

## FERDINAND MARCOS JR.: Successor of His Father's Reign of Terror and Copy-Cat of Duterte's Malicious Brutality



KARAPATAN

### MARCOS JR.'S FIRST YEAR OF TERROR

**A**FTER A YEAR IN POWER and fashioning himself like his father, Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has proven to be a virtual clone of his predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte.

Extrajudicial killings (EJKs), which were markers of the Duterte regime, have not only persisted, the policies that spur them are firmly in place, uninterruptedly terrorizing the people of this country.

Marcos Jr. continues to implement Duterte's 2017-2022 National Security Policy that has engendered counter-insurgency programs and policies that resulted in numerous victims of EJKs.

Among these are Executive Order No. 70 that spawned the "whole-of-nation" campaign of terror and the creation of the notorious National Task Force to End Local Communist

Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC); Presidential Proclamation 374 which designated the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), New People's Army (NPA) and National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) as terrorist organizations; Memorandum Order No. 32 (MO 32) ordering intensified counter-insurgency operations in Negros, Bicol and Samar; and the implementation of draconian counter-terrorism legislation such as the Anti-Terrorism Act and the Terrorism Financing Prevention and Suppression Act.

Neither has Marcos Jr. rescinded any of the operational guidelines formulated, issued and implemented by the Philippine National Police (PNP) in relation to the "war on drugs" such as Oplan Double Barrel and Project Tokhang, which are both reflected as policies through a series of PNP Command Memorandum Circulars.



Under Duterte, the implementation of these guidelines has resulted in thousands of killings. The UP Third World Studies Program's Dahas Project has so far monitored 309 drug war-related killings in the first eleven months alone of Marcos Jr.'s term, already surpassing the 302 killings monitored in Duterte's last year in office.

All domestic investigation and redress mechanisms presented by the Duterte and Marcos Jr. regimes in response to demands for justice and accountability such as the Task Force on Administrative Order No. 35 (AO 35), and the drug war review panel have been utter failures. The most recent travesties are the junking by the Department of Justice's special team of prosecutors under AO 35 of the murder complaints against the policemen involved in the killings of trade union leader Manny Asuncion and activist couple Ariel and Ana Mariz Evangelista, three of the nine victims killed during the Bloody Sunday incident of March 7, 2021. With these precedents, none of the other victims of Bloody Sunday or any other victim of extrajudicial killing, for that matter, can expect justice from the Marcos Jr. regime.

Marcos Jr.'s refusal to allow the conduct of independent investigations by the International Criminal Court and international human rights bodies on the human rights situation in the Philippines indicates his intention to perpetuate the same culture of impunity and lack of accountability that have shielded human rights violators, including war criminals, from the time of Marcos Sr. to the present.

Marcos Jr. has not acknowledged the sufferings inflicted by his father's dictatorial regime, much less offered an apology. Instead, he harps on the tired and false theme of his father's regime having been a "golden age" in Philippine history. He even has the gall to state that "fake news" has no place in Philippine society, and yet massive, elaborate and well-funded disinformation campaigns by Marcos Jr. and his family's minions since before the 2022 elections continue to deodorize their sordid record of impunity, plunder and exploitation.

Dissent is systematically suppressed through the "whole-of-nation" approach that misuses the resources of the entire government bureaucracy to profile, red-tag, harass, isolate, and set up dissidents for imprisonment on trumped-up charges or extrajudicial killings. Central to this approach is the role of the NTF-ELCAC whose functions are replicated at every level of government. The NTF-ELCAC in cahoots with government intelligence agencies have been fanatically surveilling and alternately cajoling, bribing and threatening their targets into repudiating and misrepresenting their organizations and advocacies.

Following are some of the latest and most egregious violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law documented by Karapatan in the first year of the Marcos Jr. regime.

## Extrajudicial killings

As of June 30, 2023, there were at least 60 victims of EJKs in 40 incidents documented nationwide by Karapatan since Marcos Jr. took power. Twenty of the victims were from Negros and 16 were from Bicol, two of the three regions singled out for more massive military and police deployment and intensified counter-insurgency operations under Duterte's Memo No. 32, which Marcos Jr. would continue to enforce. In many of the incidents, the victims were made out to be NPA members supposedly killed in armed encounters with the military.

**In Negros Occidental.** In one of the most gruesome massacres under the Marcos Jr. regime, four members of a peasant family in Negros were gunned down in Sitio Kangkiling, Barangay Buenavista, Himamaylan City by armed men believed to be elements of the 94<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army (IBPA).

Gunshots were heard throughout the community at around 10 p.m. of June 14, 2023. Early next morning, **Rolly Fausto, 52, his wife Emelda Fausto, 51, and their children Ben, 14 and Ravin, 11,** were found dead in their home by the Fausto couple's elder daughter Emely.



**Fausto family**

Rolly and Emelda were members of a local farmers group Baclayan, Bito, Cabagal Farmers and Farmworkers Association (BABICAF). According to local human rights groups, Rolly and Emelda had been red-tagged and subjected to continuous harassment from soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the past months.

In the same month, **Roweno Anubong**, a 40-year-old farmer and resident of Sitio Agogolo, Barangay Macagahay, Moises Padilla; and **Benjie Ebarle**, a farmer from Sitio Bungaw, Barangay Trinidad, Guihulngan City were killed by operating troops from the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA. The military claimed that Ebarle and Anubong were members of the NPA killed in encounters with the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA on June 13, 2023 in Sitio Cupad, Barangay Macagahay of the same town. In fact, Ebarle and Anubong just happened to be in the area during the clash and were shot dead due to the indiscriminate firing of soldiers.

Two months prior, **Jose Albores Jr.**, 32, a farmer and resident of Sitio Upper Tiyos, Quinten Remo, Moises Padilla town, was killed by soldiers from the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA at around 5 a.m. of April 18, 2023. Albores was home preparing tobacco to sell in Barangay Alingasaw, Moises Padilla when a platoon of soldiers from the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA surrounded his house. He was later declared an NPA member killed in a supposed encounter between the soldiers and the NPA.

TABLE 1

### Violations of Civil & Political Rights under the Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Government

(July 2022 to June 2023)

Violation	Number of victims
Extrajudicial Killing	60
Frustrated Extrajudicial Killing	28
Enforced Disappearance	8
Torture	11
Illegal Arrest without Detention	191
Illegal Arrest and Detention	78
Illegal Search and Seizure	512
Physical Assault and Injury	16
Demolition	12,000
Violation of Domicile	519
Destruction of Property	414
Divestment of Property	4
Forced Evacuation	13,905
Threat/Harassment/Intimidation	1,582,239
Indiscriminate Firing	7,712
Bombing	6,931
Forced/Fake Surrender	544

His killing was likely done in retaliation for accompanying his neighbors Jeffrey and Jessel Gella to the PNP-Moises Padilla Station to file an incident blotter report. The Gellas' house had been raided and ransacked by soldiers of the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA at about 8 a.m. on April 7, 2023. The soldiers also harassed the couple after the illegal search of their house.

On May 3, 2023, **Crispin Tingal Jr.**, 36, a farmer from Sitio Dangalon, Barangay Hilamonan, Kabankalan City, and a member of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in Kabankalan City, was killed by elements of the 303<sup>rd</sup> Brigade of the Philippine Army. He and his wife Dolly had just arrived home at around 3 p.m. when Dolly heard a burst of gunfire. She and her children ran towards the creek beside their house to take cover from the bullets. From a distance, Dolly and her brother-in-law Ramon Tingal saw Crispin being tied by soldiers of the Philippine Army. He was still alive.

On May 4, 2023, however, the 303<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade posted on their Facebook page that the 94<sup>th</sup> IBPA clashed with at least 20 members of the NPA in Barangay Buenavista, Himamaylan and mentioned that there was one casualty from the NPA and two wounded soldiers. Dolly then learned that the alleged NPA casualty was her husband.



Crispin Tingal Jr.

FILE PHOTO

Dolly, other relatives and community members attested that Tingal was not a member of the NPA, and was in fact active in their local government unit's (LGU) agricultural program. The day of the incident, Crispin was even present at a seminar organized by the LGU.

Earlier, on April 19, 2023, habal-habal drivers Renel delos Santos and Denald Mialen went missing after they were hired to transport two passengers – Lyngrace Martullinas and NDFP consultant **Rogelio Posadas**. They were last seen buying gasoline at a store in Sitio Talaptap, Barangay Talaptap, La Castellana before driving towards the Talaptap-Aranda road. At around 5 p.m., Denald Mialen phoned his girlfriend that they were in Barangay Bagroy, Binalbagan. This was the last anyone heard from the group.



Rogelio Posadas

On the morning of April 20, the 303<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade released a statement regarding an alleged encounter in Sitio Cavite, Barangay Santol, Binalbagan that led to the killing of an NPA member. Later in the evening of April 21, 2023, the 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade announced that Rogelio Posadas was the lone casualty in the alleged firefight on April 20.

The Posadas family reported receiving information that as the group was traversing the Aranda-La Castellana road on April 19, 2023, they were intercepted by armed persons in a van who forced them inside and brought them to an unknown location.

**In Negros Oriental.** On April 28, 2023, **Anthony Curson**, a member of the NPA who was on medical leave because of severe kidney disease, was in the house of Leonido Montero, a farmer and resident of Sitio Malatanglad, Barangay Budlasan, Canlaon City, when soldiers of the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA barged inside and shot Curson who was unarmed and could hardly walk because his legs were swollen. The soldiers then arrested Montero. The 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA claimed that the incident was an encounter that resulted in the death of Curson and the arrest of Montero. Later, the police speedily presented four warrants for the arrest of Leonido Montero for cases ranging from murder to illegal possession of explosives.

**In Misamis Oriental.** On March 26, 2023, elderly couple **Rudy Garay** and **Rosalia Caindoy** were abducted in a hospital while seeking medical treatment. The next day, March 27, 2023, the AFP claimed that Garay and Caindoy were killed in a 15-minute firefight with elements of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Sitio Vertudazo, Barangay San Juan, Bayugan City, Agusan del Sur. The AFP also claimed recovering a firearm and ammunition. The residents recounted hearing sounds of gunfire from various types of firearms from 2 to 5 in the morning. Later that morning, the residents discovered the lifeless bodies of Garay and Caindoy sprawled in the mud.

On April 3, 2023, **Ricardo Kabanglas Hilogon**, a 26-year-old farmer and resident of Sitio Tapol, Barangay Banglay, Lagonglong town was in his farm when two soldiers of the 58<sup>th</sup> IBPA shot and killed him. The incident was witnessed by Ricardo's wife, Diday Hilogon.

Hilogon was a former NPA member who had been inactive for a long time. He was unarmed and posed no threat to the soldiers who killed him.

Way before the incident happened, Ricardo was summoned to a military camp and forced to surrender. He was also intimidated by a certain Laureto Daaw, an agent of the 58<sup>th</sup> IBPA, and threatened that he would be killed if a military encounter would take place in their area.

The residents of the area where Hilogon was killed also reported harassment from the 58<sup>th</sup> IBPA elements. The 58<sup>th</sup> IBPA had threatened them that the soldiers would kill any civilian should a soldier be killed or wounded in an encounter with the NPA.

**TABLE 2**

### Victims of Extrajudicial Killing & Enforced Disappearance under the Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Government

By Region (July 2022 to June 2023)

Region	Extrajudicial Killing	Enforced Disappearance
Central Luzon		2
Southern Tagalog	3	2
Bicol	16	
Western Visayas	13	3
Central Visayas	9	
Eastern Visayas	13	
Northern Mindanao	3	1
Caraga	2	
SoSKSargen	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Female</i>	8	3
<i>Rights Defender</i>	3	3

**TABLE 3**

### Victims of Extrajudicial Killing & Enforced Disappearance under the Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Government

By Sector (July 2022 to June 2023)

Sector	Extrajudicial Killing	Enforced Disappearance
Government Employee	1	
Indigenous People	2	1
Peasant	43	3
Teacher	1	
Youth and Student		1
Transport	1	2
Minor	6	

**TABLE 4**

### Victims of Extrajudicial Killing & Enforced Disappearance under the Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Government

By Affiliation (July 2022 to June 2023)

Affiliation	Extrajudicial Killing	Enforced Disappearance
Anakpawis		1
GWP		1
KMP	1	
NDFP	5	1



**In Agusan del Sur.** An ailing 67-year-old, **Emanuel Llanos Anob**, was abducted by the AFP in a Butuan City highway while on his way home from a hospital for treatment on March 29, 2023. His relatives reported his abduction, but the AFP claimed that he was killed in an encounter with the NPA the day after at a mountainous area in Sitio Hugmakan, Barangay San Juan, Bayugan City. According to his relatives, Anob's remains were dumped in a funeral home in Bayugan City.

**In Northern Samar.** On May 5, 2023, chainsaw operators **Oscar Alastoy** and **Joel Recare Sr.**, residents of Barangay Sangay, Palapag and Barangay Capacujan, Palapag, respectively, went to haul the timber they had cut earlier on the land owned by Alastoy in Barangay Capacujan. They were accompanied by their friend Roy. At around 4 p.m., when Roy went to a nearby stream to cook food, he heard gunshots coming from the direction where Alastoy and Recare were. Alarmed by the gunshots, he immediately ran towards the barangay to seek help. Residents of the barangay also heard the gunshots.

The victims had been frequenting the forest for five months to cut wood. They often brought with them a .22 caliber rifle and a homemade shotgun called “dekaling” to hunt for birds, monkeys and wild boar.

On the morning of May 6, 2023, Roy together with Alastoy's brother, barangay officials and other residents tried to reach the place of the incident to search for the two. They were barred from entering the area by the PNP-SAF elements guarding the premises. It was only on the evening of May 6 that the victims' relatives were able to retrieve Alastoy and Recare's bodies from the Rural Health Unit where the police brought them. Their relatives later found out that the killings had been perpetrated by the Special Task Force Commando Course Classes 117 and 118 led by a PLt. Francisco.

**In Masbate.** On June 21, 2023, farmer and construction worker **Randy Mahinay**, a resident of Barangay San Carlos, Milagros town was shot and killed by elements of the 2<sup>nd</sup> IBPA while he was working on a road construction project in the area. Mahinay was implicated by the military in the ambush launched by the NPA against intelligence assets and CAFGU elements on April 14, 2023 in the same barangay. Mahinay was reportedly working on the road construction when the ambush happened. Thus, the military accused him of helping the NPA unit.

After killing Mahinay, the soldiers switched his work uniform to a 'sweatshirt' and placed a firearm beside him to insinuate that he was an NPA fighter killed in the encounter.

On June 16, 2023, at 3:35 p.m., **Rey Belan**, Aldin Tumangan, Roel Hagnaya, Jamar Tumangan, and Senen Dollete, all residents of Purok 5, Barangay Calabad in Dimasalang town were about to go home after a day of hunting wild animals at a nearby hilly area when armed elements from the 2<sup>nd</sup> IBPA suddenly fired upon them.



**Rey Belan**

The gunfire lasted for about 10 minutes. Aldin, Roel and Jamar ran and escaped to the barangay proper and later filed an incident report with the PNP. Rey Belan died at the scene while his friend Senen Dollete was wounded. The AFP unit later alleged that Belan was an NPA member killed in an encounter and even planted a hand grenade, a revolver and “NPA documents” to make their claim credible. Family and residents disputed the AFP's allegations.

**In Camarines Norte.** On the afternoon of May 15, 2023, **Romeo Agua**, 42, a farmer and resident of Barangay San Jose, Panganiban town was intercepted and detained by elements of the 9<sup>th</sup> IBPA as he was going to their house in the mountain to feed their pig. He was tied up and tortured before being shot seven times in the body and once in the mouth. Residents then saw the assailants flee on motorcycles.

**In Albay.** On May 24, 2023, corn farmer **Zaldy Cañaverl** was working in his field in Barangay Busac, Ligao City when soldiers from the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the Philippine Army fired at him, resulting in his death. His body was dressed in a soldier's uniform and an M16 was placed near his body to make it appear that he was a member of the NPA who participated in an armed encounter. Cañaverl suffered one gunshot wound to the head and two to the body. Contrary to the military's version of events, there were no reported clashes in the area.

**In Samar.** **Orbillo Gerellana**, a farmer and resident of Sitio Bagti, Barangay Mabini, Basey town was killed by operating troops of the 46<sup>th</sup> IBPA on April 14, 2023 while he was in his farm drying his palay harvest. The soldiers falsely claimed that Gerellana was killed in an armed encounter. His family and neighbors asserted that Gerellana was an ordinary hard-working farmer who used to be a construction worker in Tacloban City and only moved to Basey after he got married.

**In Bohol.** NDFP consultant **Manuel Tinio** was arrested by State agents on April 14, 2023 at 7 p.m. while he was riding his motorcycle at the border of Barangay La Suerte, Pilar, Bayungan, San Miguel, and Lus-ong in Ubay town. He sustained seven bullet wounds to the body. After he was killed, the soldiers placed a .45 cal pistol beside Tinio's body and claimed that he had “fought back”.

Also on April 14, 2023, former community organizer and activist turned NPA guerrilla **Arthur Lucenario** was abducted by troops of the 47<sup>th</sup> IBPA while he was driving a motorcycle in Barangay Tabuan, Antequera town. He was tortured and killed, and his body was found a month later, on May 12, 2023. NDF-Bohol accused the 47<sup>th</sup> IBPA of

fabricating a story about a clash between the AFP and the NPA on May 12, 2023 to justify the killing of Lucenario.

## Enforced disappearances

One of the most alarming trends under the Marcos Jr. regime is the rapid rise in the number of enforced disappearances. **Eight victims of enforced disappearance have been documented in the first ten months of Marcos Jr.'s rule.** Already they constitute 40% of the 20 victims documented throughout Duterte's six-year term. Republic Act No. 10353 or the Anti-Enforced Disappearance Law remains largely unimplemented and is widely violated by government's military forces.

**In Rizal.** On April 28, 2023, **Dexter Capuyan**, a former Cordillera-based activist, and **Gene Roz Jamil "Bazoo" de Jesus**, a staff member of the Philippine Task Force on Indigenous Peoples Rights (TFIP), a network of Philippine NGOs focusing on the rights of indigenous peoples to their ancestral lands, were snatched from a tricycle they were riding on along Diamond West corner Zircon Sts., Golden City Subd., Barangay Dolores, Taytay. Family members, friends and human rights activists searched for them in

military and police camps, but to no avail. They filed a habeas corpus petition on July 5, 2023 in an effort to compel State authorities to surface Capuyan and De Jesus.

**In Negros Occidental.** On April 19, 2023, habal-habal drivers **Renel delos Santos** and **Denald Mialen** went missing after they were hired to transport two passengers – **Lyngrace Martullinas** and NDFP consultant Rogelio Posadas. They were last heard from in Barangay Bagroy, Binalbagan. The military later surfaced Posadas as an alleged casualty in a supposed encounter between the NPA and elements of the 303<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade on April 20. To date, Delos Santos, Mialen and Martullinas remain missing.

The involuntary disappearance and abduction of political activists point to the existence of a network of secret prisons maintained by State forces, in violation of Republic Act 10353 or the Anti-Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance Act of 2012. There may be hundreds of these secret prisons scattered and maintained across the country as part of the State's repressive machinery. And many of the desaparecidos like Dexter Capuyan, Bazoo de Jesus, Elgene Mungcal and Ma. Elena Pamposza may be in them.

# SURFACE THE DESAPARECIDOS

## disappeared on the first year of the Marcos Jr. government



**Elgene Mungcal**

Date of Incident: 3 July 2022  
Place of Incident: Moncada, Tarlac



**Ma. Elena Pamposza**

Date of Incident: 3 July 2022  
Place of Incident: Moncada, Tarlac



**Ariel Badiang**

Date of Incident: 7 February 2023  
Place of Incident: Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon



**Renel delos Santos**

Date of Incident: 19 April 2023  
Place of Incident: Hinigaran, Negros Occidental



**Denald Laloy Mialen**

Date of Incident: 19 April 2023  
Place of Incident: Hinigaran, Negros Occidental



**Lyn Grace Martullinas**

Date of Incident: 19 April 2023  
Place of Incident: Hinigaran, Negros Occidental



**Dexter Capuyan**

Date of Incident: 28 April 2023  
Place of Incident: Taytay, Rizal



**Gene Roz Jamil de Jesus**

Date of Incident: 28 April 2023  
Place of Incident: Taytay, Rizal

Enforced disappearances emerges as a troubling hallmark of the Ferdinand Marcos Jr. regime, with a growing number of cases reported within a short span of time. One year into the Marcos Jr. government, there have been eight victims of enforced disappearances (as of June 15, 2023).



TABLE 5

**Political Prisoners** (as of June 30, 2023)

Region of Detention	Total No. of Political Prisoners	Women	NDFP Consultants	Arrested Under Marcos Jr.
Cordillera	6	0	0	2
Ilocos	6	1	0	2
Cagayan Valley	21	7	0	2
Central Luzon	12	4	0	2
Southern Tagalog	65	14	1	5
National Capital Region	107	23	9	5
Bikol	46	8	0	10
Western Visayas	91	24	1	11
Central Visayas	88	7	0	4
Eastern Visayas	32	6	1	0
Western Mindanao Region	11	5	0	0
Northern Mindanao Region	105	22	2	0
Southern Mindanao Region	55	8	1	1
Socskargen	41	7	1	3
Caraga	92	21	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>49</b>
<i>Sick</i>	95			
<i>Elderly</i>	77			
<i>Arrested as Minor</i>	5			

**In Cagayan.** On May 18, 2023, Cagayan-based activists **Patricia Cierva** and **Michael Casano** were captured by elements of the 501<sup>st</sup> Brigade in Barangay Cabiroaoan, Gonzaga town. They were held for 15 days at a secret detention facility where their captors subjected them to relentless psychological torture. On June 2, 2023, they were among 20 “rebel returnees” presented at a press conference by the NTF-ELCAC. Their “surrender” would not in any way diminish the 501<sup>st</sup> Bde’s liability under the Anti-Desaparecido Law for failing to disclose custody of Cierva and Casano for 15 days. Casano was also served warrants for illegal possession of firearms and explosives, and violation of the Anti-Terrorism Law. Both Casano and Cierva remain in the custody of the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the Philippine Army.

### Illegal arrests and detention

The Marcos Jr. regime has continued the malicious practice of unjustly jailing activists and other dissenters, and slapping them with trumped-up charges in order to justify their prolonged detention. Illegal arrest on trumped-up charges through the use of spurious search warrants, “John and Jane Does” and alias warrants is a continuing threat to all political activists and human rights defenders.

Despite a Supreme Court ruling making the use of body-worn cameras mandatory during operations to serve warrants, state forces do not observe this requirement, thus making it possible for arresting officers to continue the despicable practice of planting evidence to justify arrests and prolonged detention, and even kill targeted individuals and concoct cover stories to justify such deaths. Furthermore, inquest proceedings have not been made compulsory when deaths occur during police operations, showing how laws are skewed against the common people.

Meanwhile, a law to protect human rights defenders has managed to survive the congressional wringer only to face a seemingly dead end with the lack of strong human rights advocates in the Senate.

**As of the end of June 2023, some 78 individuals have been illegally arrested on trumped-up charges under the Marcos Jr. regime, comprising almost 10% of the country’s 778 political prisoners.**

**In Negros Occidental.** On June 25, 2023, **Susan Medes**, a resident of Sitio Bito, Barangay Buenavista, Himamaylan City, and chair of the Baklayan, Bito, Cabagal Farmers Association (BABICAFA) was arrested by elements of the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA in Kabankalan City. Susan Medes was one of 18 individuals who were slapped with trumped-up charges in connection with an alleged NPA ambush on elements of the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA in Sitio Bunsad, Barangay Tan-awan, Kabankalan City on May 12, 2018. Her husband, Rodrigo Medes was arrested on the same charges in June 2019.

The military had harassed Susan Medes and the other members of BABICAFA for some time. They were accused

of being members of the CPP-NPA. The military also monitored their activities and slandered BABICAFA. The Fausto couple who were massacred with their two young children on June 14, 2023 were also members of BABICAFA.

**In Camarines Sur.** On June 19, 2023, **Nenita** and **William Petallo**, **Ruben Retubio** and **Artemio Sanchez** (collectively known as the Pili 4), residents of Sitio Caorasan, Barangay San Agustin, Pili town and members of Damayan nin Paraoma sa Camarines Sur (DAMPA) were arrested by the PNP on June 19, 2023, on charges of violating the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012 (RA 10175). The farmers were arrested after they complained to Pili Mayor Tomas Bongalonta about trucks dumping tons of sand on the road leading to Sitio Caorasan. The trucks had the label “Province of Camarines Sur” pasted on them, but the project did not have any documentation or authorization to support the dumping. The farmers opposed the expansion of Naga Airport which would displace more than a thousand farmers and residents in Barangay San Agustin. They were arrested for allegedly posting on social media about the dumping, which the government claimed was a violation of the Cybercrime Prevention Act.



On January 7, 2023, **Bryan Sumacot**, 38 and **Honorato Barrios**, 41, both farmers and residents of Tapol, Barangay Baa were arrested by operating troops of the 49<sup>th</sup> IBPA. Sumacot and Barrios were out looking for Barrios' two minor sons who were out tending to their carabao and were taking too long coming home. Unknown to them, the boys had also been held by the soldiers and interrogated on the alleged presence of the NPA in the area. With Sumacot, Barrios and the two boys in their hands, the combat troops later strafed an unoccupied house nearby owned by Barrios' sister Lourdes, ransacked it and took a bag of loot. The soldiers released the two boys, but Sumacot and Barrios were remanded to the police who charged them with illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

**In Batangas.** On March 26, 2023, sugar workers **Alfred Manalo** and **Lloyd Descallar**, both volunteer organizers of Sugarfolks Unity for Genuine Agricultural Reform (SUGAR)-Batangas were reported abducted by unidentified armed men at around 3 p.m. outside the Medical Center-Western Batangas in Balayan town. Also reported abducted was **Angelito Balitostos**, a senior citizen who just happened to be passing by.

Manalo and Descallar were in the area to consult sugarcane workers affected by the closure of Central Azucarera Don Pedro Incorporated (CADPI). The closure this year of CADPI, the largest sugarcane mill in the province, had adversely affected the livelihood of 4,584 impoverished sugarcane planters.

On April 1, Manalo, Descallar and Balitostos (collectively known as the Balayan 3) were confirmed to be under detention at the 59<sup>th</sup> IBPA Satellite Base in Barangay Tulos, Rosario town. The 59<sup>th</sup> IBPA falsely claimed that the three men were NPA members. To date, the Balayan 3 have not been allowed access to their lawyers.

**In Rizal.** On the morning of June 5, 2023, **Danilo Acayen**, 60, a resident of Sitio Uyungan, Barangay Puray, Montalban was one of around 20 residents of the community called by elements of the 80<sup>th</sup> IBPA for a meeting at the Barangay Pura covered court. After the meeting, all the other villagers were sent home except Acayen. The soldiers made him drink several rounds of liquor until he became drunk. At around 1 p.m., PNP-CIDG (Criminal Investigation and Detection Group) personnel brought him to the CIDG Provincial Field Unit in Antipolo, where relatives later learned that Acayen was facing trumped-up charges of frustrated murder. Acayen is among the residents opposed to the construction of the Wawa-Violago Dam which would largely displace peasant and Dumagat villagers of Montalban.

**In Bulacan.** At around 10:30 p.m. of May 25, 2023, **Rosita Taboy**, 78 and her husband **Antonio Legaspi**, 74 were arrested at their home in Block 4, Lot 16, Phase 3A, Towerville Subdivision, Minuyan Proper, San Jose Del Monte City by combined elements of the AFP 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, PNP Regional Mobile Force Battalion 3, and the CIDG. When the raiders were forcing their way into the

house, Legaspi looked out the window to see what the commotion was about. One of the raiders took a shot at him. He immediately dropped to the floor and was luckily not hit. The arresting team served multiple warrants on Taboy for charges ranging from frustrated murder to arson. Both Taboy and Legaspi are also facing trumped-up charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives after the raiders planted evidence on the couple. Taboy is currently detained in Catbalogan, and Legaspi is being held at the CIDG headquarters in Camp Crame.

**In Bohol.** At about 2 a.m. of May 25, 2023, **Adolfo Salas Sr.**, 75, a resident of Purok 5, Barangay Tubod, Candijay town and vice chair of Alayon sa mga Mag-uuma sa Candijay (AMACAN), a municipal chapter of the KMP-affiliated peasant group Humabol, was arrested by elements of CIDG-Bohol led by PLT. Col. Julito A. Rabena II. The policemen presented a search warrant issued by Jorge B. Espinal, Presiding Judge of RTC Branch 51 in Carmen town. During the raid, the police allegedly found a .45 cal pistol, a .38 cal revolver, a hand grenade and several rounds of ammunition.

Salas's family disputed the PNP's claims and insisted that the pieces of evidence were planted. Salas and his family had long been subjected to different forms of harassment from the PNP and AFP.



**Dindo Monsanto**

**In Malabon City.** On May 9, 2023, couple **Dindo Monsanto**, 54 and **Imelda Handuman**, 52 were arrested at their rented home in 22 Unit E, Javier II St., Barangay Baritan. Three masked men had suddenly barged into their apartment, armed with long and short firearms and wearing SWAT uniforms with "POLICE"

printed on their shirts. Later, the couple noticed some 40 armed men loitering outside. The police tied Monsanto's hands behind his back and ordered him to stand at the door while they read a warrant. Monsanto asked to be seated, as he had just undergone an operation on his leg. Imelda was told to sit near the toilet room. A little later, three armed men entered the spare room and Imelda saw them scatter firearms and ammunition on the floor. Upon noticing that Imelda was watching them, the men ordered her to enter the other room.

The police later lined up the "recovered" evidence on a folding table and took photos, while the police asked the couple to sign the inventory. Monsanto and Handuman refused to sign the inventory list.

On May 9, CIDG officers interrogated Monsanto and accused him of being a member of the NPA.

Handuman is currently at the Taguig City Jail Female Dorm, while Monsanto is at the MMDJ Annex 2 in Camp



Bagong Diwa, Taguig City. They both face trumped-up charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives. Monsanto faces a string of cases in Masbate City ranging from alarm and scandal to murder.

**In Oriental Mindoro.** On April 26, 2023, indigenous peoples rights activists **Arnulfo Aumentado** and **Mary Joyce Lizada** were arrested in Barangay Sta. Teresita, Mansalay town by elements of the 40<sup>th</sup> IBPA, who brought them to Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, the headquarters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. Efforts made by relatives and lawyers to visit and consult with them on April 30, 2023, and on May 1, 2023, were blocked by military personnel stationed at Camp Capinpin. On May 2, 2023, following hours of intimidation and waiting, Lizada's family, accompanied by their lawyer, were permitted to speak with her in the presence of several soldiers. However, they were not allowed to confer privately and were unable to see Aumentado. On June 28, 2023, soldiers once again prevented Lizada's family and two lawyers from visiting her, despite repeated requests and reminders that detainees had the right to legal counsel and visits from their families.



**In Ilocos Sur.** On March 26, 2023, **Casimiro Binayon** was arrested in Barangay Macabiag, Sinait town by elements of the PNP Police Regional Office 1 and the 702<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army on a warrant for murder issued in 2011 by a court in Ifugao. The military accused him of being an NPA leader in Northern Luzon.

**In Cagayan.** On February 14, 2023, former student leader **Orion Yoshida**, 28, was captured by elements of the 17<sup>th</sup> IBPA in Sitio Nangbaggayan, Barangay Sta. Margarita, Baggao town. He was reportedly wounded after a clash between the NPA and the AFP. Yoshida was brought to Camp Melchor F. dela Cruz in Upi, Gamu, Isabela, where he was reportedly given medical treatment inside the camp's hospital. The AFP announced that Yoshida faces charges of frustrated murder, violation of the Anti-Terrorism Act, and illegal possession of firearms and explosives. Lawyers and human rights workers have been denied access to Yoshida, who remains in detention at Camp Melchor F. dela Cruz in Upi, Gamu, Isabela.

**In Sorsogon.** On February 9, 2023, **William Hubilla**, 33, a tricycle driver and resident of Purok 4, Barangay Sta. Cruz, Casiguran town was arrested by elements of the Casiguran PNP in Barangay Central, Casiguran. He faces trumped-up charges of murder and frustrated murder in relation to an armed encounter in 2017 that resulted in the deaths of two soldiers from the 31<sup>st</sup> IBPA. Hubilla is the son of slain Bicol NPA commander Andres Hubilla (Ka Magno).

**In Masbate.** At around 7 a.m. of January 12, 2023, elements of the Mobo PNP arrested **Julita Montellano**, 53, at her home in Sitio Sampalok, Barangay Umabay Interior, Mobo town, on a trumped-up case of attempted murder. The police accused her of being an NPA member. She was released after posting bail four days later.

Karapatan also documented up to 189 victims who were illegally arrested for interrogation or harassment, but not held in regular detention facilities and later released.

## Weaponizing the Anti-Terrorism Act and the Anti-Terrorism Financing Law against activists

There is now an increasing use of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) and the Anti-Terrorism Financing Law against activists and political dissenters, with the State hell-bent on stopping them from their human rights advocacy work. The police and military often work hand-in-glove with the local government units and the NTF-ELCAC in targeting the victims for red-tagging and criminal charges under the ATA and the Anti-Terrorism Financing Law.

**In Southern Tagalog.** Up to 13 of the region's human rights defenders have faced criminal charges under the anti-terrorism law. Eight of these cases remain active, including those of 19-year-old **Hailey Pecayo**, coordinator and paralegal of Tanggol Batangan, who faces trumped-up cases of genocide, attempted murder, and violating Sections 4A and 4D (engaging in terrorism) of the Anti-Terrorism Act after joining a fact-finding mission in July 2022 to look into the killing by 59<sup>th</sup> IB troopers of 9-year-old Kyllene Casao in Taysan, Batangas.





FILE PHOTO

### Press conference calling to junk Anti-Terrorism Act charges against Southern Tagalog activists

Also facing cases under the ATA are **Pedrito Vasquez**, a farmer and barangay kagawad from Mulanay, Quezon; **Fe Serrano**, currently a political prisoner detained in Oriental Mindoro; **Liesel Murillo**, a farmer from Lopez, Quezon; **Kenneth Rementilla**, Anakbayan-Southern Tagalog coordinator; **Jasmin Rubia**, secretary-general of Mothers and Children for the Protection of Human Rights; **Rev. Edwin Egar**, pastor of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in Lipa, Batangas and an officer of Karapatan-Southern Tagalog; **Rev. Glofie Baluntong**, a pastor of the United Methodist Church based in Oriental Mindoro; **Ronald Ramos**, former barangay chair of Macalamcam A, Rosario, Batangas; and the Sablayan 4—**Miguel Manguera**, couple **Fe** and **Allen Mariñas** and **Sherlito Casidsid**.

**In the Cordillera and Mindanao.** On June 7, 2023, the Anti-Terrorism Council signed ATC Resolution No. 41

(2023) designating as “terrorist” six persons including four indigenous peoples’ leaders and advocates from the Cordillera—**Sarah Abellon Alikes**, a development worker of the Regional Development Center-Kattinulong dagiti Umili ti Amianan; **Jennifer R. Awingan**, research staff of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA); **Windel Bolinget**, chair of the CPA; **Stephen Tauli**, CPA regional council member—and one from Mindanao—**May Casilao** of **Panalipdan! Mindanao**. On June 30, 2023, the Anti-Money Laundering Council also signed AMLC Resolution No. TF-63, series of 2023, freezing their property and funds, including related accounts.

This follows the arbitrary and baseless designation earlier this year by the ATC of Dr. Natividad Castro (Doc Naty), a community-based health worker in the Caraga region in Mindanao as a “terrorist individual” and the subsequent order by the AMLC to freeze her accounts and assets.

The accounts and assets of **Rural Missionaries of the Philippines (RMP)** and **RMP-Northern Mindanao**; the **United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP)-Haran** in Davao City and **UCCP-Fatima** in Ubay, Bohol; the **Amihan National Federation of Peasant Women (Amihan)**, **Amihan-Northern Mindanao** and **seven other peasant and faith-based non-profit organizations** have likewise been frozen and are currently being subjected to civil forfeiture proceedings. In addition, 16 activists from the Caraga region as well as RMP lay worker **Mariel Domequil** and Leyte-based community journalist **Frenchie May Cumpio** are facing charges of “financing terrorism.”



Protest action at DOJ against “terrorist” designation of Cordillera activists

KATRIBU



## Bombings, community-wide evacuations, and endangerment of civilians

In the countryside, bombings of civilian communities and production areas in the course of the counter-insurgency war have resulted in the massive physical and economic displacement of thousands of people under Marcos Jr.

It is unarmed civilians in rural villages who bear the brunt of the vicious counter-insurgency operations of the AFP. They are often deliberately targeted because the military suspects them of supporting the NPA, in brazen disregard of protocols on International Humanitarian Laws.

**In the course of these counter-insurgency operations, there have been a total of 6,931 victims of bombing, 13,352 victims of forced evacuation and 7,712 victims of indiscriminate firing under the Marcos Jr. regime, according to Karapatan.**

**In Kalinga.** Residents of Barangays Gawaan and Poswoy in Balbalan town who had suffered from the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division's indiscriminate aerial bombing and artillery firing that intensified last March are now suffering from the massive entry of ground troops into their villages.

In Gawaan, villagers have been constrained from undertaking their normal farming tasks and were thus unable to see to the irrigation of their rice terraces due to the intensified military operations. Neither could they visit their upland farms and coffee groves, thus losing their annual coffee harvest and cash income.

In Poswoy, intensified counter-insurgency operations since May have prevented farmers from tending their rice fields, thus leading to the loss of at least 25% of their wet-rice crops and at least 50% of their dry-rice harvests. Many have also lost their primary cash crop, bananas.

The 5<sup>th</sup> ID also tried to prevent members of a relief mission from the Serve the People Brigade-Cordillera from providing food aid to the villagers. It was only after the relief mission and local farmers' associations conducted a dialogue lasting for a day and a half with local government officials that the relief distribution proceeded on July 9 and 10. The relief mission had earlier provided food aid to 247 households in several sitios of Poswoy and Gawaan villages in June.

**In Negros Oriental.** At 5:30 p.m. of June 23, 2023, more than a hundred residents of Sitio Cansampo, Barangay Bagtik, La Libertad town were traumatized with the sudden indiscriminate firing from elements of the 62<sup>nd</sup> IBPA. According to residents, "it felt like bullets rained for minutes on end".

Earlier, on June 15, 2023, the military launched a similar operation endangering civilians in Sitio Uyangan, Barangay Budlasan, Canlaon City.

Residents in these areas were reportedly worried during such operations after hearing of the massacre of the Fausto family that included two young children on June 14, 2023.

**In Surigao del Sur.** On May 11, 2023, at approximately 5:15 p.m., a "Hermes"-type drone fired rocket bombs at an alleged NPA stronghold. An NPA unit later clashed with elements of the 30<sup>th</sup> IBPA in the Katarugan mountains, in Sitio Katarugan, Barangay Lobo, Cantilan town. The NPA unit reportedly found themselves under attack by a drone with its rocket bombs at their position in the Katarugan mountains as they were engaging with combined elements of the 30<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> IBPA. The assault reportedly resulted in the deaths of two members of the NPA.

Meanwhile, according to residents, surrounding trees and vegetation were extensively burned during the bombing.



**Protest in front of Camp Aguinaldo**

The AFP has not publicly acknowledged the arming of its drones with rocket bombs. However, the possibility of the US military arming the AFP's Hermes drones, purchased from Israel, with Hellfire missiles, or utilizing its own Reaper drones, could explain the nature of the May 11 armed drone strike.

**In Mindoro Oriental.** On May 8, 2023, at 2:20 p.m., 1,459 residents of Barangay Tawas, Bongabong, and 1,932 residents of Barangay Malo, Bansud were affected by the military's bombing and strafing runs in the mountains within the vicinity of the said barangays. Residents' homes were targeted by bombs and strafing.

Up to 239 families or 885 persons evacuated to different centers in Bongabong. The community was bombed after an encounter between the 203<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade and a unit of the NPA that happened to be in Sitio Pastuhan, Barangay Tawas, Bongabong. Even before the bombing and shelling were carried out, the combat operations were already disrupting the livelihood and tranquility of the residents in that area.

**In Misamis Oriental.** On April 23, 2023, more than 200 residents (including children) of Sitio Man-ibay, Barangay Aposkahoy, Claveria town suffered extreme anxiety and disruptions in their livelihood when elements from the 58<sup>th</sup> IBPA and the 4<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery conducted live-fire exercises at Dragon Tail, Sitio Man-ibay using two 105mm Standard Howitzers. The indiscriminate shelling was conducted near houses and a road which commuters regularly use. The placement of munitions near residential areas posed danger to the people living there. The exercise was witnessed by Col. Hubert Acierto, deputy regiment commander of the Army Artillery Regiment of the Philippine Army, as well as support unit commanders of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. The live-fire exercise was joined by elements from the 4<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion Headquarters and Bravo Battery.

The area formed part of the ancestral lands of the Higaonon tribe, now occupied by the Del Monte Philippines plantation.

**In Rizal.** On April 6, 2023, up to 155 families (or 930 individuals) from Sitio Lubog, Barangay Mascap, Rodriguez town were forced to evacuate and forbidden from entering or leaving their community after alleged clashes between the 80<sup>th</sup> IBPA and the NPA from March 31 to April 2. The residents were not only forced to leave their crops and livestock unattended, they endured hunger, thirst and lack of sleeping facilities in the cramped evacuation centers. Threats of bombing and shelling of the mountain areas by the 80<sup>th</sup> IBPA added to their fears.

**In Negros Occidental.** On May 11, 2023, up to 553 individuals from Sitios Dangalon, Paloypoy, Cotcot, Tapian and Cabangahan in Barangay Hilamonan, Kabankalan were forced to evacuate after clashes between the 94<sup>th</sup> IBPA and the NPA erupted in their area. The residents returned to their communities after a day.

On April 20, 2023, up to 434 individuals from Barangay Libertad, Escalante City were forced to evacuate after a clash between the 79<sup>th</sup> IBPA and the NPA. The residents were allowed to return only on April 23. The 79<sup>th</sup> IBPA had been conducting sustained military operations in northern Negros since January 2023 after putting a bounty on the head of a certain Arnel Tapang, allegedly a member of the NPA.

On April 6, 2023, some 30 families (137 individuals) from Sitio Seraje, Barangay San Isidro, Toboso town were forced to evacuate after an armed encounter between the NPA and the 79<sup>th</sup> IBPA in the area. They were allowed to return on April 7.

## Red-tagging, threats, harassment and intimidation

Rampant violations of civil liberties and political rights, especially the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly, freedom of expression, and the right to due process, among others have been documented. These violations are a result of the Marcos Jr. government's intolerance for dissent and people's right to organize. These violations are also due to the implementation of the "whole-of-nation" terror approach.

Progressive workers' groups and unions continue to be red-tagged, curtailing their freedom of association. Farmers invoking their rights under the government's land reform program are still denied the lands awarded them through various legal shenanigans.

Members and leaders of people's organizations are hounded by repeated and incessant violations of their right to privacy and due process by the NTF-ELCAC, and are terrorized and coerced into stopping their participation in activist organizations or in other groups upholding people's rights and welfare. Such harassment is perpetrated in cahoots with local government, military and law enforcement units. Even in urban centers, these forms of threats and harassment are committed, while soldiers creep their way into basing in urban poor communities.

Existing domestic redress mechanisms for victims remain ineffective in rendering justice and accountability. The state of impunity is furthermore expanded with the implementation of policies that drive these violations. For instance, the writ of amparo remains inutile as a safeguard for beleaguered human rights defenders, as seen in the case of Cordilleran activists whose petition for a writ of amparo has been denied despite numerous cases of physical and legal harassment against them.


**Karapatan has documented 1,579,846 victims of threats, harassment and intimidation, including red-tagging, as entire organizations are also subjected to such violations.**

Following are some of the documented cases of red-tagging, threats and intimidation documented by Karapatan in the first year of Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s rule:


**At the national level.** In an ill-disguised attempt at invasive profiling, an internal memorandum dated June 14, 2023 and issued by DepEd Undersecretary for Operations Atty. Revsee Escobedo, has required all regional directors and school division superintendents to submit a list of teachers affiliated with the **Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT)** who avail of the Automatic Payroll Deduction.

This is reminiscent of earlier memoranda with the same sinister objectives. In December 2018, various local police branches instructed intelligence units to conduct an "inventory" of ACT-affiliated teachers. In



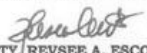


Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Education**  
OPERATIONS



OUOPS No. 2023-01-5591  
**MEMORANDUM**

**TO :** ALL REGIONAL DIRECTORS  
ALL SCHOOLS DIVISION SUPERINTENDENTS

**FROM :**   
ATTY/ REVSEE A. ESCOBEDO  
Undersecretary for Operations

**SUBJECT :** Request for Submission of the List of ACT Union-Affiliated Teachers Who are Availing of Automatic Payroll Deduction System

**DATE :** June 14, 2023

---

This Office respectfully requests the submission of the complete list of teachers affiliated with the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT-Teachers) who are availing the Department's Automatic Payroll Deduction System (APDS).

The aforementioned data shall be submitted using a **template which may be downloaded via this link: <https://bit.ly/3Cq8NEb>**. Further, submissions must be sent to this Office through email at [ouro@deped.gov.ph](mailto:ouro@deped.gov.ph) on or before **June 21, 2023 (Wednesday) at 5:00 PM**. All submissions must be consolidated at the regional level, verified, and signed by the Regional Director.

For compliance.

Thank you very much.

### DepEd memo requiring to identify members of ACT in schools

PHILIPPINE STAR

March 2021, a letter from the Department of the Interior and Local Government instructed its regional directors to “investigate” and list down members of ACT for their supposed “infiltration” of several government agencies. The same letter red-tagged the teachers’ union as a “front organization” of “communist-terrorist groups.”

Karapatan slammed the latest memorandum, saying it endangered the lives and safety of teachers as well as their right to organize and form unions. “Under the murderous regime of (DepEd secretary Sara Duterte’s) father, we have seen how such lists have been used as hitlists. This is an instigation of tokhang against teachers, and it should be strongly denounced.”

**In Muntinlupa.** On June 21, 2023, Atty. Ferdinand Topacio, a known supporter of former Pres. Rodrigo Duterte and the current administration, filed indirect contempt charges against former **Senator Leila de Lima, Karapatan Secretary General Cristina Palabay, Sen. Risa Hontiveros, Rep. Edcel Lagman, BAYAN chairperson Renato Reyes and 3 other lawyers of de Lima**, after the respondents assailed a Muntinlupa court’s decision denying bail to Senator De Lima. The case is a direct attack on the respondents’ freedom of expression.

**In La Union.** On June 14, 2023, four policemen went to the house of **Engr. Eduardo Rimando**, chairperson of TIMUN (Timpuyog dagiti Marigrigat nga Umili ti Naguilian) in Barangay Gusing Sur, Naguilian town. The policemen had in tow a provincial health officer, a barangay kagawad and a

barangay health worker, and said that they were vaccinating the village children. While Rimando’s grandchild was being vaccinated, however, there were five elements of the PNP Regional Mobile Force Battalion 1 (RMFB1) outside the house.

The RMFB1, which had been encamped in a private residence in Barangay Gusing Sur since April 2023, was on a red-tagging spree enticing members of Timun to “surrender”. On September 7, 2021, the PNP conducted a fake mass surrender ceremony in Barangay Gusing Sur in compliance with the



**Eduardo Rimando**

RAPPLER

Municipal Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (MTF-ELCAC) program, and managed to deceive a number of Timun members to sign an “Oath of Allegiance.” The signatories, who were promised livelihood and cash assistance in exchange, were not aware that they were considered rebels, and were being required to sign a document showing that they had returned to the government’s fold. The signatories were also being required to serve as the eyes and ears of the AFP and PNP in the counter-insurgency war.

Meanwhile, on May 20, 2023, two policemen – PMSg. Reggie Verona and PSSg. Ronnie Estacio – went to the village hall of Barangay San Nicolas Norte in Agoo town where fisherfolk leader **Edward Kuan** resided. The two policemen asked the barangay chair if he knew Kuan’s background. The barangay chair said he had limited knowledge and suggested that they talk to the barangay secretary instead. The barangay secretary said that all she knew was that Kuan was a resident of the barangay. At that point, the two policemen told the barangay secretary that Kuan was a member of Anakpawis Partylist, which was allegedly a front organization of the NPA. Kuan had served as Anakpawis coordinator in the May 2022 elections.

Earlier, on May 17, 2023, Carmen Ganuelas, a former member of Timun, and a man in a grey T-shirt and denim pants came to the house of elderly couple **Rolando and Josefina Ardales** in Barangay Gusing Norte, Naguilian town. When the pair entered their house, Rolando immediately took their photograph. Rolando was threatened that he would face charges if he posted the man’s photograph he took on social media. The man turned out to be a policeman.

The Ardales couple also reported being tailed by a motorcycle rider in April and had been visited by a man in a crew cut who refused to identify himself. Timun, of which the Ardales couple were members, had been in the crosshairs of the MTF-ELCAC for some time.

**In Negros Occidental.** On June 21, 2023, sugar farm workers **Carlos and Gelma Ban-on**, residents of Sitio Kangkiling, Barangay Buenavista, Himamaylan, and members of BABICAFA were detained overnight at the Himamaylan Police Station, possibly to prevent them from being interviewed by members of a fact-finding team who had gone to Negros to probe the Fausto family massacre. The Ban-on family's house was only 30 meters away from the Faustos.

On June 19, 2023, **Edgardo Teruel**, a unionist affiliated with the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) and a resident of Sitio Dangalon, Barangay Hilamonan, Kabankalan City was summoned by soldiers of the 94<sup>th</sup> IBPA to the CAFGU detachment in Barangay Hilamonan, Kabankalan where he was interrogated by two soldiers (identified as Vargas and Mario). Despite the fact that Teruel was a person with disability who had difficulty walking, the soldiers accused him of being an NPA member and being involved in the massacre of the Fausto family. Teruel denied all these accusations.

The soldiers tried to coerce Teruel into admitting that one of the bullets found at the Fausto massacre crime scene was his. One soldier kept tapping the bullet to his head and repeatedly warned him that "this is what you'll get." The soldier identified as Mario forced Edgardo to give them his child's phone number so that they could monitor his whereabouts. They also told him that his name would only be cleared if he could find and bring them his nephew Ruben Tingal, who they also accused of being a member of the NPA. The soldiers threatened to harm his family and warned him against reporting the incident.

The military also accused Ruben Tingal of being involved in the Fausto massacre. Ruben has been missing since May 3, 2023, the same day his brother Crispin was killed by soldiers.

**In Manila.** On June 8, 2023, village watchman **Rolando Bacaltos**, 60, a resident of Barangay 101, Tondo and secretary of the Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Harbour Centre had just finished patrolling the barangay with other watchmen when he was approached by a military man in civilian clothes who introduced himself as Rolando. The latter asked him who the community organizers in Tondo were and showed him some pictures to identify. Bacaltos denied knowing most of the people he was asked about. Among the persons Rolando was inquired about were Karapatan-National Capital Region paralegal Yves Lucillo and Anakbayan-Metro Manila spokesperson Benedict Macabenta. The man also asked about students who were at a local daycare earlier that month, and then told Bacaltos to inform him should another group of students arrive in the barangay.

**In Ilocos Sur.** On May 28, 2023, posters with the pictures of Ilocos-based activists **Florence Kang**, **Niño Oconer**, and **Angel Galimba** were hung in Sta. Cruz town, branding them as "NPA recruiters." In Candon City, another poster, this



JUNE 2, 2023

Red Tagging Poster was seen in MMSU Batac Cit. Ilocos Norte maliciously labelling Second Nominee Angelica Galimba, Niño Oconer, Genaro Dela Cruz and Florence Kang along side with legal mass organizations as so called 'CPP-NPA-NDF Recruiter'.

time with photos of the three plus that of another activist, **Rabh Hubbard**, was hung with the caption "CPP-NPA-NDF Recruiters." Kang is the Executive Director of the Ilocos Center for Research Empowerment and Development and is active in socio-economic projects for the poor, as well as in relief efforts during calamities. Oconer is a correspondent of alternative media outfit *Northern Dispatch* and a member of the secretariat of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Ilocos (BAYANI). Angel Galimba is the second nominee of the Kabataan Partylist. Rabh Hubbard is with the secretariat of BAYANI. All of the victims have been subjected to intense harassment and surveillance, including the filing of trumped-up rebellion charges against Kang and Oconer.

On May 4, 2023, farmer **Evelyn Villegas**, 56, a resident of Barangay Baracbac, Sinait town, and a member of a local peasant organization was visited in her house by nine policemen, two of them in uniform and the rest in civilian clothes. The policemen told Villegas that a man they had arrested for murder claimed that he had lived in Villegas' house for three years and that two NPA surrenderees from the adjacent barangay of Maradudon had identified her as an "NPA supporter." Villegas denied knowing the persons they mentioned. The policemen then asked her to sign a document "to clear her name." Villegas refused, saying that she had not done anything bad or wrong. The policemen threatened Villegas that if her name cropped up again from anyone who surrendered or got arrested, they would come back for her. Before leaving, the policemen took her contact number and told her to get in touch with the police if she changed her mind.

On April 8, 2023, farmer **Samuel Dawig**, his wife **Elena**, and two of their children traveled from their home in Barangau Lucbuban, Salcedo town to their daughter Justine's rented house in Barangay Macabiag, Sinait



town. As soon as they arrived, they were surprised when more than 20 policemen aboard three patrol cars and several motorcycles suddenly arrived and accosted them, preventing them from entering their daughter's rented place. They asked the family if they knew that a man they had arrested recently had lived in the place with their daughter. The family was shocked at the news and explained that they had come at their daughter's behest to retrieve her motorcycle and other belongings because she could not travel. The police said they would need their daughter's authorization and the motorcycle's registration papers. Out of fear, the family left without accomplishing their errand. They were also dismayed to see that the gas tank of their daughter's motorcycle was empty and its seat had been dismantled.

On April 10, the Dawig couple and their son went back to Sinait to try to retrieve Justine's belongings but they found a new lock on the door. Four policemen came to ask them if they had the documents needed to retrieve the motorcycle. The policemen produced a court order stating that they could not enter their daughter's place. The Dawig couple then decided to post an incident blotter with the barangay and identified three of the four policemen as Gascon, Rafanan and Pagud, based on their name plates.

The Dawigs had long been harassed by the military and police in Barangay Lucbuban because of accusations that they had been harboring NPA members. Samuel Dawig was a member of Tukab, a local peasant organization instrumental in stopping the construction of a dam in their municipality. His children used to be members of Anakbayan and his daughter Justine is a community organizer.

**In Laguna.** On May 25 to 29, 2023, **Rhoel Alconera**, production operator at Philfoods Fresh Baked Products, Inc. in Barangay Mamplasan, Biñan City and an officer of Unyon ng mga Panadero sa Philfoods Fresh Baked Products Inc-OLALIA, was accused by military personnel belonging to Task Force Ugnay of being an "NPA member tasked to organize unions." The military men had come to the factory to conduct an anti-union and red-tagging seminar among the workers, and took turns bad-mouthing the union and the Olalia Federation. The military urged the workers' union to become independent, or "join the TUCP." **Union officers of Gardenia**, the mother company of Philfoods had, likewise, been relentlessly interrogated at their homes by Task Force Ugnay since 2022.

**Gardenia workers condemn red-tagging members and organization**

**In Isabela.** On May 4, 2023 at around 1 p.m., three elements of PNP-Cagayan came to see Dominga Aberion at her home in Barangay Bangad, Sta. Maria town to return the latter's lost phone. Aberion chairs the Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (UMA) in Isabela. The person who found the phone gave it to the police, who said that they would return the phone to the owner.

Upon returning the phone, however, the police kept telling Aberion to disaffiliate from UMA and Anakpawis, claiming that they are legal fronts of the "terrorist CPP-NPA-NDF."

On May 9, 2023, at around 4 p.m., Aberion was set to go to Ilagan when she was stopped in her tracks by two elements from PNP-Cagayan upon reaching the Bangad barangay hall.

They asked Aberion if they could go and talk in her house but she refused. They then asked her to accompany them to the house of a man named Joel Turingan but she also refused.

On May 16, 2023, the same three elements from PNP-Cagayan went with Aberion as she talked to families enrolled in the 4Ps program in Bangad. Aberion is also the spokesperson for the DSWD's Family Development Sessions (FDS) in their barangay. It was the first time that elements of the PNP insisted on being part of FDS.

Aberion confronted the policemen, asking them whether they were keeping her under surveillance. They responded "yes, because you are a member of Anakpawis." They then showed her a picture of political prisoner Isabelo Adviento, asking her if she knows him and she told them that she doesn't.

The PNP elements currently reside in Joel Turingan's house. From time to time, they go to a school in Barangay Bangad and gather the residents for mass meetings where the military and police red-tag the Makabayan bloc and UMA.

FILE PHOTO



**In Iloilo City.** On May 4, 2023, a man who introduced himself as a member of the Philippine Army came to the barangay hall of San Nicolas, La Paz to ask for directions to the house of “Lalay” and “Yeyeng.” “Lalay” is the nickname of Bayan-Panay secretariat member **Rea Ogo** and “Yeyeng” is the nickname of her sister, health worker **Ruth Alingasao**. When asked why he was inquiring about the two, the man said that they had joined the May 1 rally which did not have a permit. The barangay chair argued that it was their right to join protests and air their grievances before government. He did not disclose any information to the military man about the two sisters.

**In Sorsogon.** On April 25, 2023, Bayan-Sorsogon spokesperson and Bayan-Bicol Vice Chairperson for Internal Affairs **Reynaldo Hababag**,<sup>75</sup> was accosted by “Teton,” who was formerly a member of a Sorsogon-based peasant group and was now a “rebel returnee” and factotum of the Philippine Army. “Teton” told Hababag that Capt. Michelle Estares of the 9<sup>th</sup> CMO Battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division wanted a word with him, which Hababag agreed to. Estares reportedly asked Hababag about his views of the current government and he gave her a short answer, which included his views about the killing of unarmed and defenseless activists. Estares then asked for a longer lecture from Hababag, to which he answered that they could talk anytime between May 5 and 10 at the Karapatan office in Sorsogon City. Estares, however, never showed up. Instead, groups of men began frequenting his house and asking for his whereabouts from May 2 to 4. On all occasions, the men were accompanied by “Teton.” The unwanted visits stopped only when a Sorsogon media man posted in the news about Hababag’s suspicious callers.

**In Batangas.** A resident student and sugar worker of Sitio Pantay, Barangay Pag-asa, Calaca town, **Jasmin Putoy** was also treasurer of the Kaisahan sugar workers union. On April 10, 2023, she was approached at her house by two men in civilian attire looking for her mother. The men, one of whom said he was from the 59<sup>th</sup> IBPA, told Jasmin’s mother that volunteer organizers of Sugarfolks for Genuine Agricultural Reform (SUGAR), to which Kaisahan was affiliated, were NPA members and were giving false hopes that the workers would receive financial assistance. When Jasmin’s mother asked for the men’s IDs, they instead showed her their guns tucked into their pants. They also showed her a picture of her daughter joining a rally at the Department of Labor and Employment, where Kaisahan members had been seeking a dialogue.

At this point, Jasmin’s neighbor Joan Aslor came in and asked the men what was wrong with joining the rally when all they were doing was fighting for their rights. One of the men responded by taking pictures of the women, saying they would be back. The men also took the women’s contact numbers.

That night, one of the men named “Makmak” called to ask Jasmin to join him in a drinking session. When

she refused, Makmak called Jasmin’s mother and asked, “Where’s Baby Girl?”

On April 11, 2023, it was Jasmin’s aunt who answered the phone. Makmak then asked the aunt to have sex with him, at which point the aunt blocked his number.

On the night of March 30, 2023, sugar worker **Joretis Villamor**, a resident of Sitio Damiana, Barangay Sampaga, Balayan town and a member of Kaisahan-Sampaga was interrogated by policemen about a group of students from the University of the Philippines who had stayed at her house during a rural community exposure trip. On five other occasions in April, she was again interrogated about her presence in rallies, and about the identity of mass leaders and the nature of organizations such as SUGAR and Anakpawis which they branded as “NPA.”

**In the first year of Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s rule, Karapatan documented up to 544 civilians victimized by the forced and fake surrender schemes of the NTF-ELCAC**, where civilians would often be deceived into joining assemblies through false promises of financial, livelihood or housing assistance, and where such assemblies later turned out to be “surrender ceremonies.”

**In Manila.** Starting March 9, 2023, some 90 to 100 soldiers occupied Barangay 105, Tondo, also known as Hapilan. The soldiers were allegedly conducting a “community support program,” which was military doublespeak for intelligence gathering. The soldiers profiled local residents to ascertain who among them were joining rallies, and who were members of progressive organizations like Gabriela. It was reported that the soldiers were also on a manhunt for two community leaders.

**In Quezon City.** On March 2, 2023, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. filed a petition for certiorari impleading Metropolitan Trial Court Judge Aimee Marie Alcera as public respondent and the ten human rights defenders (**Karapatan’s Elisa Tita Lubi, Cristina Palabay, Roneo Clamor, Gabriela Krista Dalena, Wilfredo Ruazol, Jose Mari Callueng and Dr. Edita Burgos**, as well as **Joan May**



**Cristina Palabay**

KODAO





**Hands off HR Defenders - on Esperon certiorari vs Karapatan et al**

FILE PHOTO

Salvador and Gertrudes Libang of GABRIELA and Sr. Elenita Belardo of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines [RMP]) Judge Alcera had acquitted in January 2023 as private respondents on trumped-up charges of perjury. Esperon alleged that Judge Alcera committed “grave abuse of discretion” in acquitting the defenders and asked the Regional Trial Court to review the case documents. Esperon’s petition, which is now pending before Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 84 Presiding Judge Luisito Galvez Cortez, in effect unjustly reopens the junked perjury case already hurdled by the ten human rights defendants.

Esperon’s reopening of the perjury case is but one in a series of renewed attacks against human rights defenders of Karapatan.

Palabay, along with Karapatan’s legal counsel Maria Sol Taule, continue to experience red-tagging and other forms of threats and harassment, particularly from supporters of the Duterte and Marcos Jr. administration at a TV program at the Sonshine Media Network International (SMNI), an outfit owned by the self-declared “son of God” Apollo Quiboloy who is wanted by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation for sex trafficking charges. In 2022, Palabay together with the mothers of disappeared activists Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan filed administrative complaints against SMNI. Past and present officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict, some facing numerous complaints at various domestic redress mechanisms, have repeatedly red-tagged Palabay and Taule.

Karapatan’s Eastern Visayas coordinator Alexander Philip “Chakoy” Abinguna remains imprisoned at the Tacloban City Jail for baseless and fabricated charges of

illegal possession of firearms and explosives, after the February 2020 raid in the office of Karapatan in Tacloban.

**Karapatan documented 519 victims of violation of domicile and 512 victims of illegal search and seizure from July 2022 to June 2023.**

## The Undefeated Choruses of People on the Ground

Amid these gross violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law, Ferdinand Marcos Jr. remains conspicuously silent on human rights issues and cases in a devious attempt to distance himself from the sordidness of his own government’s human rights record. His silence, however, does not save him from accountability for the grave results of his evil policies.

Relentlessly, the people have been pushing back against the repressiveness of the Marcos Jr. regime and collectively asserting their rights and freedoms.

“**Breaking Chains.**” June 29, 2023 signalled the start of a renewed and more vigorous campaign by SELDA to free all political prisoners. More than a hundred former political prisoners from the Marcos era up to the present gathered at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani to jumpstart the campaign entitled “Breaking Chains, Reclaiming Freedom from Marcos Sr. to Marcos Jr.” The campaign is led by human rights groups SELDA, Hustisya, Desaparecidos and ten other progressive groups from various sectors.





"Breaking Chains" campaign at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani

KARAPATAN

The month before, Kapatid, a support group of friends and relatives of political detainees, had filed a petition for a writ of kalayaan before the Supreme Court to secure the release of ailing, elderly and long-detained political prisoners, particularly 83-year-old Gerardo dela Peña, the country's oldest political prisoner. Kapatid will be trooping to the Supreme Court every month to step up the pressure and follow up on their petitions.

**Workers groups coalesce to demand higher wages and better working conditions.** Different labor groups united under All Philippine Trade Unions (APTU) rallied on Workers Day of May 1 to call for urgent and significant wage increases. The APTU bewailed the skyrocketing prices of goods and services that seriously eroded the already measly workers' wages. APTU also slammed the government's inability to create jobs and to protect fundamental labor rights, especially the freedom of association and the right to organize.

APTU includes Kilusang Mayo Uno, Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, Nagkaisa! Labor Coalition, and other trade union centers and confederations. The group has demanded that government speed up on petitions for wage increases pending before the regional wage boards, and in Congress.

**Wyeth Philippines union strikes back.** Wyeth Philippines Progressive Workers' Union (WPPWU-DFA-KMU) filed a notice of strike two days after the Wyeth-

Nestlé management suddenly laid off 145 workers at its Canlubang, Laguna plant on May 18, 2023. The laid off workers comprised 125 union members including 10 union officers, one manager, and 14 supervisors. They represented 23% of the plant's total workforce of 614, and 45% of the WPPWU membership. Calling the move a clear case of union-busting, the workers struck and conducted protests at the plant. By June 2023, WPPWU was able to negotiate the reinstatement of 10 among the 145 workers who were affected by the surprise layoffs, including five union officers. The union also obtained higher separation packages for the other laid-off workers.



Wyeth workers on strike

FILE PHOTO



**Veteran activist files damage suit against red-taggers.** On July 23, 2023, Dr. Carol Araullo, chairperson emerita of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) filed a Php 2.15-million damage suit against Lorraine Badoy and Jeffrey Celiz, two of the most notorious red-taggers in the country. Said Araullo, she hopes to send a message that baseless allegations and attempts to silence voices of dissent will not be tolerated.

**Court dismisses assault case vs. 43 Kidapawan farmers.** Finally, after seven years, the Kidapawan City Municipal Trial Court in Cities dismissed the case against 43 farmers accused of criminal assault in a decision dated May 22, 2023. The case was filed in April 2016 against the 43 farmers, who were part of thousands of peasants seeking urgent food aid amid the government’s lack of a comprehensive response to the damage, hunger and disaster due to the drought caused by the El Niño phenomenon of that period.

On the morning of April 1, 2016, police violently dispersed 6,000 farmers in a protest rally in Kidapawan, North Cotabato. Two persons were killed and 11 were injured with gunshot wounds. Nearly 100 farmers were arrested and detained, including pregnant women and elderly women farmers.



**Carol Araullo files damage suit vs Badoy, Celiz**

TEDDY CASINO



**Court dismisses case vs Kidapawan farmers**

MARIA SOL TAULE



## The People Will Not Yield: We Are Not Afraid

On June 28, 2023, representatives of progressive sectoral organizations assessed Marcos Jr.'s year-long performance in economics, good governance, human rights and peace, social services, and national sovereignty. The verdict was unequivocal: Marcos Jr. is all blabber with zero substance when it comes to addressing the basic issues of food, poverty, high prices, corruption and human rights. Thousands rallied at Mendiola on June 30 to confront Ferdinand Marcos Jr. with the glaring realities vis-à-vis the glittering promises he made in his inaugural speech and first State of the Nation Address (SONA).

Karapatan found the Marcos Jr. regime accountable for grave violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law more alarming than his predecessor as he mirrors and even surpasses the notoriety of the Duterte regime.

On the morning of July 24, 2023, thousands massed up along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City to proclaim the People's SONA, the real State of the Nation, ahead of Marcos Jr.'s second SONA of untruths. The People's SONA demanded higher wages for the working people, a stop

to State violence and investing in the people's welfare instead of programs like the Maharlika that are magnets for corruption.

Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s SONA presented later that afternoon made false claims about economic recovery, made token mention about foreign policy and said nothing at all about the growing violations of civil and political rights.

Unlike his predecessor Duterte, Marcos Jr. maintains a calculated distance from the fray of human rights issues and violations, preferring to let his attack dogs like Sara Duterte and the Sunshine Media Network International deliver his dirty message and take the heat for it. And yet behind this deceptive demeanor, he directs the NTF-ELCAC which he chairs, and the AFP of which he is commander in chief, to wreak havoc on the people's human rights.

**No matter what, the people are not afraid.**

**The unyielding mass movement is determined to unmask Ferdinand Marcos Jr., to expose his lies and his deviousness, and to take him to task for the grave violations of human rights that have arisen from his policies. The unyielding mass movement's impetus is for truth to prevail, and to exact justice and accountability to end impunity.**

**TULOY ANG LABAN. Never again.**



**People's SONA 2023**

