



UPDATES PHILIPPINES

RELEASED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF THE PHILIPPINES

Amsterdamsestraatweg 50, 3513AG Utrecht, The Netherlands

T: : +31 30 2310431 | E: editors@updatesphilippines.info | W: updatesphilippines.info

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EDITORIAL Let them eat cake!

The first 100 days of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. was marked with greater economic hardships and repression suffered by the Filipino people. It was marked by skyrocketing prices, increasing unemployment and poverty incidence, decreasing purchasing power, plummeting value of the peso and galloping national debt, not to mention natural disasters. Having already ascended the throne, however, Marcos, Jr. would not be bothered by these trifles.

Marcos, Jr. is not interested about the sufferings of the Filipino people. He declared, "Inflation is not that high," despite inflation pegged at 6.9% and rising. Prices of fuel, food, medicine, health care and other basic goods and services continue to rise. To make matters worse, the Marcos II regime mandated budget cuts for social spending, and instead prioritized foreign debt servicing, sneaky intelligence funds and grandiose foreign-funded infrastructure projects benefiting foreign capitalists, the Marcos family's comprador partners and loyal corrupt bureaucrats.

Marcos, Jr. is not interested in developing the national economy for the Filipino people. He recently closed deals with his US imperialist masters in opening the Philippine economy wider to foreign trade and investments. Marcos, Jr. plans to reward multinational corporations with tariffs and tax breaks, greater freedom in exploiting the country's natural resources and cheap labor. In the meantime, Filipino taxpayers are fleeced with burdensome income and regressive taxes.

Marcos, Jr. is not at all interested in the Filipino people's basic rights and freedoms. In just 100 days, 16 people, including three minors, have fallen victim to extrajudicial killings by security agents of the Marcos II regime. Rural communities suffer from aerial bombings, artillery shelling, economic blockades, forced evacuations, unlawful arrests and detentions, and massacres. Despite official pronouncements, journalists continue to suffer harassment, persecution and assassinations.

Marcos, Jr. doesn't intend to prosecute former president Rodrigo Duterte and former top security officials for the murderous 'war on drugs'. Likewise, Marcos, Jr. does not intend to stop state terrorism under the auspices of the anti-communist NTF-ELCAC.

Marcos, Jr. did show a lot of interest for foreign travel during his first 100 days. Especially as they involve shopping sprees, Formula 1 racing and other profligate events for himself, his family and his closest minions. Marcos, Jr. after all, has a fascist dictator for a father and an Imelda as a mother.

The Filipino people have no other choice but to resolutely assert and defend their rights and welfare against the rising economic hardships and ever-worsening repression. The worsening economic and political crisis under the Marcos II regime emphasizes all the more the urgency and justness of the Filipino people's revolutionary struggle for national liberation, democracy and just peace. **UP**



NPA Negros Island spokesperson Romeo Nanta aka Ka Juanito Magbanua. Photo: cpp.ph

NPA hors de combat Juanito Magbanua killed

Ka Juanito Magbanua, spokesperson of the New People's Army Apolinario Gatmaitan Command in Negros Island was killed by elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines 94th Infantry Battalion on 10 October. Ka Juanito, whose real name is Romeo Nanta, was suffering from hypertension and arthritis and was staying in the village of Carabalan, Himamaylan City in Negros Island. The AFP captured Ka Juanito alive and subsequently murdered him.

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The NPA Apolinario Gatmaitan Command clarified that Ka Juaning chose to stay in Carabalan village to closely monitor the situation of the peasant masses, “while the NPA unit maneuvered away from the area” after an armed clash with AFP soldiers on 6 October. Community residents reported hearing four gunshots and a child crying at around 5:45 in the afternoon on 10 October, near the area where Ka Juaning was staying.

Brig. Gen. Inocencio Pasaporte, Commander of the AFP 303rd Infantry Brigade, however claimed that an armed encounter between the NPA and his soldiers took place that day in the area, resulting in the death of Ka Juanito.

On 6 October, the AFP imposed a military lockdown on the population of Carabalan village after state security forces suffered casualties in an armed encounter with the NPA. Community residents were forced to evacuate their homes. Seven farm workers were randomly accused of being NPA combatants, arbitrarily arrested and tortured. They were released after three days when a village official vouched that the seven are civilian farm workers and not NPA.

On 7 October, AFP canons fired artillery shells and a helicopter fired 50-caliber guns into areas of Himamaylan City. They hit sugarcane fields, forests and rivers in Carabalan village and surrounding villages. Residents reported that livestock have been killed or stolen.

More than 16,000 persons have been displaced by the AFP military actions and are currently staying in makeshift evacuation centers. They are prevented from leaving the centers. Journalists, on the other hand, are denied access to the area.

The peasant alliance Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas - Negros has called for financial help for the displaced communities. **UP**



Photo: cpp.ph

Philippine journalist, Marcos critic shot dead

Radio commentator and veteran journalist Percy Mabasa, also known as Percy Lapid, was shot dead in his vehicle in Las Piñas City, near the capital Manila, on the evening of 3 October. The Philippine National Police reported that unidentified motorcycle-riding men shot Mabasa twice while the victim was on his way to his online broadcast.

The PNP added that the attackers escaped and an investigation is underway to identify and locate them.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines condemned the killing, which it said was evidence that

journalism remains one of the country’s most dangerous professions. “That the incident took place in Metro Manila indicates how brazen the perpetrators were and how authorities have failed to protect journalists as well as ordinary citizens from harm,” asserted the NUJP.

Known popularly as Percy Lapid, Mabasa’s “Lapid Fire” radio program featured criticisms of both Marcos, Jr. and his predecessor Rodrigo Duterte, whose term ended in June. In recent broadcasts, he had criticized the practice of ‘red-tagging’ – the imputing of communist links to government critics in order to delegitimize them or incite attacks against them.

He also criticized the current of ‘historical revisionism’ that casts the dictatorial regime of Ferdinand E. Marcos, Sr. as a ‘golden age of prosperity and stability’. The latest upload on his Youtube channel featured a commentary on anti-communist extremist Lorraine Badoy’s red-tagging, and her harassment of Manila Judge Marlo Magdoza-Malagar.

Mabasa’s family, in a statement, strongly condemned the killing. “It was committed not only against Percy, his family, and his profession, but against our country, his beloved Philippines, and the truth,” said the Mabasa family.

They said that Mabasa’s sharp commentaries managed to debunk the barrage of fake news not only in radio, but on social media as well. “We demand that his cowardly assassins be brought to justice,” they added.

Mabasa is already the second of two journalists killed under the Marcos II administration. On 18 September, radio broadcaster Rey Blanco was stabbed to death in Mabinay town in Negros Oriental. Both journalists were hard-hitting Marcos critics. **UP**



Anti-imperialist International People's Front launched

A new international united front against imperialism was launched in Phuket, Thailand on 28 September. Uniting under the themes “Fight and build an international front of the peoples of the world against imperialism and all reaction!” and “Call for an International People's Front,” more than 40 delegates from North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, Middle East, Southeast Asia, East Asia, South Asia and Asia Pacific regions agreed to establish the International People's Front.

In its unity declaration, the IPF said, “People in every continent are rising up, restless and eager to organize and make their voices heard. It is now more urgent that the people join together in a united front.” The IPF vowed to mobilize individuals and organizations to coordinate, cooperate and jointly fight imperialism and its agents.

“Anyone who agrees and accepts the objectives of the IPF, and willing to sign its statements and declarations can become members of the front and participate in its activities,” the Front's conveners said. They added that individuals and organizations are encouraged to participate in the planning and activities of the Front. “Individuals and organizations may choose to participate in some select actions, or they may choose to initiate their own actions if they wish, and still remain within the front,” they clarified.

The Front will be overseen by an International Coordinating Body composed of representatives of international organizations, “acting in an ‘unstructured’ manner and will adopt a rotating leadership in regular meetings.”

An International Coordination Network, composed of several global anti-imperialist alliances and organizations, initiated the IPF in the early part of 2022. Beginning in May 2022, the ICN conducted visits and consultations with various groups in Belgium, France, Spain and the Netherlands. ICN representatives also joined anti-NATO protest actions in Europe.

Among the conveners of the International People's Front are: Asia Pacific Research Network, Asian Peasants Coalition, Asian Rural Women's Coalition, Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self Determination and Liberation, International League of Peoples' Struggle, International Migrants Alliance, International Peoples Research Network, International Women's Alliance, Peace for Life, People Over Profit, People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty, People's Resource for International Solidarity and Mass Mobilization, Resist US-Led War Network, and the Workers International Struggles Initiatives. **UP**

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