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Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

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Editorial

## Revolution will put an end to backwardness and poverty

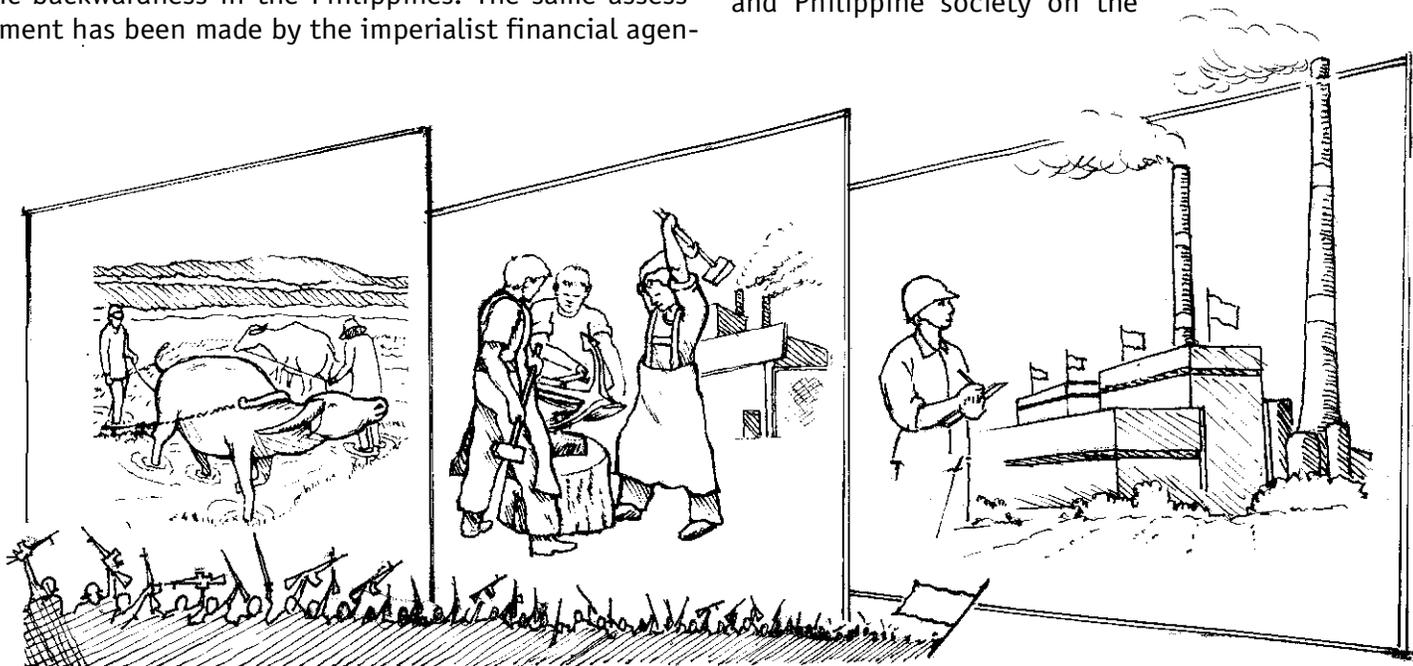
**G**loria Arroyo's vision of the Philippines becoming a First World country by 2020 is a huge delusion. Arroyo deceives the Filipino people by repeatedly telling them that their century-old poverty will be coming to an end in a few years' time through her efforts and the measures she has taken. No one, of course, actually believes her when she insinuates that she has to stay in power in order to save the Philippines and deliver on her promise of prosperity.

The intensified crisis of the country's semifeudal economy and the blows inflicted by the current crisis of the world capitalist system have worsened economic backwardness in the Philippines. The same assessment has been made by the imperialist financial agen-

cies.

So long as the Philippine economy remains a mere supplier of cheap raw materials and cheap labor for the imperialists, so long as it remains tied to exporting semi-manufactured goods, and so long as super-profits are extracted from it in exchange for a tiny amount of excess capital invested, the country will forever be condemned to backwardness and will remain agrarian and unindustrialized. It will also be constantly in the throes of permanent crisis and will never prosper under this rotten system.

The Philippine economy and Philippine society on the



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whole have been at a standstill since US imperialism imposed colonial and neocolonial rule, plunder and oppression. The implementation since the 1980s of the imperialist policies of "neoliberal globalization" and the concomitant policies of liberalization, deregulation, labor flexibilization, privatization and denationalization have worsened this already dismal situation.

The solution to the Filipino people's poverty and misery does not lie in Arroyo's empty promises. The US-Arroyo regime is in fact responsible for the continued backwardness of Philippine economy and society. This regime has not done a thing to develop the economy, industry, agriculture and the Filipino people's quality of life. It has in fact blocked national industrialization, land reform and programs and bills for the people's betterment.

It is the most rabid implementor of imperialist "globalization" policies that have further condemned the Filipino people to poverty. Imperialist "globalization" destroys productive forces, depletes the country's natural re-

sources and deprives the poor of the most basic social services.

Revolution will put an end to the country's backwardness and rottenness. Through the new democratic revolution, we can overthrow the existing semicolonial and semifeudal social order and achieve national liberation, democracy, justice, peace and the prosperity that has been denied the country and the Filipino people for more than a century. Only through revolution can economic development be attained and the people's quality of life uplifted.

The socialist revolution that will lead to the establishment of a far more developed political and socio-economic system that will mainly benefit the working class and the toiling masses will be advanced as soon as the national democratic revolution is completed.

In advancing the Philippine revolution, we must wage allout resistance against the ruling US-Arroyo regime and all other puppet and reactionary regimes that prop up the ruling system until the entire rotten system is overthrown. **AB**

## **ADB study Philippines is severely underdeveloped**

**T**he Asian Development Bank (ADB) released in May a comprehensive study comparing the living standards and social development attained by various countries around the world. The study revealed that it would take up to two centuries for the Philippines to catch up with the living standards of industrialized countries.

The ADB said it would take the Philippines 175 years to catch up with the industrialized countries' per capita gross domestic product (GDP). The Philippines has an average GDP per capita of only \$33.70 compared to industrialized countries with \$397.20. This disparity has grown bigger over the years.

The ADB added that it would likewise take 151 to 240 years before the Philippines achieves the higher living standards attained by industrialized countries in such indicators as adult literacy rate, life expectancy at birth, education and health services, among others. The Philippines lags miserably behind in these indicators and is in fact comparable to Bangladesh and Nepal, two of the poorest countries in the world.

The reality is that for as long as the Philippines remains under a semicolonial and semifeudal system, the country will never achieve genuine progress even after several centuries. **AB**



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## SWS survey confirms worsening unemployment

The worsening unemployment in the country and the record heights to which it has soared was reflected in the Social Weather Stations' (SWS) latest survey, showing that up to 34.2% or 14 million Filipinos are out of work. Almost three million workers were laid off in the first quarter of the year alone. The unemployment rate has also grown by 20% since May 2005.

The same survey showed that up to 16.7% of laid off workers' families suffer from extreme hunger while 16.9% of the unemployed have experienced hunger.

On the other hand, a survey by the marketing research firm Nielsen Company Philippines showed that up to 26% of Filipinos are haunted by the lack of job security.

The results of the SWS survey are a big slap in the face of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Malacañang, said Rep. Joel Maglunsod of the Anakpawis party. He slammed the government's failure to address worsening joblessness and retrenchments despite the "job fair" extravaganzas being showcased by the Arroyo regime.

The reactionary government also strains to conceal the actual state of unemployment. Doctored DOLE statistics purport that the unemployment rate stands at a mere 7%. AB

## Overpriced noodles

The Department of Education (DepEd) was forced to suspend the contract of its supplier of noodles under its Food-For-School program after the recent exposé of the shameful overpricing of the food item by high-ranking education officials.

DepEd officials suspended the main contractor Jeverps Manufacturing Corporation (JMC) as the Senate investigated the anomaly. The DepEd awarded to JMC in 2007 a contract worth P284.13 million to supply 15 million packs of fortified noodles to schools, a deal that the company also won this year. This time, however, the contract amounts to P427.21 million. The DepEd has awarded up to P750 million worth of contracts to JMC in the last five years.

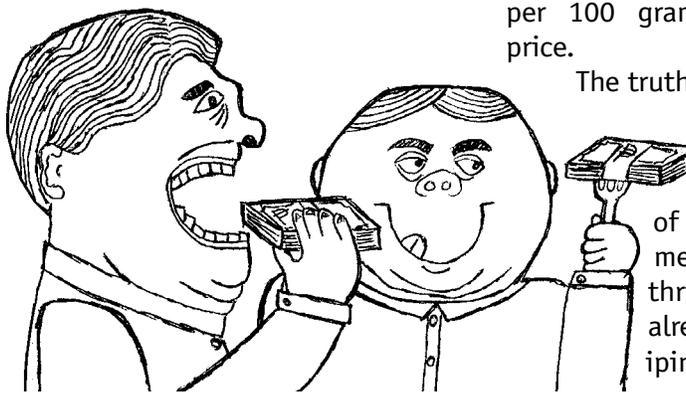
After circumventing the bidding process, DepEd favored JMC, which has no license to operate, as disclosed by no less than the Bureau of Food and Drugs.

In the 2007 contract, the P18 packets of noodles were several times more expensive than the

P4.50 packets being sold in the local market. This year, an additional P4 per packet was added to the previous P18, further bloating the price to P22 per packet. This translates to a total of almost P251 million added to this year's contract.

DepEd officials have made laughable claims that the noodles are steeply priced because they contain fresh eggs and malunggay. But this claim has been refuted in a study conducted by agencies in Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Korea and Vietnam. The study showed that the noodles are merely made of flour and monosodium glutamate, do not contain fresh eggs but egg powder and do not contain malunggay. During the Senate investigation, DepEd officials even ridiculously claimed that malunggay costs P60 to P100 per 100 grams, thus the higher price.

The truth is that the atrociously high contract price only serves to feed the insatiable greed of avaricious government officials who thrive on exploiting the already impoverished Filipino children. AB



## Senior AFP officers pocket Balikatan funds

The US government remitted close to P250 million to reimburse expenses incurred by American soldiers in the Balikatan war exercises in 2006 and 2007 that the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) paid for in advance. But instead of turning over these funds to the Philippine National Treasury, the AFP illegally deposited them in a local bank ostensibly for the Citizens' Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGU) under the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom). With only a small portion of the total

amount actually being released to CAFGU elements and spent for their needs, these funds are one of the biggest sources of corruption by senior AFP officers.

These conclusions were the result of an examination of cash flow within the AFP conducted by the Commission on Audit (COA) in the years covered. This means that the amount involved in the Balikatan fund irregularities is much bigger than that earlier revealed by Lt. Senior Grade Nancy Gadian of the Philippine Navy. Gadian, who handled Civil Military Operations (CMO) during the Balikatan joint military exercises for 2007 earlier disclosed that more than P40 million in RP-US Balikatan funds in 2007 were pocketed by high-ranking military officials.

She added that of the total P4 million officially allocated for the implementation of the Balikatan CMO, only P2.3 million was actually released to her office. The balance was not remitted by then Westmincom chief Lt. Gen. Eugenio Cedo.

Gadian revealed that Cedo and other senior Westmincom and AFP officials conspired to divide among themselves the bulk of the P46 million intended for the 2007 Balikatan exercises. She plans to present in the future the details and documents that will support her accusations.

In retaliation for her exposé and to prevent her from saying anything more, the AFP has ordered her arrest and issued a "shoot-to-kill order" for her. Gadian's sister has filed in her behalf a petition for a writ of amparo before the Supreme Court.

The petition was supported by BAYAN, Bayan Muna, Gabriela Women's Party, Anakpawis and Kabataan Party, a number senators as well as members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. AB

## US officer detailed at JUSMAG rapes Filipino woman

**A**nother Filipina has been raped by an American soldier. The victim, a student who used the pseudonym Vanessa said she was raped by an officer detailed with the Joint US Military Advisory Group who was likewise involved in the Balikatan military exercises.

Vanessa testified that she first met the American officer when he introduced himself at a club in Makati where she and her friends were last April 10. They met again twice in other clubs in the same city.

On April 19, the US serviceman called to invite her to a party to be held in a private room at a five-star hotel in Makati. He told her that they would be in the company of friends and that his girlfriend would also be attending.

When Vanessa arrived and found that there were no other people in the room, she realized that she had been deceived by the American officer. She was about to leave when the officer slapped her hard, threw her on the bed, caught her neck in a stranglehold and raped her.

The following day, she went to GABRIELA and related her ordeal to the women's organization. GABRIELA in turn helped her undergo a medical examination and seek the advice of a lawyer. Vanessa also reported the rape to the police and went through a medico-legal examination which proved that she had indeed been raped.

On May 15, she

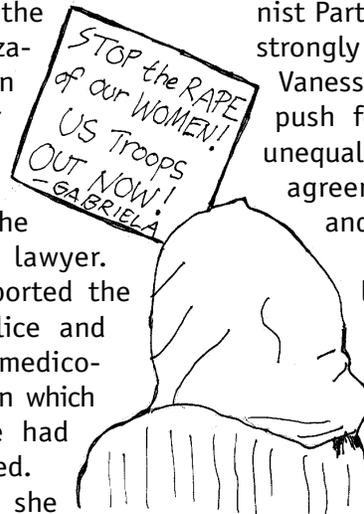
read her statement before members of the media.

Vanessa's rape occurred only four days after the Court of Appeals overturned the lower court's conviction of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith who raped Nicole, another Filipina, in 2005 at the Subic Bay Freeport. Smith's acquittal was the result of connivance between the US and Arroyo governments to salvage the Visiting Forces Agreement, whose abrogation has been demanded by various sectors for the unjust protection it grants to American soldiers who commit crimes in the Philippines.

Smith's acquittal dashed any hopes Vanessa may have had to attain justice in court. She has instead aired her case before the people. Nevertheless, GABRIELA is encouraging her to take advantage of whatever the legal arena has to offer.

In a statement, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) strongly denounced the rape of Vanessa and urged the people to push for the abrogation of all unequal, unjust and oppressive agreements between the US and the Philippines.

The CPP added that only by putting an end to these obstacles can justice for Vanessa and all other victims of oppression by US imperialism in the country be attained. AB



# Fascist military vents ire on civilians

The fascist military has been venting its ire on innocent civilians, victimizing the brother of a militant mass leader in Batangas, a farmer in Albay, an Ata-Manobo tribesman in Davao del Norte and a number of Moro communities in Maguindanao.

**May 14.** Two men aboard a motorcycle shot to death Felipe Bautista, 30, in the town of Calaca, Batangas. The murder took place while the victim was aboard his scooter at around 7:30 p.m. A 12-year old child aboard a tricycle was also hit by a stray bullet.

Felipe was a member of the Samahan ng mga Magbubukid ng Batangas, an affiliate of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. He was the younger brother of Anakpawis-Batangas provincial coordinator Agaton Bautista.

**May 12.** Military elements illegally entered and ransacked several houses in Barangays Salvo and Tatapan in Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao. Even houses of government officials and employees were not spared. Such military abuses in Moro communities in Mindanao have been rampant since clashes between the MILF and AFP erupted in mid-2008.

**May 11.** Elements of the 2nd IB mercilessly killed Danilo Nuel, a resident of Sitio Kagnanaga, Barangay del Rosario, Jovellar, Albay. His body was found in nearby Barangay Nabasan. The 2nd IB earlier reported that he was a New People's Army member killed in an encounter. The Jovellar police blotter, however, stated that Nuel was an ordinary farmer.

In a statement, the Santos Binamira Command (NPA-Albay) said that the fascist soldiers vented their ire on Nuel after suffering casualties in an earlier clash with an NPA unit at around 12 noon that same day. The NPA was able to withdraw safely from the clash scene. It was during the military's pursuit operation that the soldiers arrested Nuel, who was then busy making copra. His lifeless body was found in Barangay Nabasan two hours later.

**May 6.** Military soldiers gunned down two Tumanduk tribespeople as the latter were headed back to their barrio Rizal Sur in Tapaz, Capiz. Jason Eulalio, 47, and Charito Caspillo chanced upon a platoon of armed men in civilian clothes (who later turned out to be soldiers of the 47th IB of the 3rd ID undergoing a "field training exercise on jungle survival"). The two victims first hid themselves, thinking that the armed men were from the rival Aklanon tribe. A firefight ensued, and Eulalio was hit first. When Caspillo was also hit, she raised her hands in surrender and identified herself as a civilian. The sol-

diers kept on shooting at her, justifying their action by saying that she was a member of the NPA.

The accusation was belied by Caspillo's fellow villagers in a public hearing on May 17 in Roxas City conducted by Sen. Ana Con-suelo "Jamby" Madrigal under the auspices of the Senate Committee on Cultural Minorities.

Caspillo was brought to a hospital but eventually died on May 13. She was pregnant.

**April 14.** Elements of the 60th IB mercilessly murdered Kapis Butod, an Ata-Manobo and resident of Sitio Melangsad, Barangay Palma Gil, Talaingod, Davao del Norte. The soldiers insisted that Butod was one of the Red fighters who ambushed them on April 13 in nearby Sitio Damagan just because he had a small cut on his hand. Butod's relatives said the victim accidentally cut himself while making a slingshot.

The fascist soldiers tortured Butod first before finishing him off. They broke his fingers and repeatedly sliced his right thigh with a bolo, inflicting a wound that was at least ten inches long.

The soldiers pushed the bloodied victim towards a coconut tree and ordered him to wrap his arms around it, before peppering him with bullets.

The military also stole money from his family worth P7,000 which Butod's father earned from selling their carabao.

Out of fear, the residents of Sitio Melangsad have not returned to their homes and are temporarily taking shelter with relatives in other barangays.





# CPP calls bounty against Sison, Rosal "squid tactics"

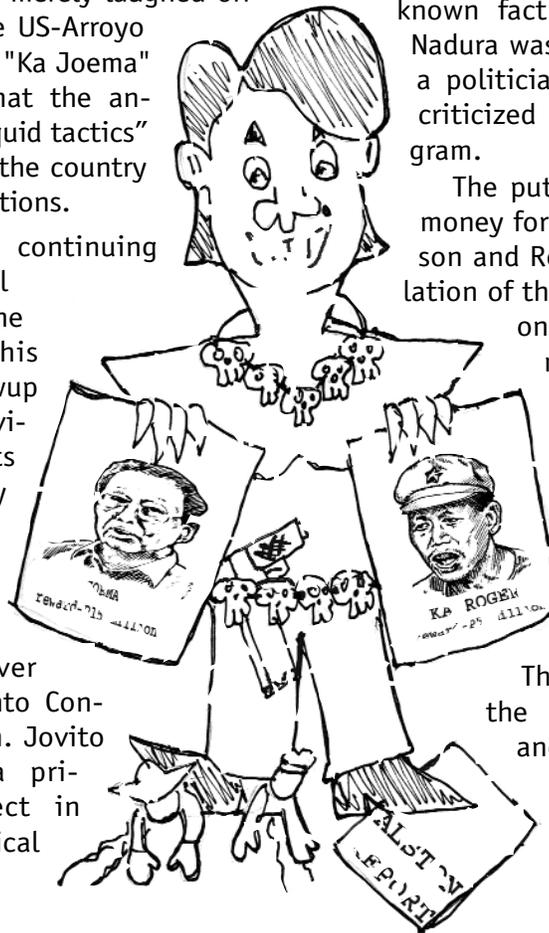
The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) merely laughed off the P15 million bounty being offered by the US-Arroyo regime for the capture of Comrades Jose Ma. "Ka Joema" Sison and Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, saying that the announcement was part of the US-Arroyo regime's "squid tactics" to deflect the crescendo of criticisms from across the country for the continuing extrajudicial killings and abductions.

The announcement of a P15 million reward (P10 million for Sison and P5 million for Rosal) by the Philippine National Police (PNP) came after Gloria Arroyo ordered the setting up of a P25 million fund to allegedly end extrajudicial murders in the country. The move came after her government came under fire at the annual meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva, Switzerland on April 29.

The bounty being offered by Arroyo and her ilk in the military and the police is not only ridiculous but also devious and malicious. They are making it appear as if the capture of two leading cadres will solve the spate of extrajudicial killings in the country. The ruling regime is desperately shifting the blame to the revolutionary movement to cover up Arroyo and her fascist ilks' responsibility for the killings while trying to make it appear as if they are doing something to end them.

In a UNHRC meeting on April 24-29 attended by Gen. Eduardo Ermita, Atty. Leila de Lima of the Commission on Human Rights and Marie Hilao-Enriquez of Karapatan and torture victims Pastor Berlin Guerrero and Raymond Manalo, UN Special Rapporteur Prof. Philip Alston in his 16-page report pointed out Arroyo's command responsibili-

ty for the continuing political killings in the country. This was a followup of his previous reports in February 2007 and 2008. Alston also expressed concern over the entry into Congress of Gen. Jovito Palparan, a primary suspect in many political killings.



The military has blamed Sison and Rosal for the assassination in 1998 of Nelson Nadura, a former member of the revolutionary movement who later became a broadcaster in Masbate. It is a well-known fact in Masbate that Nadura was ordered killed by a politician whom he often criticized in his radio program.

The putting up of reward money for the capture of Sison and Rosal is also in violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) which was forged in previous peace negotiations between the NDFP and the reactionary government.

This new scheme by the regime serves as another obstacle to the resumption of the long-stalled peace talks. **AB**

## Military imposes food blockade in Maguindanao



Internal refugees in Maguindanao have been going hungry after the military imposed a food blockade. The order was issued by Col. Menardo Geslani, chief of the Philippine Army's 601st IBde based in Maguindanao. The military has been blocking food donations from humanitarian organizations since April, reported a village official.

Even the International Committee of

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*"Food blockade..." from page 6*

the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) are complaining that they have been finding it very difficult to bring in food and provide free services to evacuation centers.

Affected by the food blockade are evacuees from the towns of Datu Piang, Talayan, Datu Saudi Ampatuan and Guindulungan. Barangay officials said that they were being prevented from accepting food because Gerlani suspects that the relief goods only go to the relatives of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) members.

The internal refugees also complained that soldiers have been setting up camp in evacuation centers and using donated canvas sheets as tents as well as other relief goods intended for the displaced victims.

Meanwhile, Stephen Anderson, UNWFP Country Director and Representative in the Philippines has expressed concern for the growing number of involuntarily displaced individuals in Mindanao as a result of the relentless military offensives against MILF Commander Ameril Umbra Kato. Up to 45,000 families have been displaced from their homes in Central Mindanao, according to the latest UNWFP report.

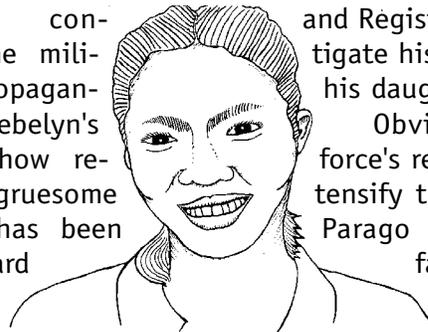
On May 13, up to 10,964 families were reported to have fled from several towns in Maguindanao and Cotabato. In Maguindanao, there were 53,335 evacuees from Barangays Ganta, Bakat, Inaladan and Pendetin in Datu Saudi Ampatuan and Barangays Dasawao and Tee in Datu Piang. Added to this were 296 families from Midsayap, Cotabato. **AB**

## Task Force absolves Rebelyn's murderers

The Merardo Arce Command of the New People's Army (MAC-NPA) condemned the bogus investigation conducted by Task Force (TF) Rebelyn which was composed of the Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and other government agencies. The task force was created allegedly to identify the perpetrators in the abduction, rape, torture and killing of Rebelyn Pitao, daughter of Red commander Leoncio "Ka Parago" Pitao. The MAC-NPA said the task force had no other objective but to clear the AFP of all culpability and shift the blame to the revolutionary movement.

That TF Rebelyn cleared the suspected military elements on the flimsy excuse that it could find no witnesses is downright condemnable. The task force feigned helplessness after military intelligence agencies refused to surface the 13 primary suspects in the crime.

Even more condemnable was the military's malicious propaganda saying that Rebelyn's father was somehow responsible for the gruesome crime. The AFP has been spreading the canard that Rebelyn's murder was al-



legedly in retaliation for the killing of Roger Narvasa, a rebel returnee, in February in Paquibato. The fascist military has also been spreading rumors linking the revolutionary movement to the crime because of Ka Parago's alleged corruption. The task force has even ordered the Anti-Money Laundering Council and Registry of Deeds to investigate his wife Evangeline and his daughter Rio.

Obviously, the task force's real objective is to intensify the persecution of Ka Parago and his remaining family members using no less than Rebelyn's murder. **AB**

## Demolitions for South Rail project

More than a thousand families were forced to evacuate and were left homeless after a series of demolitions from April 27 to 29 along the railroad tracks in Muntinlupa City to make way for the South Rail Project.

The Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (KADAMAY)-Muntinlupa said the demolition covered the city's entire first district and included houses near the railroad tracks along Cupang, Sucat and Alabang. The demolition was carried out by a 600-man demolition team from the National Housing Authority, Philippine National Railway (PNR), PNP and SWAT-Muntinlupa.

KADAMAY-Muntinlupa assailed the South Rail Project, saying it would result in homelessness and joblessness among the people and would benefit only foreign investors and the Arroyo regime. It called for an immediate stop to the demolitions and the upliftment of livelihoods for people residing along the railroad tracks. **AB**

# Fascist violence in Southern Mindanao

The International Solidarity Mission (ISM) released the results of its investigation conducted in Southern Mindanao from May 14-19. The ISM was composed of 350 progressive lawmakers, peace workers, human rights defenders, students and health professionals from the Philippines, Australia, South Korea, Argentina, Malaysia and Germany.

In particular, the ISM focused on the towns of New Bataan, Compostela and Monkayo in Compostela Valley; Paquibato District in Davao City; Sta. Cruz town in Davao del Sur; and Tampakan, South Cotabato. These areas are currently bearing the brunt of military operations of the AFP's 10th ID under the Eastern Mindanao Command.

The delegates interviewed the relatives of victims of extrajudicial killings as well as actual victims of torture, beating, forced evacuation and various forms of suppression of civil and political rights.

The ISM found that there were as many as 100 victims of extrajudicial killings in the region. In all of Southern Mindanao, there was an average of 100 people each day who were victims of various human rights vio-

lations in a span of 11 months last year.

The ISM also acquired a copy of the AFP's "order of battle" in Southern Mindanao which contained the names of 110 mass leaders and activists, church people, and various other personalities.

Progressive organizations such as BAYAN, Bayan Muna, Kilusang Mayo Uno and Samakana were also alleged to be members of the Communist Party's "united front" and targeted for military attack by the AFP.

A Power Point presentation of the 10th ID titled "Holistic Approach in Dismantling Guerrilla Front Committees" called for the formation in urban areas of Special

Counter-Urban Terrorist (SCOUT) Teams comprised of elements of the police, the Military Intelligence Battalion and the Military Intelligence Group 11.

The ISM drew a connection to the alarming increase in the number of extrajudicial killings in the cities and town centers of Southern Mindanao. In particular, the ISM related this to the killings of Rebelyn and Danilo Pitao, Celso Pojas, Danilo Cualbar, Ludenio Monzon, Maximo Baranda and Eliezer Billanes.

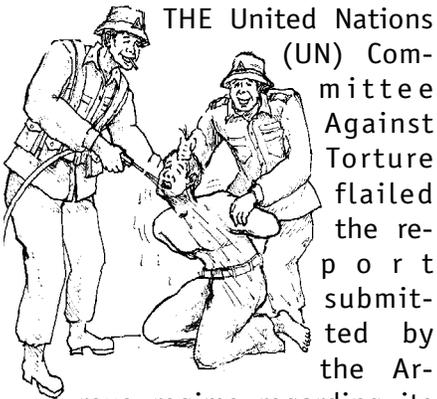
An attempt on the life of union leader Liza Alo last May 16 in Compostela Valley while the ISM was conducting its investigation in the area points to the audacity of the death squads in Compostela Valley which, the ISM observed, most likely enjoyed the backing of the 66th IB and 1001st Brigade of the 10th ID.

The ISM assailed the 10th ID for its continued use of military elements, intelligence operatives, local goons and other armed elements and military assets in the course of its counterinsurgency operations. As a result, said the ISM, there will be more civilian victims, more extrajudicial killings, and an increase in other cases of human rights violations.

The ISM demanded, among others, the pullout of AFP troops from areas densely populated with civilians; the dismissal of officials of the 10th ID in charge of areas where there is a high concentration of extrajudicial killings; and an end to the vilification campaign against leaders and members of progressive organizations. **AB**



## UN berates Arroyo regime



THE United Nations (UN) Committee Against Torture flailed the report submitted by the Arroyo regime regarding its compliance with the international agreement against torture. According to the UN, aside from the report being 16 years late, the Arroyo regime failed to comply with the 1984 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment because of its delay in filing cases against torture and other brutal acts.

The UN Committee Against Torture discussed the Philippines' report at a conference in Geneva, Switzerland from April 27 to May 15. At this conference, the committee expressed great concern over the reigning "culture of impunity" where the police, military and other high-ranking government officials who planned, ordered or committed torture and other human rights violations go unpunished.

The committee also pointed out the harassment and violence against human rights defenders. It likewise stated that national minorities in Mindanao and the Cordillera, worker and peasant activists as well as members of the media, medical workers and church people have also been victims of ever-worsening human rights violations. **AB**



## Guerrillas seize 12 firearms in Camarines Sur raid

The New People's Army (NPA) successfully attacked a detachment of the 22nd IB and CAFGU in Barangay Lubigan Jr., Sipocot, Camarines Sur last May 19. The guerrillas overran the detachment after the soldiers and CAFGU members fled.

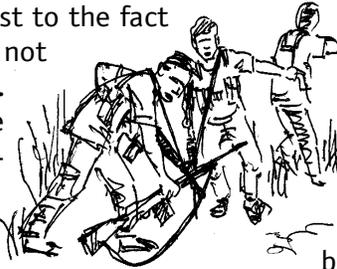
According to initial reports, the Red fighters seized six carbines, four garands and two M14s from the detachment.

NDF-Bicol spokesperson Ka Greg Bañares refuted the AFP's earlier report that six guerrillas were killed in the firefight. He said that the local police could attest to the fact that the NPA did not suffer any casualties.

Meanwhile, five civilians were illegally arrested by soldiers during their pursuit opera-

tions. The victims are Michael Mayores, Ramon Andes, Henry Lopez, Alfredo Lopez and Emil Luzon who are all from Sitio Maguimoay, Calabnigan.

In Palawan, two soldiers from the Marine Battalion Landing Team 9 were killed when they were ambushed by an NPA team in Barangay Kemdeng, San Vicente on May 15. The two Philippine Marine elements were aboard a motorcycle when they were ambushed at around 5 p.m. **AB**



## NPA frees POW in Compostela Valley

The New People's Army (NPA) effected the safe and orderly release last May 11 of prisoner of war Pvt. Ronnie Trinidad (Serial Number 972291) from the 66th IB's Charlie Company. According to the NPA Merardo Arce Command in Southern Mindanao Region (MAC-SMR), an NPA custodial unit handed the soldier over to religious leaders in Barangay Ngan, Compostela Valley.

The revolutionary forces showed their political power in the unilateral release of Trinidad on humanitarian grounds. The soldier was arrested at a checkpoint manned by combined forces of the Front 25 Operations Command and the 5th Pulang Bagani Coy of the NPA in Sitio Bongloy, Barangay Pagsabangan, New Bataan in Compostela Valley last April 28. Trinidad was treated well in accordance with the provisions of International Humanitarian Law, said Ka Rigoberto Sanchez, MAC-SMR spokesperson.

Trinidad was investigated for his possible involvement in crimes against the people in connection with the implementation of the US-Arroyo regime's Oplan Bantay Laya 2. According to MAC-SMR, though Trinidad is a part of the regime's fascist machinery under the 66th IB-1001st Brigade of the 10th Infantry Division of the AFP, it was determined that the prisoner himself had no personal responsibility in committing crimes against the people. Trinidad has been with the AFP for only two months. **AB**

# People's struggle against destructive mining in Davao Oriental

**M**ass actions have been spreading throughout Davao Oriental against the influx of huge mining corporations in the province. The people are fighting the environmental destruction that always goes hand in hand with the operations of big mining companies and condemn the latter's underhanded attempts to operate in the area.

The people of Davao Oriental are aware that they need to rely on their own strength because they cannot depend on the corrupt and reactionary US-Arroyo regime. Last May 13, for example, Rep. Ignacio Arroyo, chair of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources blocked the investigation of reports of landgrabbing by BHP Billiton and Asiaticus Management Corporation (Amcor) of the ancestral lands of the Mandaya tribe in Mati, capital of Davao Oriental.

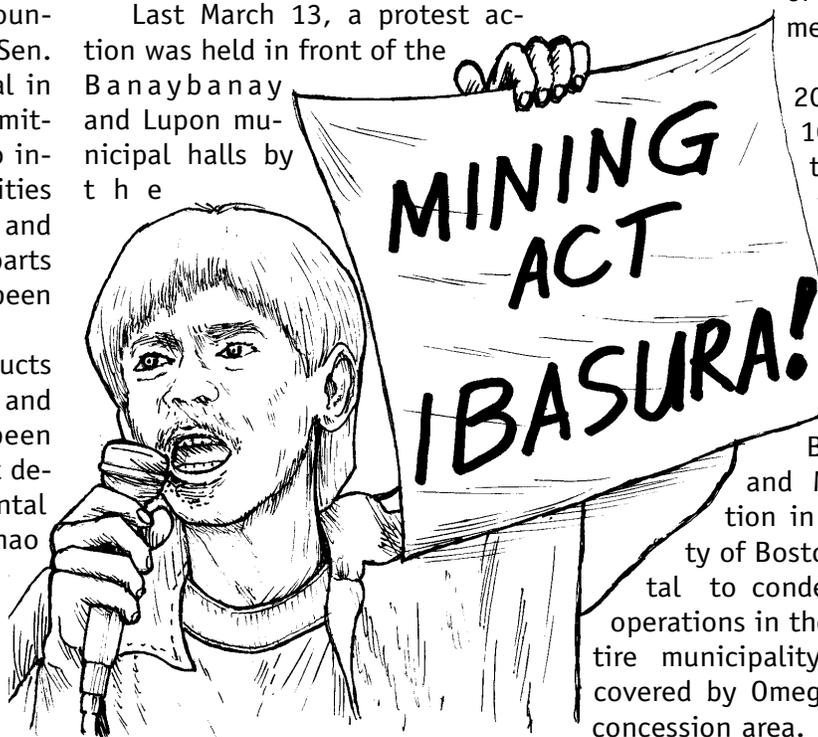
The investigation was the result of Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño's efforts in pursuing the case since last year. It was also being conducted as the House counterpart of a resolution filed by Sen. Ana Consuelo "Jamby" Madrigal in 2008 directing the Senate Committee on Cultural Communities to investigate the exploration activities of these corporations in lands and waters in Mati City and other parts of Davao Oriental that have been declared protected areas.

These resolutions are products of successive mass actions and campaigns that have been launched by the people against destructive mining in Davao Oriental and the entire island of Mindanao since 2007.

In November 2008, residents of Barrio Macambol in Mati in conjunction with the Catholic church and environ-

mentalist groups exposed the anomalous steps taken by BHP Billiton-Amcors to push their billion-dollar mining project. Among others, BHP Billiton-Amcors bribed the local government to give its consent to the mining and rounded up fake Lumad leaders to give their permission. The company also bribed officials of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to manipulate the Lumad into giving their consent even if no consultations had been held with the minorities that will be affected by the mining operation. The NCIP is the agency that is supposed to protect the interests of Lumad communities.

Last March 13, a protest action was held in front of the Banaybanay and Lupon municipal halls by the



Save Sumlog River Alliance (Sasura), which is composed of residents and environmental support groups. Sasura exposed the entry of mining corporations in their area and called on Gov. Corazon Malanyaon to stop the mining operations in Sitios Anogkot and Tabon in Barangay Marayag, a remote barrio of Lupon municipality. The alliance also demanded that the governor declare as a protected area the 44,000-hectare watershed near the Sumulog and Tag-Ugpò Rivers. Their demands are based on the results of an investigation launched last March 10-12 in the mining areas of Barangay Marayag, where it was discovered that mine tailings from tunnels were being dumped in the streams. The practice has led to low water levels and the destruction of the entire river.

Before this, some 200 Lumad launched a protest action in front of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Davao City on March 2 and called for the junking of the Mining Act of 1995 which has only worsened their plight. They timed their protest with the 14th anniversary of the law's implementation.

In December 2007, more than 100 members of the Mandaya tribe and peasants barricaded the excavation areas of Omega Gold Mining Company and Boston Mineral and Mining Corporation in the municipality of Boston, Davao Oriental to condemn the mining operations in their area. The entire municipality of Boston is covered by Omega Gold Mining's concession area. **AB**



Nepal

# New political crisis

**A** new political crisis is brewing in Nepal after the resignation as prime minister of Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda of the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) and the party's withdrawal from the coalition government on May 4.

Prachanda resigned after President Ram Baran Yadav rejected the dismissal of Gen. Rookmangud Katawal as chief of the Nepal Army (NA). The prime minister had fired Katawal for countermanning the government's order to stop the recruitment of additional soldiers and for hindering the integration into the NA of 19,000 troops of the revolutionary People's Liberation Army in accordance with the peace agreement signed in 2006.

The CPN-M protested Katawal's recruitment of more than 3,000 new soldiers and the reinstatement of eight expelled generals without consulting the Defense Ministry.

President Yadav's interference in the steps taken by Prachanda's government has split the coalition that brought down the old monarchy and presages a new series of political battles.

The CPN-M and the Nepali people have been launching successive protest actions against what they called Yadav's treason. Last May 6, hundreds of Maoist women marched towards the president's residence to demand the dismissal of General Katawal. Some 1,000 CPN-M supporters also marched to the capital of Kathmandu and called for Yadav's resignation.

Last May 11, clashes took place in Kathmandu between police and about 400 Maoists calling for Yadav's ouster and the

cancellation of what they called the president's "constitutional coup d'état."

The Nepali parliament is having difficulty forming a new government after the CPN-M's withdrawal from the coalition as the party constitutes 40% of the entire assembly. May 9 was the deadline for President Yadav to hopefully form a new government but until now there have been no agreements forged despite talks among the other various parties.

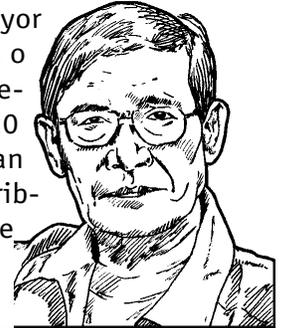
The breakup of the coalition government is also delaying the drafting of a constitution for the Nepali republic. Prachanda said that widespread consensus is needed to complete the peace process and write the constitution. Many are now worried that the heated political situation will lead to the collapse of the peace agreement and reignite civil war in the country. **AB**



Mayo 20

# "Beltran Day"

**M**anila Mayor Alfredo Lim has declared May 20 as "Beltran Day" to pay tribute to the late Ka Crispin "Ka Bel" Beltran of the Anakpawis party. A bust of Ka Bel will also be erected at Plaza Miranda.



Lim said he wanted to encourage the people to launch activities to remember the important lessons left by Ka Bel, an esteemed labor leader.

Ka Bel died on May 20, 2008 at the age of 75 while repairing the roof of their home.

Meanwhile, militant peasant groups paid tribute to Ka Bel by declaring him "Filipino of the Century".

Militant workers' groups also launched walkouts from their factories. Members of the Kilusang Mayo Uno held a picket at Plaza Miranda. Videos were also shown and discussions launched by various communities to commemorate the first death anniversary of Ka Bel.

Rep. Joel Maglunsod of Anakpawis stated, "Ka Bel fought for genuine social change that will liberate the toiling masses from the bondage of chronic unemployment, hunger and poverty. All the fiery speeches he delivered during his time called for national industrialization and genuine agrarian reform. We must learn from his example and do our best to fight for genuine social change."

## **Ka Satur files bill against harassment of activists**

BAYAN Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo has filed a bill that will give protection to critics of the government against the filing of trumped-up charges clearly meant to harass them.

House Bill 5840 otherwise known as the anti-SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) bill will hopefully stop the legal harassment, threats and repression of the government's critics.

House Bill 5840's objective is to stop the abuse of the judicial system by prohibiting the filing of fabricated cases against activists and other anti-government forces. The bill likewise calls for the payment of damages to victims and for complainants to pay for the litigation expenses such as lawyer's fees and more.

SLAPP is a state mechanism to suppress the rights of the people to launch protest actions and petition the government for redress of grievances.

Big corporations, politicians, landlords and capitalists also use SLAPP against peasants, the urban poor, journalists, students and ordinary citizens who fight for their rights.

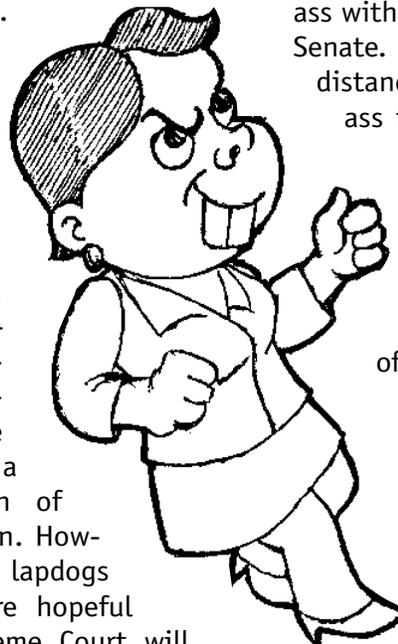
## **Arroyo desperately wants to become prime minister**

GLORIA Arroyo's plan to run for congresswoman in Pampanga in 2010 is an "open secret." According to Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, president of the United Opposition (UNO), all government officials down to ordinary tricycle drivers in the second district of Pampanga are already preparing for Arroyo's candidacy in 2010. Some signs of Arroyo's electoral plans are her weekly visits to the district and the distribution of canned goods and other food items to the residents.

Arroyo is desperate to run for congresswoman so that she can be appointed prime minister and remain in power. An important objective of this maneuver is to evade the numerous cases that will be filed against her the minute she is no longer president and loses her presidential immunity. It will be remembered that Gloria Arroyo has been implicated in numerous anomalies in government projects like the NBN-ZTE telecom deal, fertilizer fund scam, North Rail Project, Ginintuang Masaganang Ani and many more.

But before Gloria Arroyo can fulfill her desire to become prime minister, the system of government must first undergo a shift from presidential to parliamentary. This can only be done through charter

change. Presently, Congress is already maneuvering to change the constitution through a constituent assembly (con-ass) even without the presence of the Senate. This is a clear violation of the constitution. However, Arroyo's lapdogs in Congress are hopeful that the Supreme Court will uphold the proposed con-ass because the majority of its justices are now Arroyo appointees.



Already calendared for deliberation are HR 1109 filed by Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte and HR 737 filed by House Speaker Prospero Nograles. Their plan is to railroad con-ass before the current session of Congress ends on June 3. Both resolutions are pushing for constitutional change through con-ass without the participation of the Senate. Villafuerte has supposedly distanced himself from the con-ass issue but this is merely all for show.

According to Nograles, Congress will discuss these resolutions even if it has to meet until the wee hours of the morning.

If con-ass does not push through before the 2010 elections, it will still be pursued immediately after the polls. It is Arroyo herself who will initiate this as she will continue to hold power as representative of the second district of Pampanga and as the Speaker of the House.