



EDITORIAL

End martial law and plunder in Mindanao and the entire country

The people of Mindanao are tired of living under military rule and state terrorism. For more than three years, they suffer everyday from killings, arrest and detention, intimidation, surveillance and other military abuses. They are denied of their rights to express dissent or protest against the suffering and exploitation they experience. Anyone who speaks is immediately tagged as a communist and is suppressed.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana's statement that the Mindanao martial law could already be lifted is plain hogwash. Lorenzana only said this because he knows that even without martial law, the foundations and system they have built for their military rule, not only in Mindanao, but across the whole country will continue to exist. Without dismantling these, martial law will carry on in essence despite being lifted explicitly.

To end the military rule in Mindanao, the people demand to implement the following democratic measures:

(a) allow the several thousands of Marawi City residents to return to their homes and lands, and indemnify them over damages caused by the massive bombing of the city in 2017;

(b) withdraw all abusive military units camping in the middle of

"End..." continued on page 2

NPA-Eastern Samar ambushes 14th IB

THE NEW PEOPLE'S Army (NPA)-Eastern Samar ambushed a unit of the 14th IB at Sitio Bangon, Barangay Pinanag-an, Borongan City on November 11, 5 p.m. The said enemy troopers were blasted with a command-detonated explosive.

Initial reports indicate that at least six soldiers were killed, including three officials. Additionally, at least 20 were wounded during the blast.

The 14th IB is notorious for perpetrating human rights abuses, particularly against children. In 2011, two minors, both children of peasants, who were on their way to their farm to gather copra were illegally

"NPA..." continued on page 3

"End...", from page 1

communities under the guise of "peace and development;"

(c) dismantle all CAFGU units and paramilitary groups along with their detachments in and around barrios;

(d) stop the arbitrary tagging of civilians as "rebels" to force them to "surrender" even though no cases are filed against them;

(e) stop aerial bombing and strafing which endangers the lives of residents in farms and mountains;

(g) end "Red tagging" or the practice of declaring organizations and activists as "communist fronts" or "NPA recruiters" which is being used to subject them to military surveillance and other repressive measures;

(h) release all political prisoners and end the scheme of filing of trumped up criminal charges and planting of evidences.

Beyond Mindanao, Duterte's martial law and tyranny is implemented across the country through

Executive Order 70 (EO 70) and his so called "counter-insurgency" program to end the armed revolution in the country. These are on top of the Memorandum Order 32 (MO 32) which placed Samar, Negros and Bicol under military rule.

Through EO 70, Duterte placed the whole Philippines under the control of the so called National Task Force (NTF) which is led by Duterte and dominated by his military officials. The NTF has regional and provincial offices which subsumed various agencies of the civilian bureaucracy to serve its "counter-insurgency" interest.

The AFP interferes and sets the programs of all government agencies. It also encroaches in economic programs and social services which actually are not military-related. Newly elected local government officials are rendered powerless because of AFP surveillance. The congress and senate are but ornamental. Those who do not abide by the program set by the AFP and NTF are put into a tight

situation as they are tagged as NPA "supporters" or implicated in drug syndicates.

Military rule is worst in farms and mountains as the direct presence of fascist military troops in barrios and communities are maintained. Barangay officials are coerced to serve as their subordinates; those who refuse to follow are harassed or suppressed. Many were killed. In Mindanao, several bogus leaders were appointed by the AFP as "datu" (chieftain) to deceive and divide the Lumad masses.

At least 549 AFP and CAFGU troops are currently operating in various barrios across four Mindanao regions: 217 in Southern Mindanao (in 2018), 139 in North Central Mindanao (including 105 CAFGU detachments), more than 100 in Northeast Mindanao (excluding SCAA detachments put up by mining companies); and 93 in Far South Mindanao. Majority of these are situated in areas that are being targeted as sites for mining operations and destructive infrastructure projects. In Southern Mindanao, 64% or 137 CAFGU detachments are operating in 43 towns and cities with mining companies currently or planning to expand their operations.

The imposition of de facto martial law in the face of EO 70 across the country, and especially the outright implementation of martial law in Mindanao, are closely linked to advancing the economic interests of big multinational corporations and the local bourgeois comprador and landlord counterparts.

Fascism is needed to suppress all forms of dissent against the entry of destructive mining, expansion of palm oil, rubber, pineapple and other plantations, tourism projects, and energy and other infrastructures that are funded by foreigners. Since 2017, the suppression and military operations escalated in ar-

"End...", continued on page 3



Vol L No. 22 | November 21, 2019

Ang Ang Bayan is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray and English.

Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news items.

Readers are encouraged to send feedback and recommendations for improving our newspaper.

[instagram.com/prwcnewsroom](https://www.instagram.com/prwcnewsroom)

[@prwc_info](https://twitter.com/prwc_info)

cppinformationbureau@gmail.com

Contents

Editorial: End martial law and plunder in Mindanao and the entire country	1
NPA ambushes 14th IB	1
Anomalous SEA Games spendings	3
CSP in Masbate	4
Maranaos oppose new military camp	5
Yolanda's 6th year	5
AFP kills barangay captain	6
PNP harassment vs. Ibon Foundation, Altermidya	6
Regent strike dispersal	6
Delta Serra	7
Ampatuan massacre	7
Tribute to judge in Cordillera	7
US-orchestrated coup in Bolivia	8

Ang Bayan is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines

"End..." from page 2

areas targeted for mining operations in Andap Valley, as well as palm oil plantations in the Pantaron mountain range along the border of Davao del Norte and Bukidnon, and the plan to expand plantation and logging operations in the Daguma mountain range. Big military operations are also part of the plan for the construction of the Chico River Pump Irrigation Project in Kalinga, the Kaliwa Dam in Rizal and Laguna, the Pulangi 5 Hydro Power Project in Bukidnon, and also various eco-tourism projects in Masbate.

Under de facto martial law, corruption is worst and concentrated under Duterte and his AFP and military officials in form of bribes from big companies, kickbacks from infrastructure projects, and pocketing of funds allocated for the military operations of soldiers and paramilitaries.

In plain words, the US-Duterte regime's martial law and fascism is correlated with foreign plunder of Philippine patrimony and environment, corruption, exploitation of the toiling masses, and the worsening poverty of the people.

The Filipino people must continue to strengthen their struggle for democracy and defend their patrimony from foreign plunder. They have to wage this along their fight against the US-Duterte regime's tyranny and fascism.

Assiduously expose and oppose multinational companies that extract huge amounts of money by plundering our country and destroying the environment. Unite and militantly fight these companies that grab the ancestral lands of national minorities and the farmlands of peasants. Expose Duterte's bogus land reform program, which he is vaunting of, as a scheme to fast track the use-conversion and grabbing of peasant lands.

The New People's Army (NPA) is tasked to defend the social and economic interests of the Filipino people against foreign capitalist plunderers. The NPA must strictly implement the policies of the revolutionary movement to defend the environment and the livelihood of the masses, and hold destructive mining companies and big local capitalists accountable. The revolutionary movement must tirelessly rouse and mobilize the broad peasant masses to advance the struggles for their right to land and the revolutionary program for genuine land reform.

Strengthen the clamor to end martial law, EO 70, MO 32 and crush the foundation of Duterte's fascist rule. Forge the broadest unity among the Filipino people to advance the struggle for democracy, the fight against military rule, and end Duterte's tyranny and terrorism. AB

Anomalous SEA Games spendings

THE EXTRAVAGANT COST for the construction of a monument for the 30th Southeast Asian (SEA) Games which will kick off on November 30 was widely criticized.

The monument, satirically called "Cayetano's cauldron" costs about P50 million. It was named after Rep. Allan Peter Cayetano, chairperson of the Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee.

The P50-million budget used for the construction of the monument is part of the P11-billion loan from a Malaysian bank for the construction of new sports facilities in New Clark City. Among the provisions of the loan contract is a P2.5-billion sovereign guarantee which will benefit the company. The company will also get 50% of the income generated from facilities in the next 25 years. AB

"NPA..." from page 1

held by 14th IB troopers. The two were also photographed and subjected to interrogation. The victims were traumatized due to the incident. The soldiers also stole their farming tools.

In 2006, a young man and two minors were illegally arrested by the same battalion and were presented as NPA fighters.

The 14th IB also masterminded a corruption scheme through the anomalous mass surrender of civilians in Eastern Samar. On November 18, it coerced 16 farmers to attend a meeting at the provincial capitol in Borongan City who were later presented as "NPA surrenderees." The battalion also employed this scheme in December 2018 against 27 peasants from Barangay Concepcion, Paranas.

In Panay, the NPA reported that 13 troopers of the 61st IB and CAFGU were killed while four others were wounded in successive military offensives mounted by Red fighters.

The NPA mounted a harassment operation against the 61st IB on September 20 in Barangay Ungyod, Miagao, Iloilo, and against a CAFGU detachment in Dagami, Maasin on September 23. On September 25, the security guards of Century Peak Hydrodam in Igcabugao, Igbaras were also harassed.

The revolutionary movement and the people offer their highest tribute to Ka Denden and Ka Aden who were martyred during the said offensives. AB

CSP: The face of the "whole-of-nation" approach in Masbate

In Masbate, the "whole-of-nation" approach, the US-Duterte regime's counterinsurgency program, is characterized by the military occupation of civilian communities under the guise of the Community Support Program (CSP) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The three major islands of the Masbate province, Ticao, Burias and Masbate, have been under de facto martial law since Rodrigo Duterte's issuance of Memorandum Order (MO) 32. Duterte further consolidated the military rule in the island by issuing the Executive Order 70 which created the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC).

As per the AFP's design, the deployment of combat units for the CSP is in support for Oplan Kapayapaan which purportedly aims to "clean" areas that it alleges as bases or potential bases of the New People's Army. These are also called COPD (community organizing for peace and development) operations wherein local government units and agencies are tapped by the AFP for its counterinsurgency program. Under EO 70, the AFP fully subsumed the civilian bureaucracy and its structures

through the creation of local task forces against communism.

The CSP primarily aims to evict residents from areas targeted as sites for businesses of both local and foreign capitalists. A large portion of these are agricultural lands cultivated by poor peasants and ancestral lands of national minorities.

Bogus land reform, anti-people projects

In January 2018, Duterte ordered the distribution of lands in Masbate to purportedly counter the growing strength and influence of the NPA in the island. In truth, Duterte plans to have these lands, which have long been tilled by peasants, titled in order to award these to his favored individuals. This scheme will ease the process of selling lands to real estate developers who intend to invest in tourism projects, export processing zones

and mining companies.

Simultaneous with the implementation of bogus land reform, the Duterte regime is peddling its projects under the National Development Plan 2018-2022. Among these is a contract for the Masbate Park tourism project which was awarded to Chinese capitalist Huang Rolon. These also include the Masbate International Economic Zone (MIEZ) which will cater to foreign capitalists. In peddling these, Duterte is making it appear that such projects will generate jobs in the province and help the livelihood of residents.

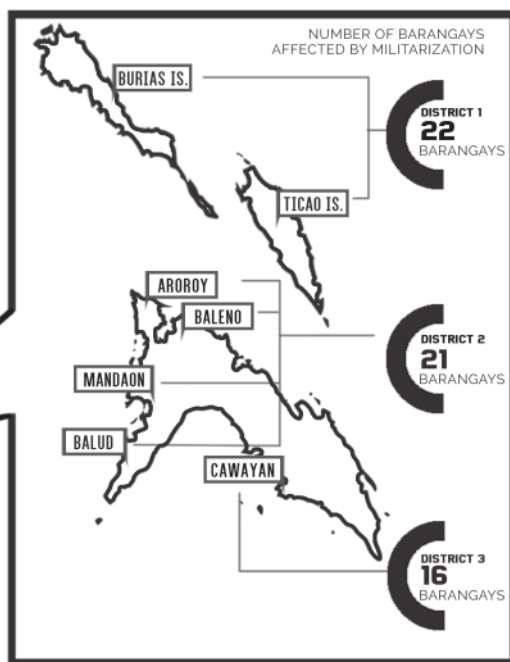
However, Ma. Roja Banua, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front-Bicol, said that the promised "biggest ecotourism project" which will purportedly benefit the town of Dimasalang and Masbateño masses is a big fat lie.

She said that "the administration is peddling its grandiose Masbate Park and Masbate International Economic Zone in an attempt to woo Masbateños, and make it appear that the regime has concrete plans to address poverty in the province. By spewing these enticing and deceptive promises, the regime aims to make Masbateños shun their support for the revolutionary movement in the province.

On top of the Masbate Park and MIEZ, there are also other massive projects in the province such as the Masbate International Tourism Enterprise and Special Economic Zone, a project of the Masbate Park and Land Development Corporation (MPark) in the towns of Palanas and Dimasalang, and Matibay Cement Factory and Coal Power Plant in Barangay Casabangan, Pio V. Corpus.

"CSP...", continued on page 5

MASBATE: FOCUS OF WORSENING MILITARIZATION IN BICOL REGION



100,000 Maranaos oppose creation of new military camp

Marawi and Lanao del Sur residents filed a petition at the Malacañang on November 15 to oppose the planned creation of a new military camp in their city. Around 100,000 signed the said petition. The camp will be constructed in Barangay Kapantaran, one of the 24 barangays that were most ravaged by Armed Forces of the Philippines bombings in 2017.

The petitioners said that the new camp will have an adverse political and social effect. They stated that the presence of soldiers in their city is against their culture and religion and will only sow fear among residents. They asserted that the Maranao identity is dependent on Marawi and that the creation of a camp will affect the future generations of Maranaos.

Contrary to the petition, Rodrigo Duterte signed Memorandum Order 41, also on November 15, and ordered the creation of a committee that will take charge of conducting "studies" on the creation of the said camp. Duterte issued the order almost two years after

inaugurating the target area in January 2018.

It has also been a year since the Department of National Defense was allocated a P51-million fund for the procurement of land properties in Kapantaran. Within two years, the value of the land in the area has increased from P100-P200 per square-meter to P1000-P2000 in 2018. Until today, the regime is still in the process of identifying the owner of the land.

The newly formed committee neither includes representatives from the local government of Marawi nor the residents. According to Moro Consensus Group, this violates their right to free prior and informed consent. AB

March in commemoration of Yolanda's 6th year

PROGRESSIVE ORGANIZATIONS, led by People Surge, marched to Tacloban last November 8 to commemorate the 6th year of the super typhoon Yolanda which devastated Eastern Visayas. The groups condemned the Duterte regime's neglect and his henchmen's brazen corruption of rehabilitation funds.

Relatedly, 400 members of the Coalition of Yolanda Survivors and Partners filed a petition at the Office of the Ombudsman in Tacloban last November 7 to demand a stop to the anomalous housing projects of the National Housing Authority in Eastern Samar. AB



"CSP...", from page 4

These projects exclude mining companies such as the Masbate Gold Project which has long been operating in eight barangays of Aroroy.

Killings, fake surrender and PNG

To railroad the delivery of these projects, the regime implemented a new wave of military occupation after the May midterm election. According to Ka Luz Del Mar, spokesperson of the NPA-Masbate (Jose Rapsing Command), the AFP and PNP heightened their operations in the province in order to declare Masbate as "conflict manageable" and "ready for development." Currently, CSP operations cover up to 59 barangays in nine towns of the province. (See infographic.)

The relentless military occupation resulted in more than 27 cases of political killings, 12 cases of frus-

trated killings, 302 cases of illegal arrest and detention, and 14 cases of abduction. More than 1,000 individuals were subjected to threats and other forms of intimidation. Soldiers also perpetrated indiscriminate strafing, aerial bombings, ransacking and hamletting. Because of this, more than 1,000 residents have been compelled to evacuate from their barrios.

Of Bicol's six provinces, the second highest number of political killings and other human rights abuses were recorded in Masbate, next to Sorsogon. According to Karapatan-Masbate, peasants, fisherfolks, drivers, municipal and barangay officials are severely affected and victimized. Soldiers and police operatives primarily target members of progressive organizations such as the Kilusang Mag-

bubukid ng Masbate (KMM), Masbate People's Organisation (MAPO) and the local offices of Karapatan and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan.

Similarly, the forced surrender of civilians either as sympathizers of Red fighters is a major aspect of the CSP in the province. The AFP implements the surrender campaign under the guise of the Enhanced Comprehensive Livelihood Integration Program (ECLIP). Data from the AFP indicate that about 539 civilians have "surrendered."

To hinder the strength of the mass and revolutionary movement, residents and local government officials are coerced to sign "persona non grata" declarations against the Communist Party of the Philippines, and even legal organizations that stand for the rights and livelihood of Masbateños. AB

AFP murders barangay captain in Masbate

Elements of the 2nd IB and PNP killed a barangay captain and six other civilians in Masbate during the first week of November. The captain was identified as Wolfert Dalanon of Barangay Libertad, Cawayan. He was gunned down by soldiers on November 6 in what soldiers claim as an encounter with the New People's Army (NPA).

Dalanon and four other civilians were falsely presented as NPA members. The two other victims were identified as Joan Versaga and Arnel Ortillano, both members of the Masbate People's Organization who were gunned down in separate incidents last November 1 and 2.

In Batuan, Bohol, Rolando Pataca, captain of Barangay Rizal was also intimidated by police and 47th IB elements. On November 7, state elements forcibly entered and illegally searched his residence. A week before this, Pataca helped in searching for and rescuing residents who were coerced by the military to serve as guide in their combat operations.

In Iloilo, police and military elements illegally arrested peasant leader Herman Allesa in Barangay Bolo, Maasin on November 10. Allesa was a former official of the Paghugpong sang mga Mangunguma sa Panay kag Guimaras (Pamanggas). He was accused of participating in a raid against police station in Maasin on June 2017.

In Montalban, Rizal, urban poor leader Lilibeth Gelith was arrested by the police last November 6. Lilibeth Gelith was charged with deprivation of property. Gelith was a leader of the Montalban Homeless Alliance, an urban poor alliance that demands the state for housing services.

In Davao, Hanimay Suazo, former secretary general of Karapatan-Southern Mindanao, was reported missing by her relatives last November 2. She was last seen riding a motorcycle on her way home after going to the cemetery. A month before this, Suazo reported the relentless surveillance against her and her family.

In Macalelon, Quezon, elements of the 85th IB besieged Barangay Malabahay on November 17. They trooped to the residence of peasant leader Eliseo Batarlo to coerce him again to surrender as an NPA member. The 83rd IB has been perpetrating various rights violations against residents of the said barangay since the early part of the year. Among the incidents that were documented were cases of interrogation, intimidation, illegal detention, coerced surrender and physical assault. AB

PNP attempts to enter Ibon Foundation and Altermidya offices

POLICE OPERATIVES ATTEMPTED to enter the offices of Ibon Foundation and Altermidya in Timog Avenue in Quezon City and the Philippine Collegian office, campus publication of the University of the Philippines-Diliman.

On November 7, officers of the National Capital Region Police Office called on the said offices prompting that they will be conducting an inspection at the Ibon Building wherein Altermidya and other legal and international organizations are based. Three men also attempted to forcibly enter the Philippine Collegian office on November 16, also purportedly to conduct an inspection.

According to Altermidya, the illegal entry of the said elements in their office can be considered an attack to press freedom.

On November 7, a journalist, identified as Dindo Generoso, was gunned down in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental. The victim was aboard his car, on the way to a radio station where he works, when he was shot. AB

PNP, goons disperse Regent Foods workers strike

THE POLICE AND goons of Regent Foods Corporation violently dispersed the strike of Regent Food Workers Union at its factories in Pasig City and Taguig on November 9. Twenty-four individuals were illegally arrested, including two members of the Defend Job Philippines and a tricycle driver who just passed by the picketline. They were charged with physical injury, and alarm and scandal among other cases. Many workers were injured during the dispersal.

The workers mounted their strike to oppose the harassment against their union and demand their right to regularization, especially those serving the company for several years already. The strike also aims to prevent the company from sneaking out its machines and closing down.

On November 15, 11 workers were released after Pasig City Mayor Vico Sotto had a dialogue with the company. Several others were released on November 18 after posting a bail of P8,500 per individual. AB

Establishing the people's government in Delta Serra

It was during the summer of 2014 when two platoons of the New People's Army (NPA) arrived at and converged in Delta Serra after several months of conducting strenuous expansion work. Delta Serra is a vast mountain range which connects four provinces in Mindanao. Most parts of the area have not yet been penetrated by the revolutionary movement in the past decades.



The two platoons started out separately in both ends of Delta Serra. After traveling for three months, the units have arrived at communities of various Lumad tribes, Moros and settlers who for the first time had the opportunity to interact with Red fighters. Residents warmly accepted the Red

fighters in their communities and participated lively in political discussions and researches. Residents bridged them to other communities and facilitated their safe passage to other areas.

The successful expansion journey of Red fighters served as seed in founding the people's government

in Delta Serra.

History and social conditions in Delta Serra

Distinct in the history of the Lumad and Moro masses in Delta Serra is their century-long and bloody struggle against various log-

"Establishing..." continued on page 8

Ampatuan Massacre: a decade of impunity

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of the Philippines (CPP) joined the Filipino people in commemorating last November 17 the 10th year anniversary of the Ampatuan massacre wherein 53 individuals were killed, mostly journalists. The Party said that the massacre is a manifestation of the rotten state of the political system in the country which is dominated by feudal landlords and warlords. They employ their armed goons to perpetuate their power, protect their businesses and criminal syndicates and suppress anyone who challenge their rule.

The party is one with the victims' families in their clamor for justice. For ten years now, the reactionary justice system has failed to decisively resolve the case. It has allowed the legal maneuvers of the Ampatuans to delay the criminal proceedings.

The same conditions which led to the Ampatuan massacre are present until today. Political dynasties still exist and so are their violent rivalries. The Duterte regime has worsened this by perpetrating killings and intimidation against the political opposition, its critics and members of democratic organizations.

In particular, Duterte is attacking the local media, especially practitioners who are critical of his fascist ambitions. Eighty-five harassment incidents against journalists and 14 killings have been documented since 2016. Even student journalists are subjected to harassment and intimidation by the state.

The Ampatuan massacre is considered the worst case of election-related violence in the country. It is also the worst case of media violence in the country and in the world.

AB

Progressives pay tribute to judge in Cordillera

HUMAN RIGHTS AND progressive organizations in Cordillera paid tribute to Judge Mario Anacleto Bañez during his wake last November 11. Bañez was gunned down in his car by several unidentified in Barangay Mameltac, San Fernando, La Union on November 6. He is the judge of the Regional Trial Court in San Fernando, La Union.

The Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera believes that Bañez was assassinated for standing by a fair and impartial judiciary. On September 4, she acquitted Rachel Mariano, a health worker who was illegally arrested and accused by the 8th IB of participating in an ambush by the New People's Army against a military unit in Quirino, Ilocos Sur on October 17.

During the hearing, Bañez upheld that the accused is an activist and that the military's allegations is not sufficient to convict Mariano. Four other individuals accused as communists were acquitted by Bañez.

Earlier, the AFP asked the Supreme Court to investigate judges who acquit those accused by the military as communists.

AB

US-orchestrated coup d'état in Bolivia



Progressive peoples and leaders across the world condemned the US-orchestrated coup d'état to oust Evo Morales as the elected president of Bolivia last on November 10. Morales voluntarily resigned amid violent demonstration spearheaded by his political opponents.

Morales decided to seek asylum in Mexico after goons ransacked his and his sister's houses. Earlier, Morales and his cabinet members received threats that they and their families will be killed.

Violence broke out after Morales' victory in the presidential election on October 20. He was elected for the fourth time after garnering 48% of the total number of votes. But instead of upholding

the result, his political opponents called for a massive demonstration. The oppositionists (mostly rightists) particularly target national minorities who comprise 60% of the total

"Bolivia..." continued on page 9

"Establishing..." from page 7

giving companies that grab and destroy their ancestral lands. In the past four decades, they suffered worse forms of oppression and exploitation from the armed goons of a large logging, mining and plantation company. This is owned by a powerful bourgeois comprador and landlord who also has a private army.

Comrades thoroughly explained that only through unity and waging a democratic revolution will they be able to address their land problems and poverty. This roused them to organize their ranks. They industriously participate in discussions and attend in political studies that are given by Red fighters. They enthusiastically accepted their role in politicizing and revolutionary organizing. The people of Delta Serra are likened to a forest with huge heaps of dried branches and leaves which will conflagrate in one instance.

Systematic and quick organizing

In analyzing the social conditions in and planning for the area, the leading Party committee decided to establish a front committee to effectively direct its expansion work. The committee devised a one-year plan to set the people's army

and the residents' objectives in its base, army and Party building work. Mass campaigns and the lines that would be carried in the said period were also set.

The committee promptly studied the terrain and devised possible maneuvers for the people's army. It continuously expanded and deepened its analysis to ensure that it is able to firmly understand the general and particular conditions in the area. It regularly holds study circles that is participated in by more and more individuals. It immediately established the organizing committees for the founding of the Rebolusyonaryong Organisasyon ng Lumad, Kabataang Makabayan and MAKIBAKA in the area, as well as squads of the people's militia. It actively gave medical services in communities and participated in the people's production activities. It held a discussion which was participated in by 70 tribal leaders from seven barangays.

Expansion work was conducted quickly with the help of local leaders, the militia and organized masses. They even reached communities and barangays in adjacent municipalities.

Newly elected leaders of the

mass movement played an active role in organizing. Because of this, revolutionary mass organizations, the people's militia and local Party branches continued to expand quickly. Later on, revolutionary committees were formed in the clusters of various barrios.

Strengthening the mass movement

In the early part of 2015, a historic mass action against a logging company was mounted in one of the communities in Delta Sierra. More than 300 residents mounted a barricade to oppose the demolition of their homes and the construction of an access road by the company.

The masses also mobilized against the expansion of a commercial plantation, and opposed the attempt of the company to bulldoze their farms. They also opposed the expansion of commercial timber plantations.

The participation of Delta Sierra residents in urban mass mobilizations is also notable. Thousands participate in large demonstrations even as their convoys were forcibly stopped several times by the reactionary local government and the fascists.

AB

local population in the country. On November 7, the oppositionists burned down the town hall of Vinto. They dragged Patricia Arce, mayor of the said town, through the streets. She was shamed in public and was coerced to sign a resignation letter. On the same day, the group attacked the 200,000-strong demonstration of peasant women in support for Morales. More than 10 of Morales' supporters were killed while 400 others were wounded in the said attacks. The US replaced Morales with Jeanine Añez, a candidate who garnered a meager 1.6% of the total number of votes in the election.

Role of the US

US and its allies played a big role in delivering the "regime change" in Bolivia. The coup against Morales is no different to the coup attempt against Venezuela Pres. Nicolas Maduro during the early part of the year. In Bolivia, the US particularly employed the National Endowment for Democracy, an agency which poses as a non-governmental organization (NGO) to fund the political opposition and incite its organizations to oust Morales. The opposition is composed of local oligarchs who challenged Morales' 14-year presidency.

The US also employed the Organisation of American States, a Washington-based institution, to reverse the election result. Even before completing the tally of votes, the organization along with US and European Union officials, that the election was "rigged." They demanded a nullification of results even as they failed to provide sufficient evidence to prove the alleged election fraud. They demanded a reelection, even as majority of inde-

pendent pollwatchers insist that the election was legitimate. To face the accusations, Morales called for a reelection. This, however, was unheeded by the US as it subverted the decision of the Bolivian people. It instead called for strikes and boycotts, majority of which ended in violence. Allies of his political opponents along with the police and military violently dispersed the peaceful protests in support for Morales.

An independent leader

Like Maduro, Morales has long been targeted by the US for his firm stance against the imperialist hegemony of the US in Latin America. In 2017, he declared that Bolivia is already free from the control of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Many of the biggest mass movements in Bolivia are against privatization of public resources, such as water, by imperialist companies.

He is known for his pro-people policies and for fighting against the local oligarchs. He frugally controls the resources of Bolivia. Among the policies he implemented to protect his country was the implementation of an 82% tax on lithium mining companies. Recently, he allowed Chinese mining companies to operate in the country. About 70% of the total lithium in the world is in Bolivia. Lithium is a mineral that is used in manufacturing batteries. Bolivia is also rich in hydrocarbon, a chemical compound that is a primary component of petroleum and natural gases.

Morales' regime saw an improvement in the quality of life in Bolivia, especially to that of farmers and national minorities. He immediately implemented extensive

land distribution to poor farmers when he first sat in power in 2006. More than 60 major indigenous communities, which comprise almost 3 million hectares of land, benefitted from the program which he dubbed an "agrarian revolution." Part of his programs were the construction of infrastructures in the countryside, such as access road, schools, hospital, and facilities for water and electricity. In 2017, even US institutions reported that the extreme poverty in Bolivia decreased by 43%. This was a result of Morales' additional 43% budget allocation for social services, and 88% for minimum wage.

International support

Hundreds of thousands of peoples condemned the US-orchestrated coup in Bolivia and expressed their support for Morales. They condemned the racist violence which the political opposition used against national minorities. For its part, the International League of Peoples' Struggles issued an open letter declaring "Peoples of the world for Evo." The organization said that the destabilization campaign against Evo aims to quell the revolutionary minorities struggle for self determination.

Academics, minorities and progressive organizations held a protest in front of the Oblation Statue at the University of the Philippines Diliman in Quezon City, in support for Morales and the people of Bolivia.

Hundreds of thousands of farmers also rallied in Guatemala in support of Morales. The peoples and independent leaders Venezuela, Cuba and Brazil also expressed their solidarity. AB