

## Offensives against State terrorism

MILITARY ACTIONS OF the New People's Army in North Cotabato, Kalinga, Quezon and Bukidnon on the second half of January were the answers to the intensifying military terrorism of the US-Duterte regime.

**North Cotabato.** Red fighters of the NPA-Far South Mindanao (Mt. Alip Subregional Operations Command) raided the 39th IB-CAA detachment in Sitio Garing, Makilala, North Cotabato last January 21 in the evening. They seized two M14 and M16 rifles, 5 rifle grenades, bullets of assorted caliber and military equipment. The Red fighters also torched a portion of the camp.

A Red salute was offered by the Valentin Palamine Operations Command to three Red fighters, Raymart Rusiana (Ka Rocky), Roger Labajo Jr. (Ka Reden) and Ka Tomas, who became martyrs in the firefight.

**Bukidnon.** The 88th IB sustained 13 killed and six wounded when Red fighters under the NPA-South Central Bukidnon Subregional Command set off command-detonated explosives against the operating soldiers last February 6, about 3:00 p.m. in Sitio Trocat, Barangay Cawayan, Quezon.

**Kalinga.** Two tactical offensives were launched by the NPA Red fighters of Kalinga (Lejo Cawilan Command or LCC) last January 18 and 24. About 6:30 a.m. of January 18, a unit of the LCC carried out a har-

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EDITORIAL

## Resist and frustrate the US-Duterte regime's reign of terror

**R**odrigo Duterte has become a mad dog attacking and deriding people left and right, after his minions in Congress failed to railroad his latest federalism scheme through charter change last January.

He froths in the mouth with frenzied threats and profanities against the revolutionary movement, progressive organizations and individuals, his political enemies, members of the media and other sectors who fight against his crude manipulations to empower himself as a fascist dictator and make his would-be fascist dictatorship appear legitimate. Duterte is desperately trying to suppress the

people who are not cowed by his strong-man tactics, threats and intimidation.

Using the armed forces and his authority as president of the reactionary state, Duterte is intensifying his reign of terror in the entire country. After he attacked press freedom, he threatened to suppress the right to assembly and expression of the protesting youth. He implemented a crackdown in the

cities by successively filing fabricated charges and attempted arrests of activists and leaders of progressive organizations. He is bullying his rival political factions. He suspended an official of the Office of the Ombudsman who exposed his family's millions in secret bank accounts. He threatened to file charges against justices who refused to testify against Chief Justice Ma. Lourdes Sereno. He uses people's issues like Dengvaxia and Mamasapano to blackmail officials of the previous regime. In the name of his fake anti-corruption campaign, he is booting out one by one state officials appointed by the said regime.

In the countryside, his fascist rule reigns supreme. He harasses, detains and kills activists from the barrios, relatives of suspected Red fighters and even revolutionaries who have retired, to sow terror among the movement's supporters. He has deployed hundreds of soldiers in "priority areas" to carry out brutal and continuous military operations. He dislocates people from

their communities to clear out suspected guerilla bases and open these to plunder by foreign companies.

He relentlessly attacks and slanders the revolutionary movement. Despite existing agreements, he had Rafael Baylosis, an NDFP consultant, arrested and is threatening the others. He spews disinformation and fake news which the AFP's machinery of paid trolls churn out to portray the CPP and NPA as terrorists and use these to justify nationwide imposition of martial law. These attacks and slander are sure to intensify now that the timorous Supreme Court has confirmed his martial law extension up to the end of 2018.

Duterte's fascist schemes will continue to be thwarted. He has long been exposed as a fascist liar greedy for wealth and power. He is isolated due to his arrogance and contempt for the people.

In the case of his fake federalism, his own haste and crude manipulations to monopolize power and extend the terms of his cohorts






has propelled protests from various classes and sectors. Protesters against charter change have increased, from constitutionalists and senators to students and academics to other democratic sectors. These protests have been carried out in tandem with protests against neoliberal policies such as the TRAIN law which caused prices of goods and services to skyrocket, as well as protests for other social services and welfare.

In the people's resistance against charter change, two camps have emerged: Duterte and his supermajority on one hand and the broad Filipino masses on the other. Thus, Duterte is only fooling himself with his high popularity ratings and in believing that he still enjoys credibility among the people.

It is only right that bigger and more frequent protests are launched against Duterte's intensifying terrorism. The people's collective anger against the puppet, corrupt and oppressive regime should be channeled to these protests to hold him responsible for his growing crimes. Call for the immediate end to martial law in Mindanao and frustrate the wars of death and destruction. Let the call to overthrow Duterte echo in schools, factories, markets, communities, barrios and other population centers.

Further broaden the anti-Duterte alliance. Various classes and sectors should take the initiative to launch campaigns and protests to condemn the regime's oppressive policies. The youth and student movement is in the position to make their voices louder than ever, just as during the First Quarter Storm.

The call to overthrow Duterte must be spread overseas. Since the beginning, various sectors and organizations have expressed alarm over the Duterte regime's widespread killings and harassment. Condemn his subservience to imperialist chief Donald Trump's war machinery. Further isolate him in

 <p>Vol. XLIX No. 3   February 7, 2018</p> <hr/> <p>Ang Bayan is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray and English. Ang Bayan welcomes contributions in the form of articles and news items. Readers are encouraged to send feedback and recommendations for improving our newspaper.</p> <p> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/prwc.official">instagram.com/prwc.official</a></p> <p> <a href="https://twitter.com/prwc_info">@prwc_info</a></p> <p> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/cppinfo">fb.com/cppinfo</a></p> <p> <a href="mailto:cppinformationbureau@gmail.com">cppinformationbureau@gmail.com</a></p>	<h2 style="text-decoration: underline;">Contents</h2> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><b>Editorial:</b> Resist and frustrate the US-Duterte regime's reign of terror</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">NPA offensives</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Arrest of Baylosis</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Worsening human rights violations in Mindanao</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Fake news, part of all-out war</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Operation Pacific-Eagle Philippines</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Sell-out of national sovereignty</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Duterte clan corrupt to the core</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Dengvaxia: corruption and profiteering</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Attacks on the mass movement</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">11</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">People's protests</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">12</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Editorial:</b> Resist and frustrate the US-Duterte regime's reign of terror	1	NPA offensives	1	Arrest of Baylosis	3	Worsening human rights violations in Mindanao	4	Fake news, part of all-out war	5	Operation Pacific-Eagle Philippines	6	Sell-out of national sovereignty	7	Duterte clan corrupt to the core	8	Dengvaxia: corruption and profiteering	9	Attacks on the mass movement	11	People's protests	12
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the international community.

Most importantly, the New People's Army must carry out significant tactical offensives to rock Duterte's fascist reign. His fascist troops must not be allowed to lord over the countryside. The revolutionary movement should resolutely face relentless military operations and frustrate destruction and pacification of mass organizations and local Party units. The enemy's encirclement campaigns must be frustrated by expanding and deepening guerilla fronts to create wider areas of maneuver for NPA units.

While the revolutionary movement in Mindanao perseveres in resisting the combined all-out war and martial rule, NPA units in Luzon and Visayas should launch bigger attacks to force the AFP to overstretch itself. AB

## NDFP denounces Baylosis arrest

LUIS JALANDONI, MEMBER of the Executive Committee of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), strongly denounced the illegal arrest of Rafael Baylosis by agents of the Government of the Republic of Philippines (GRP) and called for his immediate release.

Baylosis, an NDFP consultant to the peace talks between the NDFP and GRP, was arrested by the combined forces of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-Philippine National Police and the Intelligence Service of the AFP in the afternoon of January 31 along Katipunan Avenue and Aurora Boulevard, Quezon City. He and his companion, Guillermo Roque, Jr., had just alighted from a tricycle when he was collared.

The illegal arrest is a brazen attack on the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG), according to Jalandoni. The JASIG remains in effect whether or not there are negotiations.

According to Atty. Rachel Pastores, managing counsel of Public Interest Law Center (PILC) and Baylosis' legal counsel, no warrant of arrest was shown by arresting officers, contrary to the PNP statement to the media. They were also banned from calling their lawyers, and from visits by families and friends.

Baylosis, 69, has a heart ailment and is now confined at Camp Crame, Quezon City. AB

"Tactical offensives"... from page 1

assment operation against the CAFGU Active Auxiliary detachment in Barangay Allaguia, Pinukpuk. This was followed by an ambush last January 24, about 10 a.m., against troops of the 50th IB patrolling in Turod Bongod, in the boundary of Barangay Dao-angan, Balbalan and Barangay Baay, also in the said municipality. The military sustained three killed and two wounded.

**Abra.** Around noontime of January 18, a platoon of NPA-Abra (Agustin Begnalen Command) encountered troops of the 24th IB in a forested area of Pilar, Abra and Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur. Due to the

good defense of the Red fighters, they seized the initiative and wounded a trooper.

**Quezon.** Last January 15, at least five soldiers of the 85th IB were killed after active defense was executed by the Red fighters of Apolonio Mendoza Command (AMC) against the attempt of the military to raid their encampment in Barangay Jongo, Lopez.

Again at dawn of January 16, a unit of the AMC made a rifle harassment against a CAFGU detachment in Sitio Eybol, Barangay San Francisco A of the same municipality.

Meanwhile in Bondoc Penin-

sula, the 85th IB sustained two killed and six wounded when another unit of AMC set off explosives against the headquarters of Bravo Company in Barangay Bagupaye, Mulanay last January 19.

Successive armed actions were also launched by the Red fighters last January 26. Prior to this was the sniping operation against an element of PNP Regional Public Safety Maneuver Battalion in Barangay Bocboc, Lopez. It was followed by a harassment operation of NPA-Quezon on the CAFGU camp at Mataas na Bundok, Barangay del Rosario, Gumaca. AB





# Worsening human rights violations in Mindanao under martial law

Now that the faint-hearted Supreme Court has ratified martial law extension in Mindanao, human rights violations are sure to worsen. The people know that this is for Duterte's self-serving, pro-bourgeoisie and pro-US plans for the entire island, as well as for defeating the revolutionary movement.

In a speech this February, Duterte blatantly told Lumad leaders to leave their ancestral lands because he will invite foreign investors and their partners into their areas. He offered to relocate the Lumads in low-cost housing in town centers, similar to what he has done in Marawi. This is to make way for large plantations and foreign mining. One of these projects is an old plan to open up Paquibato District to commercial oil palm plantations. In tandem with this plan are Duterte and his daughter Sara's threats against the legal mass movement in the Davao provinces. Last February, Sara had already test-piloted a scenario of wide scale crackdown on national democratic forces in the form of a lockdown and terror drill in the city. Included in these drills are simulated incidents such as explosions, fires, hostage-taking and firefights.

Also last week, Duterte inaugurated a new military camp in Marawi City for his so-called "war on terror." American troops are sure to use this camp as one of their bases for Operation Pacific Eagle. This was after Duterte crammed the city's evacuees into narrow strips of land with tiny temporary houses. Only a few residents were allowed to enter the city to salvage their properties and only for 10 days. Aside from these injustices, Duterte also ridicules the people of Mindanao, especially the Lumads whom he says allow themselves to be "used" by the revolutionary movement, and the Moros who are swayed by a "foreign ideology."

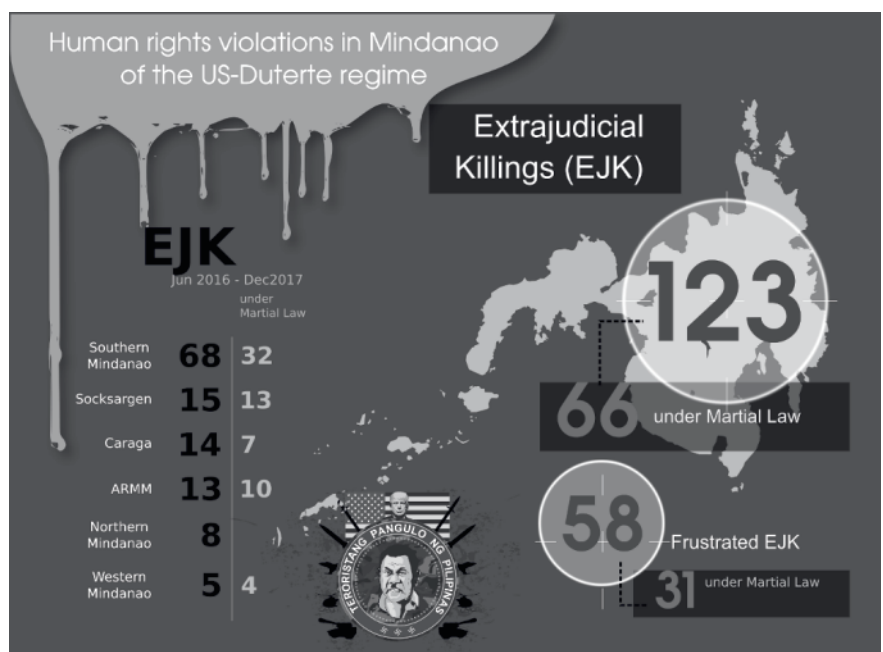
Duterte has long carried out indiscriminate attacks against the people of Mindanao. Until December 2017, human rights organizations have already recorded 123 cases of political killings and 58 cases of frustrated killings. Sixty-six of these occurred under martial law. Four more were added this January alone. Among the most chilling are the murder of 19-year old student Obillo Bay-ao, the massacre of eight Lumads in Lake Sebu and the frustrated murder of two friends Janry and Jerry in Compostela Valley.

Around 600,000 individuals have been forced to flee their homes due to intense bombings and militarization. In the entire Mindanao, there have been 77 incidents of evacuations, mostly in ARMM. Around 400,000 of them are Marawi residents who are still living with their relatives or in evacuation centers up to the present. Some 200,000 are from various other Moro and Lumad areas. Around 122 communities and 179 schools have been af-

fectured. There have been 54 bombings or an average of one every five days. Most of these are in Marawi, next in Region 12 and Soccsksargen.

At the same time, arrests and filing of fabricated criminal charges are widespread. Around 407 individuals, wherein 150 are peasants and 84 are Lumads, have been charged with murder, attempted murder, kidnapping and other non-bailable offenses. Around 234 political detainees continue to languish in jail, 33 of whom are sickly and elderly.

In the countryside, military operations are pervasive under the regime's all-out war. As of the moment, there are around 64 battalions in the island, forty-four of which are focused on NPA areas. These include the newly-formed battalions which are now camped in Davao del Norte (88th IB), Bukidnon (89th IB) and Sultan Kudarat (90th IB). The 56th IB has been deployed in Talaingod. The said battalion was once commanded by butcher Jovito Palparan and has committed heinous crimes in Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog. In addition, no less than 15 paramilitary groups are also focused on NPA areas. AB



# Fake news part of Duterte's all-out war

**D**isinformation regarding encounters between the AFP and NPA to discredit the revolutionary movement is an integral part of the US-Duterte regime's all-out war. Rodrigo Duterte himself parrots these lies, in chorus with the AFP and paid trolls who spread "fake news" or wrong information in the internet. However, the people know the real events and they are not easily fooled by this smear campaign. Among the latest "fake news" are the following:

## **Regarding the NPA's alleged beheading of a CAFGU element:**

Ariel Montero, NPA-Northeastern Mindanao spokesperson, belied the 402nd Brigade's Brig. Gen. Gacal's accusation that Red fighters beheaded a Lumad in Sitio Haguimitan, Barangay Castillo, San Miguel, Surigao del Sur last January 27. Montero clarified that this is an AFP ploy to conceal their involvement in the incident.

Mar Acebedo Bocales, a CAFGU member deployed to the Barangay Los Arcos detachment at Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur, was beheaded and dismembered by the Magahat, a paramilitary group, headed by Emerson Cuarteron. This group is under Calpit Egua and is extorting money from the gold mine workers in Barangays Castillo and Bolhoon, San Miguel. The two paramilitary groups are fighting over territory for their extortion activities.

Members of the Magahat group, together with the 75th IB, were the main perpetrators of the massacre of three Lumad leaders in Han-ayan, Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur on September 1, 2015 and the killing of Kapunungan sa mga Maguuma sa Surigao del Sur peasant leader Selvestre Maratas in Barangay Castillo, San Miguel on July 2017. The Magahat group continues to roam free, serving the AFP and PNP in carrying out harassment

and murder of the Lumads.

## **Regarding the alleged NPA ambush of soldiers bringing relief:**

Amado Pesante, NPA-Northern Samar (Rodante Urtal Command) spokesperson, refuted on January 28 the 20th IB's lies that the NPA allegedly ambushed soldiers carrying out a "relief mission" in Barangay Hinagonoyan, Catubig, Northern Samar on December 16, 2017.

Reports received by the RUC from the Silvio Pajares Command clarified that the NPA was delivering medical services in the said village to address the residents' re-

quests. A number of the peasants were suffering from flu, cough and colds and other illnesses due to bad weather in the wake of Typhoon Urduja.

Some 35 elements of the 20th IB secretly prepared to attack the NPA unit that was carrying out medical services. The NPA members were able to notice this on time, enabling them to quickly exit the village and launch active defense, killing four enemy soldiers. The military shelled the area with 105 howitzers from the 20th IB's battalion headquarters, hitting their own soldiers. According to farmers in the vicinity, six to nine soldiers were killed in the shelling. The NPA unit was able to withdraw without casualties.

**Regarding the surrender of an alleged Anakpawis Partylist member and mass surrender of Red fighters:** Anakpawis Partylist belied the AFP's story about a supposed member who "surrendered" as a Red fighter. According to Anakpawis, Gemma Burgos Quiroga was not a member of the party but an impostor who was on the military payroll.

At the same time, the NPA derided Duterte's claims of many Red fighters surrendering to the reactionary government. The regime uses these surrenderees, fake or not, to create the impression that the NPA and the revolutionary movement are weakening. However, it is no secret to the people that the multi-billion AFP scheme for surrenders, such as the Balik Baril and CLIP (Comprehensive Local Integration Program), are fake programs that serve as military officials' milking cows. AB



# Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines in exchange for support to Duterte's corrupt and criminal rule

Power-hungry Rodrigo Duterte has earned himself an exalted place in Trump's international war machine. This January, the US' new mission in the country, dubbed "Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines" was finally made public after months of clandestine operations.

The mission "replaces" Operation Enduring Freedom which was supposedly shut down in 2014 but whose troops left the country only in 2015. Since July last year, US senators have been capitalizing on Duterte's anti-Moro war in Marawi to call for the reestablishment of an operating base and justify stockpiling various weapons, including planes and drones, in the country.

Duterte's martial law against the so-called "ISIS" in Mindanao set a perfect backdrop for the reentry of US troops and their permanent basing in the country without a signed treaty. His termination of the peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and subsequent declaration of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army as "terrorist organizations" further set the stage.

For a long time now, the US military has participated directly in AFP operations against the NPA. The reactionary state's successive campaigns of repression against the revolutionary and progressive movements have been designed in line with the US counter-insurgency manuals. The US supplies the funds and weapons of AFP and PNP special units which have been created to counter NPA units.

The declaration, which was made specifically in line with the US State Department's foreign terrorist organizations (FTO) listing, bolstered Duterte's access to the US' budget for overseas contingency operations (OCO), the Pentagon's bloated "anti-terror" slush fund.

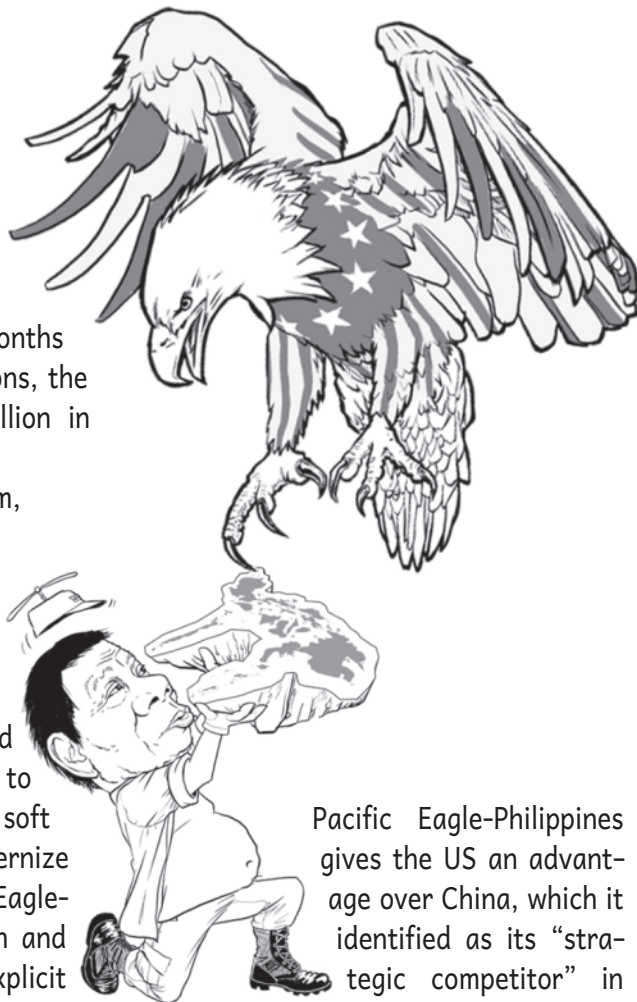
In just under two months of Pacific Eagle's operations, the US has poured P800 million in funds for its operations.

At the start of his term, Duterte portrayed his engagement with the US as "pera-pera lang" (it's all about the money). He vowed to give the AFP brand new weapons and went on a begging spree to China and Russia for soft loans supposedly to modernize his army. In "Pacific Eagle-Philippines," he gets both and more. He gets Trump's explicit support and funding for his one-man rule.

In 2017, the US OCO started with \$42 billion in February but ballooned to \$65 billion by the end of the year. For 2018, Trump asked for an initial \$64 billion for the program. In November last year, he asked for an additional P7 billion for "missile system and defense enhancements" against North Korea and more funds for its "anti-ISIS" efforts. This is despite the US' own pronouncement that ISIS forces in the Middle East are losing ground. Qualifying for OCO, or more specifically, its "counter-ISIS train and equip program," means having forward-deployed US troops "near or in combat forces they support."

OCO includes setting up bases in areas where "ISIS threats" exist. Although only a small portion will be allotted for the Philippines, Duterte and his generals will surely make a killing from these funds.

At the same time, Operation



Pacific Eagle-Philippines gives the US an advantage over China, which it identified as its "strategic competitor" in its recently published National Security Strategy (NSS). For years now, the US has been attempting to contain China by forward-deploying troops and ships, as well as stockpiling war materiel, in the region. This was the impetus behind the "pivot to Asia" of the then Obama regime.

Under Trump, the US continues to use the so-called threat from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) as a pretext to "enhance" the US expansive missile defense system. This includes the positioning of three X-band radar systems and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) systems in the region, as well as the construction of 10 new anti-ballistic missile capable warships. In 2012, US defense officials scouted for a location of the third X-band radar system in Asia, and found one purportedly off the coast of Sarangani. By 2015, a total of 20 off-shore radar systems have already been built in the Sulu



and Celebes Seas, with an additional four off the coast of Palawan, near Scarborough Shoal. On the same year, a “national coast watch center” built by US company Raytheon was completed using a \$20 million fund from the US.

On a smaller scale, Trump mouths the same anti-terror rhetoric that his predecessors used in the past decade to forward-deploy troops and equipment. In the Philippines, the US maintained 600 special operations forces, said to be the largest anti-terror contingent in the Pacific, for close to 15 years. Operation Enduring Freedom was withdrawn after the botched “anti-terror” raid against Malaysian Zulkifli bin Hir (alias Marwan) in Mamasapano, Maguindanao. It took another botched “anti-terror” raid, this time against Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, for the US to correct what it later saw as a “mistake” of reducing special operations in the Phil-

ippines.

The US focus on Mindanao and Palawan for its Operation Pacific Eagle is significant. It has actively supported the pulverization of Marawi to render it a potential military base. Aside from its strategic position for control of the region’s sea routes, it will also provide security for US economic interests in largescale multinational commercial plantations, and the 220,000-hectare Liguasan Marsh with an estimated \$580 billion worth of natural gas deposits.

Operation Pacific Eagle, the Pentagon promises, will be bigger and more expansive. Peoples’ resistance will likewise expand, more so that the US has identified “radicalization and violent extremism” as its targets, which encompasses even legitimate groups defending their rights to ancestral land and fighting for the right to self-determination. AB

## Duterte’s sell-off of national sovereignty

THE VACUITY OF the US-Duterte regime’s sham of an independent foreign policy was most obvious these past few weeks. Rodrigo Duterte often mouths the defense of Philippine sovereignty specially against countries that air concerns against his “anti-drug war.” But at the same time, he lets his minions get into all sorts of unequal trade and military agreements that auction off the people’s natural wealth and labor force.

Last January, the regime received flak when it defended the purported research by Chinese ships on Benham Rise, part of the Philippines’ sovereign territory. According to patriotic scientists of AGHAM, it is not true that the Philippines has no capacity for research, as the regime’s spokesman Harry Roque says as an excuse. Also, according to Roilo Golez of P1NAS, the Chinese might be doing not only scientific research but also surveying for favorable positions for their military submarines. In the face of these criticisms, Duterte was forced to order all foreign ships out of the territory, but only after the Chinese ships have gone on their way. Benham Rise is a 13,000-million-hectare area off the coast of Aurora and Isabela provinces. This is rich in natural gas and minerals, likewise in other marine resources.

Under the Duterte regime, Chinese structures in sovereign Philippine territory have increased. Among these are big hangars beside airports, radar and communications facilities, and other military structures at the Fiery Cross, Subi and Mischief Reefs at the Spratly group of islands, and also on the Paracel Islands. These encompass 290,000 square kilometers at the end of

2017, from 180,000 square kilometers in 2016. This belies Roque’s assertion that the structures had been there before Duterte became president.

The people are aware of Duterte’s direct sell-off of the country’s islands and territory on the South China Sea in exchange for Chinese billions in loans for his coterie’s corruption and the grand “Build, Build, Build” program for his favored compradors.

Earlier in January, Duterte arrogantly rejected a P2.4 billion aid from the European Union because of the latter’s open criticism of his indiscriminate killings in the name of the “anti-drug war.” But on December 2017, Duterte hastily signed a free trade agreement (FTA) between the Philippines and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) which allows the unregulated entry of products and services from this trade bloc. The agreement will also allow entry of foreign workers to “all service sectors,” despite constitutional prohibition on employing non-Filipinos in certain professions. Duterte also signed a separate agreement with the United Kingdom allowing the entry of their meat

products even if there is no shortage of local supplies. Aside from this, the regime’s technocrats are vigorously drafting a trade agreement that will be acceptable to the EU but detrimental for the country.

At the same time, Duterte is seeking to draft similar agreements with Russia, Australia, China and US. Common to all his desired agreements is the complete opening up of the local economy and sectors to foreign plunder. AB



# Duterte clan corrupt to the core

Last February, the US-Duterte regime suspended Melchor Arthur Carandang, overall deputy ombudsman of Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales, for supposedly authorizing the release of private and falsified documents. This came after he exposed to the public documents of the Duterte family's hidden wealth which was first revealed by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

Along with this, Mark Taguba, a customs broker, was charged with tax evasion. Taguba was the one who implicated Paolo Duterte and Manases Carpio, husband of Sara Duterte, in the P6.4 billion *shabu* smuggling controversy.

These measures were done to persecute those who risked to expose the corruption of the Dutertes and to threaten anyone who is planning to speak against them. Nonetheless, these did not stop the continuing exposés of their corruption of billions of people's money.

## Bureaucratic corruption

Recently, Vera Files published undeclared bank deposits and investments of Rodrigo Duterte and his daughter Sara while they were mayor and vice mayor of Davao City. This information was retrieved from the documents submitted by the two parties to Congress and their declared wealth on their Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) in the same year. Based on Vera Files' analysis, their undeclared wealth will possibly amount to P100 million according to their transactions at the Bank of the Philippine Islands. Involved in these transactions are those known dummies of their family, Samuel Uy and some of their known allies. The said document is part of the P2.2 billion corruption case filed by Trillanes at the Ombudsman and is currently being investigated the Senate.

Trillanes has long exposed Duterte's hidden wealth and corruption. According to his complaint filed at the Ombudsman, the Davao local government had 11,000 ghost

employees during Duterte's mayoralship, who received up to P708 million for 2014 only. He also accused the Duterte family of possessing P200 million worth of properties undeclared in their SALN. These also include 41 real estate and other properties.

The Commission on Audit has already investigated the 11,000 contractual and job order employees under Duterte, during his term as a mayor in Davao. Based on COA's investigation, Davao LGU only employs 3,253 regular employees while there were 11,000 contractual and job order staff directly under the office of the mayor's payroll without proper employment documents. Funds were transacted on Rodrigo and Sara Duterte's joint account.

Before the anomalies on Duterte's bank deposits were once again exposed, Malacañang's involvement on the acquisition of a P16-billion worth Combat Management System of the Philippine Navy, through Bong Go, was uncovered. This was known after the dismissal of Vice Admiral Ronald Mercado as chief of the Philippine Navy, who opposed the recommendation of Go to award the contract to Hanhwa Thales, a Korean company.

## Growing wealth through public contracts

Not only were the Duterte clan and their allies involved in cor-

ruption scandals and controversies. Duterte bends legal processes and policies using "public interest" as an excuse to pave way for the interests of his closest allies and cronies and to further open public funds for corruption.

Last February 27, Duterte announced that there will be no public bidding on government projects. Instead, private companies were asked to submit unsolicited proposals or proposals in favor of commercial interests and join a scheme called "Swiss challenge." This system allows a government agency to receive proposals from private groups which will compete to match each other's offer. Here, the public will not be notified on the bidding process which will be controlled solely by these agencies directly under the president. This scheme is being implemented in Davao City where Sara Duterte monopolizes profitable government projects. Through this, the Dutertes will be assured of full control of corruption while ensur-





ing that big ticket projects will be awarded to their most favored cronies.

One example is the recent awarding of a multi-billion contract to the Philippine Airport Ground Support Solutions Inc. (PAGSSI) last January 18. Duterte even pretended to be furious about the luggage theft incidents of MIASCOR's employees, an aviation service provider for the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. After terminating MIASCOR's contract, news immediately broke that he will grant the contract to PAGSSI, an aviation service provider owned by Jeffrey Cheng, a close friend of his ally Pantaleon Alvarez.

Another obvious beneficiary of his close ties with the Duterte family is businessman Dennis Uy, owner of Phoenix Petroleum and 2GO. Since Duterte came to power, Uy's wealth swiftly increased. Just last year, the P62 billion Manila Bay reclamation project in Pasay was given to Uy. Groups also expect him to benefit from the maintenance and operations of the Mindanao Railway

which is worth P31.54 billion.

### Fake anti-corruption campaign

Last 2017, Duterte expelled government officials in succession for having gone on more than 13 trips abroad. However, Duterte, his family and most trusted puppets in fact have the highest expenses on trips abroad. For his first year alone, his foreign trips had already cost P386.2 million. This is triple the combined amount of the Arroyo and Aquino regimes' foreign trips. Tagging along with him on his travels were his closest friends and their wives, his family, businessmen and other government officials without

particular business or tasks during the trips.

This belies the Duterte family's projection of a simple lifestyle. In fact, just recently, his granddaughter, Isabelle Duterte, held her debut at the Peninsula Manila, to the amount of P10 million for her pre-debut shoot in Malacañang and Australia, more than five gowns, food, LED invitations, etc.

Moreover, Duterte doubled his salary, including members of the cabinet, senators and congressmen for 2018. This is in addition to the annual P80 million and P200 million pork barrel of congressmen and senators. AB

	BPI DEPOSITS	RODRIGO-SARA DUTERTE SALN	UNDECLARED AMOUNT IN SALN
2009	₱ 103,480,474.48	17,753,801.40	85,726,673.08
2011	₱ 106,581,919.36	21,554,044.92	85,027,874.44
2013	₱ 96,852,882.94	16,793,289.73	80,059,593.21
2014	₱ 96,852,832.94	17,646,732.62	79,206,100.32

\*data from Vera Files

## Dengvaxia: Corruption and profiteering by the state and Big Pharma

In the name of profit, Sanofi Pasteur, in connivance with the reactionary state, placed the lives of hundreds of thousands of children in grave danger. This is the real tragedy of Dengvaxia, a vaccine believed to have killed 26 Filipino children since they were inoculated in 2016.

At the latest investigation by Congress last February 5 regarding the anti-dengue vaccine Dengvaxia, Gabriela Women's Party revealed some of its effects on children who had been injected. Parents reported cases of recurring high fever, fatigue, stomach ache, dizziness, loss of weight, rashes, vomiting, bleeding, loss of hearing and failing eyesight among others.

These effects are attributed to the criminal Dengvaxia vaccination

program pushed by its manufacturer Sanofi Pasteur and the Department of Health (DOH) even before having proven the vaccine's safety and efficacy. When the program was started last April 2016, Phase 3, the last stage of Dengvaxia's clinical trials had yet to conclude on September 2017. Results of experiments were not available until such time. Despite this, up to a total of 870,000 students aged 9-14, along with 15,000 police personnel, were

experimented upon. Parents were not informed that Dengvaxia was still on the test process. Consent from some parents were likewise not obtained for the vaccination of their minor children.

Apart from these, international medical authorities released an advisory cautioning that Dengvaxia may be ineffective or may even increase the danger to those who have not yet had dengue. Similar studies were also released on the succeeding months by other research centers from the United Kingdom and Singapore. Nonetheless, the DOH under the Duterte regime decided to continue the

program. Vaccination was discontinued by the DOH only on December 2017. Immediately after this, Sanofi Pasteur turned to India and pressed for the waiver of Dengvaxia's Phase 3 of clinical trials, and to likewise launch the same vaccination program in the country.

### **Criminal experimentation**

Long before this tragedy created by Sanofi Pasteur, violations by big pharmaceutical companies were already unbridled with regards to the ethical conduct of clinical trials or the human experimentation of drugs being developed. For example, during the early years of the 2000 decade, the pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca listed Alzheimer's disease, depression and others as diseases treated by the anti-psychosis tablet Seroquel despite no clinical trials on the said diseases. Serious secondary illnesses came out of AZ's criminal labeling of their medicine. The company likewise bribed doctors to prescribe the tablet.

In 1996, 200 Nigerian children afflicted with meningitis were subjected to clinical trials, this time by Pfizer, without consent from their parents. Eleven of the children died, while many more suffered from brain damage and paralysis.

Sanofi's cases of criminal practices are numerous, such as the Ketek antibiotic scandal of 2007 where the company withheld information that its clinical trials in the US were bogus, resulting in many cases of patients' liver malfunction and deaths. Sanofi is like-

wise notorious in many countries for bribing doctors to promote the company's drugs.

These oppressive methods intensified under globalization. Because of the push for maximizing profit, big pharmaceutical companies outsourced their clinical trials to poor countries, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

In these countries, patients are forced to undergo clinical trials due to the lack of medical support from their governments. Majority have low levels of literacy, making them vulnerable to compulsion by doctors and hospitals who are paid for every patient enrolled in the experiments. One study revealed that up to 80% of patients from poor countries are not informed of the nature of the clinical trials they undergo. Many of these clinical trials are not publicized as experiments.

Bureaucratic corruption in poor countries serve to favor drug companies. In the case of Sanofi, it is estimated that large kickbacks were pocketed by officials of the reactionary government from the P3.5 billion Dengvaxia vaccination program. (Former DOH Sec. Jannette Garin's motive was also questioned by the public in her avid preference to Sanofi and dumping an application for an herb-based anti-dengue vaccine created from Artemisia or *damong* Maria). This is aside from bribes to different government agencies involved in the approval of drug being tested, and to supposed "experts" that publish recommendations fa-

voring the company. At the height of the Sanofi and DOH scandal, a newly-formed organization of doctors presented themselves to the mass media to absolve Sanofi Pasteur, in unison with high ranking officials and agencies of the reactionary government.

Big pharmaceutical companies likewise cut back their expenses. Developing a new drug to be introduced to the market costs an average of \$1 billion. The biggest chunk of expenses are on clinical trials, most especially the third phase which is the most extensive and crucial. Because of competition, experiments are rushed, which is why it is to the drug companies' favor that hundreds of thousands of poor patients are ready to accept purported cure. Clinical trials outsourced to poor countries by pharmaceutical companies cost 50-60% cheaper.

In the Philippines, the wave of clinical trials outsourced by big drug companies to the country started in 2005. At present, there are more than 900 clinical trials being conducted in different parts of the country. AstraZeneca, Pfizer and Novartis lead in the most number of trials. Drugs being experimented by Merck and GlaxoSmith Klein are also considerable. These drug companies all have cases of criminal and unethical practices in conducting clinical trials.

Endangerment of the people's health will persist as long as the country is mired in poverty which is exploited by big companies who feast on diseases. AB

# Killings, harassment and crackdown on the mass movement

These past two weeks, four farmers have been shot dead by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) while thousands of families were subjected to intense militarization, violence and forced evacuation. Meanwhile, filing fabricated charges and illegal arrests of progressive leaders follow one after another in the urban areas within a series of crackdowns foisted on the open mass movement.

## Killings

On January 28, 10 a.m., AFP agents shot dead Ricky Olado, 30, a Lumad and member of Kulamanon Lumadnong Panaghiusa (Tikulpa). Olado was killed while picking up passengers for his motorcycle in Barangay Datu Ladayon in Arakan, North Cotabato. His passengers were wounded in the incident.

On January 22, soldiers shot dead Aniceto Lopez, Jr., secretary-general of Kahugpungan sa mga Mag-uuma (Kasama)-Bukidnon in Purok 3, Paitan, Quezon, Bukidnon. The killer was identified as Ernesto Balopenios of the Philippine Marines. Previously, Lopez received a call from a person identifying himself as a Bukidnon policeman and telling him to surrender as an NPA supporter.

On January 20, James Flores, 33, member of Tanang Asosasyon sa mga Mag-uuma sa Agusan ug Davao (Pamulad) was shot dead while leaving a marketplace in Tagum City. The AFP has long been accusing the Pamulad of supporting the NPA.

On January 25, 7 p.m., Arturo Colao, 56, resident of Blanco, Balin-gasag, Misamis Oriental was shot in Puting Balas, Talisayan. He was attending a gathering when motorcycle-riding gunmen shot him. He survived the attempted killing. Colao is an organizer and provincial leader of the Misamis Oriental Farmers Association (MOFA). This was the fourth in a series of attempts on his life, with the first on April 22, then May 1, 2017, and last

on January 5.

## Militarization and forced evacuation

More than 100 Lumad students, school staff, and 246 families were again forced to evacuate last January 29 due to the continuing harassment of 75th IB soldiers. At least 161 families or 758 individuals from 12 communities in the towns of Li-anga and San Agustin were forced to evacuate to Km. 9, Barangay Diatagon, Surigao del Sur due to intense militarization that started last January 8. Around 10 cases of intimidation and threats have been recorded by the Kahugpungan sa mga Lumadnong Organisasyon (Kasalo)-Caraga since the start of military operations. According to Kasalo, this is intended to allow the mining and plantation companies to start operations in their ancestral lands.

A few days later, three children were hit by an M203 grenade in a house near the 75th IB patrol base in Purok 6, Sitio Neptune in the same village. Renz Galdiano, 3, Reden Galdiano, 1, and Rynna Tiu, 12, were killed instantly in the explosion. The AFP captain said that the children might have been playing with the grenade which they picked up near the patrol base. The incident demonstrates once again why the people object to military camps in the midst of thickly populated village centers.

On January 21, the military occupied the barangay halls of

Tamucco and Balagan in Sto. Nino, Cagayan. These villages have previously submitted petitions in 2017 against the planned establishment of a military camp in the area. The residents are extremely fearful of being accidentally shot by patrolling soldiers specially when going out to their fields at dawn and dusk.

In Manila, the three months-long Homeless Camp of Floodway, Pasig residents in Mendiola was violently demolished. The demolition was led by the Manila Police District under orders of Manila Mayor Joseph Estrada. At the same day, police also attempted to demolish the community in Sitio 6 Dumpsite, Catmon, Malabon.

## Abductions, illegal arrests, and harassment

After relief operations by the Samahan han Gudti nga Parag-uma ha Sinirangan Bisayas (Sagupa-SB) in Alang-alang, Leyte on January 30, Alex Mendoza, a member of the 78th IB, forcibly took the list of the organization's aid recipients while looking for three peasant leaders of the Alang-alang Small Farmers' Association (ASFA). Mendoza threatened that the area will become like Marawi if the residents continue relations with progressive organizations.

That same day, 11 farmers of Zinundungan Valley, Rizal, Cagayan were stopped at a Regional Public Safety Battalion checkpoint in Magapit, Lal-lo, Cagayan. They were returning home from the wake of Lolito Raza, who was slain by AFP and PNP troops in Tarlac. The military interrogated the farmers and searched their things. Raza and his companion Victorio Tesorio were killed on January 24 in San Manuel, Tarlac. Both were retired Red fight-



ers who were living as ordinary civilians in the area.

On January 25, elements of the 730th Philippine Air Force entered a community in Barangay Quisumbing, Calaca, Batangas, creating terror and anxiety among the residents. It can be recalled that on December 23, 2017 a CAFGU member shot dead Moises Hernandez, a peasant leader in the area.

On January 23, men believed to be soldiers forcibly took Jorimar Japitan, 20, resident of Barangay Magangit, Maco, Compostela Valley. Japitan is currently detained without charges at the 71st IB camp in Mawab. No warrant of arrest was presented when he was taken.

### **Crackdown on the legal mass movement**

A day after Duterte's declaration of a "crackdown" on legal organizations last January 31, charges were filed against Anakbayan chairperson Vencer Crisostomo and secretary-general Einstein Recedes, Bayan Muna (BM) Rep. Carlos Zarate, former BM representatives. Neri Colmenares and Teddy Casiño, KMU's Roberto de Castro and Renato Reyes of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan). The Manila City Prosecutor issued a subpoena against the six for alleged cases of physical injuries, resistance and dis-

obedience to a person in authority and violation of the Public Assembly Act of 1995 on November 13 during the anti-Trump protests.

Previously on January 29, three men in civilian-clothes attempted to arrest ACT-National Capital Region chairperson Joselyn Martinez based on a fake arrest warrant at the Imelda Elementary School in Malabon City.

In Davao City, the AFP repeatedly called on Sheena Duazo of Bayan-SMR and Hanimay Suazo of Karapatan-SMR to "surrender" for their alleged crimes of kidnapping and serious illegal detention.

In Compostela Valley, soldiers of the 66th and 25th IB gathered residents of Sitio Pogi in Barangay San Miguel on January 29. The soldiers said Duterte has ordered the arrest and execution of leaders of organizations branded as CPP and NPA "legal fronts." The soldiers showed them a list of those they accused as secret members of the CPP and NPA. Among them were Roland Cobrado, Perlita Milallos and Elmer Atamosa, labor leaders of Shinsun Tropical Fruits Corporation and Sumifru Philippines, Corporation. The soldiers threatened them with death if they did not "surrender" within three days.

On January 26, PNP-Tagum City police led Col. Laude went to

intimidate farmer-beneficiaries of the Nagkahiusang Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association, Inc. The police and Laude had to leave when the farmers asserted their rights and legal ownership they had previously gained from the series of dialogues with the Department of Agrarian Reform. Goons of Lapanday Foods Corporation were also seen in the vicinity.

On January 27, soldiers of the 59th IB threatened Andres Dela Cruz, 54, of Barangay Pacabit, Catanauan, Quezon with fabricated charges. Dela Cruz is a peasant leader and chairperson of Pinagkaisang Lakas ng Magbubukid sa Quezon.

The Human Resource Management of the National Food Authority (NFA) issued a memorandum on January 18 on their 'affiliation' with AFP. In the 200-054 FORM from the AFP General Headquarters, the employees were required to fill in information regarding their personal background, employment history, residence, organizational membership, sketched map of their place of residence, other places they had resided in, countries they had visited, and others.

This happened at the same time when COURAGE National President Ferdinand Gaité was subjected to harassment on January 19. AB

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## People's protests

Various sectors militantly faced the US-Duterte regime's continuing attacks on their welfare. They responded with protests against the worsening oppression inflicted by the regime.

**Students' walkout.** Last February 1, students from various schools conducted a nationwide walkout to protest Rodrigo Duterte's tyranny and his threat of dictatorship, as well as against the regime's oppressive tax reform. In Metro Manila, among those who walked out of their classes were the students of UP (Diliman and

Manila), PUP, University of the East and UST. Students from the Bulacan State University, UP Los Baños, UP Mindanao, West Visayas State University, and St. Louis University also joined the walkout and protests.

Before this, students held two consecutive protest actions last January 23 and 24 to call for free

and quality education for all. A candle-lighting protest was first conducted in PUP Sta. Mesa, followed by a picket in front of the Commission on Higher Education.

**Workers' protest.** Last January 31, workers and union members of COKE FEMSA launched a picket rally in front of the company's office in Ilagan, Isabela. The group protested the impending retrenchment of more than 600 employees. According to union officials, this violates their rights not only as

union members but also as workers based on the country's labor code.

Workers from Central Luzon stormed the Department of Labor and Employment's main office in Manila last January 29. Among those who joined were workers from Hanjin Shipyard, Dong In Entech K1, Mighty Corporation, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and Mighty Food Ventures along with All Workers Alliance. They demanded the DOLE to junk Department Order 174 which perpetuates contractualization.

Meanwhile, in solidarity with the call for justice for workers killed in the NCCC mall fire in Davao City, members of BPO Industry Employees' Network (BIEN) and the Institute for Occupational Health and Safety Development held a candle-lighting protest in

front of Quiapo church in Manila last January 24. The group also commemorated the first year of the tragic fire at House Technology Industries in Cavite.

According to BIEN, no one has been held accountable for the said tragedies.

In Davao City, Kilusang Mayo Uno led a picket rally in front of the burnt mall.

**Teachers' action.** The Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) led a protest in front of the office of the Department of Budget and Management in Bulua, Cagayan de Oro City calling for salary increases last January 26. According to ACT-Northern Mindanao president Ophelia Tabacon, their group will hold a signature campaign among all the teachers in the region to strengthen their demand. Teachers from Lunugan Elementary School in Valencia, Bukidnon also joined the protest by wearing black arm-bands.

**Campout and Mendiola Massacre commemoration.** From January 24-27, farmers from Sitio Centro, Barangay Tuhian, Catanauan, Quezon held a campout protest. The campout was set up through the solidarity of PIGLAS, CLAIM and Anakpawis. During the last day of the campout, peasants marched to the neighboring barangays to call for

the abolition of haciendas and for free land distribution.

Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas led the commemoration of the 31st anniversary of the Mendiola Massacre last January 22. Farmers demanded justice, genuine land reform and genuine change. KMP also slammed Duterte's Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion.

During the rally, the KMP also joined the struggle against construction of Clark Green City in Central Luzon which will displace around 20,000 peasant and Aeta families in 12 barangays in Pampanga and Tarlac.

Similar protests were also held in Southern Mindanao, Negros, Bicol and Southern Tagalog. Persisting political killings where majority of the victims were farmers were condemned in the said rallies.

**Support for migrants.** Last January 25, a picket and an appeal to the Supreme Court was held in support of Mary Jane Veloso, a victim of human trafficking. Through Migrante, family and supporters appealed to the court to allow Veloso to explain her side. Members of Migrante International, Church Task Force to Save Mary Jane, Churches Witnessing with Migrants and St. John Neumann Migrants center also held a picket in Nueva Ecija. AB

