

NPA seizes more than 50 firearms

FIFTY FIREARMS, hundreds of bullets and military equipment were captured by the NPA from April 9 to 14.

In North Cotabato, Red fighters under the Regional Operations Command (ROC), NPA-Southern Mindanao Region, seized 32 firearms in a raid on Michael Lingaro's house, in Brgy. Mahongcog, Magpet, on April 9, at 9 a.m. Lingaro, the barangay captain, is a leader of a paramilitary group. His group is being used by the 39th IB in the area. The next day, ROC-SMR forces raided pursuing troops of the 39th IB in Brgy. Temporan, adjacent to Mahongcog. The encounter lasted for two hours.

In Palawan, the Bienvenido Valleber Command seized 18 firearms in a raid in Brgy. Barong-barong, Brooke's Point last April 14, 8 p.m. on the house of known drug lord Gilbert S. Baaco.

In San Fernando, Bukidnon, one soldier was wounded and another was killed among 60th IB forces in an encounter with combined forces of regular Red fighters and people's militia on April 10. Two harassment operations and one sparrow operation were conducted in Brgy. Bunaco and Brgy. Nabunturan in the same town.

In Cateel, Davao Oriental, a team from Front 15 conducted harassment operations against the 67th IB on April 11, 8 p.m. Another team from Front 15 set

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EDITORIAL

Filipino workers: Unite and resist! Raise the banner of the Party!

Among the biggest tasks of our Party are undertaking wide-reaching organizing and mobilization of the masses of Filipino workers along the path of the national democratic revolution. This coming May 1, on the International Workers Day, let us give attention to the urgent reasons why we should more firmly grasp and carry out these tasks.

The democratic struggles of the Filipino workers urgently need to be strengthened to enable them to overcome the widespread harm brought by almost four decades of neoliberal policies. Since the 1980s, the rights of workers to form unions, to job security and to decent wages have been relentlessly attacked. During this time, Filipino workers experienced unprecedented reversals in standards of living, social

conditions, democratic rights and political freedoms.

Through fascist violence, direct repression, arm-twisting, threats and deception, as well as with the collusion of yellow leaders and traitors, the workers' right to form unions have been widely suppressed. From 12% in the early 1980s, the number of unionized workers dropped to just above 3%. The widespread massacre of worker's unions served as the key condition

which enabled the big bourgeoisie and foreign monopoly capitalists in the Philippines to impose the worst anti-worker policies.

The Herrera Law (revised Labor Code) and the Wage Rationalization Law were both enacted in 1989. These paved the way and served as basis for contractualization and other forms of flexible employment, deregulation of labor standards, dismantling of the national minimum wage and implementation of various schemes to bring down workers wages. These policies aimed to do away with all labor regulations and other rights which workers have won in the past. Big capitalists were given full rights to stretch the workday and squeeze every peso of wages paid in order to appropriate the maximum surplus value created by a worker's labor power.

Workers are subjected to the worst forms of exploitation including the grossest employment arrangements (contractuals, "apprenticeship", "student training", unpaid work in franchises of school owners and others). These aggravated the

attacks on unions as contractuals daring to form or join face the constant threat of being axed.

The reactionary state implements investment liberalization by relaxing or completely removing past regulations protecting the welfare and health of workers (as well as the environment) just so that capitalists can cut costs at the expense of the workers' safety from fire and other accidents. Workers experience the worst exploitation in factories inside so-called export processing zones or labor enclaves. These enclaves are heaven for capitalists and hell for workers.

In the past 20 years, wage increases have fallen far behind the rapid rise in the prices of commodities. The present average of ₱454 minimum wage in the NCR is not even half of the necessary ₱1,119 for decent living of a family of six.

The worker masses must regain their organized strength in order to fight to regain the rights they have enjoyed before. Millions upon millions of workers, regulars or contractuals, must be organized in

both unions and associations. Organize en masse the workers inside the enclaves.

The widespread struggle of workers for wage increases and against contractualization must take the form of left and right outbreak of strikes in factories and enterprises. At the same time, a broad workers' movement demanding an end to contractualization must be formed, especially amid the Duterte government's failed promise to fulfill such demand. Hold the state accountable for its obligation to ensure the right to work. Fight for a general increase in wages and to set a national minimum. Clamor for an end to the labor-export policy.

These struggles of Filipino working masses is part of the broad struggle of the Filipino people against imperialist neoliberal policies. The whole range of these policies bring about widespread damage to the Filipino people and has brought the Philippines to a deeper crisis.

While advancing these struggles, it is also incumbent upon the Filipino workers to lead the people's democratic revolution to end the semicolonial and semifeudal social system and move forward towards the socialist future. The proletariat's Filipino class leadership is achieved through the Communist Party of Philippines, its political party. In order to strengthen working class leadership of the people's democratic revolution, it is an urgent task of the Party to arouse, mobilize and organize the broad masses of workers.

Promote the study of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism among the masses of workers, the ideology of the working class, which they can use as a tool to smash the bourgeois and feudal ideas being propagated by the ruling classes.



The workers movement must expose the global capitalist crisis, foreign monopoly capitalist domination in the local economy and how they make use of their control of the means of production in the



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Philippines to extract the country's natural resources and exploit the labor power of the Filipino workers.

The masses of Filipino workers must struggle for national industrialization and genuine land reform as the crucial measures to end the economy which remains backward, dependent on foreign investments and foreign loans and on the export of semi-manufactured products and cheap labor. Only by doing so can a modern economy be built and generate enough jobs for all. This must be highlighted in supporting the NDFP-GRP peace negotiations.

Expose and oppose US imperialist domination and military and political intervention, the use of unequal military treaties such as the EDCA and VFA, the military bases and presence of its military troops in the Philippines to protect the strategic interests of US corporations in the Philippines and Asia-Pacific.

The broad mobilization of the masses of workers in the cities must serve as the solid base to draw the participation of the urban petty bourgeoisie (especially students) and other middle-forces in the national-democratic movement. They must be mobilized in large numbers to unite with the struggles of the basic masses in the cities and countryside.

While advancing their economic struggles, the masses of workers and urban semi-proletariat must support and directly participate in antifeudal struggles of the peasant masses in the countryside. Expose and oppose militarization and the fascist abuses of the AFP in the countryside.

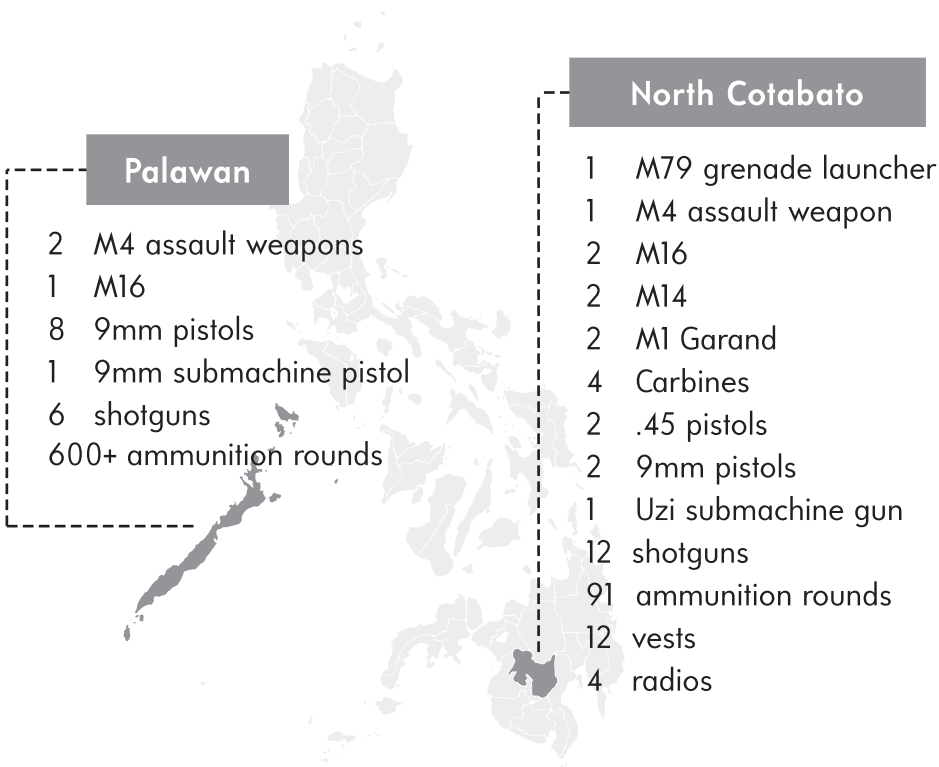
The Party must broadly mobilize the workers to participate in the revolutionary armed movement in the countryside. Thousands of worker-cadres (as well as cadres from the petty bourgeois intellectuals) are greatly needed to shoulder the growing number of tasks to strengthen the NPA and intensify the armed struggle, advance the agrarian revolution and build the organs of political power across the country. AB

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off command-detonated explosives against 67th IB troops in Baganga on April 13.

In Davao City, Red fighters from Front 55 fired at 60th IB troops in Brgy. Mangani Tapak, Paquibato last April 11.

In Surigao Del Sur, the NPA-NEMR launched harassment operations against the 72nd IB/CAA last April 10, at 2:35 in the afternoon in Brgy. Pagbacatan, Lingig.



NPA releases two prisoners of war

THE NPA-FAR South Mindanao Region released last April 19 two prisoners of war, Sgt. Solaiman Calocop and PFC Samuel Garay in Brgy. Colon Sabak, Matan-ao, Davao del Sur. Both are 39th IB elements captured by Red fighters in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat last February 2.

The program for their release was undertaken by a company of Red fighters. Following this, the two were turned over to the organization Sowing the Seeds of Peace which coordinated the soldiers' release. The POWs underwent a check-up by medical personnel in order to confirm their good health.

Among those who coordinated their release and attended the program were Columbio Vice Mayor Edwin Bermudez, South Cotabato Board Member Romulo Solivio and former congressman Marc Douglas Cagas. Also present were the families of the two soldiers.

The soldiers thanked the NPA for its humane treatment. According to Garay, they were not harmed, even in words.

During the program, Ka Macario Dilaab, spokesperson for the Mt. Alip Command, explained that the POWs' release is based on humanitarian grounds and as support for the peace negotiations between the NDFP and the GRP.

Earlier on April 12, NPA spokesperson Ka Oris stated that Garay and Calocop could have been released last Easter. However, this did not push through because of the AFP's stubbornness to suspend its offensive operations to ensure the safe release of the POWs, as well as the safety of their families and the third party facilitators.

Protest actions in Negros, Samar and ComVal

In Negros Oriental, hundreds of peasants launched a protest caravan last April 20 to Don Salvador Benedicto, and then towards Bacolod City to demand justice for their slain colleagues in the province. Two of these were Alexander Ceballos and Wenceslao Pacquiao who were killed this year by armed goons of landlords and their conniving bureaucrats. The protest action was spearheaded by Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Bayan and National Federation of Sugar Workers-Negros.

Prior to this, workers under the banner of Kilusang Mayo Uno staged a picket in front of the Department of Labor and Employment's regional office to oppose the anti-worker D.O. 174.

In Samar, more than 1,000 families who evacuated to Calbiga town center last April 4 due to the military's occupation of their communities have returned to their villages last April 10. The residents have successfully demanded in a dialogue last April 9 with elements of the 87th IB that the latter vacate the occupied 15 villages. This, despite the pig-headedness of the soldiers' officer to remain in the area.

In Compostela Valley, survivors of typhoon Pablo (Bopha) staged a protest action last April 10 in Davao

City to press for their rights to decent housing. They stood firm to remain in their occupied vacant housing units of the National Housing Authority in San Antonio Village, Compostela Valley. Kadamay-Davao, in a statement said that more than 1,000 housing units were built for the typhoon survivors but have remained vacant for more than five years. The survivors occupied the housing units last November 2016.

They likewise criticised the local government's project in Quezon Boulevard which would displace around 2,500 families. According to them, the Urban Development Housing Act or RA 7279, under the guise of "development projects", legalizes the widespread demolition of the urban poor.

Series of attritive offensives in Northern Samar

FOUR ATTRITIVE OPERATIONS were launched by Red fighters in Las Navas, Northern Samar since the end of March.

On March 30, NPA snipers wounded an element of the 43rd IB undertaking psywar operations dubbed "Community Support Program" of Oplan Kapayapaan in Brgy. San Miguel.

On March 31, around 7 p.m., Red fighters sniped 16 elements of the 43rd IB carrying out operations in Brgy. San Isidro. Because of acute demoralization, the soldiers immediately boarded a boat and left around 8:00 the same night.

On April 6, 10 a.m., Red fighters launched harassment operations against 28 elements of the 43rd IB in Brgy. Poponton who had been conducting military operations since April 4. This prompted the soldiers to retreat and discontinue operations after a helicopter airlifted their casualties.

On April 8, people's militia forces fired "double zeros" (home-made shotguns) at more than 30 soldiers on operation at Brgy. El Empon to Brgy. Poponton. The soldiers were forced to retreat with their wounded. In great fear, around 140 soldiers of the 43rd IB encamped at Brgy. El Empon and Brgy. Paco till the present, and would not go out of their quarters.

In desperation, forces of the 43rd IB turned their fascist anger against the local residents. The soldiers threatened to shoot any male they see at the outskirts of the barrio.

Ka Zola, 48

THE NPA-IFUGAO (Nona Del Rosario Command) paid tribute to Leonardo "Ka Zola" Manahan who died last April 14 at the age of 48. His death was due to a severe ailment while in service as a leading cadre of the Party and the New People's Army in Ifugao.

Ka Zola first took on revolutionary tasks among the youth sector as a model mass leader and propagandist within the League of Filipino Students during the latter part of the 1980s. Later on, he acted as secretary of the Party section in the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) and became a member of the Party's National Youth-Students Bureau. Here, he was known by the comrades and the student masses as "Tolayts" and "Dario".

Since 2003, Ka Zola continued to perform revolutionary tasks inside the guerrilla zones. From North Ilocos Sur-South Ilocos Norte-Western Abra, he was transferred to Western Mountain Province as Secretary of the Guerrilla Front Committee. From 2010-2016, he became a member of the subregion to which Western Mountain Province belongs. Here, he served as the subregional unit's political officer. He became a member of the Party Regional Committee from 2013, and was assigned as Secretary of Ifugao on the latter part of 2016.

The NPA-Ifugao recalls Ka Zola's exemplary attitude which serves as inspiration to the people's army and revolutionaries in the region. Likewise, the NPA-Ifugao remembers his firm grasp of the revolution, when immediately he returned to the countryside after being released from imprisonment on 2005.

His remains were brought to the PUP chapel last April 20, accompanied by revolutionary forces carrying flags of the CPP. Here, he was further given tribute by PUP students, friends and former comrades.

Workers win strikes in banana plantations

Two strikes were won by banana plantation workers in Compostela Valley this past week.

The Maparat Montevista Workers' Union won their strike mounted on April 18 against the "pakyawan" (piece rate) scheme of the banana export giant Sumitomo Fruits Corporation (Sumifru). The scheme had been scrapped in a formal agreement last 2015 because it reduced workers' wages. Within 13 hours, Sumifru was forced to face the striking workers and agreed to stop the "pakyawan" system.

In Brgy. Kingking, Pantukan, the Musahamat Workers Labor Union also emerged victorious on April 19 against the union busting of Musahamat Farms, Inc. and the implementation of the "gardening system." The workers launched the strike on April 12 to protest the scheme that aggravated the inhuman working conditions as it required each worker to maintain five kinds of operations on a 3-hectare land. This heavy work has resulted in the hospitalization of several union members. To bust the union, the company also illegally dismissed 2 officials of the union after they opposed the unreasonable transfer of work.

Because of the strike, the two officials were reinstated to their previous work and an agreement was arrived at to limit the workload to 4 kinds of operations over 2.5 hectares of land. It was also agreed that the union and Dole would conduct a time and motion study to investigate the effect of the "gardening" system on the workers.

Prior to this, the workers of Shin Sun Tropical Fruit Corp had launched

a strike on April 6. Later on April 8, the Freshmax Workers Union launched their own strike in the face of months of the company's non-payment of wages, withholding of union funds and work suspension due allegedly to the workers' strike of the adjacent Shin Sun TFC. The management has been adamantly denying that Shin Sun TFC and Freshmax Corp. were owned by the same capitalist. The striking workers were not cowed even when the company sent more than 60 fully-armed police to intimidate them on April 19.

In all, more than 800 banana plantation workers joined these strikes. Meanwhile, workers from other plantations and packing plants launched their own protest actions in support of the unions on strike.

Under the leadership of the Banana Industry Growers and Workers against Sumifru (Bigwas) and the National Federation of Labor Unions-Kilusang Mayo Uno (NAFLU-KMU), eight unions carried out sympathy protests for the striking workers on April 18. In solidarity, almost 1,000 workers carried out work stoppage and slowdown in their respective packing plants and banana plantations around the province.

Foreign capitalists of plantations in Compostela Valley have widely enforced neoliberal policies to ensure enormous profit while oppressing the workers and violating their rights to unionize. In Musahamat Farms, Inc. last year, the workers also launched protests when the management suspended several

members of the union for 30 days after the MWLU won in the certification election (CE). The CE formally authorizes a union to exclusively bargain with the capitalist for wage increase, rights, and other benefits.

Particularly among banana plantations operated by Sumifru, aside from the "pakyawan" scheme, workers have complained for years of prevalent contractualization through bogus labor cooperatives and agencies, the management's refusal to recognize and bargain with their unions and violations of labor standards for humane working conditions such as the continued use of the deadly pesticide Omega in their packing plants.

But for unionists in the area, the perennial struggle against capitalist schemes is part and parcel of being wage earners. "This is proof of the continued militant resistance of agricultural workers against inhumane schemes, extreme oppression, and union busting being perpetrated by foreign capitalists," said one striking worker.

Since 2013 after Typhoon Pablo (Bopha) ravaged Compostela Valley, workers have launched strikes, work slowdowns or protests almost yearly in banana plantations in the face of capitalist owners' various forms of oppression. "Time and again, the capitalists try to break us but we foil them. Even as we fight the cruelty and exploitation of the capitalists, we know that the struggle will continue as long as the capitalists see our unions as the only obstacle to their greed for superprofit," one unionist declared in 2015. AB

4 peasants killed

Four peasants were killed, a student was abducted and thousands were forcibly displaced by military operations in the past two weeks. Despite these, perpetrators have not been punished, but are instead coddled and prodded by the Duterte regime in their operations of suppression.

This April 21 at 7 a.m., elements of the 39th IB indiscriminately fired upon three civilians in Sitio Macadis, Brgy. Datal Biao, Columbio, Sultan Kudarat. The civilians were on their way to the forest to hunt for food. Immediately killed were Jorry Peles, 27, and Macmac Peles, 13. Nineteen-year old Jurry Lavella was severely wounded.

In Davao del Norte, Elias Pureza, 60, was shot inside his home in Purok Palmera, Brgy. Mamangan, San Isidro, at around 8 p.m. last April 6. Pureza was an active member of Samahang Magsasaka sa San Isidro (San Isidro Peasants' Association), under the Pederasyon sa mga Mag-uuma ug Lumad sa Agusan ug Davao (Federation of Peasants and Lumad in Agusan and Davao).

Meanwhile, the 60th IB illegally arrested Maui Bago, a 21-year old Lumad, in Sitio Natulinan, Palma Gil, Talaingod. He was arrested after being reported as a member of the New People's Army (NPA) by the Alamara, a paramilitary group. He was subjected to interrogation, hit by a rifle butt and was detained for more than 24 hours before being set free.

In Compostela Valley, military agents under the 71st and 46th IB last April 8 shot farmer Bernardo Calan Ripdos, a resident of Brgy. Sangab, Maco. Ripdos was a member of Hugpong sa mga Mag-uuma sa Walog Compostela (Unity of Peasants in Walog Compostela or HUMAWAC).

In Abra last April 4, elements of the 24th IB attempted to block members of the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance who were to investigate the human rights violations in Buanao, Umnay, Lat-ey and Mataragan in Malibcong. The 24th IB oc-

cupied the three latter barrios. In Buanao, soldiers restrained the movement of the residents in their community.

In Panay, the Alyansa ng Panay para sa Karapatan (KARAPATAN-Panay) and the National Union of People's Lawyers likewise held an investigation last April 6-8 to document human rights violations in

Cabatangan, Lambunao in Iloilo. Indigenous peoples who are residents reported that the 61st IB occupied their community and has virtually imposed martial law. This has affected 30 families.

In Nueva Ecija, armed men opened fire at peasants belonging to the Alyansa ng Mamamayang Nagkakaisa sa 3100 (United People's Alliance or ALMANA 3100) in Sitio Minalkot, Brgy. San Isidro, Laur last April 16, at 5 p.m. Four of the 18 farmers were minors. The peasants were collectively farming the land which has been declared for distribution since 1991 by the Department of Agrarian Reform. AB

Condemn Lapanday-PNP collusion!

LAND FOR THE peasants of Madaum Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries, Inc. in Tagum City, Southern Mindanao remains elusive.

No less than the secretary of GRP's Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Rafael "Ka Paeng" Mariano joined efforts for the formal reinstallment of the 159 peasants in the 119.25-hectare land in Brgy. Madaum last April 18. But even before they were able to enter the area, the overt collusion between the powerful Lorenzo clan who owns Lapanday Foods Corp. and the Philippine National Police (PNP) was laid bare in front of the peasants, the DAR and their thousands of supporters who came from different parts of the region.

More than 700 armed goons of the LFC, including some mercenary Lumad paramilitaries, stood guard around the fortified gates of the plantation. The PNP refused to accompany the DAR despite the previous understanding by a special provincial committee assigned to assist the reinstallment. Sec. Mariano vowed to exhaust all means to ensure that the peasants reclaim the land that has become a profitable milking cow for the landlord Lorenzo clan. Until now, the peasants, along with their burgeoning supporters, are still encamped in front of the LFC plantation compound and have called on GRP. Pres. Rodrigo Duterte's intervention in their favor.

Meanwhile, NDFP-SMR has warned the Lorenzo clan and the PNP against using violence in order to prevent the peasants from owning their land. Rubi del Mundo, spokesperson of NDFP-SMR, cautioned that "the People's Democratic Government is ready and able to defend the peasants in the event that the situation should result to anything other than their ownership of the land."

This is not the first time that the landlords and the PNP in Davao del Norte connived to avert the just distribution of land to the peasants. In 2014, the 112 peasants of Checkered Farms Employees Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association, Inc. in Brgy. Tibungol, Panabo City, Davao del Norte won their case before the GRP's Supreme Court. The high court upheld their right to own the 281-hectare of land that had been turned into a vast plantation for export banana. However, when around 200 armed guards of the adjacent Tagum Development Corporation (TADECO) plantation blocked their entry to the plantation, the PNP personnel themselves backed off and refused to defend the rights of the peasants.

Set and increase the national minimum wage

Thirty years have passed since the reactionary state abolished the national minimum wage and imposed the regionalization of wages through Wage Rationalization Act (RA 6727). During this period, wages were pegged at very low levels, and were further depressed. Any demand for an increase was rapidly denied or replaced with extremely low, pitiful wages.

Together with contractualization and other anti-worker and anti-union policies, wage regionalization weakened and repressed the workers' movement. It dismantled a labor standard which the workers' movement have won in a century's struggle. Like the right to an eight-hour workday, the right to a minimum wage protects workers against inhuman work conditions and further exploitation.

Capitalists and bureaucrats, along with yellow unions, have used the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB) to extract profit from the workers. It exploits the large number of unemployed workers and their backward conditions. It also exploits and intensifies their disorganized condition by localizing their opposition and struggles.

Wage regionalization is one of the major neoliberal policies implemented during the end of the 1980s. Prior to this, then Pres. Manuel Quezon declared a ₱ 1/day minimum wage during the 1930s in response to the strong and militant struggles of workers unions and the peasant movement. Quezon used this declaration to deceive the workers and pull them away from the then newly-established Communist Party of the Philippines. After World War 2, the Congress of Labor Unions continued to struggle.

In 1951, the Minimum Wage Law (RA 602) was enacted which set a ₱4/day minimum wage for non-agricultural workers and ₱2.50/day for agricultural workers. This was repealed by the Labor Code (Presidential Decree No. 422)

of the Marcos dictatorship which started the implementation of different minimum wage levels. In 1976, non-agricultural workers in the National Capital Region were already paid a peso higher compared to workers in the provinces, as well as agricultural workers in plantations compared to non-plantation agricultural workers. In the following years, the gap between the agricultural workers widened further (₱8 by 1984). More so, the dictatorship used the law to keep wages down. During the entire period of the Marcos regime, wages rose by only ₱30-31.

During the 28 years under RA 6727, wages rose by an average of only ₱313 despite the RTWPBs issuing more than 300 wage orders. In addition to numerous violations to the law, majority (81%) of company requests for exemption were approved.

Due to regionalization, there are 17 wage levels as of today. Wage gap between the highest (₱491 in NCR) and lowest (₱235 for Region IV-B) is at ₱256. This is made worse by the two-tier wage scheme where the RTWPB sets only the floor wage and any wage increase is up to what the company reports as net profits and individual worker productivity which likewise depends on the capitalist.

Overall, nominal wages do not even reach a third of the living wage. In NCR, real wages are set at ₱361 only while regional real wages are at ₱161-₱264. The living wage is pegged at ₱1,119 for a six-mem-



ber family.

From the start, the state has used wage manipulation and other reforms to divide the workers and pull them away from the genuine, militant and patriotic unionism towards substantial and revolutionary social change. But since the beginning as well, the workers movement has proven that it has sufficient collective strength to demand what is due to them and other rights. In fact, a substantial wage increase was realized under the dictatorship in 1984 —from ₱21 to ₱32 (52%) for non-agricultural workers and from ₱17 to ₱21 (23%) for agricultural workers. During this time, the strongest and longest strikes in the country's history took place, together with the strong anti-fascist workers movement.

The struggle for wage increase and other workers' struggles was derailed when local and foreign capitalists took advantage of the grave disorientations and errors in the revolutionary movement and the labor movement in the 1980s.

Wage regionalization was implemented together with other extensive neoliberal schemes which worsened workers' exploitation and repression. The state enacted labor flexibilization and widespread union busting. It repealed various labor regulations and put up industrial enclaves which gave cap-

italists free rein to extract profits from the workers' labor.

It is only correct that the struggle to reinstate a national minimum wage is carried alongside the struggle for wage increase to ensure a national standard for a decent living wage. From the 1990s, militant unions have pushed for a P125 across-the-board wage increase to offset rising prices and cost of services. In 2014, the struggle to restore the national minimum wage was launched together with the call to set it at P750/day for the private sector and P16,000/month for the public sector. This should also be carried together with the struggle against contractualization and other neoliberal policies of the reactionary state.

The continuing relevance of the October Revolution of 1917

Revisiting Lenin's critique of imperialism

Come May 1, the workers' monumental role in providing for society and advancing history will again be remembered. Along with this is imperialism's gigantic role in its all-out effort to obstruct their advance. As the monopoly and last stage of capitalism, imperialism has become more exploitative and vicious. But behind its show of power, it is becoming ever more rotten and moribund, and will go nowhere else but collapse in the face of the people's struggle led by the world's working class.

"Imperialism is the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat. This has been confirmed since 1917 on a world wide scale," wrote Vladimir Ilyich Lenin in his preface of *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. After a century, this remains the most correct analysis of imperialism and guide for studying present events.

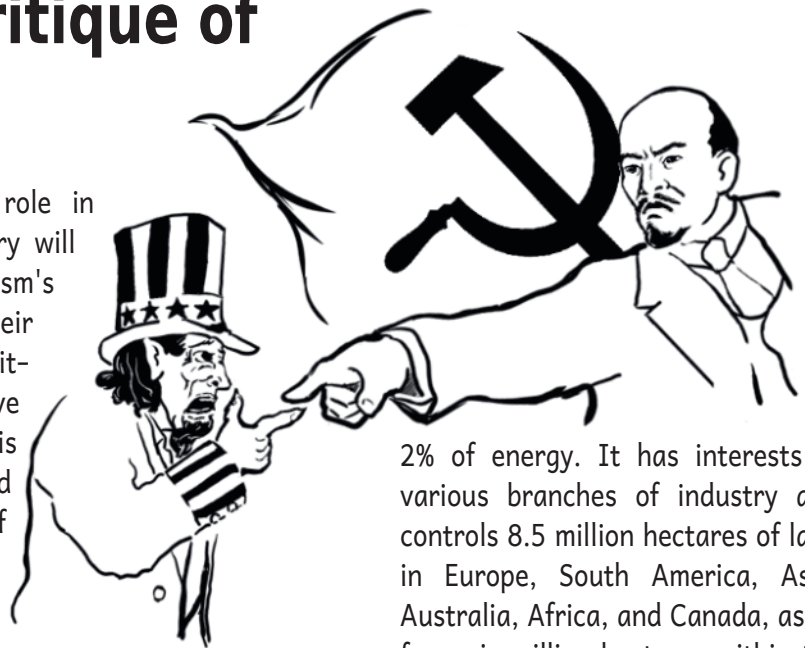
Lenin, leader of the Communist Party (the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party or RSDLP), refuted the exposition of various economists regarding the capitalist system of his time. He clarified that "unless the economic roots of this phenomenon are understood and its political and social significance is appreciated, not a step can be taken toward the solution of the practical problems of the Communist movement."

Imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism

Contrary to bourgeois economists' claim that the essence of the capitalist system is free competition, Lenin revealed that since the

turn of the 20th century, monopolies have dominated the entire system and have become one of the foundations of economic life of the capitalist countries. Monopolies control the supply of raw materials, supply of labor, deliveries and loans. They destroy unions, corner markets, and systematically resort to price manipulation to ruin firms which refuse to submit to them.

Among the industries controlled by monopolies at the start of the 1900s were the railways in Britain and France, the electric industry and chemical industry in Germany and the steel and oil industries in the USA. One of these monopolies was the Standard Oil Company of USA which became the biggest company in the country's oil industry by entering into unfair deals to undercut its competitors. With a capital of around \$150 million, it earned net revenues of \$838.8M from 1882 to 1906. It re-emerges today as ExxonMobil, the USA's biggest private oil company that produces 3% of the world's oil and



2% of energy. It has interests in various branches of industry and controls 8.5 million hectares of land in Europe, South America, Asia, Australia, Africa, and Canada, aside from six million hectares within the US. In December 2016, Pres. Trump appointed its CEO, Rex Tillerson, as Secretary of State.

Bank or financial monopolies grew together with the monopolies of industry and these merged into a powerful financial oligarchy based on finance capital. Using trusts with shares in numerous "daughter companies"—both registered and disguised—and interlocking directorates, the finance oligarchy commands almost the whole of the money capital of all the capitalists and the larger part of the means of production and of the sources of raw materials of their particular country and in a number of other countries.

In 1910, Lenin noted that six of the largest banks in Berlin had directors in 344 industrial companies, and board members in 407 others, encompassing such diverse businesses as insurance, transport, restaurants, theatres, art industry, and others. On the other hand, powerful industrialists were in the supervisory boards of these

banks.

In the US, two largest banks were mentioned, each owned by the Rockefeller and Morgan families, which control more than \$6B. These two banks are at present merged into the multinational JPMorgan Chase & Co. which Forbes lists as the biggest US bank and third largest bank in the world based on its assets which amount to some \$2.5 trillion (₱120 trillion). It has 288 registered subsidiaries all over the world, and has directorships with John Deere & Co., WalMart Stores, Inc., Dow Chemical Co., Center for Strategic & International Studies, Inc., Rush University Medical Center, Apple, Inc., Quinnipiac University, Exxon Mobil Corp., NBC Universal Holdings, The Museum of Science & Industry, University of Chicago, Business Council for International Understanding, and many others in various fields of economy and society. It earned net revenues of \$22 billion (₱1.05 trillion) in 2014 and has now 241,359 employees worldwide.

In 1911, capitalist states passed "anti-trust" laws or apparent strictures against monopolies. But these were superficial and were easily skirted, especially since all levels of government itself were full of members or agents of the financial oligarchy who were represented even by the presidents or prime ministers of capitalist countries.

These are only some examples of the concentration of social wealth in the hands of a very few finance oligarchs who do not contribute at all to social production. They are the image of imperialism's parasitism, rottenness and exploitativeness and impose a heavy yoke on the laboring masses. Their gigantic competition against each other for more profit spurs the periodic and worsening economic crises that ravage the toiling masses more than anything else. Latest and most dramatic of these was the financial crisis of 2007-2008 that started off a decade of

Russia, April 1917

ON THE EVENING of April 16, 1917, Lenin (Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov) arrived at the Finland Station in the Russian capital (then called Petrograd). Thousands of workers welcomed his return from Switzerland where he had been in exile for more than a decade.

Lenin left Zurich on April 9 with 31 other Bolsheviks and travelled through Germany (then a Russian enemy) in a sealed car which was treated as an "extraterritorial territory."

After three days, they arrived at Stockholm, Sweden's capital (which was neutral then) where fellow socialists and Russian emigrants welcomed them. They were stopped at the border by British troops but were allowed to proceed when nothing suspicious were found on their belongings.

During their precarious travel, they expected arrest upon entering Russia. But to their pleasant surprise, a giant workers' rally greeted them, complete with an orchestra playing revolutionary pieces, and armed forces of the Bolshevik revolution. Spotlights were placed in front of the station to provide light to his arrival. Here, on top of an armored vehicle, he gave his famous speech where he hailed the Russian proletariat as the vanguard of the proletarian army which illuminates the socialist revolution.

From the station, he proceeded to ballet dancer Mathilde Kschessinski's mansion which then served as the Bolshevik headquarters. On April 19, he published his April Theses. Here, he pushed for the shift of the Russian revolution from bourgeois-democratic to socialist. His "All Power to the Soviets!" called for the transfer of political power to the soviets from the republican parliament.

A few days later, on April 22, he celebrated his 47th birthday.

depression that remains unresolved up to now.

Neoliberalism, the face of intense imperialist crisis

Neoliberalism as an economic policy these past four decades has been the last recourse sought by the capitalist system (*read in the issues of Ang Bayan, May 21-July 21, 2016*). In the vein of the earlier economists disputed by Lenin, these new economists of today continue to conceal the widespread domination of monopolies by declaring that neoliberalism promotes free competition to resolve the crisis.

In fact, this is only the latest visage of imperialism. This is the removal of regulations or restrictions to give the finance oligarchy free rein to expand their capital.

This is the opening up of the world to further exploitation in the name of globalization, and destruction of the power of labor, especially organized labor. In waging its war against labor, the finance oligarchy is only digging its own grave deeper in the face of the toiling masses' seething anger.

As Lenin expounded, there is no solution to the crisis of imperialism other than proletarian revolution to establish socialism. This is a long and difficult struggle against a giant. But because it is a giant on its deathbed, the working class is sure of victory.

This article is the fifth in a series commemorating the centennial of the October Revolution.

Advanced Course completed in 15 days

Rich theoretical and practical knowledge were shared and partaken in by participants of the Advanced Party Course recently held in one of Southern Mindanao's guerrilla fronts.

The restructured APC was successfully completed in 15 days. It was participated in by 35 cadres. This abridgment is in line with the program set by the recently concluded First Central Committee Plenum of the Second Congress. This likewise supersedes the old APC outline which in the past lasted for up to 45 days. While the new outline for the course is still being developed, the main reference and framework used was Comrade Jose Ma. Sison's *Basic Principles of Marxism-Leninism: A Primer*, written in 1981-82.

The APC's primary objective is the Party cadres' in-depth study of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) as the communist standpoint, world view, and method of analysis.

Adequate time was given in discussing the major aspects that comprise MLM. First part discussions consisted of dialectical materialism and the history of philosophy until the birth of Marxism. The next part then expounded on historical materialism, highlighting the history of the development of different systems of society as the history of modes of production (or the economic base and the superstructure). Meanwhile, political economy explained the Marxist critique of capitalism and its basic contradictions that lead to crisis and further crises under imperialism. The study of the theory and practice of scientific socialism gave the opportunity to study the practical experience in establishing socialism and battling the restoration of capitalism.

Abridging the APC is in line with the target of ensuring every full Party member completes it within the first two years of his/her full membership. The Cent-



ral Committee plans for all regional- and subregional-level cadres to complete the course within the current year; and front- and section-level cadres within the next two years. The abridgment of the APC is important in adapting to the conditions of the basic masses which comprise the majority of the Party. Also, organizational as well as security problems arising from lengthy educational meetings may be avoided.

In the long run, it is expected that active propagation of APCs will produce thousands of cadres with a deep grasp of MLM who will carry the Party to great advances in revolutionary practice.

This early, the cadre-students have already expressed enthusiasm in their active participation in the discussions, considering majority of them already have lengthy experience in different lines of work. For Ka Nova and Ka Mac, they have taken particular interest in Marxist political economy. Both cadres have organizing tasks among workers, and both are excited to impart what they have learned to their organizations.

"The course provides additional orientation for the organizers," says Ka Nova. "If the right to work and join unions was guaranteed in the former Soviet Union,

such must likewise be the guide for organizers in undertaking their tasks." Ka Mac adds that in the face of neoliberalism's attacks against the workers' movement, the objective to organize them into unions must cover even those non-regular workers. Likewise, both Ka Nova and Ka Mac agree that the firm grasp of the mass line, based on their understanding of the APC, will lead to significant leaps in advancing the workers' movement in the region.

On the other hand, for Ka Toby, who performs propaganda work, he is driven to improve on research work in order to lay down the important issues and ideas that the people should be informed of. "For me," he said, "the APC has become significant in composing editorials or commentaries, and dispelling wrong ideas propagated by the bourgeoisie in the economic, cultural and political fields.

It can be said that scientific socialism stood out as the most lively part of the course. Here, discussion on the form of the succeeding stage following the victory of the national democratic revolution was thorough. Through illustrations of practical experiences from Russia, China and Vietnam,

not only the dictatorship of the proletariat and planned economy were given emphasis. The need for a continuing revolutionary struggle was impressed upon the comrades in order to combat the influences of the old society and the emerging new bourgeoisie in the bureaucracy.

In the end, Ka Obi, one of the instructors, recommends that reading reference materials for the APC must be continued. He underscores Mao Zedong's call that communists should enhance their methods of study of theory, history and the practical movement. This matches the likewise continuous combination of theory and practice as an effective method in advancing the revolution.

AB

Urban poor groups stage People's Calvary

DECENT HOUSING, living wage, job security, termination of continuing and worsening poverty—these were only some of the featured calls of the People's Calvary staged in various places across the country.

The national democratic urban poor organizations hold the People's Calvary every Holy Week. This is a street play allegorizing the people's life and struggle to Jesus' crucifixion.

In Metro Manila, Kadamay-NCR led the Calvary in Caloocan, Taguig and Manila cities. They marched to Mendiola on April 10. The People's Calvary this 2017 aimed to hold President Rodrigo Duterte of GRP accountable for his unfulfilled promises of change. In his more than nine months in power, poverty, contractualization, human rights violations, militarization and lack of social services continue unabated.

For Kadamay-Manila, their Calvary is the persistent eviction of peddlers and the homeless by the local government. Workers of the Manila Harbour Centre who are presently in a struggle for regularization and other rights joined the procession.

Kadamay-Caloocan slammed the planned "Oplan Kalinga," the local version of Oplan Tokhang which will surely become more punishing for the poor. In this plan, more than a hundred policemen and elements of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency will be deployed in every barangay in the city.

Meanwhile, the Nagkakaisang Residente ng Maysapang Homeowners Association in Brgy. Ususa, Taguig acted in solidarity to the People's Calvary on April 12. They staged the Calvary they were experiencing in the hands of RII Builders. According to the residents, threats of demolition for the company's projects continue in their community.

In Laguna, Kadamay-Southern Tagalog successfully held a program at Crossing, Calamba on April 12. In Quezon, Pinagkaisang Lakas ng Magbubukid sa Quezon (PIGLAS), Coco Levy Funds Ibalik sa Magniniyog (CLAIM-Quezon) and Karapatan-Quezon led the People's Calvary 2017 in Bondoc Peninsula on April 14. More than 2,000 coconut farm workers and their supporters joined the march.

In Compostela Valley, youth from Anakbayan Compostela Valley and Compostela Farmers Association (CFA) united with the Kalbaryo sa Kabus (Calvary of the Poor) on April 12. The CFA strongly condemned the local government's refusal to provide decent housing for the victims of Typhoon Pablo (Bopha). According to them, during the people's occupation of the houses, the government responded with threats.

Facebook closes down PRWC Page

THE PHILIPPINE Revolution Web Central (PRWC) of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) criticised Facebook's closure of the PRWC Page on April 8. Such takedown is contrary to Facebook's declaration of its mission to promote "diversity" and "to make the world more open and connected."

The takedown of the PRWC's FB page was carried out just after it had exposed the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) for churning out fake news in the mass media and social media. In particular, the PRWC page exposed as fake news the claims of the AFP of armed encounters with the New People's Army (NPA) to justify the killings of unarmed peasants in the countryside and widespread violations of human rights.

It was also right after the exposure of the efforts of the US-supported military and defense establishment to spoil the peace negotiations between the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the Philippine government.

The PRWC page has served as a communication tool to convey to the public the views of the CPP as well as daily news of the struggles of the broad Filipino masses in the country and abroad.

Said the PRWC, "The takedown of the PRWC is Facebook censorship of the CPP revolutionary Left. With it, the Facebook community of members and supporters of the revolutionary Left, the Philippine media and the interested public have been effectively denied of a source of news and information reflecting the views of the CPP and its related organizations."

The PRWC asserted that the PRWC page must be put back online, with all its previous posts and records of Likes and Followers. In protest, it made a new page (facebook.com/philrevwebcentral) while asserting the restoration of the PRWC Page.

Aside from the PRWC, Facebook also took down the pages of Melito Glor Command's Diego Padilla of the Southern Tagalog and NDFP's Liberation International last January.

"Abu Sayyaf in Visayas," a US yarn

THE COMMUNIST of the Philippines (CPP) strongly condemned the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police for launching overkill military operations in Bohol on April 11 against purported members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

According to AFP and PNP report, military and police forces were deployed last April 11 to Inabangan town where they encountered 60 members of the Abu Sayyaf resulting in the killing of three soldiers, one policeman and five "bandits."

Two of the alleged bandits were 65-year old spouses Constancio and Crisente Petalco. They were identified by the barangay officials as residents of Barangay Napo, where the supposed encounter happened.

Contrary to the report of Lt. Col. Jose Dodjie Belloga Jr. of the 47th IB that the killed spouses were supporters of the Abu Sayyaf, Col. Edgard Agrevalo, spokesperson of the AFP, claimed that they were not sure the victims were ASG members. To suppress the remaining so-called elements of the Abu Sayyaf, nine bombs were dropped by the Philippine Air Force in the barangays of Napo, Calenti and Banaha resulting in the evacuation of more than 1,200 residents.

"This story is typical of the tall tales spun by the US Central Intelli-

gence Agency and their conspirators within the Philippine defense and security establishment," the CPP added.

It is highly suspicious that a few days prior to this, the US embassy released a travel advisory warning its citizens against travelling to Cebu and Bohol because of a supposed "terror threat" on April 9, two days before the encounter.

The tall tale of the presence of the Abu Sayyaf in Bohol forms part of a US plot to strengthen its foothold and increase the presence of its troops in Central Visayas. It broke out just a week prior to the ASEAN ministerial meeting scheduled for later this month in Cebu. Likewise, the Balikatan exercises are set to be held in the nearby island of Leyte. According to the US military's and AFP's official report, the training will stress on delivery of humanitarian aid for disasters and "anti-terrorism." A few days after the Bohol attack, news came out that elements of the Abu Sayyaf were in Negros.

The CPP noted in its statement that it is no secret that the US military has long been eyeing to establish facilities in the Mactan air field in the island adjoining Cebu. It is also no longer secret that the operators of the Abu Sayyaf criminal bandit group have long been collaborating with the AFP and the US military. The Abu Sayyaf has since been used by the US and AFP as a multi-tool to discredit the Moro people's struggle for self-determination. It has been used to carry out terrorist bombings and other dirty jobs for the CIA to justify its "war on terror" and the presence of US foreign troops in the country. Its bandit activities, mainly kidnap-for-ransom, have been lucrative for the Abu Sayyaf ringleaders and their AFP handlers.

The AFP and CIA use the terrorist group's kidnapping to justify the former's all-out war and bombings. For more than fifteen years now, the AFP has been downplaying the strength of the ASG and making claims it can easily wipe out the criminal bandit group. However, the ASG repeatedly re-emerges when it suits the need of the US and AFP. AB

US drops giant bomb in Afghanistan

THE COMMUNIST of the Philippines together with the people of the world condemn the US military under the Trump administration for dropping an at least 9-ton GBU-43 bomb last April 13 in the mountainous area of Tangi Assadkhel, Achin District, Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. The US claims the area is a Taliban stronghold.

The GBU-43 or Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB) is the largest non-nuclear bomb ever used in history. It is tagged the "mother of all bombs" for its power. MOAB can destroy anything within a one-kilometer radius and thus can be considered a weapon of mass destruction.

US reports say that 92 ISIS members were killed with no civilian casualties. This is contrary to statements of residents a few kilometers from the blast saying there were civilians in Tangi Assadkhel when the bomb was dropped. Two disabled women and an elderly man had been brought to Shadal Bazaar by US com-

mandos who went to the site. Rocks fell on houses and some structures were totally destroyed up to four kilometers from the blast. Many people experienced temporary deafness and ringing in the ears for several days.

"The CPP condemns the US for using such a weapon of mass destruction. The use of such an indiscriminate weapon constitutes a war crime. The massive strength of the US bomb was designed to maximize its kill zone," the CPP said.

The US has been waging war on the Taliban in Afghanistan for a decade and a half. There are 8,500 US troops currently stationed there to support and control the puppet government of Afghanistan. While the US purports to target ISIS, it also tolerates ISIS forces who support US-backed terrorist groups against the Syrian government. AB