

EDITORIAL

Strengthen resistance to intensifying military intervention and US imperialist war-mongering

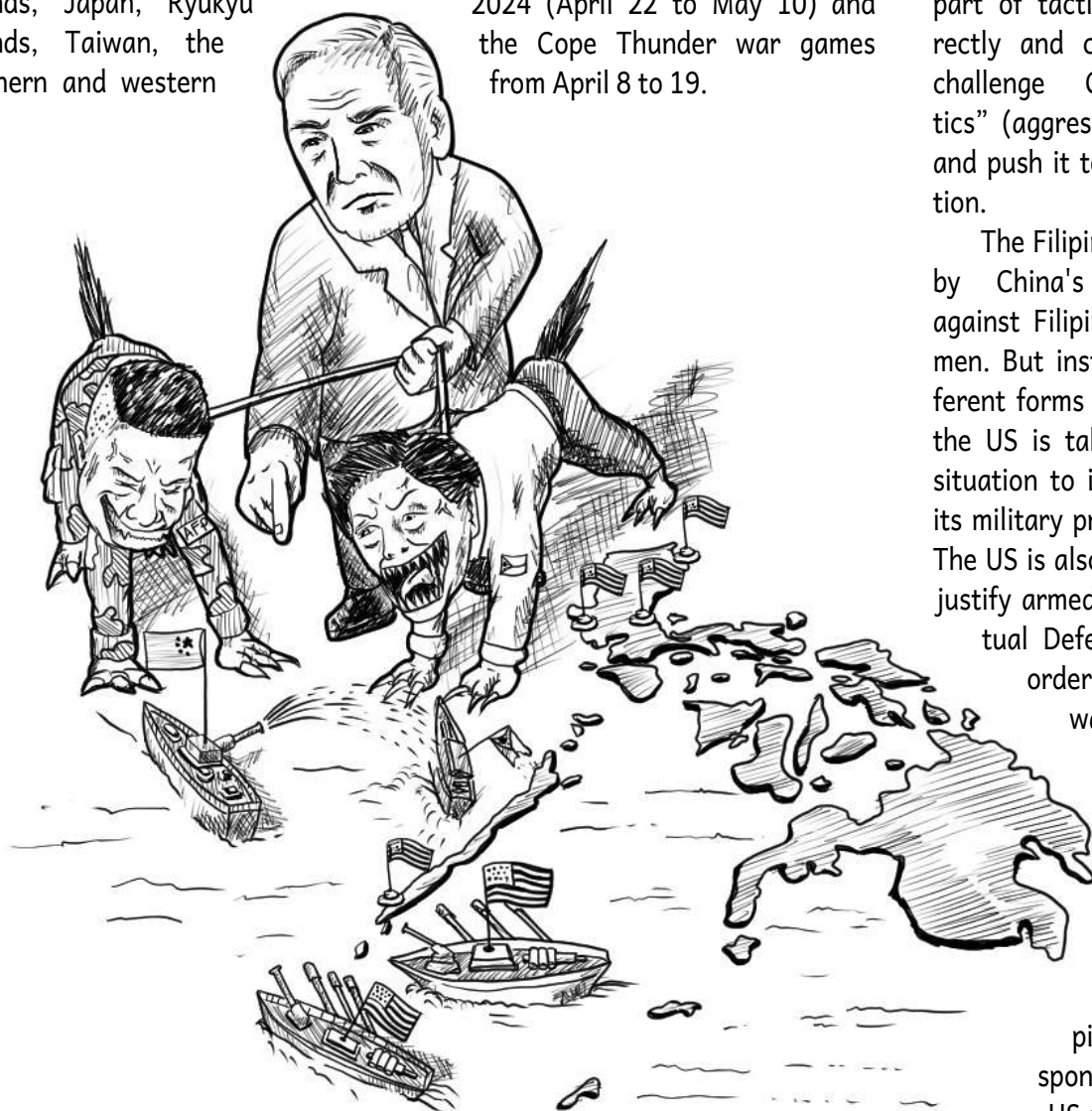
In the coming weeks and months, the Filipino people are certain to face intensified military intervention by US imperialism and its allies in the Philippines in the fight against China. It is not far-fetched, especially with US President Biden desperate to show off in the run-up to the November elections, that the offensive actions of the US and its allies against China will lead to armed confrontations before the end of the year.

The US is fueling military tensions in what it defined as the first-island-chain of countries and islands to surround China (from the Kuril Islands, Japan, Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan, the northern and western

Philippines and Borneo). The US is further raising the temperature with its scheduled mobilization of 11,000 American troops for the Balikatan 2024 (April 22 to May 10) and the Cope Thunder war games from April 8 to 19.

Earlier, key US military and security officials, including State Sec. Anthony Blinken, arrived one after another, and met with Ferdinand Marcos Jr and the AFP. Meetings were timed when public sentiments were high against China after it carried out another water bombardment against the Coast Guard's "supply mission" in the Ayungin Shoal. These "supply missions" form part of tactics that the US is directly and covertly instigating to challenge China's "gray tactics" (aggressive unarmed actions) and push it to use direct armed action.

The Filipino people are outraged by China's aggressive actions against Filipino vessels and fishermen. But instead of promoting different forms of peaceful resolution, the US is taking advantage of the situation to intervene and increase its military presence in the country. The US is also using the situation to justify armed action under the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), in order to fuel and ignite a war in the Asia-Pacific region in the not-so-distant future. Incited by the US, Marcos recently declared that with his "partner, friend and ally," the Philippines will "decisively respond" to China's attacks. US plans to incite a war is



also indicated by the AFP's new "deadline" for crushing all guerrilla fronts by March 31, dismantling all fighting units of the NPA by the end of June, and all regional committees of the CPP and NPA commands before the end of the year. The declaration made several times by Marcos that he wants to see the AFP committed to "external defense" is in line with the US's desire to fully utilize the AFP for preparing and inciting a war against China. For this, Marcos is ready to squander billions of people's funds to buy the outdated weapons being sold to the AFP by the US and its allies.

In the face of the looming threat of intensified US military intervention, a broad anti-imperialist movement must be developed in the coming weeks and months. The campaign and struggle against US military intervention must be carried out not only during the Balikatan, but throughout the year.

A plan for a massive education campaign in the countryside and cities must immediately be put together. Hold gatherings and widespread studies. Fully expose US war provocations and manipulation of Filipino sentiments against China, and its real aim of stationing troops

and weapons in the country, and selling more weapons to the Philippines and neighboring countries. As in its proxy war in Ukraine, and its genocide in Palestine in partnership with the Zionist regime in Israel, American weapon companies stand to earn big profits if a regional war breaks out in the Asia-Pacific.

Mobilize the entire nation to defend Philippine security in the face of US war provocations against China. Don't allow a repeat of the destruction and pain suffered by the country when the US and Japanese imperialists clashed here during World War II. Unite all democratic forces to resist US military intervention and call for the dismantling of its bases and facilities on Philippine land and waters. At the same time, demand that China leave Philippine



sovereign territories and stop obstructing Filipino fishermen from fishing in our own waters. Call on both China and the US to withdraw from and demilitarize the West Philippine Sea, while placing greater emphasis on exposing and condemning the US for its larger and more aggressive presence in Philippine waters and lands, and its direct war provocations.

Highlight the crimes committed by the US in the Philippines over the course of more than a century of domination and plunder. Expose human rights violations, bombings and other abuses in the intensified campaign of rural repression carried out by the US-funded, trained and armed AFP.


Link these to the widespread bombings carried out by US-Israel in Gaza, as well as in India. Strengthen the unity of the Filipino and Palestinian people and all oppressed peoples who are victims of US imperialism.

Strengthen further the network and alliances against US imperialist wars in different parts of the world. Amplify the call for the American people to unite with the Filipino people's struggle and oppose the Biden government for providing military aid and weapons to the Marcos puppet regime and abusive AFP.

Increasing numbers of people must be aroused, organized and mobilized against Balikatan, worsening US intervention, and war provocations. Aligned with the people's fight against "chacha" and the urgency of the people's demand for increased wages, well-being and rights, this struggle will further strengthen and galvanize the national-democratic mass movement.

The NPA is determined to strengthen itself and launch more and more tactical offensives, which are a crucial factor in hindering the US scheme of igniting an inter-imperialist war. Strengthen the NPA's recruitment and gather the broad support of the patriotic movement for the revolutionary armed struggle.

AB




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NPA celebrates 55th anniversary

United in spirit and with clenched fists, cadres and members of the Communist Party of the Philippines, fighters and commanders of the New People's Army (NPA), allied organizations of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the revolutionary masses celebrated the 55th anniversary of the NPA on March 29.

On the occasion of the anniversary, the Central Committee urged forces to look back at the achievements and shortcomings of the people's army during the past year, draw lessons, and forge plans to make bigger strides in waging revolutionary armed struggle in the coming year.

The Central Committee was pleased to report that the call for a rectification movement issued by the Party last December 2023 had been wholeheartedly welcomed by all regional Party committees and commands of the NPA. "They have responded positively and are presently carrying out summing-up conferences and study meetings to identify the errors and shortcomings in order to rectify these, and steadily and comprehensively carry forward all revolutionary tasks," according to the Central Committee.

The Party leadership also tasked the NPA to mount basic tactical offensives that it is capable of winning, that weakens the enemy by annihilating its armed forces part by part, and taking away its weapons. "We raise the capability of the NPA to wage war by waging war," it further stated.

Celebrations and activities

Beginning in mid-March, clandestine gatherings for the anniversary of the people's army were launched in guerrilla areas and cities, from Luzon to Mindanao.

On March 25, various revolutionary organizations in the National Capital Region (NCR) staged a rally at Recto Avenue, Manila to honor the NPA. Members of Kabataang Makabayan (KM) and Artista at Manunulat ng Sambayanan (Armas) led the NDF-NCR action. They said the armed struggle should be highlighted in all parts of the region and promoted as the main form of struggle and urge people to cherish it.

In Rizal, NDF-Rizal members distributed pamphlets to participants of the traditional Alay Lakad, in which millions of Catholics join, in Antipolo City last March 28. The next day, March 29, they displayed their artful streamer in the crowded areas of Taytay town.

KM chapters led celebrations inside main universities in the country. They painted calls and posted posters at the Polytechnic University

"NPA celebrates..." continue on page 4



Revolutionary celebrations in ICR

FULL OF REVOLUTIONARY enthusiasm and joy, the revolutionary forces and the masses celebrated the 55th anniversary of the New People's Army in different parts of Ilocos and Cordillera, including the urban areas of the region. During the celebration, the message of the Central Committee of the Party to the NPA on its 55th anniversary was read and discussed. They saluted the Red NPA commanders and fighters and paid tribute to the heroism of the revolutionary martyrs.

Celebrations were held at various gatherings such as the Advanced Party Course and Intermediate Party Course studies in the last week of March. The gatherings urged the younger cadres to spend time in the Red army and use the opportunities to learn, train and become good people's fighters both politically and militarily.

Cultural performances, such as poetry readings, dances and collective singing of revolutionary songs, as well as food, livened up the celebrations.

The celebrations in the Ilocos-Cordillera were a slap on the face of the AFP's Northern Luzon Command which declared having crushed the guerilla and revolutionary movement in the region. On full alert while guarding and surveilling even in the cities and urban centers, AFP and PNP forces looked stupid when right under their noses the revolutionary forces were raising their fists and echoing their vows to advance the people's war on the 55th anniversary of the NPA. AB



Theoretical conference on the economic crisis of imperialism, held

The International Theoretical Conference on Economic Crisis of Imperialism was successfully held from March 28 to March 29 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. It gathered 98 delegates and representatives from proletarian, anti-imperialist and democratic groups and parties from 18 countries. This is the second conference hosted by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). The first conference on imperialist war was held in October 2023.

The communique issued by the conference said the 2-day gathering discussed the current characteristics and patterns of economic crises under imperialism and amid intensifying inter-imperialist conflict. Discussions centered on 1) capitalist overproduction; 2) financial oligarchies and trade wars; and 3) the planetary crisis caused by imperialist greed and super-profit.

The Communist Party of the Philippines was among the major contributors submitting a document titled "Imperialist Economic Crises Show Moribund System is Ripe for Socialist Revolution." It discussed the stages that the general crisis capitalism went through under imperialism—from the first to its current fourth stage. It reviewed the history of the formation of such crises leading to the further decay of capitalism and the spread of socialist revolution throughout the world. It illustrates the level of decay of the current fourth stage of the general crisis, marked by worsening oppression and exploitation of the working class and other oppressed classes in the world under neoliberal policies.

The Communist Party of India (Maoist) also submitted a contribution. It discussed how the current economic situation is ripe for the resurgence of the proletarian revolutionary struggle.

Discussions focused on 17 submitted articles and speeches by representatives of communist parties, national liberation movements, and political formations from Australia, Belgium, Canada, India, Italy, Kurdistan, the Philippines, Turkey, and the US, as well as of anti-imperialist organizations representing women, migrants, agricultural workers, the urban poor, and scientists.



NPA-Quezon ambushes 85th IB

RED FIGHTERS OF the New People's Army (NPA)-Quezon (Apolonio Mendoza Command) carried out a daring ambush against a 30-strong unit of the 85th IB operating in Barangay Doña Aurora, Calauag on March 25, at 6 p.m. Three of the fascist soldiers were reported injured.

Ka Cleo del Mundo, spokesperson of the NPA unit in the province, said Red fighters blew up a command detonated explosive at the 85th IB, and the clash lasted for 10 minutes. The NPA unit safely withdrew. This again refuted the declaration of Quezon as "insurgency-free" in June 2023 and its categorization under "Stable Internal Peace and Security," she said.

In Agusan del Sur, the provincial NPA unit recently reported that it staged an ambush against operating troops of the 3rd Special Forces Battalion (3rd SFB) in Barangay Mabuhay, Prosperidad on January 19. Two fascist soldiers were killed in the attack including a mercenary officer.

"NPA celebrates..." from page 3

of the Philippines in Sta. Mesa, Manila, University of the Philippines (UP)-Visayas in Miag-ao, Iloilo, UP Los Banos, and UP Cebu.

Christians for National Liberation, Katipunan ng Gurong Makabayan, Makabayan Samahan Pangkalusugan, Liga ng Agam para Bayan, and Armas also painted graffiti in Quezon City, Pasig City and Manila City. The Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (Makibaka) issued a statement. They called for the participation of their respective sectors in the people's war and enjoined people to join the NPA.

NPA units also held gatherings and activities in all regions where they operate.

International greetings

Several parties and organizations overseas also extended greetings on the anniversary celebration of the NPA. In its statement, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) expressed confidence in the revolutionary movement in the Philippines that it will overcome temporary setbacks and obstacles and advance in its path.

The Friends of the Filipino People in Struggle and the Anti-Imperialist Action Ireland (AIAI) also expressed their recognition of the people's army. For their greetings, AIAI painted graffiti in Galway, Ireland.

The anniversary of the NPA was also celebrated in Amsterdam, the Netherlands which coincided with the conclusion of the theoretical conference initiated by the NDFP on March 28-29. The gathering saw 98 delegates from nine countries.

Toiling masses stage Calvary March in Metro Manila and Southern Tagalog

ORGANIZATIONS OF TOILING masses mounted the annual Kalbaryo ng Masang Anakpawis (The Cross of the Toiling Masses) last March 26, at Isetann, Recto Avenue in Manila City. Participants presented such issues as the intensifying economic crisis, reclamation in Manila Bay and demolition in Navotas, and the red-tagging of activist leaders and their communities. They raised calls for wage increases and an end to contractualization, union-busting, harassment of workers and mass unemployment in the national capital.

The Kalbaryo ng Timog Katagalugan was staged on March 24. Participants expressed opposition to charter change and the promotion of real land reform, living wages, national sovereignty, and just peace. The following day, they headed to the national capital to press their grievances before the departments of employment, education and the environment.

Rights groups earnestly fight for respect for international humanitarian law

KARAPATAN-SOUTHERN TAGALOG and other groups quickly dispatched teams to Batangas and Quezon last week to ensure that the reactionary state forces respect international humanitarian law. They assisted the peasant masses and supported the relatives of the New People's Army Red fighters in securing their rights.

In Batangas, the group and family handled the retrieval of the bodies of fighters Junalice Arante-Isita (Ka Arya), Bernardo Bagaas (Ka Mamay/Mike) and Erickson Cueto (Ka Ricky/Vale) who were killed in the attack by 59th IB on March 26 in Barangay Elvita (Tubahan), Rosario, Batangas.

In Quezon, they helped the family of Divine Sureta (Ka Zoe) and Paul Cruz (Ka Isko), fighters who were martyred in the Guiniyangan encounter on March 28.

On both occasions, they were subjected to pressure by police and military forces. The families suffered extreme delays in receiving the remains of their relatives, and even the communities where the vigils were held were disturbed. Despite this, they courageously asserted the rights of families and demanded respect for international humanitarian law.

The group also sent a team to Calauag, Quezon to find the whereabouts and condition of Randy Reota, who the military reported as a surrendered member of the NPA on March 25. They want to ensure that Reota's rights are respected.



Give aid and subsidies to those affected by El Niño!

Groups of farmers and fisherfolk staged protests before the offices of the National Food Authority (NFA) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) in Quezon City on April 3. They denounced the two agencies of the Marcos regime for their negligence and incompetence in providing support for farmers and fisherfolk extremely affected by the ravages of El Niño.

Boskalis Company, held liable for damage to Manila Bay.

Environmental groups, scientists, fishermen and coastal residents of Manila Bay protested before the embassy of The Netherlands on March 22 to hold Boskalis Westminster NV, a Dutch company, accountable for the damage caused by its dredging for a reclamation project in 2021-2023. This dredging is preparation for the construction of San Miguel Corporation's New Manila International Airport (NMIA) project in Bulacan. A similar protest was held at the main office of Boskalis in Papendrecht, The Netherlands.

UST students, unite against campus repression.

Students of the University of Santo Tomas staged a protest in front of its Manila campus on March 22 to condemn the university's repressive policies. The mass action follows expressions of unity by student councils, newspapers, and other campus organizations on March 20 against the UST administration. Rise for Education Alliance (R4E)-España led the activities.

Foreign ownership in schools and tuition fee increase, condemned.

Young students protested before the office of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in Quezon City on March 22 to condemn the US-Marcos regime's push for charter change that would allow 100% foreign ownership of schools in the country. They also condemned imminent tuition increase in private universities which they said will surely be approved by CHED which has always served as "rubber stamp" to these schools.

Nexperia workers fight new series of layoffs.

Workers at Nexperia Philippines, along with their supporters, protested on March 22 inside the Laguna Industrial Science Park to oppose the planned layoff of 54 workers in April. This is the company's second termination in eight months. They are aware the series of layoffs aims to dismantle the union that has achieved successes due to the collective action of workers in the past.

Rectification movement kicks-off in Agusan and Surigao del Sur

The New People's Army (NPA) successfully launched a series of studies and discussions in the provinces of Agusan and Surigao del Sur in the first quarter of 2024. Party committees and members ardently welcomed the Central Committee's call to launch a rectification movement through ideological activities, the local NPA unit has endeavored and resolutely launched studies and discussions amid the enemy's sustained operation.



They started with studying the Party's 55th anniversary statement where three groups graduated from staggered sessions. Members of the section and guerrilla front committees led and attended the first group. Of these, 74% were younger cadres, while 26% were older cadres. The entire study lasted 18 hours and 30 minutes. Comrades used the read-and-discuss and chalk-talk methods of discussion.

The collective discussion of comrades was vivified by sharing experiences in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses and in waging the people's war in the province, while humbly examining and accepting specific weaknesses and shortcomings that resulted in some failures in facing the enemy's attacks.

Meanwhile, comrades started

the second batch consisting of all Party members within the army from candidates and full members (40% and 60%, respectively). Comrades who previously graduated served as instructors. The discussion was made light by creating simple visuals such as a drawing on the world map so that students can more easily visualize the imperialist countries and where they are now launching proxy wars. Comrades were also shown the layout of underdeveloped countries or colonies and semicolonies that promote armed struggle. Although the method was still read-and-discuss, the total duration of the study was slightly shortened. In the third batch, some of the comrades with teaching potential boldly accepted the task of training to serve as instructors for the last batch consisting of Red fighters who were not yet Party members.

Comrades said studying the Party statement helped them a lot. It gave them new strength and boosted their commitment to firm up the decision to fight and continue the armed struggle.

"The Party as a

guide became more concrete because it allowed them to better understand the rapidly changing situation," said Comrade Del, one of the students. It also helped them regain their strength and overcome their negative thoughts. One of them is Ka Maja, a mother who sometimes is overwhelmed by her separation from her children.

It also challenged Che to be stronger and face the struggles of performing comprehensive work. "I felt the need to work twice as hard to advance and be a strong member of the Party," he said.

The succeeding discussions are part of the study of topics in Padepa (Pambansang Demokratikong Paaralan or National Democratic School) to review and understand the specific tasks from the Party committee level, to its entire membership, to the work in the platoon and its affiliates. The studies also prepares for the planned BKP (Basic Party Course).

All in all, the comrades are excited and enthusiastic to face the challenges having achieved the goal of starting the rectification movement, consolidating, identifying every detail of their shortcomings and errors, and overcoming weaknesses with determination to make even more progress in the future. AB



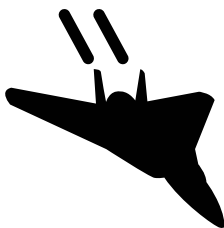
29% 

increase in the combined wealth of the three largest bourgeois-compradors (Manny Villar, Enrique Razon, Ramon Ang) in the Philippines last year, from ₱1.1 trillion to ₱1.4 trillion in March.


Meanwhile, the average workers' minimum wage increased by only 7% from ₱409 to ₱439 during the same period.

\$700 M 

military aid poured by the US into Taiwan to incite people to demand independence from China and use them in rivalry against China.



27 babies and children have died of starvation in Gaza. 

139 

employees of the **National Food Authority** were "unjustly and baselessly" suspended on allegations that they were involved in a "syndicate" within the agency.

COURAGE demanded for their immediate reinstatement.

April 1, 2016

Kidapawan Massacre occurred, in Kidapawan City, North Cotabato when police shot at a farmers' protest calling for proper state support amid severe drought caused by El Niño.

Three people died and more than 100 were injured during this massacre.

₱164.7B

Philippine budget deficit in the first quarter of 2024, 55% higher than the ₱106.4 billion deficit in the first quarter of 2023.

46

times since 1972 that the US used its vote in the United Nations Security Council to defend Israel's military aggression and occupation of the Palestinian territories.

It used its vote three times in just the last five months to prolong and intensify the genocidal war against the Palestinians in Gaza.

Primer

Ravages of El Niño: Drought, neglect and fascism of the Marcos regime

March 2024



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AFP bombings, extrajudicial killing and violence in the past week

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) dropped bombs in the border communities of Maria, Ilocos Sur and Pilar, Abra on April 2 at noon bringing terror to residents. At least 118 families or approximately 650 people evacuated due to the bombings and restrictions imposed on their livelihoods. Apart from this, hundreds of military troops swarmed into the area for counterinsurgency operations.

The use of powerful bombs is inherently indiscriminate, endangers the lives and livelihoods of civilians and causes extensive destruction to the environment. In fact, the impact of the AFP aerial bombing extends beyond ground zero, contrary to 501st IBde claims that the bombing was only focused on one unit of the New People's Army (NPA)-Abra.

Killing. The 62nd IB and the police shot and killed civilian farmer Marlon Catacio in Sitio Ngalan, Barangay Quintin Remo, Moises Padilla, Negros Occidental on April

4. To escape responsibility, the military falsely claimed Catacio was a Red fighter killed in an encounter. The victim's mother herself immediately refuted it.

Arrest. The 62nd IB arrested Ronald Cantela in Sityo Pitik-pitik, Barangay Luz, Guihulngan City on March 20. Soldiers falsely claim having confiscated a pistol from his house. Soldiers also destroyed the family's belongings during the search.

Sexual abuse. A drunken element of the 59th IB molested and sexually exploited a young girl in



Sityo Sales, Barangay Pook, Balayan, Batangas on March 28. This soldier also arbitrarily mauled the girl's 14-year-old boy companion.

Harassment. Combined forces of the police, military and barangay officials threatened and harassed a team of volunteers conducting an investigation into the impact of El Niño on farmers and residents of Barangay Sampaga, Balayan, Batangas in the early morning of March 24. AB

Swift action and vigorous demands force surfacing of 2 abducted activists in Pangasinan

Within three days, relatives, friends and fellow activists compelled state forces and the Marcos regime to release Francisco "Eco" Dangla III and Joxelle "Jak" Tiong. The two were abducted at 8 pm on March 24 in Barangay Polo, San Carlos City, Pangasinan. Human rights groups announced on March 27 that "the two are no longer in the hands of their abductors, extremely battered, but alive".

Witnesses say the two were abducted after an SUV blocked the tricycle they were riding. Two to three people from the SUV and another on a motorcycle mauled them and forced them into the vehicle, according to them. They also heard Tiong shouting for help.

Dangla, 39, is a former student of the University of the Philippines and is currently the spokesperson of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan)-Pangasinan. Tiong, 29 and a graduate of Universidad de Dagupan, is the coordinator of Kabataan Partylist in the province.

They are both convenors of the Pangasinan People's Strike for the Environment, a group that stands against the black sand mining and the construction of a nuclear power plant in the province. Prior to the incident, state armed forces have subjected Tiong and Dangla to relentless Red-tagging, surveillance, intimidation and other forms of harassment.

Massive search and public campaigning helped a lot to surface the victims. Their abduction incident was immediately reported and posted on social media, statements

were issued and drew the support of environmental groups and others. It was also promptly reported on television.

Human rights defenders also immediately protested on March 25 in Quezon City to condemn the abduction of the two by AFP and PNP agents. Teams were also formed to comb military camps and police stations for the victims' whereabouts.

As part of the campaign, relatives of Dangla and Tiong, along with Kabataan Representative Raoul Manuel, church people and other groups went to Camp Lt. Tito B Abat, Barangay Calaoacan, Manaoag, Pangasinan, camp of the 702nd IBde, 7th ID. They asked camp officers and filed an "inquiry" related to the report on the enforced disappearance of Dangla and Tiong. AB

Military "quarantine", prison of "surrendered" civilians in Surigao del Sur

Since units of the 3rd SFB and 75th IB swarmed Surigao del Sur in 2020, more people suffered the brutality of militarization and fell victim to the fake surrender campaign of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Most of them are Lumads.

Under the guise of the Retooled Community Support Program (RCSP) and Enhanced Community Livelihood and Integration Program (E-CLIP), soldiers and police go house to house carrying lists of their targets in the fake surrender campaign. Despite not being charged, those on the list are forced to "surrender" and undergo "voluntary detention" in the camp to "clear" their names. They were also promised to be released within three to six months after "clearing" their names. Those who do not surrender are threatened with various charges. Due to fear, some were forced to "surrender" and go into "quarantine" while fabricated cases

against them were being processed.

In truth, the military's "quarantine" comprise individuals associated with an armed movement that the state arbitrarily and baselessly considers "terrorist." Military forces claim their surrender is "voluntary" since no arrest warrant has been issued against them. Many of them are not brought before courts, have no legal representation and are denied other rights. Such arrests and detentions violate basic civil rights, and even international humanitarian law.

Fake surrenders, illegal and secret arrests and detentions form part of the operationalizations of the fascist Anti-Terror Law. This

law allows for the arbitrary listing of anyone as "terrorist," and for arrest and detention beyond 24 hours without a clear charge.

Military milking cow

Peasant victims are heavily burdened by this scheme that requires them to post bail for trumped-up cases. Many of them are forced to sell their lands and borrow high-interest loans to raise bail ranging from the usual ₱30,000 to ₱120,000.

Despite having posted bail, their ordeal is not yet over. Adding to their suffering is the military pressure to betray their comrades and leaders, to spy on those suspected of being linked with the NPA, and to report if they see signs or NPA camps.

Other victims charged with trumped-up criminal charges such as murder and attempted murder are transferred to the provincial or city jail, where there is no guarantee that they will ever be released.

Financial aid that "surrenderers" are supposed to receive under the E-CLIP are being used by AFP and PNP officials as milking cows. "Surrenderers" did not receive a single centavo from this program. Soldiers pocket more money when they imprison more peasants.

Illegal arrests and detentions aim to undermine the strong unity of the people of Surigao del Sur and end their three-decade struggle and resistance against the entry of logging concessions and foreign mining companies which have long been drooling over the natural resources protected by their ancestral lands.

AB



Farmers' protest against liberalization surges again in India

In March, the Communist Party of India (CPI)-Maoist urged thousands of farmers to continue their protest until their grievances were met. Since mid-February, an estimated 30,000-50,000 farmers have continued their actions to demand fair prices for their products and for the fulfillment of the promises of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over the past two years.



Driving their tractors, the farmers planned to take their protest to the Indian capital, New Delhi, but were blocked and dispersed in Shambu, a town 200 kilometres from the capital. Since 13 February, soldiers and police have repeatedly broken up their protests, using drones to drop teargas bombs and firing live ammunition and rubber bullets. At least two demonstrators have been killed and hundreds injured. The attack left some people deaf and blind. Most of the protesters were from the states of Punjab and Haryana.

On March 14, 5,000 people led by the group Samyukt Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha marched to Delhi. They represented at least 40 peasant unions participating in the protest for a dialogue with the Indian government.

The new wave of action is a continuation of more than a year of farmers' protests and camp outs in 2020-2021 that opposed the passage of three laws aimed at liberalizing the agricultural sector. One of the promises made by Narendra Modi, the prime minister of India, was to double the income of farmers before the end of his current term in 2025.

Two years after the promises,

farmers' incomes fell by more than half. Worse, the Modi regime attempts to ram trade liberalization and privatization of agricultural services without going through parliament.

In the current action, the farmers demand that the state adopt the minimum price support (MSP) or the state's purchase price of the products against trader-driven devaluation and sudden falls in the market price. They said the MSP should be set at 50% higher than their cost of production, to ensure they can support their families. They demand coverage for all crops, and not just 23 crops as implemented by the BJP.



In this regard, they called for the cancellation of the agreements India entered in the World Trade Organization and for not entering into any "free trade" agreement. They condemned the push of a powerful bloc at the WTO to scrap the MSP system as a form of subsidy. They also oppose the WTO's push for removing subsidies on fertilizer, pesticides, seeds, electricity and other services that farmers desperately need.

Farmers demand the cancellation of their debts, which they successfully achieved in their 2020-2021 mass actions. They also called for justice for the 750 farmers who died as a result of state violence in these actions.

The struggle of farmers is not distinct from the struggle of other sectors of Indian society, particularly the struggle of the Adivasi (national minority), according to the CPI (Maoist). These movements share the same goal of defending the country's wealth and natural resources. Thus, all democratic sectors of Indian society should support it, as they supported the protests in 2020-2021. About 40%-60% of India's 1.4 billion people depend on agriculture. More than half of them do not own land, and the rest are small farmers. **AB**