized the communities of peasants and Lumad in the area.

Four artillery shells were first fired at 12:30 in the afternoon of July 1.

The next day, the AFP again fired four artillery shells at three in the morning, when the civilian population was in the middle of resting.



Senate kills Sara Duterte's impeachment trial

THE SENATE COMPLETELY killed the impeachment trial against vice president Sara Duterte on the corruption charges she faces. On August 6, 19 senators voted to "archive" the case, citing adherence to a Supreme Court ruling issued on July 25.

The court declared Duterte's impeachment "unconstitutional" because the House of Representatives violated its own impeachment process. The court said the "one-year ban" before refiling impeachment cases was breached. The decision drew heavy criticism, including from former Supreme Court justices. They said the ruling introduced new impeachment rules not stipulated in the constitution and the court overstepped its role. They called for an immediate review of the decision.

Led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, groups launched demonstrations to denounce the Senate and Supreme Court rulings. They protested daily from August 5 to 7 and also on July 26 and 29.

Meanwhile, the alliance Tama Na delivered to the Supreme Court on August 5 a letter signed by over 100 individuals from the education, youth, health, and church sectors. They called to allow oral arguments to let the court hear new perspectives that could reverse its decision.

On Trump-Marcos meeting: further surrender of Philippines independence and sovereignty

A few days before Ferdinand Marcos Jr's fourth State of the Nation Address, on July 20–22, US president Donald Trump summoned him for “negotiations” on the tariff levels on products from the Philippines and other economic and military concessions. Like a loyal minion, Marcos offered the country's freedom and sovereignty to his imperialist master.

Marcos agreed to fully remove tariffs on American products. He portrayed the so-called “zero tariffs” as a “concession” given in exchange for Trump's 1% reduction of tariffs imposed on Philippine exports, from 20% to 19%. The regime also tried to downplay the impact of “zero tariffs” on Philippine exports and claimed that the country would lose only \$3–\$6 billion in revenue from this.

In fact, Marcos gained nothing from lowering tariffs. Before Trump's second term, tariffs only ranged 2%–3.6%. Trump raised tariffs on all US imports to 10% when he took office. In April, he set a “reciprocal tariff” of 20% on major agricultural products the Philippines exports to the US such as coconut, fruits, and sugar. As before, additional tariffs will not be imposed on products like semiconductors, manufactured for American companies in the Philippines.

On the other hand, Marcos further opened the local economy for dumping US surplus products like cars, soy, wheat, and pharmaceuticals. From these products alone, the state is estimated to lose up to ₱3.9 billion in revenue. The Ibon Foundation estimates that total Philippine revenue loss could reach ₱31–₱35 billion annually if other US exports to the country are included.

The Philippines is one of the biggest dumping ground for US agricultural products in Southeast Asia and ranks 8th worldwide. US

exports to the Philippines include meat and processed vegetables, which will certainly pull down the production and value of local products. Meanwhile, the influx of these imported goods will further weaken the country's capacity to manufacture and produce for domestic needs.

Military concession

Marcos also surrendered Philippine freedom to Trump by granting more incentives and concessions to American companies to set up factories and operations in the country. These include Cerberus, I Square Capital, KKR & Co, and Global Infrastructure Partners, companies set to invest in shipbuilding, logistics, and energy to support the expansion of the US market and military presence in the Philippines and Asia. The US promised to pour up to \$3 billion in funds to the Philippines, but these funds are for American companies investing in the so-called Luzon Economic Corridor.

Even before the July visit, Marcos was busy providing additional locations to serve as US military bases. Most recent is his offer of the western coast of Davao Gulf (covering Davao City, Davao del



Sur, and Malalag Bay) to build a “fuel depot” that will store 159 million liters of diesel annually for large US warships. This will supply fuel to both warships and warplanes operating in the Sulu and Celebes seas. This fuel depot will replace the major US military depot in Hawaii, permanently closed in 2022 due to leaks that contaminated drinking water for nearby communities.

Before this, Marcos had already opened Subic for manufacturing ammunition, bombs, and other materiel; the islands of Grande and Chiquita near the Subic coast for additional American surveillance bases; and most of the northern coast and seas of Palawan, including Oyster Bay, as a base and shipyard for US warships.

Relentless bombings, killings, and harassment

Contrary to Ferdinand Marcos Jr's statement in his 4th SONA that the Philippines is already "quiet" and "peaceful" and that "no guerrilla groups" remain in the country, military and police bombings, killings, and harassment of civilian communities and people waging resistance, continue to be relentlessly carried-out in the guise of counterinsurgency campaign.

Bombings. The AFP's aerial bombings and strafing brought terror, trauma, and anxiety to civilian communities in Northern Samar and Quezon.

On July 31 at 2:30 a.m., the 8th ID repeatedly dropped aerial bombs at Barangay San Isidro, Las Navas, Northern Samar. The military claimed the attack targeted a New People's Army unit in the area. Nevertheless, it severely impacted the civilian population. Later, the 8th ID hamletted Barangay San Isidro and surrounding barangays, including Barangay Imelda.

In Quezon, Barangay Maguibay, Tagkawayan was strafed, placed under checkpoint control, and shelled by the 16th IB on August 2. Two helicopters strafed during the operation supposedly to pursue an a New People's Army unit that morning.

Killings and attempted killings. Environmental defenders and indigenous rights advocates Rudolph Dela Cruz Espe and Rico Gonzaga Malubay were shot and killed in Banaybanay, Davao Oriental on July 27. Both actively opposed destructive mining in the province for damaging the environment and people's livelihoods. They also served as paralegals for the lawyers of Ateneo de Davao University in the past.

In Occidental Mindoro, 4th IB soldiers arrested and deliberately killed civilian Juan Sumiling in Sitio Salidang, Barangay Naibuan, San Jose on August 1. The soldiers claimed the victim was a New People's Army member who died in an encounter. The National Democratic Front-Mindoro refuted this claim.

In General Santos City, human rights defender Warren Cahayag suffered serious multiple gunshot wounds in Purok Bliss, Barangay Calumpang on July 28. Cahayag is a paralegal and one of the Union of Peoples' Lawyers founders in Mindanao in 2005.

Harassment. On July 28, a 17th IB soldier sought Jacqueline Ratin, a peasant and women leader in Cagayan Valley, at the barangay office of Gabut, Amulong, Cagayan. She was again harassed after she assisted in organizing disaster relief operations in the province.

In Central Negros, soldiers climbed and entered homes of civilian residents in Sitio Tagbak, Barangay Trinidad, Guihulngan City without any legal documents on August 1. Earlier, soldiers illegally encamped in a civilian's home in Sitio Sampungan, Barangay Macagahay, Negros Occidental on July 26.

AB

Call to investigate abuse of Filipino migrants gains traction

PROMPTED BY CALL of Filipino organizations, separate investigations were held on the conditions of Filipino migrants in The Netherlands and South Korea.

On August 1, the South Korea Ministry of Employment and Labor started an investigation regarding complaints of non-payment of wages of 91 Filipino farm workers in Yanggu, Gangwon Province. Migrants entered Korea through the seasonal worker program, a government initiative allowing foreign workers to work temporarily in the country to address widespread labor shortages during planting, harvesting, and fishing seasons.

In the Netherlands, organizations pushed for an investigation into inhumane working conditions involving 11 Filipino migrants. They worked as cleaners in Saints and Stars Gym, a famous gym branch in Amsterdam for the wealthy and celebrities. According to the complaint filed, they and Indonesian migrant workers worked over 12 hours a day for the whole week. Supervisors confiscated their passports and were sometimes not paid. Eleven of them are made to stay into four small rooms. Their conditions violated the country's Minimum Wage and Minimum Allowance Act and Working Hours Act. The migrant workers were not given work permits.

The Labour Inspectorate investigated the case, resulting in the Public Prosecution Service arresting the company accountant for possible document and record forgery.

Migrante Korea and Bayan Europe launched a campaign calling for justice for Filipino migrants. They also called for accountability from the US-Marcos regime, which perpetuates the labor export program.

The US-Marcos regime disaster devastates Cavite

The province of Cavite suffered damage from heavy rainfall brought by Typhoon Crising and the southwest monsoon. On July 22, a state of calamity was declared on the province.

Floods submerged at least nine towns and municipalities in the province. In Bacoor, 43 of 47 barangays were recorded affected. Most residents are urban poor, workers, and fishermen. Flooding did not spare even large enclaves like Cavite Economic Zone (CEZ). This forced up to 1,345 families to evacuate.

Rough waves that prevented seafaring and fishing adversely affected the livelihood of 30,000 local fishermen.

Damages to agricultural products in Alfonso, Naic, and Tanza towns reached around ₱3.2 million. Rice crops worth ₱1.5 million were damaged in General Trias, Imus, and Naic, while corn worth ₱407,500 was lost in Alfonso and Tanza.

Despite all this, Marcos trivialized the catastrophe facing the Filipino people. He even called severe flooding a "new normal" and said it was no longer extraordinary. Instead of addressing flooding problems, he evaded culpability and even boosted his image in his fourth State of the Nation Address. He reprimanded government officials, telling them "shame on you" for profiting from failed flood control projects. He even boasted of 9,856 completed flood control projects funded with over half a trillion pesos since 2022, without anything to show for its supposed improvement.

In fact, he is himself primarily responsible for the environmental

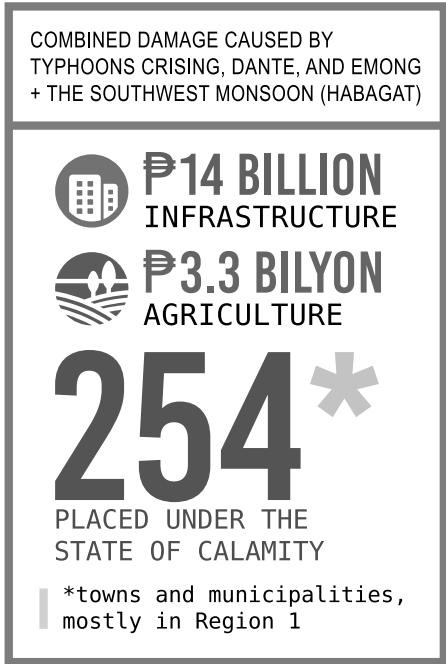


destruction that caused widespread flooding in the country. His regime continues to allow operations and construction of conversion projects that bring irreparable damage to large land areas and seas in the province.

These projects include the Frabelle Fishing Corporation's 421-hectare Diamond Reclamation Project and Bacoor Reclamation and Development Project; construction of massive Serin condominium estates and Ayala malls in Tagaytay areas; construction of River Revetment Wall in Sitio Pasipit, Barangay Tubuan 3, Silang; the 3,500-hectare Villar City Project covering parts of Barangay Salawag and Barangay Paliparan in Dasmariñas; and the 11.7-kilometer LRT-1 Cavite Extension across four barangays of Bacoor. In exchange for these projects are the destruction of the livelihoods of thousands and massive displacement in Cavite.

The regime colludes with local bureaucrat-capitalists and political dynasties now ruling each district of the province and benefiting from such projects, including the Tolentino, Barzaga, Revilla-Bautista, and Advincula families.

NDF-Cavite spokesperson Simeon Magdiwang said the broadest sectors of Cavite residents should unite to hold the US-Marcos regime accountable for all its crimes against the Filipino people. "Only by taking the path and program of the national democratic struggle with a socialist perspective can we achieve true development and change. Marching on this path will lay the foundation of our great strength to bring our revolutionary struggle to success. Only on this path can we see a bright future for the people," Ka Simeon said.



₱943.8 B

allocated by the Marcos regime for "flood control" projects since 2022, all of which proved useless in the face of new flooding in various parts of the country last July.

52.9%

of Philippine exports to the US are **electronics** domestically produced by foreign companies. All profits go to those companies, not to the local economy.

547,000 barrels

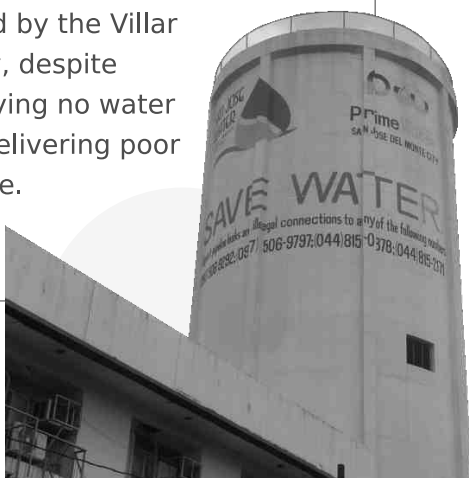
were added to the 41-42 million barrels of daily oil production by OPEC+ countries in order to peg crude oil prices at \$70 per barrel.

2,000

committed suicide in the first six months of 2025; mostly youth, with many triggered by physical and online bullying.

₱1.18 billion

was the 2023 income of **Primewater**, owned by the Villar family, despite supplying no water and delivering poor service.



August 6, 1945

the day the US dropped the first atomic bomb on **Hiroshima** City, Japan, killing 140,000 people. The Japanese population suffered from the bomb's radiation effects, which caused cancer and other illnesses, even 80 years later.



300,000



people rallied in **Sydney**, Australia on August 3 to call for peace and the immediate entry of aid into **Gaza** amid the brutal US-Israeli genocide against the Palestinian people.



175

people, including 93 children, **died from starvation** in Gaza because Zionist Israel refuses to open the borders to bar the entry hundreds of food trucks queued just outside the territory.



MILF stops the process of dismantling the BIAF

On July 19, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) approved a resolution to stop the decommissioning of 14,000 fighters from its armed group, the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF), and to halt the surrender of their 2,450 weapons. According to the resolution, the decision will remain until the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) fulfills many provisions that should accompany the "normalization" process of the Moro fighters' lives. This process is covered in the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB), the "final peace agreement" signed by both parties in 2014.

The MILF stated that in CAB's over 10 years, the GRP has failed to meet its obligations under the agreement. A study released by foreign institutions monitoring the process found that only one-third of the 40 provisions in the normalization process have been fully implemented, mostly by the MILF side. Half (20) of the provisions remain at a "minimum implementation" level, four are "half-implemented," and five have not even started. Many of the minimum and fully implemented provisions happened only during the first years of the agreement.

Among the nearly unimplemented provisions are the removal of AFP troops and units from MILF territories and the integration of Moro fighters into military and police forces. The transformation of camps where both fighters and

their families live has not been implemented. Until now, many fighters with cases related to the armed conflict have yet to be amnestied.

Tragically, only 14% of socio-economic projects have been completed. Over 43% have only been partially started, and 29% have not yet even started. This caused many decommissioned fighters to lose their livelihood, and their families to further sink into extreme poverty and hunger.

On the MILF side, the number of decommissioned combatants has reached 26,145, and they have already surrendered more than 2,000 arms. This number represents 65% of the group's total armed forces of 40,000. According to the MILF, "not a single one" of these combatants has successfully "transitioned

to a productive civilian life," because the requirements for this, except for a ₱100,000 payment per fighter, have not been met. According to MILF, "there must first be substantial socio-economic interventions for the combatants profiled for decommissioning before other combatants follow."

The reactionary state's failed response cover not only economic issues. It has repeatedly disrupted the autonomous governance process in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). It twice postponed elections to establish the Bangsamoro parliament. In March, Ferdinand Marcos Jr unilaterally replaced Ahod "Murad" Ebrahim as Bangsamoro Transition Authority chief minister, ending MILF's dominance. Ebrahim called the action a "blatant interference" by the national government in BARMM processes and warned the Marcos regime against undermining the autonomy-building process laid out by the CAB.

Many Moro people hoped for the CAB's promised peace and progress. But more than 10 years since its signing, they remain mired in poverty. Local development indicators lag behind, and BARMM remains one of the poorest regions.

Its unemployment rate is nearly twice the national average, and 89% of workers belong to the informal sector. The highest minimum wage in the region is ₱411 for non-agricultural workers and ₱386 for agricultural workers, including plantation workers. These represent only 34% and 32% respectively of the ₱1,200 living wage minimum.



PENCAS and SFLMA: The US-Marcos regime sells the Philippines' natural resources

The Philippines is one of 17 countries worldwide with extensive and extraordinary environment and biodiversity. It has 52,177 species of plants and animals, nearly half of which are found exclusively in the country. On the other hand, the Philippines also has the fastest rate of environmental destruction and loss of endangered species from wanton plundering by foreign and local corporations.

Under the US-Marcos regime, the plunder of the country's environment and natural resources has become more systematic, extensive, and rapid because of the implementation of the Philippine Ecosystem and Natural Capital Accounting System (PENCAS) Act and the Sustainable Forest Land Management Agreement (SFLMA).

Price-tagging the environment

On May 22, 2024, the regime enacted PENCAS, which aims to measure and assign prices to the country's natural resources. According to the law, the Philippine Statistics Authority will develop a comprehensive information system to measure the value of biodiversity and the stock of the country's natural resources such as land, forests, water, and air. The United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) will

serve as the standard.

Essentially, natural resources that should not be owned or measured in value were given a "price tag" making them saleable to corporations.

Since the early 1990s, the United Nations and World Bank have been pushing the Philippines to develop a natural resource accounting project and its relation to the local economy. This laid the foundation for PENCAS. The law is touted as facilitating environmental protection. Such data supposedly helps formulate scientific plans for managing nature and the national economy.

However, research in other countries that implemented SEEA shows that assigning a price to an invaluable resource only reduces nature's worth and leads to ineffective and unjust government actions. The data may also be abused

to justify environmental destruction as supposedly more economically beneficial.

Sale of forests

The US-Marcos regime is openly marketing for plunder and land grabbing 1.2 million hectares of forest in parts of Davao, Soccsargen, and Caraga under the SFLMA program. The program launched on June 26 and is monitored by the Forest Management Bureau of DENR. Its goal is to unify eight types of forest use permits in areas not covered by the National Integrated Protected Areas System.

Individuals, groups, or companies may apply to manage and develop forest areas, such as by establishing plantations, agroforestry, pastures, ecotourism, conservation, and "special" uses such as ports, wood processing, roads, airstrips, dikes, and renewable energy projects. Under the program, individual investors may manage 50 hectares, organizations 1,000 hectares, and companies up to 40,000 hectares of forest.

Foreign companies can also plant trees to supposedly "offset" their environmental damage elsewhere. The DENR is expected to collect user's fees reaching ₱85,000 per hectare per year or 3% of net income, plus application and other fees.

These measures show that while the US-Marcos regime pretends to be pro-environment, it fully surrenders the country's natural wealth to local and foreign big comprador bourgeoisie, resulting in harm to millions of indigenous peoples, peasants and people.

