



EDITORIAL:

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EDITORIAL:

Salaknib and Balikatan draw the Philippines deeper into vortex of war

The ongoing Salaknib military exercises between the US and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) once again demonstrate how the the country is being drawn ever deeper into the vortex of inter-imperialist conflict. These military exercises are part of a broader architecture of militarization that is steadily positioning the Philippines as a frontline state in a potential war between the US and China.

This year's Salaknib drills, which started on April 6 in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, are particularly alarming in both scale and scope. More than 7,000 soldiers from the US and the Philippines are participating, with additional troops from Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. For the first time, around 420 members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force are taking part in command-and-control coordination and live-fire drills, alongside 100 Australian personnel and dozens of troops from New Zealand.

Salaknib is immediately followed by the much larger Balikatan exercises, which will bring in thousands more foreign troops and involve increasingly complex warfighting simulations, including live-fire drills and so-called "territorial defense" scenarios. Notably, plans are underway for the deployment of Japanese combat troops during Balikatan, marking the first time since the end of World War II that such forces will operate on Philippine soil.

In recent years, these joint exercises have seen the steady increase in troop deployments. Balikatan, in particular has expanded into its largest iteration yet this year with 17,000 troops from seven countries joining. This continuous escalation reflects US imperialism's deepening war preparations against China, with the Philippines systematically being integrated as an operational hub in the "first island chain" strategy. Each successive increase in troop presence further entrenches foreign military forces in the country and heightens the risk that the Philippines will be drawn into a major inter-imperialist war.

In addition to troop deployments, the US also seeks to transform local communities into logistical nodes, training grounds, and potential battle zones. Each iteration of Salaknib and Balikatan tightens this integration.

For instance, the Pentagon recently revealed its plan to construct a fuel storage and refueling depot in Davao. Far from being a benign infrastructure project, this facility is a critical component of sustained military warfare. Fuel depots enable prolonged deployments of naval and air assets, ensuring that US forces can operate continuously in the region in the event of open conflict.

This plan follows earlier proposals to establish ammunition manufacturing facilities in the Philippines, including the production and assembly of military-grade munitions.


The dangers of this trajectory are already evident in other parts of the world. The ongoing war waged by US imperialism against Iran has already demonstrated the grave risks faced by countries that host US military facilities. Bases, depots, and logistical hubs become immediate military targets in times of war, exposing entire populations to retaliation and devastation.

This same danger now looms over the Philippines. In the event of a full-scale war between the US and China, US-linked facilities across the archipelago, from EDCA sites to newly proposed depots and factories, will become legitimate military targets. The Filipino people will bear the brunt of this confrontation, suffering the consequences of a war not of their making.

The reactionary regime's full embrace of these expanding military arrangements are part of their long history of subservience to US imperialist interests. Since the formal end of direct colonial rule in 1946, successive puppet presidents have consistently upheld unequal military agreements from the Military Bases Agreement to the Visiting Forces Agreement and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement all of which guarantee permanent US military presence on Philippine soil.

The current Marcos Jr regime has not only maintained these unequal treaties but has aggressively expanded them by allowing additional EDCA sites, facilitating increased US troop deployment and the construction of related logistical warfare facilities. By aligning ever more closely with US war plans, Marcos Jr. and the AFP are reinforcing the country's dependency that has long undermined the Filipino people's aspirations for genuine independence.

Preventing the outbreak of a catastrophic war requires confronting the very system that makes such unequal relations between nations possible. As long as the Philippines remains under the grip of the ruling big comprador bourgeoisie and the landlord class who are both beholden to US imperialist interests, it will continue to serve as a pawn in imperialist war plans.

In the final analysis, the path to genuine peace and security lies in advancing the national democratic revolution. Only by dismantling the structures of US imperialist domination and elite rule can the Filipino people assert genuine sovereignty over their land and resources. Only by establishing a people's democratic government on a national scale can the Philippines chart a truly independent foreign policy: one that refuses to serve as a staging ground for imperialist wars and instead upholds the interests of the Filipino masses. 

Worldwide actions in solidarity with the Indian revolution and armed struggle

The International Committee to Support the People's War in India (ICSPWI) called for an international day of solidarity on March 28, 2026 to demand an end to Narendra Modi's brutal Operation Kagaar. From Brazil, Mexico and the United States, to the Netherlands, Finland, Switzerland, United Kingdom all the way to Bangladesh and the Philippines, progressive and revolutionary forces expressed their support for the Indian and Adivasi people, and particularly the Communist Party of India (Maoist) or CPI (Maoist) and the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA), with pamphlets, posters, streamers, graffiti, discussions and protests.

Since January 2024, the Indian state has been waging the counterinsurgency offensive "Operation Kagaar" against Adivasis, peasants and activists. Villages are being bombed, people displaced, prisoners tortured or killed. This so-called "final war" has been a war waged against the masses who have dared to stand up against the exploitation of their land and resources by multinational corporations and their local collaborators.

The main goal of Modi's fascist Hindutva regime in waging this campaign is to wipe out the Indian people's armed revolutionary struggle by the end of March 2026, which is framed in the US counterinsurgency doctrine and is a direct extension of the US Indopacific Strategy. More than 750 individuals have been massacred, mainly Adivasi people in Central India. Thousands more were arrested, jailed and branded as "terrorists". The military carried out mass surrender campaigns and forced indigenous communities to cooperate. Hundreds of military camps have been built in the forests and communities to ensure the appropriation and plundering of ancestral lands and the environment.

While many cadres of the CPI (Maoist) and PLGA have fallen victim to the violence of the Indian fascist state, the

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), New People's Army (NPA) and the entire revolutionary movement have reaffirmed their support and confidence that the Indian revolutionary movement will overcome and defeat Operation Kagaar. Their steadfastness and heroic struggle serves as an inspiration to the Filipino people to persevere their armed struggle with even greater determination.


The liberation of India and the Philippines from imperialist oppression and domination will significantly contribute to the worldwide struggle against imperialism and for freedom and socialism. 



image: NDFP

NPA actions hit fascist operations vs. masses

NPA guerrillas under the Lucio de Guzman Command in Mindoro island valiantly fought back at the counterrevolutionary operations against the masses by fascist troops of the 68th IBPA 203rd Infantry Brigade in Sityo Salafay, Barangay Monteclaro, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, and foiled a treacherous attack on an NPA unit as the Red Army was celebrating its 57th anniversary last March 29. In the battle that happened March 29, the commander of the fascist troops 1st Lt. Oyando was killed while two other soldiers were wounded. Earlier on March 24, in Sityo Danlog, Barangay Monteclaro, attacking fascist troops suffered three casualties while two others were wounded. The Red fighters were able to withdraw without a scratch.

The fascist soldiers have been engaged in intimidating, harassing and exploiting civilians. They also have a notorious record of spreading decadent culture including illegal drugs and prostitution wherever they set up military camps. When it set up camp in Sitio Mantay of Barangay Monteclaro, they exploited the Buhid women and paid the victims' relatives to keep quiet.

Fascist troops cowardly attack Mangyan communities

every time there is an operation. In the latest fascist operation, 112 Mangyan Buhid families or 500 people were forced to evacuate. The fascists impose martial law in the communities where the masses are forbidden to buy more than the daily needs of a family and are forbidden to go out of the community to visit their farms and eat, and even limit their time in the fields. They also force residents to haul supplies and fetch water for the fascist soldiers free of charge.

In an effort to turn the tables on the Red fighters and score propaganda points, fascists troops turned to civilians and arrested cultural activist Charlize Garzon who went to Mindoro to live with the Mangyans. She was accused as a member of the NPA-Mindoro and was photographed next to the equipment found in the battle.

The 203rd Infantry Brigade has been carrying out violent attacks against civilian communities throughout the island of Mindoro. Recently, Mindoreño and Mangyan Iraya farmers suffered from the fascist bombings in the mountains of Barangay Cabacao, Abra de Ilog, which took the lives of three Mangyan Iraya children and a young Jerlyn Rose Doydora, while the children's mother was injured.

188 families of Mangyan Iraya were forced to evacuate. Young researcher Chantal Anicoche, a Filipino-American, was also arrested in an operation, and falsely accused as a combatant. She has since been released and returned to the US after strong denunciations of her unjust arrest from human rights and concerned organizations.

In Negros Island, the Armando Sumayang Jr Command (ASJC-NPA) congratulated Red Commanders and Guerrillas for the series of successful military actions in the month of March, in celebration of the 57th anniversary of the New People's Army (NPA) today on March 29.

The guerrillas conducted three harassment operations: on March 1, the detachment of the 15th IB was overrun in Proper Barangay Haba, Candoni; on March 9, the fascist troops of the same battalion camped in the middle of the community of Sityo Patol, Barangay Caliling, Cauayan, and were harassed and forced to flee; and on March 16, another fascist detachment was overrun in Sityo Tagaytay, Barangay Narra, Cauayan, driving away the soldiers. In addition, the ASJC-NPA obtained two weapons last March 12 and March 19 from counterrevolutionaries and evil elements who were disarmed after a guerrilla punitive operation. ▲

NDFP allied organizations: join the New People's Army

On the occasion of the 57th Anniversary of the New People's Army (NPA), allied organizations of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) heed the call of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), in the current stage of the people's war, for the revolutionary forces to continue to advance extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare in the whole country.

The CPP said that the crisis of the ruling system that brings unprecedented suffering to the broad masses makes even clearer the need to advance along the path of people's war. "This is especially stark among the youth who aspire to change the system and build a new future for the country. Marcos himself, through his negative example, is pushing them to fight and take up arms. Last year, we saw rising numbers of youth, both in the cities and countryside, responding to the call to support and join the New People's Army. The NPA is continuously infused with new blood, renewing its strength for advancing the armed struggle."

The Secretary General of the NDFP, Elias Dipasupil, explains that at the threat of an escalating and widening imperialist war, the Filipino people face the risk of being drawn into the war as magnets for attacks by US enemies. "As the reactionary regime refuses to implement an independent foreign policy and pigheadedly hosts EDCA sites and other US military installations in the Philippines, the Filipino people must develop our own revolutionary armed force to defend our sovereignty. The New People's Army and our revolutionary bases must be prepared to welcome patriotic Filipinos who want to take up arms but do not want to serve as cannon fodder for whichever imperialist power holds military command."

Dipasupil asserted that under the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army provides the sharpest and most disciplined tool for advancing the armed struggle as the primary form of people's war. All allied organizations of the National Democratic Front commend and support your advance and are always ready to expand and consolidate our organizations for the armed struggle and to contribute more Red commanders and fighters to the people's army.

Commending the NPA on its anniversary, Dipasupil affirmed that all allied organizations of the NDFP "support your advance and are always ready to expand and consolidate our organizations for the armed struggle and to contribute more Red commanders and fighters to the people's army. On this important date, we call on the people to march on in the struggle for national liberation

and democracy."

Chapters of the NDFP at home and abroad echoed the call on Filipinos to join the ranks of the New People's Army in the whole country. These are People's Artists and Writers (ARMAS)-Balangay Ka Soral Malaya, Kabataang Makabayan (KM)-Laguna, NDF-Southern Tagalog, NDF-Laguna, KM-Cebu, NDF-Kasama, NDF-Makibaka, PKM-Balangay Aplaya (Fishermen's section), Compa-triots-NDF Asia Pacific, and many others. ▲

