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Editorial

Condemn the imperialist war of aggression in Libya

A war of aggression against Libya is currently being waged by the imperialist powers. The US, France, the United Kingdom and other imperialist countries have wantonly trampled on the Libyan people's independence and right to self determination by bombing the city of Benghazi on March 19 in an attempt to overthrow Moammar Gadaffi's regime.

The bombings were conducted after the UN Security Council adopted a resolution declaring a no-fly zone over Libya. The resolution was designed to cripple the Gadaffi government's ability to defeat the armed uprising being waged by a number of US-supported rebel groups.

The armed uprising, which began in mid-February, is attempting with the US' blessings to ride on the wave of democratic protest actions and massive demonstrations in North Africa and the Middle East and foment a similar resistance movement in Libya.

After several weeks, however, these rebel groups failed to replicate the gigantic demonstrations held from January to February in Egypt and Tunisia that toppled these countries' governments. Eventually, resistance to Gaddafi's government was reduced to uprisings by small groups of armed rebels who have become easy targets of counteroffensives by Gadaffi's forces.

After the armed rebels were forced to retreat from their remaining strong-



holds in Benghazi, the US and other imperialist countries decided to intervene directly and launch a war of aggression against Libya. The first round of imperialist aggression saw hundreds of missiles launched into Libya from warships stationed in the Mediterranean Sea. Jet fighters also violated Libyan air space.

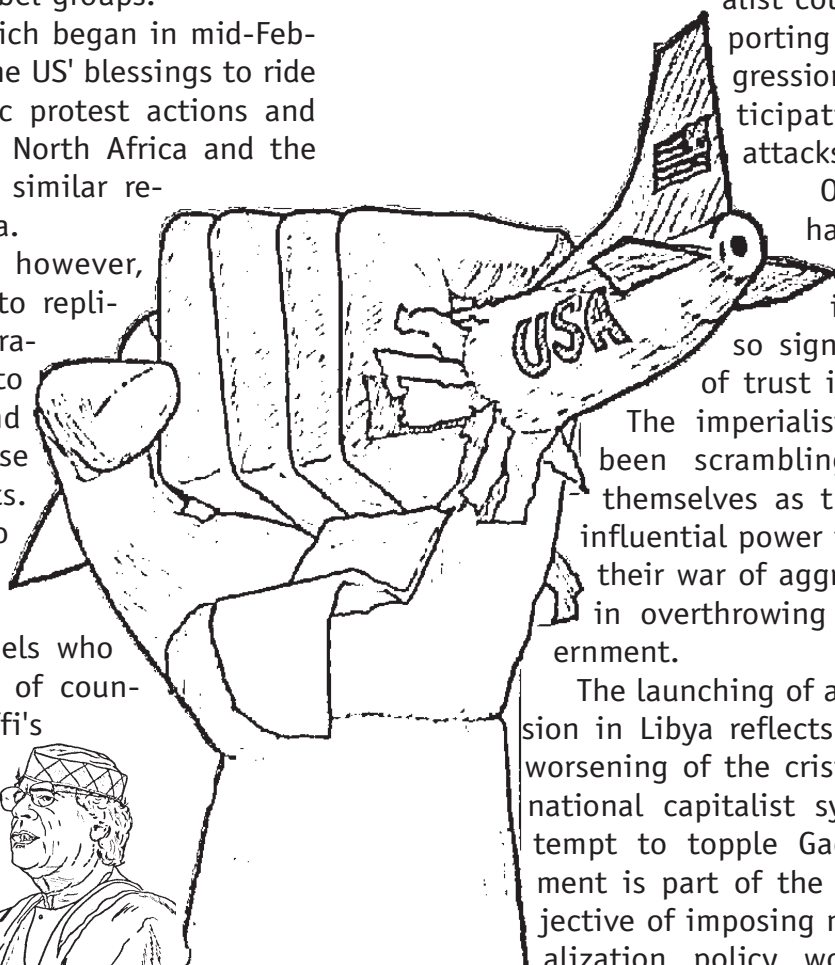
The US has long wanted to overthrow Gadaffi's government. It is one of the few governments worldwide that has asserted national independence and resisted the imperialist policy of neoliberal globalization. The imperialists are one in desiring an end to Gadaffi's government. All imperi-

alist countries are supporting the war of aggression and are participating in armed attacks against Libya.

On the other hand, this unity among the imperialists also signifies their lack of trust in one another.

The imperialist powers have been scrambling to position themselves as the single most influential power in Libya should their war of aggression succeed in overthrowing Gaddafi's government.

The launching of a war of aggression in Libya reflects the continued worsening of the crisis of the international capitalist system. The attempt to topple Gaddafi's government is part of the imperialist objective of imposing neoliberal globalization policy worldwide. Their



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sinister goal is to plunder Libya's oil wealth and give the monopoly capitalists free rein to invest in and control the Libyan market.

The US and other imperialist powers have been intervening in countries going through political upheavals in order to set up puppet governments in these countries that will implement policies favorable to the imperialists.

The Obama regime and the other imperialist powers will surely pay for launching another war of aggression. There is widespread opposition among the American people to the interventionist war in Libya in the face of the US' continuing failures and mounting casualties in its unending wars of aggression in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The armed aggression of the imperialists in Libya will stoke the fires of patriotism among the Libyan people and propel their struggle against US imperialism and in defense of their national independence.

It is the responsibility of the Filipino people and all the world's peoples to support the Libyan people's resistance to imperialist armed aggression and their defense of their national independence. **AB**

US armed aggression in Libya since the 1980s

Libya is a North African country bounded on the north by the Mediterranean Sea, on the east by Egypt, on the southeast by Sudan, on the south by Chad and Niger and on the west by Algeria and Tunisia.

It is one of the ten biggest oil exporters. From being part of the Ottoman Empire, the territory was colonized by Italy in 1911. Libya was transferred to the control of the United Kingdom and France upon Italy's defeat in World War II. The British took control of the provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica while the French took control of the province of Fezzan.

The imperialists intervened to merge these provinces into a single country in 1950. In 1951, the United Kingdom of Libya was formed under the puppet ruler Emir Idris Sanusi. The puppet regime allowed the US and the UK to establish military bases in Libya.

In 1956, the king granted foreign companies oil exploration concessions, with Libya eventually becoming one of the world's biggest oil exporters. Nonetheless, the entire oil industry and all its revenues were controlled by foreigners. This caused deepening resentment among the Libyan people and gave rise to a patriotic movement.

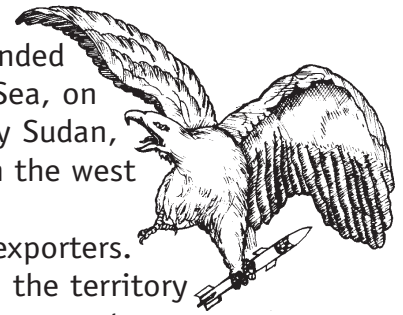
In 1969, Col. Moammar Gaddafi led other military officers in launching a coup d'etat to overthrow King Idris. Under Gaddafi, a government was set up that declared itself "socialist" and a "state of the masses." Banks and oil production were nationalized and all foreign troops were expelled from the country. Using the country's substantial oil revenues, Gaddafi was able to establish a populist regime that provided social security to the Libyan people. Nonetheless, there were complaints over abuse of power among a number of government officials.

The US' new round of interventionist offensives is but the latest of many attempts to overthrow Gaddafi's government. In 1982, the US imposed an economic embargo on Libya. In 1984, the US materminded an assassination attempt against Gaddafi. In 1986,

US planes bombed the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi.

In 1992, the UN imposed economic restrictions on Libya to pressure it into surrendering Libyan nationals involved in crashing a commercial airplane in Scotland in 1987.

Gaddafi complied with the UN demand in 1999 and followed this up with acceding to other UN conditions, including the destruction of a number of military hardware. The UN lifted all restrictions until 2004. Several countries continued to ease restrictions on their economic relations with Libya in the succeeding years. **AB**



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Operation Odyssey Dawn

French jet fighters began bombing Benghazi, Libya's second biggest city, at dawn of March 20. This was followed by artillery attacks from US and British warships and submarines on coastal areas of Libya. The bombings, which have been dubbed "Operation Odyssey Dawn" are aimed at crippling the country's air defenses.

Reports from Libya indicate that several tanks, planes and other military hardware have been destroyed in the bombings. Forty-eight civilians were also killed and 150 wounded.

Thousands of Libyans immediately trooped to Bab al-Azizia, one of Gadhafi's compounds

bombed by the US in 1986 and the international airport at Tripoli to protect these facilities.

Operation Odyssey Dawn is the biggest imperialist war of aggression in the Middle East since the US war of aggression in Iraq in 2003. It is no differ-

ent from the wars of aggression launched by the former Bush regime.

In response, Gaddafi warned of a "long war" where the Libyan people would defeat the invaders. He called on all the Libyan people to arm themselves in preparation for attacks by US, British and French troops.

The bombings were launched after the UN Security Council declared a "no-fly zone" over Libya. Russia and China did not vote in favor of imposing restrictions on Libya. **AB**

Aquino regime: Bane on migrant workers

Migrante-Middle East strongly condemned the Aquino regime's latest decision to leave Filipino migrants affected by various political crises and calamities in different parts of the world to fend for themselves and pay for their own transportation back to the Philippines. The regime has dubbed this policy "voluntary repatriation." Migrante slammed the policy, saying that this shows the regime's lack of interest in ensuring the safety of Filipino workers, especially during times of war, severe political upheavals and natural disasters.

Migrants are deeply disappointed with this move and voiced their suspicions that government officials are merely pocketing the \$150,000 fund allotted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the P200 million from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration for the evacuation of migrants from Libya alone.

The Aquino regime has done nothing to prepare for the repatriation of Filipinos affected by the people's uprisings in various countries of the Middle East and North Africa that have been going on for weeks.

In Libya, where a US war of aggression has already begun, only 8,200 out of an estimated 26,000 Filipino workers have been brought back home. Most of those who were able to return to the Philippines were able to

do so through the efforts of their employers or availed of free transportation offered by other governments. The vast majority have been forced to remain in Libya or in neighboring countries despite their extremely dangerous situation.

The migrants are essentially on their own, with no coordination with the Philippine embassies or any other branch of government in crossing the border to more secure neighboring countries. A Filipino has already been reported killed after Libyan bandits attacked the oil rig where he was working.

In Bahrain, the Aquino regime merely advised Filipinos to "remain calm" amid escalating protest actions. Up to 32,000 Filipinos are now caught in the middle of the worsening political situation in the Gulf

country. The Philippine embassy has not laid down any contingency programs and has no plans of evacuating Filipino workers.

The same situation exists in Yemen, where emergency rule has been imposed after government troops attacked protesters in the second week of March. Despite this, the Aquino government has not taken any action, and has not even drafted a contingency plan or ensured lines of communication with Filipinos caught in the middle of the political turmoil. The Philippines does not maintain an embassy in Yemen.

According to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration's latest statistics, there are up to 2.26 million Filipinos currently working in the Middle East. In 2010, they remitted an estimated \$1.47 billion.

Once they are repatriated, they will have to contend with the Aquino regime's lack of any plan to help them and their families survive economically. Instead, the DFA has been harping on the line that the turmoil in the Middle East is "temporary" and they will be free to return to work once the wars and upheavals are over.

In Japan, Filipino victims of

the recent natural disasters strongly assailed the Aquino regime's inutility and lack of preparedness. A week after the devastating earthquake, only 112 out of an estimated 4,000 Filipinos had been transferred by the embassy to safer ground. If the Filipinos living in the country had not complained, the embassy would have provided very minimal assistance. All its officials did was "monitor the situation."

A case in point involved a group of Filipino students based in Sendai, the area most devastated by the earthquake and ensuing tsunami. The students recounted how they asked for assistance from the embassy after the tsunami. Embassy officials arrived completely unprepared, without even any plans to relocate them. Instead, they were referred to the media. **AB**

Gigantic disaster hits Japan

The Communist Party of the Philippines and the entire revolutionary movement expressed their deepest sympathies to the Japanese people who have recently suffered from a series of grave disasters.

At around 3 p.m. on March 11, a very strong earthquake rocked Japan's southeastern coast. The earthquake, which registered 9 on the Richter scale, was one of the strongest recorded temblors in history.

The earthquake was followed by a gigantic tsunami that hit Sendai prefecture. Close to 40-foot waves inundated and smashed entire coastal communities, killing up to 20,000 people. In Minamisanriku alone, one of the towns in Sendai flooded by the tsunami, an estimated 10,000 out of a population of 17,000 were killed.

Among the facilities damaged by the big earthquake and tsunami was the Fukushima-Daiichi nuclear plant, whose cooling

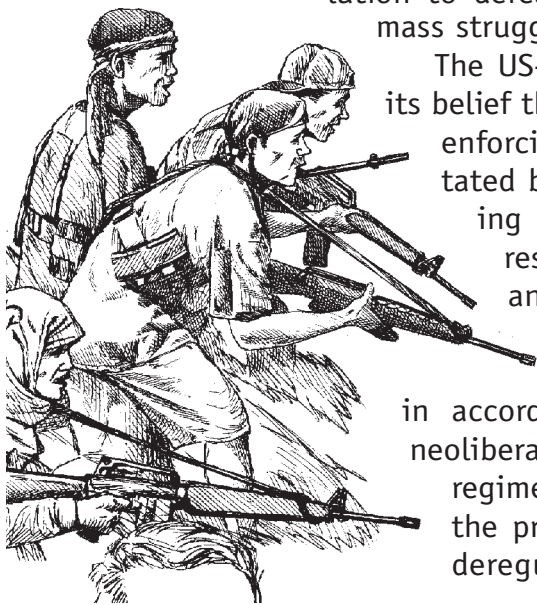
mechanism was destroyed. The damage has led to an explosion in its nuclear reactor, releasing radioactive particles into the air and the environment. The particles are akin to those released after an atomic bomb explosion, and can cause death and illnesses such as cancer to hundreds of thousands.

The Japanese government has ordered the evacuation of the entire population in communities near the nuclear plant. The people now fear the spread of radioactive material and the contamination of water and food supplies.

Up to \$38 billion worth of property has been destroyed as a result of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear plant explosion. **AB**

Resist the US-Aquino regime and advance the people's war

The coming celebration of the New People's Army's (NPA) 42nd anniversary on March 29 is an occasion for the Filipino people and the revolutionary forces to celebrate the NPA's victories in the armed struggle in the past year. It is also an occasion for Red fighters, the revolutionary forces and the people to renew their resolve to thwart the sinister scheme of armed counterrevolution to defeat the armed revolution and mass struggles.



The US-Aquino regime is mistaken in its belief that it can continue to rule by enforcing policies and programs dictated by US imperialism and resorting to empty gimmickry without resolving basic economic, social and political problems.

The programs it is implementing are all strictly in accordance with US imperialism's neoliberal globalization policy. The regime is bringing to a new level the programs of denationalization, deregulation, privatization and

trade and investment liberalization that have wrought further destruction to the economy and the people's livelihoods. It has nothing to brag about except its program of doleouts under the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino which is designed to muffle the people's cries for land, jobs, decent wages and social services.

Aquino strictly abides by the US' terrorist war and the US Counterinsurgency Guide in his regime's newly issued Oplan Bayanihan (OPB). OPB is merely a continuation of the brutal campaign of suppression under Oplan Bantay Laya. To cover up continuing human rights violations and fascist crimes, Aquino has ordered the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to use demagogic slogans like "winning the peace" and "respect for human rights."

The US-Aquino regime turns a blind eye to the Filipino peo-

ple's growing anger over its failure to fulfill its promise to hold the Arroyo regime responsible for grave cases of corruption, fascist crimes and violations of human rights. Upwardly spiralling prices of commodities, the steep decline in the people's living conditions, worsening poverty and hunger all serve to stir the fires of the people's loathing and their desire for basic changes in their situation.

The ruling political system is beset by worsening crises that rock the Aquino regime from time to time. Open clashes have been erupting between rival factions within the ruling class. On the other hand, the people's pent up anger has sparked several protest actions. It will not

be long before they culminate in bigger mass actions in the face of Aquino's indifference to the people's interests and welfare.

The Aquino regime's corruption and brutality are rapidly being exposed, along with its antipeople, antinational and anti-democratic character. The severe crisis is pushing the people to wage resistance.

The revolutionary mass movement continues to expand and gain strength. The revolutionary forces can thus form a broad united front and generate a strong mass movement capable of isolating and overthrowing the Aquino regime in a relatively short period.

The relentlessly worsening crisis of the ruling system creates favorable conditions for the

advance of armed revolution and mass struggles. The New People's Army (NPA) is in a position to achieve bigger advances. Each NPA unit must have designated periods for waging combat and for political-military training. This can be accomplished alongside the strengthening of local Party branches and mass organizations in the countryside and advancing agrarian revolution on a broader scale.

The Aquino regime's rule is the time for great advances in the people's war. In accordance with the CPP's call, the NPA and all the revolutionary forces are geared towards fulfilling the requisites for advancing the people's war towards the strategic stalemate. AB

Tactical offensives against Oplan Bayanihan

At least 11 AFP elements were killed and 19 were wounded in military actions by the New People's Army (NPA) in various regions from February to March. A striking feature of these military actions are the punitive measures taken against AFP troops serving as protectors of destructive mining and agribusiness companies.

In Southern Mindanao. The NPA Armando Dumandan Command which operates in Compostela Valley meted blows on 10th ID troops in two military actions on March 11 and 13. At least five soldiers were killed, including a company commander, and 12 were wounded in these

actions. The soldiers who were launching combat operations did so under the guise of conducting Peace and Development Operations under Oplan Bayanihan.

The NPA inflicted serious casualties on the military at around 1 p.m. of March 11 through a command-detonated land mine that hit a 40-man enemy column in Sitio Tan-awan, Barangay Malinawon, Mawab, Compostela Valley. The area lies within the perimeter of the newly transferred headquarters of the 10th ID.

Among those killed was 1Lt. Godofredo Despojo Jr.

Contrary to AFP statements after the tactical offensives,

there were no casualties on the NPA side.

Because the NPA's military action was conducted so close to the 10th ID's headquarters, 72nd IB commander and spokesperson Lt. Col. Lyndon Paniza tried to cover up their embarrassment by claiming that they suffered only one dead. Two six-by-six trucks, however, were sent to Sitio Mahayahay, Barangay Tuburan to evacuate their dead and wounded.

Two days later, a sergeant from the 3rd Special Forces was killed after being hit by NPA sniper fire in Barangay Latiban, New Corella, Davao del Norte.

Meanwhile, on February 25, partisans of the NPA Magtanggol Roque Command punished a combat intelligence asset of the 39th IB. Roldan Quitua, 24, who was punished in Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur was handled by a Lieutenant Villegas of the 39th IB.

Quitua's handler ordered him to enter the NPA in the latter part of 2008 to spy on the guer-





rilla army. When his real intentions were discovered, Quitua immediately bolted and told the military about the local NPA unit's location and strength. This resulted in two defensive battles, which the Red army was able to surmount because of the timely information provided by the masses.

Quitua was active in threatening and harassing barriofolk during the 39th IB's operations, especially villagers opposed to the Barangay Defense System.

In Far South Mindanao. Red fighters from the Mt. Alip Operations Command and elements of the people's militia inflicted at least six casualties on AFP troops in Davao del Sur and Columbio, Sultan Kudarat.

On March 2, at least four soldiers were hit by NPA snipers targeting operating troops from the 27th IB in Barangay Tagaytay, Magsaysay, Davao del Sur. After a week, the enemy suffered two more casualties when the NPA sniped marauding

troops of the 39th IB in Barangay Colonsabak, Matanao, Davao del Sur.

The targeted troops serve as guards of the environmentally destructive gigantic mining firm Xstrata-SMI.

In Northcentral Mindanao. The NPA Rexan Perez Command destroyed heavy equipment owned by Dole Philippines and Sumifru in Malaybalay, Bukidnon on February 26 and 28. The punitive action was launched because these companies have been seizing the farmers' lands, exploiting their workers and destroying the environment.

On February 23, a CAFGU element was killed and another element wounded in harassment operations launched by the NPA Ernesto "Boyboy" Roa Command at around 7 p.m. in Barangay Dao, San Fernando, Bukidnon against operating troops of the 8th IB. The 8th IB protects the Eagle Mining Co. which is much hated by the local Lumad population for its

destruction of the mountains, streams and other sources of water.

Meanwhile, the NPA in Negros strongly denied involvement in a misencounter on January 28 in Cambayobo, Calatrava, Negros Occidental. In fact, said Roslyn Pelle Command spokesperson Ka Cecille Estrella, it was AFP troops that were involved in that misencounter, which led to the death of at least 15 soldiers.

Prior to the misencounter, Red fighters ambushed a group of attacking soldiers, killing five of them in the first volley of gunfire. A Red fighter was also martyred in this gunbattle.

The NPA was able to withdraw quickly, with the enemy reinforcements arriving too late at the scene of the fighting. Greatly fearful of being ambushed by the Red fighters, the jittery elements of the AFP, Division Reconnaissance Company and PNP ended up firing their weapons at each other. AB

NPA seizes 7 firearms in Eastern Samar ambush

Red fighters of the Sergio Lobina Command (NPA-Eastern Samar) ambushed elements of the PNP 3rd Maneuver Platoon-Regional Mobile Group conducting patrols in Barangay Tangbo, Arteche on February 26, at around 11 a.m.

Killed on the spot was P/Insp. Al Llanza Tantiado. Three of his men were also seriously wounded. The policemen were hit by a command-detonated land mine and fired upon by the Red fighters. A P01 Portajada survived the ambush and readily surrendered his firearm. Seized were three M16 rifles, an M14, two cal .45 pistols, a 9 mm pistol, ammunition and other military equipment.

The patrolling elements of

the PNP were on their way back to their headquarters in Arteche town from Barrio Catumsan. The PNP-RMG is an active partner of the AFP in launching combat and clearing operations in much of Northern and Eastern Samar under the current regime's Oplan Bayanihan.

Information culled from documents seized from the PNP-RMG elements confirm their role in setting up monitoring-intelligence units/assets, checkpoints, quick reaction forces and

the like as the AFP's close partners in counterinsurgency operations.

The ambush was in response to the regional revolutionary leadership's call to intensify and raise the level of guerrilla warfare and thwart Oplan Bayanihan. It was also a response to longstanding cries from the people of Eastern Samar for justice due to the many cases of human rights violations committed by the AFP and PNP-RMG.

Most of all, the successful ambush showed that amid intense enemy operations along the Northern and Eastern Samar borders, the NPA can conduct a victorious tactical offensive because of the Eastern Samareños' support for the New People's Army. AB

NPA-Nueva Ecija warns EDC

The New People's Army Provincial Operational Command in Nueva Ecija warned the Energy Development Corporation (EDC) against continuing its plantation project in the province. In a letter to Paul Aquino, EDC chief executive officer and uncle of Benigno Aquino III, the NPA in Nueva Ecija told EDC to put a stop to its project in Sitio Maluyon, Barangay Villarica in Pantabangan town.

The NPA said the EDC plantation which covers entire communities inhabited by national minorities and settlers is a brazen form of trampling on the rights of peasants to their land and a deprivation of their right of equal access to the area's natural resources.

The EDC has been conspiring with the reactionary government through the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to demolish the residents' huts and prohibit them from setting up even temporary shelters in the area. They have been forcibly brought to a small relocation site that is too far away from their farms, without any legal guarantee that they can no longer be evicted from the site. The EDC and NIA have threatened to file various criminal cases against them for their resistance. The EDC has also bla-

ntly declared that the company would next be annexing even farmlands and other agriculturally developed areas for its plantation project. The EDC and NIA have been using the 81st IB to coerce the peasants.

Plans are also underway for the EDC to add another 100 hectares to the current 50 hectares already planted to trees for commercial and private use.

Along with the military, the NIA has been threatening residents in the area. In 2006, fascist troops of the 48th IB killed Rev. Pastor Andy Pawican, who has been leading the peasants in their fight against the NIA's attempts to threaten and evict them.

The NPA added that aside from depriving the people of their right to land, the EDC has been further abusing and ex-

ploiting its workers who were organized by the company into the Maluyon Indigenous Christian Farmers Association (MICFA). The EDC has been paying its workers wages that are way below the legal minimum, and sometimes even requires them to work without pay.

On the authority of the People's Democratic Government, the NPA has ordered the EDC to pay its workers the correct wages, including back pay which will be computed from the day the EDC began hiring its workers.

The NPA advised the EDC to file an appeal during the peace negotiations, if it is ready to comply with the rules and regulations of the People's Democratic Government. Should it cooperate, among EDC's obligations would be to ensure that the people's welfare comes first, that the environment and the national patrimony are protected, that the people be granted compensation for whatever damages they have sustained, and that the consent of the communities directly affected by EDC's operations be secured through democratic consultations. AB

19th IB: The butchers of Leyte

The Mount Amandewin Command (NPA-Leyte) has disclosed the entire context within which the 19th IB massacred renowned Filipino botanist Leonardo Co and two members of his team while they were conducting research in a forested area of Kananga, Leyte on November 15, 2010. After a hail of gunfire from the 19th IB that lasted for around 15 minutes, Co, a forest guard and a farmer assisting him in his research fell dead.

To absolve themselves of their crime, the 19th IB claimed that Co and the two other victims of military atrocities were killed in the crossfire in a gun-battle between the soldiers and the New People's Army (NPA)

and that the bullets that killed them came from the NPA.

The 19th IB's claims were belied by the two survivors of the "Kananga Massacre". The witnesses said that they saw no other people in the area aside

from the military. The tools they used in their research were mistaken for long firearms or automatic rifles, after which the trigger-happy soldiers mowed them down.

A task force organized by the Department of Justice upheld the military's lies. But the scientist's family, friends and acquaintances refused to swallow the DOJ task force's conclusions. The Co family charged the soldiers with murder, including their commander and deputy commander. The criminal case filed by Co's widow Glenda and his parents Lian Sing Co and Emelina Co named as respondents 38 officers and men in-



volved in the Kananga Massacre, including 1Lt. Ronald Odchimar, 2Lt. Cameron Perez, Cpl. Roger Mores, Pfc. Albert Belmonte, Pfc. Gil Guimerey, Pfc. Alex Apostol, Pfc. William Bulic and 28 others.

The Mount Amandewin Command issued a statement in February, explaining that elements of the 19th IB had already been trigger-happy for about a month and a half before the massacre. On October 1, seven of its soldiers were killed and two others were wounded in an NPA ambush in Barangay Salvacion in the nearby town of Albuera where the 19th IB was conducting military operations. Thus, when the 19th IB espied Co's group in the forests of Kananga, they lost no time in drawing blood, without bothering to confirm who they were targeting.

Despite the severe condemnations they received for the massacre in Kananga, the 19th IB never relented in its rampage against the civilian populations in Kananga, Carigara, Capoocan, Ormoc, Albuera, Baybay, Burauen and Jaro towns, all in Leyte. Their operations continued even during the ceasefire last December. On December 14, the NPA ambushed the 19th IB between Barangays Tigbaw and Candigahob in Carigara, killing ten soldiers and wounding five more. As in the first ambush, the 19th IB concealed the extent of their casualties from the media.

The Mount Amandewin Command called on the various sectors to support the struggle for justice of the victims of the Kananga massacre as well as that of other victims of the 19th IB's violations of human rights. It called for an end to the 19th IB's impunity, for the investigation of all its violations of international humanitarian law, and for the demobilization of the battalion for being a gross violator of the laws of war. AB

Urban poor leader slain

Suspected state agents killed an urban poor leader in Navotas City. Antonio "Nono" Homo, 47, was the campaign officer of the Nagkakaisang Samahan sa Kadiwa, a local chapter of the Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (KADAMAY) in Navotas. He was a resident of San Roque Village in Kadiwa, Navotas City.

It was 8:40 p.m. of March 16 when his assailants shot Homo in the head at close range with a cal .45 pistol.

KADAMAY strongly condemned Homo's killing, saying he was among the leaders of the anti-demolition movement in the area. In fact, he was one of the complainants in a case filed against Mayor John Ray Tiangco of Navotas and the City Engineering Office for the series of illegal demolitions in the community that began on March 3.

KADAMAY called on the urban poor to continuously defend their jobs, livelihoods and homes.

Military officer tagged in Jonas Burgos abduction

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) is holding an AFP officer accountable for the abduction of activist Jonas Burgos. Burgos was abducted in a restaurant inside the Ever Gotesco Mall along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City in April 2007. The investigation revealed that the license plate on one of the vehicles used in Burgos' abduction belonged to a confiscated vehicle impounded at the 56th IB



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"Sierra Madre Trek"

A tribute to Leonard Co

Relatives, friends and environmental advocates will trek the Sierra Madre mountain range as a tribute to patriotic scientist Leonardo Co. The trek is being organized by the late scientist's brother-in-law Darwin Flores.

The "Sierra Madre Trek" will comprise two parts--a reconnaissance trek from March 23 to April 11 which will be joined by members of the University of the Philippines-Baguio Mountaineers; and a second trek by a group of 30 people from April 18 to 23. The organizers expect mountaineers and other nature lovers to join the activity. The "Sierra Madre Trek" will end with the scattering of Co's ashes in the 16-hectare Forest Dynamics Plot in Barangay Villarobles, Palanan, Isabela where the famed botanist spent much time conducting research on medicinal plants. AB

headquarters in Bulacan.

CHR Deputy Commissioner Jose Manuel Mamaug said a witness positively identified 1Lt. Harry Baliaga Jr. as among the armed elements who seized Burgos. Baliaga was then assigned to the 56th IB, which is under the 7th Infantry Division then led by the butcher Gen. Jovito Palparan.

The CHR's investigation was greatly aided by the testimony of Jeffrey Cabintoy who was working at the restaurant where Burgos was abducted, and Edmond Daguman, a former soldier who served under Baliaga at the 56th IB. The CHR recommended to the Supreme Court that the victim's mother Mrs. Edita Burgos be granted a writ of amparo, and that Baliaga be compelled to produce Jonas Burgos. The CHR also recommended filing kidnapping/enforced disappearance/arbitrary detention charges against Baliaga as a principal, due to his direct participation in Burgos' abduction. AB

On the 100th anniversary of International Working Women's Day

Women assail US-Aquino regime's inutility

Thousands of Filipino women joined celebrations of the 100th International Working Women's Day on March 8. To commemorate the occasion, the women marched to Malacañang as well as in other town centers and cities to assert their right to health services and against rising prices of goods and services.

GABRIELA and other progressive organizations compared the first nine months of the newly installed Aquino regime to the gestation of a regime of inutility, and declared they were now bringing forth their extreme disgust for the new pro-imperialist and antipeople regime.

Among the issues GABRIELA railed against were programs of the Aquino regime such as the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) that is no other than compliance with US imperialism's privatization and denationalization scheme. They also assailed the conditional cash transfer program where the only ones who stand to gain will be government officials who will be pocketing the program's funds. They also called for the enactment of the Comprehensive Reproductive Health Bill that was sponsored by the Gabriela

Women's Party in Congress.

The rallyists expressed their solidarity with women worldwide, especially in countries beset by grave political crises. International Working Women's Day was commemorated even as millions of women have been taking action alongside their people in protests and uprisings engendered by the negative and destructive effects of the global recession. It was a fitting way to commemorate the occasion, especially since International Working Women's Day is a tribute to the protest actions of women against the deleterious effects of capitalism.

Similar mass actios were held in Southern Tagalog, Central Luzon, Bicol, Cordillera, Negros, Iloilo, Cebu, Bohol, Southern Mindanao, Caraga, Northern Mindanao and Socksargen. AB

RH Bill: Protecting women's health

Vote for women's health, not for population control. This was the Gabriela Women's Party's (GWP) response to the criticisms and black propaganda hurled by the Catholic church and other conservative sectors against the Comprehensive Reproductive Health Bill in Congress.

The GWP said that the bill was not merely focused on giving women the right to choose what birth control method to use, but the right to health services in general. The GWP did not deny that part of the bill deals with birth control, but said that this was only one part of a long list of measures that should be taken by the state to

protect women's health.

The GWP added that one woman dies every two hours due to childbirth-related complications. Up to 11 women also die from other causes. The dismal situation of women, especially from the toiling masses, is the main reason behind the GWP's sponsorship of the RH Bill.

Following are some of the

other provisions of the RH Bill:
> ensuring sufficient numbers of trained midwives in



every community

- > ensuring enough facilities in public hospitals in every city and province for obstetric and neonatal care

- > ensuring sufficient facilities and widespread education on the various family planning methods, giving special attention to poor families and couples who do not have sufficient resources for health services

- > providing maximum Philhealth benefits for severe cases related to reproductive health, such as HIV and AIDS, breast and reproductive tract cancer, menopause-related complications and the like

- > reaching out to women in farflung communities who do not have access to local health services

- > inclusion of reproduction and sexuality in the school curriculum, from the Fifth Grade up to the Fourth Year of high school

- > obligating private companies to respect the rights of workers on this issue

- > providing free health services and products to the poorest families. AB

Youth groups launch protests vs oil companies

YOUTH and student groups launched protest actions to assail the recent series of oil price hikes. Led by Anakbayan and the League of Filipino Students (LFS), the protesters trooped to the offices of the three biggest oil companies in Makati City.

Anakbayan said that diesel prices had been raised nine times (or a hike of ₱7.35 per liter) and gasoline prices also increased nine times (or a hike of ₱6.50 per liter). The price of petroleum products also practically tripled in the past ten years. From ₱13.82 per liter in 2001, they have skyrocketed to ₱46.05 per liter this year.

The youth first trooped to the Petron office and banged on its gates. Here, the LFS cited studies showing that petroleum products were overpriced by ₱7.00.

They next went to the Pilipinas Shell office where they were violently dispersed by Makati police and company guards.

Their third stop was the Chevron station where they again banged on the gates.

The LFS said that foreign capitalists were really in control of the Filipino peoples' lives with their ability to dictate the prices of petroleum products.

Meanwhile, Anakpawis Rep. Rafael "Ka Paeng" Mariano challenged the government to pay attention to an Anakpawis-sponsored bill calling for the abrogation of the Oil Deregulation Law (House Bill 4317). Mariano said that in the deregulation law's almost decade-long implementation, it was only the oil cartels that gained from it. The people bore the brunt of oil price hikes through the latter's effect on the prices of main commodities. Mariano added that Congress should begin deliberations on HB 4317 and lay down alternative solutions to oil-related policies.

Various sectors are set to launch a massive protest action on March 31 against the oil price hikes. Drivers and operators in Bicol have given a glimpse of the protest by launching a transport strike last March 16.

Illegal detention in Central Visayas

TROOPS and officers of the AFP Central Command (CENTCOM) illegally arrested and detained five members of Karapatan-Central Visayas on March 19. The soldiers also seized one of their companions who was wounded.

Karapatan said that soldiers of the 79th IB encountered suspected Red fighters on March 16

in Sta. Catalina, Negros Oriental. The following day, the soldiers set up checkpoints. On March 19, the military accosted the five Karapatan volunteers at a checkpoint in Barangay Maganod, Sta. Catalina. The volunteers were identified as Christopher Sollano, Althea Sollano, Welchester Paglinawan, Manuel

Batilla and Erwin Sinangote, all of Cebu City. With them was the wounded Marvin Villegas, also of Cebu City.

Witnesses said a white van suddenly arrived, allegedly to take Villegas to an undisclosed hospital. The five volunteers who were arrested have not been surfaced to date.

Antimining rally in Northeast Cagayan

MORE than 4,000 people, most of them farmers launched one of the biggest antimining demonstrations launched in Gonzaga and Sta. Teresita, Cagayan. In a statement, the National Democratic Front in Cagayan Valley said that the rally which was held on March 19 assailed the plunderous operations of Lianxin and Huaxia, both Taiwan-based mining firms.

Among those who joined the protest action were farmers from the villages of Cabambanan Norte, Cabambanan Sur, Maguing, Isca, Flourishing, Progressive, Smart, Paradise, Batangas, Calayan, Minanga, Calao, Tapel, Rebecca, Baua, Sta. Cruz, San Jose, Cabiraoan and Pateng in Gonzaga town; and Barangays Mision and Dungeg in Sta. Teresita town.

More than 2,000 people had earlier joined an antimining rally at the Gonzaga town center. This was followed by a forum attended by more than 400 personalities.

North Triangle residents put up barricades anew

RESIDENTS of Sitio San Roque in Barangay North Triangle, Quezon City succeeded in averting another attempt by the city government to demolish their community.

On March 15, residents barricaded their communities once more after Quezon City Mayor Herbert Bautista ordered the House Committee on Urban Planning and Development to demolish the houses in the area. The order had been issued as early as March 9.

By dawn of March 15, the residents had put up their barricades. Youths temporarily blocked Epifanio del los Santos Avenue (EDSA) near North Avenue. By 12:00 noon, there were no demolition teams in sight. The residents then knew that they had succeeded.

Earlier, in September 2010, the city government tried to destroy all houses in the community to give way to the Quezon City Central Business District (QC-CBD). The demolition failed to push through due to the residents' fierce resistance.

An estimated 25,000 families will be affected by the QC-CBD in the entire North Triangle and other areas.

BAYAN scores Balikatan Exercises 2011

BAGONG Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) demanded the scuttling of the Balikatan Exercises 2011 between American soldiers and the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

More than 6,000 American soldiers are set to join the Balikatan Exercises from April 5-15 which will be held in various areas in Central and Southern Luzon.

BAYAN secretary-general Renato Reyes Jr. said that the Aquino government must put a stop to Balikatan 2011 in order to give way to a review of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA). BAYAN is demanding the junking of the VFA which American soldiers have been invoking to avoid being held accountable for their violations of the country's laws. Through the VFA, Lance Corporal Daniel Smith who was convicted of raping Nicole in 2005 at the Subic Bay Freeport was able to escape punishment and was eventually allowed to return to the US.

BAYAN also opposes the fact under the Balikatan Exercises, the government has no control over the number of US soldiers entering the country as well as their participation in combat operations. It said that Balikatan will also serve as a source of corruption, citing anomalies in the use of funds in previous joint exercises.