



EDITORIAL

## The Filipino youth must fight the fascist US-Duterte regime and demand an end to imperialist plunder and rape

*Message to the Kabataang Makabayan on the occasion of its 55th anniversary and 156th birth anniversary of Andres Bonifacio*

**T**he Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) extends warm militant greetings to the leadership and mass members of Kabataang Makabayan (KM) on the occasion of its 55th founding anniversary. We also mark the 156th birth anniversary of Filipino working-class hero Andres Bonifacio.

Kabataang Makabayan has played an important role in the different stages in the country's revolutionary history over more than five decades. Indeed, KM has proved itself as one of the Party's most reliable partners in waging the people's democratic revolution in the country.

Kabataang Makabayan worked alongside the Party during the early stage of Marxist-Leninist ideological struggles, rectification, organiza-

tional building, mass propaganda and mobilization and building the New People's Army (NPA). It assisted the Party in nationwide building and spreading the people's war across the archipelago. It played an important role in underground propaganda and organizing work among the youth and workers during the Marcos martial law years which would later reenergize the legal protest movement in the 1970s. It has persisted in the re-

volutionary underground as one of the stalwarts of the National Democratic Front (NDF) where it represents the interests of the Filipino youth and their demand for national democratic change.

Its membership of young activists and intellectuals continues to serve as a deep bench for training revolutionary proletarian cadres and recruitment of Party members. Over the past years, cadres from the ranks of KM have been deployed to various fields of revolutionary work. Most notably, many intellectuals and workers activists, are now in the NPA and serve as its

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political officers and unit commanders, working together with Red fighters and cadres from among the peasant and minority masses.

The Party considers KM as a crucial partner in the work of arousing, organizing and mobilizing the Filipino people. Under the open fascist tyranny and state terrorism of the US-Duterte regime, it is now being called upon to serve as one of the revolutionary core of the people's democratic resistance.

Kabataang Makabayan must seize the opportunity arising from rapidly worsening conditions in the country marked by lack of access to education, widespread youth joblessness, loss of hope and cultural degradation. They must rouse the Filipino youth in their tens of thousands.

The KM must do its utmost to carry out national democratic propaganda among the youth intellectuals and the toiling masses. It must dispel the fascist lies of the Duterte regime and expose imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat

capitalism as the basic ills that plague the Filipino people. It must teach about the continuing necessity of waging revolutionary armed struggle to end the backward, oppressive and exploitative semicolonial and semifeudal society.

The founding of KM was made to coincide with the birth of Andres Bonifacio who successfully led the Filipino people in waging armed revolution against Spanish colonialism. This was done so in order to underscore the patriotic content of the national democratic program, and which remains the key element in the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation.

Kabataang Makabayan must continue to carry out antiimperialist propaganda and raise the Filipino youth's patriotic fervor. Like Bonifacio, the current generation of young Filipinos must be at the forefront of the Filipino people's clamor for genuine national freedom.





The activists of Kabataang Makabayan must expose the link between foreign big corporate interests and the Duterte regime's

fascist onslaught and suppression campaign. They must expose the big mining companies, plantations, energy, tourism and other infrastructure projects, as well as foreign big banks who finance and benefit from Duterte's reign of terror. They must expose how the country's wealth and the toiling masses are being wringed by the superprofit extracting operations of big foreign monopoly capitalists and their local big bourgeois comprador partners. They must expose how foreign big corporations and big landlords are dispossessing the peasant masses of their agricultural and ancestral lands. They must expose the fakery of Duterte's land reform declarations which merely aim to facilitate the grabbing of lands from the peasants.

Activists of KM must unite the people and mobilize them to demand a stop to the plunder of the country's patrimony and environment, and the rape of our mountains, rivers and seas. They must unite with the broad masses in demanding a stop to all foreign big mining operations, plantations and corruption-laden infrastructure projects. They must expose US military intervention and military presence and how it directs the AFP and PNP in counterinsurgency operations to suppress the patriotic and democratic forces in the country.

Kabataang Makabayan and the student and youth movement must further invigorate the national democratic propaganda movement. It must plan to reproduce the Party's newspaper Ang Bayan and its own Kalayaan in the tens of thousands and carry these to the biggest possible number of people in school campuses, factories, urban communities and rural villages. Kabataang Makabayan and its chapters must regularly issue statements on burning national and local issues and print them for mass distribution. The KM must lead

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thousands upon thousands of group discussions and study meetings, using both open and clandestine methods. It must institutionalize other forms of mass propaganda that reach out to the masses such as weekly film showing, travelling cultural shows and others.

Its activists must continue to help in further invigorating the national democratic cultural movement by producing poems, songs,



visual and graphic art, street performances, video productions and others. The activists of KM must use social media as a tool for propagating the national democratic line while fighting its pernicious ultrademocratic pull which promotes individualism and disorganization.

The activists and cadres of KM must study, uphold and inculcate Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and apply and further improve it to the various fields of revolutionary work they are involved in, including carrying out social investigation among the masses. They must publish the results of their studies as a way of propagating and promoting Marxism-Leninism. They must also encourage the scholars among their ranks to apply Marxism-Leninism in their fields of academic work as a

way of fighting the bourgeois and pettybourgeois reformist ideological influences hiding behind such labels as postmodernism and others.

Across the world, the youth are again proving themselves a great force of progressive and democratic change as they demonstrate in great numbers against oppressive neoliberal policies and government corruption which aggravate the people's social economic conditions.

In the Philippines, where conditions are fast deteriorating under the US-Duterte regime, revolutionary activists are called upon to militate the Filipino youth and unite them with the masses into a strong force for social revolution.

End the US-Duterte fascist regime! End imperialist plunder and rape! Carry forward the national democratic revolution! AB

## NPA ambushes fascist battalion in Abra

**R**ed fighters of the New People's Army (NPA)-Abra ambushed the soldiers of the 24th IB operating in the mountains of Tubo, Abra on December 1, 4 p.m. A soldier was wounded during the offensive.

The 24th IB is notorious for perpetrating human rights violations. Its soldiers were formerly under the command of Jovito Palapan during the onslaught of Oplan Bantay Laya in Central Luzon.

In 2006, the 24th IB abducted activists Sherlyn Cadapan, Karen Empeño and Manuel Merino in Hagonoy, Bulacan. Merino was killed at its battalion camp in Limay, Bataan. Cadapan and Empeño were also last sighted there. During the same period, two farmers accused of supporting the NPA were killed by operating soldiers.

The crimes of the 24th IB continued unabated when it was de-

ployed in Abra. In 2017, the battalion bombed the communities of Malibcong. This resulted in the destruction of farms and forcible evacuation of residents. Soldiers also camped in schools and houses, enforced a food blockade, and sowed fear among the residents. The 24th IB also perpetrated many cases of coerced surrenders, illegal arrests and tagging of activists as "NPA supporters."

In Negros Occidental, seven troopers of the 62nd IB were wounded in an encounter with Red fighters last November 22 in Barangay Cansalungon, Isabela. The encounter occurred at around 4 p.m. Meanwhile, another unit of the

NPA-Negros harassed a CAFGU Active Auxiliary camp in Barangay Balogo, Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental on November 30, 9 p.m.

In Northern Samar, a soldier of the 20th IB was killed in a harassment operation of the NPA in Barangay San Francisco, Las Navas. The 20th IB has been ravaging several rural communities in Las Navas for several weeks already.

In Bohol, two 47th IB troopers were wounded in an offensive mounted by the NPA-Bohol in Barangay Rizal, Bilar, on October 24, 11:40 a.m.

Ka Jose Ignacio of the National Democratic Front-Bohol said that the tactical offensive belies the false claim of the AFP-PNP that the province is already counterinsurgency-free. AB

# KM on its 55th year: celebrate and rise to the challenge

Amid the struggle against extreme fascism, poverty and the absence of freedom under the US-Duterte regime, the Kabataang Makabayan (KM) celebrated its 55th founding anniversary on November 30. The 156th birth anniversary of Andres Bonifacio was also commemorated on the same day.

The KM issued a statement calling on its members to intensify the struggle against the oppressive, fascist and puppet Duterte regime and advance the people's democratic revolution until victory.

It highlighted the significance of uniting with the toiling masses and advancing their democratic aspirations. Among these are the struggles against the Rice Liberalization Law, contractualization, wage deregulation, the K-12 program and others.

Additionally, the KM laid down its major tasks, primary of which is to fight Rodrigo Duterte's de facto martial law. It also called on the revolutionary youth to have a sharp grasp of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory and strive to practice this in advancing the revolution. It also highlighted the importance of the continuous and assiduous recruitment in schools, communities, factories, farms and other places. It must also lead the programmed deployment of activists and cadres in the countryside to participate in the agrarian revolution and armed struggle.

In the spirit of serving the people, the KM is eager to participate in the revolution and overcome

sacrifices, contradictions and doubts, for the sake of the nation's future.

Various KM chapters and NPA commands also issued their respective solidarity statements. KM-NCR criticized the vileness of Oplan Kapatagan and the capital accumulation of bureaucrats and officials of the reactionary government. KM-NCR members mounted a lightning rally along Recto Avenue, Manila on November 29.

Another lightning rally was conducted by KM-Southern Tagalog in UP Los Baños on December 6 to commemorate the anniversary.

The KM-Bicol issued an open letter honoring parents for raising and teaching their children to selflessly love the nation. KM-Sorsogon also recognized the key role of the youth in drumbeating social issues.

The regional NPA command in Negros also expressed its solidarity and called on the youth to continue Bonifacio's revolution. The NPA-North Negros also issued a solidarity statement.

Meanwhile, the NDF-Eastern Visayas challenged the youth to unite against Duterte, take on revolutionary tasks and participate in the struggle for social change. **AB**

## Commemoration of Andres Bonifacio's 156th birthday

HUNDREDS OF ACTIVISTS marched from Liwasang Bonifacio to Mendiola in Manila to commemorate Andres Bonifacio's 156th birthday. The mobilization was led by Anakbayan and Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU). The protesters carried the call "Fight neoliberal attacks on workers and the people." The progressive groups vehemently condemned the US' imposition of unfair economic policies and China's intrusion into Philippine territories.

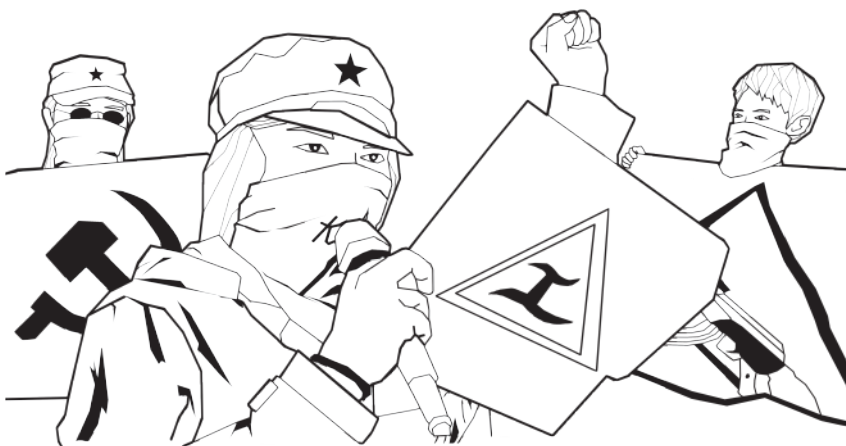
Elmer Labog, KMU spokesperson, said that Filipino workers must be liberated from exploitation in order to be truly free. He added that the people must carry on with the struggle against contractualization, wage depression, and worsening unemployment and poverty under the Duterte regime.

The youth pledged to embrace Bonifacio's revolutionary spirit by carrying on with the struggle for the genuine freedom of the country.

Before converging at Liwasang Bonifacio, separate protests were mounted by various groups in front of the US and Chinese embassies.

In Pampanga, Aetas led by the Central Luzon Aeta Association marched to the Bayanihan Park in Angeles City. They condemned the forcible eviction of thousands of minorities from their ancestral lands to pave way for the construction of the New Clark City which served as the venue of the SEA Games. They also criticized Duterte and his henchmen's corruption, and the minimal support to Filipino athletes.

Similar protests were mounted in Laguna, Negros and Davao. **AB**



## Assembly of the oldest Party branch in Panay

The oldest Party branch in Panay launched its assembly last October 17-18. The said branch was established in 1973 after the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines. For forty-six years now, the Party branch has remained at the forefront of mass struggles in the barrio and armed struggle in the region.

The assembly chose the theme "Consolidate the unity of Party branch members to lead the masses. Bravely fight Oplan Kapatagan." It aims to consolidate its members and strengthen its leadership in the said barrio.

For a long period, the Party branch withstood various brutal

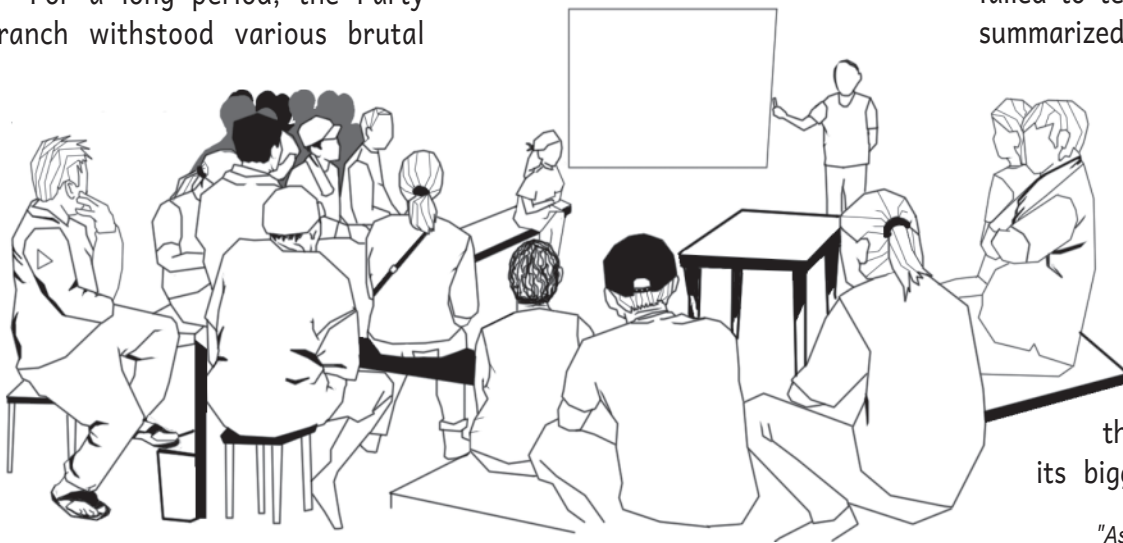
suppression campaigns of previous regimes especially under the US-Marcos dictatorship. Some of the first members of the Party branch offered their lives during this period. Residents were also forced to evacuate from the bar-

rios. The branch launched various mass struggles to defend their ancestral lands, and overcame calamities and other problems. Through all these, its members remained steadfast, defended the interests of the Party and continued on supporting the New People's Army.

Two-thirds of the total Party branch membership participated in the assembly. This only proves that the dictator-wannabe Duterte has failed to terrorize the Party. They summarized the history of the Party

branch. Their experiences and victories served as inspiration to new and young Party members. They also drew important lessons from their victories and weaknesses to further improve their leadership. One of its biggest victories is that the

*"Assembly..." continued on page 6*



## Mobilize to provide support to disaster-stricken areas—CCP

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CCP) called on all commands and units of the NPA, and all revolutionary mass organizations last December 3 to provide aid to victims of typhoon Tisoy.

"They may coordinate with local and international groups to provide victims with necessary humanitarian aid, and help them repair their homes and farms after the calamity," said the CPP.

The New People's Army (NPA)-Bicol declared a week-long unilateral ceasefire in the region to facilitate the provision of various forms of aid to residents who were affected by the typhoon. The ceasefire began on December 6, 12 a.m., and will take effect until De-

ember 12, 2019, 11:59 p.m.

The NPA-Southern Tagalog called on all its units to conduct relief and rehabilitation operations in their respective areas and provide aid to typhoon victims. The NPA-ST is ready to help in reconstructing houses and infrastructures that were devastated by the storm, including the farms of peasants. The NPA-ST reminded the revolutionary government of its duty to ensure that all typhoon victims are provided with aid and

support.

The CPP advised all NPA units to be cautious of AFP attacks in the middle of the calamity. The NPA also pledged to hold big mining, plantation, illegal logging and power companies that destroy the environment, accountable.

Initial data indicate that around 500,000 residents were affected by typhoon Tisoy in the provinces of Luzon and Eastern Visayas. Approximately P811-million worth of properties and crops were destroyed in Bicol and Oriental Mindoro. The typhoon heavily devastated Mindoro, Bicol and Northern Samar.

AB

## Police officers kill peasant couple in Butuan

Elements of the Regional Mobile Force Battalion 13 gunned down peasant couple Rolando, 55, and Josephine Egtob, 56, at their farm in Sitio San Roque, Barangay San Mateo, Butuan City on December 2 at around 3 p.m. The two were activist members of the Unyon sa mga Mag-uuma sa Agusan del Norte (UMAN).

After the crime, PCapt. Emerson Alipit, Butuan City Police Office spokesperson, made it appear in a radio interview that the two were members of the New People's Army and were shot during an encounter. The victims' children belied this statement. They said that their parents were just farmers and had no guns. They also testified that no encounter took place.

### Attempted killing

In Surigao del Sur, unidentified gunmen shot and attempted to kill Gaudencio "Junjun" Paclawona, chairperson of Anakpawis Tandag City and councilor of Barangay San Isidro on December 4. Paclawona was on his way home from the said city when he noticed that he was being tailed by four men aboard two motorcycles. The victim sustained a gunshot wound on his legs and was rushed to the hospital.

In Negros Occidental, 62nd IB troopers indiscriminately strafed the house of farmer Cresincio Dilfen at Sitio Pandan, Barangay Caradian, Himamaylan City on November 24, 10 p.m. Dilfen and his children were inside the house when the

shooting took place. On the same day, soldiers also ransacked two houses at Sitio Tagmanok.

### Illegal arrest

Manila Police District operatives arrested four members of Panday Sining after a mobilization in Mendiola, Manila on November 30. One of the arrested is a minor. Plainclothes policemen dragged the four through the streets from a jeepney and mauled them.

On the same day, 94th IB troopers arrested and mauled Melchor Lembaga and his father-in-law at around 4 a.m. at Sitio Enatito, Barangay Bukalan, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental. Arresting officers did not disclose the victims' whereabouts to their relatives. The Leonardo Panaligan Command vehemently condemned the inhumane and illegal arrest.

In Negros Occidental, elements of the 62nd IB arrested five residents of Maho-Paho, Barangay San Agustin, Isabela on November 23. The victims were identified as Maricar Estoya, Merencia Gaudia, Elizabeth Antrone, Jorgen Lizajo and Erlinda Garzola. They were im-

plicated by the military in an NPA raid in Barangay Tinongan.

### Militarization

At least 150 elements of the 3rd Mechanized IB entered and encamped in Aeta communities at Sitio Bunga, Mt. Dueg in San Clemente, Tarlac on November 4. Soliders imposed an economic blockade and required residents to present identification documents. Those who were unable to present identification documents were prohibited from going to their farms and were forced to go back to the barrio.

### Harassment and intimidation

Two military agents entered and took photographs in the campus of Tribal Filipino Program of Surigao del Sur (TRIFPSS) at Sitio Han-ayan, Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur on November 12. Earlier, on October 7, the same violation was perpetrated by five soldiers of the 3rd Special Forces Battalion (SFB) in a TRIFPSS campus at Sitio Simowao in the same barangay.

Individual cases of forcible entry and illegal search were also reported in Toboso, Negros Occidental; and San Dionisio, Iloilo.

Incidents of harassment and intimidation were also recorded in Butuan City, Quezon City, and in Agoon and Balaoan, La Union during the same period. AB

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branch has remained consolidated despite the onslaught of continuous suppression campaigns. It is also among the branches that deployed the most number of NPA recruits since 2008.

Currently, the branch is studying Oplan Kapanatagan,

Duterte's counterinsurgency program. Its members are eager to fight any attack of the fascist US-Duterte regime. They pledged to contribute to the struggle of Panayanons to frustrate this, as in previous fascist regimes. The Party branch members culminated

the assembly with renewed vigor and readiness to heed the call and challenge of the Party to firmly lead the masses in waging the revolution, and strengthen the armed struggle to overthrow Duterte's reactionary government. AB

## MO 32: A year of killings and crackdown

Various sectoral groups protested in front of the headquarters of the Department of National Defense in Quezon City on November 22 to commemorate the first year of the implementation of Memorandum Order (MO) 32. They strongly condemned the continuing human rights violations perpetrated by the AFP and PNP.

The most vicious attacks on human rights in Samar, Negros and Bicol were perpetrated under Duterte's MO 32 and Executive Order 70. MO 32 paved the way for the deployment of additional police and military troops in the said provinces to purportedly end insurgency. The said order, however, actually targets activists, human rights advocates and civilians.

Oplan Sauron 1-3 was implemented in Negros and resulted in the

killing of at least 20 civilians and the illegal arrest of many others.

MO 32 is also being used to sow terror in the island of Samar. According to Katungod Sinirangan Bisyayas, 34 cases of extrajudicial killings have been documented in Eastern Visayas. Among those killed, 20 were farmers while all others were local government officials. Around 500 barangays are militarized. Last month, the AFP even bragged about its bombing of

farmlands at Sitio Corong, Barangay Capotoan, Las Navas.

In Bicol, the 9th ID is relentlessly fabricating lies to make it appear that its counterinsurgency campaign is succeeding. Simultaneously, its officials are pocketing millions of funds that are allocated for the said program. Killings and militarization also continue unabated.

Approximately 30 AFP and PNP battalions are currently deployed in the said regions.

Sectoral groups are calling on the people to unite and oppose MO 32 at EO 70.

Similar protests were mounted in Bicol, Negros and Panay. AB

### 60th IB murders Red fighter hors de combat

THE 60TH IB brutally killed Marjun "Ka Hiker" Casal on November 27 in Davao del Norte. Ka Hiker was a Red commander of the NPA-Southern Mindanao Region (SMR).

Ka Hiker was recuperating after undergoing a medical operation when he was abducted in Tagum City on November 13.

His lifeless body was only found two weeks after in Barangay Kapatagan, Laak, Compostella Valley on November 27. Residents who found the cadaver said that the victim bore torture marks on his neck.

To cover up its violation of the rules of war, the 60th IB made it appear that Ka Hiker was killed in an encounter. This was contradictory to the testimony of residents. They said that they saw a convoy of the 60th IB entering their barangay on the

same day. The said troopers fired their guns to make it appear that an encounter took place.

Another team of soldiers trooped to Purok Tadok on the same barangay and illegally arrested Nilo Ostia along with another civilian. The two were falsely accused of being members of the NPA. They are still detained until today.

The NPA-SMR paid tribute to Ka Hiker who served the people and the revolution for 18 years. As a Red commander, he headed various units of the people's army in Davao del Norte, Compostella Valley and Agusan del Sur. AB

### Successful jeepney strike in Bicol

DESPITE BEING HARASSED by the regime, jeepney drivers successfully launched their jeepney strike in Albay and Camarines Sur on November 25-26. The strike was mounted as a form of resistance against the "jeepney modernization" scheme which will kill the livelihood of operators, drivers and workers in the jeepney industry.

On the first day of the strike, Condor-PISTON declared that 97% of jeepney operations in Albay was paralyzed, and 85% in Camarines Sur. Tricycle drivers stood in solidarity with the strikers. The percentage recorded in Albay rose to 90% on the second day.

In an attempt to suppress the strike, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board coerced the Sorsogon Transport Federation to explain before the court their strike last September. In Catanduanes, military agents went to the house of the chairperson of Federation of Virac Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association to purportedly investigate and know the names of PISTON members. AB

### Resolution against water privatization

BAYAN MUNA REPRESENTATIVES filed a resolution calling for the immediate review of the privatization concessions of the Metropolitan Waterworks Sewerage System (MWSS) with Manila Water and Maynilad.

This came after the decision issued by the Singaporean tribunal last November which favored Manila Water. In the said decision, the reactionary government was ordered

to pay P7.83 billion for water rate hikes that have not been allowed by the MWSS to be implemented since 2015.

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# Release Ka Diego Padilla!

The revolutionary movement vehemently condemned the illegal arrest of Jaime "Ka Diego" Padilla, spokesperson of the New People's Army (NPA)-Southern Tagalog. Ka Diego, 72, was arrested last November 25 while confined at the Cardinal Santos Medical Center in San Juan City. He was undergoing specialized medical treatment for his heart ailment.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) demanded Ka Diego's immediate release and that the trumped up charges slapped against him be junked. The CPP also condemned the reactionary state for prohibiting Ka Diego from accessing his lawyers. It said that the arrest is a violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees as Ka Diego is an NDFP consultant.

Ka Diego's relatives and lawyers condemned the reactionary state for underhandedly transferring Ka Diego's from Camp Crame in Quezon City to the San Jose Municipal Jail in Mindoro Occidental on November 27. He was held incommunicado for

more than 24 hours by the AFP and PNP.

In Rizal, three NPA members were slain by joint forces of the 80th IB and PNP-Region IV-A on December 5, 1 a.m. The three were killed while sleeping in a house at Sierra Vista Subdivision, Barangay Cupang, Antipolo City. Among those killed during the incident was Ermin Bellen, popularly known by comrades and the masses as Ka Romano. His companions, Jose Villahermosa and Lucio Simburoto, were also killed.

Before the incident, the three helped in resolving the problems confronted by the masses in the area. To make it appear that they were killed during an encounter, po-

lice operatives and soldiers planted guns and explosives at the massacre site.

The Regional Committee of the CPP in Southern Tagalog offered its highest tribute to the three comrades who offered their lives in service to the Filipino people.

Ka Romano served the revolutionary movement for 36 years. Before his death, he served as a member of the Executive Committee of the said Regional Committee. He also served as the secretary of the Sub-regional Committee of the Party which covered the provinces of Rizal-Quezon and Laguna in previous years. Under his leadership, revolutionary forces advanced in the sub-region by fighting and frustrating various military operations.

Ka Romano was also elected as a non-attending delegate of the second Congress of the Party in 2016. **AB**

## Prison transfer scheme sparks condemnation

Kin and supporters of political prisoners are wary of the plan to transfer their relatives in local jails.

Among those lined up for transfer are Frank Fernandez and Cleofe Lagtapon, Adelberto Silva, Oliver Rosales, Edisel Legaspi, Ireneo Atadero, Julio Lusania and Maximo Reduta who are currently detained at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City.

On December 4, Kapatid, an organization of political prisoners' relatives, questioned the plan to transfer the detainees to areas where their charges are filed. The relatives said that this scheme further persecutes political prisoners, who in the first place are detained illegally. In addition, this will subject the detainees to harsher conditions.

In a dialogue held on the same day, officials of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology admitted that the order was handed down by Sec. Delfin Lorenzana of the Department of National Defense

purportedly through the Executive Order 70.

Relatedly, the Communist Party of the Philippines issued a solidarity statement to all political prisoners, their relatives and supporters across the country. This was in conjunction with the commemoration of the 14th year of the International Day of Solidarity with Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War.

The Party extended its salutation to all the detained who continue to act and advance the call for genuine freedom and democracy. The Party also called on all democratic forces to support and carry forward the struggle of political prisoners for freedom in order for them to directly participate in the struggle.

There are currently at least 629 political prisoners in the country,

382 of whom were arrested under the US-Duterte regime. **AB**

*"Water...", from page 7*

Rep. Ferdinand Gaité said that the concessions must be immediately reviewed and amended, if not junked, based on the interest of consumers. "These companies are profit-oriented, that is why we have to nationalize water services," said Gaité. He asserted that the privatization of water services by the MWSS must be stopped and must be fully regulated, and prioritized by the government.

A research disclosed that these companies pass on not only their corporate taxes to consumers, but also their expenses for operations, sports competitions, vacations, and many others through fare hikes. **AB**