



UPDATES PHILIPPINES

RELEASED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF THE PHILIPPINES

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EDITORIAL

Marcos Jr is digging his own grave

The Armed Forces of the Philippines' rampage in Himamaylan City, Negros Oriental, has already left at least 18,000 rural community residents forcibly displaced, and thousands more traumatized due to relentless artillery shelling and aerial strafing. Their attacks have escalated to the point where they declared parts of the city 'no man's land' and anyone left behind are to be considered shoot-to-kill targets.

Such barbarism of the AFP is reminiscent of the Marcos dictatorship – a complete destitution of human dignity and the absolute devolution of power to armed military personnel – rekindled under the murderous Duterte regime and intensifying further under the current Marcos Jr. administration.

We cannot forget that such repression and atrocities favor big landlord and corporate interests. Much as the Manila government claims their attacks are targeted towards the New People's Army, the AFP's vain attempts to crush the revolutionary armed resistance are inherently aligned with the objective to clear out any opposition to the expansion of extractive industries, mines, plantations and infrastructure projects harmful to the environment and the local communities.

We cannot forget that the brutality of the fascist soldiers further isolates them from the people. Hundreds of communities across the country are currently placed under military blockade – the poor literally held hostage within their own villages! Food blockades are in place while schools are turned into military barracks. Every single day, the peasant population faces state terrorism at the hands of the AFP, meant to break their spirit and shatter their determination to defend their communities.

We cannot forget that such attacks are in clear violation of international humanitarian law and provisions of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. State security forces are committing grave violations of human rights, from the forced displacement of entire communities, military encampment in and around communities, indiscriminate bombings and extrajudicial killings. These atrocities point to the Marcos Jr. administration's complete disregard for human rights and the reign of impunity much like his father's dictatorship.

We cannot forget that the Marcos dictatorship was the biggest NPA recruiter in history. The fascist Marcos rule saw the unprecedented rise of human rights abuses meant to quell brewing dissent. But this strategy resulted in the opposite, and led to the downfall of the Marcos regime.

The current administration is taking this same terrorist path: resorting to ever-increasing repressive measures, heightening social conflict and, in the process, pushes more and more people to join the ranks of the armed revolutionary movement. As a result, every single bullet, every single life the state forces take, is an inch closer to Marcos Jr digging his own grave. **UP**



New People's Army file photo.

NPA hits AFP units in 4 provinces in 2 weeks

The New People's Army mounted successive attacks on various units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines across the country in early October, killing at least 12 AFP soldiers and injuring several others. The NPA targeted 'the most notorious' AFP units terrorizing Philippine rural communities.

In the province of Surigao del Sur, in southern Philippines, three AFP soldiers were killed and one was injured when NPA Red fighters ambushed elements of the AFP 75th

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Infantry Battalion in Mahaba village, Marihatag town, in the early morning hours of 6 October. The AFP were aboard three motorcycles when the NPA fired at them.

In Masbate, central Philippines, the NPA ambushed elements of an AFP paramilitary unit travelling along Mambog and Buenaflor villages in Dimasalang town on 7 October. One soldier was killed and another was injured. The paramilitaries were motoring from the AFP 2nd Infantry Battalion detachment in Palanas town when they were ambushed.

In Albay province, the NPA ambushed a 16-man unit of the AFP 49th Infantry Battalion Bagacay village, Jovellar town on 3 October. Seven AFP soldiers were killed in the ambush. The next day, another body was found at the scene of the incident while two were seriously injured.

On 12 October, the NPA launched a sniping operation against operating troops of the AFP 62nd Infantry Battalion in Guba village, Villahermoso town, in Negros Oriental province. One soldier was confirmed killed.

Earlier, on 24 September, the NPA-Central Negros reported the killing of AFP paramilitary operative Joselito Raboy by an NPA partisan unit. Raboy was responsible for the massacre of the Jacolbe family, including the pregnant Cristina Jacolbe, her 16-year old daughter Everly Kee and Rodan Montero, on 26 July in Guihulngan City.

Also in Negros Island, the NPA Leonardo Panganiban Command reported a sniping operation against a Philippine National Police station in Trinidad village, Guihulngan City, on 9 September, killing a police officer. **UP**



Educators call out Martial Law revisionism in Philippine textbook

The Alliance of Concerned Teachers called attention on 20 October to a textbook in Philippine public schools, which describes the Martial Law period of 21 September 1972 until 1980 as the “Period of the New Society”. They said, “Martial Law is the right term. Corrections should be made to the modules.”

ACT Spokesperson, Rissa Bantillian, addressing Vice President and concurrent Department of Education Secretary Sara Duterte and the public, said, “We should keep watch of the revisions on the current educational curriculum and fight to ensure that teaching history will still be based on facts, nationalism, and putting culture at the forefront.”

The educators called on the DepEd to immediately correct the “inaccurate” textbook.

Commenting on the issue, Ma. Roja Banua, Spokesperson of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in Bicol said, “The issue here is not simple semantics. Words are political! By changing the terminology, the history and context in which the word was originally used is lost.”

Banua stressed, “This is a part of the Marcoses’ attempts to manipulate and erase crucial parts of the Filipino nation’s collective memory... Rhetorics of the farcical ‘new society’ will overshadow all the pain, destruction, suffering and deaths that have had always gone with Martial Law.”

She added, “It is a challenge to the present generation to prevent the Marcoses from distorting history. They must be persistent in making people understand, especially those who did not live during the Martial Law era, that history tells a clear tale. It is not open for interpretation nor does it have versions. Either something happened or it did not. There were oppressors and there were the oppressed who fought back. There is no such thing as the people’s version and the Marcoses’ version. There is only the truth.

“The rampant massacres, thousands of desaparecidos, prevalent hunger and poverty, economic decline, the Marcoses’ unbridled corruption and squandering of the nation’s resources as well as all their other harrowing crimes against the Filipino people did happen,” she concluded.

Recently, a feature film glorifying the last hours of the Marcos family in Malacañang Palace did the rounds of local cinemas and Philippine embassies abroad. Filmmaker Paul Soriano, who also produced the election campaign ads and directed the first State of the Nation Address of President Marcos, Jr., now sits as Special Presidential Adviser for ‘Creative Communications’. **UP**



*Officials of the Leyte Center for Development with beneficiaries of fishing boats and gear.
Photo: LCDe.*

Foreign-funded NGOs pour aid into poor communities

Philippine non-government organizations receiving financial support from abroad go to the aid of the poorest Filipinos devastated by natural and manmade disasters. However, they are often victims of harassment and anti-communist violence by security officials of the Manila government. UPDATES Philippines gathered some recent successes and struggles of these humanitarian NGOs.

A 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck northern Luzon on 27 July 2022, triggering landslides and the collapse of public and private infrastructures across the region, and as far as Metro Manila. The town of Bucay, in Abra province,

further suffered 27 aftershocks with record intensities of 5. Abang village in Bucay was one of the most affected, damaging among others their main water system.

The local NGO Serve the People Brigade – Cordillera, facilitated the repair of Abang's water system. In coordination with the community organization Abang Indigenous People's Development Organization and another local NGO Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera, they provided food packs and construction materials to the community residents who worked on the rehabilitation project.

Aside from the waterworks rehabilitation project in Abang village, the STPB-Cordillera reported the delivery of 900 relief packs for an estimated 871 families in three villages.

In Leyte province, in eastern Visayas, the Leyte Center for Development reported in September 2022 the handover of 15 motorized fishing boats to poor fisher families in three towns of the province. LCDe also distributed food packs, hygiene kits, shelter repair kits and solar lamps to 458 households in the area. Super typhoon Odette (International name: Rai) destroyed the communities' infrastructure and livelihood in December 2021.

The LCDe said the Tijori Foundation, CARE Philippines, IHG Hotels & Resorts and Founders for Philippine Progress provided financial support to these relief and rehabilitation efforts. The NGO, however, is subjected to harassment and red-tagging by officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the anti-communist NTF-ELCAC.

In Aklan province, in central Visayas, three grassroots organizations conducted a two-day humanitarian mission on 12 and 13 October in fishers' villages affected by threats, harassment and armed attacks of the AFP. The fishers' alliance PAMALAKAYA-Aklan, peasant alliance Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and patriotic alliance BAYAN visited Cawayan village to determine the condition of the residents and to provide humanitarian support.

AFP soldiers have been conducting military maneuvers in the villages for the past three months. They garrisoned village halls and conducted house-to-house interrogations and searches without warrants. They accused members of community organizations of being New People's Army members and forced them to 'surrender'.

In Mindanao island, the Marcos government's Department of Justice filed charges of 'terrorist financing' against 16 people, including five nuns, who are members of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines. The DOJ alleged that the RMP finances the NPA, which the Manila government tags as a 'terrorist organization'.

The RMP, formed in 1969, is a mission partner of the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines. In Mindanao, they provide support for indigenous communities, in particular the network of indigenous lumad schools, targeted by the AFP and the anti-communist NTF-ELCAC as 'communist recruiting grounds'. **UP**



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