

EDITORIAL

# Advance and thoroughly carry out the rectification movement!

Party cadres and committees around the country welcomed the call of the Central Committee in its statement on the Party's 55th anniversary to advance and thoroughly carry out the rectification movement to strengthen the Party in its leadership of the Filipino people's resistance to the US-Marcos regime and the people's democratic revolution.

Cadres, mass activists and fighters were filled with new revolutionary energy and determination. They were roused by the Central Committee's analysis of the current situation and its self-critical assessment of the revolutionary movement in recent years. They are fully determined to rectify errors, weaknesses and shortcomings, and strengthen the Party and the Philippine revolution.

The Party and the Central Committee shined a light on the path to

renew the strengthen and advance the revolution in the coming period. It repudiated the bourgeois and petty bourgeois thoughts and mode of thinking within the party. These have caused the Right and "Left" errors, weaknesses and opportunist tendencies which have hindered the revolution's progress in recent years. These mistakes have led to losses and reversals in the field of armed struggle, as well as in the field of the revolutionary mass

movement in the cities and countryside.

The rectification movement is mainly a study movement on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the Party's basic principles. It aims to further strengthen the Party ideologically as the firm foundation for carrying out duties in various fields of revolutionary work.

Party cadres are determined to read and hold discussions as a way of reviewing the basic revolutionary principles. They are resolute in their decision to sharpen their proletarian minds to sharply analyze their experiences, self-criticize and forge a correct plan to advance.

The writings of the Party's founding chair Ka Jose Maria



Sison, as well as the classic writings of the great communist teachers Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao are actively being reviewed by cadres and revolutionary forces. They aim to raise their knowledge of theory to serve as guide to the study of practical or daily issues in waging armed struggle and advancing the revolutionary mass movement.

Along the framework of the rectification movement, a movement to conduct social investigation and class analysis was launched by the Central Committee at the beginning of the year to be conducted at all levels of the Party in both the countryside and cities--from the national leadership to the basic branches. The Central Committee is mobilizing cadres and activists to determine and report the concrete situation of the masses in their respective areas to deepen our grasp of the worsening degeneration of the semicolonial and semifeudal system. The particular aim of this movement is to identify the key problems and issues of the masses to serve as basis for plans to unite and mobilize them in the fight to defend their economic and democratic rights.

The Party's humble self-criticism and the initiation of the rectification

movement indicates its firm adherence to dialectical and historical materialism, and is the mark of a communist party that is faithful to the interests of the proletariat and all the oppressed and exploited classes. This way, the Party is confident of revitalizing the revolution, recovering losses and leading the revolutionary struggle to another phase of advance.

In particular, the Party believes that through the rectification movement, the revolutionary movement will advance in all-rounded way. The Party must handle and comprehensively advance the promotion of long-term people's war through a comprehensive and intense guerrilla warfare on the basis of expanding and deepening mass bases, or in other words, comprehensive and coherent promotion of armed struggle, agrarian revolution and strengthening the organized mass base.

The armed struggle is being waged in conjunction with advancing the revolutionary mass movement in the cities and the countryside, strengthening the antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal movement against the ruling oppressive, puppet and fascist US-Marcos regime, expanding



the united front, and tightening solidarity of the international anti-imperialist movement and world proletarian revolution.

The Party anticipates that under the guidance of the rectification movement, great strides will be made in the coming years. Even now, units of the New People's Army are working hard to break free from the enemy's massive focused military operations. The NPA is firmly determined to widen its guerrilla fronts and expand the mass base, while thoroughly fighting alongside the peasant masses against the AFP's maniacal and blood-thirsty war of armed suppression.

In the face of the worsening rural suffering, the Party sees the mobilization of hundreds of thousands to millions of peasants and minority masses across the country against worsening forms of feudal and semifeudal exploitation, and against land grabbing and the aggressive entry of mining operations, plantations, infrastructure, ecotourism and other projects that plunder wealth and the environment.

In the face of the worsening suffering in the cities, the Party sees the heightening of the economic and political struggles of various democratic sectors against the US-Marcos regime's pro-imperialist and oppressive policies. The growth of the revolutionary movement in the cities will directly serve the growing support for and mass recruitment of workers, workers, young students, teachers and other intellectuals to the NPA.

The first and second great rectification movements were crucial stages in the Party's history which both steered the Philippine revolution to the path of renewed advance. The current rectification movement that is being thoroughly being carried out by cadres and fighters--like the first and second--will undoubtedly bear historical significance in bringing the people's democratic revolution to a higher level of advance.

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# Gatherings commemorate 55th Party anniversary

**B**ranches and committees of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), units of the New People's Army (NPA), the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and its allied organizations launched celebrations, gatherings and study meetings in various parts of the country over the last two weeks of December 2023. This was to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the Party last December 26.

The gatherings discussed mainly the Party's Central Committee (CC) statement on the occasion of the anniversary. The discussions centered on the Party rectification movement spearheaded by the CC.

The Party called to "decisively and vigorously carry forward a comprehensive rectification movement to wage a crucial struggle to repudiate the pernicious effect and influences of various strains of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois subjectivism."

In some areas, a simple get-together and program was held with the masses. There were also cultural performances. These activities were held despite focused military operations in several fronts, and in secret gatherings in the city unknown to the enemy.

Before and on the day of the anniversary, Party cadres and members, including those within the people's army, also took pledges to strengthen their commitment to the constitution and its program.

## KM in Southern Tagalog

Among those who celebrated were hundreds of young people from different parts of Southern Tagalog led by Kabataang Makabayan (KM) in the region. Its chapters discussed the statement of the CC and the Party Regional Committee. Some of them celebrated in the guerilla fronts along with the NPA.

According to Karina

Mabini, the KM regional branch spokesperson, it is only proper to review both the achievements and weaknesses in order to continue advancing wave upon wave with the people. The initiations of the rectification movement was warmly received by their membership.

In the gathering of its urban chapters, KM-Southern Tagalog stated that its program includes exposure plans with NPA units. KM-Southern Tagalog members who previously immersed in the people's army unit also shared their experience in said activity.

Meanwhile, KM members felt elated and secure during celebrations in a unit of the people's army. According to some attendees, "it raises our spirit to continue mass campaigns and advance the revolution." At a coffee session before returning to the city, visitors shared how they immediately felt secure

and relaxed when they reached the guerrilla front and found their comrade Red fighters there. Some of the members of KM-Southern Tagalog decided to stay behind to become fulltime fighters.

## Greetings from the international community

Various international parties and organizations also conveyed solidarity and greetings on the occasion of the Party's anniversary. Organizations from India, Turkey, the United States, and Ireland, and the Friends of the Filipino People in Struggle (FFPS) issued statements of solidarity.

In a video-statement, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) honored the CPP for over five decades of leading the Filipino people's national-democratic struggle.

"Since over five decades ago, the Philippines' national-democratic struggle has been advancing under the guidance of the CPP Central Committee despite countless trials and rectifications and weaknesses and twists and turns," according to the CPI (Maoist).

Anti-Imperialist Action-Ireland recognized the Party's "bold new step" in launching the rectification movement. The group says "it will produce a new generation of revolutionary flag-bearers and revolutionaries from among the Filipino people." They added that they have full confidence in the Party and are proud to be witnessing another important phase in the Philippine revolution.



# US-China strife and the deepening conflict within the ruling class

In an interview in December 2023, Teresita Sy-Coson, vice-chairperson of SM Investment Corporation, bemoaned over what she said was the "antagonistic approach" of the Marcos Jr government towards China. She was referring to the series of open criticisms by the regime's officials over skirmishes between Philippine military ships and the Chinese coast guard in the last months of 2023. On US prodding, the AFP intensified its "supply missions" for the shipwrecked BSP Sierra Madre in Ayungin Shoal. Chinese forces have arrogantly and aggressively confronted these.

These confrontations, accompanied by US flights of jet fighters and armed drones, have raised the possibility of an armed encounter at sea. Like China, the US maintains a constant, in fact, larger, military force not only in the South China Sea, but within the Philippines itself. Sy was the first big bourgeois-comprador to openly express disapproval against the Marcos regime's

"aggressive interactions" with China. She clearly indicated the negative implications for local businesses and investments tied to Chinese capital. "China is very close to us, we cannot afford to be too antagonistic," Sy said in a Bloomberg magazine article published on December 14. "We don't want to get involved in US-China tensions," she said.

The Sy family is among those who benefited greatly from the influx of Chinese surplus capital into the Philippines which the US encouraged since the 1990s. Under the banner of "globalization" and "free trade," US and China conspired to open the markets of the Philippines and other underdeveloped countries to dump their surplus capital and products. This, however, did not prevent the outbreak of inherent competition in the form of a trade war between the US and the emerging Chinese imperialist power.

According to the CPP Central Committee in its December 26 statement, "the US drive to undermine China is a reversal of the long period of collusion between the two imperialist powers to impose a neoliberal policy regime in the Philippines since the 1990s"

Since 2000, the annual value of Philippine imports from China grew by 42%. In 2016, China surpassed Japan as the nation's largest trade source. Today, it is the Philippines' largest source of imported materials and products, and the second largest export market. One of these products is refined oil products, which is key to the local economy's operation.

Nevertheless, China has been able to dump less capital in the form of foreign direct investment compared to the US. (See table). But it has gradually grown and in 2022, China's FDI in the Philippines reached \$1.11 billion. Some studies also estimate that China's FDI has reached \$2.5 trillion from 1990 to 2015.

## Bourgeois and bureaucrat Chinese camp

The CC also said, "the Chinese financial oligarchy used this period to expand commercial and financial

*"US-China..." Continue on page 5*



operations in the Philippines, alongside that of US and Japanese banks, and build its own base among the bourgeois compradors and bureaucrat capitalists."

China aggressively expanded its influence in the country during the Arroyo regime. From 2001-2010, it signed 15 bilateral agreements and 20 major projects. Many of these contracts were discontinued over exposure of gross corruption and anomalies of those involved. During this period, the partnership between China and Enrique Razon was formed to control the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines. Razon later sold his shares to the Sy and Cojuito families, the current Chinese partners.

The tie-ups of the biggest Filipino bourgeoisie and Chinese companies continued under Benigno Aquino III. Like how the US partners with various business chambers, China channeled its investment into the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Inc. China also granted capital and contracts to so-called Filipino "taipans," to expand businesses in Beijing, Shanghai and other major cities.

The partnerships between the Filipino bourgeoisie and bureaucrats and China was most apparent during the Rodrigo Duterte era. His cronies, including Davao-based businessmen, entered into all sorts of contracts. The most prominent crony is Dennis Uy, who partnered with China in an attempt to build a telecommunications infrastructure and devoured many companies in a short period of time. Razon, the Gatchalians and many others clearly benefited from the contracts.

Even during the US-Marcos Jr regime, the local bourgeoisie continued to seek Chinese capital. In January 2023, Ferdinand Marcos Jr visited China, where he signed 15 bilateral agreements between his and the Chinese governments. In

February 2023, the Senate ratified the country's entry into the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a Chinese initiative. RCEP is a Chinese instrument for the unimpeded dumping of its surplus products on Asian markets at the expense of local businesses and producers.

But conditions seem to have changed in recent months when the Marcos government canceled its loans and contracts for large infrastructure projects such as dams, railway systems, and others funded by China. Among those canceled are the Philippine National Railways South Long Haul, Subic-Clark Railway and Mindanao Railway projects.

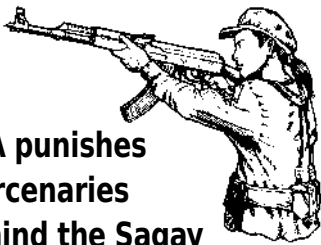
The regime is now in the process of transferring funding contracts to the ADB, the World Bank (the original proponent of some of the projects) and other US allies. The US also urged the cancellation of reclamation projects in Manila Bay near its embassy on Roxas Boulevard.

These measures have brought about new conflicts among the bourgeoisie and bureaucrats competing for lucrative contracts. **AB**

Net flow of FDI, in million dollars		
Year	US	China
2005	267.18	-0.17
2007	655	-0.12
2010	229.19	-0.05
2015	633.72	0.57
2017	472.85	28.78
2020	161.62	58.9
2022	250.65	15.69
2023*	104.12	12.21

\*January-September 2023

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas



**NPA punishes mercenaries behind the Sagay massacre**

THE NEW PEOPLE'S Army (NPA)-Northern Negros launched simultaneous armed actions against the mercenary Saronas Group on January 2 in the town of Purok Kawayan, Barangay Bug-ang, Toboso, Negros Occidental.

The NPA ambushed and killed the leader of the group, Juvie Saronas. The tractor owned by his father was also paralyzed and burned. An M2 Carbine, a .45 Colt, a .357 revolver, a shotgun, various magazines and ammunition were confiscated from the house of the Saronas. Gadgets containing important information was also taken.

The group was involved in the massacre of nine sugarcane workers on October 20, 2018. The so-called "Sagay massacre" took place in Barangay Bulanon, Sagay City. It was also paid for and supported by the military and big comprador-landlords and hacenderos on the island.

The people of Northern Negros who suffered under the oppression and exploitation of the Saronas applauded the punishment which to them is justice attained.

Meanwhile, NPA-Central Negros ambushed CAGU element Sunnyboy Teves in Sityo Tulingon, Barangay Binubohan, Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental on December 27, 2023. Teves was involved in many crimes against the masses of Central Negros.

The NPA thanked the masses who helped carry out the armed action and their continued support for the people's army.

# AFP puppets still amassing profits under the Marcos Jr regime

Ferdinand Marcos Jr., along with his accomplices in Congress and the Senate, inserted ₱6.17 billion budget for the Department of National Defense into the 2024 national budget he passed and signed on December 20.

In addition, Marcos increased the budget of the Philippine Coast Guard by ₱2.8 billion and the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) by ₱1 billion. (The addition almost doubled NICA's budget from its original budget of ₱1.432 billion.)

Even during deliberations at the Congress and Senate levels alone, the defense budget was already raised by 21.6% from ₱203.4 billion in 2023 to ₱282.7 billion this year. Confidential and intelligence fund amounting to ₱1.5 billion was also added purportedly for operations in the West Philippine Sea. Taken together, the funding allocated to the DND and other security agencies is now the highest since 2017. This is equivalent to more than 1.25% of GDP, the highest in the past 15 years.

Martin Romualdez and Juan Miguel Zubiri, heads of Congress and Senate, say the additional funds are for "dealing with the threat" of China in the West Philippine Sea. DND Secretary Gilbert Teodoro meanwhile said that this is for the "intense and serious repair" of AFP military facilities and equipment. Both purposes serve the US aims of strengthening its power projection and war provocations in the South China Sea and building its network of military bases and facilities in AFP camps, all using the Filipino people's money.

Military funding was in-

creased after weeks of fending off the threats of destabilization by the Duterte faction. A number of military officers remain loyal to the clique, although many of the favored generals are already retired. Soldiers, as well as police, were fully satiated under Duterte. Their salaries were doubled and excessive amounts of benefits were given them. Hundreds of millions of pesos were rewarded to generals, commanders and soldiers for their extrajudicial killings, mostly of civilians. The Duterte clique poured funds for corruption in the form of the NTF-Elcac's Barangay Development Program. For six years, the group allocated billions of pesos to buy second-hand jet fighters, ships, drones, cannons and various other military equipment from the US and its allied countries, such as Israel.

At its core, the "modernization"

of the AFP is nothing but the sale and dumping of surplus and mostly old US equipment to arm its puppet army. Almost all of its purchased weapons are focused on "defeating" the revolutionary armed movement and not on the "external threat," as the AFP has repeatedly declared. The joint interest of the US and the AFP is to defeat the revolutionary movement because it is a threat to its hegemony in Asia due to the Philippines' unique geographical location in the region. For now, the US is strengthening the AFP's campaign to "crush" the New People's Army because it wants to fully use the puppet army to incite war with China.

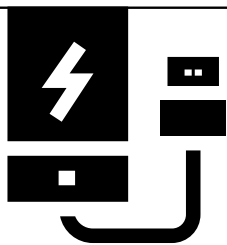
Like Duterte, Marcos uses the large funds for "modernization" to consolidate his hold on the mercenary military and buy the loyalty of the factions held by his rival clique.

The veil of "security" and confidentiality exempts the AFP's "modernization" from many of processes mandated by the Procurement Law. It avoids public bidding, to deliberately hide the process of arms procurement from the public. Thus, its officials easily manipulate major contracts and the accompanying service and parts contracts.

The AFP spent the biggest part of its funds to purchase jet fighters, drones, helicopters and cannons to launch a campaign of indiscriminate bombing and shelling. The Duterte regime started this campaign which has caused severe damage to civilian communities and forests.



75%



of electricity in the Philippines is generated by coal-powered plants.

In effect, the forced replacement of traditional jeepneys with electric vehicles will have minimal effect on reducing GHG emissions without changing the country's energy sources.



200

in 365 days a year, **Enrique Razon**, one of the biggest bourgeois compradors, flies in his private jet for business and family outings.

11%

increase in the net worth of the 13 richest Filipinos in 2023, from \$37.4 billion in 2022 to \$41.4 billion.

Private jets emit **10-20 times more** carbon emissions per person (per capita) than commercial airlines and 50 times more per person than trains. Razon has 3 such jets, and 2 private helicopters.

1.29 hectares

the average size of small or family-owned farms in 2018, down from an average of 2.84 hectares in the 1980s; 38% of these farms are not even half a hectare.

7.7 MILLION

of around 35 million hectares of watershed areas in the Philippines are protected by law. Thus, 54% are subject to deforestation, mining and destruction by greedy capitalists and bureaucrats.

Source: Legal Resources Center

17,000

students in SHS (senior high school) will be kicked out of schools after the Marcos regime removed funds for SHS programs in state and local universities and colleges.



2,201 CLASSROOMS

only were built by the DepEd by the end of 2023, not even half of the department's target of **5,000-6,000** for the year and extremely less than the **165,000 classroom deficiency**.

Source: ACT Teachers Party-list

472,000 FAMILIES

or **3 million Filipinos** were added to the number of impoverished people in the first quarter of 2023, compared to the number in 2018, **even with the very low poverty threshold of ₱91/day set by the government**.



Source: Ibon Foundation



# Military kills 4 civilians in Sorsogon, Batangas and Iloilo

Soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) killed two civilians on December 10 in Iloilo and December 17 in Sorsogon last year. Meanwhile, military forces also killed two civilians visiting their Red fighter relatives in Batangas on December 17, 2023.

Bloodthirsty fascists of the 31st Division Reconnaissance Company (DRC) killed a civilian who suffered from mental illness, Bombik Bajoyo, on December 10, 2023 in Sitio Tagbakan 1, Barangay Jayubo, Lambunao, Iloilo. The fascists falsely claim Bajoyo is a New People's Army (NPA)-Central Panay member who was supposedly killed in an encounter.

Residents of Sitio Jagnaya assert that Bajoyo was a civilian and that he had a mental disability. They say soldiers likely killed him when

they mistook him for a Red fighter. The victim has been living in Sityo Tagbakan for six years, residents say.

In Sorsogon, the 31st IB killed Joseph Esperanzate at his home in Purok Iraya, Barangay Union in Gubat, on December 17, 2023 around 4 a.m. Esperanzate had long took leave from the NPA and was leading a civilian life. Since 2019, he was being harassed by the military to enlist in E-CLIP but refused saying he wanted to live quietly.



In Batangas, the 59th IB killed civilians Pretty Sheine Anacta, 19, and Rose Jane Agda, 30, in indiscriminate firing in Barangay Malalay, Balayan, Batangas on December 17, 2023 at dawn. The two were visiting their NPA Red fighter relatives when they were killed.

Reports gathered by the NPA say Pretty Sheine passed out in the fascist troopers' first burst of shooting before they finished her off. Rose Jane's remains were found at the funeral home with her pants down, a sign she was likely sexually assaulted.

Meanwhile, the military abducted and still is secretly keeping wounded fighter Baby Jane Orbe (Ka Binhi). She was in no condition to fight. According to the rules of international humanitarian law, her rights must be recognized by enemy armed forces. Five Red fighters were also martyred in that incident.

**Abduction.** Troopers of the 62nd IB abducted young farmer Allan Paul Rayna at his family's house on December 23, 2023 in Sitio Tayubong, Barangay Puso, La Castellana, Negros Occidental. He has not been found to date. The Rayna family is extremely worried about the condition of their relative.

**Eviction.** The Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan (AFAB) gave 200 families living at the Narra Dormitory in Barangay Maligaya, Mariveles, Bataan only until January 6 to leave. Residents are being evicted because planned FAB expansion will cover the area.

## CPP condemns AFP's use of excessive force in Bukidnon aerial bombing

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of the Philippines (CCP) strongly condemned the "disproportionate use of force" or excessive use of firepower against units of the New People's Army in Bukidnon last week of December. This violates international humanitarian law which guides the conduct of modern warfare.

The Tactical Air Wing of the 4th ID dropped four bombs on a guerrilla camp in Barangay Can-ayan, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon on December 25, 2023. Two days later, it dropped more bombs in Sitio Bagong Lipunan, Barangay Linabo in the town of Quezon. The dropping of several 250-pound bombs, and the sowing of terror among the people by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in Bukidnon, was excessive and indiscriminate.

The bombing killed 10 individuals who were then in the NPA camp. The bodies of the killed were mangled due to the AFP's use of excessively powerful bombs, reports indicate. The AFP also used ATMOS 2000 howitzers bought by the AFP from Israel.

The use of powerful bombs is "inherently indiscriminate", endangers the lives and livelihoods of civilians and brings extensive destruction to the environment. In reality, the impact of the AFP's aerial bombardment is beyond ground zero. It disrupted the peace, caused widespread fear, panic and trauma to the residents of the nearby communities and destroyed mountain resources that are their source of food and livelihood.

The AFP carried out the attack amid the traditional holiday celebrations and a two-day unilateral ceasefire by the CPP on December 25, 2023 to December 26, 2023 night.



# Dam projects bring twin disasters to people of Ilocos Norte

The Cabacanan Small Reservoir Irrigation Project (CSRIP) and the Ilocos Norte-Ilocos Sur-Abra Irrigation Project (INISAIP), with construction being rushed in early 2024, bring twin threats of deluge to Ilocos Norte. The National Irrigation Agency (NIA) makes hollow claims that these will benefit the peasant masses and national minorities in the province and adjacent areas. In fact, they face the prospect of dislocation with their ancestral land threatened with seizure, destruction of the environment and widespread flooding.

Goaded by imperialist institutions and foreign companies, "development" projects such as CSRIP and INISAIP are being rammed by the US-Marcos regime. The same projects were first floated during the time of his dictator father. Currently, Marcos is using El Niño and the possibility of a widespread drought as an excuse.

### Cabacanan Dam

The Isnag-Yapayao people gravely fear the distress that the CSRIP will bring to the mountains of Barangay Saguigui, Pagudpud. The project will rise on the ancestral land covering a "disputed area" between Isnag-Yapayao tribe of barangay Dampig and Caunayan and people claiming to be indigenous to Barangay Saguigui.

Part of the ₱837-million CSRIP project, Cabacanan dam measures

95.10 meters high from its foundation and 248 meters wide at its base, with a capacity of 2.87 million cubic meters. According to the minorities, when the dam releases water into the 9.88 meter-wide spillway, or as wide as a four-lane road, it will flood and possibly wipe out the barangays downstream. It is also near the Bangui and Vigan-Aggao fault lines that run along Pagudpud making it vulnerable to earthquakes.

The Isnag Yapayao Balangon Tribal Council Inc (IYBTC) and Isnag Yapayao Ugayam Tribal Council (IYUTC) from Barangay Dampig and Caunayan have expressed strong opposition to the said project. To railroad the project, NIA is using Emilio Rabago who claims ownership of the ancestral land and misrepresents himself as "tribal chieftain" in Barangay

Saguigui.

The groups condemned the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)-Ilocos Norte for their deception, and for rushing the process of obtaining a free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) for the CSRIP. "Pressure like this on national minorities trample on our right to self-determination".

They claim the NIA did not comprehensively and truthfully explain the project's objectives and all its details. The NIA concealed the fact that CSRIP is a project for hydropower and tourism by a Japanese company. The NCIP and NIA ignored the IYBTC and IYUTC resolutions which seeks to cancel the FPIC so they can resolve the "disputes".

Isnag-Yapayao leaders face relentless harassments due to their opposition. Since December 18, 2023, they have recorded cases of "visits" and "dialogues" by police which are actually forms of intimidation on Isnag-Yapayao leaders. Police criticize Isnag-Yapayao statements supposedly because these are "being exploited by left-leaning groups".

### Gigantic INISAIP Dam

INISAIP will cover 14,672 hectares of land in nine towns in Ilocos Norte, one in Ilocos Norte, and two in Abra for the construction of various infrastructure including a gigantic dam. The ₱25.7 billion project will be funded through a Private-Public Partnership. The NIA's partners for the project are the BPE Corp. (BPEC) and China Railway Construction Corp. Ltd.

The 126.41 meter high dam is the main part the project which will be built on the Palsiguan River in Lagayan, Abra. Its capacity is estimated to reach 147 million cubic

*"Dam projects..." continue on page 10*



# Relentless protest against PUV phaseout, set for January

Jeepney drivers and operators will continue to protest and mount mass actions against the forced franchise consolidation and the implementation of the sham Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP) starting in 2024. This is their response to the refusal of Ferdinand Marcos Jr to heed the demands of drivers and operators. According to the Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (Piston), Marcos' inaction proves his regime is "incompetent, a burden, and a puppet".

In December 2023, Piston and Samahang Manibela Mananakay and Nagkaisang Terminal ng Transportasyon (Manibela) demonstrated their opposition to the PUVMP in a series of transport strikes and widespread protests across the country, mainly in Metro Manila. It is estimated that around 4,000 people participated in the protest of the two groups in Mendiola in Manila on December 29, 2023. Drivers drove more than 330 jeepneys to the protest. Drivers and operators of Starter-Piston and Manibela from Southern Tagalog participated in

the protest in Manila.

In other parts of the country, united drivers and operators also joined mass actions and camps against the massacre of their livelihood. In Bacolod City, up to 2,000 people participated in the protest march and transport strike in the city on December 29, 2023. They marched to the municipal hall to demand accountability from the local government for implementing the PUV phaseout.

In Davao City, Transmission-Piston held a transport strike on December 27, 2023. It is estimated



that the group paralyzed 70% of all jeepney routes in the city. In Cebu City, members of Piston-Cebu camped at the office of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) Region 7 on December 28 to December 29, 2023. In Iloilo City, drivers and operators held a transport strike and camped at the LTFRB Region 6 office on December 27 to December 28, 2023.

Piston believes that only by strengthening their forces and continuous collective action this 2024 will they be able to resist the regime's PUVMP plan that will massacre their livelihood.

Meanwhile, on December 28, 2023, the Supreme Court ordered the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the LTFRB to comment on the petition filed by Piston against the implementation of the forced consolidation of the franchise and PUVMP. The two agencies were given up to 10 days to comment. **AB**

"Dam projects..." from page 9

meters. For this, 9.1 kilometer long tunnels will be built from Abra to Nueva Era, Ilocos Norte, boring holes into the mountains and destroy the environment. Another dam will also be built to catch water from Abra.

The NIA reports roads to the Palsiguan River have began to be paved to speed up transportation for construction.

### Who will benefit?

It is clear to the indigenous peoples and peasant masses in the province of Ilocos that these projects are not to help them. They said, "Instead of hydropower dams, the [billions] should be used to repair damaged irrigation systems and improve them."

The government is only building infrastructure that is of no use to them, Isnag-Yapayaos say. This is similar to the windmill and solar farm projects built in Ilocos Norte. They said, "[windmills and solar farms] occupy more than 30,000 hectares of our ancestral land...these do not serve the masses of our province and instead only bring profit to big businessmen."

This includes the expansion of windmills by the NLREC company in Pagudpud which cover 1,000 hectares of Isnag-Yapayao ancestral land. The Ilocos Norte Solar and Wind Power Plant is also being built in Burgos, Bangui, Pasuquin and Vintar covering 2,346 hectares of mountains and plains where thousands of minorities and peasants live.

In Ilocos Norte, and even in other parts of the country, the NCIP has been swindling people to acquire FPICs to grab land. This is a blatant violation of the integrity of the indigenous peoples. **AB**



### PhilFoods union fights for CBA.

The Unyon ng mga Panadero of PhilFoods Fresh Baked Product Inc.-OLALIA-KMU protested before the National Conciliation and Mediation Board Region IV-A in Laguna on January 4 amid a deadlock in negotiation for their Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Four rounds of negotiations have taken place but the company refuses to agree on the groundrules.