

EDITORIAL

Intensify the resistance to the US-Marcos regime amid crisis and conflict

Concurrent economic and political crises are now pounding the rotten ruling system in the country. The intense suffering of the Filipino people amid the crisis further inflames their determination to fight for their livelihood and well-being, defend their democratic rights and fight for the people's welfare against foreign plunder and oppression.

The country's economy lies prostrate under the collapse of manufacturing and agriculture, national bankruptcy and rising mountains of debt. Tied to the global capitalist system now undergoing a stagnation, the Philippine economy is expected to fall into a recession or further contraction in the coming months. The crisis is further exacerbated by brazen large-scale corruption by the Marcos ruling clique and wasteful large military expenditures.

The livelihood and state of life of the broad working class masses and petty bourgeoisie are on a free-fall. Prices of oil, food and other basic commodities constantly rise, while people's wages and income re-

main insufficient despite toiling all day. Under neoliberal policies, millions are unemployed, robbed of land, and deprived of their sources of income (fishermen, vendors, small shops, jeepney drivers and operators) by foreign companies and big capitalists. Majority of Filipino families are deep in the mud of poverty and destitution.

Marcos is head over heels to provide tax holidays, land, and armed forces protection and other privileges to foreign big capitalists and their local big comprador bourgeoisie, cronies and bureaucrat capitalists. On the other hand, he ignores the grievances of the toiling masses and the entire Filipino people seeking higher wages, genuine

land reform, price reduction, employment, and other urgent demands.

The moment he took power, Marcos immediately paid homage to the US imperialists. In line with US policy of countering China's growing economic and military power, Marcos paved the way for the expansion of US military presence in the country and allowed the use of the country as a large US military base.

Amid economic crisis and diminishing resources which could be shared among themselves, rival factions of the ruling classes are engaged in heightened conflict, even between the ruling Marcos and Duterte cliques, who are both hungry for wealth and power. The Marcoses and Dutertes are now publicly shoving one another.

It is clear to the people that the US-Marcos regime is anti-poor and anti-people. The ruling Marcos regime is isolated from the Filipino

masses. It is much hated by the people for being an heir to the Marcos dictatorship, and because it now sits in power because of widespread fraud and manipulation of the 2022 elections. It is now even more detested because of its outrageous luxurious lifestyle and waste of the people's money in jet-setting and banquets, while the masses of the people are mired in poverty and hunger.

State tyranny under the US-Marcos regime is relentless. It imposes terror and fear through such brutal fascist tactics as murder, abduction, torture, prolonged incarceration using fabricated charges, and imprisonment of entire communities in military garrisons. Amid crisis, it muffles the people's voices in a futile attempt of suppressing their grievances and resistance. However, it is also teaching the masses that they have no other recourse but to unite and struggle to defend their rights, rather suffer worse poverty and death.

The crisis generates conditions that favor further arousing, organizing and mobilizing

the masses. The Party is in a position to lead bigger mass struggles and strengthen the revolutionary mass movement both in the city and countryside, in the framework of the overall advance of the people's democratic revolution.

To effectively lead the Filipino people, the Party needs to overcome and repudiate various forms of conservatism, reformism and legalism which has blocked the people's march to the path of resistance. Strengthen the determination, courage, and militance of the masses to fight.

Under the leadership of the Party and revolutionary forces, the economic mass struggles of all democratic classes and sectors must be further strengthened, especially of the workers and peasants masses

who make up the majority of the people, as well as other sectors of the toiling masses and pettybourgeoisie. In all corners of the country, amplify their defense of their rights and well-being, and their the condemnation of fascism and oppression of the US-Marcos regime.

Fully expose the foreign monopoly capitalist banks and corporations behind the plunder and oppression of the Filipino people. Strengthen as well the struggles against US military intervention in the Philippines and fight for national independence amid inter-imperialist armed conflicts.

Galvanize further the anti-fascist struggles. Double efforts to expose state terrorism in the countryside. Fight for justice for all victims of fascist crimes. Raise the

capacity and determination of the masses to fight back through legal and other means.

Build the broadest anti-Marcos united front and fully isolate the ruling Marcos regime from the people. At the same time, make vigorous effort to make Duterte and his minions account

for their fascist crimes, election fraud and corruption. Encourage the active involvement of the middle sections of the people against the US-Marcos regime.

Mass struggles are bound to grow stronger in the coming months, along with the strengthening of the armed struggle in the countryside and the worsening crisis of the ruling system. The New People's Army must be strengthened to strike at the fascist criminals and defend the people.

Bring together the collective anger of the masses and direct their aim at the Marcos regime and the Duterte clique. Promote the revolutionary mass movement and armed struggle to fight and shake the foundations of the US-Marcos regime. **AB**



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ang.bayan@cpp.ph

Contents

Editorial: Intensify the resistance to the US-Marcos regime amid crisis and conflict 1

Marcos-Arroyo-Duterte conflict sharpening 3

NPA-Bukidnon sanctions Duterte crony company 4

NPA-Sultan Kudarat confiscates 4 firearms 4

18 fascist troopers killed in NPA-EV offensives 4

Workers intensify fight for wage increase 5

Slow wage increases 6

Protests 6

In short 7

Non-stop US war preparations in Asia 8

AFP abducts, summarily kills 3 Red fighters 9

Highest tribute to Comrade Sandy 9

Dispossession and destruction in CamNorte 10

Marcos-Arroyo-Duterte conflict sharpening

The long-simmering conflict between the Marcoses, Arroyos and Duterte has been exposed to the public by the successive attacks and counter-attacks between its personalities. This conflict further intensified amid the economic crisis and because sharing wealth, power and state privilege can no longer satiate or satisfy everyone.

The conflict between Speaker Martin Romualdez and Vice President Sara Duterte is most apparent. Romualdez capitalized on the people's widespread and firm condemnation of the confidential and intelligence funds and its removal from Duterte's 2024 budget as vice-president and Department of Education secretary. A word war erupted between Romualdez followers and those of former president Rodrigo Duterte after the latter threatened to "kill" Rep. France Castro, ACT Partylist representative and house deputy minority leader, who spearheaded exposing and opposing the CIF.

This conflict prompted the mass resignation of Duterte's partymates in the PDP-Laban—which from 120 members, now only has 15 in Congress. Among those who broke away is Rep. Aurelio Gonzales Jr who castigated Duterte for the attacks and threats against Congress.

On November 7, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Romualdez rival and

Duterte ally, was unceremoniously removed as Congress deputy speaker. At the same time, her fellow deputy speaker, Rep. Isidro Ungab, Davao City's third district representative, was also removed. Both Arroyo and Ungab refused to sign a resolution that directed congressmen to "express" their "appreciation, solidarity and support" to Romualdez.

Military maneuver

On November 3, Gen. Romeo Brawner, chief of the AFP, exposed what he called "destabilization schemes," through a coup, against Ferdinand Marcos Jr. He said it is being pushed by retired officers and being peddled to active servicemen.

Former Information and Communications Technology secretary Eliseo Rio, a former military officer and a founder of the TNTrio group, denied plotting a "destabilization." He said, their campaign, together with the September Twenty-One Reform Movement, is to review the last presidential election to prove

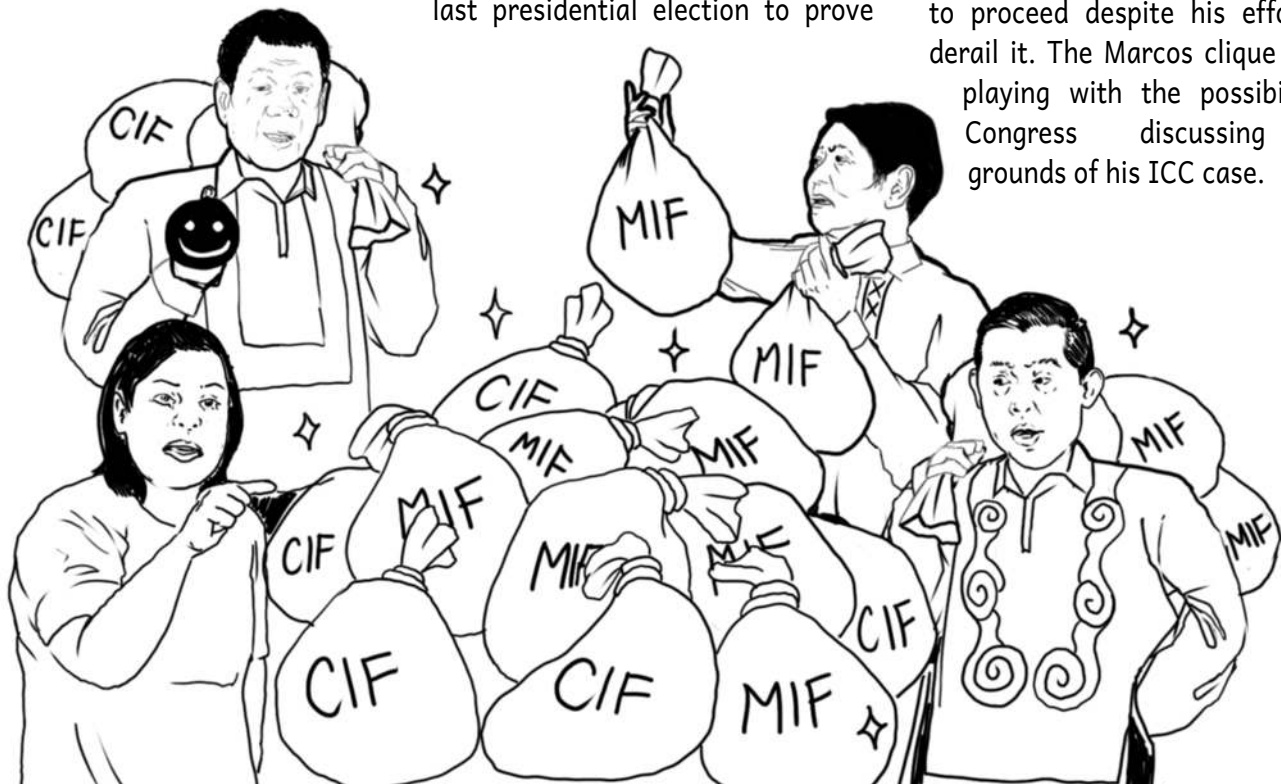
how massive electronic fraud seated Marcos Jr and Sara Duterte in power.

The National Security Council (NSC) denied that a destabilization plan is in motion and said that the reporters merely "misquoted" Brawner. The elder Duterte, on the other hand, feigned ignorance about the "rumors" after admitting that he had spoken to retired generals.

Arrest threat

On November 14, Sen. Leila de Lima was released on bail from her third and last case related to Duterte's "war on drugs". The senator was imprisoned for almost seven years on charges based on the testimonies of convicted criminals. Duterte deliberately harassed de Lima for initiating the investigation into Duterte's involvement in killings by the "Davao Death Squad," and for being the number one critic of the "war on drugs" in the Senate.

Upon her temporary release, de Lima promised to cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) where Duterte was charged with crimes against humanity. The investigation against Duterte is set to proceed despite his efforts to derail it. The Marcos clique is also playing with the possibility of Congress discussing the grounds of his ICC case.



NPA-Bukidnon sanctions Duterte crony construction company

A team of the New People's Army (NPA)-Bukidnon paralyzed two backhoes of Ulticon Builders Incorporated (UBI) on October 16 in Sityo Mahagwa, Barangay Hagpa, Impasug-ong. The UBI construction company is owned by a Duterte crony which has cornered large public contracts worth ₱1-3 billion per year.

The UBI is involved in projects that destroy the environment and farms, and disposses farmers of their land. The company is notorious for very low wages, non-payment of 13th month salary and other benefits. It also did not indemnify for damaged houses, farms and belongings of residents during its construction.

In 2018 and 2021, the NPA has already sanctioned UBI for its destruction of the environment and abuse of workers.

Contracts of UBI include construction of "farm-to-market-roads" (FMR) in northern and southern Mindanao now in use by big bourgeois compradors to facilitate the entry and operation of foreign mining companies, expansion of commercial plantations and energy plants on agricultural and ancestral

lands.

The UBI colludes with the AFP's anti-people counterinsurgency campaign in these FMR projects. The company openly supports "peace programs" of the butcher 403rd Brigade and NTF-Elcac that terrorize the people of Bukidnon. Apart from FMR construction in the province, it is also into construction of facilities inside the 8th IB military camp.

UBI was established in 1993 by the Gonzalez family in Davao and is now headed by Carlos Gonzalez. His son Lisandro Gonzalez is now representative of the MARINO partylist and deputy majority leader in the lower house. He is also among UBI operators. Lisandro is one of the staunch supporters of the Marcos regime's proposals, including the Maharlika Investment Fund. AB



18 fascist troopers killed in NPA-Eastern Visayas offensives

AT LEAST 18 soldiers under the 8th ID were killed and five were wounded in a series of tactical offensives by the New People's Army (NPA) in Northern and Western Samar last June to August.

Among those killed were five troopers of the 4th Scout Ranger Battalion (SRB), one of the "elite" forces most recently deployed in the region to "completely defeat" the people's army.

In Northern Samar, five consecutive harassment operations were conducted by the people's army in Silvino Lobos and Las Navas. Five armed offensives were also launched by Red fighters in Matuguinao, Western Samar.

Meanwhile, in Southern Leyte, the NPA-Leyte Island recently reported thwarting a raid by the 14th IB that took place in April and fascist retaliatory measures by the military unit in civilian communities. The NPA armed offensive killed two military agents and confiscated two .45 caliber pistols, and three cell phones.

These operations were launched amid focused military operations of the 8th ID with hundreds of fascist troopers using advanced weaponry such as helicopters, drones and others.

NPA-Sultan Kudarat confiscates 4 firearms

RED FIGHTERS OF the New People's Army (NPA)-Sultan Kudarat disarmed Junior Martinez, a local despot and 57th IB agent, in Sityo Badianan, Barangay Salangsang in Lebak, Sultan Kudarat on November 13, at 5 a.m. An M16 rifle, a shotgun, two pistols, a hand grenade, and a VHF radio were confiscated from him.

Martinez uses these weapons to terroriz the peasant masses in their area and grab their land. Martinez is supported by the 57th IB and actively colludes with soldiers.

On November 10, the NPA-Sultan Kudarat harassed the 37th IB detachment in Sityo Pangyen, Barangay Hinalaan, Kalamansig. The 37th IB soldiers are behind gambling, drinking and causing trouble in the village. They harass and coerce residents repeatedly to "surrender." Residents welcomed the NPA offensive against soldiers causing troubles in the area.

In Quezon, NPA-Quezon destroyed and burned to two dump trucks used by the quarry company in Unisan town on November 8. This was done to warn companies involved in environmentally destructive projects.

Workers intensify fight for substantial wage increase

Dong is troubled over where to get money for his three children, one of whom is already in college. "On the 15th, I got only eight thousand," he said. Dong is a foreman in a large Manila port. He is not the lowest wage earner among more than 800 dockworkers who find it more difficult to keep up with the needs of their families.

Because he earns ₱800 per day which is higher than the minimum, Dong and other co-workers are not covered by the meager ₱40 daily wage increase for workers in the National Capital Region (NCR) in June. But his salary is still way below the ₱1,187 daily needed for a family to live decently.

Worse, they do not have daily work at the pier. "We are considered regulars, but often we work only up to eight to 10 days in two weeks," said Dong.

Last year, more than 500 dockworkers formed a union to protect their rights. But management seized control of the union and its lawyers. Dong is now planning to push the election to replace the said union with a genuine one that will protect their rights.

This November, union members held a meeting. They talked for three hours, from 7 to 10 in the morning. During this period, the workers estimate that the company

lost as much as ₱2 million. Dong says: "What more if we go on strike? This is why management fears us."

Union struggle and the labor movement

Like Dong, many workers struggled to expand and strengthen the union movement as foundation of workers' bargaining power with capitalists. This year, strikes and protests broke out in several factories in Southern Tagalog and NCR amid deadlocks in negotiations for collective bargaining agreements or CBA.

In these negotiations, workers primarily demand wage increases, which in many cases were last given by capitalists before the pandemic. These include the Fuji Electric Phils. in Laguna and Samahan ng mga Manggagawang Nagkakaisa sa Umi-core Specialty Chemicals in Subic, Pampanga. Bread workers in Laguna achieved victory for their union Panadero ng Philfoods Fresh Baked Product Inc against the union un-

leashed by management and NTF-Elcac.

The labor movement this year gave a fresh impetus to the Sahod Itaas, Presyo Ibaba! (Increase Wages, Bring down prices!) campaign. Various labor groups sought for a dialogue with the Marcos regime but were ignored.

They supported the national minimum wage bill in Congress and a Senate proposal for a ₱150 across-the-board wage increase. The Congress bill lies dormant while that in the Senate remains at the "principle" level. In the regions, local federations and unions filed petitions before regional wage boards, but their orders were skimpy, delayed and will be given in trickles. (See related article.)

"Organizing and mobilizing workers is decisive," according to Rene, a labor-leader in a workers' enclave. As history has taught, the capitalist or reactionary state will not voluntarily give any increase unless their resistance is strong, bold and militant. It has been thirty-four years since the state was last compelled to grant a significant wage increase.

Need to strengthen

Together with the struggle for wages, labor movements strengthen its solidarity with different sectors.

Also part of the struggle of workers is to defend against the attacks on their organized ranks by the Marcos regime and the capitalists. In September, Jude Fernandez, veteran organizer of the labor movement, fell victim to extrajudicial killing. In the Southern Tagalog and Caraga regions, some labor leaders were abducted while others were illegally arrested. In Davao and Cebu, regional center leaders are targets of threats to compel them to "cooperate" with the military's counterinsurgency campaign. AB



Slow wage increases amid soaring prices of goods

WAGES IN THE Philippines remain pegged at low levels amid skimpy wage increases ordered by regional wage boards in the past five months. This is grossly insufficient for workers' families to keep up with steep increases in prices of goods, especially food and fuel.

In September, inflation eroded real wages by 28%. In NCR, the real value of the take-home ₱610 minimum wage is only ₱504. This is less than half of the ₱1,189 daily living wage level. On average, workers across the country receive only 35.5% of the living wage. Even when inflation went down in October, their average income of ₱9,158 per month remains below the poverty line (₱12,040/month). This is a far cry from the living wage of ₱25,816 per month in October.

"Snail-paced" and "loose change" were the responses to the petitions for the wage increase range of ₱150 to ₱220 proposed by unions and labor centers. Six of the regions raised wages by ₱30 coins and three to ₱35. Highest is the ₱50 wage increase in the National Capital Region and some industries in Calabarzon. Measly as it is, its implementation is even "staggered" or in trickles in some regions. Until now, there has been no wage increase in regions 10, 11 and 13, as well as in BARMM, where the gap between minimum and living wage is greatest.

The wage increase mandated for agricultural workers is worse at ₱20 to ₱40 less compared to industrial and service workers. Farm workers dubbed the increase to the daily minimum "alms", which is often not even enforced in rural areas. Currently, most agricultural workers only earn between ₱16 and ₱240 per day.

The small increases are grossly insufficient to raise the wage levels of women workers. Overall, women workers receive 13.9% less compared to men, according to the state statistics agency itself. The difference is even greater in professional jobs, such as in the digital field, where women's wages are 18.4% lower than men's.



3-day transport strike. Jeepney drivers and operators, led by Piston, launched a three-day transport strike on November 20-22. This is their response to the Marcos regime's continuing jeepney phaseout push in the guise of forced consolidation of their franchises. On the first day of the strike, Metro Manila routes were 85% paralyzed. Mobilizations were held in 27 areas in Manila, in the cities of Baguio, Cebu, Iloilo, Bacolod and Davao, and in Cavite, Laguna, Albay.

Hold the US accountable for Israel genocide. Bayan led hundreds of people in a rally right in front of the US embassy in Manila on November 14 to condemn the role of the US in the genocide against the Palestinian people and for inciting imperialist wars. Six rallyists were injured when the police blocked and tried to disperse the march before reaching the embassy.

Philippines, not for sale. Filipino organizations in San Francisco, California greeted with protests the landing of Ferdinand Marcos Jr and his delegation in the US to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Forum (APEC) Summit last November 14. They condemned Marcos' sale of the Philippines' natural resources and labor force to foreign companies.

Justice for Yolanda victims. People's Rising for Climate Justice Philippines led protests in Mendiola on November 8 to hold the state to account for "criminal negligence" of typhoon and disaster victims. Various environmental groups also marched at the San Juanico Bridge, Sta. Rita, Leyte to Tacloban City on November 7. This march is part of a 30-day benefit-walk to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Yolanda.

Youth walk-out. Three hundred students and youth from private and public universities walked out of classes on November 20 in Cebu City to demand their right to education and condemn state repression. On November 17, hundreds of young people also launched coordinated actions in 16 protest centers in the country to commemorate International Students' Day.

Still no justice. The Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Asyenda Luisita led farmers in a rally at the Department of Agriculture in Quezon City on November 16 to commemorate the 19th anniversary of the massacre of seven farmworkers camping out to assert their land rights. Farmers from nearby Hacienda Tinang participated in the activity.

Strike in Valle Verde. The Valle Verde Country Club Inc. Employees Union went on strike on November 11 after a deadlock in CBA negotiations. The management refused the workers' demand of a ₱38.50 daily wage increase, even when wages were last increased in 2019.

P30/DAY

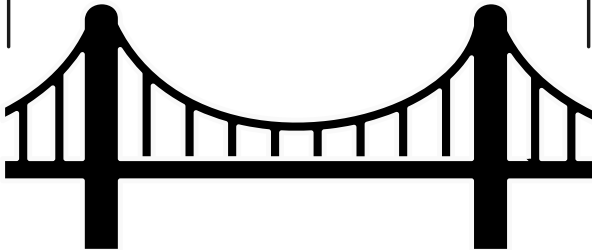
meager wage increase ordered by wage boards in Cordillera, Bicol and Eastern Visayas. With minimal increases, wages continue to lag behind the amount needed for daily needs.

REGION	WAGE INCREASE	NEW MINIMUM	LIVING WAGE*
CAR	P30	P430	P1,191
Ilocos	P35	P435	P1,113
Cagayan	P30	P450	P1,073
Central Luzon	P40	P493-P500	P1,141
Calabarzon	P35-P50	P385-P520	P1,105
NCR	P50	P610	P1,189
Bicol	P30	P415	P1,138
Western Visayas	P30	P480	P989
Central Visayas	P33	P420-P468	P1,247
Eastern Visayas	P30	P425	P856
Zamboanga Peninsula	P30	P368-P381	P1,242
Soccsksargen	P35	P403	P1,158

* as of October

\$6.534 B

planned loan of the Philippines from the **Asian Development Bank** for 15 projects like the \$2.108-billion Bataan-Cavite Interlink Bridge Project and the \$2-billion Laguna Lakeshore Road Network Project which will both cause pollution, destroy the environment, and displace hundreds of people.



\$275M

value of weapons purchased by the Philippines from **Israel** since 2018.

The country is the third biggest importer of arms from Israel, including those produced by **Elbit Systems**, which profited greatly from the **genocide in Gaza**.

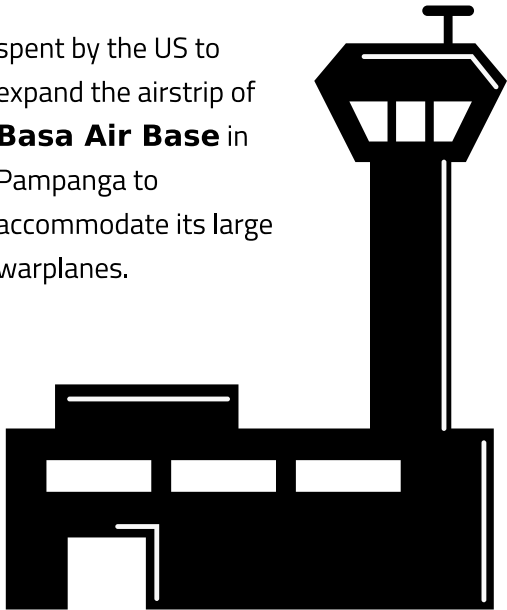


\$25 MILLION

spent by the US to expand the airstrip of **Basa Air Base** in Pampanga to accommodate its large warplanes.



This is located in an "EDCA site" and cannot be used by Filipinos unless permitted by Americans.



134 FILIPINOS

were in Gaza and were affected by Israel's bombing—**only 76 have been able to return to the Philippines** due to Israel's closure of borders and the Marcos regime's slow response.

Source: DFA, November 14, 2023



al-Shifa

biggest hospital in **Gaza** ruthlessly attacked by Israel on unfounded accusations that it is used by Hamas' armed forces.

36 hospitals have been rendered useless due to Israel's relentless attacks.

Source: WHO, November 17, 2023

Non-stop US war preparations in Asia

The US is steadily expanding its military presence in Asia, amid a potentially broader Middle East armed conflict, and the already prolonged proxy war it waged in Ukraine against Russia.

In the Philippines, the US is tightening its control of the Armed Forces of the Philippines through a series of wargames and permanent positioning of troops and military equipment on the country's land and seas. At any given day, its large ships carrying drones, warplanes and thousands of troops are found within Philippine territorial seas or adjacent seas under the veil of "freedom of navigation operations."

The US staged at least 12 large wargames this year with the Philippine military in collusion with the Marcos regime. These do not yet include the equally big, if not bigger unilateral, bilateral and multilateral wargames conducted in the country's sovereign waters without the participation, authority or even knowledge of the Philippine puppet state.

The US mobilizes not only its own troops in wargames, but also allied troops from Europe, North America and Asia. On land, a total of 40,000 troopers participated in US wargames. The biggest of these is Balikatan 2023, where 12,200 American troopers (out of a total of 17,600) were involved in artillery shelling, aerial bombings, missile launches, attack exercises and more.

These are part of the 496 agreed US military activities in the country for 2023. Thus, the US conducts military activities and civil-military operations all year long with AFP forces and machinery under full US military control.

To sustain an increasing number of American troopers, "EDCA sites," or bases and military facilities where the US has extra-territorial

rights, are undergoing full-blast repairs. At least 15 facilities of 32 approved projects in these bases are being hastily completed by AFP minions. The latest is the completion of the 3-kilometer airstrip at Pampanga's Basa Airbase.

Sixty-three "new facilities" were even added, based on the September meeting of Mutual Defense Board-Security Engagement Board. It also set the launching of more than 500 war games and other military activities for 2024. At the same time, the two states announced the addition of bases to the existing nine "EDCA sites."

"Attack forces" against China

In September, the US announced the deployment of the Marine Rotational Force—Southeast Asia (MRF-SEA), a task force assigned to launch "back-to-back" wargames in the region. It launched Sama-Sama 2023 which ran for 12 days in October and attended by over 1,000 troopers from the US, the Philippines, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, Malaysia and the United Kingdom.

Since November 9, it launched Kamandag 7 in Palawan, Zamboanga, Tawi-Tawi and Batanes, with 3,000 troopers from the Philippines, US, South Korea and Japan participating. Before this, the US conducted in the Philippine Sea



the 5-day Multi-Large Deck Event starting November 4, a wargames excluding AFP participation.

The US deployed the MRF-SEA for the second year to serve as "forward-positioned" or advanced US troops in Southeast Asia. It uses the legitimate grievance of Filipinos against China's aggression in the West Philippine Sea to position large number of troops within the country's territory.

Apart from the wargames in Philippine territories, MRF-SEA conducted the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training in Brunei, Marine Exercise in Indonesia, and Exercise Valiant Mark in Singapore. These wargames are focused mainly on training US Marines, "in tandem" with "local armies," to become the US Navy's attack force or strike force. This is in accordance with the US Marine Corps's Force Design 2030 aiming to prepare such units for a naval war against China which the US foresees.

AB

AFP abducts, summarily kills 3 Red fighters in Mindoro and Sultan Kudarat

Three Red fighters were killed while in military custody in the past two weeks. In Oriental Mindoro, Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA)-Mindoro, Jethro Isaac Ferrer (Ka Pascual) and Peter Rivera (Ka Rochie) were captured and summarily killed in Barangay Buong Lupa, Gloria on November 13. The military made false claims that they were killed in an encounter that same day. They also took Ka Jasel who still has not been surfaced.

In Sultan Kudarat, the 37th IB captured and also executed Red fighter Rafael Zambrano (Ka Dodong/Tres) last October in Sityo Surong, Barangay Hinalaan, Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat. He was taken from a house in Sityo Bugkog, Barangay Limulan on October 8 and subjected to torture. On the morning of October 11, his remains were found in Sitio Kalamagan, Barangay Limulan where the military falsely claims an "encounter" took place on the night of October 10.

In Negros Occidental, 15th IB forces killed farmers Waren Cadarin and Jovy Moreño and falsely claimed they died in an encounter in Barangay Yaoyao, Cauayan, on November 7. Cadarin was abducted by

soldiers from his farm in Sityo Indangawan, Barangay Manlucahoc, Sipalay on November 4. His family reported his disappearance to the police and local radio.

Arrest. Soldiers of the 94th IB and local police illegally arrested and detained civilians Joel Casusa and Jenny Radles on November 8 in Sityo Pisok, Barangay Buenavista, Himamaylan City, Negros Occidental. Casusa was former chairman of the local association of farmers in Barangay Buenavista, while Radles is an active member. Casusa was illegally arrested in 2019. The military falsely accuses them of being NPA members captured after an encounter in the area.

Abduction. In Batangas, state

forces abducted in succession fisherfolk organizer Mariano Jolongbayan on November 17 in Lian and youth organizer Karla Mae Monge on November 20 in Tuy town. Their relatives demand the safe surfacing and release of the two.

Harassment. Military forces harassed and intimidated the family of activist Kristel Asilom, Anakbayan-Bulacan youth leader on November 11. In Davao City, NTF-Elcac elements harassed labor leader Paul John Dizon last November 13. Soldiers went to both their relatives' houses. Dizon was threatened with criminal charges if he did not cooperate.

Illegal search. Soldiers of the 62nd IB barged in and ransacked the houses of farmers Maximo Cañete in Barangay Amuntay and Melvin Vilando in Barangay Santol, both in Binalbagan, Negros Occidental on November 13. They were accused of being supporters of the people's army and threatened with death.

AB

Highest tribute to Comrade Josephine Mendoza

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the entire revolutionary movement pay highest tribute and give their Red salute to Comrade Josephine Mendoza (Ka Sandy), Committee Central member and second deputy secretary of the regional Party in Southern Tagalog.

Ka Sandy passed away on November 10 at the age of 59. In various places of her revolutionary work, she was also known as Nene, Minerva and Victoria Mirayan.

Ka Sandy devoted more than four decades of her life serving the revolution and the oppressed and exploited masses in the countryside and urban areas of the region.

Ka Sandy was a product of the

outbreak of the movement against the Marcos Sr dictatorship in the 1980s. She joined the New People's Army (NPA) in 1984 and served in the leading committees of the Party and NPA in the guerrilla fronts in Mindoro and as deputy secretary of the CPP committee in Palawan in the 1990s.

She contributed greatly to the revitalization of the urban revolu-



tionary movement in the region from the 1990s. She led many mass struggles under the successive regimes of Estrada, Arroyo, Aquino, Duterte until the return of the Marcos family to power.

Dispossession and environmental destruction in Camarines Norte mining

Mt. Labo Exploration and Development Corporation (MLEDC) is re-accelerating open-pit mining in the town of Labo in Camarines Norte. It is one of 11 mining operations in the province plundering land here. The company is jointly owned by Canadian and Australian companies and the Villar family.

MLEDC operates the Mabilo Project to mine gold and copper. It covers 3,484.2 hectares of land in Barangay Dumagmang. In addition, it has an exploration permit covering 165.9 hectares. The company has drilled 112 large boreholes for soil analysis here since 2011. It has been granted a license to operate until June 27, 2041.

The company drools over what it estimates to be 1.97 million ounces of gold and 472,000 tons of copper from these mines. It earmarked \$17.4 million for operations which it estimates will bring them \$52 million in annual profits.

It will scrape all minerals through open pit mining, the worst mining procedure, which will destroy mountains and poison rivers and the ocean. Using this method, poison and pollution will not be contained in areas covered by the operations, and will contaminate water and farms.

Dispossession and fascism

Roads are now being expanded in the barangays of Exciban and Dumagman for the unbridled passage of MLEDC's huge mining machinery. An estimated 100 families fear eviction from this expansion. They fear of being driven away and sinking deeper into poverty. The company offers a meager ₱25,000 for those who will be evicted from their land.

Residents also fear the presence of military and police who act as

MLEDC's agents and protectors. They know it will target anyone expressing grievances and opposition.

Soldiers are currently stationed and encamped in the adjacent barangays of Exciban, Dumagmang, Malaya and Bagong Silang 1. Combat and psywar operations are relentlessly conducted by its troopers in these barangays.

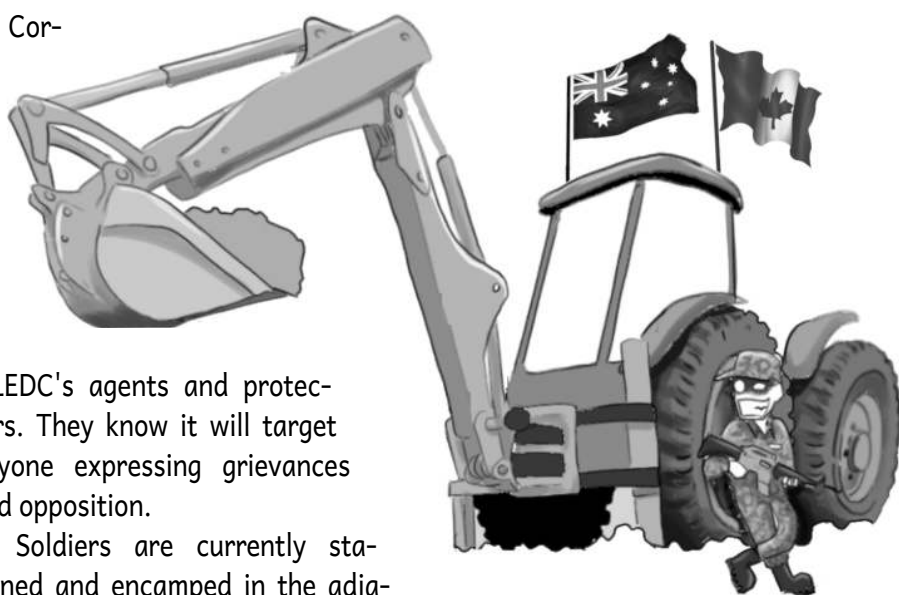
Foreign ownership

The MLEDC is actually controlled by big foreign capital. On paper, it is a partnership of Filipino company SageCapital (60%) and foreign SRM Gold Limited (40%), a company based in the British Virgin Islands. SRM Gold Limited is owned by the Australian company RTG Mining Inc. Meanwhile, SageCapital is owned by the Filipino company TVI Resource Development Phils Inc in partnership with the Canadian company TVI Pacific Inc and the Villars.

Even before the current MLEDC arrangement, it was anomalously involved in violation of laws of reactionary government covering foreign company ownership. In August, the manipulation of former foreign companies invested in the MLEDC was revealed. From 2011 to 2015, company directors involved were charged.

Driving out destructive mining

Residents of Barangay Dumagmang and its neighboring barangays



have long opposed foreign mining. In 2007, more than 3,000 families benefited from the successful campaign to evict MLEDC (then, the El Dore Mining Corporation) from 400 hectares of land it seized in the barangay.

Residents courageously built a barricade in front of the mine at Sitio Nalisbitan, Barangay Dumagman. Residents and peasants asserted their rights to the land. The mass campaign was prolonged and sustained. People ate, slept and constantly congregated at the barricades as a display of unity.

During this time the NPA-Camarines Norte struck at the company. The people's army launched a raid on October 4, 2007 where it confiscated 30 weapons from guards securing the mine. The fighters burned all operating equipment and seized its weapons.

Due to the successful eviction of the El Dore foreign company in the area, the land was restored to the farmers. The masses benefited from the gold of their land which they obtained through small mining operations, and developing their own corporation and cooperatives.

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