



EDITORIAL

Enough of five years of tyranny

The suffering and oppression brought about by Rodrigo Duterte's five years of corrupt, treacherous and tyrannical regime is beyond comparison. More than ever, the people are fired with the determination to overcome all fear and apprehension to fight the utterly detested regime.

To establish his tyranny, Duterte's key policy is the relentless and unceasing campaign of mass murder using his police and military forces and his armed mercenary killers. This aims to engulf the people in fear and paralyze them in order to rule unchallenged and with absolute power and railroad everything he desires.

In his sham "war on drugs," anti-Moro war and war against the revolutionary movement, attacking the unarmed people is Duterte's main tactic. Civilians are subjected to all forms of abuses by the armed agents of the state.

Scores of thousands across the country are victims of extrajudicial killings, abductions, torture, unlaw-

ful arrests, red tagging, "narco-listing", "terrorist"-labeling, military occupation, harassment and intimidation of civilian communities, CAFGU conscription, forcible "surrenders," aerial bombardment, relentless shelling and evacuations. State terrorism has inflicted the worst suffering on the masses of peasants and minorities. Duterte's declaration that he wants to arm vigilante groups to augment his police and military will surely worsen these attacks against the people.

He took advantage of the pandemic since 2020 to further shackle the people and control their movements, take away their rights and place the government and the entire society under police and military

power through the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict. The enactment of the "Anti-Terrorism Law" was bulldozed and now serves as weapon for intimidation and oppression against the patriotic and democratic forces.

Duterte bankrupted the people's coffers by his corruption, incessant borrowing, tax cuts for capitalists and overfeeding of military and police forces. He took hold of corruption as well as illegal drug trafficking in the country and operations of the largest criminal syndicates. He trampled on the welfare of workers, peasants, the unemployed, the teachers, nurses, government employees and the youth. Even amid the pandemic, there was a lack of funds for public health and economic subsidies for those who lost their jobs and livelihood.

The people's socioeconomic conditions worsened rapidly as a re-

sult of Duterte's additional taxes, rice and pork import liberalization, wage depression, land grabbing and use-conversion, encroachment and plunder of natural resources by multinationals in mining, plantations, energy projects and other bourgeois comprador operations. Millions have lost their jobs and sources of income in both the cities and countryside.

In five years, the erosion of the country's national sovereignty is unprecedented. Duterte betrayed the nation by allowing China to encroach on the Philippines' exclusive economic zone and extended continental shelf, build artificial islands to establish and expand its military facilities and claim the surrounding waters and its resources. It drove Filipinos away from their seas so they could completely plunder the fish supply and other marine resources.

On the other hand, he commodifies the country's rights in exchange for US grants or sales of arms and other war matériel. Duterte demands "payment" for the lopsided Visiting



Forces Agreement which he has play-pretended to abrogate since last year. He has turned a deaf ear to the clamor for the abrogation of the Mutual Defense Treaty, the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement and other unequal treaties that give US military forces extraterritorial powers in the country.

Duterte's plan to cling to power is now evident, whether in the form of running for vice president with a chosen minion as president, or through his reserve plan of imposing a fascist dictatorship. Duterte seeks lifelong immunity from criminal prosecution and perpetual aggran-





dizement of wealth and power. Yet, by aiming to remain in power, Duterte undermines the alliances that props his regime and intensifies the determination of the forces that aspire to end his reign.

Thoroughly expose all the crimes of Duterte and his lackeys and partners. The people must act to make Duterte pay for all his transgressions against the people.

The Filipino people must firmly act to put an end to Duterte's tyrannical reign. Their courage and determination must be manifested in the streets and other avenues of struggle. All democratic forces must link arms to frustrate Duterte's evil plans.

Drenched in blood, the Duterte regime is evidence of the rotten ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system. The ruling class of exploiters and oppressors can only rule through armed suppression of the broad masses of the people. Duterte's dirty war has exposed to the people the correctness and necessity of waging revolutionary struggles to end their miseries.

The Party and the people's democratic revolution will surely outlast Duterte, even if he succeeds to stay in power longer. The longer he remains, the Party, the New People's Army and the mass organizations are able to arouse, organize and mobilize more people to wage mass struggles and armed resistance. In the end, the people's pent-up outrage will collectively explode in a powerful storm that will end and cast the Duterte tyranny to oblivion. AB

<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Vol. LII No. 13 July 7, 2021</p> <hr/> <p>Ang <i>Ang Bayan</i> is published in Pilipino, Bisaya, Iloko, Hiligaynon, Waray, English and Spanish.</p> <p>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> @prwc_info</p> <p> fb.com/editorsOfAB</p> <p> cppinformationbureau@gmail.com</p> </div>	<h2 style="text-align: center; text-decoration: underline;">Contents</h2> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Editorial: Enough of five years of tyranny</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Covid-19 funds, a corruption goldmine</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Arrests and militarization in Bicol</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Farmer murdered, 22 families evacuate</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NPA seizes 2 M16 rifles</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DDoS attacks vs. alternative media</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Protest on Duterte's 5th year</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Protests</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Satiating the avarice of the dictator's monsters</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flying coffins</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In short</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PH in money laundering grey list</td> <td style="text-align: right;">9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Crisis and rivalries in semiconductor industry</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Semiconductor technology</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10</td> </tr> </table>	Editorial: Enough of five years of tyranny	1	Covid-19 funds, a corruption goldmine	3	Arrests and militarization in Bicol	4	Farmer murdered, 22 families evacuate	4	NPA seizes 2 M16 rifles	5	DDoS attacks vs. alternative media	5	Protest on Duterte's 5th year	5	Protests	5	Satiating the avarice of the dictator's monsters	6	Flying coffins	7	In short	8	PH in money laundering grey list	9	Crisis and rivalries in semiconductor industry	10	Semiconductor technology	10
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Covid-19 response funds, a corruption goldmine

The Duterte regime's Covid-19 fund worth billions of pesos is a corruption goldmine. Government reports last June 25 estimate that ₱168.7 billion or 25.43% of the entire ₱665.7 billion appropriated for the program have not been spent by various agencies of the Duterte government since March 2020 for unexplained reasons.

These funds were from the Bayanihan 1 (₱393.63 billion) and Bayanihan 2 (₱205.12 billion), and budget appropriations to various agencies in the national budget for 2021 (₱66.97 billion).

The biggest chunk of unspent funds are in the Department of Health (DOH). Of its ₱157.4-billion fund, it only managed to spend ₱51.4 billion to procure vaccines and support health workers, among others.

Particularly, it only spent ₱1.12 billion of the ₱5.26-billion allocation for the procurement of vaccines. The ₱9-billion budget for payment of special risk allowance of health workers was only released last June 29.

The ₱16.24-million allocation for health workers at the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital remains unutilized. This is despite the continuous clamor of the sector led by the Alliance of Health Workers.

End of Bayanihan 2

Government agencies with unspent funds include the Department of Social Welfare and Development or DSWD (₱1.3 billion), Department of Public Works and Highways (₱1 billion), Department of Agriculture (₱658.3 million), Department of the Interior and Local Government (₱580.471 million), DOH (₱266.2 million), and Department of Labor and Employment (₱224 million.)

Unspent Bayanihan 2 funds will be reverted back to the National Treasury as

the extended law expired on June 30. Approximately 4.6% or ₱6.5 billion of the ₱141.6 billion of the extended Bayanihan 2 remains unspent by various government departments.

Several personalities and groups criticized the regime's negligence. According to Rep. Edcel Lagman of Albay, the expiration of Bayanihan 2 with billions of still unspent funds is a "serious indictment" of the regime's negligence and failure to respond to the pandemic.

The Alliance of Concerned Teachers also criticized the Department of Education for failing to utilize the ₱1.7-billion allocation for distance learning. The said budget was particularly allocated for the printing of learning modules, and aid for teachers among others.

The regime's free public transportation program also ended with

the expiration of Bayanihan 2. This is despite shortages in public transport especially in Metro Manila.

Spending probe

Sen. Sonny Angara, chairperson of the Senate Committee on Finance, said that the committee will probe into the spending of each government agency to identify the reasons behind the slow utilization of funds.

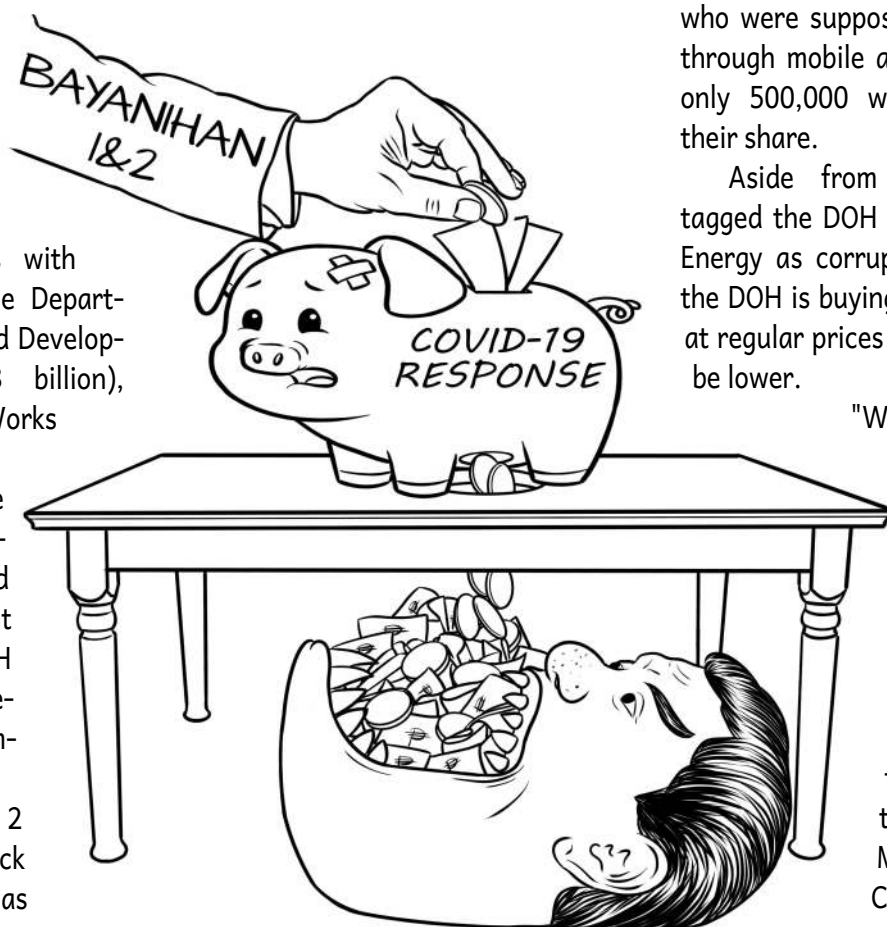
Last month, the Senate also questioned the sluggish disbursement by the DBM despite the implementation of the Anti-Red Tape Authority which supposedly aims to expedite the process.

Last February and May, Sen. Francis Pangilinan and Sen. Risa Hontiveros respectively filed their resolutions to audit the Bayanihan funds. Thirty-seven lawmakers also filed similar resolutions in the Lower House.

Last July 3, Sen. Manny Pacquiao alleged that ₱10.4 billion in Social Amelioration Program (SAP) of the DSWD are missing. He said that of the 1.8 million beneficiaries who were supposed to the cash aid through mobile application Starpay, only 500,000 were able to claim their share.

Aside from DSWD, he also tagged the DOH and Department of Energy as corrupt. He alleged that the DOH is buying near-expiry drugs at regular prices when prices should be lower.

"Without proper accounting, we cannot blame the people for thinking that this administration is trying to create an enormous war chest in the run-up for the 2022 elections," said Bayan Muna Partylist Rep. Carlos Zarate. AB



Arrests and militarization in Bicol

A farmer was killed and 19 civilians were arrested in military operations across Bicol during the past two weeks. Many areas across the region are currently under military occupation.

Elements of the Regional Mobile Force Battalion gunned down farmer Alex Llabres at his house in Barangay San Roque Heights, Bula, Camarines Sur last June 24.

In Sorsogon, the 22nd IB illegally arrested 13 individuals including six minors in Bulan last June 28. Soldiers initially arrested Alvin Mapula along with his 2-year old niece Althea Mapula, and 13-year old nephew Janrex Mapula, 13, in Barangay Bulawan.

They also illegally detained the relatives who were searching for the victims. Editha Mapula, 43; Mary Ann Mapula, 29; Angel Mapula, 12; Rey Mapula, 4; RJ Mapula, 7; Renz Guelas, 13; Sunny Preconillo, 48;

Emy Preconillo, 39 and Dante Bاندولا, 50, are still detained.

On the same day, state forces arrested Laurente Gestole, resident of Barangay Cadandanan. They also harassed and threatened to arrest Regine Graid and Geraldine Gestole, residents of Barangay Calpi. In the town of Donsol, state forces shot and illegally arrested farmer Jesus Macenas last June 17.

In Masbate, state forces arrested teacher Mariel Suson, 22, and Jennifer Dollison Nuñez, a member of Amihan Bicol and Sano Arendain ng Kilusang Magbubukid ng Bicol on June 22 and 23 in Barangay San Jose, Uson.

On June 18, the elements of the

2nd IB arrested Joseph Delara, 18, resident of Candelaria, Uson, and Jude Serafin resident of Tuburan, Cawayan. Serafin is still under police detention.

Meanwhile, 23 out of the 44 barangays of Tinambac, three in Lagonoy, and two in Goa, Camarines Sur are occupied by the 83rd IB. The soldiers have been encamped in these villages under the pretext of conducting Retooled Community Support Program operations.

The occupation aims to prepare the communities for the entry of big mining, quarrying and ecotourism companies in the Partido district. These companies primarily aim to plunder Tinambac which serves as the largest water reservoir in Camarines Sur. The mountains of the said area have rich mineral and wood resources. AB

Farmer murdered, 22 families evacuate

During the past weeks, one case each of killing and artillery shelling were reported in Negros Occidental, while 22 families evacuated in Surigao del Sur. Five civilians were arrested in Bohol, Laguna and Agusan del Sur.

Killing. Elements of the 3rd ID gunned down Erming Pacheco, a Tumannok, at Sitio Dala-upon, Carabalan, Himamaylan City. He was accused of involvement in an encounter between the military and Red fighters near the area.

Shelling. On the same day, the 3rd ID shelled the mountainous areas of Himamaylan City and Binalbagan from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This attack traumatized residents and damaged their source of livelihood.

Evacuation. In Surigao del Sur, 22 families (100 individuals) from Sitio Panukmoan and Sitio Manluy-a, Barangay Diatagon, Lianga evacuated from their community on June 23. The evacuees are from the same

barangay where three civilians were massacred by soldiers of the 3rd Special Forces Battalion on June 15. The soldiers threatened to kill anyone who will speak about the massacre.

Illegal arrest. Elements of the 47th IB simultaneously arrested Carmilo Tabada, coordinator of Central Visayas Farmers Development Center, in Trinidad, Bohol, and Rev. Nathaniel Vallente, pastor of the United Churches of Christ in the Philippines, in San Jose, Mabini, Bohol, on June 25. Evidences of firearms and ammunition were planted in their possession, and both were slapped with trumped-up charges. They were earlier red-

tagged by the regime.

On the same day, the police arrested Dana Marie Marcellana and Christian Relao in San Diego, San Pablo City, Laguna. They were slapped with trumped-up charges of rebellion and illegal possession of firearms.

In Agusan del Sur, the 8th Special Forces Company arrested a 12-year old child at Sitio Marang, Barangay Mabuhay, Prosperidad on June 4. Prior to the arrest, soldiers indiscriminately fired their weapons at farmers harvesting corn. Two farmers were wounded. Twelve children were among the harvesters.

Harassment. Soldiers and policemen illegally searched seven houses of members of the Trinidad-Talibon Integrated Farmers Association in Trinidad, Bohol on June 27 and June 28. AB

NPA-Surigao del Sur seizes 2 M16 rifles

RED FIGHTERS DISARMED the security guards of MR1 Construction Company on June 24 in Barangay Zone 3, Lanuza, Surigao del Sur. Seized during the said operation were two M16 rifles, a shotgun, a .45 caliber pistol and other military equipment. A security guard and a CAFGU element were killed during the offensive. The company is owned by Paulo Lopez, a relative of Rep. Prospero Pichay, Jr.

On the same day, the New People's Army (NPA)-Surigao del Sur ambushed policemen aboard a patrol vehicle who responded to the incident. The NPA also fired at a unit of the Regional Mobile Group in the area.

In Samar, the NPA-Northern Samar were able to evict the occupying troops of the 20th IB conducting Retooled Community Support Program (RCSP) in barangays Epaw and Sag-od in Las Navas. On June 18 and 19, Red fighters sniped soldiers at Barangay Epaw. Earlier, Red fighters also sniped 20th IB elements occupying the borders of barangays Epaw and Sag-od.

The soldiers left the area on June 21 and have not returned since then to conduct RCSP.

AFP, DOST mount DDoS attacks against alternative media

SWEDEN-BASED CYBERSECURITY watchdog Qurium Media exposed in a report last June 22 that the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Department of Science and Technology (DOST) were behind the distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks against the websites of Bulatlat, Altermidya and Karapatan. The attacks began mid-May and peaked in June, and continue until today. The websites were flooded with millions of requests to render their services unavailable.

These were mounted simultaneously with DDoS attacks on the Philippine Revolution Web Central (PRWC at <https://cpp.ph>) which resulted in intermittent service disruptions. The AFP also used fake Twitter accounts to push for temporary suspension of the handle of the CPP (@prwc_info) and permanent ban on the handle of its information officer (@marco_cpp).

According to Qurium, the attacks were traced to IP addresses linked to an office of the military in Taguig City, and to the Philippine Research, and Government Information Network of the DOST. The Congress is now pushing to investigate the attacks.

Meanwhile, unauthorized elements hijacked the membership application of 1Sambayan during the second week of June. The group believes that their political rivals orchestrated the attack.

Groups meet Duterte's fifth year with protest

MORE THAN A thousand individuals marched to the Mendiola Bridge in Manila to mark Rodrigo Duterte's fifth year in power last June 30 and hold him accountable for his regime of corruption, treachery, killings, and oppression.

Led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, various organizations demanded an end to the killings and for the Duterte regime to be prosecuted for all its crimes against the people. A similar protest was mounted in San Pedro City, Laguna.

On the same day, health workers protested in front of the Department of Health office in Manila City to demand their unpaid benefits and Sec. Francisco Duque III's resignation.



75-years of neocolonialism. Around 100 students mounted a lightning rally in front of the United States Embassy in Pasay City on July 4. Youth activists led by the League of Filipino Students demanded the abrogation of the Visiting Forces Agreement, Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement and other unequal agreements and treaties between the Philippines and the US. They also condemned the Duterte regime for being openly subservient to the US and for selling out the country's sovereignty.

Pride Protest. LGBTQ+ groups and their supporters converged at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani, Quezon City on June 26 to commemorate the Pride Month and uphold the LGBTQ+ sector's rights and struggle against discrimination. The protest was spearheaded by Bahaghari and Metro Manila Pride. Pride protests were also mounted by various organizations in Pampanga and Laguna.

Junk Anti-Terrorism Law. National democratic groups protested in front of the Supreme Court in Padre Faura, Manila City on July 6 to demand the junking of the Duterte regime's Anti-Terror Law. The law has been enacted for exactly a year last July 3 but the Supreme Court has yet to release its decision on the petitions filed against it.

Satiating the avarice of the dictator's monsters

Even with a few months left in Duterte's official term, he continues to give huge favors to his armed agents, especially to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). He often calls them "my soldiers" when he visits their camps, when he incites them to kill or rape, and when he prioritized them to be inoculated. Duterte favored them primarily by lining up their pockets and giving them power.

Serving as foundation of Duterte's terrorist reign, the military and police are continuously being beefed-up and strengthened. There are now approximately 400,000 soldiers and other state security forces, way more than the 347,000 when his presidency began. The regime also increased the number of CAFGU elements, which it targeted to bring to 79,000 last 2020. In 2015, there were only 56,000 paramilitary elements in the country. The AFP currently has 190 generals while the Philippine National Police (PNP) has 146.

Duterte is increasing the number of military personnel in a desperate attempt to end the armed revolution. In 2016, the Philippine Army which is the biggest branch of the AFP only had 81,000 personnel distributed in 87 maneuver battalions. The 88th IB was deployed in October 2017 as the first among 20-35 battalions which Duterte sought to establish. The 99th IB, one of the newest battalions, is currently stationed at Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija

US funds and control

It was easy for Duterte to carry out his plans as these were funded by the US. From 2016-2019, the regime received a total of ₱27.2 billion in military aid. This included the ₱13.1 billion worth of weapons and military equipment. The regime is



set to receive an additional ₱9.8 billion in aid this year.

Among those funded by the US was the establishment of the 11th ID in 2018 which currently covers the islands and seas of Sulu and is targeted to be filled with 4,500 personnel. Part of this is the 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT) of the Philippine Army which was patterned after the military structure of the US and is directly funded by it. It operates with complete aerial support, cannons, armored personnel carrier, and others. The 11th ID and BCTs are directed by the US under the pretext of conducting military exercises.

The regime also established a Cyber Battalion of the army which focuses on attacks using the internet.

In line with Duterte's aligning with China, the AFP also received Chinese military aid. This includes 6,000 Norinco rifles which the regime received in 2016. As part of its rivalry with the US, China is exerting efforts to influence AFP officials to counter the US' control over the military. It is evident that there

is now a pro-China faction in the AFP which believes in the growing power of China in the region, or benefits from kickbacks from anomalous public contracts and receives favor from Chinese drug and smuggling syndicates.

Rewarding the butchers

Since 2016, Duterte has pushed salary increases for his soldiers and police. He was able to gain their loyalty by doubling the monthly salary of regular troops up to generals. The basic salary of new soldiers (₱29,668) is higher by ₱6,000 compared to the entry-level salary of public school teachers. Meanwhile, the monthly basic pay of nurses remain at ₱22,000-₱24,000. The increase was implemented to attract more recruits. However, AFP branches have yet to achieve their recruitment targets.

On top of this, soldiers and police receive various allowances and benefits for food, clothing, housing and others. Those who participate in operations and combat receive additional allowances. Their take home

"Satiating..." continued on page 7

AFP aerial assets:

Flying coffins

The helicopters and planes of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have been recently dubbed as "flying coffins." This came after the crash of a C-130 Hercules transport plane of the AFP last July 4 in Barangay Bangkal, Patikul, Sulu, which recorded the highest number of casualties in the past three decades.

Latest reports confirmed that 52 have died, including 49 soldiers and three residents of Sitio Amman of the said barangay. At least 53 were wounded and currently being treated, including 49 soldiers and four civilians.

The secondhand plane was purchased by the regime just this January from the US. The war matériel of the AFP are mostly secondhand, including its warships and war planes which have been used since the World War 2 and the US war of aggression in Vietnam from the 1960s to 1970s.

The incident happened just a few days after Defense Sec. Delfin Lorenzana grounded the AFP's fleet of Black Hawk helicopter on June 24, following a helicopter crash during a night proficiency training in Capas, Tarlac.

The combat utility helicopter crashed in the evening of June 23 after taking off from a former military base. The following day, search and rescue teams were able to locate the ravaged helicopter at Crow Valley in Tarlac. All of its six crew and passengers were killed.

The crashed helicopter was among the 16 S-70i Black Hawk helicopters purchased by the Philippines from Poland in 2019. Six of these, including that which crashed, arrived in the country in November 2020. Five more helicopters arrived this June and the last batch is expected to arrive by the end of the year.

The 16 helicopters are part of the \$241-million contract (₱11.8 billion) between the Philippines and Poland in 2019. These were manufactured by PZL Mielec in Poland, a

subsidiary of US company Lockheed Martin. (The Philippines was forced to buy from Poland after Canada refused to sell war matériel to the country because of the regime's terrible human rights record.)

In all, 18 pilots and soldiers have been killed in successive helicopter crashes which took place since July 2020 until June 23 this year.

Last July 2020, four crew and soldiers were killed and another wounded when a Huey helicopter crashed while conducting night proficiency training in northern Luzon.

In January 2021, a UH-1H Huey helicopter of the 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing crashed in Bulonay, Impasug-ong, Bukidnon, killing seven crew and passengers. The helicopter was deployed to support the combat operations of the 8th IB against the New People's Army.

Last April, a pilot of the Philippine Air Force died while three passengers were wounded when an MG520 helicopter gunship of the 15th Strike Wing crashed in Jetafe, Bohol. AB

"Satiating..." from page 6

pay is relatively higher as they are not obliged to contribute to national pension funds unlike other government employees.

Officials receive separate allowances. Captains receive an additional ₱7,000 while the highest ranking general receives ₱35,000. This excludes rewards given to soldiers who are decorated with medals which can reach up to ₱100,000 monthly.

These are still minimal compared to huge rewards given by the regime to generals in exchange for their support. Duterte placed military officials in key government po-

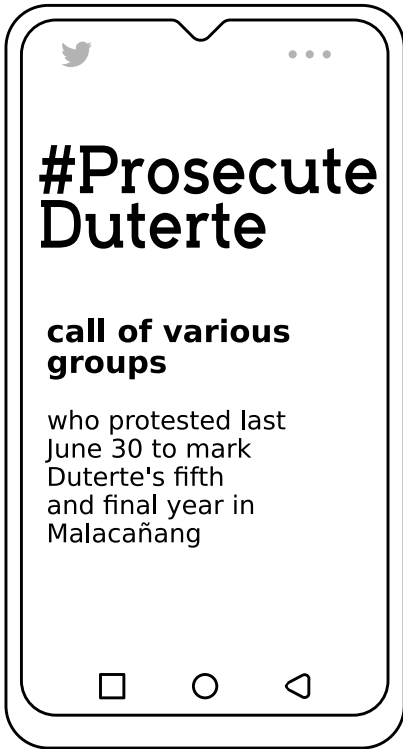
sitions after retiring, favoring particularly generals who were previously deployed in Davao. Retired military officials occupy at least 12 positions in his cabinet, in addition to those with lower positions.

Generals aggrandize themselves with public funds. In his attempt to control the flow of illegal drugs and contrabands into the country, he immediately placed a retired military official to head Bureau of Customs (BOC) when he sat in power. When the attempt of former BOC chief Nicanor Faeldon to smuggle ₱6.5 billion worth of shabu was botched, Duterte replaced him with two other former generals.

He also appointed three former military and police officials to successively head the Bureau of Corrections to control the operations of druglords inside prison compounds.

In 2017, millions of pesos are believed to have been pocketed by Duterte's generals by securing the procurement of the warships for the Philippine Navy. Even Duterte himself is involved in the anomalous ₱16-billion contract. His generals have also benefited from Duterte's termination of rival government officials under the pretext of the "war on corruption" and "war on drugs."

(The second part of the article will be published in the next issue.) AB



52nd

Rank of the Philippines among **53 countries** in terms of Covid-19 resiliency.

Indicators measured in the study include the **percentage of population inoculated, severity of lockdowns and others**. The only country behind the Philippines (53rd) is Argentina.

Source: Bloomberg Covid Resilience Ranking

80%

of Filipino students are **unable to meet learning standards** expected of their grade.



One out of four Grade 5 students do not meet proficiency levels in reading, and mathematics which they should have learned in Grade 2 or Grade 3. **Four out of five students** aged 15-years old do not meet the proficiencies in mathematics which they should have learned in Grade 5.

Source: World Bank

Press Freedom Predator

title assigned by Reporters Without Borders to Duterte

along with 36 other heads of states last July 5.

The Philippines remains among the

10

worst countries in the world for workers

in terms of the **right to strike, unionize and freedom of expression**. This is the fifth consecutive year since the country has been part of this list.

Source: 2021 Global Rights Index, International Trade Union Confederation, 2021

Benigno Aquino III, 61,

passed away on June 23 due to kidney failure.

His regime was most notorious for **corruption (Priority Development Assistance Fund)** and Mamasapano 44. He served as the 15th president of the reactionary state from 2010 to 2016.

87%

of Manila's land area could potentially be flooded in 2030

as a result of **sea-level rise and stronger typhoons** due to **climate change**. Approximately **1.54 million residents** will be driven out the city should this happen.

Source: Greenpeace East Asia



or the **Kataas-taasan, Kagalang-galang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan** was founded in the evening of

7 Hulyo 1892

at the house of Deodato Arellano in 734 Calle El Cano corner of Azcarraga (currently Recto) in Manila.

Philippines relisted in money laundering grey list

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) once again placed the Philippines in its “grey list” last June 24. This means the FATF will put the country’s bank and financial transactions under closer scrutiny.

Money laundering is “cleaning” illegally obtained dirty money through transfers involving banks or investments in legitimate businesses. The FATF is an international watchdog created by the G7 to monitor money laundering. The Philippines was blacklisted in 2000 and grey-listed in 2012.

The FATF placed the country on the list despite amendments done by Rodrigo Duterte to the Anti-Money Laundering Act last February and the passage of the Anti-Terror Law in June 2020 supposedly to counter “terror financing.” This is because both laws did not target the main sources of dirty money in the country—drug trafficking and corruption.

In 2019, the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) investigated 161,650 suspicious transaction reports (STR) from January 2013 to December 2017 worth ₱17.9 trillion. The agency discovered that 12,508 STRs worth ₱10 trillion involves drug trafficking and related crimes. Half (₱5 trillion) was reported during the Duterte regime’s first year of “war against drugs.” Between 2015 and 2016, the value of STR involving illegal drug trade rose by 200%. Despite dropping in 2017, suspicious transactions involving drugs remained higher compared to 2014. STRs are submitted to the AMLC for transactions suspected of involving dirty money.

Almost all transactions went through local banks. Some (29%) disappeared to the US, Costa Rica, Malaysia and Nigeria but bulk of the funds circulated inside the country.

In another more extensive study released by the AMLC in 2020, suspicious transactions rose by 11 times from 2013 to 2020. Between

2019 and 2020, it estimated that STRs increased by 68%, from 623,000 to 1.01 million.

Since 2012, international agencies monitoring international drug trafficking have put money laundering in the Philippines as a “serious concern.” In its 2021 International Narcotics Strategy Report released in March, the US said that Chinese syndicates have been using the Philippines as a regional transit country for illegal drugs and dirty money. These syndicates also supply the bulk of illegal drugs that are locally circulated and consumed. An AMLC report said 54% of the STRs submitted from January 1 to September 2020 are related to drug trafficking.

Other than the international operations of drug syndicates, corruption by government officials and human trafficking—both predicate crimes to money laundering—are also high in the Philippines. The inflow and outflow of dirty money is made easier when coupled with high volumes of remittances from migrant Filipinos. In addition to local banks, money is also laundered through private businesses, notably casinos. (One of the biggest casino owners in the Philippines is Duterte’s mega-crony Enrique Razon. His other crony, Dennis Uy, is set to build a giant casino in Cebu.)

In a separate report, the Securities Exchange Commission identified corruption as the main source of dirty money entering the country’s financial sector from 2017 to 2019. Most of the funds are from local politicians, though some were suspected to be from China. According to the SEC report, “terror financing” is “extremely low or nil.”



Crisis and rivalries in the semiconductor industry

The semiconductor industry is at currently at the center of rising imperialist rivalries between giant capitalists US and China. The rhetoric of "free trade" has been set aside as the imperialist states take a direct role in their race to control the production and distribution of this key technological product.

This conflict is part of the intensifying competition between the giant monopoly capitalists. This involves not only a race in production technologies, but moreover involves political and military power against rivals. This mirrors the severe crisis of the global capitalist system marked by anarchy in production, giants gobbling up smaller capitalists and intensifying exploitation of workers.

The semiconductor industry

Semiconductors are one of the key components in electronic products. These are also called ICs (integrated circuit), electronic chips or microchips. Its capacity to control the flow of electrical signals in its

circuitry enables it to control (or serve as "brains") of computers, smartphones, hard drives, television sets, cameras, as well as "smart" appliances, modern vehicles, drones, military hardware and a lot more.

There are three types of companies in the semiconductor industry: there are those who design the chip's circuitry (such as Qualcomm and Nvidia); those who carry out the actual manufacturing or production (such as the Taiwan Semiconductor Company or TSMC and the Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation or SMIC); and those who do design and production (such as Intel and Samsung).

In 2020, semiconductor sales were led by Samsung Electronics

(South Korea), Intel (US) and TSMC (Taiwan). Eight of the leading companies are from the US. The biggest Chinese company comes in at 19th position.

But the biggest manufacturers of semiconductors are in Asia. Sixty-three percent of global semiconductor supply are produced in Taiwan, led by TSMC which produces 51.5% of global supply. Of the total, 18% comes from South Korea, and 5-6% comes from China.

Currently, various fields of capitalist production are being bogged down by the lack of supply of semiconductors. This started in the latter part of 2020 with the sudden spike in demand for computers and electronic gadgets in the face of lifestyle and workstyle changes brought about by the pandemic. This also arose as vehicle production restarted without prior orders after months of being forced to shutter by drop in sales at the outset of the pandemic. The supply shortage also came about as the US prohibited SMIC, China's biggest microchip producer, from selling semiconductors to American companies.

One of the most affected by the semiconductor shortage is the production of vehicles. It is estimated that up to 2.5 million cars were not manufactured in the first half of 2021 because of supply problems. This also affected the production of new electronic products.

(The second part of the article will be published in the next issue.) **AB**

The technology of semiconductors

SEMICONDUCTOR PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY in terms of fitting more circuits in limited space advances interminably. In the 1950s, an electronic chip had only ten circuits. This increased a hundredfold in the 1960s. It is said that the capacity of chips rises every two years. In the end of the 1980s, a stamp-sized could contain 16 million circuits. In the past years, up to 7 to 10 billion circuits could be fitted in this small space

Special technologies are used to etch circuits on silicon wafers (8-12 inches). The most advanced machines could print 7 nanometer circuits. (In comparison, the diameter of common human hair is 80,000 to 100,000 nm.) The capacity to print 5 nm and 3 nm circuits are now being developed.