

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 22 JUN 2016

DAY : Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

ABS-CBN's Lopez accepts DENR post

By JANVIC MATEO

Anti-mining advocate Gina Lopez has accepted the offer of president-elect Rodrigo Duterte to be the next secretary of the Department of Environment and



Lopez

Natural Resources (DENR). "After much introspection, I decided to accept

it," Lopez said on the sidelines of an event at the ABS-CBN compound last night.

"I was surprised (because) I am not the usual choice. My stand on environment protection is clear," she added.

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ABS-CBN's

From Page 1

Lopez was attending the presentation of awards for Excellence in Educational Transformation at the ABS-CBN compound when she abruptly left the venue to answer a phone call from Duterte.

"I just talked with him a few minutes ago," she told reporters after her conversation with Duterte.

"I told him, sir, I just want you to know that I considered your proposal, I am deeply honored. It's such a controversial decision, but you decided to trust me... I give you my firm commitment that I will do everything I can," Lopez added.

Lopez chairs ABS-CBN's charitable arm Lingkod Bayan Foundation and Pasig River Rehabilitation Council.

She said she was not expecting Duterte's offer for the DENR post when she met with him on Monday in Davao City.

A staunch anti-mining advocate, Lopez said she would seek a dialogue with mining companies upon her assumption as environment secretary.

She said she would address climate change and air pollution as well as dynamite fishing and illegal logging.

"The first thing I want to do is clean the ranks of DENR. Those who are accepting bribes, your days are over," she said.

The appointment of Lopez to the DENR came weeks after Duterte stressed the need for someone who can help him address the destruction of the environment caused by mining.

Duterte's aide, outgoing Maribojoc, Bohol Mayor Jun Evasco, expressed his interest to head the agency.

Evasco was a former member of the New People's Army before he became chief of staff of Duterte.

Evasco will serve as secretary to the Cabinet of the incoming administration.

Duterte warns mining firms

Duterte said Lopez, whom he described as "ardent for responsible mining," met him Monday to talk about the impact of mining in some areas.

Duterte said mining companies should plant trees and wash away the chemicals they leave behind to avoid destroying the environment.

"If you don't do it, I will cancel the permit," he said.

Duterte said there would be a comprehensive review of all mining concessions to ensure that such activities would not be harmful to the environment.

"If you are into it, be sure you have enough resources or I'll require you to go to Canada and Australia to learn how to mine precious metals," the incoming president said.

"When you're spoiling the land, I'll cancel it (permit) without hesitation. That's the bottom line," he added.

Duterte clarified that he is not against mining but companies "have to do it right" because the precious metals belong to the Filipino people. — With Alexis Romero, Edith Regalado, Artemio Dumalao, Rhodina Villanueva

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Gina Lopez accepts offer to head DENR

By BETHEENA KAE UNITE

Environmental advocate Gina Lopez has accepted the offer of incoming President Rodrigo R. Duterte to be the new secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

"After much introspection, I have decided to accept it and let's see what happens," Lopez said right after talking to Duterte over the phone on Tuesday night, following her speech at an awarding ceremony for excellent schools in Quezon City.

Lopez said she told Duterte: "Sir, I just wanted you to know that I thought about your proposal yesterday and I'm greatly honored since it's a con-

troversial decision, and I give you my firm commitment. I will do everything I can."

Lopez received the offer from Duterte on Monday.

"My stand on the environment is very clear but this is what I really believe na kung alagaan ang kalikasan at kung gawin sa paraan na may pakinabang ang komunidad na doon nakatira (that if we take care of the environment and we do it in a way that benefits the community living in the area), I am very, very sure we can eradicate poverty," Lopez said.

"It's not only to protect the environment. What I really want to do is to eradicate poverty. And we feel that another way to do it is alagaan ang ka-

likasan (take care of the environment)," she added.

Lopez stood firm on her advocacy against mining saying: "I don't like mining, the foreigners and the rich are the only ones benefitting from it, but the farmers and the fishermen suffer."

She said she would want to meet the pro-mining advocates to discuss the issue. "I have to talk to them and we cannot and we must not build an economy based on sufferings. We cannot do it," Lopez said.

She noted that the country has become the most vulnerable country to climate change in the whole planet, noting that after many years of mining there has yet to be one rehabilitated site in the Philippines.

"They say coal is cheap. Coal is not cheap. The community there suffers, their health suffers, their income suffers, and hindi yan binabayaran ng owner ng coal companies. The poor is suffering. It's not cheap and it's not good," Lopez said.

"Why do we keep doing it? Our people have been suffering. Tama na naman (that's enough)," Lopez said.

Lopez said the first thing she wants to do when she takes the seat as DENR secretary is "to clean the ranks of DENR."



GINA LOPEZ (twitter.com)

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BusinessMirror

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Gina Lopez accepts DENR chief position

By CLAUDETH MOCON-CIRIACO
Correspondent

AFTER "much introspection," ABS-CBN Foundation Chairman Gina Lopez accepted the position of secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) offered to her by President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte.

"Nagulat nga ako eh, because I'm not the usual choice. My stand on the environment is very clear but this is what I really believe in, *na kung alagaan ang kalikasan at kung gawin sa paraan na may pakinabang ang komunidad na doon nakatira*, I am very, very sure we can eradicate poverty," Lopez said in an ambush interview with the media on Tuesday evening, after the Excellence in Educational Transformation Awards held in Dolphy Theatre, ABS-CBN Compound in Quezon City.

She said she already informed

Duterte about her decision. She revealed she was not expecting the appointment for she just had a meeting with Duterte to discuss about the environment.

"He then offered the position to me. I just said I am seriously considering it," she said.

"I just talked to him few minutes ago," she said, adding she is also ready to face critics and talk to prominent groups. Lopez is the daughter of the late ABS-CBN Chairman Emeritus Eugenio Lopez Jr.

Earlier, Duterte promised the Left he would choose his environment secretary from their list of nominees. **See related story on B6.**

Meanwhile, 39 natural caves across the country have been placed under the protection and management of the government, the DENR said.

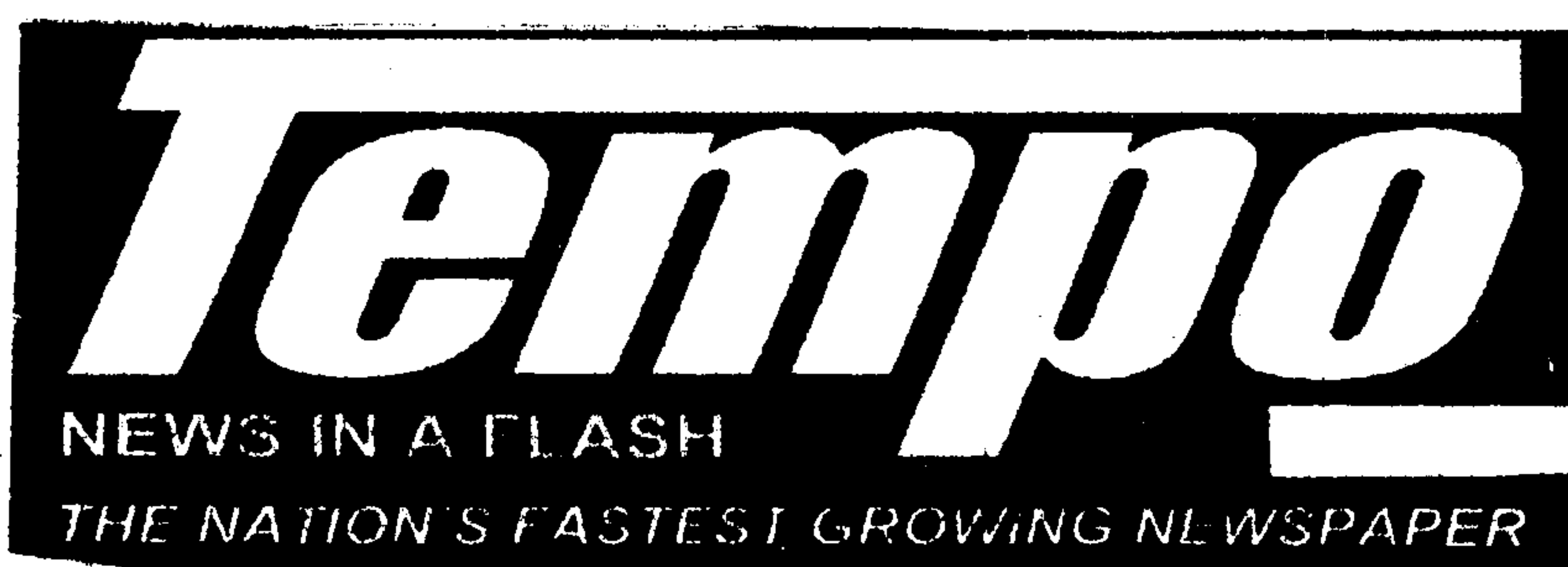
The agency recently classified an additional 39 caves, bringing to 454 the total number of caverns that are now

part of the country's natural wealth and, therefore, require sustainable management and protection.

Environment Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje said the classification, as embodied in Memorandum Circular 2016-05 that he signed, was necessary to ensure that the caves would be "preserved and properly enjoyed by the public."

"The directive will help enhance public awareness and appreciation that caves are part of our natural resources because of their significance as ecosystems, which host various forms of wildlife," Paje said.

"It also helps protect the geological, archaeological, historical and cultural values these caves carry, and helps sustain them for the enjoyment of future generations," he added. The 39 caves are distributed as follows: six in the Cordillera Administrative Region; seven in Ilocos region; two in Cagayan region; 15 in Bicol; three in Davao del Norte province; and six in Region 12. **With PNA**



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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

Gina Lopez accepts DENR post

Environmental advocate Gina Lopez has already accepted the offer of incoming President Rodrigo Duterte to become the new Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) secretary.

"After much introspection, I have decided to accept it and let's see what happens," Lopez said right af-

ter talking to Duterte over the phone last night following her speech at an awarding ceremony for excellent schools in Quezon City.

"I just told him (Duterte) sir, I just wanted you to know that I thought about your proposal, yesterday and I'm greatly honored since it's a controversial decision and I give you my

firm commitment, I will do everything I can," said Lopez, who received the offer from Duterte on Monday.

Lopez stood firm on her advocacy against mining saying "I don't like mining, the foreigners and the rich are the only ones benefitting from it but the farmers and the fishermen suffer." **(Betheena Kae Unite)**

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

Gina Lopez ng ABS-CBN bagong DENR Secretary

TINANGGAP na ni Gina Lopez ang alok sa kanya ni incoming President Rodrigo Duterte na pamunuan ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Nauna nang sinabi ni Lopez na kailangan muna niyang kunsultahin ang kanyang pamilya tungkol sa nasabing alok sa kanya ni Duterte.

Si Lopez ay kilalang environmentalist na nasa likod ng iba't ibang mga proyekto na may kinalaman sa pagsasa-ayos ng ating kapaligiran.

Mula sa pamilya Lopez ng ABS-CBN, si Gina ang

kasalukuyang pinuno ng Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation.

Nitong Linggo ay nag-usap sina Lopez at Duterte at sa nasabing pulong inialok sa kanya ng incoming president ang posisyon sa pamahalaan.

Sa kanyang pagharap sa mga business leaders sa Davao City kahapon, sinabi ni Duterte na gusto niyang tutukan ng DENR ang pagsasa-ayos sa mga likas na yaman na sinira ng ilang mining firms.

Sinabi rin ni Digong na magiging mahigpit ang kanyang pamahalaan sa pagbibigay ng permit sa mining industry.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

CHAIRMAN'S FILES!

NI: Chairwoman Ligaya V. Santos

(Anumang opinyon, tips, reaksiyon ay maari ninyong ipadala sa joy_column@yahoo.com o mag-text sa 0932-3214355. Ang Chairman's Files ay lumalabas tuwing Lunes, Miyerkules at Biyernes)

GINA LOPEZ IN DENR, A GOOD CHOICE

The lips of the righteous know what finds favor, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse – Proverbs 10: 32

PERSONAL na inalok ni **President-elect Rodrigo Duterte** kay **Madame Gina Lopez** ang puwesto bilang kalihim ng kontrobersyal na Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Si Madame Gina, isang environmentalist, anak ng namaya-pang may-ari ng ABS-CBN na si Eugenio Lopez Jr at kasalukuyang chairperson ng Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation.

HINDI pa lubusan tinanggap ni Madame Gina ang alok ni Digong dahil kailangan muna umano niyang sumailalim sa *retreat* bago ito tanggapin.

Swak sa trabahong ito si Madame Gina na matagal nang nakikipaglaban para sa maayos na kalikasan, isang anti-mining advocate. Bahagi rin si Madame Gina ng proyekto ng Manila City Government sa mga clean and green project at paglilinis sa Pasig river.

Kaya right choice ang DENR para kay Madame Gina!

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Groups laud Gina Lopez's appointment to the DENR

By JONATHAN MAYUGA

🐦 @jonlmayuga

ANTIMINING and environmental groups on Tuesday expressed support behind the decision of incoming President Rodrigo R. Duterte, naming Gina Lopez of ABS-CBN Lingkod Bayan Foundation to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) post.

Sources said Lopez had already decided to accept the Cabinet offer, but wants Duterte to be the first to know of her decision before making an official announcement. A known antimining advocate, Lopez was appointed in 2010 by President Aquino as chairman of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC).

"*Tatawag daw muna siya kay President Duterte to let him know. I don't know kung natawagan na niya,*" the source told the **BUSINESSMIRROR** in an interview.

"This is a welcome development for the environmental and climate advocacy in the country. Gina Lopez has been consistent in the advocacy to protect the environment, particularly against large-scale destructive mining, and in recent months, has been a voice to phase out coal plants and mining in the country," Gerry Arances of the Center for Energy, Ecology and Development (CEED) said.

Jaybee Garganera, national coordinator of the Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM), said Lopez has a proven track record in championing ecotourism, sustainable livelihoods, community-based enterprises and supporting communities that have been negatively impacted by destructive mining.

"The Lopez family has also recently announced that they will divest from coal-power plants [and] reduce their exposure to fossil fuels and shift to renewable energy," he added.

The professional background of Lopez as managing director of the ABS-CBN Foundation will be very helpful in her environmental advocacy, Garganera said.

"Probably, the most important factor is Ms. Gina's role in convening the Green Thumb Coalition to produce the Green Agenda and elaborate the Green Scorecard for the candidates of the 2016 elections," he said. ATM is a member of the Green Thumb Coalition.

Garganera is confident that with the proper and adequate support from the various environmental groups, Lopez will complement very well the change that the Duterte administration is aspiring for.

Clemente Bautista, national coordinator of the Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan-PNE), said the group stands witness to Lopez's leadership and determination in defending the environment and urged Lopez to accept Duterte's offer to head the DENR.

"We joined Lopez in the 'No to Mining in Palawan' national-signature drive that gathered 10 million signatures. We linked arms with her in demanding justice for murdered Palawan environmentalist Dr. Gerry Ortega," Bautista said.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP), for its part, issued a statement affirming its commitment to responsible mining.

"In light of recent developments, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines would just like to stress its continuing advocacy for responsible mining to benefit Filipinos not just in mining communities, but around the country. This, as we stress the need for a Department of Environment and Natural Resources secretary who has a solid background on the intricacies of natural-resources management and someone who is able to balance economic growth and the needs of the people with that of environmental protection, the protection of indigenous communities and the society," the COMP said.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Gina spooks mining stocks

Environment activist Lopez accepts DENR job

By Jovic Yee, Doris Dumlao-Abadilla and Dona Z. Pazzibugan



ANTIMINING activist Gina Lopez with President-elect Rodrigo Duterte after their meeting in Davao City on Monday. Yesterday, Lopez accepted the job as environment secretary.

SCREENGRAB FROM RTVM

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STAUNCH antimining advocate Regina "Gina" Lopez has accepted the offer of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), which oversees the country's mining industry.

"After much introspection, I decided to accept it. Let's see what happens," Lopez told reporters after talking to Duterte over the phone at the sidelines of the 4th Excellence in Educational Transformation Awards held at the ABS-CBN compound in Quezon City.

A day after she was offered the post, Lopez told Duterte she was deeply honored since it's a controversial decision—that he has decided to trust her.

"I give you my firm commitment that I will do everything that I can and it's not only to

protect the environment [but also] to eradicate poverty," she told the incoming President.

News of Duterte's offer to Lopez sent share prices of mining and oil stocks plunging by 4.09 percent at the end of trading yesterday. While the key Philippine Stock Exchange index gained 1.33 percent and reached a new high for 2016, the mining and oil index slumped.

Among the top losers were Philex Mining, Philex Petroleum Corp., Lepanto Con-

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Gina Spooks

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Gina spooks mining stocks

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solidated Mining, Apex Mining and Manila Mining Corp.

Analysts said investors dumped mining stocks yesterday on expectations that the regulatory environment for mining might become more challenging under the Duterte administration.

Lopez, who described herself as "not the usual choice" for environment secretary because of her antimining stance, said she was open to meeting promising advocates so she could make "suggestions" on how to address concerns in the industry.

Lopez also warned corrupt officials at the DENR that their days are numbered.

"We'll clean the ranks of DENR. Those accepting bribes, your days are over. Stop it. No corruption is acceptable," she said.

She blamed corruption within the department for the deterioration of the environment.

Lopez, 61, chair of ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation, studied at Assumption College and Newton College of the Sacred Heart in Boston. She has a master's degree in development management from the Asian Institute of Management and a doctorate degree in humanities from Ateneo de Naga University.

Environmental champions and activists hailed Duterte's appointment of Lopez as the next environment secretary.

Sen. Loren Legarda, a known pro-environment advocate, welcomed Lopez's appointment.

"Gina's track record on various environmental causes cannot be questioned," said former Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn.

"President Duterte picked the right person to fight for what is right as she has proven with La Mesa Dam, Pasig River and her antimining stance that is consistent with what the President wants to happen," Hagedorn said.

Environmentalist Tony Oposa Jr. sent a message from Norway: "President-elect Duterte made the right choice. We will support her all the way!"

Sonia Mendoza, president of Mother Earth Foundation, welcomed the appointment of Lopez. "We thank the President for his choice as we promise to support His Excellency's environmental programs," she said.



GINA LOPEZ interviewed after announcing her acceptance last night of her appointment as environment secretary.

JOVIC YEE

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Environmental activists also hailed the choice of Lopez as DENR chief.

"That's a breakthrough in executive policy because in the past all executive departments have favored large-scale mining and had little support for small-scale mining," Ban Toxics executive director Richard Gutierrez said.

EcoWaste Coalition president Noli Abinales said: "We know that Gina is a fighter in protecting the environment from destructive industries like mining."

Clemente Bautista, national coordinator of the militant Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment, said Lopez had a "proven track record" against mining.

Greenpeace Philippines country director Amalie Obusan said they hoped Lopez would be consistent and reject all environmentally-destructive projects, including those pushed by her family.

As head of the DENR, Lopez will also oversee the operations of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), which regulates the country's mining industry.

"Mining counters fell on market concerns that Duterte's potential appointee to the DENR post would pursue policies that are pro-environment and that may cap the extraction of natural resources in the

country by mining companies," said Michaelangelo Oyson, president of BPI Securities.

"Given the high dependence of the mining industry on future production, the market has apparently reacted negatively to the invitation of the Duterte administration to Ms. Gina Lopez as DENR secretary due to possible increased regulations and restrictions that could affect future earnings should she accept the position," said Marvin Fausto, a fund expert at COL Financial and president of IFE Management Advisers Inc.

Philex Mining, controlled by businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan, fell by 12.17 percent while its oil exploration arm Philex Petroleum likewise slumped by 10.94 percent.

Lepanto Mining slid by 7.78 percent and affiliate Manila Mining by 6.7 percent.

The only mining stock that was unscathed yesterday was Semirara Mining, which gained by a modest 0.23 percent.

Market participants were reminded yesterday of a heated exchange between First Pacific's Pangilinan and Lopez during a mining forum in 2012.

Lopez had supported Duterte's presidential run because the Davao City mayor had banned mining in his city.

At a business forum in Davao City yesterday, Duterte again warned the country's mining companies to do it right or get out of mining, saying he would not allow the destruction of the environment.

"There will be a comprehensive review of the mining claims and concessions given. And you must endeavor, if you are into it, be sure that you have enough resources," Duterte told businessmen.

He advised mining companies to go to Australia and Canada, learn from their best practices in mining precious metals and do it here.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP), however, assured that large-scale miners would continue to advocate responsible mining to benefit not just host communities but the entire country.

COMP executive vice president Nelia Halcion said that its members were prepared to fulfill the mining industry's crucial role of helping sustain a strong economic growth and spreading this to the countryside. *With reports from Riza Olchondra, Leila Salaverria and Ronnel Domingo*

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DENR appointment spooks miners

THE GENERAL OPTIMISM in the country's business community as the incoming administration unveiled its economic agenda was blotted yesterday on the mining front by news President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte has named an anti-mining advocate to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Stocks of listed miners yesterday succumbed to news that Mr. Duterte offered the post last Monday to Regina Paz "Gina" L. Lopez, trustee of the Lopez Group Foundation, Inc. and chairman of the ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya

Foundation, Inc., the corporate social responsibility arm of media giant ABS-CBN Corp. that lists a "No to Mining Campaign" among its key advocacies.

ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation confirmed in a statement late yesterday afternoon that Ms. Lopez has accepted the offer to head DENR, which oversees the country's mining industry through its Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

In a brief, cautious statement before that, the country's group of miners said that "[i]n light of recent developments, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) would just like to stress its continuing advocacy for responsible mining to benefit Filipinos, not just in mining communities but around the country."

Miners, SI/9

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Miners,
from SI/1

"This as we stress the need for a Department of Environment and Natural Resources secretary who has a solid background on the intricacies of natural resources management and someone who is able to balance economic growth and the needs of the people with that of environmental protection, the protection of indigenous communities and the society."

Sought for further comment, COMP Executive Vice-President Nelja C. Halcon said in phone interview: "The industry can go with whoever will be appointed, we can't do anything about that."

That was before Mr. Duterte, in late-afternoon remarks, seemed to strike a conciliatory tone before an audience of business leaders gathered for consultations in Davao City with his designated economic officials.

LIKE A SORE THUMB

The 17-stock mining and oil sectoral index yesterday stuck out like a sore thumb in a bourse that joined global markets in cheering signs that a campaign to take the

United Kingdom out of the European Union in a June 23 referendum — with expected negative impact on the global economy — appeared to be losing steam.

Mining and oil, which consists heavily of miners, lost 488.55 points or 4.09% to close 11,451.84 — the only sectoral index among six that ended the day in red. In contrast, the Philippine Stock Exchange index gained 1.33% while the all-shares index rose 0.79%.

Philex Mining Corp. led the fall, crashing 12.17% to end P8.01 per share, while stocks of its subsidiary, Philex Petroleum Corp. — which exploration and production of crude oil, natural gas, and coal — fell by 10.94% to P4.07 each. Philex Mining is one of the three Philippine subsidiaries of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Company Ltd., the others being infrastructure-focused Metro Pacific Investments Corp. and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), which has interest in *BusinessWorld* through the *Philippine Star Group* which it controls.

Manuel V. Pangilinan, who heads both Philex Mining and Philex Petroleum as chairman, said in a tweet before trading closed at 3:30 p.m.: "Crash in Ph Mining stocks this morning. There go the coal plants too. Can't look."

Most other listed miners reeled as well: Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. lost 2.01% to P4.38; Coal Asia Holdings, Inc. dropped 1.01% to 49 centavos; Century Peak Metals Holdings Corp. fell 3.13% to 62 centavos; Global Ferronickel Holdings, Inc., 3.16% to 92 centavos; Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co., 7.78% to 24.9 centavos; Manila Mining Corp., 6.67% to 1.4 centavos; Marventures Holdings, Inc., 2.08% to P1.88; NIHAO Mineral Resources International, Inc., 3.57% to P2.70; and Nickel Asia Corp. went down 5.63% to P5.03 per share.

Abra Mining and Industrial Corp., which has not begun commercial extraction of minerals, ended flat at 0.42 centavos while Semirara Mining and Power

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Corp., which has a coal operating contract on Semirara Island but whose subsidiaries are heavily into power generation, gained 0.23% to P129.80.

'ROUGH ROAD' AHEAD

"[T]he initial response is negative because of Gina Lopez' background. It may not be easy for the industry to put their agenda forward," Justino B. Calaycay, Jr., head of marketing and research at A & A Securities, Inc., said by phone.

"There will be balance, but it will be a rough road. The appointment will be good for environmentalists but there will be challenges for the mining sector."

Ralph Christian G. Bodollo, RCBC Securities research analyst for Property, Gaming & Mining, noted separately that "[f]or now, it's just the uncertainty that is plaguing the investors in the mining-and-oil sector."

"Coming from an administration that is not friendly, of course investors will take this [appointment] as very risky and [with]

uncertainty in transaction. Investors are taking less risk opportunities."

On June 30, Mr. Duterte's government will succeed the administration of outgoing President Benigno S.C. Aquino III that had slapped a moratorium on new mining permits and had sought to significantly hike miners' taxes. The 16th Congress ended without acting on this fiscal reform.

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW LOOMS

But a little more than two hours after trading closed with mining stocks' bloodbath, Mr. Duterte ended his speech before some of the country's biggest businessmen who had gathered in the last two days in Davao City with what sounded like a conciliatory tone on the future of mining under his watch.

Still, he did warn the industry that it faces "a comprehensive review" of current applications and projects.

"Ako, let it alone. *Sa tingin ko*: improve on it," Mr. Duterte said as he ended his reaction to reso-

lutions submitted by businessmen at the end of their two-day consultation with incoming state economic managers.

Mr. Duterte emphasized the need for miners to take care of the environment and communities surrounding their projects.

"If you do not do it, I will cancel your permit."

To this end, Mr. Duterte said "there will be a comprehensive review of mining claims and concessions given and you must endeavor to prove you have enough resources to do it."

"That's the bottom line," the President-elect said.

"It is not that I do not want mining. There is a law... the law allows it," he added, referring to Republic Act No. 7942, or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

"But in making money out of the precious metals of the earth that belong to the Filipino people, you have to do it right," he stressed.

"If you cannot do it right, then get out of mining." — **with inputs from Janina C. Lim**

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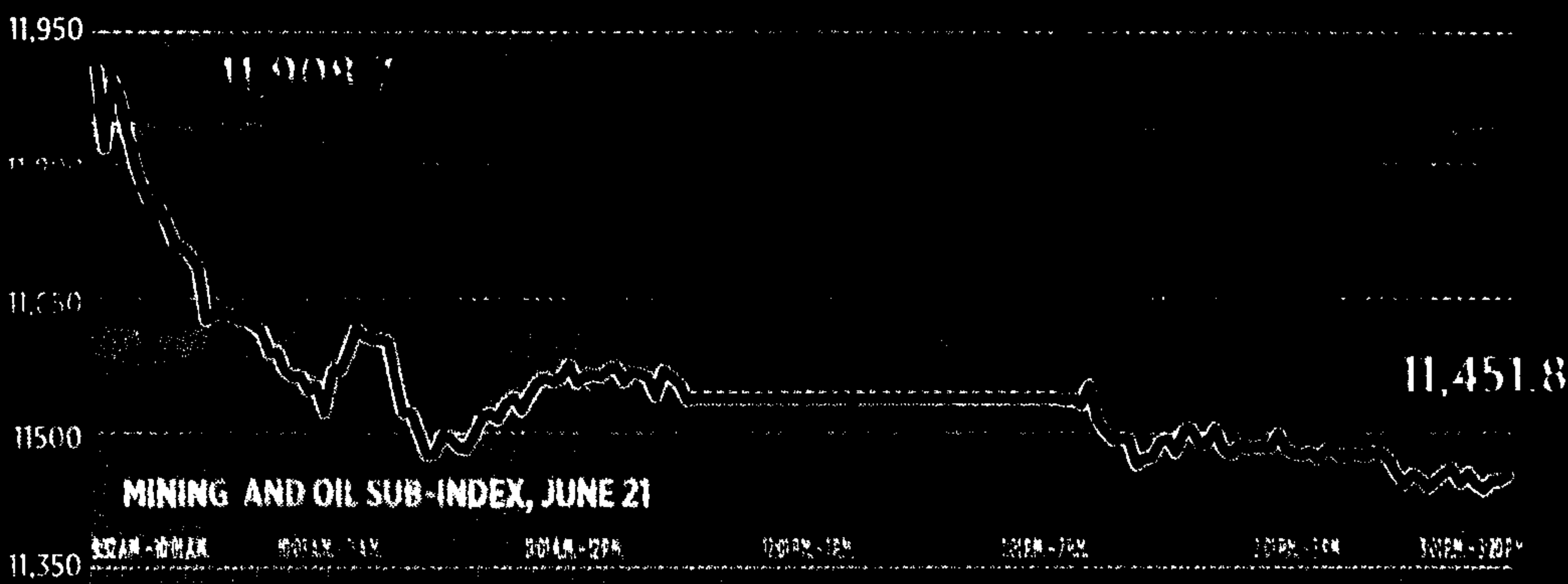
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DENR appointment speaks miners

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MINING STOCKS BLEED



Philex Mining (PX)

% CHANGE

-12.17



Philex Petroleum (PXP)

% CHANGE

-10.94



Lepanto Consolidated "A" (LC)

% CHANGE

-7.78



Lepanto Consolidated "B" (LCB)

% CHANGE

-7.02

Manila Mining "A" (MA)

% CHANGE

-6.67

Apex Mining "A" (APX)

% CHANGE

-6.5

Manila Mining "B" (MAB)

% CHANGE

-6.25

Oriental Peninsula Resources (ORE)

% CHANGE

-5.97



Nickel Asia (NAC)

% CHANGE

-5.63

SOURCE OF DATA: PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE BUSINESSWORLD RESEARCH: DINDO F. PARAGAS BUSINESSWORLD GRAPHICS: BONG R. FORTIN

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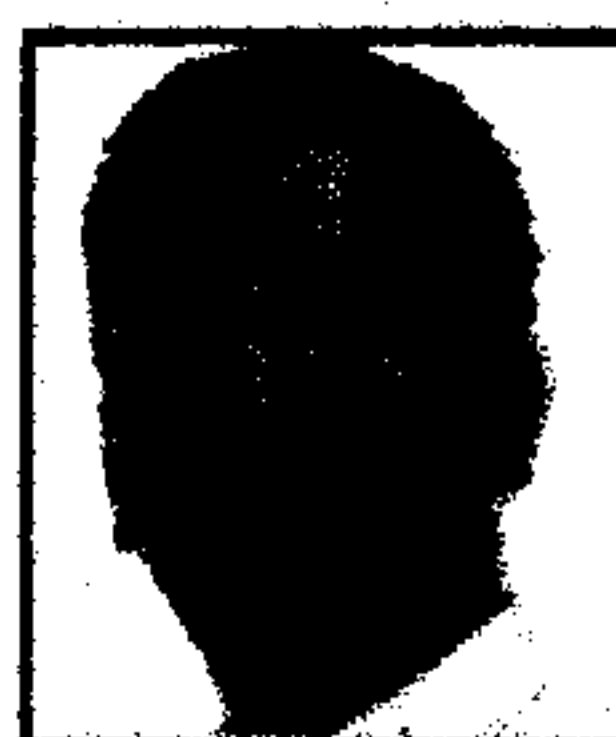
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The Standard

DEFINING THE NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

NOT GINA, PLEASE



LOWDOWN

JOJO A.
ROBLES

I RECALL Regina “Gina” Lopez, heiress of the Lopez broadcast-real estate-power generation fortune, being asked some years back to explain how she could wear expensive jewelry and claim to be an anti-mining advocate. Lopez’s reply was something to the effect that her jewelry came from New York, not from any mine in the Philippines.

President-elect Rodrigo Duterte, in a one-minute video message, has declared that Lopez, the anti-mining crusader, is his choice as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. In certain respects, the appointment is as strange to me as the nomination of Jose David Lapuz, a professor at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, as chairman of the Commission on Higher Education.

Lapuz has been the subject of much online ridicule not only because there is still a CHED chairman currently serving a

fixed term that will end two years from now, but also because some former students of his at UST have been questioning his credentials, capabilities and even his sanity. And apparently, Lapuz’s only claim to fame is that he used to be Duterte’s college instructor at the Lyceum of the Philippines in the sixties.

Naming Lopez to DENR, however, is not just fodder for online humorists. On her appointment could hinge the fate of an entire industry that, as far as I can recall, has been identified by Duterte as an important engine of the national economy,

“Lopez doesn’t deserve the job of regulating an industry that she has long vowed to destroy.”

if properly regulated.

During a forum for businessmen last February, then-candidate Duterte came out strongly in favor of responsible mining, which he said would be allowed to continue as long as the environment was sufficiently protected. “[As for] mining, the best that I can see now is the Australian standard: just follow the Australian standard, take care of the environment,” Duterte told the Wallace Business Forum back then.

But the trouble with appointing Lopez to DENR, the government agency that regulates the mining industry, is that she is against all mining, responsible or not. Yes, despite her taste for precious-metal

jewelry that could actually have been mined here, regardless of where she bought it.

“Mining as an economic path in a magnificent ‘Last Frontier’ is based on a paradigm of economic growth that is myopic and archaic,” Lopez said in an open letter published in 2011. “[It] should be thrown in the dustbin.”

To her credit, Lopez has declared that while she is honored by Duterte’s appointment, she has not yet accepted it. I believe, of course, that she should turn it down, if she is true to herself.

During the Aquino administration, the mining industry was mostly in limbo because the government—typically—could not decide one way or the other. While there was a Mining Law whose implementing rules had already been approved and upheld by the Supreme Court, an executive order issued by the Noynoying One prevented the expansion of an industry that was already providing good work for tens of thousands and pumping billions in taxes to government coffers annually.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Not Gina, Please

And, of course, the industry has its bad eggs, particularly those who raped the environment they were already extracting metals from, like that big-time businessman whose operation was dumping waste indiscriminately into the sea in Agusan and so many local officials who made "small-scale mining" synonymous with "big-time destruction" all over the country. But mining also has its conscientious players, who take care not only of local communities but also of the environment.

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Not Gina... From A9

It is important that Duterte said he wanted to follow the Australian model for responsible mining. Like the US and Canada, Australia has very stringent laws on mining, which those three countries have allowed for many decades and allow to this very day.

The Philippines, according to many international experts, also has very comprehensive and tough laws on mining, which can ensure the proper, safe and environment-friendly operation of local mines if they are implemented properly. What the local mining industry needs, therefore, is a good regulator and implementor of applicable laws, not an anti-mining activist like Gina Lopez.

I don't know how Lopez was chosen to head up DENR, which was originally among the four Cabinet posts that Duterte said he would give to the leftists. What I do know is that the position was first offered to

left-leaning Rep. Carlos Zarate, who turned it down.

But I take heart in the fact that Duterte has also been known to change his mind when he sees that he has made a mistake. This is why Duterte moved his spokesman-nominee, the combative and abrasive Salvador Panelo, to the less controversial position of presidential chief legal counsel.

Of course, he still hasn't revoked the appointment of Las Piñas Rep. Mark Villar as public works secretary, a nomination that has been described by many as akin to letting the fox guard the hen house. But Lopez's appointment is even worse than Villar's, in a sense; I think she intends to burn down not only the hen house, but the whole farm, as well.

There is always room for someone like Gina Lopez, anti-mining advocate, in society. But I don't think she deserves the job of regulating an industry that she has long vowed to destroy.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Able DENR chief sought

By Anna Leah
E. Gonzales

THE Chamber of Mines of the Philippines yesterday said President-elect Rodrigo Duterte should appoint an environment secretary who has enough background in natural resources management to get the right establishments to operate around mining communities.

"In light of recent developments, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines would just like to stress its continuing advocacy for responsible mining to benefit Filipinos not just in mining communities but around the country," said CoMP executive vice president Nelia Halcon.

"This as we stress the need for a Department of Environment and Natural Resources secretary who has a solid background on the intricacies of natural resources management and someone who is able to balance economic growth and the needs of the people with that of environmental protection, the protection of indigenous communities and the society," Halcon added.

Halcon said the mining industry can help bring in the hard investments in the countryside and help realize inclusive growth.

"The establishment of mines in local communities results to economic progress, with more goods and services coming from the mine site. The outcome is a more robust tax take overall by government," Halcon said.

The Manila Times

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Chamber of Mines alarmed over choice as DENR head

BY JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ
REPORTER

THE country's big mining lobby on Tuesday expressed alarm over the possible appointment of ABS-CBN Foundation chairperson Gina Lopez as chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) stressed the need for a DENR secretary who has a solid background in the intricacies of natural resources management, and someone who is able to balance economic growth and the needs of the people with that of environmental protection, the protection of indigenous communities, and society.

COMP is an organization of large mining corporations, processing firms, exploration companies, service and equipment establishments

and other allied industries.

The group was reacting to reports that President-elect Rodrigo Duterte has offered Lopez the key post in the incoming Cabinet after the two met at the Presidential Guest House in Panacan, Davao City.

Duterte, who will assume office on June 30, has yet to appoint a new minister that will oversee the country's mining sector.

Earlier reports said that the tough-talking executive wants to be DENR head himself for at least a year with the help of former

military officers, noting that the environment portfolio is a "sensitive" one.

Duterte has called on mining companies to "shape up" and stop destroying the environment, hinting that he would prefer ownership of mining assets to be left to local investors and may push to rewrite rules to limit environmental degradation in the sector.

For her part, Lopez, who is known for her environmental advocacies and a staunch critic of mining, said that had yet to think it over.

"I will seriously, seriously consider it," said Lopez, adding that with or without a Cabinet post, she would be behind the Duterte administration.

Gina Lopez is the daughter of the late ABS-CBN chairman emeritus Eugenio Lopez Jr. She was sworn in by President Benigno Aquino 3rd as chairperson of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Com-

mission (PRRC) in August 2010.

Meanwhile, the COMP said it remained optimistic that Duterte would listen to their appeal, reiterating the group's continuing advocacy for responsible mining.

"The chamber is committed to work with the incoming administration to help address concerns in the industry so that we may promote true inclusive growth around the country," said COMP spokesperson May Anne Cacdac.

Cacdac said that the mining industry could help bring hard investments to the countryside, and help achieve inclusive growth in line with Duterte's 10-point economic agenda.

The Philippines has some of the largest untapped mineral resources in the world, but opposition from the Catholic Church, a strong anti-mining lobby led by environmental activists, insurgency, and corruption, have stalled many projects.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

40 natural caves now under govt protection

By Anna Leah E. Gonzales

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources said yesterday nearly 40 natural caves across the country have been placed under the protection and management of the government.

The DENR recently classified an additional 39 caves, bringing to 454 the total number of caverns that are now part of the country's natural wealth and therefore require sustainable management and protection.

Environment Secretary Ramon Paje said the classification was necessary to ensure that the caves would be "preserved and properly enjoyed by the public."

"The directive will help enhance public awareness and appreciation that caves are part of our natural resources because of their significance as ecosystems which host various forms of wildlife," Paje said.

"It also helps protect the geological, archaeological, historical and cultural values these caves carry, and helps sustain them for the enjoyment of future generations," Paje added.

Paje said the caves which were placed under the government's protection are located in Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos Region, Cagayan Region, Bicol, Davao del Norte province and Region 6.

Nine caves were categorized as Class I for their delicate and fragile formations, threatened species and extremely hazardous conditions being closed to ecotourism. Activities allowed within these caves are limited to mapping, photography, and educational and scientific purposes.

Categorized as Class I caves are the Karilagan and Aswang caves in Catanduanes, and the Kasilac Bat Cave in San Isidro, Davao del Norte.

A total of 23 caves were classified as Class II, including the Sorolla Cave in Koronadal City. Class II caves have portions with hazardous conditions, as well as sensitive geological, cultural and historical values or ecosystems. These sections may be declared closed, while the other portions may be open to experienced spelunkers or guided visits.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

SC issues writ on Zambales mining

By Tarra Quismundo

GIVING complaining residents their day in court, the Supreme Court on Tuesday issued a writ of kalikasan in favor of a community in Sta. Cruz, Zambales province, who had accused five mining companies of polluting their municipality.

In an en banc resolution, the high court referred the case to the Court of Appeals to hold proceedings on the plea and determine whether the case merits the issuance of a temporary environmental protection order (Tepo), which would in effect suspend mining operations in Sta. Cruz.

Pending proceedings at the appellate court, mining operations may continue.

The petitioners sought to stop nickel ore mining in the northern Zambales town, claiming that it had destroyed the ecosystem in the neighboring communities of Candelaria town, also in Zambales, and Infanta town in Pangasinan province. They blamed mining companies for causing severe flooding in recent years.

'Sufficient in form, substance'

Respondents were Environment Secretary Ramon Paje, regional environment officials and five mining firms—Benguet Corp. Nickel Mines Inc., Er-amen Minerals Inc., LNL Archipelago Minerals Inc., Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. and Shangfil Mining and Trading Corp.

Theodore Te, spokesperson of the Supreme Court, said in a press briefing that the tribunal found the petition "sufficient in form and substance" to merit the issuance of the writ of kalikasan.

It directed the appellate court "to receive the appropriate pleadings and conduct hearings" and the respondents "to file their respective verified return," or a pleading equivalent to a comment" within 10 days of receiving the writ.

The ruling came in the midst of the transition toward the administration of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte, who had earlier expressed his fierce opposition to destructive mining operations, particularly in Mindanao.

'Spoiling land'

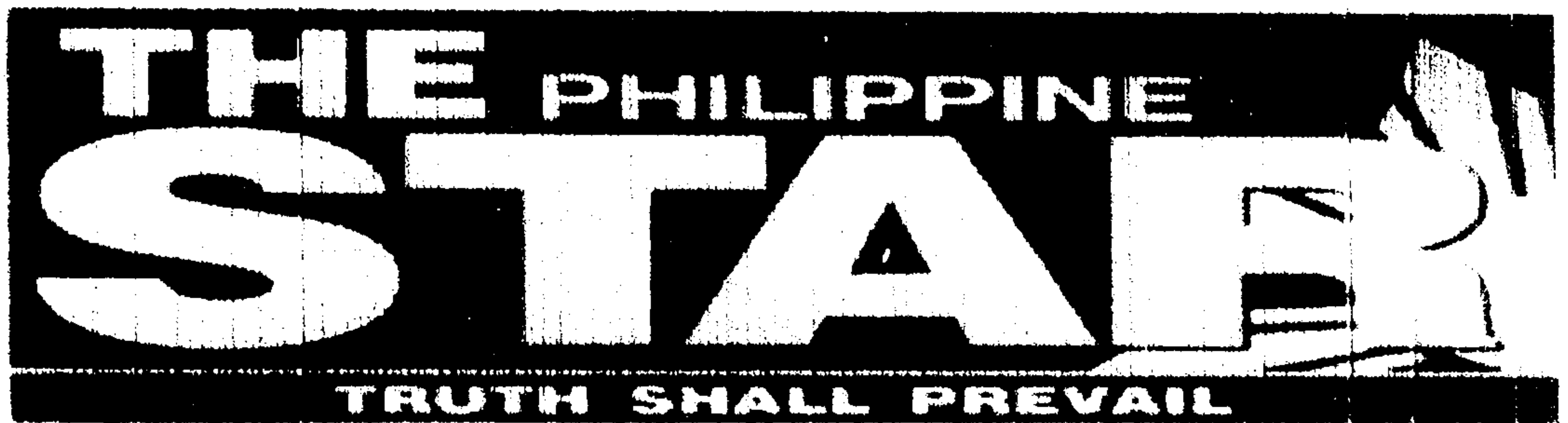
In a speech at his victory party in Davao City on June 4, Duterte said the mining industry that had been "spoiling the land" and must "shape up," and that pollutive mining operations must stop.

The Sta. Cruz residents accused the respondents of violating provisions of the Mining Act of 1995 for practices that cause, among others, "water, air and soil pollution, heavy laterite siltation of river systems, coasts, farmlands, fishponds and residential areas, forest denudation resulting in soil erosions, and exacerbated flood problems during typhoons and heavy rains."

They also said the mining firms were responsible for the "destruction of irrigation systems" in Sta. Cruz, which severely reduced the palay production in a province considered the country's rice granary.

In March, antimining advocates barricaded the national road in Zambales to stop mining firms from hauling nickel ore to port. Similar protest actions were held in previous months, which had led to several arrests.

In November, the regional Mines and Geosciences Bureau said it found "no signs of breach or collapse" in perimeter canals, ponds and silt traps in facilities of mining firms operating in town, which the locals had blamed for devastating floods that hit the area in the wake of Typhoon "Lando" (international name: Koppu) in October 2015.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

SC issues writ of *kalikasan* vs 5 mining firms

By EDU PUNAY

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday issued a writ of *kalikasan* against five mining companies in Zambales.

In a full-court session, the high court granted the petition of the residents of Sta. Cruz town to stop the operations of Benguet Corp. Nickel Mines Inc., Eramen Minerals Inc., LNL Archipelago Minerals Inc., Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. and Shangfil Mining and Trading Corp.

"The court found the petition sufficient in form and substance," SC spokesman Theodore Te told a press con-

ference.

Te said the SC had referred the case to the Court of Appeals (CA) for hearing, receipt of pleadings and resolution on merits.

He clarified that the writ would not stop the operations of the mining companies as it is up to the CA to decide whether to issue a temporary environmental protection order.

The petitioners said the mining operations would lead to the destruction of the ecosystem in Zambales and neighboring municipalities, including Pangasinan.

Malaya Business Insight

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Writ of kalikasan issued vs 5 mining firms

BY ASHZEL HACHERO

THE Supreme Court yesterday issued writs of kalikasan against five mining firms operating in the province of Zambales for destroying the eco-system in Sta. Cruz town and neighboring areas.

This developed as ABS-CBN News reported that Regina Lopez, chairwoman of the ABS-CBN Foundation, has accepted President-elect Rodrigo Duterte's offer to be the secretary of the

Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Lopez said Duterte made the offer during their meeting in Davao City, where Lopez, an anti-mining advocate, raised some concerns about the mining industry.

Duterte wants to stop destructive mining in the country.

SC spokesman Theodore Te said the magistrates reached the decision to issue a writ of ka-

See WRIT ► Page B6

WRIT

likasan during the regular en banc session Tuesday while tacking the petition by the Concerned Citizens of Sta. Cruz, Zambales for the issuance of a writ of kalikasan with a prayer for temporary environmental protection order or TEPO directed against the operations of mining firms Benguet Corporation Nickel Mines Inc. (BNMI), Eramen Minerals Inc. (EMI), LNL Archipelago Minerals Inc. (LAMI), Zambales Diversi-

fied Metals Corporation (ZDMC), and Shangfil Mining and Trading Corporation (SMTC).

"The Court found the petition sufficient in form and substance to merit the issuance of the writ of kalikasan," Te said.

A writ of kalikasan is a legal remedy for the protection of one's right to "a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature," as provided for in Section 16, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

The en banc ordered the Court of Appeals to "receive the appropriate pleadings and conduct hearings on the case.

It also ordered Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ramon Paje and other respondents in the petition to file their respective verified return before the appellate court within 10 days from receipt of the order.

The Zambales citizens group said the five mining companies claimed that their activities are

destroying the irrigation system and the ecosystem in Sta. Cruz, Zambales and its neighboring municipality of Candelaria, extending up to Infanta in Pangasinan.

They said the mining operations are causing water, air, and soil pollution, as well as heavy laterite siltation of river systems, coast, farmlands, fishponds and residential areas and forest denudations.

These, they explained, could result in soil erosion and exacerbate flooding in the area.

The Manila Times

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

SC issues writ vs 5 mining firms

BY JOMAR CANLAS SENIOR REPORTER

THE Supreme Court (SC) en banc on Tuesday issued a writ of *kalikasan* against five mining companies in Zambales extending up to Pangasinan to protect the environment and end the destructive mining operations in the province.

The respondents to the petition are Benguet Corporation Nickel Mines Inc. (BNMI), Eramen Min-

erals Inc. (EMI), LNL Archipelago Minerals Inc. (LAMI), Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. (ZDMC)

and Shangfil Mining and Trading Corp. The petition was filed by concerned citizens of Sta. Cruz (Zambales) in connection with alleged mining practices.

The High Court also directed the Court of Appeals (CA) to hear the case and receive pleadings on it.

The mining companies were also ordered to file their verified return with the CA within a period of 10 days.

The case stemmed from a petition filed by Concerned Citizens of Sta. Cruz (CCOS) against the said

mining companies, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Ramon Paje and two of the DENR's bureaus – Mining and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) and the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), outgoing Gov. Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., and other local officials of the province.

In filing the petition, CCOS urged the High Court to issue temporary environmental protection order (TEPO) and direct the mining firms to take steps that will stop the contamination of the

farms, villages, and water sources of Sta. Cruz due to unsystematic mining operations, and for the PNP Santa Cruz to enforce environmental laws, including the arrest of violators of mining laws, among others.

The CCOS also cited the destructive impact of typhoons in the past years resulting from unsystematic mining operations in Santa Cruz town and neighboring areas in Zambales, extending to Infanta, Pangasinan.

They said mining operations have caused much destruction

in the mountains, watersheds, forests, farmlands, water systems and the livelihood of the residents, and pose a continuing threat to their lives.

Under the law, a writ of *kalikasan* is defined as a "legal remedy for persons whose constitutional right to 'a balanced and healthful ecology' is violated by an unlawful act or omission of a public official, employee, or private individual or entity," as provided for under the Philippine Constitution.

BusinessWorld

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



SC issues writ of kalikasan vs Zambales mining firms

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday issued a Writ of Kalikasan directed against the operations of five mining companies operating in Sta. Cruz, Zambales.

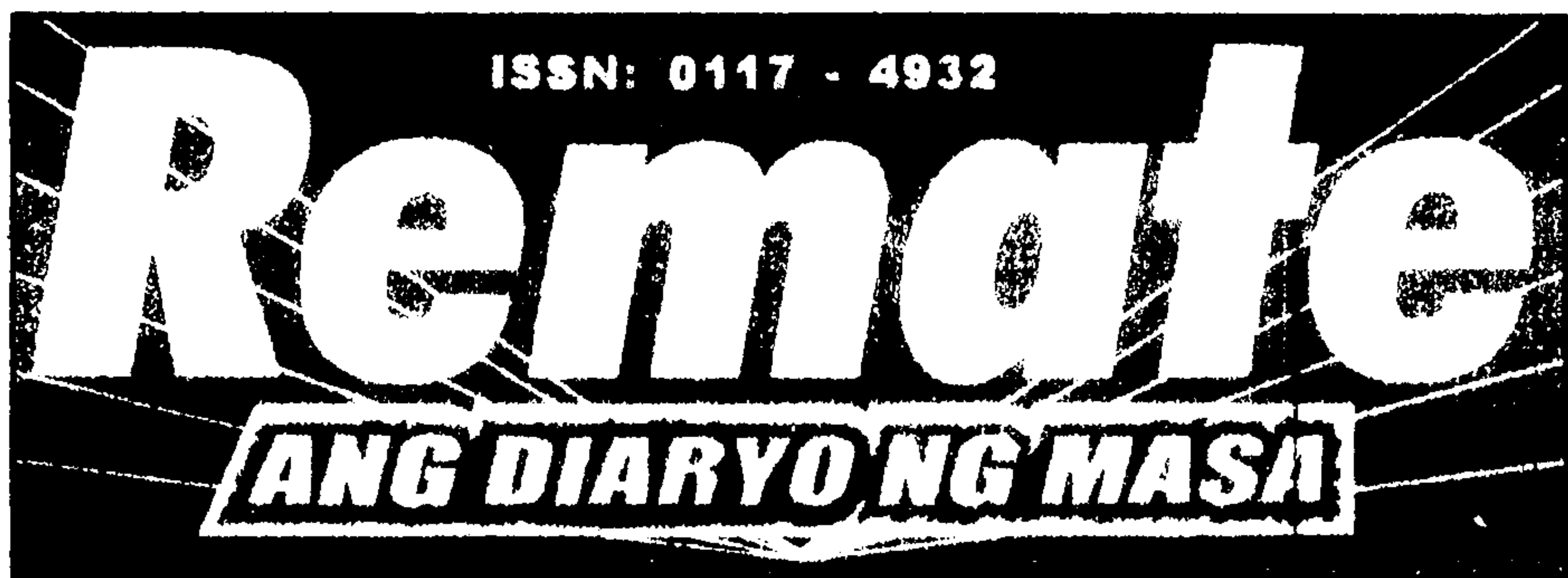
Those subject to the writ are Benguet Corporation Nickel Mines, Inc. (BNMI), Eramen Minerals, Inc. (EMI), LNL Archipelago Minerals, Inc. (LAMI), Zambales Diversified Metals Corporation (ZDMC), and Shangfil Mining and Trading Corporation (SMTC).

The miners were the subject of a petition by concerned citizens of Sta. Cruz amid allegations of "destruction of (the) ecosystem" in the town and surrounding areas.

They alleged that mining operations also caused "water, air and soil pollution" and "heavily affected the livelihood of the residents."

In a statement, the residents also alleged forest denudation resulting in soil erosion and flooding during typhoons and rains.

The high court gave the miners 10 days to give their replies before the Court of Appeals. — **Keith Niño B. Medrano**



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Writ of kalikasan sa mining inilabas ng SC

NAGPALABAS ng writ of kalikasan ang Supreme Court kaugnay sa reklamo ng mining operation sa Zambales.

Kasabay nito, inatasan ng SC ang Court of Appeals upang dinggin ang petisyon ng Concerned Citizens of Sta. Cruz, Zambales laban sa limang mining companies sa Zambales.

Ayon kay Atty. Theodore

Te, spokesman ng SC, may sapat na porma at sustansya ang petisyon kaya nararapat na maglabas ng writ of kalikasan.

Ang writ of kalikasan ay isang legal remedy na naglaan ng proteksyon sa karapatan sa balanse at malusog na kalikasan.

Ipinag-utos ng SC kay Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ramon Paje at sa iba pang respondents na maghain ng kaniyang sagot sa CA sa loob ng 10 araw.

Una nang nagpasaklo ang CCOS sa SC bunsod ng mining operations ng Benguet Corp. Nickel Mines Inc., Eramen Minerals Inc., LNL Archipelago Minerals Inc., Zambales Diversified Metals Corp. at Shangfil Mining and Trading Corp.

Iginiit ng CCOS na ang mining activities ang siyang sumisira sa irrigation system at ecosystem sa Sta. Cruz, Zambales at sa karatig lugar ng Candelaria, Zambales hanggang Infanta, Pangasinan.

TERESA TAVARES

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Mining projects to be reviewed

DAVAO. — Incoming President Rodrigo Duterte said he would order a comprehensive review of mining projects in the country, warning he would cancel operations that are causing environmental harm.

“There will be a comprehensive review of the mining claims of concessions given. And you must endeavour, if you are into it, be sure that you have enough resources” Duterte told a business conference.

“For I will require you to go to Canada or Australia, learn how to mine the precious metals inside the bowels of the earth and do it. Because ... (if) you are spoiling the land, I will cancel it without hesitation.”

The Southeast Asian nation has among the largest untapped mineral resources in the region but years of opposition from the Catholic Church and a strong anti-mining lobby, as well as insurgency and widespread corruption, have stalled many projects including the \$5.9 billion gold-copper Tampakan project in the southern Mindanao island discovered in 1991. -Reuters

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1908

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Antique towns proposed as mineral reservations

SAN JOSE, Antique (PNA) - An area over an hectare spanning the Patnongnon, San Remegio and Sibatom towns in this province is set to be declared a mineral reservation area. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB)'s Regional Director Leo Van Juguan said the agency has already completed activities provided for an area to be declared as a reservation site. The proposed declaration is expected to be endorsed to their central office this month. "Like a forest reservation, the government reserves an area not easily open to (mining) application. If there are applications and the area will be declared as a mineral reservation, you will be subject to the terms and conditions under the mineral reservation and not in the regular terms and conditions," Juguan explained. The three towns proposed are rich in metals with higher value such as gold, copper and silver. There are no mining activities in the place but there are applications for the activity.

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Cement manufacturer pinagpapaliwanag sa barkong sumadsad sa Cebu

Hiniling ng consumer group na BIGWAS sa Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) at ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno na imbestigahan ang miyembro ng Cement Manufacturing Association of the Philippines (CeMAP) na umangkat ng 28,000 metric tons ng cement clinker na nakalulan sa Panamanian-registered cargo vessel na sumadsad kamakailan sa bahura ng Monad Shoal sa Cebu na sumira sa may 3 ektaryang coral reefs.

Inakusahan ni BIGWAS secretary general Nancy Dela Peña ang CeMAP na nagtangkang itago ang isyu sa pag-ground sa MV Belle Rose sa Cebu na pinaghihinalaang ilang negosyante ang sangkot sa smuggling ng semento at cement clinkers sa bansa.

Nanawagan sila sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na pagmultahin ang CeMAP officials sa ginawang pagsira sa kapaligiran na kabilang sa malalaking importers ng semento kaya't nadedehado ang mga local na negosyante.
-Rudy Andal-

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CeMAP pinagpapaliwanag sa sumadsad na barko sa Cebu

Hiniling ng consumer group na BIGWAS sa Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) at ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno na imbestigahan ang miyembro ng Cement Manufacturing Association of the Philippines (CeMAP) na umangkat ng 28,000 metriko toneladang cement clinker na lulan ng Panamanian-registered cargo vessel na sumadsad kamakailan sa Monad Shoal sa Cebu na sumira sa may tatlong ektaryang coral reefs.

"We are disturbed why suddenly cement makers in the Philippines who were very noisy about alleged smuggling of cement in the Philippines

has been silent about the destruction of coral reefs in a popular dive spot in Daanbantayan town in Cebu province," ayon kay BIGWAS secretary general Nancy dela Peña.

Inakusahan ni dela Peña si CeMAP president Ernesto Ordonez na nagtangkang itago ang isyu sa pag-ground sa MV Belle Rose sa Cebu na pinaghihinalang ilang negosyante ang sangkot sa smuggling ng semento at cement clinkers sa bansa.

Binatikos din ni dela Peña ang CeMAP na kontrolado ng multi-national companies sa aktibidad ng mga miyembro nito na sumisira sa kabundukan

gayundin sa coral reefs kasabay ang panawagan sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na pagmultahin ang CeMAP officials sa umano'y ginagawang pagsira sa kapaligiran.

Kabilang sa malalaking importers ng semento at cement clinkers ayon sa NCL Trading Joint Stock Company ng Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam ay mga miyembro ng CeMAP tulad ng Holcim, APO Cement at Republic Cement kaya kinokondena ito ng BIGWAS dahil sa nadedehado dito ang mga local na negosyante. (Rudy Andal)

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BATANGAS CITY
APPROVES COAL PLANT

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



ANTICOAL green advocates march in Batangas City, where a 600-megawatt coal-fired power plant is being proposed, to demand to the incoming Duterte administration the cancellation of all proposed coal plants nationwide and the hastening of the country's transition to renewable energy.

JIMMY A. DOMINGO/GF

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BATANGAS CITY
APPROVES COAL PLANT

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Batangas City approves permit for coal plant

By Marrah Erika Lesaba-Rabe
and Maricar Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

BATANGAS CITY—Environmental groups promoting the preservation of the biodiversity-rich Verde Island Passage suffered a double blow after losing their bids to stop a coal-fired power plant and a large-scale mining project in Batangas province.

On Monday, the city council approved the issuance of a zoning or locational clearance that allows the construction of a 600-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Barangay Pinamukan Ibaba here.

JG Summit, the holdings company of the Gokongwei Group, applied for a permit to build the coal plant on Jan. 22 last year on a 50-hectare lot inside the city's heavy industrial zone.

Once operational, this would be the third coal-fired power plant in the province. The others are the plant operated by DMCI Power Corp. in Calaca town and a coal storage facility in Ibaan town—the biggest in the country so far.

In a two-hour session attended by civil society groups protesting the coal project, the majority of the

councilors—Julian Villena, Alyssa Renee Cruz Atienza, Angelito Dimacuha, Armando Lazarte, Serge Rex Atienza and Gerardo dela Roca—approved the city resolution granting JG Summit the clearance to erect the plant.

Dela Roca chairs the committee on environment and urban planning, land use and zoning.

Environmental and religious groups, led by Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles and nominated Environment Secretary Gina Lopez, attended the public hearings held on Feb. 4 and April 30 last year.

No legal impediment

"After the conduct of investigation and necessary hearings, it was proven that the application for zoning/local clearance has no legal impediment," the resolution read.

"I am saddened, but our fight doesn't end here," Councilor Kristine Balmes, one of the four councilors who voted against the resolution, said in a phone interview. She said she had yet to secure an environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

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BATAVIGAS CITY

APPROVE COAL PLANT

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The city government also required the company to meet certain conditions, among them the installation of pollution control facilities, a safe ash pond that prevents leachate and an online emission monitoring system accessible to the government.

It also prescribed that the company to protect the Pinamucan River during its project development.

'Double black eye'

In the next town of Lobo, residents and members of the Catholic Church also lost in their bid to pass an ordinance that will "totally ban" mining there.

"It was like a double black eye for us," Fr. Dakila Ramos, head of the Environment Ministry of the Lipa Archdiocese, said in a separate interview on Tuesday.

Groups are opposing the application of the Canadian-Australian-owned Egerton Gold Philippines Inc. and Mindoro Resource Ltd. to mine more than 20,000 ha in the coastal village of Balibago. The company, whose 10-year exploration permit expired in 2012, is now seeking a permit to begin

gold extraction in Mt. Lobo.

Also on Monday, the municipal council junked on third reading a proposed ordinance to declare the town mining-free.

"We will file a motion for reconsideration," Ramos said.

Verde Island Passage

The coal plant and mining projects are feared to cause massive environmental degradation as these are located close to the Verde Island Passage, which is known as the world's center of marine biodiversity.

A series of big rallies, the latest held in May to drum up global climate action, were held to oppose the projects that threaten key biodiversity areas.

"The science is clear, hence countries adapted the Paris Agreement to address the cause and ill effects of the climate crisis," said Rodne Galicha, Philippine manager of Climate Reality Project, in an e-mail.

He said local legislators should be reminded of the country's global commitment to "significantly and conditionally reduce carbon emissions by 70 percent by the year 2030."

BusinessMirror

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Killings of environmentalists up 60% in 2015, activists say

SÃO PAULO—A London-based advocacy group said on Monday it documented 185 killings of environmental activists around the world last year, nearly 60 percent more than in 2014 and the highest since it began collecting data dating back to 2002.

In a newly released report, Global Witness said Brazil topped the 16-country list with 50 environmental defenders slain in 2015; followed by the Philippines, with 33; and Colombia, with 26. The group says 116 were slain worldwide in 2014.

Last year "was the deadliest year on record for killings of land and environmental defenders—people struggling to protect their land, forests and rivers," the report said.

Conflicts involving mining, agribusiness, hydroelectric dams and logging are behind most of the killings, which average more than three a week, it added.

Those who oppose such projects are "finding themselves in the firing line of private security companies, state forces and a thriving market for contract

killers," Global Witness said.

Firefights and killings around land disputes are common. Last week an indigenous land activist was killed and several others were injured in Brazil's southwestern state of Mato Grosso do Sul when their camp was attacked by armed farmers, authorities said. The group had set up a camp to demand that claims to ancestral lands be recognized by the government.

The 50 environmental defenders killed in Brazil last year is nearly double the number slain in the country in 2014. Most of the killings occurred in the Amazon states of Maranhao, Para and Rondonia, where "agribusiness companies, loggers and landowners hire hit men to silence local opposition to their projects," the report said.

Brazil's Justice Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Marcio Astrini, public-policy coordinator for Greenpeace in Brazil, attributed the killings to a lack of government presence in areas where land conflicts and deforestation are taking place. **AP**

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

PH deadly for environmentalists

THE PHILIPPINES is not only the second most dangerous place for journalists, it is also the second deadliest country for environmental activists.

Global Witness said on Monday it had documented 185 killings of environmental activists around the world last year, nearly 60 percent more than in 2014 and the highest

since it began collecting data dating back to 2002.

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PH deadly for environmentalists

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age more than three a week, it added.

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Problem of impunity

Reacting to the report, Jose Luis Martin Gascon, chair of the Philippine Commission on Human Rights, said: “The CHR views with concern the fact that extrajudicial killings involving human rights defenders—such as environmental activists—have occurred. We call on law enforcement agencies to investigate these cases fully and ensure that the perpetrators are held accountable.”

Gascon blamed the extrajudicial executions in the country to “the problem of impunity” across the past administrations.

Gascon said it was important to “resolve these cases expeditiously in order to stop impunity, even as we prepare ourselves to perhaps address a possible spike in similar incidences that may occur.”

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), in a report in January, said that the Philippines was the world’s second most dangerous place for journalists after war-torn Iraq, specifically citing the killings

of 32 media people among 58 civilians massacred in Maguindanao province in 2009.

The IFJ report said that in the past 25 years, at least 2,297 journalists and media staff had been killed for “doing nothing more than trying to inform the world on war, revolution, crime and corruption.”

Iraq topped the list with 309 killings, the Philippines followed with 146 killings.

Incoming President Rodrigo Duterte, in a statement seen as justifying the assassinations of media people in the Philippines, said last month journalists had been killed because they were corrupt and were overly critical.

“Just because you’re a journalist (doesn’t mean) you’re exempted from assassination if you’re a son of a bitch,” he said.

Vulnerability

The latest Global Witness report highlighted the vulnerability of indigenous people into becoming victims of land grabbing for natural resource exploitation.

It said almost 40 percent, or 67 of the 185 killings in 16 countries around the world were indigenous people.

In the Philippines, 22 of the 33 environmental activists killed last year were from the *lumad* communities defending their lands from agribusiness and mining companies.

Among the victims were Dionel Campos,

leader of the tribal group Malahutayong Pakigbisog Alang sa Sumusunod (Mapasu) in Surigao del Sur province, his cousin Datu Bello Sinzo, and Emerito Samarca, executive director of the Alternative Learning Center for Agriculture and Livelihood Development organized in communities rarely reached by government services.

Mapasu is a community organization campaigning against the exploitation of substantial reserves of coal, nickel and gold by international and local mining companies.

More killings

On Aug. 18, five Manobo lumad were killed by the military’s Special Forces in Pangantucan town in Bukidnon.

The military said those killed were rebels, but the communist New People’s Army said the victims were civilians.

The Global Witness report said that “the encroachment of agribusiness and mining interests in indigenous peoples’ lands without their consent is one of the root causes of conflict in the highly militarized Mindanao region.”

The report also noted that despite the “widespread condemnation from civil society organizations and United Nations experts, who called on the Philippine government to launch a full and independent inquiry, however, no one has been brought to justice.” *With reports from AP, DJ Yap and Inquirer Research*

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1908

MANILA BULLETIN

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OUR PLAYGROUND - Badjao toddlers claim the coast of Matina Aplaya in Davao City as their own playground, as they play hide-and-seek among the mangroves in the area. (Keith Bacongco)

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Youth group in Bulacan takes active role in environmental preservation

By **FREDDIE C. VELEZ**

NORZAGARAY, Bulacan — A group of young students who joined the tree-planting activity a few weeks ago in this mountain town, vowed yesterday to actively get involved in the promotion of solid waste management programs and climate change adaptation and mitigation projects.

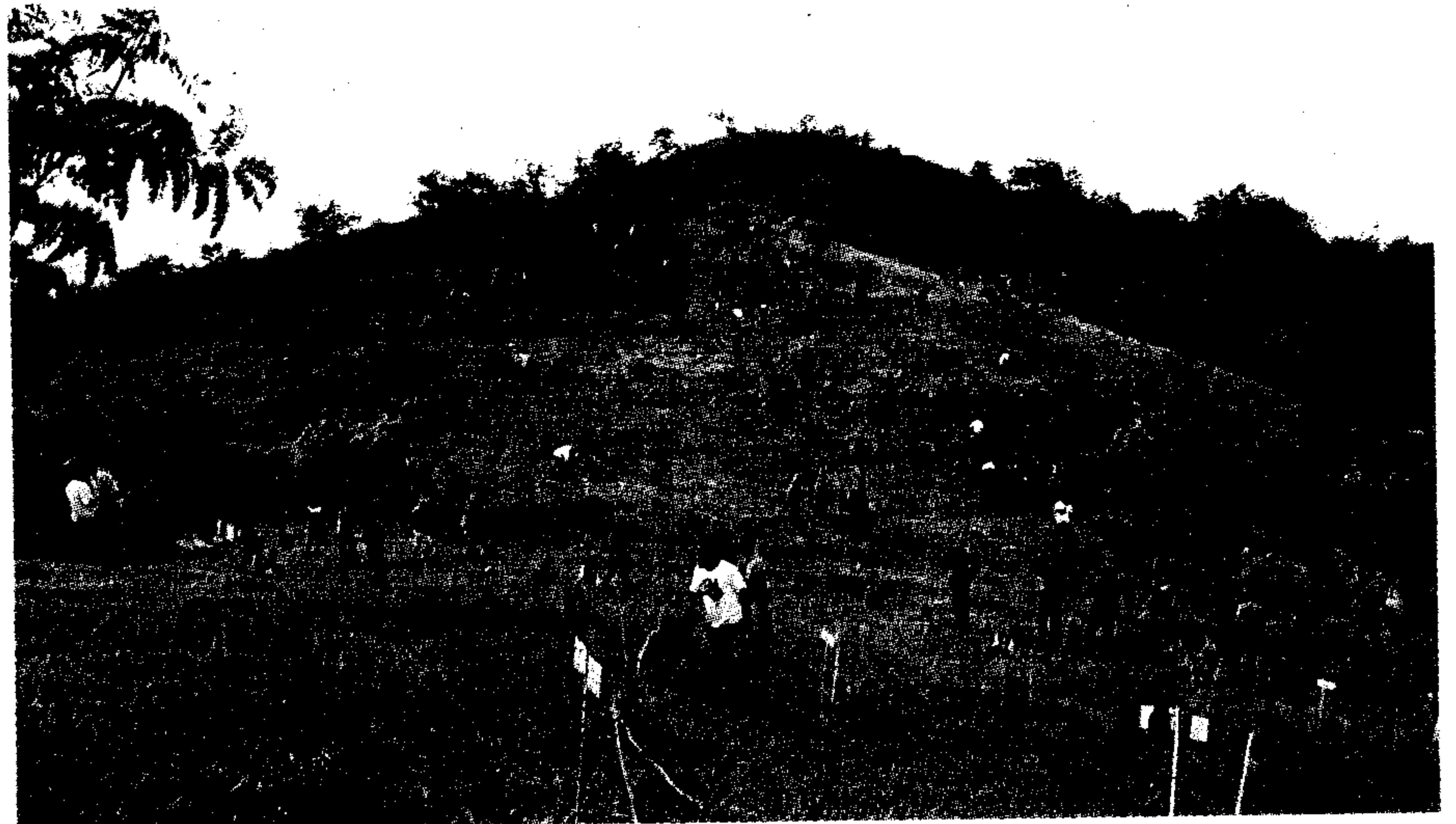
In celebration of Environment Month, the group of students trekked to the areas of Tabang in Guiguinto and Balubad in Bulacan under the auspices of the Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources Office (BENRO) not only to plant trees but also clean up canals, creeks, and drainages.

Having learned a lot from that experience, the young group vowed to give its all-out support for the protection of the environment as well as in boosting public awareness on global warming and climate change.

“Governor Wilhelmino M. Sy-Alvar-

ado is right; we have a lot of waterfalls in the province and are all along the way if we continue preserving our trees. That is why we are appealing to all Bu-

lakenyos to join us in the simultaneous planting thousands of trees this coming Arbor day June 25 to save our forest,” a member of the group said.



SAVING THE RAIN FOREST — Members of the youth sector in Bulacan take part in the tree-planting and clean-up of waterways in Norzagaray, Bulacan, to mark Environment Month in the province. (Freddie C. Velez)

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Things to know about coral reefs and their importance

HONOLULU—More than 2,000 international reef scientists, policy-makers and stakeholders are gathering in Hawaii this week to discuss what to do about the global decline of coral reefs. The International Coral Reef Symposium convened on Monday in Honolulu, where attendees will try to create a more unified conservation plan for coral reefs. Here's a look at what coral is, what role it plays in human life and what might happen if more of these important ecosystems are lost:

What are coral reefs

CORALS are animals related to jellyfish and anemones. The organisms grow and form reefs in oceans around the world. Coral reefs support the most species of any marine environment, hosting countless kinds of fish, invertebrates and even mammals. Coral reefs are comparable to rain forests in their biodiversity and importance to our overall ecosystem. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, there are over 800 species of coral that build reefs and hundreds of other

soft and deep-sea coral species in the world.

Bleaching and mortality

WHEN dramatic environmental changes occur, corals go through a process known as bleaching. Essentially, the corals become stressed, often from warmer water temperatures but also from things like pollution and acidification, and then release the symbiotic algae that they use for nutrition. The loss of these symbionts leaves the coral white or paler in color, a sure sign

the organism is stressed. If the bleaching is severe or recurs over consecutive years, the coral will likely die. Some coral has shown resilience in warmer and more stressful conditions, and scientists are working to figure out why some do better than others.

Human uses

CORAL reefs are huge drivers for many coastal tourist economies, bringing in billions of dollars of revenue annually. Many vacationers come to the tropics just to snorkel and dive on pristine reefs. But

what many people don't know are the myriad of other ways humans benefit from coral reefs. Reefs shelter land from storm surges and rising sea levels. Coral has even been found to have medicinal properties, including painkillers that are nonhabit forming. Beyond that, coral reefs are home to the vast majority of fish that humans consume, and some island nations rely almost entirely on the reef for their daily sustenance.

Saving reefs

RESEARCHERS at the University of

Hawaii's Institute of Marine Biology have been taking samples from corals that have shown tolerance for harsher conditions in Oahu's Kaneohe Bay and breeding them with other strong strains in slightly warmer than normal conditions to create a super coral. The idea is to make the corals more resilient by training them to adapt to tougher conditions before transplanting them into the ocean. Another program run by the state of Hawaii has created seed banks and a fast-growing coral nursery for expediting coral-restoration projects. **AP**

BusinessMirror

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Davao farmers open to biotechnology

DAVAO CITY—A group of farmers here expressed their optimism on the potentials of modern biotechnology to improve their production.

This came after joining researchers, academicians and journalists in a forum dubbed: "Enhancing agricultural production through biotechnology," held on Friday in this city.

Danilo Bulahan, president of Davao Region School-on-the-Air Coordinators Federation, said the forum has simplified complex issues, such as biotechnology, for farmers like him to understand and appreciate. "It has increased our knowledge on modern farming and ways to increase our income," Bulahan said.

Bulahan, who is an organic-rice farmer in Asuncion, Davao del Norte, was happy to note that organic farming and biotechnology do not contradict but complement in both principle and practice.

"I am happy to learn that biotechnology has developed varieties that are resistant to pests and diseases," he added. Bulahan said using modern technologies, such as hybrid rice, has increased his yield from an average of 4 metric tons (MT) to 10.4 MT per hectare.

Director Vivencio Mamaril of the Department of Agriculture-Biotechnology Program Office (DA-BPO) has allayed farmers' fears on safety of genetically modified (GM) crops, as a more extensive regulating law has replaced Administrative Order (AO) 8 junked by the Supreme Court (SC) in December 2015.

"Through the new Joint Department Circular [JDC], more agencies are now looking into the trial, field testing and movement of GM crops," Mamaril said.

He added that the JDC allows the continued propagation of GM crops in the country in accordance with the SC directive and ruling.

"The JDC provides the step-by-step process in making biosafety decisions for the national agencies and local government units [LGU]," Mamaril said. The new guidelines properly delineate the roles of biosafety committees of involved agencies. The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) will evaluate applications for contained use and confined test of regulated articles.

Meanwhile, the DA will evaluate applications for field trials, commercial propagation and transboundary movement of regulated articles.

Since the new rules tightened environmental scrutiny to address loopholes cited by the SC, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is evaluating environmental risks and impacts. The DENR will also ensure that environmental assessments are done and impacts identified in biosafety decisions.

The Department of Health (DOH) will assess the health impacts of regulated articles for field trial, commercial propagation and direct use of living modified organisms. The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) will coordinate with the DA, the DOST, the DENR and the DOH in overseeing the implementation circular with the LGUs, particularly in the conduct of public hearings and consultations.

Longing for change

REMELYN RECOTER, DA director in Region 11, said the forum comes at the most opportune time when the whole nation is looking

forward to change as a result of the May elections.

"For the agriculture sector, one area that has been longing for change, particularly on favorable policies from the government to provide our farmers access to modern and advanced technologies, is the biotechnology program," Recoter said.

While various studies have proven the potentials of biotechnology to improve farm production, lack of awareness continues to haunt farmers and consumers due to misinformation. Recoter is optimistic that incoming Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol will give importance to the use of biotech, considering that one of his priority agenda is the fast and effective transfer of technologies to our farmers.

Meanwhile, Stephen Joel Paredes of the J. Burgos Media Inc. said the lack of scientific understanding has compromised and aggravated the quality of debates. "Argumentation leads to political and ideological domains, which are even more complicated than science itself."

Paredes, who is also one of the allies of the Cornell Alliance for Science, said there should be more activities, such as the Davao's biotech forum, to bring truthful and science-based information to the public. "So that the role of agriculture in feeding a hungry world is better understood and appreciated."

Last week's biotech forum was attended by 60 participants from farming communities, academe, research centers and the media. The J. Burgos Media Inc. organized the event in partnership with DA-11 Information Section, Cornell Alliance for Science Philippines and DA-Biotechnology Program Office. **Noel T. Provide**