

EDITORIAL

Seize opportunities amid the political crisis under the US-Marcos regime

Conflicts and contradictions between rival factions of the ruling class under the US-Marcos regime are rapidly intensifying. People now see more clearly the rottenness of the ruling political system characterized by maneuverers, strife and jockeying for power of reactionary parties that represent the interests of a few corrupt and fascist politicians who are all puppets of foreign imperialist powers.

There is now open wrangling and conflict between the power-hungry, greedy and fascist camps of the Marcoses and Dutertes. Their opportunist "uni-team" quickly disintegrated. Contrary to promises of mutual accommodation, the rival cliques immediately maneuvered and tried to expand their influence and

control over power and plundered wealth, and tried to elbow out their rival.

On the one hand, almost right after sitting as vice-president, and after being denied her request to head the Department of Defense, Sara Duterte immediately tried to exert influence on military and po-

lice generals. On the other hand, the Marcos faction monopolized key positions in the bureaucracy, military and congress. Government contracts held by Duterte, especially large Chinese-funded infrastructures, were scrapped by Marcos, in favor of his cronies, and in favor of loans and investments by Japan and the US.

The conflict between rival factions worsened when the Duterte camp openly urged military and police to withdraw support, promoting talk of assassination threats, and riding on the widespread opposition



of the Filipino people to the Marcos camp's attempt to push the "chacha" scheme. To denounce his rival, Marcos uses the threat to allow the International Criminal Court to arrest and try Duterte and his accomplices, and the arrest of his minion Apollo Quiboloy. Marcos dons the false mask of "New Philippines" and promoting "unity." The truth is, Marcos is now preparing for a bloody clash in this conflict.

Sara Duterte's resignation from the cabinet merely formalized the full split of the cliques forming the "uni-team," which now are the main rival factions of the ruling class. The Marcos faction now firmly dominates the politics of the ruling system, controls the bureaucracy, congress and courts, and its armed forces. The strength and influence of other smaller factions and parties of the ruling class has been completely eroded. After having crumbs thrown at them, they now seem to have forgotten how the Marcoses used widespread fraud and violence (enabled by the Dutertes) to reclaim Malacañang.

The conflict and jockeying for power of the rival factions of the ruling classes expose the extremely rotten reactionary system in the

country. That the two main factions consist of dynasties that are notorious for corruption, fascism, oppression and betrayal of the people, clearly show that this conflict will only serve their own interests to amass wealth and power, and will bring more suffering to the vast masses of the people. This conflict also reflects the conflict between the two imperialist powers of the US and China, particularly China's attempt to strengthen influence in the country, and challenge US dominance and control.

The rapid escalation of the conflict between the Marcoses and Dutertes, is an indicator of the depth and intensity of the economic crisis of the ruling system, which is directly linked to the insoluble stagnation of the global capitalist system. Because of the crisis, the pie of wealth, power and privilege share by various factions of the ruling class is getting smaller and smaller. These dynasties are all hungry and obsessed, and will grab at every opportunity to pocket and possess everything they can grab while they are in power.

The clash between these rivals will surely become more fiery and bloody in the upcoming 2025 reac-



tionary elections in the Senate, Congress and local governments. Even now, Marcos is using government funds to move around the country to secure the loyalty of local officials under the guise of handing out aid and various programs. Marcos also uses state armed agents to suppress people who resist and anyone who challenges his rule.

The crisis of the ruling system under the US-Marcos regime opens an opportunity for the national-democratic movement to expose the rotten political system. It also presents an opportunity for the open mass movement to challenge reactionary elections, promote leaders of various democratic sectors representing people's politics, expose and isolate elitist and reactionary politics, and fight to place representative in the Lower House and Senate who will promote the national and democratic aspirations of the people.

This challenge will surely bring great successes by linking it to mass organizing and mobilization of the masses. In the coming months, there must be all-out effort to wage mass struggles against rising prices of goods, widespread land and livelihoods, fascist repression in the countryside and cities, widespread destruction of the environment, unemployment especially in the wide range of youth, low wages and salaries, as well as, against dragging the Philippines to an inter-imperialist conflict being fueled by the US.

The grave decay of reactionary politics under the oppressive, fascist and puppet Marcos regime opens an ideal opportunity to arouse, organize and mobilize the Filipino people along the path of national democracy. The situation is becoming increasingly favorable to clarify before the Filipino people that the suffering, oppression, hardship and hunger they are suffering will only be solved if the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system is overthrown through the people's democratic revolution to achieve national and social liberation.

AB

 <p>Tomo LV Blg. 13 Hulyo 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: Seize opportunities amid the political crisis under the US-Marcos regime 1</p> <p>Two years of exploitation and abuse 3</p> <p>Marcos, tormentor and puppet 3</p> <p>Marcos, American lapdog 4</p> <p>NPA kills fascist 87th IB soldier 4</p> <p>AFP terrorist operations in Central Luzon 5</p> <p>Tribute to Pantabangan and Tuy martyrs 5</p> <p>AFP kills 3 civilians in Bicol 6</p> <p>Protests 6</p> <p>In short 7</p> <p>Twin threats of disaster in Laguna de Bay 8</p> <p>US and Israel expand war in the Middle East 9</p> <p>Global action against Operation Kagaar 9</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Ang Bayan is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	
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Two years of exploitation and abuse

In his two years in power, Ferdinand Marcos Jr engaged in relentless maneuvers to seize public funds, extend the reign of his clique and oppress the people with neoliberal policies.

Despite widespread criticism, Marcos enacted the creation of the Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF) in July 2023. This gave Marcos control over up to ₱500 billion in funds held by state banks. Contrary to initial promises, the Maharlika Investment Corporation, the entity that manages the MIF, is now peopled by Marcos' handpicked technocrats and representatives of the big bourgeoisie and foreign institutions.

Marcos gave himself ₱4.56 billion in confidential and intelligence funds (CIF) for 2024. Furthermore, he placed ₱449.5 billion in "unprogrammed funds" under his control purportedly for aid programs of his office. This is no different from the "pork barrel" that was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 2013.

In January 2024, Marcos at-

tempted to railroad charter change for the declared intention of opening the economy to foreign investment and for the hidden objective of extending his clique's tenure. This maneuver failed after it was revealed that his henchmen used public funds for the People's Initiative, and how his minions defrauded and threatened people to sign. Efforts to pass the law for the establishment of a constituent assembly before the 2025 elections are stalled in the Senate.

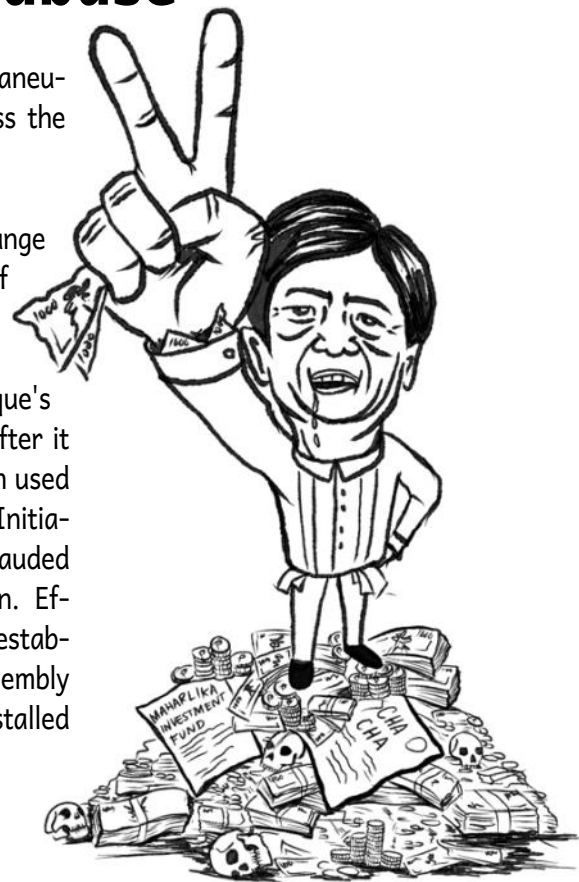
Incompetent and burden to the people

On the other hand, Marcos did nothing to alleviate the Filipino people's plight. He ignored the clamor of workers and employees for higher wages and salaries.

The ₱40/day wage increase ordered by the pro-capitalist wage board in NCR last year is an insult. More infuriating is the measly and trickling wage increases (₱30-₱35/day) given outside the NCR. The highest wage of ₱610 (NCR) is far from the living wage of about ₱1,200/day for a family of five.

Government employees received no salary increases during Marcos' two years. Until this July, he impeded the legislated benefits and incentives of health workers who served during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As a result of his neoliberal policies, prices of food and oil products have skyrocketed, as have electricity and water bills. The price of rice hit ₱56.90/kilo in June, far from his promise of ₱20/kilo during the election. In February, inflation of rice prices, which makes up the bulk of Filipino families' food expenses, soared to a 15-year high. The August 2023 imposition of price controls utterly failed, and massive imports did not lower it. Serving as Department



of Agriculture secretary until November 2023, Marcos is directly responsible for these failures.

Marcos disregarded the call of farmers to boost local rice production and for the state to buy their produce at reasonable prices to lower the price of rice. He also failed to respond to the drought during El Niño that damaged ₱9.5 billion worth of crops. Instead of helping peasants to recover, he stepped up import liberalization and slashed tariffs on imported food, including rice, by up to 15%. In 2024, the country's rice imports is expected to more than double or reach up to 4.7 million metric tons (MT), compared to 2.6 MT in June 2022-June 2023. This includes rice that will be imported under the 5-year agreement with Vietnam, brokered by his cousin House Speaker Martin Romualdez.

Hypocritical programs and historical revisionism

As in his first year, Marcos in his second year was preoccupied mainly with pretentious programs and PR stunts.

In mid-2023, he signed the New Agrarian Emancipation Act (Republic

"Two years of..." continue on page 4

Marcos, tormentor and puppet for the past 2 years

SEVERAL HUNDRED PEOPLE, mostly peasants and fisherfolk, from Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon marched to Mendiola last July 1 to condemn the Marcos regime for the suffering and anti-people policies of the past two years. They blamed the regime for the worsening economic crisis being suffered by the Filipino people. In the past two years, the peasants mainly have faced the worsening rice crisis, high food prices, and the further deterioration of the agricultural sector.

Similar actions and farm protests were held by farmers and groups in Ilocos, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Central Visayas, Panay and Negros.

Marcos, an American lapdog

During two years in power, Marcos traveled to the US four times to meet with his master. During two of these trips, he formally signed military agreements in which he surrendered the sovereignty and security of the Philippines in exchange for US military and political support. His master was very pleased with what the US called a "hyperactive" relationship between the two countries in the past year.

In April 2023, Marcos signed the "bilateral defense guidelines" prepared by the US as a new framework for military relations between the two countries. He opened four locations for the US to build military bases using the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) and possibly eight others "unofficial" locations. The bilateral guidelines include dumping of old US military equipment and vehicles in the Philippines in the name of "modernizing" the AFP, speeding up the construction of official and unofficial EDCA sites on the pretext of renovating its military camps, and more frequent and bigger

war games in the guise of training Filipino soldiers.

Marcos repeatedly talks of pivoting the AFP to strengthening the country's ability to deal with "external threats." This was reinforced by the AFP's Archipelagic Island Defense Concept, framed within the US' first-island chain strategy to encircle China.

From March 2023, Marcos and the AFP began sending construction materials to the grounded ship BRP Sierra Madre in Ayungin Shoal. This runs contrary to the more than 20-year deal with China in which the Philippines promised not to repair the

grounded vessel and that only water and food would be brought in the "supply missions" going there. Instead of renegotiating, Marcos swept aside the deal to provoke China to make a move that would spark a war, in accordance with US orders.

During Marcos' trip to the US in April, he attended the Trilateral Summit convened by the US and Japan to further irate China and open the country to returning Japanese troops. This year, he opened the Philippines to US troops and its NATO allies in the annual Balikatan and other war games, joint patrols and multilateral naval operations and flights of warplanes and drones in the SCS. He allowed the US to stockpile midrange missiles inviting China and Russia concern, and further raising the risk of the country being dragged into a US-instigated war. AB

NPA harassment, fascist 87th IB soldier killed

THE NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY (NPA)-Western Samar (Arnulfo Ortiz Command) launched a harassment operation against the fascist 87th IB soldiers in Barangay Nagbac, Jiabong, Samar on June 23. One soldier was killed in the attack.

The 87th IB unit is sowing fear and terror in the community under the guise of the Retooled Community Support Program. Residents report that they have been encamped near houses since January to provide "social services."

Meanwhile, residents of Sitio San Pedro, Barangay 3, San Jose de Buan, Samar gathered in an assembly last week of June to express their opposition to the encampment of an 87th IB unit in their community. In the first week of June, soldiers started to fence off the area for the planned detachment.

To destroy the unity of the barriofolk, soldiers threatened the barangay captain, the sitio leader and councilors. They said the community will be held accountable and imprisoned if the NPA attacked them again in the area.

Even without the detachment, San Pedro has been militarized since January. A growing number of human rights violations have been recorded. AB

"Two years of..." from page 3

Act 11953) which relieved farmers' unpaid amortizations under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). This move was hypocritical because in many cases, farmers no longer control the land they supposedly acquired under CARP (either repossessed or under contract-growing schemes).

There are no associated services and subsidies to support high production costs. It only facilitates legal land grabbing (purchase and transfer of title) and mass conversion of agricultural land to commercial use and real estate. Peasants deem pointless Marcos' spectacle of distributing Certificate of Land Ownership Award in various parts of the country, serving only as occasion for premature campaign rallies of his relatives and allies who will run in the 2025 elections.

Amid hunger and poverty, he touted the \$3-billion food stamp program as his government's "top program." It is no different from the palliative and ineffective temporary-relief programs financed by loans from imperialist institutions. These include the ₱500-billion Ayuda sa Kapos ang Kita Program (AKAP) of his cousin, the house speaker of Congress, ₱29/kilo rice in Kadiwa stores and other superficial programs. These programs are used for politicking and vote-buying for the upcoming elections.

In January, Marcos spent ₱29 million in a single day to promote "Bagong Pilipinas," a campaign based on the "Bagong Lipunan" slogan of his dictator father. He even made it a hymn and oath, which like Hitler and his fascist father, are ordered to be sung and recited in all schools and state offices. AB

AFP terrorist operations bring disaster to Central Luzon

Extensive and successive terrorist operations by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the provinces of Aurora, Nueva Vizcaya, and Nueva Ecija left extensive devastation to civilian farmers, farm workers, and even children last May and June.

Fascist soldiers displayed overwhelming violence and contempt for international humanitarian law. Civilians were the victims of the AFP's ire after the clash between the 72nd Division Reconnaissance Company and the New People's Army (NPA) on May 20 and 21 in remote areas of Dipaculao in Aurora, and May 29 in Maria Aurora, until in the bloody killing of 10 Red fighters in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija on June 26. The salvo of bullets and bombs on Alfonso Castañeda in Nueva Vizcaya on June 20 was unprovoked.

The 91st IB statements admitted that the successive operations were part of its "focused military opera-

tions" (FMO) in the region aiming to suppress the reported re-strengthening and expansion of the NPA in the past months in Central Luzon.

The FMO in Aurora started in 2021. Residents said they have suffered various forms of human rights violations in recent months, from fake surrenders that they say are milking cows for the military and local politicians, molesting women, and enforcing mobility restrictions even in farming.

These violations intensified a few weeks before the May 20 encounter



and continued until the end of June in several other barangays. The military implemented checkpoints, curfews, ransacking, interrogations, and other tactics. These severely agonized the communities. The ban on farming was the most severe, especially for small landless farmers who survive in coal gathering in the mountains of Dipaculao and Maria Aurora.

Residents said a planting season has passed without them planting or cultivating anything. Even farm workers who haul coconuts and vegetables are affected due to the AFP-imposed restriction on movement. In effect, El Niño's impact on their livelihood is said to have doubled.

Brazen attacks on civilians

Not only the deployment of hundreds of thousands of soldiers in the towns of Dipaculao and Maria Aurora can be considered "overkill" but also the use of two attack helicopters and other aircraft.

Most of the bombs seemed to have been dropped aimlessly in the mountains, residents said. Meanwhile, homes, rice paddies, and even the residents' livestock were hit by strafing.

To cover up their crime, the soldiers quickly patched up the roofs damaged by the strafing, but no compensation was given for the damage to their livelihoods caused by the operations. Residents concluded that

"AFP terrorist operations..." continue on page 6

Revolutionary movement pays tribute to Pantabangan and Tuy martyrs

THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT recognized and paid tribute to the martyred Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA) in the clashes that took place in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija and in Tuy, Batangas.

Ten NPA-Central Luzon Red fighters and commanders fell in the defensive battle against the 84th IB in Barangay Malibang, Pantabangan on June 26.

The martyrs were identified as Hilario Guiuo (Ka Berting/Tonyo), Harold Menosa (Ka Luzon), Marian Castro (Ka Lunti), Archie Arceta (Ka Soral/Teo), Asaze Galang (Ka Shyla/Cha), Pepito Bautista (Ka Dylan), Noel Bedonia (Ka Eric/Tagupay), Noel Bedonia Jr (Ka Angel), Reynan Mendoza (Ka Mel), and Angelika Villalon (Ka Molly). They came from different generations and social classes, from the ranks of farmers, laborers, drivers, churchgoers, and the student-youth.

In Batangas, the revolutionary movement paid tribute to the highest sacrifice by Gladys Cassandra Mendoza (Ka George/Gabriela Saka), Jethro Royce Magtira (Ka Alex) and Jian Markus Tayco (Ka Reb) in the battle in Barangay Bolbok, Tuy on June 23.

In both battles, the martyrs courageously faced the fascist enemy and held their weapons with full determination until their last breath.

Human rights groups condemned the soldiers for desecrating the fighters' remains. In utter disrespect, the military circulated photos showing the bodies on social media. The military also intimidated relatives, friends and human rights groups who handled the retrieval of the bodies of those killed.

AFP kills 3 civilians in Bicol

IN JUST A week, three civilians were extrajudicially killed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in Sorsogon and Masbate in Bicol. Two of the victims were falsely described as New People's Army (NPA) members purportedly killed in encounters.

In Sorsogon, 31st IB soldiers shot Niño Henera while he was hanging out by the roadside in Barangay Trese Martires, Casiguran on June 26 at 10 pm. Residents said they heard up to 10 gunshots before seeing the body of the victim lying on the ground.

In Donsol town, the same military unit gunned down 39-year-old Arnel Esperitu on June 20, at 4 a.m. He was just walking by the soldiers detachment in the center of Barangay Gogon when he was shot.

To avoid responsibility, soldiers immediately went to the victim's family to intimidate and threaten them not to file a complaint. After this, the 31st IB camped at the evacuation center of Barangay Gogon.

In Masbate, soldiers killed Boyet Rodrigo in Barangay Miabas, Palanas on June 23. Residents said soldiers posing as NPA fighters summoned Rodrigo to an abandoned house and shot him there. They confirmed that the perpetrators were AFP soldiers when barangay officials were threatened unless they sign a document stating that an encounter took place in the area.

Bombing. AFP soldiers again bombed and strafed the mountainous area of Barangay Cambitala, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija on July 4. This endangered two civilians and severely affected the livelihood of the masses in the area. It brought extreme trauma and terror in the communities. AB

"AFP terrorist operations..." from page 5

despite the military's desperation to hide evidence of their terrorism, it is still blatantly indifferent to the damage their operations have left on crops and livestock.

Military operations spread terror, especially among children victims. Parents said their children were no longer able to go to school because classes were suspended due to the operations.

Possible involvement of American troops

Meanwhile, reports of several witnesses that American troops based in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija were involved in the bloody encounter on June 26 that claimed the lives of 10 red fighters in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija are still being investigated.

In the initial report of the witnesses, some American troops were said to be with the 84th IB in the Pantabangan encounter. It is not clear what the role of the foreign troops was, but it is possible that foreign soldiers came from Fort Magsaysay, which is one of the nine "agreed locations" used by the reactionary government in the US under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). Fort Magsaysay is only one and a half hours away by road from Pantabangan. AB



The US imperialists are no friend of the Filipino people. Filipino youth led by the Youth for Justice and Peace protested on July 4, "Filipino-American Friendship Day," near the US embassy in Manila. They condemned the US war of aggression in the Asia-Pacific and its continued subjugation of the Philippines.

RIMPAC, a scourge on the people. More than 600 activists from the International Cancel RIMPAC Campaign marched in San Diego, California in the US on June 30 to call for the cancellation of the Rim of Pacific war games taking place in Hawai'i and its waters from June 27 to August 2. They launched the Cancel Rimpac 2024 Summit a day earlier.

Looming strike at Nexperia. Workers under the Nexperia Philippines Inc. Workers Union filed a Notice of Strike (NOS) on June 26 at the National Conciliation and Mediation Board Region IV-A in Calamba, Laguna. The workers held a rally at the same time. The union decided to file the NOS due to inhumane working conditions and management's violation of the collective bargaining agreement.

Groups deride Marcos aid distribution in Negros. Progressive groups in Bacolod City staged a protest during the June 26 visit of Ferdinand Marcos Jr and his wife Liza Araneta Marcos. Marcos was set to distribute ₱10,000 each to over 8,000 farmers affected by El Niño in Negros Occidental. The rallyists said Marcos' meager aid distribution was a mere "band-aid" to the problems in Negros and aimed only to "attract votes."

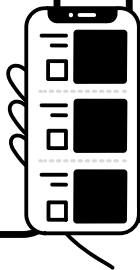
4th year of the Anti-Terrorism Act. Bayan members marched to the Department of Justice on July 3 demanding the repeal of all terrorism and terrorism financing cases that the department has filed against human rights activists and defenders using them. The action coincided with the 4th anniversary of the repressive ATA.

30th anniversary of Stonewall Manila. The Bahaghari group commemorated on June 26 the 30th anniversary of Stonewall Manila, the first gays and lesbians march in the Philippines and Asia. The event was inspired by the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York, considered a key event in the birth of the movement for the rights of the LGBT community. Various activities were also staged by LGBT groups during the last week of June in celebration of Pride month and in defense against discrimination in the sector.

₱35!

insulting wage increase granted by the NCR Regional Wage Board for 2024, which is less than 1% of capitalists' income.

This increase is a far cry from the ₱600 extra income needed to reach a living wage.



82%

of Filipinos get news online, including social media (63%); 46% tuned in on television, and 13% on newspapers. Online, the main sources are Facebook (61% from 72%), Youtube (45%), Facebook Messenger (26%), and Tiktok (23%).



1,901 DAYS

spent by Julian Assange, Australian founder of Wikileaks, in a jail in the UK.

He was released on June 24 after agreeing to plead guilty to one of 17 charges of espionage filed by the US for publishing secret US documents and posting them on wikileaks.org.

₱0.77/kwh

Meralco rate increase every month from July to September.



Source: 2024 Work Trend Index

21,000 children

in Gaza remain missing because of Israel's genocidal war.

They are either missing, displaced, imprisoned, buried in collapsed buildings or in mass graves. Of the **15,694 children** documented to have been killed, **just over half have been identified.**

Source: Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2024

53



wasted teaching days last school year. More than half of it (32 days) is due to extreme heat and other calamities.

This is the result of wrong policies and lack of adequate government funding in education, according to ACT.

112

human rights defenders and development workers and at least 20 non-governmental organizations have been charged with trumped-up charges of **"terrorism financing"** in a new series of crackdowns on activists and organizations that help the poor.



Bigas 29

limited program of the Marcos regime to sell **old-stock rice** stored in NFA warehouses to the poorest families at a price of ₱29/kilo.

KMP compared it to spoiled rice or "*bukbok* (weevil) rice" that the Duterte regime forced to feed to the poor in 2018.

Twin threats of disaster in Laguna de Bay

Communities around Laguna de Bay are now closing ranks to face the threat of disaster brought by the twin projects Laguna Lakeshore Road Network Project (LLRNP) and Laguna Lake Floating Solar Project. Fisherfolk and residents fear the resulting damage to the environment and livelihood, and infringement of their rights.

Laguna de Bay, or Laguna Lake, is the largest lake in the Philippines and the third largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia. It is important for irrigation, fishing, and water supply in the region. The Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) oversees the "development" of the lake.

LLRNP, push by ADB

As with other grandiose infrastructure projects, the LLRNP will be funded by a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), a bank established by Japan to channel its surplus capital. This is one of the largest projects to be implemented by ADB's "official development assistance" in the country.

The LLRNP will pave a 37.4 kilometer expressway on the embankment (near the shore) of the lake. The road starts in Lower Bicutan, Taguig City and ends in Calamba City, Laguna. In addition, 6.1 kilometers of connecting roads and 7.3 kilometers of interchanges and slip roads will be constructed. It will cost ₱174.3 billion.

On June 20, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) reported that the detailed design of the LLRNP is 97% complete. The Marcos regime also met in June with the Export-Import Bank of Korea which will fund a part of the project (a 7.94-kilometer road from Lower Bicutan to Alabang).

Laguna Lake Floating Solar Project

Under the guise of creating "renewable" or clean energy, the La-

guna Lake Floating Solar Project is now being pushed. The installation of [ground-mounted] solar panels will cover 2,000 hectares of the lake in parts of the cities of Calamba, Santa Rosa and Cabuyao, and in the towns of Bai and Victoria. Up to an estimated 10,000 fisherfolk and other residents who depend on the lake will be deprived of their livelihood.

The LLDA awarded the contract to install solar panels to AC Energy Corporation of the Ayalas (800 hectares), a partnership of SunAsia Energy Inc and Blueleaf Energy (1,000 hectares), and to the Singaporean company Vena Energy (200 hectares). The companies estimate that they will generate a total of 2.57 gigawatts of electricity.

In June, the Department of Energy awarded SunAsia ten 25-year

contracts for its operation. The company said it will start the project next year and begin commercial operations in 2026.

These companies, which usually partner foreign companies because the country is not capable of creating solar panels, are now pouring huge funds into "renewable" energy. They intend to monopolize its operation in the Philippines. Bourgeois compradores and foreign companies earn huge profits for hypocritically promoting "clean" energy in the country.

Widespread destruction

The two projects will cause widespread destruction to Laguna de Bay. LLRNP's dredging operations will destroy and possibly poison the lake's water, flora and fauna. It is feared that it will destroy critical habitats and cause frequent flooding especially during heavy rains.

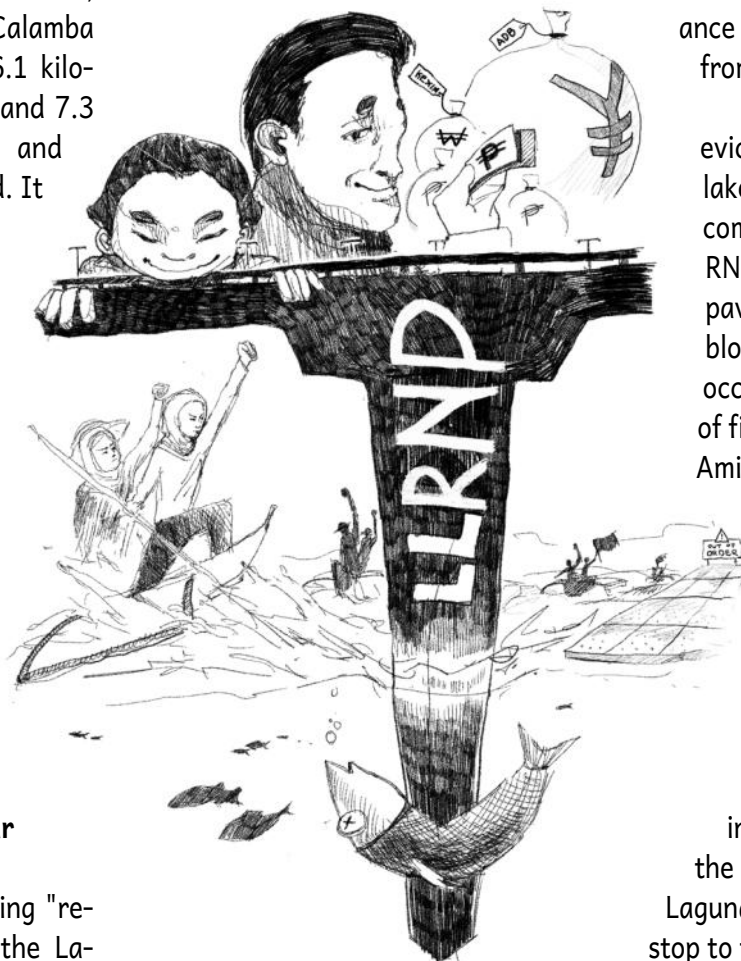
The solar panels that will be mounted will have the same effect. This will affect the quality of the water and the lake's ecological balance and will prevent sunlight from reaching the water.

Residents also fear possible eviction not only from the lakeshore, but also from the communities where the LLRNP's "access roads" will be paved. The solar panels will block the passage of boats and occupy even the staging areas of fishing boats.

Amid all these, the Save Laguna Lake Movement and the

Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mammalalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalalakaya)-Bay are carrying out a series of activities such as fora, consultations and gatherings in recent weeks to stop

the threat of the two projects in Laguna de Bay. They demand a stop to the projects. AB



US and Israel expand war in the Middle East

An all-out war between Zionist Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah group looms following Israel's intensified attacks on southern Lebanon in the past month. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said preparations for a "severe operation" against Hezbollah are underway. Following this declaration, his defense minister, Yoav Gallant, threatened that it "has the capability to take Lebanon back to the stone age," like the unprecedented devastation it brought to the Gaza Strip.

The Hezbollah leader responded by saying that Lebanon is ready to defend itself in the event of an attack by the Zionist state. Hezbollah is an armed organization of the Lebanese people fighting US imperialism and Israeli Zionism. It is based mainly in southern Lebanon, where it is the ruling party. Lebanon is a country to the north of the territory claimed by Israel.

Israel targets Hezbollah which launched strikes in northern Israel as part of defending the Palestinians under attack by the Zionist state in the Gaza Strip. Hezbollah began its strikes on October 8, 2023, one day after Israel launched its attack on Gaza.

In recent months, Israel intensified its attacks on Hezbollah. It killed two military officers and group commanders on June 11 (Taleb Sami Abdullah) and July 3 (Muhammad Nimah

Nasser) in air strikes. In retaliation, Hezbollah fired hundreds of rockets at the Israeli military. The group also used drone bombs. The group also promised that it would "increase the intensity, strength, quantity and quality of attacks."

Lebanon has opposed the Israel state since the Zionists seized Palestinian land. When the Israel state was established in 1948, Lebanon was among seven Middle East countries that launched a war against Zionism and its US support. Hezbollah led an 18-year armed resistance (1982-2000) to the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. Israel attacked Hezbollah again in July-August 2006. Hezbollah defended valiantly in this 34-day war and forced Israel to retreat.

Amid the threat of war breaking out, the United Nations humanitarian

representative warned that it could be "apocalyptic." Israel's war in Lebanon will drag Middle East countries.

The imperialist US and its officials, even its allied countries in Europe, are now pretending to calm the widening conflict in the Middle East. But in reality, the US and its allies are relentlessly supporting and supplying weapons to Israel's war of occupation and genocide in Gaza and its armed attacks against other countries in the region.

For the Palestinians

Hezbollah and the its leaders clearly declared they will stop attacks only if Israel implements a ceasefire in Gaza. This is also the goal of Yemen's Houthi group that is launching strikes against Israeli or Israel-bound ships passing through the Red Sea. It has attacked a total of 162 ships since Israel attacked Gaza.

Amid all these, Israeli airstrikes, bombings and attacks throughout Gaza are relentless. It no longer respects even its self-declared "safe zones."

On July 1 alone, Israel forcibly evicted up to 250,000 Palestinians from Khan Younis, an area adjacent to Rafah, in southern Gaza. On July 3, an Israeli airstrike killed nine Palestinians in homes near the European Hospital in Khan Younis.

Those in Khan Younis are Palestinians driven out of Israel's bombardment of neighboring Rafah, a designated "safe zone." They are again being evacuated to "humanitarian zones" such as al-Masawi which Israel attacked only last June 21, killing 25, and forcing thousands to flee to Khan Younis.

As of July 3, records show Israel has killed 37,953 in Gaza and wounded 87,266 since October 7, 2024. In the West Bank, 561 were victims of killing and 5,300 were wounded. Israel currently detains 9,300 Palestinians of whom 3,450 have no charges.

Organizations worldwide hold global action against Operation Kagaar in India

ON JULY 1, various organizations worldwide launched their activities and protests as part of the global day of action against Operation Kagaar in India. Under this operation, which began on January, at least 130 civilians and revolutionaries have been killed by the Indian state.

Operation Kagaar is a military operation that forms part of the larger counter-insurgency operation Operation SAMADHAN-Prahar in India that was launched in 2017. Under the pretext of fighting Maoists, it openly targets the Adivasi (indigenous) people of India who are struggling for their rights to land, forests, water and life.

The International League of Peoples Struggles Commission 10 and International Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self Determination & Liberation expressed solidarity on the day of action. Groups from India, China, Russia, Turkey and European countries also participated. Philippine democratic organizations also expressed opposition to Operation Kagaar during the July 1 protest.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines has declared a Solidarity Month (June 20-July 20) in the struggle of the Indian people, especially the Adivasi masses against Operation Kagaar.