



EDITORIAL:

## **Marcos Jr's First Year in Power: Intensified Corruption, Crises and State Terror**

Read on page 2

Use of US cluster bombs in Ukraine a violation of IHL - CPP (p. 2)

NDFP condemns BBM govt's 'red-tagging frenzy' against activists (p. 3)

Unabated economic crisis continues to weigh down on Filipino families (p. 4)

## EDITORIAL:

**Marcos Jr's First Year in Power: Intensified Corruption, Crises and State Terror**

The Filipino people have been subjected to worsening oppression and exploitation under the US-Marcos regime. All indications show that the next five years under Marcos Jr will see unprecedented corruption, state terrorism, foreign subservience, and anti-people policies.

***Intensified corruption***

Marcos Jr ascended to power through downright automated cheating during the 2022 elections. His presidency is widely considered illegitimate by broad segments of the Filipino people.

He has been busy recovering and securing his family's hidden wealth accumulated during his father's 14-year martial law dictatorship and refurbishing the image of his father. Rifts are slowly coming to the foreground in the Marcos-Arroyo-Duterte alliance of corruption and tyranny amid early political posturing for 2028.

Marcos pet project, the Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF), will favor the businesses of his cronies and further expand his political patronage. The MIF is set to become the mother lode of the Marcos corrupt regime.

The Marcos regime is subservient to foreign powers, primarily to military, geopolitical and economic interests of US imperialism, and its financial agents such as the World Bank and other institutions. At the same time, it kowtows to superpower China even in the face of outright military and economic intrusions into Philippine territory.

While the US and other big capitalist centers are protecting their economies, Marcos continues to push for neoliberal policies that destroy local productive forces, dispossess the people of their means of production, and undermine the local economy.

***Worsening socio-economic crises***

The further liberalization of agricultural imports result in the precarious dependence on imports of domestic supply of rice, sugar, onions, vegetables, and other basic food commodities. Local agricultural producers, including small tillers, are being pushed to bankruptcy.

Like his father, Marcos Jr is closely working with big agribusiness corporations to promote the use of patented seeds, chemical fertilizers, and other inputs purportedly to raise the yield of rice land measures like those under Masagana 99 which buried the peasant masses deep into debt.

Marcos' servility to US imperialism is blatantly demonstrated by his acquiescence to US plans to build at least four more military bases, in addition to five existing, under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). The construction of these facilities is part of the US plan and strategy to contain China's rising power by encircling it within the First-Island Chain, and threatening to undermine Chinese sovereignty in Taiwan.

The collusion of the Marcos regime with the US, is dragging the country into the maelstrom of the US-China conflict which can lead to open military confrontation and war, to the detriment of the country's national interests.

*(continued on page 5)*

**Use of US cluster bombs in Ukraine a violation of IHL - CPP**

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) recently condemned the United States for sending cluster bombs to the Zelensky government in Ukraine. This shipment was announced by US Pres. Joe Biden as part of the new \$800 million military package for Ukraine.

Cluster bombs or cluster munitions are weapons that when detonated disperse a large number of bomblets that scatter and explode over a large area. A large portion of the bomblets fail to explode on impact, leaving a field of mines. These unexploded mines remain a threat to the civilian population for many years. Children are specially susceptible to picking up the unexploded bomblets, mistaking them for toys or out of curiosity.

In 2008, more than 120 countries signed the Oslo Declaration prohibiting the use of cluster bombs. The US, Russia, China, Israel and others did not sign the declaration.

The CPP denounced the US for continuing to stoke the war in Ukraine by pouring weapons to the Zelensky government in line with the US thrust of prolonging the war in the hope of degrading the military capability of Russia. "The Ukrainian government has sought the cluster bombs which it hopes to cause 'extraordinary psycho-emotional impact' against Russia. In providing these cluster bombs, the Biden government will be directly abetting violations of international humanitarian law."

*(continued next page..)*






image: philippinerevolution.nu

(continued from page 2..)

The CPP continued, “This is the latest act of the US in its long history of violations of IHL, including the bombing of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia which left large swathes of land pockmarked with unexploded ordnance including land mines. All through history, from the Philippines to Vietnam, Iraq to Afghanistan, US imperialism has proved to be the biggest war criminal in the world.”

“The brutal aerial bombing campaign of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) using heavy bombs, jet fighters and drones which intensified starting 2017 is also the direct result of US intervention, making it complicit in violations of international humanitarian law and rules of war,” concluded the CPP. 

## **NDFP condemns BBM govt's 'red-tagging frenzy' against activists**

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) in a statement last 13 July 2023 condemned the Marcos II government over its recent ‘red-tagging frenzy’ against human rights defenders and activists in the Philippines.

The statement was made in response to the Anti-Terrorism Council’s terrorist designation of Cordilleran activists Sarah Abellon-Alikes, Jennifer Awingan and Stephen Tauli, and Mindanao-based human rights defenders Jovencio Tangbawan and May Vargas-Casilao. Under the Anti-Terror Law of 2020, the ATC has the authority to designate anyone as terrorist without the need to file evidence in court. The ATC’s Resolution No. 41, dated 7 June 2023, was quickly followed by the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) releasing a freeze order on the accounts and assets of the six individuals.

According to the NDFP, the terror-tagging of legal activists “is proof that the Marcos II’s regime is hell-bent on using its so-called ‘war on terror’ to target government critics and dissenters similar to the use of the anti-subversion law of his ousted dictator father.”

“The ATL, disguised as a legal instrument meant to keep ‘peace and order,’ is essentially weaponized, providing the Marcos II administration a license to terrorize anyone who is critical of the government,” the NDFP added.

The NDFP called to dismantle “machineries of state terror” including the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-Elcac), the ATC and the ATL which they argue are “part and parcel of the US-Marcos regime’s war against the Filipino people.”

(continued next page..)




image: philippinerevolution.nu

(continued from page 3..)

Prior to this latest string of ATC designations, the NDFP also called for the release of NDFP peace consultants Frank Fernandez and Cleofe Lagtapon. According to Julie de Lima, Interim Chairperson of the NDFP Peace Negotiating Panel, the cases filed against Fernandez and Lagtapon were 'trumped-up charges concocted by the Manila government' and violates the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG).

JASIG is an agreement signed in 1995 and was duly approved by respective principals of the GRP and the NDFP. The JASIG safeguards participants in the peace negotiations from surveillance, arrest, detention, prosecution, or any other similar punitive actions. In 2017 preceding the collapse of the peace negotiations, Duterte unilaterally 'terminated' JASIG. However, the NDFP asserts that JASIG remains in effect and stresses Duterte did not terminate the agreement according to agreed protocol.

"The NDFP strongly asserts that JASIG remains in full force and effect unless otherwise terminated according to the terms of the agreement," the NDFP stressed. 

## Unabated economic crisis continues to weigh down on Filipino families

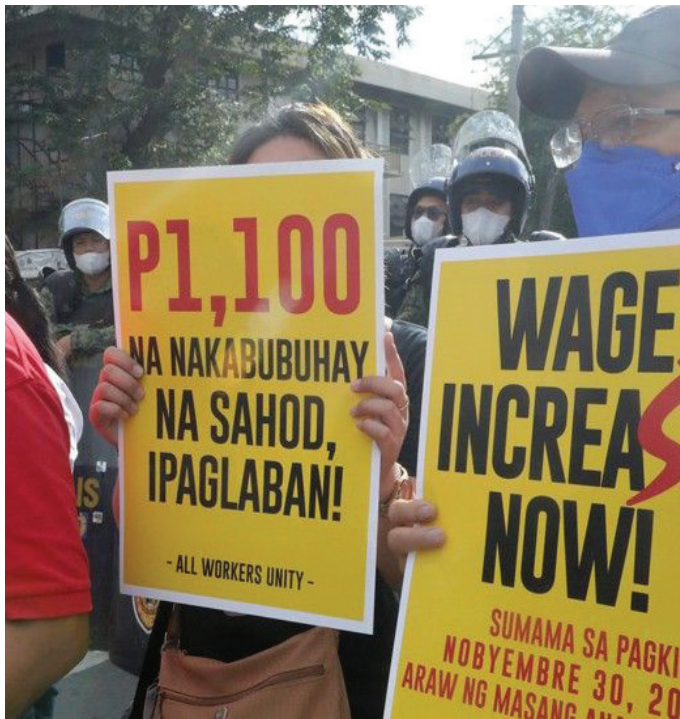


image: philippinerevolution.nu

Despite a Php40 (USD0.74) increase in the minimum wage recently announced in the national capital region (NCR), Filipino families continue to struggle to survive with high inflation rates and high prices according to independent think tank IBON Foundation.

The NCR Regional Wage Board will increase the Php570 (USD10.49) daily minimum wage by Php40 to Php610 (USD11.22) in July 2023. According to IBON, the resulting wage is still much less than the family living


wage (FLW) of Php1,160 (USD21.35) for a family of five to live decently in NCR as of May 2023.

This amount, IBON said, is not what labor groups demand and certainly much less than what Filipino workers need and deserve. Several labor groups and legislators have asked for wage increases of from Php750 (USD13.80) to Php1,100 (USD20.23).

"The Marcos Jr administration is not doing enough for millions of poor households with little income and no savings who are being left behind," said IBON in a statement.

IBON said that Filipino workers and their families are barely surviving on the minimum wage because this is even less than the official poverty threshold for a family of five. 'Immediate and meaningful wage hikes', it stressed, are urgent amid high prices, low incomes and widespread joblessness and informality.

The Philippines has the highest inflation rate compared with other countries in Southeast Asia. While inflation eased in June reportedly due to slower price increases in food, transport, housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, IBON noted that the prices of basic goods such as rice, vegetables, fish and meat still continued to rise.

Comparing Philippine Statistics Authority price monitoring data for June 2022 and June 2023, the cost of well-milled rice remained high at Php43/kg; of vegetables like native pechay increased from Php75/kg to Php94/kg; of tubers such as potatoes from Php77/kg to Php102/kg; of onions from Php93/kg to Php171/kg; and fish like tilapia from Php130/kg to Php141/kg. 



*(continued from page 2..)*

Over the past 12 months, Marcos Jr indulged in lavish parties and frequent foreign trips instead of addressing the cost-of-living crisis, food and job insecurity, and the post-pandemic economic hardships. Since he fraudelently grabbed power a year ago, Marcos Jr has been to 11 trips abroad and even attended the 2022 Singapore Grand Prix.

The recent order to increase the daily minimum wage in the National Capital Region by Php40 is a nasty insult to workers. It represents less than 7% of the difference between the family living wage of Php1,160 a day and the current minimum wage of Php570. In Marcos Jr.'s first year, he issued only one regional wage order increasing wages. Former presidents had issued several times more in their first year in office: Arroyo – 9, Aquino II – 17, and Duterte – 11, respectively. From January – May 2023, average inflation was at 7.5%.

As of June 2023, the average price of rice (staple food of Filipinos) was at Php44-45/kg (US\$0.81-0.83/kg), double than Marcos Jr.'s promise of making rice available to Filipinos at Php20/kg (US\$0.37/kg).

Marcos and his economic managers and statisticians try to conceal the gravity of the jobs crisis by inflating numbers and concealing unemployment data with rising numbers of informal, self-employed and part-time workers. As of April 2023, unemployment was at 4.5%, 2nd highest in Southeast Asia. There was a 4.4 million decrease in full-time workers, an increase of 5.5 million part-time workers, and only 1.5 million jobs created.

Marcos is vigorously pursuing the labor export policy as solution to domestic joblessness, deploying thousands of Filipinos every day in dangerous jobs overseas, at the same time, robbing them of their hard-earned money through an endless stream of dues, fees, and payments. The Marcos regime turns a deaf ear to the clamor for genuine land reform and urgent economic aid amid widespread agricultural crisis. Instead, it has pushed for a new land use law (National Land Use Act) to facilitate the widespread land-use conversion which in turn will drive away peasants from their land.

### ***Escalating attacks and state terror***

The US-Marcos regime continues to unleash more vicious and widespread acts of state terrorism. The military establishment continues to tighten its control over the entire bureaucracy through the National Task Force – to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-Elcac), where the AFP directs civilian agencies and civilian functions in the name of its “whole-of-nation approach.”

In the countryside, armed agents of the reactionary state carry out campaigns of repression against the people with even greater destructive force. Marcos' military, police and paramilitary forces aim their guns, howitzers, jet fighters and helicopter gunships directly against entire civilian communities. De facto martial law reigns across the countryside. The AFP is carrying out a shameless war of deception to prevent the crimes perpetrated by state forces from being exposed in public. It floods the public with disinformation and false news, and issues threats against media and alternative media outfits which do not willingly comply with the military narrative. Human rights defenders are vilified and targeted for armed suppression.

The military and police target organizations which are active in advancing the struggle for land reform and defending the ancestral land of indigenous communities. Military operations characterized by large-scale mobilization of armed troops, hamleting of communities, aerial reconnaissance and combat operations continue to be stepped up in desperation, to conjure the illusion of “wiping out” the armed revolution. The AFP uses heavy bombs in aerial bombardment and artillery shelling in violation of the principle of proportionality under international humanitarian law.

Extrajudicial killings and massacres by military and police forces of civilians and non-combatants are on the rise, with at least 100 victims over the past year, or almost two victims every week, including five children. There are increasing reports of abductions, illegal and secret detention, torture, and constant harassment. The military and police carry out their campaign to force people to “surrender” on the vague accusation of “supporting the NPA” without being charged or brought to court, in violation of their basic civil and political rights.

In the cities, military and police operations target leaders and members of workers unions. Organizations in poor communities also face harassments. In schools, military and police personnel routinely conduct “seminars” in which they threaten students against joining national democratic or other progressive student organizations and alliances in outright violation of their basic rights and freedoms. Organizations of teachers and health workers are constantly threatened and maligned by the NTF-Elcac and its vile mouthpieces in social media.

The broad masses of workers, peasants and the rest of the hardworking people have no other option but to wage militant resistance to defend their rights and advance their aspirations for genuine national freedom and democracy. 