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Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

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Editorial

## 40 years of crisis and state terrorism

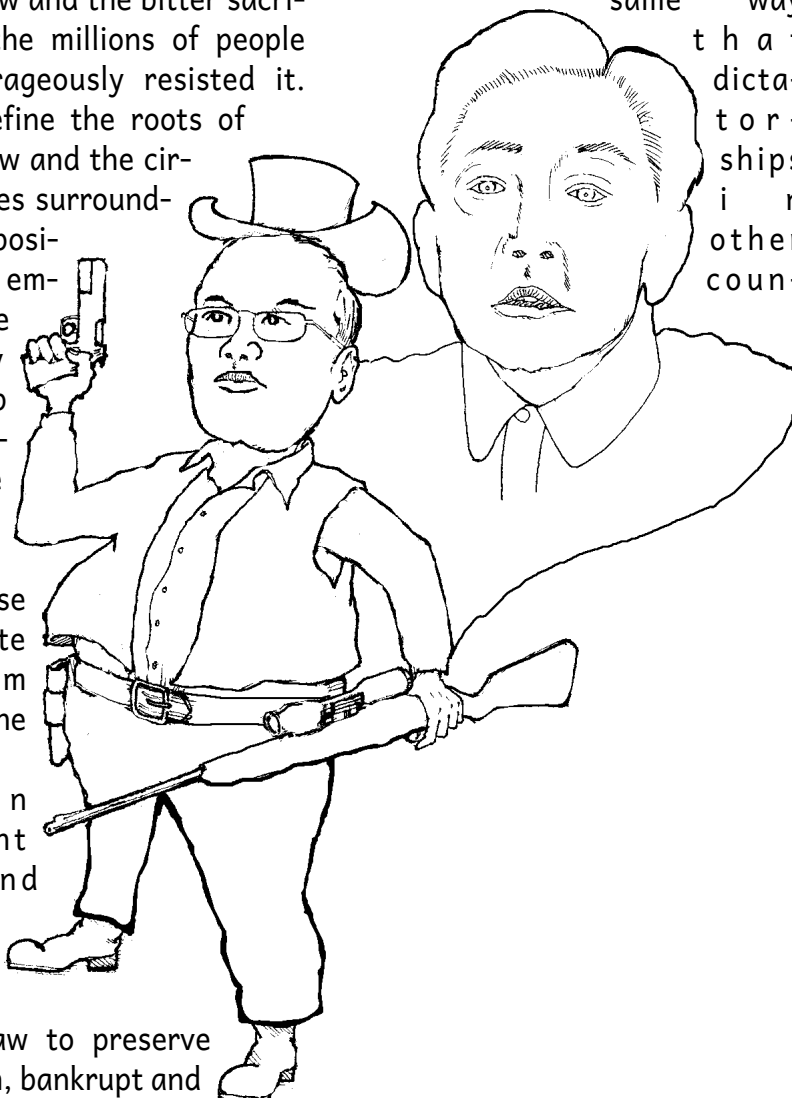
**F**orty years have elapsed, but the memory of martial law has not been erased from the Filipino people's consciousness. The wounds left behind by the US-Marcos fascist dictatorship refuse to heal in the face of the reactionary state's continuing suppression of the people and their revolutionary resistance. Let us use the 40th anniversary of the formal declaration of martial law on September 21 to remember the brutality of martial rule.

Let us encourage the study of the history of martial law especially among the youth. Most of them do not have any direct experience on the brutality of martial law and the bitter sacrifices of the millions of people who courageously resisted it. Let us define the roots of martial law and the circumstances surrounding its imposition and emphasize our duty to step up our struggle against the continuing use of state terrorism against the people.

Then president Ferdinand Marcos imposed martial law to preserve the rotten, bankrupt and

moribund ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system. Marcos had strong ambitions to remain in power indefinitely. He had the support of US imperialism, the

same way that dictatorships in other coun-



tries enjoyed US backing.

The use of state terrorism is principally directed at suppressing the armed revolution and the unarmed democratic mass movement of the Filipino people against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Marcos used a mailed fist policy to suppress the people and defend the interests of foreign big capitalists, big compradors and landlords. The imposition of martial law in 1972 was an indication that the reactionary classes could no longer rule in the old way. In the face of the deepening crisis of the ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system, the rifts within the reactionary classes further deepened and escalated to violence. Simultaneously, the Filipino

### *In this issue...*

Sereno,  
Aquino's  
errand girl 3

Robredo  
and the illusion  
of "good  
governance" 5

AFP suffers  
casualties  
in Bicol 11

people led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) launched the people's democratic revolution and the armed revolution.

Marcos expanded and strengthened the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) several-fold, aside from paramilitaries like the Civilian Home Defense Force. The police was likewise organized as a nationwide entity under the centralized command of the then Philippine Constabulary-Integrated National Police. All the coercive forces of the state came under Marcos' beck and call and were used to violently suppress the people.

At least 70,000 persons were imprisoned and tortured by Marcos' officers and men under military rule. More than 3,000 were killed, and thousands fell victim to beatings, massacres and involuntary disappearance. Unionizing and organizing, meetings and demonstrations were prohibited. Marcos instilled a climate of fear. He gagged the people and attempted to control their minds by con-

trolling the mass media and education and utilizing various psywar tactics.

Among those incarcerated by Marcos were his reactionary political rivals whom he accused of conspiring with the revolutionary movement. Eventually, most of them kept silent and merely waited for the US to change its stance vis a vis Marcos.

The revolutionary forces of the national-democratic movement were the most steadfast, staunch and courageous in their stand against martial law. They blazed the path of armed struggle and persevered in the underground resistance in the cities. They became the primary targets of the fascist violence of martial law.


The CPP and the revolutionary mass organizations it led were at the core of the undefeatable antifascist movement and the continuing struggle against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. They stoked the fires of resistance amid the darkness of martial

law. They inspired the Filipino people to persevere along the path of resisting the US-Marcos dictatorship.

The armed revolution advanced. Thousands of youth, workers and peasants joined the New People's Army (NPA). Many of them made major contributions in opening new guerrilla fronts, advancing agrarian revolution in the countryside and intensifying armed struggle. The NPA was established in 1969 with only 60 Red fighters armed with nine automatic rifles and 26 inferior weapons. In its first three years, the NPA's firepower grew to 400. By the mid-1980s, it had about 5,500 high-powered firearms and the ability to launch tactical offensives nationwide. These dealt the strongest blows against the rule of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

The revolutionary forces persevered in working underground in the cities, especially among the workers, urban poor, youth-students, church people, women and other democratic sectors. By 1976, strikes and other workers' struggles broke through the climate of fear that Marcos instilled. Huge student demonstrations flared in 1977 against tuition fee increases and various other social issues. Protest actions shook the whole of Metro Manila amid Marcos' bogus election.

The momentum of the democratic mass movement in Metro Manila and other city centers, and of armed struggle in the countryside persisted throughout the first half of the 1980s, causing great anxiety to the US. The US was disappointed with the assassination of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. by Marcos' armed minions in 1983. The assassination was met with gigantic demonstrations in 1983-85 led by the national-democratic

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<p><i>Ang Bayan</i> is published fortnightly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines</p>	

forces and stepped up tactical offensives nationwide.

Marcos' decision to call for snap elections on February 7, 1986 at the instigation of the US spurred the anti-Marcos reactionaries to take action. The US gave strict orders to Corazon Aquino and her people not to accommodate the forces of the democratic mass movement in her campaign and not to touch the issue of the military bases.

After the polls, the CPP assailed the bogus election and called for an uprising. Corazon Aquino's call for "civil disobedience" and a demonstration along EDSA came only after. The forces mobilized by the national-democratic movement formed the backbone of the four-day demonstration at EDSA from February 22 to 25. They organized demonstrations in major cities nationwide and led workers and students who rallied at Mendiola and at the gates of Malacañang until Marcos fled aboard a US military helicopter.

We must hark back to the history of martial law in order to counter the distortions of history. Marcos' political heirs claim that there was no violence under martial law and even portray him as a hero. They justify the use of mailed fist policies and the suppression of the rights of workers to organize unions and to strike in order to attract foreign investments. They hail the infrastructure projects that plunged the Philip-

pinos to indebtedness to foreign banks and fattened the pockets of big bureaucrat capitalists led by no less than the Marcos family.

Even the current Aquino regime is into historical distortions. It exaggerates the "heroism" of the anti-Marcos reactionaries in order to belittle the perseverance and sacrifices of the Filipino people and their revolutionary movement in fighting and overthrowing Marcos and martial rule.

Benigno Aquino III keeps on declaring that he and his family were victims of martial law. This

is an incontrovertible fact of history. But he has no right to deny the sacrifices of tens of thousands of people who were at the forefront of the struggle against the Marcos dictatorship. And he definitely does not have the right to justify the current suppression of democratic rights which is no different from the suppression that was done under martial law.

Of what use are Aquino's boasts about his family's sacrifice when his father Benigno Aquino Jr. was imprisoned when, like Marcos, he now denies that there are hundreds of political prisoners languishing in jail under his regime? When the killing, abduction, imprisonment and torture of activists resisting demolitions, struggling for higher wages, fighting the plunder of our natural resources and defending the interests of the toiling masses persist? When the militarization of the countryside, the bombings, shootings,

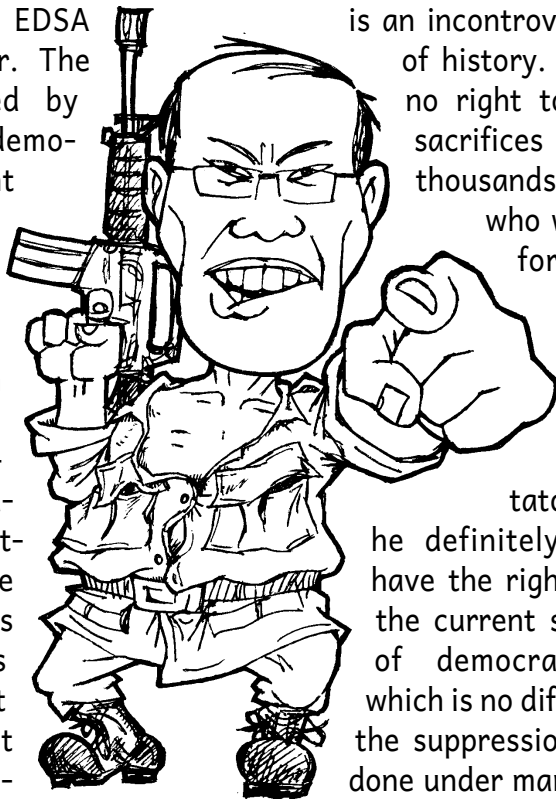
repression and persecution go on unabated?

Many aspects of the US-Marcos dictatorship's military rule continued during the subsequent regimes and persist up to the present. The ruling classes continue to defend the semicolonial and semifeudal system defended by Marcos' martial law. The Filipino people suffer even more exploitation, oppression and poverty as the chronic crisis deepens.

Campaigns of suppression launched by subsequent regimes from Corazon Aquino's to Arroyo's have been growing more brutal: Oplan Lambat Bitag I-IV (1986-1998), Oplan Gordian Knot and Oplan Makabayan (1999-2000), Oplan Bantay Laya I and II (2001-2010) and Oplan Bayanihan (since 2011) under Benigno Aquino III's regime.

Even without a martial law declaration, the state has been intensifying its use of fascist terror. Counterrevolutionary campaigns of suppression have been most vicious in the countryside, where armed struggle is being waged in conjunction with agrarian revolution. In areas where people's resistance is strongest, military power is dominant, and the civilian government a virtual figurehead. The brutal campaigns of suppression have, in recent years, been ironically called "peace and development operations."

LET US review the lessons learned from the struggle against martial law. Let us salute the thousands who sacrificed in struggling against the fascist dictatorship and hail them as heroes who should be emulated by the new generation of youth as they tread the path of revolutionary struggle in the years to come. **AB**



# Sereno, Aquino's errand girl at the Supreme Court

**L**ourdes Sereno was formally sworn in as the country's 24th chief justice of the Supreme Court. She had only one distinguishing feature among the long list of nominees: Her loyalty to the Cojuangco-Aquinos has been tried and tested, and she could be trusted to advance the clan's interests even beyond the Aquino regime's term. The long, "intricate" and allegedly transparent process of choosing the chief justice was one big zarzuela. From the beginning, Aquino had already made his choice. For him, only the most compliant persons should be appointed to key government positions.

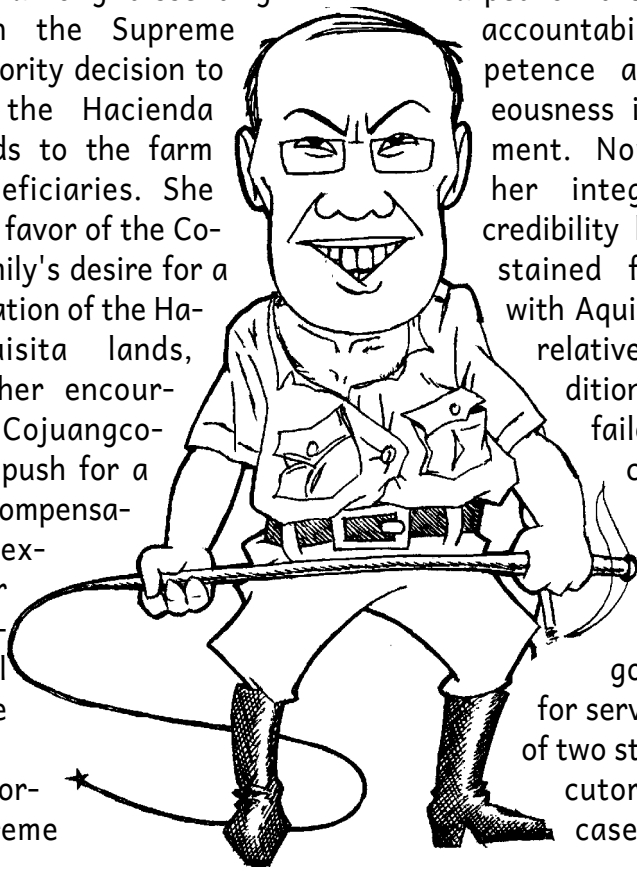
**Who is Maria Lourdes Sereno?** She is a technocrat with a long history of service to big business. She was executive director of the Asian Institute of Management Policy Center, the training ground of technocrats and advocates of capitalism. She also served as consultant to the United Nations, World Bank and United States Agency for International Development, all agencies of US imperialism.

When Aquino appointed Sereno to the Supreme Court in 2010, she immediately proved to be a loyal follower through her decisions as associate justice. She wrote a long dissenting opinion on the Supreme Court's majority decision to distribute the Hacienda Luisita lands to the farm worker-beneficiaries. She came out in favor of the Cojuangco family's desire for a higher valuation of the Hacienda Luisita lands, which further encouraged the Cojuangco-Aquinos to push for a P5-billion compensation in exchange for relinquishing control over the vast estate.

When former Supreme

Court Chief Justice Renato Corona was tried in the Senate, Sereno helped the prosecution team by serving as a witness until she was banned by the Supreme Court from further appearing at the trial. Sereno's eventual appointment as Chief Justice has brought to the fore the real objective behind Corona's ouster—the Aquino clique's desire to take control of the Supreme Court.

In her interview before the Judicial Bar Council, Sereno completely agreed with the Aquino regime's "righteous path" rhetoric. She herself harped on the need for accountability, competence and righteousness in government. Nonetheless, her integrity and credibility have been stained for siding with Aquino and his relatives. In addition, she also failed to declare the P25 million she received from the government for serving as one of two state prosecutors in the case against



the Philippine International Air Terminal Co. or PIATCO.

**Consolidation of political power.** Aquino attained complete control of all three branches of the reactionary government when he appointed Sereno as chief justice. She is not simply an Aquino ally within the Supreme Court who will not stand in the way of the executive branch. Aquino is assured that Sereno will affirm the regime's antipeople programs and policies.

At 52, Sereno has declared her intention of serving as chief justice until her mandatory retirement at the age of 70. Her projected 18-year term will outlast Aquino's term and those of two other presidents. Long after he steps out of power, Aquino can still be assured of his clan's strong influence over government.

Sereno's appointment will not usher in reforms at the Supreme Court. Her record clearly shows that she will be an errand girl of Malacañang, whatever decision her fellow justices make. Aside from favoring her political patron, Sereno's class standpoint and viewpoint are undeniably pro-landlord and pro-capitalist.

The actual length of Sereno's term, however, will depend on the directions taken by the factional strife among the ruling classes. Seven senior associate justices had to be bypassed for her to reach the highest position within the judiciary. Above all, the people, led by the progressive and democratic sectors, will not allow any antipeople moves on the part of the Supreme Court.

In fact, various progressive and democratic organizations assailed Sereno's appointment. The strongest criticisms came from the basic sectors of socie-

ty—the workers, peasants and fisherfolk. Five senior associate justices likewise boycotted Sereno's swearing-in ceremony and seven senior associate justices also later refused to attend her first flag-raising ceremony on September 3. This is aside from the disappointment expressed by a number of judges and lawyers' groups at her appointment.

Sereno's first day in office as chief justice was marked by a protest action by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and its allied organizations Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura, PAMALAKAYA, AMBALA and Partidong Anakpawis.

The farmers warned Sereno that she would face stiff resistance from the peasantry should the Supreme Court reverse its decision on Hacienda Luisita or come up with any other decision contrary to the peasantry's interests.

Among the major cases currently pending at the Supreme Court are the ownership of the coco levy funds, which involves Benigno Aquino III's uncle Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco; and agrarian conflicts at Hacienda Looc, Hacienda Yulo and the Aurora Pacific Economic Zones and Freeport (APECO). AB

## Robredo and the illusion of "good governance"

When Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Jesse Robredo died in a plane crash on August 18, the Aquino regime did not pass up the chance to hail him as a symbol of "good governance" and lull the people once more with reformist illusions on "righteous leadership."

Robredo, formerly the popular mayor of Naga City, became DILG secretary to accommodate certain allies of the Aquino regime. There was tremendous infighting among the various factions within the ruling clique, all of whom coveted the position eventually held by Robredo. Aquino eventually took in Robredo so he could have someone who could embody the "good governance" slogan that it was pushing and project itself as the exact opposite of the Arroyo regime.

On the other hand, also as a compromise to the other factions, Robredo was not allowed to control the Philippine National Police (PNP), one of the biggest dens of corruption. He was not even given a permanent appointment. Robredo nonetheless gave his all-out support to the policies and programs of the Aquino regime and contributed significantly to Aquino's "righteous road" charade.

The Aquino regime strained to exploit Robredo's death to push anew the illusion of "good governance" in a desperate attempt to obtain the support of a people completely fed up with this empty slogan.

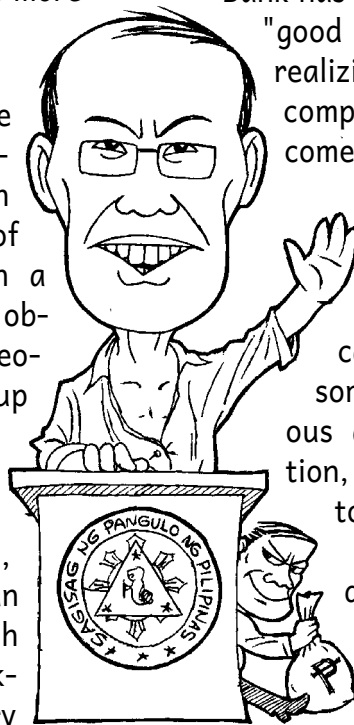
According to its World Bank framers, "good governance" can be achieved through "transparency" or making the details of every government transaction open to the public. This shallow definition conceals the real essence of corruption—the use by the ruling classes of the entire range of state power to enact laws and push policies that will serve their class interests. This is the kind of corruption that permeates all branches and levels of the reactionary government.

It is highly hypocritical for the World Bank to advocate

"good governance," given this imperialist institution's historically glaring role in encouraging corruption. For decades, it has been funding overpriced state infrastructure projects that have served as milch cows for corrupt bureaucrats. The World Bank has only spoken out for "good governance" after realizing how costly and complicated it has become for big foreign capitalists to do business in the face of gross corruption in government. It called for changes in some of the more obvious aspects of corruption, without delving into its deeper roots.

Aquino has been dishing out "good governance" propaganda to the Filipino people for the past three years. But this fails to resonate with a people who daily are confronted with the problems of unemployment, landlessness, low wages, skyrocketing prices of food, transport fares, power, electricity, water and medicine and suffer deteriorating health facilities, lack of sanitation, environmental destruction and the resulting disasters.

In the economic field, the



Aquino regime's "road of righteousness" is no different from the policies of all preceding regimes. There is no genuine land reform, no significant wage increases, no program for national industrialization or building a modern, self-reliant economy.

In the political arena, "good governance" does nothing but conceal the dominance of the system of patronage, dirty maneuvers and unprincipled alliances. The people must expose and shatter the illusion of "good governance" as a World Bank ideological offensive to derail them from the path of opposing liberalization, deregulation, privatization and denationalization.

The Filipino people are in the right as they tread the path of revolutionary struggle to put an end to the corrupt, oppressive and exploitative social system. **AB**

## Factionalism within the Aquino coalition

The Balay Group triumphed over the Samar Group and other factions within the ruling coalition when Benigno Aquino III appointed Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) Secretary Mar Roxas to replace the late Secretary Jesse Robredo at the helm of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) on August 31. Aquino also appointed Rep. Joseph E. A. Abaya to the post vacated by Roxas.

The Balay faction is led by Roxas and comprises members of the Liberal Party (LP). The Samar faction is led by Aquino's uncle Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and comprises other Aquino allies outside of the LP. These factions' monickers were gleaned from their headquarters' locations.

The DILG is a key instrument for political maneuverings since it encompasses all local officials from the provincial to the barangay level, as well as the Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology and the National Police Commission (Napolcom). All of this will now fall under Roxas' control, unlike before when the PNP was out of Robredo's hands and put under the control of Undersecretary Rico Puno of the Samar Group.

Aquino has also put Roxas in charge of enforcing the widespread demolitions needed to pave the way for projects under the Public-Private Partnership program and quell the anticipated intensification of mass struggles.

Before Roxas' appointment, factionalism once more reared its ugly head within the fragile ruling coalition when Aquino named Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa as DILG officer in charge. Vice President Jejomar Binay's name soon surfaced as a possible replacement for Robredo. Both Ochoa and Binay belong to the Samar Group. **AB**

*Docking of US warships*

## An affront to Philippine sovereignty

The successive dockings of US warships in Manila are an affront to Philippine sovereignty, said the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). The objective behind these more frequent arrivals of interventionist American troops in the Philippines is to strengthen US power in the Asia-Pacific.

The CPP condemned the back to back dockings of the USS Milius in Manila Bay on August 19 and the USS Frank Cable on September 3 in Subic Bay. The USS Milius is an Arleigh Burke-class Aegis guided missile destroyer of the United States Navy, while the USS Frank Cable is an American warship that provides at-sea support for attack submarines of the US Navy. The USS Milius was docked at Manila Bay from August 19 to 23.

The US has been tightening its grip on the Philippines as a military fortress in an effort to maintain its economic and political interests in the region, especially sea routes from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific to protect the flow of US goods towards the vast Asian market.

Meanwhile, the CPP assailed US meddling in the South China Sea conflict by pushing Southeast Asian countries to come up with a common position against China. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared the US position before proceeding to China on September 5. The US had earlier failed to obtain a unified position from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in July.

The US wants to use the South China Sea conflict as leverage in pushing for the further liberalization of trade and investment in China and pave the way for American corporate giants to do business in that country. **AB**

# Imperialist design for Metro Manila is a bane to the people

The Aquino regime's much-vaunted projects for the National Capital Region (NCR) have been conceived by the World Bank as far back as Imelda Marcos' time. Even then, the people already opposed the projects because of the havoc they would bring to their livelihoods and because they trampled on their basic rights. The projects serve only the interests of foreign investors and their bourgeois comprador and bureaucrat capitalist business partners.

These projects were envisioned during the Marcos era as part of transforming Metro Manila into a "City of Man." They also became part of successive Medium Term Development Plans called "Philippines 2000" under Ramos or "Boulevard 2000" under Gloria Arroyo. They now form part of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program of the Aquino regime.

Aquino's projects which will be implemented up to 2016 will be funded by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Japan International Blind Exchange and Cooperation Network.

Their business partners in these projects are big comprador capitalists like Lucio Tan, the Lopezes and Ayalas, Henry Sy, Tan Yu (Asiaworld), George Ty (Metrobank Group of Companies), R-1 Consortium (Jan de Nul Group, TOA Corporation of Japan and D.M. Wenceslao and Associates) and Jacinto Ng (Manila Bay Development Corporation Inc). Big foreign corporations from the US, European Union, Japan, South Korea, China and Israel have also invested in these projects.

Among these projects is Laguna Lake 2000, which will displace an estimated four million

residents living around Laguna de Bay. Laguna de Bay is the largest lake in the Philippines and the second largest in Asia. It has an area of 91,136 hectares and a coastline of almost 285 kilometers. This project includes reclamation and the construction of dikes and roads around the lake as part of a plan to build exclusive subdivisions, an airport and tourist facilities.

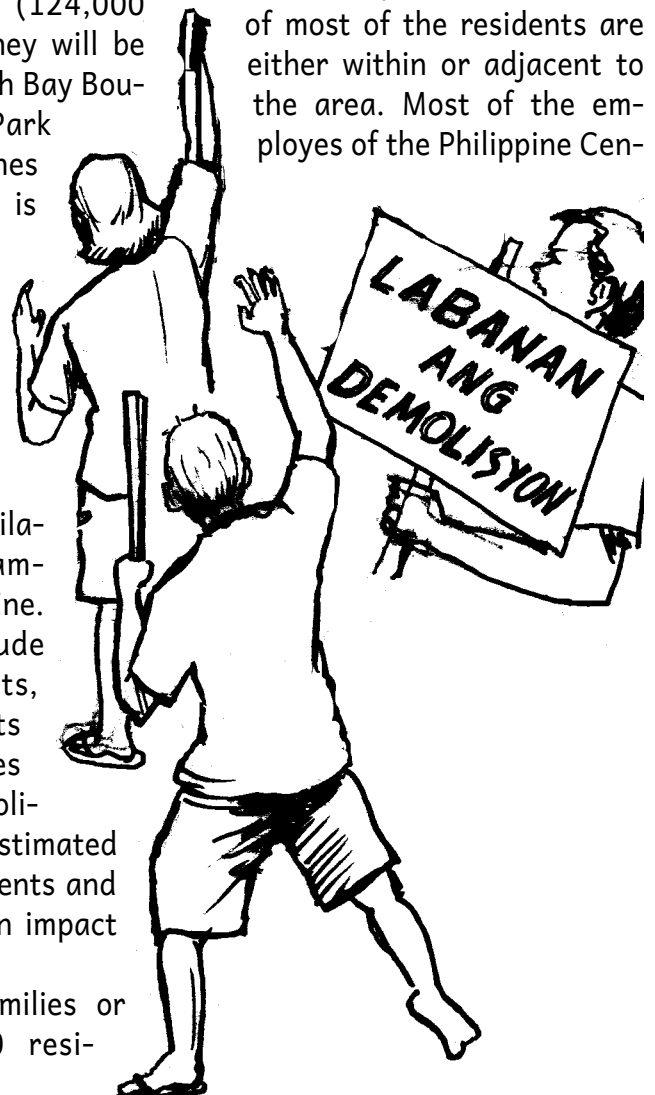
On the other hand, up to 500,000 residents (124,000 families) fear that they will be evicted once the North Bay Boulevard Business Park (NBBBP) project pushes through. The NBBBP is part of the Manila Bay Development Plan that covers the construction of infrastructure projects along 156 hectares of the Parañaque-Las Piñas-Manila-Navotas-Bulacan-Pampanga-Bataan coastline. The projects include malls, supermarkets, roads, bridges, ports and dry dock facilities for ship repairs. Demolitions will affect an estimated 60% of Navotas residents and up to 80% will feel an impact on their livelihoods.

Up to 38,000 families or more than 200,000 resi-

dents will be dislocated as a result of the Manila-Cavite Coastal Road & Reclamation Project (MCCRRP). This program will involve the reclamation and privatization of part of Freedom Island in Parañaque, the construction of the LRT-1 Extension, repairs along the Radial Road-1 Extension and building the NAIA Superhighway. Thousands will be evicted once the Entertainment City, private foreign casinos, the 15-hectare Bagong Nayong Pilipino, the Aseana Business Park-Marina and Tribeca Parksuites are constructed.

The World Bank and the reactionary state have also long had plans of utilizing the sprawling 110-hectare area where Welfareville in Mandaluyong City currently stands. There are plans to privatize a 50-hectare residential area with 25,000 families.

The sources of livelihood of most of the residents are either within or adjacent to the area. Most of the employees of the Philippine Cen-



ter for Mental Health likewise live here.

On the other hand, up to 100,000 residents or 16,000 families in 22 barangays in Quezon City, two barangays in Caloocan City and six barangays in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan will be evicted due to the Angat Water Utilization and Aqueduct Improvement Project Phase 2 and the Acquisition of Road Right-of-Way Project. There are plans to build a 160-meter wide road above the aqueduct and pipelines. This project serves the interests of Maynilad Water Services owned by the Lopez family, Manila Water Company Inc. of the Ayala family and the Engineering Development Corp.-Philippines. The MWSS is implementing the project within the Public-Private Partnership framework.

Thousands of peasants from Barangay Tungkong Mangga in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan will be booted out of their farms once the MRT 7 project is built and its terminal constructed. The project will cover more than 103 hectares owned by the Aranetas which the peasants have long been farming. Aside from the MRT station and terminal, there are plans to construct condominiums, malls and the like. The project will be funded by Universal LRT Corp., whose leading investor is the Hongkong-based EL International Holdings.

In Corazon del Jesus, San Juan City, some 2,000 families continue to fear being displaced from their community. Their 1.8-hectare barangay which they have lived in for decades will be taken over for the construction of a palatial city hall and other government and commercial buildings. They are being evicted despite the fact that the land had been given to them as far back as Cory Aquino's presidency. The San Juan local government that has long been in the hands of the Estrada family refuses to recognize the presidential order. **AB**

## Central Luzon PISTON leader slain

**A** transport group leader in Pampanga was gunned down. In Sorsogon, a peasant has gone missing after soldiers chanced upon him tending to his family's copra kiln. In Davao City, four youth activists remain detained after their illegal arrest during the violent dispersal of a protest action in an urban poor community.

**September 3.** Unidentified gunmen killed Feliciano "Poncing" Infante, head of the Pandan-Angeles Drivers Operators Association and the Pasada Operators Association, Angeles City's biggest jeepney drivers' federation. Infante also led the Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (PISTON)-Pampanga and was a member of the Partidong Anakpawis. The shooting occurred at the jeepney terminal in Barangay Pandan, Angeles City. The two assailants fled aboard a motorcycle.

Infante is the fourth PISTON leader to fall victim to extrajudicial execution in 2012. Before him, PISTON-Caraga Region leader Felix Cultura was killed in March; PISTON-Gasak Divisoria leader Erning Gulfo was slain in May; and PISTON-Baclaran-Divisoria leader Ka Jing was gunned down in June.

**August 29, 2:30 p.m.** Soldiers from the 31st IB abducted 27-year old farmer Nilo Garalde in Barangay Balocawe, Matnog, Sorsogon. Garalde, who hails from Barangay Majumlad, Matnog was tending to his family's copra kilns with his uncle and cousin when 16 soldiers arrived. The soldiers interrogated the farmers and arrested Garalde. His cousin and uncle were able to escape. The military admitted that a platoon on patrol accosted and interrogated Garalde but denied abducting him. Garalde has not been surfaced to date.

**August 24.** Policemen mauled, electrocuted and illegally arrested activists Toto Bolcan, spokesperson of the Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap-Davao City; Joselito Lagon of Kabataang Artista para sa Tunay na Kalayaan; Johnny Urbina and John Michael Lim, both members of Anakbayan; and Wyrlo Enero of the League of Filipino Students. Bolcan was later released but the four youth activists remain detained at the Davao City Police Station. The activists were interviewing residents of Bariquit Compound in Bugac, Maa, Davao City when 20 elements from the Talomo Police Station and goons with their faces concealed by ski masks swooped down on the area to forcibly build a fence that would block the residents' access to their community.

The residents had been living in the area for more than 30 years when the Villa Abrille family, one of the biggest landlord clans in Davao City, claimed the land and evicted them. The Villa Abrilles plan to build on the site an upscale subdivision called Le Jardin. **AB**



## Rights groups mark day of the disappeared

MEMBERS of various human rights advocacy groups commemorated the International Day of the Disappeared on August 30. The protesters, who converged in front the the Quiapo Church in Manila, charged that involuntary disappearances of persons branded as enemies of the state continue even if martial law has ended. Aya Santos, deputy secretary general of Desaparecidos said that there have been 11 victims of involuntary disappearance under Benigno Aquino III's administration.

A day after the commemoration, three concrete sculptures were inaugurated in Oton town, Iloilo depicting the struggle of 202 victims of involuntary disappearance under the Arroyo regime. The three sculptures were erected in the very spot where armed agents of the state abducted Luisa Posa-Dominado and Nilo Arado on April 12, 2007. Dominado was then the spokesperson of the Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Aresto (SELDA)-Panay while Arado chaired BAYAN-Panay and led Pamanggas, an association of peasants from Panay and Guimaras.

## KMU demands justice for 4 workers

THE Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) demanded justice for the deaths of four workers inside a septic tank at Ali Mall in Cubao, Quezon City in the early morning of August 31. Witnesses said the victims Marvin Aleman and Romy Suarez, 50 and his sons Rommel and Rodel were hired by Ali Mall to repair the building's water drainage. Rodel was reportedly removing dirt from a clogged pipe when the water level suddenly rose. Other workers tried to rescue them, but the four victims drowned.

KMU vice chair Lito Ustarez said the owner and management of Ali Mall clearly violated occupational health and safety standards. The four workers did not have any protective equipment while they were in the septic tank.

Ali Mall is owned by the family of newly appointed DILG Secretary Mar Roxas.

## Bagobo tribespeople oppose grabbing of ancestral lands

Some 500 peasants and Lumad from the Bago-bo K'latas tribe launched a three-day *lakbayan* in Davao City from August 27 to 29 to dramatize their opposition to the seizure of their ancestral lands. The perpetrators are Pastor Apollo Quiboloy's religious group in cahoots with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the 84th IB.

The Pasaka Regional Lumad Confederation and the Kahugpungan sa mga Lumad sa Kahusayan led the 30-kilometer *lakbayan* for justice and land from Sitio Kahusayan in Barangay Guianga, Tugbok District towards the center of Davao City. In a series of protest rallies, they demonstrated before the offices of the Commission on Human Rights and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples that they were strongly united in opposing the grabbing of their ancestral lands.

Pasaka deputy secretary general Diolito Diarog recounted how three backhoes were brought to Sitio Kahusayan in the second week of April to begin the construction of a road going to the nearby Prayer Mountain owned by Quiboloy who leads the Jesus Christ the Kingdom Above Every Name. Prayer Mountain, which Quiboloy has dubbed the "restored garden of Eden" is currently planted to pine trees and gherkins.

Diarog said they were surprised when the DENR did not lift a finger to stop Quiboloy's seizure of their ancestral lands. The pastor has already annexed more than 20 hectares of "protected land" in Mt. Apo. Due to the expansion of Prayer Mountain, the Lumad have been forced to leave the foothills of Mt. Apo and have lost their livelihood.

Alongside Quiboloy's landgrabbing activities, 84th IB troops were deployed to Sitio Kahusayan. The military has been forcing the minorities to serve as watchmen for the 84th IB's so-called Peace and Development Team.

The national minorities in the area have long been complaining about Quiboloy's landgrabbing. On August 15, Quiboloy's men burned down 13 houses in Sitio Papag, also in Barangay Guianga. On Quiboloy's orders, armed men also murdered minority leader Datu Doming Diarog in May 2008 because of his fierce opposition to the pastor's takeover of their ancestral lands. AB

# Mounting resistance to AFP's anti-Moro operations

In the face of stepped up military operations by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against Moro communities in Mindanao, the Moro Resistance and Liberation Organization (MRLO) called on the Moro people to continue resisting injustice and advance the right to self-determination. The MRLO is an allied organization of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) advancing the Moro people's resistance and liberation.

The AFP's continuing operations have forced armed groups, among them the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) to fight even during the holy month of Ramadan.

The offensives during the Ramadan were launched in various municipalities in Basilan, Maguindanao, Lanao, North Cotabato and Zamboanga-Sibugay from July 26 to August 24. More than 50,000 families were forced to evacuate out of fear. Two children have already been killed and several civilians have already been wounded, including a pregnant woman. Battalion officers under the Western Mindanao Command and the 6th ID have justified the assault as part of pursuit operations against criminal elements and MILF "lost commands" that attacked military detachments stationed in Moro communities.

The MRLO said it saw the logic behind the BIFF's attacks on military detachments in Maguindanao and North Cotabato. Days before the attack on a military detachment in Saudi Ampatuan on August 4, a BIFF member stationed at the former Camp Omar in the second district of Maguindanao was killed others wounded in an attack by CAFGU elements.

The MRLO likewise cited a

BIFF statement declaring its disapproval of the overall course of the peace negotiations involving the MILF. The BIFF said that AFP operations persisted against MILF communities despite existing ceasefire mechanisms agreed upon in the peace talks.

In Lanao del Sur, civilians were driven to attack military detachments due to the intense harassment and killings perpetrated by the 103rd Brigade and Philippine Marines deployed as security forces at the Mindanao State University and surrounding communities in Marawi City. In retaliation for an attack on their detachment on August 8, the military barred everyone from entering or leaving the university for 24 hours, ostensibly to enable them to catch the attackers. All the

students, teachers and residents were

searched

and their laptop computers confiscated. Law students were illegally arrested and detained on suspicion that they masterminded the attack.

On August 5 in Tigbanuang, Zamboanga-Sibugay, the son of an MILF commander was killed and the son of a barangay captain supported by the military was wounded. This spurred an MILF attack on a truckload of soldiers on August 6 in Barangay Kayamkam. The AFP used this as a pretext to launch a massive offensive against the MILF's Camp Salman.

Meanwhile, a four-year old girl was killed after troops from the 1st Mechanized IB rained bullets on an evacuation center in Salbo, Datu Saudi Ampatuan on August 6. Asmayra Usman, an evacuee was hit by stray bullets while she was sleeping in their family's tent. She died on the spot from gunshot wounds to the abdomen and foot. Her father was also hit in the foot and rushed to hospital.

The Usmans were among some 400 evacuee families from Barangay Iganagampong, Datu Unsay. They were forced to flee their community because of intense military operations allegedly against the BIFF. The military operation began in Shariff Aguak, precipitating the flight of some 26,000 civilians who were forced to seek refuge in 11 evacuation centers.

The civilians complained that the military was encamped near their communities. In Barangay Bagan, Guindulungan, the military set up camp in an area that is part of a mosque. **AB**



# AFP suffers 11 casualties in Bicol

The enemy suffered more than 11 casualties in various tactical offensives and military actions launched by Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA) in Bicol from July 31 to August 17.

**August 17.** Red fighters from the Jose Rapsing Command (NPA-Masbate) ambushed troops from the 9th IB's Charlie Company along the boundary of Barangay Balantay and Barangay San Vicente in Dimasalang town at around 10:30 a.m. Two soldiers were killed and another one was wounded while three other soldiers suffered fractures when they jumped off a cliff towards a stony area. There were no casualties among the people's guerrillas.

That night, at around 11 p.m., another team of Red fighters set off command-detonated explosives at the soldiers' barracks in Barangay Ban-ao, Placer, Masbate.

**August 15.** A sapper team from the Jose Rapsing Command carefully crawled towards the newly constructed camp of the 9th IB's Alpha Company and set off a command-detonated explosive at around 1 a.m. The camp located at Barangay Mayngaran, Masbate City was to have been the headquarters of the 9th IB and was only being used temporarily by Alpha Com-

pany. The explosion destroyed the biggest hut and a smaller hut being used by the soldiers. The military suffered several casualties who were all brought to the Masbate City Hospital.

**August 8.** Red fighters sniped at 9th IB troops at around 11:45 a.m. along the boundary of Barangay Manahaw and Barangay Mabini in Palanas town, Masbate, hitting Sgt. Manalo Baldesco in the thigh. That night, at around 11 p.m., the people's guerrillas burned down the huts built by the Barangay Defense System organized by the military in the villages of Macabug, Amutag and Kabasan in Aroroy town, Masbate.



**August 5.** Red fighters from the Celso Minguez Command (NPA-Sorsogon) opened fire at the Philippine Army-CAFGU detachment in Barangay Banwang Daan, Matnog, Sorsogon at around 5:30 a.m.

**August 3.** People's guerrillas hurled grenades made of local materials at a PNP-PMG detachment in Barangay Bayombon, Masbate City at around 1 a.m.

**August 3.** Red fighters of the Santos Binamera Command (NPA-Albay) opened fire at a convoy of policemen and elements from the 2nd IB while they were passing through Barangay Palapas in Ligao City at around 1 p.m.

**August 2.** An NPA platoon figured in an encounter with a unit of the 31st IB conducting combat operations in Barangay Bulawan, Irosin, Sorsogon at around 5 a.m. The people's guerrillas were positioned atop a tall hill when the soldiers closed in. The enemy suffered five casualties in the ensuing gunbattle, while the Red fighters were able to leave the area unscathed.

**August 1.** Red fighters hurled grenades made of locally available materials at the detachment of the 9th IB's Charlie Company in Barangay Stockfarm, Milagros, Masbate.

**July 31.** Red fighters under the Jose Rapsing Command closed in and opened fire at troops of the PNP Special Action Force at their headquarters in Barangay Lalaguna, Mobo, using M203 grenade launchers and rocket-propelled grenades (RPG). A policeman was killed and two were wounded. There were no casualties on the NPA side. **AB**