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RAISE HIGH THE RED FLAG ON THE PARTY'S 55TH ANNIVERSARY!

Raise high the red flag on the Party's 55th anniversary!

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On December 26th, the Communist Party of the Philippines will celebrate the 55th anniversary of its establishment. One of the biggest task of the Party today is to strengthen itself ideologically, politically and organizationally to fully frustrate the enemy's suppression campaign, lead the masses in fighting the puppet, oppressive and fascist US-Marcos regime and advance the people's democratic revolution.

On the occasion of the anniversary, let us restrengthen the commitment of every cadre and member, whether old or new, to promote Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the basic principles of the Party as stated in its constitution and program. Let us again raise our fists and vow to do our utmost to raise our proletarian revolutionary consciousness, and serve and fight for the people's interests at all times, as each of us pledged when we joined the Party.

Let us also celebrate on December 16 the revolutionary life of Jose Maria Sison, the Party's founding chair, on the occasion of the first anniversary of his death. Let us firmly uphold his legacy of teachings in advancing the revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people.

Let us remember all the martyrs and heroes of the Philippine revolution. The highest tribute we can give them is the sustained growth and invigoration of the armed struggle and mass struggles. This has completely belied the enemy's prediction that the Party, the people's army and the united front is on the road to decay and disintegration.

There exists favorable conditions for further arousing, organizing and mobilizing the Filipino people. The ruling semicolonial and semifeudal system in the Philippines is rapidly decaying. It is being clobbered simultaneously by economic and political crises caused by the rotten, oppressive, puppet and fascist rule of the Marcos regime.

It brings worse suffering to the Filipino people. It is the crucial duty of the Party to lead the broad masses of the people who strongly desire to fight for their livelihood and well-being, and to defend their democratic rights.

Amid vast social unrest, the Party is in a position to lead the invigoration of mass struggles, and expand and strengthen the revolutionary mass movement both in the cities and countryside, along with the overall task of advancing the people's democratic revolution.

With all-out energy, let us expand and strengthen the Party and the organized masses. Rectify errors and overcome all weaknesses and vacillation. Bring together the collective anger of the masses, and lead their resistance especially in the face of grave oppression and exploitation. For new tasks, we need new forces who are full of enthusiasm, vitality and militance. Replace those who have left or have become passive.

The Party welcomed the joint statement of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) on November 23 to reopen peace talks.

We do battle on the negotiating table, as we wage armed struggle to achieve the same aim of a just and lasting peace. This is achieved through genuine land reform, national industrialization, national independence and genuine democracy.

Resist schemes of the reactionary state to use the talks as an instrument for deception to lure the NPA to surrender its arms, and take away its revolutionary strength. Reject the fake "amnesty" proclamation of the Marcos regime issued for the deceptive purpose of surrender. It only serves the self-interests of the renegade few who have turned their backs and betrayed the people's interests. They should be rejected, denounced and cast into the trashbin of history.



Worldwide, the correctness of rising up against foreign aggression and fascism is being highlighted in heroic armed resistance of the Palestinian people, as well as the people of Myanmar and other countries. The NDFP timely launched an international theoretical conference on imperialism and war that served as occasion to strengthen the cooperation of various proletarian, anti-imperialist and liberation movements around the world, and to amplify the call to wage a just war and armed struggle against imperialist war.

Filipino communists are part of the global proletarian revolution against imperialism, the final moribund stage of capitalism. They represent the revolutionary liberation struggle of the Filipino people. They contribute to the global anti-imperialist movement by waging resistance against intensifying US hegemonism in the country in the form of increasing number of military bases and more frequent and bigger wargames in Philippine land and seas. The entire people should fight US schemes to use the country for its geopolitical interests in the Asia-Pacific, and link up with the global struggle to prevent the outbreak of inter-imperialist war.

In the cities and countryside, the Party and the revolutionary forces continue to grow in strength. The revolutionary mass movement of all democratic classes and sectors fighting for their interests are advancing vigorously. The antifascist, anti-imperialist and antifeudal united front is being strengthened and expanded as the broadest people's unity is being established to isolate the ruling Marcos regime. Most importantly, the NPA continues to strengthen along the path of armed struggle as the main weapon of resistance.

The Party is confident that, with all-out efforts of all its cadres and members, it will steadfastly lead the strengthening of the revolution in all fields of struggle, and succeed in advancing the national-democratic revolution in the Philippines towards its socialist future.

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The NDFP is the revolutionary united front organization of the Filipino people fighting for national freedom and for the democratic rights of the people. Established on April 24, 1973, the NDFP seeks to develop and coordinate all progressive classes, sectors and forces in the Filipino people's struggle to end the rule of US imperialism and its local allies, and attain national and social liberation.

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December 26, A Special Day for the Filipino Masses

By Raya Andres - Montanosa

Every year, on December 26, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) celebrates its founding anniversary. This year, as the Party turns 55, various celebrations will be held in the Philippines and abroad. For this issue, Liberation International highlights the masses' participation in these celebrations through the anecdotes shared by comrades who have been part of the many Party anniversary celebrations in the revolutionary mass bases in the countryside.

The masses' involvement

"The masses and their organizations are involved in all aspects of the celebration – from planning to implementation. Each task is vital, from washing dishes to preparing speeches, for the success of the celebration. The masses happily perform tasks because they know that the anniversary is for them and that it is a celebration of victories as well as an assessment of losses and shortcomings."

Tasks are delegated to volunteer masses and Red fighters. Admittedly, women are usually tasked to cook. But they would then assert to male comrades, "No, you have to do the cooking tasks as well. You

have to take part in this." At the same, there is cooperation and friendly rivalry.

"When it comes to bigger anniversary celebrations, while the New People's Army (NPA) does the construction of the structures, the masses together with the NPA units would do the clearing and grubbing of the place. It takes them around 48 hours to do this."

"When the masses know that the NPA is nearby, they are certain that there will be a celebration. So, on December 25th, though it is Christmas day, which the masses celebrate as well, they start to prepare food for the next day. For example, they cook various kinds of rice cakes (biko, puto and suman). The NPA takes care of the lechon, which is provided by the allies."

"In terms of cooking equipment needed such as big pots and pans, the masses take care of those. They either borrow or bring their own. They perform these tasks in a decentralized manner. There are committees and groups in-charge of what to bring, for instance, rice. Everyone is tasked to bring rice for a certain amount or number of people."



Aside from food, the masses also prepare for the cultural presentations. All sectors in the community participate in the program. They would practice various songs, forms of dance and poetry days before the celebration. "The children are very much enthusiastic of the anniversary and are part of the program. They are part of the program. Their parents encourage them to perform – to sing, dance or recite a poem."

Like their parents and everyone in their community, the children are not afraid to interact with the NPA. They accept them as part of their community as opposed to fascist troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) who constantly terrorize the masses.

Off to the celebration

"The masses, one way or another, know where the celebration would be. All families attend, so no one is left behind. It is as if they are going to a fiesta.

Depending on the location, they leave before the break of dawn to arrive at the venue at around six' o clock. The program starts in the morning and usually ends at 12 or one o' clock. The masses partake and share the food, greet their friends from other barrios, and socialize before the program starts. Highlights of the program include the reading of statements, speeches, messages. Afterwards, they go home before dusk sets in."

Pettybourgeois forces from the cities also visit the countryside to take part in celebrations. "There are two things that they are most surprised with: electricity and sound system. They did not expect a city in the middle of the mountains. They would exclaim upon arriving, "Wow, there is electricity here! How?" this is usually followed by, "Wow, there is a sound system! A loud one even!"

Another thing that impresses the masses and the people, particularly the middle forces, is transportation. In their mind, the NPA areas are in the far-flung places. They would often be surprised when after they get picked-up, they find themselves already at the area in less than 30 minutes. They would exclaim, "Oh, seemingly, an NPA area that can be reached by a vehicle!" So, it has become a joke: door-to-door, meaning no walking involved. So, you arrive fresh at the venue. Next time, they would joke, "Is this going to be door-to-door celebration?"

In regional celebrations, the media are often impressed by the presence and speeches of comrades, who come from the peasant class. The comrades are able to expound on the principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the situation of their area when responding to the media's questions. "They did not need any media briefing! The media were surprised at the comrades' commanding presence – young and old. They were also impressed by the close interaction and cooperation between the masses and the NPA, which in turn allayed their fears."

Aside from these outward appearances, the organised and non-organised masses could directly see the strength and fortitude of the revolutionary movement. They are impressed by such feats and by the fact that the Party and the NPA can mobilize a huge number of people from a broad range of forces for the celebrations. This is also a reflection of the strength of the armed struggle in these areas.

Light moments with comrades

"In one anniversary celebration, a jeep got stuck in a road. The jeep was big enough to fit a water buffalo, and it could usually handle tough roads because it had double tires. This time, though, the road was a dried-up river bed with big rocks, so it got stuck. It was just a short distance away from the celebration venue. The 20-30 passengers, however, could not walk so we waited for the comrades' help. After some time, a comrade came. People were frustrated as they thought he was the only one. There were others as well, but they were walking behind him so people did not see them. He was just a fast walker. People were asking where the others were. Then, this comrade said, "let's try", and lifted the jeep seemingly on his own. Viola, the jeep moved again! People were surprised and amazed at him!"

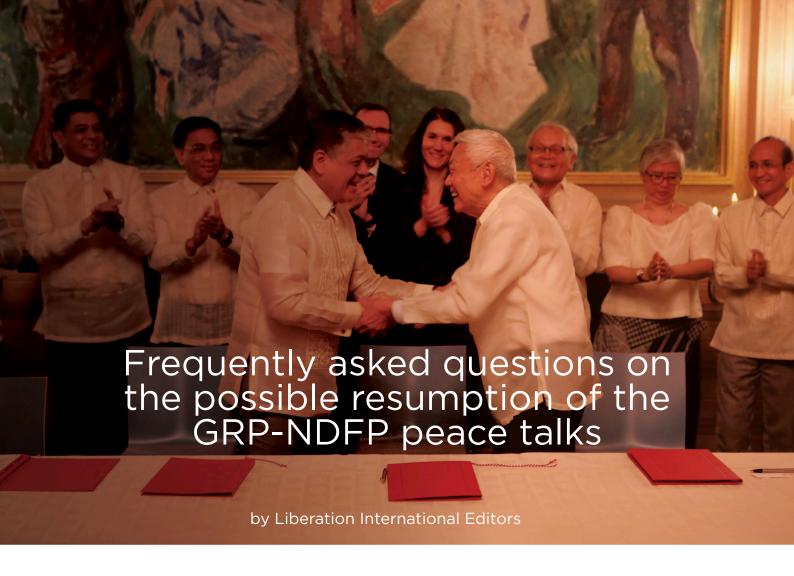
"Another instance was when three big flags had to be hanged on tall coconut trees. First, the question of who would do it and which coconut trees. After finding the right ones, comrades made a contest out of who would get to the top and get down first. In less than five minutes, the task was done!"

Challenges

"The biggest challenge is security. There is no guarantee that the base areas are clear of enemy influence. The mass organizations have to be mindful and function to ensure the safety and security of the masses and the comrades while preparing for the celebration."

The next challenge is during the celebration: securing the periphery from arrival to the dispersal of the masses and the NPA. While there is a big unit in-charge of the central celebration, there must be a unit that ensures the periphery, and this is a big challenge to the host front especially if it is a regional celebration. The logistics concern is less compared to the security. Food can be sacrificed, for instance, over security. Contingency plans must be in place.

"If there is military operation or news of military presence in the area, the masses are not able to join with comrades. If the comrades are camped far from them, the masses initiate their own programs since there are Party branches in the barrios. The masses really remember the December 26 anniversary. They consider it as their own birthday."



On November 23, this year, the NDFP (National Democratic Front of the Philippines) Peace Negotiating Panel and designated representatives of the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) signed a Joint Statement in Oslo, Norway declaring their intention to resume the peace negotiations which were terminated by the Duterte regime in 2017.

The November 23 Oslo Joint Statement is a product of a series of informal discussions in the Netherlands and climaxed in Norway between emissaries of the GRP and the NDFP Peace panel with the facilitation of the Royal Norwegian Government (RNG) that started in 2022.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) said in a statement that it welcomes the signing of the joint statement but averred that the path to the resumption of the peace talks and towards a just and lasting peace, is "filled with thorns and spikes".

"This is only the first half step to reopening negotiations. It may lead to the actual reopening of peace talks, and also possibly not," the CPP stressed.

Below are some of the most frequently asked questions and short answers on what you need to know about the potential resumption of the peace negotiations.

Q. Why are there peace talks?

A. There are peace talks because there is a war. The NDFP and GRP are co-belligerents in the civil war in the Philippines. They represent diametrically opposed interests and goals but meet in negotiations under the declared objective of achieving a just and lasting peace.

Q: Why did the NDFP decide to enter into negotiations again with the GRP?

A. The NDFP has always made it clear that it is open to the resumption of the negotiations terminated by the GRP during the time of Duterte.

The NDFP holds firmly the principle that only by genuinely addressing the root causes of the armed conflict – landlessness of majority of Filipino peasants, poverty, joblessness, bureaucratic corruption, fascism, and foreign domination of the economy - will genuine and lasting peace reign.

Q: Why talk at this time or period?

A. The resumption of the negotiations by the Marcos Jr. regime is a recognition of the political, economic, and social crises of the ruling system.

It is also a recognition, albeit openly denied, of the strength of the revolutionary movement, that there is a civil war between the GRP and the revolutionary movement, and that there exist two governments in the Philippines.

Q: Will this round of peace talks be a "restart" or a "do over"?

A: The NDFP enters the talks with a clear intention of building on past achievements of the negotiations including honoring and respecting previous bilateral agreements. Any notion or suggestion of a "restart" or a "do over" of the disregards negotiations practically previous milestone agreements between the GRP and the NDFP namely the Hague Joint Declaration, the Joint Agreement on Safety and **Immunity** Guarantees (JASIG), and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) all of which remain binding between the two Parties.

Q: Will the NDFP end armed struggle, now that the peace talks can potentially resume again?

A. The peace negotiations are not negotiations for capitulation but rather a unique opportunity to find mutually acceptable and principled ways of addressing the root causes of the civil war, as well as identify joint and separate commitments, to genuinely resolve the real reasons for the armed conflict.

The peace negotiations are only one among other more decisive means to address the root causes of the armed conflict. The national-democratic revolution is in fact, a struggle for a just and lasting peace.

The point of entering peace negotiations is to address the roots of the armed conflict. There should be no insinuation, much less demand, for the NDFP and the revolutionary forces to end armed struggle until such time that fundamental socioeconomic issues and political and constitutional reforms are addressed are addressed within the framework set by the Hague Joint Declaration.

Q: Will the NDFP declare a ceasefire?

A. Demanding from the NDFP a permanent or indefinite ceasefire amounts to the capitulation and pacification of the revolutionary forces and people and therefore the end of the peace negotiations without any substantive agreement on basic reforms.

Ceasefire is an issue that could be discussed by both parties as have been done in the past. But ceasefire(s) as a precondition for the resumption of the negotiations or of forging an agreement violates the Hague Joint Declaration which stipulates that there should be no precondition whatsoever which negates the inherent character and purpose of the peace negotiations (From Prof. Jose Maria Sison on his current status, the People's War and the GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations, LI, June 29, 2008)

However, should there be an agreement(s) on a possible ceasefire later in the course of the peace negotiations, the NDFP Peace Panel would relay this intent to the CPP which has the sole authority to order the NPA to cease from offensive operations against the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) and PNP (Philippine National Police). And even if a ceasefire happens at all, the CPP always reminds the NPA to remain vigilant and ready for self-defense whenever necessary because of the treachery of the AFP.

Q: Does the NDFP have (any) preconditions for the continuation of the negotiations?

A. None at all.

However, there are critical and practical measures, without which, it is doubtful that peace negotiations can progress, among which are: (a) releasing all the NDFP peace consultants to allow them to take part in the discussions and negotiations; (b) rescinding the "terrorist designation" of the NDFP, and that of Ka Luis Jalandoni, the CPP, the NPA and other personnel of the NDFP, and (c) building on the basic bilateral agreements, namely, The Hague Joint Declaration of September 1, 1992, the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG), and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) which remain binding between the Parties.

Addressing these practical issues means complying and honoring previous bilateral agreements signed by both Parties to the negotiations. And these are all doable on the part of the GRP.

Q: What benefits have been gained by the Filipino people from the peace talks since it started in 1986?

A. The peace negotiations benefit the people because it provides a window, however narrow, to address the basic problems of the Filipino people. These provide an opportunity for both Parties in the armed conflict, to show how they are going to address the basic problems of the people.

The various agreements forged during the peace negotiations since these were started, including the Hague Joint Declaration, the CAHRIHL, and the drafts of the CASER of the both the GRP and NDFP, are achievements and can be used to promote people's rights and improve their welfare.

Should the resumption of the peace negotiations happen at all, the forging of a Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms will be the heart and soul, so to speak, of the peace talks because it will address landlessness, rural underdevelopment, poverty, national industrialization and environmental degradation.



By Ka Luis Jalandoni

Edmundo Legislador arrived in Bacolod, Negros Occidental in January 1973. He was deployed from Panay Island. At the age of 22, he was appointed Head of the entire Party organization in Negros.

He was the son of two prominent familties of Oton, Iloilo. His father was a rice mill owner, while his mother, fondly called Nanay by comrades, was a prominent mass leader of the community. He was lovingly called OToto EddieO by his family. But in the revolutionary movement, he was Pends or Pendong.

At a young age, he got along well with people. He took care of workers. He also loved to sing and play the guitar.

In college, he became an activist and joined the local chapter of the Samahang Demokratikong Kabataan (SDL). He was in second year college, when the First Quarter Storm swept the country. He participated in rallies



denouncing police brutality in breaking up mass actions. Later he joined a Cultural Guild which offered cultural presentations during protest actions. As the student movement organized more and bigger mass actions, Pendong decided to become a fulltime cultural acativist. He also married his long-time girlfriend at this time.

Shortly after the declaration of martial law, he went to Isabela to participate in a six-month training course as a member of the New People's Army. He learned much as a Party cadre during the six months in Isabela.

Under his leadership, the Negros Party organization set up various Party units, each one carrying out Party educational courses and setting up programs of actions. It was particularly in educational sessions, that Ka Pends excelled in providing mature leadership.

In one educational session, Ka Pends noticed that a young recruit, Ka Felix, was very quiet during the meeting. Ka Pends quietly took him aside during a break, and asked him, "I notice you hardly spoke during the meeting." Ka Felix answered, "I am new. I still do not understand much. So, I am afraid to speak and make a mistake." Ka Pends spoke softly to Ka Felix, "When we have our meetings, our purpose is to contribute what we can, to come up with what is best for our committee, in order to improve our revolutionary work. That should be uppermost in our mind, the good of the committee. If we keep quiet because we are afraid to make a mistake, we are thinking of ourselves. We should be thinking what is best for the group. We should be thinking what will improve our work." These words of advice helped Ka Felix in his political work.

The manner in which he did this, without much ado, and making sure Ka Felix would not be put to shame effectively taught Ka Felix the correct thing of putting the best interest of the movement as the priority. Ka Pends did it effectively without openly criticizing Ka Felix.

More than fifty years later, Ka Felix remains a revolutionary with the rich lesson he learned from the wisdom of Ka Pends.

Ka Pends guided the young Party organization in 1973 to decide which areas in Negros would be best fit to start the first NPA fronts. His wisdom benefits the party organization up to now.

In June 1973, Ka Pends was asked to go to Panay to attend the Regional Party Plenum. The group had to transfer from place to place to avoid enemy detection. However, at the end of their prolonged meetings, state forces got wind of their presence. Armed encounters took place. Several party cadres became martyrs. Ka Pends was one of them. He was shot and wounded. When the other comrades wanted to help him and bring him with them, he told them to leave him and retreat for their safety. He died of his wounds on July 27,1973.

Pends' mother, Nanay, was so proud that her son was a martyr, she had the words written in red on his tomb: Edmundo Legislador, Freedom Fighter.

We honor Ka Pendong Legislador, Party leader of Negros from January to July 1973, beloved Martyr, Red Fighter, Mature Party Guide whose wisdom enriches us until today.



Scom the River to the Sea

by Jose Emilio Jacinto III

Introduction

The genocidal war of annihilation unleashed on the Palestinian people by US imperialism and its Zionist lackeys in the Middle East has its roots in the colonial and imperialist aggression on Palestinian land that started in 1917.

The genocide in Palestine has already claimed more than 18,000 Palestinian lives, mostly women, children and the elderly who have been brutally subjected to indiscriminate Israeli bombings of civilian buildings and establishments, residences, schools, hospitals, and refugee camps – acts prohibited by international laws and are considered war crimes.

Zionist Israel, which has long occupied, and used brutal forms of aggression against the Palestinian people has used the unprecedented October 7 attack launched by the Palestinian Hamas resistance fighters on Israeli territory to unleash this genocidal war. It imposed a "total blockade" of the Gaza Strip – the only remaining land left to the Palestinians after the Zionist occupation – preventing the supply of food, medicine, fuel, and other essential commodities to the already besieged enclave in another act of terror also considered a war crime under international humanitarian law.



Colonization and occupation

In November 1917, the British imperialists who controlled Palestine at that time, promised the creation of a national home for the Jewish people. This was expressed in the so-called Balfour Declaration, which became the mandate for the Zionists to establish their country in Palestine.

Since then and up until 1948, the British imperialists systematically facilitated Jewish immigration to Palestine, where Palestinian Arab natives made up more than 90 percent of the population. Also, and especially after the Second World War, many European Jews joined this mass migration as they were fleeing Nazi persecution in Europe.

Conflict started as the Jews arrived and started occupying Palestinian lands. The tensions led to the Arab Revolt which lasted from 1936 to 1939 but was brutally suppressed by the British imperialists. British occupying troops bombed villages, curfews were imposed, entire neighborhoods were demolished, and administrative detentions and summary killings were widespread. The British occupiers also helped the Zionists form armed groups through a British-led "counterinsurgency force" of Jewish fighters to suppress the growing Palestinian resistance. Thousands of Palestinians were slaughtered, wounded, and imprisoned in the process.

Zionist paramilitaries continued to embark on military operations to destroy and seize Palestinian towns and villages to expand the territory of the future Zionist state.

More than 500 Palestinian villages, towns and cities were destroyed in what Palestinians refer to as the Nakba, or "catastrophe" in Arabic in 1948. More than 15,000 Palestinians were massacred during this period. The Zionists seized 78 percent of historic Palestine and the remaining 22 percent was divided into what are now the occupied West Bank and the besieged Gaza Strip. About a million Palestinians were forced out of their homes.

As the Zionist occupation heightened, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181 in 1947, which called for the partition of Palestine into Arab and

Jewish states. The Palestinians flatly rejected the plan because it allotted about 55 percent of Palestine to the Jewish state, including most of the fertile coastal region. At the time, the Palestinians owned 94 percent of historic Palestine and comprised 67 percent of its population.

The establishment of the Zionist Israeli state on May 15, 1948 has been marked since then by Palestinians around the world as the "Nakba" or the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.

On June 5, 1967, Israel engaged several Arab countries namely, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt in the so-called Six-Day War which was the result of Israel coming into conflict with control of territories and water resources in the region, and also because of Palestinian guerrilla activities launched from these countries. Being the victor in this war, Israel occupied the rest of Palestine, including the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Syrian Golan Heights, and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula, resulting in more Palestinian refugees. Palestinians refer to this event as "Naksa" or setback.

Uprising and armed resistance

Significantly on December 1967, the Marxist-Leninist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) was founded. It launched several daring attacks on Israel which called attention to the plight of Palestinians and their resistance movement.

Meanwhile, illegal settlements on Palestinian land, which are outlawed under international law, continued to grow. The West Bank and the Gaza Strip fell under Israeli military occupation.

Having suffered enough from Zionist Israel's brutal repression, ethnic cleansing and occupation, the Palestinians launched two "intifadas" - or popular uprisings in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Intifada was primarily carried out by young people and was aimed at ending the Israeli occupation of these territories and creating an independent Palestinian state. The uprisings were a sustained series of protests, civil disobedience, and other forms of resistance, including armed struggle.



The first Intifada erupted in the Gaza Strip in December 1987 and spread rapidly to the West Bank. It led to the establishment of the Hamas movement which engaged in armed resistance against the Israeli occupation.

The second Intifada began in September 2000 and Palestinian armed resistance became even more widespread. A year after Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) died in 2004, Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip were dismantled, and Israeli soldiers and settlers left the enclave. After this, Palestinians voted in the first general election and Hamas won overwhelmingly in Gaza. A civil war broke out between Hamas and Fatah Party – the main party of the Palestinian authority.

Hamas expelled Fatah from the Gaza Strip, while the Palestinian Authority governed parts of the West Bank. Hamas enjoys support from the people, particularly those in the Gaza Strip, because they undertake grassroots activism, provide social welfare programs to victims of the Israeli occupation, and most important, like other resistance groups in Palestine, promised liberation and a homeland to the Palestinian people, particularly the youth.

As more martyrs are sacrificed in the genocidal war of Zionist Israel with the strongest backing of US imperialism, the worldwide solidarity for the liberation of Palestine has grown to unprecedented heights, and the pathetic isolation of Israel and its US and European backers has grown more pronounced. The war has also drawn five of the major resistance groups in Palestine together, including the Hamas, to unite and cooperate.

US imperialist support

US imperialist support for Zionism and Israel and its imperialist presence in the Middle East were also subjected to the strongest global condemnation. US

imperialism has considered Israel as its attack dog in the Middle east. Israel holds strategic value as far as US imperialism is concerned, as it is a stabilizing force in the Middle East, "keeping at bay unrest that would threaten access to the regional oil supply on which America remains dependent", asserts a political analyst.

Israel receives annually 3.8B USD in US military aid, apart from weapons, ammunitions, and nuclear technology. American munitions were supplied and used in attacking Palestinians. It is also among the US' top trading partners. It therefore comes as no surprise that the US is directly complicit in the war crimes committed by Israel in Palestine, even before the current war started.

Diplomatic isolation

As the UN has introduced resolutions in favor of a ceasefire and humanitarian aid for Palestine, more and more countries and nations reject the positions of Israel, the US and pro-Israeli European leaders. The diplomatic outcry, as a result of the continuing genocidal war of Israel against Palestine, has seen several countries cutting diplomatic ties with Israel, and with one country calling Israel a terrorist state.

Even the US puppet Marcos regime was forced to join the calls for a ceasefire recently to avoid not only diplomatic censure but also the Filipino people's outrage for condoning the genocide and war crimes of the US and Israel in Palestine.

Solidarity for the liberation of Palestine

As the Palestinians in Palestine and those scattered around the world stand firm in their determination to resist Israeli occupation and fight for the liberation of their nation, the slogan "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!" reverberates even more loudly in almost all corners of the world, and the global people's solidarity for the liberation of Palestine has grown even more massive.



FURTHER DETERIORATES UNDER MARCOS JR.

By Ricardo Lozano

In the past year, the Filipino masses have witnessed (and suffered) firsthand the further deterioration of the Philippine economy. From depressed wages, ballooning food prices to persistent landlessness and maldevelopment especially in the countryside, the neoliberal economic policy of the Marcos Jr. regime stays true to form as an unequivocally antipeople scheme. Despite Marcos Jr.'s incessant projections of economic growth and recovery, the lives of the toiling masses tell us otherwise.

Marcos Jr.'s economic team composed of the IMF-WB (International Monetary Fund – World Bank) triumvirate of Benjamin Diokno, Felipe Medalla and Arsenio Balisacan, have demonstrated their utter disregard of the need to generate meaningful employment opportunities for Filipino workers. Although employment figures increased by 3.4 million to 4.8 million from July to August 2023, the jobs created were mostly in precarious work forcing Filipinos to make do with whatever job they can find, no matter how dangerous or cheaply paid. The latest labor force data suggests that the number of part-time workers jumped to nearly 15 million while full-time workers grew less than a million in the same period.

Add to this the fact that real wages have lagged terribly behind food prices in recent months. Current real wages in the National Capital Region (NCR) for example has declined 2% since 2020 while the price of regular-milled rice has skyrocketed 10% in the same period. Last August, GRP's Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno even had the gall to declare before a Senate hearing that raising the minimum wage will be bad for the Philippine economy and cause it to "slow down."

But what Diokno and his cohorts fail to realize is that economic growth under the Marcos Jr. administration has already been on a downward spiral. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has consistently slowed down from 7.7% in the third quarter of 2022 to 7.1% in the fourth quarter last year. In the first quarter of 2023, GDP dwindled to 6.4% and down further to 4.3% in the second quarter. This slowdown of economic activity is rooted in the continued depression of wages which in turn dampens household consumption historically accounting for three-fourths of the country's economy.

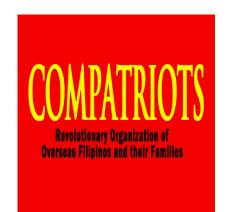
Earlier this year the GRP decided to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which particularly targeted Philippine agriculture. Part of RCEP's conditions is for the GRP to remove its tariffs on sensitive agricultural products including rice. The Philippines' backward and neglected agriculture is in no position to compete with imported commodities from countries which provide massive subsidies to their farmers. Presently, farmers are already deep in debt due to high costs of production. Farmgate prices are pulled down because of unimpeded importation, smuggling and manipulation of cartels in collusion with the ruling reactionary faction.

Price manipulation in turn further squeezes more profit from the hardships of the poorest Filipino families. This is on top of continuously increasing inflationary pressures that contribute to soaring prices. A recent survey suggests that the number of Filipino families who consider themselves poor have increased to 13.2 million in the past year. High food costs are putting crushing pressure on the majority of Filipino households who survive on low wages and incomes.

At the root of the Philippines' deteriorating economy is the prolonged global economic crisis and the resulting strategic decline of US imperialism. With the rise of a multi-polar world order and continuous attempts to redivide the world comes the narrowing of spaces from which monopoly capitalism can derive superprofits. This crisis has expressed itself in the form of wars and proxy wars in various parts of the globe coupled with even more aggressive neoliberal offensives to pry open underdeveloped economies in the global south including the Philippines.

The chronic crisis force-fed to the Filipino toiling masses on a daily basis have caused Marcos Jr. and Sara Duterte to suffer significant drops in their approval ratings. Marcos Jr.'s approval ratings plummeted by 10% in October while Sara Duterte saw 11% drop in her ratings. These figures attest to the growing discontent and wrath of the Filipino people. As the ruling Marcos-Duterte clique continue to scramble for control over an increasingly smaller pool of money and squeeze more out of the people's pockets to compensate for lesser spoils, they inevitably stoke the flames of civil

war. 🛭



Life of a revolutionary compatriot

By Ricardo Lozano

The struggle of Filipino migrants, despite being away from their homeland, remain rooted in the Philippine struggle for national and social liberation. Cognizant of the semi-feudal and semi-colonial conditions back home that forced Filipinos to work abroad, the revolutionary movement affirms that Filipino migrants can be organized as a formidable force of the revolution.

Statistics International from the Labour Organization (ILO) suggest there are over 10 million Filipinos living abroad globally. This is on top of thousands of Filipinos who have immigrated abroad, those who remain undocumented as well as refugees in various parts of the world. These comprise the Filipino diaspora, tied by their common stories of sacrifice, hope, and revolution. As they navigate the complexities of adjusting to a different life abroad subjected to intense exploitation and oppression, they recognize that their plight can only be understood and transformed by taking part in the national democratic struggle for liberation.

We interviewed members of Compatriots, the revolutionary organization of Filipino migrants and their families, and an allied organization of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), to find out more about their daily struggles, the challenges they face in organizing compatriot masses and what it's like to live as a revolutionary migrant.

Fertile ground for organizing

Filipino migrants suffer various forms of exploitation, oppression, racism, and discrimination. This common thread that ties compatriots together make the ground fertile to organize them in their millions for the national democratic revolution.

"As class conscious revolutionary forces, we organize migrants by first making them understand and realize how they are exploited and capitalized upon both by big businesses through wage depression, and by the Philippine government by raking in billions from their remittances only to pay off international debt," tells Jenny, a part-time migrant worker and revolutionary migrant organizer.

"We can also organize them by helping them with their immediate needs. In many cases, we are able to organize migrants who are rescued from situations of abuse or other forms of modern-day slavery," Jenny adds. According to some estimates, around 49.6 million people live in conditions of modern slavery – in forced labor and forced marriage situations majority of whom are migrant women.

"The moment they understand their situation and the moment they realize that the only way to change things is by taking part in the struggle for national democratic revolution, Filipino migrants can become a strong core of revolutionary strength," explains Jenny. Organized Filipino migrants play a key role in shaping international public opinion in support of the Philippine revolution. In their thousands, they can either pressure political actors abroad to take action on human rights violations committed by the Philippine government, or also generate substantial moral and material support for the revolution.

Filipino migrants abroad can come from various class origins – from peasants who are forced to sell their land and eventually sell their labor power in another country, pettybourgeois professionals who are underpaid for their work in the Philippines, or workers who risk everything for a better life in a foreign land – these make up the wide range of forces that can be organized for the liberation of Philippine society.

Challenges faced by revolutionary compatriots

But "organizing work among Filipino compatriots isn't always easy," says Dina, also a member of Compatriots and works as a household cleaner in Europe. "Organizing work among migrants, like in other sectors, is also fraught with challenges much of which has to do with the very limited time they can spare to be with us in meetings or participate in educational discussions and other activities," admits Dina. Most Filipino migrants, especially undocumented migrants, take on two or three jobs jumping to clean from one household to babysit in another according to Dina.

Dina wakes up early and begins her day navigating the intricate web of odd jobs that sustain her livelihood and her family back home. With a wornout backpack slung over her shoulder, she moves from one house to another, always on the lookout for a day's wage. Calloused from countless tasks, Dina's hands tell the tale of labor and sacrifice. Despite her busy schedule, she still finds time to do mass work and organize among the ranks of Filipino migrant workers.

"Many of the masses we have organized prove that it is possible to participate in political actions despite balancing time for economic work. The moment they see the organization alive and functioning, they become inspired to be part of it and give more time for political action," Dina explains.

"Individualist tendencies tend to exacerbate especially for migrant workers here in advanced capitalist countries," says Dina. She argues that the work available for migrant workers are mostly in the service industry or so-called "black jobs" that often rely greatly on the individual efforts and hardships – from cleaning houses, babysitting, waitressing, and other house-based chores.

"This becomes a challenge for migrant organizers in terms of developing their social consciousness and a collective way of life," adds Dina. "Nevertheless, we are able to overcome these challenges through pain-staking ideological work. By giving out educational discussions to raise their consciousness and allow them to break through the individualist mindset with which they have been trained for a long time," she explains.

"As a revolutionary compatriot, you must also be always on guard against your own individualist tendencies – to situate yourself as a revolutionary, and not a mere migrant. This means you must be able to apply revolutionary ideas to the current situation faced by Filipino migrant workers abroad and organize them for the cause of revolution in the homeland," said Dina.

Life full of sacrifices

"The life of a revolutionary compatriot is a life full of sacrifices. Imagine having all the opportunity to earn more money so you can send more back to your family at home but giving that up so that you can spend more time doing political work," said Jenny.

Jenny recalls how she would sometimes have to give up a gig just to respond to urgent migrant concerns; how despite not knowing how to replace lost income, takes comfort in knowing the masses will support her and provide for her needs. "Despite being away from the Philippines, the spirit of bayanihan prevails among our Filipino compatriots. Whenever someone needs a place to stay, some food to eat, or even just company, our migrants are always ready to help out," she adds.

Jenny wakes up at five in the morning to prepare for her first job as a part-time warehouse staffer. She leaves work around 12 noon for a quick break and travel to the next village to clean a household or two where she earns 15 euros per hour of cleaning. She spends the remaining part of her day to meet up with other Filipino migrants to hold educational discussions or participate in political actions. In her free time and especially during weekends, she would spend most of her day in social gatherings of traditional migrant organizations to expand her network for organizing.

"It was difficult at first to adjust to living abroad, away from family. I had to learn a new language, adjust to a new culture, and jump from one job to another just to survive," explains Jenny. "It was also challenging to find the right balance between economic work to earn just enough for me and my family back home to survive and find enough time to do the work I set out to do – which is to organize other migrants for the Philippine revolution," she added.

"But these are sacrifices that I'm willing and prepared to take. Situating oneself in the Filipino revolution is possible despite being thousands of miles away from the armed resistance at home," Jenny said.

Indeed, the life of a revolutionary Filipino migrant is not a walk in the park. It requires constant self-remolding in the face of bourgeois influences especially in advanced capitalist countries where the temptation to "bourgeoisify" is strongest. But amid the constant uncertainty and relentless hardships, our revolutionary compatriots find solace in the camaraderie of their fellow migrant workers whom they arouse, organize and mobilize. Their daily struggles are an inspiring illustration of simple living and arduous struggle.





By Ana Rosario

Prof. Jose Maria Sison, or Ka Joma as he is fondly called, was a staunch fighter for the rights and welfare of Filipino overseas workers. As Chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) and as Chief Political Consultant of the NDFP Panel for peace negotiations he never failed to uphold the interest of the migrant Filipino workers.

His writings on the cause of migration, the struggle against exploitation and oppression suffered by migrant workers, the important role they play in the struggle for national liberation and democracy and in building a genuinely free and prosperous Philippines developed the ideological and political consciousness of our kababayans (compatriots) working abroad. Ka Joma was a tireless resource person accepting invitations from different organizations, not only Filipinos but other nationalities, to discuss the various concerns faced by migrant workers.

In 2007, the Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo regime filed trumped up murder charges against Ka Joma and instigated the Netherlands government to arrest and imprison him. During his interrogation by Dutch authorities, one of his interrogators told Ka Joma that he must have been a very important person because people were demonstrating in front of Dutch embassies in different countries demanding his release from prison. Migrant workers were a constant part of these protest actions.

Upon his release after being proven innocent, he was given a warm welcome by the Filipinos and other foreign friends who gathered at the NDFP International Office. Kababayans were carrying banners and placards saying, "Ka Joma is not a terrorist!" "Long live Ka Joma" "We love you Tito Joma!"

A kababayan said: "Ako simpleng tao lang ako. Pero tanong ko lang, bakit ang isang taong lumalaban para sa kapayapaan at karapatan ng taong tulad ko ay tatawaging isang terorista? Basta ang alam ko si Tito Joma ay hindi terorista!" (I am just a simple person. But my question is why a person who fights for peace and rights of people like me is called a terrorist? What I know is Tito Joma is not a terrorist!)

Indeed, the Filipino migrants never believed Ka Joma was a criminal. They know who he is and what kind of a person he was. He was Ka Joma, Tito Joe, Kuya Joma, Lolo (Grandfather) Joe. They are very at home with him, and he was at home with his beloved Kababayans. He enjoyed talking to the youth and sharing his experiences with them, teaching summer political schools, joking and singing with them. He even tried jamming, rapping and doing some hip-hop routines with the youth.

During a gathering that celebrated his long service to the Filipino people, one of the speakers explained why the terrorist tag never stuck on Ka Joma and why the cacophonous slander fell on deaf ears. She said "Ka Joma always welcomed the presence of our Kababayans. He would listen to their stories, their problems, explained to them the reason for their leaving the Philippines and their family and suffer the pain of separation, the loneliness of being far away from family and friends. He would always explain the need and importance for them to organize themselves and fight for their rights as migrant workers. For our kababayans, Ka Joma was one of them."

Kababayans would often consult their problems to Ka Joma – from family and financial problems, their heavy responsibilities as a migrant worker, legalization, advise on forming organizations, how to protect the rights and welfare of migrant workers and sometimes even about their love life.

It was not difficult nor were they afraid to approach Ka Joma because he was always friendly, easy to talk with and always had time for them. They also knew he would listen intently to what they will say.

Ka Joma, on the other hand, enjoyed being in the company of Kababayans that he always accepted invitations to their gatherings whether this was a celebration of the Christmas holidays, birthdays, summer picnics, fundraising, political gatherings and of course those karaoke nights that he so adored. He was at ease with them and he really belonged.

Like our kababayans, he also suffered the pangs of loneliness for being so far from his beloved Philippines, his family and his kasamas (comrades). He suffered the injustice of the ruling system, as a refugee who was persecuted and prosecuted, charged with crimes he never committed imprisoned and deprived of income. But he persevered for he knew his country and his kababayans are worth fighting for.

In his poem "Sometimes the Heart Yearns for Mangoes", one could feel the pain of loneliness and longing emanating from the words of his poetry, just like the loneliness and longing felt by his millions of kababayans outside the Philippines.

Sometimes, the Heart Yearns for Mangoes

Sometimes, the heart yearns
For mangoes where there are apples,
For orchids where there are tulips,
For warmth, where it is cold,
For mountainous islands,
Where there is flatland.

Far less than the home, And the flow of kith and kin, Unfamiliar and now familiar Things and places trigger The pain of sundered relations, Of losses by delays and default.

Direct dialing, fax machines, Computer discs and video casettes And visitors on jumbo jets, Fail to close the gap Between rehearsed appearances And the unrehearsed life at home. That make a strange land loveable. But they have their routines, Their own lives to live, Beyond the comprehension And pertinence of the stranger.

Those who seek to rob the exile Of home, kith and kin, Of life, limb and liberty Are the loudest to mock at him Who is helplessly at sea, Uprooted from his soil.

The well-purposed exile continues
To fight for his motherland
Against those who banished him,
The unwelcomed exploiters of his people,
And is certain that he is at home
In his own country and the world.

Jose Maria Sison Utrecht, 30 March 1994

Dubai climate talks reek of monopoly capitalist control

By Hugo Francisco

The recent UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) Conference of Parties (COP) in Dubai reeks of monopoly capitalist control mainly through the global oil cartel represented by the US-backed United Arab Emirates (UAE) hosting the talks. In every annual COP, western imperialist countries including the US and Europe would make pledges to cut down on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to arrest runaway global warming, but at the same time shift the discussions away from any notions of historical responsibility and climate debt, instead focusing only on 'current' emissions levels while allowing big fossil fuel companies to continue operating unfettered.

The same is true for the 28th edition of COP. Ahead of the negotiations, allegations were made against the UAE for supposedly leveraging COP28 as a means to forge new business deals for the benefit of oil conglomerates. It is also not surprising to see that at least 2,456 fossil fuel lobbyists (highest in record) were granted access to the climate negotiations demonstrating the scale of influence carved out by big oil and gas corporations such as Shell, Total and ExxonMobil.

The outcomes of the negotiations also point to a set of orchestrated "commitments" meant to create a profitable route for fossil fuel businesses to continue operating. For instance, the increased attention given to market-based solutions such as in the case of hydrogen, gas and ammonia co-firing, nuclear, and big hydropower projects attest to the corporate capture of the talks. Even the 'just transition' framework is effectively hijacked by US imperialist geopolitical maneuvering to funnel the profit from the renewables industry to the west away from China who has now become one of the world's top manufacturers of renewable energy technology. This is increasingly becoming a characteristic of imperialist crisis today: with the further accumulation of profit remaining the motive behind so-called mitigation efforts to curb the impacts of climate change.

On the other hand, rich industrialized countries pledge underwhelming figures for loss and damage funds meant to pay for the impacts of the climate disaster on poor underdeveloped countries. The US committed just USD 17.5 million which is a mere 0.0035% of the USD 500 billion estimated annual cost of climate impacts on the Global South by 2030. While developed countries contributing over 75% of the world's emissions have enough money

to act, they expect the global south to adapt on their own and pay for the costs.

The fossil-fuel imperialist powers try to obscure their responsibility by misleading people of the real cause of global warming. They take cover under the phrase 'human activity' in an evident attempt to spread the blame on all of humanity for causing climate change. They often use 'motherhood slogans' such as biodiversity to pit environmentalists and poor communities against each other. In contrast, corporate landgrabbers, extractive profiteers, and polluters, the biggest culprits in biodiversity depletion worldwide, are left off the hook.

The relentless pursuit of monopoly capital for super profit has incentivized a continuing frenzy of fossil fuel-based energy operations. This in turn has resulted in destructive oil and gas drilling operations in many countries of the Global South. Despite the glaring fact that increasing global temperatures has been scientifically proven to be caused by an everincreasing use of fossil fuel-based energy by the imperialist countries, US imperialism continues on the same path.

It is a well-known fact that over 80 percent of the energy used in the world is based on fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas, and methane). Until recently, the United States ranked the topmost emitter of GHG but because of China's rapid industrialization, it has become the world's top GHG producer at 30.7% followed by Europe at 17% and the US at 13.6%. The US however still remains the highest historical emitter responsible for 25% of emissions since the 1700s.

The economic powers belittle the already catastrophic consequences of climate disasters that have increased in frequency in the past 28 years. Drought, for example, is now becoming a frequent phenomenon, particularly in Africa. In Somalia, villagers witness how their livestock slowly starve to death due to a lack of food and water. The people had no choice but to migrate away from famine-affected regions and seek refuge in neighboring countries. Africa contributes the least to global warming yet suffers the most. Between 2010 and 2012, 260,000 Somalis died from famine – most of whom were children.

The Philippines will likely experience 'moderate to severe drought conditions' in 2024 comparable to the 1997-1998 El Niño drought, the country's worst-ever dry spell. Ranked among the most

vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change, the Philippines is usually affected by around 20 major storms a year. So far this year, only ten have made landfall, the lowest number since 1998 when 11 were recorded.

Rising sea levels is also evident in almost every corner of the world. In the south of Bangladesh, villagers who live near the riverbanks are migrating to the cities as they lost their livelihood due to intense cyclones that are becoming frequent in the region. The island Tuvalu also faces extinction. This 26 square kilometers island country in the Pacific Ocean with over 10,000 inhabitants may soon disappear beneath the sea due to rising sea levels.

In Shishmaref, Alaska, an Eskimo village on a barrier reef island is slowly disappearing. Rising temperatures have reduced sea ice, which buffers the island from storm surges. At the same time, the permafrost that the village is built on has also begun to melt, making the shore even more vulnerable to erosion.

The effects of global warming are evident, and it is making the life of the global south more miserable on top of imperialist exploitation and plunder. Developing countries only emit a small fraction of the carbon developed countries emit. And yet, they suffer the most from the impacts of climate change.

The climate crisis is at the core of a broader global ecological crisis, and both are tightly intertwined with the recurring and worsening socio-economic crises, geopolitical crises and wars, which in turn are deeply rooted in the capitalist system. The rule of monopoly capital has further intensified all these crises.

POINTBLANK

News: Peace talks with CPP-NPA-NDFP a restart, not a resumption - Galvez

>Restart, you say? Address the stumbling blocks to peace that GRP created in the first place!

News: Marcos administration determined to sustain the gains of peace – Peace Adviser > Then why are you calling for a restart? Ano ba talaga, kuya!?

News: Sara Duterte says resuming peace talks is an agreement with the devil >Says the angel?

News: Detained SMNI anchors Badoy, Celiz go on hunger strike

>Must be tough, considering their usual diet consists of misinformation and baseless accusations.

News: Security officials tell senators: Philippines in safe hands (in the wake of recent Marawi bombing)

>Which safe hands? US imperialists? Corrupt bureaucrat capitalists? Fascists AFP and PNP?

News: Marcos offers amnesty to rebels >Amnesty offer? More like a blanket offer to surrender.

News: Marcos has Covid for third time > Foreign junkets will continue, no matter!

News: Sara appealing to DOJ: Don't cooperate with ICC

>That's one way to play hide and seek with international justice. Maybe next we'll see a 'Don't Disturb, War Criminals at Work' sign on the presidential door.

News: Senator Bong Go wants to bolster NTF-ELCAC, rebel returnees programs; Go said that he has been a witness to the root causes of rebellion in the Philippines

>In what multiverse is bolstering NTF-ELCAC and rebel returnees program supposed to address the root causes of armed conflict? How about implementing genuine land reform and developing our national industries instead?

News: Filipino students lag in learning by 5 years > DepEd bureaucrats led by Sara, lag in learning by a century!

News: Imee Marcos backs VP Duterte's sentiments over peace talks > Hawks of the same feather, flock together.

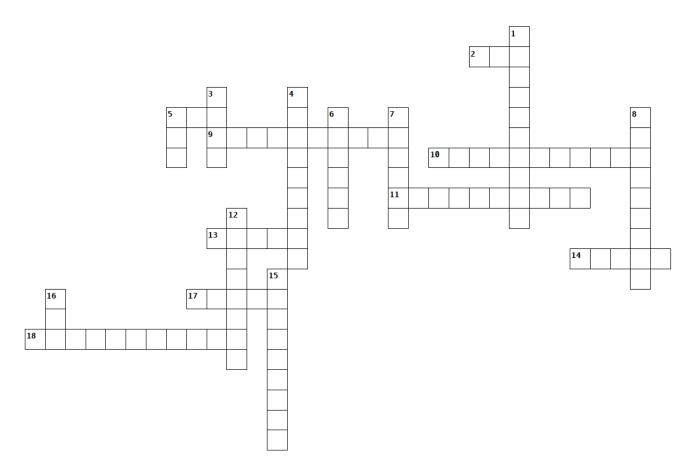
News: Philippines' Marcos relinquishes agriculture

News: Philippines' Marcos relinquishes agriculture post as prices soar >Good riddance!

News: Heavy traffic? Marcos advisor calls it sign of 'booming' economy

>That's a stretch longer than the EDSA traffic jam! If traffic congestion were a measure of prosperity, our economy would be a five-star destination.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

- **2.** this person launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1966
- 5. people's army
- **9.** violent overthrow of a government or social order
- 10. highest stage of capitalism
- **11.** act or process of setting someone or a society free
- **13.** founding head of government of Soviet Russia
- **14.** division in society based on their relationship to the means of production
- **17.** instrument of control used by the ruling class to maintain its rule over the means of production or repress the exploited classes
- 18. the working class

Down

- **1.** taking a stand in support of people's struggles
- 3. he wrote Das Kapital
- 4. occupied by US-backed Israeli forces
- **5.** revolutionary united front organization of the Filipino people
- 6. leader of the Soviet Union from 1924 to 1953
- **7.** he wrote Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State
- 8. classless society
- **12.** primary force for the armed revolution in the Philippines
- 15. serfs vs landlords
- 16. state of conflict



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