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The 21-peso challenge: Marcos poverty statistics a cruel joke

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The 21-peso challenge: Marcos poverty statistics a cruel joke

The Marcos Jr. administration's claim that only one in ten Filipinos live below the poverty line is a staggering distortion of reality. This figure is not just misleading, it is a grave insult to millions of Filipinos struggling to survive on the most destitute living conditions.

Setting the poverty threshold at an absurdly low P64 per day for food (or a laughable P21.30 per meal), proves how the reactionary government is not just out of touch, it is blatantly disregarding the crushing hardships faced by the toiling Filipino masses on a daily basis.


Let's break this down: P21.30 per meal in today's economy is a grave insult. With the price of rice reaching as high as P60 per kilo in some areas, how is a typical family of five expected to feed themselves on such a pittance? A kilo of chicken, a common protein source and alternative to pork, now costs upwards of P200. Even basic vegetables like onions and tomatoes have seen price surges, with onions hitting P100 per kilo just last year.

These numbers make it clear that the Marcos Jr. administration's poverty line is a cruel joke – a figure so out of sync with reality that it can only be understood as a deliberate attempt to downplay the severity of the crisis.

But the economic mismanagement does not stop there. The Marcos Jr. admin's inability to control inflation has left ordinary Filipinos reeling. In July 2023, inflation was recorded at 4.7%, and while the government touts this as an improvement, it conveniently ignores the fact that the poorest Filipinos bear the brunt of these price hikes. Basic goods such as rice make up a significant portion of the average Filipino diet and rice prices surged by over 20% in the same year, pushing many families deeper into poverty.

The dire economic conditions perpetuated by the Marcos Jr. administration are not just statistics – they form the material basis that fuels a growing sense of desperation among the Filipino people. With poverty levels artificially deflated and the cost-of-living spiraling out of control, many Filipinos are finding themselves with no other recourse but to take up arms especially those in the rural countryside. The poverty statistics propagated by Marcos' stooges are a cruel joke, and tragically, Marcos jr. himself is at the butt of this joke. By manipulating numbers and ignoring the harsh realities faced by millions of Filipinos, he has crafted a narrative that is as hollow as it is dangerous. In doing so, he is unwittingly sowing the seeds of his own downfall.

As more and more Filipinos are driven to desperation and forced to take up arms, the very fabric of his administration unravels. The armed movement in the countryside continues to grow despite their claims of a few fronts remaining and this growth is a direct consequence of their inability to grasp the roots of the armed conflict.

This joke will end not in laughter, but in the erosion of Marcos Jr.'s power, as the cracks in his regime widen and ultimately, bring it crashing down. 

NPA: Tactical losses will not result in the defeat of rev forces in Panay

The recent tactical losses in Panay does not equate to the dismantling or dissolution of armed struggle in the island, according to the the New People's Army (NPA) Central Panay Jose Percival Estocada Jr. Command. NPA-Central Panay made this statement to the bluster of the 3rd Infantry Division of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to make Panay island 'insurgency-free' by September 2024, and in the wake of death of 10 cadres and red fighters of the NPA in a series of incidents in the border area of 4 provinces of Panay Island in the Western Visayas.

Historically, all previous Chiefs of Staff of the AFP made the pronouncements to eliminate the NPA during their respective terms of office but ultimately failed. NPA guerilla fronts still exist in more than 70 provinces in all strategic areas in the Philippines today.

This is partly because the AFP follows the US counter-insurgency guide, acting like occupation forces with utter disregard to the welfare of the people in areas where they operate.

According to the NPA-Central Panay, "Terrorism and damage to the lives, livelihood, and peaceful existence of the people result from the influx of military troops in the mountainous areas of Central Panay, in their haste to 'wipe out the revolutionary forces in 2024'. More than three battalions under the 3rd Infantry Division Philippine




image: philippinerevolution.nu

Army (3ID PA) with police forces and paramilitary units were deployed in villages in the border area of Capiz, Aklan, Iloilo, and Antique...".

The food blockade and population control measures aggravate hunger and difficulties of the people in the area because August is "tiggurutom" or period of hunger when harvest from their crops were already exhausted and majority of them look for odd jobs in the farm or in the urban areas to make ends meet. The people have not even recovered yet from the impact of El Niño, said NPA-Central Panay in a statement.

NPA-Central Panay declared that while the martyred cadres and red fighters was a big loss to the movement, it cannot dismantle the armed revolutionary movement in Panay. On the contrary, it will serve to arouse further hatred of the reactionary state and steel their resolve to overcome difficulties in winning the war.

"The Party, NPA and the revolutionary masses salutes all the martyred casualties who serve as their inspiration to heighten the armed struggle against the terrorist US-Marcos Jr. Regime," concluded NPA-Central Panay. 

CPP condemns US meddling & subversion in Venezuela

The Communist Party of the Philippines has strongly condemned the US government's blatant political meddling, and together with the Filipino people, stand in solidarity with the Venezuelan people.

The CPP in a statement on August 8, 2024, said the US is colluding with puppet opposition groups in Venezuela and the Western media, to promote images of widespread fraud during the recent elections which saw the overwhelming re-election of Bolivarian anti-imperialist Nicolas Maduro as the country's president.

The CPP said that not even the team of US election observers sent to Venezuela during the elections could prove the US' and Western media's claim of widespread fraud.

"As in 2019, the US has brazenly claimed the power to declare the opposition candidate as the new president of Venezuela. It is funding pocket riots in an attempt to destabilize the situation and ignite an upheaval. It has mobilized its global psywar machine to prop up support for its intervention," the CPP said.


The US has long been undermining Venezuela with unilaterally imposed economic sanctions and has repeatedly attempted, but failed, to assassinate Maduro and overthrow his government. The US' evil agenda is to replace it with a regime that will bring back neoliberal economic policies, US monopoly capitalist control of



image: philippinerevolution.nu

Venezuela's oil reserves, and other privileges for US corporations.

The Maduro government, however, has stood firm, and continues to rally the support of many anti-US imperialist countries in Latin America and all over the world, including national liberation movements like in the Philippines, led by the CPP and the NDFP.

“Venezuela remains one of the cornerstones of resistance to US imperialism in Latin America. The Venezuelan people's resistance inspires militance and fires the people's determination across the world to fight US imperialist domination,” the CPP emphasized. 

AFP military operations, a scourge to the people of Central Panay



image: philippinerevolution.nu

The focused military operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have brought incomparable suffering to Central Panay farming communities.

Units of the 12th IB, 82nd IB, 61st IB and DRC under the 301st IBde have sowed terror in the mountainous border of Antique, Aklan, Capiz and Iloilo.

In Iloilo, soldiers wantonly shot and killed a farmer's carabao in Barangay Cabatangan, Lambunao on August 9, which was a big blow to his livelihood. Despite the devastation, not one soldier was held accountable.

In the town of Calinog, a military helicopter landed on a rice field in Barangay Caratagan. Soldiers crushed and destroyed the crops which was already ripe for harvest. No soldier took responsibility for the damage.

Apart from this, soldiers imposed a food blockade in Calinog and Lambunao in Iloilo. Residents were

allowed to buy only three bags of rice per family. This was a burden to residents who had to travel for two hours to reach the center of Barangay Caratagan, Calinog to procure their necessities.

Soldiers also set up checkpoints in rural communities.

They searched and inspected purchases of all passers by. They baselessly accused residents of buying supplies for the New People's Army when they deemed their purchases excessive.

These tactics have caught the residents' ire. They reason out that they intentionally shop in bulk to save on transportation cost.

Neighbors and relatives sometimes even request to include their intended purchases to reduce shopping trips.

Farming restrictions is also an added burden. Even abaca stripping, rattan and banban gathering, and other sources of livelihood have been prohibited by fascist military troops in the area. 