

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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DENR

IN THE NEWS

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39 natural caves placed under gov't protection

BY RHODINA VILLANUEVA

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) announced last Tuesday that 39 natural caves across the country have been placed under the protection and management of the government.

The DENR's recent classification of the 39 brings to 454 the total number of caves now part of the country's natural wealth, thus requiring their sustainable management and protection.

Environment Secretary Ramon Paje said the classification, through Memorandum Circular 2016-05, 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 explained.

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

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 or SOCCSKARGEN.

Nine caves were categorized as Class I for their deli-

cate 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 other portions may be open to experienced spelunkers or guided visits.

Meanwhile, seven caves, including the Dalangin Cave in Camarines Sur and the Sibud-Sibud Cave in Abra, were identified as Class III or those safe for inexperienced, yet expert-accompanied vis-

its. These caves may also be utilized for economic activities like extraction or collection of guano or bird's nest.

The DENR's Biodiversity Management Bureau has been studying the caves prior to their classification, pursuant to Republic Act 9072 or the National Caves and Cave Resources Management. The law mandates the DENR to formulate, develop and implement a cave management program to conserve and protect caves and cave resources.



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39 natural caves now under DENR management

AT LEAST 39 of the country's natural caves are now under the protection and management of the government.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has classified the caves bringing to 454 the total number of caverns that are now part of the country's natural wealth that require sustainable management and protection.

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ramon Paje said the classification, as embodied in Memorandum Circular 2016-05, 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.

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Joel dela Torre

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39 bagong tuklas na kuweba, isinailalim sa DENR

Inilagay na ng pamunuan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa kanilang pangangalaga ang may 39 bagong natural caves na natuklasan sa iba't ibang panig ng bansa.

Ito ay makaraang mabusisi ng DENR ang dagdag na 39 kuweba.

Dahil dito, umaabot na ngayon sa 454 ang kabuuang bilang ng mga kuweba sa bansa na pinaangangasiwaan at pinaangangalagaan ng DENR.

Ayon kay Environment and Natural Resources Sec. Ramon J.P. Paje, ang ginawang pagbusisi sa mga bagong kuweba

na nasa ilalim na ng pinaangangasiwa ng ahensiya ay alinsunod sa Memorandum Circular 2016-05 na kanyang nilagdaan upang matiyak na mamantine ang kagandahan at kaayusan ng mga kuweba para sa interes ng mamamayan.

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

Sa 39 na bagong kuweba, anim dito ay mula sa Cordillera Administrative Region; pito sa Ilocos Region; dalawa sa Cagayan Region; 15 sa Bicol; tatlo sa Davao del Norte province at anim sa Region 12 o SocSargen. (*Angie dela Cruz*)

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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58 landslide-prone sites in Panay, Negros identified

By TARA YAP

ILOILO CITY – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)'s Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Western Visayas (MGB-6) has identified 58 cities and towns in Panay and Negros Islands that are prone to landslides.

MGB-6 Regional Director Leo Van Juguan said local government units (LGUs) in Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental provinces have already been warned to watch out for landslides, particularly as the rainy season starts, and be ready for damages or casualties should such calamity occur.

Of the six provinces, Negros Occidental has the most number of landslide prone areas, that is, Cadiz, Kabankalan, San Carlos and Silay cities and Calatrava, Candoni, Cauayan, Don Salvador Benedicto, Isabela, La Castellana, Moises Pa-

dilla, and Pontevedra towns.

Antique province has 11 towns that are landslide prone. These are Anini-y, Barbaza, Laua-an, Hamtic, Libertad, Pandan, Patnongon, San Remigio, Sebaste, Tobias Fornier, and Valderrama.

Meanwhile, ten towns in Aklan have been identified landslide prone: Balete, Batan, Buruang, Ibajay Libacao, Madalag, Malay, Malinao, Nabas, and Tangalan.

Capiz also has 10 towns that are landslide prone. These are Cuartero, Dao, Dumarao, Dumalag, Jamin-dan, Mambusao, Pres. Roxas, Pilar, Sapi-an, and Tapaz.

In Iloilo, identified as landslide-prone are Alimodian, Calinog, Concepcion, Igaras, Janiuay, Lambunao, Leon, Miag-ao, San Joaquin, and Tubungan towns.

Lastly, there are four landslide prone towns in the island province of Guimaras, namely, Buenavista, Jordan, Nueva Valencia, and San Lorenzo.

X-FILES

SAGAD SA SHOWBIZ • BULGAR SA BALITA

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NI Lhean Angeles



Pag-demolish sa DENR building, isang pagkakamali - Sec. Paje

RENOVATION lamang at hindi dapat demolition ang gagawin sana sa dalawang palapag na lumang gusali ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) sa Quezon City.

Inamin ni outgoing Environment Sec. Ramon Paje na nagkaroon ng pagkakamali sa pagpapatayo ng bagong gusali para sa Foreign-Assisted and Special Projects Office (FASPO) ng kagawaran at kailangan itong i-renovate. Subalit sa halip na renovation lang, ginawa umano itong construction. hindi man lang ipinapaalam sa ibang mga opisyal.

Ayon sa ilang mga source, ang bagong buidling ay magkakaroon ng anim na palapag, kabilang na ang basement parking at helipad.

Nauwi aniya sa ganito ang proyekto dahil tumanggi ang Department of Budget and Management (DBM) na i-realign ang pondo sa maintenance at operating expenses para sa capital outlay. Bagaman hindi naman aniya nila sinisisi ang

DPWH sa nangyari, naniniwala si Paje na dapat managot ang kung sino man ang may kasalanan dito.

Nilinaw naman ni Paje na walang fraud o graft sa pangyayari at walang perang nawala dahil sa pagkakamaling ito.

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Duterte: No mining ban

By EFREN MONTANO

INCOMING President Rodrigo Duterte said he would not ban mining as long as it follows environmental protection standards similar to Australia.

He also said mining contracts would be reviewed.

"I will not ban mining... Making money out of the precious metals of the Earth that belongs to the people, you have to do it right. If you can't do it right, get out," Duterte told the business gathering in Davao City.

Gina Lopez, chair of ABS-CBN Foundation, said on Tuesday night that she has accepted the offer to lead the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) after a phone conversation with the incoming President.

Lopez was offered the position during a courtesy call at the Presidential Guest House in DPWH Panacan Depot, Davao City, on Monday afternoon.

"I just wanted to give him some ideas, then he offered the position. Nagulat na nga ako eh. Sabi ko, 'Sir alam mo magiging controversial ako'," she said, adding she only met with Duterte to raise some con-

cerns about the mining industry in the country.

Meanwhile, Duterte flashed a thumbs up to the 10-point agenda presented to him by business leaders that gathered in Davao City.

In fact, Duterte said that the recommendations are "doable" and will be implemented although he clarified that the proposals -- including tax reform measures and a review of the Conditional Cash Transfer Program -- will have to undergo evaluation.

"I was given a copy ahead of the 10 recommendations on socio economic programs of the government. And I assure you, we will study and review it," Duterte said.

"I see nothing wrong with this. These are all doable. It's a matter of just

doing it, implement it right away," he added.

The 10 recommendations presented by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) include: adoption of comprehensive tax reform package; implementation of national ID system; automation and streamlining of government business permits and licensing system; improvement of telecommunication services; support services to farmers; implementation of responsible mining; development and implementation of national strategy; improvement of transport network across country to improve connectivity; review of the Conditional Cash Transfer Program; and reduction in infrastructure bottlenecks.

"You must understand that I am a lawyer... Do

not expect me to discuss with you these economic provisions especially taxation," he said, pointing out that Duterte's economic experts will study the recommendations.

Duterte also said he wants a review of the land reform law when he assumes office.

Duterte told business leaders that the best move forward on land reform is to take a step back.

"Balik muna tayo. Let us go back and review. If I think there is an improvement in the lives of the people who were awarded lands, baka pa. Pero kung ganito lang nangyari, lahat na pinagbili na, it has been returned, there was a buy-back then there, I will have to think a thousand times," the incoming President said.



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No ban on mining; DENR has new chief

THERE will be no mining ban, declared incoming President Rodrigo Duterte.

Duterte said he would not ban mining, as long as environmental protection standards similar to Australia's are followed.

He also said mining contracts would be reviewed.

"I will not ban mining...Making money out of the precious metals of the Earth that belongs to the people, you have to do it right. If you can't do it right, get out," Duterte told the business gathering in Davao City.

Meanwhile Regina Paz "Gina" Lopez, chair of ABS-CBN Foundation, said Tuesday night that she has accepted the offer to lead the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) after a phone conversation with the incoming president.

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"I just wanted to give him some ideas, then he offered the position. Nagulat na nga ako eh. Sabi ko, 'Sir alam mo magiging

controversial ako'," she said, adding she only met with Duterte to raise some concerns about the mining industry in the country.

Lopez said she admires Duterte for showing genuine concern for the environment and the welfare of farmers and fishermen.

Duterte considers the DENR post one of the most important in his Cabinet, as he seeks to end destructive mining in the Philippines.

The president-elect earlier offered the DENR post to the Left but later changed his mind.

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New DENR chief vows to wage war vs mining

By JANVIC MATEO

Incoming environment secretary Gina Lopez has drawn the battle lines as she prepares to head what president-elect Rodrigo Duterte described as one of the most sensitive agencies under his administration.

Speaking to reporters minutes after formally informing the incoming president of her decision on Tuesday, Lopez did not mince words as she ran down her policy proposals once she assumes as chief of the environment agency.

"Coal is not cheap. The community there suffers, their health suffers, their income suffers," she said when asked about the country's continuing dependence on energy derived from coal. "Just stop it already."

Lopez expressed disappointment over the issuance of permits for over 100 coal plants to be established in different parts of the country, vowing to initiate a review of the approval given by the current administration.

She also expressed support for the comprehensive review of the country's national energy policy that is being conducted by the Climate Change Commission.

"(The Philippines is) the most vulnerable country to climate change in the whole planet," she stressed, noting the availability of renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and geothermal.

A known anti-mining advocate, Lopez also echoed Duterte's sentiments as she criticized irresponsible mining, which she said has caused suffering to people in the community.

"Mining causes suffering and building an economy based on suffering is not acceptable," she said, adding that utilizing the resources efficiently could help address poverty.

She said she would meet with pro-mining groups to discuss the issues, particularly the destruction of the environment.

Lopez also noted the problem of corruption, stressing that it is an issue that she will not take lightly.

"The first thing I want to do is to clean the ranks of DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources). Those who are receiving bribes, your days are over. Stop it, no corruption is acceptable. That's enough, it's over," she said.

Collective effort

Lopez said she aims to work with various sectors to address different environment problems, such as with the Department of Transportation and Communications to solve air pollution.

She also highlighted the importance of harnessing the support of the youth.

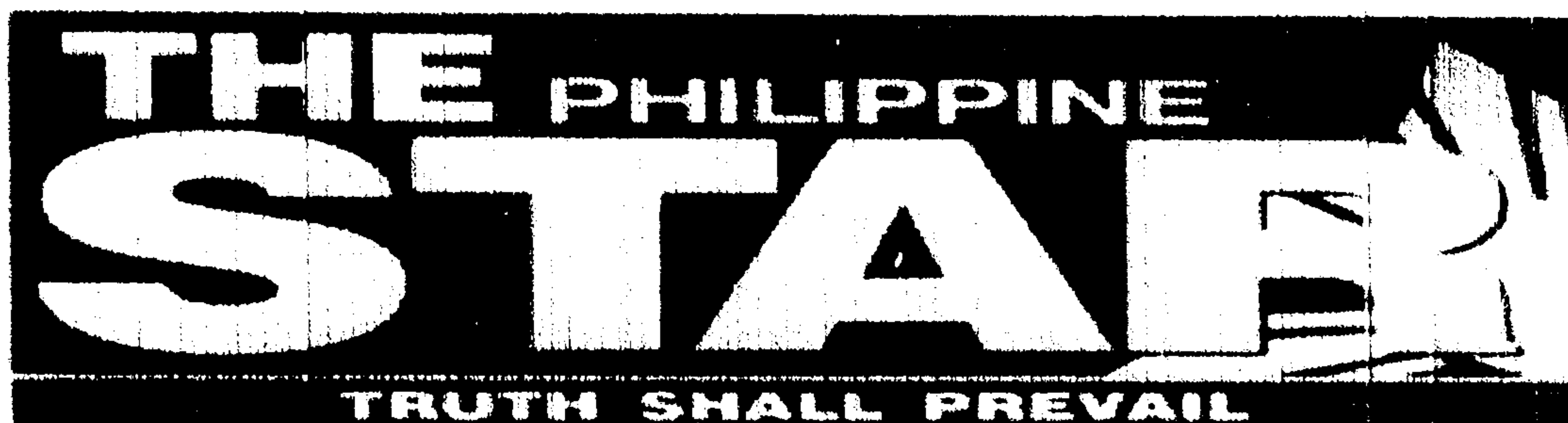
"I want a way to work with the youth. They are the key, the environmentalists. I want to work with everyone," said Lopez.

Duterte initially offered the DENR post to the Left, but later said he would need to appoint someone who would ensure that his environment policies would be implemented.

The DENR post was among the last Cabinet positions filled by Duterte.

Business as usual

Pressed to comment on Lopez's appointment to the DENR, businessman Manuel



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New DENR chief vows to wage war vs. mining

Pangilinan said they would wait for her to announce her policy even as he committed to respect whatever it would be.

"It is entirely the prerogative of the president to name whoever it is he wants to name. We respect Gina Lopez to be the DENR secretary...Our attitude is that it's business as usual. We have a mining business. We have an operating mine in Baguio and for us, we have to take the view that it is business as usual," Pangilinan said.

"There will be in the future I guess when the mine will require certain permits. We will then have to submit our applications. We will just have to work with the hand that we will be dealt and work with the environment that we are given," he said.

At the same time, he said that the MVP Group is an advocate for responsible mining and responsible business practices in general.

Mining stocks tumbled four percent on Tuesday when Duterte announced that he offered the DENR post to Lopez, who heads the ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation, which includes a no-to-mining campaign.

Open to meet stakeholders

Lopez said she is open to meet with stakeholders in the mining industry.

Her media relations officer at the foundation said "she can meet pro-mining advocates so she could make suggestions on how to address concerns in the industry."

"However, it is best if Ms. Lopez answers the issue of 'mining and oil stocks plunging' when she returns from Japan," the staff said.

Meanwhile, the Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation Inc., which Lopez heads, expressed full support for her decision to accept the position of DENR secretary.

"Gina Lopez's laudable and pioneering efforts in rehabilitating the La Mesa Watershed, in restoring the Pasig River through cleaning the esteros and in launching the ecotourism sites in the 13 provinces all over the archipelago are testaments to her dedication and passion to protect, conserve and promote the environment," the foundation said in a statement.

The group said Lopez is known for her passion and dedication toward protecting the environment.

Policy in limbo

However, a business group said an unclear mining policy of the incoming administration has left both the government and the business sector on a wait-and-see mode, probably jeopardizing efforts to make the country's minerals work in its favor.

"What Duterte said was he feels that we should have mining, but it should be sustainable," said Doris Magsaysay-Ho, co-chair of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Advisory Council.

"Now, how that connects to what Gina is going to do, I don't know yet," she told reporters yesterday. - **With Iris Gonzales, Christina Mendez, Prinz Magtulis, Rhodina Villanueva**

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Lopez decries 'pathetic' record of PHL mining

THE Philippines will have an antimining crusader running the environment department, after President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte's choice accepted the post this week. Shares of resources companies plunged a second day.

Regina Lopez, 61, managing director of ABS-CBN's Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation Inc., said on Tuesday she accepts the offer to head the environment and natural resources department. The Philippine Stock Exchange's mining and oil index fell 7.3 percent on Wednesday, the steepest drop in 10 months, after closing 4.1 percent lower in the previous session.

"The reason I don't like mining is, the poor suffers so that the foreigners and already very rich people benefit," Lopez told the ABS-CBN News Channel late Tuesday. Small miners, big resource companies and coal plants harm the environment, endanger the livelihood of farmers and fishermen, and are potential health hazards, she said.

Outgoing President Aquino banned new mining permits during his six-year term, and investors hoped that the Duterte administration would revive the industry in a country with mineral reserves estimated at \$1.4 trillion.

"Any kind of mining here puts our farmers and fishermen at risk; for whom, for what, is this worth it?" Lopez asked. "We've been doing it for a hundred years and usually, you do something and you know if it's good by track record. Well, mining has a pathetic track record. Wherever there's mining, the people are poor." *Bloomberg News*

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Senators back Lopez's DENR appointment

By **Leila B. Salaverria** in Manila
and **Delfin T. Mallari Jr.**
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SEVERAL senators support the appointment of antimining advocate Gina Lopez as the next secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), citing her decades-long experience in fighting for the protection of the country's natural resources.

Sen. Bam Aquino believed Lopez would do a good job in her new post and would be an asset to the Duterte administration.

"Gina is right for the position because she knows the roots of the problems and there are a lot of solutions she could propose and implement to protect natural resources," Aquino said in a statement.

He noted that she chaired the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, and launched Bantay Kalikasan, which promotes environmental protection, education and eco-tourism.

Sen. JV Ejercito also hailed Lopez's advocacy for the environment and her integrity.

On Lopez' antimining stance,

Ejercito said he believed she was not against mining itself, but irresponsible mining.

According to him, he saw her point when she raised the fact that mining towns have remained poor and did not seem to benefit from the industry.

"They are the ones who are supposed to enjoy the benefits first," he told reporters.

Sen. Loren Legarda, an advocate for climate change measures and Global Champion for Resilience by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, promised to help

Lopez in her new job.

But not all environmental advocates welcomed Lopez' appointment.

"While we appreciate what Ms. Gina Lopez has done for the antimining advocacy, we recognize that her appointment to the position of DENR secretary is a big blow to the aspirations of the poor that finally somebody who really cares for the poor and the environment is in that key position," activist Franciscan priest Pete Montallana, said in an open letter to President-elect Rodrigo Duterte.

The Manila Times

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Lopez an 'elephant' in the room – Pangilinan

ONE of the largest players in the mining industry has raised some concerns over the appointment of ABS-CBN Foundation chairperson Gina Lopez as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Manuel "Manny" Pangilinan, chairman of Philex Mining Corp., said Lopez's appointment by President-elect Rodrigo Duterte may lead to some changes such as the imposition of additional requirements to mining companies that could affect future projects.

"I guess the elephant in the room is Gina Lopez. I apologize for my comparison, but first of all let me just say this: I think it is the prerogative of the President to name the secretary he wants to name, and we respect that if she was nominated, and if Gina Lopez will be our secretary then

so be it. We respect the decision," Pangilinan said during the AIM for Change briefing on Wednesday.

"But our attitude, it's business as usual. We have a mining business, an operating mine up there in Baguio. For us, we will take the view that it will be business as usual," he added.

"There would be, I guess in the next few years, there will be occasions when Padcal would be required of certain routinary permits -- we don't know what it is [yet]. If we wish to, for example, raise the level of our tailings pond, or if we find additional resources, [then] relevant permits will have to be procured by Padcal from the government. And we'll have to submit our applications to both the Mines and Geosciences Bureau or MGB and of course with DENR," the Philex chairman said.

"With respect to renewal of mining tenements, which we have one, and there might be other mining tenements in the pipeline, then there are permits to be procured from the government -- that would clearly fall under the DENR. So, we just have to work with what we've been dealt with," he added.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines also expressed concerns over the appointment of Lopez, saying the DENR secretary should be someone who is adept and experienced in natural resources management.

Lopez served the Aquino government as the chief of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission.

Logical choice

Former Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño, however, said Lopez was a

"logical" choice.

In an interview with *The Manila Times*, Casiño noted that Lopez's appointment sits well with the Left and bodes well for the campaign against destructive mining.

"We have worked with Miss Lopez in the past. We just hope that she will continue her advocacies without letup. We hope her fire will not be watered down in the future," he said.

The DENR portfolio was among the four Cabinet positions originally reserved for leftist leaders and the former Bayan Muna representative was considered for the post.

Casiño said Lopez is respected for her staunch position against "large-scale, destructive mining" and for her fight against the continued use of coal.

**KRISTYN NIKA M. LAZO
AND JOEL M. SY EGCO**

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Up to \$30 billion needed for power plants by 2030; be prepared for cost of renewables — Pangilinan

By Victor V. Saulon *Sub-Editor*

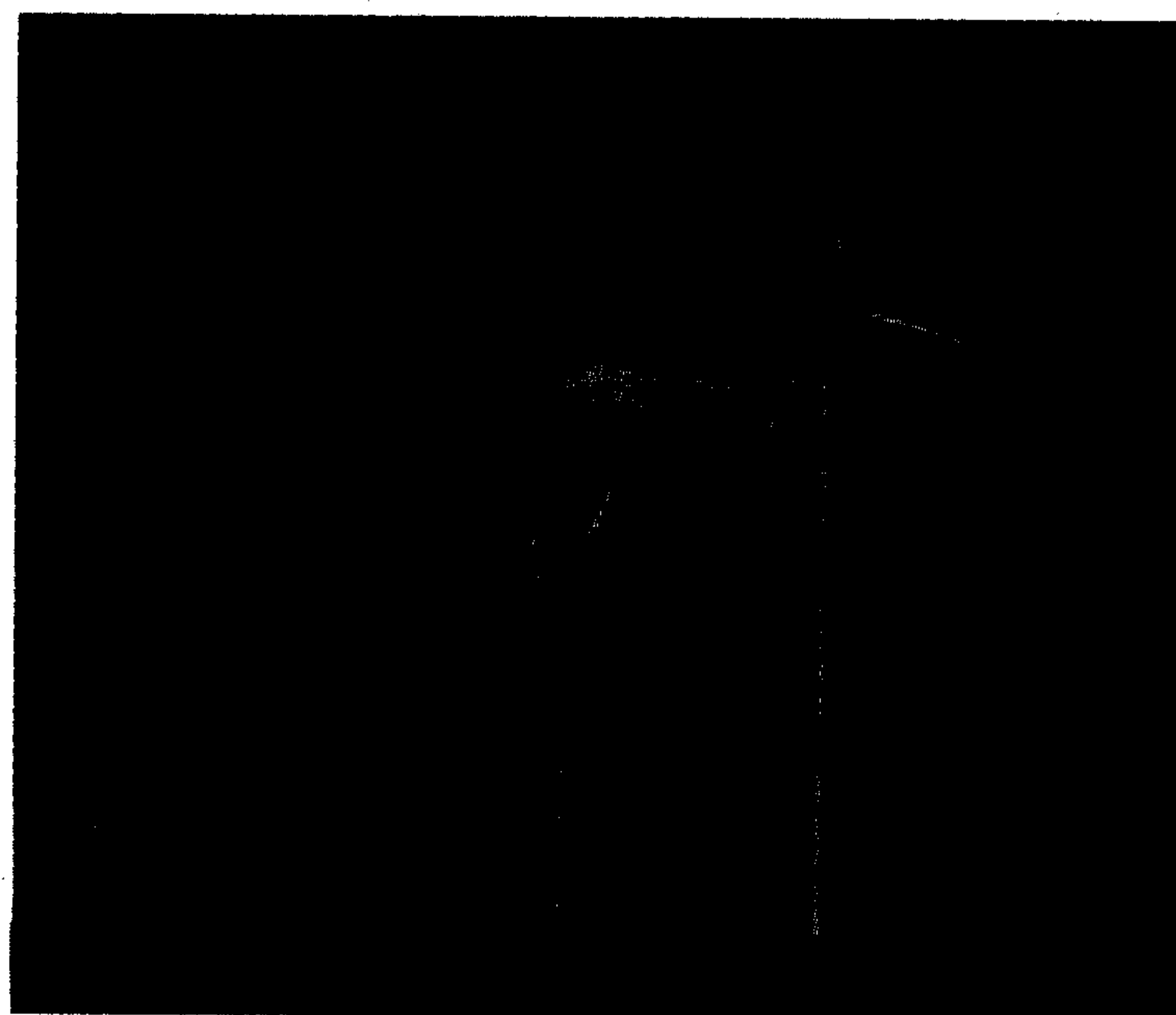
THE PHILIPPINES needs to invest between \$20 billion and \$30 billion to build power plants capable of meeting demand by 2030, but must be prepared to shoulder the cost if it wants supply to come from renewable energy, the head of the country's biggest distribution utility said.

"There is always a price you need to pay to protect your environment," Manuel V. Pangilinan, chairman of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), told reporters on the sidelines of a conference hosted by the Asian Institute of Management on Wednesday.

As it stands now, the industry has about 16,000 megawatts (MW) of installed capacity, which he said looked sufficient "on paper" to meet the current demand of 12,000 MW.

But he said a second day of "yellow alert" meant that the actual produced power was much lower than the power plants' nameplate capacity, especially when some of these were on maintenance shutdown or on an unscheduled outage.

"If you project it, say, up to 2030 the consensus view is that demand from the current 12,000 MW could rise to as much as 20,000 or even 22,000 or 24,000 MW. Clearly the country needs



more capacity to build in the next 15 years or so," he said following a meeting with business leaders to discuss ways to support inclusive growth.

He said the question regulators needed to answer was how much of the country's energy needs should be sourced from coal, natural gas or renewables to support an economic growth projection of between 6% and 8%.

"Those are the only options," he said, adding that building plants to produce 10,000 MW more power

would cost \$2 million per MW. "You're talking between \$20 and \$30 billion of investments needed in the next 15 years or so."

He said "the seduction of renewables is there," pointing out that the sun shines, the wind blows and biofuels are everywhere.

"But can you build enough renewables to fill up this 10-12,000 MW of additional capacity and more importantly, how much will it cost? We have to address it. It's not cheap. It's not gonna be cheaper than coal or gas," he said.

He said the industry needs policy direction on the appropriate fuel mix. "And once that is decided, business will build the plants. Whether it's a gas plant, a coal plant or a renewable plant. We just need a direction," he said.

This comes after the Climate Change Commission last week started discussions with the Department of Energy and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in an effort to come up with harmonized policies on new and existing coal-fired power plants.

The commission said a review of the government's energy policy was "expected to reshape the country's power development plans and replace coal with renewable sources of energy."

Mr. Pangilinan said that if that was the policy direction then "there is a cost consequence."

"You just have to tell the people: look you have to protect your environment and it will come with a cost... If that is accepted then fine. Let's proceed on that basis. Business will follow that direction," he said.

Meralco's controlling stakeholder, Beacon Electric Asset Holdings, Inc., is partly owned by Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT). Hastings Holdings, Inc., a unit of PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund subsidiary MediaQuest Holdings, Inc., has an interest in *BusinessWorld* through the Philippine Star Group, which it controls.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

'Nothing to fear, we are responsible miners'

Roll with the blow

BY JED MACAPAGAL
AND RUELLE CASTRO

"NOTHING to fear, we are all responsible miners" was the common statement of mining stakeholders on the face of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte's statement that he will require a review of all mining claims and will be harsh on those destroying the environment.

The mining industry will "roll with the blow" according to Manuel V. Pangilinan, Philex Mining Corp. chairman. Adaptation is a necessary skill among businesses, he said.

Duterte also indicated that he prefers ownership of mining assets to be left to local investors and may push to rewrite rules to limit environmental degradation in the sector.

At present, half of mining companies currently operating had been found to have been remiss in protecting the environment and the communities they are operating in.

Duterte also appointed environmentalist Gina Lopez as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

In a TV interview, Lopez said: "I am absolutely anti-mining as it causes suffering for the poor."

Several stakeholders are hoping she will be able to lead the agency with balanced decision-making. Earlier, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) said the DENR secretary should come from the industry who understands the intricacies of mining and natural resource management.

"It's entirely the prerogative of the president to name who he wants to name and we respect that. So be it. Our attitude is business as usual," Pangilinan said.

"So we have to work with what we've been dealt with. The hallmark of business is you work within the environment you've been dealt with," he added.

Pangilinan had a memorable encounter - a near shouting match at a business forum

- with Lopez.

Gerard Brimo, listed mining firm Nickel Asia Corp. (NAC) president and chief executive officer, said the company has nothing to fear amid the expected stricter rules in the industry as it complies with government policies.

"President Duterte has made clear his policy in support of responsible mining. All our mining operations are ISO-compliant for environmental management systems and are world-class. We congratulate the secretary designate on her appointment and will work with her to promote responsible mining," Brimo said in a statement.

Jose Bayani Baylon, NAC vice president for corporate communications, said the "activist secretary designate can use her passion to fight illegal and irresponsible mining throughout the country."

The Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA), on the other hand, said despite the drop in prices of listed mining shares, Lopez' designation is supported.

"We welcome an environment advocate to head the DENR and we share her desire to support responsible mining and at the same time rid the industry of illegal and irresponsible miners," Louie Sarmiento, PMSEA president, said in a text message.

"I'm hopeful she will be balanced in her decisions because she will be looking not only at environment which we are all committed and passionate about but also the wise utilization of our natural resources," Sarmiento added.

Meanwhile, COMP, which has yet to issue an official statement on the matter, said earlier it hopes the Duterte administration will assign a leader with a solid background on the intricacies of natural resources management.

Malaya Business Insight

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

J. 2 Nothing to fear...

"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," it said.

Earlier this month, the Mines and Geoscience Bureau (MGB) said of the 44 metallic mines currently operating in the country, half of them have repeatedly been warned to implement environmental protection measures to comply with the law.

Leo Jasareno, MGB director, said violations involving hazardous operations that expose mine workers, communities and the environment to fumes, dusts and mine wastes are the most common cases, prompting the bureau to slap suspension orders.

He also said he prepared a transition report covering the state of the mining industry, ready for submission to the next DENR secretary. The report, he added, identifies frequent violators as well as responsible miners, but he has yet to make the list publicly available.

Pangilinan said mining could have helped boost the incoming administration's push for expansion of export base had it had a mind to it.

"If you look at the major export base, the biggest export base of the Philippines is our people... \$45 billion. After that will be electronics. The net value added if you take out the import is about \$20-\$21 billion. In trying to create a viable and extensive export base, you have to consider mining as a potential because the mining export last year is \$4 billion," said Pangilinan.

"We have the resource, the question is do you want to exploit that for the betterment of the people?" he asked.

The mining and oil index at the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) on Tuesday dropped 837.14 points or 7.31 per cent, to 10,614.70 after it was announced that Lopez has accepted the DENR post.

Astro del Castillo, managing director at First Grade Finance Inc., said mining share prices continue to drop yesterday, still tied to risk aversion related to Lopez's appointment.

"Though most welcomed the pronouncement of the incoming administration that mining activities will be allowed so long as its compliant to US and Canadian standards," said del Castillo.

The Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) closed yesterday at 7,756.37, a 0.14 percent drop. Losers edged gainers 108 to 86 with 44 stocks unchanged. Trading turnover reached P7.66 billion.

Pangilinan said miners are expected be responsible.

"Nobody disputes responsible mining. And of course we should be responsible miners," said Pangilinan.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Office shows that the whole mining and quarrying business in the Philippine was valued at P124.23 billion as of 2014, with copper mining at P10.32 billion, gold at P18.39 billion, and nickel at P22.47 billion.

As of 2013, it employs around 33,900, PSA data shows.

Meantime another business sees opportunities with an environmentalist as DENR secretary.

Necisto Sytengco, chairman of chemical retailing firm SBS Philippines Corp., said there will be heightened appreciation of environment-friendly chemicals by industrialists particularly those involved in the mining industry.

"If you introduce a new type of chemical that is environmentally friendly, you will find it interesting. You have to change the approach already. You cannot still go into all the traditional way of using chemicals that is not environmentally friendly," Sytengco added, noting that given Lopez's image as an environmentalist, the adoption of greener chemicals will be much faster.

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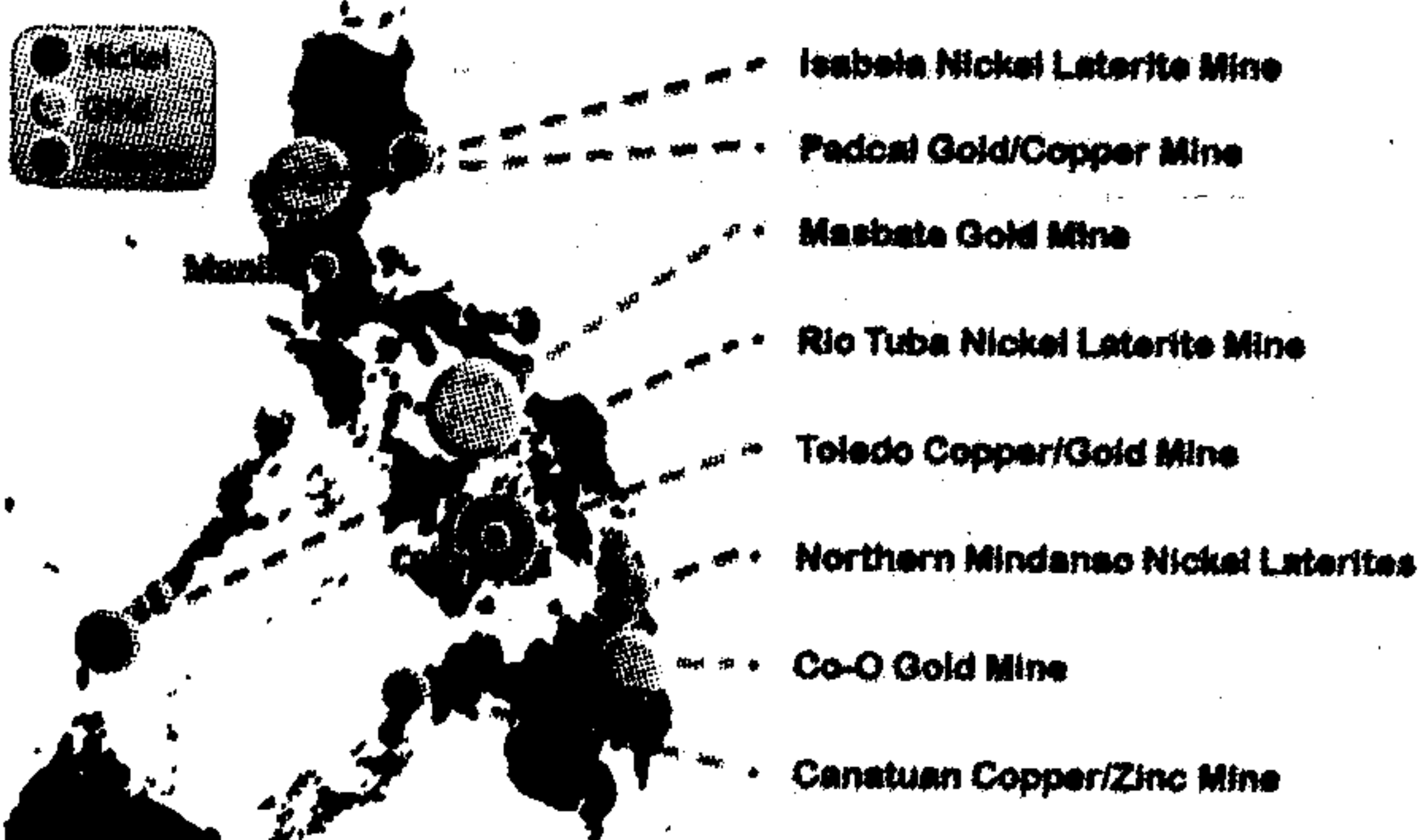
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

g 3 Nothing to fear ...

The problem with mining

- Funding is already limited for mining. The World Bank and the ADB no longer finance mining projects.
- Australia, where most of the funding came from, is no longer that interested in mining.
- MGB says half of the operating mines do not protect the environment
- Of the existing mines, 21 run open pit mining while 10 mine underground.
- The Catholic Church is against mining which it sees as destroyer of the environment.
- Anti-mining lobby strong

Major Mining Operations



Source: IntierraRMG



Open pit copper mining at Carmen, Cebu.

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Even as mining shares plunge a second day

Business as usual for mining firms

By **MADELAINE B. MIRAFLOR**

Smarting from hemorrhaging losses in their company's stocks, mining firms yesterday sported a "business as usual" attitude as an anti-mining advocate takes over the post of secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), whose tasks include regulating the mining industry that has been involved in many controversies.

Shares of resources companies plunged

a second day when it was already official that anti-mining advocate Regina Lopez was taking over the DENR post. Mining and oil stocks crashed 7.31 percent, or 837.14 points to close at 10,614.70 on Wednesday.

Officials of mining companies and industry groups were reacting to the appointment of Lopez, who is ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation Chairperson, as the new DENR secretary. Lopez had been quoted as saying that "mining has a pathetic track record" and that "wherever there's mining, the people are poor".

When sought for comment, businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan, chairman of the country's biggest mining firm Philex Mining Corp., said that whoever assumes the DENR post, whether its Lopez or someone else, it will just be "business as usual" for the companies.

"The elephant in the room is Gina Lopez, I apologize for the comparison, but first of all, let me say this, it's entirely the prerogative of the president to name whoever he wants to name and I respect that he has nominated Gina Lopez to be DENR

Secretary. We respect that and so be it," Pangilinan said on the sidelines of AIM for Change roundtable discussion.

"If he thinks she is the right person then we respect that. What's our attitude is that it's business as usual. We should give her a chance to articulate her policy. It reflects the policy of the president as well," he added.

Pangilinan recognized the fact that after such announcement was made, Philex Mining's shares in the Philippine Stock Exchange dove by more than 12 percent in just a matter of

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two days.

"Nobody wants to see the value of the company going down," he added.

For his part, Semirara Mining and Power Corp. Chairman and CEO Isidro Consunji said in a text message that the industry should just "wait and see" if Lopez was really the right person for the position.

He said, however, that he doubts "whether she has the balance to do a good job."

Consunji relatively shared the same stance with Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA) PMSEA President Louie Sarmiento, who said that while they welcome Lopez as the new DENR secretary, he also hopes "she will be balance in her decisions."

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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Business as usual for mining firms

"We welcome an environment advocate to head the DENR and we share her desire to support responsible mining and at the same time rid the industry of illegal and irresponsible miners," Sarmiento said.

"[But] I am hopeful she will be balance in her decisions because she will be looking not only at environment, which we are all committed and passionate about, but also at the wise utilization of our natural resources being the DENR secretary," he added.

Nickel Asia Corp. President Gerard Brimo, on the other hand, said the company is willing to work with Lopez to promote responsible mining.

Other resource companies were also down. Global Ferronickel Holdings, Inc. was down 7.6 percent. Nickel Asia Corp., the nation's largest producer in which Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. owns 26.27

percent, dropped 7 percent. The broader Philippine Stock Exchange PSEi Index was little changed.

"The reason why I don't like mining is: The poor suffer so that the foreigners and already very rich people benefit," Lopez told the ABS-CBN News Channel late Tuesday. Small miners, big resource companies and coal plants harm the environment, endanger the livelihood of farmers and fishermen and are potential health hazards, she said.

Duterte, who takes office on June 30, told a forum of businessmen in Davao Tuesday that he will review all mining claims and that he won't hesitate to scrap those found to be "spoiling the land." The brash city mayor, who won on his pledge to crush crime and corruption, made a similar warning on June 4, triggering a decline in some mining shares the following trading day. (With Bloomberg)

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Mining companies cautious

By Alena Mae S. Flores
and Anna Leah E. Gonzales

MINING companies conceded Wednesday that the choice for the new environment secretary presents difficulties for the sector, but vowed to work with anti-mining advocate Gina Lopez.

Philex Mining Corp. Manuel Pangilinan said it was "business as usual" for the country's biggest mining company and that "we will just work what we have been dealt with."

Philex Mining, which owns the Padcal mines in Benguet, is the country's biggest producer of copper and gold.

"The elephant in the room is Gina Lopez, I apologize for the

comparison. But first of all, let me say this, it's entirely the prerogative of the president to name whoever he wants to name and I respect that he has nominated Gina Lopez to be DENR secretary. We respect that and so be it," he said.

Lopez on Tuesday accepted the offer of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte to head the Environment and Natural Resources Department.

The mining and oil index of the Philippine Stock Exchange fell 7.3 percent on Wednesday, the steepest drop in 10 months, after closing 4.1 percent lower in the previous session.

Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. tumbled 6.8 percent and Philex Mining lost 11 percent, while Global Ferronickel Holdings Inc. was down 6.5 percent and Semirara Mining and Power Corp. slid 7.9 percent at the session's close. Nickel Asia Corp., the nation's largest producer in which Sumitomo Metal Mining Co. holds a 26 percent stake, dropped 4.6 percent.

"In two days, we're down 12 percent. Nobody wants to see the value of the company going down," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan, however, said Lopez should be given the chance to articulate her policy as "it reflects the policy of the president as well."

He added the company may also have to wait first before pursuing any expansion plans.

He said mining could be another growth driver for the Philippines if given the chance to grow. "The Philippines is a very mineralized country so we should explore that," he said.

The Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association, meanwhile, is confident Lopez will be fair in her decisions on

the country's mining industry.

Sarmiento said in a text message while the sector was worried about the appointment of Lopez, it was "positive that she will look at it with a balance view before making any drastic view detrimental not only to the industry but to the direct and indirect beneficiaries and workers in and around the industry."

With Bloomberg

BusinessMirror

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Mining shares hammered after antimining advocate appointed environment secretary

By VG CABUAG @villygc

MINING shares were hammered during Wednesday's trading at the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) after markets were rattled by the appointment of an antimining advocate to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The Mining and Oil index shed 837.14 points, or 7.3 percent, to close at 10,614.70.

Only five of the 23 listed Mining and Oil shares posted gains. The rest edged lower with notable net foreign selling seen in some of the biggest mining firms.

Semirara Mining and Power Corp., which closed at P119.50, or a drop of 10 percent, had the biggest foreign sell-off at P28.42 million, followed by Philex Mining Corp. that closed at P7.14, also a 10-percent drop, at P15.64 million.

United Paragon Mining Corp. was the biggest loser after its share price

dropped by 16 percent; Manila Mining Corp.'s share price fell 14 percent, as well as other mining firms, such as Oriental Petroleum and Mining Corp., Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corp., Nickel Asia Corp. and Global Ferronickel Holdings Corp.

Analysts said markets were rattled after President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte's appointment of Gina Lopez to the DENR. Lopez is known publicly as a staunch antimining advocate.

Luis Limlingan, head of research at Regina Capital and Development Corp., said there's a possible knee-jerk reaction on Lopez's appointment, as many don't know her plans

for the agency.

"Everyone was just worried. But we don't know what will happen next," Limlingan said, adding that Lopez may go after those companies not practicing responsible mining.

He said Semirara and Philex were heavily beaten on concerns that their respective mining permits are up for review.

Meanwhile, the PSEi, the PSE's main index, was also down by 10.86 points to 7,756.37, and most sub-indices declined.

Value of trade was at P7.76 billion, as decliners edged gainers 108 to 86, and 44 were unchanged.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Spy Bits

By BABE G. ROMUALDEZ

A successful business summit

Majority of those who attended the two-day business summit dubbed as Sulong: Hakbang Patungo sa Kaunlaran" organized by the economics team of incoming president Rodrigo Duterte came out with a highly optimistic feeling that things are moving towards the right direction under the next administration that will formally take over on June 30.

Many said they actually enjoyed listening to the president-elect and were heartened that he consulted the business sector first before assuming office – a clear indication that "he takes business seriously," one of the summit participants said. Many were congratulating incoming Finance secretary Carlos "Sonny" Dominguez, who spearheaded the summit, with the country's top business groups from all over the country in attendance.

Various industries presented their concerns and also gave recommendations on how to generate more jobs and enhance the economy. A common concern, however, is the current tax system with many suggesting a comprehensive overhaul, saying unclear and conflicting memorandum circulars aggravate the situation.

Aside from taxes, a major issue from the business community is the continuing corruption in several agencies, among them the Bureau of Customs with millions of government revenues lost everyday due to smuggling and other illegal activities. It would seem the summit warmed the relations between the president-elect and the business community which was initially very wary at the prospect of a Duterte presidency.

Groups like Goldman Sachs, however, believe Rodrigo Duterte would be good for business, citing his resolve to boost infrastructure spending, his support for the farming sector and his vow to cut bureaucratic red tape. After a meeting with Mayor Duterte, Goldman representatives went away impressed with the decisiveness and the strong political will that they sensed in the incoming president. Most of all, they welcomed president-elect Duterte's "keenness to delegate" – something that is not surprising to those who know Duterte very well.

Mining industry apprehensive over Gina Lopez appointment

We know Gina Lopez and believe she really means we when she says she wants to protect the environment and help uplift the lives of Filipinos living in poverty. Her work with Bantay Kalikasan underscores her zeal in protecting our natural resources and in preserving critical ecosystem.

However, mining industry players especially foreign mining companies are very apprehensive over her appointment as DENR secretary, expressing concern that she could totally swing to the "left of center" instead of coming up with reasonable and practical policies as far as the mining industry is concerned, especially since she has stated she "absolutely anti-mining as it causes suffering for the poor."

Mining groups want to organize a dialogue to highlight the good that "responsible mining" – which is the operative phrase – can do for the residents of the communities where they operate. Adding to the apprehension is the recent tumble in the mining and oil sector when news of Gina's appointment broke – losing 488.55 points or 4.09 percent. Phil Mining was among those that have been hit hard, down 12.1 percent the other day and down as of this writing 10.6 percent – 22.7 percent in just two days.

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Spy Bits . . . From B-4

The fact is, it's the irresponsible mining groups – many of them small-scale players and the so-called backyard miners – who have been a bane to the industry that has a vast potential to contribute to the economy, with the Philippines having an estimated \$1 trillion of untapped mineral wealth. A lot of companies adhere to responsible mining and contribute to the growth in the areas where they operate, among them Philex whose corporate social responsibility advocacy and projects have been recognized as among the best in the Philippines.

Just recently, the company inaugurated a 2-km farm-to-market road that would benefit thousands of residents in several barangays in Benguet as the road completes the loop that links six sitios (villages) in the area. Aside from constructing the road, the company also helped the areas get energy, spending a total of P12.2 million for the 2-km road and the energization project that would uplift the standard of living of residents. Not many know that mining companies spend millions annually for Social Development Management Projects to benefit communities – on top of the many other local taxes they also pay.

Top Duterte Cabinet picks

Many have criticized president-elect Duterte for some of his Cabinet choices because they happen to be friends or classmates – which is really understandable because the president has to make sure he can trust the people who will serve as his

alter ego. However, he has also made some very good appointments which have been welcomed by various sectors.

An informal survey among those who attended the two-day business summit in Davao revealed the “top 5 Cabinet picks” of the incoming administration, starting with Sonny Dominguez who is well-known by many, having previously served as the Agriculture Secretary under the late Cory Aquino. Next is Art Tugade, a cum laude graduate of San Beda and known as a brilliant man whose stint as chief of the Clark Development Corporation was cut short when he joined the campaign of Duterte.

Next is Ben Diokno who is well respected in the academe and also served as DBM chief during the term of Joseph Estrada and as Budget Undersecretary during the time of Cory Aquino.

Another one whose appointment has been received very well particularly by the business sector is Go Negosyo's executive director Ramon Lopez as Trade Secretary. Ramon's advocacy for MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) has helped many Filipinos grow their small businesses. Rounding up the top picks is incoming Health Secretary Paulyn Ubial who has served for almost three decades in the health sector. Being an insider, Ubial, who is currently assistant secretary at the DOH, is recognized as a public health expert.

Email: spybits08@gmail.com



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Mining selloff weakens index

The stock market snapped out of a five day rally yesterday, with mining stocks suffering a huge decline after incoming president Rodrigo Duterte announced that he would appoint anti mining advocate Gina Lopez to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) retreated 10.86 points, or 0.14 percent, to finish at 7,756.37, a marked turnaround from a new high of 7,767.23, recorded on Tuesday.

During yesterday's trading session, the broader all shares index manage to climb 2.31 points

By IRIS GONZALES

to settle at 4,603.14.

Total value turnover reached P7.66 billion. Decliners edged out advancers 108 to 86 while 44 stocks were left unchanged.

Mining stocks were the biggest losers, shedding 837.14 points or 7.31 percent to close at 10,614.70.

Only the Industrial index managed to stay in positive territory.

On Tuesday, when Duterte announced Lopez' impending appointment, mining stocks tumbled

four percent. Lopez heads the ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation which includes a no-to-mining campaign.

Meanwhile, global stocks rose while traditional safe-haven assets gold and bonds slipped yesterday, as investors were guardedly optimistic about a "remain" vote in Britain's European Union referendum later this week.

Riskier markets also drew support from Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen's cautious comments on the US economy the previous day, in which she virtually ruled out a July rate hike.

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MINING INVESTORS DUMPING
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Mining, oil investors still dumping shares

By Doris Dumlao-Abadilla

FOUR years after his heated exchange with antimining advocate Gina Lopez in a public forum, businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan has vowed to keep "business as usual" while stock market investors anticipate doomsday for the mining industry once she assumes office as

the new environment czar.

Mining and oil stocks took a beating for the second straight day on the local bourses as jittery investors continued to dump shares in mining and oil companies a day after Lopez accepted the offer of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte to become the next secretary of the Department of Environment

and Natural Resources (DENR).

In a press conference after the AIM for Change conference yesterday, Pangilinan—managing director of First Pacific Co. Ltd. that has interests in mining, infrastructure and telecommunications in the Philippines—said after some initial concerns, businessmen were now generally "welcoming" of

the Cabinet members nominated by President-elect Rodrigo Duterte.

At the end of the day, he said, Duterte's 10-point economic program—likewise warmly received by businessmen—would

MINING / A4

**Senators back Lopez's
DENR appointment / A4**

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DUMPING SHARES

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Mining, oil investors still dumping shares

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be a matter of execution.

"Only time will tell what degree of success this [incoming administration] will achieve in six years," he said.

'Elephant in room'

"The elephant in the room is Gina Lopez—I apologize for the comparison—but first of all, let me just say it's entirely the prerogative of the President to name whoever he wants to name. He has nominated or asked Gina Lopez to be the DENR secretary. So be it, we respect that decision. In his own wisdom, he feels she's the right person for that post," Pangilinan said.

On Tuesday, the mining/oil index slumped by 4.09 percent on news that Lopez was asked to be the DENR secretary. The counter slid by another 7.31 percent on Wednesday on confirmation that Lopez had accepted the portfolio.

"What's our attitude? It's business as usual," Pangilinan said.

First Pacific controls Philex Mining, one of the largest mining firms in the country, along with oil exploration arm Philex Petroleum Corp. Yesterday, shares of Philex fell by another 10.86 percent.

Pangilinan acknowledged that Philex would inevitably have to deal with Lopez,



PANGILINAN

whether for permits to operate its existing Padcal mine or to work on additional resources or new mining tenements.

"We just have to work with what we've been dealt with. I think the hallmark of business is you work within the environment you're given," he said.

He said Lopez should be given a chance to "articulate her policy," which, in turn, would also reflect the policy of the President.

"We've been in this situation before so what's new?" Pangilinan said.

Asked whether he thought that mining could be a growth driver under the Duterte administration given the current



LOPEZ

circumstances, Pangilinan said it's pretty much "work in progress."

He added it would be best to wait and see how the policy framework would pan out.

"In trying to create a viable and extensive export base, you have to consider mining potential," Pangilinan said, noting that mining exports last year amounted to around \$4 billion.

Rural catalyst

"We are a very mineralized country. We have all that resource underground, so the question really is—do you want to exploit that for the betterment of our people and fulfill one of the tenets (of the Duterte economic agenda) which is to

increase exports?" he said.

Pangilinan said he agree that the government should enforce responsible mining.

"In fact, for business in general, you have to conduct your affairs in a responsible way whether in mining or telecom—it's part of your duty to society," he said.

The businessman said the Philippines could adopt global standards in responsible mining, referring to the extraction of minerals in an environmentally and socially sound manner.

"If the Canadians, Australians, the South Africans do it, why can't the Filipinos do it?" he said. "There will be costs associated with it but I think it comes with the territory."

Along with programs to boost agriculture and tourism, Pangilinan said the mining industry was one way to encourage businesses to invest in the countryside, where about 10 percent of people were living in poverty.

"Mining is not in the core of our economy. It's out there in the boondocks," he said.

But if businesses could make money in the rural areas, they would not invest in mining, he said.

Businesses then should be encouraged and given incentives to focus on the countryside, he said.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Miners reel for 2nd day; stocks of Lopez firms soar

By Krista A. M. Montealegre
National Correspondent

MINERS extended their blood-bath on Wednesday, as they come to terms with the appointment of anti-mining advocate Regina Paz “Gina” L. Lopez as head of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

After losing 4.09% on Tuesday, the mining and oil index bled by another 837.14 points or 7.31%

to 10,614.70 — far greater than the Philippine Stock Exchange index’s losses at 0.14% that ended the benchmark index’s five-day winning streak.

“It is business as usual” for Philex Mining Corp., its chairman, Manuel V. Pangilinan, told reporters in a briefing following the “AIM for Change” forum in Makati City that was organized by the Asian Institute of Management.

Philex Mining, the country’s largest miner, plummeted by an-

other 10.86% to P7.14, bringing its two-day losses at 21.71%.

“I guess the elephant in the room is Gina Lopez. I apologize for the comparison, but let me say this, it’s entirely the prerogative of the president to name whoever it is he wants to name. We respect the decision,” Mr. Pangilinan said.

“We have to work with what we’ve been dealt with and that has been the hallmark of business. You work within the environment you’re given.”

Mr. Pangilinan had engaged Ms. Lopez in a heated exchange in a 2012 mining summit on the issue of whether there could be alternatives to mining in mineralized sites.

“President Duterte has made clear his policy in support of responsible mining. All our mining operations are ISO [International Organization for Standardization] compliant for environmental management systems and are world-class. We congratulate the

Mining, S1/3

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Mining,
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Secretary-designate on her appointment and will work with her to promote responsible mining," Gerard H. Brimo, chief executive officer of the country's biggest nickel miner, Nickel Asia Corp., said in a statement.

"We respect the decision of the President. We are fine working with the incoming DENR Secretary Gina Lopez. She would give a fresh perspective in the DENR," Dante R. Bravo, executive vice-president of the Philippines' third-biggest nickel producer, Global Ferronickel Holdings, Inc., said in a mobile phone message.

"We welcome and support the mining policies President-elect Rodrigo [R.] Duterte announced at the Economic Summit here in Davao yesterday and look forward to working closely with Finance Secretary-designate Carlos [G.] Dominguez [III] and the Cabinet's economic cluster. We will also engage with DENR Secretary-designate Gina Lopez to promote environmentally sensitive and responsive mining. We welcome and support a balanced policy between environmental protection and resource development," OceanaGold Phils., Inc. Chairman Jose P. Leviste said in a statement.

"I am hopeful she will be balanced in her decisions because she will be looking not only at environment, which we are all committed and passionate about, but also the wise utilization of our natural resources, she being the DENR Secretary," Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association President Louie R. Sarmiento said in a statement.

Anti-mining sentiment could hit coal miners next, Mr. Pangilinan warned. "In the range of fuel mix, coal is probably not up there in terms of meeting the kind of environmental

tests, albeit that technology on coal side has moved to the point where it is permissible... But if you take a very pristine view of the environment, you will turn to gas and renewables."

Tapping the potential of the mining industry is consistent with the focus of the incoming administration on developing the countryside and creating a viable, extensive export base, Mr. Pangilinan said. "We are a very mineralized country. We have that resource underground. The question really is do you want to exploit that for the betterment of our people and indeed fulfill one of your economic pillars which is exports," he said. "Nobody disputes responsible mining and we should abhor irresponsible mining. We're not here to get into that irresponsible mining space."

Other listed miners were deep in the red as well: United Paragon Mining Corp. fell 16.67% to one centavo; Manila Mining Corp. dropped 14.29% to 1.2 centavos; Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company plunged 6.83% to 23.2 centavos; Semirara Mining and Power Corp. declined 7.94% to P10.30; Global Ferronickel went down 6.52% to 86 centavos; Apex Mining Company, Inc. "A" shares declined 6.09% to P2.16; Marcventures Holdings, Inc. slipped 5.32% to P1.78; Alsons Consolidated Resources, Inc. shed 5.24% to P1.99 each; and Nickel Asia slumped 4.57% to P4.80.

"The fear is we don't know what she [Ms. Lopez] has in mind. There is that fear she can tighten the controls," Bede Lovell S. Gomez, vice-president and head of the investment advisory and trust unit at First Metro Investment Corp., said in a telephone interview. "That is okay, just don't kill it."

First Metro took mining stocks out of its core holdings as far back as two

years ago, maintaining a neutral outlook on the industry, Mr. Gomez said.

"Investors are not sure to what extent she'll be against the business: if she's going to completely ban the mining industry. There's a possibility that mining will still continue, but you have that possibility the industry might pay higher fees. No matter how you look at it, it will be negative," Dexter A. Azurin, head of research at Unicapital Securities, Inc., said in a separate interview.

He noted that Ms. Lopez's anti-mining stance adds to the worries of an industry that has already been hit by Executive Order No. 79, signed by President Benigno S. C. Aquino III on July 6, 2012, that stopped issuance of mining permits until a new mining revenue sharing scheme is legislated.

While mining stocks took a beating, Lopez-owned power companies, which are mainly engaged in renewable energy, saw share prices soar. Energy Development Corp. (EDC), which owns geothermal, wind, and solar power facilities, rose 6.52% to P5.72; First Gen Corp., (FGEN) which owns natural gas plants and EDC, rallied 8.73% to P24.90; First Philippine Holdings Corp. (FPH), which controls FGEN, gained 4.72% to P67.70 each; and Lopez Holdings, Inc., the parent of FPH, added 2.11% to P7.75.

"EDC and FGEN produce clean energy. Definitely, there is a demand for power and if you see some of the coal plants shutting down, there will be some shortage in power. Demand will come from cleaner energy," Unicapital's Mr. Azurin said.

"She has to be careful with her statements. Her family owns clean energy companies. It may be misinterpreted as conflict of interest," First Metro's Mr. Gomez said.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Mining stocks routed for 2nd day on Wed

THE local stock market's mining and oil sub-index slumped further on Wednesday, after Regina Paz Lopez of ABS-CBN Foundation Inc., who described herself late Monday as "absolutely anti-mining," accepted the offer of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The mining and oil board at the Philippine Stock Exchange plunged 7.31 percent or 837.14 points to close at 10,614.70.

"The reason why the mining sector has again dropped substantially today [Wednesday] was that Gina Lopez accepted the position being offered to her. She is known to be an anti-mining advocate," Victor Benavidez, general manager of Alakor Securities Corp. said in a phone interview.

As posted on Twitter by ANC's nightly business program late night Monday, Lopez was quoted as saying, "I am absolutely anti-mining as it causes suffering for the poor."

"This is the immediate reaction of the market. Thus, the mining sector was battered," Benavidez added.

He explained that by appointing Gina Lopez, the incoming Duterte administration has created confusion among mining investors and stakeholders.

"In his recent pronouncements, President-elect Duterte said he would allow the mining industry to flourish provided it conforms with the Australian standard. But here you are, appointing a person who is well known as an anti-mining advocate. So as of now, the position of the government [on mining] is quite conflicting," he noted.

Therefore, the new administration should come up with it a "clear-cut" policy that would govern the country's mining sector, he said.

Eight of the 10 biggest losers of the day were mining index issues, including Philex Mining Corp. (PX), losing 10.86 percent and dropping from P8.01 to P7.14 per share, and Semirara Mining

► **Stocks B2**

The Manila Times

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■ STOCKS FROM B1

Mining stocks routed

and Power Corp. (SCC), which tumbled from P129.80 to P119.50 per share, a slide of 7.94 percent.

On the other hand, the benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange Index (PSEi) was not seriously affected overall by the rout of the mining sector, slightly dipping 0.14 percent or 10.86 points to end at 7,756.37, while the wider All Shares likewise moved sideways 0.05 percent or 2.31 points to close at 4,603.14.

"The PSEi slightly dropped as investors stayed cautious ahead of the Brexit referendum. At the same

time, the mining sector led the losses after the appointment of Gina Lopez, a staunch anti-mining advocate, as head of the DENR," Jonathan Latuja, equity research analyst at Unicapital Securities Inc., said.

Total value turnover was low at P7.6 billion, with losers edging out winners, 108 to 86, while 44 issues remained unchanged.

All other sub-indices ended in negative territory, except for the industrial firms, which managed to gain 0.94 percent.

KATRINA MENNEN A. VALDEZ

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

First Person

By ALEX MAGNO

Emphatic

DAVAO CITY – Emphatic. There is no other way to describe Rodrigo Duterte's leadership style.

Last Tuesday, the President-elect named anti-mining activist Gina Lopez to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The appointment sent shock waves through the stock market, pushing mining stocks sharply lower even as the index pushed securely in the green.



Uncompromising, unyielding and often dogmatic, Lopez is *bête noir* to the mining industry. If Gina had her way, there will be no mining industry in the country.

On television Tuesday night, the incoming DENR appointee outlined her alternative vision for the country's beleaguered environment. She wants the country to be like Bhutan, the hermit kingdom that strictly regulates tourism inflow and upholds its pristine environment.

Bhutan, of course, belongs to another century. She is ruled by a king and is sparsely populated. The man-to-land ratio is among the lowest in the world. The Himalayan kingdom has no manufacturing to speak of and her population relies on subsistence agriculture.

It is a paradise, no doubt, but only because it was untouched by the 20th century – or the 15th for that matter.

Contrast that with the Philippines. We have among the highest man-to-land ratios in the world. We now have about 106 million people squeezed in the slivers of arable land between the mountains and seas of our archipelago. About half of our people are trapped in poverty and cannot be rescued by subsistence farming.

True, we are now the most calamity-prone country in the world. Most of our people are landless and homeless. The housing backlog has now ballooned to over five million units. We will never again be rice self-sufficient, notwithstanding the delusion peddled by one Proceso Alcala and his boss.

We need industry to provide our people a better life. Subsistence agriculture will not save us.

To have minerals, someone has to do mining. Unfortunately, minerals are not evenly spread across the globe. Some have them; some don't. We have them; lots of them.

Surely Gina will go after illegal miners and despoilers of our ecology with hammer and thongs. She should go after the Wild, Wild West miners around Diwalwal who apply every unsound method in the holes they dig nearly at random. She should go after those horrid nickel miners in Surigao who scrape the soil with wild abandon and terrorize the indigenous people in pursuit of their greed.

In my book (and hopefully Rody's), these unscrupulous miners, plunderers really, should be put to the wall and shot.

Then there are the large-scale mining enterprises governed by the Mining Act. Their methods are the most advanced. They are required by law to practice environmental remediation.

They are a different species.

Paradigm-shift

For two days, hundreds of businessmen big and small huddled at the SMX Lanang here in Davao City finding out what is immediately "actionable" to help our economy grow and become more inclusive.

The "Sulong Pilipinas" forum did not gather businessmen from all over the nation only to have them lectured by incoming officials of the Duterte administration. They came to dialogue among themselves, with incoming officials listening in.

The Mindanao Business Club and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry jointly convened this forum. The two business associations, confident we will now have a "listening presidency," dared the shift in paradigm. This event was designed to elicit the views of entrepreneurs and magnates alike, thinking together about how to make the national economy more responsive.

One of the facilitating groups described this as a "focused group discussion" on a large scale. Every participant had an equal opportunity to have his voice heard. All the inputs were collected on large votes and the participants were given tags to help the organizers prioritize the issues.

It was taken as a healthy sign that nearly the entire Duterte Cabinet was present through the two days of this forum. They joined the workshops, argued in the hallways and listened to the reports.

This is the spirit of consultations and consensus that will, hopefully, guide the way we are governed after June 30.

Perhaps this deserves to be called a paradigm-shift to a mode of governance driven by ceaseless consensus building. It certainly signals a departure from the stuffy, top-to-bottom, manipulative and often intellectually dishonest mode of leadership characterizing the Noynoy years.



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First Person

Emphatic

The hallmark of the Noynoy years was its constant attempt to bribe the people for support: through the DAP, the BUB and the CCT. The media was free, but there was no sustained and robust debate between the governors and the governed.

This is where the personality of the leader matters in a system so centered on the Chief Executive as we have.

Noynoy was cloistered all his life. He did not need friends to survive. He is comfortable with a tight inner circle that will always tend to manipulate him. He addressed his people from behind a phalanx of apparatchiks, somehow believing the people will believe everything he says simply because he was president.

Rody Duterte, by contrast, is a man of the world. He survived life by thinking more quickly than others, by learning to trust in friends and by winning love largely by self-deprecation. That is why his wit is sharp and his humor acid.

The shift in personality styles was palpable in the two-day forum of businessmen. The participants were upbeat. They felt they had a leader they could trust, the rough edges and all.

This was a good meeting.



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Babala sa iresponsableng miners

NAPAKAGANDA ng sinabi ni incoming DENR Secretary Gina Lopez, makaraang hirangin ni president-elect Rodrigo Duterte, *"I don't like mining, the foreigners and the rich are the only ones benefiting from it but the farmers and the fishermen suffer."*

Swak na swak ang kanyang sinabi at hindi na ito lingid sa mamamayan sapagkat ngayon ay marami nang tumututol sa pagmimina dahil sa kagagawan ng mga iresponsableng minero. Nasisira ang kapaligiran dahil sa ginagawang pagmimina. Hinuhukay at binubutas ang mga bundok nang walang pakundangan. Wala silang pakialam kung mawasak man ang mga bundok. Ang mahalaga sa kanila ay mahukay ang inasaam nilang mina na magpapayaman sa kanila.

Sa isang picture na kuha noong 2012 sa mga kabundukan sa Compostela Valley at ilang bahagi ng Davao Oriental, nakapanghihilakbot ang makikita

sapagkat butas-butas na ang mga bundok sa mga nasabing lugar. Masahol pa sa sungkaan ang tuktok ng mga bundok.

Nang manalasa ang bagyong Pablo noong 2012, bumigay ang bundok na maraming hukay. Napuno ng tubig ang mga butas at iyon ang naging dahilan para magkaroon ng landslides. Tinangay ng putik ang mga bahay kasama ang mga troso. Nasa 314 katao ang namatay.

Ganito rin ang nangyari sa St. Bernard, Southern Leyte noong Peb. 17, 2006, kung saan naguho ang bundok at tinakpan ang isang barangay. Isang school na may mga bata at guro ang nalibing nang buhay. Ang pagmimina rin ang itinuturong dahilan nang pagkawasak ng bundok. Bumigay ang lupa dahil sa sobrang pagkabutas na ginawa ng mining companies. Lumambot ang lupa at bumulwak ang putik

Sino ang makalilimot sa ginawa ng Marcopper Mining Company sa Marinduque noong Marso 24, 1996. Nasira ang kapaligiran at kalikasan doon. Ang dating buhay na buhay na Boac River ay nalason at namatay dahil sa tailings. Ilan sa mga tao ang nagkasakit sa balat.

Inaasahang ang pagkakahirang kay Lopez sa DENR ang pipigil sa mga matatakaw na miners upang hindi masira ang kapaligiran. Walang puwang sa mundo ang mga gahaman na walang awa kung sirain ang kapaligiran. Nararapat na suportahan ang bagong DENR secretary sa kanyang adbokasiya na mapangalagaan ang kapaligiran at likas na yaman.



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Seryosong kamay para sa kalikasan

Sa lahat ng appointees ni President-elect Rodrigo Duterte sa kanyang gabinete, itong pagkakapili niya kay giant network executive Gina Lopez bilang kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang nakasorpresa sa marami. Mismong ang may katawan nga ay nagulat. Hindi talaga inaasahan.

Nang tanggapin kahapon ni Lopez ang posisyon, gumawang na ang mining at oil stocks sa Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE). Ito ang reaksiyon ng mga negosyante at financier ng mga minahan sa bansa.

Pero iba ang reaksiyon ng mga environmentalists na ang adbokasiya ay iligtas ang Mother Earth mula sa tuluyang pagkasira na dulot ng industriyalisasyon at walang pakundangang abuso sa likas na yaman.

Masasabing mahusay ang pagkakapili kay Lopez. Bagama't sa isip ng ilan ay panibagong 'bayad-utang' na naman ang Lopez appointment sa nakaraang kampanya – may impresyon kasi na nakakiling ang ABS-CBN sa Duterte campaign noon dahil sa lantarang pagsuporta rito ni Lopez – sa isang banda ay mukhang ang kalikasan naman ang magbebenepisyo sa kanilang alyansa.

Ang kapuri-puri kay Lopez, bilang isang pribadong indibidwal ay naging masigasig at consistent ito sa kanyang kampanya para sa pagsusulong ng pro-environment projects.

Sa katunayan, ang ABS-CBN Foundation na nasa ilalim ng kanyang pamumuno ay pangunahing haligi ng malawakang proyekto na rehabilitasyon ng Pasig River. Tinawag na "Kapit-Bisig para sa Ilog Pasig" ang kampanya na walang kapagurang itinataguyod ni Lopez at ng foundation, katuwang ang ilang ahensya ng gobyerno, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at mga 'green volunteers'.

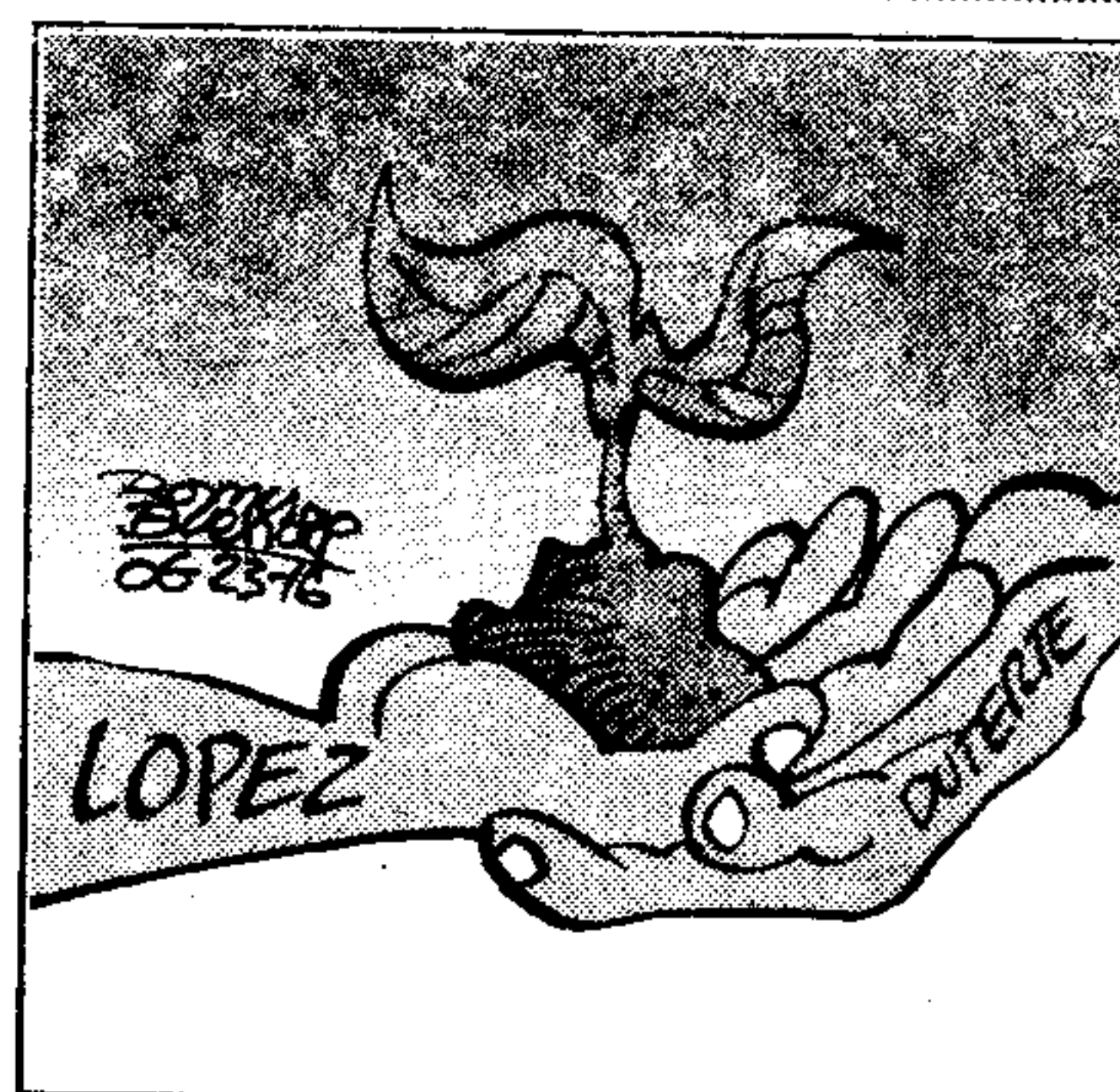
Mula sa aktuwal na paglilinis ng Ilog Pasig hanggang sa edukasyon sa pamamagitan ng giant network kung paano muling mabubuhay ang kontaminadong ilog, kita ang buhos na pagsisikap ni Lopez.

May katwiran ding mangamba ang mga kumpanya na ang negosyo ay nasa pagmimina at mga coal-fired power plants dahil bilang isang pribadong indibidwal ay naging napaka-aktibo at pursigido ni Lopez na tutulan ang ganitong uri ng mga aktibidad at negosyo sa bansa dahil sa matinding pinsalang idinudulot nito sa kalikasan.

Sinuman ang mayroong ganitong katangian ay karapat-dapat na pamunuan ang DENR.

Gayunpaman, dapat ding isipin ngayon ng uupong kalihim na hindi na siya basta pro-kalikasan environment kundi mayroon na siyang hawak na kapangyarihan na direktang makakaapekto sa interes ng mga mamamayan, ng mga investors sa bansa at ng kalikasan.

Importante ring binabalanse ang mga galaw at desisyon.



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Gina Lopez na sa DENR: "Be very scared, mining companies!"

Pormal na tinanggap ni ABS-CBN Foundation Chairperson Gina Lopez, ang alok ni President-elect Rodrigo Duterte na maging kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Si Lopez ay kilala bilang environmentalist dahil sa kanyang mga advocacy at programang may kaugnayan sa kalikasan.

Maliban dito, matindi ang paninindigan niya laban sa mining activities at coal-fired power plants.

Kaya naman ito ang reaksiyon ni Ifugao Rep.

Teddy Baguilat, dating chairman ng House committee on indigenous peoples, "The mining companies, be afraid. Be very afraid."

Umaasa si Baguilat na tatapusin na ni Lopez ang problemang ito bago pa man tuluyang mapatag ng mga minero ang mga kabundukan sa bansa at mapalayas ng tuluyan ang mga katutubo sa kanilang ancestral land.

Bagama't medyo kininagulat ni Lopez ang alok ni Duterte, pumayag na rin siyang hawakan ang nasabing ahensya upang lalong

maisulong ang pangangalaga sa kalikasan na isa sa kanyang priority.

Ilang oras matapos tanggapin ni Lopez ang posisyon, bumagsak ang mining at oil stocks sa pagsasara ng trading sa Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) kahapon.

Kabilang sa mga naapektuhan sa pagbulusok ng share prices ay ang Philex mining, Philex Petroleum Corp., Lepanto Consolidated Mining, Apex Mining at Manila Mining Corp. (Lhean Angeles/Bernard Taguinod)

HATAW!

D'YARYO NG BAYAN

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BULABUGIN

ni Jerry Yap

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MS. GINA LOPEZ IS THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR DENR SECRETARY

ISA tayo sa mga natuwa nang italaga ni Incoming President Digong Duterte si Ms. Gina Lopez ng ABS-CBN bilang Kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

She is the right person and the right choice!

Noong ang inyong lingkod po ay nanungkulang Presidente ng National Press Club (NPC), naging guest natin si Ms. Lopez sa ating weekly news forum noon na "No Holds Barred."

Dekada 70 pa nang makilala natin si Ms. Lopez. Alam naman natin kung ano ang dinanas ng kanilang pamilya nang mga panahong iyon kaya't hindi rin nagtagal ang aming acquaintance.

Muling nagtagpo ang aming landas nang ang inyong lingkod ay Presidente na ng NPC nang hilingin niya sa atin na maging resource person sa isang forum tungkol sa mining industry sa bansa.

Noon pa man ay nanindigan na si Madam Gina na dapat kontrolin na ng pamahalaan ang kalat-kalat na mining operations sa bansa lalo sa Mindanao.

Ayon kay Ms. Lopez, "Mining has a pathetic track record. Pathetic. Wherever there's mining, the people are poor. So why are we doing it? It's crazy."

Nagpakita rin siya ng mga video sa mga bundok na nasira sa pagminamina.

Sinabi niya ito sa isang interbyu, matapos tanggapin ang alok ni Incoming President Duterte.

Agit pa nga raw sa mamamatay-tao ang mga minahan sa bansa.

"For me, large scale, small scale, it's just, when you destroy the environment and you cause suffering to our rivers and streams, our agricultural land, our fishery resource, you kill everything. Is it worth it?"

Nagtataka naman tayo kung bakit si Mr. Manny Pangilinan ang unang pumiyok nang italaga ni Presidente Digong si Ms. Lopez sa DENR?!

Sabihin ba naman, "The elephant in the room is Gina Lopez, I apologize for the comparison but let me say this, it's entirely the prerogative of the president and we respect that," ani Pangilinan.

Kunsabagay, matagal na nating nababalitaan na may 'tensiyon' talaga

sa bahagi ni Madam Gina at Mr. Pangilinan, dahil sa kanilang magkakontraing adbokasiya.

Pero maging si Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison ay nasiyahan at natutuwa sa pagtatalaga ni Presidente Digong kay Ms. Lopez.

Well, alam nating magiging mabigat ang laban ni Ms. Lopez kontra malalaking mining companies or operations, illegal man 'yan o legal.

Lalo na ang talamak na black sand mining.

Pero sa palagay natin, isang seryosang kagaya niya ang angkop sa pagtatalaga ni Presidente Digong.

Suportahan po natin ang DENR ngayon, sa ilalim ng isang matapang, determinado, may pagmamahal sa kapaligiran at humanidad nagaya ni Ms. Gina Lopez.

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'Gina Lopez -- 'perfect choice'

BUMALANDRA sa mga pahayagan, dumagundong sa radyo at napanood sa telebisyon ang pagkahirang kay Regina 'Gina' Paz Lopez bilang **Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary**.

Si Gina ay kilalang 'environmentalist' na matagal nang ipinaglalaban ang pagligtas sa kalikasan at patuloy na pagsira ng mga minahan sa ating mga **natural resources**.

Inalok ni President-elect **Rodrigo 'Rody' Duterte** ang posisyon bilang **Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary** kay Lopez. Agad naman itong tinanggap ni Lopez at sinabing kahit pa wala siya o nasa DENR siya ay buo ang magiging suporta niya sa papaupong Presidente.

Sino nga ba si Gina Lopez, siya ay anak ng **ABS-CBN Chairman emeritus** na si **Eugenio Lopez**.

Maliban sa kilala ang kanilang pamilya bilang nagpapatakbo ng isang higitang istasyon ng telebisyon sa bansa naging chairperson din siya ng **ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation** at ng **Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission**.

Ilan lang sa pinakakilalang mga proyekto na kanyang nagawa habang nasa **ABS-CBN Foundation** siya ay ang **Sagip Kapamilya, Bantay Bata 163**, reforestation ng **La Mesa Watershed Reservation** at ang rehabilitasyon ng ilog Pasig, na malalapit sa estero sa pamamagitan ng proyektong **Bisig para sa Ilog Pasig**.

Isa rin siyang anti-mining advocate na kilalang tumututol sa malakihang pagmimina sa **Palawan**. Hindi rin siya sang-ayon sa paggamit ng **fossil fuels** bilang pagkukunan ng enerhiya at coal mining.

(Sundan sa page 4)

CALVENTO... Mula page 3

Malinaw daw ang kanyang prinsipyo na kung aalagaan ang kalikasan at kung gawin sa paraan na may pakinabang ang komunidad na doon nakatira naniniwala siyang mapupukso ang kahirapan.

Sumuporta naman kay Lopez ang **Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE)** sa pagkaka-appoint sa kanya bilang **DENR Secretary**.

Sa mga nagawa at ipinaglaban ni Lopez talagang naaayon sa kanya ang posisyon para mapangalagaan ang kalikasan. Ito na yata ang sinasabi ni

Presidente Rody na 'change is coming'.

Sa isang kuha sa isang pahayagan nakita na magkasama si Gina at President-elect Rody Duterte.

Isang magandang pangitain ito dahil seryoso si Gina sa kanyang adbokasiya at walang pwedeng magsabi na mabibili siya ng mga multi-national na mining corporations. Lopez yata yan!

Ang desisyon ni Digong na pagkuha kay Gina ay isang **perfect choice** hindi lamang nakakuha siya ng isang 'bulldog' na magba-

bantay at nasandigan pa niya ang pinakamalaking television network na **ABS-CBN Channel 2**. Gina na channel 2 pa laban ka?

PARA SA ANUMANG REAKSYON, sa mga biktima ng krimen o may problemang ligal maaari kayong magtext sa **09198972854**,

09051090451 at sa gustong maka-usap ako ng direktso sa **710-3618**.

Maaari din po ninyong i-like ang **www.facebook.com/tonycalvento** o i-type na rin ng direktso sa Facebook sa **Tony A. Calvento** at mag-iwan ng mensahe para sa inyong mga problema.

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Editorial

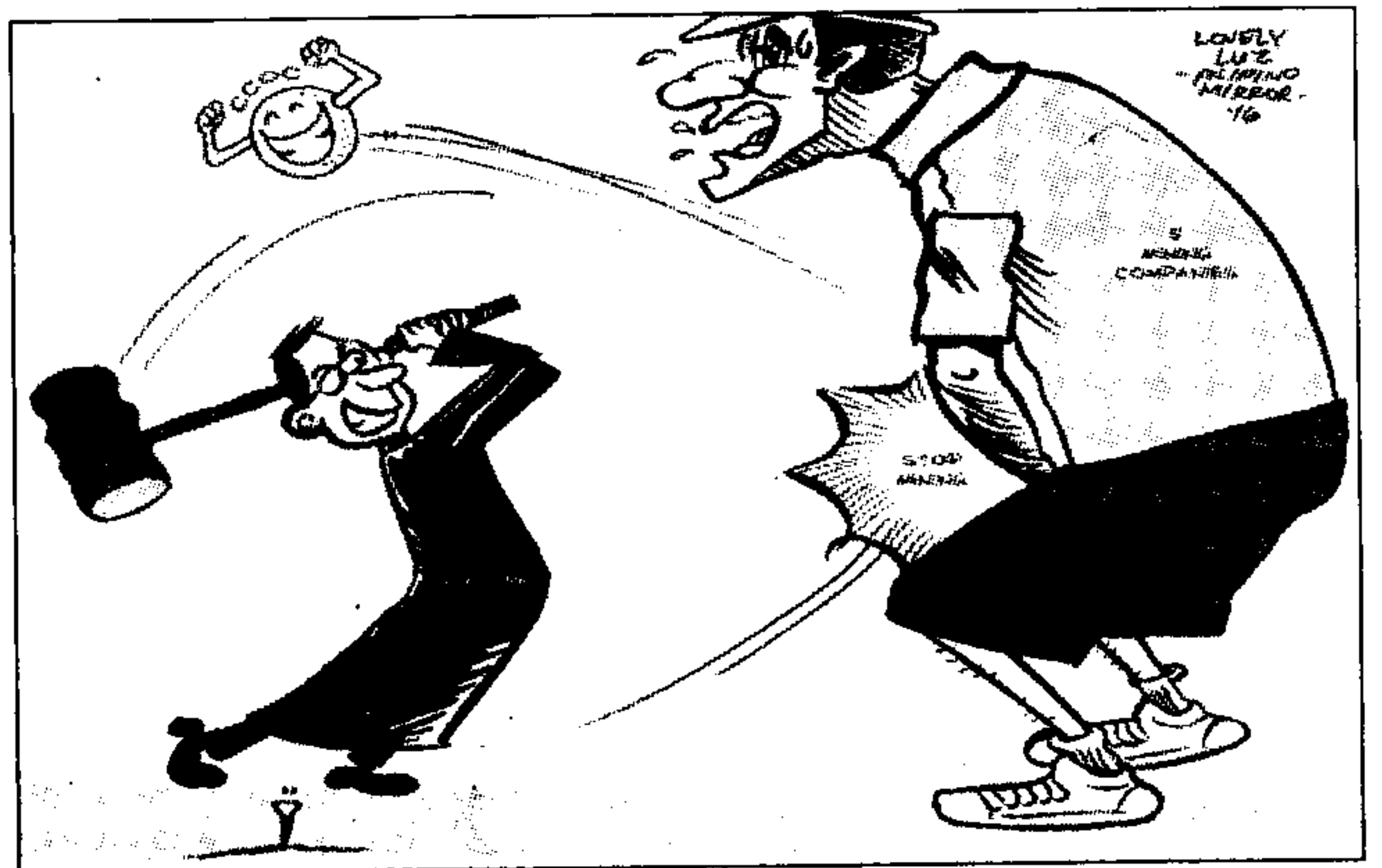
TAGUMPAY KONTRA PAGMIMINA

WASTO ang desisyon ng Korte Suprema sa pagbibigay ng writ of kalikasan sa Concerned Citizens of Sta. Cruz (CCOS) laban sa limang kompanya sa pagmimina na tahasang winawasak ang kapaligiran ng nasabing bayan gayundin ang mga bayan ng Candelaria sa Zambales at Infanta sa Pangasinan.

Kung ilang taon nang ipinaglaban ng CCOS na pinamumunuan ni Dr. Benito Molina ang pagpapatigil sa nickel ore mining na sumira sa mga kabundukan, ilog, talon, bukirin, palaisdaan, karagatan at bahura ng Zambales. Pero nagmistulang inutil ang Department of Environment and Resources (DENR), opisyaes ng lokal na pamahalaan at pulisya na hinayaan ang paglapastangan ng mining companies sa kapaligiran ng nasabing lugar.

Bagamat hindi pa lubos na titigil ang operasyon ng pagmimina hangga't hindi nag-iksiy ng temporary environmental protection program order (tepo) ang Court of Appeals (CA), malaking tagumpay pa rin ito sa mga mamamayan ng Sta. Cruz na matagal nang nagdurusa sa pamemerhuwisyo ng mining companies.

Tiyak na kikilos ang mga kompanya para patuloy na mapagsamantalahan ang dating magandang kapaligiran ng Zambales pero lalong lumaki ang pag-asa ng mga mamamayan ng Sta Cruz, Candelaria at



Infanta sa pagtatalaga ni incoming President Rodrigo Duterte kay Ms. Gina Lopez na kilala sa adbokasiya nitong kontra sa halos lahat ng uri ng pagmimina bilang bagong kalihim ng DENR.

Makaaasa ang sambayanang Pilipino na maipatutupad na sa bansa ang tunay na responsableng pagmimina pero dapat ihabla at papanagutin ang mga nagsabwatan sa pagwasak sa kapaligiran ng Zambales.

BusinessMirror

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Quo vadis, mining industry?



Val A. Villanueva

BUSINESSWISE

IT will be interesting to see how staunch antimining advocate Gina Lopez follows through with her reassuring words that she's open to a dialogue with stakeholders of the mining industry, now that she's accepted President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte's offer for her to lead the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Her rather conciliatory statement appeared to be not enough for investors in the mining sector, as the 17-stock mining and oil sectoral index nosedived on Wednesday—the day after her acceptance of “the challenge”—despite the whole market experiencing modest gains.

The index, which comprises heavily of miners, gave away 488.55 points, or 4.09 percent, to close at 11,451.84—the only index among six that bid the day good-bye in the red. Nonetheless, the Philippine Stock Exchange index expanded by 1.33 percent, while the all-shares index rose 0.79 percent.

Philex Mining Corp. shares stumbled 12.17 percent to end at P8.01 per share, and those of its subsidiary, Philex Petroleum Corp.—which explores and produces crude oil, natural gas and coal—tripped by 10.94 percent to end at P4.07 each. Philex Mining is one of the three Philippine subsidiaries of Manuel V. Pangilinan's Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd.

Pangilinan, the top honcho of both Philex Mining and Philex Petroleum, tweeted: “Crash in Ph Mining stocks this morning. There go the coal plants too. Can't look.”

Lopez is seen in the industry as its staunchest enemy who uses her family's ABS-CBN TV network to harass

large-scale mining operators in the country. It wasn't too long ago when she engaged Pangilinan in a heated tussle during a mining forum in one of the Metro's five-star hotels.

Sometime last year, and with ABS-CBN's TV crew in tow, she brought in around 300 antimining activists to disrupt a mining consultation in Lobo, Batangas, which Egerton Gold was conducting for the townsfolk.

A mining executive, who refused to be identified, told BusinessWise: “This could be a cliché, but it is just like appointing Dracula to the blood bank. I really don't know how the vetting procedure went, except for the fact that Gina is a staunch Duterte supporter.” Her aggressive and abrasive style irked many stakeholders in the industry who believe that she could not just draw the line between responsible and irresponsible mining.

The mining executive said: “Hers in an uncompromising stand where there is no middle ground.”

The industry's big-time players, indeed, struggle to differentiate and distance themselves from small-scale illegal miners who feel they are accountable only to themselves.

Time and again, large-scale miners immerse themselves in the dissemination to the public about the

best practices in responsible mining, with emphasis on rehabilitating the environment and improving the lot of the community where they operate. Illegal miners, on the other hand, wantonly pillage the environment in collusion with local executives who, BusinessWise sources intimate, receive a share of their “loot.”

Industry sources added: “This is the main reason these executives are for a total mining ban. Unfortunately, the ban is only for large-scale miners. Despite the ban, being contrary to the spirit of the country's laws, large-scale miners still get the raw end of the deal.”

Despite it being the world's most regulated and most taxed industry, the country's mining industry finds the government's help, if and when needed, disappointing, if not utterly dismal. Mining firms are left to

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Quo vadis, mining industry?

fend for themselves in cases where they are harassed and given the circuitous rounds by local government units (LGUs), in which they operate or explore for minerals.

The Philippine Mining Act has enough teeth to ensure that these mining companies toe the line. But too often, provisions of this law become inferior to the ones enacted by antimining LGUs, thus, frustrating the industry's effort to maximize the economic benefits the country could get from the industry. The industry is already heavily invested in building infrastructure and taking care of the indigenous people in its respective mining areas.

Lopez refuses to accept that modern-mining practices mitigate environmental destruction and that it could be the government's partner to fuel economic growth.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) has repeatedly assured the government and the public 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 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.

The country has the world's second-largest gold reserves. The queue of foreign investors, who wish to tap its vast mineral reserves, is getting longer, with each one eager to extract gold and other precious metals that lie beneath the ground. At the moment, mining contributes a miniscule percentage to the Philippine economy. Access to the \$1.4-trillion mining sector, which is rich also in copper and nickel, has been elusive, mired since the 1980s in irrelevant local laws, environmental battles and land-rights issues.

The Philippine Mining Act has enough teeth to ensure that these mining companies toe the line. But too often, provisions of this law become inferior to the ones enacted by anti-mining LGUs, thus, frustrating the industry's effort to maximize the economic benefits the country could get from the industry.

In my previous column, I have stated that mining matters in the world we live in. Almost everything that we use—household appliances, computers, farm implements, transport vehicles, mobile phones, beauty and hygiene items, medicines, fertilizers, etc.—is a mineral product, or relies upon minerals and metals for production and distribution. In order to maintain the lifestyle and security that a modern society enjoys, the mining industry must, therefore, be given the opportunity to continue on a course of healthy production and exploration into the future. Mining activists conveniently forget that mining has been, is and will continue to be a significant contributor to the country's economic growth.

In my talks with captains of the mining industry, they are still hopeful that Lopez would realize that she's now the chief of a regulatory body, which is expected to be neutral. Until after Lopez makes known her plans for the industry, the future of mining precariously hangs in the balance.

*For comments and suggestions, e-mail me at
mvala.v@gmail.com*



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Hihina ang mining business

on ni Duterte at sa pamamahala ni Gina sa DENR.

YARI ang mga kumpanya na may minahan sa pagkakahirang ng anti-mining advocate na si Gina Lopez bilang incoming secretary ng environment and natural resources.

Ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources o DENR ang namamahala sa mga minahan sa buong bansa.

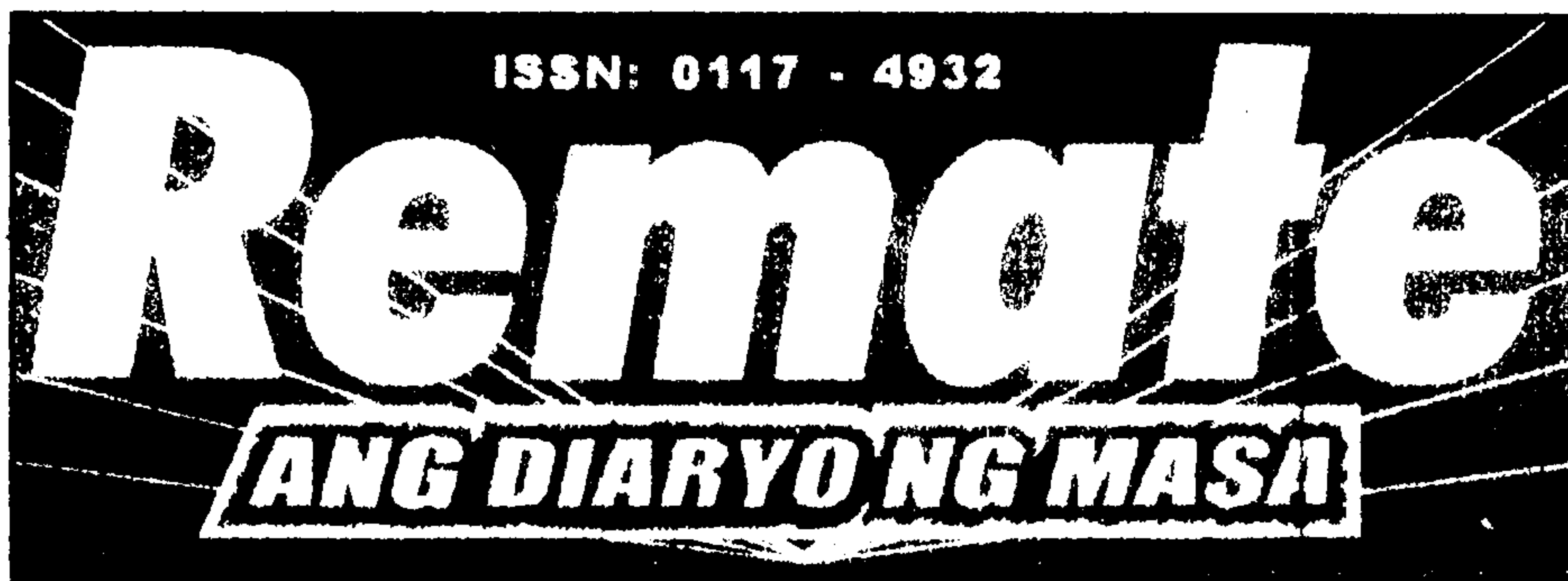
Dahil sa balita na binibigay ni incoming President Digong kay Gina ang DENR, nagbagsakan ang share prices ng mining and oil stocks sa Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

Yun ay balita na ino-offer pa lang ni Digong kay Gina ang DENR; mas lalong bababa ang stocks ng mining sa pagtanggap ni Gina ng Cabinet position.

Isa sa mga kumpanya na bumagsak ang stocks ay ang Philex Mining, na kontrolado ng bilyonaryong si Manny Pangilinan.

Nagkasagutan sina Gina at Manny sa isang mining forum noong 2012 dahil sa paninindigan ni Gina laban sa mining.

Malulugi ang mining industry sa administray-



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Writ of Kalikasan vs. 5 minahan, inilabas ng SC

Nag-isyu ang Korte Suprema ng Writ of Kalikasan kaugnay ng operasyon ng limang minahan na inaakusahang nagdudulot ng pagkasira ng kalikasan sa Sta. Cruz, Zambales.

Kasama sa inisyuhan ng Writ of Kalikasan ang Benguet Corporation Nickel Mines, Incorporated; Eramen Minerals, Incorporated; LNL Archipelago Minerals, Incorporated; Zambales Diversified Metals Corporation; at Shangfil Mining and Trading Corporation.

Sa petisyong inihain ng mga residente ng Sta Cruz, inireklamo nila ang limang minahan sa pagkasira sa ecosystem ng Sta. Cruz at ng katabi nitong bayan ng

Candelaria; polusyon sa tubig at hangin; at pagkawasak ng irrigation system sa Sta. Cruz, na nakaapekto sa produksiyon ng palay sa lugar at naging dahilan din para mawalan ng pinagkakakitaan ang mga residente sa nasabing bayan.

Kaugnay nito, inatasan din ng Korte Suprema ang Court of Appeals (CA) na magsagawa ng pagdinig sa kaso at atasan ang mga respondent na maghain ng verified return sa loob ng 10 araw.

Pero paglilinaw ni Atty. Theodore Te, tagapagsalita ng SC, walang inisyung temporary environmental protection order ang hukuman laban sa operasyon ng limang minahan. **Beth Camia**

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Group slams governor's defense of mining operations

SURIGAO CITY—An environmental group in the Caraga region denounced Surigao del Norte Gov. Sol Matugas for “shamelessly” defending large-scale mining companies despite glaring evidence of the destruction that their operations caused in her province.

Matugas earlier said she was “not afraid of mining here in Surigao.”

“The mining industry is, I think, implementing what we call responsible mining,” she said in the wake of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte’s mention of the province as a haven of irresponsible miners, whose operations are wreaking havoc on the environment.

“It is no wonder that large-scale mining companies have been free to exploit the mineral resources of Surigao del Norte without consideration of the effects to communities, to feed

the greed for profit,” said the group Caraga Watch in a statement sent by e-mail to INQUIRER.

“They have a shameless protector in Gov. Sol Matugas,” said the statement, signed by Rev. Pio Mercado, Caraga Watch Surigao del Norte spokesperson.

Days after she spoke in favor of mining companies, Matugas said she supported Duterte “against irresponsible mining.”

In a statement released by her office, Matugas said she had a good record in “strictly enforcing applicable rules and pertinent regulations to make sure that mining companies comply with official policies.”

“I am for responsible mining. I believe in caring for the environment,” she said.

Matugas said proof of her advocacy for responsible mining is the ongoing project to build a coastal resource center in the town of Claver, where most

elect Duterte to point out the problem” in Surigao del Norte.

Caraga Watch said Matugas turned a blind eye “for years” on heavy siltation caused by mining in coastal areas in the province.

The group said coastal waters in the towns of Placer, Bacuag and Claver “have become a muddy, polluted area with increasingly dwindling marine life.”



A SILTATION pond of the Shenzou Mining off the shore of Claver town, Surigao del Norte province.

PHOTO FROM CARAGA WATCH

large-scale mining operations in the province are based.

But Caraga Watch’s Mercado scoffed at the governor’s action, describing it as “consuelo de bobo.”

“This is too little, too late and laughable to say the least,” Mercado said.

Mercado said Matugas had spent more than six years as governor “and it took President

Matugas, said Caraga Watch, cannot claim ignorance about the pollution caused by mining because it has been reported many times by media.

It said in the meantime, fish kills have occurred in and diseases have spread among residents of towns around Lake Mainit, which Caraga Watch said has been contaminated by the operations of mining company Red 5-Greenstone Corp. in the towns of Tubod and Mainit.

Danilo Adorador III, Inquirer Mindanao



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Land reform law set for review

By Efren Montano

THE land reform law will be reviewed once President-elect Rodrigo Duterte takes office.

Duterte told business leaders in Davao City that the best move forward on land reform is to take a step back.

"Balik muna tayo. Let us go back and review. If I think there is an improvement in the lives of the people who were awarded lands, baka pa. Pero kung ganito lang nangyari, lahat na pinagbili na, it has been returned, there was a buy-back then there, I will have to think a thousand times," the Davao City mayor said.

Duterte said he will follow the provisions of the law and not violate the rights of the land owners.

"You know the law has already passed... and I really want to know among klaseng land reform (would be implemented). Kasi if we go back to being confiscatory, nonchalant attitude, I will not agree with that. Mahirap iyan. Sa ekonomiya ng lupa na ibinigay doon sa tenants, bumabalik naman doon sa landlords," he said.

"The only consideration or the thing that would make

me happy is that one time in their lives they were able to hold that much money. At least, they enjoyed for a moment in this universe, nakahawak sila ng pera na malaki. Iyon lang. At least, natikman nila. Iyon na lang ang konsuelo ko. But to go into confiscating other people's property, I will not," Duterte added.

The late President Corazon Aquino in 1988 signed into law the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) to grant landless farmers and farm workers' ownership of agricultural lands. The land distribution should have been completed in 1998.

In 2009, former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension with Reforms (CARP-ER) that extended the deadline of distribution of lands to farmers for five years.

The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) are the lead agencies tasked to implement the CARP.

Duterte has tapped Rafael "Ka Paeng" Mariano to head DAR and environment advocate Gina Lopez to handle the DENR portfolio.

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PH fishers pin hope on UN tribunal

INFANTA, Zambales—Jonathan Almandrez was chased away from the rich fishing grounds of a South China Sea lagoon by a Chinese patrol, something he hopes will stop happening if the Philippines wins an international legal case against China.

The incident at Panatag Shoal, a necklace of reefs and rocks that Filipino fishermen say hosts some of the world's most abundant marine life, is part of a long-running territorial dispute that sits at the heart of a United Nations-backed tribunal expected to rule in the coming weeks.

"I was angry at their gall to shoos us away when we were clearly inside Philippine territory," said the 30-year-old fisherman, who used a pseudonym as he did not want to be identified for fear of potential Chinese repercussions.

Almandrez, who provided mobile phone footage of the encounter to Agence France-

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PH fishers pin hope on UN tribunal ruling

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Presse (AFP), said that for two hours on June 7, Chinese Coast Guard patrol boats circled a wooden outrigger carrying 10 Filipino fishermen.

The patrol boats got within about 2 meters of the vessel, which had been fishing in the reefs just outside the shoal before daylight betrayed them to the Chinese.

"Transfer to another area! No fishing inside," the Chinese coast guards shouted in English, according to Almandrez.

"You go (back) to China because this is the property of the Philippines," he recalled shouting back.

The Filipino crew eventually left when a much larger Chinese vessel began to approach and they feared it would fire water cannon.

Video footage shows two patrol boats flying Chinese flags and with the English words "China Coast Guard" on the side.

China takes control

Local fishermen say Panatag Shoal, 230 kilometers off the main Philippine island of Luzon, has been their hunting ground for generations.

Internationally known as Scarborough Shoal, it is 650 kilometers from Hainan Island, the nearest major Chinese landmass, but falls within the ill-defined "nine-dash line" that marks the extent of Beijing's claim to control of nearly all of the South China Sea.

The reefs and shallow waters mean one fisherman can easily spear 200 kilograms of fish in just over an hour, according to Almandrez and others from Infanta, one of the main Panatag Shoal fishing towns on Luzon.

It also provides vital shelter for stranded fishermen during storms.

China took effective control of the shoal in 2012, following a two-month standoff with the

Philippine Navy and Filipino coast guards.

Ear-splitting blast

Since then, non-Chinese fishing boats approaching the lagoon mouth have routinely been given an ear-splitting horn blast from a ship stationed inside, and those who refuse to leave run the risk of being hosed down or even rammed, according to Filipino fishermen.

"The water spray was so strong it destroyed one of our styrofoams," Felix Lavezores, 36, told AFP at Infanta, recalling an early May water-cannon attack at the lagoon mouth that split an ice box used to store their catch.

An expedition to the shoal costs around P90,000 per boat, including fuel, supplies and crew salaries—money the boat's owners cannot make back if they are forced to high-tail it home with an empty hold.

The Chinese at times also cut anchor cables, putting Filipino boats at risk of running aground, according to some of the Filipino fishermen at Infanta and Masinloc, another fishing town in Zambales province from which Panatag Shoal is administered, explaining the name Bajo Masinloc (Masinloc Shoal) by which Scarborough Shoal is also known.

'Intrinsic territory'

China claims it has sovereign rights to nearly all of the South China Sea, even waters approaching the coasts of its Asian neighbors.

When asked about incidents at the shoal, foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying repeated China's longstanding position.

"We have said that Scarborough Shoal is China's intrinsic territory. The Chinese Coast Guard vessels' law enforcement activities in China's sovereign territorial waters are legitimate and beyond reproach," Hua told reporters in Beijing on Tuesday.

The competing territorial

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WAITING FOR RULING A fisherman and his wife fix their nets next to a fishing fleet at the port in Masinloc, Zambales province. A recent incident at the nearby Panatag Shoal is part of a long-running territorial row between the Philippines and China, which sits at the heart of a UN-backed tribunal that is expected to rule in the coming weeks.

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claims have for decades made the South China Sea a potential source of regional conflict, and tensions have risen sharply in recent years as China has sought to expand its presence in the disputed areas. Aside from taking control of

Panatag Shoal, it has undertaken unprecedented land reclamation in the Spratly Islands, one of the sea's main archipelagos that are

also claimed by the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Taiwan.

Critics of China fear the artificial islands could be put to military use, and to establish effective sea and air control over some of the world's most important shipping routes and waters that are believed to sit atop significant oil and gas deposits.

PH legal challenge

The Philippines, the most vocal critic, has responded by lodging a case with the Permanent Court of Arbitration, a UN-backed tribunal at The Hague, asking it to rule that China's claims to most of the sea violate international law.

Although China is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, it has vowed to ignore the ruling and accused the Philippines of stirring tensions with its legal challenge.

The Philippines hopes a favorable verdict will, at minimum, help build global diplomatic pressure on China.

But regardless of the outcome, China looks unlikely to let Philippine fishermen return to Panatag Shoal.

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US to China, rivals: Be calm after ruling



IDLED Epifanio Marqueza, one of the captains of a reef-fishing fleet, gestures next to his vessel idled in Masinloc, Zambales province, after an encounter with a Chinese Coast Guard ship at the nearby Panatag Shoal. AFP

Court decision seen to help start talks

THE UNITED States on Wednesday called on China and other rival claimants to exercise restraint when an international tribunal issues a landmark ruling on the South China Sea disputes that Beijing has chosen to ignore.

A senior US state department official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to Asian journalists through a teleconference, said the upcoming decision by the arbitration panel in The Hague may offer "a great deal of clarity" on the disputes and help the claimants forge an arrangement to avoid potential confrontations.

She said the decision, expected within weeks, could also serve as a jumping-off point to diplomatic talks.

"We would certainly call on all governments to exercise restraint and to use this post-arbitration period as an opportunity to restart those diplomatic discussions," she said.

China has said it would not recognize any arbitration decision despite calls by several

Asian and Western governments for it to respect international law.

Some fear Beijing may take a harder stance and take provocative actions if it comes under pressure from outside, including by the United States, to comply with an adversarial ruling.

In a harsh attack on US policies in Asia, the flagship newspaper of China's ruling Communist Party on Wednesday accused Washington of seeking to turn the South China Sea "into a powder keg" and warned it not to underestimate China's determination to defend its territorial claims.

The People's Daily cited reports from Beijing.

US TO CHINA/A

Duterte to US envoy: Are you with us or not? /A

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US to China, rivals: Be calm after ruling

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cent combined exercises by two US Navy aircraft carrier strike groups off the eastern coast of the Philippines as a sign of US hegemony and said Washington had made a mistake in seeking to intimidate China.

In making displays of military power aimed at China, the United States has “picked the wrong counterpart,” said the editorial, the contents of which are usually vetted by high ranking party officials.

Competing claims

US military activity, including freedom of navigation cruises near China’s man-made islands and exercises with allies, is contributing to the militarization of the region, the editorial said.

China claims almost all of the 3.5-million-square-kilometer South China Sea, in-

cluding waters close to the shores of its smaller neighbors in the region.

The Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan have overlapping claims in the South China Sea, a crucial waterway where \$5 trillion in global shipborne trade passes every year and where islets, reefs and atolls are believed to be sitting atop vast energy reserves.

Beijing prefers one-on-one negotiations with each of the rival claimants, an arrangement that gives it advantage because of its sheer size and clout and prevents Washington from playing any role to resolve the conflicts.

In the case filed in the United Nations Permanent Court of Arbitration, the Philippines challenged the validity of China’s “nine-dash line” claiming virtually the entire stretch of the South China Sea and demanded respect for its right to explore resources in waters within its 370-km exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

The Philippines also asked the tribunal to rule whether several disputed areas are outcrops, reefs or islands and how much stretch of territorial waters they project.

Natuna incidents

The US official also expressed concern over China’s Coast Guard ships escorting Chinese fishing vessels in areas including Indonesia’s Natuna Islands, where Indonesian vessels fired warning shots on Friday.

Indonesia has rejected China’s stance that the two nations have overlapping claims on “maritime rights and interests” in the South China Sea.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi on Wednesday said his country had “no overlapping claims in any form in Indonesian waters with China.”

But Jakarta has objected to Beijing’s inclusion of waters around Natuna Islands within its “nine-dash line” claim to almost all of the South China Sea.

A Chinese fishing boat entered those waters on Friday, prompting an Indonesian naval vessel to fire a warning shot, injuring one person.

It was the third reported confrontation between Indonesian naval vessels and Chinese fishing boats near the Natuna Islands this year.

Confrontation at Ayungin

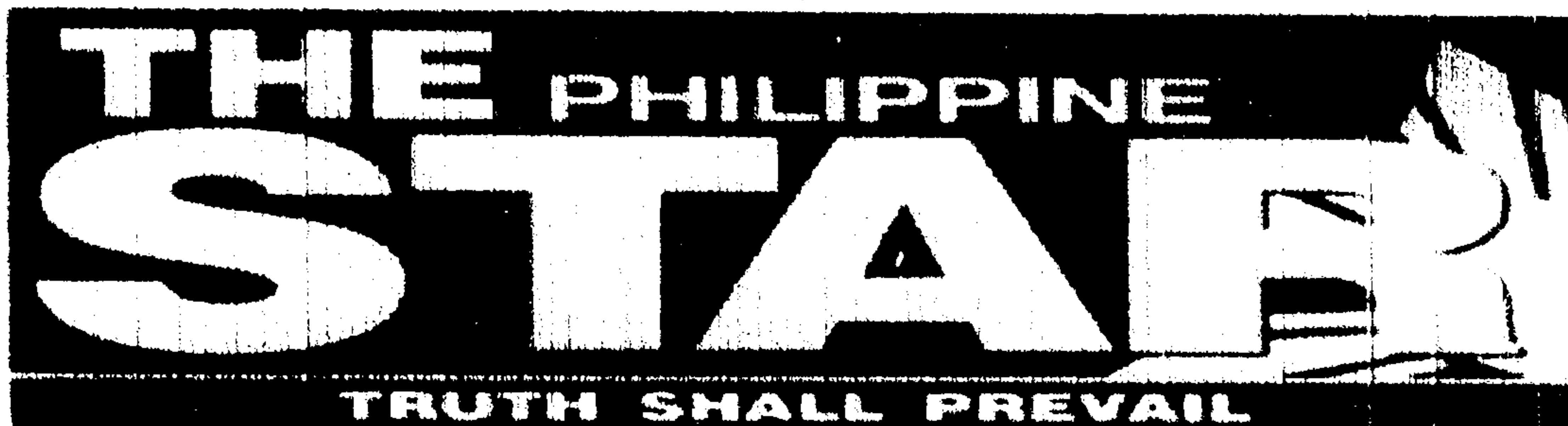
The Philippines also has stood up to China’s bullying in the South China Sea, with a small, rickety Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources vessel outsmarting a large Chinese Coast Guard ship to restock a small Marine garrison on the BRP Sierra Madre on Ayungin Shoal (Second Thomas Shoal) in the Spratly Islands on March 29, 2014.

The next day, the Philippines submitted evidence to the arbitration court in The Hague, which proceeded to hear the case despite China’s refusal to take part in the proceedings.

In his last week in office, President Aquino is waiting for the ruling, which he hopes will be in favor of the Philippines.

“We have done what we can [to obtain] a resolution that is fair to all parties concerned,” Mr. Aquino told reporters in a recent news conference.

Mr. Aquino steps down on June 30.
Reports from AP, Reuters and Nikko Dizon



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EDITORIAL

On dangerous ground

The Philippines consistently ranks among the most "murderous" countries for journalists, and among the five worst in terms of impunity as most of the killings remain unsolved.

Now the country has another dubious distinction. International non-government organization Global Witness, in a report called "On Dangerous Ground," ranked the Philippines second only to Brazil in a list of the deadliest countries for environmental activists. The non-profit NGO reported that of the 185 people worldwide who were killed last year while defending their lands, forests and rivers from industrial activities that harm the environment, 33 were Filipinos.

Global Witness explores hidden links between environmental destruction and demand for natural resources, corruption and armed conflict. The NGO said that in many countries, governments, companies and criminal gangs were seizing land from residents to meet a growing demand for products such as minerals, palm oil and timber.

Around the world, vulnerable communities find themselves targeted by private security personnel,

government forces and contract killers, according to Global Witness. In the Philippines, among the communities that have suffered in defending their lands are indigenous or *lumad* groups.

Environmental activists who go into journalism are also vulnerable. Relatives of broadcaster Gerry Ortega, former director of the Crocodile Farm in Palawan and an opponent of mining in the province, are still waiting for justice.

Ortega, a veterinarian-turned-politician, was assassinated in January 2011. His political foes, former Palawan governor Joel Reyes and brother Mario Reyes Jr., former mayor of Coron town, are facing trial as the accused masterminds.

The case may move faster under the Duterte administration, whose incoming environment secretary, known anti-mining advocate Gina Lopez, heads the foundation that counted Ortega among its members.

Relatives of many other slain environmental activists, however, have little hope of getting justice. As in the unsolved murders of journalists, this failure has guaranteed impunity and more attacks.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

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Scientists battle to save world's coral reefs

HONOLULU – After the most powerful El Niño on record heated the world's oceans to never-before-seen levels, huge swaths of once vibrant coral reefs that were teeming with life are now stark white ghost towns disintegrating into the sea.

And the world's top marine scientists are still struggling in the face of global warming and decades of devastating reef destruction to find the political and financial wherewithal to tackle the loss of these globally important ecosystems.

"What we have to do is to really translate the urgency," said Ruth Gates, president of the International Society for Reef Studies and director of the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology.

Gates, who helped organize a conference for more than 2,000 international reef scientists, policy makers and others, said the scientific community needs to make it clear how "intimately reef health is intertwined with human health."

The International Coral Reef Symposium convened on Monday to try to create a more unified conservation plan for coral reefs. She said researchers have to find a way to implement large scale solutions with the help of



DEAD REEF – Much of the inner reef at Hanauma Bay in Oahu is dead after decades of tourist interaction, but the outer reef is still relatively healthy. (AP Photo/Caleb Jones)

governments.

Consecutive years of coral bleaching have led to some of the most widespread mortality of reefs on record, leaving scientists in a race to save them. While bleached coral often recovers, multiple years weakens the organisms and increases the risk of death.

Researchers have achieved some success with projects such as creating coral nurseries and growing forms of "super coral" that can withstand

harsher conditions. But much of that science is being done on a very small scale with limited funding.

Bob Richmond, director of the University of Hawaii's Kewalo Marine Laboratory, said the problems are very clear: "Overfishing of reef herbivores and top predators, land-based sources of pollution and sedimentation, and the continued and growing impacts of climate change."

While reefs are major contributors

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
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Scientists battle to save world's coral reefs

to many coastal tourist economies, saving the world's coral isn't just about having pretty places for vacationers to explore. Reefs are integral to the overall ecosystem and are an essential component of everyday human existence.

Reefs not only provide habitat for most ocean fish consumed by humans, but they also shelter land from storm surges and rising sea levels. Coral has even been found to have medicinal properties.

In one project to help save 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.

Most of Hawaii's species of coral are unlike other corals around the world in that they grow very slowly, which makes reef rebuilding in the state difficult. So

officials came up with a plan to grow large chunks of coral in a fraction of the time it would normally take.

Coral reefs have almost always been studied up close, by scientists in the water looking at small portions of reefs.

But the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is taking a wider view, from about 23,000 feet above. NASA and other scientists recently launched a three-year campaign to gather new data on coral reefs worldwide. They are using specially designed imaging instruments attached to aircraft.

"The idea is to get a new perspective on coral reefs from above, to study them at a larger scale than we have been able to before, and then relate reef condition to the environment," said Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences' Eric Hochberg, principal investigator for the project.

If the scientific community and the world's governments can't come together to address coral's decline, one of earth's most critical habitats could soon be gone, leaving humans to deal with the unforeseen consequences.

"What happens if we don't take care of our reefs?" asked Gates. "It's dire."

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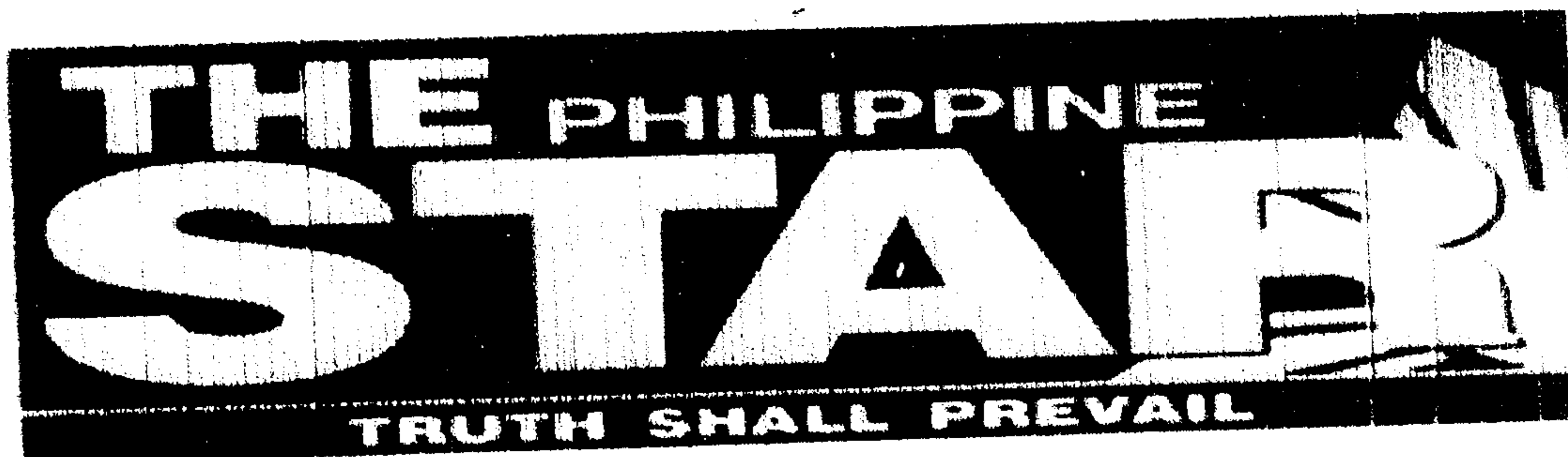
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

● Tons of trash from Baguio waterways

BAGUIO CITY (PNA) – Engr. Moises Lozano of the City Environment and Parks Management Office (CEPMO) and focal person of the Waste Water Air Ambiance Management Division (WWAMD) and “Salaknib ti Waig” (protectors of the rivers) recently bared that barangay environmentalists and volunteers gathered about 130 sacks or 2.6 tons of garbage from Balili (Sagudin), Bued, Galiano, Ambalanga (Agno) rivers and tributaries between March and May 2016. There were 161 participants from Barangays Happy Hallow, Loakan proper, Holy Ghost extension, Honeymoon-Holyghost, Marcoville, Pacdal and Magsaysay Private Road including adoptors from the Baguio Center Mall, Texas Instrument and Canitalk Academy.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Filipinos benefit from climate study missions abroad

By RUDY FERNANDEZ

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna – A total of 42 Filipino environment and agriculture officials and specialists have so far benefited from the overseas study missions in three Southeast Asian countries that shared with them their “success stories” in climate change and related initiatives.

The separate overseas trips have brought the Filipinos to Vietnam, Thailand, and most recently, Indonesia under the “Overseas Study Mission on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM) Initiatives in Agriculture.”

The mission participants were mostly officials of the Department of Agriculture (DA), local government units (LGUs), non-government entities, and selected representatives of the private sector.

The study trips were organized by the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) in collaboration with the Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT)-Regional Office for Asia based in Hanoi, Vietnam.

SEARCA is hosted by the Philippine government through the Department of Education (DepEd) in the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB).

Colombia (South America)-based CIAT is one of the international centers of the Consultative Group on Agricultural Research (CGIAR) established in strategic regions of the world, among them the Los Baños-based International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). CIAT is the lead center of the

CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture, and Food Security.

The overseas study tours were envisioned as means of sharing knowledge, experiences, and resources to address climate change risks in agriculture. They aimed to enhance the managerial and technical capacity of the Department of Agriculture-Adaptation and Mitigation Initiatives in Agriculture program being undertaken in partnership with SEARCA.

For instance, in the maiden mission to Vietnam, the Philippine team observed how climate-smart agriculture technologies and practices are integrated into the farmers’ management strategies to enhance their adaptive capacity and build resilience in the face of climate change.

“The various science-based information and tools, policies, and mechanisms for up-scaling and outscaling of the technologies were discussed during the field visits,” mission facilitator and coordinator Rosario Bantayan reported.

Other activities visited in Vietnam included the “Safe Vegetable Production” project in Hanoi and the Climate-Smart Village in Yen Bai province.

The team that composed the second mission to Thailand included 12 officials and staff members of the Department of Agriculture, International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, and Rice Watch.

The mission to Indonesia provided the participants – 12 DA officials and staff members, one local government official, and two representatives

from the private sector, with perspectives and how the Indonesian government, particularly its farmers, tackles the challenges of climate change.

Bantayan reported that the trip enabled the participants to gain first-hand knowledge and information on how Indonesian institutions integrate climate change considerations and initiatives in the agriculture sector.

Indonesia is the world’s largest archipelagic country, consisting of some 17,000 islands with the majority of the total population living in marginalized environments that are susceptible to weather- and climate-related disasters.

The Indonesian government has taken research- and technology-based climate change adaptation and mitigation measures to reduce the threats to food and nutrition security.

CIAT, together with its local partner, the Jakarta-based ASEAN-German Program on Response to Climate Change, coordinated the Philippine team’s visit to various Indonesian agencies and institutions. The team included DA official Alice Ilaga and DA-Negros Island regional executive director Renato Manantan.

One of the mission’s highlights was the opportunity given to the team to interact with the rice farmers in West Java, where the first Climate Field Schools were piloted.

Through the Science Field Shops, the farmers shared with the Filipino mission team members their deeper understanding of the impact of climate change.

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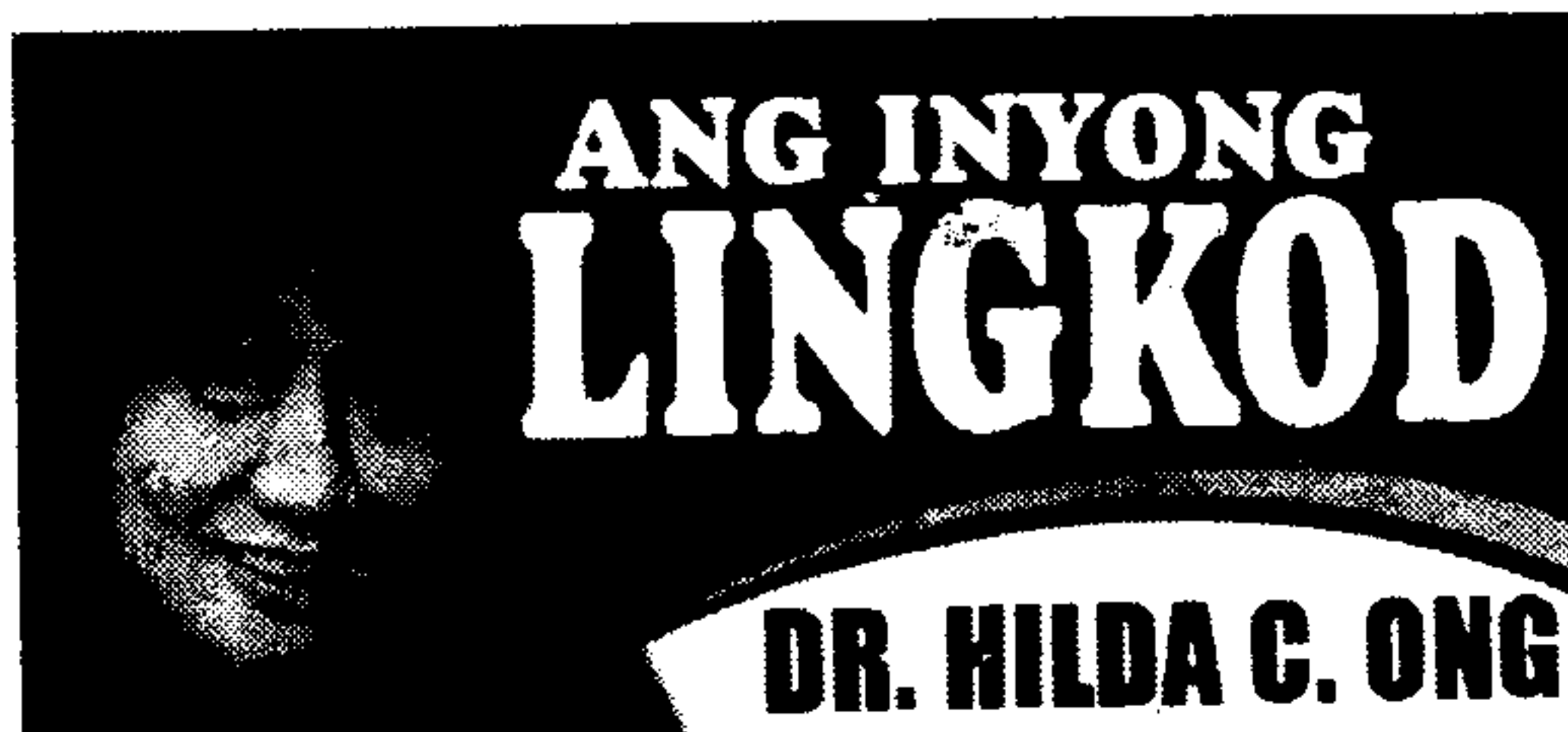
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NAGSISIMULA na ang panahon ng tag-ulan sa buong bansa, ngunit kinakailangan pa rin ang ibayong pagtitipid sa tubig ng mga nasa Metropolitan Manila. Alam n'yo bang nasa 181.11 meters na lamang ang antas ng tubig sa Angat Dam nitong Hunyo 20, 2016 na malayo mula sa normal range na 212 meters.

Panawagan ni Dr. Sevilio D. David, Jr., executive director ng NWRB at mga water concessionaire na nagsisilbi sa NCR, tipid-tipid pa rin sa tubig dahil kahit halos araw-araw nang umuulan ay hindi parin sapat ang taas ng tubig sa Angat Dam.



DR. HILDA C. ONG

LEBEL NG TUBIG SA ANGAT DAM, PABABA NANG PABABA!

Kapag sapat ang tubig sa Angat Dam, ang normal na alokasyon na ibinibigay ng NWRB sa Manila Water at Maynilad ay nasa pagitan ng 43-46 CMS, ngunit, nasaksihan nating lahat ang pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig noong nakaraang Agosto 2015, ito'y umabot sa 186 meters. Pero, kung ikukumpara natin ang mga datos ng nakaraang taon, mukhang mas mabilis ang pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig ngayong taon. Nasa buwan palang ng Hunyo pero ang lebel ng tubig ay nasa 181.11 meters na, lubhang mababa sa 212 normal high water level (NHWL).

Dahil sa patuloy ang pagbaba ng lebel ng tubig, ang mungkahi ng inyong lingkod sa NWRB, sana umpisahan ang pagbabawas ng alokasyon ng tubig o kaya magkaroon ng water pressure reduction, scheduling, at interruption sa malaking bahagi ng Metro Manila.

Ang pagbawas ng paglalaan ng tubig para sa domestic consumption ay hindi makaaapekto sa pag-sup-

ply para sa Metro Manila.

Ang hakbang na ito ay isang estratehiko upang makatipid ng tubig at mabawasan ang pagbagsak ng antas ng tubig sa Angat reservoir habang naghihintay ng patuloy ng pag-ulan hanggang sa umabot sa normal na lebel.

Sa ngayon, todo na ang pagbabantay ng National Water Resources Board (NWRB) sa naturang dam upang maiwasan ang pag-abot nito sa critical level na 160 meters para sa drinking water at 180 meters para sa irrigation.

TANGKILIKIN ang programang **"HEALTH & Travel @ SERBISYO PUBLIKO**, sa DWBL 1242 kHz (8:00-9:00 a.m.) Monday to Friday at DWSS 1494 kHz (9:00-10:00 a.m.), Saturday & Sunday. Mababasa ang kanyang mga article sa Dr. Hilda Ong FB Fan Page.