

EDITORIAL

Workers, march at the head of anti-imperialist resistance

Over the past four decades, policies of liberalization, deregulation, and privatization have eroded the social, economic, and political rights of workers. In backward semicolonial and semifeudal countries such as the Philippines, plunder and oppression are rampant and extraction of surplus value from workers' labor-power is unmitigated.

Filipino workers have been victims of an all-out neoliberal onslaught since the late 1980s. The gap between wages and the cost of living of Filipino workers has grown wider and wider. Fascism has attacked trade unions, which are the only weapon of workers to fight for fair wages and to defend their rights.

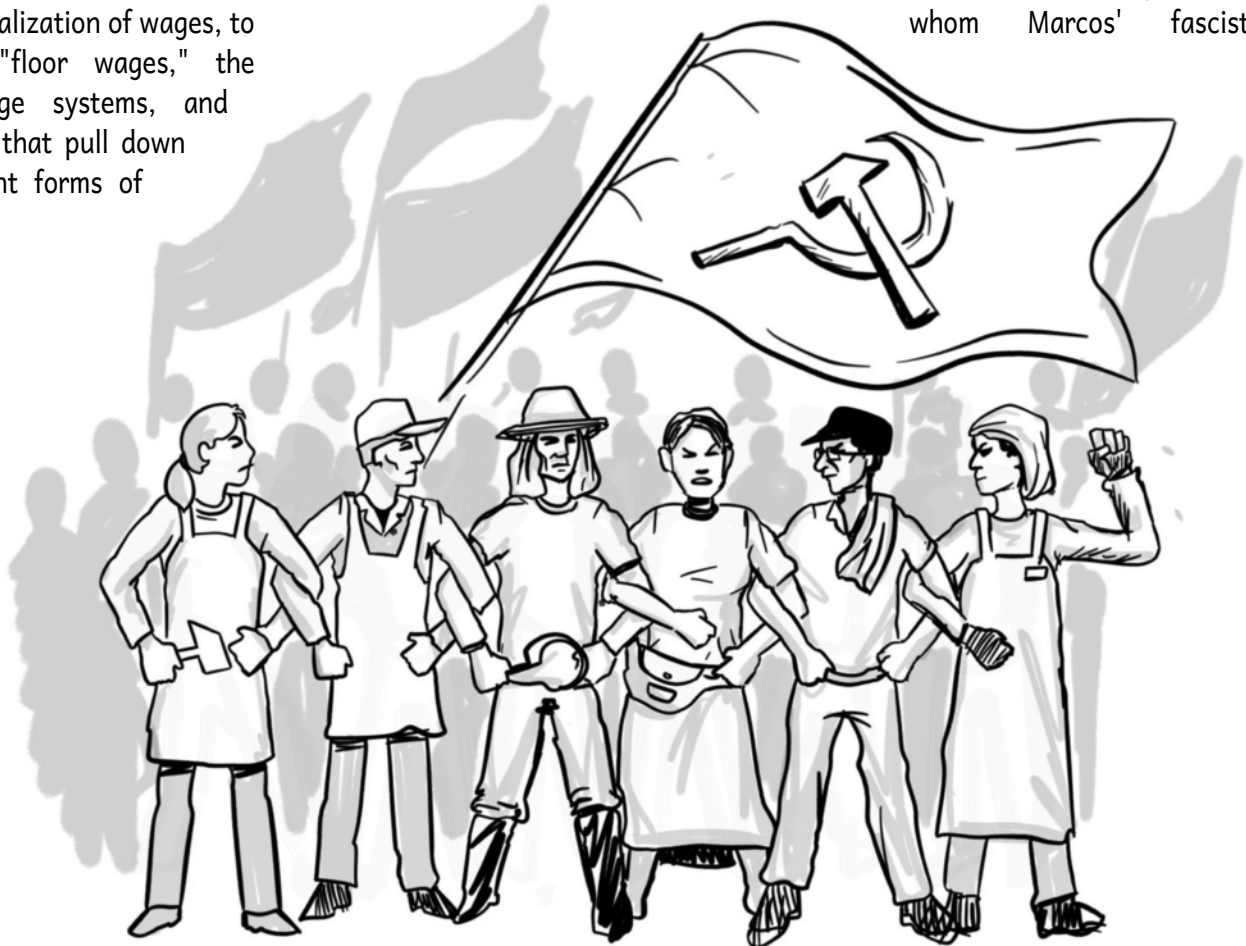
Labor laws were amended to pave the way for neoliberal attacks, from the regionalization of wages, to implementing "floor wages," the "two-tier" wage systems, and other schemes that pull down wages. Different forms of

flexible labor have pervaded, including labor contractualization, compressed work week, outsourcing, and other schemes, which have worsened the conditions of workers and eroded their rights.

The living standards of the working class are falling, especially in the face of the steep and unrelenting rise in the prices of food, fuel, and other necessities during

the past two years under the Marcos regime. In terms of quantity and quality, workers and their families suffer lower standards of living, as seen in their children's education, food and nutrition, health care, and access to public utilities and services. Filipino workers and their families are unemployed and deep in debt.

Marcos has turned a deaf ear to workers' cries for wage increases, in line with his regime's policy of cheap labor, which is a key component of his anti-national aim to attract foreign investors. Political repression has intensified against workers leaders and organizers, whom Marcos' fascist



henchmen have targeted for surveillance, raids, arrests, kidnappings and extrajudicial killings.

The Marcos regime is busy amending the 1987 constitution to make it more in line with the interests of foreign capitalists. This coincides with Marcos serving the geopolitical goals of US imperialism, and allowing the Philippines to be used for US war provocations against rival imperialist China. Thousands of American troops are now stationed in the Philippines.

In the face of the worsening forms of exploitation and the deterioration of the economic situation, the intensifying political repression and the complete subservience of the Marcos regime to US imperialism, the workers' movement in the Philippines must stand more firmly at the forefront of the Filipino people's struggle for national and social liberation.

Filipino workers should make every effort to organize and build their unions or their political, cultural and other types of mass organizations in their factories and communities. The working masses must be aroused, organized and mobilized to fight for fair wages equivalent to a minimum of ₱1,200 per day, which is about

the daily cost of living of a family of five.

The struggle for fair wages is an assertion of workers' rights to decent housing, free or affordable health care and education, adequate food, clean water, electricity and other basic social and economic rights. These once-recognized rights are widely being trampled and denied in the era of neoliberalism. It is time to reassert it and fight for them.

There is no other way to fight for fair wages and workers' rights than through their militant action. They have the power to operate, slow down or stop production through various forms of collective action, including strikes.

The economic struggles of the workers must be firmly linked to the urgent social and political issues



facing the entire nation. The strength of the working class is the main hope of the Filipino people in the struggle against Marcos's "chacha" scheme and the growing threat to the country's independence and security posed by US imperialist war-mongering.

Workers must raise their voices and advance the sharpest national-democratic analysis and demands. Their unions and associations must be imbued with a patriotic and democratic spirit, and with a militant and revolutionary determination to fight. They should stand at the forefront of the Filipino people's march of resistance, and unite with the democratic and anti-imperialist struggles in different parts of the world.



Guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, workers must study history to rediscover their power to change the world and end the exploitative system. Failures and setbacks do not change the basic fact that under the leadership of the working class, humanity has enjoyed unprecedented progress, equality, justice and freedom.

The worsening economic and political situation of workers, peasants and other democratic sectors in the Philippines is driving them to rise up and fight. To move forward, they must reject the empty promises of the US-Marcos regime, and the reformism of the yellow leaders and opportunists who make up the labor aristocracy that hinder them from forging their class consciousness.

The tyranny of the Marcos regime cannot stop the determined advance of the Filipino people on the path of national-democratic struggle, from collective resistance in the cities, to armed struggle in the countryside.

The Party is determined to lead the working class and Filipino people in advancing the revolutionary movement, guiding them in their anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles, and advancing the struggle for national democracy and socialism.

AB

 <p>Vol LV No. 9 May 7, 2024</p> <hr/> <p>Ang Bayan is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray, and English. Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news items. Readers are encouraged to send feedback and recommendations for improving our newspaper.</p>	<h2 style="text-decoration: underline;">Contents</h2> <p>Editorial: Workers, march at the head of anti-imperialist resistance 1</p> <p>Consolidate the power of the working class 3</p> <p>Protests 4</p> <p>3-Day protest against jeepney phaseout 4</p> <p>Anti-Israel protests in US universities 4</p> <p>The "historic firsts" of Balikatan 39-24 5</p> <p>"Terrorism" charges against progressives 6</p> <p>Groups protest Balikatan 39-24 6</p> <p>20th IB, a scourge to Northern Samar 6</p> <p>Tribute to Ka Lalay 7</p> <p>NDFP celebrates 51st anniversary 7</p> <p>Sa madaling salita 8</p> <p>Celebrations mark 40th Cordillera Day 9</p> <p>Armed movement in Myanmar 10</p>
<p>Ang Bayan is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	
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Consolidate the power of the working class—RCTU

In commemorating this year's International Workers' Day, the Revolutionary Council of Trade Unions (RCTU) affirmed its commitment to its revolutionary task of deepening its investigation into the condition of the working class in order to galvanize their resistance. Bringing together workers along their common interest for higher wages, lower prices, proper and safe working conditions, the right to unionize, job security, and other democratic demands is the first step in consolidating their strength.

The RCTU firmly stands for the just demand for a national minimum wage equivalent to the living wage; against all forms of exploitation, injustice, and attacks by the combined forces of the state and capitalists. Its task is to reach out to the widest possible number of workers, whether unionized or not, including those in yellow unions.

In Marcos Jr.'s two years in office, wages were raised by an average of only ₱43-₱44 nationwide. As commodity prices continue to rise, the real value of workers' wages is rapidly eroding. The current daily minimum wage of ₱610 in the National Capital Region has a real value of only ₱502.

The Marcos regime remains silent on raising workers' wages to a

real living wage of ₱1,200 and implementing a national minimum wage. At its core, the amount of ₱1,200 is very small compared to the enormous wealth created by Filipino workers.

Fight for a living wage

On May 1, various labor groups under the National Wage Coalition marched together in Metro Manila to call for an increase in the daily wage in the country. They pushed for the immediate enactment of a law to raise daily minimum wages by at least ₱150 across-the-board the minimum wage as the first step to achieving a living wage. The coalition consists of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), Bukluran ng

Manggagawang Pilipino, and the Nagkaisa Labor Coalition.

In the public sector, government employees demanded a salary increase of up to ₱33,000 per month through the enactment of a new Salary Standardization Law (SSL). Teachers meanwhile demand on raising the salary of new teachers to ₱50,000.

Around noon, thousands of workers and other sectors led by the KMU and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) marched to the US Embassy to condemn the ongoing Balikatan Exercises 39-24 between US and Philippine military forces. They condemned US imperialism for trampling on the sovereignty of the Philippines and for dragging the country into its heightening conflict with its imperialist rival China. They also condemned Marcos regime's charter change which it is promoting at the behest of the US.

Police tried to block protesters and used water cannons to disperse the march. Six young activists, dubbed the Mayo Uno 6, were arrested and detained. They were charged and required to pay a total of ₱252,000 as bail for their temporary freedom.

Workers' day was also marked with protests in Angeles City, Calamba City, Rosario in Cavite, Legazpi City, Cebu City, Iloilo City, Bacolod City and Davao City.

Before the protest last May 1, widespread activities were also carried out by workers and government employees.

Overseas, Migrante International led activities in 15 protest centers in the US, in Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and New Zealand.





Earth Day: Protest against reclamation. Fisherfolk, environmental groups, church people and residents of communities around Manila Bay gathered for a forum and protest in Caloocan City and Navotas City on April 20, as part of the commemoration of Earth Day last April 22. They demanded an immediate stop to the destructive Navotas Bay Reclamation Project and other reclamation and dredging projects in Manila Bay and other parts of the country.

Surface William Lariosa! In a protest last April 25 in Davao City, Kilusang Mayo Uno-Southern Mindanao Region (KMU-SMR) and Anakbayan-Southern Mindanao reiterated their call for the immediate surfacing of missing labor organizer William Lariosa, 63. He was abducted by agents of the 48th IB on April 10 in Barangay Butong, Quezon, Bukidnon.

Picket for CBA. Workers of Phil-Foods Fresh Baked Product Inc protested anew before the National Conciliation and Mediation Board Region IV-A in Calamba, Laguna on April 24 to condemn the negotiations deadlock or refusal of the capitalist to grant workers demand for wage increase and benefits.

31st World Press Freedom Day. Journalists and journalism students staged a protest on May 3 to mark the 31st International Free Press Day. They carried out the action in UP Diliman and the Boy Scout Monument in Quezon City and called for justice for all murdered journalists and victims of violations of the right to free press in the country. In the first 22 months in power of the Marcos regime, the groups recorded 135 incidents of violations of press freedom.

3-Day protest against jeepney phaseout

ON MAY 1, jeepney drivers and operators led by Piston and Manibela joined the workers' march to call for the scrapping of the Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP) and the policy of forced franchise consolidation. This is the culmination of their 3-day transport strike and encampment. They demand the return of their 5-year franchises for their livelihood.



At the beginning of the strike on April 29, organizations of drivers and operators, together with the youth and their supporters, set up strike centers in key areas in Metro Manila and Southern Tagalog. They set up the encampment at Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila at night.

Transport strikes and actions were also held in Baguio City, Calamba, Sta. Rosa, and Cabuyao in Laguna, in Rizal, Legazpi City, Cebu City, Bacolod City, Iloilo City and Davao City.

On April 29, Piston submitted a supplemental petition before the Supreme Court for a temporary restraining order against the PUVMP. Earlier, they staged a picket before the court on April 23 to push it to decide on their earlier petition.

Meanwhile, jeepney drivers and operators under Manibela protested again in Metro Manila on May 6.

Authorities unleash violence against anti-Israel protests in US universities

THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS and faculty at several major campuses in the US launched a new series of protests to push universities to withdraw their support and investment in Zionist Israel. Many universities work closely with the US military industry, and are thus complicit in Israel's genocide in Gaza.

On orders of the Biden government, police entered the universities and violently broke up protests.

The encampment set up by students and faculty at Columbia University in New York on April 25 was most prominent. Police violently dismantled the camp arresting and charging many students.

In addition to the one in Columbia University, significant mass actions were also carried out in 18 other large universities in different parts of the US from April to the present. These were broken up by police with violence, violating students' rights and endangering the lives and welfare of students and teachers.

Protests and camp-outs have spread to universities in other parts of the world. Similar protests were held at major universities in Australia, France, Italy, Poland and Britain. As in the US, students are demanding that universities cut financial ties with Israel, which they consider as support for its genocide in Gaza.

As of May 2, at least 35,000 Palestinian civilians have been killed by Zionist forces in its relentless bombing and attacks on Gaza since October 7, 2023. A large number of them are children (14,500) and women (8,400).

The "historic firsts" of Balikatan 39-24

The US says the current Balikatan 39-24 is "a first in history" as many of the activities were "unprecedented." The Armed Forces of the Philippines also announced its supposed "shift" to external defense in accordance with the Comprehensive Archipelagic Coastal Defense (CACD) strategy as a "direct response" to China's "aggression" in Philippine waters. This allowed the US to station offensive weapons, deploy more forces in the country, and conduct military maneuvers in the South China Sea, all under the guise of "defending" the Philippines.

For the first time, the US took the Balikatan outside Philippine territorial waters, along with French naval forces. Earlier, the US also conducted the "historic" naval maneuver with the Philippines, Australia and Japan.

It also "historically" deployed in the country and in Asia the new Typhon Missile System (TMS), consisting of four missile launchers with the capability of firing missiles to a distance of 1,600 kilometers. The US started manufacturing these missile launchers only after it scrapped in 2019 its Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with

Russia. The US calls the TMS a "key component" of the Multi-Domain Task Forces or special military units it formed to surpass the military capabilities of China and Russia. TMS pairs with HIMARS, which was first deployed in the Philippines during Balikatan 2023.

The US introduced an Israeli-made missile defense system and its associated Patriot missiles for defensive use in official and unofficial EDCA sites." For the first time, the current Balikatan will include the US training of AFP forces in flying surface-to-air missiles that will be used in such a defense system.

This year, the US fully utilized the "EDCA sites", which the AFP forces hastily repaired and built since Ferdinand Marcos

Jr. took office. One of the most used is the civilian airport in Lallo, Cagayan, as well as the port at the former Subic US Military Base and the facilities the AFP built on Balabac Island in Palawan and Mavulis island in Batanes.

China's reaction

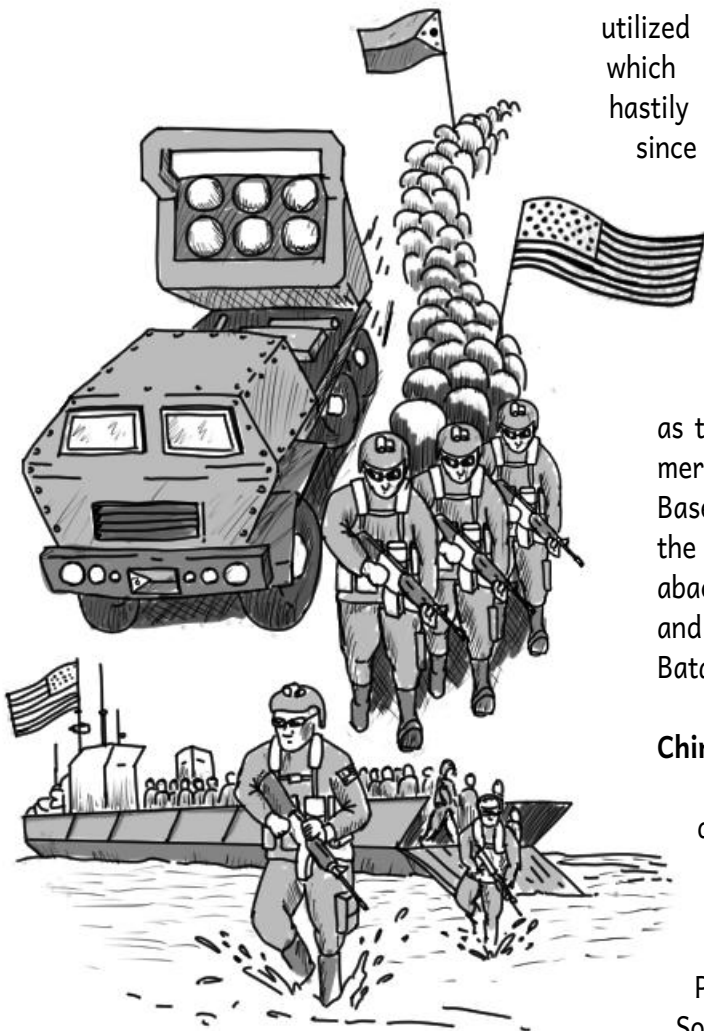
China does not disregard the offensive nature of the US's latest moves in the Philippines and the South China Sea. It

accused the US of pursuing "unilateral military advantage" right at its doorstep. It called the deployment of offense weapons in the Philippines dangerous because it increases the possibility of "misjudgments and miscalculations." It says such measures are a "threat to the stability and peace" in the region.

China also admonished the Philippines to "be vigilant as to the true intentions of the US" and avoid being used without discernment. It said the Marcos government should rethink following the steps of the US at the expense of its own security.

Since its "pivot" to Asia in late 2011, the US has steadily strengthened and consolidated its dominance in the region. It increased the number of its troops deployed at its military bases in Australia, Japan and Korea. It revived its old bases and built new ones in the Philippines.

It enlarged and expanded its war games. In 2021-2023, 525 major military exercises in South Asia, Southeast Asia and Australia were recorded. The US led or participated with its allies in 60% of these. The US conducted about 87% of the major military exercises in the Philippines. The US military conduct overlapping activities in the "first-island chain" countries that are closest to China's coasts. The US' "pivot" to Asia in 2011 signaled to China that the period of collusion with the US was ending and that it was entering a period of rising confrontation. That early, the strategic goal of its imperialist rival to dominate Asia has been clear to China. As a countermeasure, it began to expand its military presence in the South China Sea, including the long-disputed islands near Japan (Senseku Islands), Vietnam (Paracelis) and the Philippines (Spratlys).



Charges of "terrorism" used to suppress progressives

THE MARCOS REGIME has charged at least 12 progressives for "terrorism" and "terrorism financing" in the past few weeks. Cases have been filed to suppress them and their organizations.

In Quezon, Paul Tagle, spokesperson of Tanggol Quezon, and Fritz Labiano, coordinator of Kabataan Partylist in the province, were charged with "terrorism financing". The case against them arose from providing aid and food to political prisoners in July 2023.

In Negros Island, a similar case was filed against some former and active members of the "Paghida-et sa Kauswagan" Development Group Incorporated (PDG Inc). Clarissa Ramos, Felipe Levy Gelle, Federico Salvilla, and Perla Pavillar were accused of "terrorism financing". Also charged was Darryl Albañez, who is not a member of PDG Inc but assisted in its activities. They were subpoenaed on April 29.

In Leyte, the personal bank account of Jazmin Jerusalem and that of the Leyte Center for Development, Inc. (LCDe), which she heads, were arbitrarily ordered frozen on May 2. The order was issued on April 26 following unsubstantiated allegations of "terrorism financing" against her and another LCDe staff.

In Nueva Ecija, charges of "terrorism" or violation of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 were filed against Nathanael Santiago, Anasusa San Gabriel, Rosario Brenda Gonzales, and Servillano Luna, Jr, and three others who are all activists and mass leaders. They are being implicated in an encounter between the 84th IB and the New People's Army (NPA) in Barangay San Fernando Sur, Laur, Nueva Ecija on October 8, 2023, on claims that they were "recognized" by soldiers during the firefight.

Democratic organizations launch protests against Balikatan 39-24

THE OPENING OF Balikatan 39-24 was met by protests of democratic organizations on April 22. Led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), they protested before the headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City calling for a stop to the war games of US and Philippine military troops in the country.

On April 26, workers marched to the US embassy to denounce the ongoing Balikatan war games. The action is the third in a series of Friday protests launched by Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) in April. Groups from Southern Tagalog also protested near the US embassy on May 5, and women's groups on May 6.

Meanwhile, Bayan-Ilocos condemned the conduct of some elements of Balikatan 39-24 in the region. At least 2,000 Philippine and US military troops went to Ilocos for the war games. The live-fire exercises will be held at the La Paz sand dunes in Barangay La Paz, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. US and Philippine forces will also blow up and sink the decommissioned BRP Lake Caliraya ship in the ocean facing the province. This will greatly harm the livelihood of people in the region, especially that of fisherfolk who are being banned from fishing.

20th IB, a scourge to the people of Northern Samar

AMID RELENTLESS COMBAT operations of the 20th IB, more and more cases of human rights violations are being recorded in the towns of Northern Samar. Recent cases include bombings, shootings, food and livelihood blockades, and sexual abuse by soldiers.

In Las Navas town, drunken soldiers indiscriminately opened fire in Barangay San Francisco on April 9. In Barangay San Miguel, soldiers fired mortars at around 11 p.m. on March 12 near homes.

In Catubig, a CAFGU element, and another soldier, pointed a gun at and molested a 15-year-old girl who was returning home from a dance in Barangay Hinagonoyan on April 12.

Meanwhile, the 20th IB continues to prohibit farmers in all barangays covered by its combat operations from bringing rice or any other food to their farms. Soldiers also control the movement of farmers and impose a curfew.

In Davao City and Davao de Oro, 10th ID soldiers harassed to force the "surrender" of regional labor-leaders Carlo Olala and Melodina "Melod" Gumanoy. They and their families were "visited" on April 23 and 26.

In Negros Occidental, 79th IB and police forces arrested two minors, brothers aged 16 and 17, in Sitio Humayan, Barangay Pinowayan, Don Salvador Benedicto on April 25. The 79th IB paraded them as arrested New People's Army "child soldiers".



In Albay, soldiers shot and injured Ace Diano and Francis Leteral in Barangay del Rosario, Jovellar, Albay on April 25. The fascists also illegally arrested uncle-and-nephew Ernesto Lumangaya and Arlan Lumangaya and forced them on the ground, but they also escaped.

Ka Lalay, Party cadre, Red fighter, and martyr of the Lumad and Filipino people

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines paid the highest tribute on April 22 to Aprecia Alvarez Rosete (Ka Lalay), revolutionary leader and CPP cadre who was martyred on April 27 in Barangay Malagad, Dumingag, Zamboanga del Sur. At the time of her death, Ka Lalay was a member of the Party's Central Committee and was secretary of the Party's regional committee in Western Mindanao.

Ka Lalay is a loyal cadre who fully devoted herself to the Party since she joined in 1990. She became the secretary of the sub-regional committee under the Southern Mindanao Regional (SMR) Party Committee, chaired its education committee and became member of its executive committee.

Based on her excellent record in the SMR, she was appointed in 2016 as the secretary of Western Mindanao, and spearheaded efforts to overcome military conservatism that hinders the advancement of armed struggle in the region. That same year, she was elected as a member of the Central Committee during the Second Party Congress.

On February 27, she was traveling on a motorcycle from Dumingag to seek treatment for her illness.

The 53rd IB intercepted and captured her on the way. Instead of recognizing her rights as a prisoner of war or even legally as an accused, soldiers and police holding her in custody extrajudicially killed her. The next day, the military announced that she had been killed in an encounter in the area. The fascists displayed her lifeless body at an "encounter site" they staged for a media presentation.

Ka Lalay was born on December 2, 1968 to a family of impoverished Manobo farmers in Loreto, Agusan del Sur. At a young age, she escaped the traditional feudal and patriarchal structure that limited women's development. She took on various jobs



to support her studies through elementary and high school. She became a scholar and enrolled at the University of San Carlos in Cebu City, where she took a course in social work.

She soon became involved in social issues when she gained a deeper knowledge of her fellow Lumads' suffering and oppression. Despite opportunities for a better life, Ka Lalay chose a life of service to others by organizing and helping to empower them. AB

NDFP celebrates 51st anniversary

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), together with allied organizations and the entire revolutionary movement in the Philippines and overseas, celebrated its 51st anniversary on April 24. Various types of activities were conducted to commemorate the anniversary. A week of commemorating revolutionary martyrs was also held on April 17-April 23.

"We extend militant greetings to the NDFP allied organizations, especially to the fighting Filipino masses whose unwavering spirit and determination to achieve genuine national liberation and democracy serve as the eternal wellspring of our revolutionary strength," said Ka Louie Jalandoni, Chief International Representative of the NDFP.

In statements, the allied organizations of the NDFP extended warm

congratulations on the anniversary. NDFP consists of 18 organizations. Some of the regional NDFP chapters also expressed solidarity.

The Communist Party of the Philippines also greeted the NDFP and said, amid unprecedented corruption, fascism and subservience of the Marcos regime to US imperialism, there is even greater urgency to strengthen and expand the NDFP and its allied organizations.

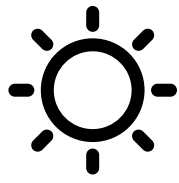
In Europe, members of Anti-Imperialist Action Ireland (AIAI), painted slogans and gathered in April.

They painted the words "VIVA CPP-NPA-NDF" on walls in several cities in Ireland and unfurled the NDFP flag in their protests and actions. They carried out solidarity activities in Wicklow, Dublin, Galway, and Waterford in Ireland.

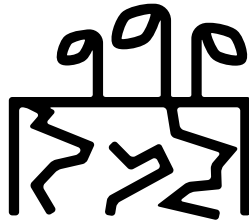
Meanwhile, Friends of the Filipino People in Struggle (FFPS)-Vancouver in Canada put up a mural to celebrate the anniversary of the NDFP. FFPS also released a new song for the anniversary titled "Celebrate the NDF!" AB

₱5.9 billion

damages caused by El Niño droughts.



Paddies and cornfields were worst hit in Mindoro, Western Visayas, Cordillera and Cagayan Valley.



Source: Department of Agriculture, Mayo 3, 2024

\$2.4 trillion

total world military spending in 2023, "the highest in history." This comes after US proxy war in Ukraine, US-Israel genocide in Gaza, US instigation of war in Asia and other parts of the world.

8.6%

or 6.2 million youth (15-24 years old) unemployment rate reported by the PSA in February 2024. Add to this, 669,000 youth who were not counted and hundreds of thousands of unpaid "family workers."

13%

real unemployment rate, contrary to 3.5% claimed by the Marcos government. This means 7.5 million workers (not 1.8 million) are unemployed. They include 1.9 million dropped from the labor force, and the 3.8 million unpaid family workers.

Source: Ibon Foundation

832,812

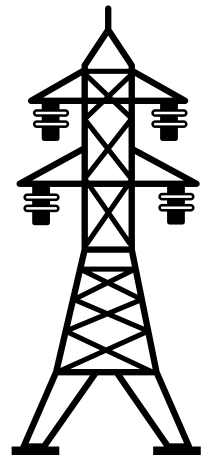


> or 29.68% of government employees in 2023 are under contractual arrangements and job orders, up from 29.71% in 2022.

₱11.93977/kwh

Meralco's rates in Metro Manila in March this year,

almost double compared ₱6.12 kpw rates in March 2014.



8,480

Palestinians in the West Bank illegally arrested and detained by Zionist Israel since October 7, 2023, adding to the 5,200 previously detained. Of these, 200 are children, 56 are journalists and 80 are women.

> Around 3,660 were arrested without charges nor trial and detained indefinitely. Not counted are those abducted and permanently disappeared by Israel in Gaza.



farmgate price for all types of tobacco that farmers in Ilocos have been demanding for decades. They also demand removing classification of tobacco, and various methods to force down prices.

Cordillera Day's 40th, mark of Kaigorotan's resistance to destructive projects

Sounds of *gangsá*, *salidummay* (Cordillera chant) and Igorot cries echoed in the celebration of the 40th Cordillera Day with the theme "Courageously advance the fight for land, life and dignity." Up to 1,500 people from different provinces in the region and organizations and defenders of the rights of national minorities from different parts of the country gathered in Sitio Liglig, Barangay Tanglag in Lubuagan, Kalinga on April 23-24.

Before the celebration, the 3rd CMO of the 103rd IB made several attempts to stop the residents from holding the gathering. They held a "youth summit" to hand out pamphlets defaming the Cordillera Peoples' Alliance (CPA) and hang rice-sack streamers maliciously associating the organization with the armed movement.

However, the soldiers failed and the community continued to support the festival despite intimidations and threats.

"We know our enemy, it is not the CPA, not our guests, but those who protect the foreigners who want to build dams and mine our an-

cestral land," said a community leader.

They spent almost two weeks preparing for the gathering, from setting up tents, constructing stages, making benches as the center of activities, preparing sleeping quarters and food, and the daily monitoring of the area's security. Thus they supported the celebration despite knowing state forces could retaliate and harass them.

Continuing Macli-ing Dulag's fight

Barangay Tanglag is historic in Kaigorotan (Igorot people) resistance to the Chico River Basin Development Project during the Marcos dictatorship. One of the first bodong or inter-tribal peace councils was held here in 1974 under the leadership of Macli-ing Dulag to unite the indigenous people's fight against the destructive dam. Soldiers killed Macli-ing Dulag on April 24, 1980 in an attempt to stop the Kaigorotan struggle. But instead of being cowed, the mass movement flourished in the Cordillera.

A leader of the local organization of Kalinga recalled how they faced the soldiers during the dictatorship. "We drove away the surveying teams, we destroyed the camps in Tabuk.

Women took the frontlines, we held back the men because of certain bloodshed."

He added that violence against Kaigorotan escalated in the late 1970s when soldiers increased in number declaring the barangay a "free-fire zone." Community members were branded "trespassers" and arbitrarily shot. Because of this, they armed themselves as a people's militia, and many joined the New People's Army.

A nephew of Macli-ing Dulag says the presence of youth and church people from the outset significantly helped in the fight against the Chico Dam. "Surveyors arrived but didn't explain its impact on us. So we ourselves studied those projects with the help of other organizations. Our studies continue until now and we stand firm in not allowing those dams and large mines to enter."

At present, 100 hydropower plants or dam projects have been awarded to various companies, and up to 104 different mining applications have been filed with state agencies. To break the indigenous people's unity, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples is making numerous attempts and schemes such as widespread intimidation and threats against indigenous leaders. Various Cordillera tribes struggle to overcome these.

Despite the threats against leaders and even their families, they will continue their fight against the destructive projects.

"While our hearts beat, threats will always affect us, but we will not allow fear to prevail and stop us," declared one of the widely recognized leaders of the alliance formed in the Cordillera. "Defending our ancestral land really involves sacrifice, and like what our predecessors did, the Kaigorotan is ready to fight," he said. AB



The victory of the armed people's movement in Myanmar is unstoppable

Armed groups of national minorities and people fighting in different regions in Myanmar against the fascist Tatmadaw junta have achieved successive victories. From separate efforts, the unity and coordination of the armed anti-junta groups have increased. Simultaneous and, in some parts, coordinated offensives from late 2023 have also accelerated. They are confident in significantly weakening, if not completely overthrowing, the despised regime this year.

National minorities have been fighting Myanmar's fascist military even before the February 2021 coup that ousted the civilian government of Aung San Suu Kyi. They have long carried out struggle in the states of Kayah and Kachin in the eastern part; in Rakhine state which opens to the Indian Ocean; and in the northern state of Shan, which borders China. After the coup, national minorities from Sagaing and Magway regions also fought, as well as those from Chin state in the northwest, and national minorities from Karen (also called Kayah) state around the border with Thailand. These groups are just some of the more than 20 armed ethnolinguistic groups in Myanmar today. Many of them have been struggling for decades for the right to self-determination against national oppression by Myanmar's reactionary state and military.

By 2023, the Three Brotherhood Alliance had recaptured much of the territory from the junta forces. This is after they launched Operation 1027 from October last year. The alliance seized from junta forces important towns on the Myanmar-China border where trade flows between the two countries. Hundreds of detachments and camps were defeated by coordinated attacks during the first 10 days of the offensive. Thousands of soldiers, including several senior Tatmadaw officers, surrendered to the alliance.

The Karen National Union and Karenni Nationalities Defense Forces have also liberated large territories since it launched Operation 1111 in



November 2023. Together with other armed groups, it seized important institutions and agencies, including the police station in Loikaw, the Karen state center, in December 2023. On April 24, the Karenni State Interim Executive Council declared that it has 90% of the state under its control.

At the same time, the resistance of the Chinland Defense Forces to oust the junta forces from their territory is increasing. On April 29, it captured the headquarters of the Tatmadaw battalion that controls the part of the Irrawady river that is a key portal to the Kachin capital.

In Naypyitaw, Yangon and other urban centers of the country, the People's Defense Forces (PDF), the armed group established by the National Unity Government from youth groups and activists, is intensifying its attacks. On April 5, the PDF conducted a coordinated attack using 28 "kamikaze drones" at the house of junta leader Min Aung Hlaing, the main military headquarters and a major airbase, all in the capital

Naypyitaw. Before this, many camps, detachments and checkpoints were overrun by armed groups using small drones.

Armed groups carry out widespread and intensive offensives due to the support of the democratic sectors of the majority Bamar people, and national minority groups. Combining regular and guerilla warfare, they are able to stretch Tatmadaw forces and strike at them from various sides.

In response, the fascist Tatmadaw intensified its attacks on the states with the strongest resistance. Using planes, helicopters and drones, it indiscriminately bombs and attacks civilian communities. These led to the displacement of 2.8 million individuals, the deaths of at least 6,000 civilians including many children and women. An estimated 25,000 have been arbitrarily arrested by the junta since 2021. **AB**