



EDITORIAL

Frustrate the Duterte-Marcos collusion in the 2022 elections

Although the final array of candidates remain pending, the horrid image of the 2022 elections has started to emerge. In particular, it is becoming crystal clear how it will be used to perpetuate the Duterte clique in power and pave the way for the Marcoses' return to Malacañang.

The 2022 elections will be held under the fascist tyranny of Duterte who is desperate to remain in power to continue their dynasty's bureaucrat capitalist reign.

Duterte is now using his power to ensure support for his chosen candidates. Hundreds of billions of pesos in the gargantuan 2022 budget are allotted to infrastructure projects set to be granted to favored politicians in exchange for their loyalty.

Duterte is also using the military and police to the hilt to serve his political agenda. On the pretext of waging "war on drugs" and "counterinsurgency," Duterte has ordered the suppression of politi-

cians who refuse to bow to his power. The inflated budget of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) is being used to favor politicians who cooperate with the military and police. It is campaigning all-out against progressive party-list groups which despite being a minority in parliament have served as strong voices of the people. The NTF-ELCAC is also in full support of its parties supportive of the AFP's fascism.

Duterte controls the Comelec, majority of whose officials are his appointees. It gave the contract for the delivery of ballots to a company owned by Dennis Uy, a known

Duterte crony. This is a glimpse to how election results will surely be manipulated. Duterte's threat before politicians of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) that he will use the military if there is "trouble" is an unequivocal order to ensure votes for his party.

Contrary to earlier declarations that he will run as vice-president, Duterte did not file his candidacy and declared he will "retire" from politics (an empty promise he also made in 2015). Instead, his loyal minion Bong Go filed as vice-presidential candidate of PDP-Laban. At the same time, Duterte declared her daughter to be Go's standard bearer.

It is likely that negotiations on power sharing are ongoing under the scenario that Duterte finally supports Ferdinand "Bongbong"

Marcos, Jr., who registered as presidential candidate of the "Federal Party of the Philippines," which was formed by politicians who are Duterte officials. According to Marcos, although he planned to partner with Duterte as vice-presidential candidate, he remains open to tandem with Bong Go, or any substitute for the Duterte clique.

The candidacy of Bongbong Marcos as president must be thoroughly denounced and repudiated as an attempt to have the family of the fascist dictator fully restored to power. It would be thoroughly unfortunate to mark the 50th year of the dark days of martial law under another Marcos.

The possibility of a Marcos-Duterte tandem form part of their continuing collusion, together with the Arroyo clique, over the past six year. Under Duterte, the Marcoses were favored with the dictator honored as a "hero" while his wife Imelda was allowed to elude arrest and imprisonment. The Duterte-Marcos-Arroyo collusion is the vilest symbol of fascism, corruption

and abuse in the Philippines.

Over the past 35 years, the Marcoses used their hundreds of billions of illegally acquired wealth to make their way back to the different branches of government, revise the people's historic judgement of the dictatorship, and aim to return to the apex of power.

The threat of Duterte and his minions extending their power, and the return of the Marcoses, adds fuel to the raging anger of the Filipino people. Nothing can contain their wrath against the two fascists whose reigns are marked by suppression, plunder and oppression.

The scheme of the Dutertes and Marcoses to expand and perpetuate their power is bound to generate a major political struggle in the coming months. "Never again!" is the united clamor and pledge of the broad democratic forces to fight the return of the Marcoses and the power perpetuation of the Dutertes.







The broadest and largest possible united front must be brought together to frustrate the devious scheme of the Dutertes and Marcoses to place the country under their dual reign. All anti-Duterte parties must help each other and agree to unite for the benefit of all sides and the entire people. The Filipino people, especially the youth, must act to voice out their united outrage against the threat of fascism and dictatorship under the Dutertes and Marcoses.

The Duterte-Marcos collusion in the 2022 elections manifests the further deterioration of the Philippine ruling system. It shows that the political rule of the reactionary classes in the country is becoming ever more oppressive and serves the interests of a few.

It is correct for the people to use the upcoming elections as a battleground to fight the Duterte tyranny and the return of the Marcoses. During this time, workers, peasants and other democratic sectors must intensify their struggles to advance their welfare amid the crisis and pandemic.

Because the oppressive and exploitative system in the country remains, the upcoming elections will be no different fundamentally from all past elections serving as contest for the representatives of the ruling classes. Thus, even as they wage resistance during the elections, the Filipino people must continue to persevere along the path of revolutionary struggle to put an end to the rotten ruling system. AB

<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Vol. LII No. 19 October 7, 2021</p> <hr/> <p>Ang <i>Ang Bayan</i> is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray, English and Spanish.</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.</p> <p> @cpp_angbayan</p> <p> fb.com/editorsOfAB</p> <p> cppinformationbureau@gmail.com</p> </div>	<h2 style="text-align: center; text-decoration: underline;">Contents</h2> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Editorial: Frustrate the Duterte-Marcos collusion in the 2022 elections</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Makabayan bloc announces candidates</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">AFP massacres sick Red fighters</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">NPA offensives in Negros</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Duterte and Marcos are the same</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Protests</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Duterte's 2022 budget to satiate generals</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">2022 National budget</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">When will vaccines reach the countryside</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">In short</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Brutal weapons of bombing and strafing</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Rice farmers face bankruptcy</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">MCRP rams through right of domicile</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">10</td> </tr> </table>	Editorial: Frustrate the Duterte-Marcos collusion in the 2022 elections	1	Makabayan bloc announces candidates	3	AFP massacres sick Red fighters	3	NPA offensives in Negros	4	Duterte and Marcos are the same	4	Protests	4	Duterte's 2022 budget to satiate generals	5	2022 National budget	5	When will vaccines reach the countryside	6	In short	7	Brutal weapons of bombing and strafing	8	Rice farmers face bankruptcy	9	MCRP rams through right of domicile	10
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Makabayan bloc announces nominees for Senate and Congress

In its national convention last September 27, the Makabayan bloc formally nominated Atty. Neri Colmenares and labor leader Elmer Labog as its senatorial candidates in the upcoming 2022 national elections. Progressive partylists Bayan Muna, Anakpawis Partylist, Gabriela Women's Party, Kabataan Partylist and ACT Teachers Partylist also released their complete lists of nominees.

Bayan Muna nominated Teddy Casiño as its first nominee, followed by Rep. Ferdinand Gaité and Amirah Lidasan, secretary general of the Moro Christian People's Alliance and convenor of Sandugo.

Gabriela Women's Party nominated Rep. Arlene Brosas as its first

nominee, followed by Dr. Jean Lindo and Lucy Francisco.

Anakpawis Partylist nominated as its first nominee Rafael "Ka Paeng" Mariano, former Department of Agrarian Reform Secretary and its representative from 2004 to 2013. Lana Linaban of Kilusang

Mayo Uno and Francisco Mariazeta, Jr. will serve as the party's second and third nominees.

ACT Teachers Partylist nominated incumbent Rep. France Castro as its first nominee followed by Antonio Tinio, former representative of the party from 2010 to 2019, and Dr. David Michael San Juan.

Raoul Manuel, former national president of the National Union of Students of the Philippines, was nominated by Kabataan Partylist as its first nominee, followed by Angelica Galimba and Jandeil Roperos. **AB**

AFP massacres sick Red fighters

Units of the New People's Army (NPA) reported a blatant violation of international humanitarian law by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) over the massacre of Red fighters in Negros. Two Red fighters were also abducted, tortured and coerced to "surrender" in Cordillera.

Four hors de combat Red fighters were asleep when they were fired upon by troops of the 303rd IBde in Hacienda Builders, Barangay San Pablo, Manapla, Negros Occidental on September 30 at 2 a.m. The victims were resting in the said area to recover from flu.

The NPA-Negros Island paid tribute to the martyrs Marilyn Badayos (Ka Monet), Rudy Carbajosa (Ka Brod), Ronilo Desabille (Ka Wowie), and Rufino Bocaval (Ka Simo).

In Kalinga, couple Ricca Llanes and Daniel Ladawan, Jr. are being held incommunicado by the 503rd IBde for more than a month now since being abducted by soldiers last August 7. The couple are Red fighters who were seized while on their way to meet their relatives. They are currently detained at the headquarters of the 503rd IBde sa Calanan, Tabuk City and are denied access to lawyers and family visits.

Killing. Elements of the 9th ID

gunned down July Barotillo, barangay secretary and former leader of Bayan, at his home in Barangay Lamon, Goa, Camarines Sur on October 1.

Arrest. Lorena Sigua, a volunteer teacher in a Lumad school, is currently detained based on a trumped-up charge of murder. She was arrested by the police along the boundary of Marilao and San Jose del Monte City in Bulacan.

The military illegally arrested six civilians in Masbate after accusing them of being NPA members. Chito Huligaña was arrested on September 26 in Barangay Nainday, Placer. He was maliciously accused of being a ranking NPA official.

A day earlier, state forces arrested Michael Funelas, Myra Letada, Maricris Letada, Sheryl Salazar and Vicky Ontog in Barangay Piña, San Jacinto.

The NPA-South Central Negros reported that soldiers arrested farmer Pedro Montecino and his son

Christopher at Sitio Kubay-Anahaw, Barangay Carabalan, Himamaylan City on October 4. They are still being held by the 94th IB.

The police and military arrested Lino Baez of Bayan-Batangas and Willy Capareño of Anakpawis-Batangas in Manggalang 1, Sariaya, Quezon on October 6 at 2 a.m. Their families still do not know their whereabouts.

Bombing. The Philippine Air Force (PAF) repeatedly dropped bombs in Barangay Dungeg, Sta. Teresita, Cagayan on September 21 destroying farmers' farmlands and livelihood.

In Northern Samar, the military strafed and dropped six bombs on September 16 using an FA-50 fighter jet and other war planes in San Francisco, Las Navas on September 16. The bombing lasted for seven hours forcing residents to temporarily evacuate to a nearby village.

On the following day, the PAF also strafed and dropped bombs in sa Barangay E. Duran, Bobon, forcing around 2,000 residents to temporarily evacuate to the towncenter. **AB**

NPA-Negros mounts offensives

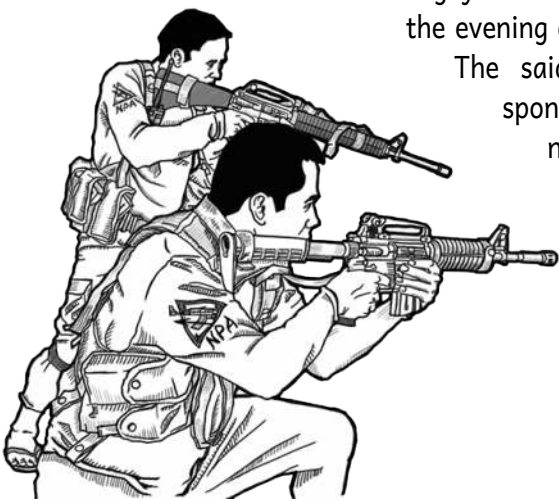
THE NEW PEOPLE'S Army (NPA)-Central Negros mounted a sniping operation against a military detachment in Barangay Budlasan, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental on September 22. The armed action aims to give justice to the massacre of farmers in the said area in March 2019. A soldier of the 62nd IB was killed during the offensive.

The NPA-South Central Negros attacked a detached operating unit of the 94th IB at Sitio Kubay-Anahaw, Barangay Carabalan, Himamaylan City on October 1. Four 94th IB soldiers were wounded during the 10-minute encounter.

In Camarines Sur, NPA-East Camarines Sur snipers fired at operating troops of the 83rd IB in Barangay Scout Fuentebella, Goa on October 1. One soldier was killed during the offensive.

An intelligence official of the Philippine National Police-Guinobatan was killed in an NPA partisan operation in Barangay Peñafrancia, Daraga in the evening of September 25.

The said officer is responsible for planning the intelligence operations of the police in communities which have repeatedly endangered the lives of the masses.



Duterte and Marcos are the same

THE BAGONG ALYANSANG Makabayan (Bayan) and Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses and Martial Law (Carmma) led a mass protest in Manila on September 21 to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the martial law declaration by Ferdinand Marcos.

The protesters said that it is important to mark the anniversary of martial law due to the prevalence of fascism and threat of the tyrant Duterte to cling to power. They pointed out the need to remember the dark years of martial law to prevent the return of the Marcoses to Malacañang and their attempts to revise history.

Similar protests were held in the cities of Baguio, Calamba, Cebu, Iloilo, Davao and Cagayan de Oro, as well as in Cavite and Cagayan Valley.

Simultaneously, health workers protested in Bacolod City to demand humane working conditions. A day earlier, farmers protested in Bacolod City to commemorate the Escalante Massacre which took place during the US-Marcos dictatorship.

Coordinated protest actions were also mounted in the United Kingdom, Hongkong, Montreal in Canada, France, the Netherlands, Chicago, New York, Seattle in the US, South Korea and Belgium.



Drivers protest vs. oil price hike. Drivers and youth activists protested along East Avenue in Quezon City on October 5 to condemn six consecutive oil price hikes in past months. According to Piston, the gasoline prices have cumulatively increased by 4 per liter, while diesel and kerosene prices increased by 5.65 and 5.30 per liter, respectively.

World Teachers' Day. The Alliance of Concerned Teachers marked the World Teachers' Day on October 5 in Mendiola, Manila. They demanded salary increases, benefits and aid amid the economic and health crisis. They condemned the intensified attacks by the regime against the sector and its neglect over the plight of teachers. Teachers of the Manila Science High School also protested outside the school campus.

Resistance against Manila Bay reclamation. Fisherfolk and environmental groups protested at the Manila Bay on September 24 to condemn the Duterte regime's attempt to demolish oyster and mussel farms in Cavite City, Bacoor City, Noveleta and Kawit. They were accompanied by young environmental activists who protested in solidarity with the Global Climate Strike.

Kabataan Partylist pickets in Comelec. Members of the Kabataan Partylist mounted a picket protest in front of the Comelec headquarters in Intramuros, Manila to demand a comprehensive, efficient and accessible registration process for millions of potential voters. On September 30, the Comelec extended voter registration up to October 31.

Reinstate shipyard workers. The Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Harbour Centre protested in front of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) headquarters in Manila on September 30 to demand the reinstatement of 216 workers terminated by the company in January. They demanded that their employer uphold the June 28 Supreme Court decision which states that they should be reinstated and regularized. Earlier in 2017, the DOLE issued a decision stating that the workers should be regularized.

Duterte's 2022 budget will continue to satiate his generals

Rodrigo Duterte announced on September 24 that he will not hesitate to use the military to prevent "trouble" in the upcoming 2022 elections. On many occasions, the tyrant has expressed his confidence that he can trust the generals of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) as he continues to give them favors.

Under the proposed 2022 national budget, the Department of National Defense (DND) requested an allocation of ₱222 billion, higher by ₱16.2 billion than its budget allocation this year.

It requested a budget of ₱103 billion for the Philippine Army, with approximately 100,000 personnel responsible for various attacks against barrios and communities under the regime's brutal "counterinsurgency" war. The Philippine

Navy and Philippine Air Force are also set to receive ₱32 billion each.

Around ₱630 million will be directly controlled by the office of Defense Sec. Delfin Lorenzana. Part of this is the ₱109 million allocation for the corruption-ridden Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program, the regime's "surrender" program. Lorenzana also requested that the ₱35 billion for "AFP modernization" be placed under the control of Duterte. This further

augments the president's pork barrel funds which he can utilize to give favors to his favorite generals.

Huge pork barrel funds

On top of the DND budget, the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) proposed an allocation of ₱29.2 billion. The proposed budget is higher by ₱11 billion compared to the allocation this year.

Part of this is the ₱28.12 billion allocation for its Barangay Development Program (BDP). Under the BDP, barangays said to be "cleared" of the influence of the revolutionary movement will supposedly receive ₱20 million each. The BDP has been exposed by the Party since January 2021 as pork barrel given to generals used to control governors and mayors for the 2022 elections. An additional ₱1.08 billion was also requested by the Department of Interior and Local Government to augment the funds of the NTF-ELCAC.

This year, huge pork barrel funds were allocated to areas controlled by the Duterte family, particularly Davao City and the Davao Region. Around ₱4.3 billion were allocated to the said region, while ₱1.64 billion were allocated to Davao City. Huge funds were also poured into Caraga, Northern Mindanao and Soccsksargen (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, General Santos).

Areas with huge BDP allocations recorded numerous cases of extrajudicial killings, illegal arrests, and other human rights violations since the Duterte regime came into power until the second half of 2021.

Only lawmakers of the Makabayan bloc opposed the regime's railroading of its antipeople budget. Meanwhile, several senators pledged to defund the NTF-ELCAC. AB

Duterte railroads passage of the 2022 national budget

IN COMPLIANCE WITH Duterte's orders, his minions in Congress railroaded the passage of the proposed 2022 national budget approving it on second and third reading on September 30 despite being riddled with anomalies.

The ₱5.02-trillion proposed national budget is the highest in Philippine history. This includes an ₱8.2-billion allocation to the Office of the President. More than half (₱4.5 billion) of the said allotment is categorized as "intelligence and confidential funds" which will be utilized without public accounting.

The regime's neglect for pandemic response and public health, despite the worsening crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, is evident in the proposed budget. No funds were allocated for the procurement of new medical equipment and infrastructure for 72 public hospitals which are currently facing shortages due to the influx of Covid-19 patients. Neither were funds allotted to the Research Institute for Topical Medicine which is among the leading agencies which process Covid-19 tests.

Those that will suffer budget cuts include the Philippine General Hospital, which will receive a measly allocation of ₱5.66 billion. The cumulative operating budget of 64 hospitals will also be cut by ₱14 billion.

Compensation and appropriate benefits for medical frontliners were also left unfunded. The already measly allocation for health services and procurement of personal protective equipment will be cut as well. The budget allocation for Covid-19 booster shots were categorized as unprogrammed, which means that the regime will still have look for funds either through taxes or loans.

When will vaccines reach the countryside?

It will still take some time before vaccines reach the countryside. For the past seven months, the Philippine's vaccine rollout has been marred by shortages, delays and favoritism. Last June, many local government officials complained of "vaccine czar" Carlito Galvez's favoring areas lorded over by Rodrigo Duterte's family, factotums and partymates. For a long time, local governments were banned from purchasing vaccines directly from pharmaceutical companies outside the contracts negotiated by Duterte officials with the Chinese government.

In the face of vaccine shortages, delays and uneven distribution, the Covid-19 virus ran rampant, especially the more contagious Delta variant, reaching all corners of the country. Infections averaged 20,000 a day on September 9-14, the highest weekly record of infections since the pandemic began.

Infections skyrocketed in Isabela, Samar provinces, Bukidnon, General Santos and many areas once considered "low risk." There are numerous anecdotal evidence of the virus' rampage in the countryside, but are unconfirmed because testing and contact tracing have yet to reach these areas. There are reports that some units of the New People's Army doing mass work have been infected.

Infection cases started to decrease since the first week of Octo-

ber. But according to the DoH, this is also due to decreased testing and problems in reporting. On October 6, more than 2.6 million Filipinos have been infected and almost 39,000 have died.

Last October 1, the total number of vaccines delivered to the Philippines reached 74.7 doses. This is just a little more than half the needed doses to vaccinate the target of 77 million Filipinos. Around 40.5 million doses were brought from the Chinese company Sinovac. Almost all of the rest were donations from the World Health Organization's Covax Facility.

On September 30, only 45.6 million vaccines or 61% of the supply was administered. Of this, only 21.36 million individuals or 27.69% were given two doses. This is one of the lowest in Asia. The low vaccination rate is also one of the reasons

why the Philippines came out last among 53 countries in terms of Covid-19 resilience.

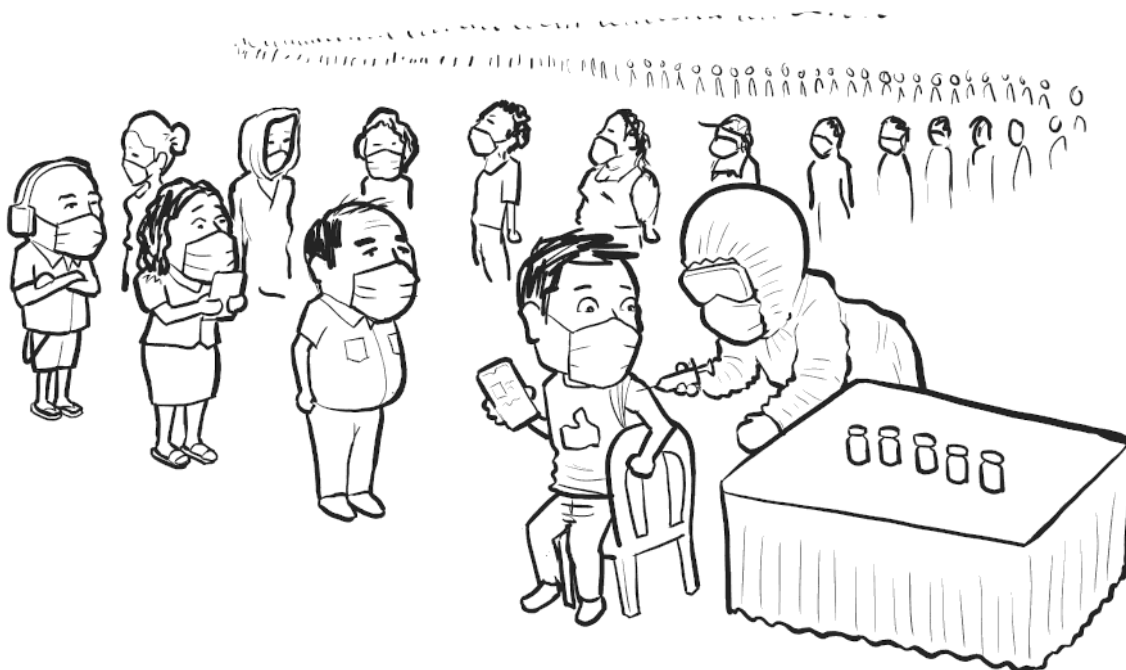
Most of the vaccines were poured into the National Capital Region (NCR) and nearby regions Calabarzon and Central Luzon supposedly to fasttrack opening of the economy. Around 57.49% of the vaccines or 26.22 million doses were administered in these areas.

There are wide gaps of fully vaccinated individuals between regions and between urban centers and provinces. The national capital has the highest number of full vaccinations at 72%. The Cordillera Autonomous Region (28.13%) and Davao Region (25.44%) come as a far second and third.

The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (8.7%) and Soccsksargen (13.9%) recorded the lowest number of fully vaccinated individuals. Rates for the rest of the regions rest between 15% and 20%.

"Low risk" areas received larger vaccine allocations only in September. This include the Bicol region which has inoculated only 1.16 million doses in September 27. The region has fully vaccinated only 13.7% of its target population.

In the meantime, vaccinating the general population is already set to start in the Davao region, including children ages 12 to 15. The region has one of the highest vaccination rates (2.15 million) relative to its target population (3.76 million). Half of these are residents of Davao City, where Duterte's children rule as mayor and vice mayor. **AB**



—IN—SHORT

70 ORGANIZATIONS
AND 900 INDIVIDUALS
signed a petition against

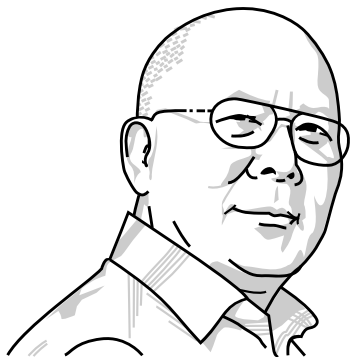
Ramon Ang's Pasig River Expressway (PAREX) Project which will worsen traffic in the area and damage the river ecosystem.

Source: AltMobility PH

596 Filipinos with a wealth of ₱2.5 billion
and **2,200** with a wealth of ₱1.5 billion

must be levied a **1-3% wealth tax**. Approximately **₱236.7 billion annually can be raised** from wealth taxes on even just 50 richest Filipinos. The said amount can be used to aid the people amid the pandemic.

Source: Ibon Foundation



Bienvenido Lumbera

**April 11, 1932
– September 28, 2021**

poet, playwright, cultural and literary critic, and teacher. National artist and national democratic activist.



3,000 bangus (milkfish) fishpens will be destroyed

with the impending **magnetite mining** operation in the **Lingayen Gulf** in Pangasinan.

Source: Pangasinan People's Strike for the Environment

₱3,000-₱9,000

proposed singular allowance which healthworkers rejected

as this will be used to deny them better benefits. Only **526,727 out of 1.8 million health workers are covered** by this allowance.

Source: Alliance of Health Workers



900 **Philippine-based individuals were named in the Pandora Papers,**

a trove of documents containing information about **secret offshore companies and wealth**. of the richest people in the world. Two of them are **Rodrigo Duterte's minions: Sec. Arthur Tugade at Dennis Uy.**

Source: Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism

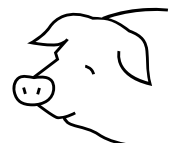
\$385 billion

was loaned out by China to 165 poor countries

beyond their capacity to pay. These countries will be **buried in debt** and **forced to surrender** their **patrimonial assets** to China.

Source: AidData

Farmgate price of live hogs dropped by 25%-35%



this year due to the regime's all-out importation of pork.

Source: Pork Producers of the Philippines

Brutal weapons of bombing and strafing

As a brutal counterinsurgency tactic, the employment of drones, helicopters and fighter jets for aerial bombing and strafing started under the Duterte fascist regime.

Over the past years, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) bought weapons left and right to strengthen its "air superiority." Hundreds of billions of pesos were squandered to buy drones, helicopters, fighter jets, rockets, cannons and bombs. These purchases were made purportedly for "modernization" of the country's military equipment to defend against incursions in the South China Sea. In reality, most of these are being used in the all-out war against the people in the countryside.

At present, the AFP has 17 medium-altitude long-endurance drones, including eight Hermes 450 and nine Hermes 900. These were brought from the Elbit Systems of Israel, a firm in business with the US. In addition, the AFP has at least 15 ScanEagle drones. These drones are used for strategic surveillance of large areas.

The AFP also has smaller and less capable drones such as the Raptor 1, Knight Falcon1 and the RQ-11 Raven 3 which can only rise to a maximum of 5 kilometers. There are smaller quadcopters that fly at lower altitudes that are used

in tactical operations. There is a scheduled delivery of 1,066 such quadcopters. The AFP also coordinates with US forces who operate drones controlled from their base in Zamboanga City.

Drones are unmanned aircraft controlled remotely via satellite or radio link. These carry powerful electro-optical cameras, infrared thermal imaging cameras and other equipment for aerial surveillance. The AFP does not have armed drones yet, although there were reports in 2018 that bombs were dropped from drones. Drones are mainly used for intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and target acquisition. The AFP also uses manned Cessna airplanes that carry surveillance equipment.

Attack helicopters such as the MD-520MG and the Agusta Westland (AW 109) are used by the AFP for bombing. The AFP right now has 13 AW 109s and 15 MD-520MGs. These helicopters carry 6-7 rocket bombs which have a diameter of 2.75 inches and weigh 15 kilograms each. There are also Hydra rockets that weight 6.2 kilos. The AFP also uses Sikorsky helicopters that can be fitted with

machineguns used for strafing.










The AFP also uses war planes for its bombing runs such as the FA-50 fighter jet (purchased in 2014) and the A-29B Super Tucano (set to be used in 2023 after a period of training). The FA-50 can fly at a speed of 1,837.5 kilometers per hour, while the Super Tucano can fly at 590 kph. These war planes can carry up to seven large bombs. The AFP bought AGM-65 Maverick bombs that weigh 210-304 kilos (equivalent of 4-5 sacks of rice). The AFP also uses Bronco airplanes, OV-10 and Marchetti jets to drop bombs. These drop bombs based on information collected by the drones.

Aside from bombs, these war planes can also carry rockets. These are also fitted with M61 Vulcan machineguns that can fire 6,000 rounds per minute. Aerial strafing is done without a clear target on land. This puts in danger anyone who might be in the vicinity, and destroys trees, plants and others. Aerial strafing is part of the tactic to cause widespread fear while emboldening their own troops.

Rockets and bombs are extremely powerful weapons. In warfare, these are often used against hard and heavily fortified targets such as military camps and warships. A 500-pound bomb can demolish a medium-rise building or create a crater 15-foot deep and 30-foot wide. These bombs are even more destructive when attached with a proximity fuse which causes the bombs to explode before hitting the ground.

In addition, the AFP also uses howitzer cannons in senseless shelling. These cannons fire 105mm (13 kgs) or 155 mm (43.7 kgs) bombs. It can fire a 105mm to a distance of 11 km, and a 155mm to a distance of 23.5 km. These cannons sit on wheels, are drawn by military trucks and positioned typically within the vicinity of a village. Every time that these cannons are fired, residents experience untold fear. **AB**

Legend: ■ Type ▲ Service Ceiling ⏏ Speed ⏏ Wing/Rotor ⏏ Endurance ↔ Wingspan

 <p>Hermes 450</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drone ▲ 5.5 km ⏏ 176 kph ⏏ 17 hours ⏏ 10.5 meters ↔ 6.1 meters 	 <p>Hermes 900</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drone ▲ 10.3 km ⏏ 220 kph ⏏ 36 hours ⏏ 15 meters ↔ 8.3 meters 	 <p>ScanEagle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drone ▲ 5.9 km ⏏ 80 kph ⏏ 24 hours ⏏ 3.1 meters ↔ 1.7 meters
 <p>FA50</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Airplane ▲ 14.6 km ⏏ 1,837 kph ⏏ 9.5 meters ↔ 13.1 meters 	 <p>A-29B Super Tucano</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Airplane ▲ 10.7 km ⏏ 590 kph ⏏ 8.4 hours ⏏ 11.1 meters ↔ 11.4 meters 	 <p>AW109</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Helicopter ⏏ 311 kph ⏏ 11 meters ↔ 6.1 meters
 <p>OV-10 Bronco</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Airplane ▲ 9.1 km ⏏ 460 kph ⏏ 12.2 meters ↔ 13.4 meters 	 <p>S.211 Marchetti</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Airplane ▲ 12.2 km ⏏ 980 kph ⏏ 3.8 hours ⏏ 8.4 meters ↔ 9.3 meters 	 <p>MD520MG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Helicopter ▲ 1.3 km ⏏ 244 kph ⏏ 8.1 meters ↔ 9.8 meters

Farmers face bankruptcy amid low farmgate prices

Local rice farmers continue to face poverty due to feudal exploitation, lack of production support, low farmgate prices, and the regime's all-out importation of cheaper rice.

They are facing severe hardships due to the declining farmgate price of palay. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), palay farmgate price was only ₱17.14 up to ₱20.87 per kilo in the past five years. Farmers, however, said that prices have bottomed out to ₱7-₱10 per kilo in the past two years. These farmgate prices were recorded in Central Luzon which is the major producer of palay in the country.

Farmers have long demanded that farmgate prices of palay be raised to ₱20 per kilo to support local production. Despite the low farmgate prices of palay, the average retail price of rice in the past five years was ₱42.59, which peaked to ₱45.18 in 2018.

Farmgate prices are pulled down further by the influx of imported rice after the enactment of the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) in February 2019. During the same year, the country recorded the highest volume of imports which reached 3.131 million metric tons (MT) or five times higher than imports recorded in 2016. Imports remained high in 2020 and 2021. Contrary to claims by proponents of the RTL, the average retail price of rice in local markets only decreased by 1%.

Rice farmers are left with almost no income. The average cost of production per kilo of rice is estimated at ₱12.41. This is way higher than the cost of production in other rice-producing countries such as Vietnam (₱6.22 per kilo) and Thailand (₱8.86 per kilo).

The coverage of the regime's free irrigation law is very limited. Despite being enacted in 2018, funds allocation for irrigation de-

creased over the years from ₱41.67 million in 2018, to ₱35.29 million in 2020.

Farmers are burdened further by increasing prices of fertilizer. The price of urea, commonly used by rice farmers, increased by 12.06% from 2016 to ₱1,046.44 in 2020. The prices of other types of fertilizers such as ammonium sulfate and diammonium phosphate have also increased by 8.32% and 7.57%, respectively.

More or less five and a half sacks of rice (1 sack = 50 kilos) are used per hectare of rice field. In sum, the cost of fertilizers utilized by farmers per hectare of rice field increased by ₱688-₱711.

Data by the PSA indicate that the "highest" palay production (19.44 million MT) in the country in recent years was recorded in 2020. Farmers, however, pointed out that this was primarily because of bigger volumes of rain and lower yield in previous years caused by El Niño. The total land area of palay land in the country shrank by 300,000 hectares from 4.81 million hectares in 2017 to 4.53 million hectares in 2020.

Floods and low farmgate prices

During the last cropping cycle last June, rice farmer Miguel spent ₱19,350 to buy fertilizer which he applied in his 3-hectare rice field. On top of this, he also spent ₱5,730 to buy herbicide and ₱4,324 for pesticide. He also spent an additional ₱16,200 to rent farming machinery and pay the wages of farm-

workers whom he employed for harvesting.

He was further burdened by the destruction of about a fourth of his rice fields due to the typhoon which hit South Cotabato during that period. He was only able to harvest 170 sacks of palay (69.47 kilo per sack) in September. Eight percent of this or 13 sacks of palay was deducted from his output as payment for the harvester which they rented. Twelve sacks of palay were also reserved to be planted for the next cropping cycle.

Of his net harvest (145 sacks), 25% (36 sacks) will be paid to the landlord as land rent. He will also pay 18 sacks of palay to his financier and 12 sacks of palay to pay the debt incurred by his family over the planting season.

He will only be able to sell his produce at a farmgate price of ₱13.50 per kilo, which will be further pulled down by the trader who buys his produce with various deductions. Overall, Miguel will be left with a gross income of ₱70,134 which he will use to cover over ₱60,000 in production costs and pay other debts. He is left with a net profit of ₱10,134 which their family will spend to survive until the next harvest season. AB



MCRP rams through the right of domicile

The Duterte regime is railroading the construction of the anti-people Malolos-Clark Railway Project (MCRP) which is set to displace approximately 1,416 families in Pampanga, Tarlac and Bulacan. The project will be funded using a \$2.75-billion (₱137.5 billion) loan from the Japan International Cooperation Agency and Asian Development Bank. Over the past 12 months, Sec. Arthur Tugade of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) also railroaded the approval of five big contracts worth \$2.4 billion (₱120 billion) for the construction of the project despite the grave economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in the country.

The MCRP is part of the massive North-South Commuter Railway Project, one of the flagship infrastructure projects under Duterte regime's ambitious Build, Build, Build program. This purportedly aims to connect the railway system in the national capital to Central Luzon, and shorten the travel time from Bulacan to Clark, Pampanga. The project will encompass and grab approximately 455,000 hectares of residential, agricultural and commercial lands across Malolos, Calumpit and Apalit in Bulacan; Minalin, Sto. Tomas, San Fernando, Angeles and Mabalacat in Pampanga; and Bamban and Capas in Tarlac. The railway will cover 59 barangays in three provinces, majority of which (40 barangay) are in Pampanga.

The largest area of land that will be grabbed and the biggest number of families that will be displaced are from San Fernando (167,000 hectares, 823 families),

Calumpit (61,000 hectares, 328 families) and Angeles (60,000 hectares, 197 families). Majority of the families (1,173) that will be displaced are considered informal settlers and will only be extended meagrely compensation by the regime. They will only receive a one-time ₱15,000-financial aid according to the proposed rehabilitation program of the DOTr which has yet to materialize.

Nearly half (49%) of those who will be displaced have been residing in the affected areas for more than two decades, while a third have

been residents for one up to ten years now. At least 1,089 structures will be demolished to pave way for the construction of the railway and train stations. Approximately 784 of these are houses, 199 and 97 are commercial and industrial infrastructures, respectively.

According to the DOTr's own survey conducted before launching the program in 2018, many affected families raised apprehensions regarding the relocation program of the regime because most of the sites are far from their workplaces, markets, hospitals and schools, and will cause an increase in their spending. Many affected business owners also raised apprehensions over losing their regular clients, and the possibility that there will not be enough space to reestablish their businesses in relocation areas. There are also reports about the lack of access to water and electricity in some relocation areas.

AB

