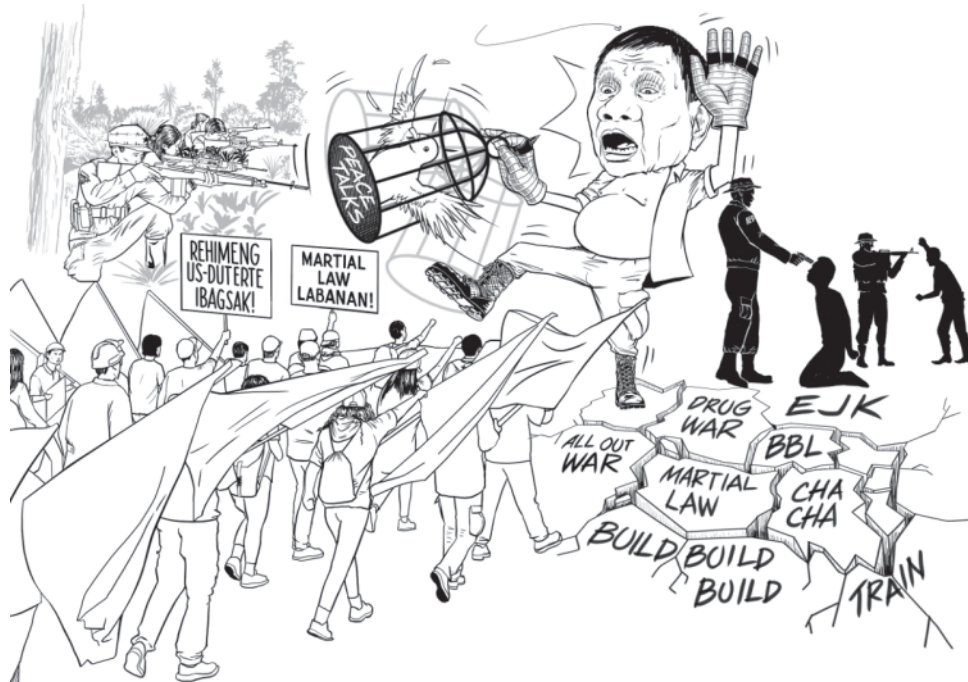


## 36 AFP casualties in SMR

IN THE RUN-UP to the 49th founding anniversary of the New People's Army (NPA), Red fighters from the Southern Mindanao Region (SMR) delivered blows against the intensified military-terrorism of the Duterte regime in the region. The Armed Forces of the Philippines suffered not less than 36 casualties from successful harassment, demolition, and ambush operations launched by the NPA in various provinces in the region from February until March 2018.

On March 22, AFP troops were hit thrice in a series of attritive actions in North Cotabato, Davao del Norte and Compostela Valley, killing eight soldiers and wounding at least five others. The seven-vehicle convoy of the 19th IB operating troops was harassed by Red fighters under the Mt. Apo Subregional Command in Brgy. Manobo, Magpet town while troops of the 56th IB were ambushed in Sitio Nasilaban, Brgy. Palma Gil in Talaingod. On the same day, the NPA ambushed 71st IB agents on-board six motorcycles in Brgy. Magangit. The 71st IB unit was responsible for the series of illegal arrests, detention and extrajudicial killing of civilians in Compostela Valley, including the arrest, torture and attempted burning of bodies of a minor and

*...continued on p. 3*



EDITORIAL

## On the possible peacetalks resumption

**T**he Communist Party of the Philippines, as well as the New People's Army, support the possibility of the resumption of peace talks between the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the Government of the Philippines. This is in line with the revolutionary movement's policy of maintaining openness to hold talks with any regime which is prepared to hold negotiations to seek solutions to the roots of the civil war in the country.

The CPP and the NPA fully support the NDFP Negotiating Panel as representative of the revolutionary movement. The CPP upholds the NDFP position that there should be no preconditions in the resumption of peace talks as stipulated in The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992, which both sides have agreed to uphold. The Filipino people is hoping that negotiations on the Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms will push through.

Both panels were set to discuss the agreement during the talks' fifth round before Duterte terminated the negotiations on November 2017.

The NDFP also insists that the previously signed Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) be implemented. In line with the CARHRIHL and other agreements during the first round of the talks, the GRP

should immediately issue a presidential amnesty proclamation and ensure the release of all political prisoners.

The possibility of resuming negotiations comes after Duterte's about-face on his declaration of terminating the talks (Proclamation No. 360) and his succeeding declaration of the CPP and NPA as terrorists (Proclamation No. 374).

For now, Duterte has shown no concrete measures for the people to reduce their resistance against his hated regime and call for his ouster. Without a substantive effort to im-

plement previous agreements and seriously negotiate the CASER, the Duterte regime's revival of the peace talks is a mere falcity used to prettify his regime amid its worsening political crisis.

The revolutionary movement is aware that while it is engaged in the negotiations, Duterte's bureaucrat-capitalist corruption and crimes prevail. He openly favors big foreign capitalists and their local comprador partners. He persistently manipulates state processes to favor his family, cronies and supporters in awarding public contracts under his Build-Build-Build program.

His regime continues with anti-people neoliberal policies. Since his TRAIN Law was implemented early this year, prices of petroleum products, food and basic services have all gone up. Both the Build-Build-Build program and TRAIN are contrary to the socio-

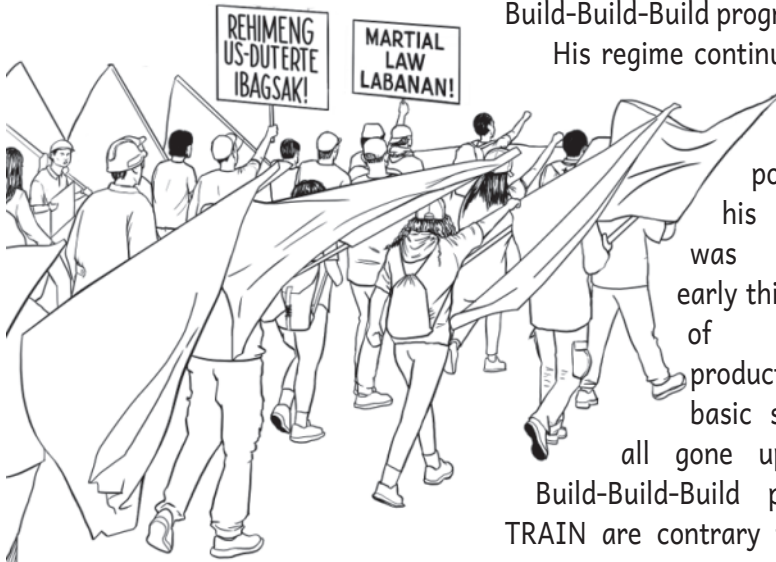
economic reforms being pushed in the the peace negotiations.

The revolutionary movement is also aware of Duterte's worsening subservience to US imperialism, the AFP's master, which is also his main machinery for terrorism. He pays lipservice to an independent foreign policy only to beg alms from China to fund his grandiose infrastructure scheme in exchange for some of the country's sovereign territories.

The regime marches on in the path of establishing a fascist dictatorship to monopolize political power and extend its term. Extrajudicial killings continue, both under his "war against drugs" and all-out war against the revolutionary movement. Under Oplan Kapayapaan, the AFP continues its rampage in the countryside. Its troops occupy, bomb and impose blockades on entire communities. Widespread deceit and intimidation is used to terrify the people to force them to masquerade as "NPA surrender-rees." This is most atrocious in Mindanao under martial law.

In this light and to augment the peace talks, the people need to intensify their struggle against the US-Duterte regime's terrorism, tyranny and oppression. They need to mount bigger protest actions to advance their democratic rights--land, jobs, living wages, housing, education and other basic services.

The Filipino people should strengthen their call to end martial law in Mindanao. They should hold Duterte and the AFP responsible for Marawi's destruction, and for the thousands who were killed and the hundreds who are still missing and feared to have died. They should also hold Duterte and the AFP accountable for the the long list of brutal and merciless crimes it has committed against the Filipino people. In the face of the fascist Duterte regime's reign of terror, the NPA is left with no choice but to carry out the people's war to defend the people. AB



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"36 AFP..." from page 1

a civilian last year

**Compostela Valley.** On March 20, three 46th IB troopers were wounded following a demolition operation in Lawasan, Pantukan by the ComVal-Davao Gulf Sub-Regional Command. Three 66th IB soldiers were also killed in another demolition operation by the ComVal-Davao East Coast Sub-Regional Command in Sitio Taytayan, Brgy. Andap, New Bataan on March 18.

**Davao del Sur.** On March 5, operating troops of the 102nd Division Reconnaissance Company and the 39th IB were ambushed by Red fighters belonging to Mt. Apo Sub-regional Command in Sitio Landig, Brgy. Sibulan in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur. The spin doctors of the 10th ID tried to save face by denying their seven casualties and instead claimed that only one soldier was wounded.

**Davao City.** In Baguio District, Davao City, troops of the 3rd IB were hit three times in attritive actions by the 3rd Pulang Bagani Company in Sitio Basicong and Sityo Utan in Brgy. Tamugan from February 23 to 26. In retaliation, enemy troops bombed nearby Lumad communities for two days, torched and ransacked two houses of civilians.

Red fighters have also meted out revolutionary justice against Barangay Intelligence Network (BIN) members and concurrent paramilitaries Toto Costan and Daden Diaz. Both were active intelligence agents of the AFP who were fanatic implementors of "counter-insurgency" tactics of profiling and targeting mass leaders and local activists and sowing discord among civilians. Costan and Diaz were neutralized on February 22 in Brgy. Manuel Guianga, Baguio District.

**North Cotabato.** Three 19th IB troopers were confirmed killed in a

demolition operation of Red fighters under the Mt. Apo Subregional Command in Purok 8, Brgy. Greenhills in Pres. Roxas, North Cotabato on February 24.

**Davao del Norte.** In Laak, Davao del Norte, enemy troops of the 60th IB were likewise harassed by Red fighters in Purok 1-A in Brgy. Kiokmay on February 11. On February 9, Guerrilla Front 56 operatives triggered command-detonated explosives against the 3rd IB soldiers where five troops were killed in Sitio Balaas, Barangay Gumitan, Marilig district.

**Negros Oriental.** On March 21 at around 4:00 a.m., the Leonardo Panaligan Command has meted out revolutionary justice against Rene Torres, an intelligence agent of the AFP and PNP who actively spied on the NPA since the 1990s. He secretly reported to the police and military, especially to the 11th IB that is stationed in barangays McKinley and Buenavista.

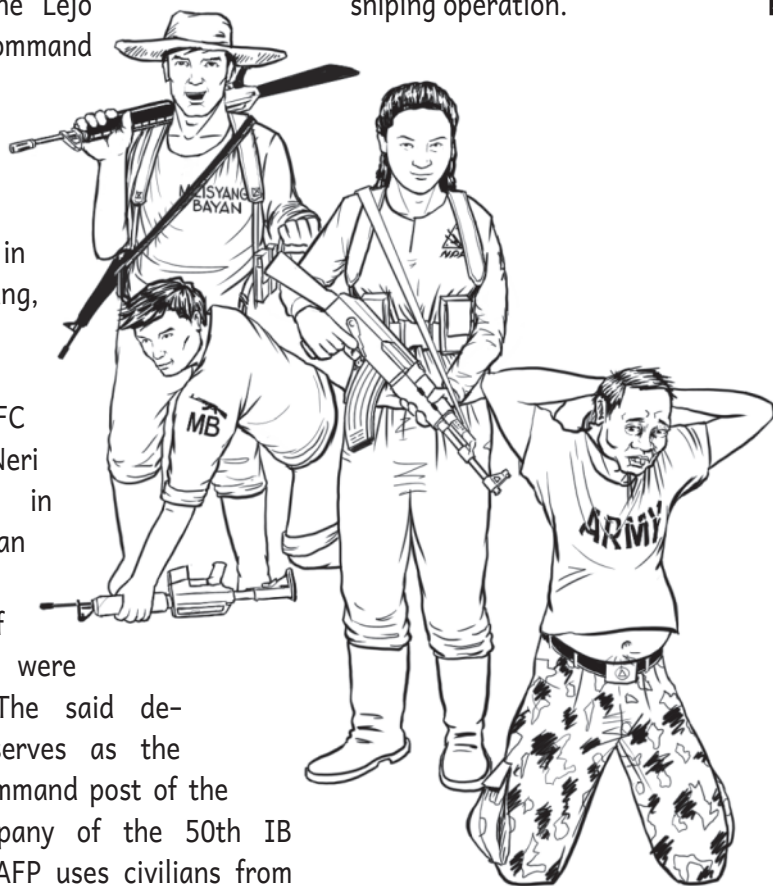
**Kalinga.** On March 11 at around 8:00 in morning, Red fighters from the Lejo Cawilan Command successfully raided a detachment of the 50th IB in Sityo Guesang, Poblacion Salegseg, Balbalan. PFC Samuel Neri was killed in action, and an unknown number of soldiers were wounded. The said detachment serves as the advance command post of the Alpha Company of the 50th IB where the AFP uses civilians from

the Salegseg tribe as humanshields.

Following the marching orders of the US-Duterte regime, the 50th IB is currently occupying many tribal communities in Kalinga to protect the interests of large corporations poised to start massive mining operations and construct large power plants in the province such as the Cordillera Exploration Company, Inc. (CEXCI)-Nickel Asia, Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company, Freeport McMoran, Chevron, SanLorenzo Ruiz Builders, DPJ Engineers and Consultants, and Kalinga Hydro. The said projects in the ancestral lands is the worst form of national oppression against national minorities in Kalinga and the entire Cordillera.

**Nueva Ecija.** A sniper unit of the NPA-Nueva Ecija has launched an attritive action against the troops of the 84th IB operating in Barangay Piut, Caranglan on March 23 at around 10:30 a.m. The Red fighters fired at the enemy troops' passing vehicle in Cagayan Valley Road. A soldier was killed in the sniping operation.

AB



# NPA grows steadily

In its statement for the 49th founding anniversary of the NPA last March 29, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines declared that "[t]he New People's continues to grow steadily as it approaches its 50th founding anniversary."

The Central Committee of the Party described the current ranks of the NPA today as mainly composed of young Red fighters and commanders from the peasantry, workers and urban intelligentsia who infuse the armed movement with revolutionary vigor, optimism and courage. In view of this, the "NPA's commitment and determination to serve the people and carry forward the people's war to greater heights is as strong as ever."

The fascist US-Duterte regime has failed to hinder the growth of the people's army despite the brutal war that it has launched against the people and its pronouncement that it will defeat the NPA before the end of 2018.

As Duterte becomes more tyrannical and contemptuous of the people's democratic rights and freedom, many are left with no choice but to fight back and launch various forms of resistance. Millions are aroused and are realizing the justness and the historical necessity of the revolutionary armed struggle that will put an end to the Duterte regime and advance the overall revolutionary cause.

**55% growth.** The overall number of new NPA recruits in the past one year and a half under the conceited Duterte's rule actually grew by 55% as compared with its growth in the past four years under the Aquino regime (2012-2016).

There is an influx of young intellectuals from urban centers joining the NPA. Just like his idol-dictator, Ferdinand Marcos, Duterte is proving that he is indeed the number one recruiter of the NPA.

In the past year, the NPA has launched not less than 1,000 tactical offensives and various types of military actions across the country. 700 of these have been launched in

Mindanao alone under the fascist regime's martial law. These demonstrate and prove the determination of the NPA to fight the terror that the puppet and fascist regime has unleashed.

Meanwhile, Ka Oris, spokesperson of the National Operations Command (NOC), reported that the "NPA forces in Mindanao remain strong amid the militaristic attempt of the fascist regime to crush it altogether with Moro defense forces by deploying 70% of its armed force in Mindanao alone. This has ironically given way for other regions in Luzon and Visayas to grow and expand."

NPA units in Luzon and Visayas have been able to launch tactical offensives, particularly those operating in the provinces of Kalinga, Abra, Ilocos Sur, Cagayan, Quirino, Nueva Vizcaya, Laguna, Batangas, Quezon, Mindoro, Sorsogon, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Eastern Samar, Western Samar, Leyte, Negros Occidental, Capiz, Iloilo and others.

Consequently, the enemy troops are forced to respread its forces across the country.

"Widespread attritive actions, inflicting significant enemy casualties, sapping the enemy's strength and giving it difficulty to fulfill the plan of forming new battalions and divisions complemented these tactical offensives. Whatever tactical defeats the NPA suffered were turned into lessons on advancing guerilla warfare, to face the enemy's intensified attacks using imperialist high-tech military equipment," said Ka Oris.

He further said, "[d]espite aerial bombings, shelling, political killings, burning of schools and homes, threats and deception by the regime's military minions, the people's

army's mass base increased by 10% nationwide, even in Mindanao where military brutality is most severe."

"This has translated into more guerrilla fronts, where the people's army helped build and develop more people's organs of political power and revolutionary mass organizations which were tempered by advancing agrarian revolution, fighting for their ancestral lands and for their right to self-determination, the struggle against fascism and militarization, and resistance to imperialist plunder and widespread environmental destruction by large scale mining and commercial plantations," he added

**Tasks.** In connection with the preparations of the revolutionary forces for the forthcoming 50th founding anniversary of our Party, the NOC ordered the NPA "to achieve in the fastest possible time the most appropriate deployment of forces and most effective coordination in intensifying guerrilla warfare in the whole archipelago."

"We will increase and strengthen several-fold the people's army through active recruitment; training and development of Red commanders and fighters and military cadres; improving command structures at all levels; increasing and upgrading weapons; further developing our intelligence capabilities; forming people's militias and carrying out well-planned annihilative tactical offensives to punish the enemies' crimes, weaken them and confiscate their weapons."

In conclusion, Ka Oris stressed, "use the occasion of the NPA's celebration today to strengthen our unity in continuing and accelerating the momentum we have achieved this past year. Let us further heighten our will, vigor and capacity to fight and reaffirm our determination to carry out the tasks the CPP has set out for us.

The NDF-Mindanao, regional Party committees and NPA-commands in Northeastern Mindanao, North Central Mindanao, Sorsogon,

## Lumads against Duterte

To struggle for the advancement of the rights of the people to education, land and self-determination denotes wisdom and not ignorance. The conscious neglect of the reactionary government to protect and uphold the rights of the Lumad people, especially their right to their ancestral domain, is the reason why many Lumads resolutely choose to tread the noble path of the revolution.

Ka Bick Mar, a political instructor of the NPA, belied Duterte's statement that Lumads are merely tricked by the NPA into joining the revolutionary army. In an interview with him by *Ang Bayan*, he said that, "as a Lumad, and based on what I have experienced and witnessed, Duterte's accusation is baseless. I, as a Lumad, voluntarily joined the NPA because of my desire to organize my fellow Lumads, and educate them about the real societal situation."

Ka Bick Mar, 23, is a Lumad farmer. At an early age, he was already aware of the justness of the war that is being waged by the revolutionary movement. Before his father died, he told Ka Bick Mar never to sever ties with the movement, because if not for the movement, their environs would have long been destroyed. At the age of 18, he decided to join the NPA as a full-timer, and subsequently became a full member of the Party. He currently leads a platoon of Red fighters as a political instructor. His wife is also a Lumad, a Red fighter, and concurrently a platoon medic.

According to Ka Pigan, a Red commander of the NPA, "it is the reactionary government who deceives the Lumads as it allures local tribal leaders into serving the interests of big businesses over the rights and interests of the people. It is also responsible for the formation of paramilitary groups who repress and terrorize Lumad communities who are actively defending their right to ancestral domain and are strongly opposing the entry and

operation of destructive foreign mining projects. He said that the regime's manner of governance is "worse than shit", for it has done nothing but spread terror and decay in their communities.

Ka Pigan, 57, is also a Lumad farmer. In 2000, he decided to join the NPA because of the continuous harassment of the reactionary government's Delamance paramilitaries against him and his family. Amid repression, his revolutionary fervor remained steadfast. Recently this year, the US-Duterte regime listed him as a terrorist. Among his five children, one is also an NPA commander.

The fact that many young Lumads are joining the NPA cannot be denied. Ka Oris, NPA spokesperson, recently explained that "majority of NPA fighters (in Mindanao) are Lumads, because the reactionary government continues to favor large mining and wide plantation concessions of big corporations that will evict Lumads from their ancestral lands. Thus, it is but natural for them to fight and defend their ancestral lands."

Ka Bick Mar criticized Duterte's statement wherein he compared NPA organizers to "serpents" who purportedly destroy the "paradise" of Lumads. He said that "(we are) not serpents for we are speaking the truth. The people feel and know this, that is why they continue to support us. If we are serpents and our intentions evil, the movement would not be this strong today for nobody will join the NPA."

Lumad NPA commanders and



Party cadres like like Ka Bick Mar and Ka Pigan disprove Duterte's claim that the revolutionary movement is exploiting the "ignorance" of Lumads. For actually, many Lumads play crucial roles in various NPA fronts, and CPP leadership.

They are efficient organizers for they have strong influence over their former communities and fellow Lumads. They are skilled commanders for they are great fighters and have mastery of the terrain. They are also competent political officials for they are good at propagating Party studies and courses.

Majority of national minorities are farmers. Their ancestral lands are grabbed not only by landlords but also by big foreign mining, logging, and plantation corporations.

The NPA educates them about class struggle. For them, it is clear that the NPA represents the farming and working class, and all other oppressed sectors of society.

According to Ka Bick Mar, "the NPAs are the true Baganis of the Lumad people for they defend not only the interests of their fellow Lumads but also of the Filipino majority who are exploited." Bagani is the term for the traditional warriors of various Lumad groups who defend their people against encroachers and those who threaten their lives. They are considered heroes, similar to how Red fighters are hailed today. AB

# Marawi residents demand to take back their city

Up to 50,000, Marawi residents marched to the city's Ground Zero and launched their protest "Let's go back to Ground Zero" on March 30 to demand their right to return to their homes, call for a people's consultation regarding the rehabilitation of their community, and offer prayers for civilians who died during the conflict. Serving as the main battle area in Marawi, Ground Zero was severely devastated following the airstrikes launched by the AFP.

The protesters, however, were barred from entering the former warzone by AFP troops who claimed that there are still 50 undetonated in the area.

According to Sultan Abdul Hamidullah Atar, an organizer of the said activity, their protest also aimed to express their dismay over the government's neglect. He stressed that the Duterte government is giving the residents "broken promises and false expectations."

Furthermore, he insisted that hindering the residents from returning to their homes is a grave violation of their legitimate right.

"It is high time residents see their homes, salvage what is left of their belongings, and rebuild their houses and city," added Aida Ibrahim of Tindeg Ranao, an organization of displaced Moro families.

Meanwhile, Ranaw Multi-Sectoral Movement slammed the National Economic Development Authority and Task Force Bangon Marawi's plan to convert their city into an ecozone under the guise of rehabilitation.

Awarding of public contracts will be subject to the Swiss Challenge scheme that allows foreign investors and their local business partners to submit unsolicited project proposals. This scheme is full of anomaly and was only being implemented to favor Duterte's cronies and his foreign business allies.



The group added that the rights of the residents are disregarded in the name of the bogus Marawi rehabilitation. The plan was made without consultation with the residents, and without concrete steps for the rehabilitation. Only one thing is certain about the rehabilitation plan: that the people of Marawi are out of its picture.

Almost 10 months have passed since 400,000 residents were evicted from their homes in Marawi. Majority of them have yet to return to their homes. In a vain effort to console the residents, Duterte previously promised that they can finally return to their homes in February. Contrarily, DSWD data reveal that, 8,000 individuals are still in evacuation centers. Furthermore, reports by the local government indicate that about 1,200 people have died, while hundreds are still missing and feared to have died during the AFP's indiscriminate airstrikes.

The AFP recently reported that 24 barangays in the city are still 'off-limits' due to security issues. These barangays are Bangolo Poblacion, Bubonga Lilod Madaya, Daguduban, Dansalan, Datu Naga, Datu sa Dansalan, Kapantaran, Lilod Madaya (Poblacion), Lumbac Marinaut, Lumbaca Madaya (Poblacion), Marinaut East, Marinaut West, Moncado Colony, Moncado Kadingilan, Norhaya Village, Raya Madaya I, Raya Madaya II, Sabala Manao, Sabala Manao Proper, Tolali, Tuca Marinaut, Wawalayan Marinaut, Sangcay Dansalan, and South Madaya Proper. These barangays are covered by the AFP's military reservation claim. The same area is also targeted for the construction of an ecozone for a foreign corpor-

ation.

According to Drieza Lininding, chairman of Moro Consensus Group, the proposal to construct the ecozone and military camp does not serve the interest of Marawi residents. He insisted that the Moro people do not need a grandiose plan to rebuild and rehabilitate their city. What they need first and foremost is to be able to return to their homes, with or without the support of the government.

Because of the protest, the government was forced to initially allow 7,000 residents on April 1 to return to Ground Zero for the first time since the start of the conflict to retrieve whatever belongings they have left in their homes. During their visit, residents reiterated their call to permanently return to their homes. They documented the damages caused by the conflict including their ravaged homes and properties, and possible cases of looting. They stressed that their call to uphold their rights and demand to rebuild Marawi will carry on.

## Information control

On the day of the protests, elements of 103rd Brigade attempted to evict Davao Today journalist and National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) member Kathryn Cortez from entering Marawi to cover the residents protests. The soldiers even tried to drive her away and attempted to confiscate her identification documents and camera.

To justify the harassment, Col. Romeo Brawner, brigade spokesperson, said that his troops' reaction might have been influenced by the fact that leftist and non-muslim organizations attempted to infiltrate the ranks of the legitimate Maranao internally displaced persons (IDPs) reportedly to agitate the peace-loving rallyists to become aggressive and even violent.

The NUJP slammed this repres-

sion and said that “implying the security forces' suspicions are enough reason for them to suppress journalists from coverage and subject them to clearly unconstitutional acts like confiscation of their property and arbitrary eviction, which not even martial law justifies” could

actually endanger their colleagues.

According to residents, government troops barred the media from covering the protest. Moreover, cell-phone signals were jammed to prevent protesters from posting about the said event on social media websites. **AB**

### Groups condemn the massacre of Palestinian protesters

THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) condemned the massacre of Palestinians by Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) killing not less than 29 and wounding more than a thousand in a brutal dispersal of a peaceful demonstration in the Gaza Strip last April 1 and 7. Hundreds of thousands of protesters were hurt due to teargas inhalation and rubber bullet shots.

The protests are part of the month and a half long commemoration of the 70th anniversary of Al Nakba (day of catastrophe) when Palestinians were evicted from their land to pave the way for the establishment of the state of Israel on May 15, 1948. Around 750,000 Palestinians were forced out of their homes. The descendants of the original refugees would now number around seven million scattered in many countries around the world.

The protests kicked off on April 1 to commemorate Land Day to mark the killing, by the Israeli military on March 30, 1976, of six young unarmed Palestinians who opposed the aforementioned catastrophe. The protests, which was participated by hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, set up barricades and camps in front of the wall which was built by Israel and Egypt on 2007 to confine the Palestinians within the small territory of Gaza.

Even the United Nations denounced the indiscriminate firing in Israel and the use of excessive force to disperse unarmed civilians. It explained that the use of live rounds is illegal. Meanwhile, the ILPS condemned the continuous imperialist support of the US to Israel and its brutal repression against the people of Palestine.

## Drones: a history of intervention and destruction

In accepting the six ScanEagle 2 drone systems last March 13, the puppet Duterte regime prolongs the US' control of drones flying the Philippine airspace for more than a decade.

US drones flying over the country's territory flagrantly violates Philippine sovereignty.

Their surveillance of the people's activities and directing the AFP and the PNP to attack and bombard communities in the name of the US' “war against terror” is outright intervention.

The US directs the AFP through the drones' ability to gather real-time information from the air, as well as their ability to carry out attacks.

In the country's history, US drones are used in order to pinpoint locations which Philippine Air Force planes plan to strike. Apart from this, some drones carry and drop bombs. For the past 16 years, Mindanao civilian communities bore the brunt of these bombings.

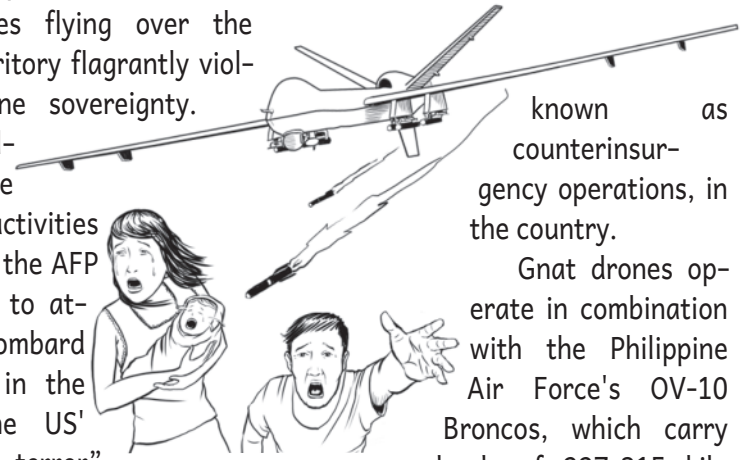
The first use of drones in the country was recorded in March 2002. The US Central Intelligence Agency deployed Gnat drones in the first months of the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines' (JSOTF-P) operations. The Gnat drones were stationed at the Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga City, with the JSOTF-P positioned at nearby Camp Navarro. From 2002-2015, the JSOTF-P trained the AFP and the PNP as the US' instruments in its Foreign Internal Defense, better

known as counterinsurgency operations, in the country.

Gnat drones operate in combination with the Philippine Air Force's OV-10 Broncos, which carry payloads of 227-315 kilo bombs. The old Broncos were used by the US during the Vietnam War, but were upgraded in 2004 (\$6 million) and 2010 (\$19 million) in order to be used in combination with drones.

In February 2, 2012, in combination with ScanEagle drones, two OV-10 Broncos dropped four smart bombs in Barangay Lanao Dakula in Parang, Jolo, Sulu. The airstrike supposedly targeted designated terrorists Zulkilfi bin Hir (Marwan) and Muhammed Abdulla Ali (Muawiyah), but all victims who died in the incident were all civilians.

Predator drones were among the next to be flown by the US. These are faster and bigger than the Gnats, and have payload capacities. In an interview, US intelligence officials admitted that in September 2006, a barrage of Hellfire missiles was fired by Predator drones targeting a community in Tawi-tawi. Umar Patek, accused by the US as the planner of the Bali bombing in Indonesia, was supposedly in the area.



However, of the reported casualties, Patek was not included.

This was followed by the US Marines experimenting with the Silver Fox drone, when the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit arrived the next month. Under the pretext of military exercises, the US launched its war using the AFP and the PNP as its proxies. In the entire period of JSOTF-P's operations, the US trained and armed Philippine forces, provided them with advanced surveillance assets including drones and satellites, and commanded them in battles.

Despite the US and Philippine

governments' attempts at concealing from the public the increased presence of drones in the country, these are exposed due to the increasing scope and intensifying destruction caused by the bombardments. During the AFP siege of Zaboanga City in September 2013 to attack the Moro National Liberation Front, Raptors and Falcons were among the drones used by the AFP to guide the bombings for more than two weeks. The bombings resulted to the destruction of the city and loss of homes around 120,000 civilians.

American soldiers also con-

trolled the drones when its trained AFP and PNP battalions besieged Marawi in May 2017. After weeks of daily bombardments, the city was crushed and the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of residents were destroyed.

The presence of drones are likewise exposed because of accidental crashes. From 2002-2009, not less than five incidents of drone crashes were reported. Many of these are attributed to the less-favorable climate in the country. Some are the result of counterattacks launched by various armed Moro groups. AB

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## AFP kills 4 civilians

Over the past 2 weeks, four civilians were killed and 13 arrested by the terrorist US-Duterte regime's police and military forces. Militarization and indiscriminate bombings in the countryside continue, especially in Mindanao.

**Killings.** Agudo Quillio, 52, a resident of Purok Gemilina, Sitio Lawaan, Barangay Kingking, Pantukan in Compostela Valley and the chairperson of Hugpong sa mga Mag-uuma sa Pantukan (HUMAPAN) was shot dead by armed elements under the 46th Infantry Battalion around 6:30 p.m. on March 20. Quillio was preparing dinner when three armed men forcibly entered their house. They immediately shot him repeatedly in his chest causing his immediate death.

Quillio and his organization HUMAPAN strongly oppose the operation of Canadian mining firm St. Augustine Gold and Copper Limited and the \$2-billion Kingking Mining Project in Pantukan. He was also an active supporter of the ARB One Movement, an organization of agrarian reform beneficiaries in the region which struggle for genuine agrarian reform and free land distribution.

Suspected paramilitary members shot dead a Manobo from Barangay Gupitan, Kapalong Davao del Norte on March 22. The victim was identified as Garito Malibato,

23 years old, and member of the Lumad group Karadyawan. Garito had been receiving several death threats from members of ALAMARA, a paramilitary group led by Ungging and Laris Masaloon, which has been attacking the Karadyawan group and Lumad schools in Kapa-long town.

On March 21, a Moro businessman was shot dead while passing by the Army's 2nd Mechanized Battalion detachment on his way home to Talayan, Maguindanao. The victim was identified as Nasrudin Kadatuan. The military linked Kadatuan to the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) that harassed the aforementioned military detachment, 8:30 in the evening before Kadatuan drove by. The BIFF also had a recent armed engagement in Barangay Lower Salvo, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao.

However, BIFF spokesperson Abu Misri Mama denied Kadatuan is a member of their group. Mama said Nasrudin is a civilian and that even the military knows him. Residents also belied the Philippine Na-

tional Police's spot report that Nasrudin was hit in a crossfire. They attested that it was the military who shot him in the back. According to Moro human rights group Kawagib, Nasrudin's case is part of the state forces continuing "war on terror" campaign against the Moro people in Mindanao.

**Illegal arrest and filing of trumped-up charges.** On March 29, members of the police and military arrested Ruby Lacadman, an organizer of the urban poor group Kadamay, at her residence in Barangay Cacutud, Mabalacat City, Pampanga. Although the warrant of arrest was addressed to a certain Ruby Palabrica y Quitason, Lacadman was accused and falsely charged with murder for purportedly having been involved in a 2010 killing in Cadiz City, Negros Occidental. The "Ruby Palabrica" that was addressed in the warrant is one of the 600 names that were listed by the DOJ as members of the CPP and NPA.

Kadamay, however, denied these allegations. Elvie Adona, spokesperson of Kadamay-Metro Clark, said that Lacadman has long been residing in Mabalacat and that her involvement in the criminal charge filed against is impossible. Ruby valiantly opposed the plan of Hausland Corp., in connivance with



the local government of Mabalacat, to evict urban poor communities in areas targeted as sites for the construction and operation of residential subdivisions.

On April 2, elements of the Davao City police violently dispersed striking Coca-Cola workers and subsequently arrested 10 unionists from the Kilusan ng Manggagawa Laban sa Coca-Cola (KIMACO), an affiliate of Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU). The workers staged the strike to demand the reinstatement of 72 members who were dismissed by their agency last month. Arrested were Sustenes Bantayan, chairperson of KIMACO-KMU, Ricardo Sales, Ryan Balera, Reynaldo Mane, Antonino Bayawan, Ayan Dibalgui, Jesse Monticillo, Alvin Buccat, Ronnel Calacat, and Michael Olan-Olan. They were charged with grave coercion and disobedience and are currently detained at the Talomo police station.

On the same day at around 2:00 p.m., elements of the 73rd IB and PNP Polomolok illegally arrested Mary Ann Mariano, 35, at Purok Hechanova, Barangay Poblacion, Polomolok, South Cotabato together with her 3-month old infant and 7-year old child. According to witnesses, Mariano was arrested without a warrant. They were brought to PNP Polomok where she was declared as a Red fighter surrenderee. The 73rd IB tagged her as member of the NPA-Front 71 of the Far South Mindanao Region. Until now, the victims remain under military custody.

Adelaida 'Nanay Ede' Macusang, 59, a resident of Purok 3, Barangay Camansi, Montevista Compostela Valley and an active member of Montevista Farmers Association (MONTEFARMA) was taken by elements of the 25th IB in the early morning of March 24. According to her family, Nanay Ede was brought to the 25th IB's headquarters in Monkayo, Compostela Valley. In MONTEFARMA's

latest update to Karapatan-SMR, Nanay Ede was already brought to a nearby PNP station and was falsely charged with illegal possession of explosives.

**Intimidation and harassment.** In a statement last April 2, Karapatan-Quezon condemned the increasing presence of the military and its continuous operation in South Quezon, Bondoc Peninsula. Recently, soldiers in full battle gear stationed at a church in the said area. Moreover, they distributed and displayed tarpaulins and reading materials that maliciously attacked progressive organizations and leaders who staunchly defend people's rights.

According to its March 14 statement, a suspected AFP intelligence agent held three civilians at gunpoint in a bus terminal at Calauag, Quezon. The victims were identified as Julius Bataller, Larry Alleluya and Kennet Quizana who are all members of progressive organizations that are calling for justice for the murder of Fe delos Santos, an elderly woman who happens to be a mother of a known NPA commander in the province.

On March 26 in Tuguegarao City, suspected elements of the PNP and AFP distributed leaflets which maliciously state that the NPA Sparu death-squads are roaming around and hiding in the Anakpawis office in Barangay San Gabriel. The leaflets also tags Isabelo Adviento, regional coordinator of Anakpawis, and all members of the aforementioned partylist as members of the NPA and "terrorists."

In Laguna, armed elements of the PNP, SAF, and SWAT encamped in a school across the FEMSA Sta. Rosa Plant three days after workers under the Liga na Pinalakas ng Manggagawa sa Coca-Cola FEMSA Philippines (LPMCCFP) launched a strike on March 20. To further threaten the workers, the police deployed some of its armed officers in the plant compound. AB

## AFP blocks IFFM

ON THE FIRST day of the International Fact-Finding Mission (IFFM) to Defend Filipino Peasants' Land and Human Rights Against Militarism and Plunder in Mindanao last April 6, three teams of delegates were intimidated and harassed by the military as soon as they arrived at Davao City, Laguindingan and Butuan City airports. As they were leaving the airports, the mission teams were surrounded by suspected state agents who took pictures and videos to intimidate the delegates.

The convoy of the mission groups were also arbitrarily stopped several times at different checkpoints by combined elements of the PNP and Scout Rangers.

According to the KMP, there are already 126 documented victims of political killings as of December 2017; 110 victims are farmers and peasant leaders, mostly from Mindanao

In Compostela Valley alone, one of the target-areas of the mission, the 46th IB incessantly murders peasant leaders who actively oppose the entry and operation of destructive foreign concessions in their communities. According to the KMP, more than 20 farmers and peasant leaders from Compostela Valley were killed since 2016 including Jimmy Saypan who was killed in September 2016, and elderly couple Leonila Tapasan-Pesadilla, and Ramon Pesadilla killed in March 2017. Saypan and the Pesadillas were active in the campaign against the entry and exploration of Agusan Petroleum and Mineral Corporation in their town in Ngan, Compostela covering 2,400 hectares.

The IFFM was spearheaded by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Mindanao for Civil Liberties, Tanggol Magsasaka,

Asian Peasant Coalition, PAN Asia Pacific, People's Coalition for Food Sovereignty, Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, International League of Peoples Struggles and Youth for Food Sovereignty.

Lawyers, progressive lawmakers, the media, and personalities from the academe and church, and from

other sectors also participated in the mission.

The four-day mission kicked off on April 6 to look into the alarming cases of peasant killings and other human rights violations in Mindanao, particularly in Southern Mindanao, Northern Mindanao and the Caraga region.

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