

EDITORIAL

Marcos then and now: puppet, fascist and oppressive

It is crystal clear to the Filipino people that Ferdinand Marcos Jr, current chief of the neocolonial state, is no different from his former dictator father: they are both puppets, fascists, corrupt and oppressive, and grossly indifferent to the people's hunger and suffering.

These are the reasons that prompted people to unite and rise at EDSA more than three and a half decades ago. The same reasons bind them today in the struggle to advance and defend their rights and well-being, and their desire for genuine national independence and democracy. Like his father dictator, Marcos Jr uses the most vicious and evil ways of the ruling classes to run the crisis-ridden semicolonial and semifeudal system in the Philippines.

Marcos Jr is subservient to for-

eign powers and completely lacks national dignity in surrendering the country's sovereignty and welfare to foreign powers, especially the US and China.

Marcos implements the neoliberal policies started by his father in the 1970s. In the name of "throwing the doors wide open," he pushes all-out import and foreign investment liberalization. Foreign capitalists are afforded all favors and promises, especially low workers' wages and tax holidays. Foreign capitalists are also given all freedom to take the land of farmers and minority peoples, and plunder the richness of our mountains, rivers and oceans.

For decades now, these policies have destroyed people's livelihood, local production and the Philippine economy. Import liberalization allowed foreign commodities to flood and drown local production, especially agriculture. The peasant masses are gasping for air under the weight of imported rice, all types of vegetables, onions, garlic, and even salt. Deregulation gave bourgeois compradors who are large merchants, and importers and smugglers (who typically are the same people or families) all the freedom to overprice commodities.

Production has steadily declined over the past four decades, further hobbling the country's economy.

Foreign investments in "export



processing zones" are misrepresented as "growth" though these do not help develop the local economy. The chronic lack of currency due to uneven foreign trade makes the country ever dependent on foreign borrowing and dollar remittances earned by sending Filipino workers overseas. Every year, up to a quarter of the country's budget goes to servicing public debt which people did not benefit from.

Like the malpriorities of his father and succeeding reactionary governments, health, education and other social services lack funds under Marcos Jr's budget. On the other hand, more and more unproductive funds are wasted on the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to buy helicopters and warships, as well as bombs, ammunition and war

equipment being used in the suppression, intimidation and repression of the people's resistance.

Marcos Jr's declaration of being "everyone's friend" is, in fact, a slavish policy. Concretely, he recently acceded to the plan of the US government and military to build five more military bases within AFP military camps in Cagayan, Isabela and Palawan. The US plans to use these to station troops and missile that will be aimed against China. Marcos also agreed to have the so-called joint patrols of US warships and AFP forces. These measures are part of the US military strategy to use the Philippines, as well as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and other countries, to provoke war against China, in the same way that it used Ukraine to wage war against

Russia.


Meanwhile, Marcos sits idly by in the face of China's ongoing use of seven military facilities many of which were built within the Philippine maritime territory. In fact, Marcos invited the Chinese Construction and Communication Corporation, a China state-owned company notorious for bribery and corruption. It is among the companies involved in the plunder of Philippine seas. Marcos invited this company to expand operations in the Philippines, in exchange for additional loans from China.

As was during the Marcos dictatorship, the stench of corruption is pervasive. In addition to accepting bribes from foreign companies, it was revealed recently that Marcos Jr is also involved in large-scale smuggling, through some well-known relatives of his wife Liza Araneta. Marcos is also rushing the creation of the Maharlika Investment Fund to control hundreds of billions of government funds to benefit favored businesses.

The intensification of Marcos Jr's puppetry, corruption and oppression of the people is accompanied by intensified viciousness and brutality of the war of the reactionary state against the people. Also under the direction of the US imperialist, the campaign of suppression of the AFP and the Philippine National Police (PNP) is set to become more cruel. Political repression and counterinsurgency today is as vicious as martial law under the Marcos dictatorship. Violations of human rights and international humanitarian laws are rampant and relentless.

As was under Marcos Sr, the masses of workers, peasants, and entire people under Marcos Jr are mired in hardship and hunger, while landlords, the big bourgeois compradors and big foreign capitalists, bask in wealth and luxury. In the face of their oppression and exploitation, it is clear to the people that there is no other path but that of revolutionary resistance.





Vol LIV No. 3 | February 7, 2023

Ang Bayan is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray, English and Spanish. Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news items. Readers are encouraged to send feedback and recommendations for improving our newspaper.

Contents

Editorial: Marcos then and now: puppet, fascist and oppressive 1

Celebrations, NPA training in Western Samar 3

NPA strikes at Southern Panay police 3

Planned US-PH military exercises denounced 3

GDP growth, not felt by people 4

NDFP consultant, 4 others, arrested 5

Protests 5

Fight for workers rights! 6

In short 7


Fight the labor export policy 8


Gen. Durante & 1001st IBde butchers 9

CPI (Maoist) honors Ka Joma 9

Armed struggle in Myanmar intensifies 10

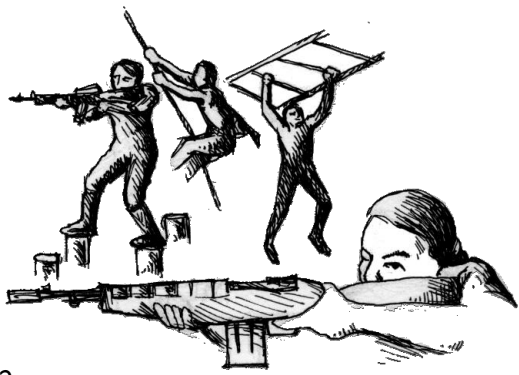
Ang Bayan is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines

 ang.bayan@cpp.ph

 [@angbayan1969](https://twitter.com/angbayan1969)

Celebrations, NPA training held in Western Samar

Despite fascist attacks of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and focused military operations in the towns of Samar, units of the people's army continue to persevere in the province. The NPA launched celebrations and other activities in the last quarter of 2022.



On December 25, 2022, Red fighters of the NPA and members of the revolutionary mass organization came together to celebrate the Party's anniversary and honor the revolutionary martyrs. The program centered on remembering the Party's achievements in the island program over the past year.

The gathering paid tribute to the heroism of the Dolores 22, Joel Arceo (Ka Divino) and others. It also conducted a silent 21-gun salute by way of giving the highest tribute to Comrade Jose Maria Sison.

Military training

On the last week of October 2022, NPA-Western Samar launched a military training to strengthen the Red fighters' capa-

bilities in following commands, falling in different formations, in combat and defense maneuvers, and more.

One of the training participants was Ka Rain, 20, a new recruit and member of the Kabataang Makabayan in their village. The training raised Ka Rain's confidence in holding a weapon and fighting the enemy.

The training was successfully conducted despite the bad weather. The Red fighters will use what they learned in carrying out their work. Ka Pander, the head trainor, said "We Red fighters must always thirst for studies and trainings because these raise our ability and revolutionary spirit to further contribute to the Filipino people's liberation movement."

AB

NPA strikes at Southern Panay police

THE NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY (NPA)-Southern Panay reported armed actions it launched in recent months against police and military forces who have been plaguing residents in the southern part of the island.

An NPA unit fired shots at the police detachment of the 2nd Platoon, 1st Iloilo Mobile Company in Barangay Mayang, Tubungan, Iloilo on February 1. Earlier, the people's army fired at a CAFGU detachment in Barangay Tubudan, San Remigio, Antique on January 28.

Meanwhile, on December 11, 2022, the NPA ambushed the combined force of the San Remigio Municipal Police Station and the Antique Mobile Force operating in Barangay Aningalan, San Remigio, Antique. Two policemen were wounded in the ambush.

On the island of Negros, the NPA-Southwest Negros struck at soldiers of the 15th IB in an encounter in Sitio Malipayon, Barangay San Jose, Sipalay City on January 18. Three 15th IB soldiers were confirmed killed while seven were injured.

The NPA-North Negros also fired at the CAFGU detachment in Barangay Bandila, Toboso, Negros Occidental on January 31.



Planned US-Philippines military exercises in Ilocos denounced

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC Front-Ilocos condemned the planned 38th Balikatan Exercises of Filipino and American soldiers to be staged in Ilocos Norte on April 24-27. Up to 16,000 soldiers are set to participate, according to initial news.

According to the NDF-Ilocos, this will be the second military exercise to be staged in Ilocos Norte. Previously, joint exercises of Philippine and US Marines were conducted in Currimaog and Laoag City in June 2022.

According to Col. Michael Logico, who will lead the military exercise, they chose Barangay Bayog, Burgos as the "operational area" of the exercises. The coast of Bayog can be used as a site for coastal air defense. Live fire exercises to test new US military hardware are also planned to be conducted here.

According to the NDF-Ilocos, the exercises will endanger the Ilocano people and the Philippine sovereignty. They also warned against threats of environmental destruction that the exercises would bring including damage to coral reefs in the area. They said live fire exercises will imperil communities of fishermen and farmers.

US-RP Balikatan Exercises are conducted under the Mutual Defense Treaty and Visiting Forces Agreement. In addition to Ilocos Norte, exercises are also set to be conducted in Fuga, Calayan and Batanes.

GDP growth, not felt by people

The 7.6% growth of the gross domestic product hailed by Ferdinand Marcos Jr is not felt by the people. According to the group Kadamay Kadamay, Marcos Jr's "development" is "does not address the hunger" of the Filipino poor. They do not expect the "jetsetting president" to provide solutions to their poverty.

The poor mocked Marcos Jr's reign as the "hunger era." According to state statistics, the number of poor rose to 20 million (an increase by 2.3 million) in 2022. The biggest number of people suffered hunger between October and December last year due to rising prices of commodities.

A "flash in the Pan" was how Ibon Foundation described the GDP's claimed growth. It is a mere "rebound" coming from the economic collapse caused by restrictive lockdowns during the pandemic. There will be a steep drop this year, according to the institution.

The government's claimed growth is an attempt to fool the public, according to Ibon. It is being used to make claims that Marcos Jr "economic stewardship." In reality, this will not last long because the "growth" from the historical 9.5% collapse of local production in 2020 has been maxxed out. "The (economy) will return to the former pattern of slow growth before the pandemic."

In fact, the slowdown in the fourth room of 2022 has begun where the economy grew by 7.2%, slower compared to the entire 2022. The "revenge spending" or increasing household consumption has slowed down since the second quarter of the year. There was no spending momentum even during the Christmas season.

Meanwhile, agricultural production fell for the third year. State statistics itself indicate negative local agricultural growth of -0.1% in 2022. Earlier, production in the

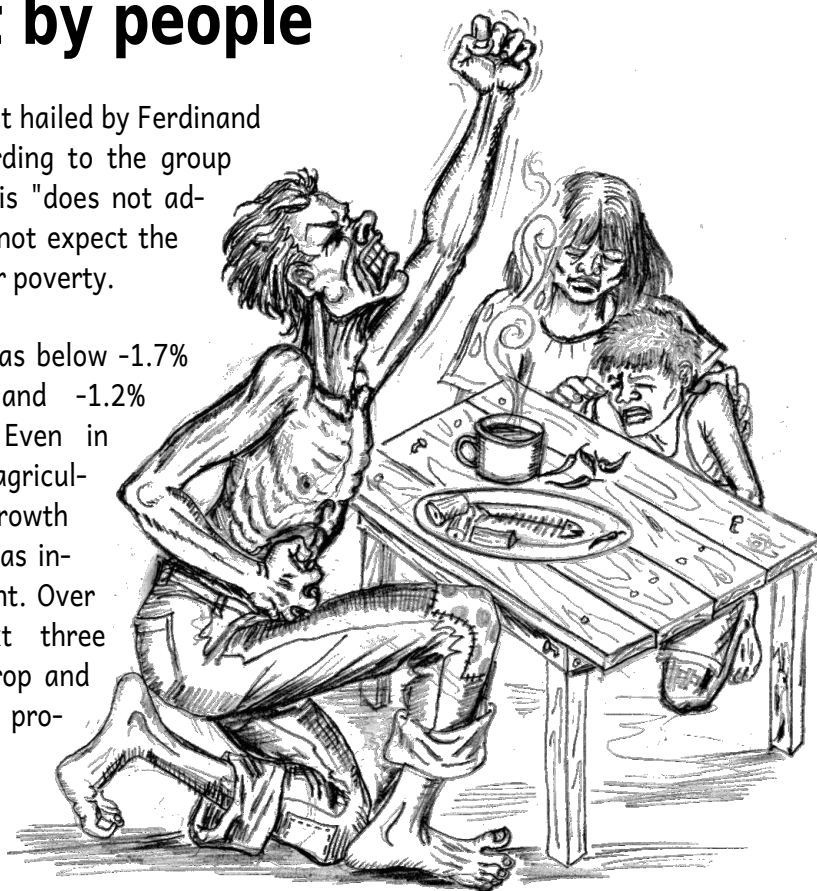
sector was below -1.7% (2021) and -1.2% (2020). Even in 2019, agricultural growth (0.3%) was insignificant. Over the next three years, crop and fishing production fell. Live-stock production (1.9%) slightly increased but was not enough to boost the entire sector.

Not a solution to the crisis

The Philippine economic crisis will not be resolved through the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s economic program. Ibon called the plan's framework "obsolete."

The PDP, according to the institution, is the ninth of the "development programs" since the Marcos dictatorship. Then and now, these programs have focused on implementing reforms for "free trade." This simply means export-based production will continue while the reactionary state exerts efforts to attract foreign investments.

Ibon pointed to state statistics that indicate an increase in the share of production for export from 16% of the GDP in the 1980s to 40% in the 2000s. Foreign investment has grown six times since the 1980s, with a share of 5% of the GDP to 29% at present.



In the face of this, manufacturing and agriculture has been on the decline since the 1950s. Likewise, these sectors' share in employment vis-a-vis the entire economy has decreased.

PDP 2022-2028 will pull the country deeper to a severe crisis. This is because the plan is set within the framework of globalization that has caused widespread unemployment, poverty and lack of development over the past four decades.

Instead of bringing development, the regime will continue to kill the productive sectors of the economy, particularly agriculture, through all-out importation. It has no plans to provide support to current production.

Similar to the economic plans of previous reactionary regimes, it has no plans to provide living wages for workers nor carry out land reform, raise farmgate prices of farmers agricultural produce and other necessary reform to improve the lives and livelihood of the majority of Filipinos.

AB

NDFP consultant, 4 others, unlawfully arrested

The soldiers and forces of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) unlawfully arrested National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) peace consultant Ruben Saluta, 75, and his wife and fellow revolutionary Cordon Saluta, 63, along with with Yvonne Losaria in their residence in Doña Soledad, Barangay Labangal, General Santos City on January 30.

Saluta was arrested based on fabricated charges of murder while Presentacion and Losaria were charged with rebellion cases. In addition, state forces claimed they seized six high-caliber weapons, ammunition and other military equipment from the three. Saluta is old and has chronic pulmonary disease. He and his wife suffer from hypertension.

In Baguio City, police arrested Jennifer Awingan, a native of Kalinga and a member of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) at her home in Barangay Pinsao Proper on January 30. She was charged with eight others, with a fabricated case of rebellion in the Cordillera and Ilocos region.

Among those charged were Windel Bolinget and Steve Tauli,

both officers of the CPA, Sarah Abellon, Lourdes Gimenez, Florence Kang, Northern Dispatch journalist Niño Oconer, and Jovensio Tangbawan and Salcedo Dumayom Dappay Jr. They are not being allowed to post bail.

Police also arrested UP Dili-man unionist and professor Prof. Melania Flores on February 6. She was charged with "violations of Social Security Law ." According to various groups, this is part of harassment of activists and progressive individuals.

Meanwhile, on January 30, the Anti-Terrorism Council (ATC) publicized the "terrorist" designation of Dr. Natividad Castro, a well-known doctor who chose to serve Lumad and peasant communities in Mindanao. The ATC is a

body created under the Anti-Terror Law.

Attempted massacre. Danny Malinao was killed in an attempted massacre by the 3rd Special Forces Battalion against five farmers in Sitio Emerald, Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur on January 24. The five were harvesting vegetables when soldiers fired at them. The 3rd SFB claimed an encounter with the people's army took place.

Violation of humanitarian law. Soldiers of the 85th IB arrested the injured Red fighter Jose Dela Cruz or Ka RC after a battle in Barangay Huyon-uyon, San Francisco, Quezon on January 29. He was paraded like a trophy instead of being recognized as a prisoner of war and having his wounds treated.

Attacks on communities. Around 200 soldiers of the 62nd IB invaded Barangay Amuntay, Binalbagan, Negros Occidental and Barangays of Talaon, Aya and Cansumandig in La Libertad, Negros Oriental from January 21 to 27. Various cases of violations of human rights were recorded.

In the town of La Libertad, soldiers forcibly entered and searched the home of the elderly couple Marting and Roama Pedro in Barangay Amuntay on January 22 and 23. In Barangay Aya, the military ransacked and destroyed Dongkoy Pahayahay's house on January 26. They also raided the home of the Pecore couple in Sitio Mabato, Barangay Talaon.

On February 2, the 79th IB threatened to behead farmers Rex Lumayno and Eric Opinggo in Sitio Odiong, Barangay Bandila, Toboso, Negros Occidental after they were illegally detained.

Meanwhile, soldiers ransacked Toto Palay's house in the same village and threatened to bomb it.

On January 7, the military threatened to behead civilian Wendel Pasinabo.



#SaveSibuyan. Residents of Sibuyan Island in Romblon temporarily halted the illegal and destructive operations of the Altai Philippine Mining Corporation on February 4 after a nearly 2-week people's barricade. The people triumphed even though their barricade was dispersed on February 3.

Peasant camp in Bacolod. Negros peasants held a 2-day camp out protest in front of the regional Department of Agriculture in Bacolod City on January 30-31 to demand the resolution of cases of land disputes in the island. During the camp out, peasants held a dialogue with DAR officials.

Mendiola Massacre commemoration. Peasant and other democratic groups marched to Mendiola in Manila on January 22 to commemorate the 36th year of injustice to the victims of the Mendiola massacre and the absence of genuine land reform.

Junk EDCA, MDT. Groups allied with Bayan protested on February 2 in Quezon City to denounce the visit of US Defense Sec. Lloyd Austin to the Philippines which aimed to accelerate the construction and increase the number of US military bases in the country.

Fight for workers rights!

Workers unions, associations and groups held various activities in line with the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s High Level Tripartite Mission (HLTM) in the Philippines last January 23-26. The said mission aimed to investigate violations of workers' rights in the country.

The HLTM was held after workers in 2019 called for an investigation of at least 380 case of attacks against unionists and organizers. The activity finally pushed through after more than two years of being blocked by the Duterte regime.

Data from the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights (CTUHR) show not less than 56 workers were killed under the Duterte regime. This include cases in Davao de Oro, Negros Island, Bicol and Southern Tagalog. Meanwhile, two organizers were abducted by state forces and remain missing to this day. More than 30 unions have been victimized by state forces and the NTF-Elcac in its campaign of red-tagging, intimidation and forced disaffiliation from their labor center.

During Marcos Jr's more than six months in power, there have been 29 cases of threats and intimidation of workers, four cases of illegal arrests and victims of trumped-up charges. A case of abduction of two organizers of workers in Cebu was also recorded. Presently, 27 unionists and workers rights defenders are imprisoned and are facing trumped-up charges.

Workers' unity and mobilization

Before the arrival of ILO officials, the Kilusang Mayo Uno (May First Movement or K MU) held a series of workers' consultations in Visayas (Iloilo, January 5), Mindanao (Davao, January 7) and Luzon (Laguna, January 10). These

assemblies expressed support to the ILO's investigations.

In relation to the mission, the All Philippine Trade Unions was established by members which include the biggest union centers such as the K MU, Federation of Free Workers, PSlink, Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, Partido Manggagawa, Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa, Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura, and the All Workers Unity.

Government employees unions also came together and established the All Philippine Public Service Unions to demand union rights, benefits and ending of contractualization. At least 12 national public sector unions came together.

Meanwhile, health workers laid down their 10-point recommendation on January 22 demanding recognition and advancements of their rights. Teachers meanwhile demanded recognition of their union rights and granting of additional salary.

Labor groups held consecutive protests at the national offices of the Department of Justice and Department of Labor and Employment in Manila. On January 23, the day the ILO HLTM began, hundreds of workers staged a rally in Makati City to greet its delegation. Workers also protested in Bacolod City, Cebu City and Davao City.



The mission's recommendations

After the investigation, the ILO pushed the Philippine government to resolve the many cases of extra-judicial killings of workers and abduction of unionists and organizers. The mission said, "it should prioritize the criminal investigation and...holding someone accountable." It said that this could be led by a commission it recommended the government to establish.

The mission criticized the state's mindset of linking parts of the trade union movement to the insurgency. According to them this violates the law and outrightly impedes their right to association.

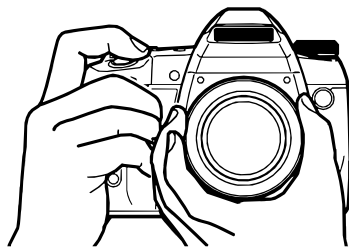
It also encouraged the Philippine government to strengthen mechanisms of its agencies to ensure the welfare of unions and protect union rights. It said that the government must act on it and submit a report this coming June 5.

The All Philippine Trade Unions welcomed the ILO HLTM's recognition of workers and unions' situation in the country. The group said it will strengthen the unity of unions and workers to demand the government to recognize their rights, provide jobs and raise wages. They will stand vigilant to the day the ILO asked the government to submit a report.

AB

2,093

registered guidance counselors for **28 million students**.



₱155,929
per piece

overpriced **cameras** acquired by **DepEd**. If bought online or in ordinary establishments, it would only cost **₱21,999**.

Source: Department of Education

\$82 million

promised by the US

to the puppet Marcos regime to "**hasten**" construction of its first **five military bases** in the Philippines under the **EDCA**.

Justicefor23Moro
call of the Moro people

for Moros brutally massacred by the police in its failed SAF operation on **January 25, 2015** in Mamasapano, Maguindanao.

Source: Moro Consensus Group

79 days

"needed" to clear charges against **Juan Jose Remulla III**, son of Justice Sec. Jesus Crispin Remulla, for a case of selling **illegal drugs**.

6 years

since **Sen. Leila de Lima** has been imprisoned for the same case despite lack of evidence and retraction of witnesses against her.

FEBRUARY 4, 1899

start of the Filipino-American war

when American colonial soldiers fired at Filipino fighters standing against foreign invaders in San Juan

2 million
protesters
in France



against proposed measures to increase the retirement age from 62 to 64.

Bring home abused migrants, fight the labor export policy

Sally is one of the migrant workers who just arrived home from Kuwait. Before coming home, she stayed for a period in a Philippine shelter for victims of human trafficking while documents for their return to the Philippines are being processed. Sally came home empty handed because she was not at all paid by her employer.

More than 400 migrants are in the shelter of the Philippine embassy in Kuwait, according to Sally. She said the process to return home is painstakingly slow and migrants are squeezed like animals in a coop in the shelter. Many of them become sick because of inhumane conditions. Apart from those in the shelter, many other Filipino migrants are in Kuwaiti prisons for having abandoned their employers and other violations of the kafala system.

Sally joined a press conference with Migrante and church people on January 27 after news of the brutal murder of another Filipina domestic worker came out on January 18. Jullebee Ranara, 35 years old, was raped and killed by the son of her employer. Her corpse was burned and left in the desert.

Before cameras and microphones, claims of all-out support are hypocritically made by the state, from the president to the Department of Migrant Workers and OWWA. Behind this, thousands of migrant Filipinos are neglected by the state in brutal and inhumane working conditions in the Middle East. From 2017, not less than 6,000 cases of abuses on Filipino workers were recorded in Kuwait. At least 126 Filipinos were killed in the country since 2016. This includes Joanna Daniela Demafelis (2018), Constancia Lago Dayag (2019), and Jeanelyn Villavende (2019).

According to the United Methodist Church, since the news of Ranara's death, not less than 10 former domestic workers in Kuwait who were also victims of rape asked their office for help. They may have returned to the Philippines alive, but

not one of them received any help from the government.

Brutality and modern slavery

The group Migrante estimates that around 15 million Filipinos work overseas. Overseas Filipino workers (OFW) send remittance equivalent to 8.9% of the gross domestic product or GDP. Majority are women (59.6%) but their share of total remittances is smaller (44.47%) because they often are employed in lower class of work and earn meager wages. Many are domestic workers and some are cleaners or vendors.

In the Middle East, the biggest number of Filipino migrants are in Saudi Arabia, followed by United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Qatar. The kafala system is in effect in these countries, like in all other states in the region except Iraq. This is also known as the "sponsorship system," wherein the state permits individuals or companies to directly hire foreign employees. The employer pays for all expenses of contractual workers. In exchange, the employer holds not only the livelihood of the employee but also his or her entire. Migrant contractuals are prohibited to transfer work, leave or go home if they wished.

As a result of this system, migrant workers receive very low wages and experience inhuman working conditions, various forms of abuses and brutal crimes. Crimes against women workers, including rape, are widespread. In reality, the kafala system is modern-day slavery.

In 2022, almost 6,000 cases of maltreatment and abuse against migrant workers were recorded by the

PSA, and 5,201 of these were in the Middle East. Only 200 of these cases are brought before courts.

Sold like meat

The kafala system and criminal and abusive employers are not the only reason for the extreme conditions of contractual workers overseas. The Philippine reactionary state is also culpable for the deregularization of the processes of sending workers and passing to the private labor agencies the responsibility of monitoring and ensuring their welfare. The officials of the government's embassies have been proven inutile countless times in providing emergency help for migrants.

The biggest crime of the state is its labor export policy in which it sells Filipino migrants "like meat" in the international labor market. The state does this to squeeze maximum remittance. According to Migrante, the state pushed for the deregulation of deployment so that Filipino workers will remain "competitive" or keep them "marketable." In line with this policy, the government compels domestic helpers to bear with their situation where they are contracted to abusive employers and passes state obligation to recruitment agencies when workers face threats, are maltreated or become victims of attempted murder.

Everyday, more than 6,000 Filipinos leave the country to work. While the number continues to increase, the state's capacity and interest to protect them shrinks.

Migrante lambasted the labor export policy and called for its end. Instead of selling workers abroad, the state must immediately outline a sustainable program for the reintegration of workers. The country will fully benefit from the skills and labor of nurses, teachers, caregivers and many others forced to work abroad. At the same time, contractual workers suffering overseas must immediately be repatriated and justice be given to all victims of maltreatment, abuse and killings.

AB

Gen. Durante and 1001st IBde, butchers of Davao

Military and police cannot deny the crime of 1001st IBde commander Brig. Gen. Jesus Durante III after evidence that he ordered the killing of businesswoman Yvonne Chua-Plaze was exposed to the public. Five soldiers of the 1001st IBde directly involved in the murder pointed to him as the mastermind of the crime. Chua-Plaza was shot in front of her house on December 30, 2022.

Apart from Durante, his vice commander Colonel Michael Licayao and five other soldiers were implicated in the crime. Before this, relatives and friends of Chua-Plaza released messages from her cell-phone exchanged between her and Durante, as well as photos of the businesswoman with bruises on her face and arms. In her messages, she explicitly named Durante as the perpetrator.

Chua-Plaza's post included threats that she will expose the true story behind the military's murder of Menardo Villanueva (Ka Bok) and

Chad Booc. She

said she holds throves of evidence of what Durante did to Villanueva and Booc. Her post included a photo of Ka Bok's lifeless body and said she had more similar photos.

Durante was assigned as commander of the 1001st IBde in August 2021 after serving as chief of the Presidential Security Group of then president Rodrigo Duterte. Earlier, he was part of the 1st Scout Ranger Battalion, and was chief of Task Force Davao.



Lying butcher

On February 24, 2022, Durante boasted of the 1001st IBde murder of teachers Chad Booc and Gelejurain Ngujo, together with civilians Elgyn Balonga, Tirso Añar and Robert Aragon in New Bataan, Davao de Oro. Durante insists that the five were killed in an encounter even as the local NPA unit denied that a firefight took place in the area. The autopsy of Booc's cadaver revealed that he was summarily executed.

Durante also spewed lies surrounding the killing of three cadres of the Party in Southern Mindanao Region in a supposed encounter in 2022.

One of them is Villanueva who he said was killed in Barangay Libudon in Mabini, Davao de Oro on January 5, 2022. In truth, the 1001st IBde held Villanueva in custody since December 25, 2021. He was held incommunicado and tortured before being killed and surfaced dead. The butchers also summarily executed Sandra Reyes (Ka Kaye) who was likely abducted along with Ka Bok.

Another brutal case involving Durante and the 1001st IBde is the abduction, holding incommunicado and summary execution of Ezequiel Daguman (Ka Rey) in March 2022. **AB**

CPI (Maoist) honors Ka Joma as proletarian internationalist

IN TRIBUTE AND honor to Comrade Jose Maria Sison's contributions to the international communist movement, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) led the "Memorial Day for Comrade Joma" last January 16. Members of the CPI (Maoist), fighters of the People's Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA) and members of revolutionary organizations in India gathered to commemorate Comrade Joma.

Carrying big red banners, placards and red flags, hundreds of Indian masses and fighters marched in an unidentified community. Many of them are from India's indigenous groups and families from Red bases of the PLGA and CPI (Maoist). The banners and placards carried calls: "Red salute Comrade Joma!" Fighters of the PLGA stood in formation and paid tribute to Comrade Joma.

Other revolutionary and communist parties and organizations expressed their solidarity with the memorial day.

Earlier, several international organizations gave recognition of Comrade Joma after his death. He was hailed by many organizations for his great contributions to the international communist movement and advancing the anti-imperialist movement across the world.

Armed struggle in Myanmar intensifies

The people of Myanmar's armed resistance to the military junta is intensifying as it enters its third year of brutal reign in the country.

On February 1, at least 43 armed forces of the junta were reported killed in the regions of Mandalay, Sagaing and Magwe in just three days.

Among them are Tatmadaw commanders who were ambushed in a landmine attack along a highway in Shwebo town, Sagaing region. Fighters who carried out the ambush, said in an interview that they used a homemade landmine. Even though the operation was dangerous because they needed to get near a battalion-strong camp, an 11-man team performed the offensive to inflict damage to the junta. Thirteen junta forces were killed while six were wounded.

Five other junta forces in Ayadaw town in the same region were killed after a drone dropped a bomb at their checkpoint and detachment. A 4-man team performed the drone strike. Apart from the five dead, 10 other junta forces were wounded.

Still in Sagaing, two junta forces were killed and many were wounded in three separate raids on detach-

ments and police stations. Two others were killed and many wounded when armed people ambushed a 60-man unit of the Tatmadaw using 18 landmines.

Armed citizens also used landmines in operations in Magwe and Mandalay.

Meanwhile, the military junta treacherously extended its reign for six more months. This is contrary to its earlier promise to hold elections to re-establish the civilian government a year after its coup d'etat to seize state power on February 1, 2021.

The coup put to power its leader Gen. Min Aung Hlaing. The military once again imprisoned then leader of the civilian government, Aung San Suu Kyi.

Even if elections were to be held, many fear that this will only be used by the junta to legitimize its military rule. This is because it sentenced opposition Aung San Suu Kyi to 33 years imprisonment on charges by the junta. Suu Kyi was convicted in secret and anomalous trials.

Under the brutal military junta, the people of Myanmar experienced extreme terrorism and harassment. In the past two years, almost 3,000 civilians mostly peaceful protesters were killed by the junta. More than 18,000 were arrested because of their resistance to the coup d'etat and demand to reinstate elected officials and restore people's civil rights.

In the countryside, aerial bombing is widespread, killing even children and senior citizens. One of the most brutal is Tatmadaw's bombing of a school in September 2022 which killed at least 11 school children. This was followed by the bombing of a concert of the indigenous Kachin which killed 50 people and injured 70 others.

Razing of houses and expulsion of communities are also widespread. Thousands of people, most from national minorities, are forced to cross borders to Thailand and India to seek sanctuary.

Despite the junta's brutal violation of human rights and the international humanitarian law, it continues to be supported by imperialist corporations, including oil giant Total.

AB