

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

DATE : 16 NOV 2016

DAY : Wednesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

COMP cites members for best practices in responsible mining

THE Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) is recognizing its member-companies that exemplify what is best in the Philippine mining industry. For their best practices in the industry and for their continuing effort to protect the environment, they will receive citations during the Presidential Mineral Industry and Environmental Awards (PMIEA) on November 18.

PMIEA is part of the 63rd Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference that will take place on November 18 at CAP-John Hay Trade Center and Cultural Center, Camp John Hay, Baguio City. It is led by the Mines and Geoscience Bureau, Philippine Society of Mining Engineers and Philippine Mines Safety and Environment Association.

Nelia Halcon, COMP executive vice president, said: "These awardees are leading examples of responsible mining in the country and the world. Despite the challenges that continue to hound the minerals industry, there remain companies which are fully committed to protecting the environment and bettering the communities and the country."

Halcon, who has served as judge for the awards, said the PMIEA has stringent requirements that include full compliance with environmental policies; establishment of a contingent Liability Fund; an approved Social Management and Development

Program; zero fatal accident for the coverage period; and no significant damage to lives and properties as a result of mining operations.

"The pursuit for world class operations, even long before the PMIEA was established, is worth emulating. Their achievements, while deserving of trophies, also entail unwavering commitment to our advocacy of responsible mining," Halcon stressed.

The award is conferred every year to mining companies which show exemplary practices in safety and health; environmental protection and rehabilitation; and community and social development and management.

According to the selection committee, there are 23 mining companies nationwide that have been shortlisted for this year's PMIEA, which was established under Executive Order No. 399 on February 03, 1997 in compliance with the policy that mineral exploration and mining operation shall be pro-environment and pro-people.

Of the 23 mining companies, 11 are engaged in surface mining while the rest are involved in quarry operations, mineral exploration and processing.

However, four of those 11 in metallic mineral mining were earlier recommended for suspension by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau as part of the mine audit ordered by Environment Secretary Regina Paz Lopez.

JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ

The Manila Times

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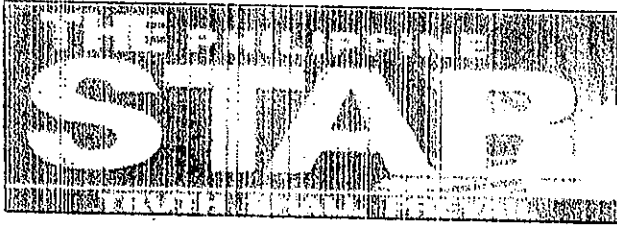
Nation in brief

BARBERS FILES ETHICS RAPS VS PICHAY

SURIGAO DEL NORTE Rep. Robert Ace Barbers has filed an ethics complaint against Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay for financial interest in contract, franchise or special privilege granted by the government and for disorderly, unparliamentary conduct. The complaint was filed a day after he accused Pichay of committing corporate identity theft and graft charges involving a mining firm in Claver, Surigao del Norte. Barbers, in a privilege speech, claimed that Pichay in 2015 stole the ownership of Claver Mineral Development Corporation (CMDG), which has been ordered suspended by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in 2012. Mr. Pichay, using the stolen identity of the original CMDG SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) registration, filed an ejectment case against the occupants of CMDG in Claver mysteri-

ously won in the case from a Surigao judge who owes his position to him and forcibly took over the management and operations of the mining firm in February 2016. The local Mamanwa tribes who have government-approved cadastral claims over the area were also driven out of the place, Barbers said in a privilege speech.

LLANESCA T. PANTI



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Lepanto Mining trims losses

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

Listed Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. trimmed its net loss to P500 million in the first nine months of the year on the back of improved revenues.

Revenues from January to September went up 21 percent to P1.1 billion. Third quarter revenues improved 12 percent to P427 million.

Metal sales grew nearly 30 percent to P1.05 billion due to higher gold production and the depreciation of the peso.

versus the US dollar.

Gold production rose to 17,213 ounces from 15,007 ounces as a result of higher milled ore. Silver production slightly decreased to 29,034 ounces from 35,304 ounces with the reduction in silver grade.

On the other hand, cost and expenses increased 19 percent to P1.5 billion.

Mining cost surged by al-

most 80 percent to P493 million while milling cost decreased to P146 million due to the lower prices and lesser usage of some milling materials.

Other cost component that increased included labor, major consumables, repairs, maintenance and service.

Lepanto is among the 20 mining firms that have been recommended for suspension following the audit of the De-

partment of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on the industry.

The company, which operates in Benguet, is primarily engaged in the exploration and mining of gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc and all kinds of ores, metals, minerals, oil, gas, coal and their related by-products.

It sells its production to Hongkong, Canada, Peru, and China, among others.

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ACT OF REMEMBRANCE. Activists stage a protest at the Department of Justice in Manila to commemorate the killing of eminent botanist Leonardo Co, forester Sofronio Cortez and farmer Julius Borromeo in the forests of Kananga, Southern Leyte on Nov. 15, 2010. Norman Cruz

PILIPINO MIRROR

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AMIN NG KATOTOHANAN

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HUMIGA sa harap ng tanggapan ng Department of Justice (DOJ) sa Padre Faura, Maynila ang mga militante bilang protesta at paghingi ng hustisya sa patuloy na pagpatay sa mga environmentalist sa mga Kuha ni NORMAN ARAGA

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Why climate action will spur inclusive economic growth

By Sara Jane Ahmed

CLIMATE ACTION is now more important than ever.

Building climate resilience and reducing emissions will veer the world away from the worst-case climate scenario projected by scientists and enable vulnerable countries like the Philippines to fight climate change.

While the Paris Agreement recognizes the need of climate-vulnerable countries for financing to undertake ambitious mitigation programs from their respective Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), adaptation projects and programs also need to quickly scale up.

Through innovative financial instruments, trillions can be shifted toward climate-resilient infrastructure and renewable energy (RE). Yet it is not the lack of funds but the inability to design bankable projects that is at the root of low-level investment in climate action.

Developed economies can provide funding for electricity grid upgrade requirements that will allow developing countries to absorb scaled up renewable energy generation, paving the way for more private sector renewable energy investments.

The bottom line to spurring investment is to incentivize and decrease risk. It involves helping develop the capacity of governments to access climate finance. Empowering them to utilize emission markets and carbon pricing, and to make the most of the diffusion of low-carbon tech-

nologies, can help them mobilize climate funds in a significant way.

The common misconception and argument that renewable energy is expensive is no longer true. Solar and wind are already the lowest cost options in many regions while RE costs continue to decline in countries such as Morocco, South Africa, India, the United Arab Emirates, and Brazil.

Likewise, the historical responsibility of developed countries in contributing to climate change is undisputed. They have a higher obligation to scale up funding, support project design, and transfer technologies to developing countries, not only to avoid the irreparable losses and effects of climate change but also to incentivize vulnerable countries to transition early and attract far bigger investments in clean energy.

For example, developed countries can provide funding to cover vital electricity grid upgrade requirements to allow developing countries to absorb scaled up renewable energy generation, which paves the way for more in-

vesting in renewable energy from the private sector.

It is no secret that countries are still lagging on action to reduce emissions despite the Paris Agreement's entry into force.

The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), an alliance of over 40 vulnerable countries including the Philippines, recognizes the need for global solidarity in the face of worsening climate threats. CVF member countries demand far greater ambition from other nations but likewise demonstrate



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Why climate action will spur
inclusive economic growth

their own ambition through enhanced NDCs that are predicated on far stronger and more predictable international support.

The goal of CVF's call for 100% renewable energy commitments by 2050 is to encourage transformational low-carbon resilience that helps boost inclusive economic development. Though the transformational side here is neither technology-driven nor measurable by a sectoral outcome, the impact of transformation on poverty incidence and vulnerability is

absolutely critical to the climate finance approach that vulnerable countries and other least developed countries need to pursue. Climate finance should evolve its metrics to ensure the marginalized benefit first from existing climate funds and programs.

Access to cleaner energy drives economic growth and development, and more importantly, helps the poor escape poverty.

Aside from the rapid decline of overall RE prices, developments in RE-powered infrastructure are expected to accelerate. This is seen by CVF member countries as one of their prime opportunities to leapfrog the polluting pathway taken by big countries towards development.

Ultimately, this call for 100% renewable energy prioritizes the mechanisms and tools that will advance low carbon, climate-resilient infrastructure development compatible with the ambitions of the Paris Agreement. Aside from being a driving force in signalling the need for increased commitments from all countries to keep within the 1.5°C temperature threshold, climate-vulnerable countries can also show the economic benefits of pursuing such climate action. ■



SARA JANE AHMED is the Energy Finance Consultant of the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.

Global climate change action 'unstoppable' despite Trump — UN

MARRAKESH, MOROCCO — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Tuesday action on climate change has become "unstoppable," and he expressed hopes that US President-elect Donald Trump would drop plans to quit a global accord aimed at weaning the world off fossil fuels.

At a meeting of almost 200 nations in Morocco to work out ways to implement the 2015 Paris agreement to limit greenhouse gas emissions, Mr. Ban said US companies, states and cities were all pushing to limit global warming.

"What was once unthinkable has become unstoppable," he told a news conference of the Paris Agreement, agreed by governments last year, ratified in record time and formally adopted by more than 100 nations including the United States.

The accord, aiming to phase out net greenhouse gas emissions this century, was a breakthrough after more than two decades of negotiations, driven by increased scientific certainty that man-made emissions drive heat waves, floods and rising sea levels.

Mr. Ban said that he hoped that Republican Trump, elected last Tuesday, would drop his

view that man-made climate change is a hoax and his pledge to cancel the Paris Agreement.

"I am sure he will make a quick, wise decision," Mr. Ban said, saying that climate change was having severe impacts from the Arctic to Antarctica. He noted this year is on track to be the warmest year since records began in the 19th century.

"I hope he will really hear and understand the severity and urgency of addressing climate change. As president of the United States I hope he understands this, listens and evaluates his campaign remarks," he said.

Mr. Ban said that companies including General Mills and Kellogg, states such as California and cities such as Washington, Nashville and Las Vegas were working to cut their greenhouse gas emissions.

He said that Mr. Trump, as a "very successful business person," would understand that market forces were already acting to push the world economy towards cleaner energies, away from fossil fuels.

Mr. Ban, who will step down at the end of the year after a decade in charge of the United Nations, has made action on climate change a core issue of his time in office. — *Reuters*

UN chief Ban voices 'hope' as leaders tackle climate change in Trump shadow

MARRAKESH, Morocco: UN chief Ban Ki-moon voiced hope Tuesday that Donald Trump will "vary" his stance denying climate change as world leaders gathered in Morocco to keep a planetary rescue plan on track.

A week after the election to the White House of Trump, who has called global warming a "hoax" and has threatened to "cancel" the global pact, Ban said: "I am sure he will make a good, wise decision".

He has spoken to the president-elect, the UN secretary-general said, and he was "optimistic" that the business mogul "will hear and understand the seriousness and urgency of addressing climate change."

Ban was addressing journalists in Marrakesh before opening the "high-level segment" of an annual UN climate meeting—the first since last year's adoption of the Paris Agreement to stave off calamitous global warming.

Trump's election has been uppermost on the minds of many delegates and negotiators gathered since last Monday to thrash out a roadmap for putting the agreement into action.

"I have explained at length about our expectations and our hope that... president-elect Mr Trump will hear and understand the seriousness and urgency of addressing climate change," said Ban.

"As the president of the US I am sure he will understand this, he will listen, he will vary his campaign remarks," he added.

It was usual for campaigning politicians to engage in rhetoric, but a president had to understand "the reality of the whole world's problems," said the UN chief.

"No country, however resourceful or powerful, is immune from the impacts of climate change," he added.

"My sense is that as a very successful business person in the past... I believe that he understands that there are mar-

'No Planet B'

Many fear that withdrawal by the United States, a champion of the deal under President Barack Obama, would shatter the political goodwill built up over years of negotiations, and put the very-planet-saving goals of the deal at risk.

While waiting for Trump to make his position clear, many now look to the rest of the world to strongly restate their commitment to the pact—with or without the US.

All eyes will be on Marrakesh Tuesday, where about 60 heads of state and government are scheduled to address the 22nd Conference of Parties (COP22 for short) of the UN's climate convention, which gathers 196 nations and the EU bloc.

To date, 109 of the 197 parties have officially ratified the Paris Agreement, which entered into force on November 4 after crossing the threshold of 55 ratifications by countries representing 55 percent of greenhouse gas emissions.

They included the United States, which represents about 14 percent of global emissions, and China which accounts for 25 percent.

Beijing's climate envoy Xie Zhenhua stressed Monday that tackling climate was a "common and shared responsibility".

"International cooperation is a must for us to address climate change," he said in Marrakesh.

Scientists say warming over 2 C will yield dangerous sea level rise, harsher storms and droughts, disease spread and conflict over ever-scarcer resources.

"We have only one planet," Ban stressed. "We don't have a Plan B, because there is no Planet B."

Among the speakers on Tuesday's agenda are Sudan's Omar al-Bashir, for whom the International Criminal

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Chile's cold south makes wine in warming climate

By Miguel Sanchez

PUELO, Chile—A decade ago, no one would have thought of making wine in Chile's wind-swept southern Patagonia region.

But now it is warming, and winemakers are seeking their fortune here while the country's production falls overall.

Traditionally cold and wet, the region now has enough sunshine to grow high-quality Pinot Noir grapes.

"We have managed to make the grape mature," says Sergio Subiabre, head of sales for Villaseñor Wines.

"We can make a wine with the same characteristics, the same alcohol and sugar content, as one from central Chile."

'More flavors'

Chile's central vineyards have for years been recognized as a source of decent wine. The country as a whole is the world's eighth biggest producer.

But its southern region was seen as too chilly and rainy—until Subiabre and others planted their vines on the remote banks of the Puelo River in recent years.

"We are surrounded by volcanoes and mountains. All that volcanic earth adds lots of minerals to the wine," he says.

"That distinguishes it from wines from central Chile. Our wines have more flavors."

Wine to China

The company planted its first

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chile's cold south makes wine in
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Enologists walk along the vineyard at Villaseñor winery, where the "Puelo Patagonia" wine is produced, in Puelo, Los Lagos Region, Chile. Amid thousand-year-old woods and snow-covered mountains in the Chilean Patagonia, wine businessmen discovered an incredibly propitious microclimate for wine making where, due to climate change, there are unusual high temperatures and rainfall has decreased. AFP

batch has already been ordered in advance by Chinese and US buyers for \$120 a bottle.

That is a lot for a Chilean wine. "Chile has always had a weakness in that it is known as a producer of cheap wines," says Maximiliano Morales, a wine marketing consultant.

But drawing on the fame earned by Patagonia's stunning landscapes among tourists "generates added value," he says.

Wine race

Villaseñor is now experiment-

And other winemakers are following the trend.

"There has always been a race to produce wines in the south. That has prompted many producers to experiment," says Morales.

"Here we can see a genuine example of how more varieties of grape are adapting to the region," he adds.

"New economic activity is being generated, precisely because of the rise in temperature."

Climate change

three decades and it now has more sunshine.

They say average temperatures have risen by two degrees Celsius. Just a decade ago, there was 30 percent more rain.

"In the Puelo River the water level has fallen due to a decrease in rainfall and less snow," says Jose Luis Iriarte, a researcher at the IDEAL environmental institute at Chile's Southern University.

Subiabre says the temperature in the area swings from 14 de-

C in the summer, pushing grapes to quick maturity in the last few months of growth.

But climate change is not good for all winemakers.

Global warming is disrupting harvests in warmer climates than Patagonia—such as neighboring Argentina, Brazil and elsewhere in Chile.

That caused world wine production in 2016 to reach its lowest level in two decades, the International Organization of Vine and Wine said.

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Farmers' irrigation fears allayed as Bustos Dam rehab set to start



READY FOR DAM REHAB — In preparation for the start of the Bustos Rubber Dam rehabilitation project next month, laborers start clearing the area of tons of water lilies. (Freddie C. Velez)

By **FREDDIE C. VELEZ**

BUSTOS, Bulacan — Farmers' fears that agricultural fields in this province and neighboring Pampanga may be washed out or have a water cut-off were allayed yesterday as officials in-charge of the Bustos Dam Rehabilitation project assured continued management of water releases for irrigation even when work on its repair and rehabilitation begins next month.

Engineer Orlando Garbo, Bustos Dam Project manager, said the more than 20,000 farmers in Bulacan and Pampanga have nothing to worry about, "because we have proper coordination with NIA (National Irrigation Administration) operations managers for irrigation supply."

The repair and rehabilitation project covers the brittle rubber gates of Bustos Dam, also known as the Angat Afterbay Regulator Dam, in Barangay Tibagan, here, is set to start next month.

"Walang dapat ikabahala ang mga magsasaka sa lalawigan ng Bulacan at ilang bahagi ng Pampanga dahil hindi naman matutuyuan ng tubig ang Bustos Dam kapag tuloy-tuloy na ang pagawa sa susunod na buwan (Farmers in Bulacan and Pampanga have no need to worry because Bustos Dam will not dry up even if work proceeds next month)," Garbo said.

In a related development, the provincial government in cooperation with the NIA has already mobilized and distributed 100 irrigation pumps to the

support for our farmers while the rubber gates of Bustos Dam are under repair," he said.

In a related development, the pro-

Gintong Nagdasig Irrigators Association of Bulacan town, expressed his gratitude to the provincial government and the NIA for the pumps.

Undersecretary, the Department of

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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SHIFT TO NUKE POWER BAFFLES GREEN GROUPS

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan
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The Duterte administration's decision to revive the Marcos-era Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) has baffled environmental groups which point out that even technologically advanced Japan and Germany have moved away from nuclear power.

Gerry Arances, Center for Energy Ecology and Development convenor, said Japan was still grappling with the 2011 Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster in which harmful radioactive material was released into the environment after a powerful earthquake and tsunami.

"The Philippines' sudden move toward nuclear energy is baffling given that (we are) less technologically equipped but similarly vulnerable to environmental disasters as Japan. Japan is a developed country yet it has started to move away from nuclear power," Arances said.

Greater risks

Germany is another developed country that pulled the plug on nuclear energy after the Fukushima meltdown, apparently reckoning the risks were greater than the benefits, he said.

Sanlakas secretary general Aaron Pedrosa pointed out that the location of the country put it at greater risk of a nuclear radiation leak.

"Given how a nuclear power plant is by itself dangerous, our geographical location along a typhoon belt and the Ring of Fire (region in the Pacific where many earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur) threatens to exponentially magnify the risks of reviving this nuclear plant," Pedrosa said.

"The revival of the BNPP is an environmental disaster waiting to happen," he said. INQ

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Relocation of gov't offices gets nod

A HOUSE leader yesterday said that government officials and economic managers agreed to a proposal of relocating some government agencies and offices to the provinces.

Chairman of the House Committee on Housing and Urban Development Negros Occidental Rep. Alfred "Albee" Benitez said Vice President and chairperson of the Housing Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) Leni Robredo agreed on the idea of transferring some government agencies to rural areas.

The idea of creating new urban centers outside Metro Manila is embodied in the House Bill 83 authored by Benitez which is now the subject of consultations among Cabinetmen led by Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez. The purpose of this proposal is to address the worsening traffic especially in Metro Manila and to resolve housing backlog.

Benitez disclosed that Sec. Dominguez is giving his support to the proposal.

Citing data from the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and HUDCC, Benitez said that about 1,234.85-hectare government-owned properties are currently being occupied by informal settler families (ISFs) while 2,185 hectares of public properties are available for housing programs. Jester Manalastas

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'Create growth and let everyone gain from it'

MR. President, Distinguished Colleagues:

We live in extraordinary times and we are going through an extraordinary time of change.

It is therefore my honor to present to you our proposed 2017 budget that sets bold plans to meet not just today's needs, but one that looks beyond 2017 - one that contributes to delivering long-term solutions to the country's long-term problems. The P3.350 trillion proposed National Budget for 2017 is the biggest annual budget ever assembled - a budget that will help deliver the change that our people want and need.

The Face of the National Budget

The budget before you is not a mere compilation of cold and impersonal words and numbers. It is the lifeblood of our nation, crafted to fuel hope and inspire our people to believe in our collective future again.



Sponsorship Speech of Sen. Loren Legarda on the 2017 proposed national budget bill delivered in the Senate Session Hall on Nov. 14, 2016 - Ed

One has to read between the lines of this hefty book, for behind the hard numbers lie stories of real people whose pleas were met with either apathy, neglect, or by the arrogance of power.

Tucked within the thick pages of this book is the memory of young Kristel Tejada who killed herself, unable to raise the P10 thousand tuition

fees she needed to continue her college education; our countrymen still affected by the wrath of Typhoon Yolanda and in dire need of assistance; or the farmer mercilessly shot to death because he was asking to be given rice at a protest rally in the drought-stricken, unirrigated farms of Kidapawan, North Cotabato.

They are the faces of the more than 22 million Filipinos who are poor, half of them living in extreme poverty and lacking the means to feed themselves.

Mr. President, it can no longer be "budget as usual." We need to have a budget that works - one that places money where they will make a real difference in improving the lives of our people. We need to have an inclusive budget, one that will consider the needs of every Filipino without prejudice to age, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnicity, faith and religion, and physical limitations.

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Lopez firms post robust Q3 income growth

THREE Lopez-led companies on Tuesday reported a robust growth in third-quarter net income despite declining gross revenues, with the reduction in cost and expenses driving the strong bottom line.

In their quarterly reports, Lopez Holdings Corp., First Philippine Holdings Corp. (FPH) and First Gen Corp. posted a significant growth in their net income attributable to the equity holders of the parent company.

Lopez Holdings posted P2.83 billion in net income, higher by 18% from P2.4 billion a year ago, while FPH's earnings jumped to P5.21 billion, or nearly five times more than year ago's P1.04 billion.

First Gen recorded a net income of \$57.01 million, up 131.56% from \$24.62 million in the previous year.

For the January-September period, Lopez Holdings registered a net income of P5.52 billion, up 27% from P4.36 billion a year ago with the company attributing the results to the "steady performance" of FPH and ABS-CBN Corp.

"FPH also reported one-off gains for the period," the company said in a statement, identifying these non-recurring items in manufacturing and power generation. It also said "higher efficiencies sustained year-to-date gains."

The higher income comes despite an 8% decrease in consolidated revenues to P65.73 billion from P71.1 billion, the holding firm said.

As of end-September, Lopez Holdings held 46% of FPH and 56% of the economic interest in ABS-CBN. The holding firm houses the Lopez family's investments in major development sectors. It is the controlling stakeholder in the two subsidiaries. FPH's net income attributable to equity holders of the parent rose by 137% while that of ABS-CBN increased by 50%. — Victor V. Saulon