



UPDATES PHILIPPINES

RELEASED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF THE PHILIPPINES

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EDITORIAL Supreme Drug Lord

President Rodrigo Duterte has successfully established himself as the Supreme Drug Lord of the Philippines. In the guise of ridding the country of illegal drugs, he has in fact abetted the importation, local production and proliferation of crystal meth or 'shabu' on the streets of the capital and the rest of the archipelago.

The crooked officials of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) have been the reliable 'muscle' in Duterte's operations. Amidst the howls of the families of his murdered victims and the condemnations of human rights defenders in the country and abroad, the state's security forces have been used to eliminate rival drug syndicates and create a climate of fear among the poor drug dependents and small-time drug peddlers by killing tens of thousands.

The judicial system has been prostituted to persecute and prosecute political activists and oppositionists – all those who dare speak out against the new ruling gangster. And the already corrupt and dynastical parliament is all too happy to give its stamp of approval to Duterte.

Duterte has found new allies in China's Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin. Eyeing the exploitation of the country's natural resources, cheap labor and as additional market for surplus commodities and capital, these 'foreign allies' can provide additional arms and training for the murderous rampage to continue.

But the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people does not cower before this new tyrant and his shiny weapons. We have already proven twice that we can overthrow the US-supported puppet governments. Duterte and his ilk will soon be history while the Filipino people will march forward to national liberation and genuine democracy. **UP**



Presidents Rodrigo Duterte and Vladimir Putin in Moscow. Photo: Sputnik | Sergey Guneev.

Duterte - Russia alliance aimed at countering international isolation -- CPP

The Communist Party of the Philippines on Sunday condemned the trip of President Rodrigo Duterte to Russia on 1 – 6 October, and his trip to China on 28 August – 1 September as "costly political junkets" aimed at countering mounting international notoriety.

The CPP said Duterte wants to "counter international isolation and pressure" resulting from the UN Human Rights

Council's Resolution in July 2019 to investigate his regime's 'war on drugs'.

"Duterte hopes to use his 'alliance' with China and Russia to induce some countries to withdraw their vote from the UNHRC Resolution," the CPP asserted.

A second objective for the costly junkets, according to the CPP, is to boost Duterte's "bargaining position" in relation to the US, to pressure the Donald Trump government to "provide his regime with more purchases of military equipment."

Following its 2017 Agreement on Defense Cooperation with Russia, the Manila government has announced plans to procure helicopters and other military items from Russia. A move, the CPP says, that "will go against US policy of not selling weapons to countries who buy weapons from Russia."

The CPP also lambasted the supposed gains from the trip that were announced by the government, saying the visits "also highlight Duterte's mendicant foreign policy, where he begs for loans and foreign investments."

The regime claimed bringing home 10 business deals worth \$12.57 million, which include supplying tuna, sardines and coconut oil to Russia, and supplying Russian-made watches, vehicles and medical technologies to the Philippines.

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Discussed in the meetings were cooperation in the construction of nuclear power plants, which will likely spark protests in the country, and Russia's possible energy exploration in the West Philippine Sea.

"Without a change in the local economic system," said the CPP, "trade relations with the more advanced capitalist countries are always an unequal exchange between their finished manufactured commodities and the country's cheap, raw and semiprocessed goods."

After taking power in 2016, Duterte declared an "independent foreign policy," which his spokesperson now frames as "rebalancing of traditional relationships" pertaining to the US and "deepening of relations with non-traditional partners," mainly China and Russia.

He had claimed that if China and Russia were to create a new world order, he would be the first to join them and abandon the UN. He has also referred to Russian president Vladimir Putin as his "idol" and "favorite hero."

During his Russia trip, Duterte took a swipe at the US and the European Union, saying the Western powers "make the world more chaotic."

Total trade between the Philippines and Russia increased by 50 percent from 2017 to 2018, and the Philippines' export to Russia increased by more than 20 percent in the same period. **UP**



*Erstwhile PNP chief Gen. Oscar Albayalde stepped down amid drug syndicate allegations within the police organization.
Photo: Wikipedia*

'Ninja cops' expose drug syndicate within police forces

Ongoing investigations in the Philippine Senate have exposed top officials of the Philippine National Police (PNP), including its chief General Oscar Albayalde, as being involved in reselling hundreds of millions of pesos worth of seized illegal drugs. The controversy forced Gen. Albayalde to resign on 14 October, ahead of his retirement on 8 November 2019.

Former PNP generals testified in the Senate that Gen. Albayalde blocked the investigation and dismissal of 13 police officials implicated in stealing about 160 kg. out of 200 kg. of crystal meth – locally called 'shabu' – they confiscated in a drug raid in 2013. The corrupt officials – so-called 'ninja cops' – then resold the drugs valued at about PhP600 million (US\$12 million).

The 13 'ninja cops' were then under Gen. Albayalde's command in Pampanga province north of Manila.

Former PNP general Rudy Lacadin testified how Albayalde admitted to him that he, Albayalde, got a share of the money, "although just a small amount of it."

A few days before the PNP chief was implicated, Duterte burst out against 'ninja cops', "I will kill you first!" However, his rhetoric suddenly softened when Albayalde's name came up in the Senate hearings. Duterte instead invoked "due process" in the investigations that he delegated to the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) denounced the PNP and President Rodrigo Duterte for their corruption and crookedness. Patnubay De Guia, Spokesperson for the NDFP in the Southern Tagalog Region, urged the Filipino people to "vent their anger on President Duterte as a murderer, number one druglord and protector of favored 'ninja cops' and big illegal drug syndicates in the country."

"It is becoming ever-clearer that Duterte's campaign against illegal drugs is primarily intended to dismantle the supply and market of his rival drug syndicates, in order to establish himself and his favored druglords as the new supreme drug lord," De Guia revealed.

She said that Duterte is clearing the way for his syndicate to monopolize the illegal drug trade in the country, mobilizing his trusted high officials in the PNP, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and the Bureau of Customs.

Duterte's deadly campaign has earned increased notoriety and condemnation around the world. It has reportedly victimized more than 20,000 in extra-judicial killings and 6,000 more due to 'legitimate' PNP operations.

De Guia called on the people to "fight for justice for the victims of the regime's bloody 'war on drugs' – drug dependents and small-time drug pushers from among the poor people. Expose the Duterte-led armed machinery of the AFP and PNP for what it is: rotten to the core!" **UP**



Teachers demand a meaningful wage increase.
Photo: Janess Ann Ellao | Bulatlat.

Nationwide transport strike, teachers' march rouse Philippine capital

Two widespread protest actions shook the Philippine capital and other parts of the country on 30 September and 4 October 2019.

Public utility jeepney drivers and small-scale public transport operators held a one-day nationwide transport strike on 30 September 2019 to protest against a government program to phase out the traditional local jeepneys and replace these with expensive imported vehicles. The imported vehicles, according to the protesters, are priced far beyond the reach of

small-scale operators and jeepney drivers.

The strike was led by the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (PISTON, United Association of Drivers and Operators Nationwide), and supported by the Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations (ACTO). Other grassroots organizations such as GABRIELA (Women), Anakbayan (Youth) and Kilusan ng Manggagawang Kababaihan (Movement of Women Workers) also joined the strike.

The Duterte government threatened the strikers with cancellation of their public transport franchises. Despite the threats, the strikers stood firm and successfully held their strike: In certain areas, up to 100% of public jeepneys did not ply their routes.



Public transport workers and operators fight against the Duterte regime's scheme to corporatize public transportation.
Photo: peoplesdispatch.org

According to PISTON, the government program will cause loss of livelihood to 600,000 jeepney drivers and their families as well as 174,000 small-scale operators. The program is expected to monopolize public utility vehicles in the hands of corporations who could afford the imported vehicles.

Meanwhile, thousands of teachers took part in a Unity March on 4 October on the occasion of World Teachers' Day the following day. The Filipino teachers have been demanding increases in their monthly salary, including a PhP30,000 (US\$600) entry-level salary for teachers.

France Castro, parliament member for the Alliance of Concerned Teachers party list, stated "the struggle for substantial salary increase still remains. We are (given) the usual excuses of 'no budget' and 'salaries are already

comparable to those in the private sector."

She expressed dismay over the series of vetoes by President Duterte of the parliament's General Appropriations Act "which included, among others, the grant of allowance and benefits of teachers."

Entry-level teachers comprise the majority of the country's 800,000 public school teachers. They currently receive about PhP20,700 per month (US\$414) which economists concede is well below the amount needed to meet basic needs.

ACT National Chairperson Joselyn Martinez asserted, "It shouldn't come as a surprise then that teachers are restless and agitated... We who are tasked to fulfill the state's primary duty to deliver social services are denied a decent pay."

PISTON national president, Mody Floranda, declared during the transport strike: "Do not underestimate the power of the masses because it has been proven in history that the Filipino people are capable of overthrowing a dictator." **UP**



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