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10 FEB 2017

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Friday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

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February 10, 2017

The Manila Times

News

Mines shutdown based on law, Lopez insists

BY CATHERINE VALENTE

Environment Secretary Gina Lopez on Thursday refuted reports that her decision to ban mineral extraction in watersheds was suspended by members of the Cabinet following a meeting on Wednesday.

In a press conference in Malacañang, Lopez stood by her order to shut mines operating in watersheds, saying her decision was based on laws and the Constitution.

"What happened there, they want to make sure I followed the rule of law and I did. They were scared that what I did was pretty something, 23 mines, oh my God," Lopez told reporters.

"I'm totally in my rights to close down the mines, if they don't agree, they will appeal, when they appeal to the President, the mines still continues operations while it's on appeal. Then when the President sees the appeal, then it's final, then they can go to court," she added.

The Finance department, in a statement, said that the Cabinet decided to intervene following the "outrage" triggered by Lopez's order "in communities hosting mining sites." It noted that some 195,000 direct and indirect workers and their families, or a total of some 1.2 million people, would be adversely affected by the closure and suspensions of the mine sites.

But Lopez said she was pursuing "social justice" for the poor, who should benefit from mining's contribution to the economy.

She said she was aware she was going against some politicians whose past campaigns may have been funded by mining companies. "I'm not saying any names, I know

when you are funded by whoever, then you are indebted to that person," Lopez said.

Lopez stressed she would "not cop out" in her fight against destructive mining, adding "only a miracle" will make her reconsider her decision.

Malacañang said members of the Cabinet backed President Rodrigo Duterte's decision to observe due process before implementing Lopez's order.

In a statement, Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said the "President and his Cabinet collectively decided to observe due process with regard to the mining issue."

Abella said the affected mining firms will be given the opportunity to "respond or dispute" the mining audit done by the DENR.

The mining firms will also be given the chance to "make the necessary remedies to ensure compliance with government standards," Abella added.

"The Department of Finance (DOF) shall have further discussions with the DENR in their ca-

pacities as concerned government agencies of the Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC)," he added.

Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo said her department will conduct a survey to determine the extent of joblessness that will result from Lopez's move.

Denial

Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez 3rd also on Thursday denied any involvement in any mining companies or ventures.

"I have no mining interest. I have no investment in mine. I have no stocks in mines," he told reporters at the sidelines of the Mining Industry Coordinating Committee meeting.

Dominguez clarified that he was only involved in mining twice - in 1999 and 2003 when he was the Chief Executive Officer of Philippine Associated Smelting and Refining Corp. (PASAR) and when he was invited to rehabilitate the Rapu Rapu Mine.

WITH MAYVELIN U. CARABALLO

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

"LOPEZ DEFENDS MINE CLOSURES"

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Lopez defends mine closures

BY JOCELYN MONTEMAYOR

MGB RECOMMENDATIONS

	FINES SUGGESTED
AAMPIL NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORATIONS & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	P 26,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 260,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
BENGUET CORPORATION	P 6,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 50,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
BERONG NICKEL CORPORATION	P 10,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau
CTP CONSTRUCTION AND MINING CORPORATION/CARRASCAL NICKEL CORPORATION	P 61,600.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 100,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
CENTURY PEAK CORPORATION (PARCEL II MINING PROJECT)	P 18,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 450,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
CENTURY PEAK CORPORATION (CPC NICKEL MINING PROJECT)	P 19,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 600,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
EMIR MINERAL RESOURCES CORPORATION	P 3,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 210,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
HINATUAN MINING CORPORATION	P 50,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
LEPANTO CONSOLIDATED MINING COMPANY	P 27,275.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 100,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
MARCENVENTURES MINING AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	P 17,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 150,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
MT. SINAI MINING EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	P 21,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau
VISTA BUENA MINING CORPORATION/WELLEX MINING CORPORATION	P 130,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 990,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
EAST COAST MINERAL RESOURCES CO., INC/LIBJO MINING CORPORATION/WESTERN SHORE NICKEL CORPORATION	P 18,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 160,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
NORWEAH METALS AND MINERALS COMPANY, INC/ORIENTAL VISION MINING PHILIPPINES CORPORATION	P 61,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 120,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
SINOSTEEL PHILIPPINES H.Y. MINING CORPORATION	P 21,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 390,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
CLAVER MINERAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	P 6,000.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 50,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau
BENGUETCORP NICKEL MINES, INC.	P 144,290.00 to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau and; P 60,000.00 to the Environmental Management Bureau

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Regina Lopez said she was well within her rights to order the closure of 23 mining companies to prevent them from restarting operations that would end up destroying the environment.

The technical review committee of DENR that did the audit on mining operations recommended slapping fines of P10,000 to less than P1 million on the mines found violating environment rules.

The worst the committee recommended (table) was suspension of operations.

Lopez, in a briefing in Malaca-

"Dominguez: No stake in mining"

DOMINGUEZ Carlos Dominguez, Department of Finance (DOF) secretary, said he does not have any stake in the mining industry and that he will support the mining law.

Dominguez told reporters on the sidelines of the 24th Mining Industry Coordinating Council Meeting Thursday night he was

See DOMINGUEZ > Page A4

nang, defended her decision to order the closure instead of just suspension as recommended by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau of the 23 firms.

"If you suspended the (operations), that means that they can start again," she said.

Lopez said she is not out to start a fight with the mining operators as she knows some of them. She said she was merely protecting the environment.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

"LOPEZ DEFENDS MINE CLOSURES"

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LOPEZ

Lopez said the affected provinces where the mining firms had been operating for several decades now deserve to seek other industries to promote growth and provide livelihood to their people.

She also said mining operation in one's municipality or province does not necessarily guarantee that the place would become rich.

On the contrary, she said areas where the mining firms operate are among the poorest in the country.

Lopez said mining activities also do not give jobs all year round as operations are mostly done during the dry months.

She said some politicians and communities support mining not realizing there are other industries that can help promote the communities' growth and provide people with other sources of income.

Lopez and representatives from the Departments of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Trade and Industry (DTI), Labor and Employment (DOLE), and Science and Technology (DOST) are set to visit next week Surigao and Dinagat to look at the situation of mining communities.

She said workers affected by the closure would have to wait until March or April before work resumes and

it is the goal of government to determine how they can be provided jobs or other means of livelihood.

Lopez said those who are not satisfied with her decision can file an appeal, and even go to court.

She added due process had been observed before she made a final decision to order the closure and suspensions.

She said those who are asking for copies of the audit reports may also visit her office where she has the records.

Lopez acknowledged the directive of President Duterte, during the Cabinet meeting, to review the decision and ensure that the mining firms had been accorded due process before the order is meted out.

She also said that the President has the final say on the closure of the mining firms pending their appeal before his office, adding that the closure order would only be executory once the President decides on the appeals.

She also said that the mining firms could continue their operations pending their appeal.

"When they appeal to the President, the mines (can) still continue their operations while (the cases are) on appeal. Then when the President sees the appeal, then (decision) final, then they can go to court," she said.

"DOMINGUEZ"

only involved in mining twice in his life.

"One was in 1999 and 2003 when I was the CEO (chief executive officer) of Pasar (Philippine Associated Smelting and Refining Corp.) ... (when) we used to buy (copper) concentrates from the mines," Dominguez said.

"The second involvement I had in mines was in 2006 when I was invited to rehabilitate Rapu-Rapu mine because there was damage ... created by the previous management. Since then, I had nothing to do with mines," he added.

Dominguez chairs the Mining Industry Coordinating Council which is reviewing the closure and suspension of several mining companies.

"I support following the law. There is a mining law, I support following the law," Dominguez said.

The DOF had estimated losses that could run up to P653.64 million annually from the closure and suspension of several mining firms all over the country.

Dominguez earlier said local government units (LGUs) hosting mining firms that were ordered for suspension or closure will be affected by the possible revenue loss.

She said once the cases are in the courts, operations would be stopped pending court decision.

Asked what she would do if the President or the court overturns her order, Lopez said she would be sad but she has no intention of quitting her job.

She said she would stay on for as long as she is able to serve the country.

Lopez said she also intends to make the most of her job as environment secretary, starting with ensuring the strict implementation of the laws on mining especially those that ban its operations inside the watershed areas.

On the issue of the opening-pit mining, particularly in Tampakan, South Cotabato area, Lopez said she is also against it.

"I am not in favor of it at all. It's not even gonna be an economic problem. I think it's gonna be a peace problem," she said.

Lopez acknowledged that she may be stepping on some people by pushing for the campaign against illegal mining adding that there had been instances when some of her people are being offered millions of pesos as bribe.

She, however, stressed that she has zero-tolerance for corruption and inefficiency. #

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

President backs Lopez on closure of mine operations to protect watersheds

By GENALYN D. KABILING

President Duterte is backing the country's environment secretary to keep the precious watersheds "off limits" to destructive mining operations.

Environment Secretary Regina Lopez affirmed that the closure of mining operations in watersheds was non-negotiable, adding she has the support of the President on protecting this natural resource.

"It would take a miracle to convince me to allow mining in watersheds because as far as I know it's against the law. It's against social justice, it's against the Constitution to allow any kind of extractive industry inside the watershed," Lopez said in a Palace press conference.

"In the Cabinet meeting, his last closing remark in front of everyone 'I agree that there should be no mining in watersheds,'" she added, referring to the President's position on the mining issue.

After months of audit, Lopez recently announced the closure of 23 large-scale mining operations and suspension of five others for alleged violation of the country's mining and environmental laws.

Mining companies however complained they were not given due process and urged the President to intervene. The Palace later assured that these firms will be given a chance to respond or dispute with the audit or make the necessary remedies to ensure compliance with government standards.

In the Palace press briefing, Lopez defended that her decision to shut down these mining operations was "fair" and above board, dismissing allegations the mining companies were not given due process.

She explained that she followed the "rules of law" in carrying out the audit of the mining operations before handing down the decision.

Asked if the closure of these mining operations was not negotiable,

Lopez said: "For me, no. That's how I feel."

"I have made a policy in DENR that there should be no extractive industries in watersheds because it will kill the community life of the people around and it has," she added.

Lopez however recognized that the President will have the final say on the fate of the mining companies.

She said the mining companies could appeal the DENR decision to the Office of the President. Pending such appeal before OP, mining operations can continue.

If the President upholds the mine closure, Lopez said the companies can bring their case to court. By the time, mineral operations would be suspended until the court makes a final decision.

The DENR chief however is inclined to file criminal charges against the mining companies implicated in environmental destruction.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Group wants Mining Act of 1995 scrapped

By BLADYNN N. RENATING | Correspondent

The Scrap the Mining Act Network (SMAN) welcomes the order of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shutting down 23 mining firms and suspending five mining operations.

All power and agencies should respect and ensure the implementation of the order, SMAN said.

It also encouraged Environment Secretary Loren Legazpi to reverse his decision amid the threat of big businesses and threats to politicians and Cabinet members.

"This bold act is a step toward to abolish the people's national patrimony as basis for our national industrialization," SMAN said.

"We agree these mines, especially those devoted for the extraction of gold and nickel, have endangered rivers, ecosystems and destroyed or put at danger some communities. In the setting up these mines, forests were cleared and the area was stripped of everything, leaving nothing to plant and animal life," it said.

The group said it said on recent news reports on mining operations to stop is the case of human rights violations committed by these companies and the people's lives are being targeted.

The DENR also failed to mention how these companies forced residents to give their consent through duress, threats or violence. In many instances, social acceptability was ignored, and citizens, thus de-

fecting the very substance of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) among those affected by mining operations," the group said.

SMAN asked Legazpi and members of the two chambers of Congress to just scrap the Mining Act of 1995.

"The enactment and implementation of this law exacerbated the effects of large-scale mining to the environment and to the people's lives and welfare, resulting thou-

sands of tons of mineral resources without even establishing our own national mining industry. Existing mines became bolder in their expansion moves and approved mining applications pushed through, as exemplified by the Marcventures Holdings (MARC) assertion of their 'prior rights' as recognized by the mining law while operating in a watershed area in Surigao del Sur. Before the new leadership of the DENR came, there was minimal assessment of the environmental and human-rights performance of mining companies. The Mining Act of 1995 was implemented to attract foreign companies and investments, without regard to its real benefits to the economy, to job generation

and adherence to international human-rights and environmental standards," SMAN said.

"We appeal to Secretary Lopez to add voice to our clamor to scrap the Mining Act of 1995 and for Congress to replace it with a law that will employ stricter environmental and human-rights standards to mining companies. The People's Mining bill that was filed in Congress also seeks to reorient the mining industry toward the creation of a genuine and sustainable national industry," it stressed.

"As long as the current Mining Act is in place and is being implemented, environment woes caused by large-scale mining will not end. It is not enough to impose environment regulations. Regulation of the mining industry must be integrated in a holistic and sustainable development agenda, one that will serve the people's genuine interests and aspirations," SMAN said.

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BusinessMirror

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

ATM, green groups: Mines closure not without basis

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA
@jonlmayuga
& REA CU @ReaCuBM

ENVIRONMENTAL and anti-mining groups on Thursday welcomed Malacañang's directive to give due process to mining companies affected by the closure and suspension orders issued by Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez.

They maintained, however, that Lopez's decision is not without basis, citing the massive environmental destruction caused by mining operations in violation of various mining and environmental laws.

Clemente Bautista, national coordinator of Kalikasan-People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan-PNE), said it is the inherent right of mining companies to contest the closure and suspension orders.

However, he added, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and related agencies should implement first the orders on what he described as "abusive mining companies".

"Malacañang should not only respect, but help, Secretary Lopez and the DENR people to do their jobs. Mining [companies] could raise their appeal during this process. The orders will be for naught if Malacañang will intervene and halt [the] implementation [of closure orders]," Bautista said.

He expressed hope that President Duterte and his Cabinet will not side with the mining companies that already caused "so much environmental destruction and depleted our resources".

Cabinet members, meanwhile, have expressed support behind Duterte's decision to observe due process before implementing a directive of the DENR to shut down or suspend 28 mining sites across the

country, according to a news statement issued by Palace Spokesman Ernesto C. Abella.

"The President and his Cabinet collectively decided to observe due process with regard to the mining issue. The DOF shall have further discussions with the DENR in their capacities as concerned government agencies of the Mining Industry Coordinating Council," he added.

Jaybee Garganera of Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM) said social justice and

human rights comprise the broader basis of closing the mines.

While ATM welcomes Malacañang's directive to give due process to mining companies affected by the closure and suspension orders, Garganera said the results of the mining audit are "credible".

"Our impression is that the decision to close and suspend the mines relied on a whole set of references and evidence—the mining audit, the report of the Technical Review Committee, the local reports of NGOs [non-governmental organizations] and LGUs [local government units] submitted as addendum to the mining audit, news coverage, documents from legal cases in various courts and quasi-judicial bodies, LGU resolutions and ordinances against mining projects, aerial surveys of mining areas, and ground interaction by DENR officials in the mining-affected communities," he said.

He added: "The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines wrongly maintains a narrow viewpoint when they insist that the mining-audit report was the sole basis for the closures and suspensions."

“Malacañang should not only respect, but help, Secretary Lopez and the DENR people to do their jobs. Mining [companies] could raise their appeal during this process. The orders will be for naught if Malacañang will intervene and halt [the] implementation [of closure orders].”

—BAUTISTA

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TIKLOP KAY GINA

Watersheds, off-limits sa mining firms **P. 2**

NI GENALYN D. KABILING

May basbas ni Pangulong Duterte ang maigting na kampanya ni Environment Secretary Gina Lopez na ipagbawal ang pagmimina sa mga watershed ng bansa.

Ito ang giit ni Lopez sa kabila ng pagpupursige ng malalaking kumpanya ng minahan na iapela sa Pangulo ang pagpapasara sa 23 mining

operation at pagsuspende sa lima pa dahil sa umano'y paglabag sa environmental laws.

"It would take a miracle to convince me to allow mining in watersheds because as far as I know it's against the law. It's against social justice, It's against the Constitution to allow any kind of extractive industry

inside the watershed," sabi ni Lopez sa isang press conference sa Malacañang.

"In the Cabinet meeting, his last closing remark in front of everyone 'I agree that there should be no mining in watersheds,'" saad ni Lopez.

Umalma ang mining companies sa closure at suspension order ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) dahil sila binigyan ng pagkakataong magpaliwanag.

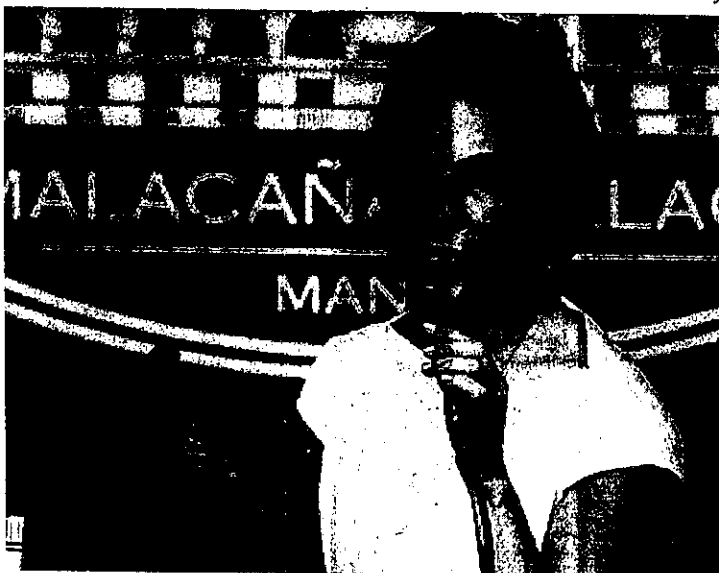
Sinabi naman ng Malacañang na handa si Duterte na pakinggan ang mining firms

Ngunit sinabi ni Lopez na ang desisyon niyang ipasara ang minahan ay "fair" at alinsunod sa "rules of law."

Dagdag niya na hindi totoo hindi niya pinakinggan ang paliwanag ng mga kumpanya ng minahan.

"I have made a policy in DENR that there should be no extractive industries in watersheds because it will kill the community life of the people around and it has," sabi ni Lopez.

Aminado si Lopez na ang desisyon ng Pangulo ang mananaig.



USAPANG PANGKALIKASAN Humarap sa press briefing si Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez upang talakayin ang mga isyung pangkapaligiran na kinakaharap ng bansa sa Malacañang kahapon.

RICHARD VIÑAS

PEOPLES Tonight

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DU30 HAS FINAL SAY ON MINES' CLOSURE -- LOPEZ

**COMP: This gives hope to
our mining communities**

By EFREN MONTANO

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has the final say on the closure of the 23 mining firms pending their appeal before the Office of the President, Environment Secretary Regina "Gina" Lopez told Palace reporters yesterday.

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DU30...

From Page 1

Lopez said in the Palace briefing yesterday that the closure order against the operation of the 23 mining firms would only be executory once the President decides on their appeals.

"It only takes effect when it's rendered final by the President. For example, they can appeal. When the President says to close it, then it's final," Lopez said.

Lopez added that the mining firms, could continue their operations pending their appeal.

"When they appeal to the President, the mines still continue their operations while it's on appeal. Then when the President sees the appeal, then it's final then they can go to court," she said.

Earlier, Lopez ordered last Feb. 2 the closure of

23 mining firms, mainly for ruining watershed areas and "indiscriminate mining."

"It is time for social justice. You cannot run your business and affect our farmers and fishermen. This is not acceptable under the Duterte administration and not acceptable under the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources)," she said.

Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella said Duterte and his Cabinet had agreed to observe due process in the closure of the mining firms.

"This means companies affected by mining closures for violations of environmental laws and regulations will be given the opportunity to respond or dispute the audit, or make the necessary remedies to ensure compliance with government standards," Abella said.

In a statement, the Chamber of Mines of the

Philippines (COMP) thanked President Duterte and the Cabinet for deciding to observe due process with regard to the mining issue.

"We welcome the decision as this gives hope to our mining communities comprised of the many women and men who rely on the industry for their living.

"We commit to work closely with government and the Minerals Industry Coordinating Council regarding issues raised to ensure that a fair and just conclusion to the mines audit is reached.

"We have not wavered in our commitment to continue being

significant contributors to nationbuilding and inclusive growth," COMP added.

Lopez and Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III co-chair the MICC which is mandated to oversee reforms to make miners more socially and environmentally responsible, while giving the state a bigger share of mining revenues.

"Dominguez has also expressed concern over the plight of the tens of thousands of workers who would lose their jobs as well as the fiscal health of cities and municipalities hosting mine sites, which are heavily dependent on the taxes and fees paid by mining firms for their revenues," the DOF said.

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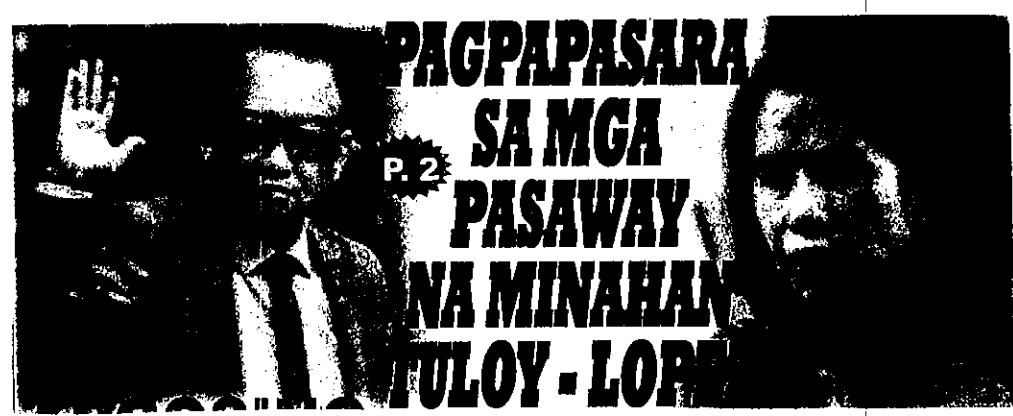
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PAGPAPASARA SA MGA PASAWAY NA MINAHAN TULOY - LOPEZ

P.2

Pagpapasara sa mga pasaway na minahan tuloy - Lopez

NILINAW kahapon ni Environment Sec. Gina Lopez na hindi pinigil ng Malakanyang ang pagpapasara ng 23 mining operations sa buong bansa.

Magugunitang naglabas ng closure order si Sec. Lopez sa mga nasabing mining companies dahil sa paglabag sa mining laws at sa Saligang Batas pero sinabi ng Department of Finance (DoF) na hold muna ang implementasyon.

Pahayag ni Sec. Lopez, kailangan lamang masunod ang mga kinauukulang proseso at tuloy ang pagpapatupad ng kanyang closure order.

Pahayag ni Lopez, kailangan ng isang milagro para maabago ang kanyang desisyon lalo sa 15 nasa water shed areas.

Kasabay nito, itinanggi rin ng kalihim na "one-sided" at hindi dumaan sa due process ang kanyang desisyon.

Katunayan, sinagot ng mga mining companies ang ibinigay na "show cause order" at nagsagawa rin sila ng "on-site investigation" maliban sa ginawang mining audit. (Vanz Fernandez)

HATAW!

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPING

Digong naiipit sa bangga ng Gabinete LOPEZ NANINDIGAN LABAN SA 23 MINAHANG IPINASARA

Digong naiipit sa bangga ng Gabinete **Lopez nanindigan laban sa 23 minahang ipinasara**

DESIDIDO si Environment Secretary Gina Lopez na ipatigil ang Tampakan mining operations, kahit masagasaan ang interes ng promotor ng proyekto na "best friend forever" (BFF) ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

Sa press briefing kahapon sa Palasyo, itinanggi ni Lopez ang pahayag ng Department of Finance (DoF), na walang basbas ni Pangulong Duterte, ang pasya niyang ipasara ang 23 mining sites sa buong bansa.

"What happened there [during the DENR's decision-making process] was they want to make sure that I followed rule of law and I did," ani Lopez.

Giit ni Lopez, kaya niya ipinasara ang 23 mining firms dahil 'ginahasa' ang kalikasan, at pinagkaitan ang mga mamamayan, lalo ang mga katutubo, ng "social justice."

Aniya, si Pangulong Duterte ang huling mag-

dedesisyon kung papayagan o ibabasura ang mga rekomendasyon ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

"Now, if they don't agree and I think they don't agree, is that they will appeal. So when they appeal to the President, the mine still continues operation while it's on appeal," dagdag niya.

Ang ipinasara ni Lopez ang Tampakan mine operations, sumasakop sa South Cotabato, Sarangani, Sultan Kudarat, at Davao del Sur, proyektong inilunsad ng Sagittarius Mining Inc. (SMI), kompanyang ang isa sa mga may-ari ay si Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez, kababata at BFF ni Duterte.

Ipinaliwanag ni Lopez, ang kabuuang sukat ng open mining pit sa Tampakan ay katumbas ng 700 football fields, at mayaman sa copper at gold ore deposits.

Tinatayang gagastos

ang SMI ng \$5.9 bilyon upang hukayin ang lugar, itinuturing na pinakamalaking virgin natural resources sa Timog Silangang Asya, upang makapag-supply ng 11.6 milyon toneleda ng copper, at 14.6 milyon ounces ng gold.

Ilang oras bago ginapang ang press briefing ni Lopez sa Palasyo, binatikos siya sa kalatas ng DoF, dahil ang desisyon niyang ipasara ang 23 mining operations ay "triggered outrage in communities hosting mining sites, as some 195,000 direct and indirect workers and their families, or a total of some 1.2 million people, would be adversely affected by the closure and suspensions of the mine sites."

Inakusahan ng DoF si Lopez, na pinagbawalan ang mga miyembro ng Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) team, na nagsagawa ng mines audit, at ang panel na nagre-paso ng findings nito, na

pagkakait ng due process.

"Malacañang has swiftly moved to calm fears of massive layoffs in communities affected by Lopez's sudden move to close down or suspend mining operations... Several Cabinet officials expressed concern over the detrimental impact of her decision, which she had apparently kept to herself," ayon sa DoF statement.

(ROSE NOVENARIO)

HATAW!

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PHILIPPINE OFFICIAL NEWS & PINKS

CLOSURE, SUSPENSION ORDERS VS MINAHAN IPINATIGIL NG PALASYO

IPINATIGIL muna ng Palasyo, at ng Gabinete ang closure at suspension orders, ipinatupad ni Environment Secretary Gina Lopez, laban sa mga minahan sa bansa, sinasabing nakasisira ng kalikasan, at kakapiranggot ang naiambag sa kabangbayan.

Sa pahayag ng Department of Finance (Dof), Huwebes, pag-aaralan muna ng pambansang pamahalaan ang pasya ng kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Sinisiguro lamang anila ng pamahalaan ang "due process" sa pagpapasara sa halos 30 minahan, na sinasabing hindi nakasunod sa mga patakaran sa pagmimina, batay sa mining audit na isinagawa ng DENR.

"Members of the Cabinet have expressed their full support behind President Duterte's decision to observe due process before implementing a directive of the DENR to shut down or suspend 28 mining sites across the country," pahayag ng Dof.

Inianunsyo ni Secretary Lopez noong 2 Pebrero, ang resulta ng mining audit, nagpapakitang mahigit sa kalahati ng bilang ng mga malalaking minahan sa bansa, ay bumagsak sa patakaran ng DENR.

Agad nakialam ang Palasyo dahil sa rami ng mga maggagawang apek-tado ng hakbang ng DENR.

REMATE

ANG DIARYO NG MASA

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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Closure ng 23 mining firms, hold muna

SINABI ni Department of Environment Secretary Regina Paz Lopez na kailangan munang masunod ang mga kinauukulang proseso bago ituloy ang pagpapatupad ng ipinalabas niyang closure order laban sa 23 mining firms na lumabag sa mining laws at sa Saligang Batas.

labon ang dahilan kung bakit hold muna ang implementasyon ng kanyang naging kautusan laban sa mining companies.

Itinatwa naman ni Sec. Lopez na "one-sided" at hindi dumaman sa due process ang kanyang desisyon.

Sa katunayan, sinagot ng mga mining companies ang ibinigay na "show cause order" at nagsagawa rin sila ng "on-site investigation" maliban sa ginawang mining audit.

Sinabi naman ng Department of Finance na pinasuspindi muna ni Pangulong Duterte gabinete nito ang closure at suspension orders na ipinataw ni Sec. Lopez laban sa mga minahan sa bansa na umano'y nakasisira ng kalikasan at kapingangot ang nalambag sa kaban ng bayan.

Sa kalatas na ipinalabas ng DoF, nakasaad dito na pag-aaralan muna ng national government ang pasya ni Sec. Lopez bago ito ikasa.

Titiyakin lang ng gobyerno na may "due process" sa pagpasara sa kulang-kulang 23 minahan na hindi nakasunod sa mga patakaran sa pagmimina, balay sa mining audit na isina-

gawa ng DENR.

Si Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez ay kababata ni Pangulong Duterte.

Nauna nang inanunsyo ni Secretary Lopez noong Pebrero 2 ang resulta ng mining audit na nagpapakitang mahigit sa kalahati ng bilang ng mga malalaking minahan sa bansa ay bumagsak sa patakaran ng DENR.

Ito umano ang dahilan kung bakit agad na nakialam ang Palasyo, dahil na rin sa rami ng mga maggagawang appektado ng hakbang ng DENR.

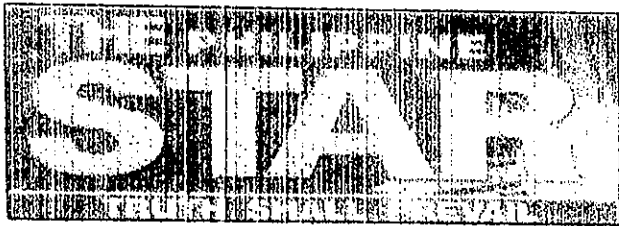
Aabot sa 28 na malalaking mining operations sa 10 lalawigan sa bansa ang ipinasara ni Lopez.

Ikinatuwa naman ng mining industry lobby group Chamber of Mines of the Philippines ang desisyon ng Malacañang.

Nagpulong naman kahalipon ang Mining Industry Coordinating Council, kung saan co-chair si Lopez, at kabilang na rin si Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III.

Ang MICC, na naitatag sa itatim ng Executive Order No. 79 noong 2012 ni dating Pangulong Benigno Aquino III, may kapangyarihang i-oversee ang mga panukalang reporma sa industriya sa pagmimina upang italong maging "socially and environmentally responsible" ang mga malalaking minero, upang sa ganun ay makapag-ambag sa pamahalaan ang industriya ng mas malaking bahagi sa kinikita ng mga ito.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Palace, Cabinet stop mine closures, suspension orders

Story on Page 4

By MARY GRACE PADIN
and DELON PORCALLA

Malacañang has put on hold the closure and suspension orders on 28 mines issued by Environment Secretary Gina Lopez purportedly to give way to due process.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said on Wednesday that President Duterte and his Cabinet have collectively decided to observe due process in dealing with the mining issue.

Abella said mining firms would be given the opportunity to respond to or dispute the results of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)'s mining audit, which has not yet been released by the agency.

The DENR based its decision to close 23 mines and suspend five others on the audit report.

"The Department of Finance (DOF) shall have further discussions with the DENR in their capacities as concerned government agencies of the Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC)," the President's spokesman said.

Lopez and Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III co-chair the MICC.

"Members of the Cabinet have expressed their full support behind President Duterte's decision to observe due process before implementing a directive of the DENR to shut down or suspend 28 mining sites across the country," the DOF said in a statement.



DENR Secretary Gina Lopez meets the press at Malacañang yesterday.

KRIZJOHN ROSALES

Lopez's closure order has sparked uproar in communities hosting mining sites, as some 1.2 million people are estimated to be directly and indirectly affected by the closure and suspension orders.

Affected mining firms have also asked the DENR to give them more time to take the necessary remedial actions.

Industry group Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) welcomed the Palace's latest announcement.

"The Chamber of Mines thanks President Duterte and the Cabinet for deciding to observe due process with regard to the mining issue," the group said in a statement.

"We welcome the decision as this gives hope to our mining communities comprised of women and men who rely on the industry for their living," it added.

The group promised to cooperate with the government and the MICC in reaching a "fair and just" arrangement.

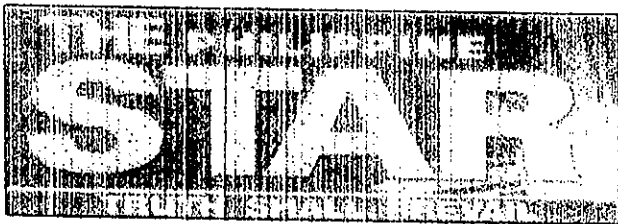
It also reminded the DENR that it has not yet released the audit report used by the department to justify its orders.

"Firms have not received any. That's why we're still at a loss," COMP executive vice president Nelia Halcon said over the phone.

"We are not just requesting for the mere summation of the audit results. We need the actual test results which were used as bases for determining whether or not these mining firms have violated environmental regulations," COMP chairman Artemio Disini said.

"The DENR needs to show us that these tests were conducted in each mining company and the specific findings that merited their suspension or closure," he added.

Several Cabinet members earlier expressed concern over the impact of the DENR decision on employment and on finances of local government units.



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Palace, . . .

In response, Lopez said the government would allot P8 billion for the development of sites in ecological zones where displaced workers would be hired.

House probe

For two members of the House of Representatives, an investigation should be launched to find out how Lopez came up with her decision.

Reps. Allen Jessé Mangaoang of Kalinga and Anthony Bravo of party-list Coop-Natcco filed House Resolution 756 calling for a House inquiry into the

DENR chief's basis for issuing the suspension and closure orders.

Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers – in whose area several mining firms were operating – earlier warned Lopez to watch her back and be wary of her alleged double agent confidant, former Mines and Geosciences Bureau chief Leo Jasareno.

Closing mining companies responsible for destroying Mother Earth is definitely commendable, but the DENR chief should also check her own trusted aide who for decades allowed

unimpeded and unabated mining activities, he said.

Barbers issued the warning following Lopez's decision to tap the expertise of former DENR undersecretary Jasareno, whom President Duterte had already "dismissed."

"Jasareno is not an innocent bystander in this masquerade. He is the protagonist. His MGB was supposed to police the mining activities in the country, but now he is saying that these companies committed environmental violations," Barbers pointed out the irony.

Lopez, a pro-environment advocate, hired the former MGB chief and even designated him to lead the audit team that supposedly recommended the closure of the 23 mines.

Barbers, chairman of the House dangerous drugs committee, noted it is very "disturbing" to learn that Jasareno was hired by no less than Lopez herself and "equally disturbing" was her appointment of him as head of the audit team to probe the mining firms.

"Such hypocrisy coming from the one who was supposed to make sure that mining laws are followed and implemented," Barbers noted, as he urged Lopez to be "fair and investigate her confidante with the same zeal and vigor" as she had displayed in her dealing with mining firms.

"Jasareno knew all too well that the violations were happening under his watch – for several years – but he deliberately turned a blind eye on these violations," the Mindanao lawmaker stressed.

"Gross negligence at the very least, gross incompetence at worse and connivance at worst, which one is it, Mr. Jasareno? And how about those mining companies which were not closed and whose owners are known friends of Mr. Jasareno?" Barbers asked.

He lamented that Lopez has "put the blame entirely on the erring mining companies without looking at the root cause of the problem, which did not just happen overnight."

He urged Lopez to "open her eyes if she really wants to reform the graft-laden agency."

"I urge Secretary Lopez to turn her attention to the contributing factor for these environmental violations. I am referring to the corrupt MGB under Jasareno, the Malacañang-dismissed DENR undersecretary," Barbers said in a statement.

"It is very sad and unfortunate for the country that despite being dismissed by no less than the President, Secretary Lopez still retained Jasareno as her confidante and consultant," he added.

Meanwhile, environmentalist group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE) has assailed Malacañang for withdrawing Lopez's order.

– With Artemio Dumlao, Louise Maureen Simeon



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

President has final say – DENR chief

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ
and ALEXIS ROMERO

President Duterte has the final say on the fate of 23 mines ordered closed for operating in or near watersheds, Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez said yesterday, as she rebuffed criticism from a mining industry group that she had sidestepped procedures in issuing the order.

In a briefing, Lopez said her closure order on 23 of the country's 41 mines was aboveboard. She also ordered the suspension of operations in five mines.

"It's totally in my right to close down the mines," Lopez said.

The mines ordered closed account for half of the nickel ore output by the world's top supplier of the metal. Of the 23 mines, 15 are within watershed areas.

However, sources told *Reuters* that a team that reviewed an audit of the country's mines recommended suspension of operations and payment of fines for environmental violations, rather than closures.

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President

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"It would take a miracle to convince me to allow mining in watersheds. As far as I know it's against the law. It's against social justice, it's against the Constitution. He (Duterte) said 'I agree there should be no mining in watersheds,'" she stressed.

An environmentalist, Lopez said the miners could appeal her decision to the Office of the President. If they fail to convince Duterte to withdraw the DENR order, the mining firms are likely to turn to the courts for help.

Ordered closed include mines operated by Hinatuan Mining Corp, a unit of top Philippine nickel ore producer Nickel Asia Corp., and BenguetCorp Nickel Mines Inc.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines is pushing for the release of the audit used by the DENR to justify the closure.

"We are not just requesting for the mere summation of the audit results. We need the actual test results which were used as bases for determining whether or not these mining firms have violated environmental regulations," Artemio Disini, the chamber's chairman, said in a statement on Thursday.

"The executive branch has been advocating transparency in its policies and programs and on this basis, we feel we have the right to know the process involved and the results of the audit," Disini said. Lopez promised to provide all the information the group needed.

The DENR chief also rejected claims that the closure would affect some 195,000 direct and indirect workers and their families or a total of 1.2 million people.

Citing statistics, Lopez said the mining industry contributed P82.4 billion to the economy as of 2014, while the tourism industry churned out P982 billion in the same period and created 4.7 million jobs.

"So, where I feel we should go in terms of area development is we have to look at the

specialness of each and every part of the Philippines and develop that area for the people of that area," she said.

Lopez also reiterated her opposition to the operations of the \$5.9-billion mining project of Sagittarius Mines Inc. in Tampakan, South Cotabato, where operations would cover the size of seven football fields.

"All mines at one point in time take a crack. I mean, even Philex - which was a poster boy of mining - had a crack a few years back," she said.

"So we are sacrificing the food basket of Mindanao for nothing. We might not even get any money there because we can't get anything unless there's a windfall profit. That's why... that's how the agreement was designed, it's so unfair. That was my story," Lopez said.

Corruption

She also revealed there is "serious" corruption in her department as she revealed an attempt by a mining firm to offer her millions of pesos to sign some papers.

Lopez said the owner of a mining company coursed the offer through a friend but she did not name names.

"A friend went to me and then she said, Gina if you sign this paper, the person (who) owns the mine, he didn't tell me, will give me P6 million a month," she told reporters.

"The role of government is to play the middle path, you know. If you co-opt your role to the side of big business, who is going to protect the poor? How will the poor ever stand against big political, big business interests?" Lopez said.

"The only institution, the only entity that can stand against political and business interest is the government. And if we co-opt our role to the side of big business, what's going to happen to these guys? The farmers and fishermen who have been suffering for decades," she added.

Lopez said corruption in her agency allowed errant mining firms to continue their

operations. She said the environmental destruction caused by irresponsible mining firms would not have happened had people from the environment department and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau performed their job with integrity.

"I think it's serious. That's why I want to clean it up right away. I'm very careful about the money... I'm really strict. If they don't do what they promise to do in the planning... out, out, go away, bye-bye," Lopez said.

Lopez said while the environment department has "very, very good employees," there are some who "are not really good at all."

"Anything that entails regulation, there will always be some people who would want to make money," she said. "I fault the government for not being strict in implementing rules."

She is optimistic that she would be able to make a difference in the agency in one year.

Lopez also said her announcement of the closure order came days after the completion of the technical committee report, as she had to follow some legal procedures recommended by lawyers.

"When the press con was done, the evaluations have been completed days before. What happened was an omnibus directive. It was prepared for all mining companies and our lawyers have decided it should be issued to individual mining companies. That's why there's been a delay," she said.

This means each of the 28 mining firms would be furnished a copy of the suspension order as well as the audit report within the day.

In a press conference last Thursday, the DENR announced the closure of 21 mining firms, which supposedly failed the DENR's audit. The agency later corrected its announcement and said that 28 firms failed the test.

But despite the DENR's announcement, the mining firms continue to operate as no suspension order has been released by the department.
- With Elizabeth Marcelo, Reuters

Mines gain reprieve

Palace lets 28 firms comply first before suspension or closure

By John Paolo Bencito, Anna Leah E. Gonzales and Maricel V. Cruz

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte and his Cabinet will observe due process before shutting down or suspending 28 mining sites in 10 provinces, a Palace spokesman said Thursday.

In a statement, Presidential Spokesman Ernesto Abella said mining companies subject to closure or suspension for violating environmental regulations will be given an opportunity to dispute the mining audit undertaken by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources, the results of which have not yet been made public.

Abella said the mining companies would also be able to undertake "the necessary remedies to ensure compliance with government standards."

"The Department of Finance shall have further discussions with the DENR in their capacities as concerned government agencies of the Mining Industry Coordinating Council [MICC]," Abella said.

Last week, Environment Secretary Gina Lopez announced the

closure of 23 mining companies and the suspension of five others, citing the results of a mining audit that she has not made public. The move would throw 19,000 workers out of a job, and hurt tens of thousands of others who indirectly benefit from the mining operations in their communities.

On Thursday, Lopez admitted that she disregarded the recommendation of a technical review committee to merely suspend some mining companies.

In an interview at the Palace, Lopez confirmed reports that the technical review committee she created in November 2016 recommended only a maximum of "suspension and fines," and that she decided to close 23 of them on her own.

"Yeah that's true," Lopez told reporters. "[The recommendation

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THE STANDARD

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Mines...

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suspension and fines ... and fines don't go to the community; it goes to the national government, it's so unfair."

Lopez said she "didn't agree at all" with the recommendation to just impose fines on mining companies that allegedly committed environmental violations.

Asked for the basis of her closure orders, Lopez pointed at herself.

"Blame me. Not even Leo Sarenzo, it's my decision," she added, referring to the dismissed former Environment Undersecretary who led the mining audit.

Earlier this week, the Finance Department voiced worries that the closures would cripple the local government units that rely heavily on the taxes and fees paid by the mining companies for their revenues.

Social Welfare Secretary Edy Taguiwalo said her department will conduct a survey to determine the extent of joblessness that would result from the mining closures.

Labor Secretary Ivester Bello III said that his department has an agency job program in place that would be able to absorb a limited number of workers and the jobs could only be temporary.

Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez, who has been vocal on the financial impact of the mine closures, said Thursday he had no mining interests. He said his only involvement in the mining industry was when he headed Philippine Associated Smelting and Refining Corp. in 1999 and 2003 and in 2006, when he rehabilitated Rapu-Rapu mine.

"Since then, I have nothing to do with mines. I do not have mining interest. I personally have no investment in mine. I have shares in stocks in mines," he added.

Journalists covering Lopez's closure announcement asked for copies of the mining audit, but she refused, saying that they do not have to "be privy to the

processes" on which she made her decisions.

On Wednesday, Lopez attended a hearing of the Senate labor committee, which convened to find ways to address the plight of mining workers who would be rendered jobless as a result of the mine closures.

Lopez said the government would spend P8 billion to build "blue lagoons, enchanted rivers" in ecological zones where displaced mining workers would be hired.

But the chairman of the committee, Senator Joel Villanueva, said the government needed to "get their act together" because 19,000 jobless miners was "not a small number."

Surigao Rep. Robert Ace Barbers told Lopez to develop her "green economy" first before throwing tens of thousands of miners out of work.

"Put up your 'green economy' first, develop it and employ these people, then you can tell the mining companies to stop," Barbers said.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines accused Lopez of "condemning to poverty more than 1.2-million Filipinos whose livelihood depend on legitimate, permitted mining."

It added that Lopez "is slowly killing an industry that has faithfully paid billions in taxes and fees annually," referring to the P10.1 billion in tax revenues collected by the government from the mining sector in 2015.

The mining operations ordered closed down or suspended account for 46 percent or P4.6 billion of these tax revenues, the chamber said.

Moreover, about \$22 billion in mining investments will be put on hold as a result of Lopez's move, the chamber added.

"When faced with the fact that almost all of our member-companies' mining operations met the standards and received the certification of ISO 14001, she launched her own four-day audit and packed the audit teams with anti-mining NGOs,"

the industry association said.

"That she uses the results of this second audit rather than the results of the ISO standards reveal her inherent bias against the industry as a whole," the chamber said. "Worse, President Rodrigo Duterte's appointee Undersecretary and Concurrent MGB (Mines and Geosciences Bureau) Director Mario Luis Jacinto and his team are being ignored. They were even banned from last Thursday's press conference, [which only included] anti-mining NGOs."

The chamber on Thursday reiterated its request to see the results of the DENR mining audit.

"We are not just requesting for the mere summation of the audit results. We need the actual test results which were used as bases for determining whether or not these mining firms have violated environmental regulations," said the chamber's chairman, Artemio Disini.

The group wants to see that water and air quality test, siltation test, proper solid waste management and other pertinent and standardized tests as prescribed by law were done.

"The DENR needs to show us that these tests were conducted in each mining company and the specific findings that merited their suspension or closure," he added.

The chamber said it is asking for the results in the spirit of fairness and transparency.

The Palace intervention in the controversial closure and suspension orders lifted stock prices Thursday, after two successive days of losses.

The PSE Index gained 17.84 points to 7,252.66. The Mining and Oil index gained 238.05 points or 1.99 percent to close at 12,209.90.

Also on Thursday, the Philippine Business for Environmental Stewardship (PBEST), a non-government organization, criticized what it described as the "divisive" leadership of Lopez at the DENR.

"The sound management of the environment requires the involvement and cooperation of people and communities, not antagonism and animosity," said lawyer Ysan Castillo, secretary general of PBEST.

"We live in one big ecosystem, where everything and everyone is interconnected. We need a type of governance that is inclusive, not just of the marginalized, but of all, including those perceived to be the ones destroying the environment." With Gabrielle H. Binaday

The environmental cost of irresponsible mining

ANGEL C. ALCALA



'Once the environment is degraded, it will take decades and even centuries, to recover and become functional and productive again.'

THE planned closure of 23 mines by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has generated objections from mining companies. The Secretary of Finance has estimated that the closure will cost the government P654 million in taxes. What surprises me is that he failed to compute the cost to the environment.

This cost to the environment including its impact on the resources that are used by the people should be estimated in order to be fair to the DENR. Degradation of the environment is visible to any one in many mining areas. What many people fail to understand is that once the environment is degraded, it will take decades and even centuries, to recover and become functional and productive again.

Two examples in my experience come to mind. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Pagatban River in southern Negros Oriental lost its biodiversity when its lower reaches were virtually converted to mud. I have picture of my youngest son showing the muddy substrate up to his waist. The mine tailings not only damaged the river but also killed the productive coral reef some few hundred meters from the river mouth. Today, this reef no longer exists, and people have lost the site as fishing area for small-scale fishermen. The river has recovered slowly but some important fish species are gone.

The second example is the mining operation in Sipalay, Negros Occidental. Due to negligence of the mining company, its tailings pond overflowed and damaged several hectares of productive rice fields.

It is important that in assessing mining operations the important values of the environment must be taken into consideration and not only the financial aspects of mining operations.

PEOPLES' JOURNALS

Everybody's Newspaper

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MINES



LOPEZ

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**It's the President who
has final say on mines'
fate —Gina Lopez**

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

MINES STAY OPEN

By Efren Montano

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte has the final say on the closure of the 23 mining firms pending their appeal before the Office of the President, Environment Secretary Regina "Gina" Lopez told Palace reporters yesterday.

Lopez said at the Palace briefing yesterday that the closure order against the 23 mining firms could only be carried out once the President has decided on their appeals.

"It only takes effect when it's rendered final by the President. For example, they can appeal. When the President says to close it, then it's final," Lopez said.

Lopez stressed that the mining firms could con-

tinue their operations pending their appeal.

"When they appeal to the President, the mines still continue their operations while it's on appeal. Then when the President (rules on) the appeal, then it's final then they can go to court," she said.

Lopez ordered last February 2 the shutdown of 23 mining firms, mainly those ruining watershed areas and doing "indiscriminate mining."

"It is time for social justice. You cannot run your business and affect our farmers and fishermen. This is not acceptable under the Duterte administration and not acceptable under the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources)," she said.

Presidential Spokes-

man Ernesto Abella said Duterte and his Cabinet had agreed to observe due process in the closure of the mining firms.

"This means companies affected by mining closures for violations of environmental laws and regulations will be given the opportunity to respond or dispute the audit, or make the necessary remedies to ensure compliance with government standards," Abella said.

Lopez however insisted that due process was followed in the mining audit.

"I have followed the rule of law at every single, single step of the way," the DENR chief said.

Mines group statement

The Chamber of Mines

thanks President Rodrigo Duterte and the Cabinet for deciding to observe due process with regard to the mining issue.

We welcome the decision as this gives hope to our mining communities comprised of the many women and men who rely on the industry for their living.))

We commit to work closely with government and the Minerals Industry Coordinating Council regarding issues raised to ensure that a fair and just conclusion to the mines audit is reached.

We have not wavered in our commitment to continue being significant contributors to nation-building and inclusive growth.

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Lopez firm vs mining in watersheds

President Duterte is backing Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez to keep the precious watersheds "off limits" to destructive mining operations.

Lopez affirmed that the closure of mining operations in watersheds was non-negotiable, adding she has the support of the President on protecting this natural resource.

"It would take a miracle to convince me to allow mining in watersheds because as far as I know it's

against the law. It's against social justice, it's against the Constitution to allow any kind of extractive industry inside the watershed," Lopez said in a Palace press conference.

"In the Cabinet meeting, his last closing remark in front of everyone 'I agree that there should be no mining in watersheds,'" she added, referring to the President's position on the mining issue.

After months of audit, Lopez recently announced the closure of

23 large-scale mining operations and suspension of five others for alleged violation of the country's mining and environmental laws.

Mining companies, however, complained they were not given due process and urged the President to intervene. The Palace later assured that these firms will be given a chance to respond or dispute with the audit or make the necessary remedies to ensure compliance with government standards. **(Genalyn D. Kabiling)**

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

Shutdown ng 28 minahan tuloy - Lopez

Nilinaw kahapon ni Environment Sec. Gina Lopez kahapon na ipatitigil pa rin niya ang operasyon ng mga minahang nasa watershed areas, kahit ipinag-utos ng Palasyo na pansamantalang itigil ang pagpatutupad ng "suspension and shutdown orders" laban sa 28 na malalaking minahan sa bansa.

Ayon kay Lopez, kalihim ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), ang pagsara sa mga minahan na nasa watershed areas ay "non-negotiable" at iginiit niyang suportado ni Pangu-

long Duterte ang kanyang desisyon.

"It would take a miracle to convince me to allow mining in watersheds. As far as I know it's against the law. It's against social justice, it's against the constitution. He (Duterte) said I agree there should be no mining in watersheds," sabi ni Lopez.

Sinabi pa ng DENR chief, 15 sa 28 na mga minahan na kanyang ipinasasara ay nasa watershed areas.

Ipinasuspinde muna ng Palasyo at ng Gabinete ang "closure at suspension orders" ni Lopez at ayon sa

DOF, pag-aaralan muna ang pasya ng kalihim.

Sinisiguro lamang umano ng Malacañang ang "due process" sa pagpapasara sa aabot sa 28 minahan na umano'y hindi nakasunod sa mga patakaran sa pagmimina, batay sa mining audit na isinagawa ng DENR.

Inanunsyo ni Lopez noong February 2 ang resulta ng mining audit na nagpapakitang mahigit sa kalahati ng bilang ng mga malalaking minahan sa bansa ay bumagsak sa patakaran ng DENR.
(Rudy Andal)

Daily Tribune

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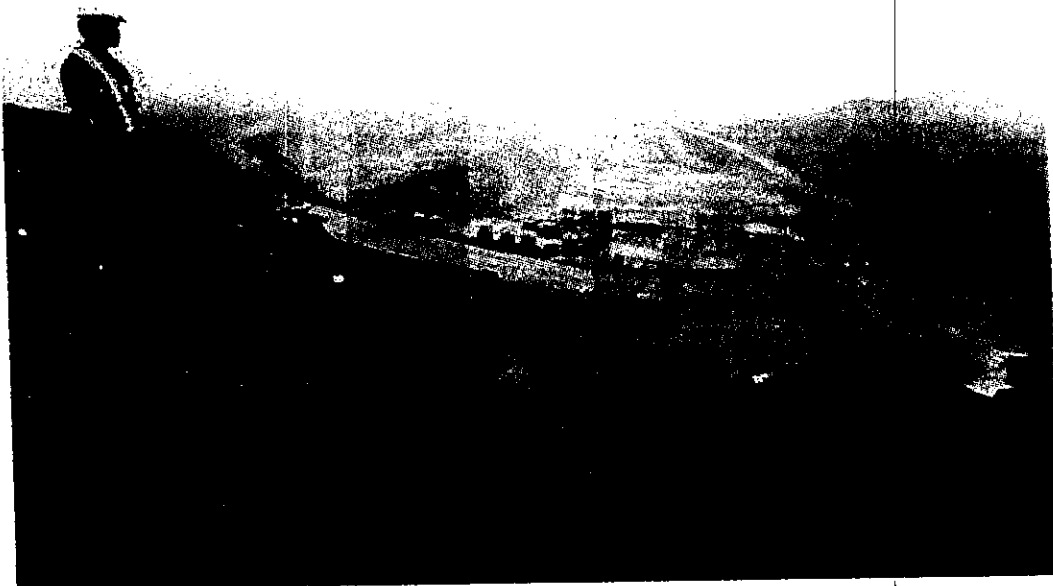
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"DU30 ORDERS DUE PROCESS" MINES

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DU30 orders 'due process' on DENR's mine closures



By Ted Tuvera

President Duterte has ordered the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to observe "due process" before implementing its directive to shut down or suspend 28 mining sites across the country, the Palace said in a statement.

"Members of the Cabinet have expressed their full support behind President Duterte's decision," the statement read.

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Regina Lopez, however, insisted due process was observed in the industry-wide audit on mining operations that resulted in its actions.

"The DENR's move ... has triggered outrage in communities hosting mining sites, as some 195,000 direct and indirect workers and their families, or a total of some 1.2 million people, would be adversely affected by the closure and suspensions of the mine sites," the Palace said.

"Malacañang has swiftly moved to calm fears of massive layoffs in communities affected by Lopez's sudden move to close down or suspend mining operations in 10 provinces across the

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Daily Tribune

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

"DU30 ORDERS DUE PROCESS" MINES

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DU30 orders 'due process' on DENR's mine closures

From page 1

country, after several Cabinet officials expressed concern over the detrimental impact of her decision, which she had apparently kept to herself and even excluded members of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) team that conducted the audit, as well as the panel that reviewed the audit findings," it said.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP), the umbrella group of 26 of the biggest local miners, lauded the Palace statement.

"The Chamber of Mines thanks President Rodrigo Duterte and the Cabinet for deciding to observe due process with regard to the mining issue," a statement of the group read.

The Palace decision "gives hope to our mining communities comprised of the many women and men who rely on the industry for their living."

The Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC), co-chaired by Lopez and Finance Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez III met yesterday afternoon to thresh out concerns regarding the DENR order.

"Members of the Cabinet have expressed their full support behind President Duterte's decision to observe due process before implementing a directive of the [DENR] to shut down or suspend 28 mining sites across the country," the Department of Finance (DoF) added in a statement.

The DoF says the DENR decision "triggered outrage in

communities hosting mining sites, as some 195,000 direct and indirect workers and their families, or a total of some 1.2 million people, would be adversely affected by the closure and suspensions of the mine sites."

Lopez has different take

Lopez denied in a press conference at Malacañang that her decision was not made abruptly and that the DoF's sentiment is not actually shared by the President.

"What happened there (during the DENR's decision-making process) was they want to make sure that I followed rule of law and I did," Lopez told reporters.

Lopez said that the 23 mining firms she ordered closed "raped" the environment and deprived the citizens — especially the indigenous peoples — of "social justice."

She stressed further that Mr. Duterte will always have the last say in approving or denying the DENR's recommendations.

"Now, if they don't agree and I think they don't agree, is that they will appeal. So when they appeal to the President, the mine still continues operation while it's on appeal," he added.

However, in actual practice, even the Chief Executive's decision could still be contested before and shall be decided upon by the Supreme Court.

Notably, Lopez was passionate in slamming the Tampakan mine operations — that encompasses the provinces of South Cotabato, Sarangani, Sultan Kudarat and Davao del Sur — which turns out to be a project initiated by the Sagittarius Mining Inc. (SMI), a firm

supposedly partly owned by Dominguez.

Lopez reported that the total size of the open mining pit in Tampakan which is a deposit of large copper and gold orebody is equivalent to 700 football fields.

SMI is geared to spend \$5.9 billion to dig into one of Southeast Asia's 'largest virgin natural resources that could supply some 11.6 million tons of copper and 14.6 million ounces of gold.

Lopez also bared corrupt practices done by her subordinates in the provinces, saying that if only she could shoot them, she actually will.

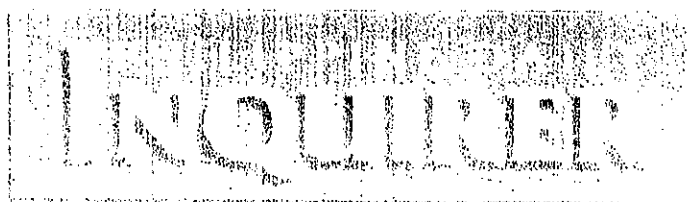
Lopez said that there were times wherein her actual staff members tried to extort money from miners while other DENR officials abused their authority to grab lands.

"I asked one of my staff to go there and please check up on this mine... then the miner came back to me the next day, and then, he said, he was asked for a bribe of P30 million," she said.

"There were even DENR officials who have titled land to themselves, it's disgusting," Lopez added.

As a matter of fact, she confessed that there was one time seduced by a friend to receive bribe money in exchange for DENR favors.

"A friend went to me and then she said: 'Gina, if you sign this paper, the person owning the mine...' He didn't even tell me... 'Will give me six million a month.' Six million a month, wow!" the DENR chief said with conviction.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

CLOSURE, SUSPENSION ORDERS

MINERS WANT FULL DISCLOSURE OF DENR AUDIT, INVOKE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

By Ronnel W. Domingo
and Leila B. Salaverria
@Team_Inquirer

Miners have invoked freedom of information in requesting the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to fully disclose the audit of mines that led to the order for the closure of 23 projects and the suspension of five others.

In a two-page filing, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) cited Executive Order No. 2 issued in 2016 and DENR Administrative Order No. 2016-19, both providing guidelines for the right to full disclosure and transparency of public transactions.

The chamber asked the DENR to provide it with copies of the mine audit reports pertaining to 29 mining companies, including one whose mines' status was "deferred."

COMP also sought copies of the recommendations of the DENR technical review committee for the 28 mines. The committee was tasked with going over the results of the mine audit.

Environmental tests

"We need the actual test results which were used as bases for determining whether these mining firms have violated environmental regulations," COMP chair Artemio Disini said in a statement.

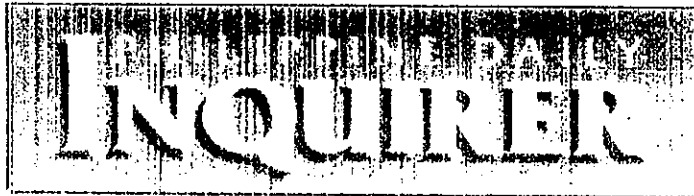
Disini said the mining companies wanted to see that water and air quality tests, siltation test, proper solid waste management and other pertinent and standardized tests—as prescribed by law—were done.

"The chamber is asking for these in the spirit of fairness and transparency," he said.

Environment Secretary Gina Lopez said the closure order for 23 mines would not be implemented while the companies were appealing the directive to President Duterte, who would hand down the final decision on the matter.

Lopez nevertheless stood pat on her decision to stop the mining operations, especially those in watershed areas.

She said that during the Cabinet meeting earlier this week, what was agreed upon was that due process and the rule of law would be followed



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

*miners want full disclosure of DENR audit,
nickel freedom of information*



A mine worker at OceanaGold's gold-copper project in Kasibu, Davao del Norte, undergoes a security check before entering the mining site in Didipio village. —MELVIN GASCON

with regard to the mines.

That was precisely what she did "at every single, single, single, single, single step of the way" when she ordered the closure of the mines, Lopez said.

But the owners of the mines could still appeal her decision to Mr. Duterte.

"So, when they appeal to the President, the mine still continues operation while it's on appeal," she said. "It only takes effect when it's rendered final by the President."

Watershed areas

Fifteen of the 23 mines are within watershed areas.

Lopez said her order to shut mines operating in watersheds had the backing of the President.

"It would take a miracle to convince me to allow mining in watersheds. As far as I know it's against the law.... against the Constitution. He (Duterte) said 'I agree there should be no mining in watersheds,'" Lopez said at a media briefing.

Should the President uphold her decision, it would be implemented even if the mining firms elevated the matter to the courts.

"But when they go to court, they have to stop the mine. I can use the rehab funds. That's what I want to do. There's so much money there. I want to use their money," she said.

Social justice

Lopez announced last week her decision to shut down 23 mines for "indiscriminate min-

ing" that ruined watershed areas. Her decision to close down the mines, she also said, was "social justice."

She said on Thursday that she first issued an omnibus order for the closure, but was later advised that she had to issue individual closure orders. As of Thursday, she had signed 12 orders.

Her closure order had mining firms up in arms, and they warned that some 1.2 million people—including workers and their dependents—would lose their jobs if the operations were to close down.

But Lopez disputed this on Thursday, saying that as of 2014, the mining industry had provided only 235,000 jobs.

"So I honestly don't know where they're getting this number of 1.2 [million]," she added.

The mines to be closed account for half of nickel ore output by the world's top supplier of the metal.

The mining firms are hoping that the interagency Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) would reverse Lopez's orders to close down the 23 mines and suspend five others.

The MICC can make only recommendations regarding the closure or suspension of mines, but the environment secretary exercises the higher authority, according to Lopez.

The "MICC is recommendatory. I make the decisions," she told the Inquirer. INQ

The Manila Times Business

FRIDAY
February 10, 2017

Mining chamber seeks full disclosure of audit

BY JAMES GALVEZ

MINING lobby Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) on Thursday reiterated its call for a full disclosure of an industry-wide audit by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

"We are not just requesting for the mere summation of the audit results. We need the actual test results which were used as bases for determining whether or not these mining firms have violated environmental regulations," said COMP chairman Artemio Disini.

COMP issued the statement after Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Regina Paz Lopez announced that the suspension and cancellation orders covering 28 mining companies will be signed and released today.

She will release to the mining industry the recommendations submitted to her by the technical committee, saying that "due process was meticulously observed" in the audit of all existing metallic mines in the country.

Because the team she formed took longer than expected in going through the mining operations, the DENR chief said she personally visited mine sites by helicopter to come up with a decision.

Lopez said there were disagreements between the audit team's recommendations and her desire to promote common good and social justice.

In a press conference in Malacñang on Thursday, Lopez said her order to close down mines operating in watersheds is non-negotiable that "it would take a miracle to convince me to allow mining in watersheds."

Fifteen of the 23 mining operations that were given the order to close shop were operating in functional watersheds.

"As far as I know it's against the law. It's against social justice, it's against the constitution. He (Duterte) said 'I agree there should be no mining in watersheds,'" Lopez said.

COMP, however, said mining companies will want to see that standardized tests as prescribed by law were done covering air and water quality, siltation and solid waste management.

"The DENR needs to show us that these tests were conducted in each mining company and the specific findings that merited their suspension or closure," Disini said. The chamber is asking for these in the spirit of fairness and transparency.

"We continue to subscribe by President Rodrigo Duterte's marching orders that we could mine for as long as we follow the law and uphold to the highest regard the tenets of responsible mining," Disini said.

Earlier, Lopez said the mining audit was fair and within the law and that she did it to protect the present and future generations as enshrined in the Mining Law and the Philippine Constitution.

The audit results were criticized by the mining sector, claiming the audit lacked due process and would

lead to loss of employment and livelihood in affected communities. The closures would result in loss of tax revenues against local governments and the national coffers.

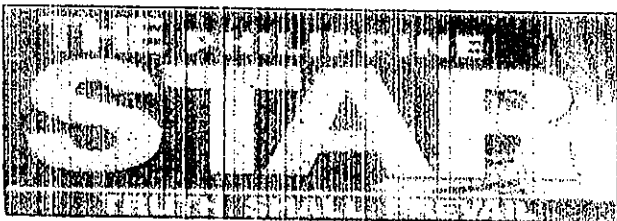
Lopez vowed that within two years she will prove that a green economy can create more jobs than mining could ever create.

While mining has indeed created jobs, she stands firm that sustainable economic development could be achieved without destroying the environment and causing the people to suffer, and that an inclusive green economy is way better an alternative to mining.

The issue is social justice and not mining, she said. At the end of the day, Lopez said she had "to make the decisions based on truth, service and the common good."

Lopez earlier said she lacked technical knowledge of the mining industry, but the closure and suspension orders were done "to protect the present and future generations."

In an interview with ANC's Headstart, Lopez said she did not know about the technicalities of mining and relied on "someone who has the common good in his heart," which happened to be former Mines and Geosciences Bureau Director Leo Jasareno.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

EDITORIAL

Mining policy

Backed by most members of the Cabinet, Malacañang stopped yesterday the closure of dozens of mining firms on orders of Environment Secretary Gina Lopez. Saying President Duterte has the final say on the controversy, Lopez bowed to the Palace order.

The issue is far from over, causing jitters in the industry. The extractive industries have always been controversial in this country that has suffered its share of serious mining disasters. As in the President's policy on the use of coal, however, a compromise will have to be forged between the opposing views.

As the industry has pointed out, every manmade product in this world has a component extracted from mines and other natural resources. The mining industry is one of the nation's major employers and revenue earners. Relying completely on imported minerals is certain to increase the cost of producing many items from electronic components to roads and houses.

On the other hand, environment warriors such as Gina Lopez also have valid concerns about the

damage, often irreversible, that mining inflicts on the environment and even on public health. Open pit mines in particular are an ugly sight. And small-scale operators aren't the only irresponsible miners. Several of the major mining disasters in this country and elsewhere in the world occurred at sites operated by big mining firms.

A developing country, however, needs raw materials for many things, and the materials extracted locally are naturally more affordable. Recycled materials are not enough. But mining firms must persuade the government and the public that there is such a thing as responsible mining, and that it is possible to restore the environment once extraction activities are over. The companies must also reassure the nation that they give priority to their workers' safety as well as the health of communities around the mines.

Arguments for and against mining have been aired in the past months, and it's time to end the uncertainty gripping the industry. The Duterte administration must forge a consensus and make up its mind on its mining policy.



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Editorial

Mining policy



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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS



Hindi na mapakikinabangan ang dalawang trak ng minahan matapos itong sunugin ng mga rebeldeng NPA sa kuradang highway sa Barangay Ampucao sa bayan ng Itogon, Benguet kahapon ng umaga. **Kuha ni Andy Zapata Jr.**

2 trak ng minahan sinunog ng NPA

TUGUEGARAO CITY, Cagayan - Dalawang truck ng Philex Mining Corp. na kargado ng copper ore na dadalhin sana sa San Fernando City sa La Union ang sinilaban ng mga rebeldeng New People's Army (NPA) sa kahabaan ng highway sa Sitio Tupac, Barangay Ampucao sa bayan ng Itogon, Benguet kahapon ng umaga. Base sa police report na nakarating sa Benguet Police Provincial Office, hinarang ng mga rebelde sa ilalaim ng Chadli Molintas Command ang dalawang trak sa itinayong checkpoint saka pinababa ang dalawang driver na sina Rogelio dela Cruz at Danilo Aglugub. Dinisarmahan din ng mga rebelde ang sekyu ng minahan na si Danny Bay-an. Nabatid na ang Philex Mining Corp. ay hindi napasama sa 23 minahang ipinasara ng DENR subalit inaakusahan naman ng mga residente na nagtatapon 50,000 toxic waste malapit sa bayan ng Tuba noong 2012. **Raymund Catindig**

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

PDU30, gabinete teka-teka sa mining closure ni Lopez

Ipinatigil ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte at ng gabinete nito ang implementasyon ng closure at suspension order ni Environment Secretary Gina Lopez laban sa mga minahan na lumabag sa environment laws base sa isinagawang audit ilang buwan na ang nakaraan.

Sa isang statement na ipinalabas ng Department of Finance (DOF), pag-aaralan muna ng pamahalaan ang pasya ng kalihim ng DENR sa pagpapasara at pagsuspinde sa operasyon ng 30 minahan sa bansa dahil sa magiging implikasyon nito sa ekonomiya at sa isang milyong kataong maapektuhan ng pagsasara ng mga minahan.

Ipinaliwanag ng DOF na gusto lang makatiyak

ng pamahalaan na may sinusunod na "due process" sa pagpapasara sa 30 minahan na umano'y hindi nakasunud sa mga patakaran sa pagmimina, batay sa mining audit na isinagawa ng DENR. "Members of the Cabinet have expressed their full support behind President Duterte's decision to observe due process before implementing a directive of the DENR to shut down or suspend 28 mining sites across the country," ayon sa DOF.

Noong Pebrero 2, inanunsyo ni Lopez ang resulta ng mining audit na nagpapakitang mahigit sa kalahati ng bilang ng mga malalaking minahan sa bansa ay bumagsak sa patakaran ng DENR. (Boyett Jadulco)

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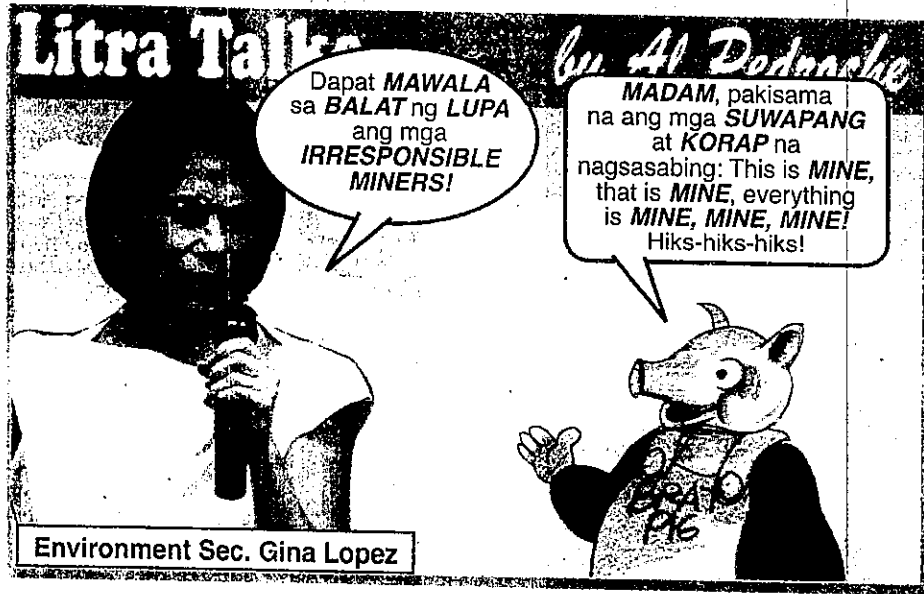
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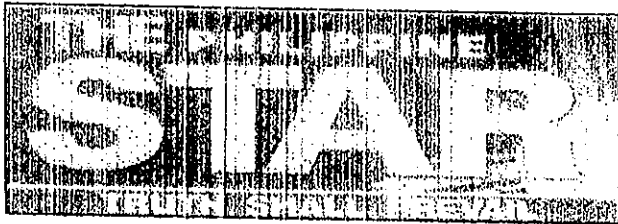
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CAUTION

Safety officers stand next to mining trucks that were set ablaze by suspected New People's Army rebels in Itogon, Benguet yesterday.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Protected eco areas in LGUs pushed

By LIEZLE BASA INIGO

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan — Governor Amado I. Espino III has ordered concerned municipal and city officials to establish and maintain protected ecological areas in their respective localities.

Espino encouraged them to heed the call for environmental protection through the establishment of eco-protected areas.

Eco-protected areas support the greening program of the provincial government and will contribute to the overall efforts for the preservation and conservation of natural resources as well as to mitigate climate change.

"We are doing this for future generations," Espino stressed, as he cited Laoac town for developing a tree library, where tree varieties are grown and cultivated.

The Pangasinan Association of Water Districts, Inc. (PANAWAD) backed the environmental protection thrust of the provincial government.

PANAWAD officials assured that their organization will lead in instilling awareness among households on the importance of conserving water resources.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

LANGKAWI WILDLIFE PARK

is a must-visit place in this quiet town

Kenneth M. del Rosario



Exotic birds greet you at the entrance of the Langkawi Wildlife Park, which used to be a bird paradise before other animals were added to the mix.

PHOTOS BY KENNETH M. DEL ROSARIO

The first thing you hear upon arriving at the Langkawi Wildlife Park is the sound of birds—some exotic, some familiar; some huge, others small—some more “talkative” than others; but all colorful and lively. A fitting homage to what used to be the Langkawi Bird Paradise before being renamed to what it is called today.

The Langkawi Wildlife Park in Langkawi, Malaysia, is a 5.5-acre establishment which features the mentioned birds of different species, as well as several mammals and reptiles from Malaysia, Southeast Asia, Africa, South America, Australia and Russia.

The park, which opened in 2012, has created an ambience of a tropical rainforest. Today, there are about 150 different species of mammals and birds.

It's noteworthy how visitors get to interact with many of the animals being kept there. One of the raccoons was gamely playing with visitors. There were also opportunities to feed the animals, in-

cluding the macaws, which love sunflower seeds and peanuts, while the flamingos love fish pellets.

Visitors can also opt to watch feeding times of the eagles and the huge crocodiles, which make the visit all the more exciting, especially to children.

At one point during a visit, a

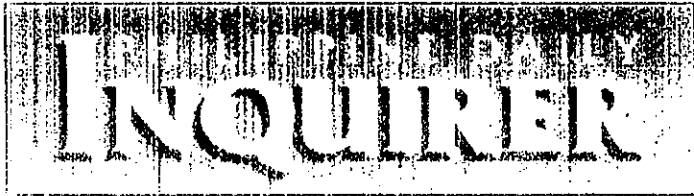
playful monkey snatched up an eyeglass resting in the pocket of a visitor who came too close to the cage. It took the park personnel a good 10 minutes before he was able to convince the primate to give back the eyeglass.

Another highlight of the visit is The Walk-in Aviary, which features many adorable and colorful “love

birds” (aka Budgerigars).

There is a nice coffee shop at the middle of the park, where visitors who need to rest a bit can get a hearty snack before finishing the tour at the shopping outlet near the exit.

In the quaint and quiet town of Langkawi, this is one of the must-visit places on everyone's itinerary.



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Langkawi Wildlife -



Jacob, the raccoon, playfully interacts with visitors, even letting them carry him for a photo opportunity



One of the rare and exotic birds which can be found in the wildlife park.

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Pagkawala ng Isang Hayop



Maraming itinuturong dahilan ang animal extinction o 'yung tuluyang pagkawala ng isang hayop.

Pwedeng 'natural' ang pagkawala nito tulad ng biglaang pag-init at paglamig ng klima (climatic changes).

Sa panahon ngayon, ang tao ang siyang sinisisi kung bakit nagiging endangered (malapit nang mawala) ang mga hayop.

Ang tao kasi ang responsible sa pagkasira ng kanilang tirahan, sobrang pangingisda at pangangaso, polusyon, at iba pa.

Isa sa hayop na pinanghihinayangang nawala ay ang Sabre-Tooth Cat/Lion. Nabuhay sila sa mundo 55 million years o 11 thousand years ang

nakararaan.

Karne ang kinakain ng nasabing hayop na may mahaba at mala-kutsilyong tulis ng ngipin. Katawan ng isang oso na may ulo ng isang lion ang sinasabing hitsura nito.

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SBMA backs World Wetlands Day, steps up eco preservation drive

By JONAS REYES

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT — This premier Freeport teeming with marshlands and wildlife, joined the world-wide celebration of the World Wetlands Day through the Subic Bay Wetlands Celebration on Wednesday.

Known for its beautiful mangrove forests, Subic Freeport celebrated the wetlands day by holding a two-day seminar that included trainings for some 150 employees and environmental officers from various investors here.

They also toured a mangrove forest on the second day where they helped plant saplings.

SBMA Administrator Wilma Eisma said the activity, spearheaded by the agency's Ecology Center is aimed at educating the participants on the importance of wetlands to the coastal communities, the environment and marine life.

"We appreciate the participants for sharing their time in raising public awareness on the importance of the wetlands and contribute to the conservation and protection of our mangrove forests," she said.

Inside the Freeport's Binictican-Malawaan Mangrove Area, participants were divided into groups: one group assigned to pick-up, identify and record trash and garbage found inside the mangrove area, and another to plant mangrove samplings on vacant portions of the area.

Another group was assigned to count and record how many living crustaceans they could find in the selected one square meter-area of the wetland to determine the biodiversity in the area.

SBMA Ecology Center head Amethya Dela Llana-Koval said the records will be used as

reference in formulating a mangrove management plan that will define guidelines and policies related to the protection and conservation of all mangrove areas in the Freeport.

There is an estimated 62 hectares of wetlands in Subic Freeport located in Boton, Binictican-Malawaan, Triboa A, Triboa B, Nabasan and Ilanin, where 37 species of mangroves are found and serve as feeding, spawning and nursery grounds to many marine life and considered as nature's buffer to natural hazards such as flooding caused by storms, cyclones, storm surges and tsunamis.

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THE STANDARD

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



Celia Esteban of PENRO, Atty. Jen Go and daughter Gabby, and Manila Standard publisher Rolando Estabillo lead the tree planting activity.

Manila Standard...

From E16

both Estabillo and Valmorida recognize the importance of the tree planting activity in fostering stronger relationship among Manila Standard employees.

"This is a way to bond and at the same time to give back to the community that supports Manila Standard. This project is not only for the present but also for the future," said Estabillo.

Valmorida, for his part, said the affair is a chance for the staff to be together in doing something that benefits the environment.

"Not only are we promoting camaraderie among our employees, we are also giving them the privilege of contributing something good to the future of our country," he said.

With the positive impact and development "Adopt a Tree" has brought to the environment and to the Manila Standard family, Valmorida said they intend to continue with the project in the coming years.

"We have a plan to adopt an area in

areas which our contacts in DENR Central Office might offer. Or, perhaps, we can do river or coastal cleanups or mangrove planting depending on what is permissible," shared the Circulation chief.

Format and name changes, notwithstanding, Manila Standard, since its inception in February 1987, continues to uphold the highest standard in news reporting and information dissemination. And with its CSR initiative, the newspaper is making a real difference in the world, one paper and one tree at a time.



The 'Adopt a Tree' project helps in fostering stronger relationship among Manila Standard

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Visayas tree-seed center to support NGP through 2028

THE government has put up a tree-seed center (TSC) in Minglanilla within the 123-hectare Cebu Experimental Forest, which should ramp up support for long-reforestation up to 2028.

This TSC is the first in the Visayas and is setting up of a similar TSC in Bislig, Agusan del Sur. Both were established by the Forest Systems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB), an attached agency of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The prospect of reforestation in the Visayas is bright, because the tree-seed center is not only for Region 7 [Cebu], but for the "Visayas," ERDB Executive Director Dr. A. Adornado said.

The TSC is part of the forest-nursery organization program in line with the extended National Greening Program (NGP) to massively produce quality, disease-free seeds. It has a laboratory that may be used for testing germination of seeds. The TSC is just waiting for an occupancy permit to start operation.

Availability of a variety of tree species will be enhanced as the TSC as the facility

will do seed exchange, according to Dr. Alicia L. Lustica, who heads the ERDB research center in Cebu.

The CEF itself is situated in the Philippines's first reforestation project, which is now a century old. This is the Osinena Reforestation Project, also the country's oldest reforestation as established in January 1916 and was a 2,710-hectare forest-reserve area ran in earlier times by the Vatican known as the Friar Land Estate.

Based on ERDB records, as of June 2015, Region 7 alone had seed collection and supply of 1.222 million.

Seed requirements will increase as Executive Order 193 mandated the extension of the NGP up to 2028, which envisions a wood and agroforestry product self-sufficiency set at an annual production target of 750,000 hectares of timber, 60,000 hectares of coffee, and 300,000 hectares of fuelwood.

Wood and paper products produced is estimated to be worth \$900 million yearly.

Partners that may use Visayas TSC's seed production are DENR-ERDB's own provincial, city or municipal environment and natural

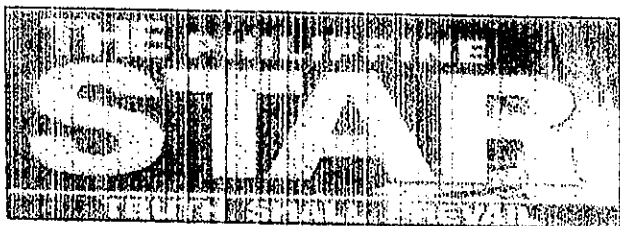
resources offices (ENRO), state universities and colleges, community and people's groups, and private, industrial tree plantations.

The TSC has a seeder area where seeds are sown into containers, and are watered through misting for growth. Germinants are turned into seedlings in the growing area. In the hardening area, sunlight allows for drying of the seedlings for sturdiness.

The ERDB has been conducting research in CEF since June 1986, covering bamboo, rattan, dipterocarps (hardwood and tropical trees), narra, endemic tree species, neem, tiger grass, flowers and honey production. It is also a site for training ENRO researchers on cave ecotourism and forest conservation.

Despite being considered a national heritage and a protected and forest-reservation area, it is faced with threats of illegal logging.

"Our forest is still threatened by illegal tree cutting and charcoal extraction. Informal settlement, farming, wildlife hunting, sand, gravel and black stone extract and bamboo harvest are also threats. We need valuable community partners to fight the threats."



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Rotary Club conducts tree-planting event in Norzagaray

The Rotary Club of Mandaluyong and United Architects of the Philippines (UAP)-Manila Maharlika Chapter joined hands last Jan. 28, 2017 for a tree planting event in Angat Watershed, Norzagaray, Bulacan and a medical mission for the Dumagat Tribe, indigenous people residing in the area. This is UAP-Manila

Maharlika Chapter's 7th year of tree planting as part of their advocacy of restoration and protection of the environment, but the first time to do a medical mission with the help and assistance of the Rotary Club of Mandaluyong.

The Rotary Club of Mandaluyong, founded Dec. 4, 1963, has been at the

forefront of service to various communities since its inception. This is the first joint project between the two organizations.

Rotary brings together a global network of volunteer leaders dedicated to tackling the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges. Rotary connects 1.2 million members of more than 34,000

Rotary clubs in 200 countries and geographical areas. Their work improves lives at both the local and international levels, from helping families in need in their own communities to working toward a polio-free world. For more information, visit Rotary.org. To access broadcast quality video footage and still photos, go to [The Newsmakret](http://TheNewsmakret).

HATAW!

D'YARYO NG BAYAN

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Ang Nanjing Vertical Forest sa China

NI TRACY CABRERA

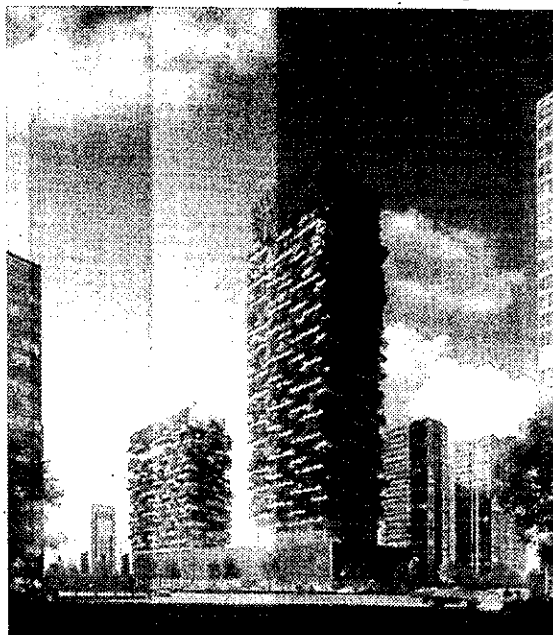
PAANO nga ba lalabanan ang problema ng polusyon at maraming hangin sa isang lungsod na may mahigit 8 milyong residente — at halos wala rin lugar para mapagtaniman ng mga puno at halaman?

Ang sagot, magpatayo ng gubat na tumutubo nang paitaas.

Ito ang ideya sa likod ng Nanjing Vertical Forest, na nakatakdang makompleto sa taong 2018, at makapagdadala ng libo-libong puno at halaman sa highly populated na Pukou District ng lungsod, para ma-absorb ang tone-tone-ladang carbon dioxide (CO2) at makapag-produce na rin ng yaman ng oxygen.

Idinisenyo ng sikat na arkitektong si Stefano Boeri, ang pambihirang gubat sa katunayan isang pares ng tore na babalutan ang kabuuan ng mga halaman. Ang mas mataas sa dalawang tore ay titindig ng 200 metro ang taas, na may 35 palapag, at magiging tahanan ng iba't ibang establisimiyento mula

sa isang museo hanggang sa isang private club sa bubong. Ang mas malaking tore ay magkakaroon din ng isang architecture school na ang espesyalidad ay pagbubuo ng



mga green building. Sa kabilang dako, ang mas maliit na estruktura, na may sukat na mahigit 100 metro ang taas, ay hihirangang Hyatt hotel na aabot sa 250 guest room.

Hindi lang magiging isang tourist attraction ang Nanjing Vertical Forest dahil lubhang napakahalaga nito sa environmental perspec-

tive. Magkakaroon ang estruktura ng 1,100 malalaki at medium-sized na mga puno sa walong façade ng dalawang tore, kasama na rin ang 2,500 iba pang mga

halaman. Inasahang makapagbibigay ang mga halaman ng 60 kilo ng oxygen kada araw habang sinisipsip ang mahigit 25 tonelada ng carbon dioxide kada taon.

Hindi ito ang kauna-unahang vertical forest na idinisenyo at binuo ni Boeri. Sa Milan, Italy ay mayroon din pares ng tore na katulad ng pinaplanong Nanjing Towers. Nag-simula ang

pagpapatayo nito noong 2009 at nakompleto noong 2014, at sa ngayon ay ginawang residential structures.

Gayonman, tinitiyak na mas malaki ang ipatatayo sa Nanjing project dahil magiging doble ang bilang ng mga halamang ilalagay dito at sadyang mas mataas ang dalawang tore na bubuuin.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Sonja Guroy, Bobby and Dolly Galang, Maritess Pineda

Bobby and Anna Fernandez, and Marienne Pimentel

The Samsung Galaxy A Series Through The Years

Let's take a look back and see why this smartphone is for the young and adventurous

You Only Live Once. This mantra has kept the new millennial going. Unafraid to pursue new adventures and savor what life has to offer, they want to live life to the fullest and share it with those who matter, using technology to do so.

Over the years, the Samsung Galaxy A has been the smartphone for many who aspire to get more out of life as they have fun in top bars, new restaurants, laid-back beaches, or quaint neighborhood coffee shops. It has always had a premium yet hip design, as well as great features, at a reachable price range.

2015 - Access #theAllLife

Designed for the young and the bold, the Samsung Galaxy A captivated the market with the Galaxy A5 and A7 in 2015 - a blend of style and performance evident in the slim, stylish, and full metal design; amazing selfie experience; and super AMOLED display. Delighted users discovered the joys of creating wide selfies and taking photos with the beauty mode that impressed their friends.

2016 - Sleek and Powerful

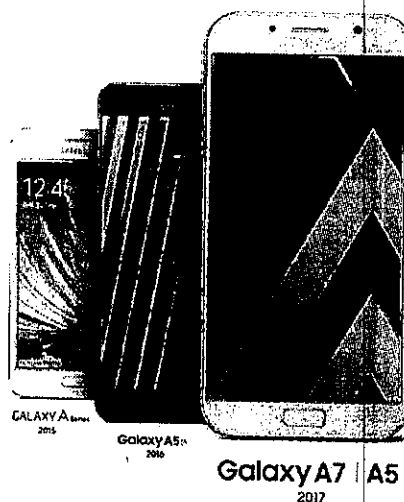
In 2016, Samsung took things a notch higher by retaining the same Galaxy A attitude, but with improved features for the Galaxy A5 and A7 that keep up with the ever-changing and diverse tastes of adventurous personalities. On top of the new glass and metal design, it houses premium camera functions such as the Quick Launch camera feature, its Shake-Free OIS, and the camera's F/1.9 aperture that lets you take crisp photos even in low-light conditions. Compared to the 2015 version, the Galaxy A (2016) also boosted its performance with the convenience of the Fast-charging feature, its Octa Core 1.6Ghz, the Fingerprint Scanner, and the LTE Dual SIM that's expandable up to 128GB.

2017 - The Smartphone with Attitude

The Samsung Galaxy A's evolution continues in 2017 with innovations that are sure to once again captivate those whose spirit for adventure knows no bounds with the feature-packed Galaxy A (2017). These smartphones can accompany you even when you take a roadtrip through dusty terrain, sweat it out in a trek, or jump right in for a refreshing dip in a river. Showcasing features found in Samsung's flagship models, the Galaxy A (2017) is definitely the smartphone with attitude.

The Galaxy A (2017) smartphones are

SAMSUNG



The A Series Evolution

SAMSUNG GALAXY A SERIES THROUGH THE YEARS. || This 2017, Samsung unveiled the latest addition to the Galaxy A Series - the smartphone with attitude the Galaxy A (2017). Every year, the Galaxy A is upgraded with more features with IP68 water and dust resistance, and a large 16MP selfie camera. The Samsung Galaxy A (2017) is now available in Samsung Experience Stores and authorized Samsung dealers. You may also check out both variants online through Lazada

IP68 dust and water resistant as they're able to withstand the elements such as rain, sweat, sand, and dust. They can even be submerged in up to 1.5 meters of fresh water for up to 30 minutes.

For a larger-than-life experience, the Galaxy A (2017) smartphones are built with a large 16MP selfie camera that can easily capture images that are just as good as the rear camera, and are great also in low-light conditions thanks to its F/1.9 aperture.

For an immersive experience, The Galaxy A7 (2017) comes with a 5.7" screen, in three colors - Black Sky, Gold Sand, and the new exclusive Blue Mist. The Galaxy A5 (2017) is built with a 5.2" screen and is available in Black Sky and Gold Sand. Both have a smooth metal frame and a 3D glass back that add to the overall premium look of the phone, with zero camera protrusion that adds to the smartphone's sleek design.

To keep memories alive in photos and videos, the Galaxy A (2017) boasts of 32GB internal storage and an awesome expandable storage of up to 256GB. Coupled with the Fast-Charging feature, the long-lasting 3,600mAh battery of the Galaxy A7 (2017) and the 3,000mAh

battery for the Galaxy A5 (2017) less down time and promises 1 active use. Easy to use and flexible, Galaxy A (2017) is also equipped with the convenience of the reversible USB-C port, and comes equipped with SIM capability.

For those who are always on the go, the Always on Display feature lets you quickly see the time and date without waking up the smartphone. Definitely, the Samsung Galaxy A has gone a long way over the years, setting new standards and redefining what a smartphone is all about.

Given its compelling features, the Galaxy A (2017) smartphones are available in Black Sky and Gold Sand, starting at P19,990 SRP and the Galaxy A7 at P23,990 SRP.

The Galaxy A (2017) smartphones are now available in Samsung Experience Stores and authorized Samsung dealers. For more convenience, the Galaxy A (2017) smartphones are also available online in Lazada. Visit www.samsung.com/ph/ASeries2 to learn more.

ASC number So2o.



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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Manila Standard...

From E15

Manila Standard employees actively took part in the first leg of the one-day tree planting activity, which was then followed by planting events at Halamanang Pilipino in Luneta Park, Manila; Paco Park and Pook ni Mariang Makiling in Los Baños, Laguna; Marikina Riverbanks in Marikina City in 2010 as part of the government's rehabilitation program following the onslaught of Typhoon

"Adopt a Tree" project's sixth and latest sowing which happened on July 23, 2016 brought Advertising, Circulation, Editorial, Finance, Human Resources, MIS, Production and Purchasing departments back to Ipo Dam Watershed in Brgy. San Mateo for the third time.

Previously a lush range, the watershed has been denuded due to illegal

YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW. Employees of Advertising, Circulation (CSR) project 'Adopt a Tree' in a bid to help lessen the effects of climate c

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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Adopt a tree program

By Bernadette Lunas

PAPER makes our company go round. On it we print stories, photos, page layout designs and our finished product, the Manila Standard newspaper. It is scattered in every corner of our office and piles up on our tables.

Thus it only seems appropriate that a company whose finished product is made of paper is committed to planting trees as its corporate social responsibility (CSR) project.

Planting for a greener future

Initiated by Circulation department head Edgar Valmorida, Manila Standard's "Adopt a Tree" project kicked off at Ipo Dam Watershed in Norzagaray, Bulacan on November 28, 2009.

"I first introduced the idea of planting a tree for every new subscriber that will subscribe to then Manila Standard Today," said Valmorida in recollection, adding, "When I and former Advertising Manager Gina Versoza presented the idea to then President and CEO Rogelio Salazar, he approved it and made it our CSR project."

Turn to E16



The sixth sowing of 'Adopt a Tree' on July 23, 2016, was held at Ipo Dam Watershed in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

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Adopt a tree program

Manila Standard employees actively took part in the first leg of the one-day tree planting activity, which was then followed by planting events at Halamanang Pilipino in Luneta Park, Manila; Paco Park and Pook ni Mariang Makiling in Los Baños, Laguna; Marikina Riverbanks in Marikina City in 2010 as part of the government's rehabilitation program following the onslaught of Typhoon Ondoy that crippled the city; and again at the 1.5-hectare land at Ipo Dam for another batch of tree seedlings.

"Adopt a Tree" project's sixth and latest sowing which happened on July 23, 2016 brought Advertising, Circulation, Editorial, Finance, Human Resources, MIS, Production and Purchasing departments back to Ipo Dam Watershed in Brgy. San Mateo for the third time.

Previously a lush range, the watershed has been denuded due to illegal poachers, according to Celia Esteban of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) of Bulacan. But

Officials of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources (PENRO) of Bulacan welcomed Manila Standard employees, led by Atty. Jen Go and publisher Rolando Estabillo, at Ipo Dam Watershed.

vertisers and subscribers's respective names.

Manila Standard Publisher Rolando Estabillo expressed pride in the company's endeavor. "You will see however small it is, this symbolizes the importance of public and private co-operation. It doesn't have to be a big project, it's the sincerity and consistency [that count]," he enthused.

"With (this project) now on its sixth sowing, you can see that we are really consistent in our effort to help preserve Mother Nature," added Estabillo.

In an article in Business News Daily, it stated that "businesses, regardless of

size have a large carbon footprint. Any steps they can take to reduce those footprints are considered both good for the company and the society as a whole."

Not only is Manila Standard replacing, so to speak, the paper it is using by planting trees, but is also working on reducing its other negative environmental impacts through its nature-focused CSR project.

Bonding for stronger relationship

On top of helping conserve and protect the environment and lessen the effects of climate change.

Turn to E10

Manila Standard, together with other companies, are working together to help the area return to its original, healthy state.

With the help of several

public and private organizations and corporations, the newspaper was able to mount its sixth tree planting activities. And in gratitude for their support, seedlings were planted under the ad-



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Adopt a tree program



Celia Esteban of PENRO, Atty. Jen Go and daughter Gabby, and Manila Standard publisher Rolando Estabillo lead the tree planting activity.

Manila Standard...

From E16

both Estabillo and Valmorida recognize the importance of the tree planting activity in fostering stronger relationship among Manila Standard employees.

"This is a way to bond and at the same time to give back to the community that supports Manila Standard. This project is not only for the present but also for the future," said Estabillo.

Valmorida, for his part, said the affair is a chance for the staff to be together in doing something that benefits the environment.

"Not only are we promoting camaraderie among our employees, we are also giving them the privilege of contributing something good to the future of our country," he said.

With the positive impact and development "Adopt a Tree" has brought to the environment and to the Manila Standard family, Valmorida said they intend to continue with the project in the coming years.

"We have a plan to adopt an area in Antipolo City. Or opt to plant in other

areas which our contacts in DENR Central Office might offer. Or, perhaps, we can do river or coastal cleanups or mangrove planting depending on what is permissible," shared the Circulation chief.

Format and name changes, notwithstanding, Manila Standard, since its inception in February 1987, continues to uphold the highest standard in news reporting and information dissemination. And with its CSR initiative, the newspaper is making a real difference in the world, one paper and one tree at a time.



The 'Adopt a Tree' project helps in fostering stronger relationship among Manila Standard employees.