



EDITORIAL:

Glossing over reality: how Marcos Jr.'s 2026 SONA betrays the Filipino people

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Glossing over reality: how Marcos Jr.'s 2026 SONA betrays the Filipino people

As expected, Marcos Jr.'s 86-minute State of the Nation Address (SONA) downplayed the harsh reality facing ordinary citizens. Masked by populist rhetoric, the speech ultimately pushed for policies deeply harmful to the Filipino people.

Marcos Jr. boasted of his administration's crackdown on flood control corruption, but glossing over the selective and shallow nature of his anti-corruption drive. The primary figure, former Congressman Zaldy Co—who could shed light on a systemic web implicating parliamentarians, executive officials, and the President himself—remains free while seeking political asylum in France. Meanwhile, the regime's prosecutors have charged and detained politicians aligned with the Duterte faction, Senators Bong Revilla Jr., Jinggoy Estrada, and Rodante Marcoleta. Not a single ally of the Marcos dynasty faces prison. Aside from five DPWH officials and two contractors, those closest to the President implicated in the scandal—such as former Executive Secretary Bersamin and Budget Secretary Pangandaman—were merely allowed to resign without being investigated.

Turning to the broader economic crisis, Marcos Jr. bragged about how his administration adapted to the fallout triggered by the U.S. unprovoked war against Iran. Yet he ignored the root of the problem: the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act. By leaving oil cartels free to profit without restriction, this law leaves the national economy exposed to foreign conflicts—forcing Filipinos to endure unbearably high fuel prices and soaring costs for basic goods.

In addition, Marcos Jr. magnified his policy of “eliminating system loss costs” from electric bills while glossing over the urgent need to repeal the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA). It is EPIRA that drives high energy costs in the first place, guaranteeing massive profits for private power monopolies at the expense of consumers.

Marcos presented the Pax Silica as a project to modernize the nation, boost the economy and create jobs. In reality, Pax Silica is a project of US Imperialism to ensure its war supply of rare-earth elements and other minerals, microchip technology and AI facilities. US and its allies, notably Israel, will exploit cheap, skilled Filipino labor, extract vital raw materials and poison the environment.

To mask this subservience to U.S. imperialist interests, Marcos Jr. has fixated on Chinese violations in the West Philippine Sea, exploiting maritime disputes to whip up anti-China sentiment. Meanwhile, he deliberately conceals the grave dangers of the establishment of nine U.S. EDCA sites, accommodated advanced U.S. missile systems aimed at China, and the year-round troop presence through rotational units like the Marine Rotational Force–Southeast Asia (MRF-SEA) and the U.S. Army Rotational Force–Philippines. Coupled with the annual “Balikatan” exercises involving tens of thousands of troops, naval ships, and aircraft, this is not strategic deterrence—it is provoking China into a kinetic war.

By positioning the Philippines on the front lines of the U.S. “First Island Chain” containment strategy, the administration makes the country a primary target in the event of armed conflict. Marcos Jr. packages this subservience as patriotism, diverting vital public funds into an arms buildup rather than funding essential social services or pursuing genuine diplomatic resolution over Philippine sovereign rights.

Ultimately, Marcos Jr. continues to mask the true state of the nation. He remains blind to the deep frustration and anger of a people struggling against foreign imposition, bureaucrat capitalism, and feudal exploitation. Yet across both city streets and the countryside, popular resistance is rising. From organized mass protests to persistent armed struggle in strategic regions, the Filipino people are mounting a growing challenge against the intensified repression and economic plunder under the U.S.-Marcos regime. 

US State Secretary highlights Philippines as launch pad for war at ASEAN

Last July 21, 2026, the 59th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in the Philippines. Foreign Ministers of other countries like Japan, South Korea, Australia, Russia, Canada, New Zealand and member countries of the European Union were also present. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi also attended the meeting.

The presence of Marco Rubio was significant because it reaffirmed the US engagement in the Southeast Asia and its support for the Philippines in the South China Sea. The visit also signalled that the Philippines has become a central US partner in the Indo-Pacific region.

One of the major issues discussed during the conference was the South China Sea dispute. The ministers discussed the recent confrontations between Philippine and Chinese ships, how to avoid escalation of the conflict and an ASEAN-China Code of Conduct for the South China Sea.

Member organizations of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) staged a protest action on July 22 to condemn the presence of Secretary Rubio. Bayan said the presence of Rubio was unacceptable to Filipinos. “As the chief foreign policy architect of the fascist Trump regime, Rubio is among the most accountable for the human rights atrocities and blatant violation of national sovereignty and international law brought about by US imperialist intervention and aggression.”

The meeting of Rubio with Philippine government officials has only pushed the country deeper into serving as a launch pad for US-imperialist war in the Asia Pacific, the group said. It would speed up the creation of the economic security zone under the Pax Silica initiative, which would

plunder the environment, and displace Aeta and peasant communities.

Police dispersed the demonstrators and attempted to arrest mass leaders of the demonstrators and members of the media. Several ralyists were injured in the process.

Among those the police attempted to arrest was Amirah Lidasan, a Moro leader of the Moro-Christian People's Alliance. Lidasan said she believed the police targeted her because she is a Muslim wearing a hijab. 



image: philippine revolution.nu



image: bulatlat.com

Wage hike sparks debate over inflation, food prices, and economic reforms

The recently approved P85 increase in the daily minimum wage has reignited debate among economists, labor groups, and policy analysts over whether raising workers' pay can improve living standards without fueling another round of inflation.

The wage adjustment was supposed to help restore workers' purchasing power after years of rising prices. It seeks to compensate for income eroded by inflation over the past two years and provide relief to millions of Filipino workers struggling with the soaring cost of food, transportation, fuel, and other basic necessities.

However, monetary authorities and economists argue that higher labor costs could lead businesses—particularly labor-intensive and service-oriented enterprises—to increase the prices of goods and services, potentially fueling another round of inflation. Labor groups and the IBON Foundation reject this view, contending that rising corporate profits, supply bottlenecks, and structural weaknesses in agriculture—not workers' wages—are the principal drivers of high prices.

According to IBON, the national average minimum wage of P510 per day covers only 39 percent of the estimated P1,312 family living wage, leaving millions of workers unable to meet even the basic needs of a family of five. The group also points out that real wages have steadily declined over the decades, with Filipino workers able to buy 21 percent less today than they could in 1989 because wage increases have consistently failed to keep pace with inflation.

IBON further contends that wage increases do not have to result in higher prices or business closures. Instead of passing additional labor costs on to consumers, it argues that many large corporations can absorb higher wages from their substantial profits. The group also maintains that increasing workers' incomes would stimulate the domestic economy by boosting consumer spending, which in turn benefits small and medium-sized enterprises through stronger local demand.

Progressive labor organizations likewise criticized the P85 wage increase as a "token adjustment" that remains far below what workers need to live decently. They argue that despite the increase, Filipino families continue to struggle with the relentless rise in the prices of food, fuel, housing, transportation, and other essential goods. For labor groups, the wage hike reflects the government's continued reluctance to address the widening gap between workers' earnings and the actual cost of living.

The debate also extends into economic theory. In *Value, Price and Profit*, Karl Marx argued that a general increase in wages does not necessarily lead to higher commodity prices. Instead, he maintained that wage increases primarily reduce the rate of profit while leaving the underlying value of commodities largely unchanged—a perspective frequently cited by labor advocates in challenging the claim that higher wages inevitably cause inflation.

As discussions continue, the wage increase has evolved into a broader debate over economic policy. Beyond the immediate issue of workers' pay, it has renewed calls for structural reforms to address high food prices, improve agricultural productivity and distribution, strengthen workers' purchasing power, and ensure that economic growth translates into a better standard of living for the country's working majority. 

to sell the Philippines off to the US imperialists rather than to the Chinese. They are blatant in their condemnation of the AI video, but pervasively silent in regards to Pax Silica and US bombing of Iran, which has led to immense suffering of the Filipino people. 