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## Editorial

# Renounce Arroyo's deceptions

**T**he people's worsening suffering is further aggravated by unabated increases in the prices of fuel, power, food and other basic needs. Despite these crises, the Arroyo regime continues to turn a deaf ear to the people's clamor for wage increases, tax relief and price controls, among others. Instead, it has launched a campaign to distribute so-called "subsidies" with no other objective but to cover up its culpability for the prevailing crisis and intensify its plunder of the nation's wealth.

These "subsidies" hyped as "fruits" of the value-added tax (VAT) are nothing but loose change compared to the billions of pesos Arroyo and her cohorts

pocket from this burdensome tax that is behind the sharp increases in the prices of commodities and services. This subsidy scheme has no other intention but to make the regime appear sympathetic to the masses and the VAT beneficial to the people. Just as what happened with previous "subsidy schemes", the bulk of the tens of billions of pesos allocated for this gimmickry will surely go to the pockets of Arroyo and her ilk, and will be utilized in bribery and massive fraud in the coming elections.

Arroyo is hell-bent on covering up her criminal responsibility for the unparalleled miseries and oppression the Filipino people endure under her rule. The country's industries and agriculture remain backward and in ruins, prices of services and commodities are record high, joblessness, poverty and hunger widespread. These are the ill effects of the Arroyo regime's adherence to the "globalization policies" dictated by US imperialism and the unmitigated graft and plunder of public funds by Arroyo and her band of high-ranking officials, businessmen and criminal syndicates.

Along with the Arroyo regime's widespread deceptions, it relentlessly wages an "all-out war" against the revolutionary and patriotic forces and the people in general. Thousands have fallen victim to extrajudicial killings, abductions, illegal arrests, detention and torture. Millions of people have been victimized by bombings and economic blockades, entire communities subjected to forced evacuations. Widespread repression and terrorism prevail.

The Filipino people are angry and furiously demand the overthrow of a regime that unbridledly worsens their plight and oppression.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) calls on the Filipino people to intensify open, armed and



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other forms of struggles against the exceedingly oppressive ruling regime and system.

The CPP encourages the people to march to the streets and utilize other forms of protests to tirelessly expose the crimes and deceptions of the US-Arroyo regime and manifest their extreme hatred and militant opposition to it.

Rallies, marches, protest concerts, public video showings and other cultural presentations, fora and community meetings, alternative classes, school and office walk-outs, factory protests, transport strikes, noise barrages, boycotts and similar collective protest actions will serve as effective contributions to the overall protest movement nationwide.

Activists must redouble their efforts and be creative in arousing, raising the consciousness, organizing and mobilizing the people in their millions in communities and schools and in factories, farms, plantations and other places of work. Various levels of alliances among the progressive, democratic and positive forces must be established in order to build the broadest anti-Arroyo unity, further iso-

late the despicable regime and hasten its downfall.

We must encourage the biggest possible number of people in the countryside, in urban poor communities, factories, schools and other areas in cities and towns to join the revolutionary armed struggle. They are not easily hoodwinked by the regime's gimmickry and lies, nor cowed by the brutalities and repression of the reactionary state. They are tireless and persevering in struggle and know too well that the present rotten, plundering, deceitful and repressive reactionary and puppet regime and the entire semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system have one foot in the grave.

The Filipino people are expanding revolutionary mass organizations, building local organs of political power, waging agrarian revolution and other mass protests in guerrilla fronts and actively participating in armed struggle. They are prepared to tread the path of unrelenting, protracted and arduous struggle to attain revolutionary change until national liberation, democracy and socio-economic progress are realized. **AB**

## Deceptive "subsidies"

**M**alacañang's scheme of giving doleouts in the form of so-called "subsidies" is riddled with anomalies. In the first few days, the regime went through the motions of distributing these doles through authorized banks and government offices that required certain processes and requisites. After only a few days of implementation, however, and after enjoying media attention, these processes have been replaced with utter leniency, with mandatory requirements and accounting procedures completely ignored, just as what happened in the previous anomalies and huge corruption cases involving the Arroyo regime.

As a matter of fact, the lifting of processes and accounting procedures was so designed because Arroyo's real intention was to pocket the bulk of these "subsidies" and distribute them only on paper.

**Incoherent processes, no system of audit.** These were evident in Arroyo's move to grant cash subsidies to low-end electricity consumers. At first, such doles were distributed through branches of the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) that in turn required "lifeline consumers" to present valid identification cards and billing statements from MERALCO as proof that their power consumption in May did not exceed 100 kilowatt-hours. The LBP later stopped asking for billing statements. A few more days later, the distribution of cash subsidies was passed on to several channels in the localities, including local governments, local offices of the Department of Social Welfare and De-



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velopment, barangay centers, sports complexes and many others.

The same inconsistencies occur in other cash subsidy schemes for the poor. Cash distributions have become lax and unsystematic in order to conceal the actual flow of funds, facilitate further corruption, and obscure the way by which Arroyo and her cabal deplete these moneys.

Arroyo's publicity stunts are endless:

#### **Cash grants for electricity.**

The Arroyo regime washes its hands over the new round of increases imposed by MERALCO. In an attempt to appear that it sympathizes with power consumers, the regime has started distributing one-time doleouts of P500 to four million poor electricity users. Dubbed "Pantawid ng kuryente: Katas ng VAT," the subsidy scheme was launched on June 3, with a total budget allocation of P2 billion.

**Food doleouts.** Arroyo continues to give out National Food Authority (NFA) rice at P25 per kilo in response to spikes in the prices of commercial rice. In reality, however, the price of NFA rice costs as much as P35 per kilo in several places, which is a little less than the price of commercial rice. Nevertheless, consumers who want to avail of NFA rice are obliged to acquire "family access cards," which are given out through a corruption-ridden process defined by patronage politics. Arroyo's cohorts in the localities have collected stacks of these cards, with even dead people reportedly among the "beneficiaries". Ironically, so many poor

families have not been given these cards.

**Vouchers for drivers.** Instead of heeding the public transport drivers' demand for the removal of the VAT imposed on petroleum products, the regime reportedly plans to spend P3 billion in VAT revenues every three months to "subsidize" public transport. This subsidy scheme will be implemented in the form of a P2 per liter discount for jeepney, bus and taxi drivers. Before this discount could be enjoyed, however, drivers have to beg Malacañang for these vouchers.

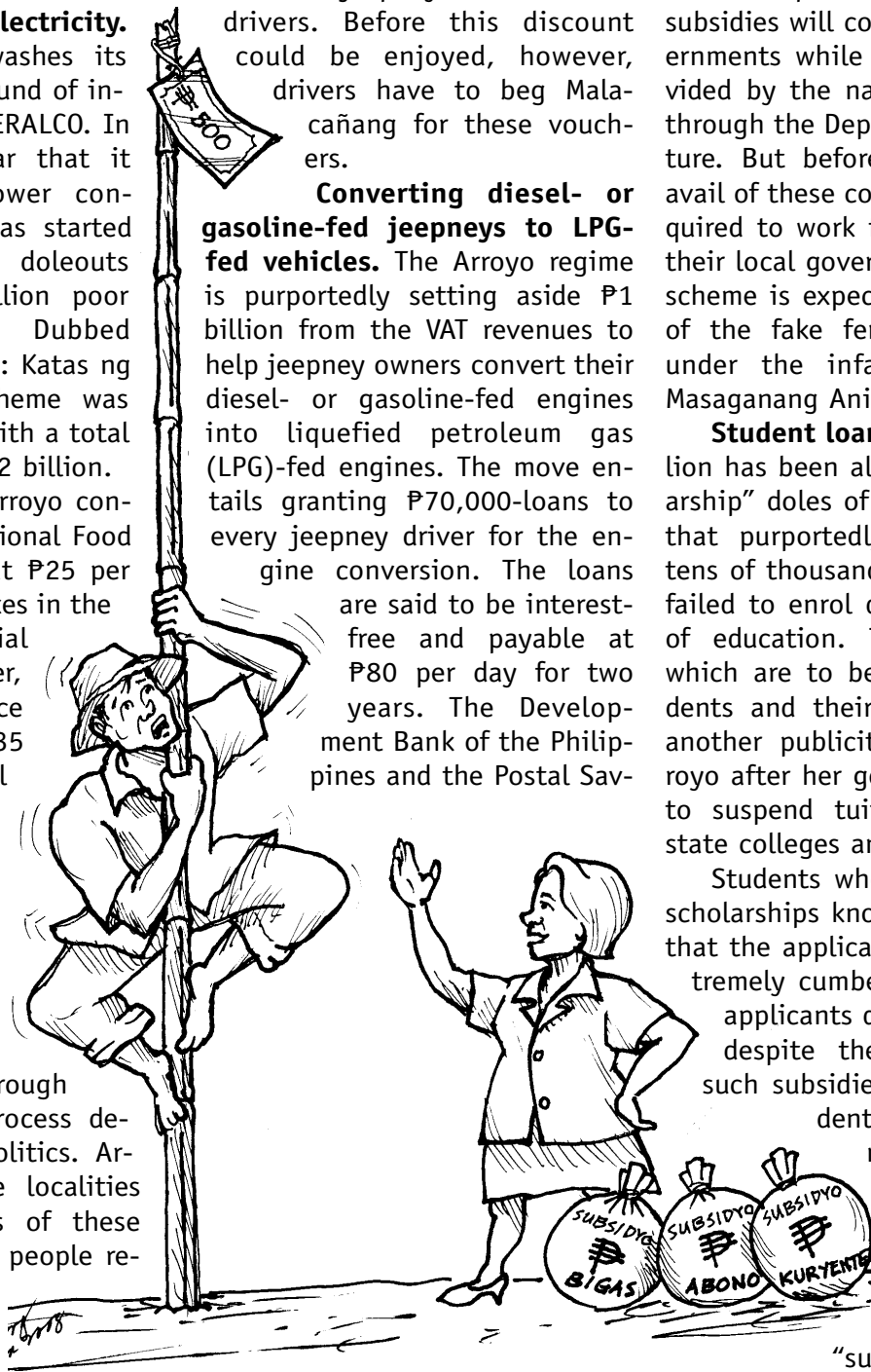
**Converting diesel- or gasoline-fed jeepneys to LPG-fed vehicles.** The Arroyo regime is purportedly setting aside P1 billion from the VAT revenues to help jeepney owners convert their diesel- or gasoline-fed engines into liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)-fed engines. The move entails granting P70,000-loans to every jeepney driver for the engine conversion. The loans are said to be interest-free and payable at P80 per day for two years. The Development Bank of the Philippines and the Postal Sav-

ings Bank have been tasked to manage the loans, but no clear policies have been drawn so far for its implementation.

**Fertilizer.** Malacañang announced the distribution of P1,500 coupons to every farmer in an effort to help them cope with the spiraling prices of fertilizer. The scheme is reportedly part of the P43.5-billion program to improve rice production in the country. One thousand pesos of these so-called subsidies will come from local governments while P500 will be provided by the national government through the Department of Agriculture. But before the farmers can avail of these coupons, they are required to work for some period at their local government offices. The scheme is expected to go the way of the fake fertilizer "subsidies" under the infamous Ginintuang Masaganang Ani in 2004.

**Student loans.** Another P1 billion has been allocated for "scholarship" doles of the Arroyo regime that purportedly aim to benefit tens of thousands of students who failed to enrol due to rising costs of education. These "subsidies," which are to be paid by the students and their parents, are just another publicity gimmick of Arroyo after her government's failure to suspend tuition fee hikes in state colleges and universities.

Students who have applied for scholarships know from experience that the application process is extremely cumbersome, with many applicants denied scholarships despite their dire need for such subsidies. Democratic student organizations demand that the reactionary government provide free education to all instead of giving out such "subsidies."



# Global oil cartels hasten steep oil price hikes

**T**oday's excessively high oil prices are dictated principally by the global oil cartels that exercise monopoly control over production, refining, distribution and marketing of oil.

In addition to monopoly pricing, the global oil giants accelerate steep price hikes by manipulating market prices, particularly through trading in "oil futures". This trading scheme, which utilizes excess oil profits, sees oil cartels conniving with big finance capitalists to further raise oil prices in the world market.

In order to justify their endless and speculative oil pricing practices, global oil giants take advantage of international events such as the weakening of the dollar and the impending US recession, the intensifying US war on Iraq and Central Asia, threats of US intervention in Iran, the continuing turmoil in different parts of the Middle East and Africa, and the growing global demand for fuel.

Oil price increases have become unprecedented in the past years. From \$55 per barrel in 2005 and \$60 per barrel in June 2006, crude oil prices soared to almost \$140 in the first week of June and continue to rise. These steep hikes in the world market have been invoked by giant oil companies to justify price increases of petroleum products in the local market.

Oil monopolies earn tremendously from huge superprofits extracted from rapid and excessive fuel price increases. In 2007, the combined profits of oil companies amounted to \$155 billion, of which 75% went to the oil giants—over \$40.61 billion to Exxon Mobil, \$31 billion to Royal Dutch Shell, \$18.7 billion to Chevron and \$18.66 billion to Total France.

**Oil futures manipulation.** Oil futures are contracts between big oil producers and buyers to purchase

fuel at a given future price. These contracts are traded like stocks in the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) and the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) Futures in London.

Among the main investors in oil futures are big finance capitalists like Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Citigroup and JP Morgan Chase in the US and Deutsche Bank in Germany. It is in their interest to further increase oil prices to boost the value of their stocks. They manipulate fuel prices by deliberately and systematically spreading rumors that may affect oil prices. Last month, Goldman Sachs announced that the price of oil per barrel will reach US\$200 in a span of one to two years purportedly as a result of an estimated 35% increase in consumption.

Expected fuel price hikes push producers and oil refineries to increase their inventories and hoard stocks until the projected price increases take effect in the market. They also earn more income by selling oil at prices much higher than actual production costs. As a result, steep oil prices and huge oil inventories exist side by side.

Because of oil futures speculations, fuel prices balloon beyond the actual production expenses. Studies by the US Senate reveal that as early as 2006, crude oil prices in the world market were overpriced by 60% compared to actual costs.

Giant oil firms easily manipulate oil futures due to the lack of regulatory mechanisms as evidenced by the rapid expansion in past years of oil futures transactions. In a short span of five years, oil futures trading increased 20

times, coming to more than \$130 billion. The 300% hike in fuel prices in the past three years stem principally from oil futures transactions.

Because of the considerable influence finance capitalists have on steep fuel prices, there are currently proposals from the US and other countries to regulate oil futures transactions. The Malaysian government has proposed the suspension of all oil futures contracts worldwide. In Germany, the ruling Social Democratic Party has called for the cancellation altogether of all oil futures transactions. Even the International Monetary Fund has expressed concern over the role of speculators on fuel prices.

**Billions worth of kickbacks on oil taxes.** The US-Arroyo regime feigns powerlessness to stop or control relentless and steep hikes in the prices of petroleum products these past few months. In truth, the Arroyo regime is ecstatic with every oil price increase, because these increases translate to higher collections from the 12% Value-Added Tax (VAT) exacted from petroleum products.

Last year, more than 50% of the reactionary government's total tax revenues were sourced from the VAT on petroleum products (P54 billion). Total VAT collections were estimated to be at P4.34 per liter of gasoline in 2006 and P4.38 in 2007. Due to the persistent price hikes of petroleum products since May, the reactionary government collects as much as P5.06 per liter from VAT impositions. This amount is expected to climb to as much as P7.20 per liter if oil price spikes persist. The US-Arroyo regime is jubilant over projections by the Department of Finance that should world oil prices go no lower than

\$100 per barrel, the government may be able to collect a whopping P18 billion from VAT revenues in just one year.

As a result, the US-Arroyo regime completely ignores the people's clamor to scrap this tax. The regime even justifies such taxation by coming out with publicity gimmicks such as "Katas ng VAT" where so-called subsidies are given to poor families. The reason behind this gimmick is to create additional opportunities for corruption.

Progressive organizations have been demanding that the Arroyo regime lift the VAT on oil. The demand to scrap the VAT on fuel is sure to bring in benefits to the Filipino people that are much more substantial than that provided by phony schemes of distributing "subsidies." Should the VAT on oil be lifted, jeepney drivers can expect to have daily savings of as much as P150, tricycle drivers P25 and fisherfolk using motorized boats P55. **AB**

### *Pacific Partnership 2008*

## **US intervention in the guise of humanitarian missions**

**"T**he US is helping the Philippine military address a classical insurgency. In doing so, it is as important to build a school, rebuild a bridge or host a medical clinic as it is to kill an extremist."

This was how Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the US Armed Forces openly justified the presence of almost 3,000 American soldiers who arrived in the country last month. The soldiers are participants in the so-called Pacific Partnership 2008 (PP2008), purportedly a humanitarian medical and construction mission.

Admiral Mullen's statement only reveals that the mission conceals and is merely a part of US military intervention in the country. The combined operations of the US Navy and the AFP under PP2008 aim to reinforce the counterrevolutionary Oplan Bantay Laya 2 against the New People's Army (NPA) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

PP2008 is being implemented by the US military in priority areas where armed revolutionary resistance is strong. American troops landed in Calbayog City in Samar on May 10 and in Cotabato City in Mindanao on May 29, aboard the USN Mercy hospital ship.

Using medical and engineering teams as fronts, the true objective of so-called "humanitarian missions" is to establish troop presence in the areas in preparation for future military operations. The troops are involved in, among others, setting up communication systems, surveying the terrain and conducting a population census. **AB**

## **Worldwide resistance against steep oil price hikes**

**T**housands of people across the globe have staged protest actions against continuing fuel price hikes in the world market. The price of oil now stands at \$140 per barrel and is expected to climb further to \$200 per barrel in the coming months.

**In the European Union.** Over 90,000 truck drivers in Spain, France and Portugal launched open-ended work stoppages that commenced on June 9 to demand alleviation measures from their governments to help them cope with the spiraling prices of oil.

Car manufacturing companies in Spain and major airports in Portugal were almost completely paralyzed in June 11 because of the authorities' refusal to allow aircraft

to refuel following massive unrest and supply shortages. Transportation was paralyzed on the third day of the strike, resulting in long queues for public transport, shortages of fresh commodities in the markets, and the depletion of oil supplies in some gasoline stations.

In Spain, car manufacturers such as Seat, Nissan, Renault, PSA Peugeot Citroen and Mercedes Benz have either suspended or decreased their vehicle production for lack of spare

parts and accessories as a result of the massive strikes. In Belgium, car plants Volvo and Audi were forced to shut down on Thursday.

On June 12, more than 600 truck drivers that deliver gasoline to Shell stations in Britain launched a four-day transport strike to demand wage increases from Hoyer & Suckling, a Shell contractee. They also clamored for profit-sharing arrangements with Shell, which rakes in superprofits.

**In Asia.** In Nepal, protests against oil price increases continue. The series of demonstrators in the country's capital Kathmandu started on June 19 when students blocked traffic and threw stones at the Supreme Court chief justice's car to demand a rollback in the prices of petroleum products. The

25% increase in gasoline and diesel prices this month resulted in a 35% increase in transport fares in the country.

In South Korea, truck drivers protested on June 13 against the soaring fuel prices and demanded a guaranteed minimum wage. The transport strike paralyzed most ports in South Korea, including Busan which handles 76% of all shipping in South Korea. This transport strike followed earlier protests opposing the government's decision to allow meat importation from the US anew.

Previous to this, nationwide protest actions have been staged by various sectors in India under the leadership of the Community Party and opposition parties that have been countering the government's move to raise fuel prices by 10%.

States led by the Communist Party of India such as West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala were completely paralyzed in the strike. In Calcutta, stores and markets have closed down while schools and colleges have suspended classes. Meanwhile, flights to and from Calcutta have been delayed. Public transport such as buses and trams have simply parked at the roadsides while a number of government employees have absented from work.

Simultaneous with the protest actions in India, the opposition party in Malaysia has pushed for a rollback in fuel prices. Truck drivers in Thailand are also planning to stage similar protests.

In the Philippines, protesting students threw red paint and rotten tomatoes at the Petron office in Makati City on June 20. Petron is one of the three biggest oil companies in the country. The students demanded the scrapping of the Oil Deregulation Law and the lifting of the 12% VAT imposed on petroleum products. **AB**

## Intense militarization in Negros

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) have been militarizing both the cities and countryside of Negros. They continue to launch brutal military operations in their desperate attempt to suppress and crush the revolutionary struggles of the people in the island.

The AFP has deployed two military brigades in the island, including the 302nd Bde that has been brought in from Bohol. Under these brigades are four battalions—the 61st, 11th, 15th and 19th IB, while under the 302nd Bde are the 78th and 79th IB. Also deployed in the island are the 1st Scout Ranger Battalion and the 32nd and 33rd Reconnaissance Coys of the 3rd ID. Also present in the island are two companies of the 12th IB CAFGU handlers that lead more than 2,000 CAFGU elements. Among the government forces likewise geared to fight the revolutionary forces is a battalion of the PNP Regional Mobile Group and four companies of the PNP Provincial Mobile Group.

The AFP focuses mainly on Central Negros, particularly the town of Guihulngan. Military elements have sown massive terror in the area, with gross human rights violations rampant. Government soldiers have conducted censuses, taken photographs of all the residents and forced them to acquire community tax certificates [cedula]. There have been reports of arson, rape and harassment committed by 11th IB elements in

Barangays Linantuyan and Trinidad in the said town. The Linantuyan barangay hall has already been occupied and converted into an AFP detachment.

Alongside militarization in the countryside, leaders of the legal democratic movement have suffered from the same intimidation by the military troops. KAUGMAON chairperson Rone Quirante is being linked to the armed revolutionary movement. KAUGMAON (Kapunungan alang sa Ugma sa Gagmay'ng Mag-uuma sa Negros Oriental) is a farmers alliance in Negros Oriental and is a sister organization of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. Lourdes

Baloy, chairperson of

Pamabali (Panaghiusa sa mga Mag-uuma sa Barangay Linantuyan), a sister organization of KAUGMAON

has been harassed as well by military elements, along with

Josephine Saguran, chairperson of KARAPATAN in Guihulngan. Saguran's husband Waldo has been accused by the military troops of being a member of the New People's Army (NPA). The couple's house was strafed in May in a failed assassination attempt on Waldo.

In mid-May, six farmers were abducted from their homes in Barangay Linantuyan by 11th IB elements. The victims were Genaro Ferolino and couple Pio and Magdalena Mata, all from Sitio Taklungan; couple David and Elizabeth Bahinting of Sitio Kaningag; and a certain Regie. The Matas underwent intense interrogation. Bahinting was branded a "revolu-



tionary tax collector." The six farmers were forced to file fake extortion charges against Baloy, whom the military elements tagged as an NPA finance officer.

Prior to this, two farmers—Benjamin Edoloverio and Julito Alban—were illegally arrested by 79th IB elements on April 1 after government soldiers strafed the house they were in. Rodelyn Taguiam, who owned the house, said that the soldiers continued strafing despite her pleas to stop firing because her children might be hit. Edoloverio and Alban suffered severe physical and psychological torture.

The latest in the list of human rights violations was the threat on the lives of Roldan Villarin and Abundio Sildora, both residents of Barangay Linantuyan and Pambali members. Villarin and Sildora reported having received a text message on June 7 stating that they would be butchered to serve as an example to their fellow villagers of what fate awaits "NPA members". Prior to this incident, Sildora had been summoned to the 11th IB detachment where soldiers tried to coerce him into admitting that he was an NPA intelligence officer.

In conjunction with the military offensives, the enemy soldiers have also made use of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) to cover up their gross human rights abuses. In June, the CHR cleared the 11th IB following an alleged investigation on reported human rights violations. Human rights group KARAPATAN and the Promotion of Church People's Response have condemned the CHR for defending the terrorist AFP.

In contrast, the military has been accusing KARAPATAN of being an NPA supporter for providing legal assistance and other services to victims of human rights abuses. **AB**



## NPA seizes 19 firearms

**T**he New People's Army (NPA) seized 19 firearms in three separate armed actions launched in Compostela Valley, Abra and Eastern Samar in the first week of June. About nine enemy elements were killed and 17 others wounded in 10 military actions staged by Red fighters in various areas in the archipelago since May 20. *Ang Bayan* received the following initial reports.

**June 19.** Government soldiers reportedly sustained four casualties after Red fighters raided the 17th IB Alpha Company detachment in Sitio Batangan, Barangay Mabuno, Gattaran, Cagayan. Killed was detachment commander 1Lt. Neil Borja, while three others were wounded.

**June 7.** Red guerrillas seized 14 Garand rifles in an assault on the 72nd CAFGU Battalion detachment in Barangay Linda, Nabunturan, Compostela Valley. The Red guerrillas overran and disarmed three CAFGU elements after a 30-minute gunfight. They swiftly cleared the armory and burned down the three bunkers in the detachment.

That same day, five government soldiers were wounded, including their commander S/Sgt. Francisco Millare when comrades attacked the 14th Abra CAFGU Detachment in Gangal, Sallapadan, Abra. The Red

fighters also seized three Garand rifles.

**June 6.** The NPA seized an M16 armalite rifle and a Garand rifle in an encounter with the 14th IB along the boundaries of Barangay San Roque and Barangay Cagma-naba, Jipapad, Eastern Samar. The enemy suffered three dead.

**June 3.** Red guerrillas wounded 1Lieutenant Mercado and 2Lieutenant Manimtim in an encounter with Philippine Army forces in Barangay Pasian, Monkayo, Compostela Valley.

**May 29.** Two government soldiers were seriously wounded in a bomb attack and raid staged by NPA guerrillas on the 58th IB detachment in Barangay Bolhoon, Surigao del Sur.

**May 27.** A military intelligence officer was instantly killed in an ambush conducted by three NPA operatives in Camarines Norte while the former was gathering information. The fatality was identified as SPO4 Mario Javier, an officer belonging to the Intelligence Division of the PNP Regional Office.

**May 20.** An intelligence agent identified as S/Sgt. Carlito Guimalan was wounded in an attack by the NPA comrades in Barangay Ngan, Compostela, Compostela Valley. **AB**

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## Environmentalists condemn pro-mining court ruling

ENVIRONMENTAL groups, church people, progressive groups and the masses condemned the Court of Appeals (CA) for allowing the resumption of mining operations of Oceana Gold Mining Inc. in Didipio, Kasiabu, Nueva Vizcaya on June 10. The mining operations were suspended in May by the local government.

According to the local government, Oceana Gold has been illegally operating in the area without a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA), an accord that allows mining companies to operate in the area. In addition, the mining operations have resulted in ten-

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*Continued on "Militants..." on page 8*

## Over 1,600 hectares of Hacienda Luisita now being tilled

**R**ene Galang, Unyon ng mga Mangagawa sa Agrikultura (UMA) president and concurrently the chair of United Workers' Labor Union (ULWU) has confirmed that agricultural workers of Hacienda Luisita have started cultivating over 1,600 hectares of land in the hacienda.

This move was the positive result of efforts by agricultural workers in the hacienda and is beyond the scope of the inutile Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. Parcels of land have yet to be distributed to the farmers due to the absence of a final court decision despite previous declarations by various government agencies in favor of the agricultural workers. The Supreme Court has ordered the suspension of land distribution in the area in favor of the appeal submitted by the Cojuangco family.

The agricultural workers have formed cooperatives for collective and organized efforts and have started planting rice and vegetables in the plantation.

The key to the success of this collective initiative was the agricultural workers' strong determination to oppose the stock distribution option (SDO) that the Cojuangco family utilized to evade land distribution, which the farmers have long been fighting for. They

called on their fellow workers and farmers in the hacienda to form independent cooperatives and till the land for their livelihood.

They started working on the plantation after the Supreme Court in 2007 prevented the Department of Agrarian Reform from implementing CARP. The agricultural workers have likewise appealed before the Supreme Court to scrap the SDO, a scheme that gives the farmers negligible shares of stocks from corporations as a replacement to the actual distribution of land to the tillers.



Danilo Ramos, secretary general of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said that "CARP's bankruptcy and built-in institutional denial of land rights failed to stop Hacienda Luisita workers from struggling and asserting their rights to land. Now, despite all odds and political obstacles, the farm workers are reaping the fruits of their hard labor and collective resistance."

Meanwhile, agricultural workers of Hacienda Luisita have also trooped to the streets to oppose CARP's extension and instead called for the approval in Congress of the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill (GARF) or House Bill 3059 proposed by the late Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran.

### GABRIELA assails Arroyo regime's neglect of Filipina rape victim in Japan

THE militant women's group GABRIELA has condemned the Arroyo regime for its utter neglect of the case of a Filipina raped by an American soldier in Okinawa, Japan in February.

The victim, who was raped on her very first day of work in Japan, was found bleeding in a hotel and needed hospitalization for a week due to the severe injuries she sustained. She still needs to take sleeping pills at night as a result of the severe trauma she suffered.

Despite her appalling condition, a Japanese court has dropped the complaint purportedly due to lack of evidence. GABRIELA said that the case did not prosper due to the Arroyo government's total neglect and the regime's refusal to confront the US. Now that the court has dropped the case, the regime has completely abandoned the hapless victim altogether.

This situation has moved the victim's mother to seek GABRIELA's help since the latter is the only group open to assist them.

The victim is asking Okinawan authorities to conduct a reinvestigation of the case.

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sion and human rights abuses among the Ifugao communities.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño and other solons have criticized the CA's decision especially since a few days prior to the ruling, the progressive party released a report of various human rights violations committed by Oceana Gold on residents in the area and its failure to consult first with the residents before mining operations commenced. Company guards have already launched numerous attacks against the protesting residents, resulting in the death of one of the villagers.