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Editorial

Aquino is dragging the country into a US war of aggression, and must be opposed

The Aquino regime acted like the true-blue puppet that it is when it made assurances two days ago that the reactionary Philippine state would assist and support the US' looming attack on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

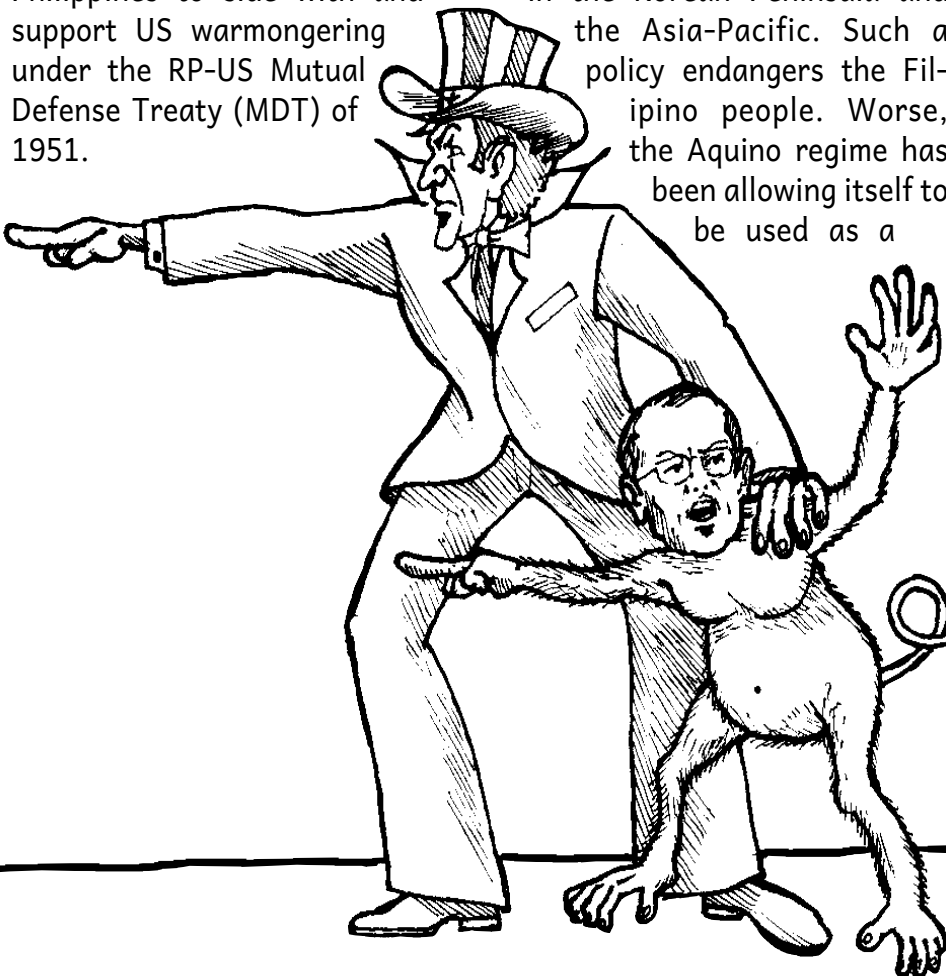
With not even a hint of advocating or forging an independent foreign policy, the Aquino regime declared it an "obligation" on the part of the Philippines to side with and support US warmongering under the RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) of 1951.

The Filipino people must take a stand and resist the Aquino regime's puppetry to US imperialism and for dragging the Philippines into intervening in the Korean Peninsula and the Asia-Pacific. Such a policy endangers the Filipino people. Worse, the Aquino regime has been allowing itself to be used as a

pawn in a war against a sovereign country that has been asserting its own independence.

Insisting that it is the country's "obligation" under the MDT to support US warmongering exposes the excessive one-sidedness of this military treaty. Amid the Aquino regime's posturing against China in 2011, the US made it clear that it would not "automatically" side with the Philippines should the latter go to war against China on the Spratly Islands dispute.

On the other hand, there is no basis for the Philippines to



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take the US' side in the latter's wars of aggression and intervention against sovereign governments.

The Aquino regime's unhesitating obsequiousness to US dictates was made clear in Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario's statements made a few days after he received directives from US Secretary of State John Kerry and US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel when the three of them met in Washington. The US officials impressed on Del Rosario that the Philippines is obliged to comply with the provisions of the unequal treaty.

At the same time, the US and the Aquino regime are using their saber-rattling against the DPRK to justify further the Balikatan Exercises that began on April 5. This year's Balikatan involving 8,000 US and Philippine troops are being held in Central Luzon. Should the US war of aggression against North Korea push through, the US would surely use its forces that are now in the Philippines.

The US also used the Balikatan to show off its military prowess by flying a squadron of F/A-18 fighter jets. The Balikatan is a regular military exercise between the US and the Philippines that aims to enhance interoperability between the AFP and the US military and enable the US to use Filipino soldiers as force multipliers in US operations to assert American hegemony in the Asia-Pacific.

Alongside such regular military exercises, the US continues to use the Philippines as a docking point for its warships and landing point for its warplanes. Under the Aquino regime's "full access" policy, US military forces have been able to use the country's air and sea ports and various other facilities.

The Aquino regime invokes the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) in justifying its "full access" policy. Under the VFA, American troops are free to lord it over Philippine territory and use the country as an instrument in waging war, dragging the Filipino people into conflicts

that are not of their own making.

The Aquino regime must immediately stop allowing itself to be used as a tool by US imperialism in intensifying tensions on the Korean Peninsula. The Filipino people support the DPRK people's call for a stop to the economic blockade against their country and for their right to self-determination to be respected (*see related article*).

The DPRK declared a state of war against the US and South Korea after the US flew two nuclear-capable fighter planes into DPRK air space. Two US warships have likewise been positioned near the Korean Peninsula, its weapons menacingly aimed at the DPRK.

The Filipino people cry out for the abrogation of the MDT. This is not the first time that the Philippines is being dragged into involvement in a US war of aggression against the latter's enemies, using the MDT.

Under the MDT, Filipino troops were sent to Korea (through the PEFTOK or the Philippine Expedition Force to Korea) and Vietnam (through the Philcag or the Philippine Civic Action Group) to support US wars of intervention and aggression against peoples struggling for democracy and national liberation.

The US military bases in the Philippines were then used by the US as launching pads for its interventionist troops to Korea and Vietnam. The Philippines has also been used as a launching or rest and recreation station for US aggressor troops in Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan. All the US wars of intervention and aggression that have been directly or indirectly supported by the puppet Philippine government have been unjust. **AB**

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DPRK declares state of war with South Korea

Kim Jong-un, leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) declared a "state of war" against South Korea on March 30. This was after successive provocations by South Korea and the US against the DPRK and violations of existing agreements between the two neighboring countries. Through this declaration, the DPRK revoked its ceasefire agreement with South Korea signed after the war in 1953.

The DPRK declared the state of war in the face of continuing acts of aggression by the South Korean and US militaries and preparations for aggression against the DPRK. The US and South Korea have relentlessly been holding military exercises near the border of the two Koreas.

There are at least 30,000 American soldiers permanently stationed in a number of military bases in South Korea.

In March, the US flew two nuclear-capable

B-2 stealth bombers over the Korean Peninsula and dropped fake bombs to brandish the US military's readiness to wage war on the DPRK. In the past few days, the US military also positioned warships off the coast of the Korean Peninsula and aimed them at the DPRK.

The US has been bearing down on the DPRK for decades, imposing an economic blockade to stop it from freely engaging in commerce. It has also been curtailing it from developing its nuclear capability.

The people of the DPRK have shown their solidarity and readiness to fight for their country against US and South Korean aggression. Thousands of students and soldiers marched in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang and shouted "Death to imperialism" and "Sweep away the US aggressors." The DPRK armed forces have also readied their missiles to thwart possible attacks from the US. AB

Progressive youth launch 2-day caravan vs Balikatan

Youth groups roundly assailed the ongoing 29th Philippine-US Balikatan Exercises 2013, calling it a thinly veiled preparation for war by the US against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The youth joined other patriotic groups in a two-day caravan towards Central Luzon.

The two-week military exercise, which began in Central Luzon on April 5 and will end on April 17, is being joined by up to 4,000 American soldiers. At the height of tensions between the US and North Korea, the US government sent 30 airplanes of various capacity, 12 of them F/A-18 Hornet jet fighters. This is on top of three warships led by the USS Tortuga.

The demonstrators slammed the use of the Philippines as a launching pad for US wars.

Earlier, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) lambasted the launching of Balikatan as "a show of contempt against Philippine sovereignty and a show of force in the face of heightened US war preparations in the

Korean Peninsula."

The CPP assailed the US and Aquino governments for deceiving the Filipino people by saying that the Balikatan exercises are all about humanitarian assistance and disaster preparedness. "For the past several years, the US has been using humanitarian and disaster operations in order to surreptitiously carry out combat and intelligence operations and set up their spy and communications network."

Members of the Kabataan Partylist and League of Filipino Students gathered early on April 5 at the People Power Monument and joined a march of other patriotic groups to Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City where high-ranking military officials from the US and the Philippines were holding a meeting. They were to proceed to Central Luzon where war games were being held at Subic, Olongapo City; Crow Valley in Pampanga; Tarlac; and Nueva Ecija. AB

NPA takes big strides in Mindanao



Revolutionary armed struggle in Mindanao continuously made gains in 2012 and the first quarter of 2013 in accordance with the Party's call to advance the people's war towards the strategic stalemate.

NDF-Mindanao spokesperson Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos said it was but fitting for the revolutionary forces and the people to hail the New People's Army (NPA) for its major gains throughout the island. They also saluted all revolutionary martyrs for offering their lives in the interest of the people.

The armed revolutionary movement effectively thwarted the brutal but desperate nine-year Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) of the US-Arroyo regime and the US-Aquino regime's Oplan Bayanihan (OPB), now three years in the running. This, it achieved even if the revolutionary movement in Mindanao has become the main target of the reactionary state as a result of the significant weakening of the Moro people's armed resistance.

NPA units now operate in more than 200 municipalities in Mindanao. Hundreds of barangays have been added to the

more than 2,000 villages included in the NPA's areas of operation in 2011. The mass base has grown rapidly, and is now in the hundreds of thousands.

Organs of revolutionary people's government have been established, mostly at the village level, with some at the municipal level. Revolutionary land reform has been implemented in many areas, benefiting hundreds of thousands of people.

The antifascist and anti-imperialist mass movements in the cities and town centers is gaining greater momentum, along with a vigorous antifeudal movement in the countryside. Local Party branches are fast being established to provide solid leadership to the mass organizations, people's militia and revolutionary people's governments in many villages and communities in the countryside.

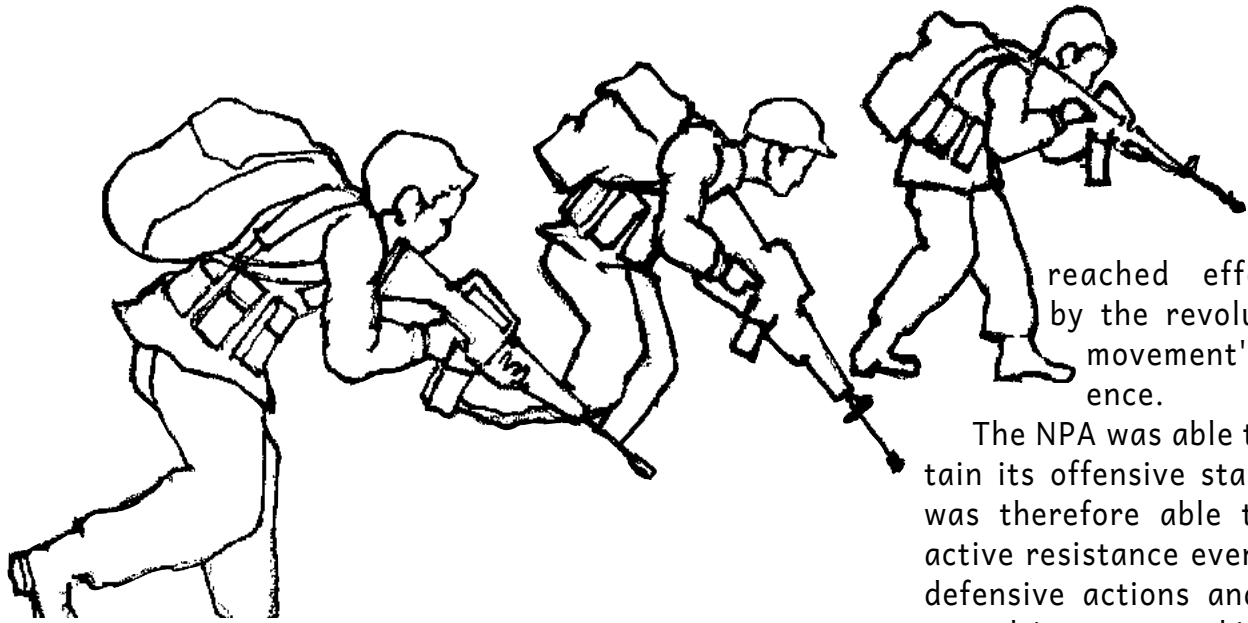
The NPA grew by more than 10% in Mindanao. This has resulted in the formation of several new companies and platoons capable of launching widespread and intensifying tactical offensives based on an ever deepening and expanding mass base. Thousands of members of the People's Militia have been organized into platoons and squads in several barangays.

In the past year alone, more than 400 tactical offensives were launched in the island, and from January to March this year, more than a hundred tactical offensives in the form of annihilative, attritive and punitive actions were launched by the NPA in the five regions of Mindanao. The NPA was able to seize hundreds of high-powered rifles and wipe out the equivalent of more than a battalion of combined forces of the Philippine Army, Philippine National Police and CAFGU.

In the first quarter of 2013, the NPA reaped significant gains by attacking the environmentally destructive imperialist agribusinesses Del Monte and Dole-Philippines in Bukidnon.

On the part of the Communist Party which has absolute leadership over the NPA, its membership grew by more than 50%. The Party is firmly rooted among the basic masses of workers and peasants and even among the middle forces. The Party's ideological foundation is much stronger now compared to when it was first established in Mindanao. It is now thoroughly implementing the three-tier Marxist-Leninist-Maoist (MLM) course. **AB**

NPA posts significant gains in North Central Mindanao Region



The revolutionary movement in North Central Mindanao Region celebrated the 44th founding anniversary of the New People's Army (NPA) flushed with victories. Due to the NPA Red fighters' strict observance of the Party's leadership, they were able to gain the people's ardent participation and support, which served as the bases for their gains, said Norseem Mangubat, spokesperson of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

NPA Red fighters in the region launched 83 tactical offensives from 2012 up to the first quarter of this year. Among the most notable tactical offensives were the simultaneous and coordinated attacks on the Del Monte and Dole companies, both in Bukidnon where several NPA units were mobilized on a wide scale. Red fighters also raided the Earthsaver Security Agency in Butuan City where 59 high-powered rifles (46 AK47s, three M14s and ten automatic shotguns) were seized. More than a hundred enemy troops were killed and 68 wounded in gunbattles. Up to 139 firearms of various caliber were seized by the Red fighters, arming more than a com-

pany of NPA fighters and people's militia. Eight punitive actions were launched against the continued expansion of multinational agribusinesses.

Conservatism was gradually overcome. After an assessment and self-criticism, the NPA in the region was able to launch a correct combination of attritive and annihilative tactical offensives.

The revolutionary forces' efforts to catch up with the island's relatively more advanced regions and assist other regions being subjected to concentrated enemy attacks bore fruit.

The conduct of the people's war was provided correct direction so that the region's leading cities could be

reached effectively by the revolutionary movement's influence.

The NPA was able to maintain its offensive stance and was therefore able to wage active resistance even during defensive actions and inflict casualties on attacking AFP-CAFGU troops.

Thousands of families benefited from gains in implementing the minimum program of agrarian revolution. The mass base expanded by 34%.

There was a 7% increase in the number of full-time forces, with the number growing by 36% in the newly formed platoons. Party membership expanded by 21%, and Party education flourished. The membership of people's militias grew by 25%. The militia units actively performed their duties in directly participating in military actions.

The Regional Military Conference was successfully convened, summing up ten years of military work and clarifying tasks in raising the level of people's war towards the strategic stalemate in the next several years. On the other hand, the Regional and Sub-regional Command Conference united on coordinatedly raising the level of military work in North Central Mindanao. **AB**

Advances in people's war in Rizal and Southern Tagalog as a whole

People's war has been steadily advancing in Rizal, a province adjacent to Metro Manila. In this province, which is a mere 25 kilometers from the gates of Malacañang, the New People's Army (NPA) has been gaining strength, the mass base has been expanding and the revolutionary political influence of the Communist Party of the Philippines is being consolidated through its army.

Almost a company has been added to the number of NPA guerrillas in the province in the past two years. It has contributed a platoon of forces for other NPA units in Southern Tagalog, where it is one of ten provinces under the leadership of the Party Committee in the region. The number of people's militia units grew by 38% from last year. This expansion has strengthened the NPA's capability to launch tactical offensives.

In the past fifteen months, the NPA in Rizal was able to launch 16 annihilative and attritive tactical offensives, or an equivalent of one a month. It was able to inflict the equivalent of almost a platoon of casualties on the AFP. The NPA dealt blows on the fascist enemy troops, including the 16th and 59th IB and the 22nd DRC. The NPA also punished exploitative and environmentally destructive

quarrying companies owned by big comprador bourgeoisie, such as Pacific Concrete Products Inc.

The number of villages covered by the Party and the NPA's area of operations has increased, with a mass base in the thousands throughout the province. The organized mass base grew by 64% in two years, and the number of full-fledged peasant mass organizations has doubled in the province.

Party membership in Rizal grew by more than 40%. The ideological, political and organizational leadership of the Guerrilla Front Party Committee and the Urban Party Committee in the province have been strengthened among the people in the villages, communities, factories, mass organizations and alliances and NPA units. More than 94% of Party members in the NPA and

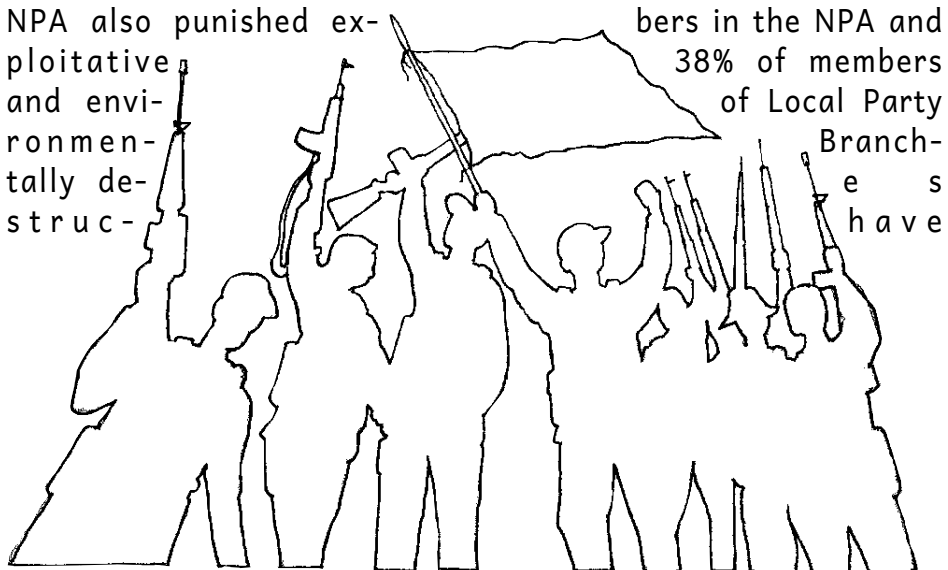
38% of members of Local Party Branches have

finished the Basic Party Course. Cadres at the guerrilla front and section levels and a number from the Party branches have likewise taken the Intermediate Party Course.

Meanwhile, in Southern Tagalog as a whole, the NPA has achieved not a few gains in the face of extremely difficult circumstances. In the past three years, the NPA was able to launch 105 tactical offensives, killing 91 and wounding 70 enemy troops. These tactical offensives yielded 131 firearms comprising two light machine guns (a K3 and an M60); four grenade launchers (three M203s and an M79); 66 high-powered rifles (37 M16s, four M14s, two cal .30 Carabines and 23 shotguns); five machine pistols; and 54 pistols and revolvers.

The NPA meted punishment on persons proven to have committed crimes against the people and destructive foreign mining companies such as Citinickel in Palawan. Even in the provinces suffering from severe concentration of military forces like Quezon, the NPA was able to mete punishment on enemy operatives who betrayed the guerrillas numerous times and owed blood debts to the people. The Danding Cojuangco-owned V.I.L. Mines was also punished. In Quezon, where Oplan Bayanihan's attacks were most intense, a platoon of peasants, women and youth have joined the New People's Army.

AB



NPA-Panay ready to launch island-wide tactical offensives

The New People's Army (NPA) in Panay has reached the capability to launch island-wide tactical offensives. This forms part of the NPA-Panay's efforts to gain the initiative in the people's war, according to a statement by the Regional Party Committee in the island. In this regard, the guerrillas have spurned the tendency to base themselves too long in one area, to set up camp for defense, mainly within the guerrilla base and to become passive amid an enemy attack, explained Ka Concha Araneta, Regional Committee spokesperson.

The NPA in Panay is currently developing its capability for active defense and sustained military actions within and outside guerrilla fronts to draw the enemy from pursuit operations or garrisoning big forces. On the other hand, the enemy will be tied in its narrow area of concentration and will become unable to wreak havoc so easily.

In particular, the Regional Committee defined the following tasks:

1. Actively resist and thwart intensifying enemy attacks in the island. Seize the initiative, mainly through tactical offensive campaigns throughout the island, especially in the guerrilla fronts. This is the key to defending Red power that has already been established and gaining strength and to making the revolutionary movement's influence felt.

Show that armed revolution is the genuine alternative to thoroughly change the corrupt and exploitative system of landlord-compradors in power, such as the Cojuangco-Aquinos and Roxases. Armed revolution is likewise the alternative to the dynasties that have been given the go-signal to rule through dirty and fraud-ridden bour-

geois elections.

2. Further develop company-size guerrilla fronts as a source of additional forces and strong Red power. Expansion is likewise a must to add to the contiguous guerrilla fronts towards the formation of a theater of war. We must seize on the opportunity where the enemy pours enormous resources into its "key-hole approach" and neglects the wider plains and mountainous areas. Increase the

number of Red fighters and expand the mass base, which will crush the enemy and disperse him.

3. Vigorously advance the movement to defend the lands being seized by the US-Aquino regime for destructive projects and training camps of the 3rd ID and PNP. Carry forward a wider campaign to relieve the hunger and poverty of the people, most of whom are peasants. Expose the inutility of projects like 4Ps.

4. Continue exposing and opposing the US-Aquino regime's deceptions and its exploitative and oppressive policies in the island such as "eco-tourism" and the multi-billion peso Jalaur River Project. Thwart the deceptive and brutal Oplan Bayanihan.

2 cops wounded in NPA raid in South Cotabato

Two policemen were wounded when Red fighters from Mindanao's Guerrilla Front 73 attacked the Philippine National Police Station in Barangay Sinolon, T'boli, South Cotabato on March 20. The raid belied boastful claims by the 27th IB and 1002nd Brigade that the revolutionary movement has been wiped out in the province. The people's guerrillas were able to seize a cal .45 pistol and other military equipment in the raid.

The Red fighters staged a surprise raid on the station while combat operations of the 1002nd Brigade's so-called Task Force 73 continued to ravage the provinces of South Cotabato, Sarangani and Sultan Kudarat.

Meanwhile, the New People's Army in Compostela Valley released prisoner of war PO3 Ruben Nojapa Jr. on April 2 in Mawab town.

Nojapa was ordered released by the National Democratic Front-Southern Mindanao on humanitarian grounds, and despite the AFP's refusal to declare a ceasefire to pave the way for an orderly turnover. AB

Intensifying peasant war and people's war

The People's Militia is a form of fighting unit under the New People's Army (NPA) that is rapidly being developed nationwide. It serves as the center of gravity of the armed strength of peasants operating at the village level and is led by the Local Party Branch.

Amid the worsening crisis, peasant resistance and the people's militia's direct involvement in tactical offensives and in advancing agrarian revolution are the concrete expressions of guerrilla warfare among the peasantry. The direct involvement of the people's militia in warfare is important in expanding and intensifying tactical offensives in order to advance the people's war to a higher stage.

The people's militia serves as the Local Party Branch's main force in ensuring revolutionary peace and order in the village. Along with the full-time Armed Propaganda Units and region's center of gravity or guerrilla front's

main platoon, the units of the people's militia serve as the main force for area defense.

in the barangay and inter-barangay level. It is through this that we propagate the people's military capability for people's war.

In Panay's experience, the various guerrilla fronts actively build, administer, train and consolidate the units of the people's militia. With its membership growing by 21% in the past two years, there is now an equivalent of three battalions of people's militia in the entire island. In fact, up to a third of the fulltime guerrilla recruits of the NPA in the region last year came from people's militia units.

The people's militia is clearly important in Panay, especially since its Armed Propaganda Units and units that serve as centers of gravity are still relatively small. People's militia units are a big help in defense operations, launching tactical offensives and other NPA military actions.

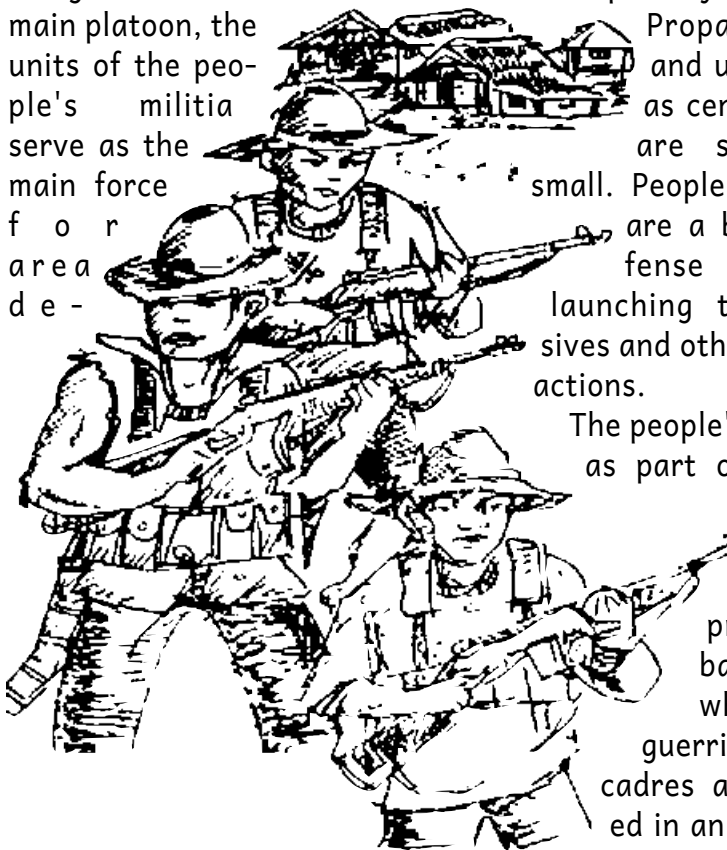
The people's militia serves as part of the security unit whenever there are comrades present in a barangay or when full-time guerrillas and Party cadres are concentrated in an area. They are

the main force in intelligence and counter-intelligence networks with a mass character. They monitor the enemy's movements in an organized manner. They immediately send information to NPA units, the Local Party Branch and the adjacent village whenever they are able to observe movements or hear news about the enemy.

People's militia units also perform other support services, among them delivering supplies, office equipment, letters or documents and other materials needed by the NPA and the Party, even if the barangays are dotted with detachments of the AFP Peace and Development Teams (PDT). They also fetch and escort comrades, given their familiarity with the local terrain. They serve as guides in maneuvers of Armed Propaganda Units and reconnaissance operations in areas where the Party or NPA sets up temporary encampments and in exploring new routes.

Thus, despite the Philippine Army 3rd ID's "keyhole approach" under Oplan Bayanihan, the military could not boast completely that it is in control of a barangay where a PDT has been posted. This is because the mass organizations and the Local Party Branch continue to operate clandestinely, thanks in a major way to the units of the people's militia.

The people's militia closely coordinates with the Armed Propaganda Units and the platoons that serve as the cen-



ters of gravity in the guerrilla fronts. They not only participate in active defense, they actually join military actions. In the past two years, the NPA in the island was able to launch at least 40 military actions within and outside guerrilla zones. In these military actions, the Red fighters were joined by the people's militia.

Aside from combat intelligence, there are people's militias armed with *pugakhang* (homemade shotguns) who join mass undertakings in looking for and retrieving the villagers' stolen cows and carabaos. They are also a big help to Armed Propaganda Units in neutralizing and punishing notorious robbery syndicates, as what happened in Antique. There are people's militias that help in neutralizing CAFGU elements known to them. On many occasions, the people's militias join harassment operations against AFP Peace and Development Teams. They do this alongside Armed Propaganda Units and the centers of gravity of the guerrilla fronts.

There are select elements of the people's militia from various barangays, most of them peasant youth, who are included along with full-time and composite NPA units in launching tactical offensives. Up to a squad of people's militia are mobilized in direct combat.

The people's militia units are given Basic Politico-Military Training and are organized according to their tasks—such as assisting in the reconnaissance of routes and combat zones, laying command-detonated explosives (CDX), up to actually firing at the enemy. In the past, there have been harassment operations launched on the initiative of people's militia units, in accordance with the overall plan laid down by the Party Section Committee.

In expanding and intensifying guerrilla warfare by the peasantry—harassment and sabotage operations and other military actions done in coordination with Armed Propaganda Units, centers of gravity and urban partisan units—AFP troops will be forced to set up garrisons to watch over highways, towns, cities and other strategic areas, thus, gradually reducing the enemy's offensive capability to attack, while the revolutionary forces continue to gain strength until they reach the stage of strategic stalemate. **AB**

(Culled from the January-February 2013 issue of Daba-Daba, the revolutionary mass news-

Participation of people's militia in combat

The experience of a guerrilla front in Panay showcases the big role played by the people's militia.

The 3rd ID was then launching a huge military operation and several enemy columns were zeroing in on a particular barangay where Party cadres and Red fighters were gathered. The people's militia in the village directly and immediately reported on the movements of the mercenary troops even if there was a raging typhoon.

The Party and the people's army readied themselves to maneuver and withdraw from the area should the number of enemy troops increase. The NPA command assigned a team from its security unit to harass the enemy.

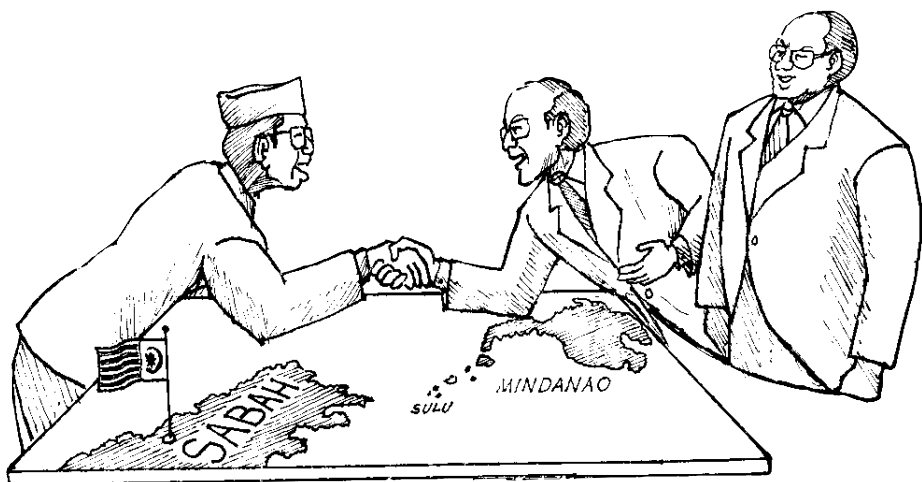
The NPA was able to seize the initiative. The next morning, the security unit and a Philippine Army column clashed, resulting in the death of a number of soldiers. That afternoon, the people's militia from the barangay joined a detached platoon of the Armed Propaganda Unit to attack another column of operating military troops.

Another member of the people's militia guided a group of comrades from the gathering through a new route in the mountains. The militia guide was not only familiar with the terrain. Since he was a hunter, he could distinguish between old and fresh tracks and could make out the hack marks on trees along the route taken by the reactionary troops. It was the same route taken very carefully by the comrades maneuvering themselves out of the area.

During the fighting that morning, another squad of people's militia in the adjacent barangay went towards the village boundary. They posed as hunters, brought food with them and waited, just in case the comrades would come to contact them. In the process, they discovered part of an enemy column. They found that the soldiers were so tired and had no plans of reinforcing their fellow soldiers who figured in the firefight.

Meanwhile, the militia guide succeeded in bringing the comrades out of the village where the gun-battle had occurred. Through the people's militia unit in the other barangay, they were able to arrange for fresh food and other supplies needed in traveling to other areas. The people's militia in the other barangay was able to provide more information. There were even more military troops in the vicinity, with some of them coming from another guerrilla front. But some of their troops were tied to manning checkpoints along roads and attending to their dead and wounded. **AB**

Conspiracy between the big bourgeoisie of the Philippines and Malaysia



The big comprador bourgeoisie close to the Aquino regime are in close collusion with the big comprador bourgeoisie of Malaysia. The Aquino regime is thus vehemently opposed to pushing the Sabah claim out of fear that this would jeopardize the interests of its favored big businessmen.

The biggest of these comprador bourgeois businesses is AirAsia Philippines, a subsidiary of the Malaysian carrier AirAsia. Aquino's cousin Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco Jr. has the biggest shares (60%) in AirAsia Philippines. Just this March, AirAsia expanded, buying 49% of Zest Air.

AirAsia figured in a controversy last month when AirAsia Malaysia planes were used to transport Malaysian armed forces to Sabah.

Meanwhile, Petron completed purchasing ExxonMobil gasoline stations in Malaysia in 2012. Petron is 51% owned by San Miguel Corp., where Aquino's uncle Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco owns the biggest shares. Petron has also acquired the Port Dickson Refinery, near Kuala Lumpur.

AlloyMTD Group and its arm MTD Capital Bhd have long been doing business in the Philippines. It cornered the Southern Luzon Express-

way Build-Operate-Transfer project in 2007. It also recently acquired the ₱2.3-billion contract for the Calabarzon Regional Government Center in Calamba, Laguna. It has huge interest in expanding its investments in the Philippines, in the mining sector and in other infrastructure projects, such as the Light Rail Transit Line 1 extension.

Also among the businesses involving big Malaysian compradors are Maybank of Malaysia, CIMB (Bank of Commerce) and Resorts World in the Philippines. Some of the Filipino comprador bourgeois businesses in Malaysia are Century Motolite, URC Snack Foods (Universal Robina Corp.) and Jollibee.

For the ruling class factions in power in the Philippines and Malaysia, it would better serve their business and political interests to preserve relations between the two countries without raising

the issue of the Philippine sovereign claim over Sabah.

The US government and big American businessmen, the Aquino regime and Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak's government are also in close collusion in pushing the surrender of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and putting an end to the struggle of the Moro people for their right to self-determination. Malaysia officially serves as the third-party facilitator and "observers" and "conflict resolution experts" from the US have also been playing major roles in the peace negotiations between the MILF and the Aquino government. Their goal is to push for the capitulation of the armed Moro people in order to install a "peaceful" business climate in Mindanao, especially in the Moro people's ancestral lands.

The signing of the Framework Agreement in October 2012 by Aquino and the MILF was witnessed by no less than Razak and big Malaysian businessmen led by Azmil Khalid who heads Alloy MTD. Earlier, US Embassy representatives were among those who happily witnessed the signing in Malaysia in 2008 of the Memorandum of Agreement for the establishment of the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity under the Arroyo government, although the plans fell apart. The memorandum likewise provided for the USAID to lead the "development projects" that would have been installed in the BJE. **AB**

The Aquinos and Sabah

The Aquinos—from Ninoy and Cory down to Noynoy—have had a long history of colluding with the Malaysian ruling class on the Sabah question.

Before Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. was assassinated in 1983 upon landing in Manila from his US exile, he passed by Singapore and Johor, Malaysia on August 14 and spent days in talks with the ruling class and government officials of that country. He informed them of his plans of going home to the Philippines and challenging Marcos' power. He asked the support of Malaysian officials and promised that once he becomes president, he would drop the Philippine sovereign claim over the territory of Sabah.

Corazon Aquino, Ninoy's wife, made good on this promise when she became president after the overthrow of the Marcos regime in 1986. Cory Aquino pushed for the removal in the 1973 Marcos constitution of the provision stating that the Philippines has sovereignty over other Philippine territory by virtue of "historical right and legal title."

Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III continues to fulfill this promise. As the current head of the reactionary Philippine government, Noynoy Aquino has blocked calls to assert the country's sovereign claim over Sabah. Not only has the Aquino government turned a blind eye to the intense oppression being suffered by Filipinos living and working in Sabah. It has even connived with the current government in Malaysia in the latter's armed suppression of the expedition sent by the Sultanate of Sulu to push for the country's sovereign claim, resulting in widespread violations of the human rights of Filipinos in Sabah. AB

Hold the Aquino regime accountable for rampant human trafficking

"Stop the Traffic," a broad anti-human trafficking network was launched on March 17. The launching was timed to coincide with the anniversary of the execution of domestic helper Flor Contemplacion in Singapore in 1995.

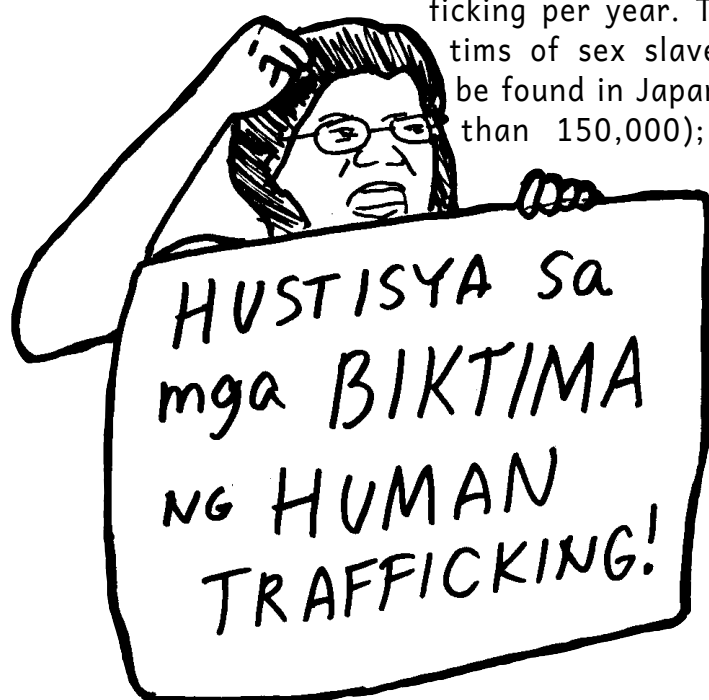
The formation of "Stop the Traffic" was led by Migrante International. It was established in the face of the widespread trafficking in persons, which involves illegally forcing people to work without just compensation and benefits. It is a form of modern slavery, with most victims coming from backward countries like the Philippines. Many of the victims are forced to become sex slaves.

On March 4, "Stop the Traffic" led a protest action at the Department of Foreign Affairs joined by Filipino victims of human trafficking in Saudi Arabia and Malaysia to assail the Aquino regime's inaction.

In November 2012, the visiting United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking of Persons lambasted the sporadic and contradictory data issued by the Aquino regime on human trafficking. The UN identified the Philippines as one of the biggest sources of human trafficking victims. The majority of the victims are women and children (who comprise a third of persons being sold in the sex trade).

Most of the cases of human trafficking are perpetrated by recruitment agencies and their foreign co-conspirators licensed to operate by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and other government agencies.

There are at least 400,000 victims of human trafficking per year. The victims of sex slavery can be found in Japan (more than 150,000); North



America, Europe, other countries in Asia like Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and the Middle East. The operations are run by criminal syndicates in Japan, China, Russia and Italy, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa and other areas.

Migrante International and even the UN Special Rapporteur belittled the Aquino regime's claims of having stamped out human trafficking. They said that despite the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act, only a small number of cases has been resolved. Those proven guilty receive very light penalties. In fact, many of the convicted agencies are given new licenses to operate and recruit.

They likewise assailed the deception behind the praises heaped by the US Department of Global Trafficking in Persons (GTIP) due to the Philippines' alleged compliance with the minimum requirements for abolishing human trafficking. Since 2010, only 146 cases of human trafficking have been filed with the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking in Persons (IACAT) and POEA. Both of these agencies are toothless, and none of the cases filed with them has been resolved.

The Aquino regime's failure to resolve human trafficking comes to the fore in the most recent cases of the so-called Saudi 400+ and the Malaysia 30, and the continuing struggle of victims of human trafficking in Florida and at the Grand Isle Shipyard in Louisiana, USA.

In Sabah, there is a glaring problem in the human trafficking of Filipinos. There are more than 170,000 undocumented Filipinos working in big plantations, building construction sites and factories. They are currently the main victims of the fascist operations of the Malaysian police working under the guise of pursuing the troops of the Royal Sultanate of Sulu. In Malaysia, there are more than 700,000 Filipino workers, almost half a million of them undocumented.

In the human trafficking cases in Malaysia and the US, the victims were directly hired by agencies with duly approved work contracts from government agencies in the Philippines and other countries. Thus, Philippine government agencies are directly accountable for the miserable plight of migrant workers. AB

Soldiers kill boy in ComVal

The most striking violations of human rights in the past few weeks involve the killing by soldiers of a boy in Compostela Valley and the assassination of a local mass leader in Apayao.

April 3. Nine-year old Roque Antivo was killed and Jeffrey Hernan and Earl Antivo, both 13, were wounded when soldiers from the 71st IB rained bullets on them in Sitio Kidaraan, Barangay Maskareg, Mabini, Compostela Valley. To cover up their crime, the military claimed that the three children were caught in the crossfire in a clash between soldiers and the NPA. The NPA ComVal-Davao Gulf Sub-regional Command strongly belied the AFP's claims.

In fact, there was an NPA ambush on the 2nd Scout Ranger Battalion in Barangay Candinuyan, but this occurred an hour before the military opened fire on the three children, and in a place 15 kilometers away from Maskareg.

The 71st IB had earlier been involved in the killing of another child, 7-year old Sunshine Jabines in Pantukan town on September 2, 2011.

March 23-25. Policemen in civilian clothes arrested Jalandoni Campos, chair of the Malahutayong Pakigbisog Alang sa Sumusunod (Mapasu), representative of the Katribu Partylist and council member of Kalumaran, the Mindanao-wide alliance of Lumad organizations. He was arrested while leaving a radio station in Tandag, Surigao del Sur where he was interviewed.

Campos was interrogated for over an hour by an intelligence operative after his arrest. He was released on March 25 after the church and other sectors campaigned for his freedom.

The case against Campos and other members of Mapasu is just one of 12 trumped-up cases filed against more than 80 leaders and members of progressive organizations in Northeastern Mindanao.

March 14. Unidentified assailants killed Enrico Cabasag, village councilor of Barangay Ripang, Conner, Apayao and a leader of the Save Apayao Peoples Organization (SAPO). Two men entered Cabasag's house and gunned him down. Cabasag led the barricade put up by villagers of Barangay Ripang against the dredging project of the municipal and provincial governments, which is being implemented without the people's consent. AB

KADAMAY launches "People's Calvary"

The Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (KADAMAY) and allied groups held a "People's Calvary" on March 25 to illustrate the poor's continuing agony under the Aquino regime.

They went to various government offices bearing mock crosses that had slogans denouncing their incessant suffering. They also protested at the Philippine Orthopedic Hospital, which is being privatized by the government. KADAMAY said that there has been no real change under the current regime. Prices of commodities and basic services have been rising one after the other. At the same time, demolitions of urban poor communities go on relentlessly. An estimated 1.4 million families in Metro Manila will be affected by demolitions for the first 50 projects under the Aquino government's Public-Private Partnership scheme.

The regime has also been destroying the livelihoods of the poor. One example is the eviction of vendors at Rizal Park in Manila to give way to eco-tourism. The two-tier wage system will also make workers' conditions more unbearable. Oil deregulation and the Conditional Cash Transfer have likewise not provided relief to the poor in the communities.

Aquino's refusal to sign into law the Magna Carta for the Poor did not come as a surprise to KADAMAY, saying that Aquino had no interest in seeing to the welfare of the impoverished. KADAMAY added that even if the Magna Carta were to be approved and funded, it would still be useless since the policies and programs that keep the people poor would still exist. AB

New evidence in Jonas Burgos case

New evidence has emerged linking two units of the Philippine Army in the abduction of activist Jonas Burgos. Burgos was seized from a restaurant at Ever Gotesco Mall in Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City on April 28, 2007. Investigators established the involvement of the 56th IB in the crime after tracing the license plates on one of the vehicles used in the abduction.

New documentary evidence now in the hands of Mrs. Edita Burgos, Jonas' mother, gives further confirmation on the 56th IB's responsibility for the abduction, and that it was the result of a joint operation involving the battalion and the 7th Infantry Division's intelligence unit. Mrs. Burgos filed a petition at the Supreme Court to include this in the evidence already submitted to court. She appealed to the Supreme Court to order the Court of Appeals which is handling the case to include in the charge sheet the names mentioned in the documents. Mrs. Burgos had already earlier asked the court to charge Gen. Eduardo Año, currently chief of the Intelligence Service of the AFP; Lt. Col. Melquiades Feliciano, former 56th IB chief; and former AFP chiefs of staff Gens. Romeo Tolentino, Hermogenes Esperon and Alexander Yano and former PNP chief Gen. Avelino Razon.

Among the documents submitted by Mrs. Burgos are after apprehension reports by the arresting units and a photograph of Jonas Burgos taken just days after his abduction. Burgos is shown with the kerchief used to blindfold him upon his arrest still tied around his neck.

Mrs. Burgos declined to reveal to the public the contents of the documents because of fears for her personal safety.

Earlier, the Court of Appeals formally declared in March that Burgos was a victim of enforced disappearance and that the AFP was responsible for his abduction. In particular, the Court of Appeals named then 1Lt. Harry Baliaga Jr., who was identified by one of the witnesses to the crime. KARAPATAN and Desaparecidos trooped to the Department of Justice (DOJ) on April 1 to push the agency to take action on the case.

In the face of all the pressure, Aquino ordered the DOJ to investigate the Jonas Burgos case. The Commission on Appointments has also deferred Año's promotion as ISAFP chief.

But Aquino's order is no assurance that the case will prosper. Aquino made a lot of noise regarding Gen. Jovito Palparan, but despite a warrant of arrest against him issued more than a year ago, the butcher general responsible for the abduction and killing of hundreds of activists remains scot-free. AB