



ANG

Pahayagan ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas  
Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

# Bayan

Vol XLVI No. 8  
August 7, 2015

www.philippinerevolution.net

Editorial

## Frustrate attempts to cripple the national democratic movement

Under direct orders of the US, the Aquino regime and state security forces have launched a desperate attack against the national democratic movement. This attack seeks to capture or liquidate leading cadres of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), commanders of the New People's Army (NPA) and officials of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), as well as key activists and leaders of the open national democratic mass movement.

Its despicable aim is to suppress the Filipino people's national democratic movement in order to bulldoze the neoliberal policies through and pave the way for unimpeded plunder and exploitation by foreign big capitalists in the coming years.

Arrest and liquidation operations by the US-Aquino regime have intensified over the past few months. Aquino's urgent objective is to cripple the protest actions that are set to confront the APEC leaders meeting this November. He also aims to suppress the national democratic forces who are determined to expose and oppose the computerized cheating being hatched by Aquino for 2016 in order to install his clone.

His attack against the leading committees, commands and organizations are part of the anti-people Oplan Bayanihan war of suppression. This is a rehash of similar attacks by the Arroyo regime under Oplan Bantay Laya I and II. These attacks aim to derail the advance of both the people's war and the mass struggles in the cities. These are in consonance with the all-out offensives of

the AFP in Mindanao since the early part of 2014 and other parts of the country which have caused the forced evacuation of tens of thousands of people. The attacks of the AFP against civilians are relentless.

Based on its targets, the AFP has failed to attain the aim of Oplan Bayanihan to render the NPA irrelevant by the end of 2013, even by the adjusted timetable of 2015. Every year, the AFP declares so-called "conflict manageable areas" which they would later take back in the face of continuing NPA tactical offensives in those areas.

ership of the Party, the people's war continues to advance nationwide. Even in Mindanao where AFP offensives are concentrated, the NPA continues to maintain tactical initiative and can launch armed actions and offensives against the enemy. Units of the NPA continue to gain momentum in launching tactical offensives across the country against the overstretched forces of the enemy.

In fact, the US-Aquino regime's arrest and killing of some leaders and commanders are merely flashes to cover up the failure of Oplan Bayanihan and its vain attempt to defeat the people's revolutionary resistance. While these cause temporary work dislocations, these fail in preventing the overall advance of the armed revolutionary movement and the people's struggles.

Under  
the lead-



New revolutionary leaders and commanders will continue to rise up from the ranks to strengthen the leadership of the CPP, NPA, NDFP and the mass organizations. They are ardently studying Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and applying it in advancing the people's war in the country.

The all-out attacks of the US-Aquino regime must be confronted and roundly defeated. Here and abroad, we must carry out vigorous exposure of the campaign of suppression, trampling on civil and political rights and outright distortion of legal processes. The mass movement to defend civil rights must be strengthened and expanded among the broad democratic forces who will stand firmly and oppose the regime's campaign of suppression.

Party cadres and personalities in the urban areas who are identified and being pursued are the most vulnerable to enemy attacks. They should more firmly carry out underground means of working in the cities, including building secret support networks, limiting links, and

others.

All Party organs at different levels must be strengthened in order to be able to strike deep roots among the masses, and carry out propaganda, organizing and mobilization work.

It is better for those who can no longer effectively work in the cities to work in the countryside in the territories under the authority of the revolutionary movement. Territories of the revolutionary movement are also open to activists and mass leaders being hounded by the US-Aquino regime.


The US and Aquino regime are bound to be frustrated in their aim of crippling the national democratic movement in the face of the deep-seated crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal system. Aquino's devout adherence to the neoliberal policy dictates of his imperialist masters has resulted in unprecedented crisis. The extreme exploitation and grave sufferings of the people it has caused are compelling the people to tread the path of revolutionary struggle. AB

## Aquino regime illegally arrests NDFP personages from Panay and ST

The US-Aquino regime once again dealt a blow to the peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) when it arrested an NDFP consultant and a staffer over the past two weeks. These were carried out as part of the intensified suppression campaign which also targets activists and leaders of progressive organizations in urban centers. It is also in tandem with the unabated attacks against peasants and minorities who are fighting for their land and livelihood.

Luis Jalandoni, chief negotiator of the NDFP, condemned the successive arrests of NDFP consultants and staffers. He likewise condemned Joint Order No. 14-2012 which listed 237 individuals as "wanted communists" and increased bounty to P467 million for their heads. The Joint Order was issued by the Department of National Defense and Department of Interior and Local Government in November 2012 and serves as an "order of battle" or OB for police and military operations. This scheme has resulted in numerous JASIG (Joint Agreement of Safety and Immunity Guarantees) violations, and illegal arrests, abuses and detention of ordinary civilians due to the million-peso bounty. According to Karapatan, the military, police and their fake witnesses have profited a total of P55 million from this scheme.

**Blow to the peace negotiations.** Elements of the Criminal Investigation and Detection

 <p>Vol XLVI No. 8   August 7, 2015</p> <p><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Hiligaynon, Waray and English. It can be downloaded from the Philippine Revolution Web Central at <a href="http://www.philippinerevolution.net">www.philippinerevolution.net</a></p> <p>Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news items. Readers are encouraged to send feedback and recommendations for improving our newspaper. Send your messages to <a href="mailto:cppinformationbureau@gmail.com">cppinformationbureau@gmail.com</a></p>	<h3 style="text-decoration: underline;">Contents</h3> <p><b>Editorial:</b> Frustrate attempts to cripple the movement 1</p> <p>NDFP personages arrested 2</p> <p>IPT 2015 verdict 4</p> <p>US trained AFP in Panay 5</p> <p>NPA raids 58th IB 6</p> <p>NPA attacks 75th IB 6</p> <p>NPA strikes 49th IB 6</p> <p>SONA protests 7</p> <p>Job crisis under Aquino 8</p> <p>Coconut farmers in Quezon 8</p> <p>Five years under PPP 9</p> <p>POC Privatization 10</p>
<p><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	

Group (CIDG) VI and Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines illegally arrested Ma. Concepcion Araneta-Bocala, known as Ka Concha Araneta, spokesperson of the regional committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines and NDF-Panay, in Junta Subdivision, Molo, Iloilo City last August 1.

Araneta was in possession of NDFP Documentation of Identification ND978245 under the name of Remi Estrella. Araneta is known for her fierce criticism of the US-Aquino regime and of the exploitative and anti-people policies of the state, especially of its criminal neglect of the survivors of super-typhoon Yolanda which left Panay in tatters. (Read related article.) Soldiers likewise arrested her nephew Joseph Cariaga, and Anielyn Soldevilla, a housemate. Araneta has a P7.8-million bounty on her head.

Earlier, elements of the CIDG, Philippine National Police (PNP) and Anti-transnational Crimes Unit jointly arrested Ernesto Lorenzo, NDF-Southern Tagalog staffer, on July 21 in the Gilmore IT Center in Quezon City. Lorenzo is the holder of NDFP Document of Identification ND778299 under the name of Lean Martinez. Simultaneous with his arrest, AFP elements raided the house where he has been staying and arrested his wife, Joyce Latayan. More than 50 soldiers stormed the house, while their one-year child Julie Alicia was inside.

Charges of rebellion, illegal possession of firearms and multiple murder were filed against Araneta while Lorenzo and his wife were slapped with criminal charges such as destructive arson. Both Araneta and Lorenzo are covered by the JASIG. Lorenzo and Latayan are currently held in Camp Crame while Araneta is detained in Camp Martin Delgado, PNP-Western Visayas headquarters.

**Raid on Haran Compound.** More than 500 police, along with

soldiers and members of the paramilitary group Alamara, raided Haran Compound last July 23. The raid sought to force the 700 Lumads who are temporarily living inside the compound to go back to their communities despite continued military presence which forced them to evacuate. More than 15 Lumads were injured during the raid. Haran Compound is owned the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP.)

The raid is part of the successive attempts of officials of the US-Aquino regime, headed by the Rep. Nancy Catamco, and officials of the 10th ID, to silence the Lumads and put a stop to the increasing support they are generating from different sectors and institutions here and abroad.

Before the raid, the Lumads refused Catamco's offer of vehicles to take them back to their communities in Talaingod, Davao del Norte and Bukidnon. The Lumads have been staying inside the compound for almost four months.

In July 17, Catamco sowed fear among them when she brought representatives of the 10th ID to a dialogue inside the Haran Compound. She pretended to be a friend at first, but her true colors showed when the evacuees refused to return to their communities as long as military troops do not leave the area.

She was rude to the Lumads whom she mocked as "stinky" and

questioned the authority of their leaders. Because of this, she was declared persona non grata by the evacuees and banned from the compound.

The UCCP, progressive representatives and organizations and the broad masses condemned the raid and the recurrent abuses of state forces against the Lumads. Consequently, the Davao City Council and Congress plan to investigate Catamco's role in the raid.

Meanwhile, on July 15, Datu Tungig-Masim-oy from Talaingod, together with Karapatan and National Union of People's Lawyers representatives, held a dialogue with Dr. Chaloka Beyani, United Nations Special Rapporteur for Internally Displaced Persons, in Quezon City to convey the Lumads' situation. Karapatan submitted to Dr. Beyani the documentation of 60,000 victims of forced evacuations in different parts of Mindanao. It included the case of 441 individuals, mostly of the B'laan tribe, who were forced to leave their community in Sitio Akbual, Upper Suyan, Malapatan, Sarangani due to the AFP's indiscriminate bombing, threats and interrogation, and the imposition of a food blockade since May.

**Intensified harassment of legal activists in Davao.** Karapatan disclosed last July 15 the threats, harassment, intimidation and surveillance carried out against Han-



imay Suazo, Karapatan-South Mindanao Region secretary-general, by the 10th ID, 10th Civil Military Operations (CMO) Battalion, agents of the Eastern Military Command and CIDG XI since October 2014 up to the present. Suazo is one of the 15 leaders charged with kidnapping, illegal detention and human trafficking in relation to the Lumad evacuees.

The operations carried out by the military against Suazo include motorcycle-riding operatives tracking her movements, blatant intimidation by a military officer during a dialogue, an attempt to enter the Karapatan office, 24-hour surveillance of the said office and brazen loitering of motorcycle-riding military agents at their gates.

In a related case, military agents ransacked the home of Grace Gamalinda, Migrante-Davao's education officer, last July 20. Gamalinda and her daughter Arriane, are among those charged with the same spurious cases as Suazo. In another related case of intimidation, state agents followed Cristy Balinawa, Migrante-Davao staffer, on her way home from Haran Compound. According to Balinawa, police cars have been staking out her house for several days.

**Fascism against peasants and minorities.** In Cagayan, three members of the Aggay minorities were abducted by elements of the 17th IB in Sitio Dalingan, San Juan, Rizal last July 20. According to Karapatan-Cagayan's documentation, the victims Mendo Visiotan, Marlon Baganay and Lando Duruin were first mauled before the soldiers dragged them out of the sitio. The soldiers also kicked Visiotan's wife Jessica when she attempted to stop them. Before leaving, they ransacked five houses and accused the residents of being supporters of the New People's Army. After a long search, relatives found the

victims in Cagayan's provincial jail. They are facing trumped-up charges of illegal possession of firearms.

In Negros, Ronel Bariga, a member of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW), was injured last July 17 in an ambush by paid goons of a notorious landlord while on his way to Barangay Igmay-an in the town of Salvador Benedicto. Bariga was then onboard a jeepney with his nephew Ariel Ceballos when two men riding-in-tandem opened fire. The NFSW believes that Alexander Ceballos, Ariel's father, was the goons' real target since he led the cultivation of land in Igmay-an for food consumption. The land, which the farmers call a "land cultivation area" has been sold by Nehemias de la Cruz, Salvador Benedicto's ex-mayor, to Benigno Aquino III's uncle, Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Before the attempted murder, the same goons have already threatened the lives of Alexander and 11 more farmworkers. De la Cruz's son likewise threatened to file cases to drive them out of the land during a confrontation inside the office of the Provincial Agrarian Reform Office in July 14.

Since 2013, Ceballos and 50 other NFSW members have cultivated the 25-hectare land which the de la Cruzes are claiming. They have planted rice, corn, cassava and bananas for their families' consumption. The property is part of the 771-hectare land that the de la Cruzes have

grabbed through intimidation, killings and various legal maneuverings during their family's tenure in local politics.

In Ifugao, the military repeatedly intimidated and threatened Nonoy Bungtiwen, one of the leaders of the Ifugao Peasant Movement's (IPM) and a barangay councilor of Tulludan, Tinoc. Bungtiwen and the IPM strongly oppose the Quadraver project which aims to build a hydroelectric power plant in their area. In July 19, the Tulludan council passed a resolution to condemn the threats against Bungtiwen and called for the military to stop maliciously linking him with the New People's Army.

In related news, residents from nearby Barangay Tukucan condemned Quadraver's attempt to bribe their barangay captain, Joseph Calabson, to make him sign a memorandum of agreement (MOA) as part of gaining their free prior and informed consent (FPIC).

The residents had already withdrawn a prior MOA after learning the extent of the project's destruction to their land and livelihood. Quadraver promised higher wages for Calabson and other officials if they signed a new MOA and Quadraver's operations go ahead in Tinoc. Calabson refused and instead called a barangay assembly where the residents restated their decision to close the door to the project. The Quadraver project is a subsidiary of a company owned by the Ayala family. **AB**



## IPT 2015 finds Aquino and the US guilty

**G**uilty beyond doubt — this was the verdict handed down against Benigno Aquino III and the US government for violating the Filipino people's political and civil rights, economic and social-cultural rights, and right to self-determination. This was the decision of the International People's Tribunal (IPT) which was held last July 16-20 in Washington, D.C. The tribunal heard a total of 34 cases, with 32 witnesses, filed by various groups.

The tribunal found that the evidence submitted complies with evidentiary requirements and that there is clear basis to convict and hold responsible Benigno Aquino III and the US government for their crimes against the Filipino people. The IPT is an independent body of lawyers and human rights experts.


As stated by the tribunal, the human rights violations are not "random" but are of a clear pattern, especially in the context of the Aquino government's Oplan Bayani-

han, which is "implemented with the assistance of the US government."

Among those who testified was Cynthia Jaramillo, wife of Arnold Jaramillo, who gave an account of the results of the autopsy on her husband and that of his companions which proved that they suffered extreme torture and brutality before soldiers executed them in a raid in Lacub, Abra in 2014. Earl John Antivo, Roque Antivo's 8-year old brother, also gave his testimony. Roque was killed in April 2013 when

soldiers fired indiscriminately at their community.

The IPT verdict will be submitted to the office of the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and courts in America, Europe, Africa and Asia, where Aquino and the US government can be put on trial.

Meanwhile, in July 15, Filipino human rights defenders testified in the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the US Senate to narrate abuses and other human rights violations committed against the minority peoples of Cordillera, Sierra Madre and in Mindanao. One of the participants, Bishop Solito Toquero, reminded the commission that they had also appeared in 2007 when they called for the US to stop military aid to the Philippines. 

## US troops trained AFP for APEC—Ka Concha

**A** number of American troops were deployed in Panay for "inter-operative" training of AFP troops to secure the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings. This is according to Ka Concha Araneta, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF)-Panay, in a statement released a few days before Benigno Aquino's State of the Nation Address (SONA).

According to Ka Concha: "The regime has doubled regular army troops deployed in Panay to face increasing numbers of people massing up to protest on the streets and to fight the in-

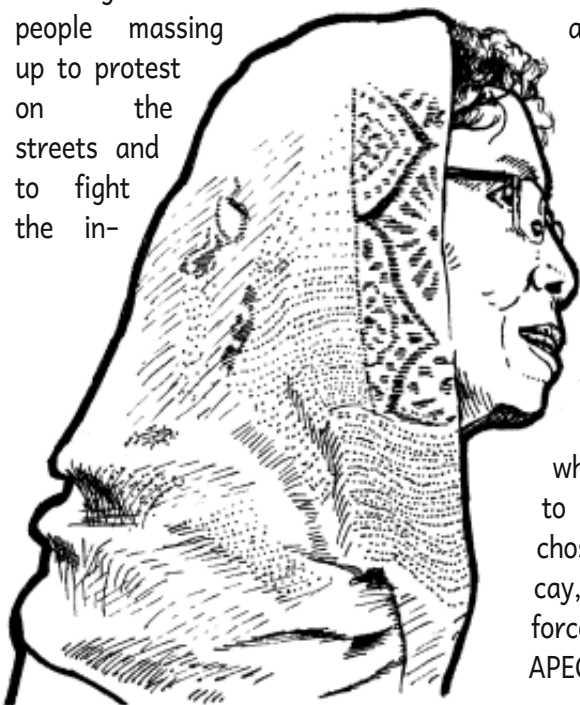
vigorated NPA forces. On certain occasions, the regime has added 2,000-3,000 to the Philippine National Police (PNP) to secure APEC and presidential sorties in Panay."

Panay is one of the sites chosen by the regime to host various APEC meetings. A convention center, sponsored by loyal Aquino supporter Sen. Franklin Drilon, was built in Iloilo for this sole purpose. The center is mired in anomaly and corruption which the government has chosen to cover-up. Among other places chosen for the meetings is Boracay, Aklan, where the whole police force was trained by the US. The APEC leaders meeting will be held in

November. Added Ka Concha, "some ministerial-level conferences had been held and some are still to be conducted, including those on capital infrastructure (policies which facilitate capital penetration and remittances), privatization of small and medium industries and the further exploitation of the blue economy (of the sea). We are made to participate, as hosts to the APEC, in the plan to subject our livelihood to the control of foreign capital, to the sell-out of our patrimony and the bankruptcy of small and medium industries by subcontracting them to big local and foreign corporations for more profits. Our depleted sea resources would be further exploited for more profits of big foreign fish factories."

Fishing is Panay's second largest industry. The biggest is rice and third is sugar.

Ka Concha also denounced the massive importation of rice and sugar which has caused peasant livelihoods to fall. She also slammed the Aquino regime's long-delayed release of the Emergency Shelter Assistance (ESA). She said many victims received nothing at all from the ESA



because “many were stolen by public officials”.

Ka Concha also criticised the “glorified” Jalaur River Dam project which, aside from presenting enormous danger to people downstream, will also create an enormous debt burden for the people. The planned Jalaur Dam will be the biggest dam outside Luzon, and is funded by an P11 billion loan from South Korea.

She further added that “All of the above only make the people more determined to overthrow the US-Aquino regime.”

Meanwhile, Ka Oris, spokesperson of NDF-Mindanao, condemned the lies peddled by Aquino in his last SONA.

According to Ka Oris, “Aquino III is the latest upgrade in the implementation of neoliberal policies in the country that mired the people in dire poverty... Real economic growth is impossible under Aquino III’s reign because he refuses to implement land reform and establish national industrialization... Moreover, giant agribusiness companies, such as DOLE, Del Monte and Sumifru, have further expanded their plantations in Mindanao, grabbing more land from peasants, including the Moro and Lumad peoples, and exploiting agri-workers”.

He stated further that: “His stress on AFP and PNP modernization, highlighting the procurement of new vehicles, aircrafts, sea crafts and military hardware and weaponry, means the intensification of the OPB military suppression campaign. However, he intentionally skipped mentioning his administration’s human rights violations, such as extrajudicial killings, which claimed 229 lives from 2010 to 2014, 85 in Mindanao alone, forced evacuations, filing of trumped-up cases, forcible closure of some community schools and many others.” AB



## NPA raids 58th IB in Gingoog City

**A**K3 light machine gun and an M203 grenade launcher were seized by the Eastern Misamis Oriental-Northeastern Bukidnon (EMONEB) Sub-regional Command in a successful raid against a Peace and Development Team (PDT) of the 58th IB in Brgy. Alagatan, Gingoog City, last July 11, 2015. The said PDT encamped at Alagatan’s barangay hall.

Around ten soldiers under the command of 1st Lt. Valiente Palomino were caught by surprise when they were attacked by an NPA platoon while playing basketball. The gunfight lasted for about 20 minutes, resulting in a soldier killed, seven wounded, and the capture of Pfc. Adonis Jess M. Lupiba. A Red fighter was wounded. Aside from the two high powered firearms, the NPA seized two ammunition vests, three machine gun ammunition links, 12 40mm ammunition and two military backpacks. The NPA successfully withdrew from the site.

On the other hand, the NPA-North Central Mindanao Region (NCOMR) apologized for injuring two civilians, Helen Mae Helodo, 14 years old, and Leticia Cabrera. They were immediately given first aid before they were taken to the hospital. According to Ka Allan Juanito, spokesperson of NPA-NCOMR, the NPA is ready to shoulder their medical expenses.

As of last report, the two are in stable condition.

Ka Allan also declared Pfc. Lupiba (Serial No. 863573) as prisoner-of-war (POW). Last July 22, Ka Luis Jalandoni, chief negotiator of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, endorsed the recommendation of NDF-NCOMR to start negotiations for his safe and orderly release. Last July 28, the NPA-NCOMR released a video of Lupiba showing him to be in good condition in the custody of Red fighters and that he is not wounded, contrary to rumors being spread by the military. He is currently under the care of an NPA custodial unit that is ensuring his rights and welfare. AB



## NPA launches offensive against 49th IB in Camarines Norte

NINE were confirmed killed and one seriously wounded in an harassment action launched by the NPA in Sta. Elena, Jose Panganiban last July 20.

At around ten in the morning, Red fighters of the Armando Catapia Command (ACC) attacked a detachment of the CAFGU and 49th IB in response to the village people’s demand to punish the abusive and extortionist troops. Romeo Gresola (Ka Gomar), who hailed from Bulacao, Gubat, Sorsogon, was martyred in the battle. The National Democratic Front-Bicol paid him the highest tribute.

Last July 19, Red fighters burned down the camp of Charlie Coy of the 49th IB in Barangay Dumagmang, Labo while the soldiers were out on operations.

Meanwhile, the Celso Minguez Command meted the death sentence on Recto Maglaque Jr., a member of the Civilian Armed Auxillary of the 22nd IB in Magallanes, Sorsogon last June 25. Maglaque acted as a guide in military operations in the area, including the raid of the 31st IB against the NPA in Barangay Tagas, Magallanes last April 2. AB

# Widespread protests greet Aquino's SONA



On July 27, tens of thousands of protesters held a demonstration along Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, to expose the lies of Benigno Aquino III's sixth and last SONA and to express their extreme anger at his regime. Workers, peasants, and other sectors including students, women, migrants, indigenous people and teachers rallied to the call to "end the corrupt, incapable, elitist and oppressive rule of the US-Aquino regime".

The rally was held amid threats and harassments on leaders of the democratic organizations and the heavy phalanx of police troopers, container vans and concertina wire to block the protesters.

Around noon, peasants from Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon were bombarded with water cannons in the police's futile attempt to disperse the march. Protesters from the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) were able to push aside some container vans that blocked their march.

The protesters blasted the hyped "Daang Matuwid" and asserted that Aquino's rule must end. Renato Reyes, secretary-general of Bayan, declared that "The Aquino regime will be remembered for the following things: pork barrel corruption, the illegal Disbursement Acceleration Program, the failed response before and after Yolanda, the Mamasapano incident, the daily suffering of train

commuters, the return of US bases via the EDCA, the selective prosecution in corruption cases, bogus land reform, historically high unemployment amid so-called growth, the plight of Mary Jane Veloso and the rise of barkadahan governance".

After Aquino's speech, representatives of progressive parties inside the halls of congress stood up and raised placards in front of Aquino with slogans such as "mapang-aping asendero" (oppressive landlord), "pahirap sa mga manggagawa at kawani" (burden to the workers and employees), "human rights violator", "pork barrel king", "serbisyo palpak" (botched services), and "tuta ng Kano" (US puppet).

In Baguio City, protesters picketed the city hall. The Cordillera Peoples Alliance and other progressive organizations attended the mass action.

Even before the SONA, protest actions were held in different parts of



the country.

On July 23, the KMP launched 'Kadenang Magsasaka', a series of protest actions including a noise barrage, human chain and other activities all over Luzon to highlight the real state of the peasants even before Aquino presented his sham SONA.

On July 24, artists, together with Karapatan, the End Impunity Alliance and relatives and friends of political prisoners held an exhibit entitled "PORTRAYAL: Faces For Freedom" at the Maximillian Gallery, Quezon City. Faces of political prisoners were featured in more than 50 paintings, digital art, and sketches to refute Aquino's criminal labels on them and to express solidarity with the call for their release.

On July 21, at twelve noon, political prisoners in different prisons in the country sang Bayan Ko. Detainees in prisons in Metro Manila, Eastern Visayas, Negros, Bohol, Caraga and Southern Mindanao joined in the coordinated protest.

Last July 29, a few days after the SONA, members of Alyansa ng Novo Viscayanos Para sa Kalikasan and other progressive organizations from Cagayan Valley held a picket in front of the provincial capitol of Nueva Vizcaya in Bayombong.

They condemned the extrajudicial killing of more than 150 peasants and other human rights violations in the region. They also declared their opposition to Oceana Gold in Didipio, Kasibu and FCF Mining in Runruno, Quezon.

Peasants affected by the big foreign mining companies in Cordon, Isabela, expressed solidarity with the protesters.

## NPA attacks 75th IB

FIVE government soldiers were killed and two wounded in separate engagements between the NPA and military troops in Surigao del Sur and Agusan del Norte last July 23, 2015, a few days before Aquino's State of the Nation Address.

In Barangay Doña Carmen, Tagbina, Surigao del Sur, two troopers from the 75th IB were killed in an ambush by Red fighters from Front 14.

At 9:30 a.m., in Sitio Zapanta Valley, Bangayan, Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte, two Scout Rangers were killed in an ambush by the NPA-Front 16. Another soldier of the 29th IB was killed around 2:35 p.m. in the same place.

In retaliation, two Air Force bomber planes dropped eight bombs, while two MG-520 attack helicopters dropped an undetermined number of rockets and fired cal. 50 machine gun at 4:55 p.m. on the same day. A UH-1H helicopter also flew twice to get the casualties in Zapanta Valley. **AB**

## Coconut farmers launch “Bigkisan” in Quezon

PROGRESSIVE coconut farmers headed by the Coco Levy Funds Iba-lik sa Amin (CLAIM or Give Us Back the Coco Levy Funds) launched a week-long series of protest actions in the province of Quezon last July 20-27.

On July 20, up to 5,000 farmers joined in the demonstrations in different towns in the province. This is the biggest and most extensive demonstration of coconut farmers in the province in more than 30 years.

The largest among the gatherings was held in Catanauan where more than 2,000 farmers assembled and linked arms on the roadside. They called the action “Bigkisan ng Magsasaka sa Niyugan ng Quezon Para Bawiin ang Coco Levy Funds

(Quezon Coconut Farmers Chain for the Return of Coco Levy Funds.) They stretched over two kilometers of road.

In San Francisco, more than 1,000 farmers joined in the “Bigkisan.” Simultaneously, delegations from Central and South Quezon picketed in front of the provincial capitol while the provincial council held deliberations regarding coco levy funds inside. On the same day, hundreds of students from the Southern Luzon State University and Enverga University walked out of their classes and linked arms in solidarity with the farmers.

One of the highlights of the “Bigkisan” is the State of the *Magniniyog* (coconut farmers) Address

wherein CLAIM presented the real state of the farmers in the province.

More than 1,300 farmers who participated in the “Bigkisan” gathered at a camp in Lucena City’s Perez Park before travelling to Metro Manila on July 23. On July 24, they went to the US embassy, before picketing in front of the United Coconut Planters Bank office in Makati. On July 25, they launched a protest-action in Mendiola. The next day, they picketed in front of the Aquinos’ house in Times St., West Triangle, Quezon City. On the day of the SONA, they joined the large demonstration on Commonwealth Avenue. The next day, they went to Camp Crame to condemn the violent dispersal of their ranks the day before. **AB**

## Job crisis under Aquino



**A**quino declared in his SONA that the unemployment rate in the Philippines has gone down to 6.8%, supposedly the lowest in the past decade.

He also asserted that the number of Filipino overseas contract workers (OCW) has gone down and that many are coming home because they are encouraged to seek employment here.

According to a study by the Ibon Foundation, a research group, the current job crisis is unprecedented. The group estimates that the number of unemployed grew by at least 100,000 while the number of underemployed grew by not less than one million. The number of workers who do mere part-time work grew by 1.5 million.

Government data makes it appear that there are only 2.68 million unemployed. But according to Ibon estimates, there are 4.3 million without work (10.2%). This is no different from the 10-12% unemployment rate since 2000. In addition, there are 7.9 million underemployed. All in all, 12.2 million or 29.12% of the entire

labor force are unemployed or underemployed. This is the biggest number yet of unemployed and underemployed in government statistics.

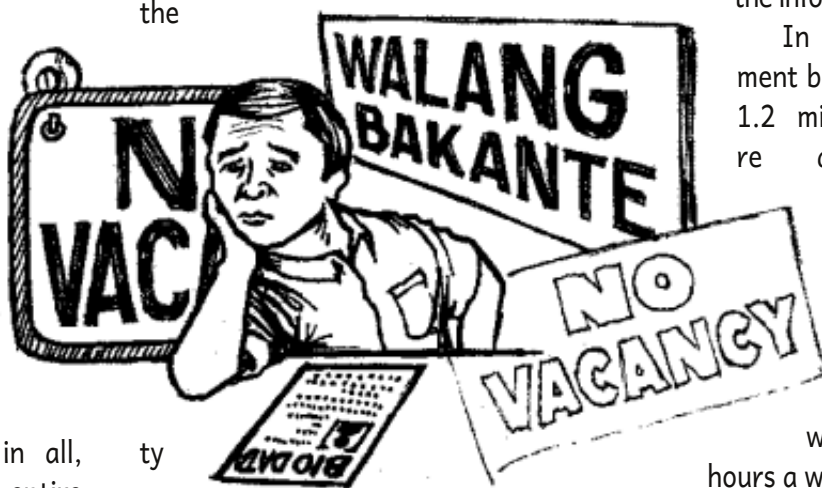
This estimate is based on an analysis of data released by the government. Actual number and rate of unemployment is higher since the National Statistics Office did not release data from Eastern Visayas, where supertyphoon Yolanda's effect on the people's livelihood was worst. Even before the

phoon, there were more than 500,000 unemployed people in EV.

To pull down the rate of unemployment, the Aquino government reduced the base number of the labor force. This was done by dropping or not counting those individuals who said they were no longer looking for work because they had lost hope of landing a job. Based on this new standard, the labor force participation rate was reduced from 65.2% in April 2014 to 64.6% this year (or a reduction of 1.5 million people).

Worse, a large part of those the Aquino government consider as employed are comprised of people having part-time and low-income work in the informal sector.

In 2014, the government boasted of generating 1.2 million new jobs. In reality, 90% of these or 918,000 are mere “part-time” work or those with less than 40 hours a week. More than 60% (605,000) work less than 20 hours a week.



ty



Of the overall 38.3 million Filipinos considered by government as "employed", 15.5 or 40% are mere "part-time" workers.

In his SONA, Aquino made it appear that the number of migrant

workers went down by 400,000 since 2011, supposedly because they were encouraged to find work here. In reality, migrant Filipinos continue to be deployed abroad. In 2014, 4,500 daily sought work

abroad, far more numerous than the 2,800 who found work in the local economy. Most of the migrants who came home were forced by the crisis in the different countries and not because of Aquino's illusory jobs. **AB**

## Five years of enrichment under the PPP program



In his last State of the Nation Address, Benigno Aquino III boasted of 50 Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects under his regime. He pointed out that 10 have been awarded, 13 are under bidding while 27 more are being filed. From these projects, P64.1 billion in premium will allegedly go into the nation's coffers. In truth, only a minimal amount or even none will reach the government or the people from these projects. Instead, the government and the people will be spending more because of these projects.

Most of the 10 awarded projects went to only four big bourgeois compradors. Three have been awarded to San Miguel Corporation (SMC) and its subsidiaries. SMC is owned by presidential uncle Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco. Five projects were given to SM and Banco de Oro owner Henry Sy, through his Megawide Construction Company. The biggest project, the LRT 1 Cavite Extension and Operations and Maintenance, was cornered by the Salim/Metro Pacific Investment Corporation (MPIC) group and its counterpart Ayala Corporation. The project costs some P65 billion, a third of the total cost of all the projects. Two other projects have been granted each to the Ayalas and the MPIC headed by Manuel Pangilinan.

Aquino's statement that the "the premium coming from the PPP companies... will proceed to the nation's coffers" is a blatant lie. In the case of the LRT1 project alone, more than 54% of its entire cost will be shouldered by the government. Of the total project cost of P64.9 billion, Aquino agreed to shoulder P34.9 billion, including the expenses for right of way acquisition, purchase of additional coaches, civil works and construction of depots. The Ayala-Pangilinan group also en-

joys real property tax exemptions reportedly costing P64 billion. In this one project alone, corporations will recoup double the alleged "premium" to be received by the government in all 10 projects. Whatever money slips into one hand leaves the other.

In fact, the Aquino government allocated P59 billion in its past 2014 national budget for PPP projects. The biggest bulk of this (P30 billion) was reserved for the "risk management" program to guarantee private company profits.

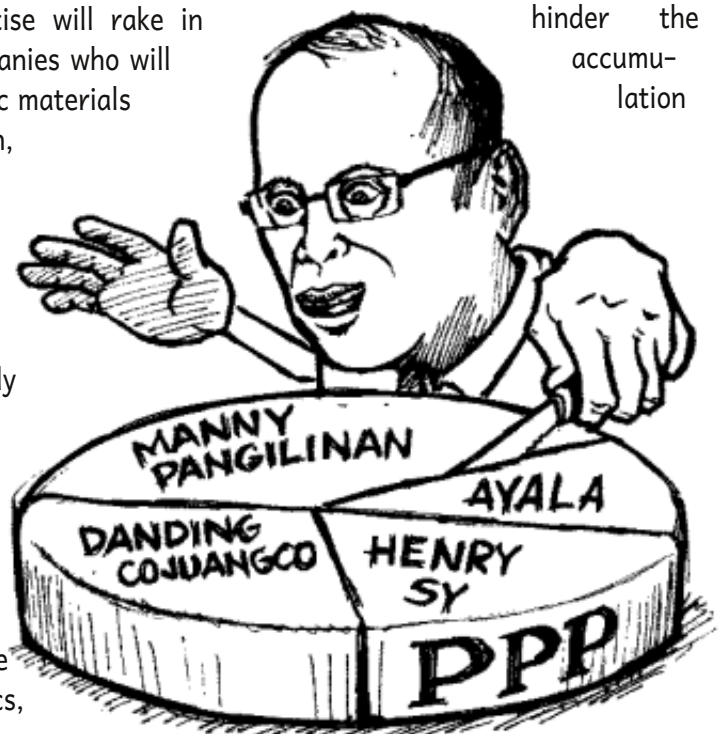
Aside from the local comprador big bourgeoisie, foreign consultants contracted for their design and administrative expertise will rake in huge profits. Companies who will be sourced for basic materials – from construction, industrial and technical equipment, hardware and technology—that will be completely imported from big foreign partner companies of the local bureaucrats will also rake in millions.

Contrary to the regime's rhetoric,

the PPP projects will not bring about better services, modernization of facilities nor lower prices of services. Instead, fees and prices will rise due to the "user pays" scheme wherein all expenses for running the business will be directly shouldered by the consumers of the service.

### Intensified privatization

The PPP program is framed in the bankrupt doctrine of neoliberal globalization. Under this, the US-Aquino regime has paved the way for more and bigger deals of the three-decades old privatization of public utilities. It has completely sold roads, airports, ports, bridges, trains and other transport systems, water utilities, hospitals and schools, to the local comprador big bourgeoisie and their foreign business partners. Following the neoliberalization dogma of "open markets" wherein there is minimal or even no "state intervention in economic management", Aquino dismantled piece by piece the laws and regulations that hinder the accumulation



of super-profits by local and foreign capitalists “jostling” to “join” the PPP program.

At the onset of his regime, Aquino announced that his regime will ensure the profits of investors who will enter deals under the PPP program. He termed this “regulatory risk guarantee”, a provision of the contracts that since then has been questioned by progressive organizations.

In 2012, Aquino amended the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the laws related to the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) projects to legalize the spirit of “regulatory risk guarantee”. Accordingly, the government guarantees the investors' profit from the agreed service fees in the contract, even if there is opposition or contrary decisions from its own agencies. The government will pay the difference between the fares stated in the contract and the fares approved by the government's regulatory agency. The “deficit payment scheme” provision of the contract between Aquino and the Salim/MPIC/Ayala group under the LRT1 was concocted in this light.

In 2012, Aquino created the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) through Executive Order No. 78. Under this, all disputes and conflicts arising from the contract lifetime of a PPP project are settled not in local courts but within the ADR. ADR hearings and decisions are not open to the public.

This 2015, Aquino seeks to pass the PPP Act that will amend the 26-year old BOT Law. The PPP Act will

consolidate the different laws and orders already in place to oversee the PPP program. The PPP Act will further weaken substantially the courts and regulatory bodies by directly restricting their mandate.

The PPP Act will disallow courts from issuing temporary restraining orders (TROs), preliminary injunctions and preliminary mandatory injunctions against practically all PPP-related acts. Court officials who will violate this will be expelled from the judiciary and face criminal and civil liabilities. Only the Supreme Court (SC) can issue TROs against a PPP project, but such orders will only be effective for a maximum of six months.

Moreover, the PPP Act will institutionalize a Contingent Liabilities Fund (CLF) to be funded by foreign debt and local resources. The CLF will ensure a steady source of public funds to meet government's financial obligations arising from PPP contracts. Such obligations include performance undertaking where government guarantees debts incurred by the private investor. One of the PPP projects that enjoy the CLF provision is Eduardo Cojuangco's P69.3 billion MRT-7 project. The old “deficit payment scheme” in the LRT1 contract is now called the Viability Gap Funding (VGF).

Outside of the CLF and the VGF, the PPP Act will allow the government to shoulder more than 50% or half the project cost. As additional incentive, investors will enjoy perks like exemptions from local and real property taxes. AB

## **POC Privatization: For profit, not for services**

ONE of four PPP projects involved in privatizing public hospitals has been awarded by Aquino. The contract for the rehabilitation and management of the Philippine Orthopedic Center, the country's leading bone hospital, is now in the hands of the Megawide Construction Corporation-World Citi Consortium of Henry Sy and the Guico family. The P5.7 billion contract will close down the POC in its current location at Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City and build a new hospital that will be named Center for Bone and Joint Disease, Trauma and Rehabilitation Medicine near the National Kidney and Transplant Institute along East Avenue, Quezon City.

The POC currently provides free service to some 450-500 poor patients at any given day and allocates 85% of its beds for service (charity) patients. But under the Megawide management, only 10% will be allocated for service patients. Hundreds of bone patients coming from all over the country will be turned away. Further on, the transfer of the POC to East Avenue will favor the aim of attracting medical tourism, or serving foreign patients for bigger profits. AB