

LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL

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September - October 2008

Excellent conditions for revolutionary upsurge in the face of worsening global capitalist crisis

By Communist Party
of the Philippines

The world capitalist system is undergoing a deepening recession that can only result in the massive destruction of productive forces and further concentration of capital in the hands of a few. This global economic malaise is now causing production slowdowns, massive job losses, worsening impoverishment and intensified exploitation and oppression of the proletariat and ordinary people in the capitalist centers, with even worse consequences for peoples in the Third World.

The bursting of the biggest financial bubble in history and the severest financial crisis since the Great Depression have already caused the collapse and subsumption of many of the largest banks and financial institutions, the sweeping credit crunch, the continuing meltdown of stock markets and near paralyzation of other financial markets.

The financial crisis has become so acute that, aside from several hundred billions already thrown in, the US government has allocated \$700 billion and is planning to pour in more funds in a vain attempt to salvage the "toxic assets" of finance giants and buttress the battered capitalist financial system in the US and abroad. More than a trillion dollars is being poured in by the US and other imperialist governments and big finance capitalists to salvage more collapsing banks and financial markets in other capitalist countries.

These measures have, however, only been met with doubt and skepticism over their effectivity in stemming the financial crisis. After a few gasps of apparent resuscitation, financial markets have only continued to plunge. All these massive diversions of taxes and funds to rescue losing finance giants from their own greed have only

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Seated (left to right): Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez, NDFP Panel Chairperson Luis Jalandoni, PEPP co-convenor Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, PEPP co-convenor Sharon Rose Joy Ruiz-Duremdes, Prof. Jose Maria Sison, Bishop Efen Tendero and Sister Cres Lucero. Standing (left to right): Ofelia Cantor, PEPP; Ruth de Leon, NDFP; Fr. Michel Beckers of the Norwegian Ecumenical Peace Platform; Julieta de Lima, Coni Ledesma, Fidel Agcaoil and Dan Borjal, of the NDFP. Photo by NDFP-IIO.

Norway, peace advocates push for peace talks resumption

By Ed Ladera

The Royal Norwegian Government (RNG) and various peace advocates in the Philippines and abroad recently echoed calls for the resumption of formal peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

As Third Party Facilitator in the peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP, the RNG has designated Special Envoy and Ambassador Vegar Brynildsen to head the team of Norwegian officials that is working for the resumption of the formal peace talks. Mr. Brynildsen and his

associates came to Utrecht on 15 October to meet with the NDFP Negotiating Panel and its Consultants. They are scheduled to meet with the GRP Panel and its officials in the first half of November 2008.

In May 2008, both the NDFP and the GRP panels agreed with the Norwegian government to prepare for the next informal talks before the end of this year.

In previous statements regarding the peace negotiations, the NDFP Panel has made clear that "the resumption of formal talks should be based on previous agreements and should address the root causes of the armed conflict through fundamental social,

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angered the impoverished masses much divested of social assistance and made more miserable in the face of deprivation and worsening economic hardships.

Marxist-Leninist critique

The current crisis besetting the global capitalist system reaffirms the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist critique of the moribund capitalist system and the need to overthrow it through revolutionary struggle and supplant it with a socialist order.

The rotten capitalist system has become even more absurd and unproductive as the imperialists are engaged in ever greater financial speculation and accumulation of surplus finance capital rather than in production. Meanwhile, accelerating overproduction of surplus capital leads to cyclical overproduction in the real economy with piles of unsold inventories of houses, cars, computers, food items and other commodities, followed by production slowdowns, underconsumption and stagnation. The result is massive destruction of productive forces and billions of people around the world condemned to unemployment, poverty, hunger and utter desperation.

At the root of the current financial crisis is the concentration and accumulation of capital which has resulted in the ballooning of finance capital detached from production in the real economy. The amount of surplus capital employed in financial speculation has grown several times bigger than productive capital. The current financial crisis, in particular, was triggered by the accumulation by big finance capitalists of trillions of dollars of overblown assets and superprofits from the housing and subprime derivatives bubble.

As a result of the unproductive accumulation of finance capital, industrial production has turned recessive and presently continues to contract. Joblessness in the US

is at a five-year high, with the number of unemployed expected to swell by another million by year's end. This is on top of the 9.5 million already unemployed in the US. Underemployment is soaring to even higher record levels. The consumption crisis, following the burst of the housing bubble, has become protracted and has made a turn for the worse. Previous irrational capitalist overproduction has turned to disastrous stagnation and underconsumption.

In the face of the worsening crisis of the capitalist system, it is the miserably pauperized working class and ordinary people who suffer the most. More than a trillion dollars have been used to salvage losing finance capitalists in the imperialist countries and provide their losing executives with tens of billions in "golden parachutes." On the other hand, the mass of their working class and ordinary people whose tax payments provided these funds, are left with practically nothing.

Worsening crisis in the semicolonies and impoverished nations

The imperialists have been forcing trade and investment liberalization and denationalization policies on their semicolonies as a means of further exporting their surplus capital, dumping their surplus products, plundering natural resources and taking advantage of the cheap labor and raw materials in their semicolonies. This has resulted in the large-scale destruction of productive forces, and mass unemployment, poverty and hunger in these countries. The spread of the global crisis of capitalism and the intensification of the exploitation and oppression of the working class and oppressed people are worsening even further the chronic crisis in the semicolonies and impoverished nations.

As its "solution" to the threat of the worsening global capitalist crisis on the flimsy semicolonial and semifeudal economy, the puppet Arroyo regime is further opening up the national economy to foreign investments, plunder of the natural resources,

lopsided neocolonial trade, increased deficit government spending, more public and foreign borrowings, and even more intensified taxation of the people. The US and its puppet regime are pushing more policies and measures geared towards the removal of whatever remaining protection there is for the national patrimony and the interests of the toiling masses and the people. The policies include the long-standing scheme to change the constitution of the reactionary government to prolong the reign of the ruling regime.

These policies and measures aim to further open up the economy and resources of the country to the ravages of the imperialists and their big comprador and big bureaucrat accomplices. Instead of alleviating the crisis, the resulting production downfalls, increased unemployment, intensified inflation, reduced consumption and heightened poverty and hunger will only worsen the economic crisis and heighten the people's sufferings.

Excellent conditions for revolutionary upsurge

The current crisis of the global capitalist system provides excellent conditions for revolutionary upsurge as the working

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The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is an alliance of revolutionary organizations with roots in the various sectors and regions of the Philippines. Its goal is to build a society that enjoys national sovereignty, genuine democracy, social justice, progress and peace. It seeks to unite with all forces willing to achieve these goals.

LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL

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Global finance crisis grinds Filipinos deeper into poverty

By Bagani Dong-ilay

News reports from Manila came out on 9 September about a young mother, Janeth Ponce, who poisoned her three children aged four, three and two years old, because she had nothing more to feed them. She drank the poison too, and died. According to the reports, Janeth's husband was then away working as a carpenter.

Sixty-five million Filipinos, or 80% of the total population, struggle to survive on the equivalent of less than two US dollars a day. Hunger afflicts 46.3 million Filipinos or 57% of the population. The current global crisis will make this situation even worse.

According to the International Labor Organization, around 20 million global jobs will be lost next year because of the current global financial and economic crises. The Philippine economy, which is export dependent, is bound to be hit hard with the expected economic downturn in the developed world due to the financial meltdown. US, Japan and Europe are the main markets for Philippine exports.

Filipino working-class families will bear the brunt of the crises as local companies are expected to resort anew to job cuts and various "flexible" measures that result in the pressing down of wages and worsening of working conditions.

There are already reports of a number of slowdowns and shutdowns of garments factories in the Cavite Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) south of Manila. Woo Su, a Korean-owned garments company, shut down this October because there were no orders coming in. Phils Star, another Korean-owned company making socks was shut down also this October.

Some companies are resorting to a compressed workweek and other work arrangements to maximize their profits at the expense of the workers. Other companies are not paying their workers the mandated daily minimum wage.

The Center for Trade Union and Human Rights (CTUHR), an independent non-governmental institution advocating for workers rights, gives a picture of the situation of Filipino workers and how they strive to cope with their difficult working and living conditions.

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Corruption is a social and moral cancer – Catholic Bishops

By Ed Ladera

In a widely-covered press conference on 28 October 2008 in Manila, Roman Catholic Archbishop Angel Lagdameo and four other senior bishops called for "radical reforms" against corruption in the Philippines, declaring that corruption has become a "moral and social cancer".

Lagdameo, president of the highly influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), was accompanied by Archbishop Oscar Cruz, Bishop Socrates Villegas, Bishop Joel Baylon and Bishop Emeritus Jose Sorra. Lagdameo declared: "In response to the global economic crisis that we are facing today, which everybody knows about, and in response to the pitiful state of our country, the time to rebuild our country economically, socially, politically -- minus corruption -- is now!" He stressed, "The time to start radical reforms is not later but now. The time for moral regeneration is now. The time to conquer complacency, cynicism and apathy and to prove that we matured from our political disappointments is now. The time to prepare a new government is now! Not in 2010, but now!"

In their prepared statement, the bishops declared: "The biggest culprit and major

cause of the nation's poverty and hunger is graft and corruption, which has invaded all public and private institutions. In the past few years up to today, we have watched how corruption has become endemic, massive, systemic and rampant in our politics. The faces and symptoms of corruption are overpriced projects, multi-billion scams of various kinds, election manipulations, anomalous transactions, bribery of both high and low, unsolved murders of media practitioners. Corruption is a social and moral cancer!"

Bishop Villegas of Bataan province (in northern Philippines) stated, "If we had been less corrupt, we would have been better prepared to face [the] global crisis. The problem of the Philippines is not population... the problem is corruption. Let us not just wait, let us be actively involved. Let us not just protest [but] offer alternatives."

Archbishop Oscar Cruz of Lingayen-Dagupan, also in northern Philippines, is a former President of the CBCP and a consistent and outspoken critic of the Arroyo regime. He said that corrupt officials would have to pay to a "higher authority" someday, aside from the human justice system. "Perhaps, who knows, they might be given the punishment they deserve. But

Bishops, page 8, col 3 ...

Begging in the city streets. Extreme poverty and hunger impact hard on Filipino children and infants who are forced into mendicancy, prostitution, and other anti-social activities. Photo from lestercavestany.com



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Rosa, a 55 year-old worker at a garments factory, has to work 12 hours a day, seven days a week. For this she receives around P 2,000 (US\$ 45.10) every payday. After paying for house rent, water and electricity bills and some outstanding debts, she is left with only P300 (US\$ 6.76) for food. Because of this, she has to reduce her family's food consumption or borrow money from usurers who charge 20 percent interest.

Teofilo Galalo, 55, who has been working in a small-scale piggery for almost 27 years receives a daily wage of P336 (US\$7.577). He allots P186 (US\$ 4.19) for food everyday for the eight members of his family. This is way below the P862 (US\$ 19.44) daily food allowance needed by a family of six, according to the computations of the National Productivity Wage Commission (NPWC).

Renilyn Tubay, 19, works at Unity Packaging, a factory of 50 workers producing boxes for medicines and skin applications. Women workers receive only P281 (US\$ 6.33) a day for eight hours of work. The mandated minimum wage in Metro Manila is supposed to be P382 (US\$ 8.61) per day. To cope with inflation, Renilyn walks to work everyday. She has to wake up at 6 a.m. to be able to reach her workplace by 8 a.m.

Celine, wife of a worker at a biscuit factory, has shifted to using charcoal for her daily cooking instead of liquefied petroleum gas or LPG. By doing so, she can save P350 (US\$ 7.89) a month, which can then be added to her family's food budget.

Ruth, 32, who works in a garments factory, could not enroll her eldest son, a second year college student, because the family had to save money for food. The son now has to find work to augment the family income. The National Statistics Office reports that more than half of the school-age population are out of school – 31% would rather work while 20% do not have the means to attend school. There are a reported 2.6 million child laborers aged 5 to 17 working in psychologically and physically hazardous conditions.

Those who have no regular work resort to doing odd jobs to survive. Jose Campilos, 20, fetches and carries pails of water for residents in an urban poor community in Manila. He earns an average of P50-100 (US\$ 1.12 to \$2.25) everyday. He also washes clothes for other people for P100 to P200 (US\$ 2.25 to \$4.50) per bundle. For additional income, he collects plastic bottles and tin cans at night, which can be sold for a few pesos to junk dealers.

Crushing revolutionary movement is cacophonous bluster

By Isah Antonio

The boastful chorus of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and her generals of crushing the revolutionary movement by 2010 is a cacophonous bluster. The recent successful nationwide tactical offensives launched by the New People's Army against enemy troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) have clearly shown that the people's army has not only grown in numbers and in strength but has increased its capability of waging tactical offensives against the enemy.

Based on initial reports, the New People's Army confiscated 102 firearms, killed 20 enemy troops and wounded 20 more in the past three months of August-October 2008.

Following are some of the reports received by *Liberation International* from guerrilla fronts across the country from August to October:

- On 25 October, 16 high-powered rifles (hprs) were seized from a detachment of the 39th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army inside the plantation of the Stanfilco-Dole company in Makilala, North Cotabato, in southern Philippines. In less than 10 minutes, the Red fighters and people's militia seized 16 hprs, assorted ammunition and military paraphernalia. The revolutionary movement had earlier warned the company to listen to the people's demands for Stanfilco-Dole to stop dispossessing the peasants of their lands and livelihood in favour of agri-corporation's export crop plantation. Instead of heeding the people's demands, the company continued with its anti-people and anti-worker policies and even employed the reactionary troops as security for its landgrabbing operations against the peasant masses.
- In Surigao del Sur, Red fighters staged harassment operations against the 36th

A 60-year-old resident in an urban poor community in Manila told CTUHR that her family is now used to extending their sleep to wake up past breakfast time, so that they don't need to eat breakfast. Many families are now eating only two meals a day because they simply can no longer afford the standard three meals a day.

Even some rich families, reports say, are complaining. Instead of a five-course meal that they were used to having, they now have to make do with just a three-course meal. ■

IB-AFP detachment and ambushed the reinforcement troops last September 22 in Cabunsuan, Linging.

- In Bulacan, Red fighters seized 25 firearms in two simultaneous raids last August 30 against the PNP detachment in San Isidro, Norzagaray and a guard post in San Jose del Monte.
- Without firing a single shot, members of the Narciso Antazo Aramil Command of the NPA-Rizal seized 10 firearms from the RFM-Swift Company last August 30. In a statement issued by the NPA command, the disarming operation of the company's security was a punitive measure against RFM's violation of the workers' rights and policies of the people's democratic government on environmental protection.
- In Davao Oriental, also on 30 August, people's guerrillas disguised as reactionary soldiers raided the Core Mining Corporation in Barangay Calapagan Lupon and confiscated 4 firearms and five communication radios. Aside from its anti-worker policies, the mining corporation has caused environmental destruction in the area.
- In Sibalay, Negros Occidental, a squad of the Roger Mahinay Command thwarted an attack by the 51st IB Alpha Coy last Aug. 28. Red fighters spotted the enemy maneuvering for an attack. The people's guerrillas quickly took an ambush position and two military troops were killed and many others were wounded during the firefight.
- An M16 rifle and a 12-gauge shotgun were seized in a raid in a village detachment in Sarangani last Aug. 12. The NPA also seized other military equipment.
- Even the supposed fighting mean machines of the Scout Rangers in the province of Aurora were no match for the New People's Army. The people's army staged a preemptive strike last August 15 against the Scout Rangers who were going to conduct military operations in the area. Twelve soldiers died in the strike while eight were wounded.
- In Southern Tagalog, NPA fighters staged operations against the enemy from July 27-August 10. Said operations netted the arsenal of the people's army 14 high-powered rifles and 28 pistols and several thousand rounds of ammunition and military equipment.

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Arroyo regime is Number One violator of children's rights

By **LUIS G. JALANDONI**
NDFP Negotiating Panel

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was in New York on 23 September 2008 to address the United Nations General Assembly. Her executive secretary, General Eduardo Ermita, revealed that she also reported to the UN Security Council on the alleged use of child soldiers by the Moro Islamic Liberation Movement (MILF) and the New People's Army (NPA).

Mrs. Macapagal-Arroyo has no shame! The US-Macapagal-Arroyo regime is today the number one violator of the rights of children in the Philippines.

Regardless of the armed conflict, at least 90 percent of Filipino children suffer gross human rights violations, together with their worker and peasant parents, under the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system. They are exploited and oppressed by foreign monopolies and by such local reactionaries as the big compradors, landlords and corrupt bureaucrats. They live in appalling poverty. They are grossly malnourished and constantly hungry. They are deprived of health care and of adequate and full education.

They are forced into hard labor in urban slums and in the countryside to help their parents eke out subsistence living. They are pushed to live in the city streets to beg for scraps and engage in petty crimes. They are often pushed to drug use and prostitution and are jailed and abused by adult criminals while in prison. They become victims of summary execution in so-called police drives against thieves, drugs and criminals; and they are trafficked for sex, human organs and illegal adoption.

The daily violence against Filipino children is occurring in the context of the exploitative society and the Arroyo regime's subservience to US imperialist "neoliberal" policies. These policies have deeply aggravated the already miserable conditions of poverty and deprivation of the people. The Arroyo regime is the principal instrument of the foreign and local exploiters in committing violations of human rights against the masses of workers and peasants and their children.

In the areas of armed conflict, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime has unleashed extremely brutal campaigns of suppression against the people, especially affecting the children. It



Residents of Compostela Valley province, in southern Philippines, condemn the killing of 9-year old Grezil Buya by the Armed Forces of the Philippines in March 2007. AFP officials justified the killing by saying the child was a Red fighter of the New People's Army. Photo from baibulan.wordpress.com.

has manufactured cases of alleged use of children as soldiers of the NPA, in order to provide license to its armed forces and police to kill, torture, detain and wantonly abuse the rights of children in military operations against communities alleged to be influenced or under the control of the revolutionary forces.

The indiscriminate aerial and artillery bombardments and the random gunfire and strafing of civilian houses have not only led to deaths and destruction of crops but also to massive displacement of people into unhealthy makeshift evacuation centers where children, women and the elderly suffer from lack of food and clothing causing deaths due to lung diseases and diarrhea.

These human rights violations against children by the Arroyo regime are amply documented in fact-finding reports of independent human rights groups such as Amnesty International, as well as in numerous complaints submitted to the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) under the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

Even the United Nations Secretary General, given his partiality to State members, in his first report to the UN Security Council on 24 April 2008 on the situation of children in armed conflict in the Philippines, had to acknowledge that most of the viola-

tions against children were committed by security forces of the GRP.

These include not only killings, maiming, abductions and illegal arrest, detention and torture, but also the recruitment of child soldiers for the paramilitary forces; false labeling of children as NPA because they are suspected to be children of NPA members or sympathizers; torturing them to inform on their parents or act as guides in military operations; detaining them in military camps with the girls being turned into sex slaves and the boys into domestic helpers before being turned over to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The most well known case of false accusation being labeled against a child as NPA is the killing of 9 year old Grezil Buya in Compostela Valley on 31 March 2007.

The findings of the UN Secretary General were further reinforced by the 30 May 2008 report of the UN Committee of Experts on the Rights of the Child which found the GRP armed forces to be recruiting child soldiers for their paramilitary groups and holding military training of children in schools in accordance with GRP laws.

All the above reports expose the lies of Mrs. Macapagal-Arroyo, her civilian officials, and the entire corps of military propagandists on their false accusations against the NPA. Their attempts to continue repeating such false accusations will only further expose them to the international community

No. 1 violator, page 8, col 2 ...

... Peace talks, page 1, col 3

economic, political and constitutional reforms.”

Luis G. Jalandoni, Chairperson of the NDFP Negotiating Panel, earlier clarified that “The resumption of formal talks, upon overcoming the impediments put up by the GRP, should take place as soon as possible. There should not be an indefinite series of informal talks which do not result in agreements on the substantive agenda, namely social and economic reforms and political and constitutional reforms.”

On 2 September, a high-level delegation of church leaders from the Philippines, the Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform (PEPP), met with the NDFP Negotiating Panel and its Consultants in Utrecht, The Netherlands. The delegation was led by PEPP co-convenors Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, Vice-President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), and Ms. Sharon Rose Joy Ruiz-Duremdes of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP). They were accompanied by Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez, Jr, Bishop Efren Tendero, Sr. Cres Lucero, Ofelia Cantor, and Fr. Michel Beckers of the Norwegian Ecumenical Peace Platform.

The Church leaders came in pursuit of their mission as “advocates and bridge builders for peace”. They declared their willingness to help in the peace negotiations and their commitment for the resumption of formal peace talks “without preconditions, and on the basis of all previous agreements”.

Both the NDFP and the PEPP reiterated their stand that addressing the root causes of the armed conflict is the path to a just and lasting peace.

In the 2 September meeting with the PEPP, the NDFP side was composed of Jalandoni and Panel members Fidel V. Agcaoili,

Julieta de Lima and Coni Ledesma. Also present were Chief Political Consultant Prof. Jose Maria Sison, NDFP Monitoring Committee member Danilo Borjal, and Ruth de Leon, head of the NDFP Panel Secretariat.

Archbishop Ledesma and Ms. Ruiz-Duremdes explained the role of the PEPP as one of bridge-building for peace between the GRP and the NDFP. Jalandoni welcomed the visit of the PEPP and the role it has assumed. Both sides held frank discussions on peace negotiations, ceasefire, vision of the NDFP, land reform and national industrialization, and revolutionary taxation.

Jalandoni reiterated the position of the NDFP that the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations are ongoing, “because neither side has terminated the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and that what needs to be done is the resumption of formal talks upon overcoming the 13 impediments put up by the GRP.” He added that the NDFP Panel presented this document on the impediments to the GRP in the presence of the Norwegian officials in the informal talks held in Norway in May 2008.

The PEPP and the NDFP agreed that there is an urgent need to resume formal talks and such resumption must be based on previous agreements.

In an interview on 18 September 2008, Archbishop Ledesma said that the dialogue with the NDFP officials had been fruitful. “The NDFP is asking [the GRP] to recognize the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and [the observance] of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).” At the end of the meeting in Utrecht, Bishop Iñiguez declared, “Dialogue is good!”

Fr. Michel Beckers of the Norwegian Ecumenical Peace Platform accompanied the

PEPP delegation to Norway to meet with Norwegian non-government organizations supportive of the PEPP and the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations, and with the officials of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry.

Arroyo regime’s DDR Scheme Condemned

When Mrs. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo announced that the paradigm she would use for peace talks would be Disarmament, Demobilization and Rehabilitation (DDR), NDFP Negotiating Panel Chairperson Jalandoni declared in an interview with Philippine Daily Inquirer (10 September 2008): “Arroyo’s DDR scheme is a formula to justify the escalation of the GRP’s military attacks against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the New People’s Army (NPA). It is causing hundreds of thousands of civilian victims.”

While reiterating that the NDFP is open to informal talks to prepare the ground for the resumption of formal talks as soon as possible, Jalandoni said that the NDFP condemns the DDR scheme of the Arroyo regime as a flagrant violation of The Hague Joint Declaration. “This agreement, signed in 1992 and approved by the Principals of both Parties,” declared Jalandoni, “stipulates that neither party in the peace negotiations may demand capitulation from the other party. DDR will not address the root causes of the armed conflict.” ■

... NPA offensives, page 4, col 3

- Last Aug. 2 in Albay, the Bicol region, two cal.45 pistols and one Ingram machine pistol were confiscated by operatives of the Santos Binamera Command-NPA from agents of the 9th ID intelligence while two elements of the joint PNP and 65th IB were killed and another wounded in a sniping operation launched by the Nerissa San Juan Command-NPA in Catanduanes, also in the Bicol region.

No matter what lies the Arroyo regime dish out, it cannot hide the fact that its reactionary troops are suffering defeats and casualties in the hands of the New People’s Army nor that the enemy troops are demoralized and going berserk in the face of such defeat.

On the other hand, in spite of the regime’s superior firepower, war machines and massive troops, the people’s guerrillas are able to deal heavy blows against the enemy troops by executing carefully planned offensives and creative actions. And with the support of the peasant masses in the areas tactical offensives of the New People’s Army are sure to be victorious. ■

... Upsurge, page 2, col 3

class and other oppressed and exploited people all over the world who have been pushed to the wall have no other recourse but to further intensify their revolutionary struggles and advance their interests.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the entire international proletarian revolutionary movement anticipate the reinvigoration and resurgence of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist movement and the heightening of working class and people’s revolutionary struggles the world over.

The worsening socio-economic crisis in the Philippines is pushing millions of workers,

peasants and other democratic sectors to wage people’s struggles and advance and support people’s war. The CPP calls on all revolutionary mass forces to take advantage of the current situation to step up recruitment, consolidate their ranks and intensify their struggles.

In the midst of the worsening crisis of the present system, the New People’s Army (NPA) will further intensify revolutionary armed struggle, launch more tactical offensives against the fascist armed forces, deal heavy blows on the US-Arroyo regime for its pro-imperialist, anti-democratic and antipeople policies and punish it for inflicting great harm and misery upon the people. ■

INDIA: Leader of anti-displacement movement arrested, faces 26 trumped up cases

By Roselle Valerio

Signalling further escalation of political repression aimed against the anti-displacement campaign in India, a people's leader who has been fighting one of the worst "development packages" of the Manmohan Singh government was arrested on 12 October by Orissa state security forces and is now facing 26 false cases. Abhaya Sahoo, President of the 15,000-strong POSCO Pratirodh Sangram Samiti (POSCO Resistance Struggle Committee), was picked up by Orissa police while undergoing hospital treatment in Bhutmunde, in Paradeep.

Orissa state officials charged Sahoo with 26 grave but false offenses, including rioting, arson, abduction and kidnapping, in a move aimed at keeping the people's leader in prison for life. On 24 October, the Judicial Magistrate court in Kujanga rejected Sahoo's appeal for bail and ordered him remanded to the Choudwar Central Jail.

Talking to reporters at the court premises, Sahoo said that his arrest was a conspiracy aimed at weakening the anti-POSCO movement. He, however, remained hopeful that the movement will not be affected by his absence and that the villagers themselves will carry on with the struggle to defend their land and livelihood.

South Korean-owned POSCO, one of the world's largest steel manufacturers, signed a deal with the Orissa state government in June 2005 to build a steel plant and a port in the town of Paradeep, in the Jagatsinghpur district. Touted to be the largest steel plant in India, the project aims to utilize 600 million tons of iron ore from mines several hundred kilometers away. Seven villages and 22,000 people will be displaced from over 1,600 hectares of land. In addition to the farmers who will be displaced, thousands of fisherfolk and villagers in the port area will lose their livelihood.

For three years, POSCO has been trying to acquire the peasants' and tribals' land. Organizing themselves as the POSCO Pratirodh Sangram Samiti, the villagers have kept the company and their hired goons from establishing local offices. They have set up "checkpoints" at the entrances of the villages to prevent POSCO from starting survey operations and demarcation of the land. In retaliation, POSCO hired goons, harass the villagers and destabilize the situation, and provide a pretext to call in state police and paramilitary units.



Villagers in Orissa state came out in force to protest the arrest of their leader Abhaya Sahoo and push harder against the POSCO steel project.
Photo from www.hindu.com.

Hundreds of struggling masses all over Orissa have already been arrested while tens of thousands have been framed under false and trumped up charges. Thousands of the indigenous minority adivasis are also put behind bars by the Orissa state government. In the area of Kalinganagar on 2 January 2006, Orissa police killed 15 tribals who were protesting the beginning of construction of the Tata Steel plant.

After 2 January though, the Anti-Displacement Movement (ADC) grew stronger in the Kalinganagar area. For the next 14 months, they constantly stopped traffic on National Highway 215. According to an official of the ADC, "People came from different areas of Orissa and other states, including Nandigram and Kashipur, to support us."

Because of this movement, Tata Steel's construction work has stopped. This is seen as a major blow to the efforts of the Orissa state government to make the Kalinganagar area into "the second most important steel city of the world."

On 12 August, ADC activists Devendar Das, Protima Das, Amin Maharana and Pradeep were arrested along with David Pugh, a social scientist and teacher from the US who was then in India doing a study on the displacement of people due to so-called development projects. Pugh endured about nine hours of intense interrogation and psychological torture by Orissa state police before being forced to leave India. Devender, Protima and Pradeep were later charged with trumped up politico-criminal

cases and were falsely shown to have relations with Maoist guerrillas. At around the same time, ADC activist Amin Maharana was also arrested, heavily tortured, before being charged with false politico-criminal cases.

Meanwhile, more protests have broken out to demand the release of the people's leaders and to press for the scrapping of the agreement between POSCO and the Orissa state government.

The Indian people's resistance to displacement by so-called Special Economic Zones has been growing exponentially across the countryside over the last few years. Villagers are strengthening their resolve even more to defend their land and livelihood, even if it cost them their lives. They have been raising their level of political consciousness and increasing efforts to lend assistance to each other's local anti-displacement struggles.

They have also started drawing international attention to their cause. In June 2008, the International Campaign against Forced Displacement was launched, under the auspices of the global anti-imperialist alliance, International League of Peoples' Struggle. Plans are currently up for a multi-national fact-finding mission to India focusing on the so-called development packages of the Manmohan Singh regime and the displacement and economic deprivation of millions of poor peasants, tribals and dalits and the destruction of the country's natural resources. ■

NDFP hosts meeting on 30 years of Reform in China

The International Information Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP-IIO) hosted a meeting on Saturday, 18 October, in Utrecht, The Netherlands to discuss the current economic, political and social situation in China and the most important impact of 30 years of Reform. Leading the discussion was Pao-yu Ching, Professor Emeritus of Economics at Marygrove College Michigan, USA, who has been specializing in the study of the Chinese economy and the concrete conditions of the Chinese people.

In the meeting, Prof. Pao-yu Ching presented a China rarely seen in the western media and educational system. "Among the Chinese people," she asserted, "no one really believes anymore that China is still a socialist country."

Referring to the Chinese economic reform -- also called "socialism with Chinese characteristics" -- which started in 1978, Prof. Pao-yu Ching declared: "The Reform has cost human lives and caused human suffering, wasted China's precious resources, devastated the environment, and turned China into a neo-colony of foreign powers. China has transformed from a socialist country, which supported oppressed people all over the world, into one which is allied with the oppressors in Asia, Latin America and Africa in order to acquire resources and expand its economic and political influence."

On the other hand, she said, "The Reform has taught the Chinese people what capitalism is really all about. Thirty years after the capitalist Reform began, the majority of workers and peasants have not only endured much suffering but also have realized that if the capitalist Reform continues, their sons, daughters and grandchildren will have no future. Progressive intellectuals have also realized that the future of China is indeed at stake. With this real life education, the Chinese people have finally understood the meaning of the two-line struggle and Mao Zedong's warning of the return of the bourgeoisie."

Prof. Pao-yu Ching's presentation stimulated a lively discussion among her audience. Attending the meeting were several political refugees based in the Netherlands, political activists from Indonesia and Afghanistan, and members of communist parties and groups from the Netherlands,

Germany, Greece and the UK. Also in the meeting were members of the NDFP Negotiating Panel in peace negotiations with the government of the Republic of the Philippines.

Reflecting on the sentiments of the Chinese people about the 30 years of Reform, Prof. Pao-yu Ching revealed that the forces opposing capitalist reforms have been gaining strength in the past two years. "In a letter written and signed by 170 prominent people in September 2007 and submitted to the Delegates of the upcoming 17th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party," she said, "the signatories openly charged that power holders of the Chinese Communist Party no longer represented the interests of China's proletariat, and that they betrayed the principles of Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought."

She concluded: "though there is no doubt that the struggle for socialism in China, like elsewhere, is going to be long, hard, and treacherous, China's socialist legacy and the theory and practice Mao Zedong left behind will carry the struggle to triumph in the end." [NDFP-IIO] ■

... No. 1 violator, page 5, col 3

as shameless liars and scoundrels whose corruption, greed and mendacity know no bounds.

As everyone knows, as early as 1988, the Political Bureau (PB) of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has already adopted a definite policy prohibiting the recruitment of those below 18 years as regular members or armed fighters of the New People's Army. This has been reiterated on 15 October 1999 by the Executive Committee (EC) of the CPP with the corresponding amendment to Point 1 of Principle III of the Basic Rules of the NPA.

As the UNICEF-commissioned study on the implementation of these CPP directives has shown, the NPA has religiously been complying with the prohibition on the recruitment of children below 18 years old, in accordance with International Humanitarian Law, specifically the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. In fact, the CPP beats even the US,



Prof. Pao-yu Ching. NDFP photo.

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that is not enough. Someone else in higher authority will punish them as they deserve," he warned.

The Arroyo regime reacted sharply, with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez saying that the bishops' calls treaded the line of sedition as they call on the public to act against the government.

Bishop Baylon of Masbate province, in central Philippines, responded that they will remain steadfast in their position to stand up for the truth. Cruz for his part retorted that sedition is nowhere near what the statement of Archbishop Lagdameo read. But Cruz added, "The bishops know what sedition is. If Malacañang (the official residence of the Manila president) really wants them to be seditious, then it can simply request the bishops who might oblige." ■

which allows the recruitment of children as soldiers who are below 18 years old.

We are calling on the UN Security Council and its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict not to be taken in by the lies of Mrs. Gloria M. Arroyo. We ask for the sake of fairness and due process that the NDFP be given the opportunity to present its side on any issue raised by the Arroyo government on the alleged use by the NPA of children below 18 years old as combatants. In accordance with the report of UN Secretary General, we ask that an interface dialogue between the NDFP Negotiating Panel and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children in Armed Conflict be held at the earliest time in Utrecht, The Netherlands. ■