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EDITORIAL

'AFP Modernization Program' exposes Marcos Jr. as a tool of US aggression

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. stated in no uncertain terms on 8 November that the Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization program will continue during his term. In the same breath, he cites 'terrorism' as justification to use taxpayers' money to purchase more night-fighting systems capability, transport aircrafts, additional helicopters capable of night flight and more communications and surveillance equipment for police and military forces.

These statements are despicable considering the unrelenting military attacks against rural communities in the Philippines. For instance, in the wee hours of 6 November, the AFP 203rd Infantry Brigade conducted artillery shelling and strafing in the villages of Rizal, Aguas, and Pitogo, in Rizal town, Occidental Mindoro province. The local New People's Army unit reported that at least 8,000 residents were forced to flee their homes to seek refuge from the terrorist attacks. The current bombardment is taking place just around a month after the AFP shelled the hinterlands of Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro, terrorizing several indigenous Mangyan communities with around 6,000 residents.

In early October, the AFP subjected the residents of Himamaylan City in Negros Occidental to relentless bombings, unleashing their pent-up frustrations of failed military operations. The bombings resulted in at least 3,650 families forced to leave their homes, pushing the local government to declare a state of calamity.

Since 19 October, weeks-long combat operations are plowing through Toboso and Calatrava towns and Escalante City, in Negros Occidental, perpetrated by armed contingents of the AFP and Philippine National Police 6th Special Action Force. These latest operations further add to the mounting cases of human rights violations committed by the Marcos-Duterte regime.

Under the orders of their new Commander-in-Chief Marcos Jr, state security agents are heightening state terrorism and attacks against the Filipino people. While Marcos Jr. cites 'external threats' as reason to welcome US military support, his silence on China's incursions in the West Philippine Sea indicates otherwise. In reality, the Marcos II regime aims to exploit public funds and foreign military aid for its brutal counterinsurgency campaign, victimizing peasant and indigenous communities in the process.

Marcos Jr.'s embrace of US military aid for 'AFP modernization' readily exposes him as a tool of US foreign aggression. The real intent is to please US imperialist interests and warmongering, in order to generate greater profits for the US military industrial complex and to fuel futile attempts to crush the armed revolutionary movement. If anything, this goes to show that Marcos Jr. – very much like his father – is a puppet of US machinations and, more importantly, will suffer the same fate as the late dictator. **UP**



Image: philippinerevolution.nu

CPP exposes AFP-PNP war crimes

The Communist Party of the Philippines published on 29 October a report on the war crimes committed by security forces of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines in the past six years. The report, "[AFP and PNP War Crimes](#)" focused on cases of "summary executions" committed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police and other armed agents of the

Manila government against civilians, non-combatants and hors de combat belonging to the CPP, New People's Army and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

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The CPP revealed, “Over the past six years, at least 101 active and retired members of the CPP and NPA, NDFP consultants and personnel, and their civilian companions who were captured, wounded or no longer in the position to fight, were unlawfully killed” by security agents of the Manila government. Among those killed were 34 non-combatants and 44 hors de combat, the report said. “Of the hors de combat, 22 were wounded in action who were ‘finished off’ instead of being arrested and cared for... Of the non-combatants, 19 were members of the Party and the NDFP who were not directly involved in the armed conflict or were not in the battlefield.”

The report asserted that these killings constitute war crimes, “as stipulated in the Geneva Conventions and its protocols, and in the provisions of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.” Then NDFP Chairman Mariano Orosa and GRP President Joseph Estrada signed the CARHRIHL on 10 April 1998, as part of the peace talks between the two belligerent parties.

The report said that 20 of those killed were senior citizens, retired members of the CPP and NPA. It further revealed that the AFP and PNP try to cover up their crimes by reporting victims as “killed in armed battles” or having “resisted arrest”. Various ‘evidence’ like guns, explosives and ‘subversive documents’ were planted at the murder scenes, the report asserted.

The report cited the latest case involving the capture and killing of NPA-Negros Island spokesperson Ka Juanito Magbanua by the AFP 94th Infantry Battalion on 10 October 2022. The AFP claimed Ka Juanito was “killed in battle”.

In a related news, 63-year old CPP Central Committee Member Emmanuel Fernandez died of natural causes on 30 October in a village of Sen. Ninoy Aquino town, Sultan Kudarat province. News of his death, however, attracted a unit of the AFP 603rd Infantry Brigade, whereupon the soldiers peppered Fernandez’s corpse with bullets. The AFP later claimed that Fernandez was killed in an armed encounter. **UP**



*Wages, jobs and workers’ rights, not fascism!
Photo: COURAGE | bulatlat.com*

Philippine workers demand wage increases, job security

Amidst skyrocketing inflation and plummeting value of the Peso, Philippine workers and employees are launching work stoppages and other types of collective action to press their demands for higher wages and job security. Trade unions are also directly calling on the Marcos II government to address their deteriorating living conditions.

On 3 November, workers of the Kowloon House restaurant chain launched a protest action demanding the raising of their minimum daily wage from PhP537.00 to PhP570.00 (US\$9.39 – US\$9.97). They also demanded

the management to meet with their union for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The Kowloon House chain has 104 restaurant branches throughout the country.

On the same day, the Technol Eight Workers Union staged a picket outside of the National Conciliation and Mediation Board, calling for the continuation of their CBA negotiations with Technol Eight Philippines management. Negotiations have been held 15 times on and off without headway, the company refusing to increase wages beyond PhP24.00 per day (US\$0.42).

Technol Eight Philippines manufactures auto parts for the Toyota Iron Works Company of Japan.

Inflation in the country is currently at 7.7%, the highest in 14 years. Manila government officials reveal that, using 2018 as baseline, the real value of the daily minimum nominal wage of PhP570 has shrunk by PhP76.00 (US\$1.33) in 2022.

Elmer Labog, national chair of the trade union center Kilusang Mayo Uno, criticized the inaction of President Marcos, Jr., amid the worsening economic crisis. He asserted that Marcos, Jr. has all the power to give Filipinos urgent relief. “He can issue an order to raise workers’ wages through the Regional Wage Boards. He can also push Congress to pass a legislation to raise workers’ wages. He can also issue an order or goad Congress to take off taxes on oil products and impose price control,” he said.

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Meanwhile, public sector employees are wary of reported plans to ‘right-size’ government agencies. Marcos’ Department of Budget and Management advised that laying off 5% of public sector employees will save PhP14.8 Billion (US\$259 Million) and “fix redundant functions”.

However, public sector union Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees criticized the proposed ‘rightsizing’, saying this does not always result in reducing the bureaucracy. COURAGE asserted that the current ratio in the country of government employees to people served is among the lowest internationally, and refuted the notion that the bureaucracy is overloaded.

Contractual government employees also fear they will be the first to be affected by this ‘rightsizing’. As of 2021, there are 449,748 government employees under ‘job order’ and 132,630 personnel under the contract of the service term. **UP**



Image: philippinerevolution.nu

NPA offensives belie Marcos government claims

A series of successful tactical offensives launched in the past two weeks by the New People’s Army against armed security agents of the Marcos, Jr. government raises serious doubts about claims that the NPA and the armed revolutionary movement have been crushed.

The NPA Jose Rapsing Command in the island province of Masbate, ambushed a paramilitary CAFGU unit in Manlot-od village, Placer town, on 7 November. Two enemy combatants died in the ambush. Recovered from the enemy were two handguns, several ammunition and other war materiel.

The NPA-Masbate reported launching more than 20 tactical offensives against various units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police and paramilitary CAFGU since the start of 2022, resulting in casualties equivalent to a platoon of the enemy forces.

Meanwhile in Negros Island, the NPA mounted a series of sniping and harassment operations in the past two weeks against AFP and PNP units.

On 1 November, the NPA fired at a police station in Trinidad village, Guihulngan City, injuring two police officers. On 30 October and again on 1 November, NPA snipers fired at an AFP camp in Budlasan village, Canlaon City, killing a soldier and wounding another.

On 29 October, an armed encounter between NPA and the AFP 62nd Infantry Battalion took place in Planas village, Guihulngan City, killing five AFP combatants. Six hours later, in another village of the same city, another encounter took place where an NPA Red fighter died.

In the Cordillera Region in northern Philippines, the NPA ambushed soldiers of the AFP 24th Infantry Battalion on 27 October in Malibcong town, Abra province. Two AFP troopers were killed while another was wounded. The NPA-Cordillera declared that the ambush is punishment for AFP attacks and suppression of the indigenous Igorot communities who are opposing the environmentally destructive mining operations in Abra and Apayao provinces.

The NPA-Cordillera also reported mounting armed offensives against the AFP on 30 June, 9 July and 18 August in Abra and Apayao, where five armed mercenaries were killed.

Meanwhile, Marco Valbuena, Chief Information Officer of the Communist Party of the Philippines, branded as “utterly ridiculous” the claims of the Marcos, Jr. government that the NPA now operates in only five guerrilla fronts. He bared that any of the 14 NPA regional commands has more than five guerrilla fronts.

Valbuena said, “The exaggerated claims of having crushed the NPA is meant for foreign capitalist investors, who the Marcos regime wishes to invite to plunder the country’s mineral riches and other natural resources.” **UP**

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