

08 December 2022, Thursday



**DENR**

# **NEWS ALERTS**

# **NEWS CLIPPINGS**

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# REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENT LAWS UNDER WAY, SAYS DENR

By **Jordeene B. Lagare**  
@jordeenelagare

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is conducting a "comprehensive review" of the laws and policies governing the mining sector. This is part of its thrust to promote "responsible" mining that has the potential to bring in significant revenues for the government.

Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said in a briefing on Wednesday that the agency was conducting a department-wide review of policies and legal frameworks, but that the mining sector, particularly small-scale mining, was one of its priority areas.

She noted that current laws and policies governing the mining sector were "somewhat dated" with some regulations



Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga

issued back in the 1990s.

The DENR also wants to ensure that the social and physical advances in science and technology as well as the Philippines' "current context developmentally" are taken into account.

"Among them possibly is the small-scale mining dimension, which as we know is really in need of a closer look because of the need for social protection of our small-scale miners as well as an improvement in their overall livelihood and well-being," she said.

Such efforts are being undertaken in line with the DENR's push for responsible mining which, according to Loyzaga, covers not just the extraction of minerals but also the implications on the integrity of the ecosystem and the livelihood and well-being of the communities.

"Where we need to build our capacity is in the observation, in the monitoring, in the analyzing and our entire process of permitting and watching over the results and activities of the permitting process in

the mining sector," she added.

The government has identified the mining sector as one of the potential primary contributors to the country's economic growth and development and the DENR previously expressed its intention to bolster the sector's potential.

Aside from addressing illegal mining, the DENR plans to undertake geological survey and mapping to populate the geoscientific and mineral information database, as well as rehabilitate the remaining 11 abandoned mines to address lingering concerns over the controversial sector.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau had identified approximately 9 million hectares as potential mineral-rich areas, but less than 3 percent of these are covered by mining contracts.

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# Revitalizing mining industry a priority

BY BELLA CARIASO

**E**NVIRONMENT Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga on Wednesday said that the revitalization of the mining industry is now part of the priority programs of the administration of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.

In a press conference, Yulo-Loyzaga said that minerals are important in the country's development.

"That's [revitalization of the mining industry] the direction of the administration, and therefore we are working very hard now to build up the technical capacities to support that particular direction. We've already acknowledged this as a priority, and therefore we are going to be undertaking not just a review of the existing policies of our laws, which are somewhat outdated," she added.

Yulo-Loyzaga noted that among

those need to be amended are the Small-Scale Mining Law of 1991 and the Philippine Mining Law of 1995.

"We would like to make sure that the social and physical advances in science and technology, as well as our current context developmentally, are now adequately reflected in updated policy and legal system," she noted.

At the same time, Yulo-Loyzaga assured that the DENR will push for responsible mining.

"Responsible mining actually responds to the specific context in terms of what mining can deliver to a country's development, strategi-

cally and critically, and that means, not just the extraction of the mineral physically but what are the implications on the integrity of the ecosystem on livelihood and well-being of the community that are actually affected by the different physical changes because of the mining activity," Yulo-Loyzaga added.

The DENR's direction is in line with the President's directive as he emphasized the use of the country's mining resources in the country's economic development and recovery.

Yulo-Loyzaga added that the Environment department will initially prioritize the review of the mining laws.

"We will be taking a comprehensive review of the existing legal framework, and the current policies and practices in each of the sector. It will be department-wide because mining is actually a priority. This will be the first area wherein we will be conducting a

review," Yulo-Loyzaga added.

She said the review has already started, adding that the DENR targets to come up with an initial report on selected areas within the next six months.

"Possibly, we will come up with a report on the small-scale mining dimension, which we know is really in need of a closer look because of the need for social protection of our small-scale miners, as well as improvement in their overall livelihood, so that will be one of the priorities in terms of the mining development," Yulo-Loyzaga said.

According to her, there are at least 53 Minahang Bayan in the country.

"As you know, with those Minahang Bayan, it is possible to subdivide them so that small-scale miners can actually partake from the Minahang Bayan. Most of the Minahang Bayan are in the Cordillera areas and Region 11 (Davao Region)," she added.



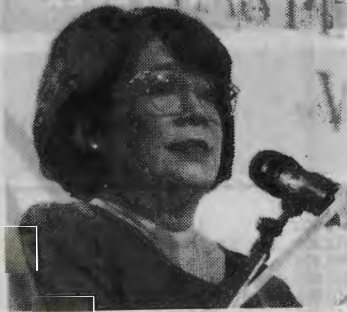
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## Mining law changes ready in 6 months



LOYZAGA

BY JED MACAPAGAL

UPDATES on mining laws may be expected within the next six months, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo Loyzaga said in a briefing in Pasay City yesterday expected amendments include the Minahang Bayan which serves as a common area where small-scale miners are allowed to legally operate.

"Because mining is actually a priority, this will be the first area wherein we will be conducting a review and that process has already

started. Hopefully, we will be able to come up within the next six months on some selected areas... Among them, possibly the small-scale mining dimension, which as we know is really in need of a closer look because of the need for social protection of our small-scale miners as well as an improvement in their overall livelihood and well-being," Loyzaga said.

She said the DENR will also be taking a comprehensive review of the legal framework and policies and practices of other sectors aside from mining. These include biodiversity, land management, environmental management and forestry.

Loyzaga said the DENR is supportive of "responsible mining" but needs to build its capacity in the observation, monitoring and analyzing of the the permitting process in the mining sector.

"We would like to make sure the social and physical advances in science and tech(nology), as well as our current context developmentally are now adequately perfected in an updated policy and legal system," Loyzaga said.



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# DENR to revisit mining laws

By DANESSA RIVERA

Mining laws will be the first to be reviewed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources as the Marcos administration puts high priority on revitalizing the sector.

In a press conference yesterday, DENR Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said the agency would take a comprehensive review of the existing legal framework and current policies and practices in each sector it covers, namely mining, biodiversity, land management, environmental management and forest.

"Because mining is actually a priority, this will be the first area wherein we will be conducting a review and that process has already started," she said.

The Marcos administration said the mining sector has a high growth potential that will help the economy recover amid the pandemic.

In recent years, the mining sector has

only been contributing less than one percent to gross domestic product.

With the thrust of the administration on mining, the DENR is eyeing to "build the technical capacities to support that direction," Loyzaga said.

"We've already acknowledged this as a priority and therefore we are going to be undertaking not just a review of the existing policies and laws that are somewhat dated. Some of them are in the '90s - the Small-Scale Mining Act of 1991, Philippine Mining Law of 1995," she said.

"We would like to make sure that the social and physical advances in science and tech, as well as our current context developmentally are now adequately perfected in an updated policy and legal



Yulo-Loyzaga

system," the DENR chief said.

The DENR intends to focus on small-scale mining policies as one of the priorities of the mining review.

Loyzaga said the industry is in dire need of a closer look "because of the need for social protection of our small-scale miners, as well as an improvement in their overall livelihood and well-being."

Under Loyzaga's leadership, the DENR will push for responsible mining to contribute to the country's economic development and recovery.

"Responsible mining responds to the specific context in terms of what mining can deliver to a country's development strategically and critically. That means not just the extraction of minerals specifically, but what are the implications on the integrity of the ecosystem, on the livelihood and well-being of communities that are actually affected by the different physical changes because of the mining activity," she said.



## DENR plans to update small-scale mining rules

THE Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said it hopes to remove "outdated" rules for small-scale miners after announcing a review of a 1991 law governing that segment of the industry.

"We will be undertaking a comprehensive review of the existing legal framework (for) mining — this will be the first area that the department will be reviewing. We are undertaking review of certain laws, they are somewhat outdated as you know," Environment Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga said in a briefing on Wednesday.

Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga said the department is looking in particular to update Republic Act 7076 or the People's Small-Scale Mining Act of 1991.

"We are looking very closely in this Small-Scale Mining Act and what needs to be done to update it. We're hoping that some of the large companies can help us with the social protection and environmental protection side for the small-scale miners," she said.

Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga said the DENR is looking to "revitalize" the mining sector as minerals will be critical for the economic recovery, adding that "responsible mining" must be viewed in the

context of "what mining can deliver to a country's development."

She said that the department hopes to announce the priority areas for review, which will take place over the next six months.

Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga said that to date there are 53 "Minahang Bayan" areas open to small-scale miners, mostly in the Cordillera and Davao regions.

"These are where we need to concentrate because as you know there are needs as far as the Minahang Bayan process is concerned, especially in the protection of our small-scale miners. There's also an aspect to environmental protection because as you know small-scale miners are only allowed to use certain artisanal tools," she said.

Minahang Bayan are designed to regulate the small-scale mining industry by defining the areas they are allowed to operate observing DENR guidelines.

"At this point, for this very, very much needed is collaboration and close cooperation with the local government," Ms. Yulo-Loyzaga said.

She said that the DENR is looking at expanding discussions with the Department of the Interior and Local Government and local chief executives regarding the operation of Minahang Bayan areas.

— Ashley Erika O. Jose



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## Tax incentives sought for mining investments in bamboo plantation

The private sector is pressing government to grant tax incentives to the mining sector's investments in large scale bamboo plantations that will help boost watershed conservation, disaster risk reduction, and generate as much as \$3 billion in long term revenue.

Bamboo propagation and mining sector advocates from the Junction Ridge Resources Development Corp. (JRRDC) and the Kilusang 5K (Kawayan: Kalikasan, Kabuhayan, Kaunlaran, Kinabukasan) said bamboo planting would be the best antidote to pervading criticisms thrown on mining.

Banker and mining leader Isidro C. Alcantara Jr. of JRRDC said bamboo plantations in mining areas could generate huge revenue that could even equal the country's gold, copper, and nickel revenue.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported in November 2020 that the mining and quarrying sector generated P189.9 billion (\$3.45 billion) revenue.

Isidro was chairman of Marcventures Holdings Inc. (Marcventures Mining parent firm) prior to his retirement. Its mining operation in Surigao del Sur has so far grown 30,875 bamboo plants in the area, pioneering the effort in mining.

The Philippines can earn \$3 billion revenue if only at least 10 percent of such China industry (\$35 billion) is created.

At an estimated area of around 400,000 hectares, this is less than 10 percent of China's bamboo area of seven million hectares.

"This is doable. We have so much land to make large scale bamboo plantations," said Alcantara.



Alcantara



## Albay gov suspends quarry operations

LEGAZPICITY— All quarry operations in the province of Albay are now suspended, the provincial government has announced.

Based on newly-installed Gov. Edcel Greco Alexandre Lagman's Executive Order 2 signed Monday, all quarry operations in the province shall be suspended effective December 5 until December 18.

"An inventory of all quarry operators shall be conducted, their compliance with existing ordinance shall be determined, and an ocular quarry site inspection shall be undertaken by the Albay Environment and Natural Resources Office," the order posted on the social media page of the provincial government on Monday night, read.

Lagman said there is a need to suspend quarrying in Albay in order to conduct an inventory of all the operators to determine their compliance with the existing ordinance.

Aside from the suspension of quarry operations, he also issued EO 3 suspending the delivery of sand, gravel, and other quarry resources in the province.

Lagman said the purpose of authentication of delivery receipts is necessary in order to see to it that the province will not be prejudiced, income-wise.

"The delivery of sand, gravel and other quarry materials shall be suspended from December 5 to December 11," he added.

Meanwhile, EO No. 4, also signed on Monday, abolished Task Force Kalikasan and terminated all appointed Bantay Kalikasan personnel.





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# DENR pushes ecological integrity

The proclamation directs the DENR to lead the observance and celebration of the National Bicycle Organization in coordination with relevant non-government organizations and civil society groups

BY PAULA ANTOLIN  
@tribunephil\_phau

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources – through its SCIS-Strategic Alliance and Environmental Partnership Division and with the National Bicycle Organization – is

pushing since 2014 the use of bicycles as an alternative means of transportation to ensure a cleaner and better environment.

The DENR was instrumental in the signing in November 2020 of Proclamation 1052, which seeks to ensure ecological integrity and a clean and

healthy environment.

Under the proclamation, all other agencies and instrumentalities of the national government, including government-owned or government-controlled corporations and state universities and colleges are enjoined to participate.

The proclamation directs the DENR to lead the observance and celebration of the National Bicycle Organization in coordination with relevant non-government organizations

and civil society groups.

It also encouraged the local government units, as well as the private sector, to actively participate and render support and assistance to the DENR for the effective implementation of the proclamation.

DENR Undersecretary for Field Operations Juan Miguel Cuna disclosed that the annual event will continue to attract more participants as bicycles have become an alternative mode of transportation during the pandemic.



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## 4,000 cyclists, kids in push bikes join Nat'l Bike Day celebration

SOME 4,000 bicycle enthusiasts and children in push bikes participated the celebration of the National Bicycle Day 2022 hosted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The mass cycling parade marked the second year since former President Rodrigo Roa Duterte signed Proclamation 1052 declaring every fourth Sunday of November as the National Bicycle Day.

DENR Undersecretary for Field Operations - Luzon, Visayas and Environment Juan Miguel T. Cuna said the annual event continued to attract more participants as bicycle has become an alternative mode of transportation during the pandemic.

The event also highlighted a race among kids aged two to five years of age using push bikes to instill to the young minds the importance of biking and its contribu-

tion to the government's clean air campaign.

According to Cuna, bicycles are not just fashionable and recreational but also a necessity in many ways compared to motorized transportation.

He added that cycling is more economical, cleaner, healthier, quieter, and faster," Cuna said in his speech read by DENR-Strategic Communication and Initiatives Service (SCIS) Director Khalil S. Bayam.

Around 3,000 members of 200 cycling groups and 1,000 individuals signed up for the activity. The bikers traversed a total of 51.94 kilometers from the host city Makati to Pasay, Manila, Quezon City, Pasig, Taguig and back to Makati City.

For his part, National Bicycle Organization (NBO) Director Benedict Camarasaid the biking activity is in line with their organization's "continuing vision of clean air through a bicycle-friendly Philippines." **Joel del Torre**



## GMA: Address water supply, sanitation issues

SENIOR Deputy Speaker and Pampanga Representative Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo underscored the need to address the looming water supply backlog and worsening sanitation issues in the country.

This is the reason why she filed House Bill 482 or the creation of Department of Water, Irrigation, Sewage and Sanitation Resource Management.

In filing the bill, the former President said that it is the government's responsibility to provide people with safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water, sanitation, and irrigation services.

This project is attainable through well-coordinated, effective, efficient and sustainable management of its water and sanitation resources.

According to Arroyo, at present, management of water sources is lodged with different units or agencies of the government, thereby resulting in poor coordination or even conflicts in the implementation of the national policies and plans on water, sewage, sanitation, and irrigation.

The present set-up for water, irrigation, sewage, and sanitation responsibilities of the government involves, among others, major government agencies like the National Water Resources Board, a government agency responsible for the enforcement of the Water Code of the Philippines which is under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources; the Local Water Utilities Administration, a government-owned and controlled corporation attached to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and has regulatory powers over all local water districts (LWDs); and rural waterworks and sanitation associations

nationwide.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, a GOCC also attached to the DPWH, is responsible for the water supply and sanitation in Metropolitan Manila and such contiguous areas as may be added to its area of jurisdiction, while the National Irrigation Administration, a government agency under the Office of the President is primarily responsible for irrigation development and management.

In her time as President, Arroyo's administration provided water to 136, 477 hectares of agricultural land from new irrigation projects while restored or rehabilitated projects watered over 1.3 million hectares of farmland from 2001 to mid-2009.

**Jester Manalastas**



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## Czech Rep. offers solutions in solid waste management

BY RIZAL RAOUL S. REYES

**T**HE Czech Republic, through Ambassador Jana Šedivá, has committed to working closely with the Philippines in various areas, including finding solutions to the looming waste crisis in the latter.

This, as the Embassy of the Czech Republic conducted a pioneer conference on solid waste management: "Clean Philippines: Solutions to the Waste Pollution" last November 21 in Makati City, with WASTen z.s. as a partner.

WASTen z.s. is a solid waste-man-



AMBASSADOR Jana Šedivá

agement association in the Czech Republic with 30 members composed of different universities, private companies, as well as research and development organizations. It aims to assist governments in European states in solving their waste crisis, while aiding economic growth in the continent.

In the event, members of WASTen z.s. introduced and discussed various Czech technologies and practices on solid waste management—particularly solutions for separating waste, converting waste to energy, and diverting plastic waste into concrete-

like material. Presenters also tackled benefits of the innovations, and ways they can assist the Philippines in overcoming its issues with solid waste processing.

The afternoon saw a knowledge-exchange session among Czech presenters and their Filipino audience.

The gathering was the first among the series of conferences on solid waste management prepared in Manila by the embassy and WASTen z.s. The Czech delegation was expected to meet with counterparts in Davao City on November 23 and in Cebu City on November 25.



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# CHR REPORT INDICTS FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

By Krixia Subingsubing  
@krixiasINQ

The world's fossil fuel companies have "obfuscated, obstructed, derailed and delayed" efforts to transition to renewable energy sources, undermining the people's right to be protected against the climate crisis, according to a landmark report by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) released on Wednesday.

The commission's National Inquiry on Climate Change (NICC) Report declared that climate change adversely affected the human rights of Filipinos to life, food and water security, as well as development.

It's the world's first inquiry into corporate responsibility for the climate crisis. It was in response to a petition by environmentalists led by Greenpeace to examine the impacts of climate change on the human rights of the Filipino people and the responsibility of carbon major companies.

The petitioners held 47 companies liable for driving the climate crisis and the harms it produced. They included the world's largest multinational carbon companies—Chevron, ExxonMobil, Royal Dutch Shell, British Petroleum, Peabody Energy, Total and Console Energy Inc.

The report is a searing in-

dictment of the largest fossil fuel producers which the inquiry found to have "engaged in willful obfuscation of climate science" that prejudiced the public's right to make informed decisions about their products and concealed the "significant harm" these had on the environment and climate system.

It said these companies engaged in "obstructionist efforts that were driven not by ignorance but by greed," citing testimonies, studies, community dialogues, fact-finding missions, briefs and public hearings both here and in the United States and the United Kingdom.

## 'Environmental harm'

It took seven years for the CHR to finish the inquiry for several reasons, former CHR Commissioner Roberto Cadiz said. Among others, the companies were unwilling to engage with the CHR on the grounds of jurisdiction and territoriality, and refused to acknowledge that climate change involved civil and political rights.

Cadiz said that "in truth and in fact, all human rights are interdependent and interconnected."

The CHR said several international laws, treaties and principles "already confirm that states have the respon-

sibility to mitigate climate change impacts in a manner anchored on human rights."

"Because it is generally viewed that climate change is a type of environmental harm, the human rights obligations in environmental harm also generally apply to climate change," the report said.

Even if states fail to perform this duty, that does not free business enterprises from the responsibility of respecting human rights, it added.

The CHR found that the world's major carbon companies already knew about the harms that carbon dioxide from fossil fuels posed on the climate as early as the 1930s, but they still tried to convince the public that their products caused no "significant harm."

This included massive climate denial campaigns led by the American Petroleum Institute, which published a book in 1996 that tried to argue that there was no conclusive scientific evidence that climate change was driven by man-made activities and that there was no basis to shift to renewables.

The report also cited a 2017 study revealing that Exxon-Mobil had internally acknowledged that climate change was real but its advertisements expressed doubts.

It said these companies' moves contravened standards

of honesty and good faith.

## Clean energy

"The challenge that confronts us, therefore, is to hasten the transition of the global economy toward clean energy. And all acts to obfuscate climate science and delay, derail, or obstruct this transition may be bases for liability. At the very least, they are immoral," the report concluded.

In publicizing the report, the commission hopes to provide a template for the public should they demand compensation for present and future climate harms as well as a roadmap of action for governments to fully transition to a more sustainable economy.

Among others, it recommended the "urgent transition" to clean energy and for states to put a price on pollution and to create legal frameworks for climate-related compensations.

It also urged carbon majors and other industries to publicly disclose due diligence and to stop undermining climate science and acknowledge their contributions to climate-related harms.

"Once and for all, they should let science tell the truth about climate change in order to hasten the global effort toward transitioning to clean and renewable energy," the CHR said. INQ



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## Rotary, DENR conduct massive tree planting in QC to protect environment for the future generations

**W**ITH its founding ethos of "Tamang Gawa, Gawang Tama," 1Rotary Trading Corporation recently partnered with the Department of National Resources (DENR) in its massive tree planting drive to stress the need to protect the environment for future generations.

To amplify sustainability awareness, 1Rotary launched its "Plant Trees, Plant Hope" campaign earlier in the recently concluded tree planting activity held at the La Mesa Eco Park, Quezon City, as part of

the company's longstanding commitment to corporate social responsibility and sustainability. Headed by 1Rotary's President Rodel Eusebio and EVP Jinky Eusebio, 1Rotary team was able to plant 500 saplings.

"Small actions, when collectively taken, generate a major impact," said 1Rotary's Marketing Department Head, Kacy Cruz. "We wanted to take one further step and motivate our employees to volunteer to plant trees to make an even bigger impact."



1ROTARY Mancom, office, stores and warehouse personnel, together with DENR-NCR Site Development Officers, Ma. Mariella Tamondong and Nina Katrina L. Gabitanan.



## EDITORIAL

# Just implement Arta

**T**hat old familiar promise to make it easier for foreign investors to set up shop in the Philippines has been dusted off once more, when Malacañang announced last week that President Marcos Jr. would soon sign an executive order (EO) requiring government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to cut unnecessary red tape to hasten the entry of badly needed big-ticket investments.

The aim is to make the Philippines more attractive to foreign investors who have so far been putting more of their massive, job-generating investments in neighboring countries. Singapore, Indonesia, and even Vietnam attracted \$15.7 billion in foreign direct investments in 2021, almost 50 percent more than the \$10.5 billion that the Philippines managed to get.

Press Undersecretary Cheloy Velicaria-Garafil said the proposed EO called for the establishment of a "green lane" for "strategic" investments to speed up the process and streamline the requirements for the issuance of permits and licenses, including the resolution of pertinent issues. Under the EO, government agencies and LGUs only have up to three days to act on permit or license applications for simple transactions, seven for complex transactions, and 20 working days for highly technical ones. The order covers national government agencies and their regional and provincial offices, as well as local governments and quasi-judicial bodies involved in issuing permits and licenses necessary for "nationally significant" or "highly desirable" projects.

The EO "will immediately address concerns about ease of doing business that has always been the complaint about us," said Mr. Marcos, who had declared that making the Philippines more business-friendly was one of his administration's priorities, along with hastening the country's recovery from the pandemic, and improving the agriculture sector.

The directive is nothing new, with previous administrations posting mixed results. While the Duterte administration improved the country's ranking from 124th in 2019 to 95th in 2020 among 190 economies on the now discontinued Ease of Doing Business list of the World Bank, the Philippines still came in last among the founding members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) on a similar index. The Asean ranking measured economies against 10 indicators that represent the life cycle of a business, from its start to its application for construction permits, getting electricity, registering the property, getting credit, protecting minority investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts, and finally, resolving insolvency.

Not surprisingly, Singapore led the pack at 2nd place. Malaysia was 12th, followed by Thailand at 21st, and Indonesia at 73rd place. The Philippines lagged behind, with the World Bank noting that it takes an average of 13 procedures to start a business, 22 steps to build a physical establishment, and nine procedures to register property. Established firms also have to make 13 annual tax payments. In case of disputes, it takes about 962 days for issues to be resolved through the courts.

The Duterte administration sought to address these issues through the passage of the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018, which was geared toward helping private firms—from entrepreneurs to micro, small, and medium-sized businesses, and big ticket investors—do business in the country. With the law still in place, why the need for a new executive order on the same concerns?

Aside from prescribing the ideal processing times for business applications and technical evaluations, the Duterte-era law also called for the setup of an online central business portal where all permits and needed licenses can be completed. It also created the Anti-Red Tape Authority (Arta) to implement the Ease of Doing Business Act. Arta articulated late last year its plan to come up with the Philippine Ease of Doing Business Reporting System, a "localized version of the Doing Business Report" to help further improve the country's competitiveness ranking by using the same indicators studied by the World Bank.

"Investors look at our competitiveness ranking in their decision to invest in the country or not. Because investors would like their investments to be protected, and once they come in, that their return of investments is secured. We want to provide a healthy business environment that will generate more employment opportunities, improve our country-wide development, and of course our inclusive growth," said Ernesto Perez, who had been promoted as Arta's new director general. He was its deputy director general for operations from 2019.

Considering that taxpayer money is already being spent on fulfilling Arta's mandate, perhaps it would be better for the President to just double down on what it has been tasked to do, as a new executive order may just add another layer of unwanted and unnecessary bureaucracy.



## WWF NAMES DIPOLOG 'MOST LOVABLE' PH CITY IN 2022

ILIGAN CITY—Dipolog, the capital city of Zamboanga del Norte province, earned the tag of “most lovable city” in the country this year after gaining popular acclaim from experts and ordinary netizens for its target of reducing local carbon emissions by 75 percent in 2030.

Mayor Darel Dexter Uy received the citation from World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) at an event in Pasig City on Tuesday, during which Dipolog was also formally awarded for winning the One Planet City Challenge (OPCC) 2021-2022.

WWF announced the OPCC winners last June.

Ernie Rojo, Uy’s executive assistant, told the Inquirer on Wednesday that the OPCC was a friendly competition among participating cities on putting out a commitment to reduce carbon emissions as part of the global climate action.

Dipolog, Davao and Quezon cities, which were the three finalists in the country, qualified to compete for public engagement on social media for the most lovable city tag.

### **Bold plan**

WWF intended the competition to encourage more climate action as cities are key contributors to climate change. According to WWF, an estimated 75 percent of global carbon emissions are from cities, with transport and buildings among the most sig-

nificant contributors.

“Dipolog city was commended by the international jury of the OPCC Core Team in Sweden for its bold emissions reduction plan, which is aligned with science-based targets needed to keep global warming within 1.5 degree Celsius,” said WWF.

Cities participating in the OPCC were measured for their ambitious climate targets, bold leadership, ability to meet upcoming challenges and a holistic climate action plan that is well balanced toward their goals.

Dipolog has committed to cutting emissions by 75 percent, based on a 2018 baseline, in 2030, and being carbon neutral by 2050.

A greenhouse gas inventory done in 2020 estimated the city’s total emissions at 1.7 million tons of carbon dioxide, generated mostly by stationary combustion or fuel used by households, establishments and other facilities.

As part of its climate commitment, the Dipolog local government has shifted to renewable energy for its street lights, saving P500,000 in monthly electricity costs.

The local government also went full blast on forest protection and rehabilitation projects to enhance the local environment’s capacity for absorbing carbon emissions.

—RYAN D. ROSAURO INQ





## DFA chief asks UN to review maritime law amid disputes

THE Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has called on the United Nations to review the implementation and the provision of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea due to new challenges and threats to maritime security four decades since its adoption by the world body.

In his speech before maritime forums in Manila before delegates of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo stressed that "geopolitical rivalries are simmering, transnational crime has intensified, and the effects of climate change are present and irreversible."

Manalo urged the neighboring countries to review the law, which must govern the marine scientific research, navigational rights through straits, exploitation of seabed resources and marine environmental protection.

"It is timely for us, four decades on, to look back and take stock of this landmark document and examine whether it has served its intended purpose in this vast array of areas," Manalo said on Tuesday night.

"It is often said that the UNCLOS is a 'constitution of the oceans.' The heft of this description should not be lost on us, 40 years onward," he added.

**Rey E. Requejo**



## 5.3 earthquake, Taal emission fluster Luzon

By Rio N. Araja

A MAGNITUDE 5.3 earthquake jolted Tinaga Island in Vinzons, Camarines Norte Wednesday afternoon with shockwaves felt across Metro Manila, forcing people out of homes, schools, and buildings, stalling sessions at the Senate, and forcing the Philippine National Railways to temporarily suspend all trips.

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### 5.3 earthquake,...

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The earthquake occurred as the national government was continuing to carry out initiatives to protect public buildings against earthquakes in Metro Manila, where 13 million of the 114 million population live, Climate Change Commission executive director Robert Borje said.

Meanwhile, a small phreatomagmatic burst was recorded in Taal Volcano, which lasted for a minute, according to state monitoring of the volcano from 5 a.m. on Tuesday to 5 a.m. on Wednesday.

Taal Volcano remained at Alert Level 1, which means there is a low-level unrest.

A weak emission of plumes reaching up to 600 meters tall was observed over

the volcano that drifted southwest, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said.

The PNR said in an advisory all PNR trips were suspended temporarily and advised commuters to and from the Bicol Region to check its official Facebook page for additional updates regarding train trips and schedule.

Meanwhile, Phivolcs said the quake, of tectonic origin meaning it was caused by the movement of the earth's crust, occurred at 1:05 p.m. at a depth of one kilometer.

Secretary Renato Solidum Jr. of the Department of Science and Technology was at the Senate for his confirmation hearing with the Commission on Appointments at the time when the tremor happened.

Intensity 5, characterized by strong shaking, was felt in Mercedes and Jose

Panganiban in Camarines Norte, while intensity 4 or moderately strong shaking was experienced in Daet, Camarines Norte, and Guinayangan and Polillo in Quezon.

Intensity 3 or weak shaking was also recorded in Ragay, Pili and Iriga City in Camarines Sur, and Mauban, Lopez, Mulanay, Alabat and Gumaca in Quezon.

Several parts in Metro Manila felt intensity 2 or slightly felt shaking, such as in Quezon City, Marikina City and Pasig City, and in Tabaco, Albay; Dingalan, Aurora; Batangas City, Batangas; Calumpit; Plaridel, Pulilan, Marilao and San Ildefonso, Bulacan;

Sagnay, Camarines Sur; Carmona, Cavite; Gapan City, Nueva Ecija; Pinalayan, Oriental Mindoro; Guagua, Pampanga; Infanta, Pangasinan; Dolores, Infanta and Calauag, Quezon, and Taytay and Tanay, Rizal.



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# Manila Standard

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**ECO-FRIENDLY LANTERN.** Members of an environmental group urge students, teachers, and parents of General Roxas Elementary School Quezon City to ban toxic materials and use eco-friendly lanterns instead. **Manny Palmero**



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Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Community Environment and Natural Resources Office

**NOTICE OF BIDDING**

Notice is hereby given that the DENR - CENRO Bislig City will auction through sealed bidding at 10:00 o'clock in the morning on January 10, 2023 the right to lease for commercial purposes the tract of land herein described below. Written bids in the prescribed form must be submitted not later than 10:00 A.M. on the said date.

Location	:	Mabua, Lawigan, Bislig City, Surigao del Sur
Description	:	Mla-13-000001
Area	:	8,384 square meters
Appraised Value of Land	:	Php 10,899,200.00
Appraised Value of the Improvements (Existing/Proposed)	:	Php 499,825.61
Applied by	:	Lumino Land and Port Mgt. Inc. Mla-166803-01

The right to lease the land will be awarded to the person offering the highest annual rental which shall not be less than three (3) per centum of the value of the land plus one (1) per centum of the value of the proposed and/or existing improvements, *equivalent to Php 826,801.61*. In order that a person may be entitled to participate in the bidding, he must be a qualified lease applicant, and must, before the commencement of the same, make a deposit equivalent to at least three (3) months rental, *equivalent to Php 206,700.39*. Only deposits in cash shall be accepted. A person bidding in representation of another may do so under a duly executed Special Power of Attorney. During the bidding, the bidder has to make an additional deposit every time his bid is raised, to complete the three (3) months rental, otherwise such bid as raised shall not be accepted. The right is reserved by this Office to reject, any or all bids.

The successful bidder if other than the applicant must reimburse the latter of the value of the improvements and the expenses for the publication of the notice of auction.

NATHANIEL E. RACHO, RPF  
OIC, CENR Officer

For and in the Absence of the OIC, CENR Officer

MAMERTO V. VALBARES  
DMO IV/Chief, RPS

CENRO R13-D4, Mangagoy, Bislig City, Surigao del Sur  
Email Address: cenrbislig@denr.gov.ph