

*STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE*

DATE : 04 OCT 2016

DAY : Tuesday

# **DENR**

## **IN THE NEWS**

## Lepanto criticizes 'suspension' order

By Anna Leah E. Gonzales

**L**EPANTO Consolidated Mining Co. said Monday the government has no reason to suspend the company's mining operations.

"Since the publication of news items that Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company is under threat of suspension of its mining operations by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, we have been bedeviled by numerous inquiries and expressions of concern from nervous stakeholders on the status of our operations," said Lepanto president and chief operating officer Bryan Yap.

"This situation constrains us to make this explanatory report to these stakeholders, namely our worried employees, our communities, our stockholders and investors, our retirees, our partners and partner banks, and our services and goods providers," Yap added.

The DENR last week released the results of mining audit that showed only 11 out of the 41 metallic mines passed the review.

The DENR identified Lepanto as one of the companies recommended for suspension,

saying that the company's treatment, storage and disposal facility for detoxification process for the mill tailings was unregistered.

The government also cited alleged accidents in the mining operations and its low performance in tree planting.

Yap said Lepanto had not received any official communications for the suspension of its operations.

"There is no reason to suspend our operations. We passed the recent audit of all mines ordered by the DENR, which in our case was completed on August 14, 2016. The DENR audit report confirms that we have complied with all relevant laws and regulations," Yap said.

He said the company planted 6.5 million over its area of operations in the last 50 years, and obtained an ISO 14001 certification for its environmental management system.

"For the last 80 years, Lepanto did much more than produce copper, gold and silver. We helped build Mankayan, Benguet into a first-class municipality. We have been dutifully paying our taxes," Yap said.

"We assure our stakeholders that we will take all and every step necessary to ensure that we can and shall continue our mining operations and uphold Lepanto's legacy of responsible mining," Yap said.

04 OCT 2016

DATE

✓  
UPPER HALF

A3  
PAGE

LOWER HALF

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE**

## Lepanto: We're compliant with mine laws

LEPANTO Consolidated Mining Co., one of the companies recommended for suspension by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), said it has complied with all mining and environmental laws thus its operation should not be halted.

"This situation constrains us to make this explanatory report to these stakeholders, namely, our worried employees, our communities, our stockholders and investors, our retirees, our partners and partner banks, and our services and goods providers... Lepanto's operation has not been suspended. We have not received any official communications to that effect," Bryan Yap, Lepanto president and chief operating officer, said in a statement.

Yap added there is no reason to suspend the company's operation as it passed the audit ordered by DENR which was completed last August and confirmed that it complies with all relevant laws and regulations.

The DENR said last week the company has to resolve issues like the treatment,

storage and disposal facility; the occurrence of various accidents; and low tree planting performance.

"We have also recently obtained an ISO 14001 certification for our environmental management system. For the last 80 years, Lepanto did much more than produce copper, gold, and silver," Yap said.

"We helped build Mankayan, Benguet into a first class municipality. We have been dutifully paying our taxes... We have planted 6,500,000 trees in the community in the last 50 years. Our livelihood programs and scholarship grants have benefitted thousands of community members," he added.

Lepanto said it supports over a thousand employees enjoying free housing, hospitalization, electricity, and water at the mine site aside from building establishments and infrastructures for the community near the mine site.

DENR gave the firms facing possible suspension a week to explain their sides before a final decision will be made whether their operations will be put to stop.

# The Manila Times

04 OCT 2016

DATE

✓  
UPPER HALF

B3

PAGE

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Audit confirms Lepanto compliant, no reason to suspend ops

AMID concerns on the status of its operations, listed firm Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. on Monday assured its stakeholders that the company passed the recent audit of all mining companies ordered by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

In a statement, LCMC president and chief operating officer Bryan Yap said that the DENR has no reason to suspend its operations, noting that the audit report confirms that Lepanto has complied with all relevant laws and regulations.

"Lepanto's operation has not been suspended. We have not received any official communications to that effect," Yap said.

Yap issued the statement following numerous inquiries and expressions of concern from nervous stakeholders after news reports came out that Lepanto was under threat of suspension.

"This situation constrains us to make this explanatory report to these stakeholders, namely, our worried employees, our communities, our stockholders and investors, our retirees, our partners and partner banks, and our services and goods providers," he added.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) earlier scored the DENR for its reportedly reckless public pronouncement about the results of the mine audit despite the premature results of its findings.

COMP also expressed concern over the repercussions of such pronouncements, stressing that the report that was released was highly inconsistent with the letters sent to certain companies informing them of the audit findings.

The mining lobby group also said that the repercussions go well beyond mining communities and further endanger investments in and out of the minerals development industry.

"A lot of these companies with alleged viola-

Lepanto is among the 22 members of COMP that have already secured ISO certification, which Environment Secretary Regina Paz Lopez earlier said was "a way to identify responsible miners."

Meanwhile, Yap assured stakeholders that the company will be taking all steps necessary to ensure that they can and shall continue their mining operations and that Lepanto will uphold its legacy of responsible mining.

"For the last 80 years, Lepanto did much more than produce copper, gold and silver. We helped build Mankayan, Benguet into a first class municipality. We have been dutifully paying our taxes," he said.

"For the last 80 years, we have been a good corporate citizen and a caring partner to the community," he added.

**JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ**

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### Lepanto Consolidated exec: DENR has no reason to suspend company's operation

**L**EPANTO Consolidated Mining Co. on Monday said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has no reason to suspend the company's mining operation.

In a statement, Lepanto Consolidated President and COO Bryan U. Yap said that, since the DENR's announcement of its mine-audit report and news of the company's having been under threat of suspension, it has received numerous inquiries and expressions of concerns from stakeholders on the status of its operation.

Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez said last week that based on the findings and recommendations of the audit teams, 20 more operating mines face possible suspension for failing to meet environmental standards. This brings to 30 the total number of mines that failed the audit criteria, with only 11 of the 41 operating mines being allowed to continue operation for committing minor infractions that do not warrant a show-cause order.

However, as of Monday, the DENR has yet to issue an official letter communicating the result of the mine audit and furnish the mining companies copies of the reports.

DENR Senior Undersecretary Leo L. Jasareno said they are in the process of producing copies of the audit reports, particularly the 20 mining operations facing possible suspension.

The DENR would reproduce 2-inch thick individual audit reports for all 41 mining operations seven times—one each for the members of the audit teams, plus another for the mining company.

Yap said the company has not received any official communications to that effect. Secondly, Yap said there is no reason to suspend the company's mining operations.

"We passed the recent audit of all mines ordered by the DENR, which, in our case, was completed on August 14, 2016. The DENR Audit Report confirms we have complied with all relevant laws and regulations," he said.

Yap added that the company also recently obtained an ISO 14001 certification for environmental management system.

"For the last 80 years, Lepanto did much more than produce copper, gold and silver. We helped build Mankayan, Benguet, into a first-class municipality," he said. *Jonathan L. Mayuga*

04 OCT 2016

DATE

✓  
UPPER HALF

S4

PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# Community impact key to new mine permits

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it wants mine operators left untouched by a recent audit to prove their effectiveness in boosting socioeconomic activity in their host communities before new projects are approved.

"I don't want to allow any new ones until we show that we can do it well... Miners right now are not doing a good job," Environment Secretary Regina Paz L. Lopez said in a phone interview on Monday.

Aside from ordering the review of operations for 41 metal miners, Ms. Lopez in a memorandum order issued in July also put a halt to new mining applications.

Asked on the prospects of lifting the moratorium she imposed, Ms. Lopez said: "No, not now. We should fix it first. I mean, the fact that 30 failed the audit means we are not in good shape... Why would I allow more new [mines]?"

The secretary said that the agency will consult with stakeholders in presenting a so-called total economic valuation framework that will determine the economic viability of mining projects, according to Ms. Lopez.

A total economic valuation approach will seek to place a value on the negative effects of mining operations, making for an improved estimate of costs and benefits.

Environment Undersecretary Leo L. Jasareno has said that the agency may release soon an administrative order covering the new policies, particularly on utilization of social development and management program funds (SDMP).

Ms. Lopez said that she will support the mining industry in terms of presenting projects in which they can appropriate their SDMP funds in a "creative and cohesive way."

"They don't know how to do development. They know how to do mining. But I know how to do development. That's what I did for 25 years. I know how to use money because we never had a lot of money like them," she added.

Under existing laws, all mineral contractors are tasked to lay out a five-year comprehensive plan, the SDMP, with the aim of improving the livelihood of people in host and neighboring communities.

Miners set aside 1% of their annual direct mining and milling cost, of which 90% is utilized for SDMP and the remaining 10% to develop technology and manpower.

Meanwhile, the Chamber of the Mines of the Philippines (CoMP) expressed willingness to work with the DENR Secretary on improving the utilization of miners' SDMP funds.

"We're very willing to work

Policy Division Ronald V. Recidoro said in an interview, noting, however, that the CoMP has not received from the DENR a formal invitation to discuss the matter with mining stakeholders.

Mr. Recidoro added there is room for improvement in the implementation of SDMP in a way that would expand its benefits to cover whole provinces.

The mining group also opposed an indefinite halt to new mining projects.

"We hope her plans are clarified. It's as if she only wants to work with existing mines. That does not look good for the long-term health of the

Miners need to continually look for new projects to sustain their momentum," said Mr. Recidoro.

According to the CoMP, total projects currently in the pipeline run until 2020 and are expected to bring in at least \$20 billion in revenue.

Mines and Geosciences Bureau data show that investments in major mining projects last year totaled \$924.94 million, down 22.5% from a year earlier.

"What we'd really like to see is the secretary also opening up to the possibility of allowing exploration activities and eventually mining projects to proceed," CoMP's Mr. Recidoro added.

04 OCT 2016  
DATE

UPPER HALF

6  
PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## PAGBILAO, QUEZON

# DENR engages village heads in forest protection

By **DANNY J. ESTACIO**

LUCENA CITY, Quezon — The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (DENR-CENRO) in Talipan, Pagbilao has forged strong partnerships with barangay officials in a bid to boost forest protection in this part of the province.

At present, village officials conduct periodic upland monitoring in their respective areas of jurisdiction to ensure that no illegal logging, "kaingin" (slash and burn), and other forms of forest destruction are perpetuated.

DENR-CENRO Officer Ramil Limpiada said that deputizing village chiefs is provided in Executive Order No. 23, which primarily declares a moratorium on the cutting and harvesting of timber in natural and residual forests. It also mandates the creation of the Anti-logging Task Force.

The primary purpose of these moves, Limpiada said, is to task village chiefs, in particular, to raise awareness, funds, and resources for tree-planting.

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) which was prepared by DENR-CENRO was signed, by the presidents of Association of Barangay Captains (ABC) of towns covering the DENR-CENRO Pagbilao, to hold responsibilities in the protection and prevention of illegal logging and other forest destruction.

They have the authority to arrest suspected illegal loggers and confiscate undocumented logs.

Limpiada said new partnerships for forest protection are also being

04 OCT 2016

DATE

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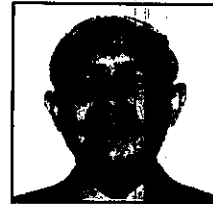
12  
PAGE

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT

## The power of outreach



BY J. P. ESTABLANCO

**M**ULTI-Sector Governance Coalition (MSGC) members, with active support from the city's many Value-Aligned Circles (VACs), use their networks in order to spread the reach of the city's governance programs. Moreover, they take advantage of the presence within the city of national government agencies that have their regional offices in Butuan for the Caraga region.

The involvement of the Philippine Army and the PNP in the initial tree-planting activities at the Bood Promontory and Eco Park has already been mentioned. In the Caraga Eco Park, in addition to the Caraga State University, at least three other national government agencies are involved: DTI, DA, and DENR. The Caraga State University happens to have a 200-hectare campus, which is just 4 kilometers from the city proper; it has reserved ample space within its property for the "expansion and re-packaging of an existing biodiversity conservation project" of the university. Within this reserved site, some 2,000 trees belonging to

several indigenous tree species have been planted to form a "naturally-set rainforest ecosystem."

Through the MSGC, arrangements have been made to make this eco-park open to the general public. The city is now involved in its further development; it has thereby acquired one more site to add to the cluster of pocket forest parks called for by its Vision 2020. This is an example of the pro-active stance the city has taken in engaging external stakeholders who can help put up projects in pursuit of the city's vision.

Another outreach program is directed to the city's barangays. Outreach to barangays goes beyond getting them to participate in the tree farming and growing initiative of the city. It extends to getting the barangays "embrace Vision 2020" such that they (the barangays) would "replicate many of the programs and projects" included in the city's performance scorecard. This outreach program to barangays would entail the following:

- Help the barangay craft its own Strategy Map that would be fully supportive of, and fully in line with, the city's own Strategy Map.
- Through technical assistance

from the city, orient the Punong Barangay and the Barangay Council towards using the city Strategy Map as a reference for its own "planning, resource mobilization, and monitoring of identified development projects."

One specific example of a barangay that has already done so is Barangay Doongan. It now has 10 major programs that it has launched to make it "socially and economically competitive," such that "equal opportunities" would be open to "all barangay stakeholders." The city provided

further technical assistance so that the barangay would have "access to funds from other line agencies (of the national government) that have related programs" (to those of the barangay); sometimes, this would entail having "to customize the barangay projects to fit the requirements of the funder." Technical assistance extends to enabling the barangay to "tap private partners (willing and able) to provide technical support, manpower and financial assistance for the (ba-

rangay) projects."

It is true that one swallow does not bring in the summer, and that one barangay does not portend similar success involving other barangays. But the mold has been made, and this success story — in the case of Barangay Doongan — can now be replicated in the other barangays of the city. The city's VACs and MSGC members have a concrete success story they can tell to others who may then follow in Doongan's wake.



04 OCT 2016

DATE

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

# PEOPLES Tonight

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE NEWS CLIPPINGS

### ACTO tutol sa kampanya vs smoke-belching PUV

TUWIRANG tinututulan ni Efren de Luna, national president ng Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations (ACTO) sa All-Out-War ng Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) laban sa mga smoke-belching na public utility vehicle (PUV).

Tuwirang inamin ni De Luna na lahat ng PUV lalo na sa jeepney ay walang papasa sa kanilang mga jeepney.

"Aminado po kami sa aming grupo (ACTO) kahit isa pong unit namin ay walang papasa sa smoke belching dahil lahat ng makina ng am-

ing mga jeepney ay "surplus" galing ng bansang Japan," aniya.

Giit ni De Luna na dapat ay tulungan muna sila ng gobyerno lalo bago hulihin ang kanilang mga lumang jeepney.

Pakiusap ni De Luna, dapat hindi muna ipatupad ang operation sa smoke-belching hanggang hindi nasisimulan ng gobyerno lalo na ang Department of Transportation at Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (DOTr-LTFRB) ang Land Transportation Modernization Program (LTMP).

Inamin din ni De Luna na hrap silang ipasa ang kanilang mga jeepney bilang roadworthy sa Land Transportation Office-Motor Vehicle Inspection Center (LTO-MVIC).

Nakikiusap din si De Luna sa DENR-DOTr at LTFRB na huwag munang ipatupad ang kampanya labang sa mga smoke-belching.

Ayon sa report, sinimulan na ng Task Force Anti-Smoke Belching noong October 1, 2016 (Sabado) ang panghuhuli sa mga PUV na smoke belching at dinidiretso ito sa impounding area.

**Jun Ichan Legaspi**

04 OCT 2016

# INQUIRER

DATE

UPPER HALF

A12

PAGE

✓  
LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Drive vs corruption, trash top SBMA tasks

By Allan Macatuno  
*Inquirer Central Luzon*

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—President Duterte and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) are studying how the remaining 15 containers carrying garbage illegally shipped from Canada would find their way out of Subic port, if not of the country, new SBMA Chair Martin Diño said.

Diño, who assumed his post on Monday, succeeded Roberto Garcia as chair. But Garcia remained SBMA administrator pending the appointment of his replacement.

"I'm immediately relaying this [Canadian trash issue] to the President because these [containers] should be returned [to Canada]," Diño said during a news conference here.

But he said his transition team had laid down action plans for a situation where the government would opt not to ship the trash back to Canada.

### Energy source

"Since we're tapping renewable sources of energy as part of our long-range program here, we're considering converting [the Canadian trash] into energy," he said. He did not give any more details about this proposal.

On June 30, a Manila Regional Trial Court ordered 50 40-

These containers have been parked at the Manila port. In August 2014, 15 of these containers were taken to the Subic port.



DIÑO

Garcia has asked the Bureau of Customs to remove the containers from this free port but the agency has yet to act on it.

In his address during the turnover ceremony at the Subic Bay Exhibition and Convention Center, Diño said he would make this free port "the best

in East and Southeast Asia" by getting rid of corruption among its ranks and making it a business-friendly economic zone.

"Mark this as a new beginning for SBMA. There will be changes to make it a better free port zone. We will fight graft and corruption, smuggling and red tape," he said.

Diño, former chair of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC), said he would also help local government officials fight illegal drugs and criminality in their communities.

"I've been helping our President in the last three months in his fight against illegal drugs, criminality and corruption in the government. I'll be working with you to make this [campaign] a success," he told officials from Zambales and Bataan provinces and Olongapo City who attended the ceremony.

Diño withdrew his candidacy



04 OCT 2016

DATE

UPPER HALF

12  
PAGE

LOWER HALF

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

# 'File raps vs Espinosas over seized pythons'

By MIRIAM DESACADA

TACLOBAN CITY - An official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) yesterday pressed for the filing of charges against suspected drug lords Albura, Leyte Mayor Rolando Espinosa and his son Kerwin in connection with the recovery of 15 pythons from their residence in August.

Leonardo Sibbaluca, regional executive director of the

DENR, issued the directive to city environment and natural resources officer (CENRO) Val Nuñez.

"They have no reason to fear because it was clear the Espinosas violated the law. They have no permit to keep the wildlife recovered from their residence. I already instructed the PENRO to coordinate with the Albura CENRO

and conservation development division to file the case," Sibbaluca said.

Nuñez admitted he did not file the charges for fear of his life.

Kerwin, tagged as Leyte's top drug lord, remains at large. He reportedly gets shabu from drug lords detained at the New Bilibid Prison.

Crisostomo Badeo, assistant

division chief of the DENR conservation development division and head of the raiding team, said they have done their part, adding that it is up to CENRO to file the charges.

At least 11 of the recovered animals were Philippine pythons while four were imported from Myanmar.

The pythons were brought to the Wildlife Rescue Center in Palo, Leyte.

04 OCT 2016

DATE

8

PAGE

UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



**WHALE CARCASS** - Marine mammal expert Darrel Blatchley goes through the remains of a beached whale that was found in Kadatu Beach, Pag-ibig Village in Barangay Dumoy, Davao City last Sunday. (Yas D. Ocampo)

## Lego bricks, metal strands may have choked beached whale in Davao

By **YAS D. OCAMPO**

DAVAO CITY - Interlocking plastic bricks, more popularly known as Lego, and strands of metal may have caused the death of a short-finned pilot whale which was found on a beach on the southern part of this city Sunday.

Darrel Blatchley, an expert in marine mammal beaching, told reporters Monday that an initial autopsy of the whale showed that it had ingested the foreign materials, which may have been floating in the Davao Gulf.

The beached whale was found in Kadatu Beach, Pag-ibig Village in Barangay Dumoy here.

Blatchley, the American curator of D'Bone Collector Museum here, said the whale that was found dead Sunday was the third to have been beached in

the scene last Sunday, the whale was already in a state of decomposition, which led the team to conduct an autopsy on the spot.

Its tail had also been cut off, but Blatchley said that this could have happened along the Davao Gulf.

According to Blatchley, the whale may have died of starvation or dehydration.

The whale weighed at least 400 kilograms and would have been at least 13 feet long, Blatchley said.

Some of the whale's teeth were also gone that led Blatchley to surmise that these were plucked by curious locals or beachgoers who were after souvenirs.

Possession of any part of protected creatures is prohibited by law.

The bones of the marine mammal

# The Manila Times

04 OCT 2016

DATE

✓  
UPPER HALF

A7

PAGE

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

## Pygmy sperm whale rescued in La Union

**SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union:** A 6.5-foot long pygmy baby sperm whale was rescued over the weekend by the La Union Rescue Team, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and the City Fisheries and Aquatic Management Council (CFARMC) from coastal area in Carlatan Village in his city.

The sperm whale, which weighed 1,000 kilograms, had swum toward the shore and was discovered by a local fisherman who lives nearby.

According to Dr. Chris Apilado, a CFARMC veterinarian, the whale bore two deep cuts, one near an eye and the other on the tail.

"Maybe it was caught and was being fished out from the water by handy fishing hook but it was able to wiggle

out," Apilado said, who closely examined the injuries while the sperm whale was still floating in the water.

Vanessa Bonitalla said her fisherman husband, Ding Carpio, saw the mammal at about 4 a.m., Friday, as soon as he woke up.

They rushed to the sea and were surprised to see an injured "dolphin" and tried to push it farther into the sea but it cannot move so they called for help from village guards.

Sally Gacayan, a BFAR staff, said the sperm whale would be brought to the BFAR custodial quarters in Casantaan village in Santo Tomas, La Union.

Gacayan said they would try to keep the mammal alive by first treating its wounds until it is strong

enough to be released into the sea.

A vehicle from the La Union Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council transported the injured whale, which was placed in a rubber boat filled with sea water.

The pygmy sperm whale is one of the several aquatic species that is endangered.

It was the second stranded whale found in the coastal area.

In October 2014, a 12-ton, 20-foot long giant sperm whale, died while it was being rescued by a backhoe and bury men at the nearby village of Lingsat Marine Sanctuary.

It was eventually buried in village.

**WILLIAM JUN GARCIA**

# The Manila Times

04 OCT 2016

DATE

E2

PAGE

✓  
UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE



## MAKILING Pop Mountain

BY JOSEPH T. BAUTISTA

**I**F there's a mountain that can be considered as the Philippines' most popular, Mount Makiling wins by default.

This mountain with its peak towering 1,090 meters above sea level and located about 70 kilometers south of Manila is the first that most city dwellers see when they travel south from the National Capital Region (Metro Manila). For those going on a first trip to Los Banos in Laguna, it is the majestic Makiling that greets every visitor to the south with its lovely silhouette that looks like a woman on a recline (thus the

Commuting to UPLB is easy. Take any bus in Buendia in Makati City or Cubao in Quezon City going south to Santa Cruz, Laguna. Alight at Los Banos crossing, often referred to as Los Banos Jollibee. Fare is around P120 and travel time about two hours. From across Jollibee, there's a terminal for jeepneys going to UPLB. These jeepneys go around the campus of UPLB, all the way to the College of For-

# The Manila Times

04 OCT 2016

DATE

E2

PAGE

✓  
UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

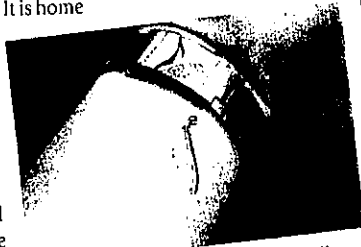
P2

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### *cf. Makiling Pop Mountain*

term 'maquiling').

Makiling now is home to almost a million people, enjoying the abundance of its waters and soil to nourish a fast-growing community. It is home to one of the biggest universities in the Philippines and several of Asia's biggest research institutes. It is also one of the oldest national parks in the Philippines, and continues to preserve and to propagate our endemic species.



■ Get ready for leeches to stick on you when climbing Makiling.

estry. For those destinations outside the regular jeepney route, the only way to go there is to walk.

For those driving to Mount Makiling, take the south highway via SLEX then exit from Calamba, also in Laguna. From Calamba, continue drive to the national highway all the way to the next town of Los Banos. The main entrance is 1.3 kilometers from the Jollibee junction.

UPLB security now requires visitors to deposit their driver's license at the entrance. There are two other entrances to UPLB - thru the Magnetic Road and the side road near International Rice Research Institute - but only for those with UPLB stickers.

### What to do, what to see

Mount Makiling's peak can be climbed in a day. Although there are several designated campsites for those who prefer to stay overnight, it is not advisable because of limited water source and presence of "limatik" (forest leech) at higher elevations.

There are several access trails to Mount Makiling, but the most popular is via UPLB. All visitors to the Mount Makiling Forest Reserve are required to register at the entry point and pay P10 per person entrance fee. The entry point is marked Station 1, and all important landmarks are properly identified, making the need for a hiking guide unnecessary.

The next major station is the entrance to the Makiling Rainforest Park (Station 7). The trail leading to the park is 3.3 ki-



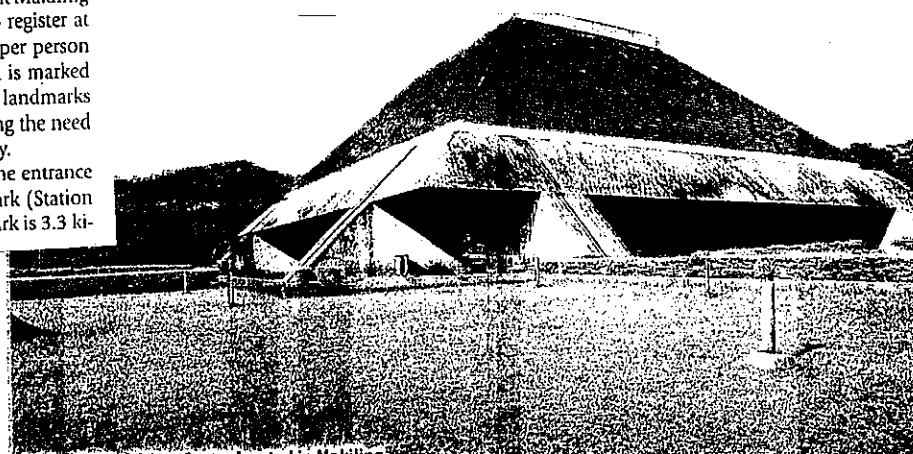
■ There is also huge camp site at the Makiling Rainforest Park for overnight hikers.



■ The trail leading to the Makiling Rainforest Park takes between one to two hours of easy to moderate trekking.

### How to get there

Being under the jurisdiction of UPLB, the only way to go to Mt. Makiling is to enter the gates of the university.



■ The National Arts Center located in Makiling

# The Manila Times

04 OCT 2016

DATE

E2

PAGE

✓  
UPPER HALF

LOWER HALF

P3

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

### *Makiling Pop Mountain*

lometers from the gate, and takes between one to two hours of easy to moderate trekking. Here, there is a huge camp site for overnight hikers. Located also within the vicinity are the UPLB Nursery Farm and the Mud Spring (about 15-minute trek from the main trail).

From here, one can take a short detour to the Mudspring before taking the two-hour trek to the summit. The summit is identified as Peak 2, and it rewards climbers with a magnificent view of Laguna and its surroundings.

But for those who do not wish to tire themselves but still like to see the many trees that grow in Makiling, they can visit the Botanic Garden near the entrance of the reserve. Established in 1965, this natural museum contains many plant species endemic to Mount Makiling.

Another interesting site around Makiling is the National Center for the Arts. Built

during the Marcos regime, it continues to hone talented students through the Philippine High School for the Arts. On the way up to the center, visitors will pass by the Chapel of Saint Marc. The chapel's cross - featuring the outline of a crucified Christ - was designed by National Artist Leandro Locsin.

At the main campus of UPLB, visitors can also see the Oblation, the old Baker Memorial Hall, the Carabao Park, the Carillon Tower, the Seniors Social Garden and many more. At the corner of the football field is the biggest Acacia tree in the campus. It is also called Fertility Tree because of the many things that happen at night under the tree.

#### **Where to stay, what to eat**

As most visitors to Mount Makiling go there for a day trip, places to stay overnight are very limited. There is a designated campsite

at the Rainforest Park. However, prior arrangement must be made at the gate.

Visitors can also stay at the Pook ni Maria Makiling right next to the Jamboree site. It is also possible to find overnight lodging at the cottages of the National Arts Center.

Another alternative is to stay overnight at the nearby Pansol, where private pools with cottages can be rented for P5,000 to P10,000 for 12 hours.

There are many places to eat around UPLB. For quick and affordable meals, visit the campus cafeterias. For those who wish to try some authentic Elbi (LB) cuisine, the stretch from Jollibee junction to the main gate are lined with quaint little restaurants ranging from Thai to Mediterranean that serve tasty and reasonably fair-priced meals.

But for the ultimate Elbi experience, try the choco milk being sold at the Dairy Farm. It's as fresh and as refreshing as the popular Mount Makiling.



■ A tree planting activity in the rainforest park.

■ The view of Laguna Lake from one of the highest points of Makiling.

