

**DATE**  
**DAY**

19 FEB 2017

**Sunday**

# **DENR**

## **IN THE NEWS**

19 FEB 2017

DATE

UPPER F

4

PAGE

LOWER F

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Duterte takes a swipe at mining industry anew

2017 here.

He added that the rest of the nation is being threatened by the widening gap between the rich and the poor, crime, corruption, criminality, and illegal drugs.

He said the only way to resolve this is for the government to deliver goods and services to really serve the people, not just for the interest of the few.

"In the past, our government verged on failure because those who were in the position to help, deliberately made wrong decisions which favored only themselves," he said. "We will always uphold the sanctity of the common good as the highest good. And always for the benefit of the next generation."

President Duterte first admitted

that the mining industry is taking its toll in Mindanao during his aerial inspection when he visited the victims of the Surigao del Norte earthquake last week.

"I'm warning those mining industry, even if they have billions they use to pay everyone to be able corner a huge concession, that won't happen under my administration," he said during his Surigao visit.

While conceding that the government generates P70 billion from the mining industry, Duterte said there is nothing he can do if Environment Secretary Gina Lopez decides to close down the mines since he has already seen the industry's seemingly irreversible effects.

**FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City** — President Duterte yesterday called the mining industry a threat to Mindanao, the so-called "Land of Promise."

In his speech before the alumni of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), Duterte said Mindanao is now being threatened by climate change which is caused by the mining industry.

"As a child immigrant from Visayas to Mindanao, we hoped for a better life in the so-called 'Land of Promise.' But now it is threatened by climate change caused by man-made diseases like extractive industries," Duterte said during the PMA alumni homecoming



19 FEB 2017

DATE

UPPER HALF

8

PAGE

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Duterte backs Lopez, but to review mine

By CHRISTINA MENDEZ

President Duterte has thrown his full support anew behind Environment Secretary Gina Lopez, who is facing opposition at the Commission on Appointments (CA) and possible counter charges for being hard on mining firms in

the country.

Earning the ire of the mining industry, Lopez had ordered the closure of 25 mining firms for reportedly violating environmental laws and the cancellation of 75 contracts between the government and mining firms, known as mineral produc-

tion sharing agreements, in watershed zones.

Speaking before the Philippine Military Academy Dimasupil Class of 1967 at the Baguio Country Club last Friday, Duterte said he would still review the environment secretary's decision which, he said, remains recommenda-

## closures

tory.

"Titingnan ko 'yun, kung mali talaga, eh wala akong magawa (I will see, if it's wrong, there's nothing I can do)," Duterte said. "But I will review. There's such thing as the exhaustion of administrative remedies. I will not judge her now."

Duterte's statement came

after the Chamber of Mines filed a complaint to oppose Lopez's confirmation at the CA.

The Palace earlier said the complaining parties should just file an appeal before the necessary agencies, including the Office of the President.

19 FEB 2017

DATE

5

PAGE

UPPER-HALF

LOWER-HALF

### Pagmimina, seryosong banta sa Mindanao—Duterte

**FORT GREGORIO DEL PILAR, Baguio City** - Naniniwala si Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte na isang seryosong banta ang industriya ng pagmimina sa Mindanao sa tinaguriang "Land of Promise", ang Mindanao.

Sa kanyang pagtatalumpati sa harap ng nagsipagtapos sa Philippine Military Academy (PMA), sinabi ng

Presidente na nanganganib ngayon ang Mindanao dahil sa climate change, na epekto na rin ng pagmimina sa rehiyon.

"As a child immigrant from Visayas to Mindanao, we hoped for a better life in the so-called 'Land of Promise.' But now, it is threatened by climate change caused by man-made diseases like extractive industries,"

sinabi ni Duterte sa kanyang pagdalo sa PMA Alumni Homecoming 2017 sa Baguio City kahapon.

Unang inamin ng Pangulo ang malaking pinsala ng pagmimina sa Mindanao sa kanyang air inspection nang kumustahin ang mga nabiktima ng lindol sa Surigao del Norte noong nakaraang linggo.

"I'm warning those mining industry, even if they have billions, they use to pay everyone to be able to corner a huge concession, that won't happen under my administration," sinabi ni Pangulong Duterte nang bumisita siya sa Surigao.

Ayon sa Presidente, kumikita ang Pilipinas ng P70 bilyon mula sa pagmimina.

Bagamat sinabing wala siyang magagawa kung ipasara man ni Environment Secretary Gina Lopez ang mga pasaway na minahan dahil na rin sa nakita niyang matinding pinsala nito sa kalikasan, aminado si Duterte na ang pinakamalaking magiging problema ay ang napakaraming mawawalan ng trabaho.

"Now our problem are the people who will lost their livelihood. So, if I can find another alternative source of income, if they will come, maybe I will really close them. Because our mountains were really destroyed. Already spotted," ani Duterte.

**Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos**

19 FEB 2017

DATE

UPPER H.

A3

PAGE

LOWER H.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Duterte to review closure of mines

By Leila B. Salaverria  
@LeilasINQ

President Duterte said on Friday night that he would review the decisions of Environment Secretary Gina Lopez, as he acknowledged the controversy they have stirred up.

But Mr. Duterte said he was withholding judgment on Lopez, adding that there was nothing he could do about her decision if the companies involved were really destroying the environment.

Mining firms are up in arms over Lopez's decision to order the closure of 23 mines and to scrap 75 mining contracts for covering watershed areas.

### Administrative remedies

According to the President, there were administrative remedies that the mining firms could take.

"But I will, I will review. There's such a thing as exhaustion, for the lawyers, exhaustion of administrative remedies. I will not judge her now," he said

in a speech during dinner with Philippine Military Academy alumni on Friday.

But if the companies were destroying the environment, there was nothing he could do.

"I will look at it. But if it's in the wrong, there's nothing I could do, if it's destructive to the environment," he said.

But Mr. Duterte also said he would take into account the revenue brought in by mining operations.

"We get something like P70 billion a year out of the min-

ing operations in the entire Philippines. So we have to also take [that] into consideration," he said.

Lopez earlier said she scrapped 75 mineral production sharing agreements because the projects were located in watershed areas.

On the other hand, the closure of 23 mines came after an audit by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, which found that they had engaged in indiscriminate mining and ruined watershed areas.

The mining companies had hit back on the closure orders, saying they had not been given copies of the audit results. They also warned that many Filipinos stand to lose their jobs.

In protesting the cancellation of the mining contracts, they raised the government's responsibility to uphold contracts and follow due process.

The mining firms are also seeking to block Lopez's confirmation as environment secretary before the Commission on Appointments. INQ

19 FEB 2017

DATE

2

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Duterte: Mining industry threatens Mindanao

FORT GREGORIO DEL PILAR, Baguio City — President Duterte yesterday criticized the mining industry anew and called it a threat to Mindanao, the "Land of Promise."

In his speech during the Philippine Military Academy alumni homecoming here, Duterte said Mindanao is now being threatened by climate change which is caused by the mining industry.

"As a child immigrant from Visayas to Mindanao, we hoped for a better life in the so-called 'Land of Promise.' But now, it is threatened by climate change caused by man-made diseases like extractive industries," Duterte said.

He lamented that the rest of the

nation is being threatened by the widening gap between the rich and the poor, crime, corruption, criminality, and illegal drugs.

Duterte said the only way to resolve this is for the government to deliver goods and services to really serve the people, not just for the interest of the few. "In the past, our government verged on failure because those who were in the position to help deliberately made wrong decisions which favored only themselves," he said.

"We will always uphold the sanctity of the common good as the highest good. And always for the benefit of the next generation," Duterte added.

Duterte first admitted that the mining industry is taking its toll on

Mindanao during an aerial inspection when he visited the victims of the Surigao del Norte earthquake last week.

"I'm warning those mining industry, even if they have billions, they use to pay everyone to be able corner a huge concession, that won't happen under my administration," he said.

The Philippines earns P70 billion from the mining industry, Duterte said. However, he said there is nothing he can do if Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Gina Lopez decides to close down the mines since he has already seen the industry's seemingly irreversible effects. (Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos)

# The Manila Times

DATE

A4 - Lower  
PAGE

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SER

## Billionaire-miners scream, a rare sight in a rich-worshipping country

**O**URS is a country that worships the rich. Whether they are oligarchs or vice lords does not matter. Rich-worship is across-the-board and is not blurred along the source of wealth. Billionaires have a special place of their own: they are regarded as deities. Even the billionaire-miners.

Unlike in other countries, mining in our local context does not stir up a lot of controversies. Even when mine tailings spill into vast swaths of farming communities and cause widespread devastation all around, the state just slaps the mining entities on the wrist. On cases when the holding dams of toxic mining refuse burst into waterways and cause dislocation on a wide scale, the closure orders of the mining firms do not last.

Insofar as mining firms are concerned, it is about multiple chances. There is no such rule as "strike three and you are out."

Ok, that leniency does not cover only the miners. The country's rich bio-diversity is down to less than one million hectares of original timber stand (we call these virgin forest) because of the state's pliable logging policy. How many mahogany courts in the developed world had we supplied with prime hardwood?

All forms of resource-extraction have been regulated with leniency by government.

Today, however, things have changed.

Gina Lopez, the DENR secretary and environmental sheriff of DU30, recently ordered the closure of 23 mining companies, including iconic

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names in the mining industry, mining entities that have been with us from time immemorial. Then, in another bold move, she cancelled 75 mining contracts for underdeveloped mines, including the \$5.9 billion Tampakan gold and copper project in South Cotabato. No one in the contemporary history of the DENR has demonstrated the boldness of the new sheriff. She has a powerful argument: life and survival. Reckless mining means death and that should end.

Finally, the DENR gets a spine. And the result is a rare spectacle in this rich-worshipping country - billionaire-miners screaming and asking for support from their perceived allies in the DU30 cabinet. We have not seen this kind of policy implementation before and for those of us in the vulnerable class who used to feel that the billionaires in this country have always been spared from the slightest inconvenience by government policy, we are seeing a rare treat.

The screams of the billionaire-miners with closure orders seem to be as primal as the screams of those in the slum communities raided under Oplan Tokhang.

And the new sheriff, Ms. Lopez, seems unfazed, if not revelling in her newfound role as the scourge of the

billionaire class. Ms. Lopez, it has to be pointed out, is the only true blue blood in the DU30 cabinet. She is an heir to the Lopez fortune.

Ms. Lopez is the rare type of blue blood who pushes the Marxists into a great conundrum. Is there really someone from the capitalist class who will work against the interests of the capitalist class? And as we said before, Ms. Lopez is not only doing that - she is having the time of her life doing just that.

The beef of the billionaire-miners is compounded by this fact. Ms. Lopez can be lenient to the miners, too. The review committee she formed to review the state of environmental safety of mining firms in the country offered the usual leniency. The committee, beholden to the old ways and the state's traditional kid-glove treatment of mining firms, recommended two forms of punishment. First is fines, big and small fines. The second is suspension of the permits of the violators, pending the correction of the violations.

Ms. Lopez went beyond that. She ordered the closure of the more than 20 flagrant violators and suspensions for those with lesser violations. The order on the 75 mining contracts was a virtual death sentence. The power point presentations of Ms. Lopez seem to drive home the point that those closed should remain permanently closed before they inflict more damage on the environment.

A question worth asking in the aftermath of Ms. Lopez's tough policies on the billionaire-miners. Will

she survive the wrath of the miners?

Already, and as expected, the collected wrath of the miners was conveyed to the Commission on Appointments (CA), the bicameral body that screens and approves cabinet appointments of the President.

The influential Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, one of the few lobby groups with clout and power in the country, has fired off a passionate opposition to the CA, with a request to junk her confirmation.

The Chamber called her "secretary-designate" which is not normal and which intention is to insult the new sheriff.

Metallurgy and geology students took up parallel actions, which essentially said "No to Gina and Yes to Mina."

The Chamber has everything: money, clout, media muscle, organizational capability, and most of all influence with lawmakers, whether these lawmakers are in the mining communities or not. Remember the fate of Sonny Alvarez? He was pushed out as DENR secretary by some lawmaker - protectors of resource extractors in Mindanao. Poor Sonny had zero chance against the powerful lobby against him.

Is Ms. Lopez tough enough to withstand the tsunami of rage?

That we do not know. But for the spine alone, and doing what has not been done before - which is to inconvenience the billionaire class - many feel she should be defended by DU30. Many secretly want to say this: We are with her.

## The party's over

ON Valentine's Day, Secretary Gina Lopez of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) announced that her department was cancelling 75 MPSAs or Mineral Production Sharing Agreements with mining companies. Many of these projects are only in the exploration stage. The cancellation of MPSAs will not mean the loss of jobs.

But of course the mining companies, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP), and pro-mining advocates will not take this sitting down.

### The law and watersheds

Many of the questions thrown at the Secretary and her DENR team on that press conference showed a clear bias for the mining companies, where the line of questioning was pretty much stuck on asking about the DENR's authority to make these decisions, and the "scientific" basis of these cancellations.

The answer, at least to me, seemed simple enough. It was about the DENR enforcing the law, which is based on the science that seeks to protect certain areas against environmental abuse and degradation. The answer that the DENR kept repeating was this one: these MPSAs were granted even when these mining projects are in watersheds.

The media would have none of it. Even when the answers from the DENR team were calmly and objectively delivered, even when it was a discussion about the value of watersheds - which is obviously based on science - none of it was being heard.

But reading the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, it is clear even to me that it is based on science, given how it includes a set of rules for protecting the environment against mining projects, given its acknowledgment of the probable/possible adverse effects of mining on the environment - all of which would be based on scientific proof of both.

Section 19 lists down Areas Closed to Mining Operations, and it includes "proclaimed watershed forest reserves" among "other areas expressly prohibited under the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS) or Republic Act 7586. Watersheds are of course part of NIPAS, which makes all watersheds protected areas.



RADIKAL  
CHICK

KATRINA  
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### Are 75 cancellations too much?

The pro-mining groups and the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines have insisted that this is too drastic a move, that it is impossible that 75 mining projects are in violation of any law, which would warrant the cancellation of their MPSAs.

Yet this would only be impossible to people who refuse to admit that ultimately, while there is the law and the rule and regulations for acquiring any government permit at all, that where we come from, the acquisition of permits can be as simple as finding the loopholes in the law. It's through those loopholes that the illegal can be made legal, which could explain why there are mining permits for wa-

tersheds, which are protected areas under the law.

In a 2004 report by Earthworks and Oxfam America, a loophole is made more concrete: "One reason that it's difficult to keep mining out of protected areas is that the

boundaries of these areas are often poorly defined. This is a common problem in some parts of the Pacific region, which has relatively few protected areas and many major mines. In the Philippines, for example, mining is prohibited in intact forests and protected areas, yet approximately a third of all mining concessions overlap with these areas. (That figure covers both exploratory and active concessions.)"

In 2006, a fact-finding mission report on the state of mining in the Philippines, which was done by six human rights and environmental groups from the UK, also talked about this overlap and how it endangers the environment, our watersheds, and our communities: "In the Philippines, many mining and exploration concessions overlap watershed areas where demand for water exceeds the available supply. Mining in these areas would therefore be likely to compete with the needs of other users, including farmers and households, for scarce water. Many mining sites are located on mountains that act as watersheds for numerous rivers, potentially compounding the threat."

To me, those 75 cancellations actually finally address the above crises of overlaps between mining contracts and protected areas.

And it's about time.



# The Manila Times

19 FEB 2017

DATE

A5 - Upper  
PAGE

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SEI

The party's over...

2/2

## DENR authority

When Atty. Ipat Luna succinctly and perfectly answered that question about the DENR Secretary's authority to close down the mines and cancel these contracts, by pointing out what is enshrined in the law, there were no follow-up questions, but the badgering of Secretary Lopez continued.

And so it bears repeating. Under Chapter II, Section 8 of the Mining Act: "The Department shall be the primary agency responsible for the conservation, management, development, and proper use of the State's mineral resources including those in reservations, watershed areas, and lands of the public domain."

Can the DENR cancel these 75 MPSAs? Absolutely. From the MPSA itself as published on the Mines and Geosciences Bureau website: "This Agreement terminates or may be terminated for the following causes: <...> (f) any other cause or reason provided under the Act and its implementing rules and regulations, or any other relevant laws and regulations."

The more one watches the mining sector trying to paint itself as victim of DENR and Secretary Lopez, the more one sees how the sector is behaving like a spoiled brat used to getting its way, regardless of the law. And now that the law is being enforced, they cannot even defend themselves and say that what they're doing does not harm the environment and our communities in any way.

Lest they have yet to see the writing on the wall: the party's over.

Thank heavens.

19 FEB 2017

DATE

7

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF



**PAGTANAW  
AT  
PANANAW**  
Bert de Guzman

**K**UNG noong panahon ni ex-Pres. Noynoy Aquino ay may tinatawag na mga babaeng may "balls", ngayon ay may isa ring babae sa gabinete ni President Rodrigo Roa Duterte na may "balls." Siya ay si Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Regina "Gina" Lopez. Noon ay sina ex-DoJ Sec. Leila de Lima, ex-BIR commissioner Kim Henarez, ex-COA chief Grace Pulido-Tan, at Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales.

Ipinakansela si Sec. Gina ang 75 mining contract kaugnay ng pagpinaigting na kampanya ng Duterte administration na ipasara ang mga minahan na pumipinsala sa mga watershed. Ang pinakanselang mga kontrata ay kumakatawan sa halos ika-3 bahagi ng kontrata sa

"undeveloped mines", kabilang ang \$5.9-billion Tampakan gold and copper project sa South Cotabato.

Ayon kay Lopez, kailangang kanselahin ang mga kontrata sa pagmimina sapagkat lahat sila ay nasa watershed zones at maaaring magsapanganib sa supply ng tubig. Maraming nagrereklamo sa pagpapasara ng DENR sa mga minahan dahil marami raw ang mawawalan ng trabaho bukod pa sa nakatutulong sa ekonomiya ng Pilipinas ang mga minahan.

Inamin ni PNP Chief Director General Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa na siya ay istrikto at "siga-siga" sa hanay ng pulisya, pero pagdating sa bahay, siya ay mabait at "ander de saya" sa kanyang pinakamamahal na esposa. Ang pag-amin ay ginawa ni Gen. Bato nang siya at ginang na si Nancy Grace ay tumayong ninong at ninang sa 21 magkasintahan na lumahok sa

### GINA LOPEZ VS MINAHAN

Kasalang Bayan 2017 na ginanap sa St. Joseph Chapel sa Camp Crame, Quezon City kaugnay ng pagdiriwang ng Valentine's Day.

Sinabihan ni Bato ang mga lalaking hindi dapat ikahiyang sila ay "henpecked" sapagkat nagpapatunay ito na mahal nila ang kanilang mga ginang. "Huwag kayong mahiya na itawag ang ander de saya. Dapat pa magang ipagmalaki ito sapagkat patunay na mahal ninyo sila. Kung hindi ninyo sila mahal, aba balewala lang sila sa inyo," pangaral ng PNP chief na maskulado at nagmumura ring katulad ni Mano Digong.

Sakaling siya ay ipahuli ng DoJ dahil sa alegasyon ng pagkakasangkot sa illegal drug trade sa New Bilibid Prisons (NBP), sinabini Sen. Leila de Lima na hindi siya mangingibang-bansa, magsasakit-sakitan o gagawa ng kung anu-anong alibi upang hindi makulong.

Kinasuhan na siya ng DoJ ng 3 kasong kriminal na pawang non-bailable.

Nangangamba si Sen. Leila na inapura ni Justice Sec. Vitaliano Aguirre II upang siya'y sampahan ng kaso para isyuhan ng warrant of arrest. "I'm pinning my hope on the judiciary. I have faith in our judiciary especially the courts, the Supreme Court."

Talagang ayaw tantanan si De Lima ng Duterte admin na hindi makalimot sa ginawa niyang pagpapaimbestiga sa noon ay alkalde ng Davao City na si Rodrigo Duterte tungkol sa umano'y pagkakasangkot nito sa kilabot na Davao Death Squad.

Humanda ka Sen. Leila de Lima sa unos na dala ng administrasyon at ipakita mong ikaw ay isang babaeng may "balls" at hindi katulad ng mga lalaking senador at kongresista na urong ang mga "yagbols" at takot kay PDU30!

# PEOPLES JOURNALS

Everybody's Newspaper

19 FEB 2017

DATE

5

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### PCCI are concern on new DENR order

THE Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) expressed its concern on the new order of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on mineral production sharing agreements.

In a statement on Wednesday, PCCI said the decision of DENR to suspend mining contracts is an "unilateral move" of the government.

On January 14, DENR Secretary Roy A. Gallardo announced the cancellation of 750 mining contracts.

PCCI said the move is "not in line" with the spirit of the Mining Industry Contracting Council (MICC), the country's largest business organization

and that the government should provide the framework for mining projects in the future. PCCI said the government should share the production of a contractor with the kind of value.

Let the local and foreign and investments community would be encouraged to do more here after the DENR decision on the cancellation of 750 mining contracts. PCCI said the move is "not in line" with the spirit of the Mining Industry Contracting Council (MICC), the country's largest business organization

19 FEB 2017

DATE

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## 19 arestado sa illegal mining

Labinsiyam katao, kabilang ang anim na menor de edad, ang inaresto ng pulisya sa pagkakasangkot umano sa ilegal na pagmimina sa Sitio Kilot, Barangay Tablo, Tampakan, South Cotabato, iniulat kahapon.

Ayon kay Insp. Harold Cornel, hepe ng Tampakan Municipal Police, kinilala ang mga suspek na sina

Anthony Malit, Joni Masamlok, Ryan Diolan, Leath Matibay, Nelson Collado, Aldrin Dayem, Macky Labuayan, Lito Malayon, Roy General, Albert Ngoño, Serino Quibol, Bobet Peras, at Richie Jolan.

Sinabi ni Insp. Cornel na ang labis na nakababahala ay ang pagmimina ng anim na menor de edad, na hindi

pinangalanan ng pulisya.

Nakumpiska sa mga suspek ang kagamitan sa pagmimina, kabilang ang mercury.

Sasampahan ng kaso ang 13 nabanggit na suspek habang ang mga menor de edad ay nasa kustodiya na ng Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). **Fer Taboy**

19 FEB 2017

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DATE

PAGE

UPPER HALF

UPPER

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Green economy isusulong ni Sec. Lopez

Nilinaw ni Environment Secretary Gina Lopez na hindi siya anti-mining o 'bitter' sa mga kumpanyang nasa industriya ng pagmimina.

Depensa ng kalihim, ginagawa niya ang paghihigpit sa mga minahan dahil kailangan niyang protektahan ang 'quality of life' ng mga Filipino na tila napapabayaan dahil sa pagkagahaman ng maraming mining companies.

Kung umabot man umano sa mabigat na desisyon ang ginawang pagpapasara sa mahigit 23 mining firms at kinansela ang nasa 75 mining con-

tracts, ito ay sa kadahilangang nagbabanta ito sa buhay at kabuhayan ng milyun-milyon Filipino na nasa watershed areas.

Paglililaw ni Lopez, hindi siya anti-mining at gusto lamang nitong isulong ang 'green economy' na makatutulong sa nakararami.

Pinayuhan din ng kalihim ang mga bumabatikos sa kanya na iparating na lamang kay Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte ang apela ng mga mining companies dahil ito lamang ang may kapangyarihang baliin ang kanyang desisyon. (Jun Tadios)

19 FEB 2017

DATE

4-2

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

43

## EXPERT: PHL SHOULD IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT TO END ILLEGAL LOGGING

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA

**E**NVIRONMENT Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez has vowed to intensify the campaign against illegal logging to protect the country's watershed areas, a campaign which may be doomed to fail unless measures promoting investment in sustainable forest management is put in place, a forestry expert said.

The renewed drive against illegal logging is in line with President Duterte's marching order to enforce a total log ban, especially within watersheds, following massive flooding in Agusan and other Caraga provinces last month.

"We will intensify the campaign against illegal logging, and Victor Corpuz will lead the task force," Lopez told reporters at a news conference, as she announced the cancellation of 75 mineral production sharing agreements (MPSAs) and the Tampakan Copper-Gold Project Financial and/or Technical Assistance (FTAA) at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) early this week.

The official earlier blamed the flooding in Agusan, which prompted the government to implement



**VALDEZ:** "The government should allow private-sector investment to come in by opening CBFMs. The private companies will invest and provide technical training while the communities will have jobs. A sharing scheme can be forged for mutual benefit."

forced evacuation in Agusan del Sur to the destruction brought by logging and mining in the area.

The cancellation of the MPSAs, a preventive measure, aims to protect and conserve the country's fresh-water supply, against the impact of mining operations, Lopez pointed out.

CONTINUED ON A2

19 FEB 2017

DATE

2

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

2/3

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Expert: PHL should implement sustainable

### forest management to end illegal logging

CONTINUED FROM A1

#### Resurgence

DENR Undersecretary and National Anti-Environmental Crime Task Force Head Arturo Valdez admitted the resurgence of illegal logging activities, and vowed to mount the campaign in so-called illegal logging hot spots.

Executive Order (EO) 23 signed by former President Benigno S. Aquino III prohibits the cutting and harvesting of trees in natural and residual forests. The logging ban and intensified campaign under the Aquino administration, according to the DENR had reduced the number of illegal logging hot spots from 197 to just 27.

The DENR donated the confiscated hot logs to the Department of Education and were later crafted to make school furniture.

Acknowledging Duterte's order to study the current policy against illegal logging, Lopez vowed there will be "no letup" in the campaign, with Corpuz leading the charge.

Lopez plans to use the budget for the Enhanced National Greening Program to create more green jobs and help would-be affected miners with the impending closure of 23 large-scale metallic mines and suspension of five others, pending a review by the Mining Industry Coordinating Council.

#### 'Condemnation'

MINING industry's big players under the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP), which has filed an opposition before the Commission on Appointments to block Lopez's confirmation, had

said that 1.2 million people are "condemned to hunger and poverty" with Lopez's actions.

COMP argued that private sector and mining companies have planted the most number of trees—over 2 million—in the last five years in support of the government's massive reforestation programs.

It also claimed that mining companies implement progressive rehabilitation in mine sites and tapped local communities in the creation of green jobs and livelihood opportunities.

#### More PPCPs

MEANWHILE, Tom Valdez, president of Society of Filipino Foresters Inc., said imposing a total log ban will not address illegal logging.

Instead of a total log ban, Valdez said the government should implement sustainable forest management and allow the private sector to help in the reforestation through the establishment of more forest plantations and public-private community partnership (PPCP).

"Since EO 23 was enforced, did it really stop illegal logging? *Baka nga lumalapa,*" Valdez, a graduate at the University of the Philippines Los Baños who worked as a forester for 13 years before joining the San Roque Power Corp., pointed out.

Speaking mostly in Tagalog, Valdez, who sits as cochairman of the Interim National Government Board for Establishment of a Philippine Forest Certification System, said he supports the massive reforestation of the country's degraded and denuded forest.

The board, which is composed of representatives from the wood industry, non-governmental

organizations, civil-society organizations, and the Society of Filipino Foresters and concerned national government agencies such as the DENR and the Department of Trade and Industry, is currently organizing and building the capabilities of the wood industry and forestry sector.

He said the people need wood and cutting of trees for fuel alone cannot be stopped by the government. At the same time, Valdez said the wood industry is already importing more than half of its wood supply to sustain the wood industry.

As a forester himself, he added the government has no capacity to protect the country's vast forest and would need the support of the private sector and the community.

#### Investment

VALDEZ said the government should open up its community-based forest management (CBFM) areas to private-sector investment, reinforcing the program that will be beneficial to the wood industry, as well as the community.

This will also help lessen the burden on the part of the government in terms of covering more areas for reforestation.

"The government should allow private-sector investment to come in by opening CBFMs. The private companies will invest and provide technical training, while the communities will have jobs. A sharing scheme can be forged for mutual benefit," he told the BUSINESSMIRROR in a telephone interview.

Valdez echoed the concerns aired by the Philippine Wood Producers Association on the possible decla-

19 FEB 2017

DATE

2

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

EXPERT ...



FOREST cleared for agriculture in Palanan, Isabela. ANTONIO OQUIAST DREAMSTIME.COM

ration of a total log ban that will include plantation forests established by the private sector, individuals and NGOs in government lands through the integrated forest management agreements and socialized industrial forest management agreements and CBFMAs.

"For public-sector investment in forest rehabilitation to flow in, we need the private sector and community support. But first, we need an enabling policy environment to build investor confidence," he explained.

Valdez said measures should be enacted by Congress to protect the private-sector investment in forest rehabilitation that will boost forestry contribution to the country's growth and development, and its contribution to the economy in terms of exports, jobs and liveli-

hood opportunities.

He added the country is now import-dependent and forestry's contribution to the economy is miniscule. This, he said, is because the country's forest is already denuded, and cutting in natural forests is prohibited under EO/23.

"Kasi wala ng cutting. Walang supply. Halos wala. Meron siguro [supply] iyong imported from other countries," he said.

According to Valdez, forestry's contribution to the economy will increase, eventually, but this should start with an admission that, in the past, the forests were gravely abused, and that this time we have the opportunity to bring it back.

Valdez said the Society of Filipino Foresters and the Philippine Networks of Forestry Schools are

developing the sustainable forestry road map—a private-sector initiative.

"We will present it in October during a convention in Davao," he said.

For investment in forestry to come in, Valdez said, the government should ensure that the policy is stable and that forest certification should be implemented.

Forest certification is now being done in other countries, he added, and it is high time that the Philippines had its own to ensure buyers that the trees or wood were harvested legally, and in a sustainable manner that does not harm forest ecosystems.

With abundant local wood supply and duly certified as coming from environment-friendly sources, demand for illegally logged trees will eventually stop, Valdez said.

3/3



19 FEB 2017

DATE

UPPER F

18

PAGE

LOWER F

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## AFP commits to assist DENR in fight against illegal logging

**DAVAO CITY** — The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is joining the war against illegal logging in the region, according to 10th Infantry Division commanding official Maj. Gen. Rafael C. Valencia.

Valencia made the disclosure in his meeting with Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) regional officials who paid a call on him at the 10ID's camp in Mawab, Compostela Valley.

"To curb illegal logging activities is one of the marching orders of our DENR Secretary Gina Lopez. We are very serious on this drive the reason why we are intensifying our campaign and to further strengthen our partnership with the AFP once again so we could solicit their support in battling illegal logging activities in this region," DENR XI regional director Ruth M. Tawantawan said.

Valencia expressed his full support, not only in curtailing illegal logging but also illegal mining activities, especially within the 10ID's area of responsibility.

He stressed that the AFP already has close coordination with the Mines and Geo-Sciences Bureau in Region 11.

One of the preventive measures that were discussed during the meeting in order to stop illegal logging activities was the establishment of DENR-AFP checkpoints in the area.

"Our focus will be in areas within Compostela Valley, particularly in Laak and some areas in Davao del Norte and Davao Oriental. We will jointly conduct IEC in each barangay to prevent cutting of banned species," Tawantawan stressed.

DENR XI will also be conducting a refresher course on environmental laws and regulations as well as orientation on proper documentation in terms of apprehension of illegally cut trees for the AFP personnel.

Prior to her meeting with the 10th ID, Tawantawan had a courtesy call with Lieutenant Gen. Rey Leonardo B. Guerrero of the Eastern Mindanao Command in Panacan, Davao City, and discussed with him the different programs and projects of the DENR.

19 FEB 2017

DATE

PAGE 4

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# AFP sets sights on illegal loggers

YAS D. OCAMPO

DAVAO CITY – The Armed Forces of the Philippines is all set to augment the all-out battle of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) against illegal logging.

Major General Rafael C. Valencia, commanding officials of the AFP's 10th Infantry Division said they have already pinpointed areas where there is a critical need in guarding its environment.

Valencia expressed his full support not only in curtailing, not only illegal logging but also illegal mining activities especially within their area of responsibility stress-

ing that he has close coordination with the Mines and Geo-Sciences Bureau-XI.

One of the preventive measures that were discussed during their meeting with DENR XI regional director Ruth M. Tawantawan is the establishment of DENR-AFP checkpoints in the area.

"Our focus will be in areas within Compostela Valley Province particularly in Laak and some areas in Davao del Norte and Davao Oriental. We will jointly conduct IEC in each barangay to prevent cutting of banned species," said Tawantawan.

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Prior to her meeting with the 10th ID, Tawantawan had a courtesy call with Lieutenant General Rey Leonardo B. Guerrero of the Eastern Mindanao Command in Panacan, Davao City and discussed to him the different Programs and Projects of the DENR. They are also eyeing to solicit EASTMINCOM's support in the implementation of these programs especially in the campaign against illegal logging activities in the region.

Aside from the military, Tawantawan also urged all the employees of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) of Compostela Valley Province to help out in intensifying all the campaigns of the Department especially that there are reports that Comval Province has a high rate of illegal logging activities.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## FISHERS' GROUP HITS 'BLANKET ORDER' TO DEMOLISH LAGUNA DE BAY STRUCTURES

By Jhesset O. Enano  
@JhessetEnanoINQ

As environment officials dismantle fish pens and cages in Laguna de Bay to carry out one of the first marching orders of President Duterte, a fisherfolk organization is asking the government: What alternatives are you giving us?

The Alyansa ng mga Ped-rasyong Kumikilos sa Lawa ng Laguna posed the question as it called for the suspension of the moratorium on aquaculture being imposed by the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA).

The group questioned LLDA

Board Resolution No. 518, which set off the dismantling of fish pens based on a directive the President made as early as July last year, in his first State of the Nation Address.

For the alliance, it was "a blanket order" that covered even small fish cages as well as structures for kangkong (water spinach) farms.

"The resolution says that no structure will be left standing and all activities would have to cease for one year," the group's spokesperson, Teófilo Mamplata, said in a press briefing in Quezon City on Friday.

Mamplata stressed that the

government failed to clarify the processes behind the demolition of the lake structures. "They started without considering the families who rely on the lake for food and livelihood."

### 24K fishermen affected

According to the alliance, around 24,000 small-time fishermen will be affected if all fish pens in the freshwater lake are removed.

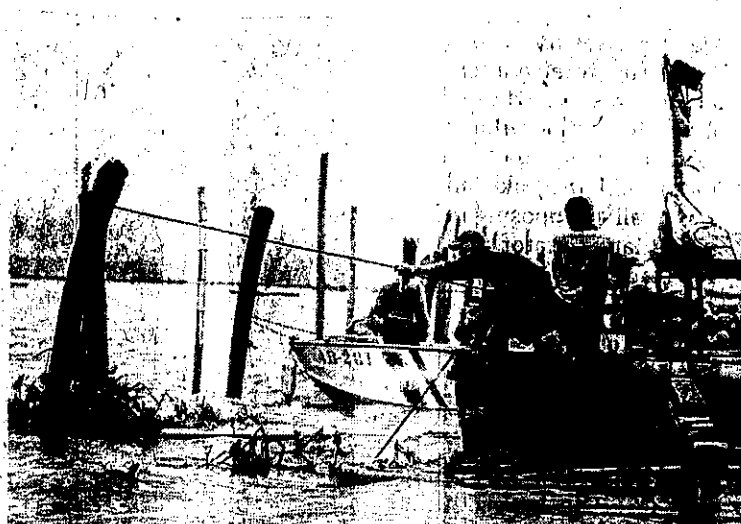
The group called for a review of the LLDA resolution and urged the agency and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to speak with the fisherfolk from

the provinces bordering the lake.

They also asked Environment Secretary Gina Lopez to define what exactly are the eco-tourism projects being considered in Laguna Lake and surrounding areas.

Lawyer Terry Ridon, chair of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor, said they would call an interagency meeting between the two agencies to address the matter.

In an earlier press conference, the DENR gave assurances that the clearing operations would not adversely affect small-time fishermen. INQ



Demolition teams go to work in the freshwater lake in this Jan. 26 file photo.

# PEOPLES JOURNALS

Everybody's Newspaper

19 FEB 2017

DATE

13

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## 2 DENR provincial execs in CL sacked

By Steve Gosuico

**CABANATUAN CITY** — Two provincial chiefs of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Luzon have been relieved

from their posts while four other lower officials were placed on "floating status" following a massive revamp ordered by DENR Secretary Gina Lopez.

Sacked were Joselito Blanco and Raul Ur-

mamac, DENR provincial environment and natural resources officers (PENROs) of Aurora and Bataan, respectively.

Blanco was replaced by Nicomedes Claudio, DENR community environment and natural resources officer (CENRO) based in Casiguran, Aurora, while Urmamac by Raymond Rivera, CENRO based in Masinloc, Zambales.

The replacements of Claudio and Rivera were not immediately known.

Reportedly placed on a floating status were CENRO-Dingalan Jimmy Aberin, CENRO-Muñoz (Nueva Ecija) Gerundio Fernandez, CENRO-Baliuag (Bulacan) Meliton Vicente and Centro-Tarlac Laurino Macadangdang.

Retained as PENROs were Leovino Ignacio of Nueva Ecija, Celia Esteban of Bulacan, Rafael Otic of Pampanga, Emelita Lingat of Tarlac and Laude Mirsalac of Zambales.

Among the CENROs, retained were Ariel Mendoza of Bagac and Florencio Jalu of Dinalupihan, both in Bataan; Roger Encarnacion of Guiguinto, Bulacan; Ricardo Lazaro of Cabanatuan City; Romel Santiago of Bacolor, Pampanga; Alfredo Collado of Camiling, Tarlac; and Marife Castillo of Olongapo City.

DENR regional director for Central Luzon Francisco Milla, who was one of the regional directors retained, confirmed the relief of Blanco and Urmamac.

Milla said he was not aware of the reasons behind the relief of the two officials, saying it was the decision of a group formed by Lopez.

Milla however, clarified that Aberin, Fernandez, Vicente and Macadangdang are still CENROs in holdover capacities since there are no Special Order for their relief.

A DENR official, who sought anonymity, said the relief of Blanco and Urmamac and the freezing of the four CENROs was a result of "fengshui," a Chinese philosophical system of harmonizing everyone with the environment.

The affected officials were reportedly removed due to "bad feng shui vibrations."



**SMALL-SCALE MINERS PLEAD TO DENR.** Some 5,000 small scale-miners stage a protest rally on Valentine's Day at the Provincial Capitol Grounds in Daet, Camarines Norte asking the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines and Geosciences Bureau to lift a cease and desist order on small-scale mining in the mineral-rich towns of Paracale, Jose Panganiban and Labo. The protesters appealed to Environment Secretary Gina Lopez to allow the opening of a "minahang bayan" in the province.

Photo by Sonny Sales

19 FEB 2017

# PEOPLES Tonight

DATE

12

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### 2 DENR prov'l officials relieved

By STEVE A.  
GOSUICO

**CABANATUAN CITY --** Two provincial chiefs of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Central Luzon have been relieved from their posts while four other lower officials were placed on "floating status" following a massive revamp.

The relieved DENR officials were Joseito Blanco and Raul Urmamac, DENR provincial environment and natural resources officers (PENROs) of Aurora and Bataan, respectively.

Blanco was replaced by Nicomedes Claudio, DENR community environment and natural resources officer (CENRO) based in Casiguran, Aurora while Urmamac by Raymond Rivera, CENRO based in Masinloc, Zambales.

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Francisco Milla, DENR regional director for Central Luzon and who was one of the regional directors retained, confirmed the relief of Blanco and Urmamac.

Milla said he was not aware of the reasons behind the relief of the two officials, saying it was the decision of a group formed by Lopez.

Milla clarified, however, that Aberin, Fernandez, Vicente and Macadangdang are still CENROs in hold-over capacities since there are still no Special Order for their relief.

A DENR official who sought anonymity, however, said the relief of Blanco and Urmamac and the subsequent freezing of the four CENROs was the result of "Fengshui," known locally as "punsoy," a Chinese philosophical system of harmonizing everyone with the environment.

The affected officials were reportedly removed due to "Feng Shui" vibrations.



19 FEB 2017

DATE

UPPER HALF

b5

PAGE

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## JICA facilitates mulberry tea project in Pampanga

San Fernando, Pampanga – The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has vowed to support a mulberry tea project in Pampanga.

JICA senior representative Yuko Tanaka said the agency funded the prefeasibility study on the mulberry tea project as part of efforts to bring in more investments in the agricultural sector.

This project is actually in line with the JICA's current administration's Zero Plus Ten Point Agenda of inclusive development. So, now, the shift is from Metro Manila to the region," Tanaka said during a welcome dinner.

Japanese firm Kuwanosato Inc. of Yamaguchi Prefecture of Japan will be providing expertise and technology to the Pampanga State Agricultural University through a grant from the JICA. It processes and exports mulberry tea.

Tanaka said the project leverages the technology of mulberry tea planting so the farmers could produce high value crops and increase their livelihood.

"Through the mulberry tea project, we hope to revitalize and create new opportunities in Pampanga especially in the agriculture sector in the rest of Central Luzon," she said.

Tanaka is confident that the partnership

will improve the quality of life of many Filipinos.

It is very good for the health especially for diabetics. So feel free to drink the tea," she said.

Kuwanosato manager Han Sonmin expects this initiative to

boost the local food sufficiency and promote an economically

viable agriculture production of

mulberry.

"I would like to share a lively future of our agriculture."

"I will stake my life and put forward my best effort to ensure the success of mulberry tea business in the province of Pampanga. I hope through this venture, we will further improve Philippine-Japan relations," Sonmin said.

Pampanga governor Eula Pineda has expressed gratitude to Kuwanosato, PSAU and JICA for introducing mulberry farming and seeking ways to augment the income of farmers in Pampanga.

"Mulberry farming if realized would be a big help for farmers and their families. We are here to continuously support the agricultural sector and welcome the introduction of new agricultural technology and production like mulberry so we can improve their way of living," Pineda said.

The group plans to start planting in the hilly areas of Magalang, Floridablanca, Borac and Mabalacat City in Pampanga.





19 FEB 2017

DATE

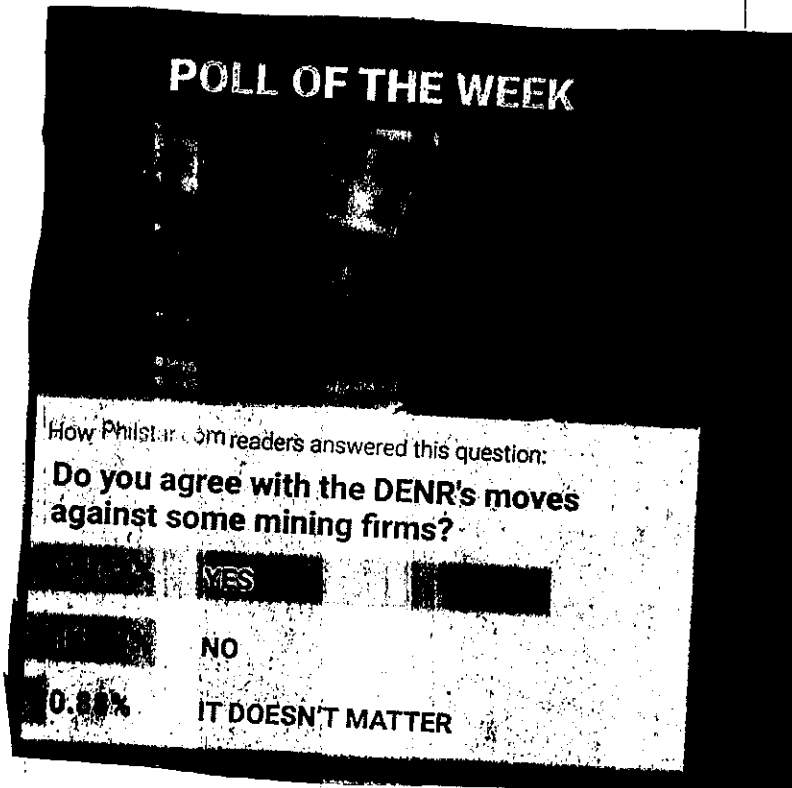
UPPER HALF

9

PAGE

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



19 FEB 2017

DATE

UPPER H

9  
PAGE

LOWER H

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## 'PH forests must be preserved'

By MARIO B. CACAYURAN

Sen. Loren Legarda, chairperson of the Senate climate change committee, pressed yesterday the national government to prioritize the rehabilitation of the country's denuded forests and degraded forestlands.

This as Legarda filed Senate Bill 402, the proposed Sustainable Forest Management Act, that provides for sustainable forest management based on rational allocation of forestland uses and promotion of land use practices.

A report of the National Mapping and Resources Information Authority (Namria) stated that from 2001 to 2003, the country's forestland consists of 7.1 million hectares or 24.2 percent of the country's land area.

The Namria also stated that from 1990 to 2005, the Philippines lost 32.3 percent of its forest cover or around 3,412,000 hectares.

Legarda said the sustainability of the country's forests is ensuring that both present and future generations would benefit from its natural resources.



# PEOPLES JOURNALS

Everybody's Newspaper

19 FEB 2017

DATE

12

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Green plans for Payatas landfill bared

THE Payatas controlled disposal facility is being eyed to become an eco-park or for any suitable land use after its closure.

The Quezon City government is now crafting a master plan for the Payatas controlled disposal facility to determine short and long-term development initiatives in the area.

Frederika Rentoy, head of city's Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department (EP-WMD), said that the city government is using a seven-hectare engineered sanitary landfill in Payatas for the disposal of solid waste generated by the city.

Earlier, the city government appealed to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to reconsider its order calling for the immediate closure of the Payatas sanitary landfill.

The city government asked the DENR to give it

sufficient time to prepare for all the vital adjustments to ensure minimal impact on the city's solid waste management system.

The city council has authorized Mayor Herbert Bautista to forge a joint venture agreement with the private sector for the development of the city's own waste-to-energy plant.

The mayor stressed the need for the establishment of the waste-to-energy plant as it is vital to the city's effort to avert a possible crisis in waste management with the impending closure of the city's sanitary landfill in Payatas.

As provided for under the resolution, the city government shall ensure that the project configuration of the proposed WTE facility is compliant with the required laws and regulations including but not limited to: the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000; Clean Air Act; Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Act; Renewable Energy Act of 2008 and guidelines governing the establishment and operation of waste-to-energy technologies for municipal solid wastes.

**Cory Martinez**

# PEOPLES JOURNALS

Everybody's Newspaper

19 FEB 2017

DATE

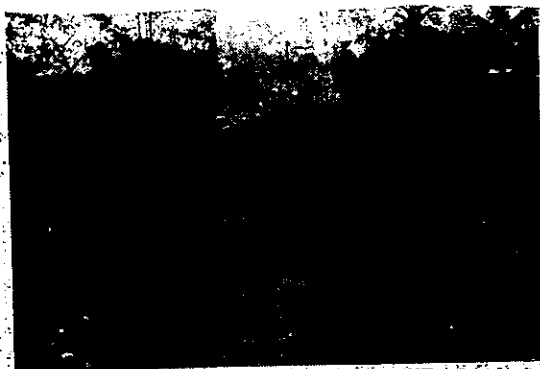
13

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



**HYDRO POWER PLANT PLANNED SITE.** A photo taken by INECAR researchers shows partial diggings at a supposed surge pond in Bgy. San Pedro, formerly Bgy. Aroro, in the Goa, Camarines Sur portion of Mt. Isarog Natural Park, where a mini-hydro power plant is set to be built.

*Photo courtesy of INECAR*

### DENR stops hydro power plant development at Mt. Isarog

**By Sonny Sales**

**NAGA CITY** – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Environmental Management Bureau - Bicol regional office stopped the site development of the proposed Rangas River Mini-Hydro plant pending review of the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) issued for the project.

The order was issued amid complaints by local environmentalists and stakeholders that the project is being developed in the vicinity of Mt. Isarog Natural Park.

Former DENR Bicol regional director Gilbert Gonzales issued an ECC for the project on Nov. 11, 2009.

The Ateneo de Naga University, non-government organizations and the Institute for Environmental Conservation and Research (INECAR) said the development of the 17,770.50 square meter Rangas hydro power plant project is in violation of the National Integrated Project Area System or the NIPAS Act of 1992.

INECAR spokesperson Joanaviva Pelopenio said based on a Global Positioning System (GPS) plotting of the boundaries of the 10,112 hectares of the Isarog National Park, the site development of the mini-hydro power plant in Bgy. San Pedro (Aroro) Goa town in the portion of Mt. Isarog falls inside the natural park and not outside its boundary.

The INECAR said about 63 mature trees will be affected by the project.

Many stakeholders among the water district offices in Camarines Sur also opposed the project. They said they were not informed of the planned construction of a hydro power plant in Mt. Isarog, considering that potable water sources in Naga City and the adjacent towns come from the mountain's watershed.