

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 17 OCT 2016
DAY : Monday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

Ban on new mines mulled

ENVIRONMENT secretary Regina Lopez wanted to ban new mines, ramping up a campaign to clamp down on damage from the minerals industry in the country.

The Philippines is the world's top nickel ore supplier and an environmental crackdown that has halted a quarter of its 41 mines, and the risk that 20 more maybe shuttered has spurred a rally in global nickel prices.

"I want to put a moratorium on any new mine," Regina Lopez told a media briefing.

"I don't want to fight the mining companies, I can work with them as long as they don't silt the river, destroy the rice fields."

Lopez, a committed environmentalist, also said her agency would review around 800 environmental compliance certificates (ECC) including those granted to mines. That would come on top of a mining industry audit completed in August that led to the current mine suspensions.

Nickel prices surged to a one-year high of \$11,030 a tonne in August, although the metal has since retreated, trading at \$10,425 on Friday.

Lopez also announced the suspension of the ECC of a nickel mine in southern Davao Oriental province run by private-owned Austral-Asia Link Mining Corp.

The environmental permit would be cancelled because it sits between Mount Hamiguitan, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and Pujada Bay, a marine protected area.

"We're now going to have an intense evaluation of all other ECCs. No more mining in any protected areas," she said.

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ENVIRONMENT

ILLEGAL QUARRYING BACK IN BANAHAW

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
@dtmallarijrINQ

LUCENA CITY—Illegal quarrying is back in Mt. Banahaw in Sariaya town in Quezon province, an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said.

"The pockets of quarry holes look like 'sungka.' This is frightening because this poses grave danger to the local community," Environment Undersecretary Arturo Valdez, head of National Anti-Environmental Crime Task Force, said in a phone interview on Friday.

Acting on the order of Environment Secretary Gina Lopez, Valdez led a team from the DENR, military, police and other government agencies that stopped the operations of 15 quarry permit holders. Their environmental compliance certificates (ECC) were cancelled by the DENR on Tuesday.

"We're enforcing the ECC cancellation of quarries that have operated beyond their legal mandate because of violation of the ECC. They have to stop operations," he said.

Webster Letargo, Provincial Mining Regulatory Board (PMRB) vice chair, said his office welcomes the participation of national government agencies in purging the ranks of quarry operators.

One goal

"We all share the same goal: to protect and preserve our natural resources," Letargo said.

Mining activities in the province are under the control and supervision of PMRB.

Letargo said PMRB has not been remiss in its duties to regulate quarry operations.

Legal and illegal quarrying activities thrive in the villages of Sampaloc II, Sto. Cristo, Tumbaga, Canda, Limbon, and Castañas, situated on the banks of the Janagdong and Lagnas rivers.

"Unlawful mining operations have already trespassed on the boundary of the protected area at the base of Banahaw," Valdez said.

The local government of Sariaya has been limiting quarry operations to the river bed as part of its flood control program.

Illegal quarry operators, however, entice owners of low-yielding farms, particularly coconut plantations, to sell them their land, which they would turn as quarry sites.

Valdez said the piles of boulders at the base of Banahaw posed serious danger to residents of Sariaya in the event of continuous and heavy rain.

Fatal past

At the height of Typhoon "Santi" in 2009, two persons drowned in a mining site in Barangay Sto. Cristo when they slid into a quarry hole.

The Lagnas Bridge connecting the Maharlika Highway collapsed at the height of Typhoon "Rosing" in 1995 due to strong river current.

Operators of rock crushing plants in Sariaya protested their inclusion in the DENR operation.

Cerilo Cinco, president of the Sariaya Rock Crushers Association, said the government team held at least eight of their haulers.

"We're not quarry operators. We're just processors," Cinco said.

Valdez said the trucks will be released. However, he warned owners of rock crushing plants that they face criminal charges if they buy materials from illegal quarry operators. INQ

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

H1 metallic mining production drops 14%

THE value of country's metallic production dropped 13.59 percent to P48.25 billion in the first half of the year from P55.84 billion recorded in the same period last year, according to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

The MGB attributed the drop to the halt in mining by three companies in Dinagat, Mindanao and lower metal prices:

However, gold made a big comeback in the first half accounting for 47 percent or P22.68 billion of the total metallic production value.

Since 2012, nickel direct shipping ore and mixed nickel-cobalt sulfide combined had dominated ore production in the country.

Nickel at second spot accounted for 33 percent, contributing P16.08 billion followed by copper with 19 percent or P9.01 billion. The remaining 1 percent or P470 million, came

from the collective values of silver, chromite and iron ore.

MGB said nickel ore production for the period declined 30 percent to 10.45 million dry metric tons (DMT) valued at P9.20 billion from 14.88 million DMT valued at P19.08 billion last year. Mixed nickel-cobalt sulfide output also went down by 14 percent to 37,604 DMT valued at P6.89 billion from 43,512 DMT valued at P9.23 billion.

The agency said among the nickel miners which reported zero production during the period were Wellex Mining Corp., Oriental Vision Mining Philippines Corp. and Westernshore Nickel Corp. due to poor metal price and ongoing maintenance works. All three companies are located in Dinagat Island in Mindanao and are only into their second year of commercial operation.

Major nickel producers Rio Tuba Mining Corp. in Palawan, Taganito Mining Corp. in Surigao Del Norte, Platinum Group Metals Corp. in Surigao del Norte and SR Metals Inc. in Agusan Del Norte likewise incurred production setback both in volume and value.

MGB earlier said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' mining audit will affect the overall ore production this year especially that only 11 from 41 operating metallic mines passed. These are Philex Mining Corp., Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp., Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp., Techiron Resources Inc., Cagdianao Mining Corp., Taganito Mining Corp., Platinum Group Metals Corp., Greenstone Resources Corp., Philsaga Mining Corp., Pacific Nickel Philippines, Inc. and Apex Mining Company Inc.

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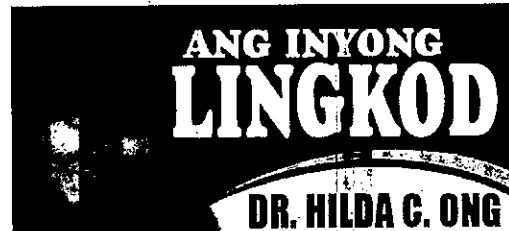
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NANAWAGAN ang environmental group na BAN TOXICS kay Pangulong Rodrigo R. Duterte na manindigan at gumawa ng kaukulang hakbang upang maibalik sa bansang Canada ang 103 containers na naglalaman ng samu't saring mga basura na dinala sa ating bansa noong mga taong 2013 hanggang 2014.

Matatandaan na pinalusot ng Bureau of Customs (BOC) ang mga container van buhat sa Vancouver, Canada na dinala rito ng Chronic, Inc. na pagmamayari ni James Makris. Nasabi na ng inyong lingkod sa aking nagdaang column, "Huwag Gawin Basurahan ang Pilipinas! (Hulyo 23, 2015) na lubhang kahinahinala ang hindi akmang pagkilos ng noo'y pamunuan ng BOC hinggil sa mga basurang ito. Dapat nang malaman nilang basura ang laman nito, hindi ito dapat tinanggap ng ahensya at agad na ipinatawag at pinagpaliwanag ang importing company.

Hindi rin naman lingid sa ating lahat na binalak pang ibaon sa Capas Tarlac Sani-



WALANG REKOMENDASYON NI DENR SEC. GINA LOPEZ KAYA HINDI MAIBALIK ANG BASURA SA CANADA

tary Landfill ang mga basurang ito pero mabuti na lamang at nanindigan ang mga residente doon na huwag itong tanggapin.

Katulad ni Anna Kapunan ng BAN Toxics, ang paniniwala ng inyong lingkod, isang pang-insulto sa ating mga Filipino ang ginawang ito ng bansang Canada.

Sinasabi nila na kaibigan nila tayo, pero bakit dito nila itatapon sa ating bakuran ang kanilang basura? Ganito ba kalit ang pagtingin sa atin ng kanilang pamahalaan? Sabagay, noong panahon ng administrasyong Aquino ay hindi rin ito binigyang-pansin.

Sa panayam ko kay Ms. Kapunan, bagama't may mga inisyal na pagkilos nang ginagawa hinggil sa mga basurang ito gaya ng pagsasampa ng motion for execution for partial return of the imported trash ay tanging 50 containers lamang ang sakop nito at hindi obligado ang pamahalaan ng Canada na

sundin ang ilalabas na kautusan ng ating korte.

Ang puwede aniyang dapat gawin ni Pangulong Duterte ay utusan ang Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) at ang Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) na mag-sampa ng "Notice of Illegal Waste Trade" sa Basel Convention Secretariat.

Sa ilalim ng kasunduan kung saan kapwa nakalagda ang Pilipinas at Canada, ipinagbabawal ang waste trade maging ito ay toxic, hazardous o maging household.

Sa pamamaraang ito, may mga mekanismo na puwedeng magamit upang mapanagot ang Canada sa itinatapon nilang basura sa atin.

Naaalala ko, sa isang panayam noong September 2015, sinabi ni Pangulong Duterte noon na ang ginawang waste dumping ay isang "derogation of our national dignity".

Mas magkakaroon ng konkretoning pagkilos ang ating pamahalaan kung maging manggagaling sa Pangulo ang kumpas at kautusan. Kuwentop na ni Ms. Kapunan, ang nakakangitngit pa, patay — malisya sa illegal waste dumping ang Canada at hanggang ngayon, hindi binibigyang-pansin ng DENR. Nakalulungkot aniya na bagama't kinikilala ang Vancouver kung saan nagmula ang basura, bilang "one of the top three cleanest cities in the world", sa ating bansa naman nila ita-

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AMIN NG KATOTOHANAN

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800 ECC BUBUSISIIN

ISASAILALIM sa audit ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ang may 800 Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) na naisyu ng Environment Management Bureau (EMB) sa mga kompanya.

Ayon kay DENR Secretary Gina Lopez, ito ay para masiguro na nakasusunod ang mga kompanya sa isinasaad ng ECC Rules.

Ginawa ni Lopez ang pahayag matapos isyuhan ng show cause order ang apat na kompanya na binigyan ng ECC.

Kabilang sa mga bubusisiin ang ECC ay mula sa infrastructure, manufacturing, power at mining sector.

Nagbabala si Lopez na babawiin ang mga naisyung ECC sa mga kompanya sa sandaling mapatunayang magiging mapanganib sa kapaligiran ang mga proyekto.

"There are 800 ECCs and we are going to evaluate all of them. We are coming up with ECC audit. We are going to categorize all the projects by sector," ani Lopez.

Sa sandaling bawiin ang ECC, tigil na ang operasyon ng kompanya.

Nauna nang sinuspinde ng DENR ang ECC ng Century Communities Corporation at Austral-Asia Link Mink Corporation.

MONCHET LARANO

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

CANCELS ECC

DENR willing to buy back La Mesa land from Century

BY JED MACAPAGAL

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources is willing to buy back the La Mesa property sold by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System from Century Communities Corp.

Century is owned by Jose Antonio developer of high end condominiums, one of which is endorsed by international socialite Paris Hilton.

DENR has suspended the environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) of the developer.

Environment Secretary Regina Lopez said Century Communities failed to secure a clearance from the MWSS for the project to proceed.

"There was an addendum to the ECC which said that (ECC) will be rendered ineffective if there is no clearance from the MWSS (Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System)... (The project) is not yet in operation or in process of construction but it is also suspended for lack of compliance to the requirements of a ground water survey," said Ipat Luna, DENR undersecretary.

Lopez said the DENR is exploring ways on how Century Communities can settle the matter.

"The problem is (Century Communities) bought the land there and already spent a lot of money. A housing there in the watershed really is not an environmental thing to do. We are going to explore ways so (the company) can still make money in an environmental sound way. I talked to Joey Antonio (Century chairman)," she said.

DENR said Century Communities could instead develop the site into an agri-tourism park or sell back the land to the government.

"We should just buy (the land) back. (MWSS) sold it at P8 per square meter. If (Century Communities) sells it back for the same price, why not? We can just buy it back. It is the how much the government sold it to MWSS employees," Lopez added.

The agency is not giving any deadline to Century Communities for it to comply with its ECC requirements especially that it can refile it anytime.

"They can keep on refile and we just have to keep looking at whether it will be good for the 12 million residents of Manila to have the watershed used in the way they are planning. They can keep on changing their plans and we can't stop them from refile," Luna said.

Lopez earlier said the planned housing project should not be pursued since Metro Manila water concessionaires, Maynilad and Manila Water are still incapable of filtering household waste which would be a risk if Century Communities' plan is pursued inside the La Mesa watershed.

In a separate statement, Century Communities said that it is prepared to submit its appeal to the DENR and remains open to discuss on conditions or additional requirements that will be imposed.

"Projects in Singapore, the United States and the United Kingdom



Lopez: "No to new mines and no more mining in any protected areas".

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DENR bans housing projects near watersheds

By JONATHAN L. MAYUGA @jonlmayuga

TO protect the country's water supply, Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez has declared that watersheds are "off limits" to housing and other "destructive projects" under her watch.

Lopez issued the policy statement at a press conference in Quezon City on Friday, as she announced the suspension of the environmental compliance certificate (ECC) of property developer Century Communities Corporation for its Nova by Century housing project at a 58-hectare private property acquired by the company.

According to Lopez, she would not allow "destructive" development projects even on private properties, to protect the country's water source from possible contamination.

Lopez, an environmental advocate, said if she would have it her way, there will be "zero development" in watersheds.

"Even in private lands, correct me if I am wrong, you cannot do anything there that will adversely affect the greater good. For instance, in the Marikina watershed, there are

subdivisions in the area, which may aggravate flooding.

She blamed the flooding in Metro Manila to the degradation of the Marikina watershed, partly because of the destructive development projects.

According to Lopez, private landowners within watersheds have special responsibility for the common good. "The DENR [Department of Environment and Natural Resources] is determined and completely committed to the common good," she said.

Lopez said the DENR has been reviewing the ECCs for various development projects.

At the DENR's office alone, the DENR is in the process of reviewing 800 ECCs involving environmentally critical projects, Lopez said.

Environment Undersecretary for Policy and Planning Marlo D. Mendoza said development projects

would be the basis of the ongoing review of ECCs.

The DENR chief said Century failed to secure clearances from the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and the DENR for its Nova by Century housing project within the La Mesa watershed in Quezon City.

"Without clearance from the MWSS, the ECC of Century is rendered ineffective," Environment Undersecretary for Legal Affairs Maria Paz Luna said. Luna, however, said Century can file and refile an appeal.

"They can keep changing their plans and they can keep on filing and refiling and keep on complying. We can't stop them from filing and refiling," she said.

However, Luna said as long as the project is not consistent with a "proenvironment" management plan that would adversely affect the La Mesa watershed, she said the ECC is not likely to get an approval from the DENR.

Lopez said she had also talked to the chairman of Century, but said a housing project in the watershed is "not an environmental thing to do."

She said the DENR would work with Century to come up with an "environmentally friendly" project.

"Fifty-eight hectares is a big chunk of land. In La Mesa Ecopark, there are 17,000 pre-nuptial shoot every year. Because it is beautiful. Manila

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DENR bans housing projects near watersheds



FISHING IN LAS PIÑAS A fisherman in the coastal area of Las Piñas takes advantage of calm weather to gather his fishnet. NONI REYES

source of Metro Manila residents.

The company also failed to conduct a groundwater survey in the area, one of the terms of the ECCs issued to Century for the project.

In a statement, Century said it is prepared to submit its appeal to the DENR on the basis that it has complied with the provisions of its ECC for the Novaliches project.

"The company is of the strong opinion that there is no definitive basis to suspend its ECC for the said

we should not be fined. There was no mention of the possibility of suspension, nor cancellation," it said.

Century added that the said meeting established that the company complied with the ECC rules and as a result, was neither sanctioned nor fined by the DENR.

"Further, the company is of the strong opinion that suspension is not warranted since there has been no development works commenced on the property to date," the state-

These private rights to develop a housing project in the property was upheld with finality by the Supreme Court in 1975.

"Century Communities expresses its hopes that the DENR would fairly and judiciously exercise its authority throughout the course of this process not only for the project, but also recognize that the property has been afforded the rights to develop a housing project," the statement said.

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Warm weather will change the way farmers will till their fields

BY PAUL M. ICAMINA

WARMING temperature and changing rainfall patterns could affect the way major crops grow.

"Preliminary research shows a potential decline in the yield of rice and other major crops," said Dr. Rodel D. Lasco of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST).

On the other hand, he said global studies on rice and other crops show that carbon dioxide gas fertilization could lead to higher yields.

Either way, it is clear that climate change will impact on agriculture. For example, he says, sea level rise could flood crop growing areas, reducing arable land. Extreme events such as tropical cyclones could increase in intensity and frequency, leading to greater damage to crops and infrastructure. Changing rainfall patterns could lead to flooding and droughts which will depress crop yields.

Lasco, who chairs the NAST Task Force on Climate Change, said research should

project yields of crops, livestock and fisheries in the future.

"Research should look on the impacts on small farms and how farmers and fisherfolks should adapt," he said.

"Climate change could bring higher rainfall during the wet season and drier climate during the dry season. These will modify stream flow, dam operation and water allocation, domestic water supply, irrigation, hydro power generation, depth and recharge of aquifers, water quality, watersheds and fishery. These, in turn, could adversely affect food and human security and the economy."

Research must identify the most vulnerable river basins, he says, adding that projections must be made on impacts on water supply for domestic, power and irrigation needs.

Because climate change could alter forest ecosystems, the drier forests may be the most vulnerable as overall rainfall increases, said Lasco, who heads the Oscar M. Lopez Center for Climate Science, a private foundation promoting research on climate

adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

"Studies on the potential impacts at the species level is still in its infancy," he said. "Because natural forests store significant amount of carbon, open areas could be reforested to sequester more carbon."

"Coastal and marine ecosystems such as mangroves and coral reefs could be affected by sea level rise and warming temperatures. These will lead to loss of mangrove forests, coral bleaching, landward intrusion of seawater in estuaries and aquifers and the submergence and inundation of low-lying areas."

Lasco said one research priority is to look at strategies for natural ecosystems and local communities to cope with the expected change within and around forests. The carbon sequestration rates of individual species and at various ecological zones should also be measured.

"With the poorest of the poor especially vulnerable, there are very limited evidence-based information. As a result, policy makers remain largely in the dark on the specifics of how to prepare for climate change."

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Coral-reef restoration provides tourism prospects to Camiguin

WHILE Camiguin Island is popular for its sweet lanzones, the province has something more to boast of.

The island is blessed with natural attractions, such as cool refreshing waters and waterfalls, panoramic view of the ocean and potential dive sites.

One of such dive sites is in Barangay Cabuan, Guinsiliban, in Camiguin. Aware of such potential, the Cabuan Community Village Coastal Tour Association (CCVCTA) collaborated with the Department of Science and Technology and the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARRD), Sangkalikasan Producers Cooperative (SPC) and the provincial government of Camiguin in addressing coral degradation on the island through the government's roll-out of Coral Reef Restoration (asexual) Program.

The CCVCTA, an organization registered with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), is composed of 61 members. Its

volunteerism, desire to adopt progress that is environmentally sound, and reclaim their identity as a people of the sea, hence its desire to adopt the Coral Reef Restoration Program.

Having started in 2014, the Coral Reef Restoration Program rolled out a coral-transplantation technology using asexually reproduced corals to improve the productivity of coral resources for sustainable fisheries.

Camiguin, Bohol, Pangasinan, Sarangani, Bataan, Zambales, Palawan, Zamboanga del Norte and Ilocos Norte were chosen as restoration sites. The sites were selected based on their suitability for restoration; availability of sufficient amount of coral fragments for transplanting; and their location within the marine protected area.

Dislodged live coral fragments or "corals of opportunity [COP]" are gathered and attached to coral nursery units (CNU) so they can

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Coral-reef restoration



MEMBERS of the Cabuan Community Coastal Tour Association at the barangay's coastal center. SANGKALIKASAN PRODUCERS COOPERATIVE

of SPC, presented the organization's accomplishment as a program collaborator during the Sixth General Assembly and Convention of the Philippine-Korea Rural Development Administration Alumni Association (PhilKoRAA) on September 29 and 30 at the DOST-PCAARRD Innovation and Technology Center (DPITC), in Los Baños, Laguna.

Adopting the theme Technology Transmission to Community Transformation, the event highlighted the outcomes or impacts of technology-transfer initiatives in transforming communities.

Lao' said that with the DOST-PCAARRD program on coral restoration, 10 CNU's were designed through the DOST-funded Filipino innovation program, and two SPC-designed CNU's have been deployed underwater with 5,000

and 3,000 COPs, respectively. This has helped in improving not only the coral reefs, but also the marine ecosystem, as evidenced by the increase in fish density and marine biodiversity.

Aside from what have been restored, the program has also institutionalized certain mechanism toward a sustainable underwater tourism. For one it has initiated the Eco Dive Tourism Education and Briefing, DOST-PCAARRD's coral propagation main tool. It has also provided divers with the opportunity to experience coral restoration as an added feature of the dive.

With the success of the technology in Cabuan, Louisa said, "Today, we are no longer just divers. We have the power to bring back life to the sea." *Ricardo R. Argana/S&T Media Service*

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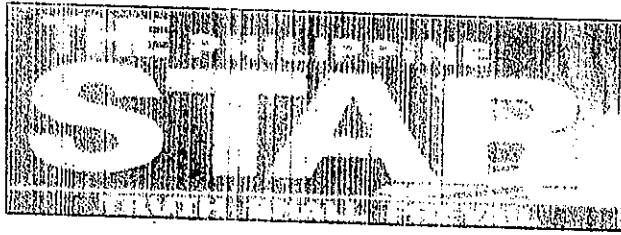
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coral-reef restoration - - -



THE coral nursery units deployed with coral fragments allow divers to experience the coral reproduction technology. CABUAN COMMUNITY VILLAGE COASTAL TOUR ASSOCIATION



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'Hot' logs seized in N. Cotabato

NORTH COTABATO – Police confiscated 1,138 board feet of illegally cut logs in Alamada, North Cotabato yesterday.

The logs, which were in two trucks, were intercepted at a checkpoint in Sitio Kitub in Barangay Bao.

Senior Inspector Jojet Nicolas, Alamad police chief, said the drivers of the trucks could not present the required documents to transport the logs.

Superintendent Romeo Galgo, Soccsksargen police spokesman, said the Alamada police asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to look into reports that the logs were cut by a group led by a businessman identified as Salahudin Abdullah.

A truck loaded with 1,514 board feet of illegally cut logs was also intercepted in Barangay Paruwayan last week.

John Unson

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Private land cannot be the subject of free patent application

Dear PAO,

My parents, who are deceased, owned a two-hectare farmland in Pangasinan that was titled by means of a free patent application. The free patent title covering the land was issued in August 1987. When my siblings and I tried to sell the land in 2007, Jaycon appeared and claimed that he bought the land from Dindo. He presented the free patent title issued in the name of Dindo, and the deed of absolute sale. When we checked the title presented by Jaycon, we discovered that the title in my parent's name and that of Dindo covered the same land. However, Dindo's title was issued in December 1987.

We are really confused. How could this have happened? We have already consulted the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in our place regarding the matter, and they advised us that they would file the appropriate action against Dindo. Can we file a case against him instead of waiting for the case to be filed by the DENR?

Quintilijos

Dear Quintilijos,

You can file a cause of action for the declaration of nullity of patent against Dindo, and you need not wait for the case to be filed by the DENR. You are the real party in interest in the action for the declaration of nullity of free patent. The DENR had no jurisdiction to issue a free patent title to Dindo in December 1987 after the subject land was titled to your parents in August 1987.

In a similar case decided by the Supreme Court in Tancuntian vs Gempesaw, et al. (G.R. No. 149097, October 18, 2004), the late Chief Justice Renato Corona stated:



DEAR PAO

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defendant's fraud or mistake; as the case may be, in successfully obtaining these documents of title over the parcel of land claimed by plaintiff. In such a case, the nullity arises strictly not from the fraud or deceit but from the fact that the land is beyond the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Lands to bestow and whatever patent or certificate of title obtained therefore is consequently void *ab initio* (Ramirez vs Court of Appeals, No. L-28591, 31 October 1969, 30 SCRA 297, 301). The real party in interest is not the State but the plaintiff who alleges a pre-existing right of ownership over the parcel of land in question even before the grant of title to the defendant. Xxx xxx"

The court stated further that "[t]he jurisdiction of the Director of Lands is limited to public land and does not extend to land already privately owned. A free patent which purports to convey land to which the Government no longer has title at the time of its issuance does not vest any title in the patentee as against the registered owner."

Based on the decision cited above, the title issued to Dindo is void considering that the same was given to him by a government agency that had no jurisdiction to issue the title.

Again, we find it necessary to mention that this opinion is solely based on the facts you have narrated and our appreciation of the same. The opinion may vary when the facts are changed or elaborated.

We hope that you were able to...

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Miss Earth bets to visit Sablayan town

By Robert A. Evora

SABLAYAN, Occidental Mindoro—Five foreign candidates of Miss Earth 2016 will pay a three-day visit to this “fairly unknown” rural town to explore its ecotourism destinations and “how these newly-discovered ecotourism spots are protected.”

“Our town and people of Sablayan, although fairly unknown, gladly welcome our visitors. We are lucky that our town was chosen as a venue of their visit despite the presence of other beautiful places in the Philippines,” Mayor Eduardo

Gadiano said.

The five international candidates who will visit Sablayan from October 21 to 23 are Lyndie Kean (Australia); Candisha Rolle (Bahamas); Fenne Verecas (Belgium); Eliana Villegas (Bolivia), and Gloria Nelson (Guam).

According to pageant founder Lorraine Schuck, whoever will be crowned Miss Earth “will be expected to travel the world and carry out the mission to encourage the global community to make a change to save and protect the environment.”

“These are not just mere leisure activities. They will have a

chance to meet with the locals and learn how these ecotourism spots are protected,” she said.

“We need to understand the need to raise funds through the promotion of our tourist spots, but not to the point of compromising nature. We also need to strike a balance between creating profit and conserving the environment for the benefit of small communities,” Schuck added.

Aside from Sablayan, the rest of the 90 Miss Earth candidates are also scheduled to visit Davao City, Island Garden City of Samal, Isabela, Tacloban City, Guimaras, Cebu, Boracay Is-

land, Sorsogon, Benguet, Lanao and Butuan.

Among the places that they will visit in Sablayan are the Apo Reef Natural Park, Pandan Grande Island, Parola Park, and Libuao Lake. The candidates will also get to ride the world’s longest island-to-island zipline stretching 1.5 kilometers from Parola Park to Pandan Piqueno Island.

Other activities include a glass-bottom boat ride, mangrove planting, coastal clean-up, ribbon-cutting of a photo exhibit inside the Sablayan municipal hall and a grand motorcade around Sablayan town.

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Migs Earth bets to visit Sablayan town



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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

TREE-PLANTING, CLEANUP OFFERED TO USERS

By Maricar Cinco
@maricarcincoINQ

Drug dependents in Laguna province have found different paths to reform, with some getting their hands dirty in farm work while others helping in community cleanup or learning martial arts as they try to kick their addiction.

In Los Baños town, those who surrendered in the government's antidrug campaign were made to join greening activities as part of the local police's rehabilitation program.

"While bigger cities offered zumba [classes], we thought, 'Why not something that will do the environment good?'" said Supt. Vicente Cabatingan, town police chief.

The program started last week with a tree-planting activity in Barangay Maahas.

On Thursday, 83 users and pushers from Barangay Mayondon, also in Los Baños, joined a Laguna Lake coastal cleanup, removing tons of discarded fish nets, garbage and water hyacinths from the water and shore.

Erick, 42, who said he



Anyway, these people are just users and they understood that they were only victims

Celso Talampas
Senior Inspector

stopped using "shabu" (methamphetamine hydrochloride) three months ago, said the activity was a good way to kick the bad habit.

"I am hoping [the government] could also give us jobs. I have skills in fishing but any job they offer me will do," he said.

In Pila town, users were offered temporary jobs as farm workers.

Senior Insp. Celso Ihune Talampas said he talked to farm lot owners in Barangay Concep-

cion and offered the services of former drug users to carry sacks of grain or plant rice.

"We're glad [lot owners] welcomed the idea. Anyway, these people are just users and they understood that they were only victims [of drug pushing]," Talampas said.

Also in Biñan City, some drug users are learning taekwondo as part of the city's fitness and rehabilitation program.

Every Tuesday and Thursday, the former drug users gather at the open park for a warm-up before they practice their kicks and forms.

Thanks to PO1 Joderick Maddam-op, 27, of the city police community relations unit, they have a taekwondo black belt holder for an instructor.

"It's a whole package. We start [the sessions] with spiritual counseling," said Rommel Dicdican, head of the Association of Barangay Captains.

In Quezon province, drug dependents in the island town of Patnanungan in Quezon province joined their town mates in cleaning their coastlines recently.

—With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., INQ

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

2nd 'green' activist killed in ComVal

Human rights group refutes claim case drug-related

TAGUM CITY—Another environmental activist in Compostela Valley was killed by still unidentified assailants in a murder case that some police officers said could be among hundreds of cases of street killings related to drugs.

Joselito "Anoy" Pasaporte, 32, was outside a cockpit in the town of Mabini, Compostela Valley when he was attacked by a lone gunman past 4 p.m. on Thursday, according to police yesterday.

Senior Supt. Armando de Leon, acting Compostela Valley police chief, said Pasaporte is a drug suspect who is No. 6 on the watch list of police in Mabini town.

His colleagues, however, said Pasaporte is a member of Panalipdan Youth, an environment group based in Compostela Valley.

Jay Apiag, Karapatan Southern Mindanao spokesperson, said Pasaporte had become the second activist to be murdered in Compostela Valley in just a week.

Finished off

Senior Insp. Jesser Vagilidad IV, Mabini police chief, said Pasaporte was shot by a man wearing black short pants and shirt outside the cockpit in Barangay Cadunan.

Vagilidad said witnesses heard three gunshots outside the cockpit and three more inside.

"It appears that the assailant had chased the victim into the



Nuns join a rally in Quezon City demanding a stop to extrajudicial killings of drug suspects. The growing list of victims of those killings now include Joselito Pasaporte, a youth environment group member. —RICHARD REYES

cockpit where he was finished off," Vagilidad said.

While provincial police chief De Leon said Pasaporte was a drug suspect, Vagilidad, the town police chief, said policemen in Mabini are still investigating the killing.

The motive for the killing, said Vagilidad, "could be drugs, personal or he might have had a

quarrel with gamblers."

Vagilidad said police are checking Pasaporte's background as an environmental activist.

Pasaporte was the second activist slain in a week in Compostela Valley.

On Oct. 10, motorcycle-riding gunmen shot and killed Jimmy Saypan, secretary general of the Compostela Farmers' Association (CFA).

Saypan was on his way to Compostela town when attacked.

Baseless accusation

CFA and the municipal government of Compostela have been opposing the entry of a large mining company in the rice and banana growing town.

Agusan Petroleum and Mineral Corp. (AgPet) has applied for a mining exploration permit for at least 12,000 hectares of largely tribal lands in Compostela's Ngan village.

Karapatan's Apiag accused the military of being behind the killings.

But Capt. Rhyann Batchar, spokesperson of the Army's 10th Infantry Division, said the accusation is baseless.

Batchar earlier said the Army division is one in condemning the murder of Saypan and allegations of military involvement are "unfounded."

"We will be grateful to those who will help us purge our ranks," said Batchar. —FRINSON LIM INQ