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Editorial

Pull all stops to resist the Aquino regime's "cha-cha" scheme

Reactionary politicians are currently busy trying to sneak charter change ("cha-cha") into the national agenda. No matter how much Aquino denies it, "cha-cha" is definitely one of the priorities of his regime and the entire ruling system. It is a logical consequence of Aquino's betrayal of the nation's sovereignty in allowing growing US armed presence in the country and his ceding of the national patrimony to foreign companies.

Aquino's minions are actively working on building a broad consensus among reactionary politicians in favor of charter change. These efforts are being led by Juan Ponce Enrile, Senate president and one of the leading stalwarts and baton wielders of US imperialism. Enrile's

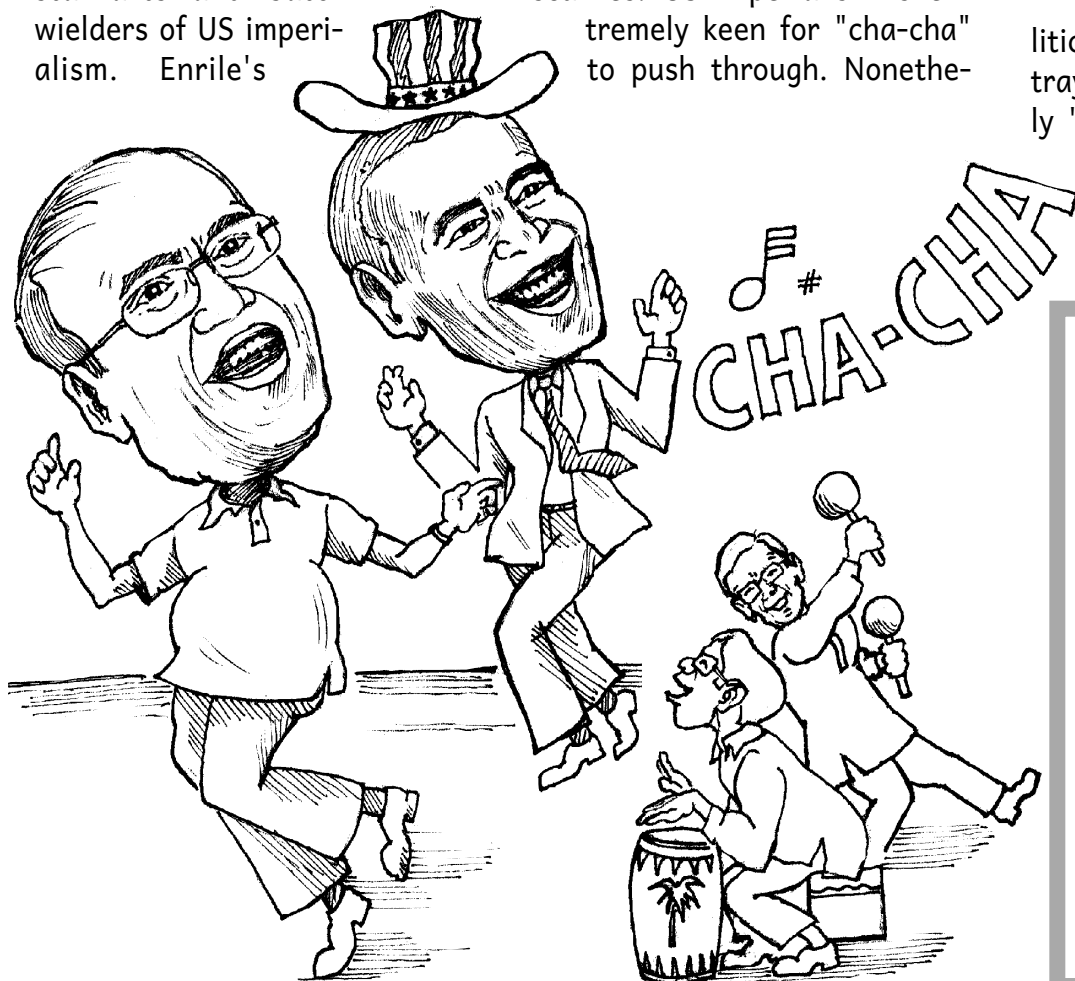
partner in this endeavor is Rep. Feliciano Belmonte, Speaker of the Lower House of Congress.

Enrile and Belmonte want to accomplish "cha-cha" in the shortest time possible and without any obstructions or political scuffles. US imperialism is extremely keen for "cha-cha" to push through. Nonethe-

less, it also wants amendments without any major conflicts that would shake the stability of the ruling political system.

The tactics used in quickly securing Corona's impeachment by Congress in November 2011 are the same ones they would like to utilize again in achieving "cha-cha." Alongside a vigorous media campaign to make "cha-cha" palatable to the people, government funds will definitely be used to "convince" the politicians.

There are efforts to "depoliticize" the "cha-cha" and portray it as an exercise with purely "economic" objectives. Aquino is pictured in the media as being opposed to, or



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uninterested in, "cha-cha" in an effort to make the people believe that politicians are not interested in amendments leading to their term extensions. But this is all public posturing. In fact, Aquino and the entire puppet ruling regime are extremely interested in "cha-cha" and desire it exceedingly.

"Cha-cha" counts among the Aquino regime's top priorities because it is one of the requisites set by US imperialism for the Philippines to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement which is currently being built by the US. The TPP aims to build a "free market zone" where member-countries abolish all tariffs and similar policies to achieve full investment and trade liberalization.

Since Aquino's men came to power, they have been actively negotiating to have the country included in the TPP. But the US outrightly said last year that the country must first amend the reactionary constitution to make it consistent with the TPP's objectives.

The constitutional changes

being pushed by the Aquino regime all revolve around this issue. The regime wants to completely eliminate from the constitution whatever remaining provisions it has that promote national independence and protect the national patrimony. In particular, Enrile wants to remove from the reactionary constitution provisions that bar foreigners from owning land in the country and prohibit foreign capitalists from owning more than 60% of enterprises.

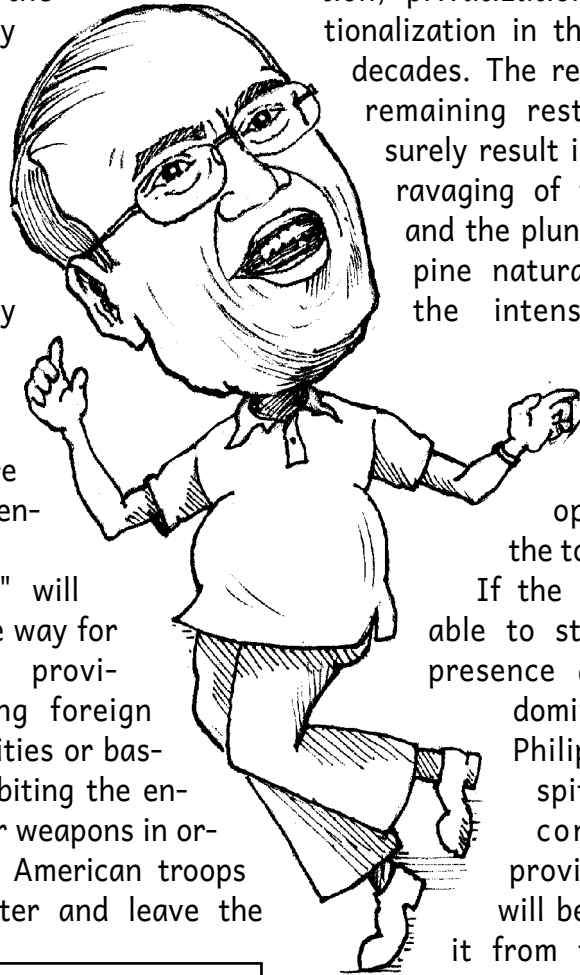
"Cha-cha" will also pave the way for eliminating provisions banning foreign military facilities or bases and prohibiting the entry of nuclear weapons in order to allow American troops to freely enter and leave the


Philippines and conduct operations within the country.

Once "cha-cha" pushes through, the puppet government will have completely surrendered Philippine national sovereignty. The US has already been able to push its neoliberal policies of liberalization, deregulation, privatization and denationalization in the past three decades. The removal of the remaining restrictions will surely result in the further ravaging of the economy and the plunder of Philippine natural resources, the intensification of workers' exploitation and the graver oppression of the toiling masses.

If the US has been able to strengthen its presence and military domination of the Philippines despite contrary constitutional provisions, there will be no stopping it from transforming the country into its military outpost in the Asia-Pacific once "cha-cha" comes to pass.

The Filipino people must give their all in resisting the "cha-cha" scheme, whether this will be accomplished by convening Congress as a "constituent assembly" or electing a "constitutional convention" simultaneous with next year's polls. All progressive, patriotic, democratic, pro-people, environmentalist, anti-nuclear, pro-peace and revolutionary forces must unite and take a stand against "cha-cha" and its goal of further condemning the Philippines to remain within the backward and crisis-ridden semicolonial and semifeudal system.



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They must expose and oppose Enrile and his ilk's pro-imperialist ideas that justify "cha-cha." They must expose the widespread havoc unleashed on the masses' lives by the neoliberal policies of the last three decades: skyrocketing prices of oil, food, water, electricity, education and health services, widespread unemployment and homelessness, low quality jobs and low wages, the export of labor to other countries, the death of local agricultural production, the seizure of land by foreigners, the denudation of the forests and the loss and destruction of the Philippines' natural resources.

They must push for patriotic economic policies to revive the local forces of production through a

program for national industrialization and genuine land reform. The toiling masses of workers and peasants, and even small businessmen and producers interested in developing the local economy through patriotic policies must be mobilized against "cha-cha."

The spirit of patriotism must be kindled. The patriotic sectors must be mobilized against the planned "cha-cha" to advance and fight for Philippine national independence, bar plans to use the Philippines as one vast US military base, fight for an independent and peace-loving foreign policy and advance the struggle for the right to self-determination. **AB**

EO 79: Tool for mining liberalization

There is no basic difference between Executive Order No. 79 (EO 79) and the hated RA 7942 or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995. They both encourage the plunder by foreign monopoly capitalists of the country's mineral resources to the detriment of the local economy, the environment and the people's lives and livelihoods. Both are framed within the policy of liberalizing the mining industry.

Foreign companies and their local co-conspirators at the Philippine Chamber of Mines applauded EO 79. Celebrating the EO's issuance with them were businessmen who made much ado about large-scale mining and posed as oppositors but did so to advance their own anti-people interests. Also among those who welcomed EO 79 were a number of reformist groups who hailed it for provisions that supposedly protect the environment and impose bigger taxes on mining.

The people, on the other hand, confronted the EO with anger and protest. Organizations of the peasantry, the national minorities and other progressive sectors, the church and environmentalist groups issued a barrage of statements against it. On the day of its issuance, the Kalikasan People's Network

for the Environment led a rally joined by various progressive organizations in front of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Mines and Geosciences Bureau. The next day, July 10, youth activists marched towards Mendiola Bridge.

Aquino's EO is full of loopholes

The Aquino regime's claims that EO 79 will lay down the direction and foundations for "responsible mining" is nonsense.

The moratorium on the issuance of new mining permits is useless since the issuance of exploration permits continues. In many cases, exploration permits are invoked to engage in actual mining operations. In fact, it is a lot easier to obtain an exploration permit because it does not require an Environmental Compliance Certificate.

The moratorium does not serve any purpose because it does not put a stop to the operations of companies that had already been allowed to conduct mining operations before EO 79 came out. Up to 771 companies have been granted permits for large-scale mining on over a million hectares of land. Up to 60% of this land area comprises ancestral lands. Up to 270,000 hectares covered by new permits were approved only in the last two years.

One of the companies previously issued permits is Xstrata-Sagittarius Mines Inc. and its Tampakan Project in South Cotabato. For a long time, Xstrata's operations were put on hold because of the moratorium imposed by the local government on open-pit mining. Under EO 79, Xstrata can push through with its project simply because it had been given its permits before EO 79 was issued. As a consolation, the DENR said that local moratoriums are valid and will remain in force.

EO 79 runs roughshod on the authority of local governments to determine what pro-

jects to approve in their areas of jurisdiction. It calls for setting up a "one-stop shop" ostensibly to facilitate the mining application process. It actually centralizes the Aquino clique's control over the industry to make it easier for foreign companies to obtain permits to operate in the country.

EO 79 will obliterate small-scale miners. It imposes heavy restrictions that will surely make life harder for them, limiting them to specific areas called "minahang bayan" (people's mining sites). The idea is to prevent them from "encroaching" on large-scale mining sites. It also bans the use of mercury, an important ingredient in small-scale mining operations.

The EO pays lip service to environmental protection. It has "closed off" certain areas to mining—which is a useless provision. The so-called protected areas, such as farms and ancestral lands, have long been protected under the Indigenous People's Rights Act, the National Integrated Protected Areas System and the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. But these laws have never been obstacles to foreign mining operations. The seizure of "protected" ancestral lands as well as agricultural lands that have already been distributed under CARP remains widespread.

The one thing that distinguishes EO 79 from these laws is its closure of 78 areas designated by the Department of Tourism as "eco-tourism" spots. But this was done only as a favor to bourgeois comprador allies who have existing tourism

businesses in these places. Foremost among them is the Lopez family whose only interest is to save Palawan from mining because of their huge investments in eco-tourism projects in the island. Like mining, eco-tourism projects are notorious for seizing lands and evicting farmers and minorities.

War against the Filipino people

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) views EO 79 as a declaration of war against the Filipino people. The people will never allow Aquino to implement this order so easily and will fight it every step of the way.

They will strengthen all means and forms of struggle, from filing legal cases to launching mass movements to waging armed resistance. Aquino may succeed in neutralizing opposing local politicians by pressuring them or giving out favors. But the advancing movement against mining will fuel the contradictions between the national and local governments.

In contrast to Aquino, the CPP and the people's democratic government strictly prohibit destructive mining. Advancing national sovereignty, the right of national minorities to self-determination, genuine agrarian reform and national industrialization are in accordance with the people's interests.

As the defender of the people, the New People's Army implements the directives of the people's democratic government. **AB**

2013 elections:

Contest of old names in politics

Horse-trading among the country's political parties and personalities has been heating up in the face of the upcoming campaign for the 2013 elections. Nonetheless, no final tickets have been announced as political leaders continue to negotiate on building possible coalitions. There is practically nothing impossible in the world of reactionary politics. The absence of principle-based unity leads to former enemies becoming friends and former allies ending up on opposite sides of the political fence.

Only one thing is certain: the 2013 polls, like all previous electoral contests, will see the old names in reactionary politics competing with each other. And the old names are those of none other than the infamous politi-

cal dynasties.

A case in point is the United Nationalist Alliance (UNA), a coalition formed early this year by the PDP-Laban Party of Vice President Jejomar Binay and the Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino

(PMP) of former Pres. Joseph Estrada. UNA boasts of a probable ticket comprising Rep. Jackie Enrile, son of Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile who is considered one of UNA's "Big 3" aside from Binay and Estrada. Also in the lineup are Zambales Rep. Mito Magsaysay, former Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri of Bukidnon, Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia and former Surigao del Sur. Gov. Robert Ace Barbers. The latter are former close allies of Gloria Arroyo who have crossed over to another party.

Probable Liberal Party (LP) candidates include elements from other parties like Aurora Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, son of Sen. Edgardo An-

gara; former Rep. Risa Hontiveros of Akbayan Citizens' Party; and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority Director General Joel Villanueva, son of Bro. Eddie Villanueva of Jesus is Lord Movement. Aquino's first cousin Paolo Benigno "Bam" Aquino IV also announced this July his intention to run for the Senate. The LP is likewise open to the entry of PDP-Laban president Sen. Koko Pimentel after he bolted UNA due to Estrada's refusal to drop Pimentel's rival Zubiri from the rolls.

Aquino has, of late, admitted that the Liberal Party is in the thick of negotiations with Sen. Manuel Villar's Nacionalista Party and the Nationalist People's Coalition led by Aquino's uncle Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco. Among their likely candidates for the Senate are Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar, Sen. Pe-



ter Cayetano and Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, all of the NP, and Sen. Loren Legarda of NPC (who Estrada has substituted for Pimentel after the latter's departure from UNA).

Relatives or factotums of traditional politicians want to dominate even the token party-list system.

Talk is rife on how partylist group seats are being auctioned off to the highest bidder and

about parties being put up that do not truly represent a particular sector.

In a related development, some sectors are demanding that the Commission on Elections introduce reforms in the system of partylist categories ostensibly to purge the list of bogus parties like Ang Galing Pinoy led by Mikey Arroyo. In fact, their real motive is to organize parties run by bourgeois politicians and further marginalize parties that truly promote the interests of the toiling masses.

Rival political parties had also, for a time, floated the idea of forming a "super coalition" of UNA and LP forces. The idea was first broached by Rep. JV Ejercito, Estrada's son by San Juan mayor Guia Gomez. The concept fizzled as quickly as it was conceived when Malacañang spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said that Aquino rejected the Ejercitos' proposal. **AB**

NPA seizes 30 firearms in Agusan and Surigao

Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA) in Northeast Mindanao Region (NEMR) seized 30 firearms in separate tactical offensives against rampaging government forces and mining company goons in Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur.

National Democratic Front-NEMR spokesperson Ka Maria Malaya congratulated the Red fighters under Guerrilla Front 14 for their successful raid of the VPO Mining Company compound in the morning of July 6 in Barangay Bayugan III, Rosario, Agusan del Sur. The Red fighters were able to haul away 30 firearms of various caliber when they disarmed the mining company's guards and armed goons. The arms seizure consisted of seven M16s, two M4 baby arma-

lites, two M14s, an M203 grenade launcher, an AK47, eight shotguns, two KG-9 mm and six cal .45 pistols aside from rounds of ammunition.

VPO Mining Company which extracts gold is owned by a former mayor of Rosario town. The revolutionary movement had allowed the company's operations, since they fell under the category of medium-scale mining. It also allowed VPO to maintain weapons for security in transporting gold ore, funds for

the miners' wages and mining equipment.

The NPA nonetheless meted punishment on the VPO Mining Company upon the orders of the People's Democratic Government because it was secretly amassing firearms that exceeded the number needed by the firm to maintain security. The VPO owns more than 70 high-powered firearms, including a number of machine guns. Reports have also come in about abuses committed by the mining company's guards and armed goons.

While three high-ranking VPO officials were being investigated, enemy reinforcements arrived, prompting the NPA unit to retreat with them in tow towards safer ground. The guerrilla unit was also forced to with-

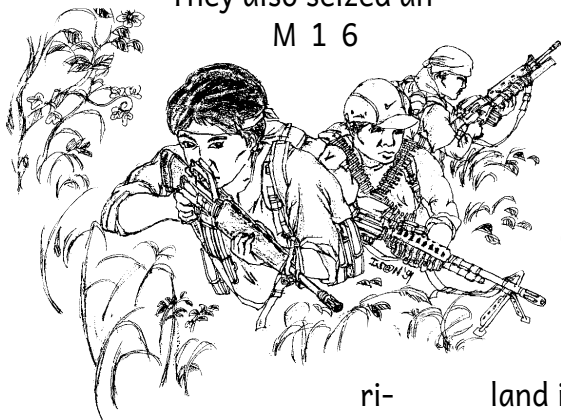
draw to avoid a firefight within the company grounds that would have endangered civilians.

The investigation revealed that Christopher Ocete, the company owner's son and VPO's chief operating officer; its head of security Joel Jayoma; and the mining firm's chief administrator Crispin Alotaya had committed some minor violations. They were reminded not to repeat them. The three officials promised to abide by the policies of the revolutionary movement on the maintenance of firearms, the protection of the environment, and the proper treatment of the Lumad, their workers and the peasants.

They were released at 7:15 p.m. on July 7 in Bayugan III after the military heeded the appeal of concerned groups to declare a Suspension of Offensive Military Operations (SOMO) in Rosario and Bunawan towns. They would have been released earlier had the AFP agreed at once to declare a SOMO.

NPA units in the region had earlier launched ten military actions from June 15 to June 30 against enemy troops protecting foreign-owned plantations and companies engaged in large-scale mining. The people's guerrillas attacked 29th IB troops in Puog, Tandag City, Surigao del Sur on June 27, killing 2nd Lieutenant Martinez and wounding 2nd Lieutenant Gomez and a Corporal Cabajes.

They also seized an
M 16



ri-

file from this gunbattle. (for more details, see p. 5)

In Davao City, military troops suffered five casualties in two tactical offensives launched by Red fighters of the 1st Pulang Bagani Company (1st PBC). Two soldiers of the 84th IB were killed in separate sniping operations launched by 1st PBC operatives in Barangay Dominga and Barangay Dalagdag, both in Calinan District, on July 9. The day before, three soldiers of the 68th IB were wounded when an operative of the 1st PBC hurled a grenade at them in Upper Mabuhay, Paquibato District.

According to Leoncio "Ka Parago" Pitao, Red commander of the 1st PBC, these were retaliatory actions by the revolutionary movement against the intense strike, intelligence and civil-military operations of the 69th and 84th IB. These troops are responsible for the series of land seizures and dislocation of peasants that pave the way for the entry of big mining companies in Marilog District and waging psychological warfare in Paquibato and Calinan districts.

In Batangas, an element of the 730th Combat Group of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) was killed and another was wounded in a sniping operation conducted by members of the NPA Eduardo Dagli Command in Sitio Bato, Barangay Aga, Nasugbu on July 14. The people were gladdened at the NPA sniping operation because the PAF troops in their area serve as protectors of despotic landlords like Miguel Puyat. The latter has laid claim to Sitio Bato, more commonly known as Hacienda Mulawin, and wants to evict the peasants who have been farming the land in the sub-village. **AB**

Peasant activist killed in Negros



A peasant activist was slain in Negros even as Malacañang washed its hands of accusations by the New York-based Human Rights Watch of failing to stop extrajudicial killings. Meantime, suspected soldiers fired at the office of a progressive party in Northern Samar while a civilian community in Mindanao was bombed anew by military planes.

July 16. Up to 50 Manobo families in Magpet, North Cotabato were forced to evacuate after the military bombed their community. Before the bombing, elements of the 57th IB terrorized the area. In Barangay Kambaringan, Magpet, two minors were forced by soldiers to serve as guides in their military operations. Most of the families have already returned to their community but 20 families remain at the evacuation center.

July 11. The Bayan Muna office in Sitio Bukhasan, Barangay Cawayan in Catarman, Northern Samar was fired at while activists were resting inside.

Two armed men aboard motorcycles were heard conversing loudly outside the office at around 10 p.m. When Katungod-Sinirangan Bisayas member Andrew Sudario looked out to see what was going on, he heard a

gunshot and the sudden departure of the motorcycle parked outside the office. Sudario saw that one of the office's glass windows was broken. He also found a cal .45 shell on the floor.

This is the third time that the BM office in Cartarman was targeted for harassment. In April 2005, when Jovito Palparan headed the 8th ID, an activist was wounded when a molotov bomb was thrown at the office. A month before this, a company of soldiers from the 63rd IB and an armored personnel carrier were positioned in front of the office to intimidate the activists.

July 9. Farmer Arnulfo Vaflor was mercilessly killed in Negros Occidental. Vaflor was a member

of Paghidaet sa Kalambuan, an affiliate of the National Federation of Sugar Workers.

According to an investigation conducted by the Northern Negros Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (NNAHRA), Vaflor was gunned down in front of his home in Vergara Subville, Bug-ang, Toboso town. NNAHRA strongly believes that the killing is related to the rampant landgrabbing near the area which Vaflor's organization is actively resisting. NNAHRA added that landgrabbers and the military colluded with the bandit Revolutionary Proletarian Army in killing Vaflor.

Vaflor is the eighth victim of extrajudicial killing in Negros under the Aquino regime. **AB**

NPA counter-offensives confront intense military campaign in Caraga Region

Simultaneous with protest actions by the masses, units of the New People's Army in Northeast Mindanao Region (NEMR) launched counter-offensives to confront a renewed massive military campaign by the Philippine Army 4th Infantry Division. More than ten Philippine Army battalions began attacking the people and the revolutionary forces in NEMR on June 15, with the enemy onslaught still ongoing as of this writing. The military is being reinforced by CAFGU and PNP units in the region.

The renewed military campaign aims to pave the way for, and protect, imperialist-, big bourgeois comprador- and big landlord-owned mining companies and plantations. These companies have wrought unparalleled destruction to the lives and livelihoods of the Lumad and the peasantry and are likewise guilty of exploiting their workers.

The attacking enemy forces are from the 8th, 26th, 29th, 30th, 36th, 58th, 72nd and 75th Infantry Battalions, the Division Reconnaissance Company and the 5th Scout Ranger Company (SRC). Their military operations are concentrated in Surigao del Norte province. Seven of these battalions are on a rampage in

the municipalities of Sison, Mainit, Malimono, Tubod, Claver, Alegria and Gigaquit and in Surigao City.

Troops from the 36th and 29th IB and the 5th SRC are likewise launching military operations in Tago and Tandag City in Surigao del Sur, and the 75th IB in Rosario, Bunawan, Bislig, Hinatuan and Tagbina towns. The 36th IB and 5th SRC, on the other hand, were in Madrid, Lanuza, Cantilan and Carrascal, Surigao del Sur from June 13 to 21.

In the face of a superior enemy force, the NPA Red fighters not only remained unfazed but maintained their courage and creativity in launching widespread and intense tactical of-

fensives from June 15 to 30, killing four fascist troopers and wounding 13 others. They also seized an M16 rifle, a shotgun and a cal .45 pistol.

Following are the details of these firefights:

July 15. The NPA destroyed a bulldozer, two generator sets, two water pumps and a welding machine owned by Staya Mineral Trading Corporation (SMTC) which operates within a protected area of Mt. Ilong-Ilong in Palidan, Mahaba, Cabadbaran City. The NPA meted punishment on the mining company for wreaking havoc on the Lumad community and for paying its workers a mere ₱200 per day. The Red fighters likewise confiscated a cal .45 pistol, a shotgun, four VHF radios and two chainsaws.

June 21, around 2:30 p.m. An enemy soldier was killed and four others were wounded when the NPA sniped at units of the 58th and 30th IB in Magtangali, Mainit, Surigao del Norte.

June 24, around 10 p.m. Two enemy elements were killed and four others were wounded in an NPA harassment operation on a military detachment protecting Greenstone mining company in Dayano, Maninit, Surigao del Norte.

June 27, at around 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. 2Lieutenant Martinez was killed while 2Lieutenant Gomez of Bravo Coy and Corporal Cabajes of the 29th IB-Long Range Patrol Unit were wounded in an NPA harassment operation on the Special Warfare Group (SWAG) and the 29th IB in Puog, Tandag City. The Red fighters also seized an M16 rifle.

June 28, at around 1 a.m. The NPA harassed a unit under the 8th IB in San Francisco, Surigao del Norte.

June 29, at around 8:30 a.m. Chief of Police Ernesto Telano and two other policemen were wounded in an NPA ambush on patrolling elements of PNP-Jabonga along the San Roque, Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte highway.

June 30. An NPA team harassed the 42nd Division Reconnaissance Company in Alipao, Alegria, Surigao del Norte. On the same day, Red fighters likewise harassed a unit under the 58th IB launching COPD operations in Brazil, San Francisco, Surigao del Norte. **AB**



Intense fighting by the NPA in South Quezon

The reactionary armed forces have been launching fierce military operations against the New People's Army (NPA) in South Quezon-Bondoc Peninsula.

On June 30, eleven Red fighters were killed in a gunbattle with the 74th IB in San Narciso, Quezon. Seven of the martyrs are Armando Albarillo (Ka Jun), member of the Executive Committee of the CPP Quezon Provincial Committee; Rosario F. Olvinar (Ka Cristy), member of the Guerrilla Front Committee in Far South Quezon; Renier Rodrigo (Ka Robin), commander of the Armed Propaganda Unit (APU) in San Francisco and San Andres towns; Ka Elmer, commander of the APU in Mulanay and San Narciso towns; Eduardo E. Olvinar (Ka Royal), commander of the APU in Mulanay and San Narciso towns; Darwin Amay (Ka Rio), political guide of the APU in Mulanay and San Narciso; Josie Fuentes (Ka Monic), Red fighter of the New People's Army.

Their deaths were celebrated to the hilt by military elements, local landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie, foreign mining corporations and bandits and thieves in South Quezon-Bondoc Peninsula who all thought that they had eliminated the obstacles to their exploitation and oppression of the peasant masses, the farm workers and people of the area.

This was because the NPA unit led by Ka Jun and Ka Cristy led the fight against exploitation and oppression by local landlords in the towns of San Francisco, San Andres, San Narciso and Mulanay. Through the revolutionary movement's tireless efforts, thousands of peas-

ants in thousands of hectares in the towns within their area of responsibility were united and mobilized for agrarian revolution campaigns to win big victories:

1. Land rent in coconut and corn lands was significantly reduced in more than 30 haciendas or landholdings within their area of responsibility. From the old 75-25 sharing scheme in favor of the landlord and with the farmer shouldering all the expenses, the peasants succeeded in transforming this to either a 50-50 net sharing scheme or a 60-40 net sharing scheme in favor of the peasants.

2. Wages for coconut farm workers in at least ten barangays were raised from ₱80.00-₱120.00 to ₱300.00-₱350.00 per thousand nuts harvested.

3. Payment for every thousand nuts baked into copra was raised from the measly ₱500.00 to ₱700.00 to ₱1,200.00 to ₱1,700.00 in at least ten coconut landholdings.

4. The lands of a number of despotic landlords were confiscated, allowing the peasants in these haciendas to reap the benefits of their daily toil.

5. Thousands of peasants were mobilized to fight for higher prices of copra and the elimination of illegal deductions from the prices of the coconut farmers' products.

6. Hundreds of peasants were able to assert their right against eviction by landlords and their armed goons. The NPA

unit likewise meted punishment on landlords and their armed minions who owed blood debts to the peasants.

The NPA unit led by Ka Jun and Ka Cristy deterred, punished and dismantled carabao and cattle rustling syndicates and thieves who victimized the peasant masses. These bad elements sprang up and regained strength because of the support of the fascist military after the Red fighters' absence from some parts of their area of responsibility.

Ka Jun and Ka Cristy had firm revolutionary standpoints because they saw themselves in the masses they served. They had a deep grasp of the masses' needs and conditions because they themselves were actual victims of severe oppression and exploitation by the ruling classes.

Ka Jun lost his mother and father when they were murdered by the fascist military led by the butcher Jovito Palparan Jr. in Mindoro. When he became an urban-based activist, he was put on the AFP-PNP's list of persons targeted for extrajudicial killing.

Husband and wife Ka Cristy and Ka Royal were activists in Gumaca town who were relentlessly harassed, physically assaulted and slapped with trumped-up criminal charges for leading the

struggles of the peasantry and other impoverished residents in their municipality.

Ka Robin, Ka Elmer and Ka Monic were ordinary peasants who fought for their right to land and were relentlessly harassed, arrested and assaulted by the military in their farms and homes.

Ka Rio was a youth who became politically conscious after his family was among those victimized by the demolition of their community.

They were ordinary folk, actual victims who were roused to the need to become part of the effort to attain justice not only for themselves but for others from their class and country. Their consciousness deepened until they devoted all their strength, skills and talents, their entire life to the national-democratic revolution.

The AFP-PNP has been relentlessly attacking the NPA unit led by Ka Jun and Ka Cristy for more than three years. All these attacks had not only failed in the past. The revolutionary forces under their leadership grew stronger and contributed significantly to strengthening the South Quezon-Bondoc Peninsula guerrilla front. **AB**

This article was based on a statement by Armine de Guia, spokesperson of the Apolonio Mendoza Command (NPA-Quezon).

Military puts Tumanduk ancestral lands on the auction block

Maj. Gen. Jose Mabanta, chief of the Philippine Army 3rd ID is auctioning off Camp Macario Peralta Jr., a vast military reservation, to tourism businessmen despite intense opposition from the Tumanduk minorities. The move was exposed in a statement issued by National Democratic Front (NDF)-Panay spokesperson Ka Edmundo Vencer.

Camp Macario Peralta Jr. is the country's third biggest military camp, next to Camp Laur in Nueva Ecija and Clark Air Base in Pampanga.

The Tumanduk were forcibly dispossessed of their 33,310-hectare ancestral lands in 1962 through Presidential Proclamation No. 67 issued by the Diosdado Macapagal regime that converted the area into a Philippine Army reservation. The area covers Jamindan and Tapaz towns in Capiz province and

Lambunao and Calinog towns in Iloilo province. The Tumanduk were branded as squatters in their own land by the military who tried to evict them.

Mabanta now plans to "develop" the ancestral lands through eco-tourism. This is on top of the other government lands already ceded to foreign mining companies undertaking exploration activities and to the perilous Jalaur River Dam Project, said NDF-Panay.

Meanwhile, Rep. Teddy Ba-

guilat of Ifugao filed House Resolution No. 2216 calling for an investigation into reports reaching the House Committee on National Cultural Communities that thousands of indigenous peoples are being evicted from their ancestral lands that have been declared as military reservations. Aside from Camp Laur and Camp Macario Peralta Jr., there is the Crow Valley Military Reservation in Tarlac.

Baguilat also called for similar resolutions from the House Committee on National Defense and Security and the Committee on Human Rights. He said that the daily lives of national minorities residing in these places were being disrupted because of war games and weapons testing activities, frequent military operations, abuses by paramilitary groups and the establishment of intelligence networks. **AB**

Bioethanol project in Isabela

Slave-like conditions of farm workers

The bioethanol project of the foreign-owned Green Future Innovations, Inc. (GFII) and its business partner Ecofuel Land Development, Inc. (ELD) began in 2011. The project arose as a result of a contract signed by GFII with the Isabela provincial government in 2006 to plant sugar cane and build a bioethanol plant on 11,000 hectares covering 17 barangays in Central Isabela. Bioethanol is an alternative source of energy for generating electricity.

The ELD ensures the procurement of land for planting sugar cane and acts as GFII's subcontractor in hiring laborers to plant sugar cane and work in the bioethanol plant.

In collusion with the Dy dynasty and the military, the ELD has been coercing the peasants to have their lands covered by the project. To ensure this, the ELD orders its tractors to run over the peasants' fields to destroy their existing crops. The company then forces the farmers to sign over their lands to have them planted to sugar cane and for them to toil as farm workers for the project. The ELD deceives the farmers into believing that their lands will be given back to them in time and that they would be paid ₱20,000 per year as lease. They are also promised high wages to entice them to plant sugar cane.

Hard times and sweet promises did attract the

masses to come in hordes to work in the plantation. They came not only from the different towns of Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya but from provinces like Nueva Ecija, Negros, Sarangani and South Cotabato. All in all, more than 8,000 migrant farm workers took turns in planting sugar cane for the foreigners and their local capitalist partner.

But one year after the sugary promises were made, there has been no improvement in the masses' economic conditions.

Back-breaking work for measly wages. Contrary to the high wages that were promised, all the farm workers got were slave wages for their slave-like toil. In 2011, in Barangay Minanga, San Mariano, farm

workers often received a mere ₱26.00 in daily wages. ELD gave each worker a bowl of instant noodles and two pieces of dried fish for their back-breaking work at the sugar cane fields—if they were fed at all. After less than a month, some of the workers were already selling their machetes just to have a little more money to spend.

They were also rarely paid in full. They usually receive three days' wages after a week of working. The company gives the rest of their wages in exchange for still another week's work. Aside from ELD's desire to scrimp and rake in more profits, it wants assurance that the farm workers will come back.

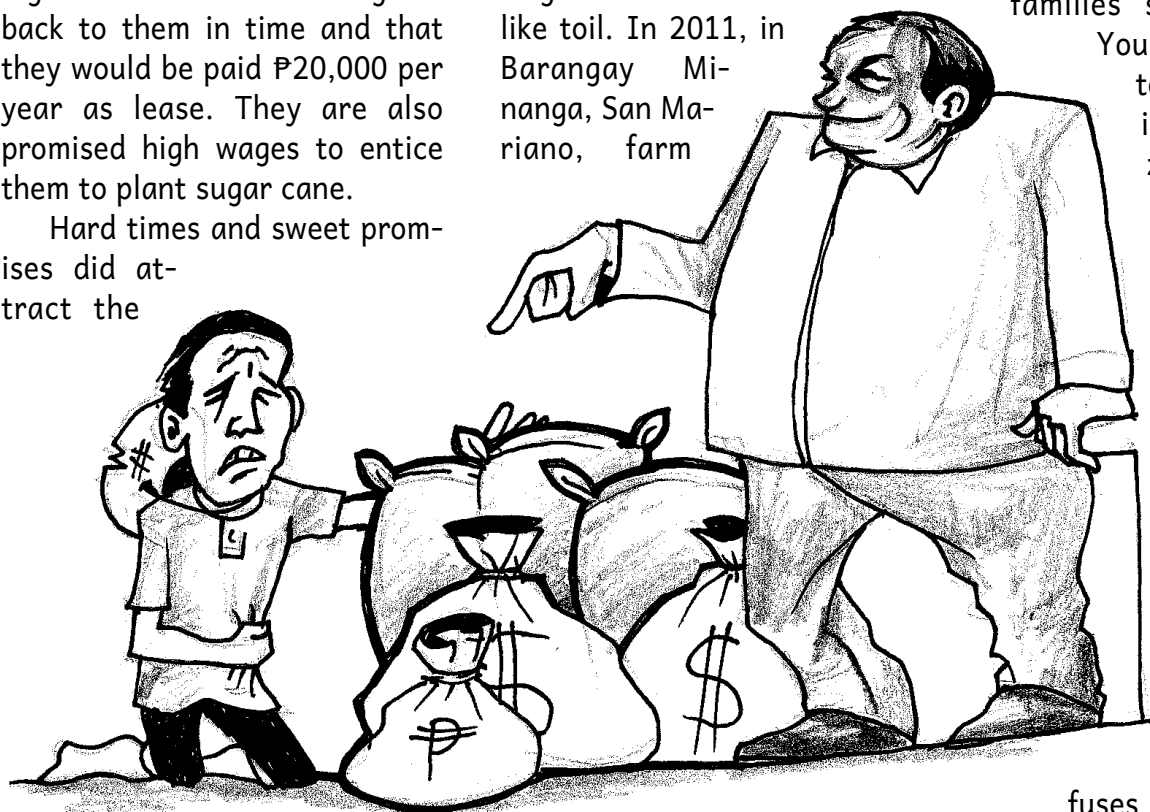
Some farm workers were never paid. For instance, in August 2011, ELD ordered the construction of a canal for a sugar cane nursery in San Mariano. The company promised to pay them ₱150.00 for every square meter of earth they dug up, but ended up paying them ₱150.00 per day. Many of the peasants who worked on the canal have yet to be paid.

For added income, entire families show up for work.

Young and old, they all toil and sweat, planting, applying fertilizer, clearing hectares of land for a mere ₱50.00.

Once the sugar cane is ready for harvest comes the heavy tasks of cutting, hauling, loading and unloading the sugar cane. They are paid a mere four centavos per stalk, with women workers paid even less.

The company refuses to pay the workers



for cutting sugar cane unless these are likewise hauled. Even then, if the cane is not loaded onto the greedy company's trucks, the workers will not be paid a single centavo. They will also not be paid in full if they do not unload the cane.

This is exactly what happened to Delyo (not his real name) and his four co-workers. From Bintacan, Ilagan, they went to Barangay Binatug in San Mariano, and cut and loaded 55,000 stalks. Already exhausted, they still went on to unload their cargo from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. But they were paid only ₱695.25 for their toil, or ₱135.00 each. Others were paid only ₱75.00 because they loaded cane but did not unload them.

Many farm workers have already left Isabelta because of the low wages and the back-breaking work. In March, Bombo Radyo reported the departure of workers who walked from San Mariano to Cauayan town and were not even paid enough for transport fare!

Heavy burdens, no benefits. GFII claims that the workers receive very little in wages because of deductions for their benefits. The hapless workers are forced to endure deductions for the SSS or Philhealth, but do not enjoy any benefits at all. They usually end up transferring jobs or leaving work even before their SSS applications are approved because the company does not abide by the terms of their work contracts.

GFII also claims that because it hires workers through labor subcontractors, it has no obligations to its laborers. On the other hand, contractors are given free rein to bleed the workers dry. GFII or the contractors can fire the farm workers any time. The laborers toil without clear work con-

tracts. If they do have contracts, these are not complied with by the company. The farm workers end up being more severely exploited and oppressed.

GFII and the contractors often do not release the workers wages on time. Ten farm workers from Nagtipunan, Quirino planted sugar cane for two weeks and expected to be paid ₱2,250.00 per hectare, as the contractor promised. Each of them were only paid ₱112.00, but had to wait four months to get the money because the contractor said he had spent it.

A contractor at Kratos Manpower Services did the same to 11 farm workers from Bintacan, Ilagan. A week had passed before he gave them reduced wages. Each worker was only paid ₱145.00 for three days of clearing a field for planting. The contractor claimed that he had to deduct their debts from the canteen, even if they did not incur any.

The company does not provide the workers with any equipment or work clothes. Farm workers have to procure their own shovels, digging bars, machetes, gloves, long-sleeved shirts, shoes or boots to avoid being bitten by snakes hiding in the thickets. Only the supervisors, technicians and aides are provided such needs. Even if the fertilizer and pesticide sprays they use are so potent, the workers are not provided any protection. Their clothes end up being soaked in pesticide. When it rains, they do not have raincoats or shelter, and become drenched while waiting for the truck to fetch them.

The company pockets the funds intended for their weekly allowance, and free rice and water rations that were promised the workers. Instead of providing them a place to rest and

sleep, the workers are made to spend the night in a warehouse in San Mariano, a banana drying facility in Cauayan or a stage in Barangay Delfin Albano.

The workers have fallen victim to many illnesses—deep and painful leg wounds, headaches, recurrent coughs, diarrhea and skin diseases. Workers who drank the polluted water in Barangay Bacolod, Cauayan fell sick. Even the wives of farm workers who washed their husbands' pesticide-soaked clothes suffered skin, eye and respiratory ailments.

On July 1, 2011, a truck that was transporting workers to the plantation fell off a cliff in Sitio Curaitan, Barangay Binatug, San Mariano, leaving one laborer dead and 40 others severely injured. The company paid for their hospitalization but provided nothing for medicines, claiming lack of funds and lack of time to attend to their needs.

Cunning contractors, hapless workers. GFII and its contractors have conjured up many ways to scrimp on expenses and add to their profits. The company's tractor usually arrives only at 10 a.m., putting the workers at a disadvantage since they are paid by the job and not on a daily basis. There are days when they are idle because there are no fields to plant, or the land had not yet been prepared for planting, or there are no cane cuttings to plant. Even if the law stipulates that they should be paid for their time spent waiting, they get nothing. But the cunning contractors make the farm workers fill up job completion reports anyway so they could pocket the wages.

No work means no pay and no food. Hundreds of hungry farm workers have been forced to beg for food or borrow money at exorbitant interest.

Contractors also arbitrarily change work rules to reduce labor costs. For instance, instead of paying the usual ₱420.00 for every 10,000 stalks of sugar cane cut, the company has reduced this to ₱400.00 after noticing that the workers have been cutting more cane. In another system where workers get paid by the *gappa* (big basket), the company decreed that only 80 stalks will be counted per basket no matter how full it is. Workers do not get paid extra for cutting cane stalks in excess of this number.

In a plantation at Villa Pereda, Delfin Albano, tractor drivers do not get paid for overtime work. The contractors also collude with the sycophant technicians and split ₱2,400.00 in wage money between them after giving the other half to the farm workers.

Instead of the progress promised by Ecofuel, the Dy dynasty and the AFP, not a single family has been raised from poverty, and the farmers even lose their land to boot. No less than the workers themselves are witness to this truth. At present, Ecofuel is down to only a little more than a thousand workers from its previous 3,000.

What will alleviate the suffering of the poor? Planned investments and building mass projects that would create products needed by the people, not goods that cater only to foreigners and landlords.

This can only be achieved after the victory of the national-democratic revolution, when the people control the land and the rule of imperialism and its disciples has been put to an end. Only then can national industrialization and genuine land reform commence. **AB**

Thousands of workers to be laid off

Tens of thousands of workers in the centers of capitalism are set to lose their jobs in the coming months due to the closures of several big companies. This marks a turn for the worse of the international capitalist crisis, contrary to claims by imperialist countries that the crisis is in remission, if not ended.

Peugeot. In France, 8,000 workers will be laid off due to luxury car manufacturer Peugeot's bankruptcy. Some of its plants in France will close down and production cut in its other factories across Europe.

The workers' union is strongly opposed to the layoff. Half of Peugeot is owned by General Motors, a bankrupt American company.

Nokia. More than 40,000 Nokia workers have been out of work since 2010 due to company losses. It is already in the process of closing down its factories in Hungary, Mexico and Finland. Next year, another 10,000 workers will be terminated.

Nokia began manufacturing cell-phones in 1992 but was eventually overtaken by other cellphone manufacturers. It will thus be shutting down its remaining offices in Fin-

land, Germany and Canada. The value of Nokia's stocks have fallen by more than 70%, with each share now worth only 1.51 euros.

Kodak. The camera manufacturer eventually folded up and closed shop in January. Kodak was unable to cope with the overproduction of cameras and the rise of the more modern digital cameras. More than 18,000 Kodak workers have lost their jobs due to the closure.

Hawker Beechcraft Inc. Company losses since 2010 have forced Hawker Beechcraft Inc. in July to sell its US-based combat plane and business jet factory for \$1.7 billion to the Chinese-owned Superior Aviation Beijing. Thousands of workers were laid off when the company closed down in May. **AB**

Ford Philippines to close shop

Ford will be closing down its plant in Sta. Rosa, Laguna by 2013, leaving more than 250 employees out of work. The closure of Ford Philippines is part of the impact of the international crisis on the automobile industry. Overall, Ford suffered a 45% reduction in income this year. It earned only \$1.4 billion, down from \$2.55 billion in the same period in 2011.

The severe crisis of automobile overproduction has culminated in the bailout by the US government in December 2008 of three big American car manufacturers—General Motors (GM), Chrysler and Ford. These companies asked for a \$34 billion bailout package. In January 2009, the Obama government used up \$24.9 billion out of a total \$700-billion bailout fund to rescue General Motors and Chrysler. Ford received a \$14-billion loan from the government.

Due to the overproduction of automobiles, thousands of cars produced by Ford Motors are now lined up in various US piers and warehouses. The company is expected to be pushed deeper into crisis. Un-sold automobiles can be found as well in other countries like China and India. **AB**

Salute to Ka Maita

For more than 40 years, she never stopped fighting for the Philippine revolution and for the liberation of women. Thus said the National Democratic Front of the Philippines Negotiating Panel in a tribute to Comrade Maita Gomez who died on July 12 at the age of 65.

The Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) also gave a clenched-fist salute to Ka Maita, one of the organization's founders. Said MAKIBAKA, "She devoted her youth, her intelligence and her talents to the revolutionary movement."

Ka Maita was a beauty queen and famous fashion model and came from a wealthy family. When she studied at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, she was one of many youth whose political arousal was spurred by witnessing the peasants' abject poverty after joining teams of activists providing assistance to victims of a massive flood that struck Central Luzon. She spurned her a

life of affluence and joined the New People's Army (NPA) upon the declaration of martial law.

Said MAKIBAKA, "She devoted her entire life to serve the people. This was not easy, but she overcame the trials that came her way. Ka Maita's participation in the armed struggle is proof of the revolutionary women's courage and ability to engage in any revolutionary field, including the bearing of arms."

Ka Maita was arrested in the 1980s. Upon her release, she continued fighting the US-Marcos dictatorship and the succeeding puppet regimes. She was one of the founders of GABRIELA and other progressive women's groups. She was also active in research and struggles to protect the environment against destructive mining.

In 2009, she was appointed co-chairperson of the MAKABAYAN coalition. She was also one of the leaders of SELDA, an organization of former political detainees. AB
