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EDITORIAL Fake charges, real dangers

The government of President Rodrigo Duterte has intensified yet again its attacks against revolutionaries, activists, indigenous communities, human rights defenders and opposition politicians.

We are assaulted by daily news of political murders, death threats, communist labeling, military occupation of villages and schools, bombardment of rural villages, forced evacuation and forced 'surrender' of revolutionaries.

The latest barrage has come in the form of so-called mass graves – the deceased being dug up by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), placed in common graves and announced in the media as victims of 'purges' or 'mass murders' of the New People's Army (NPA) and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). The defenseless deceased are relocated and reclassified by the AFP as they please, and the cases against the NPA and CPP are 'recycled' and re-filed as needed.

The so-called facts alleged in the cases as well as the charges may be false. But the dangers against the accused are real. They can be arrested and languish eternally in the rotten judicial and penal system of the Manila government. Worse, they can be targets of the notorious shoot-now-justify-later policy of the Duterte regime.

The ever-increasing dangers are driving greater numbers into the ranks of the New People's Army. Safe from the clutches of the fake charges, they can then help expand the territories of the People's Democratic Government. **UP**



CPP Founding Chairman Prof. Jose Maria Sison (left) and NDFP Chief International Representative Luis Jalandoni. Photo: jonb

False charges filed against Sison, Jalandoni, 36 others

As part of the Duterte regime's campaign against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), a Manila court on 28 August ordered the arrest of CPP Founding Chairman, Prof. Jose Maria Sison, his wife Julieta de Lima-Sison, National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) Chief International Representative Luis Jalandoni, NDFP peace consultants, and others totaling 38 persons.

The case accuses Prof. Sison and his companions of having summarily executed 67 persons. These persons were allegedly former members of the New People's Army (NPA), whose skeletal remains were discovered by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in an alleged mass grave in Inopacan,

Leyte, in August 2006.

Prof. Sison [issued a statement](#) saying that at the time of the supposed killings, he was in a maximum security detention as a political prisoner of the dictator Marcos.

Among those to be arrested are some who have been forcibly disappeared by the AFP, some in prison, and some who have already died.

According to Sison, "The case is being resurrected as part of Duterte's plan to have a proliferation of charges against his opponents and as preparation for the mass arrest of people who oppose his anti-people and anti-democratic policies and action."

In a subsequent development, the AFP said it would coordinate with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Justice, and the Interpol to arrest Prof. Sison, who lives as a political refugee in the Netherlands.

Prof. Sison said that he cannot be arrested by the Manila government. "I am well protected by the Refugee Convention and by the European Convention on Human Rights."

There is no extradition treaty between the Netherlands and the Philippines. **UP**



Police agents dig up 'mass grave' in Bukidnon.
Photo: PNA

AFP digs up fake 'mass grave' cases

The Duterte government's Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has dug up two cases of alleged 'mass graves' in late August, alleging that the dead had been killed by the New People's Army and alleged top officials of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). The CPP and the accused individuals denied the allegations. [see related story: [False charges filed against Sison, Jalandoni, 36 others](#)]

CPP Founding Chairman Jose Maria Sison revealed that the [Macapagal-Arroyo government 'concocted' the false charges in 2006](#). Then AFP General Hermogenes Esperon and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales masterminded the collection of skeletons from various cemeteries and placed

them in one site. The Inopacan case included alleged victims who were also listed by the AFP as victims in yet another alleged mass grave 24 kilometers away.

The Supreme Court already dismissed the Inopacan case in 2007. The SC admonished the prosecutors "not to prostitute the function of the prosecution". The most recent case however, involves a new set of alleged victims and accused.

Earlier in the month, on 22 August, the 10th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army exhumed the remains of retired policeman Joel Rey Galendez, 43; tribal leader Dionisio Camarillo Havana, 37; and Army Sgt. Reynante Havana Espana, 42 from a shallow grave in Kitaotao town, in Bukidnon, in southern Philippines.

According to the AFP, the three were on their way home when they were intercepted by NPA members on 22 August 2017. They were supposedly executed shortly after. Family members of the deceased, currently under military custody, claim that the NPA had been asking for ransom from them until July 2019, supposedly making them believe their family members were still alive.

[The CPP denied the AFP's claim](#). "As far as our records are concerned, there were no incidents involving NPA units in checkpoints, arrests or captives in Bukidnon around August 2017", the CPP asserted.

"We have no record of the names of those exhumed," the CPP emphasized. Neither had the AFP made public any reports regarding the three, "something they usually do to score propaganda points," the CPP said.

The CPP further clarified "It is against the policies of the NPA to demand money for the freedom of its captives, whether prisoners of war or those arrested for trial. This is publicly known". **UP**



AFP's 79th Infantry Battalion ambushed in Escalante City

The Roselyn Jean Pelle Command of the New People's Army (NPA) won a significant victory in its ambush of the 79th Infantry Battalion of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the early morning of 31 August, in Paitan village, Escalante City, Negros Occidental province in central Philippines.

The firefight lasted about 15 minutes. At least 10 soldiers were killed and many others wounded. The NPA unit was able to

retreat to safety without suffering any casualty. [According to the NPA](#), most of the AFP soldiers were only slightly wounded when the Red fighters were retreating. However, the AFP used machinegun fire at their own units, causing the multiple deaths and more serious wounds.

Meanwhile, the AFP's 303rd Brigade, the higher command of the 79th Infantry Battalion, gave the false report that "only three soldiers were slightly wounded". Families of the dead and wounded soldiers are expected to protest against the deadly actions of the AFP troops and the fake story of the 303rd Brigade.

The NPA Roselyn Jean Pelle Command stated that the ambush "is a response to the widespread cry for justice for the numerous victims of Duterte's Memorandum Order 32 in Negros Island, which is a de facto Martial Law declaration."

87 civilians have been [victims of political assassinations in Negros Island](#) since Duterte became president in 2016.

Escalante City is known for the people's resistance against the Marcos dictatorship. In September 1985, a protest action was mercilessly attacked by fascist troops of the dictatorship, causing the death of some 20 martyrs among the youth, workers, and peasants. The Roselyn Jean Pelle Command refers to this tradition of resistance to call for the people in Negros and other parts of the country to fight and defeat Duterte's de facto martial law. **UP**