

DATE : 25 JUN 2016

DAY : Saturday

DENR
IN THE NEWS

THE EXPONENT OF PHILIPPINE PROGRESS
SINCE 1900

MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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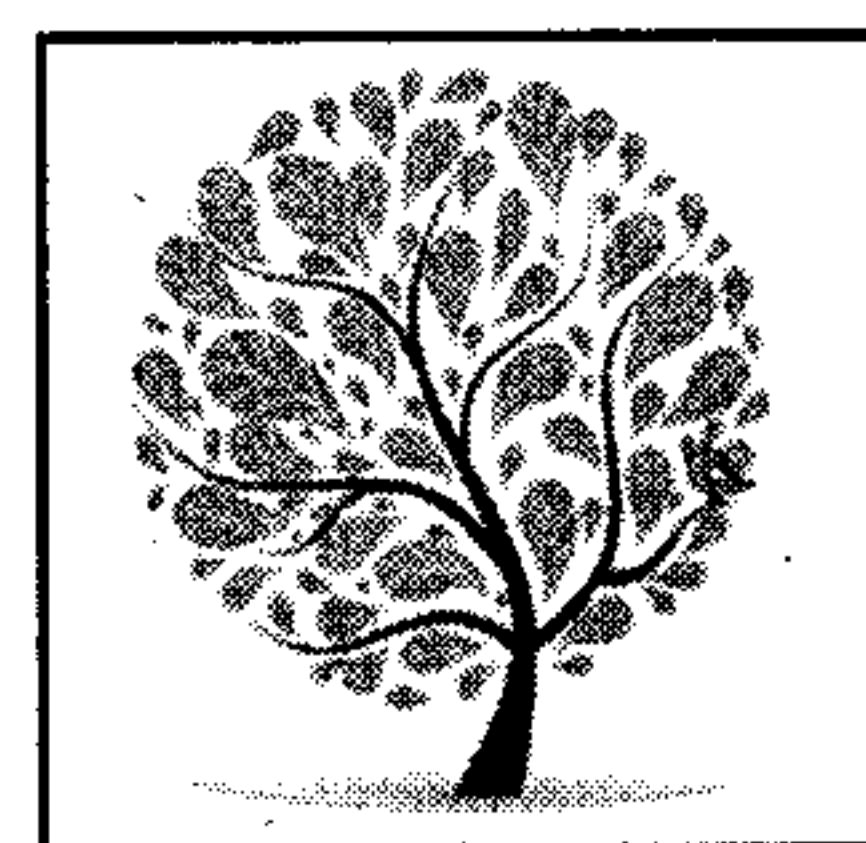
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

CELEBRATION

Arbor Day, a celebration of trees



ARBOR Day is celebrated in the Philippines on June 25 of each year. It was first established through Proclamation No. 30 in 1947, to be held every second Saturday of September. Proclamation 396 on June 2, 2003, moved the celebration to June 25.

Republic Act 10176, the Arbor Day Act of 2012, revived tree-planting as a yearly event for local government units. Under the law, all Filipinos aged 12 and above are required to plant at least one tree every year. RA 10176 boosts the National Greening Program, implemented since May 13, 2011, involving the planting of 1.5 billion trees in 250 million hectares of public lands by 2016. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is leading the tree-planting.

On Arbor Day, individuals and communities are urged to plant tree saplings and ornamental plants and to recognize their importance. Trees create shade, provide home for animals; ancient trees serve as historic landmarks. Trees make food for humans and wildlife, absorb and store rainwater, replenish the ground water supply, and prevent flooding. Trees help keep things cool during summer.

Welcoming President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte, an environmental group launched the "Duter-tree Challenge,"

calling on all Filipinos to plant trees on Arbor Day, to mitigate the effects of climate change. The activity is designed for each individual to plant a tree in his own backyard or any vacant space, and to ensure that it will grow and benefit future generations.

The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority is planting over 3,000 seedlings of various tree species at Pastolan Village, home of the indigenous Aeta tribe, to conserve and protect the environment in its Freeport and special economic zone.

The first Arbor Day in the world was launched in the small Spanish village of Villanueva de la Sierra in 1805 by priest Don Ramos Vacas Roxo who, accompanied by other clergy, teachers, and neighbors, planted the first tree – a poplar. The first Arbor Day in United States was conceived in 1870 by J. Sterling Morton, a newspaper editor. He proposed a tree-planting day on April 10, 1872.

Arbor Day has spread across the world and has been adopted by some 40 countries. Usually held in spring, the date varies, depending on climate and suitable planting season. In Canada, Maple Leaf Day is held during National Forest Week; in Belgium, International Tree Planting Day is March 21; and in Brazil, Arbor Day is Dia da Arvore, celebrated by tree-planting in schools.



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ARBOR DAY, ISANG PAGDIRIWANG PARA SA MGA PUNO

ANG Arbor Day ay ipinagdiriwang sa Pilipinas tuwing Hunyo 25 ng bawat taon. Ito itong itinakda sa bisa ng Proklamasyon Bilang 30 noong 1947, para ipagdiwang tuwing ikalawang Sabado ng Setyembre. Ngunit sa pagpapatibay sa Proklamasyon Bilang 396 noong Hunyo 2, 2003, nalipat ang selebrasyon sa Hunyo 25.

Sa pamamagitan ng Republic Act 10176, ang Arbor Day Act of 2012, muling binuhay ang pagtatanim ng puno bilang isang taunang aktibidad para sa mga lokal na pamahalaan. Alinsunod sa batas, ang mga Pilipinong edad 12 pataas ay inoobligang magtanim ng kahit isang puno kada taon. Dahil sa RA 10176 ay nailunsad ang National Greening Program, na ipinatutupad simula Mayo 13, 2011, at nagtatakda sa pagtatanim ng nasa 1.5 bilyong puno sa 250-milyong hektarya ng pampublikong lupain pagsapit ng 2016. Pinangungunahan ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources ang pagtatanim ng mga puno.

Tuwing Arbor Day, hinihimok ang mga indibiduwal at mga komunidad na magtanim ng mga tree saplings at halamang ornamental at kilalanin ang kahalagahan ng mga ito. Nagkakaloob ng lilim ang mga puno, nagbibigay ng tahanan para sa mga hayop; ang mga sinaunang puno ay nagsisilbi namang makasaysayang pananda. Gumagawa rin ang mga puno ng pagkain para sa mga tao at sa mga ligaw na hayop, sinisipsip at iniimbak ang ulan, at pinapanibago ang supply ng tubig, bukod pa sa nakapigil sa baha. Nakatutulong din ang mga puno upang mabawasan ang alinsangan kapag tag-init.

Sa pagtanggap kay President-elect Rodrigo R. Duterte, inilunsad ng isang grupong makakalikasan ang "Duter-tree Challenge", na nananawagan sa lahat ng Pilipino na magtanim ng puno tuwing Arbor Day, upang mabawasan ang epekto ng climate change. Layunin ng aktibidad na magtanim ng isang puno ang bawat indibiduwal sa sariling bakuran o sa alinmang bakanteng espasyo, at tiyaking lalaki ito at mapakikinabangan ng mga susunod na henerasyon.

Nagtatanim ang Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority ng mahigit 3,000 seedlings ng iba't ibang puno sa Pastolan Village, tirahan ng tribung Aeta, upang mapangalagaan at maprotektahan ang kalikasan sa Freeport at special economic zone nito.

Ang unang Arbor Day sa mundo ay inilunsad sa isang maliit na Spanish village ng Villanueva de la Sierra noong 1805 ng paring si Don Ramos Vacas Roxo, na kasama ang iba pang mga pari, mga guro, at mga kapitbahay, ay nagtanim ng unang puno – isang poplar. Ang unang Arbor Day sa Amerika ay ipinagdiriwang noong 1870 ni J. Sterling Morton, isang patnugot sa pahayagan. Siya ang nagpanukala na magkaroon ng isang araw ng pagtatanim ng puno noong Abril 10, 1872.

Kumalat na ang selebrasyon ng Arbor Day sa mundo at ipinatutupad na sa may 40 bansa. Karaniwang idinadaos tuwing tagsibol, nag-iiba-iba ang petsa, depende sa klima at sa akmang panahon ng pagtatanim. Sa Canada, ang Maple Leaf Day ay idinadaos tuwing National Forest Week; sa Belgium, ang International Tree Planting Day ay Marso 21; at sa Brazil, ang Arbor Day is Dia da Arvore, ay ipinagdiriwang sa pamamagitan ng pagtatanim ng mga puno sa mga eskuwelahan.

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La Niña preparations start with 120,000 trees

CLARK FREEPORT—At least 120,000 trees in this economic zone have been prepared for strong typhoons accompanying the onset of La Niña, with several century-old trees undergoing surgery, an official said.

Rogelio Magat, manager of the environmental permits department of the state-run Clark

Development Corp. (CDC), said 10 sick narra here had been treated with cement, sand and coal tar, and propped up using reinforced steel bars to halt their decay and increase their chances of surviving intense rain and wind. More are lined up for tree surgery.

The Acacia, kalumpit,

molave, balacat, kamagong, alibangbang, antipolo and fire trees thriving inside Clark have been inventoried, Magat said.

Typhoon "Lando" (international name: Koppu) in October last year destroyed several century-old trees.

Clark began as a cavalry station of the United States mili-

tary in 1902 and expanded as an air base. In 1991, the Philippine Senate rejected the extension of the 1947 Military Bases Agreement.

The CDC, which oversees the conversion of Clark for civilian use, enforces environmental laws inside the economic zone. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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2 separate departments for environment, natural resources

IN the last Congress, a bill was filed in the House of Representatives to split the Department of Environment and Natural Resources into two departments – the Department of Environment and the Department of Natural Resources.

During the 9th Biennial Convention of the Chinese Filipino Business Club at the Manila Hotel last February, Vice President Jejomar Binay, discussing his platform as a presidential candidate, said he would, if elected, split the DENR into two. "Environment is really a problem. We need a separate department for it," he said. "Anything on natural resources, I would give to a Department of Natural Resources."

Environment has become a leading worldwide concern because of climate change and the resulting rise in global temperatures that have, in turn, melted the Arctic and Antarctic glaciers and caused sea levels to rise. The Philippines has taken a leading role in developing renewable energy – notably solar, wind, and geothermal power – to gradually replace power now produced with coal and other polluting fossil fuels.

To give environment the attention it deserves, the move to split the DENR into two was conceived. At the same time, there was a similar move to split the Department of Transportation and Communication into two – this was the time Metro Manila traffic problem hogged national at-

tention, so that it was thought it should have its own Department of Transportation to attend to it. Last May, President Aquino signed RA 10844 creating the Department of Information and Communications Technology, with the Department of Transportation now standing as a separate department.

The move to also split the DENR has now been recalled in the wake of reports that President-elect Duterte has named well-known environmentalist Gina L. Lopez to be the next DENR secretary. The mining and oil sectors promptly fell in the Philippine stock market. The appointment will be good for environmentalists but there will be challenges for the mining sector, one analyst commented. A few hours after the close of trading, President-elect Duterte, addressing a business gathering in Davao City, assured that Philippine mining has a good future ahead of it.

The new secretary must be able to balance economic growth with the need to protect the environment and indigenous communities, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines said in a statement Wednesday. It will be a difficult balancing act for Lopez.

This might be an opportune time to revisit the move to split the DENR so that its two concerns – protecting the environment and developing natural resources – could be more fully attended to by two separate departments.

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2 separate departments



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EDITORIAL

2 separate departments for environment, natural resources

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2 MAGKAHIWALAY NA KAGAWARAN PARA SA KALIKASAN, LIKAS-YAMAN

Sa huling Kongreso, isang panukala ang inihain sa Kamara de Representantes upang hatiin ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources sa dalawang kagawaran — ang Department of Environment at Department of Natural Resources.

Sa 9th Biennial Convention ng of the Chinese Filipino Business Club sa Manila Hotel noong Pebrero, sa paglalahad sa kanyang plataporma bilang kandidato sa pagkapangulo, sinabi ni Vice President Jejomar Binay na sakaling mahalal siya ay hahatiin niya ang DENR. "Environment is really a problem. We need a separate department for it," aniya. "Anything on natural resources, I would give to a Department of Natural Resources."

Ang kalikasan ay naging pangunahing pandaigdigang usapin dahil sa climate change at sa patuloy sa pagtaas na temperatura sa mundo na, kalaunan, ay nagbunsod ng pagkatunaw ng mga glacier sa Arctic at Antarctic at nagresulta sa pagtaas ng karagatan. Pinangunahan ng Pilipinas ang pagpapaunlad ng renewable energy — partikular ang solar, wind, at geothermal power — upang unti-unting palitan ang enerhiya na ngayon ay nalilikha sa tulong ng uling at ng fossil fuels na nakasisira sa kalikasan.

Upang bigyan ng atensiyon ang kalikasan na karapat-dapat naman dito, nabuo ang hakbangin upang hatiin. Kasabay nito, may kaparehong hakbangin upang hatiin din sa dalawa ang Department of Transportation and Communication — sa pagkakataong ito, ang tinututukan naman ng atensiyon ay ang matindi at perhuwisyong trapiko sa Metro Manila, kaya napag-isipang mas mainam na magkaroon ng sariling Department of Transportation para rito. Nitong Mayo, nilagdaan ni Pangulong Aquino ang RA 10844 na lumilikha sa Department of Information and Communications Technology, at ang Department of Transportation ay isa na ngayong hiwalay na kagawaran.

Ang panawagan para hatiin din ang DENR ay nagbalik sa alaala sa harap ng mga ulat na pinili ni President-elect Duterte ang kilalang environmentalist na si Gina L. Lopez upang maging susunod na kalihim ng DENR. Agad namang bumulusok sa stock market ng Pilipinas ang mga sektor ng pagmimina at petrolyo. Ang pagkakatalaga kay Lopez ay makabubuti para sa mga environmentalist, ngunit isa itong malaking hamon para sa sektor ng pagmimina, komento ng isang analyst. Ilang oras makaraang magsara ang stock trading, tiniyak ni President-elect Duterte, nang magtalumpati siya sa harap ng mga negosyante sa Davao City, na may magandang kinabukasan ang pagmimina sa Pilipinas.

Dapat na magawa ng bagong kalihim na mabalanse ang pagsigla ng ekonomiya at ang pangangailangang protektahan ang kalikasan at ang mga komunidad ng katutubo, ayon sa pahayag ng Chamber of Mines of the Philippines nitong Miyerkules. Magiging mahirap ang pagbabalanseng ito para kay Lopez.

Isa itong magandang pagkakataon upang ikonsidera ang panukalang hatiin ang DENR upang ang dalawang usapin — pagbibigay ng proteksiyon sa kalikasan, at pagpapaunlad sa likas na yaman — ay tiyak na mapagtutuunan ng atensiyon ng dalawang magkahiwalay na kagawaran.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

MGB autoclave laboratory starts operating

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

✉ @jonlmayuga

THE Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) is embarking on a research-and-development project for the development of feasible value-adding activities for laterite ores.

MGB Director Leo Jasareno said the MGB's Metallurgical Technology Division (MeTD) laboratory autoclave is now fully operational at the required leaching parameters to conduct testing.

The installation process, which include setting up software synchronization and numerous commissioning test trials, was done for the 1-liter autoclave acquired by the MGB as part of ongoing research and development.

"We spent a little over P1 million for the machine," he added.

The research for mineral processing is ongoing. It is a new method. It hopes to provide mining companies with appropriate technology at less cost and more environment-friendly. It uses pressure, so it means it will use less chemicals," Jasareno said.

He said the basic research being conducted is part of the MGB's mandate to make mining more efficient.

The new method, he said, is now being used in other countries in a pilot scale. "We get sample and test it. It will determine if the metal processing is efficient, such as in nickel processing," he added.

He said the test will help, in particular, nickel-mining companies operating in the Philippines.

"Nickel is a metal that will always stay. Nickel metal will stay in the next several years," Jasareno added.

More than half of the 44 operating mines in the Philippines are into nickel mining.

The MeTD team said the complex equipment, which is operated using high pressure and temperature, is now being utilized for the current research that is aimed at comparing the efficiency of atmospheric leaching with the high-pressure acid leaching in treating low-grade Philippine laterite ores.

Several high-pressure and atmospheric leaching tests using sulphuric acid were already conducted.

Leaching products were submitted to the Chemical Laboratory and Service Section of MeTD for chemical analysis. Further researches using other types of acids and bases will also be conducted.

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Mining permits to be reviewed

DAVAO CITY—Mining permits will be reviewed as soon as President-elect Rodrigo Duterte is sworn into office on June 30.

Ernesto Abella, the spokesperson of the incoming president, on Thursday stressed that Duterte was not antimining, but was for responsible mining.

“The President is not antimining, that must be made clear,” Abella said in a press briefing.

“He (Duterte) actually supports each and every venture that will contribute to the health of the Philippine economy. However, he is very clear that whatever enterprise, venture that we get into, it must be done in a responsible manner,” he added.

When asked about the timetable for the review of mining permits, Abella said: “I’m sure

almost as soon as possible after the inauguration (on June 30).”

He said that with the appointment of Gina Lopez, chair of the ABS-CBN Foundation, as environment secretary, “[the mining permits are] going to to be reviewed as soon as possible.”

Duterte named Lopez, a staunch antimining advocate, to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) when they met in Davao on Monday.

The post was initially offered to the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, but Duterte backtracked, explaining that he was planning a hard-line stance in dealing with highly extractive activities like mining and logging. *Nico Alconaba, Inquirer Mindanao*

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Total mining ban in Mindanao sought

By MIKE U. CRISMUNDO

BUTUAN CITY—Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos of the Diocese of Butuan urged incoming President Rodrigo Duterte to “stop all mining companies from operating in Mindanao to avert any catastrophic incident in the future.”

Puebelos, a former president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and lead convenor of the Caraga Conference for Peace and Development, told the Manila Bulletin Thursday that he was “in full support of environmental preservation, including the stoppage of mining activities in the region.”

“Mining destroys our natural resources and only foreigners and lawless group are benefiting (from) the mining business,” Pueblos said in the interview conducted at the Bishop’s Home in Am-

payon district here.

“Mining destroys the country’s resources and Filipino communities are at the losing end,” he underscored.

Pueblos said he appreciated how Duterte has made a “strong, pro-poor and pro-Filipino stance” with regards to mining activities in the country.

“Now is the time to address the proliferation of mining activities in an effort to avert any catastrophic incident that may occur in the future due to severely damaged natural resources,” he emphasized.

Pueblos also pointed out that, while there will be more than 15,000 who may be displaced once a total ban on mining is imposed, there are billions of pesos that have already been included in the budget of government agencies that would be able to address this problem.

The prelate cited the cash-for-work, livelihood and economic development pro-

grams of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Agriculture (DA), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

(TESDA) and other line agencies of the government.

In Caraga region alone, there are about 25 Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) holders operating at various ar-

eas in the region, particularly in Surigao del Sur, Surigao del Norte and Agusan del Norte and more than 15,000 workers are currently employed in these mining companies.



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Responsible mining key to the country's growth

DAVAO CITY, -- The incoming administration of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte does not oppose mining but mining firms must do it right.

"The key word here is responsible and the president has made his position very clear: You have to do it right. If you cannot do it right, then get out of mining," incoming Presidential Spokesperson Ernesto Abella said during a press briefing on Thursday.

Abella said Duterte has also asked to apply the standards of responsible mining as practiced in developed countries such as Canada and Australia, to ensure the protection of the environment," he said.

Abella said responsible mining plays a key role in the growth of the Philippines.

According to Abella, the Duterte administration is committed to promoting a robust and dynamic economy with every sector contributing to its growth.

While Duterte banned mining in Davao City, Abella said Duterte is not anti-mining if it is done in a responsible manner.

The Duterte camp issued the statement to clarify the incoming president's position on mining.

Among the big mining operations in Mindanao are operated by Toronto Ventures Inc., - known Canadian firm while the Western Mining Corporation, which is an Australian firm, explored the Tampakan Mines but gave up due to resistance of the communities in the mining concession in the provinces of South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Davao del Sur.

This week Duterte named anti-mining advocate and socio-civic leader Gina Lopez to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Duterte had wanted someone with strong political will to head the DENR as there are serious issues that he wanted to fix especially on mining.

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Philex unfazed by Lopez appointment to DENR

Philex Mining Corporation, the country's top gold producer, is unfazed by the appointment of anti-mining advocate Gina Lopez to the highest post of the Department of Environment and Natural resources even though this has made stock market investors jittery.

In a statement, Philex said it is open to whoever the President-elect (Rodrigo Duterte) appoints as the DENR Secretary.

According to Atty. Michael T. Toledo, MVP Group Media Bureau Head and Senior Vice-President for Public and Regulatory Affairs at Philex, the

President-elect has every right to appoint whoever he deems fit to become the next Secretary, not just on a matter of competence, but also on a matter of trust and confidence as a member of his official family.

"Philex has committed to support President Duterte and his drive against illegal and irresponsible mining. We are open to sitting down and working with the new DENR Secretary to further the President's call, to stamp out the illegal and irresponsible miners who give the industry a bad name," said Toledo.

Toledo added that, in its 60 years

of living the tradition of responsible mining, Philex has adhered to "doing what is right" according to international standards, in response to the President-elect's statements made at the recent Sulong Pilipinas Davao conference.

Asked on the impact of the acceptance of Lopez as DENR Secretary, Toledo said that "perhaps we should give her a chance as she is a known advocate for climate change and environmental protection."

"I understand that she has made recommendations to President Duterte on how to move the industry forward; we are always open to working with whoever would want to improve the industry and move the nation forward towards economic development and inclusive growth," said Toledo. (JAL)

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Gina's appointment a good decision

THE APPOINTMENT of Gina Lopez as head of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, a position that President-elect Rodrigo Duterte had intended for himself, at least in the beginning, was like an earthquake that rocked Big Mining and sent the value of mining stocks plummeting. But for me, Duterte must be congratulated for his decision. He has put the DENR in the hands of an environmentalist and committed natural resources conservator, who cannot be manipulated and bribed, and who will do what is best for the Philippines, not only for a particular sector. My gut feel is that at the end of the day, she will leave the Philippines better off, rather than worse off, as far as this area is concerned.

Already, there seem to be some efforts to destroy her reputation and her credibility, to the President-elect and to the public. Her detractors are trying to package her as an empty-headed, wealthy socialite who dabbles in these issues for lack of anything to do, and who doesn't know what she is talking about.

Well, Gina's record speaks for itself: She is at the forefront of the campaign to save the Pasig River, she has flown all over the Philippines to take videos of (a picture is worth a thousand words) and interview residents about the damage to the environment that has occurred in their areas as a result of mining activities. She has done this for at least 10 years—and she very assiduously does the homework.

The scuttlebutt is that she was distressed at what Duterte was quoted as saying about mining, so she asked for an appointment and brought with her materials and studies to prove her point. Duterte must have realized that she was more than just a talking head, she knew what she was talking about, and was passionate about the subject. So he said, "Why don't you handle the DENR?"

If the story is told to show how impulsive Duterte is, so be it. In this case, it is a good decision. Under Gina's leadership, the DENR will never be in danger of being "captured" by vested interests. Hallelujah. One for Duterte.

The designation of Gina also raises a

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod



question: With the members having such disparate backgrounds and advocacies, even ideologies, how can Duterte make that Cabinet work? We can look at it another way. It is a courageous move on his part to bring together such a Cabinet—the members all his personal choices. If he can make that Cabinet work together, he can make the country work together. And I am praying for him to succeed.

But just when Duterte shows some inspired choices, it seems he puts his foot in his mouth again, if the newspaper reports are accurate. He says he will certainly not go to war with China over a "little issue"—the little issue being Scarborough Shoal. Good grief. Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio must have shot out of his seat when he read the morning papers. Duterte should ask him for a briefing, as he (Carpio) is the acknowledged expert.

In the first place, ownership of that little stone implies sovereignty over a radius of 12 nautical miles—maybe even 200, depending on what the decision is. So it is not a little issue, it is a big deal. Let me just quote from a paper titled "A Whole of a Nation's Support on West Philippine Sea: A Call for Action":

"Economically, 20 percent of the country's fisheries catch is coming from the WPS. The WPS rich in fossil fuels accounts for 11 billion barrels of oil, 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and in addition to the unexplored areas that can potentially hold more oil and gas reserves, has an estimated value of energy reserves as high as \$1 trillion. Thus, our present and future economic survival largely depends

on the sustainable managed utilization of these marine resources in the WPS, which is under threat from poaching and use of illegal and destructive fishing practices and the recently significant reclamations of the Chinese Government." In other words, it is not only a big deal, it is a very big deal.

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GINA LOPEZ AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS

PRESIDENT-ELECT Rodrigo Duterte is on a roll. Even before assuming office as the 16th President of the Philippines, his administration is off to a good and fast start. Verbal pyrotechnics and media controversies aside, the initial decisions have been encouraging. In particular, with a few exceptions, I find the Duterte cabinet to be by and large solid—impressive, in fact.

There are individuals in the Duterte cabinet that stand out right away—among others, Sonny Dominguez, Ernie Pernia, Ben Diokno, Jun Evasco, Bebot Bello, Jess Dureza, Salvador Medialdea, Art Tugade, Rodolfo Salalima and Liling Briones—for their experience and seniority. Their professional records in and out of government assures us that at the helm of the most critical departments are people of the highest caliber.

Finance secretary-designate Dominguez does not just know money. He also understands rural and sustainable development, having performed excellently in the Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources during the time of Cory Aquino. His stewardship of the La Fayette mining company in Rapu-rapu, Albay also saw the reversal of the bad environmental and social development record of that company.

Forming the core of Duterte's economic team

are two world-class economists from the University of the Philippines—Diokno and Pernia. Diokno's understanding of the budget is unparalleled. Together with Pernia's insight on poverty, it complements the vision of inclusive development articulated by Dominguez. I must add that Ramon Lopez, the new Trade and Industry Secretary, while younger than his peers in the economic team, brings with him the success of the innovative program Go Negosyo and could provide impetus for new thinking on the economic challenges (particularly poverty) we face.

I can say the same of Jess Dureza and Bebot Bello, both of whom I worked with during the administration of Fidel V. Ramos. Dureza and Bello are seasoned consensus builders—people you would like to be with in a foxhole (literal and figurative) during conflict situations. They are trusted by the constituencies they are now responsible for. I must say that I am optimistic that we will finally be able to forge permanent peace with all the major revolutionary movements the country has to contend with.

The personal history of Jun Evasco is well-known. His leadership role in the Duterte campaign has also been recognized. He will be a strong advocate for the poor and for lo-

cal governments in the new administration. The Cabinet, and more importantly, the country, is fortunate to have Evasco as Cabinet Secretary.

Salvador Medialdea is highly respected in legal circles. His family name of course is an admired brand in law, his father being a former Supreme Court Justice and longtime Court Administrator. Bingbong, as he is called, has been described a lawyer's lawyer—as straight as an arrow on legal and integrity issues. This assures us that the rule of law will not be set aside in an administration that could be daring in many issues.

Finally, among the senior officials, Art Tugade and Rodolfo Salalima come to their positions in the Department of Transportation (for Tugade) and the newly formed Department of Information and Communications Technology (for Salalima) with stellar reputations in the private sector. They have challenging mandates but I am hopeful that finally, the government will deliver on the areas in which the Aquino administration failed so miserably.

The Duterte administration is not impressive only at the Cabinet level but also at the sub-Cabinet level. To cite one example, I am very happy that Martin Delgra, from Davao City, will be the

new Chair of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board. Chuck or Chuckbong, as we call him, is totally incorruptible, extraordinarily competent, and absolutely patriotic. He is pro-poor and an advocate of good governance. I should know because we have been friends for 35 years since we were batch mates as Jesuit Volunteers in 1981. Chuck served as a high school teacher in Kadingilan, Bukidnon and then took up law in Ateneo de Davao. He then became a human rights lawyer, basing himself in Basilan for a number of years, before returning to law practice in Davao City. The transportation sector and public is well-served to have someone like Delgra overseeing the public interest.

I am very happy of course that many Mindanawons are in the Duterte government. The Department of Agriculture, for example, will now led by Manny Piñol from North Cotabato. He brings to that position the experience of someone who has actually been a farmer and a governor of a province dependent on agriculture. I am also proud to claim that two of his undersecretaries are people with my surname. Evelyn Laviña will be undersecretary for high-value crops while Pompee La Viña will be undersecretary for

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Gina Lopez and other appointments

Gina... From A10

agricultural enterprises. Evelyn, who happens to be the spouse of my cousin Peter, has extensive experience as a planter herself of high value crops, while Pompee, my brother, is a business entrepreneur with degrees from both Ateneo de Manila and the Asian Institute of Management.

I also welcome into the highest ranks of government those personalities coming from progressive organizations. I really admire President-elect Duterte for appointing Paeng Mariano, Judy Taguiwalo, and Joel Manglungsod in the Departments of Agrarian Reform, Social Welfare and Development, and Labor and Employment. With the chairmanship of the National Anti-Poverty Commission also going to another militant, this will be a historic moment for our country. I look forward to these colleagues to show that consistency in principles can

be translated into results in the ground which they can politically defend from attackers. In the end, they will unify all stakeholders (not just their usual constituencies).

Finally, reserving the best for the last, I enthusiastically support the appointment of Gina Lopez for environment secretary. Among others, Lopez understands what is at stake in the many fights going on all over the country over coal-fired power plants. It is time for the country to transition to clean and renewable energy. That policy shift starts by making sure that the environment and health impacts of coal-fired power plants are properly internalized and accounted for in pricing electricity. As a study the Ateneo School of Government produced last year has pointed out, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources can enable this shift by imposing a gold standard in ap-

proving coal-fired power plants. We should approve only those plants that can perform according to the highest global pollution standards and deny permits to those that can only comply with lower standards.

While I personally believe that responsible mining is doable, its principal enabling condition is strong environmental governance. Lopez will assure us that the government will always be on the side of planet and people; she will require the highest standards of performance from her own colleagues in government and from the private sector. If such standards were followed, then indeed only mining consistent with sustainable development will be operating in the Philippines.

Change is coming. These individuals definitely will bring positive change. Let's welcome that.

Facebook: *tonylavs5* or Dean
Tony La Viña Twitter: *tonylavs*

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From A Distance

By CARMEN N. PEDROSA

Like a broken record

With Gina Lopez as secretary of environment and natural resources, we can expect the same music being played yet again like a broken record. We have had this anti-mining music played during Aquino's government.

Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI), the Philippine subsidiary of Swiss based Xstrata, was denied their Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) even after complying with necessary requirements.

David Pearce, an international expert on resource economics presented a report on the potential game changing impact of the Tampakan Copper-Gold project on the economy. If approved, the project can contribute an average of an additional one percent to the gross domestic product over a period of 20 years.



The Philippines is a well-endowed country with mineral resources. With its long history and experience in mining, it has demonstrated its very rich potential for copper, gold, nickel, chromite and other metallic minerals through the commercial operation of numerous mines. It is also abundant in non-metallic and industrial minerals such as marble, limestone, clays, feldspar, rock aggregates, dolomite, guano and other quarry resources.

The Philippine minerals industry is currently an industry below \$1 billion in annual sales (Figure 1) similar to Malaysia and Papua New Guinea, but lagging behind Indonesia (\$3.6 billion), Chile (\$13 billion) and Western Australia (\$26 billion).

To make them useful to the economy, the rich mineral resources of the Philippines have to be explored and developed into commercial mines. However, there are no local funds available for exploration investments. Historically, the funds used for exploration come substantially from foreign investors through foreign direct investments. The Philippines has to compete with other mineral producing countries to attract this fund. During the period 1995 to 1999, majority of the exploration funds went to Indonesia, Chile and Peru.

With untapped mineral wealth worth more than \$840 billion, the Philippines is "one of the world's most highly mineralized countries," according to a US Department of State report on the Philippine economy.

Despite its rich gold, copper and chromate deposits, however, "the Philippine mining industry is just a fraction of what it was in the 1970s and 1980s when the country ranked among the 10 leading gold and copper producers worldwide," the Washington-based agency said.

"Low metal prices, high production costs and lack of investment in infrastructure contributed to the industry's overall decline," the State Department said in the report, which the US Embassy in Manila has posted on its website.

it noted that "a December 2004 Supreme Court decision upheld the constitutionality of the 1986 Mining Act, thereby allowing up to 100 percent foreign-owned companies to invest in large-scale exploration, development and utilization of minerals, oil and gas" in the country.

In the same report, the agency said the Philippine economy "proved comparatively well-equipped to weather the recent global financial crisis, partly as a result of the efforts to control the fiscal deficit, bring down debt ratios and adopt internationally accepted banking sector capital adequacy standards."

"After slowing to 3.8 percent growth in 2008 and sputtering to 1.1 percent in 2009, real year-on-year GDP growth rebounded to 7.6 percent in 2010, a 34-year high fueled in part by election-related spending, optimism over the peaceful transition to a new government, and an accommodating monetary policy," the report said.

However, "growth slowed in 2011 and is likely to be in the 3.5 percent to 4 percent range," it said.

According to the State Department, "the portion of the population living below the national poverty line increased from 24.9 percent to 26.5 percent between 2003 and 2009, equivalent to an additional 3.3 million Filipinos."

As Manuel V. Pangilinan said "Mining is not the enemy, poverty is." But I don't think he was understood. Those who are against mining continue with their obstructions while saying "they are not against mining but it must be responsible."

For mining to be responsible the onus is as much on government regulatory bodies to implement its rules and regulations. It is about good governance. If there have been instances in the past of irresponsible mining the government is more to blame for its dereliction of duty. In my opinion, the solution is not into making more laws or new laws when the present laws are not being enforced.

The result of the proposed alternative mining bill called "The Philippine Mineral Resources of 2012" would only mean more trouble. We would have more laws to be violated and more opportunities for graft. Meanwhile as Pangilinan says, the real victims of this lack of will on good governance are the poor.

As some of them have told me, when I visited Tampakan until mining came around they fended for themselves without any help or resource from government. They cannot even plant in these areas because mining areas are hard rock on which nothing grows. Responsible mining as spelled out in the Revised Mining Law of 1995 (considered as one of the best in the world) are committed to build infrastructure, schools, hospitals all of which they would not have ever had if they relied on government. It has also a proviso for setting up a fund for rehabilitation even before mining takes place.

It does not mean that the industry has no bad eggs, particularly those who raped the environment they were already extracting metals from, like that big-time businessman whose operation was dumping waste indiscriminately into the sea in Agusan and so many local officials who made "small-scale mining" synonymous with "big-time destruction" all over the country. But mining also has its conscientious players, who take care not only of local communities but also of the environment.

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

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

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First Person

By ALEX MAGNO

Rash

There is a whale of a difference between being decisive and being rash. Rodrigo Duterte found that out when he offered the post of DENR secretary to anti-mining activist Gina Lopez.

Mining stocks promptly collapsed.

Among those losing billions in the market in the course of the bloodletting are government financial institutions. The SSS, for instance, reportedly owns 21% of Philex Mining. In two days after Lopez took the DENR job, Philex lost over P10 billion in stock value. That translates into a P2 billion loss for SSS.

We do not know yet how much the other government financial institutions lost in the mining crash this week. Mining is a heavily capitalized industry reliant on market capitalization.

What we do know is that coal mining Semirara lost about P11 billion and Nickel Asia about P4 billion in the market panic.

On the other hand, Lopez-owned First Gen Corporation gained P9 billion while Energy Development Corporation added P8 billion to its market capitalization. The two companies are involved in alternative or renewable power generation.

Gina Lopez has taken an absolute anti-mining stance as an environmental activist. She has likewise taken strong positions against the use of coal to generate power.

As an activist, she has all the right to take those unremitting positions. As a government official, however, she has to enforce the law and take cognizance of market realities.

For instance, while it may be ideal to generate all our power needs using renewable sources, this is not practicable at the moment. The solar farms, wind energy projects and other newfangled sources of power may supplement our generating capacity, it is a reality that baseload power is generated through heavy-duty diesel and coal plants.

During droughts, our hydroelectric plants generate less power. During storms, we have less solar power. On windless days, the windmill turbines do not turn. We must have enough baseload capacity to meet peak demand.

This might seem evident to environmental crusaders – especially those who advocate “glamping” (glamor camping). So-called “clean energy” is expensive.

As things stand, we have among the highest energy costs in the world. It is a cost structure that forced our industry to hollow out. If we resort only to “clean energy,” this will force our energy cost structure to spike beyond the means of the poor and depress what is left of our industry.



As things stand, we do not have enough power reserves. This is why rotating brownouts happen in Mindanao and “yellow alerts” are raised each time a plant conks out in Luzon. In the near term, we need to boost our energy supplies to meet the needs of a growing economy.

Gina Lopez must realize that there is a whale of a difference between a crusader and a regulator. A crusader is fixed on the best of all possible worlds. A regulator applies the law in imperfect circumstances.

That requires a dramatic shift in attitude. It might be easier for Gina to divest her holdings in the Lopez firms (especially those where conflict of interest is glaringly evident) than to alter her militant stances.

The Duterte camp must have been (appropriately) spooked by the adverse market reaction to Gina Lopez’s nomination.

Last Thursday, presidential spokesman Ernie Abella hastily convened a press conference to stipulate the mining and energy policies of the incoming Duterte administration.

The Duterte administration is not against mining per se. It is adamantly against “irresponsible mining,” those that flout the law and rape the environment with impunity. The case of a nickel mining outfit in Surigao (said to be a major financier of losing presidential contender Mar Roxas) comes to mind.

In a word, there will not be an all-out war against the mining industry. There will be an all-out war against irresponsible mining.

Those are two very different things.

Our mining industry has been thrown into some sort of purgatory during the Noynoy years. Although the Supreme Court, after 10 years, upheld the constitutionality of the Mining Act of 1995, the outgoing administration claimed it was formulating a “mining policy.”

That “mining policy” was never fully formulated even as the administration’s allies in the nickel industry tore up the land and polluted the waterways. These nickel boys are a privileged lot. The rumor among people in the industry is that the same boys supplied low-grade ore to the Chinese who were busy building islands out of reefs in the South China Sea.

Clearly, Gina Lopez needs to modulate her positions on mining and energy to cohere with the articulated policy of the administration she wants to serve. Otherwise, she will find herself at odds with the rest of the Duterte team – maybe even untenably at odds.

Several Duterte insiders, present during the business conference held in Davao earlier this week, expressed surprise over Gina’s nomination. The Lopez-controlled media empire, they pointed out, seemed hostile to the Duterte candidacy through the length of the campaign period.

Notwithstanding, no administration can tolerate discrepancies in the articulation and implementation of its key policies. All the new President’s men must toe the line.

Gina Lopez is not exempt – even if she tends to wander her own way.

The policy on energy is to have abundant supply at the lowest possible cost to enable further economic expansion. The policy on mining is to respect the Mining Act, which is among the most stringent in the world.

As regulator, all Gina might do is to strictly implement standing policy. She may not contradict it.

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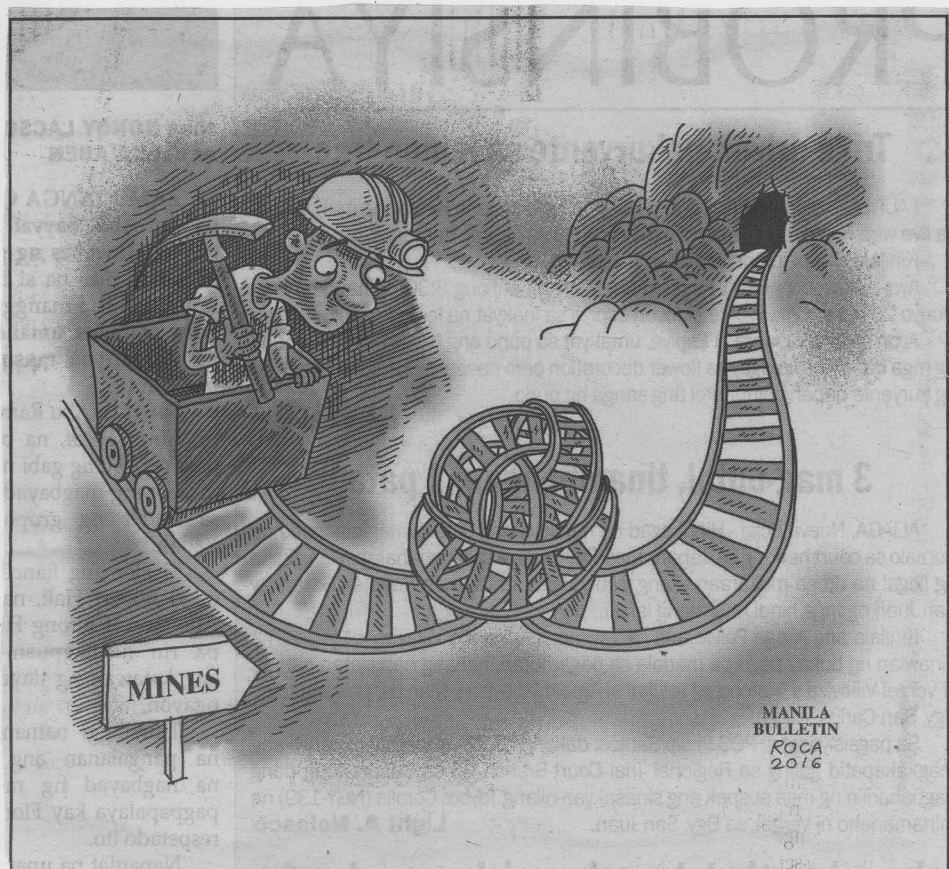
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Climate body backs Lopez as DENR chief

The Climate Change Commission (CCC) has expressed support for the designation of environment and renewable energy advocate Gina Lopez as chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

CCC secretary Emmanuel de Guzman said the appointment of Lopez is welcome as the Philippines undergoes transition from fossil-based energy to cleaner and sustainable sources of energy.

"With ABS-CBN Foundation chairperson Gina Lopez at the helm of the DENR, we are confident that we are on the right track to achieve our dream of a low-emission and climate-resilient future for the country," De Guzman said.

"We are honored to have Ms. Lopez as a partner in our journey toward our ultimate

goal of a green economy, which offers enormous opportunities for green jobs for the Filipino people," he added.

Lopez – an anti-mining advocate – has repeatedly voiced her opposition to coal-powered plants due to their adverse impact on health, the environment of host communities and on the livelihood of residents, according to CCC.

She previously expressed support for a comprehensive review of the government's energy policy, which the commission began last week.

The CCC, together with the DENR, the Department of Energy and the National Economic and Development Authority is conducting the six-month review based on a resolution issued by President Aquino as chairman of the commission.

– Aurea Calica, Janvic Mateo

The Manila Times

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DENR's Lopez to boost PH climate efforts

THE country can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the appointment of ABS-CBN Lingkod Kapamilya Foundation chairperson Regina Paz "Gina" Lopez as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Climate Change Commission (CCC) said on Friday.

CCC Vice Chairman Emmanuel de Guzman said the appointment is most welcome as the Philippines undergoes transition from fossil-based energy to cleaner and sustainable sources of energy.

"With Lopez at the helm of the DENR, we are confident that we are on the right track to achieve our dream of a low-emission and climate-resilient future for the country," said De Guzman.

"We are honored to have Ms. Lopez as a partner in our journey toward our ultimate goal of a green economy, which offers enormous opportunities for green jobs for the Filipino people," he added.

Lopez has been vocal against mining and made known her strong opposition to coal-fired power plants that impact on the health, the environment of host communities, and the livelihood of residents in a negative way.

Last week, the CCC began reviewing the energy policy to pave the way for a swift transition to renewable and sustainable energy.

The CCC, together with the DENR, the Department of Energy (DOE), and the National Economic Development Authority

(NEDA), has six months or until the end of the year to review and craft a framework development on energy as mandated by Commission Resolution 2016-001.

The CCC is under the Office of the President and is the lead policy-making body tasked to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate state programs and ensure mainstreaming of climate change in national, local, and sectoral development plans toward a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines.

The policy review is vital to fulfill the country's commitments under the Paris climate agreement to keep global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

FNI supports Lopez

Global Ferronickel Holdings Inc. (FNI) supports the mining policies of President-elect Rodrigo Duterte and the appointment of Lopez as the incoming secretary of the DENR.

"As a responsible miner, FNI will continue to make the advocacies of the government a priority and is looking forward to partnering with Secretary Lopez in her quest to uplift the conditions of host communities," FNI President Dante Bravo said in another statement.

"We are proud to say that our operations are conducted in accordance with ISO standards. We are committed to practices that respect human rights and the aspirations of local communities. We also provide safe and healthy workplaces for our employees," he added.

JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ

The Manila Times

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

■ KRITZ FROM A1

What was not on the list



ROUGH
TRADE

BEN KRITZ

• A call for clarification and more efficient management of land reform policy, including a comprehensive and practical land-use policy: Concerns are growing about the potential Zibabwization of the Philippines given the signals

made by Duterte so far in appointing the hysterically anti-everything Gina Lopez to the DENR, and his intention to surrender the land reform job to a designee of the Maoist rebellion.



Balita

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BULONG AT SIGAW

PAGBABAGO

Ric Valmonte

HINIRANG ni Pangulong Duterte si Gina Lopez ng ABS-CBN bilang kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). May nabigla, lalo na iyong nasa pagmimina, sa ginawang ito ng Pangulo. Kilala kasing environment activist at anti-mining advocate ang kanyang piniling mamuno ng departamento ng gobyernong mamahala at mangangalaga sa kalikasan at yaman ng bansa.

Nasa gabinete na ng Pangulo ang mga taong nasa mga wastong posisyon. Bukod kay Lopez, nauna niyang hinirang sina Rafael Mariano na mamuno ng Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Tagiwalo, ng Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Leonor Briones, ng Department of Education (DepEd). Gaya ni Lopez, ang mga ito ay aktibista rin sa kanilang mga piniling larangan. Sagad sa buto ang kanilang determinasyong isulong ang alam nilang makabubuti sa bayan.

Pero, ang alam nilang makabubuti sa bayan ay hindi katanggap-tanggap sa iba. Matagal nilang ipinaglaban at ipinaglalaban pa ito. Pinuhunan nila ito ng kanilang buhay, kalayaan at dangal. Malakas at makapangyarihang sektor ng ating lipunan ang kanilang nakalaban na ang hangarin ay proteksiyunan ang kanilang makitid na interes.

Ngayon, nabigyan na sila ng pagkakataon para lubusan na nilang itaguyod ang kanilang hangarin sa ikabubuti ng bayan. Ang pagtitiwalang ipinagkaloob ng taumbayan kay Pangulong Digong na mapapatakbo niyang matino ang gobyerno ay iginawad naman sa kanila ng Pangulo. Kung tatagal sila sa serbisyo at sa pagiging katuwang ng Pangulo sa pagpapaunlad ng bansa sa paggamit ng kapangyarihan ng kanilang departamento depende ito kung hanggang saan sila pagkakatiwalaan ng Pangulo. Depende ito kung papanigin sila ng Pangulo sa kanilang gagawin na tiyak na tututulan ng iba dahil laban ito sa kanilang pansariling interes.

Hindi ko nakikitang mangyayari sa apat ang naganap sa mga nakasabayan nilang mga aktibista. Tulad nila, ang mga ito nang sila ay nasa labas ng gobyerno ay nakita ang mga kamalian nito na mapaminsala sa kapakanan ng taumbayan. Pero, nang sila ay magkaroon ng pagkakataon na makapasok sa gobyerno, gaya ngayon ng apat, ang kamalian na nakita nila noon ay sila mismo ang gumawa. Nilamon sila ng bulok na sistema. Nakikita ko sa apat na sa abot ng kanilang makakaya ay babaligtarin nila ang sistema. Lalabanan nila ang sistemang hinulma ng world bank (WB) at International Monetary Fund (IMF) sa bayan na siyang sanhi ng kahirapan ng mamamayan.

Daily Tribune

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Miners donated funds to DU30 – SOCE

By Ted Tuvera

Statements made by incoming President Rodrigo Duterte during his campaign sorties and his anti-mining stand may have been all or show, and are fairly inaccurate or insincere, although Duterte has a penchant for laying the blame on the media, and even threatened the media again, vowing an absolute boycott of the press until after his presidential term is over.

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By that time, media would hardly be interested in him for interviews.

How inaccurate can his claimed anti-mining stand is, as announced in his sorties then and has even lately, having tapped Gina Lopez, a total anti-mining advocate as his nominee to head the environment and natural resources can be proved in his statement of contributions and expenditures (SOCE).

He has been caught prevaricating.

In his sorties during the campaign season Duterte presented himself as an anti-mining advocate, even slamming mining activities in Agusan del Norte by showing photographs that tended to prove environmental exploitation.

However, after the business leaders summit hosted in Davao City this week, Duterte's position on mining has been moderated.

Duterte last Wednesday evening in Saranggani while attending to the oath-taking ceremony of his fellow Mindanao-native Senator-elect Manny Pacquiao, tried to reiterate his position on mining by saying that he absolutely never received any financial backing from mining magnates.

"And I assure you that I never really accepted money from any mining company. You can be certain about it and ask anybody," Duterte said in his speech.

However, his SOCE submitted to the Commission on Elections (Comelec) belie his claim of not having mining donors and contributors for his campaign.

ni Duterte's SOCE shows that he received P14 million from a certain Michael Regino, who it appears, turns out to be president of Agata Mining Ventures and San Agustin Mining Services, Inc. that operate in Agusan del Norte, where the mining activities claimed to be irresponsible by the president-elect happen.

Apparently, Regino's Agata Mining Ventures entered into a deal with Canadian firm TVI Resources Development (TVIRD) to build a nickel processing plant for less than \$400 million in Agusan del Norte. Its operations started in 2015, the plant is expected to operate for 20 years.

According to reports, Agata Mining is holding seven million wet metric tons of high iron material.

Duterte's brickbats on "irresponsible" mining activity in Agusan del Norte were apparently

directed to a different company, the San Roque Metals, Inc. (SRMI), a nickel-mining company in Tubay, Agusan del Norte whose operations the municipality had earlier petitioned President Aquino to stop due to alleged "destructive and irresponsible mining practices."

SRMI, which Duterte brands as destructive, turned out to be his campaign funder, Regino's immediate rival in the mining industry in Agusan del Norte.

But beyond the issue on mining or environmental concerns, are the political connections established what Agata is to Duterte, and SRMI is apparently aligned with the outgoing administration's Liberal Party (LP).

Duterte had assailed that during the campaign, defeated LP standard bearer Mar Roxas having used the planes of SRMI owner Eric Gutierrez, whose alleged violations of mining laws had gone unpunished.

A partner of Gutierrez is Rep. Edgar Erice, a vocal supporter of Roxas.

Despite complaints and resolutions from the municipal and provincial councils to stop the firm's operations, SRMI got an amended Mining Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) on January 26, 2015, and it now covers 1,079 hectares, with an expiration date on March 10, 2033, according to a listing of MPSA holders posted on the website of the DENR as of its latest posting.

Also, LP political officer and Caloocan City congressman Erice used to be SRMI chairman and stockholder some time around the mid-2000s.

Incoming presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella also had to clarify Duterte's long standing position on mining after gaining an anti-mining reputation for banning the said industry in his Davao City turf.

"Duterte is not anti-mining, but it must be done in a responsible manner," he told reporters last Thursday in a press conference in Davao City.

"The president-elect supports every venture that will contribute to the health of the country's economy," Abella added.

This was said after businessmen objected to Lopez's appointment as DENR secretary. The mining stocks in the market dove after Duterte's announcement of having offered Lopez the DENR portfolio, and dove some more after she decided to accept the offer.

For Fr. Eliseo Mercado, a

Catholic missionary and environmental advocate based in Mindanao, although Duterte says he is for "responsible mining", such an adjective tacked to mining activities is futile.

"I myself am for responsible mining. But the sad truth is that in the country at the present time, responsible mining is an oxymoron," Mercado said in his Facebook page, adding that "miners still have to show a mining community that is progressive and sustainable".

The priest-environmentalist also slammed how mining operations are often a political matter.

"In a country where a 'payoff' is practically a national culture from barangay level to the highest position in government, miners go for short cut from the environmental assessment compliance to actual extraction," he said.

"Islands and mountains disappear! Open pit mining destroys practically everything! The rehabilitation and reconstruction of environment are practically nil," Mercado added.

Digong should watch out

The incoming Duterte administration had better be true to its promises because people are closely watching.

According to a ranking member of the House of Representatives, so many in government and the military have been bypassed by the Duterte and in the administration, resulting in demoralization.

"People are angry but they are going to give Duterte a chance to prove himself," the source but who asked not to be identified.

The same source said that even in the House of Representatives, lawmakers who have thrown their support to Duterte are also disgruntled and frustrated by the false hopes the incoming president had given.

"In the military and police, many have been bypassed including a whole batch of three-star and two-star generals," the source said adding the the incoming government had ruined the careers of these generals and police officers.

"But what can we do? It's the prerogative of the President," he said.

Daily Tribune

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Miners donated funds to DU30 — SOCE (p2)

Cont. from front page

Duterte has also lost the support of the Catholic Church after "hitting the Pope and other church officials."

He is also losing the support of some big businessman particularly those in the mining industry by appointing an avid anti-mining advocate to the post of secretary

of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The source said even the incoming Speaker of the House should also be wary of his actions because a majority of his alleged coalition partners are not really loyal to him.

Prompt release of commies not forthcoming

The leftist expectations that the new administration will release its comrades in arms who are currently detained, have been thumbed down by their "ally," Duterte.

Talking to policemen in Davao City yesterday, Duterte clarified that he is not in favor of a mass release of nabbed members of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army and National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF).

"There will be no mass release of NPA. If they are willing to surrender arms, then I might reconsider amnesty," Duterte said.

He clarified that he will be releasing arrested CPP conjugal leaders Benito Tiamzon and his wife Wilma Austria on the condition that they will have to participate in the peace talks - representing the NDF, with Duterte's emissaries in Oslo, Norway by the third week of July this year.

"What I said before is that I will only agree on the preliminary stage of the Oslo talks with the communists leaders," the president-elect added.

Duterte has blamed media for the report of his release of the political prisoners even before an amnesty is concurred by the Congress, even if it is his peace negotiator, incoming Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III who gave this statement to the media.

Bello, designated Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza and former Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza, met with CPP-NDF leaders in Oslo last week.

Duterte again blew his top over the release of the prompt release of the political prisoners, and berated the media, saying he will not be giving any interviews to the media until after his presidential term ends.

Duterte, a self-proclaimed socialist, also clarified that his being one made it easier to have amicable ties with the leftists, but this does not make him a communist.

"I am a socialist, not a communist. Socialism is a way of thinking on how to distribute the wealth of the nation," he said. With Mario J. Mallari and Gerry Baldo

The Standard

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Marine groups ask Duterte to end sea, coastal crimes

By Anna Leah E. Gonzales

LEADERS of fisherfolk and Marine conservation groups yesterday urged President-elect Rodrigo Duterte to end crimes happening at sea and in coastal communities.

In a statement, the groups also called for the creation of a separate Department of Oceans and Fisheries to be able to better plan, monitor and implement reforms and contribute towards food security.

"We are here to request a dialogue and to remind incoming President Duterte of his campaign promise to address fishers' and ma-

rine issues, and to end very high poverty incidence among people directly relying on seas for food and for a living. His administration will play a critical role in the country's transition to sustainable fishing," said Greenpeace Philippines oceans campaigner Vince Cinches.

"We expect nothing less than strong, resolute im-

plementation of the amended fisheries law against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUUF). Doing less is a disservice to millions of Filipinos who have been clamoring for change," Cinches added.

The groups said that latest data from the Philippine Statistics showed that the poverty incidence among fisherfolk reached 39.2 percent in 2012, the highest among the basic sectors of society, followed by farmers at 38.3 percent, and children at 35.2 percent.

"Coherent and holistic programs should especially be quickly put in place that recognize our vulnerability to climate change. We need focused and

sustained efforts in combatting crimes against the oceans and to allow a better playing field for our small fishers and fishing communities," said Dennis Calvan, executive director of the NGOs for Fisheries Reform.

"We strongly urge the incoming administration to target an end to illegal fishing within their first six months of office," added Calvan.

During the election campaign period, fishers, marine conservationists and environmental groups pushed for the 10-Point Blue Agenda to be taken up by the presidential candidates. This include the delineation of municipal waters, the implementation of

traceability mechanisms for fishery products, sustainable fishing, and capacity-building for fisherfolk to better adapt to climate change.

"We call on the new administration to immediately address the crime of illegal fishing and start rehabilitating our overfished waters. We look forward to seeing political will in the new government's campaign against crime to include its focus on prosecuting plunderers of our oceans, to protect the people's right to healthy marine ecosystems and ensure food security for all Filipinos," said Atty. Gloria Estenzo Ramos, vice president of Oceana Philippines.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Solar power to grow sixfold by 2030 as sun becomes cheapest resource

THE amount of electricity generated using solar panels stands to expand as much as sixfold by 2030 as the cost of production falls below competing natural gas and coal-fired plants, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency.

Solar plants using photovoltaic technology could account for 8 percent to 13 percent of global electricity produced in 2030, compared with 1.2 percent at the end of last year, the Abu Dhabi-based industry group said in a report Wednesday.

The average cost of electricity from a photovoltaic system is

forecast to plunge as much as 59 percent by 2025, making solar the cheapest form of power generation "in an increasing number of cases," it said.

Renewables are replacing nuclear energy and curbing electricity production from gas and coal in developed areas such as Europe and the US, according to Bloomberg New Energy Finance. California's PG&E Corp. is proposing to close two nuclear reactors as wind and solar costs decline. Even as supply gluts depress coal and gas prices, solar and wind technologies will be the cheapest ways to produce electricity

in most parts of the world in the 2030s, New Energy Finance said in a report this month.

"The renewable energy transition is well underway, with solar playing a key role," Irena Director General Adnan Amin said in a statement. "Cost reductions, in combination with other enabling factors, can create a dramatic expansion of solar power globally."

Bloomberg New Energy Finance also forecasts growth in solar photovoltaics, reaching 15 percent of total electricity output by 2040, according to Jenny Chase, head of solar analysis in Zurich. "Irena's assumptions are

reasonable," she said. "Solar just gets so cheap under any reasonable scenario."

The "most attractive" markets for solar panels up to 2020 are Brazil, Chile, Israel, Jordan, Mexico, the Philippines, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, according to Irena.

Global capacity could reach 1,760 to 2,500 gigawatts in 2030, compared with 227 gigawatts at the end of 2015, it said.

Smart grids, or power networks capable of handling and distributing electricity from different sources, and new types of storage technologies will encourage fur-

ther use of solar power, Irena said.

As of 2015, the average cost of electricity from a utility-scale solar photovoltaic system was 13 cents per kilowatt-hour. That's more than coal and gas-fired plants that averaged 5 cents to 10 cents per kilowatt hour, according to Irena.

The average cost of building a solar-powered electricity utility could fall to 79 cents per watt in 2025 from \$1.80 per watt last year, it said. Coal-fired power generation costs are about \$3 per watt while gas plants cost \$1 to \$1.30 per watt, according to Irena.

Bloomberg

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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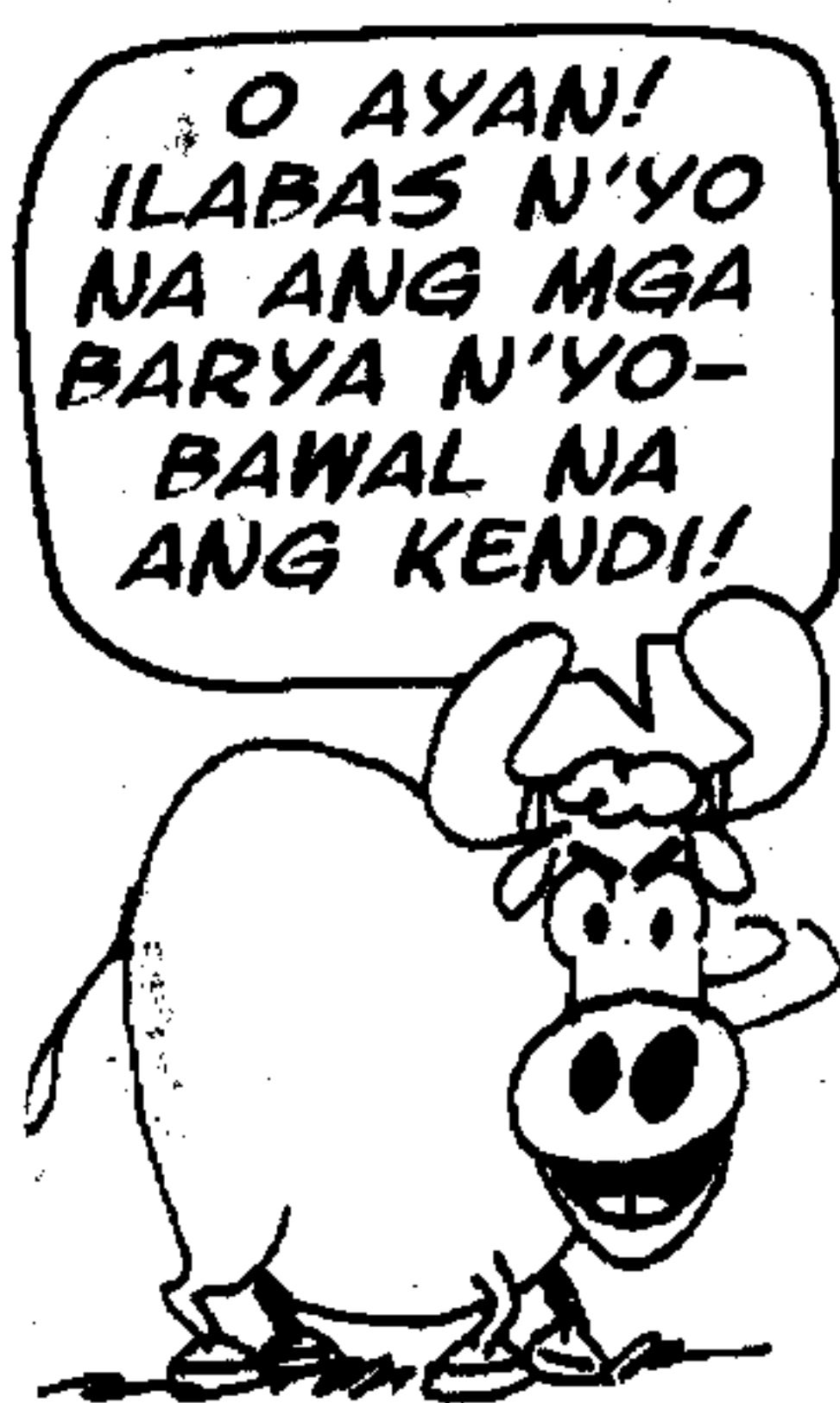
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE



Change is coming, exact loose change

By Marc Jayson Cayabyab
Inquirer.net

GOT NO coins? Candies won't do. You have to give the exact change, otherwise you have to pay a hefty fine.

A bill ratified by Congress penalizing business establishments for failing to give exact

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change to customers is now awaiting President Aquino's signature.

The proposed "Exact Change Act" prohibits any business establishment from giving insufficient change or no change at all to consumers or customers, even if

establishments will be required to display on their counter signs that read: "Demand your exact change."

They also need to put tags of the exact retail price as well as signs indicating the taxes incorporated in the retail price.

Under the proposed law, a consolidation of House Bill No. 4730 and Senate Bill No. 1618, a con-

First-time violators face a fine of P500 or 3 percent of their gross sales, whichever is higher. Second offense is penalized with P5,000 or 5 percent of the gross sales.

Third-time violators face a fine of P15,000 or 7 percent of their gross sales, and a three-month suspension of their li-

the change is a small amount.

The fine is quite hefty: from P500 to P25,000.

If before store owners get away with giving candies, this is a no-no under the bill, which specifies that the change should be in monetary form. Neither can they use the excuse that they lacked coins or bills.

If the bill is signed into law, es-

sumer can file a complaint against erring establishments with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) within 10 working days after the violation was committed.

The DTI is mandated to investigate the complaint and notify the establishment within 10 working days. It has to decide on the complaint not more than 30 days after receiving it.

cense to operate. A fourth offense merits a P25,000 fine or 10 percent of the gross sales, and a revocation of the license to operate.

The DTI is tasked to mount a campaign to inform consumers of their right to be given exact change and regularly publish a list of the violators.