



EDITORIAL:

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## Impeachment of Sara Duterte emboldens Filipino people to hold Marcos Jr. accountable

The Philippine ruling classes are undergoing acute crisis. This is manifest in the increasingly antagonistic split between the top national political dynasties in the ruling coalition -- the Marcoses and the Dutertes. This instability is a cause for worry for US imperialism because the country is in the front line of its first island chain strategy of warmongering against China. The latest offensive of the Marcos Jr.'s clique against the Duterte faction is the impeachment of Vice President Sara Duterte by the Marcos--controlled House of Representatives, setting the stage for a trial before the Philippine Senate.

A guilty verdict will effectively box out the Dutertes from the 2028 presidential contest and pave the way for a perpetuation of the Marcos dynasty in power. The impeachment petition was hurriedly passed by the Marcos' supermajority in Congress in the last day before sessions are suspended. Earlier, the 3 previous petitions for impeachment of the vice president were sat on by the Congress' leadership for two months, in the aftermath of Marcos Jr.'s declaration that the "impeachment of Duterte will not benefit the nation", fearing that this would ignite a bigger political crisis while the ruling system is rocked by a deep-seated economic crisis.

The impeachment came amid growing clamor of broad democratic sectors to hold Duterte accountable for corruption over the anomalous use of hundreds of millions of "confidential and intelligence funds," as well as her father, former President Rodrigo Duterte, for crimes against humanity. It is a victory for the democratic mass movement, whose protests over the past weeks added to mounting pressure on Marcos and the House of Representatives to push the impeachment.


The impeachment of Sara Duterte marks a significant escalation of the conflicts between the Marcos and Duterte cliques. It further exposes the deep divisions within ruling reactionary classes, where rival factions and cliques jostle against each other over spoils of bureaucrat capitalist privilege and power.

The move follows efforts of the Marcos regime to consolidate political power, especially within the military, police and defense establishment, through "loyalty checks" and the reorganization of the National Security Council. Marcos further secured the support of the US imperialists by further heightening anti-Chinese propaganda and collaborating with the US government and military in naval operations in the West Philippine Sea, under the guise of "defending Philippine sovereignty."

The Filipino people welcome the impeachment of Sara Duterte as the first step to hold the vice president accountable and remove her from office by way of meting out justice for her crimes of corruption. However, the impeachment was secured and transmitted to the Senate just as congress was set to adjourn its sessions. As such, the people must further intensify and expand their mass actions to compel the Senate to convene promptly as the impeachment court and see the trial of Sara Duterte commence at once. The impeachment of Sara Duterte also serves to heighten the urgency of the people's demand for the arrest of Rodrigo Duterte and trial before the International Criminal Court, where he is facing charges for having ordered the wave of killings under his sham "war on drugs" and brutal counterinsurgency campaign.

The impeachment, furthermore, emboldens the Filipino people to hold Marcos himself accountable for even bigger crimes of corruption. The Filipino people are outraged by the even greater amounts of confidential and intelligence funds that Marcos has allotted to himself in the 2025 budget. In addition, they protest the Php26-billion pork barrel fund under the guise of

the AKAP "cash-assistance program," the Php500-billion Maharlika Investment Fund, the anomalous remittance to the national treasury of Php60 billion Philhealth funds, the dismissal of ill-gotten wealth cases against the Marcos estate worth at least Php202 billion and other anomalies.

The worsening socioeconomic conditions of the Filipino people are rousing them to more vigorously resist the anti-people neoliberal policies and corruption of the Marcos regime and protest against the oppressive bureaucrat capitalist system, that serve to perpetuate the semicolonial and semifeudal system. Steady efforts to build and strengthen their organizations are bound to result in even greater protests in the coming future. 

## NPA units successfully frustrate US-Marcos regime attacks

Area command units of the New People's Army (NPA) in four different provinces in the Philippines recently engaged in battles in their respective areas without suffering any casualties. On 11 February, the 203rd IBde of the armed forces of the Marcos regime attacked units of the NPA-Mindoro (Lucio de Guzman Command) in two towns, San Jose in Occidental Mindoro and Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro, reported Ka Madaay Gasic, the spokesperson of the NPA-Mindoro. In the first incident, Red fighters were doing mass work among the indigenous people and farmers of San Jose when they learned of the approaching 68th IB of the enemy and thus were able to quickly conduct an active defense that injured two of the regime's soldiers. The Red fighters were able to withdraw safely.

Less than an hour later, another unit of the NPA-Mindoro, in Mansalay, was attacked in a disguised operation by the Special Warfare Group (SWAG) of the 4th IB. The civilian clad SWAG operatives pretended they were NPA and deceived the villagers. The Red fighters seized the initiative and inflicted two casualties on the enemy.





image: philippinerevolution.nu


On 8 February, in La Libertad, Negros Oriental, Red fighters of the NPA-Central Negros (Leonardo Panaligan Command) carried out a punishment operation against the plundering and destructive operation of a company owned by big comprador Limkaichong. The unit paralyzed a dump truck, a roller, and two backhoes used in the construction of a road for a mine and plantation. Damage was estimated at P20 million.

The spokesman of the unit, Ka JB Regalado, said the construction of the road will “pave the way for the operation of large mines, commercial reforestation under the National Greening Program, plantations, and other projects that will destroy the environment and drive the people out of the affected communities in the mountains.”

On February 17, the NPA-Rizal (Narciso Antazo Aramil Command) struck the fascist troops of the 80th IB in Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City. According to Macario Liwanag (Ka Karyo), spokesperson of the command, the offensive was a strike against the troops that are launching sustained focused military operations that are squandering public funds to torture the people and harm the area. One soldier was killed in the incident.

Ka Karyo said, for a long time the troops of the 80th IB in Rizal have been protecting the anti-people projects that have evicted many farmers and indigenous people in Antipolo City and other towns in Rizal.

Right after the last incident, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) commended the NPA Red fighters who carried out military action. “They are true people’s warriors who are dedicated to serve the people, defend their rights and protect the environment.”

The NPA’s actions are a just response to the people’s clamor for social and environmental justice. They are also a blow to the claims of the Marcos fascist regime and its armed forces that the country is now “insurgency free”. 

## US military surveillance in Ph condemned

Patriotic and human rights groups have condemned and denounced continuing US military surveillance operations in Philippine territory as violative of Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity.

They strongly expressed this after a US military surveillance plane (a Beechcraft King Air 300 with registry number N349CA) contracted by the US Pentagon crashed in a ricefield in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao del Sur, last February 6 killing a U.S. Marine and three US Department of Defense military contractors. The crash occurred near farmers’ houses and killed a water buffalo, according to the international news agency Associated Press.

The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command admitted, “the aircraft was providing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support at the request of our Philippine allies. The incident occurred during a routine mission in support of U.S.-Philippine security cooperation activities”.

The Marcos regime should fully disclose the reason for the so-called US surveillance operation in Mindanao, how many of these operations were allowed and under what agreements were these allowed, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (New Patriotic Alliance, Bayan) stressed.



image: philippinerevolution.nu


Bayan said the Marcos regime should answer why the US operation was conducted in Mindanao when the region is far from the so-called hotspot of the conflict between the US and China, which the Marcos regime and the US are using as justification for the US presence in the country.

Bayan also emphasized that the Marcos regime has been warning about Chinese interference and spying in the country while allowing US forces and spies to freely roam Philippine territory and use the Philippines as a military launching pad for US operations. The Marine who died in the February 6 crash was an intelligence and electrotonic warfare specialist.

The group strongly called for the immediate expulsion of US military forces from the Philippines, the termination of unequal military treaties with the US, such as the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) and subsequently, the dismantling of US military bases and stations in the country.

Meanwhile, the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) related that the recent incident of US troops' involvement in military operations in the country is not the first time.

The ICHRP said following the 2001 US proclamation of the Philippines as the "2nd Front on the War on Terror" under the Bush Administration, US aid to "counter-terror" operations increased. It said, in 2015, after the Mamasapano incident, that happened during the Noynoy Aquino regime, which took the lives of five civilians in a so-called misencounter between the Philippine police and Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the body of a US military officer killed in the operation was among those retrieved, despite US denial. The ICHRP added that under the Duterte regime in 2017, the US played a role in directing and providing intelligence when the Armed Forces of the Philippines bombarded Marawi City, putting at risk the lives of thousands of civilians and displacing 400,000. The US has been using Mindanao as its military "laboratory".

The group supported calls for a probe into the recent crash and demands for the immediate withdrawal of US troops and the halting of foreign military agreements with the Philippines. 

## Marcos Jr.'s 'food emergency' declaration, not a solution to agri crisis



image: philippinerevolution.nu

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP – Peasant Movement of the Philippines) have criticized the Marcos regime's plan to declare a "food emergency," saying it is not a solution to the skyrocketing rice prices. "This is yet another short-term measure that does not address the root of the problem—the control of private traders and rice cartels over the supply and price of rice," said Rafael Mariano, chairperson emeritus of KMP and former Agrarian Reform Secretary.

Mariano said the Rice Liberalization Law (RLL) has given free rein to ruthless traders to manipulate the price of rice in the market, while our local farmers

continue to suffer losses. If the government is serious about bringing down the price of rice, it should scrap the RLL, he said.

"(It should) increase support for local production and implement strict regulations against hoarding and overpricing by big traders. The government should be the one to control the supply and price of rice, not the private cartels," he said.

A "food emergency" is set to be declared in February to allow the NFA to sell rice to local governments at a lower price. According to the regime, the agency can sell its stockpiled rice at Php36/kilo. This could reportedly lower the average price of rice to Php38 per kilo. The NFA wants to dispose of up to 300,000 metric tons of rice.

Before this scheme, the regime had also promised that rice prices would fall after it lowered the tariff imposed on imported rice. Before this, it tried to impose a minimum price for rice, and more recently, a "maximum" price. All of these schemes have thus far failed.

Meanwhile, other agricultural products continue to increase in prices further burdening consumers while still detrimental to small-scale food producers. Last week, red onions' retail price reached Php250 (4.32 USD) per kilo, while white onions were valued between P120 and P140 (2-2.4 USD) per kilo. 